



QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: REPORTING IPA

Table of Themes for Group-Study 2

	Tom	Mike	Dan	Arjun
1. <i>Motives for drinking and using drugs</i>				
Enhancing sociability	3.28	4.09		2.05
Coping with feelings	4.14	2.22		2.10
Awareness of the consequences			4.12	2.26
2. <i>Challenges of beginning the recovery process</i>				
‘But the other part of me’: Ambivalence	5.01	5.10	3.07	
Conflictive identification with NA people	5.22	11.28	2.29	
Being busy	11.19	14.05	10.17	12.09
Setting a new temporality	7.8	9.18	10.12	14.11
3. <i>Maintaining recovery</i>				
Experiencing cravings	07.43	11.25	12.05	10.09
Missing out on the drugs/alcohol scene	12.20	07.03		
Becoming honest			04.31	09.21
‘It give that feeling of belonging’: NA’s support	9.10	13.01		14.16/18.15
Developing a new social network	7.31	10.04	11.17	18.28
Writing	13.16		7.09	
Praying		8.11	11.31	
4. <i>Changing sense of self</i>				
‘Being me and doing what I’m doing’: Authenticity	7.14	06.13	04.22	08.23
Identity as an addict	03.31	06.13	13.01	

	Participants					
Emergent themes	Fred	Bill	Sam	Iain	Dave	Recurrent? (Present in over half sample)
Impact of diagnosis	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Re-assertion of self	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Social withdrawal	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
HIV as catalytic in life change	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES

You want to have:

- Developed a *structure* (often, but not necessarily, hierarchical) which illustrates the relationships between themes.
- *Organised* all of the material in a format which allows for coded data to be traced *right through* the analysis - from initial codes on the transcript, through initial clustering and thematic development, into the final structure of themes.
- Made use of supervision, collaboration, audit, or other ***processes of triangulation*** and credibility checking, to test and develop the coherence and plausibility of the interpretation.
- SO THAT you can write a *narrative*, evidenced by detailed commentary on data extracts, which takes the reader through this interpretation, usually in a theme-by-theme structure, and often supported by some form of *visual guide* (a simple structure, diagram or table).

Preparing to write-up

- Identifying a suitable narrative structure
- Committing butchery
- Maintaining transparency
- Balancing voices, and levels of analysis (shared-distinct & phenomenological-interpretative)
- Incorporating reflexivity

Top tip: find examples of studies you like, and look at how they are written!

