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Constructing Community to achieve Citizenship using recognition theory, recovery and  
citizenship as a reflective lens: experiences from the US and Scotland

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**Abstract:**

This paper explores the usefulness of recognition theory, recovery and citizenship in explaining constructions of community by adults who have experienced life disruptions participating in similar Citizenship programs in the US and Scotland. A content analysis of secondary data was undertaken and focus groups held with recent graduates of both programs. The findings indicate that constructions of community aligned significantly with aspects of identity and common experience rather than location. Moving towards an identity framed by assets rather than deficits, was further identified, which reflects the need for recognition to be extended by communities that are well informed and non-discriminatory in their attitudes towards those with life disruptions to promote inclusion and connectedness. Interventions at the level of community development and engagement are therefore crucial in promoting inclusion and increasing citizenship for marginalized groups; alongside the role of social movements and public policy in tackling stigma and discriminatory attitudes. Uniquely, within this project, a theoretical framework that combined elements of recognition theory, recovery and citizenship emerged that best explained the experience of those with life disruptions and provided direction for a future focus on community development as well as recovery and citizenship oriented practice.

Key words: recognition, recovery, citizenship, life disruption

## Constructing Community to achieve Citizenship using recognition theory, recovery and citizenship as a reflective lens: experiences from the US and Scotland

The importance of ensuring the maintenance of human rights and increasing citizenship in supporting people experiencing life disruptions such as mental disorder, substance misuse, homelessness and/or offending is an increasing feature of both public policy and service design in both Scotland and the U.S. (Rowe & Davidson, 2016; Scottish Recovery Network, 2016). This policy discourse reflects an underlying drive to ensure that all citizens are able to meet their responsibilities, claim their rights and be protected from discriminatory actions that may reduce their legal, civil, political and human rights (Stewart, 2016; Knifton & Quinn, 2013; Human Rights Act, 1998). Despite this policy context, individuals accessing services often report a diminished sense of citizenship (MacKay, 2011). At best, marginalised individuals may achieve a second-class or “program citizenship” characterised by a sense of community disconnection and a dependence on services for their social context (Rowe et al., 2009). Therefore, community and an individual’s inclusion in their community play a central role in achieving citizenship. Burns-Lynch, Brusiloskiy and Salzer (2016) further suggest that community participation can enhance both quality of life and recovery, although this work was carried out solely with those experiencing serious mental illness.

Recognition theory suggests that the integrity of autonomous human beings is based on receiving the approval and respect of others and that where absent, the individual is more vulnerable to reduced expressions of citizenship including stigma, discrimination and social exclusion (Honneth, 2001; Anderson & Honneth, 2004). The theory is underpinned by concepts of power and the ability through that power to confer or withhold recognition and respect, oftentimes through the use of language (Habermas, 1988). This exclusion occurs at a

number of levels including structural, cultural, social and individual levels and the impact of this can be viewed as discriminatory or stigmatising (Secker, 2011).

This article will explore the importance of recognition, recovery and citizenship in constructions of and participation in community by students participating in a Citizenship Program developed by the Program for Recovery and Community Health at Yale University in the US (PRCH, 2014) and replicated by Turning Point Scotland (TPS) (TPS, 2015) adapted for a Scottish context. These programs aim to equip students who have experienced a significant life disruption such as a mental health diagnosis, homelessness, involvement in the criminal justice system, substance misuse or a combination of these disruptions to acknowledge their existing skills, develop new skills and to develop valued social roles within their communities as part of their recovery and a bridge towards re-building their citizenship. A brief outline of the program and their historical development is provided below.

Life disruption as defined by PRCH (2012) and acknowledged by the TPS program can be considered to be when people experience mental health issues, homelessness, incarceration or misuse substances. This disruption can delay or divert the individual from achieving important marker points such as gaining qualifications, establishing romantic relationships, raising children, or beginning a career. Derived from life course theory, the concept of life disruptions and off-timedness (Pickett, Greenley and Greenberg 1995) were adopted by PRCH to aid in defining the experiences of marginalised groups. Life disruptions are therefore characterised as significant events that may prevent someone from reaching expected developmental milestones (Rowe, 2015).

