

Women's Help Seeking for Suicidality after Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

A feminist grounded theory and photovoice study

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The Problem

IPV ~ suicide correlation

- Stigma
- Custodial, punitive
- Gender neutral
- Support, therapeutic relationship

? Help-seeking- IPV- suicide ?

Purpose

How do women seek help for suicidality
after IPV?

Feminist ethics lens

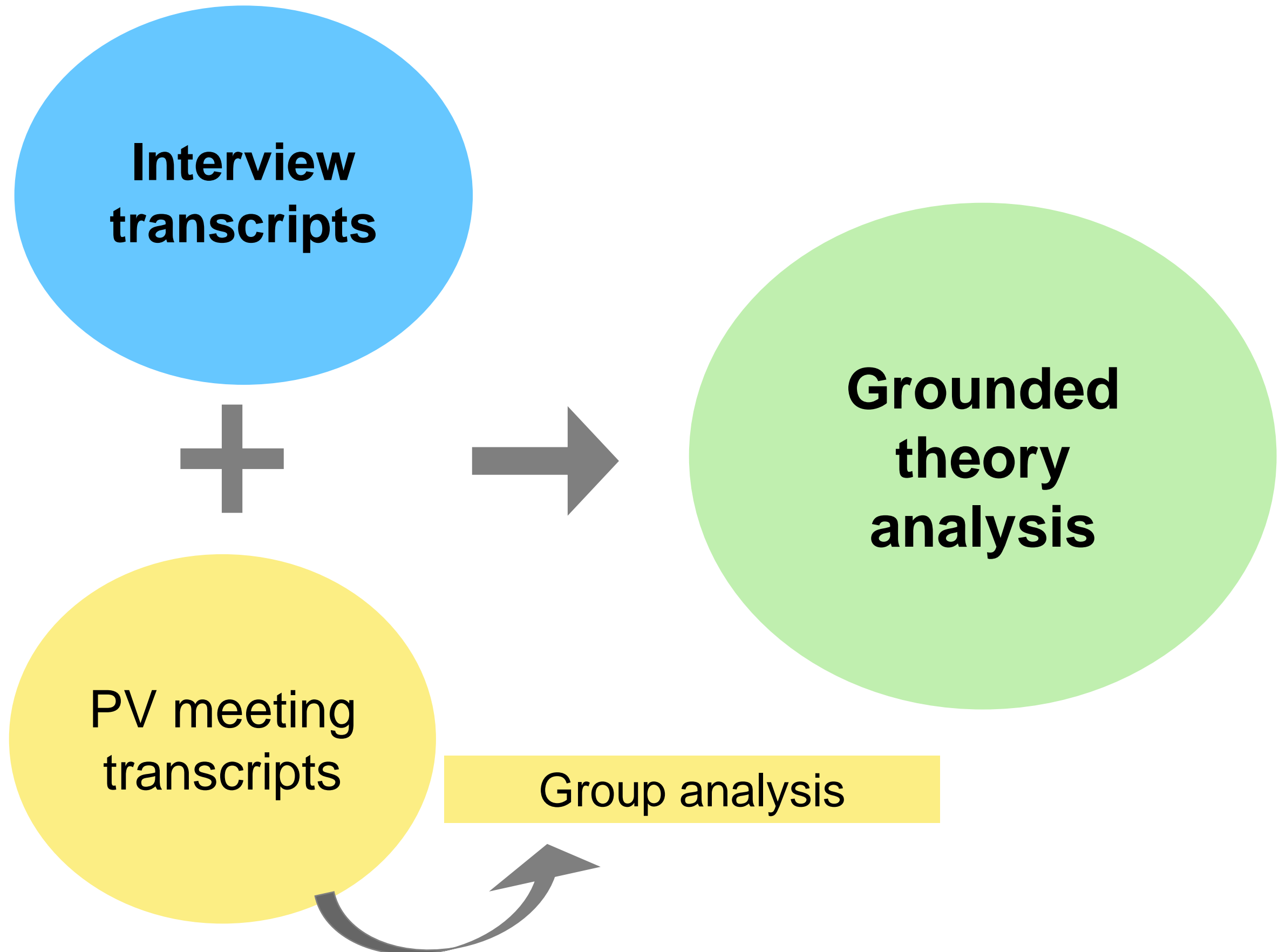
Sample

- 32 women
- Ages: 19-60
- Left partner > 6 months
- English Canadian > French Canadian
- Urban > rural
- Most are mothers
- Feel safe from suicide

