



The Association between Moral Injury and Cannabis Use Disorder among Israeli Combat Veterans

Daniel Feingold, PhD

Moral Injury

Shame & Guilt

The event → Long-term consequences

- Transgression by **self**
- Transgression by **others**
- **Betrayal**
- **Emotional:**
Anger, disgust,
self-condemnation
- **Interpersonal:**
Isolation, exclusion
- **Behavioral:**
Self-handicapping, self harm,
Substance use



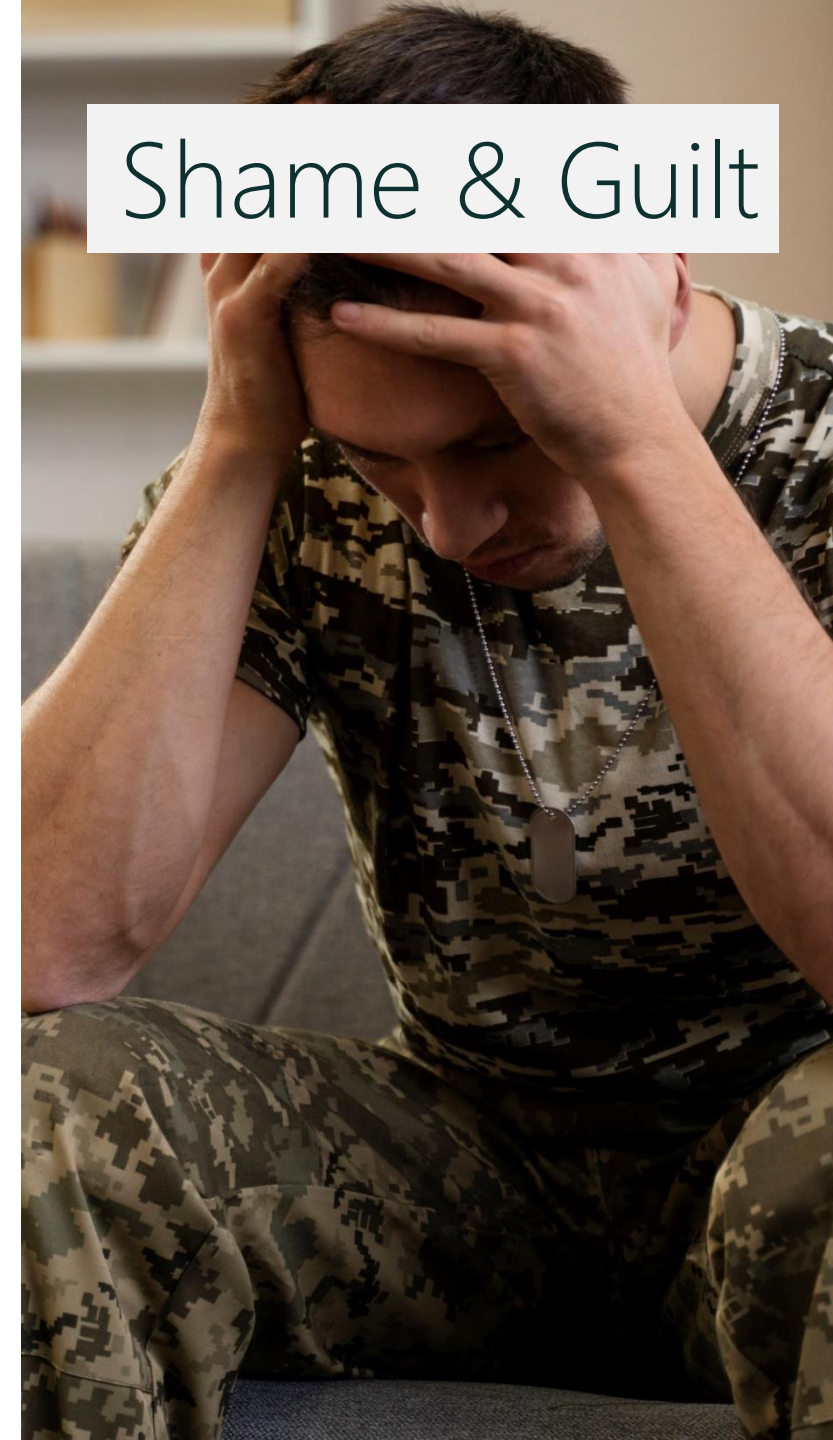
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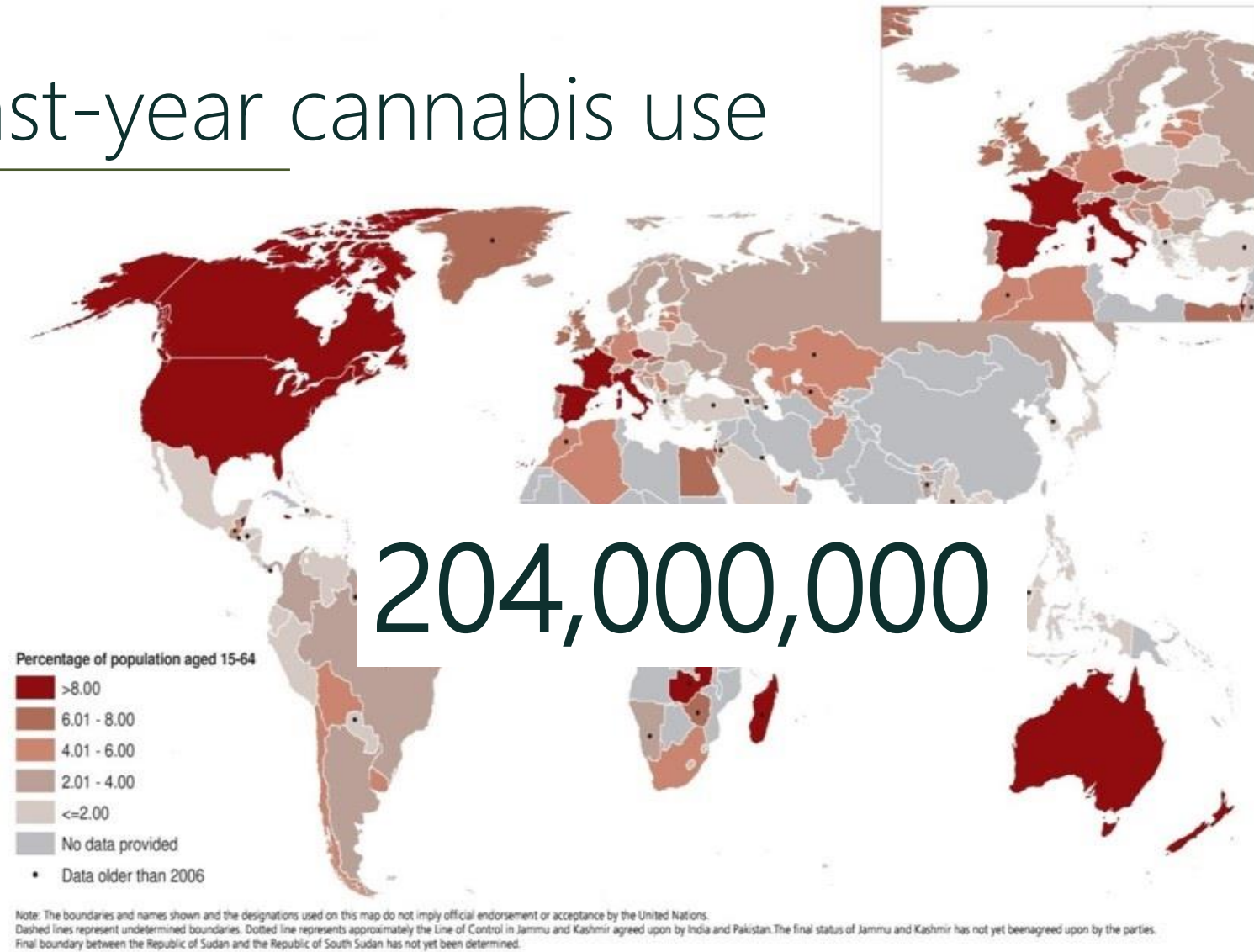