The Citizenship programs go beyond considering citizenship as a purely legal concept to exploring the multi-faceted aspects of being a citizen in 21<sup>st</sup> century western societies (Rowe et al., 2009). The theoretical framework drawn upon to explore the findings from this

study brings together recognition, recovery and citizenship theory (Anderson & Honneth, 2004; Rowe & Davidson, 2016), as a reflective lens to consider the experience of the program participants concentrating on the promotion of inclusion and the individual skills required to become included within the various communities to which the participants belong, enhancing their citizenship and promoting their recovery.

The model of citizenship that frames both programs is that developed by Rowe et al. (2009). This model considers that citizenship is about individual and collective connections to the rights, responsibilities, roles, resources and relationships available to individuals through local and national institutions both social and political, and ecological life in their neighbourhoods and local communities (Rowe & Baranoski, 2011; O'Connell, Clayton & Rowe, 2017). Increasing the connections that bridge the gap between individuals and their community with the support of organisations and services can promote moving from marginalisation to full citizenship. Although connectivity is sometimes linked with social integration, nevertheless, each is a distinct term with the former reflecting ties mentally, socially and emotionally and the latter suggesting physical presence or the building of inter-dependent relationships (Ware et al., 2007). Connectedness can therefore be seen as a fundamental element of citizenship, described by Rowe et al., (2012) as a sense of belonging. More recent interventions undertaken at PRCH in the US to promote citizenship-oriented practice (Rowe & Davidson, 2016), as the next logical stage in progressing this work outlines the requirement to concentrate on community development and capacity building as well as individual change (e.g. Harper & Rowe, 2014). This further reflects an understanding in community development discourse that acknowledges the importance of collective responsibility in promoting inclusion and ensuring rights (Ife, 1995; Ife & Fiske, 2006).

In a study by Rowe, Kloos et al. (2001) on homelessness, mental illness and citizenship, the authors found that it was the social and collaborative elements, which helped

the individual to engage with their community and realise their citizenship potential. This understanding of citizenship as social, collaborative and interconnected rethinks the roles of organisations and service providers as key players in supporting citizenship. This move away from individual responsibility to collective support and advancement enables further development in understanding citizenship in different contexts with varying resources and emphasises the role of recognition by communities in embracing marginalised groups.

The citizenship programs in both countries therefore recognize that their role is a single part of a broader systems change that is required at both community and governmental levels to ensure the inclusion of all citizens regardless of life disruption. The theoretical framework outlined above and discussed below emphasises the need for communities to be receptive to recognising the value of different types of life experience as part of the recovery process and acknowledged the broader challenges within the process of achieving citizenship whilst living as someone who has experienced a life disruption.

### **Theoretical framework**

Recognition theory submits that there are limits to the ways in which individuals can promote their own inclusion whilst communities remain 'hostile' to their overall inclusion (Anderson & Honneth, 2004). This reflects theorists such as Durkheim, Hegel and Marx who all, to some extent, considered the importance of the recognition of others in constructing identity and place in the world (Heidegren, 2004) This construct therefore suggests that working with individuals to empower them to secure their own rights and to raise their self-esteem and self-confidence in isolation from supporting or tackling communities to challenge stigmatising and discriminatory attitudes, e.g. via social movements and public policy, will not support full inclusion and connectedness. This explanation creates tensions in a social care and health environment that promotes the individualisation of care alongside self-care and self-management strategies. The drive towards self-care and self-management has been

critiqued on a number of levels, particularly in increasing individuals' level of responsibility, inappropriate use of market principles in welfare and reducing that of the state to provide care and treatment and support and protection (Ferguson, 2011).

The concept of recovery, although primarily used in the field of mental disorder, also has resonance for those who experience other types of life disruption (Lunt, 2002). The creation of hope and the experience of reclaiming one's own life alongside achieving a meaningful existence and the expectation of 'recovery' regardless of the presence of challenges and/symptoms form the core of recovery, although definitions vary (Pilgrim, 2014; Rowe & Davidson, 2016). This inevitably leads to a consideration of what promotes the achievement of hope and the key aspects of a meaningful life, for example valued social roles as well as how the conditions for recognition regardless of life experience can be created within communities.

In bringing together recognition theory, citizenship and recovery, a framework is created which not only focuses on the key aspects of an individuals' existence that most effectively endorse the prevalent citizenship model including those roles and responsibilities; but also, acknowledges the responsibility of the broader community to create conditions that facilitate inclusion. This suggests a theoretical framework for exploring and understanding the challenges faced by those with life disruptions, which works on two levels, skilling the individual to contribute and be part of their community and developing the community to understand, accept and support the recovery of those experiencing life disruptions.