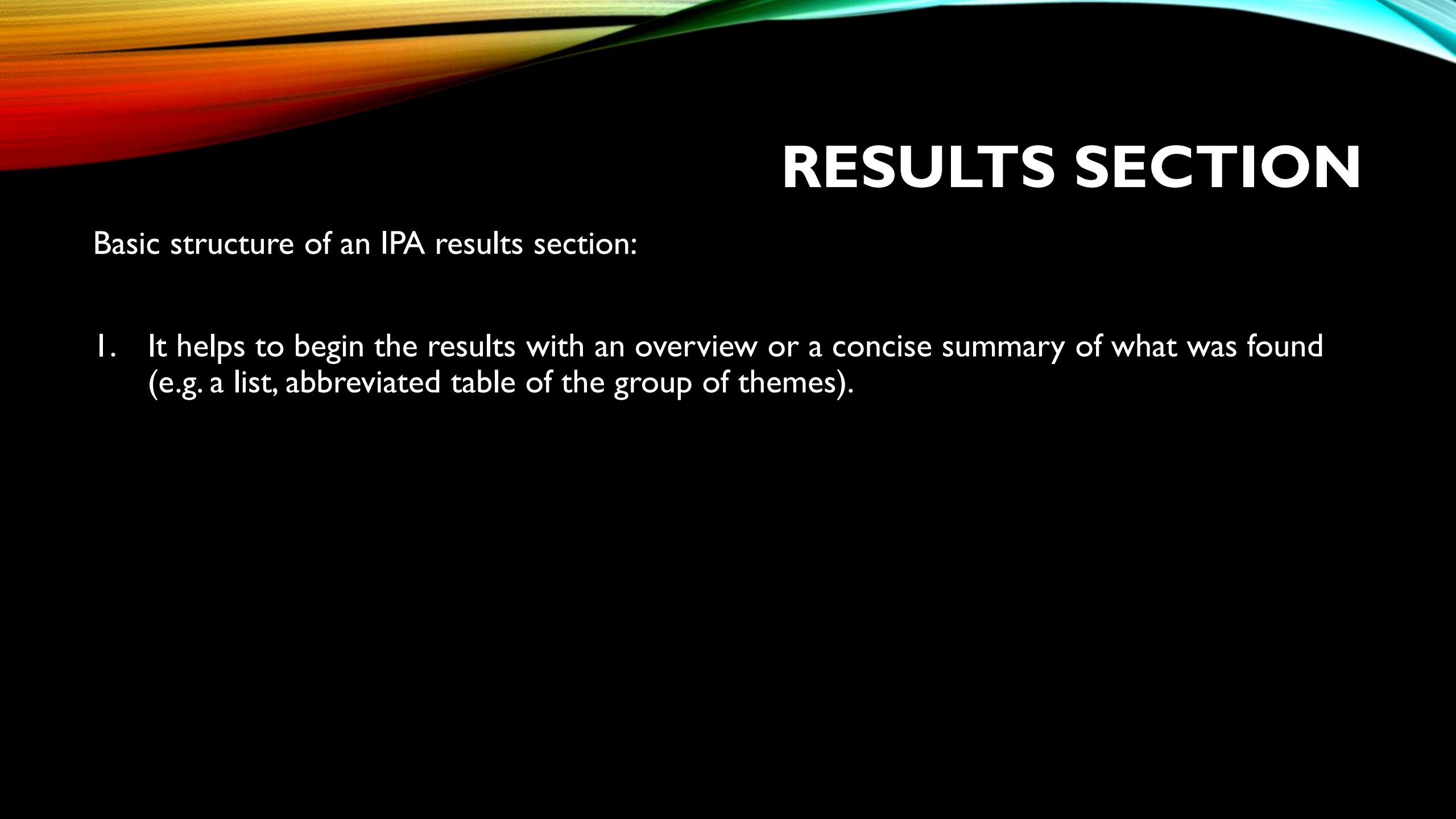


RESULTS SECTION

- This is by far the most important section in an IPA write-up.
- You must present your results in a full narrative account which is comprehensible, systematic and persuasive to the reader.
- Results section on an IPA write-up is much more substantial, and much more discursive, than the results section of a typical quantitative report.

RESULTS SECTION

- Your aim is twofold:
 - 1) you need to give an account of your data, to communicate a sense of what the data are like,
 - 2) and you need to offer an interpretation of your data, to make a case for what they all mean.



RESULTS SECTION

Basic structure of an IPA results section:

- I. It helps to begin the results with an overview or a concise summary of what was found (e.g. a list, abbreviated table of the group of themes).

RESULTS SECTION

Table of the group themes (example)

Challenges of Beginning the Recovering Journey

‘But the other part of me’: Ambivalence

‘I’m really nothing like these people’: Conflictive identification with NA group

Time in early recovery

‘It’s just for today’: Setting a new temporality

Managing time

Maintaining Recovery

‘It gives that feeling of belonging’: NA’s support

Developing a new social network

Practices of self-care:

