

# Therapeutic writing and ethical resilience in fluid workplaces: a neutralization theory perspective

Jinzhao Wei, Yufei Wang and Mangirdas Morkūnas

## Abstract

**Purpose** – *This paper aims to envision therapeutic writing as an intervention to disrupt stress-driven ethical erosion in flexible workplaces, redefining resilience as an inter-subjective practice that strikes a balance between individual initiative and structural responsibility.*

**Design/methodology/approach** – *Based on an interdisciplinary methodology blending management, sociology and psychology, the study maps ten stress typologies in adaptive working environments onto their equivalent neutralization mechanisms. The research develops a set of ten statements in which therapeutic writing practice is connected to ethics and resilience, with writing as an intrapsychic procedure and systemic diagnostic tool for effective management. The model couples neuroscience information on stress management with sociological analysis of precarious work.*

**Findings** – *Therapeutic writing is resistant to moral degradation in the following ways: first, by identifying the external sources of system-wide stress in terms of restructuring narratives; second, by recapturing prefrontal regulation in leaders for making moral decisions; and third, by facilitating collective accountability through collective storytelling. Moral degradation is, thereby, shifted from a managerial problem to a diagnostic problem.*

**Originality/value** – *In this case, originality starts with a focus on neutralization theory from a structural management perspective, providing an early premise to connect therapeutic writing with sustainability in organizational responsiveness. In addition, it enhances leadership by integrating employee well-being with ethics.*

**Keywords** *Therapeutic writing, Ethical resilience, Fluid workplaces, Neutralization theory, Organizational ethics*

**Paper type** *Conceptual paper*

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## 1. Introduction

The workplace in the 21st century has been revolutionized, with fluid organizational structures, such as gig economies to decentralized distributed teams, and high-paced cultures driven by algorithmic efficiency and perpetual connectivity. Although such developments offer hope for flexibility and innovation, these have paradoxically culminated in a state of crisis concerning a depletion in ethical resilience in stressful contexts thus threatening enduring organizational effectiveness (Tan *et al.*, 2021). Workers in such contexts find themselves relying increasingly on methods of neutralization such as psychological methods which factor in worker exhaustion due to burnout, methods of justifying moral dilemmas or methods of shifting blame toward work demands and algorithmic systems rather than self-care activities with a team (Zhang and Leidner, 2018), thus negatively affecting worker well-being and business ethics in these companies (Lima *et al.*, 2023; Moss, 2020). Therapeutic writing, in this case, therefore, is presented in this research as an innovative strategy in these contexts. Our work intersects with theory in

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management, sociology and psychology to fill an important knowledge gap: first, how contemporary work structures intensify moral disengagement influenced by stress; and second, methods which leaders can use in response to these effects.

Although fluid work is a universal phenomenon, it takes different forms in different environments, such as platform economies in Southeast Asia or hybrid work environments in Scandinavia. Therefore, this paper will take a deliberately international perspective, in recognition of the fact that both degradation and resilience in ethics can be influenced by local culture and technology.

## 2. Literature review

The modern work environment, with its time pressures and fluid organizational structures, presents unique challenges at the nexus of management, sociology and psychology. The current review synthesizes timeless theory and recent research to distill how stress-inducing neutralization behaviors take place in dynamic workplaces and how therapeutic writing can undo them. Originally constructed to explain how individuals rationalize deviant behavior, neutralization theory has been used to explain ethical compromise in the workplace (Trinkle *et al.*, 2021). The theory describes the ways in which employees use methods such as playing off responsibility, harm minimization, or appeals to loyalty to justify their behavior that is not in line with organizational or personal ethics (Kaptein and Van Helvoort, 2019). In fluid work environments, which are typified by gig economies, remote teams and algorithmic work, such justifications have become normalized (Kadolkar *et al.*, 2024). Such employees can attribute an intolerable work schedule to misunderstood systems or downplay personal sacrifices in ethics to help a team win a victory but not realize that a crisis in systems persists in making a sacrifice to integrity for efficiency. Early versions of using this theory were intended toward application in organizational power structures, but present working environments have increased these dynamics by making them invisible (Schoultz and Flyghed, 2019). For example, algorithms controlling work environments allow employees to push responsibility off into space, and project work positions reduce workgroups from being accountable towards each other. Such a paradigm shift demands acceptance of redefining the sociotechnical application of neutralization in terms of how fluidity in work roles, power dynamics and control can promote moral disengagement and demand not just resilience but resilience adaptation in individual work environments (Oyetunde *et al.*, 2023; Aloisi and De Stefano, 2021).

A decentralized and fluid labor system brings in disorienting effects of role ambiguity, algorithmic control and social disembeddedness. Fluid work environments are likely to have blurred role boundaries and people will have to work with multiple expectations and vague role identities (Samaan and Tursunbayeva, 2024). Freelancers have conflicting requirements from clients and conflicting personal ethics, which cause role dissonance. Algorithmic control in platform economies automates human control by way of data control, in which case, efficiency is given prominence over well-being. Such algorithmic systems suppress human agency and environments are brought in which stressful situations are normalized, and moral concerns are pushed to the background (Liang *et al.*, 2022; Nuccio and Guerzoni, 2018). In addition, social dis-embeddedness is also a factor in such challenging environments in which distant work models break communal connections hitherto given to mixed social environments (Wood *et al.*, 2019b). Structural injustices also perpetuate these difficulties, in which marginalized individuals are in an unequal manner affected by such fluid work environments and exhaust resilience resources (Harris and Ogbonna, 2024; Prouska *et al.*, 2023). However, present-day literature veers a structural analysis into a psychological disconnect, detaching cognitive imperatives to normative theoretical assumptions, unaffected by hysterical interplay rendered by imperatives in hedonism and moral rollback, in which case, they show the least interest in conformity with cognitive reactions in stressful situations to make moral decay normative. Psychological and

affective imperatives of dynamic work environments exert control over self-regulation and moral judgments. Tasks such as chronic multitasking, role-shifting and dopamine regulation in reward systems, for instance, in gamified work performance systems, exhaust control over working minds, which show signs of heuristic thinking and/or moral tricking in moral workarounds, in which case, they are driven toward moral hacking or moral cracking by heuristic judgment systems (Gerdenitsch *et al.*, 2020). Disidentifications arise when people fracture distinct self-elements to accommodate different work roles, in which case they have splintered self-concepts meant to mediate different expectations (Burton and Vu, 2020). Stressed environments introduce neurobiologically based responses to disincentivize moral judgment, in which case, hyperaroused amygdalas drive moral overwhelm and reduced prefrontals annihilate impulsive control in judgment systems (Sarmiento *et al.*, 2024). Conventional therapeutic methods, such as mindfulness, have an equally shortcoming in that conventional methods not only have cognitive advantages over fluid work environments but will theoretically mitigate moral decay by way of structural injustices (Tobias Mortlock *et al.*, 2022; Morton *et al.*, 2020). Expressive writing, a therapy based on transference of emotional experience to narrative, has proven to be a highly rewarding psychological intervention in this area (Ruini and Mortara, 2021). To externalize sources of stress, clients reappraise cognitively, transforming a disordered experience into a challenge to master. Research in neuroscience shows this technique decreases emotional arousal by lowering limbic activity and increasing prefrontal activity, thus recapturing control over behavior and mending psychological resilience at a biological level (DiMenichi *et al.*, 2019). Over time, this leads to a solidification of pathways from self-regulation to moral cognition in the brain. In application, expressive writing decreases both burnout and poor moral cognition but does not add work-related elements of struggle, such as algorithmic opacity and fluidity of personal and collective identity, into the therapy offered today (Round *et al.*, 2022). Narrative practices work against fragmentation because they enable a repair of integrated personal identities, bridging a split between work roles and permanent personal beliefs, and promote organizational resilience via increased transparency and accountability in those roles and in institutions (Sadler, 2021). Yet, the potential of writing as both an individual and structural intervention – one making invisible system forces visible and actuatable – lies largely unrealized.

