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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Intrapersonal Communication as a Psychological Restoration Mechanism Among Quarter-Life Crisis

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| ABSTRACT

Early adulthood is a transitional phase often marked by uncertainty and psychological pressure, which can manifest as a Quarter-Life Crisis (QLC). This study examines how intrapersonal communication functions as a mechanism for psychological restoration among young adults in Indonesia experiencing QLC. Using an interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA), five participants were recruited through purposive sampling and engaged in in-depth interviews to explore their internal dialogue, reflective practices, and coping strategies. Data were analysed thematically to identify patterns of intrapersonal communication and meaning-making processes. Findings indicate that participants used both verbal self-talk and nonverbal reflective activities, including journaling, contemplation, and personal rituals, to regulate emotions, process experiences, and maintain psychological stability during periods of uncertainty. Intrapersonal communication also facilitated meaning reconstruction and adaptive reorientation of life goals, strengthening self-regulation, resilience, and a sense of agency. These practices persisted beyond the peak of the crisis, forming sustainable restorative pathways that support ongoing psychological well-being. The study highlights the significance of intrapersonal communication in promoting emotional regulation and resilience among young adults and points to practical applications in personal coping strategies, therapeutic interventions, family and community support, and workplace resilience programs. By integrating intrapersonal communication with psychological restoration theory, this research provides insight into how young adults in Indonesia navigate developmental challenges and recover from QLC.

| KEYWORDS

quarter life crisis, intrapersonal communication, psychological restoration, self-reflection, early adulthood.

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### 1. Introduction

Early adulthood, typically ages 20–30, is a critical transitional phase characterized by identity exploration, career planning, and the pursuit of financial and emotional independence (Dietrich et al., 2014). This developmental period is often accompanied by heightened uncertainty and psychological pressure, which for some individuals manifests as a Quarter-Life Crisis (QLC). Recent research confirms that QLC is associated with significant emotional distress and existential concerns during this life stage (Oliver et al., 2025). QLC is commonly described as a psychological condition marked by confusion regarding life direction, emotional distress, and discrepancies between personal expectations and social realities (Robinson et al., 2013). In recent years, this phenomenon has been further intensified by global and local dynamics, including post-pandemic economic instability, increasing career competition, and social comparison pressures amplified through digital media (Ahuja et al., 2024; Powell et al., 2022)

To navigate these challenges, individuals require adaptive mechanisms that support psychological recovery and emotional regulation. One internal mechanism that has received increasing scholarly attention is intrapersonal communication, particularly

self-talk, which refers to internal dialogue used to interpret experiences, regulate emotions, and guide behaviour. Self-reflective internal dialogue has been shown to improve emotional regulation and resilience among emerging adults facing life stressors (Larasati et al., 2025). Interdisciplinary research indicates that adaptive forms of self-talk, such as reflective evaluation, self-compassion, and meaning-oriented inner dialogue, can reduce psychological distress, enhance resilience, and strengthen motivation during developmental transitions (Brinthaupt Thomas M et al., 2020).

From a psychological perspective, the concept of psychological restoration emphasizes that recovery from mental fatigue and emotional strain is not solely dependent on external factors but is also shaped by internal cognitive processes that replenish depleted mental resources (Kaplan, 1995). Subsequent studies have extended this view by highlighting the role of self-reflection, reinterpretation of lived experiences, and intrapersonal emotional regulation in restoring psychological balance and emotional capacity (Zijlastra et al., 2014). Within the context of QLC, intrapersonal communication may therefore function as a restorative pathway that enables individuals to reconstruct meaning, reduce stress symptoms, and regain the cognitive and emotional capacity needed to make important life decisions.

Although previous international studies have examined self-talk and intrapersonal processes in relation to emotional regulation and psychological well-being, the integration of intrapersonal communication and psychological restoration within the specific context of Quarter-Life Crisis remains relatively limited. Moreover, empirical research exploring this integration within the Indonesian cultural context remains scarce, despite the strong influence of family expectations, social norms, and collectivist values on young adults' internal experiences. Intrapersonal capacity has been proposed as a key mechanism that enables individuals not only to cope with but also to grow from QLC by promoting resilience and goal clarity (Solang, 2025). This gap highlights the need for an in-depth exploration of how intrapersonal communication operates as a psychological restoration mechanism among young adults experiencing QLC in Indonesia.