Design

Multiple qualitative research approach

- Grounded theory
- Photovoice:



Results

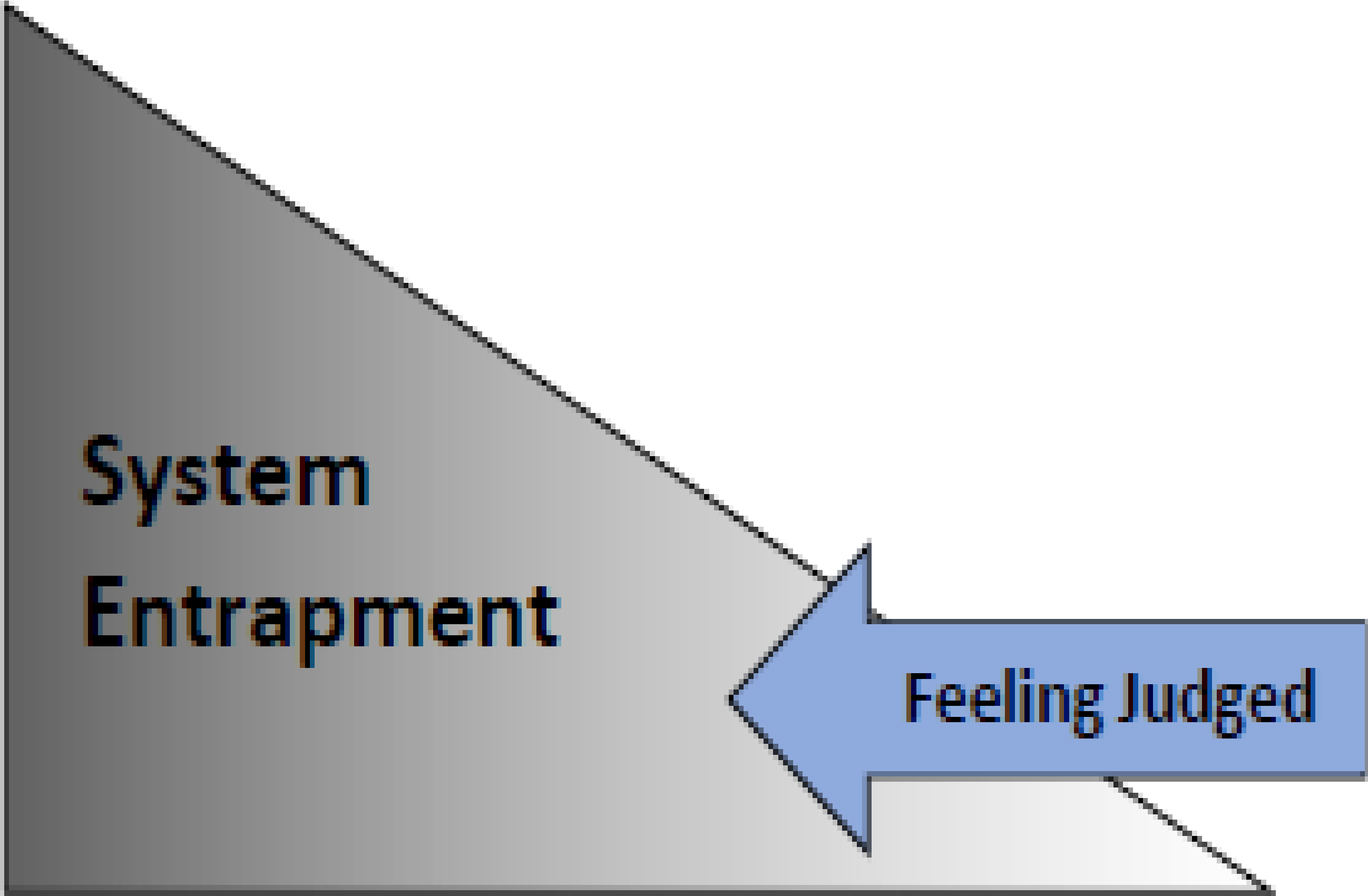


System Entrapment

Dehumanization:

devaluation of personal worth and low
sense of belonging

...due to being **invalidated**



The diagram consists of a large gray arrow pointing from left to right. Inside the arrow, the words "System Entrapment" are written in a blue, pixelated font. At the tip of the gray arrow, there is a blue arrow pointing from right to left, which contains the words "Feeling Judged" in the same blue, pixelated font. The blue arrow is positioned such that it appears to be emerging from or interacting with the tip of the gray arrow.