Writing

Praying

Changing Sense of Self

‘Being me and doing what I’m doing’: Authenticity

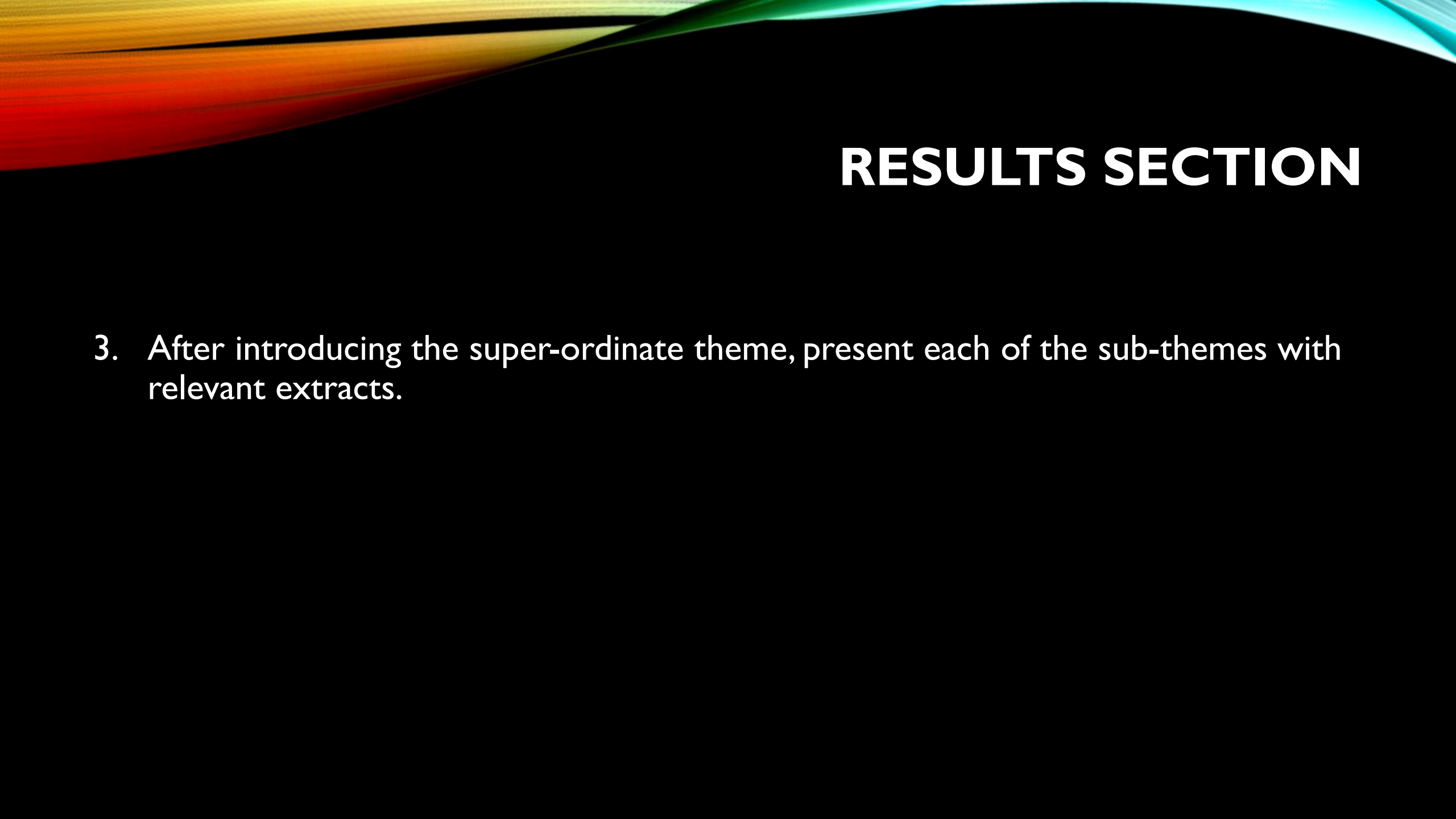
Addict identity

RESULTS SECTION

2. Taking the first super-ordinate theme, give a short statement outlining what it is. The aim is then to illustrate in detail how it applies to each of the participants in the study.
Example taken from Rodriguez and Smith (2014):

Managing recovery

“This theme conveys the strategies that the participants employ to sustain their recovery. Their coping strategies involve changes in their social and recreational contexts, and also engagement with self-care activities suggested by NA, such as writing and praying.”