Based on this background, the present study aims to examine the role of intrapersonal communication as a psychological restoration mechanism among individuals experiencing a Quarter-Life Crisis. Using an interpretative phenomenological approach, this research seeks to provide theoretical contributions by integrating communication psychology perspectives with psychological restoration theory, while also offering practical implications for the development of intrapersonal-based interventions to support the psychological well-being and resilience of young adults navigating contemporary social and economic challenges.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Quarter-Life Crisis in Emerging Adulthood**

Quarter-Life Crisis (QLC) has been increasingly recognised as a salient psychosocial phenomenon among individuals in early adulthood, particularly those aged 20–30 years. Characterised by uncertainty regarding identity, career direction, relationships, and future stability, QLC reflects a period of heightened emotional vulnerability and cognitive dissonance as individuals negotiate personal aspirations alongside social expectations (Oliver et al., 2025; Robinson et al., 2013). Recent studies suggest that contemporary socio-economic pressures, intensified by post-pandemic instability and digital comparison culture, have amplified the prevalence and psychological impact of QLC among emerging adults (Ahuja et al., 2024; Powell et al., 2022).

Within the Indonesian context, QLC is further shaped by collectivist cultural values, strong family expectations, and moral or spiritual norms that influence decision-making and self-evaluation. Praptiningsih et al. (2025) conceptualise QLC not merely as an individual psychological disturbance but as a dynamic communication process, involving both intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions. Their study identifies QLC as a phase of self-transformation marked by internal conflict, emotional tension, and reflective negotiation, highlighting the centrality of internal dialogue in navigating life transitions. This perspective positions QLC as a communicative phenomenon in which meaning, identity, and emotional regulation are continuously constructed and reconstructed through internal processes.

### **2.2 Intrapersonal Communication and Self-Talk as Adaptive Mechanisms**

Intrapersonal communication refers to internal cognitive and emotional processes through which individuals communicate with themselves, including self-talk, self-reflection, self-evaluation, and inner dialogue. Self-talk, in particular, has been widely studied as an internal regulatory mechanism that enables individuals to interpret experiences, manage emotions, and guide behaviour during periods of stress and uncertainty (Brinthaupt Thomas M et al., 2020). Research in communication psychology and developmental psychology suggests that adaptive self-talk characterised by reflection, self-compassion, and meaning-oriented evaluation can enhance emotional regulation and resilience in emerging adulthood (Larasati et al., 2025).

Solang (2025) further emphasises the role of intrapersonal capacity in transforming vulnerability during QLC into psychological growth. Her findings indicate that internal reflective processes enable individuals to reframe crises as opportunities for self-development, strengthen resilience, and regain clarity regarding personal goals. This study underscores that intrapersonal communication functions not only as a coping response but also as a developmental resource that supports identity consolidation and emotional stability during early adulthood. However, existing literature also cautions that self-talk may have ambivalent effects; maladaptive or self-critical internal dialogue can exacerbate distress if not accompanied by reflective awareness and emotional regulation strategies.

### **2.3 Psychological Restoration and Internal Reflective Processes**

The concept of psychological restoration provides a theoretical framework for understanding how individuals recover from mental fatigue and emotional strain. Kaplan's (1995) restorative theory initially emphasised environmental factors in replenishing depleted cognitive resources. Subsequent research has expanded this framework by recognising the role of internal cognitive processes, such as self-reflection, reinterpretation of experiences, and emotional regulation, in restoring psychological balance (Zijlstra et al., 2014). Within this perspective, intrapersonal communication can be understood as a restorative pathway that supports emotional recovery and cognitive renewal. Through reflective self-talk and internal meaning-making, individuals are able to reduce emotional overload, process distressing experiences, and regain psychological energy. Studies have shown that reflective internal dialogue facilitates emotional regulation, enhances self-awareness, and promotes adaptive coping during life transitions (Latinjak et al., 2023; Simth et al., 2021). These processes are particularly relevant during QLC, when individuals face cumulative stressors related to identity formation, social comparison, and future uncertainty.