**System
Entrapment**

Feeling Judged





TAKE A NUMBER,
HAVE A SEAT
AND
WATCH FOR YOUR NUMBER

PRENEZ UN NUMÉRO,
ASSOYEZ-VOUS ET ATTENDEZ
QUE VOTRE NUMÉRO SOIT AFFICHÉ





Feeling Human

- Goal of help seeking
- Worthy of living, belongingness
- **...via validation (empathy, taking women seriously, acceptance)**

The diagram consists of two large triangles pointing towards each other. The left triangle is grey and contains the text 'System Entrapment'. The right triangle is pink and contains the text 'Feeling Human'. Between the triangles are two horizontal arrows. The top arrow is yellow and points from left to right, labeled 'HCPs' Validation'. The bottom arrow is blue and points from right to left, labeled 'Feeling Judged'.

**System
Entrapment**

HCPs' Validation

**Feeling
Human**

Feeling Judged

Validation

“

My doctor understands how it works ...He understands me. He understands my needs and if I am having a hard time ... he lets me vent without being judgemental or anything.

”

“

Feeling Human

[Its] about the heart of the person... that is the real deal... that is where all your emotions and feelings and everything... the real part of the human spirit.

”

Hunting

Vigorous battle (not an attack)

... to get security needed to remain alive

... but preventing suicide is NOT the goal

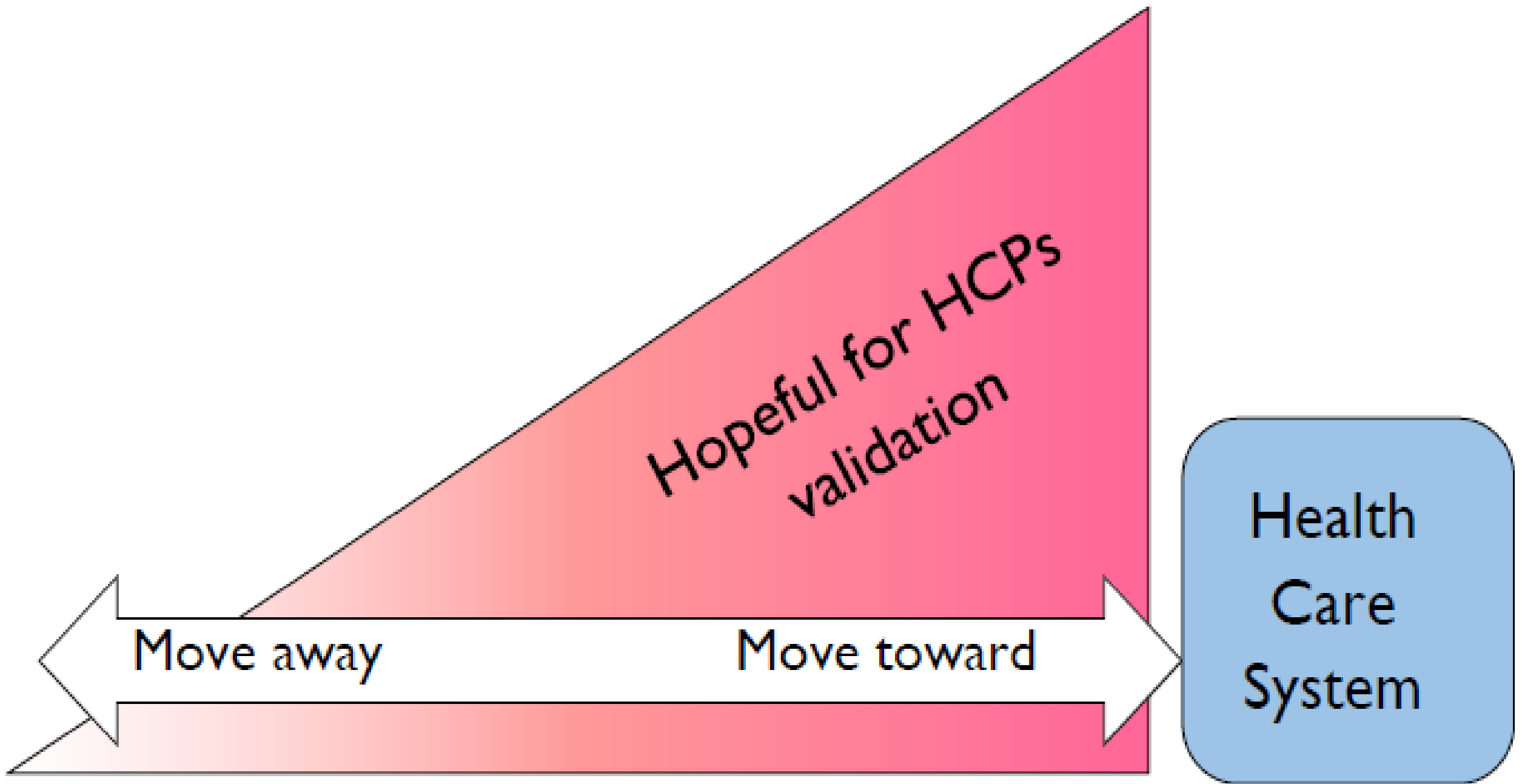
Hunting

“

*...just like a wolf starving in the woods.
Just like... I'm so desperate for somebody
to see [my need for help].*

”

Hunting



Path of Least Entrapment

“

“So if you are not going to listen to me anyway and I'm going to sit here and wait for the goddamn doctor to see me, I don't give a rat's ass if you don't believe me or if you were judging me as long as I end up getting [the Dr.] to help me.” So I think my will to live and my will to survive is craziness and that's what it was; craziness. ... The will to get better was stronger than... having to put up with people judge me in the hospital.”

”

Implications