Moral injury and moral repair in war veterans: A preliminary model and intervention strategy

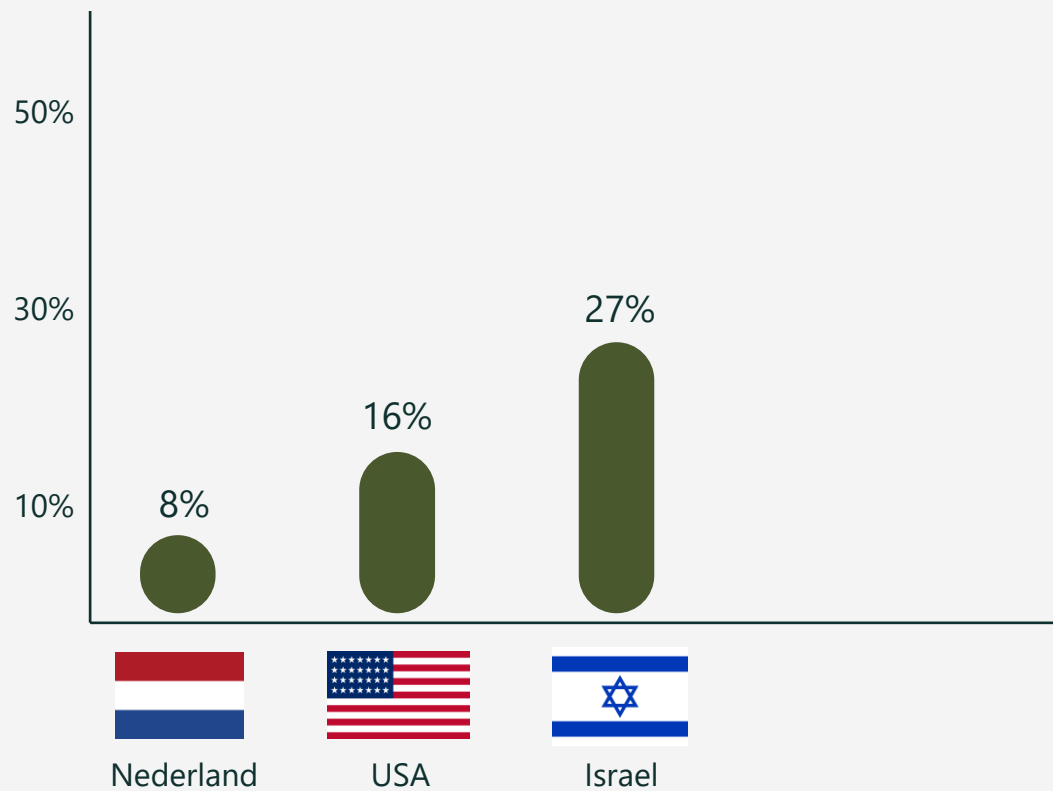
Brett T. Litz ^{a,b,*}, Nathan Stein ^a, Eileen Delaney ^a, Leslie Lebowitz ^c, William P. Nash ^c,
Caroline Silva ^a, Shira Maguen ^d



