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## Psychology and the research enterprise: Moving beyond the enduring hegemony of positivism

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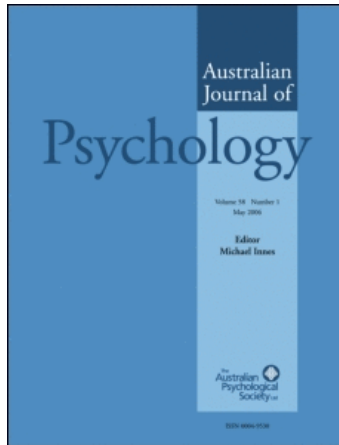
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# The Abstracts of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Australian Psychological Society

23 – 26 September 2008

Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart

Abstracts Editors: Vicky Mrowinski and Nicholas Voudouris  
*Australian Psychological Society*

We are pleased to present the abstracts from the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Australian Psychological Society. The presentations cover all areas of Psychology, from the applied to the theoretical and the conference theme – *Psychology Leading Change* – is reflected in the abstracts. The membership of the Society is also well represented with submissions from postgraduate students, current lecturers and practitioners, and members of different cultures. All submissions were subject to peer review by at least two reviewers. As in previous years, the variety and scope of the offerings is one of the great strengths of our annual conference. In addition to helping you choose which sessions to attend during the conference, the abstracts will provide a valuable reference source in the future, providing a snapshot of the current research and practice in Australian psychology. Many of the abstracts also refer to papers that are printed in full in our *Conference Proceedings*, which are on sale here at the conference and – failing that - available to everyone to purchase through the APS National Office. I would like to thank the members of the Scientific Program Committee who were responsible for reviewing the abstracts in a timely and efficient manner. I would also like to thank Nicholas Voudouris, Elaine Grant and their team of helpers at the National Office of the APS for their tireless efforts in bringing together the conference and this volume of abstracts.

Jeff Summers  
*Chair*

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### Co-action in human and autonomous platform teams: A dynamical field approach

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Dynamical systems theory (DST) has recently been extended to account for the properties of human cognitive functioning (Schoner, 2007). As a result, DST is promising to provide the language in which the principles of embodied and situated cognition can be developed into a rigorous scientific theory. In particular, DST has a proven efficiency in modelling *agency* and *autonomy* as emergent properties of self-stabilising dynamical systems. General stochastic dynamics, developed in a framework of Feynman path integrals, have been applied to Lewinian force-field dynamics, with a new concept of Life-Space Foam (LSF) emerging as a natural medium for motivational / cognitive dynamics (Ivancevic & Aidman, 2007). The concept offers a mathematically rigorous characterisation of individual actor dynamics. The current paper extends the model to characterise the dynamics of co-action by two or more actors. This dynamics is modelled by (a) two-term joint action (cognitive and motivational potential plus kinetic energy), and (b) associated adaptive path integrals, representing infinite-dimensional neural networks. Feedback adaptation loops are derived from Bernstein's (1967) concept of sensory corrections in motor control and Brooks' (1990) subsumption architectures in robotics. Potential applications of the approach to modelling co-action in human and autonomous platform teams are discussed.

### The development of a measure of identity for Indigenous Australian school students

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Purdie, Tripcony, Boulton-Lewis, Fanshawe, and Gunstone (2000) suggest that poorer academic outcomes, lower education retention rates, and higher absenteeism of Indigenous students could be improved if they had more opportunity to experience success and develop positive perceptions about themselves as students. The aim of this study was to develop a valid and reliable measure of identity for Indigenous Australian school students. Challenges

faced in the construction of the scale included the need to keep it short and simple for in-class use, and the need to make it flexible enough to be used across all grade levels. Substantial evidence was found for the validity and reliability of the resulting 28 item scale, the Positive Identity Questionnaire (PIQ). The ability of the PIQ to measure nine self-concept dimensions provided evidence for the construct validity of this questionnaire. All components with four items or more were internally consistent for participants in grades 1 to 12. The PIQ demonstrated satisfactory test-retest reliability when calculated for all participants. However it was found that the PIQ may not be as valid or reliable for children in grades 1 to 3 as it is for children and adolescents in grades 4 to 12.

