Positive mental health - from what to how!

Introduction and questions:

About half of the Norwegian population will experience a mental disorder during their lifetime. Similar trends are seen in the rest of the western world. There is a call for knowledge about mental health promotion rather than just treating mental disorders and reducing symptoms. This study aims to develop knowledge inspired by salutogenesis of how people with mental disorders experience positive mental health. Additionally, the aim is to explore movements in health status, health promoting experiences as well as experiences undermining positive mental health. Furthermore, the study will explore former patients’ experiences of positive mental health promotion in mental health hospitals, as well as former patients’ suggestions on how improvements in hospitals can promote and protect positive mental health.

Methodology:

Persons with mental disorder and experiences as in-patients in a hospital are interviewed in-depth about their lived experiences. The study is an explorative and interpretative qualitative inquiry, inspired by Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

Results:

The theoretical perspective inspiring the study and preliminary results will be presented at the conference. The study will provide researchers, policy makers and practitioners with patient generated knowledge of positive mental health as it is lived. The findings can tell us about the movement in health status and the resources necessary to promote movement towards the positive end of a mental health continuum. The study can come up with some recommendations from service-users on how to improve the health services and re-orient them in a health promoting direction.