Recently, the research literature has started to examine how culture and region mediate both the sources of fluid work pressures and the effectiveness of therapeutic writing interventions. For example, in a collectivist culture such as East Asia, which places great emphasis on a sense of organizational commitment and group cohesion, moral disengagement would likely take on a different look in these settings compared with how it has been considered to date within more individualist Western cultures, perhaps more a matter of silent complicity than verbal rationalization (Din *et al.*, 2025; Mishra *et al.*, 2025). Furthermore, gig economy labor in the Global South frequently takes place in informal economies with less robust regulation, creating a complexity of precarious work lives with specific cultural stories of work and dignity in these settings (Hammer and Ness, 2021). At the same time, therapeutic writing research remains Euro-American-centric in focus, relying upon models of expressive disclosure developed in North America and Europe.

Current work tends to parcel out structural criticism, psychological notes and action plans for organizational action. Although it has given a very insightful treatment of moral disengagement, neutralization theory remains an area where sociotechnical issues in algorithmic working contexts have not yet been considered (McCormack and Chowdhury, 2024; Walters, 2019). Research on therapeutic writing rightly focuses on individualized well-being but ignores modifications in systems. Hence, this study brings a balance to these issues by focusing on writing itself, which acts to disrupt both stress and processes of neutralization at different levels (Ruini and Mortara, 2021; Malyn *et al.*, 2020). Through an externalization of both algorithmic intensity and precarity, writing enables responsibility, recreates ideological coherence and facilitates an ethics of prudence. This approach

reorients resilience as a relational action, not merely an individual act but an organizational investment in ethical infrastructure. By doing so, it offers an integrated vision to address the interdependent cognitive, affective and structural challenges of fluid work.

### 3. Methodology

To achieve an inclusive and rigorous synthesis, the review was implemented through a structured interdisciplinary analysis after the application of a systematic search and selection procedure. This was with the aim of identifying the theoretical and empirical intersections that exist between therapeutic writing, ethical resilience, neutralization theory and fluid work environments. There were four phases in the research methodology. First, systematic searches were conducted using the Web of Science and Scopus databases for scholarly articles that were peer-reviewed; no time restriction was imposed. A search targeting key terms in three concepts: "therapeutic writing," "ethical/moral issues" and "work environment," using "fluid work environment," "gig economy," "algorithmic management," as keywords, using Boolean connectors brought in the initial search result of over 1,300 scholarly articles.

Second, a two-step screen was used using strict inclusion/exclusion criteria. Relevance was assessed through titles and abstracts, followed by a full review of the literature for full texts. Inclusion criteria for the literature were empirical research, theoretical submissions or literature reviews in the English language and with at least two of the key topics explored. Studies were excluded if they were purely clinical in nature, with no applications or implications for work organizations, or if they were non-peer-reviewed opinion pieces or had no relevance to work-related stress or work-related behaviors that were deemed to be of a high ethical standard. A total of 142 articles were then selected.

Third, these articles were analyzed using a thematic synthesis approach. Open coding in early analysis uncovered important concepts such as typologies of stress, schemes of neutralization and writing performance. Such concepts were continually grouped into major concepts with a focus on creating an integrative framework to be presented in this paper. A deliberate attempt was made to transcend disciplinary divides ranging from management studies, through social sciences such as sociology, to psychology, to contribute to the compilation of innovative statements about connections between therapeutic writing practices and effective resilience in fluid work environments.

### 4. Conceptual development

The proposed framework is most relevant in a set of contextual parameters. First, it relates to knowledge-intensive fluid work environments (such as the gig economy, consulting, tech and remote work) with a high degree of role ambiguity and social fragmentation. Second, a baseline level of psychological safety in the environment is assumed in this model. In contexts with very unequal power relations, harsh retaliation in kind or pervasive fear of negative consequences, private writing may be viewed as taking too much risk with personal safety and well-being. Third, efficacy is related to organizational reciprocity. The intervention aims to be a diagnostic tool leading toward organizational adaptation. A lack of organizational commitment to make decisions based on new insights may transform this practice into a pacification technique rather than an empowerment strategy, which can provoke cynicism. Such parameters define a setting within which a different protocol may need to be considered in combination with this framework.

#### 4.1 *Theoretical foundations*

Fluid workplaces face ethical challenges that arise from the clash between individual choices and the pressures of the structure around them. This part presents a theoretical

framework in which a better understanding of why people exhibit neutralization behavior in today's work environments and how therapeutic writing can disrupt these tendencies. Through an integration of criminology principles and neuroscience, therapeutic writing is considered both a tool and a practice. The application of neutralization theory emerges with extra significance in today's work environments. Ambiguity and a lack of cohesion are considered rampant in this context, with an increasing degree of confusion in this setting (Wu and Wei, 2024). In a conventional organizational setup, employees will have a rationale in which they can attribute incorrect trivialities to a form of moral defense based on common grounds. They can cite reasons such as "This is an order from above," or "This is for our team," hence arguing they did this all in support of a higher good objective in this matter (Mumtaz, 2022; Zhang and Leidner, 2018). Nevertheless, fluid work systems such as gig economies, remote teams and algorithm-driven platforms expedite and redefine these procedures. For example, gig economy participants partaking in invisible algorithmic systems can predict exhaustion by imputing expectations to the platform ("The algorithms in the application pushed me"). Of course, this is in a manner similar to how decentralized team remote staff reproach leadership for disconnections ("They don't understand what's real for us"), repurposing disconnections into a justifiable response toward being abandoned in a decentralized way (Hajihedari and Delgosha, 2024; Scheuer *et al.*, 2021). These adaptations illustrate how neutralization evolves in settings where accountability is decentralized, roles are transient and systemic pressures obscure individual agency.