### **Methods**

An interpretivist approach which considers multiple perceptions of reality based on differing interpretations (Sarantakos, 2005) is most appropriate for considering individual constructions of community. Social research has often been accused of involving 'soft science' because the common subject matter, humans, is fluid and hard to measure precisely



(Robson, 2010). Despite the concerns expressed about qualitative approaches, this tradition involves the systematic collection of methods to produce knowledge (Barbour, 2008) and is viewed as a scientific process.

Two distinct methods were used to gather the data within this small scale study. A content analysis was undertaken of secondary data (speeches) that was routinely collected by both programs, the details of which are outlined below. Content analysis has been described as an unobtrusive method of gathering data (Robson, 2016) in that it is primarily an analysis of data collected for some other purpose than the one for which the analysis is being undertaken. Concerns regarding content analysis include reliability and validity, for example it may not expose the meaning behind the identified themes or patterns (Dumay & Cai, 2014; Krippendorff, 2004). To ameliorate any deficits in this analysis a focus group was held with recent graduates of the programs whose speeches had been analysed to facilitate confirmation and exploration of key themes from the content analysis.

Focus groups are considered to have developed with particular qualitative paradigms (Barbour, 2014), however they are most commonly used within a qualitative framework. The purpose of the focus group within this study was to explore the underlying meaning of the key themes identified within the content analysis. This ensured clarity of understanding for the researchers.

Analysis of the data was undertaken using recognition, recovery and citizenship theory as a reflective lens. This process emerged during the analysis process. A thematic analysis of the data was undertaken by the research team focused on an extraction of the key elements which reflected the experience of the participants in constructing and connecting to their communities. A clear correlation emerged between those elements and aspects of the three key theories being considered. This led to the construction of a framework (see Figure 1 below) which outlined the elements of the three theories relevant for this study. This created

the framework for further analysis of the data to explore the extent to which the combination of elements was useful in exploring the findings in more detail.

[INSERT FIGURE 1]

The data within this project both secondary and primary has been jointly and iteratively analysed by the four authors to ensure consistency of themes and agreement. This has provided both clarity and robustness to the analysis. In addition to traditional analysis of the data, detailed discussions over content, themes and findings have also taken place.

The secondary data analysed was routinely collected within each of the programs in the form of three speeches, which concentrated on different aspects of construction of and inclusion in their communities; these were: ‘what community means to me’, ‘what I have learned’ and ‘goals for the future’.

### ***Scotland Participants***

Speech data was gathered from nine participants who successfully completed the pilot program; five of this group later participated in a focus group. Of the nine, six identified as male and three as female. Eight identified as White Scottish and one as Latvian. The age range was between 28 and 61 at the time of completion of the program. All participants were, or had previously accessed TPS services for support with addiction issues, three had recently experienced homelessness and were in supported accommodation with TPS during their time on the program, and one was accessing a criminal justice service, which offers alternatives to custody for female repeat offenders. A number of participants also reported that they were currently or had previously accessed support services, both within TPS and from other service providers, for additional issues including: (Additionally, participants reported experiencing a range of other issues for which they were currently or had previously accessed

support services both within TPS and from other service providers for issues including): offending, homelessness, mental health challenges, and physical disabilities.

Data from 27 speeches as detailed above and one focus group formed of five of the most recent graduates from the program formed the core data set from Scotland.

### ***U.S. Participants***

Data from student speeches was gathered from eight participants who successfully completed the 2016 Citizen's Project Class; six of the individuals later participated in a focus group about community. Of the eight individuals, three identified as female and five as male. Three individuals identified as African American, three individuals identified as White, and two individuals identified as Multi-Racial. Their ages ranged from 27 to 56. Three individuals reported that they were currently homeless, three reported residing in a residential program, while the remaining two individuals were living independently. All eight participants have been involved with the criminal justice system within the last three years, all participants are currently receiving mental health services, and all participants identify with having a substance abuse addiction.

Data from 24 speeches as outlined above and one focus group including six of the most recent graduates from the Citizen's Project formed the core data set from the US.

