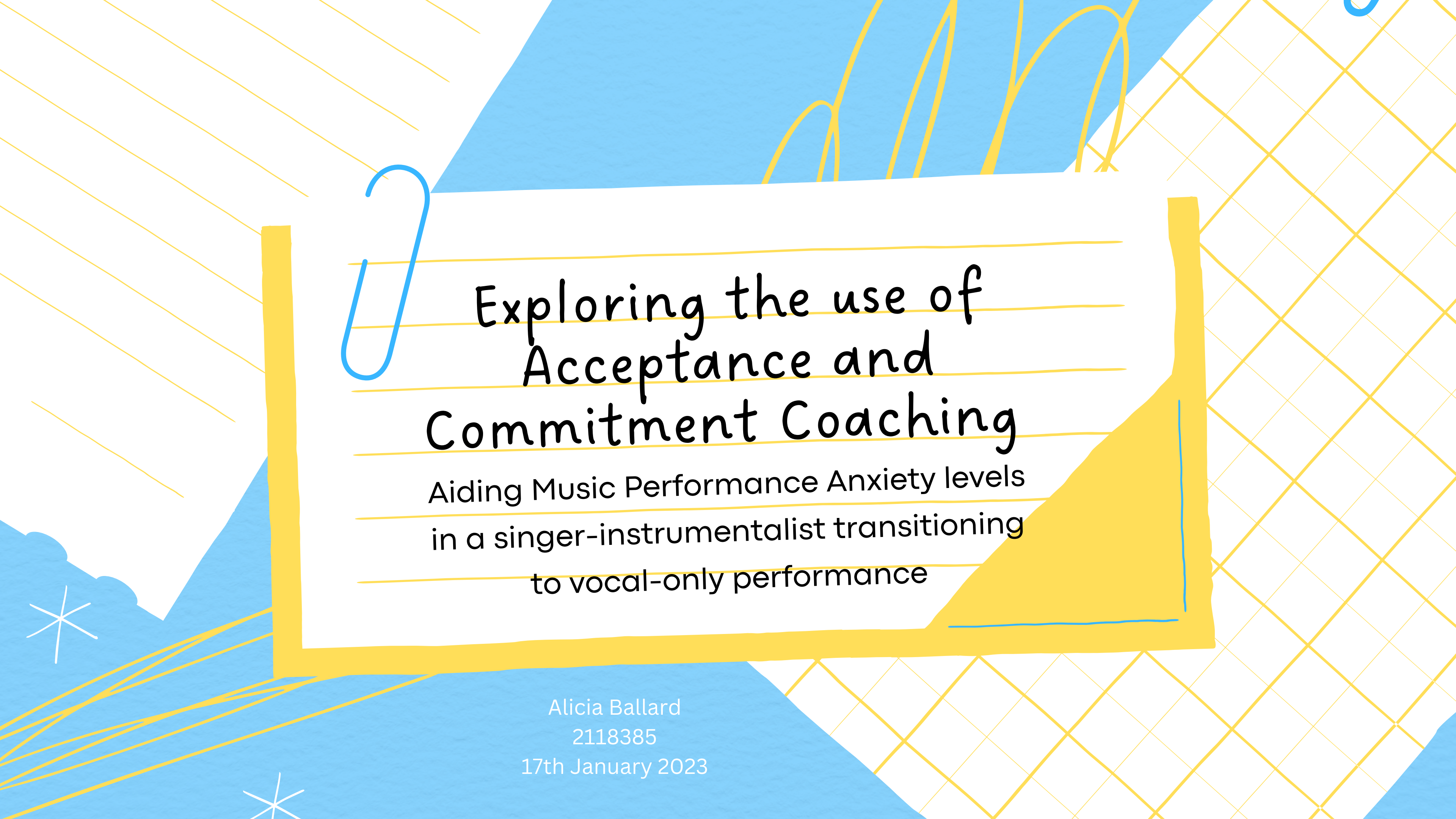




Exploring the use of Acceptance and Commitment Coaching

Aiding Music Performance Anxiety levels
in a singer-instrumentalist transitioning
to vocal-only performance

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Key Questions:

- Why does 'vocal-only' performance exacerbate MPA levels?
 - Can a shift in musical identity be aided by a teacher delivering ACC?
-



Background & Justification

01

Personal
Experience of MPA

02

Singer-
Instrumentalists

03

Student-conceived
project

04

Gaps in current
MPA research

Aims & Objectives

PERSONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES	
To learn how to successfully implement ACC for MPA in the teaching studio	✓
To develop a performance coaching skillset, including tools such as Active Listening	✓
To expand my understanding of MPA and its occurrence in students	✓
To expand my understanding of the experience of transitioning musical identity	✓

Literature Review

Music Performance Anxiety

Key Studies:

Ritchie & Williamon, (2007)

Nusseck et al., (2015)

Thomas & Nettleback, (2014)

Juncos & de Paiva e Pona (2018)

Yoshie et al., (2009)

Osborne & McPherson, (2014)

Caused by various factors including genetics, environment, and personal experience

Independent of age and/or experience

Occurrence can be mild to severe - career debilitating!