### Adjustment in parents of children with disability: Interrelationships of resistance factors

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The aim of this study was to further understand why some parents are better able to adjust to having a child with disability than others by exploring perceived control of internal states and social support as resistance factors. Eighty-three mothers and fathers of children aged 1 to 18 years were recruited from early intervention centres and schools in Victoria. Parents completed the Perceived Control of Internal States Scale (PCOISS; Pallant, 2000), the Social Support Questionnaire-6 (SSQ-6; Sarason, Sarason, Shearin & Pierce, 1987) and the Australian World Health Organisation Quality of Life-Bref (WHOQOL-BREF; Murphy, Herrman, Hawthorne, Pinzone & Evert, 2000). The psychological and physical health subscales on the WHOQOL-BREF were used as measures of adjustment. It was found that perceived control of internal states was associated with both measures of adjustment, as was the functional measure of support. The structural measure was only associated with psychological health. Both structural and functional measures of support partially mediated the relationship between perceived control and psychological health. Furthermore number of supports moderated the relationship between perceived control and psychological health. These results imply that perceived control of internal states

and social support may be instrumental factors in the development of successful intervention programs, particularly when their interrelationships are taken into account.

### **Psychometric properties of Scheier and Carver's Life Orientation Test in a sample of prisoners**

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The psychometric properties of Scheier and Carver's (1985) Life Orientation Test (LOT), a measure of optimism, were examined as part of a study that investigated the education, training and work experience of 453 sentenced adult prisoners in Western Australia. The mean age was 34.4 years, 21% were females and 21% reported being Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander. Five metropolitan public prisons participated, ranging from minimum to maximum security. All prisoners were invited to participate. The response rate was 50% for both women's prisons, almost 90% (308 prisoners) for the minimum security men's prisons, but only 13% (52 prisoners) for the maximum security men's prison. The means and standard deviations suggest that optimism scores for prisoners were similar to those of other groups and demographic differences did not have significant effects on the scores. The internal reliability of the LOT scores with this sample was acceptable. Confirmatory factor analyses indicated that the two-factor item-keying model fitted the prisoner data better than a one-factor model. However, the two factors did not simply reflect underlying optimism and pessimism constructs, but were substantially affected by item keying.

### **Exploring the use of biofeedback video games to help children diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD)**

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This study investigates a biofeedback program called *The Journey to Wild Divine*. The Wild Divine uses three finger sensors to measure heart rate and skin conductance levels. Changes to an individual's physiology are reflected through the video game via numerous on screen events. The study measures behavioural and emotional changes through

questionnaires completed by parents, combined with observations of heart rate graphs of the children's progression through the game. The aim of the study is to determine the effectiveness of biofeedback through heart rate and skin conductance measurements of children with AD/HD, and present it as a reasonable option to help manage AD/HD. It is hypothesized that (i) results may show improvements in attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity levels, (ii) an involvement in biofeedback sessions may produce significantly less, if any, side effects in comparison to side effects experienced from medication, (iii) a difference in outcomes from children who attend sessions once a week, to those who attend sessions three times a week, and (iv) experience with parenting stress could decline with session progression. Results demonstrated significant differences between behaviour levels in children in both experimental ( $n=26$ ) and control groups ( $n=12$ ), as well as differences in parent's ( $n=25$ ) mental health.

### **The sport psychologist as the performance enhancer: Pulling the plug on a terminal patient**

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The popular misconception of sport psychologists as performance enhancers is reinforced by practitioners themselves, the dismissive and patronising perceptions of other psychologists, the media, and the misunderstandings of the profession by athletes and coaches. The Australian model of training sport psychologists has, as its number one goal, the education of psychologists first. In the two Australian universities that train sport psychologists, expertise in working with athletes and coaches is a second string to the bow for students. This training model is relatively rare in the world. Many sport psychology programs outside of Australia focus on the (for me) tiresome techniques of goal setting, self-talk, imagery, attention, and relaxation. Many coaches, pseudo psychologists, charlatans, NLPers, and so forth also provide those CBT techniques, and are often employed by teams. The idea of serving as a "performance enhancer" seems, in some cases, pernicious and in contrast to the goals of psychology as a profession. Performance enhancement focuses on "behaviour" (e.g., *citius, altius, fortius*) rather than the health and happiness of clients. In the pursuit of

better performance, the so-called performance-enhancement sport psychologist may be colluding with a system of abusive practices aimed at things (e.g., gold medals, national pride) other than individual happiness.

