Cognitive Representations of Future Self as Predictors of Motivational Impairment in Women with PTSD

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence "PTSD has long been recognized as a complex psychopathological condition..." provides a broad opening. However, it would strengthen the argument to include epidemiological data (e.g., PTSD prevalence in women globally or in Mexico specifically) to contextualize the significance of studying this demographic.

The term "motivational impairment syndrome" is compelling but appears to be novel or non-standard. Please define whether this is a coined term for this study or drawn from existing literature. If new, consider placing it in quotation marks and defining its conceptual boundaries clearly.

The authors note that "few studies have qualitatively explored how women with PTSD describe their future self…" This is an excellent rationale for the study. However, including a sentence summarizing the unique contribution of this research (e.g., cultural specificity to urban Mexico, interpretive phenomenology, etc.) would clarify its novelty.

The term "borrow hope" used to describe interpersonal scaffolding is insightful. Consider aligning this idea with Snyder's Hope Theory or attachment theory frameworks, which provide explanatory power for motivational restoration through relationships.

When linking findings to substance use studies (Farrelly et al., Zaso et al.), the text would benefit from clarifying that although substance use was not explored in the present sample, these studies are referenced to underscore mechanisms of motivational distortion.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2.   Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The concept of the "future self" is introduced effectively, but its operational definition remains somewhat abstract. Please consider clarifying whether the study adopts a particular theoretical model (e.g., Markus & Nurius' "possible selves" or Zimbardo's time perspective framework) as a lens.

In discussing the impact of PTSD on autobiographical memory, the authors state: "PTSD often disrupts the normal sequencing of autobiographical memory..." This is a strong claim that would benefit from additional clarification or citation distinguishing between episodic and semantic future thinking, or detailing how memory distortion maps onto motivational outcomes.

The authors mention axial and selective coding. However, these terms are generally associated with grounded theory, not Braun and Clarke's method. Please clarify whether these coding levels were adapted from grounded theory or integrated into thematic analysis, and explain the rationale.

The manuscript states that member checking and peer debriefing were conducted, but it lacks details. What was the method of member checking (e.g., returning transcripts, sharing themes)? This information is critical to assessing the credibility of qualitative analysis.

The discussion on ambivalence is rich but lacks connection to existing psychological models (e.g., approach-avoidance conflict theory or Janoff-Bulman's shattered assumptions theory). Referencing these could enhance theoretical coherence.

The authors cite Saltzman & Terzis (2024) multiple times but should avoid over-reliance on a single source. Consider integrating a more diverse range of recent PTSD studies to support claims on time disintegration.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2.   Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.
Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.