Research has identified numerous predictors of MPA:

- solo performance
- low self-efficacy
- pessimism
- maladaptive perfectionism
- trait anxiety
- fear of negative evaluation
- age of commencing musical training

Self-efficacy, the greatest predictor of performance quality and achievement, reveals information about musical identity

Musical genre impacts MPA levels:

- 'Popular' musicians make more frequent references to fear of failure
- 'Popular' musicians experience the highest anxiety immediately prior to performance

FOUR SYMPTOM CATEGORIES:

- Cognitive
- Physiological
- Behavioural
- Distress

Challenge or Threat

Literature Review

MPA & Musical Identity

Key Studies:

Oakland et al., 2012

Juncos et al., 2014

Juncos & Markman, 2016

Castiglione et al., 2018

Musical self-concepts are formed via:

- experiences
- evaluations from others
- beliefs about one's performance

Disruption of established musical identity can damage self-worth (Oakland et al., 2017)

Identities aren't linked to proficiency but to social influence (MacDonald, 2017)

Social influence has vast impact on singer's MPA (Sandgren, 2002)

Different singing roles may be prone to different levels of MPA

Musicians define themselves via their speciality: 'guitarist' 'vocalist' 'cellist'

Too strong and specific a relationship with speciality may cause MPA

ACT can help defuse from limiting musical self-concepts

MPA may be 'particularly pernicious' for vocalists (Arneson, 2010)

The singing voice is an integral part of self-identity

Strong sense of musical identity:

- vitality, agency, belonging, meaning
- aids those with physical trauma to increase feelings of mastery
- sig. link to musical accomplishments and creativity
- sig. predictor of singing performance - better pitch accuracy.

Singing self-concept is distinct from other musical self-concepts

Literature Review

ACC for MPA

Key Studies:

Mahony et al., 2022

Shaw et al., 2020

Swain & Bodkin-Allen, 2017

ACT is a promising treatment for MPA and for enhancing musical performance.

There is growing consensus that non-clinical practitioners trained in ACC can deliver effective psychological intervention.

The use of ACC has been seen to create sig. improvements in psychological flexibility

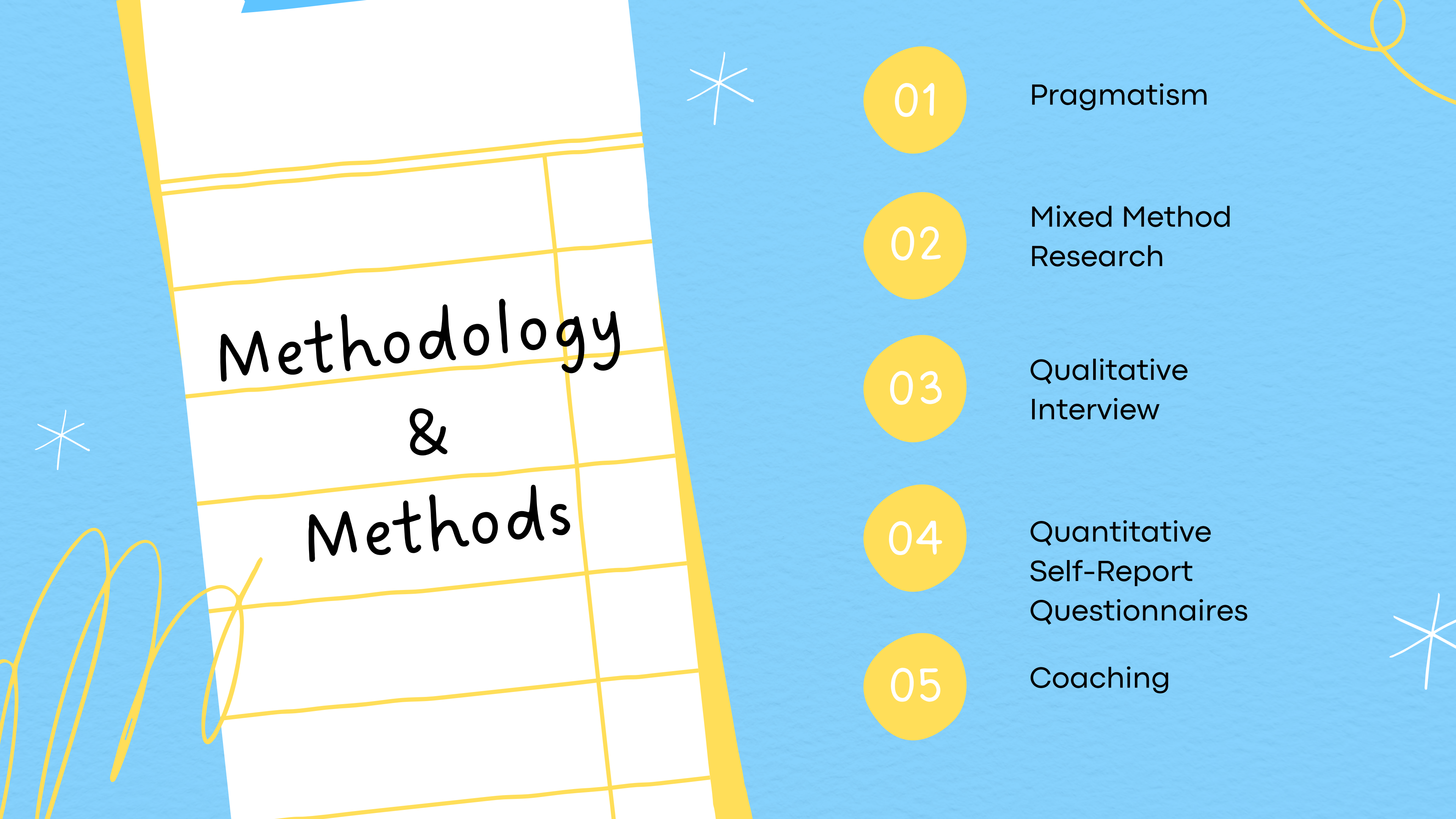
Four known studies in ACC delivered by singing teachers to aid MPA:

- Mahony et al., 2022
- Shaw et al., 2020
- Swain & Bodkin-Allen, 2017
- e Paiva e Pona, 2016

ACC has a potential for assisting shifts in musical self-concept and identity

ACC for MPA shows improvement in:

- psychological flexibility
- performance quality
- MPA symptoms
- Shame over having MPA



Methodology & Methods

01

Pragmatism

02

Mixed Method
Research

03

Qualitative
Interview

04

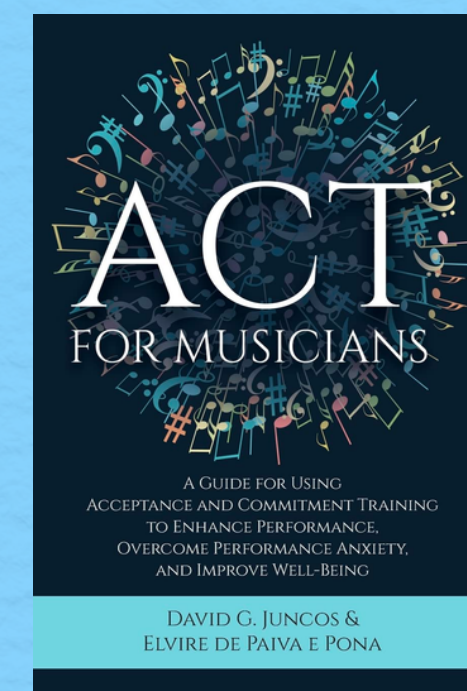
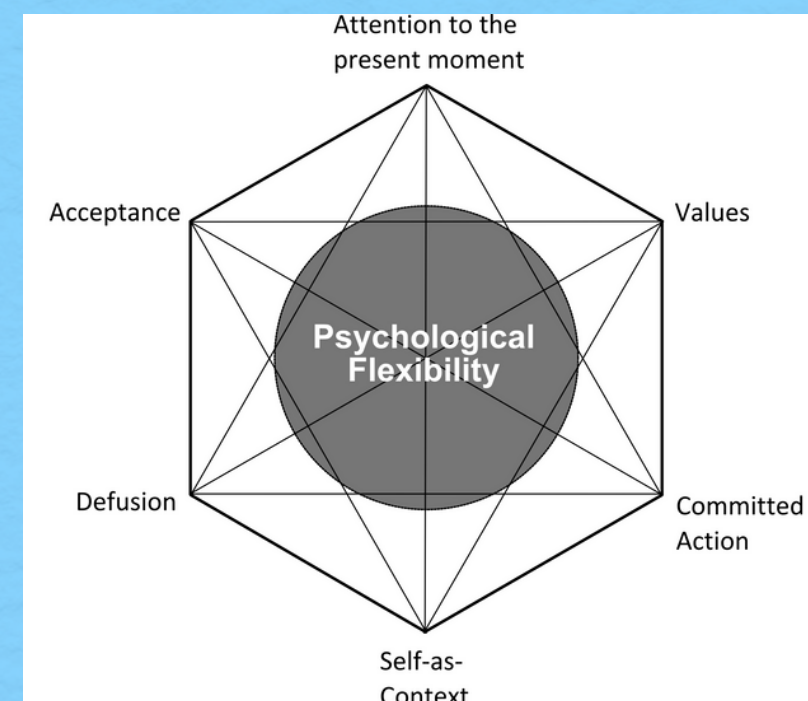
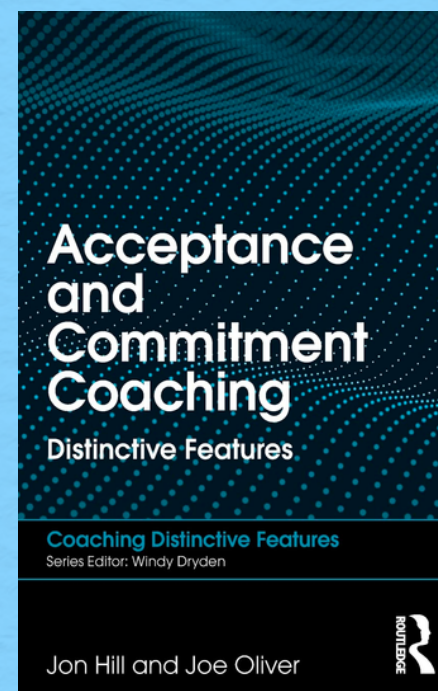
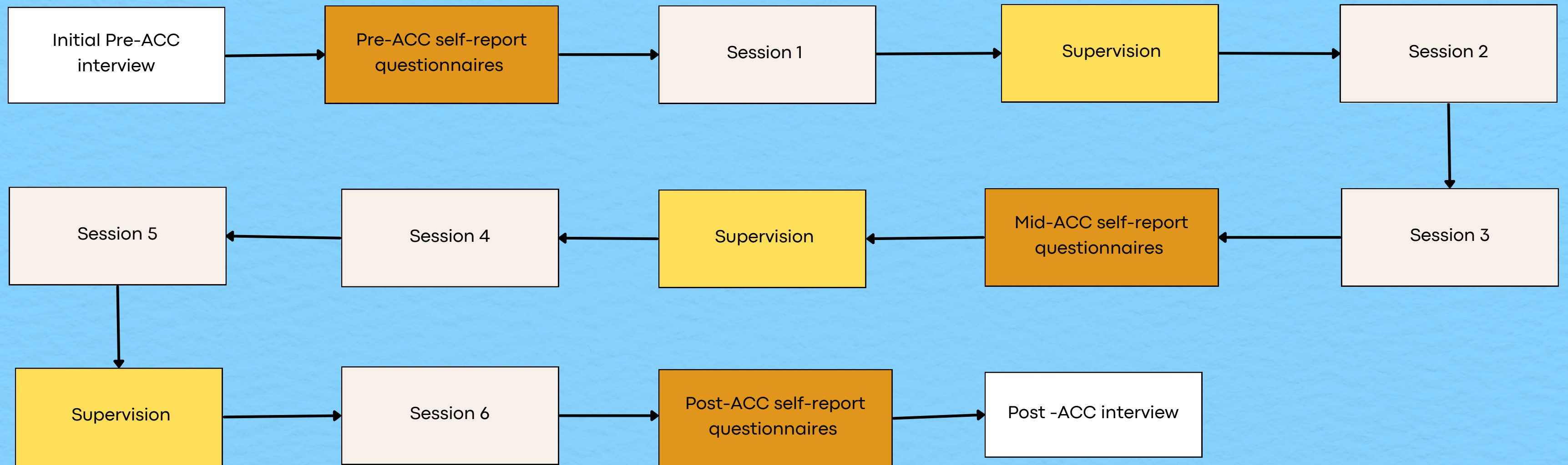
Quantitative
Self-Report
Questionnaires