### **2.4 Empirical Studies on QLC, Intrapersonal Processes, and Cultural Context**

Although international research has explored self-talk and intrapersonal processes in relation to emotional regulation and well-being, empirical studies that explicitly integrate intrapersonal communication with psychological restoration in the context of QLC remain limited. Praptiningsih et al. (2025) contribute to this area by highlighting QLC as an internal communicative process, yet their study focuses primarily on communicative dynamics rather than restorative psychological outcomes. Similarly, Solang (2025) demonstrates the importance of intrapersonal capacity in overcoming QLC but does not specifically examine how intrapersonal communication functions as a sustained psychological restoration mechanism over time. Moreover, empirical investigations situated within the Indonesian cultural context are still scarce, despite evidence that cultural norms, family obligations, and spiritual values significantly shape young adults' internal experiences and coping strategies (Praptiningsih et al., 2025). This gap suggests the need for qualitative, in-depth exploration of lived experiences to understand how intrapersonal communication operates as a restorative mechanism during and beyond the peak of QLC. An interpretative phenomenological approach is particularly suited to capturing the subjective meanings, emotional dynamics, and reflective processes that characterise intrapersonal communication in culturally embedded contexts.

### **2.5 Research Gap and Contribution**

Based on the reviewed literature, it can be concluded that while QLC, intrapersonal communication, and psychological restoration have each been studied independently, their integration remains underexplored especially within non-Western settings. Existing studies have yet to sufficiently examine how self-talk and internal reflective practices function as continuous psychological restoration mechanisms that support emotional regulation, meaning reconstruction, and resilience throughout the QLC trajectory. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by exploring how intrapersonal communication operates as a psychological restoration mechanism among young adults experiencing QLC in Indonesia. By integrating communication psychology with psychological restoration theory through an interpretative phenomenological lens, the present research aims to contribute both theoretically and empirically to a more nuanced understanding of internal recovery processes during early adulthood.

## **3. Methodology**

This study employs an interpretative phenomenological approach (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis / IPA) to explore how intrapersonal communication functions as a mechanism of psychological restoration among individuals experiencing a Quarter-Life Crisis (QLC). IPA was selected because it prioritises the in-depth exploration of lived experiences and meaning-making processes, particularly internal cognitive and emotional dynamics such as self-talk, self-reflection, and self-evaluation that emerge during developmental transitions in early adulthood (Latinjak et al., 2023; Smith et al., 2021).

Participants were recruited using purposive sampling to ensure information-rich cases relevant to the research focus. Inclusion criteria consisted of: (1) individuals aged 20–30 years, (2) having experienced a QLC characterised by uncertainty about life direction, perceived social pressure, or future-related anxiety, (3) the ability to articulate internal communication processes, and

(4) willingness to participate in in-depth interviews. A total of five participants were included, consistent with IPA methodological guidelines that emphasise analytic depth and idiographic focus rather than generalisation from sample size (hennink & Kaiser, 2022; Smith et al., 2021).

Research materials were embedded within the procedural flow and included a semi-structured interview guide, informed consent forms, an audio recording device, and field notes. The interview guide was theoretically informed by recent literature on intrapersonal communication, self-talk, and Quarter-Life Crisis, and covered questions related to internal dialogue, emotional regulation, meaning reconstruction, and psychological recovery strategies (Agustini et al., 2025; Raalte et al., 2019). Following qualitative research writing conventions, materials were integrated into the methodological narrative rather than presented as a separate list (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Sandler et al., 2019).

Data collection was conducted over one month through face-to-face, in-depth interviews lasting 45-90 minutes at locations mutually agreed upon by participants. The interview procedure consisted of: (1) obtaining informed consent, (2) exploring personal experiences and triggers of QLC, (3) examining intrapersonal communication dynamics, (4) identifying psychological restoration processes, and (5) concluding the session. All interviews were audio-recorded with permission and accompanied by reflective field notes that captured emotional expressions, contextual nuances, and paralinguistic cues, which are considered essential to phenomenological inquiry (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Interview recordings and transcripts were anonymised and securely stored to protect participant confidentiality (Ratih & Winta, 2024).