### ***Background to the programs in the US and Scotland***

#### ***U.S.***

The U.S. Citizen's Project was piloted by PRCH in 2000 and has subsequently expanded and replicated in various locations in Connecticut and internationally. The Citizen's Project is a six-month program that runs twice weekly. Students must be currently receiving care/follow-up for mental health for co-occurring mental health and substance abuse and have had involvement in the criminal justice system (arrest, probation, parole or incarceration) within the past three years. Students are recruited from various service

agencies and a large number of referrals are from graduates of the program. In addition, service providers do not simply refer a potential student; the individual must contact the program directly. Citizen's Project participants are referred to as "students" because they are appreciated holistically as human beings who are students of life, not as individuals who are ill, as the word "patient" implies or someone who receives services, as the word "client" implies; reflecting an asset based approach (McKnight & Kretzmann, 1996).

There are four components to the Project: 1) Citizen's classes are built upon the five "R's" of Citizenship: rights, responsibilities, roles, resources, and relationships, as well as a perception of belonging in the community; 2) "What's Up?", a student facilitated support group where participants have the opportunity to share what is going on in their lives and receive and give feedback to one another; 3) Valued Role Projects are individual or group projects that are inspired by participants' knowledge, passion, and life experiences; and, 4) Wrap around peer support is provided by Peer staff who; have had similar life experiences.

The participants explore in the program and "What's Up?" how to build a community and family. They learned that what they say and how they say it matters and impacts their relationships. They also learn that what they have to offer is of value and that they are important to themselves and to others. Whilst it takes some time through this process, participants learn to trust one another and that they can be trustworthy as well. In the group, there are a diversity of personalities and worldviews, by working together they learn to be more accepting of each other's differences and therefore accepting of themselves as well. The participants are encouraged to share their good times as well as their challenges so they celebrate themselves and others, the importance of having fun and finding the humorous side of life is also stressed.

***Scotland***

Connecting Citizens is a program delivered by Turning Point Scotland (TPS) that has recently adopted the PRCH Citizenship approach. The program, which follows the framework of the PRCH ‘Citizens’ project, was piloted in February 2016 and is currently being delivered to a second cohort of students. Connecting Citizens is a six-month program open to individuals who are currently accessing or have recently completed one of TPS’s Substance Misuse, Homelessness, Criminal Justice, or Housing Support services. One of the key aims of Connecting Citizens is to support participants to move away from the issues that brought them into services and to concentrate instead on developing more positive aspects of their identity. As such individuals attend the program as ‘students’ rather than ‘service users’. The aim of Connecting Citizens is to support participating towards building productive and fulfilling lives in their communities. Participants attend twice weekly classes based around the 5 R’s of Citizenship (noted above) and strengthening their connection to these. A “What’s Up?” group, peer support, and valued role projects are the other core components of the program. Participants are also supported to complete a college course for which they receive a formal qualification. The program is promoted in TPS services and as with the US program, prospective participants complete an application form rather than accessing the program through being referred by a support worker or practitioner.

### **Findings**

The findings from the primary and secondary data analysis are presented thematically and illustrate key aspects of community connectedness and how this impacted on participants’ rights and responsibilities as citizens from their perspective. The participants identified different types of communities, although the issues with regard to inclusion and connectedness were broadly similar. Communities identified included those based on location, common interest, familial relationships, work and education. The usefulness of the theoretical framework (Figure 1) which emerged from the data analysis process is considered

alongside the findings in the discussion section as is identification of key differences between the US and Scotland.

*Relationships; recognition, respect and reciprocal trust*

The importance of having support networks and close ties with like-minded people was a key aspect of explorations of community across the data. Acceptance and recognition of and by community members played an integral role both in terms of individuals potential to contribute, to grow and develop within the sub-community of the Citizenship programs and in turn with their wider communities. It was noted by participants that they could not take up valued roles within communities which did not value their worth or their experiences; achieving inclusion and citizenship was therefore considered to be dependent upon recognition by others. This also suggests that achieving full or active citizenship was not solely the responsibility of the individual but rather the whole community.

The strength, confidence and self-esteem that participants drew from each other in their citizenship 'family' was demonstrated across the data. This acceptance and engagement also generated hope and expectation for the future of their recovery for participants:

We've grown together like a family; like neighbours...It's been amazing getting to know them. Now I've got extra strength to take part in my community and to feel part of something wherever I go (Participant 1 – Scotland).

To me a good start to any kind of community probably begins with like-minded people who accept each others differences, and don't judge them (Participant 3 – Scotland).