05

Coaching

Ethics & Bias

INSIDER RESEARCH, ETHICS & POTENTIAL BIAS	
Triangulation to increase validity and improve reliability	✓
Existing teacher-student relationship	✓
External supervision of coaching sessions and data	✓
Repetition of methods	✓
Self-report bias	✓
Respecting boundaries of coaching	✓



"I sing and can't wait to get off"

MPA & Singing



01

Ego-investment

02

Responsibility

03

Vocal Perfectionist

04

Singing is riskier

05

Lack of identity

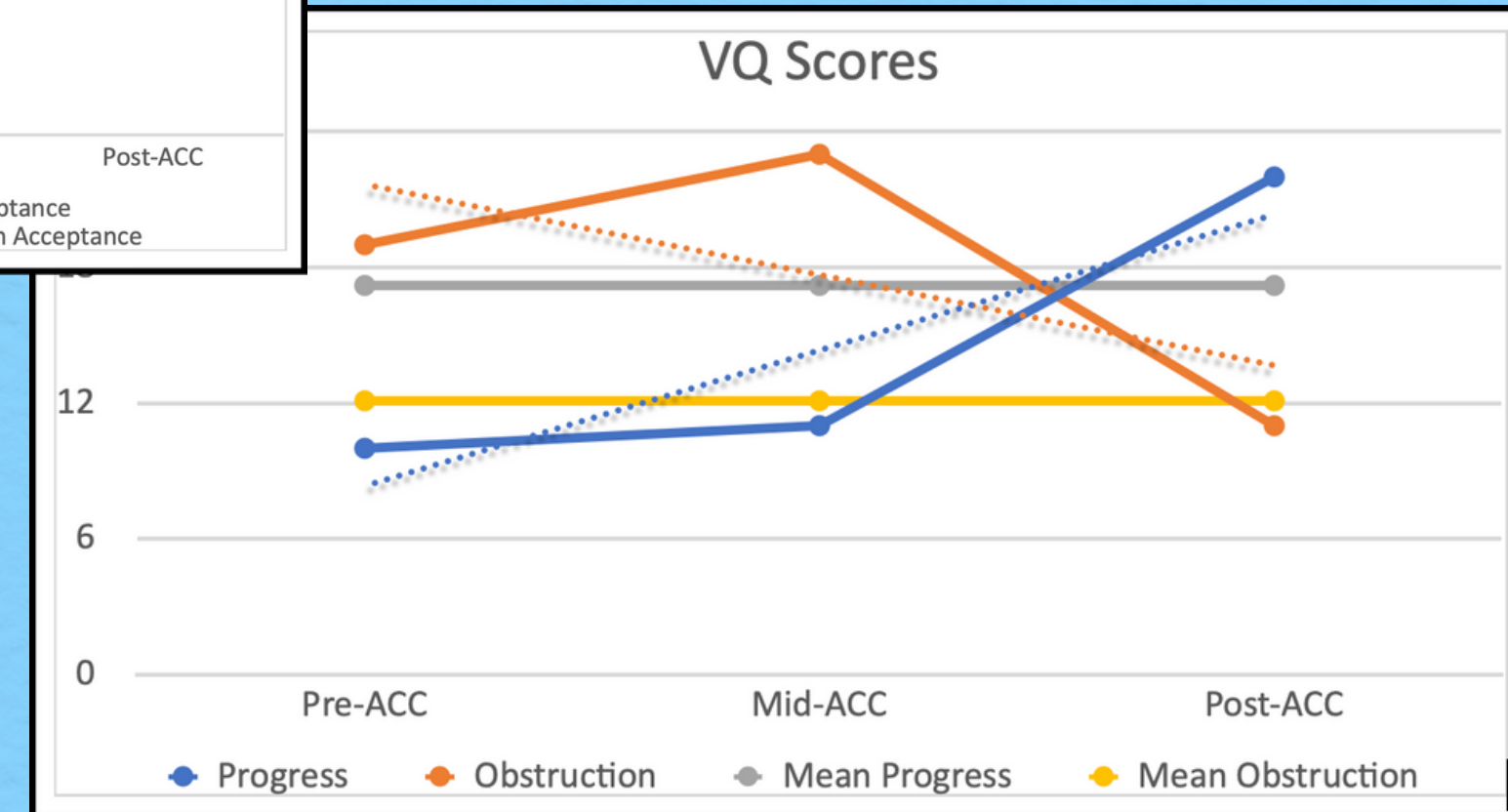