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and cross-checked against audio recordings to ensure accuracy. Data were systematically organised through multiple analytic layers, including raw transcripts, initial coding, preliminary themes, and final thematic structures. This layered organisation enhances analytic transparency and methodological rigour in phenomenological research (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Tong, 2023). Data analysis followed the core procedures of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), integrated with Colaizzi's systematic analytic steps to enhance procedural clarity and auditability. Analytical stages included repeated immersion in the data, identification of significant statements, formulation of meaning units, thematic clustering, synthesis of essential experiential structures, and participant validation. Recent qualitative methodological studies support this combined approach for analysing complex psychological and meaning-centred phenomena, as it balances interpretative depth with systematic rigour (Alase, 2017; Northall et al., 2020).

To ensure trustworthiness, the study applied methodological strategies including member checking, cross-participant thematic comparison, and the maintenance of an audit trail documenting analytic decisions. These strategies address the criteria of credibility, confirmability, and dependability in qualitative research (Mekarisce, 2020; Nowell et al., 2017). Ethical considerations included written informed consent, participant anonymity, and secure digital data storage. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, minimal potential risks, their right to withdraw at any stage, and the exclusive academic use of the data. All ethical procedures adhered to contemporary international standards for qualitative social research, ensuring transparency and replicability (Wiles, 2013; Yudiarti & Basrowi, 2024).

#### **4. Results**

The study brought together five participants whose experiences of the Quarter-Life Crisis unfolded through markedly different life events. UF's crisis was shaped by marital breakdown and subsequent social pressure, while ST struggled with identity conflict and family tension related to religious transition. DR's experience emerged from patterns of unstable relationships and emotional vulnerability, ZH faced distress following sexual harassment and social pressure in digital spaces, and ADS encountered a profound crisis after the consecutive loss of both parents. Rather than forming a uniform pattern, these diverse trajectories illustrate the varied contexts in which intrapersonal communication becomes psychologically salient during early adulthood.

##### **4.1 Self-Talk as an Emotional Regulation Mechanism**

Across these diverse experiences, participants consistently described engaging in intrapersonal communication through self-talk as a primary means of managing emotional distress and navigating periods of profound uncertainty. Rather than functioning as a momentary coping response, self-talk emerged as an ongoing internal negotiation, through which individuals continuously evaluated their emotions, weighed available choices, and sought psychological stability amid competing demands and pressures. This internal dialogue enabled participants to regulate emotional responses while simultaneously constructing meaning around challenging life circumstances. For ST, self-talk became especially salient when confronting identity conflict and intense familial pressure. Through inner dialogue, ST attempted to reconcile deeply held personal beliefs with the potential relational consequences of those beliefs, particularly the risk of social exclusion and family rejection. The following excerpt illustrates how self-talk operated as a mechanism for negotiating between personal values and the need for relational security:

*"Tadinya kalo aku ga bisa pindah agama yaudah gpp tapi aku tetep mau melaksanakan perintah-perintah islam dari pada aku di usir sama papah aku dari pada aku ga punya temen."*

This statement reflects a form of internal reasoning in which emotional survival, belonging, and self-preservation were prioritised through deliberate self-directed communication. Other participants demonstrated a similar reliance on self-talk, although the content and emotional tone of their internal dialogue were shaped by distinct lived experiences. UF employed self-talk as a means of restoring emotional balance and sustaining motivation following marital failure, particularly when confronted with negative social judgments and feelings of personal inadequacy. In this context, inner dialogue functioned to counter self-blame and reframe the crisis as a temporary disruption rather than a permanent identity failure. In contrast, ADS's self-talk was characterised by an emphasis on acceptance and inner resilience in the aftermath of parental loss. Rather than negotiating external pressures, ADS's internal dialogue focused on acknowledging grief, cultivating emotional endurance, and reaffirming personal strength in the face of irreversible loss. This form of self-talk supported psychological adjustment by fostering self-compassion and emotional continuity. Collectively, these accounts suggest that self-talk operates as a shared emotional regulation strategy among individuals experiencing a Quarter-Life Crisis. However, its specific functions—whether oriented toward reconciliation, motivation, or acceptance are deeply embedded in each participant's personal history and crisis context. As such, intrapersonal communication through self-talk plays a critical role not only in regulating emotions but also in facilitating meaning-making and psychological restoration during transitional life stages.