### **Promoting the emotional literacy of adolescent boys: The circle time approach**

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Schools play a crucial role in assisting young people to develop effective social and emotional skills. Research shows that emotional literacy programs have numerous benefits, including greater emotional self-awareness, self-control and empathy towards others. Research also shows that these programs are associated with improvements in learning and school performance. This paper describes an emotional literacy program currently being implemented in a boys' high school. A key component of the program is the use of weekly circle time sessions. Sitting in a circle format, students and teachers take part in structured individual and group activities that cover a range of topics, including emotional knowledge, self-esteem, communication and friendship. To assist teachers to develop targeted circle time sessions, all students completed a self-report measure of emotional literacy at the commencement of the program. Initial findings and implications for future programs will be explored.

### **Social dynamics in a university class room: A social networks approach**

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How can the university experience be made more socially engaging? What factors predict interaction patterns both inside and outside the university class room? As part of a 3<sup>rd</sup> year undergraduate I/O psychology course, we measured social networks in three separate weeks of a lab class series (4 lab groups; approximately 25 students per lab). Big-5 personality factors, course content knowledge, educational values, and demographics were also measured. Adopting this approach we were able to integrate individual difference and social network perspectives within a longitudinal context.

Findings suggest a strong role for classroom tasks in shaping student class room social networks. Findings further suggest that there are many things that educators can do to increase feelings of social connectedness in students. Based on student satisfaction ratings and anonymous student comments, there is evidence that the emphasis on social lab activities (e.g., negotiation role plays; team decision making exercises) was positively received. Social network analysis enabled us to measure more objectively the attainment of such educational goals as social connectedness and collegiality. Further implications on the role of social network analysis in improving educational outcomes and how to effectively conduct a social network analysis in the university classroom context will be discussed.

### **The dynamic nature of individual differences in performance on the Kanfer-Ackerman Air Traffic Control Task**

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The development of statistical models, user-friendly software and the overall maturity of psychology as a discipline has led researchers to call for the development of nonlinear multilevel models of psychological phenomena (e.g., Cudeck & Haring, 2007). Learning is a prime example of phenomena that is characterised by non-linear trajectories and substantial individual differences. In order to explore the implications of non-linear multilevel models for conceptualisations of learning, we performed a re-analysis of the dataset from Experiment 1 of Ackerman and Cianciolo (2000). Participants were 166 adults completing the Kanfer-Ackerman Air Traffic Control Task over thirty-six 10-minute task trials. Each trial included multiple measures of task performance including number of planes landed, violations of landing rules and number of crashes. A series of analyses, including nonlinear multilevel models, were performed exploring learning trajectories at the individual and aggregate level. The emphasis of the talk is on the practical implications of dynamic models of performance, and dynamic models more generally, for I/O psychologists, particularly in the domains of selection, training, and performance evaluation.

### Practical tips on how to conduct a sophisticated online psychological experiment

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Researchers interested in greater access to participants and reduced data administration costs are frequently using online software to administer simple surveys. However, many psychological research paradigms are more than just a series of survey items. Psychological research typically has more sophisticated requirements such as the need to allocate participants to between subject conditions, record response latencies, precisely time stimulus presentation, randomise ordering of within subject conditions, and present feedback. In order to realise the benefits of the online environment while having the control required of experimental psychology, we started using online psychological experimentation software (Inquisit). We have now conducted numerous online psychological experiments on such topics as personality faking, social network analysis and skill acquisition. Drawing on experience we will: 1) display examples of our online experiments; 2) highlight useful features; 3) discuss strategies for overcoming challenges involved with online experiments; and 4) provide tips for learning how to program the experiments in Inquisit. The talk should be of interest to academic, student, and practitioner researchers who are interested in conducting more sophisticated psychological research over the internet.

### Ethical issues for psychologists working in law enforcement agencies

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Ethical challenges, dilemmas, responsibilities, allegiances and beneficence are just some of the key concerns for psychologists that are employees of law enforcement agencies, providing services across a gamut of operational areas where psychological input and expertise is required and provided. This covers routine areas such as selection, recruitment and special operational / deployment testing and assessment, support, monitoring, debriefing, reintegration and other more sensitive areas that require psychological service provision. For example,

police professional standards and internal investigations (in terms of supporting members and their families across the whole process, as well as providing opinion and statement of fact and managing the question, 'who is the client?'), work suitability and fitness for duty assessments, and management requests for assistance (including the continuum of management and psychologist responsibility). Three cases will be explored, clearly articulating the challenges and how the psychologist involved was able to navigate through the issues with some level of resolution, including organisational, legal and moral components, education of management and advice seeking from professional bodies, registrations boards and commonwealth agencies. The three case studies cover: internal investigations with breach of confidentiality; fitness for duty assessment; and a case combining internal investigations, HR, confidentiality, privacy and ComCare.