Past-year cannabis use



% reporting past-year use of cannabis



The Association Between Moral Injury and Substance Use Among Israeli Combat Veterans: the Mediating Role of Distress and Perceived Social Support

Daniel Feingold¹ · Gadi Zerach¹ · Yossi Levi-Belz^{2,3}

Participants: 191 combat veterans

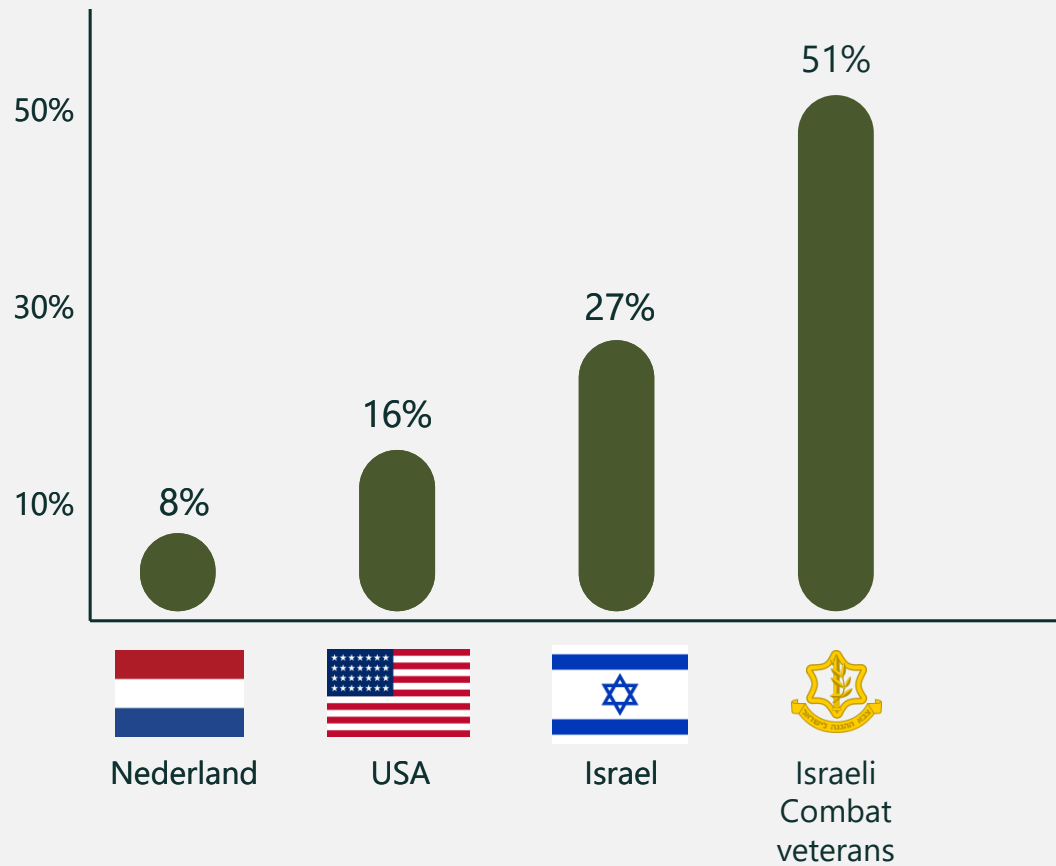
Measurements:

- Moral Injury Event Scale (MIES) Nash et al., 2013.