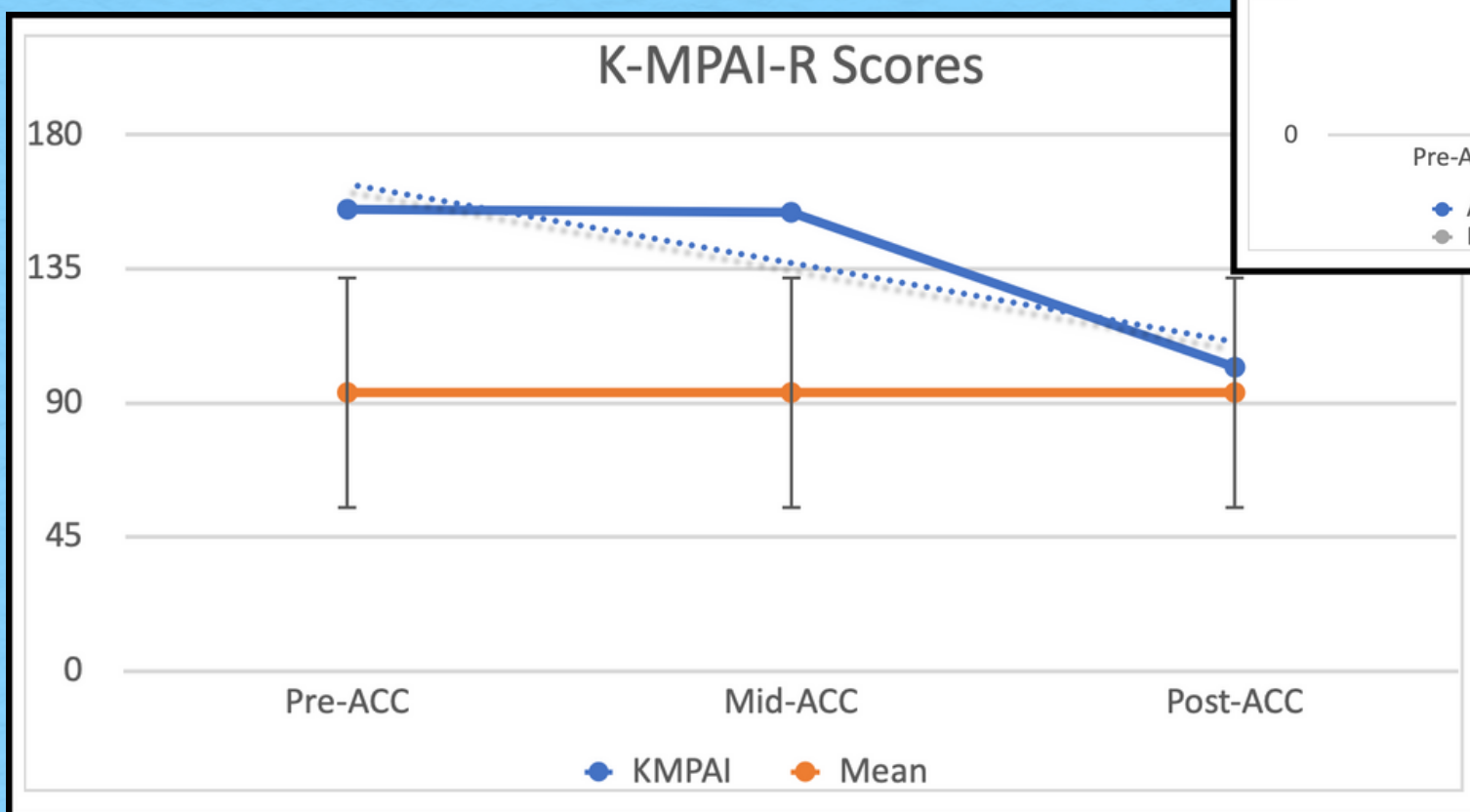
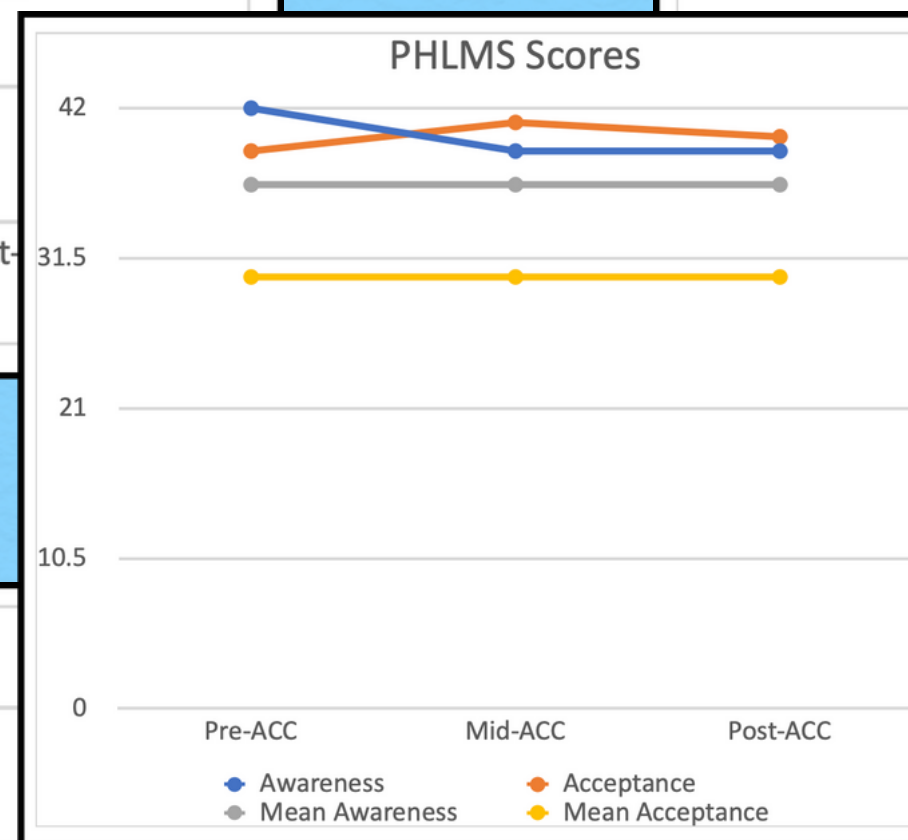
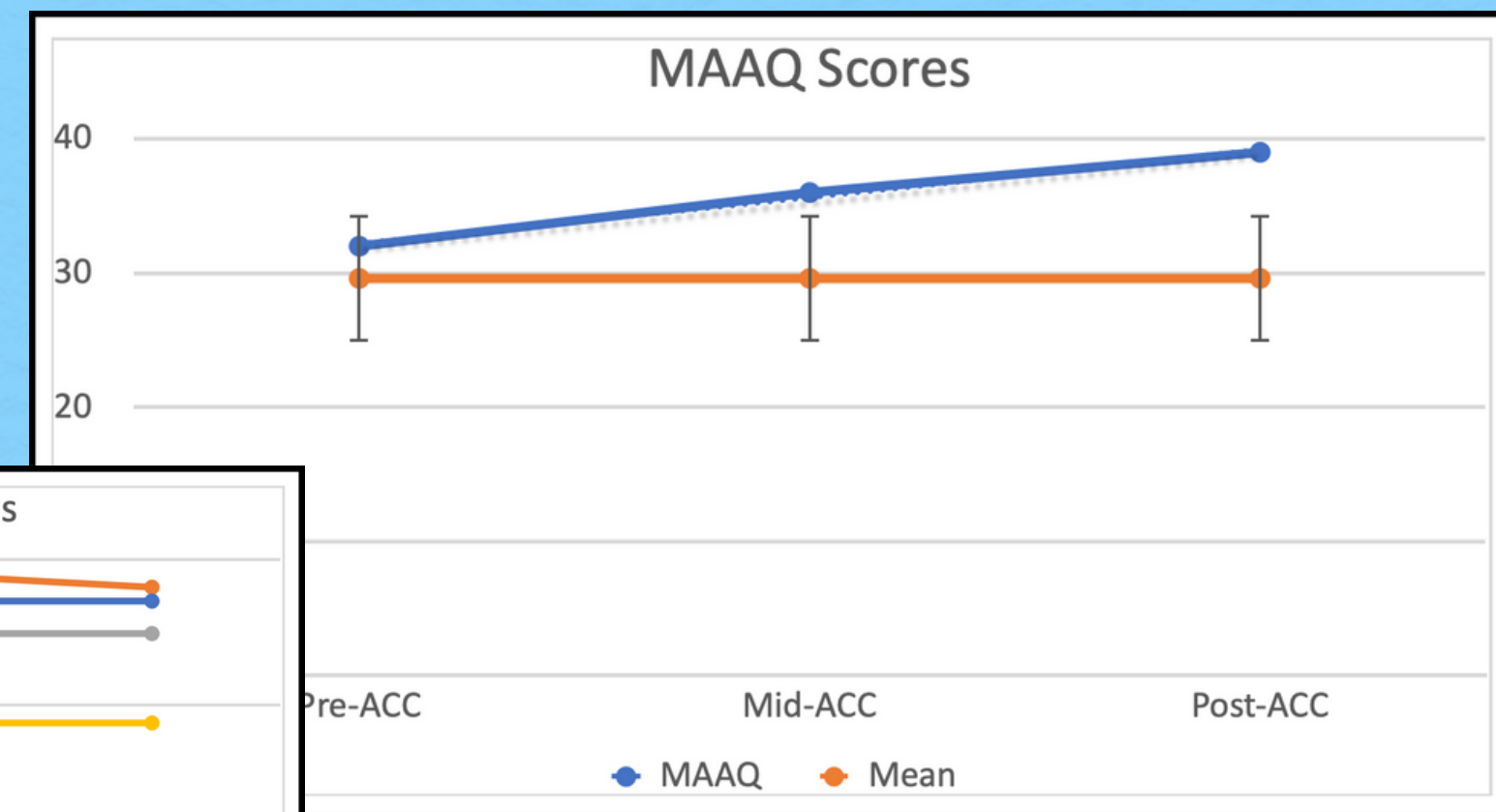
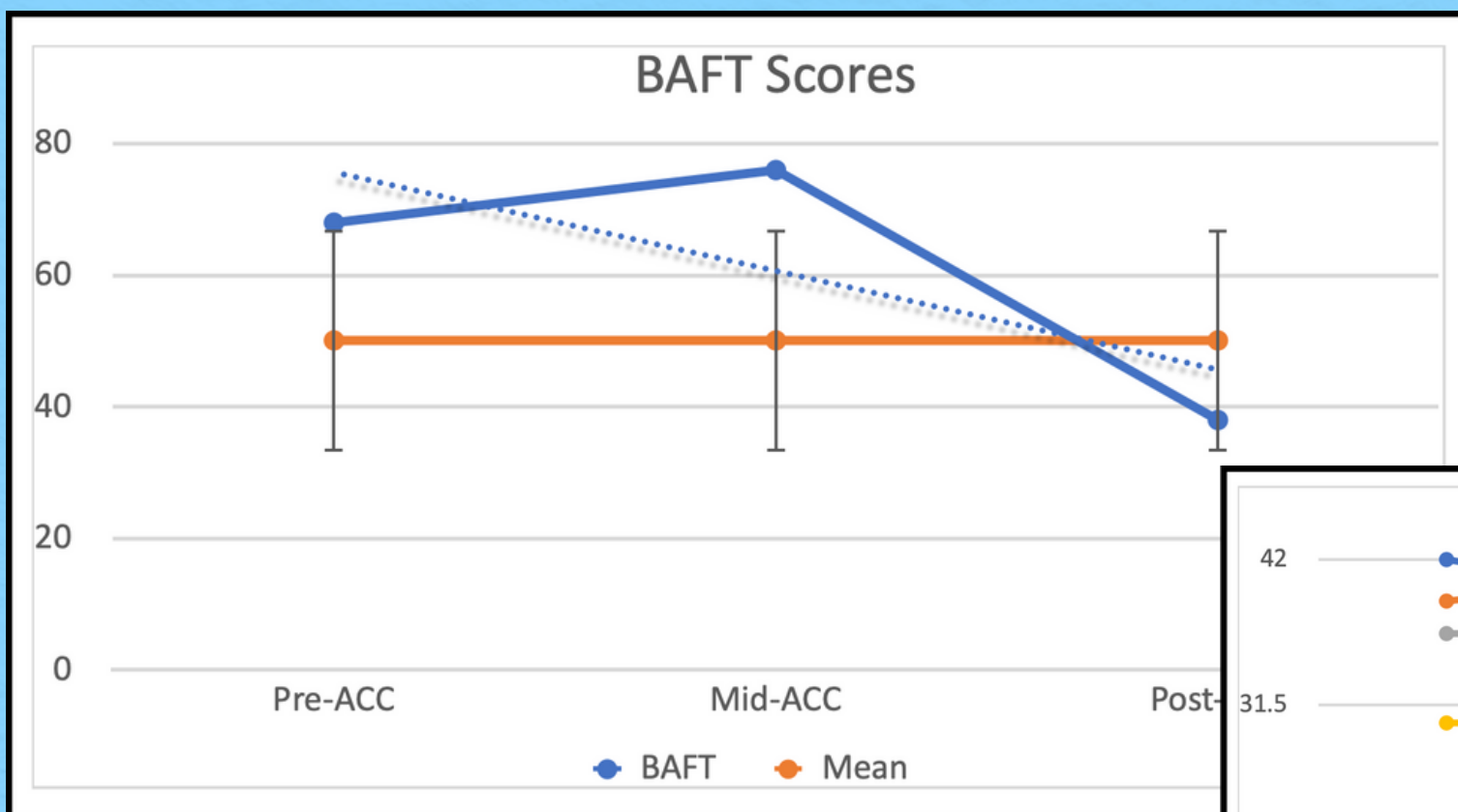
"I want to do it, but..."