### Do young cannabis users require residential treatment?

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Although cannabis is the most common drug for which young people present to specialist substance use treatment in Australia, the prevailing sentiment is that young cannabis users do not require residential treatment. To test this assumption, the current study comparatively examined the clinical profiles of 1221 admissions to an Australian residential treatment program for substance-dependent adolescents. Young people who nominated cannabis as their substance of primary concern were younger and more likely to be male than those who presented primarily with psychostimulant, alcohol or opioid use. After controlling for potentially confounding variables, the cannabis group demonstrated less physical ill-health and criminal involvement than the other groups, but their mental health was as poor as that of the psychostimulant group, and poorer than that of the alcohol and opioid groups. Also, the cannabis group demonstrated less sexually unsafe behaviour than the psychostimulant group, but had poorer social functioning than the alcohol and opioid groups. Finally, the cannabis group was retained in treatment for longer than the

psychostimulant and opioid groups. These findings support the need for the provision of residential services for at least some young cannabis users: those who are dependent, have complex needs, and may be poly-substance users.

### **Psychotherapists' handling of sexual attraction to clients: A grounded theory**

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Following 20 years of progressive yet sporadic research, the literature relating to psychotherapists' handling of sexual attraction to clients remains underdeveloped and fragmented. The current qualitative research attempts to reignite this flagging literature via interviews with 11 psychotherapists, which were analysed to develop a grounded theory of psychotherapists' handling of sexual attraction to clients. The resulting theory explains the development of sexual attraction to clients via the combined influences of the client, the psychotherapist, and the therapeutic relationship. In addition, it explains the process of handling such sexual attraction via decision-making influenced by numerous characteristics of the psychotherapist, and based on various qualities of the sexual attraction, its perceived manageability, and the ethicality and consequences of handling it in certain ways. Such handling strategies include: implementation of psychic and/or behavioural management techniques; therapeutic use of the sexual attraction (including therapeutic self-disclosure); guidance-seeking; privileging the sexual attraction; and discontinuation of psychotherapy. Implementation of these strategies is theorised to result in one of the following: cessation of psychotherapy; successfully managed sexual attraction; or incompletely or unsuccessfully managed sexual attraction, the last of which would require further attempts at handling it. Implications for psychotherapists, supervisors, educators, and future research are discussed.

### **Restorative environments: The relationship between nature in school playgrounds and children's attention in school classrooms**

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Environments which promote, and not merely permit, the restoration of depleted psychological resources are referred to as restorative environments. More natural environments; that is, environments with higher levels of natural elements such as trees and grassy spaces, are associated with higher attention and higher levels of restorative environment components, when compared to results from more urban environments, with both adults and children. This study investigates primary school playgrounds as possible restorative environments for children's capacity to direct attention in their classrooms. Children ( $N=550$ ) from 14 primary schools completed measures of attention at three time points: the beginning of the school day, just before and then immediately after their morning play period. Children also completed a perceived restorative components scale. Levels of nature were measured using photograph ratings and vegetation volume. Results indicate that actual vegetation volume is the only environmental predictor of potential restoration, which in turn predicts performance on measures of attention linked with academic performance. The research examines everyday nature in school grounds with a non-clinical sample (c.f. Positive Psychology) and indicates children's environments could be designed to include vegetation sources like trees and shrubs that facilitate the restoration of attention, and in turn, support their academic performance.