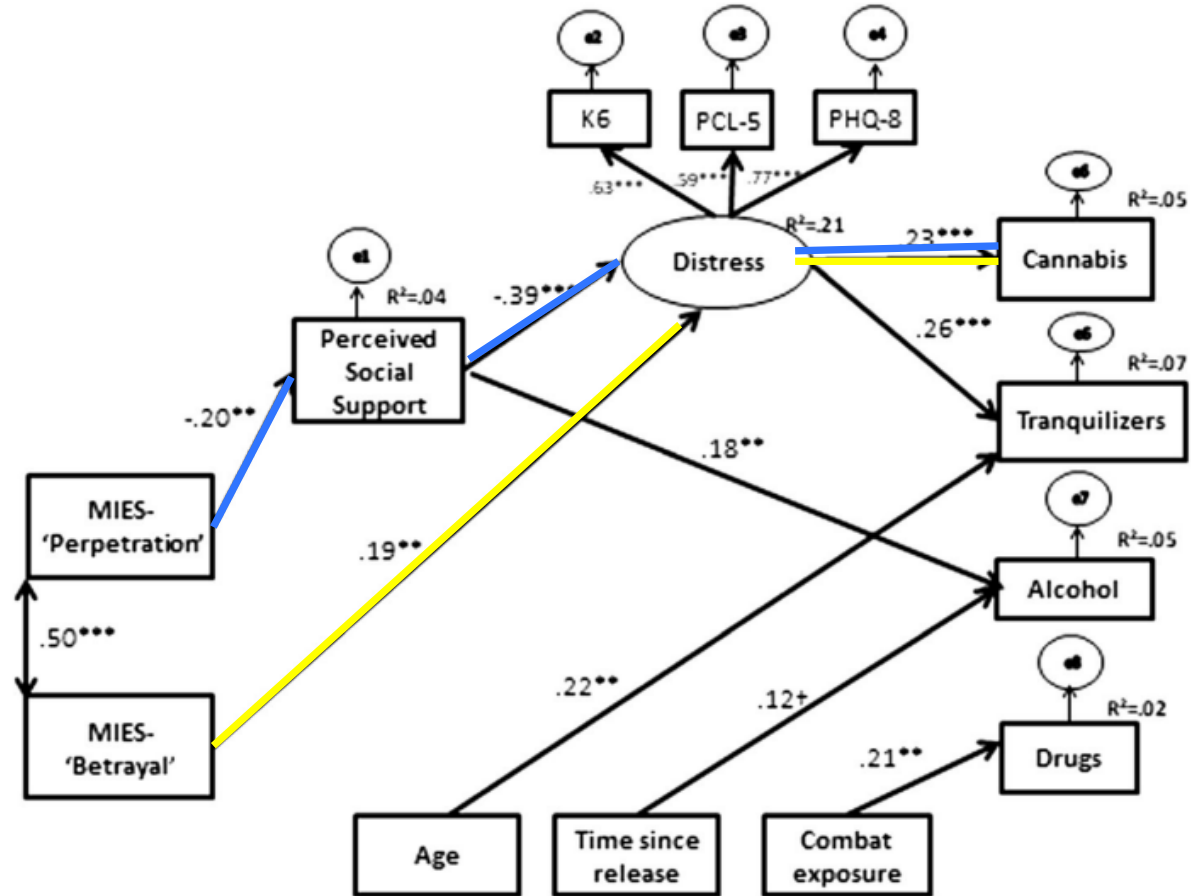
e.g., “I acted in ways that violated my own moral code or values”

- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-8) Kroenke et al. 2009
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist (PCL-5) Bovin et al. 2016
- Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support Zimet 1988
- Past-year frequency of various substance use