RESULTS SECTION

3. After introducing the super-ordinate theme, present each of the sub-themes with relevant extracts.

'It gives that feeling of belonging': NA's support

Participants assert that feeling supported is a key feature of their recovery. They go on to establish an insightful distinction between the support they receive from family and friends, and the support they receive from NA members:

Mike: The main source of support is the fellowship because as much as family and friends will support me they don't know what I'm up against, they don't know about this disease of addiction.

Tom: You get support in the rooms whatever. Like that's what's really nice, that it's unconditional...you'll not get on with everyone, that's a natural thing but a lot of the things that you share someone else will have something that they can relate it to, so it feels good, it feels really good when you hear someone saying something and you get him saying thank you for sharing, it feels good when you say it and when someone comes to you and says thank you. It gives that feeling of belonging.

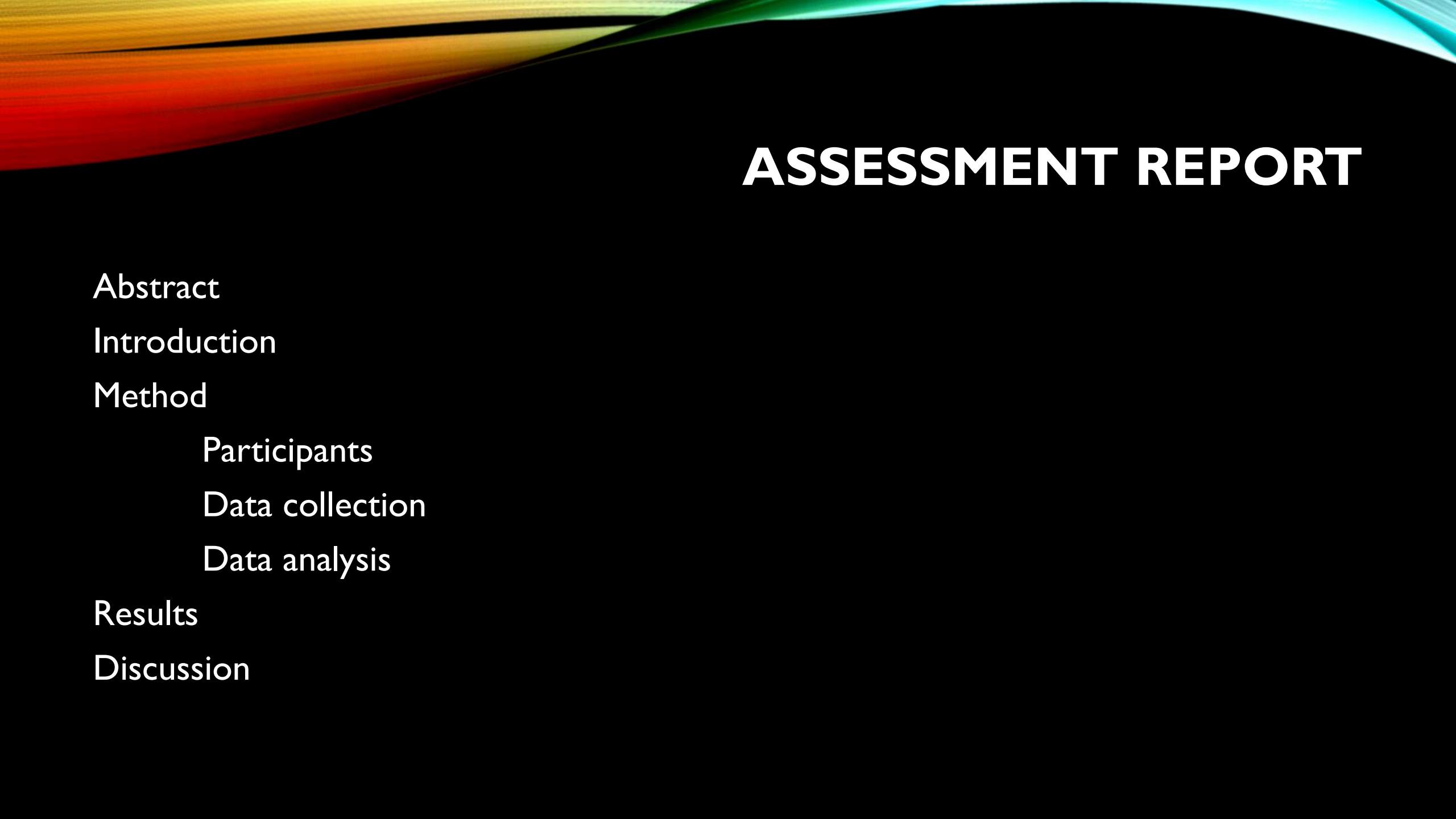
NA's 'rooms', or group meetings, are experienced as a safe environment. The significance of NA's support is founded on a sense of belonging due to a shared group experience of addiction. Participants portray a relational context where recovering members respond to one another with care, facilitating feelings of unconditional acceptance and trust. This trust within the group dynamics enables the re-appraisal of difficult experiences that are received as a positive contribution to the process of the whole group.