My community is the people I associate with. Mostly people here at Citizens. They give me good feedback and support me, along with where I live (Participant 1 – US).

The significance of communicating with and having positive interactions with others was reported and this was considered to link to learning how to set and maintain appropriate and healthy boundaries with others in the community. Trusting and respecting each other was deemed necessary to have a meaningful sense of community which allows members to learn from and advocate for one another and to give and receive feedback, something that was practiced in the “What’s Up?” part of the programs and was considered to prepare participants to engage more effectively with their communities. Experiences of discrimination were identified and the impact of these contributed to feeling excluded, lacking value and feeling unsafe.

There was a clear acknowledgement of the need to *‘put yourself out there’* (Participant 2, Scotland) to engage in your local communities whether they were focused around geography or common interest and that reciprocity was required to ensure that these relationships could flourish and recognition of each other’s’ value could develop. This reciprocal trust was noted as challenging to achieve in some communities, particularly given participants’ experiences of rejection, isolation, discrimination and exclusion, but it was acknowledged that they needed to *give in order to receive*, (Participant 3 – Scotland) something practiced throughout the programs:

I want to become a counsellor and give back to the community. Open a sober house or a halfway house for women (Participant 2 – US).

Having empathy and compassion for others whilst engaging with your communities was similarly thought to be important to become part of the community and a valued key feature of accepting communities. This was illustrated by one participant (Participant 1 – US) who noted that often exclusionary or discriminatory comments/behaviours could be based on ignorance of others experience and the responsibility to educate and/or challenge on those situations was keenly felt. Participants in Scotland noted the value of social movements and

public campaigns to challenge these discriminatory perceptions (e.g. See Me campaign to challenge negative images of mental health in Scotland) (<https://www.seemescotland.org>).

The role of peer-advocacy, knowledge exchange and peer learning in achieving citizenship and full membership in the various communities also featured significantly in discussions. Both programs offered these opportunities to participants and this facilitated skill development and an exchange of ideas that promoted risk taking and the development of trust. This was considered to be part of the journey towards recovery, reclaiming previous skills and elements of the *life lost* due to the specific life disruption.

Many of the participants had lost connections to family and friends, while others, had never experienced healthy relationships. Relationships in their lives were more often that of service user and service provider and/or within the criminal justice system. It was considered that oftentimes neither of these types of relationships allowed for a feeling of mutuality, reciprocity, respect or a sense of empowerment.

#### *Participation and giving back*

The responsibility to participate and ‘fit in’ was thought to rest jointly on the community at large and the individual in recovery. Having a sense of purpose, a valued social role, contributing and having a voice/being heard were seen as important elements to securing this sense of belonging. A key element of inclusion and connectedness is therefore having a responsibility to be an example to others (i.e. other individuals in recovery and broader community members). This in turn created a ripple effect where communities recover and grow stronger as a result of having positive experiences of those whose life has been disrupted. Learning from the “What’s Up?” groups was particularly valuable for participants in extending their understanding of how their words and experiences can influence and be valuable to others. For example, participants noted that their presence was missed when they did not attend class and that this made them feel valued and connected and consequently



enhanced their recovery journey. Sharing experiences including mistakes they had made also emphasised the importance of non-judgemental and non-discriminatory attitudes.

Sometimes you don't realise that you're working hard and participating and to recognise that you are important – you're as important as the next person – not any better but just as good (Participant 1 – Scotland).

I would like to make a difference. Become a personal trainer, get an apartment and stay focused on myself. I want to go sky-diving, I figure I spent last year in a jail cell, I'm going to spend this year flying free like a bird (Participant 1 – US).

### *Access to opportunities and identity*

One of the key goals of the Citizenship programs is to support individuals to build on more positive aspects of their identity, moving away from the issues (often defined as deficits) that brought them into services, alongside supporting participants to take up valued roles in their communities. Having a sense of personal identity framed in terms of assets was therefore considered important in promoting participation in new and existing communities. Being aware of and able to access the resources and opportunities available in the community were deemed necessary for participation, as well as being open minded to trying new things and “*coming out of comfort zones*” (Participant 4 – US), while at the same time ensuring that new ventures don't pose a threat to the individual's recovery. Listening to the risks that others took gave participants the confidence to try themselves including the challenge of maintaining their recovery. As participants began to take risks in their lives they also began to change their view of themselves, to appreciate that they had options and how to work through their fears of taking up those options.