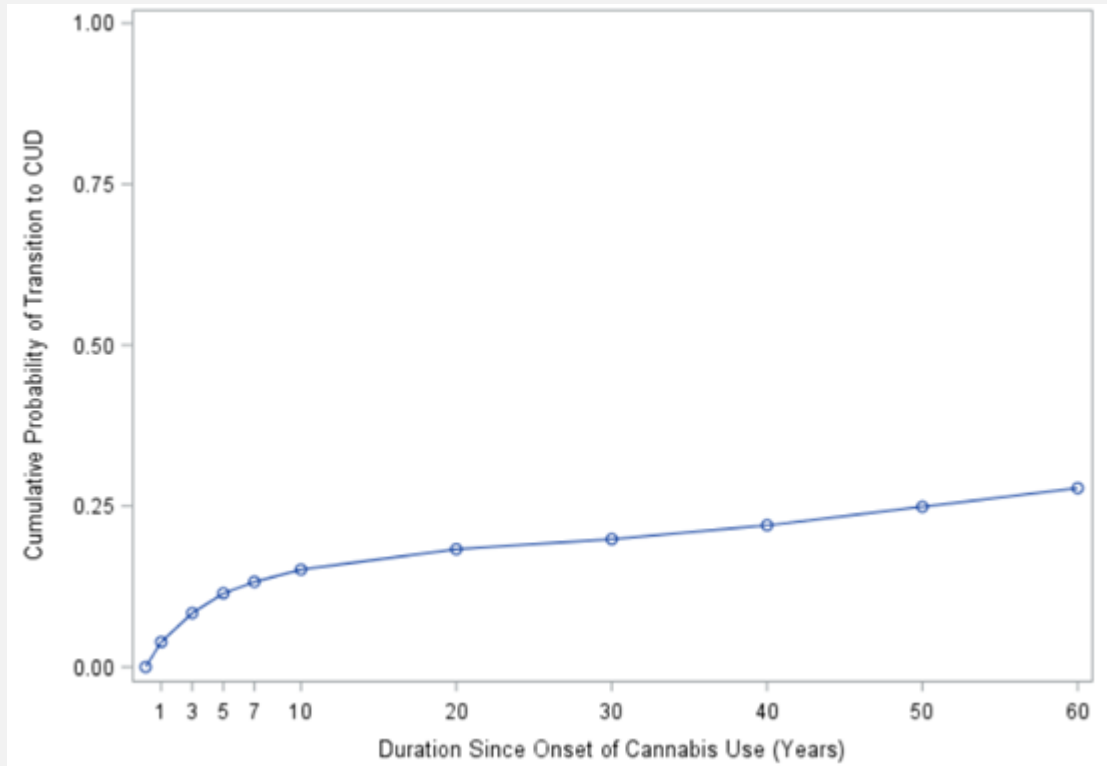
% reporting past-year use of cannabis



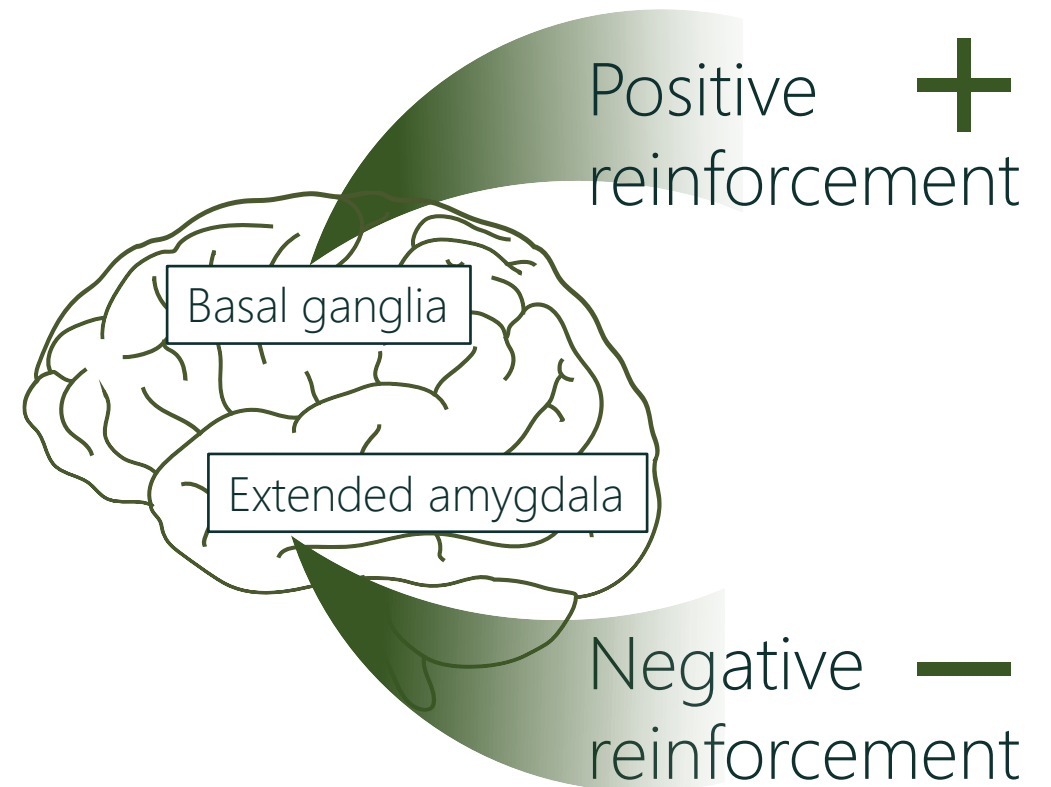
Results



Cannabis Use Disorder



Why do people get addicted?





Moral injury and cannabis use disorder among Israeli combat veterans: The role of depression and perceived social support

Aviya Ashwal-Malka^a, Keren Tal-Kishner^b, Daniel Feingold^{a,*}

Participants: 215 male combat veterans
≥ 1 year of combat service
regular cannabis use

Instruments:

Cannabis Use Disorder Identification Test Revised (CUDIT-R; Adamson et al., 2010)