Therapeutic writing inverts neutralization by engaging three interlinked psychological and neurocognitive processes. Emotional externalization serves a critical function in the first instance, to permit people to translate their internalized anxiety into tangible story form (Paixão, 2018). As people talk among themselves or try to make sense of algorithmic management or their roles in it, they begin to work through these anxieties about the system and their capacity to act, which in turn reduces their emotional investment in needing to rationalize. In this manner, they can move from a state of powerlessness to a state of empowerment. For instance, provoked reflection, such as reframing an unpleasant experience with a client into a boundary-setting moment, engages prefrontal systems used for ethics to assist people to better redescribe themselves within a life challenge given to them, rather than simply being a one-way struggle toward self-improvement (Regehr *et al.*, 2023). Moreover, neuroplastic adaptive therapy will see this hardening of improved behavior in the end (Joshua, 2022). Habitual writing cements paths of self-regulation and emotional resilience into a firmer bond in this manner, to better overhaul thinking paths of cognitive predisposition toward neutralization in a sustained way (Atkins and Carver, 2021). For instance, a contractor will become less anxious with uncertainty in a way that they are less pressed in terms of sensible explanations with regards to precarious working situations being necessary due to a lack of options (Allan *et al.*, 2021). The intersection of structural inequalities, organizational tension and psychological pressure necessitates an interdisciplinary approach. Sociologically, flexible work systems of work intensify systematic inequalities because algorithmic systems in shared economies unduly sanction marginalized workers, with precarious work shifting risk from companies to employees, according to Shifrin and Michel (2022) and Smyth *et al.* (2020). Twenty-first century managerial ideologies concerning work efficiency ignore such inequalities, viewing burnout in terms of personal ineptitude instead of consequences of a larger system. Psychological studies have included chronic stress in terms of impairing self-regulation in persistent disengagement loops (Bailey *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, therapeutic writing takes up a liminal space between personal and structural change. The disciplines are traversed because therapeutic writing brings people access to dealing with cognitive and affective splintering on one level and making sense of systemic pressure on another level to make these issues legible and contestable (Pearson and Foster, 2024; Forster *et al.*, 2022; Bertrand, 2021). For instance, one can see how a gig economy worker can both work through personal worries in relation to algorithmic control but also produce a critique of an inequitable rating system

with which they can work to affect social change (Chan, 2019; Griesbach *et al.*, 2019). The ability to do both is what puts a spanner in the works of neutralization because, in taking control of their stories, people contest the very processes that achieve disengagement in nature.

The cross-cultural transferability of therapeutic writing can never be considered with superficial attention. Culturally important dimensions such as individualism/collectivism (Fatehi *et al.*, 2020) or high/low context communication styles (Yang *et al.*, 2021) can greatly affect how these kinds of writing can be received and interpreted. For example, in a high context/collectivist culture, such as most East Asian or Middle Eastern countries, where relationships and contexts are where all meaning resides, a personal form of writing may appear strange or too self-exposing. Other forms, such as a guided group storytelling activity or a dialogue journal with a systematic format or writing emphasizing collective identity and relationship cohesion, may be more meaningful and productive in these contexts.

#### ***4.2 Stress typologies in fluid workplaces***

The fluidity of today's workplaces is a cluster of stressors that erode ethical resilience and cement neutralization habits. Such stress factors, grounded in structural, social and cognitive foundations, overlap to create environments in which people justify disengagement, exhaustion and compromised ethics (Mueller and Morley, 2020). The following subsection will present these typologies of stress present in fluid work environments. Structural ambiguity arises in gig economies and non-hierarchical collectives where confusion over roles affects professional self-conception. With unclear roles and command structures, people face fluid roles, leading to a dissonance effect in which actions do not align with deep-seated beliefs (Page-Tickell and Yerby, 2020; Wood *et al.*, 2019a). A contractor facilitating conflicting requests from clients, for example, can justify poor performance in terms of a necessary evil in a muddled system, which shows a denial of responsibility. Such ambiguity leads to a fluidity in accountability, which can readily be pushed onto amorphous structures (Mair and Seelos, 2021). Temporal Fragmentation occurs in an environment where the culture of being 'on all the time' is omnipresent. This is due to the omnipresent connectivity that the digital age offers. The telecommuter, working in global teaming activities with teammates distributed in various regions that differ in time zones, is vulnerable to incursions in personal time (Ciolfi and Lockley, 2018). Being "always on" can infuse self-exploitation, with people pushing aside consequences to deny harm through disengaging with reality. Such degradation in restorative downtime can weaken resilience in cognitive powers, which can leave people liable to make careless decisions in situations requiring decisions, hence engaging in poor judgment and poor ethics in work life, when people deny harm despite increasingly compromised ethics in work obligations and personal life commitments (Hassard and Morris, 2021). Algorithmic control represents the zenith of autonomy and incompatibility of surveillance issues under platform capitalism (de Vaujany *et al.*, 2021). AI-based metrics, like Uber ratings or the rate at which delivery apps are expected to function, provide the conditions under which work occurs under the guise of human control (Wiener *et al.*, 2021; Griesbach *et al.*, 2019). This is a novel way of pointing fingers at people who are to blame. However, this represents a new pattern of finger-pointing toward those on whom blame is placed. With automated governance, individual agency will be reduced, making ethics a simple algorithmic requirement (Zuboff, 2022). The fluidity with regards to identity will disable specialists in transitional work roles, such as freelance workers operating in split client environments (Zappa *et al.*, 2023). Each and every project demands a re-invention of self, creating dissonance between the actual self and performative professionalism (Cross and Swart, 2020). For instance, a marketing consultant who oscillates between corporations and startups may be able to prioritize different sets of values to reconcile the clashing norms of the corporations and startups they

work in. This, therefore, leads to self-fragmentation due to the contradictions. This attracts the self and leads to projects of explanation like loyalty beyond self (Ryoo *et al.*, 2023). Social disembeddedness describes a hybrid and virtual form of sociality in which a lack of co-presence leads to the deconstruction of social ties (Petitta and Ghezzi, 2023). With a removal of informal interaction and ritual performance, people are left in want of collective support and predisposed to alienation. In an arm's-length organizational culture, remote workers earn the right to refuse to contribute to the organization by complaining against the leaders (Bagga *et al.*, 2022). Alienation espouses a code of conduct where others are a means with which to transact, in contradistinction to solidarity. Precariat anxiety is where gig economies suffer from work security being tainted because of arbitrary desires (Singh *et al.*, 2024). Fear of collapse or nullification leads to risk aversion because workers consent to exploitation to keep their livelihoods afloat (Bari *et al.*, 2020; Chen *et al.*, 2020). Workers can legitimize exploitation to make a sacrifice, essentializing precariousness to live a nonviable reality. Precarity Anxiety quiets resistance, "survival mode" taking priority over ethics of resistance (Han, 2018). "Scarcity" of recognition thrives in fast-paced settings in which a recognition with sufficient substance is minimal or narrowed to transactional encounters. Workers in fast-paced settings, such as content moderators and gig delivery service providers, do not, in reality, have a chance at being recognized in a manner meaningful outside of work requirements, which in turn lessens an experience of being seen. A sense of being unseen may initiate a disengaged, veiled mode of denial in response to maltreatment (Yang *et al.*, 2022; Bhattacharyya *et al.*, 2020). Such conditions demotivate and treat work as a series of task accomplishments. Cultural misalignment describes a case of personal values not aligning with organizational ethics, which is widespread in globalized teams with incompatible normative systems based on incompatible paradigms of ethics (Minbaeva *et al.*, 2018). For example, the employee who advocated for the transition toward renewables might underestimate their knowledge, because they do not want to challenge the management that values more immediate returns over a net-zero transition. Cognitive overload is brought about by the constant shifting that is involved when working with fluid roles that involve context-switching at an increasing dizzying pace (Sewell *et al.*, 2020). Decision fatigue clouding judgment leads to heuristic thinking, such as photocopying other people's work to meet deadlines, and then justifies this action through denial of injury (Pignatiello *et al.*, 2018). Overload leads to a scattered attention span, where attention is focused on being efficient rather than intensively ethical. Moral neutralization completes the vicious circle of stress since pressure compels the justification of unethical choices (Hakimi *et al.*, 2020). A project manager who focuses on deadlines might approve a misleading report, as an excuse that it is a short-term convenience to ensure team survival. This move, which is defended as a temporary convenience, engenders a culture of ethical flexibility (Zhu *et al.*, 2022; Havlik *et al.*, 2022).