### **Word-length effects in backward serial recall and the remember/know task**

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This study tested an item-order explanation of word-length effects in backward serial recall and recognition. It examined (a) whether the superior recall for short words expected for order-based tasks, and consistently found in forward serial recall, would apply also to backward serial recall; (b) whether the



superior recall for long words expected for item-based tasks would apply to recognition; and (c) whether there was evidence for qualitative differences in processing between long and short words. Twenty adults performed backward serial recall and recognition tasks based on five-word lists of short and long words. They then completed a remember/know task requiring them to classify each recognised word as being consciously recollected (remember) or as just being familiar (know). The results showed that backward serial recall was better for short words than for long words, whereas recognition was better for long words than for short words. These opposing word-length effects were consistent with the item-order explanation. The remember/know analysis showed that long words were more likely to be classified as consciously remembered than as just familiar, whereas for short words there was no difference. This suggested that long words were encoded with more episodic information than short words during initial processing.

### **The plural human self under study: Development and early results from the Contextual Selves Inventory**

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Personal selves form, evolve and are expressed within relationships that offer different opportunities and requirements for self-being. A person can develop differing configurations of self, as in relations with parents, siblings, school-mates, an intimate partner, with an opponent, and in a group context. To study this diversity, a Contextual Selves Inventory (CSI) was devised, which taps the self as experienced in nominated key relationships. Self-descriptive statements are rated on a 7-point scale from 'No, not like me at all' to 'Yes, very (or always) like me'. Preliminary research supports the hypothesis of contextual variation in self-perception and points to more specific patterns in this variation. One such pattern is the indication that self-esteem varies with the relational context. The results invite more closely targeted research, including a focus on how subselves interrelate. A person may be quite aware of their diversity, with self-configurations that are flexible zones within a dynamic whole. Or, the subselves may be fixed patterns largely isolated from each other in awareness. Study of change in subself

qualities and relations through psychotherapy is one prospective focus of considerable interest.

### **Impact of Better Access on Better Outcomes and practical strategies for psychologists navigating the two programs**

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Prior to the introduction of Better Access, uptake of the ATAPS projects was substantial (e.g., by December 2007, 102,218 consumers had been referred to the projects and had received 423,530 sessions of care). High uptake has been particularly notable in rural areas. ATAPS projects have found it necessary to implement strategies to deal with excess demand. The Better Access program has been welcomed as a further means of meeting need, and again has experienced rapid uptake. In just over twelve months, Medicare Australia was billed for 1,530,753 sessions provided by allied health professionals. A correlation analysis by location will examine the relationship between the monthly number of sessions provided through the two programs. The current paper examines whether there has been a reduction in demand for services provided through the ATAPS projects since the introduction of the Better Access program and, if so, whether this reduction has been greater in urban areas. It would appear that the two programs are providing complementary services and are working in tandem to address a previously unmet need for mental health care. Based on evaluations of these programs, practical strategies to assist independently practicing psychologists navigating the two programs and exchange of information with GPs will be proposed.

### **Evaluation of the Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care program**

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The Access to Allied Psychological Services (ATAPS) component of the Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care (BOiMH) initiative, introduced in 2001, permits General Practitioners to refer eligible consumers to allied health professionals (mainly psychologists) for six to twelve sessions of focussed psychological strategies. Australia-wide,

over one hundred ATAPS projects are being implemented by local Divisions of General Practice. The Commonwealth Government has commissioned The University of Melbourne's Centre for Health Policy, Programs and Economics to evaluate the ATAPS component of the BOiMHC program. Evaluation data sources include a minimum data set, surveys, interviews, and forums. This paper will report the latest evaluation findings including: uptake by GPs, allied health professionals, and consumers; types of care consumers are receiving; comparison of rural and urban projects; and consumer outcomes. Over 102,000 consumers have been referred for services and over 423,000 sessions have been delivered via ATAPS projects. The majority of consumers have been diagnosed with mood and/or anxiety disorders. Interventions have been cognitive and behavioural, delivered to individuals in one-hour sessions, at no or minimal cost to the consumer. Evidence demonstrates that the ATAPS projects have achieved improvements in consumers' mental health and have been addressing a previously unmet need.

#### **Intercultural communication barriers, contact dimensions and attitudes towards international students**

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Extending Spencer-Rodgers and McGovern's (2002) intergroup threat research, this study investigated the role of intercultural communication emotions (ICE) - negative affect associated with perceived linguistic and cultural barriers, in conjunction with contact dimensions in measuring domestic students' attitudes towards international students. Participants included 327 Australian undergraduate university students (63% female and 37% male; ranging from 17 to 58 years of age) who anonymously self-reported their social interactions with and perceptions of international students. Multiple hierarchical regression results indicated that intercultural communication barriers were moderately and uniquely related to unfavourable attitudes toward international students. Contact quality and contact quantity exhibited small positive effects on intergroup evaluations and this relationship was partially mediated by ICE. Theoretical implications are discussed and integrated in reference

to institutional strategies for creating intercultural programs on campuses. The important role of negative factors in instigating and ameliorating intergroup attitudes is highlighted.