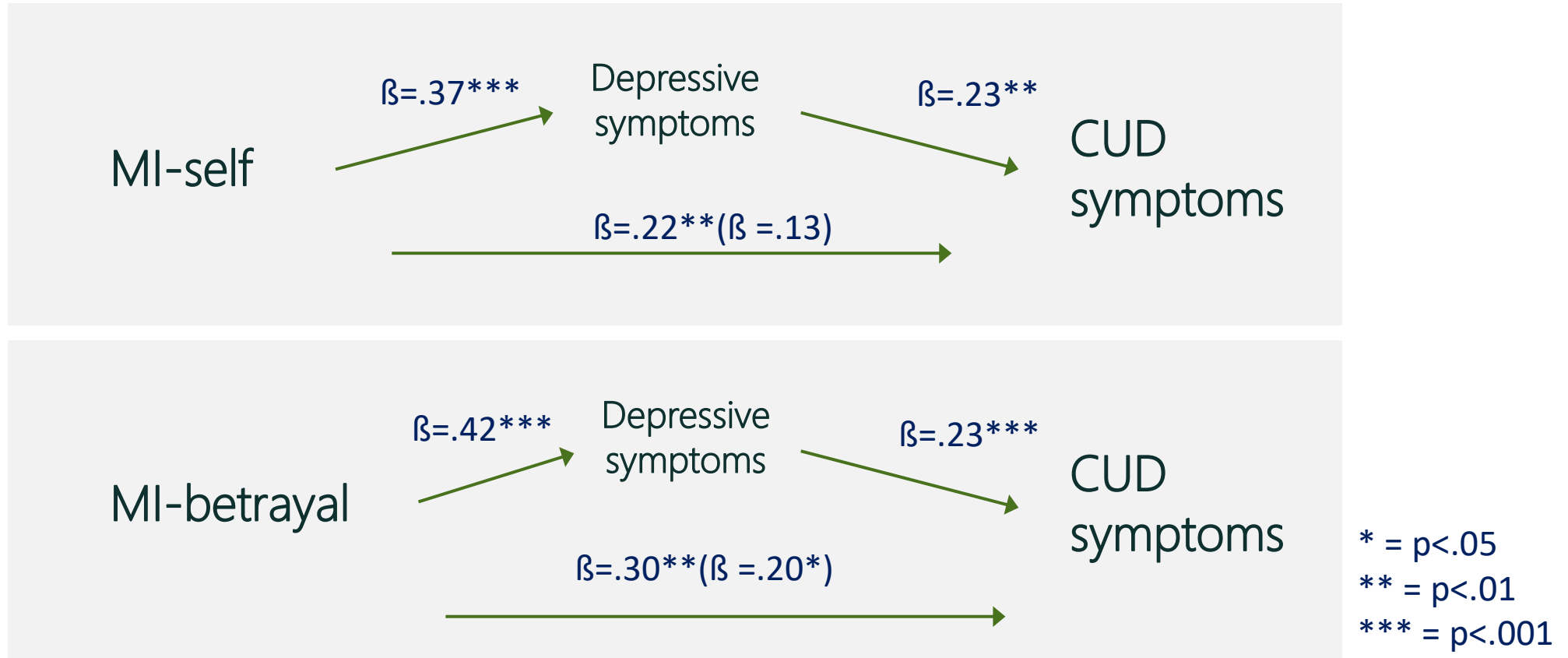
Moral Injury Event Scale (MIES; Nash et al., 2013)

Patient Health Questionnaire Depression Scale (PHQ-8; Kroenke et al., 2009)

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS; Zimet et al., 1988)

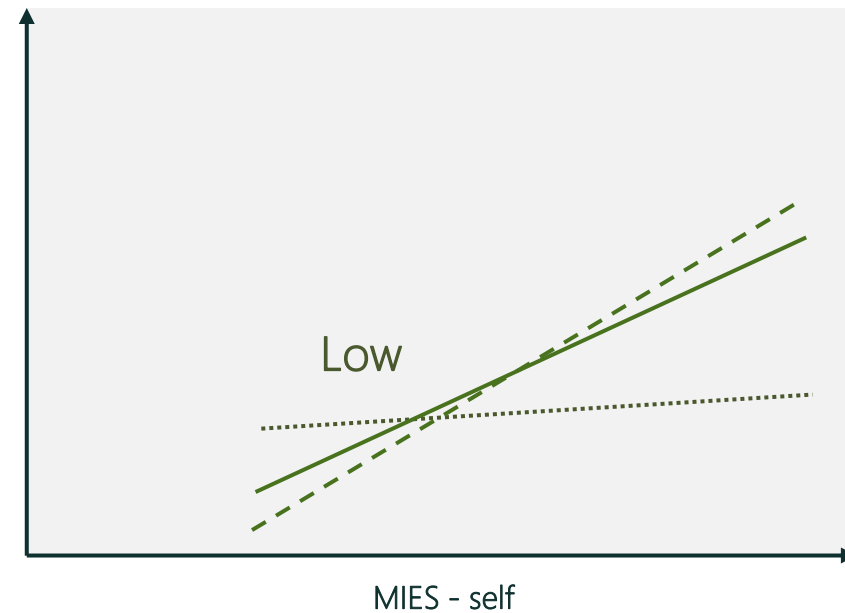
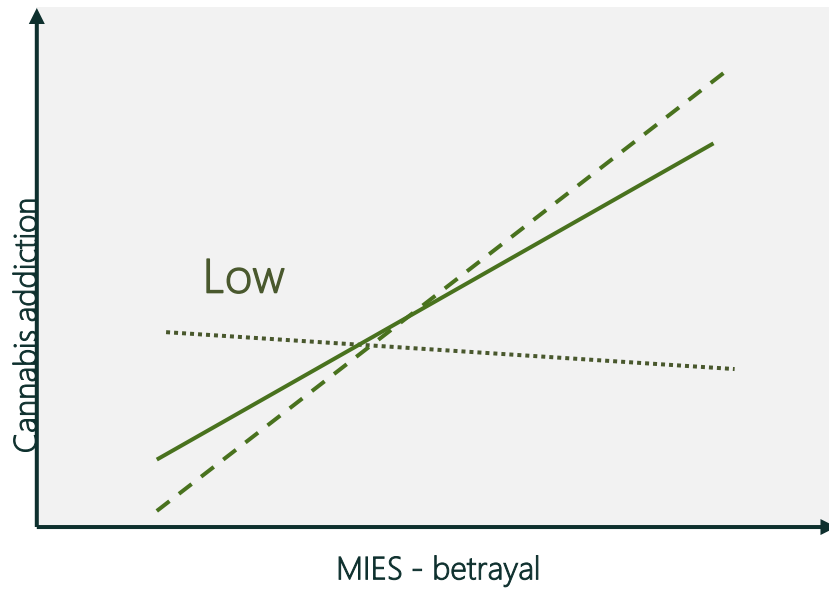
Results