As presented in Table 1, these typologies illustrate how the ambiguity, loneliness and precarity of the fluid workplace create the conditions necessary for the neutralization of disengagement that results from stress. There is a stress factor in each typology that leads to the establishment of the neutralization process. Mapping these stressors onto each other allows scholars to explore interventions, such as therapeutic writing.

### 4.3 Therapeutic writing mechanisms

Therapeutic writing serves to break this cycle of stress neutralization by reframing broken experiences into a coherent narrative, making it possible to assign blame and restoring cognitive agency. A trilogy of cognitive functions—emotional externalization, cognitive reappraisal and neuroplastic adaptation—help people thrive in liquid work environments with resilience based on ethics. Emotion externalization is accomplished by translating abstract and/or internalized sources of pressure into written form, making system pressure transparent and contestable (Bai and Repetti, 2017). As a way of externalizing an

**Table 1** Stressor typology

<i>Stress typology</i>	<i>Neutralization mechanism</i>	<i>Example</i>
Structural ambiguity	Denial of responsibility	Contractors accuse disorganized workflows of low performance: "the system's confusion left me no option."
Temporal fragmentation	Denial of injury	Remote workers habituate sleeplessness: "I can work always-on."
Algorithmic control	Condemnation of condemners	Gig workers condemn platforms: "the app's discriminatory scores pushed me to hurry up."
Identity fluidity	Appeal to higher loyalties	Freelancers repress core values: "I will tailor my voice to retain this customer."
Social disembeddedness	Condemnation of condemners	Hybrid employees blame managers: "the management isn't concerned with remote workers."
Precarity anxiety	Appeal to higher loyalties	Gig workers endure exploitation: "I need to earn that pay to keep a roof above my family."
Recognition scarcity	Denial of victim	Content moderators disconnect: "why make more effort if no One will ever recognize my input?"
Cultural misalignment	Condemnation of condemners	Sustainability activists scoff at greenwashing: "leadership promises are false."
Cognitive overload	Denial of injury	Managers rationalize rushed decisions: "cutting corners wasn't a big deal."
Moral neutralization	Appeal to higher loyalties	Teams rationalize unethical decisions: "We needed to bend rules to meet deadlines."

**Source(s):** Authors' own work

experience in written word format concerning algorithmic domination, precarization and/or disembedding in social relationships, people are able to demarcate their personal self from their emotional investments in such considerations. For instance, gig economy workers can describe their experiences with blackbox AI systems, such as injustices in systematic rating systems, to make vague frustration in systematic critique (Sayyed *et al.*, 2024). Through this technique, nothing will suppress an amygdala-driven emotional state, calming a fight or flight state symptom, to regulate with prefrontal cortical control of representing stressful experiences in an externalized manner rather than in a personal failure state experience (Finley *et al.*, 2018). Long-term, cognitive reappraisal in written format shifts perspectives in written format from opportunities in stress terms to opportunities in personal change and resistance to pressure, using cognitive writing journals with indications toward opportunities in cognitive growth and resistance to these relationships despite difficulty in such manners (Burnham and Kocovski, 2023). Long-term, this technique reverses secularization in institutions such as algorithmic systems governing work environments, allowing people to blame institutions in critique rather than personal blame. To illustrate, role-ambiguity contractors could counter questions such as, "What essential values are the foundation for your work within projects?" to recreate identity coherence with fluid roles. Such an exercise solidifies dorsolateral prefrontal circuits, exercising top-down control of impulsive nullification. With decision fatigue breaking into reappraisal in the high-tempo environment, one could move a project manager, for instance, who was simply writing about what constituted an ethical issue, to adopting a deliberate delegation strategy (Pignatiello *et al.*,

2018). This cognitive reframing, in addition to stimulating cognitive flexibility, precludes moral neutralization when prioritizing forecasting over opportunism. The neuroplastic change brought on by this writing exercise promotes self-regulation and ethics with each performance (Glass *et al.*, 2019). After a certain lapse in time, engaging in writing exercises related to stressful life situations such as precarity anxiety or a sense of recognition scarcity leads to a thickening of the anterior cingulate cortex, thus improving control over emotions, with enhanced connectivity among limbic and prefrontal regions in both cases (Biro *et al.*, 2023; Vande Griek *et al.*, 2018; Reinhold *et al.*, 2018). A daily stocktaking of transferable skills for a freelancer will finally instill a sense of stability in them, with a reduction in fear-driven appeals to loyalty. Team members using shared gratitude journals to address recognition scarcity will build a sense of team cohesion, thus recreating a “social embeddedness” which is otherwise destroyed by working from a remote location (Basit *et al.*, 2024). The effect leads to a reprogramming of habitual thinking in people. Here is where therapeutic writing engages with organization studies, sociology and design in psychology. As a matter of organization administration, it provides scalable solutions in which reflection is embedded in organizational or other processes using AI-powered writing tools, answering both organizational needs for efficiency and prioritizing well-being. For example, microjournals in a gamified form incentivize gig economy contributors to keep 5-min journals of stressful situations in a manner that alters organizational culture without being too obvious in designing an ethics of care in constructing organizational culture (Majithia *et al.*, 2024). As sociologically inclusive, it finds typically personal experience rendered universal in which worker accounts of algorithmic injustices or disjunctive culture bring to light organizational errors, forge solidarity and foster activism. As a matter of psychology and design, it repairs cracks in self-identity in which provisional organizational roles are woven into a single self-narrative, exemplified in organizational consultants compiling tales of mediating organizational clients and personal beliefs, for example. To be successful in using therapeutic writing, one must overcome three obstacles. “Privacy concerns in decentralized settings,” for instance, “could undermine willingness to make risky disclosures,” but “story circles among peers” or ‘anonymous or protected computer environments,’ can help assuage them, for instance in a study by Platt *et al.* (2021). Scalability to high-stress environments, where time is of the essence and reflection will not be permitted, needs to be built into existing tools, such as forcing delivery drivers to listen to voice journaling during breaks. Societal norms in resisting hustle culture, where work is equivalent to hard work, a necessary equal step in incorporating writing activities into a strategic exception to idleness (Chairunnisah and Kurnia, 2023). Techniques in gamification, such as being compensated in online sites for journaled writing activities, use a dopamine reward in making reflections a “productive” labor (Mou *et al.*, 2024).

