

# The Association of Suicide Motivations and Attempt Severity

## Operationalizing a decision-science model of suicide

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### INTRO

- Decision science says suicide is a choice to attempt or not, with three possible outcomes (survive, die, no attempt)<sup>1</sup>
- This implies some attempters may prefer to survive rather than die, which would be reflected in attempt severity
- Research has identified two categories of motivations: inter- and intra-personal<sup>2</sup>
  - Intrapersonal motivations are associated with greater *intent*<sup>3</sup>
- No data exists connecting motivations with attempt *severity*

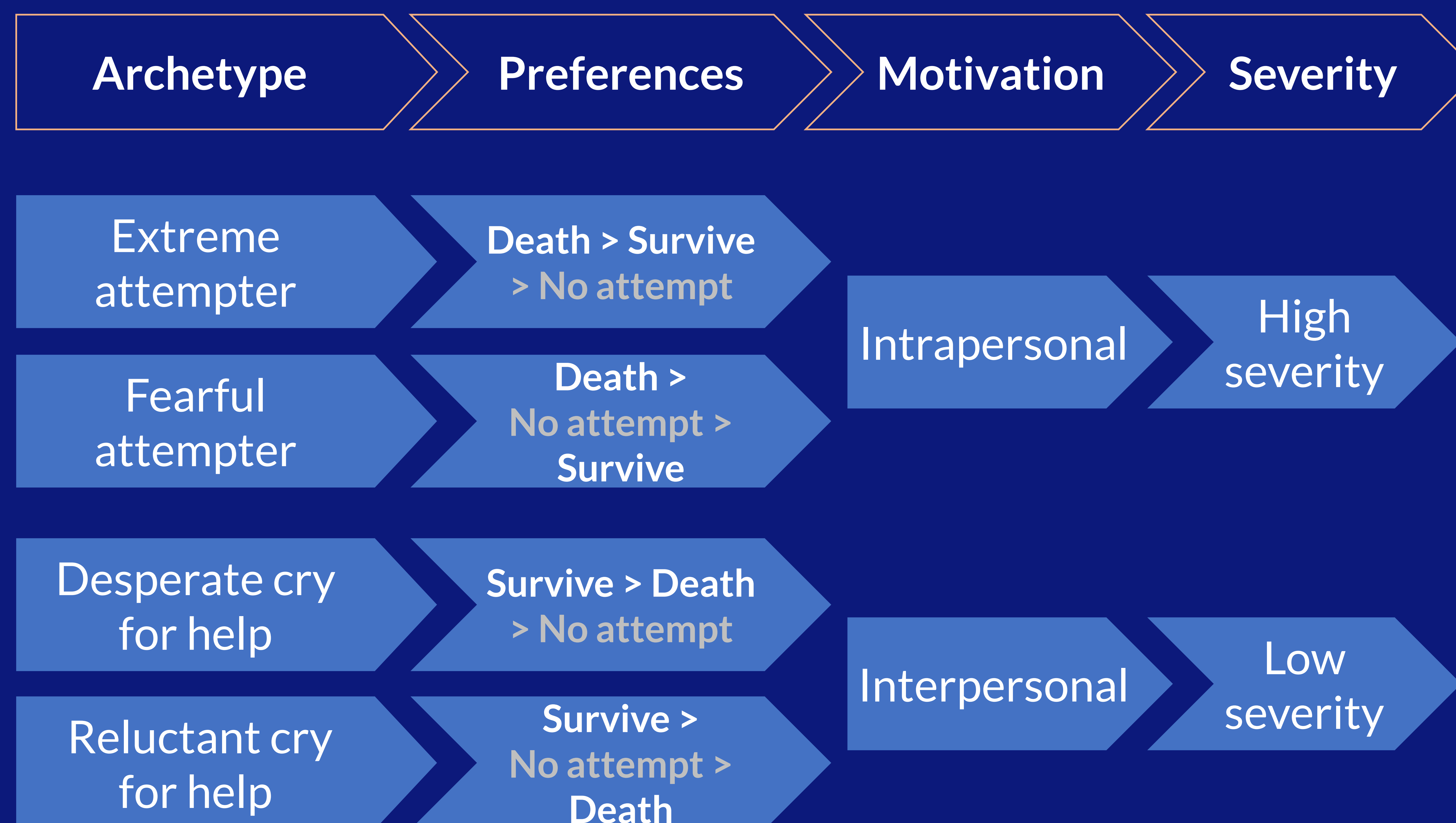
### METHODS

1. Sample sequential suicide attempters presenting to the psychiatric ER
2. Physician or psychologist administers LRS, IMSA, SIS, demographics

### HYPOTHESES

- Severity correlates positively with intent
- Intrapersonal motivation correlates positively with severity and intent
- Interpersonal motivation correlates negatively with severity and intent

# Are intrapersonal suicide motivations associated with more severe attempts?



### MEASURES

#### Lethality Rating Scale (LRS)<sup>4</sup>

- Objective measure of medical severity determined by physician

#### Inventory of Motivations for Attempting Suicide (IMSA)<sup>5</sup>

- Two superordinate scales:
  - **Intrapersonal:** "I lost all hope that things could get better"
  - **Interpersonal:** "I wanted to get help from someone"

#### Suicide Intent Scale (SIS)<sup>6</sup>

- Subscales: objective and subjective

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Develop a measure of suicide motivations explicitly grounded in the decision science model
- Determine validity of all six archetypes implied by the model
- Elaborate clinical implications of the decision science model

### REFERENCES

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