The diagram consists of two large, blue, stylized arrows pointing in opposite directions. The left arrow points left and contains the text 'Medical Model'. The right arrow points right and contains the text 'Trauma/ Violence Informed'. The two arrows are positioned side-by-side, with their inner edges facing each other, creating a central space. The arrows have a slightly irregular, hand-drawn appearance with some internal shading.

Medical Model

**Trauma/ Violence
Informed**





DETOUR









Thank you

Hunting to Feel Human: Women's help seeking for suicidality after IPV

System Entrapment

Feeling non-human by the way I'm treated in the health care system: judged, not taken seriously, minimized, isolated, labeled as personality disorder, not accepted. I feel like I don't belong and feel worthless.

Trauma Entrapment

Stuck in suicidal thoughts, depression, etc. Past trauma affects the way I function. I don't think I deserve help, but if these feelings get really bad, I fight more for help. I feel like I don't belong.

Enduring System Entrapment

When I am a 'good patient' and put up with being judged and minimized, I get more help (empathy, validation, less judgments, and health care providers are not as angry with me).

Hope

There are other options
to deal with my pain
other than killing
myself. Others might
help me. I can see the
future beyond this
moment.

Feeling Human

I belong in the world.
I am accepted. My
past trauma is not my
fault. I am deserving
of help. I feel like a
valuable person.

Gauging

Weighing: How much I need help in comparison to how bad I will feel if I try to get help. If I feel REALLY bad, I will put up with being judged so that I can get some help. OR... If I don't feel THAT bad, maybe I will stay away from the health care system and just cope on my own.

Grasping for Help

I reach out when I think about killing myself only when I REALLY need it. I have hope that someone might care. But I usually end up feeling rejected, judged, frustrated, worse about myself.

...influenced by **Taking the Path of Least Entrapment**

I will do whatever I can to avoid feeling trapped and dehumanized even if that means not getting help and I end up hurting myself. I will open up to health care providers who don't tell me what to do, think, or feel. I want to continue living when I am not expected to change and I am accepted just the way I am.