The Experience of Doing
in Recovery from Mental Illness

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Study Background

- Phenomenological Study

- 13 Participants shared stories of their recovery from SMI

- Analysis focused on revealing the covered over aspects of the recovery experience

- Analysis informed by Philosophy of Martin Heidegger
  - Our primary way of Being-in-the-world is through practical involvement
  - Doing creates the interface between one’s self and the world
  - Doing provides a form of ‘sight’ or understanding, shapes our world by structuring our experience of time and space, allows us to create meaning in our lives
5 Modes of Doing and Being

**Undoing**
- time & space rupture
- body is unavailable
- others recede

**Non-doing**
- time & space is insular & infinite
- body is separate & senseless
- others threatening or a distant support
Half-doing
- creating movement in time/space
- body reconnects through doing
- others can provide structure & hope

Engaged-doing
- direction & synchronicity with others
- understanding through responsive doing
- reconnecting with the public world

Absorbed-doing
- time & space flows and unfolds
- body is fully available & disappears
- doing for and with others
Key Points

- One’s being-in-the-world can be uncovered, recovered and discovered through different modes of doing.
- As one’s patterns of doing are re-fabricated new meaning and possibilities of being are opened up.
- Interventions are only effective to the extent that they open up possibilities of doing.
- Being-with is central to the opening up of doing and being-in-the-world.
- Time and space can be structured to enhance doing.