#### ***4.2 Deep Reflection and Non-Verbal Intrapersonal Activity***

Participants' accounts reveal that emotional regulation during the Quarter-Life Crisis was achieved not only through verbal self-talk but also through nonverbal forms of intrapersonal communication. These quiet, embodied, and deeply personal activities functioned as internal spaces in which participants could remain present with their emotions without the pressure of immediate verbal articulation. Through such practices, individuals were able to pause, reflect, and gradually restore psychological equilibrium amidst emotional turbulence and life uncertainty. For ZH, nonverbal intrapersonal communication took the form of journaling and spending time in quiet companionship with her cat. These moments were described as contemplative experiences that provided emotional comfort and a sense of calm, allowing her to process complex feelings in a non-confrontational manner. As reflected in the following excerpt:

*"Kadang juga aku seneng main kucing sambil merenung. Kucing ga bisa kita ajak ngobrol tapi rasanya tenang aja."*

This interaction illustrates how emotional regulation can emerge through silent relational presence, where comfort and emotional safety are generated without verbal exchange. Such experiences enabled ZH to temporarily step away from cognitive overload and reconnect with a calmer emotional state. Comparable reflective and restorative functions were evident in DR's experience. Engaging in solitary healing activities and visiting her father's grave became meaningful nonverbal practices through which she processed grief and re-established a connection with her inner emotional world. These activities provided a symbolic and emotional space for remembrance, acceptance, and emotional continuity following loss. Rather than avoiding painful emotions, DR's nonverbal intrapersonal practices facilitated a gentle confrontation with grief, supporting gradual emotional integration. Although the specific practices differed across participants, these accounts collectively indicate that nonverbal intrapersonal activities served as essential personal resources during periods of emotional vulnerability. Through silence, solitude, symbolic actions, and reflective presence, participants were able to manage stress, organise internal thoughts, and sustain emotional regulation. These findings suggest that intrapersonal communication during a Quarter-Life Crisis extends beyond spoken self-talk, encompassing nonverbal modes that play a crucial role in supporting psychological recovery and emotional resilience during transitional life stages.

#### ***4.3 Meaning Reconstruction and Reorientation of Life Goals***

Participants' narratives indicate that intrapersonal communication played a central and transformative role in reconstructing life meaning and reorganising personal goals during the Quarter-Life Crisis. Rather than serving solely as a mechanism for emotional regulation, intrapersonal dialogue functioned as a reflective space in which participants evaluated past experiences, reinterpreted adversity, and gradually reoriented their sense of purpose. Through this ongoing internal communication, individuals were able to redefine who they were becoming and what directions their lives should take following periods of disruption and loss. This meaning-reconstruction process was particularly evident in ADS's account following the loss of both parents. For ADS, inner dialogue emerged as a powerful source of self-affirmation, enabling her to acknowledge personal resilience and to reframe suffering as evidence of inner strength rather than vulnerability. Reflecting on past hardships and comparing them with her present condition allowed ADS to construct a renewed sense of self-worth, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

*"kalo flashback ke masa-masa itu, terus ngeliat diri gua yang sekarang, suka bilang ke diri gua kalo gua keren banget kuat sampe sekarang itu bener-bener ga bisa di ungkapkan dengan kata-kata."*

This self-directed affirmation demonstrates how intrapersonal communication facilitated meaning-making by transforming painful memories into narratives of growth, endurance, and personal achievement. Comparable patterns of meaning reconstruction were also observed in the experiences of UF, ZH, and ST. Through sustained intrapersonal reflection, these participants actively reorganised their life directions by reassessing priorities and aligning future goals with newly emerging values. This process manifested in various forms, including engagement in self-development activities, the strengthening of spiritual orientation, and the redefinition of responsibilities toward family and social roles.