- Positive association between moral injury and cannabis CUD symptoms
- Mediated by depression

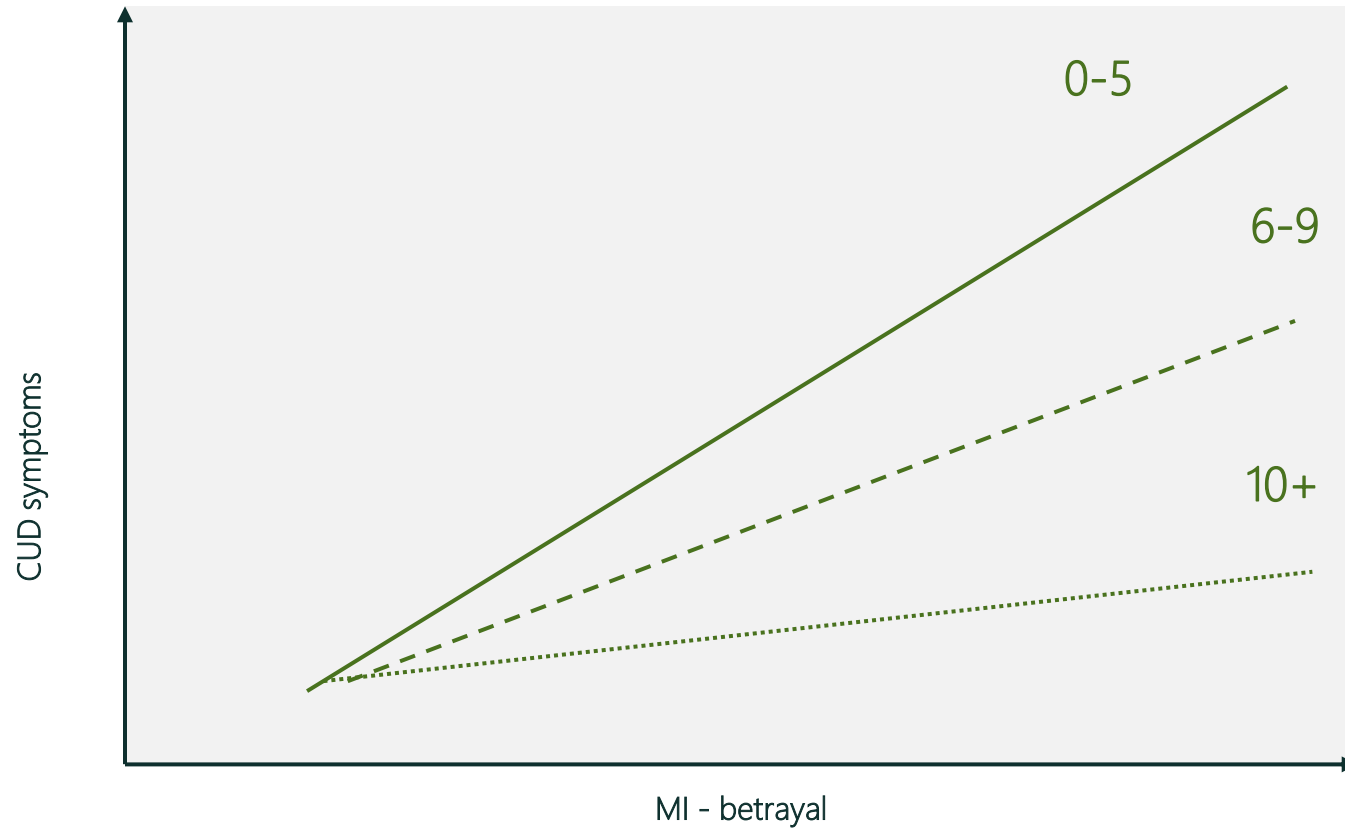


Results

Social support moderates the association between moral injury and cannabis CUD



"Only time heals a wounded heart..." Araybia S. L. Williams,



Narratives of young veterans who use cannabis

From Enchantment to Disillusion: A Narrative Exploration of Cannabis Use Disorder Among Young Israeli Combat Veterans

Miri Serebro¹, Shira Sobol-Goldberg² and Daniel Feingold^{3}*



- Combat veterans ≤ 5 years since release from duty (n=12).
- Regular use of cannabis.
- In-depth interviews.
- Systematic content analysis

Narratives of young veterans who use cannabis

From Enchantment to Disillusion: A Narrative Exploration of Cannabis Use Disorder Among Young Israeli Combat Veterans

Miri Serebro¹, Shira Sobol-Goldberg² and Daniel Feingold^{3*}



From enchantment to disillusion

Traumatic events

Combatant identity

Authority figures

Moral crisis

Cannabis experiences

"I made it through this war, I felt I **deserve** to do whatever I want".