Therapeutic writing grows out of coping with oneself to making a practice of resisting a dehumanized working life. The externalization of structural tension, recapturing cognitive agency and taking responsibility within an organization retrieves fluidity from an immanent source of precariousness to a site of moral transvaluation. As a practice of revolutionary self-claiming through which individuals assert their humanity, therapeutic writing can span resilience and collective action for people working under algorithmic control, isolation or moral estrangement.

#### **4.4 Ethical resilience in sustainable work systems**

Ethical resilience embodies collective organizational and member resilience to uphold moral responsibility and integrity in the midst of systemic stressors in dynamic workplaces. As opposed to previous models of resilience based on individual adaptability, it focuses on upholding ethical coherence on three pillars of sustainability, including organizational (agility with accountability), social (dignity/equity) and cognitive (ethical judgment). In fluid working environments, which are demarcated by algorithmic rules, gig uncertainty and role

definition, ethical resilience decodes flexibility in a systemic way to transmute stressful situations into opportunities for learning ethics (Tan *et al.*, 2021). Ethical corrosion in the present era is on a par with environmental and financial dangers in terms of threat to the organization. Ethical fluid working environments, such as in the case of burnout when accounts of dismantling faith and algorithmic regulation are reduced, are a very good example in this context. Ethical resilience can be considered to be at a level of threshold subjects such as productive fragility conditional on gigs, temporal exhaustion, which brings balance in terms of short-term and long-term ethics, effectiveness and validity (Hajiheydari and Delgosha, 2024). In addition, attaining a standard in narrative ethics in terms of prefrontal repair, healing prefrontal function with ethics-boosted judgment-making and self-continuity with interconnecting temporal roles with eternal ethics through ethical healing via writing. Each of these composite operations situates writing itself as a unified and system-wide agency, filling a span between individual flourishing and organizational ethics in liquid work systems.

#### 4.5 Propositions for ethical resilience

The following assumptions describe a manner in which therapeutic writing interventions disrupt stress neutralization dynamics in fluid work environments:

*P1.* Formal role-clarification writing will decrease role ambiguity because flexible roles will be bound by fixed ethics standards.

A lack of structural clarity in gig economies and non-hierarchical systems hides responsibility, making abdication easy when employees point to disorganized systems for moral dilemmas rather than taking control of them (Worth and Karaagac, 2021). Role-clarification writing prevents this by encouraging individuals to set their core values and priorities in black and white, symbolically translating conflicted expectations into goal-oriented commitments. The tool rebuilds a sense of self-integration to help employees sense fluid work without compromising their moral standards (Josi *et al.*, 2020; Soubra *et al.*, 2018):

*P2.* The boundary definition text resists temporal fragmentation in its treatment of time as a resource.

Temporal fragmentation in “always-on” societies justifies self-exploitation based on a denial of harm in overwork (Ciolfi and Lockley, 2018). Boundary-writing approaches, such as documenting restorative everyday activities, make non-negotiable demands readable to become workable plans. Boundary enactment leads to cognitive reappraisal to allow employees to regain control over time and a sense of sensible routines (Hamilton and Bacon, 2021; Scott Hoffman *et al.*, 2021):

*P3.* The proposition is that algorithmic awareness writing circumvents algorithmic control to make systems imperceptible yet legible.

A major challenge with algorithmic rules in a platform economy is a lack of accountability, leading to criticism of condemners because condemners criticize AI systems based on exploitation. Awareness writing based on algorithmic understanding records experiences with unclear metrics, making such metrics transparent and criticism turns into a critique of systems. Projection of awareness is important because it facilitates collective awareness, allowing for proper design and clarity (Shin *et al.*, 2022; Koenig, 2020):

*P4.* Identity-integrated writing leads to a reduction in identity fluidity because narrative coherence is established and retained.

Identity fluidity in contractual or freelance work requires a fluidity of commitment in which authenticity is compromised with loyalty-driven dissonance. Identity-integration writing integrates different roles into a story, such as letter writing to oneself in the past or future.

Reducing compartmentalization and moral drift, it resolves demands and incorporates them into deep values (Zappa *et al.*, 2023; Flatøy, 2023):

*P5.* It is proposed that the effect of communal storytelling on writing reduces social disembeddedness as it rebuilds social relationships.

Remote team social disembeddedness weakens social ethics, and the resultant reason for social disengagement remains valid as it describes and justifies its reasons for disengagement on the basis of deeming leaders as unworthy. The social storytelling spaces allow for the externalization of loneliness as an experience for social reflection, promoting empathy and rebuilding social purpose in groups as it replaces loneliness with social accountability (Petitta and Ghezzi, 2023):

*P6.* We propose that the writing task of self-affirmation leads to a reduction in precarity anxiety by increasing levels of self-efficacy beliefs.

Precarity anxiety, which is associated with gig economy work, is driving fear appeals of loyalty and normative beliefs of exploitation by the gig platforms and companies, and the writing task of self-affirmation helps by strengthening the circuits of resilience associated with neuroplasticity, reconceptualizing precarity anew, as it is understood as a developmentally supportive environment (Singh *et al.*, 2024):

*P7.* We propose that gratitude journaling is a resistance against recognition poverty.

Being invisible in high turnover positions demands invisibility in high turnover positions as a denial of the victim principle to describe motivation siphoning. While gratitude journaling transcends effort, morality and the reward pathway because the value alignment from peers' recognition of input shared in co-journals aligns peers' value with input, gratitude journaling rebuilds work, rebuilds meaning and resists indifference because it refires purpose (Basit *et al.*, 2024):

*P8.* A value alignment text will not have a culture mismatch because it clearly states a difference in values.

Misalignment on a cultural level in both organizational and individual contexts enables "condemning condemners" to promote cynicism. An externalization of the alignment of organizational values involves agonies that are bargained in a dilemma to criticize or re-bargain limits in a manner to allow employees to condemn hypocrisy or re-bargain limits when in a passive state of resentment, translating into an active state of ethics (Minbaeva *et al.*, 2018):

*P9.* Reflective logging, we suggest, can reduce cognitive overload by articulating implicit stressors.

In fluid jobs, cognitive overload calls for ethical shortcuts in terms of harm withholding or precipitous conclusions. Logarithmic reflective recording documents a series of occurrences in writing, which calls for a series of remedies, such as task allocation, to address them. In exposure to quiet stressors, an ideal practice relates to sustainable flows rather than unsustainable bustle (Sewell *et al.*, 2020):

*P10.* We propose that future-self writing disrupts moral Neutralization by respecting long-term integrity.