#### **Suicide bereavement support group standards and practice**

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Currently across Australia, there exists a diverse range of suicide bereavement support (SBS) groups providing invaluable support to people experiencing a most tragic loss by providing a connection to others who have shared that experience. There are minimal national standards or benchmarks available against which groups may be assessed and guided and few accredited training tools that facilitators may obtain to assist them in running SBS groups. Lifeline Australia has undertaken the Commonwealth funded Suicide Bereavement Support Group Standards and Practice project in cooperation with the APS and other collaborative partners. The project will develop clearly defined standards which will inform the development of both a good practice guide and a suite of training tools to assist in both the facilitation of individual SBS groups and the training of those who facilitate them. The APS and Lifeline Australia have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which supports collaborative work of mutual interest. The APS has representation on this project's Expert Reference Group and is reviewing the Facilitator Training package for sound psychological content. The selection of a diverse range of partners in this project as well as broad consultation has been central to its success. Some keys to this successful partnership will be discussed and include: 1) Well identified and articulated purpose/objectives; 2) Project objectives congruent with each partner organization's aims and vision; and 3) Partners valuing difference and innovation.

### **Individualism, collectivism and voting behaviour: A pilot of the study into the 2007 Australian Federal Election**

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Individualism and collectivism constructs has been discussed in a number of contexts in the social sciences (Triandis, 1998), including social systems, morality and cultural patterns (Triandis, 1990). To date much of the research has focused on cultural differences in the individualism-collectivism construct; and the application of these constructs to political ideology and voting intentions is scarce. It is arguable that more centre-right parties (e.g. Liberal-National) are more likely to endorse individualism than centre-left parties (Labour or Greens), whereas this trend may be reversed for collectivism. An exit poll was conducted at a provisional city polling booth in the November 2007 Federal Election. Fifty respondents were given a questionnaire about voting behaviour. They were also given a modified 20-item version of the Individualism-Collectivism Scale (ICS). The modified ICS had fair to adequate internal consistencies for Collectivism ( $\alpha=.60$ ) and Individualism ( $\alpha=.77$ ). A one-way ANOVA found people who voted Liberal-National endorsed Individualism significantly higher than people who voted Labour or the Greens. There were no differences between Labour and Greens voters. Voting behaviour did not provide any differences in the Collectivism scale.

### **Counselling asylum seekers: A service delivery and advocacy program in a humanitarian context**

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Asylum seekers arrive in Australia from backgrounds of war, torture and trauma, and are then placed in immigration detention centres or given bridging visas until the complex, and often protracted, process of deciding their refugee status is completed. The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC), currently located in West Melbourne, was established in June 2001 as a response to the lack of services available to asylum seekers, particularly those who have no rights to work and no entitlements to Medicare, Centrelink, or community services. The

ASRC provides a broad range of services including counselling, casework, health, and legal programs. The counselling program provides individual counselling and advocacy, a family program, and support for asylum seekers when they attend the centre for potentially distressing legal appointments. This paper provides an overview of the conditions of the lives of asylum seekers and discusses the way the counselling program works with them at all stages of the refugee determination process.

### **Albert Ellis and the world of children**

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Despite Albert Ellis' extensive contributions to the cognitive-behavioural treatment of childhood disorders, he always expressed the view that his more important contributions to the mental health of children could be found in the applications of rational-emotive behaviour therapy (REBT) in schools in the form of teaching children how to deal with difficult circumstances and people and to manage their own emotions through the use of rational beliefs and thinking. Ellis firmly believed that young children can be taught to distinguish rational from irrational aspects of their thinking and to re-structure their thinking so that as much as possible it is consistent with reality and logic. However, he was even more convinced of the importance of teaching children of all ages about the harmful and self-defeating aspects of irrational beliefs (self-deprecation, low frustration tolerance, lack of acceptance of others) providing them with a variety of what he called psycho-educational learning experiences that would result in children acquiring self-acceptance, high frustration tolerance and other-acceptance. This presentation will illustrate some basic ways that teachers (and parents) can teach children to think, feel and behave rationally as well as illuminate some of Ellis' distinctive understandings of childhood development.