RESULTS SECTION

Key points:

- There is considerable variation in how the results are presented and this again depends on both the writer and the material collected. (e.g. case within theme or theme within case).
- The structure of the theme table will itself vary from project to project.
- Each time you introduce a new theme or aspect of the data, you need to give evidence for it, from the participant's transcript.
- Another reason for presenting extracts from participants is to make your evidentiary base transparent.

Top tip: Your task is to present a clear and full narrative account of what you have learnt about the participant(s).



ASSESSMENT REPORT

Abstract

Introduction

Method

Participants

Data collection

Data analysis

Results

Discussion

Evaluating your writing up

- Does it make sense?
- Does it answer the research question?
- Is the analysis sufficiently interpretative?
- Can the interpretative account be seen to develop from a phenomenological core?
- Is the structure clear and meaningful?

AUDIT AND CREDIBILITY CHECKING

Test the claims and limits of the analytic structure:

- Is the account coherent and plausible?
- Are the analytic claims persuasively-evidenced?
- What could be clearer?
- Is the analyst able to see and reflect upon alternative versions?
- Are any theoretically-informed inferences handled appropriately cautiously?

Transferability

Reader needs to know about the participants, and the process:

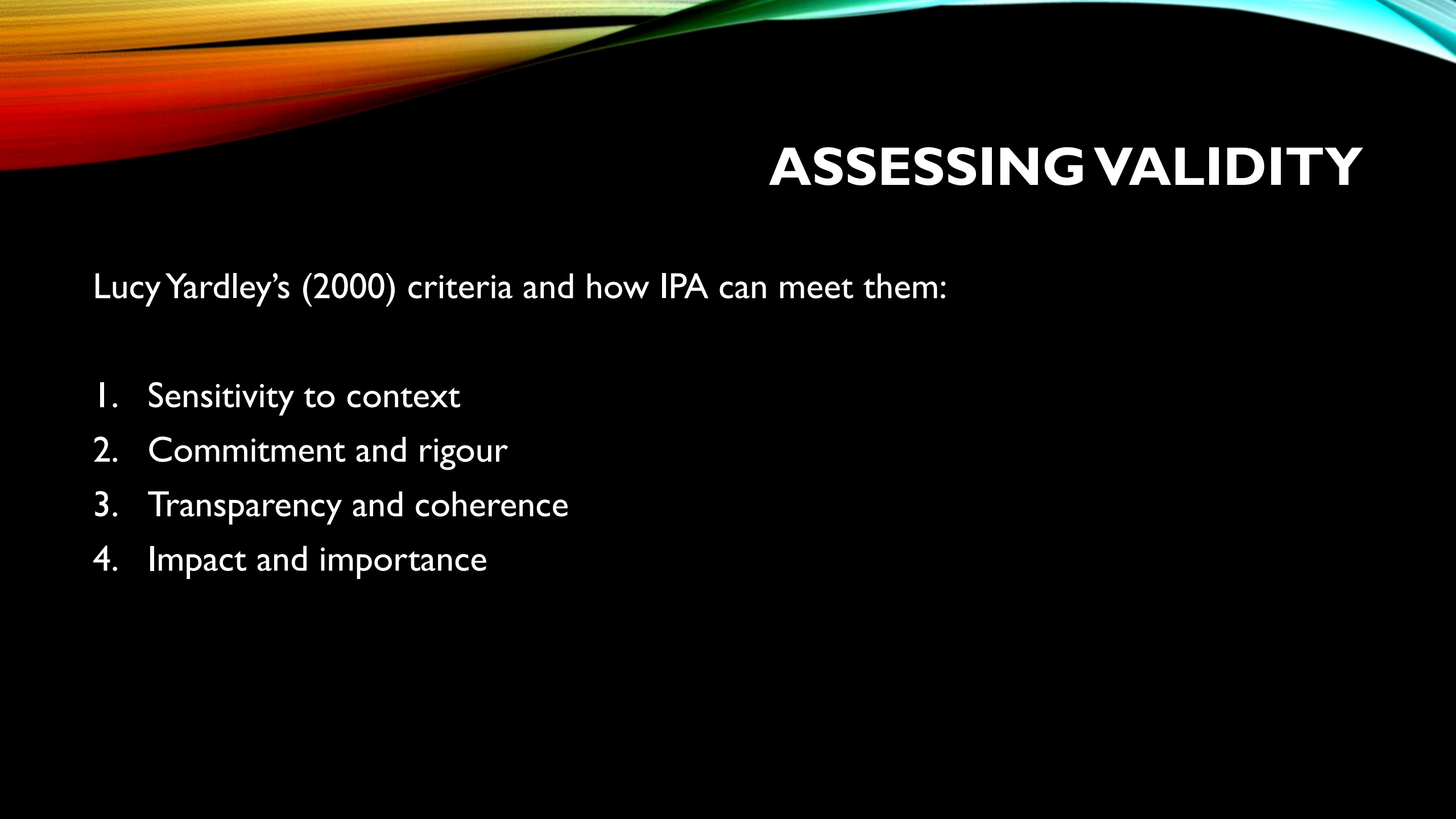
- Transparent account of process
- Rich description
- Contextualized description of participants
- Interpretations clearly sourced
- Reflexive level of analysis

Triangulation

- Methods (e.g. more than one type of data analysis)