Moral neutralization under coercion legitimates immoral conduct – on the grounds of loyalty and momentary survival. Future-self writing uses prefrontal foresight, deciding based on long-term consequences. The technique resists impulsive rationalization for the sake of careful ethical decision-making, and it promotes responsibility (Hakimi *et al.*, 2020; Glass *et al.*, 2019).

Table 2 summarizes all propositions and provides a concise synthesis of the theoretical logic behind each proposition.

**Table 2** Theoretical scaffolding

<i>Proposition</i>	<i>Target stressor</i>	<i>Expected outcome</i>
<i>P1. Role-clarification writing</i>	Structural ambiguity	Increased role coherence; reduced value-task dissonance; clearer ethical accountability
<i>P2. Boundary-defining writing</i>	Temporal fragmentation	Restored control over time; decreased self-exploitation; sustainable work rhythms
<i>P3. Algorithmic-awareness writing</i>	Algorithmic control	Externalized locus of critique; shift from personal blame to systemic advocacy; demand for transparency
<i>P4. Identity-integration writing</i>	Identity fluidity	Unified professional self-narrative; reduced compartmentalization; alignment of roles with core values
<i>P5. Communal storytelling writing</i>	Social disembodiedness	Restored collective efficacy; shared ethical frames; strengthened relational bonds
<i>P6. Self-affirmation writing</i>	Precarity anxiety	Enhanced self-efficacy; reduced fear-based compliance; increased adaptive confidence
<i>P7. Gratitude writing</i>	Recognition scarcity	Renewed sense of purpose; increased intrinsic motivation; visibility of contribution
<i>P8. Values-alignment writing</i>	Cultural misalignment	Clarified ethical stance; renegotiated boundaries; constructive dissent
<i>P9. Reflective logging</i>	Cognitive overload	Improved task allocation; sustainable workflow; reduced impulsive decision-making
<i>P10. Future-self writing</i>	Moral neutralization	Enhanced foresight; deliberate ethical decision-making; prioritization of long-term integrity

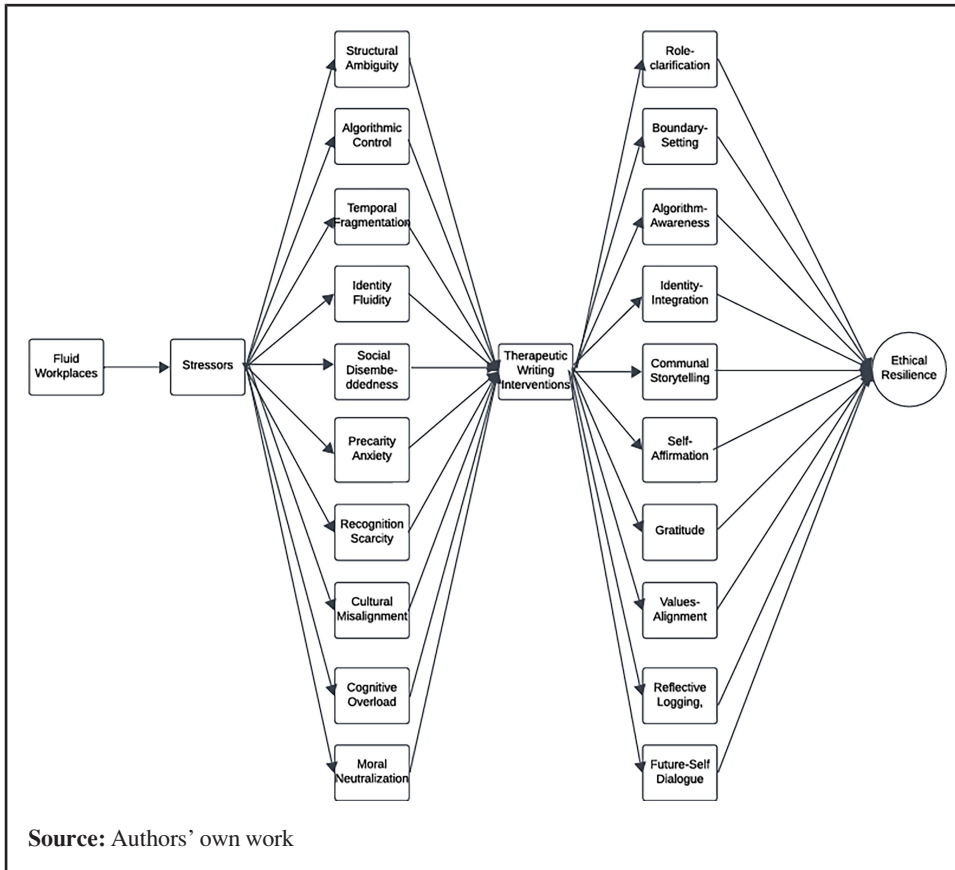
Source(s): Authors' own work

Figure 1 shows how stressful factors in fluid environments operate in a self-constitutive cycle of stress and moral disengagement, which therapeutic writing interrupts with a combination of emotion externalization, cognitive reappraisal and neuroplastic adaptation, producing individual resilience and organizational insight that, via adaptive reciprocity, can reduce the stressful factor from which a self-resilient moral path begins.

## 5. Discussion

This necessary adaptability to the precarious nature of the contemporary workplace, via the mechanisms of algorithmic governmentality, that is, the use of algorithmic norms rather than human authority to control the workforce (Weiskopf and Hansen, 2023), precarious workforce contracts and disjointed social relations, requires not the personal ethic of resilience, but rather the collective ethic that the following pages propose to promote via the use of therapeutic writing as a sociocognitive intervention to reintegrate subjective experiences with the deconstruction of the system itself. This positions the therapeutic use of writing not only as a space to interrupt the stress-redundancy cycle, but to transform the inevitable deterioration of the ethic that results from fluid workplaces from a necessary evil to an interventionist space that externalizes the unseen stresses via the medium of legible narratives. Here, the stress-redundancy mechanism, a necessary aspect of fluid workplaces, becomes an opportunity to subvert the organizational ethic that contributes to

**Figure 1** Conceptual map



the deteriorating ethic via the use of writing. The applicability of this tool to real-world practices derives from an underlying paradigm shift in theory, namely that neutralization is now considered a symptom of the system, not an incorrectly based belief system of the self (Rhodes, 2023). Thus, while the application of the Sykes and Matza theory on the subject matter by other researchers (Blomberg et al., 2019) aimed to rectify the moral deficiency via the correction of the rationalizations held by the individual organizational members, this practice has regularly presented issues with its application. An example health-care system that could institute decision logs, for instance, might be data showing that nurse shortages drive nurses into moral dilemmas that lead not to resilience training, as would make sense, but to reallocations of resources (Schlak et al., 2022). These applications require that the methodology meet its critique in terms of co-optation by corporate social responsibility on display. The social implications of this research appear most clearly in relation to labor rights and government regulation regarding technology. Therapeutic writing then remains a technology of testimony, one among several forms of testifying injury against systems, as they also sustain a sense of solidarity with regard to platforms and economies characterized by the absence of any labor unions or collective bargaining rights for labor. The narratives of women suffering from nursing sanctions in “Always-On Economies,” or food delivery drivers from communities of color maintaining their diaries against racial algorithmic injustices, are those that assemble cases for policies to be put in place (Ahmed et al., 2024). Those institutions adopting this perspective would offer not one, but a double-bounded mandate toward improvement. It would mean institutions that offer tools for individual intervention, as well as tools that also seek to improve what individual symptoms

make clear. It could mean one alliance based on transparent software that gets information from worker diaries, or companies that will vociferously advocate on behalf of gig workers from platforms, using stories as clear evidence. However, from understanding to performing remains always tenuous. Technological diaries threaten the vulnerability of workers as they offer care as their product. They can also overlook the role of the word 'writing' as something that gets misunderstood in knowledge-focused societies that always urge more 'efficiency.' The real test of this model is how well it can redistribute narrative power in the sense that those who have been most deeply impacted by fluid work's burden guide its rewriting.