Impact of ACC on MPA

Measure	RCI pre-ACC	RCI mid-ACC	RCI post-ACC
BAFT	0.47	-2.25*	-1.78
MAAQ	0.52	0.39	0.92
PHLMS	-	-	-
Awareness	-0.61	0	-0.61
Acceptance	-1.37	-1.54	0.17
VQ	-	-	-
Progress	0.16	1.71	1.86
Obstruction	0.58	-1.74	-1.16
K-MPAI-R	-0.03	-1.33	-1.36

Measure	Data pre-ACC	Data mid-ACC	Data post-ACC	Normative Mean (SD)
BAFT	68	76	38*	50.1 (16.88)
MAAQ	32	36	39	29.6 (4.74)
PHLMS	-	-	-	-
Awareness	42	39	39	36.65 (4.93)
Acceptance	39	31	40	30.19 (5.84)
VQ	-	-	-	-
Progress	10	11	22	17.2 (6.44)
Obstruction	19	23	11	12.1 (6.88)
K-MPAI-R	155	154	102	93.5 (39.1)



"Someone that can grab you
and take you along"

A Singer's Identity



01

Presence & Flow

02

Movement

03

Extroversion

04

Creativity

05

Skill

"It all comes down to movement
and getting people"



"Before I was a guitarist that had to do the singing because nobody else wanted to take it on"

Forming A Singer's Identity



01

Forced - unwilling

02

Defusion

03

Shift in identity

04

Stronger identity =
more creativity

05

More skilled

"getting rid of that old me"



The role of Self-Belief

Negative Self Evaluation

"I used to beat myself up about it",
"I would have dwelled on that".

"I think it heightened my degree of
what I think of myself and what I can
do, rather than shy away from
different things. Not because I
couldn't do them, [but] because I
didn't want to attempt them. It's kind
of a subtle difference."

"I CAN be a vocalist!"

Shift in Time Perspective

"I'm more excited about it than
apprehensive about it"

"You don't need to have a prop"

"Breakdown of Barriers"

01

Instruments as
'barriers'

02

Instruments as
detrimental to
vocal performance

03

Successful change
in habits

04

Other potential
barriers to vocal
performance

"I'm tired of this lump"



A Sense of Agency



Control over values & goals

"rather than just getting into
a band for the sake of it".



Control over anxiety

"Some anxiety I know will not
go, but I think some of it is
good."



Control over emotions

"Now I know what to do should
things start faltering halfway
through."





"It's made me a more confident
person, music aside."

Conclusions

"I think it heightened my degree of what I think of myself and what I can do, rather than shy away from different things. Not because I couldn't do them, [but] because I didn't want to attempt them. It's kind of a subtle difference."

MPA levels & singing: **heightened sense of responsibility** and **perfectionism**.

A 'singer' identity: **presence, movement, creativity, extroversion**, and **proficiency**; if the musician feels lacking in these areas they may not identify themselves as singers and therefore experience MPA around vocal performance.

The use of **instruments as a barrier** to relieve anxiety also hinders vocal performance.

Recommendations

Eight sessions of ACC

Prior interview &
in-lesson follow-ups

Addressing age-related
self-report bias

Comparative studies with
different age groups

Assessment of musical
self-concept alongside



Thank you for
listening

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