Although the reflective processes followed a similar trajectory, the sources of motivation underlying these transformations differed across participants. UF's intrapersonal reflection was driven by a desire to restore happiness and personal fulfilment following divorce, prompting a re-evaluation of relational expectations and self-worth. ZH's motivation stemmed from increasing financial and social responsibilities, leading to a future-oriented focus on stability and accountability. In contrast, ST's meaning reconstruction was closely linked to spiritual growth and a commitment to continuous learning, through which she sought long-term personal and moral development. Taken together, these narratives suggest that intrapersonal communication operates as a critical mechanism for meaning reconstruction and goal reorganisation during the Quarter-Life Crisis. By enabling individuals to reinterpret adversity, reaffirm personal values, and realign life goals, intrapersonal dialogue supports psychological restoration and facilitates adaptive transitions into emerging adulthood.

#### **4.4 Intrapersonal Communication as a Continuous Recovery Mechanism**

In the period following the most intense phase of the crisis, intrapersonal communication continued to play a meaningful and stabilising role in participants' everyday lives. Rather than diminishing once the immediate emotional turmoil subsided, internal reflective processes evolved into enduring practices that helped sustain emotional balance and reinforce psychological resilience over time. These ongoing intrapersonal dialogues enabled participants to remain attentive to their emotional states, manage stressors proactively, and maintain a sense of internal coherence in the face of daily challenges.

For UF, continued reflection became a crucial resource for preserving emotional clarity, particularly when encountering renewed emotional pressure. Through intrapersonal dialogue, UF developed a deeper and more embodied understanding of patience and endurance, reframing these qualities not as passive acceptance but as active psychological efforts requiring sustained mental energy. This insight is reflected in her statement:

*"menurut aku iya, karena aku jadi tau makna sabar itu gimana, aku tau makna bertahan itu gimana. Sabar itu butuh energi yang cukup banyak menguras pikiran."*

This reflection illustrates how intrapersonal communication supported UF in transforming lived experience into practical emotional knowledge that could be applied in everyday situations. A similar continuity was evident in other participants' daily practices. DR described maintaining self-healing activities as a regular component of her routine, using these moments as opportunities to recalibrate emotionally and prevent the accumulation of unresolved stress. Meanwhile, ZH and ST reported the establishment of consistent personal habits such as reflective pauses, emotional self-monitoring, and deliberate moments of quiet that helped them regulate emotions and reduce the risk of psychological overload. Across these experiences, intrapersonal communication gradually shifted from a short-term crisis-response strategy to a sustained recovery process embedded in everyday life. Rather than being confined to moments of acute distress, internal communication became a personalised resilience practice, continuously shaped by individual needs, life contexts, and evolving emotional demands. This finding suggests that psychological restoration during the Quarter-Life Crisis is not a finite outcome but an ongoing process supported by habitual intrapersonal communication that extends well beyond the initial resolution of the crisis.

## **5. Discussion**

The findings presented earlier illustrate that participants employed intrapersonal communication, both verbal and non-verbal, as a key strategy for managing emotional distress, reconstructing meaning, and sustaining psychological balance during the Quarter-Life Crisis. These empirical patterns provide a foundation for understanding how internal dialogue, self-talk, and reflective practices operate as mechanisms for coping, while also allowing interpretation within established theoretical frameworks on emotional regulation, meaning-making, and psychological restoration.

Participants' use of adaptive self-talk aligns with existing research highlighting its role in emotional regulation and cognitive reorganisation during psychological distress (Islami et al., 2023). When self-talk is reflective and constructive, often supported by spiritual values or religious coping, it not only facilitates immediate emotional calming but also strengthens long-term resilience and self-efficacy (Cahyandari, 2023). However, the literature also warns that self-talk is not inherently beneficial; self-critical or negative inner dialogue may intensify distress rather than alleviate it. In this regard, self-talk combined with self-compassion appears most effective in supporting stable, reflective, and resilient engagement with life uncertainty (Oliver et al., 2025; Robinson et al., 2013).