Citizens Project is like a Harbor, like a shining peace from the sea for all of those lost souls. It helped me to regain a piece of the man I thought I lost. It brought back my self-confidence, my hunger for life. I didn't know that I would make friends that I

would consider family. I learned that there are some people who are willing to fight for you when you throw in the towel (Participant 1 – US).

Being viewed as, feeling, or passing for ‘*normal*’ is a strong theme, which arose regularly and appears to contribute towards gaining a sense of belonging in a community. This transition or journey towards feeling sufficiently valued to participate was facilitated through fixing on the positive aspects of identity, noted above and through changing perspectives of self and others, alongside gaining hope and inspiration from others.

I accept myself today, my struggles with substance abuse and depression. Reminds me that I’m not alone, keeps me moving forward and helped me to process my emotions (Participant 4 – US).

#### *Sense of belonging and safety*

Community was acknowledged as being considerably more about a sense of belonging than about a location. Close proximity was not enough to foster a sense of connectedness or to feel valued and recognised as being worthy community members. Communities were therefore considered to be more closely aligned with identity than proximity as participants who had similar experiences were considered to be more welcoming and less likely to judge. An ability to feel emotionally and physically safe within a community was a high priority for participants. Feeling safe was observed as essential to promote a sense of belonging. It was acknowledged that this was a key aspect of the learning within the citizenship programs in both countries. The participants noted that the group and the staff were not only not going to judge them or discriminate against them but also would not let any harm come to them.

My community today is with my other half being in a tent in the woods, the homeless center and shelters. And this community at Citizens Project, the people I’ve gotten

close to, who have, each and every single one of you, helped me in different ways.

Has made me a strong person (Participant 2 – US).

### *Skills for participation*

A lot of what participants report they have gained from participating in the Citizenship programs relates to learning the skills necessary for full and meaningful engagement in communities. The relevant skills identified included: learning how to share with others, learning how to handle situations differently, taking accountability for one's actions, regaining self-confidence and acceptance, being able to cope and develop coping skills for various situations, learning how to forgive self for actions from the past and learning how to connect to others in a safe and healthy manner. The participants noted that these skills encouraged their inclusion not only in the program but also in their individual communities.

It's made me more confident and more able to say I can get a job and I can participate (Participant 1 – Scotland).

It's helped me with my confidence and being more open-minded. In the past I wouldn't have tried things but now 99% of the time I will try anything unless I really don't have time. Everyone can see a big change in me (Participant 4 – Scotland).

### *Goals*

The data indicates that the programs aided participants in identifying their goals for the future and the relationship between these goals and their constructions and consideration of community participation and engagement. The types of goals identified included: staying on the right track, getting a job, raising kids by being a more involved parent, going back to school and/or further education, building upon family relationships, becoming a trainee addiction worker and working with people in recovery. These goals suggest that participants are aiming to contribute to and participate in broader society and to meet their obligations as

citizens. It also illustrates their wish to secure similar rights as others, for example accessing finance, gaining employment and education.

Believing in myself – I actually think that I can achieve – if I set goals I can achieve them (Participant 1 – Scotland).

### **Discussion**

As can be noted from the above, the themes identified in the data related to the construction of community were broadly consistent across both the US and Scotland. There were, however, some distinctions in terms of the priorities afforded to aspects of their life experiences in moving forward in their recovery journey. Specific cultural differences emerged in terms of finance and housing which is perhaps unsurprising given the different political and welfare contexts. Participants in the Scottish study who weren't already housed, were supported by TPS in residential housing support services which work towards accessing appropriate housing and transitioning individuals into their own accommodation at the end of the process, thus housing was not an immediate concern. (Almost all of the participants in the Scottish study were part of services provided by TPS, that included housing, therefore they were not concerned about finding somewhere to live and access to public housing options at the end of their stay in the TPS service meant that this was not an immediate concern). US participants, however, had more significant challenges in accessing housing and this was therefore considered to be of greater priority. Participants in the US were also concerned significantly about access to finance to support their inclusion in communities, whereas the welfare benefit system in Scotland meant that the Scottish participants had access to at least a minimal income, although the introduction of benefit sanctions has weakened this safety net.