"I'm starting to feel bad about weed. When you're **weak** you start to see its downsides."

Narratives of older veterans who use cannabis

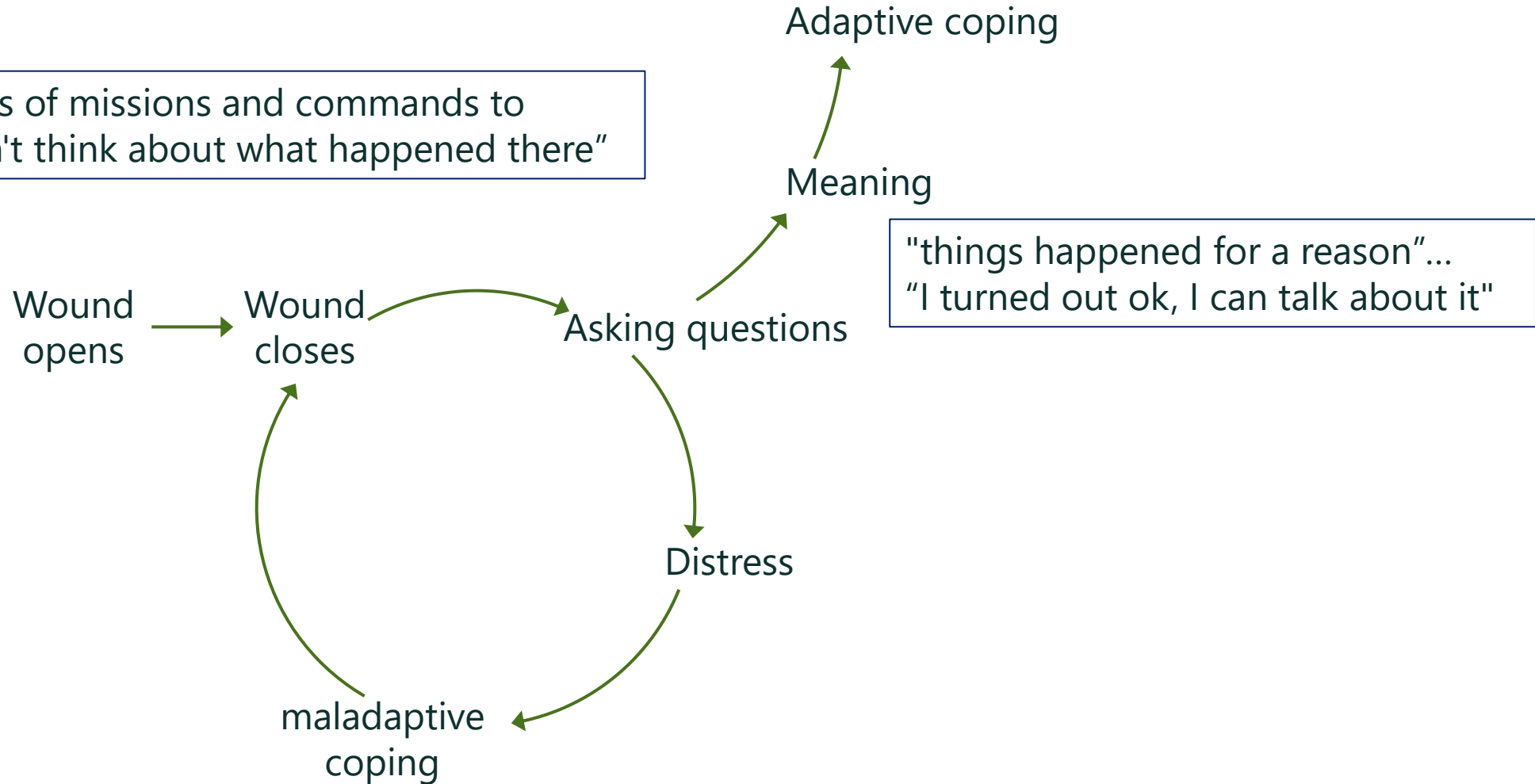


- Combat veterans >5 years since release from duty (n=10)
- Regular use of cannabis
- In-depth interviews
- Systematic content analysis

Narratives of older veterans who use cannabis




"they gave us lots of missions and commands to follow so we don't think about what happened there"



"things happened for a reason"...
"I turned out ok, I can talk about it"

Take home

- Moral injury is closely associated with cannabis use and CUD.
 - This association may be mediated by emotional distress.
 - Paradoxically, social support may elevate the MI-cannabis correlation.
 - Time and finding meaning may increase resilience.
- 



THANK YOU
for LISTENING

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