A careful consideration of the context of practice is important for ensuring the effective integration of therapeutic writing practices in fluid work environments. In this regard, the following proposed framework applies to voluntary implementation, preparation for the implementers, assessment of the implementation process, as well as addressing the barriers to the transition from clinical practice to an organization. It is essential to note that the implementation practice regarding therapeutic writing should ensure it is voluntary and "opt-in" so that the issue of autonomy will not be violated. By making it mandatory, it could similarly lead to an uneasy relationship regarding reflection and performance, thereby influencing psychological safety (Sargunaraj *et al.*, 2020). It should not be used as an organizational technique aimed at improving performance. Preparation plays a pivotal role in the implementation of writing. Organizations should deliver initial workshops that inform the related purposes, as well as terms related to writing. In addition, facilitators (such as HR professionals or external coaches) should be trained in the basics of empathetic listening and ethical guidelines. Clear written guidelines also need to be provided to all participants, including information on confidentiality, data ownership and the strict separation of writing content from performance appraisal processes (Ohmann *et al.*, 2017).

Organizational environments do not provide the therapist-patient dyad present in clinical settings. Writing, therefore, should be supported through guided peer circles, small, confidential groups led by either trained peers or independent moderators. Digital platforms with high levels of privacy can afford a protected medium through which reflections may take place using encrypted and anonymized journals, with a potential for sharing if one desires. Pre-designed, structured exercises guide reflection without the need to disclose the traumatic content. Organizations should allow access to optional counseling through an Employee Assistance Program. Such combined structures allow "contained" spaces where employees feel free to reflect without threat of managerial oversight and reprisal.

In regard to the real application of this process to organizations, this is not an application from the therapy setting, but an application of its underlying tenets. There are several important points to differentiate. The role of the writing process in the therapeutic setting revolves almost exclusively around personal healing, whereas within the organizational setting it goes beyond healing to include cementing ethics, building resilience or even tearing apart systems. The feedback loop is different too. This could be a facilitated group sharing process or a collection process that anonymously aggregates insight for the organization's learning purposes, but not for an employee's personal feedback to the boss. The first guiding principle regarding this interaction would be that the employees always retain complete ownership over their writings at all times, and the organization should, therefore, be allowed no more than the aggregated themes anonymously, having been provided explicit, informed consent. The goal remains to respect boundaries while harnessing the power of the diagnostic process that writing has to change the system for the better. The first important area to explore from an ethics perspective would be to make the writing process better for employees at least, if not better, than the organization. This requires that a reciprocal exchange formula be put together.

A major practical consideration in such therapeutic writing methods is the possibility of backlash exposure to co-employees or managerial repercussions, despite established

safeguards for privacy. The need for such a consideration resides in the reality that no product is completely risk-proof in these kinds of organizational power struggles. To counter this in a way that takes into direct consideration this need, these proposed principles include guaranteed overlays of protected confidentiality with a mandatory firewall separating personal reflections from performance ratings. Such an objective aims not to remove this risk but bring it to a different, lower level of exposure risk, similar to ethics hotlines/employee assistance programs. Moreover, it is critical to state that therapeutic writing is not presented as a replacement for an open organization discourse but rather a complement and preparatory step. As a matter of fact, an individual can distinguish personal reactive responses from content by first working out their personal experiences in a safe, private setting, where they can work out their thoughts in a coherent manner, because a personal written space is a preparatory stage for voice, but not a silent stage. The specific skill of storytelling as practice for communities (Proposition 5) will try to bridge this gap. The “gossip,” pointing fingers at people, will then be turned aspersively toward systemic critique of the organization of work. Ultimately, organizational utility and ethical need for maintaining confidentiality in these spaces come from being a means by which truths, suppressed in public discourse by imbalances of power or fear of negative consequences, can come to light in these safe spaces, where a self-correcting loop can be initiated with a focus toward private consideration, creating a safe space for a more authentic public discourse.

On the part of the employee, the benefits include enhanced self-regulation, diminished burnout, enhanced role clarity, feeling empowered to express their systemic concerns without fear of backlash and crafting an integrative narrative identity of their values. For the organization, the advantage lies in gaining practical recommendations on the systemic stressors of injustice through algorithms and role ambiguity to attain an enhanced moral environment and diminished moral disengagement to inform and revamp organizational policies effectively (Tarafdar *et al.*, 2023). Which is why there is a rationale to include the action exchange more explicitly. The deal is this: employees give frank reflections in return for the organization’s commitment to listen and to enact structural change based on the insight revealed.

Evaluation of therapeutic writing initiatives should be multimodal and longitudinal, ranging from individual to organizational levels of outcomes. At the individual participant level, what can be used is an assessment of pre- and post-test levels of well-being, self-efficacy or sense of agency. Anonymous analysis of content in the writing samples may, on an optional basis, assist in understanding the transitions in themes, like powerlessness to advocacy, on both individual and group levels. At an organizational level, the measurements may include changes in the perceptions of the ethical environment through current surveys, actual reductions in burnout turnover and recording changes in policies launched due to insights from the writing process. Process evaluation would also be required, monitoring rates of voluntary participation, retention and qualitative data concerns for the quality of facilitators, as well as environmental safety. This is what keeps the practice adaptive, ethical and effective.