Beyond verbal self-talk, participants engaged in non-verbal and embodied reflective practices, such as journaling, contemplation, and personal rituals. These activities provided psychologically safe spaces to process emotions and structure internal experiences without external pressures (Miller, 2017; Saxena & Yi, 2025). By actively engaging with themselves, participants were able to regulate emotions, maintain self-management, and sustain psychological stability independently. Prior studies similarly suggest that such reflective non-verbal practices facilitate adaptive coping, strengthen self-regulation, and enhance resilience during transitional and uncertain life phases (Hartono & Lestari, 2023; Prasetyo, 2022; Saidah & Rachmawati, 2021; Saxena & Yi, 2025).

Sustained engagement in non-verbal reflective practices further supports deep reflection and accelerates psychological restoration, particularly during developmental transitions such as the Quarter-Life Crisis. In this sense, intrapersonal communication functions not only as a form of internal expression but also as an adaptive psychological mechanism that aids decision-making, stress management, and emotional healing (Altaher & Runnerstrom, 2018; López-González et al., 2022; Pantchenko et al., 2010)).

These processes also contribute to meaning reconstruction and reorientation of life goals. Reflective inner dialogue enables individuals to revisit past experiences, clarify core values, and establish new priorities, thereby supporting psychological recovery and resilience. This observation aligns with meaning-making theory, which emphasises how internal narrative construction helps interpret stressful events and reduce emotional distress (Meisels & Gryzman, 2021; Park, 2010; Wong, 2023). Furthermore, reorganising goals through reflective intrapersonal communication enhances self-regulation and coping capacity, allowing individuals to regain agency and direction, which is critical for maintaining psychological stability in early adulthood (Ariati & Irene, 2023; Ariska et al., 2025; Noviariski, 2021).

Viewed more broadly, intrapersonal communication operates as an ongoing recovery mechanism beyond the immediate crisis. Through repeated introspection, self-talk, and reflective activities, participants continued to process experiences, reorganise emotional responses, and manage residual stress after significant life stressors (Aprilia et al., 2024; Noviariski, 2021; Taufiki et al., 2024). Regular practice of both verbal and non-verbal internal communication appears to restore psychological energy, reduce anxiety, and maintain emotional equilibrium over time, functioning as a sustainable pathway for preserving psychological well-being amidst continuous life demands (Aprilia et al., 2024; Musyarofah et al., 2025).

## **6. Conclusion and Implications**

This study demonstrates that intrapersonal communication serves as a key mechanism for psychological restoration among individuals experiencing a Quarter-Life Crisis (QLC). Both verbal self-talk and non-verbal reflective practices, such as journaling, contemplation, and personal rituals, enable individuals to regulate emotions, organise thoughts, and maintain psychological stability during periods of life uncertainty. Beyond immediate coping, intrapersonal communication also facilitates meaning reconstruction and adaptive reorientation of life goals, strengthening self-regulation, resilience, and a sense of agency in early adulthood. The findings highlight that these practices are continuous rather than temporary, forming sustainable restorative pathways that help individuals navigate ongoing developmental transitions. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of contextual factors, such as personal history, social pressure, family expectations, and cultural norms, in shaping the focus, tone, and function of intrapersonal communication.

From a practical standpoint, the results suggest several avenues for intervention and support:

1. Individual-level strategies: Adaptive self-talk, structured journaling, and reflective rituals can be incorporated into personal coping routines or therapeutic programs to enhance emotional regulation and psychological recovery.
2. Sociocultural support: Families, educational institutions, and communities can create supportive environments that recognise and reinforce the value of internal reflective practices.
3. Workplace application: Young employees can benefit from training programs that strengthen self-awareness and internal dialogue management, contributing to resilience and informed decision-making.

4. Policy and services: Structured support services and preventive programs for young adults can incorporate intrapersonal communication as a tool for mental well-being, especially in culturally demanding contexts.

Overall, this study contributes to understanding intrapersonal communication as a multidimensional, adaptive mechanism that supports both immediate emotional coping and long-term psychological growth, offering insights for research, practice, and policy targeting young adults navigating the challenges of early adulthood.

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