Constructions of community identified by participants aligned significantly with aspects of identity and common experience rather than simply location. The principle drivers

for this construction appeared to coalesce around acceptance, non-judgemental attitudes and a sense of belonging (through shared experience) to those particular communities. This requirement to construct an identity framed of assets rather than deficits reflects the need for recognition to be extended by communities that are well informed and non-discriminatory in their attitudes towards those experiencing or who have had experience of life disruptions in order to promote inclusion and connectedness (Anderson & Honneth, 2004; Heidegren, 2004). Reciprocal trust that promotes a sense of safety consequently forms a core part of an inclusive community as defined by the participants. Having a sense of purpose and ‘being seen’, particularly in valued roles, also reflect the need to be safe within the individual communities as this sense of safety will encourage those at the margins to contribute and to undertake their responsibilities and obligations (Lister, 1998).

Ware et al.’s (2007) distinction between connectivity and social integration is also useful in exploring the implications of the findings. Participants noted the social, mental and emotional connections to each other based on common experiences, and in their engagement with their broader community the importance of not just physical presence but also the development of inter-dependent relationships. Alongside this need for reciprocal trust, the development of hope and belief that as individuals they could recover and become valued members of their communities, demonstrated above aligns appropriately with recovery theory (Davidson et al., 2016). Combining the development of these assets with risk taking in terms of testing boundaries and taking on responsibilities suggest participants are developing the skills to fully participate and integrate within their communities.

These findings suggest both that the conditions within communities require being optimum to encourage recognition and that those marginalised require the skills and confidence to make that journey (Stewart & Atkinson, 2012). As noted by Rowe et al., (2009) the relationships described by participants in this study suggest a ‘program’ citizenship

submitting that the impact of their life disruption includes a reduction in their rights and consequently in their ability to meet their responsibilities as citizens.

Many of the skills required to promote inclusion in communities can be classified as life skills, resilience, and coping strategies and much relates to personal growth and overcoming struggles related to self (i.e., self-esteem, self worth, self-respect; factors which are central to Honneth's theory of Recognition (1992). Honneth (1992), also suggests that social justice can only prevail in a society that protects the individual's autonomy through an infrastructure of recognition that supports these relational aspects of self. Indeed, Clayton and colleagues propose that citizenship cannot be fully realised without recognition since "full citizenship requires that people have access to participation in society and perceive others as valuing their participation" (Clayton et al., 2013, p. 115). The programs provided the participants with a range of skills that would enable them to engage with communities important in enhancing their citizenship whether these were in the workplace, education or in their own local neighbourhoods. There is, however a challenge in ensuring that communities are sufficiently welcoming and there is evidence from the data that public policy and social movements can aid in creating appropriate conditions, although this was more clearly expressed in the Scottish context.

Whilst it should not be argued that the constructions of community derived from the findings within this project suggest a simple binary approach, there are a number of elements, which require combining to create the appropriate conditions to promote inclusion for those experiencing life disruptions. Developing an identity as citizens based on assets which moves away from a deficit model requires reciprocity on a number of levels; trust, understanding, awareness, positive modelling and acceptance. Combining recognition, recovery and citizenship has therefore been critical in understanding the experience of those with life disruptions.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has suggested that a combination of, recognition theory, recovery and citizenship provides an appropriate lens to consider the ways in which individuals construct and can be included in their community. The evidence from the experience of students within the citizenship programs explored in this paper suggests that although participants are provided with tools and skills to increase confidence and self-esteem, and skills to engage with their individual communities, communities that do not recognize, value or respect a range of life experiences will still exclude individuals and reduce their citizenship. Services and supports directed at the level of community development and engagement are therefore crucial in promoting inclusion and increasing citizenship for marginalized groups. Challenging community attitudes, stigma and discrimination is also vital and the role of social movements and public policy is acknowledged. Finally, Rowe and Davidson (2016) urge further development of social and political movements to tackle the exclusion of those individuals experiencing life disruption at a community and broader social level, alongside equipping them for their own recovery journey. The experience of the participants in the programs discussed above suggests there is an urgent need for further developments in this area if they are to achieve full citizenship.

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**Figure 1: Theoretical Approach**

<b>Theoretical Approach</b>		
<b>Recognition</b>	<b>Recovery</b>	<b>Citizenship</b>
Engagement	Hope	Rights
Acknowledgement	Connectedness	A sense of belonging
Value	Reclaiming own life	Roles
Approval	Meaningful role	Responsibilities
Respect	Expectation of a good life	Resources
Power		Relationships