Therapeutic writing goes from self-help to infrastructural ethics, a practice of reconditioning both structure and mind. This subversive potential is not found in undoing fluidity, as other movements do, but in redesigning it, in which workers’ stories inform system design and malleability is improved by shared care rather than self-abnegation.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper has posited the idea of therapeutic writing as a transformative practice that interrupts the cycle of stress and ethical disengagement in fluid workspaces by conceptualizing it as a tool and a structural intervention. By bridging the cognitive reappraisal approach of narrative construction, systemic criticism and collective narrative

building, the paper has re-imagined the idea of ethical resilience as a relationship process that calls upon the need for two-way interaction between workers and the system they work under. By applying the rubric of translation and application, the paper proposes a model of translation that encourages the organization to move past superficial wellness projects. Writing therapy projects such as algorithmic awareness diaries and boundary stories should not only act as coping mechanisms but diagnostic tools through which the problems of the system can come to the fore through the very act of alternative production. For example, gig economies adopting such strategies should move past superficial changes such as the addition of transparent performance-based scales and pay structures, as well as using their AI development system as a collective resource for workers rather than imposing direct objectivity from the algorithms themselves. Similarly, the offices that implement the peer story circles should work toward bridging the inequality established by the very stories they tell through the circles. Writing should not act as a resource extracted by overworked workers, but should instead act as an added service toward the swell of the ocean by incorporating more equality measures into the system through the very act of policy intervention through the narratives produced by writing therapy. Social responsabilization in work environment exists through the very act of becoming a collective voice through the narratives produced by writing therapy. The narratives produced through writing therapy call not just for retreats into stabilization through the system, but act as affirmative evidence through which policy intervention can take place through the very act of profiling the very problem that the system needs to fix. These results can provide capital by investing into infrastructures that provide human thriving and not just resource extraction by exploring a paradigm shift from the leader's procedural structure from responsibility for resilience to infrastructural development of sustainable work systems. Future studies will need to then try out this conceptual model's applicability in varied contexts, for example, how do writing practices generalize in globalized workforces? Can technology tools enable the democratization of access without supporting surveillance? Most saliently, then, the study of AI itself must partner with unionized workers such that the intervention remains linked to the lived experience and not the interests of management. Finally, therefore, this paper concludes that the future of work must be written quite literally by the very people who live within its constantly shifting terrain. Therapeutic writing may not hold the solution, *per se*, but the provocation, itself an intervention, or perhaps better put, an invitational provocation to reimagine the adaptability of the self as not an accommodation of the few, via the extraction of the many, but as accommodation of the many themselves.

The value of therapeutic writing practice, according to this perspective, has to be located within learning. When an organization chooses to take part in voluntary writing practice sessions, it embodies the well-managed aspect of its workforce. This transition from therapeutic to organizational settings is achieved through intensive principled design, ensuring that writing does not become a means of oppression but of freedom. Future studies would then test this framework in various industries, studying the long-term effects and related digital support for better accessibility without infringing on individual privacy. When therapeutic writing is applied with integrity and with a structurally reciprocal approach, it can help change fluid workplaces from being places of moral deterioration into places of reflection for moral renewal. It is not through forcing people to participate that the effectiveness of therapeutic writing should be measured, but through establishing a context of trust where the worker would feel secure enough to write, and where the organization would be willing to listen. Writing becomes more than a personal tool; it becomes a vehicle for learning.

Although this framework provides a new way to approach this problem from an interdisciplinary perspective, when it comes to implementation and application in a generalized manner, this work is faced with important limitations. To begin with, assumptions in this model concerning narrative processing and emotional expression need to be considered thoughtfully in a cross-cultural way. Cultural beliefs underlie individual self-

perception and written vulnerability expression in a vital manner. For example, in a collectivist culture, individual cognitive processing concerning personal emotions in written form might appear less suitable than formats with a focus on community dialogue and problem-solving. In addition, a culture's views of authority might affect views concerning written exposure as a safe haven or a dangerous exposure. Further research would need to investigate how cultural factors can serve a moderating function in tests of written format effectiveness. Second, a series of methodological and practical issues arises in translating narrative into organizational diagnosis. The move from individual thinking to organizational insight is one that encounters challenges in representativeness, organizational interpretive bias and organizational receptivity to a new course of action. Moreover, in the absence of organizational frameworks for analysis and governance, it can readily become the case that organizational insights will be watered down, filtered, or organizationally assimilated without meaningful change. Future research should focus on protocoling such a translation and methods for co-diagnostic analysis with organizational membership. In addition, it is integral to highlight the ethical mandates at the foundation of the implementation of the reflective writing practice in an organizational context. The task of writing down the vulnerability and the critiques generates its own set of data, especially one that is equally tractable to other goals, including organizational surveillance and the measurement of performances, therefore contributing to the very problem that the transformation aims to solve, that of uncertainty. At the same time, the power structures in the organizational context could very well undermine the orders of the technical measures of information and data security. The sovereignty of the information in future research shall thus have to find its footing in the importance of the matter and not in the afterthought of past research.

The framework presented in this paper constitutes a starting point for turning theoretical insight into organizational and research practice. The implications below describe a course of action in detail and emphasize important regions of future research. A responsible and ethical implementation of therapeutic writing in an organizational setting must therefore be accomplished in a cyclical manner. After conducting a diagnostic scoping and co-design phase where anonymous surveys and focus groups are used to establish key local stressors with employee representatives in designing the focus and protection parameters of this initiative, a pilot project with digital assistance and effectiveness of facilitators must be conducted on a voluntary basis. A subsequent analysis of this pilot project, with an understanding of collective thematic elements from this evaluation, will allow refinement of this project before a more widespread implementation in an organization is undertaken. The most critical stage in this implementation strategy for therapeutic writing, therefore, would be integration, where channels for reviewing collective, anonymous elements must be established to inform organizational modifications in performance metrics or role definition. The effectiveness of this intervention is now dependent on a series of organizational foundations. First and foremost, participation in this intervention must be absolutely voluntary and decoupled from performance management. Second, a commitment to reciprocity must be demonstrated in stating a commitment to respond to system insights. Third, strong data governance policies are now non-negotiable in ensuring a commitment to employee data sovereignty through organizational encryption standards and a prohibition on surveillance repurposing. Facilitation is an essential part of lessening damage and achieving benefit. Facilitators, HR or coaches, need specialized training in active listening, working with groups, trauma-sensitive facilitation and personal boundary-setting, with an emphasis on facilitating process rather than therapy. Preparation of participants is also important; orientation sessions need to include explanations in an honest manner of the purpose of this initiative, an assurance of its complete separation from performance appraisal, a description of privacy provisions, access to mental healthcare resources and a definite right to withdraw. Moreover, facilitators need access to individualized supervision to work through difficult sessions and avoid becoming burned out.

Implicit in all implementations is a need to explicitly address and mitigate serious risk. The key risk is the surveillance and misuse of reflective data. This can be remedied in part by using zero-knowledge or end-to-end encrypted digital platforms and setting up independent ethics boards to check the usage of data. The secondary risk is re-traumatization/emotional distress, which can be ameliorated with immediate access to counseling support, trainer support to detect distress and using structured interviewing with a focus on coping and agency. Then, a third type of cultural risk is performative implementation, in which this effort is incorporated into a superficial wellness initiative that promotes cynicism. To mitigate this, continuation of this initiative can be linked to transparent output in terms of how these findings have driven policy change." Second, this conceptual framework provides a number of specific pathways for future research. As technology increasingly becomes incorporated with these methods, a very important line of research will have to be focused on the ethics of AI journaling to assess such issues as algorithmic bias and commodification, and ensure a focus on humanistic thought. Impact studies will be important in developing methods of assessing a return on investment, not solely based on well-being gains, but in terms of turnover and innovation based on increased psychological safety.

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