- Perspectives (e.g. sample participants with different perspectives on same process or event – e.g. psychiatrists and patients)
- Data (elicit more than one type of data from participants – e.g. interviews and diaries)
- Data collection (more than one person involved in data collection at different levels - e.g. one field-worker, one interviewer, one supervisor)
- Analysts (more than one person analyzing the data – lots of ways of managing and integrating outcomes of this)

WHAT MAKES A GOOD IPA PAPER?

- Smith, J.A. (2011). Evaluating the contribution of interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Health Psychology Review*, 5, 9-27.
- Well focused; offering an in depth analysis of a specific topic
- Data and interpretation are strong
- Reader is engaged and finds it particularly enlightening
- Overall the paper could be recommended to a novice as a good exemplar of IPA.



ASSESSING VALIDITY

Lucy Yardley's (2000) criteria and how IPA can meet them:

1. Sensitivity to context
2. Commitment and rigour
3. Transparency and coherence
4. Impact and importance



I. SENSITIVITY TO CONTEXT

- theoretical
- relevant literature
- empirical data
- socio-cultural setting
- participants' perspectives
- ethical issues

2. COMMITMENT AND RIGOUR

- in-depth engagement with topic
- methodological competence/skill
- thorough data collection
- depth/breadth of analysis

3. TRANSPARENCY AND COHERENCE

- clarity and power of description/argument
- transparent methods and data presentation
- fit between theory and method
- reflexivity

4. IMPACT AND IMPORTANCE

SO WHAT?

- Theoretical importance (enriching understanding)
- socio-cultural importance (changing society)
- practical (for community, policy makers, health workers)