### **The effect of You Can Do It! Education on the emotional resilience of elementary school students with social, emotional, behavioural and achievement challenges**

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This study examined the effect of the You Can Do It! Education (YCDI) cognitive-behavioural intervention program on the emotional resilience of students in grades 4 to 6 who were identified with achievement, behavioural, social and/or emotional challenges. Sixty one students were randomly assigned to either small groups receiving an eight week YCDI cognitive-behavioural intervention or small groups receiving “eclectic” counselling other than cognitive-behavioural. Results indicated a positive impact of the YCDI program on the resilience items contained in the ACER Social and Emotional Well-Being Surveys (student self-report; teacher survey) with no positive impact found for students receiving “eclectic” counselling. Students receiving YCDI showed improvements on the Walker-McConnell Classroom Adjustment Behaviours and Peer Preferred Behavior sub-scales. Recommendations for future research are included.

### **The social and emotional well-being of Australian children and adolescents: The discovery of “Levels”**

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Data will be reported on the social and emotional well-being of 11,526 students (prep to Year 12) who completed the ACER Social-Emotional Well-Being Surveys (SEWB) as well as 6,860 of their teachers. Employing Rasch measurement, a continuum of student SEWB emerged that included six distinct levels. Students with higher levels of SEWB increasingly display social and emotional skills and values associated with resilience, positive social orientation and positive work orientation. They also increasingly perceive higher levels of positive interactions with adults, peers and youth-oriented programs in their homes, schools and community. Different findings will be presented concerning the incidence of social and emotional difficulties (anger, anxiety, depression, under-achievement, bullying), gender differences, SES differences and changes in

student SEWB across age. The aspects of students’ homes, school, communities and social-emotional strengths that contribute most to high levels of SEWB will be highlighted. Implications for treatment of students with different levels of SEWB will be discussed. Based on this data, recommendations will be offered concerning the promotion of positive social and emotional well-being of all students.

### **Climate change and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing**

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Worldwide the burden of disease of mental illness and mental health has long been recognised. There is also increasing understanding of the importance of addressing the social, economic and environmental determinants which promote the mental health of individuals, communities and societies. As evidence about the reality and the consequences of climate change has expanded, a growing body of evidence has also emerged about the health effects of climate change. In this article our aim is to focus particularly on the implications of climate change for mental health. In addition to noting evidence about the direct mental health consequences of climate change our aim is to trigger a broader debate about the link between the social and economic impacts of climate change and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing. We conclude with some thoughts about implications of these reflections for future policy, practice research in the fields of mental health and mental health promotion.

### **Leadership in a global economy - how can Australian leaders be developed to compete?**

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This presentation’s objectives include exploring the challenges Australian leaders face and will face in competing internationally and why; understanding how Australian leaders can develop themselves to respond to these challenges; and considering practical ways psychologists can provide service and support in the development of these

leaders. The presentation will focus on the challenges facing Australian leaders as the global economy increasingly confronts Australian organisations' ability to compete and succeed. After a brief discussion of the drivers for this increased need to compete globally, the focus will be on what mindset and competencies Australian leaders will need to be able to compete and how they can develop these. The workshop will explore what is practical versus ideal, using examples from the presenter's experience, and how psychologists can successfully support the development of Australian leaders.

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### **Relationships between working memory and reading comprehension in primary school children using self-paced and computer-paced working memory measures**

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Effective reading requires a person to remember the individual words of a sentence while retrieving their meanings from long-term memory and creating a meaningful whole. Consequently, a link between working memory and reading has been established. However, research suggests that the nature of the working memory tasks used significantly influences their predictive power (Lépine, Barrouillet, & Camos, 2005). In this study, working memory performance was measured using both computer-paced and self-paced tasks and the relationship between these measures and reading comprehension was examined. Eighty eight children (44 in Year 2; 44 in Year 4) participated in a range of reading and working memory tasks. Results showed that in Year 2, the self-paced tasks were better predictors of reading comprehension than computer-paced tasks, and accounted for significant variance in reading comprehension above phonological awareness and single word reading. In Year 4, the computer-paced tasks were better predictors, accounting for significant variance in reading comprehension above the other literacy measures. These results raise questions as to which working memory tasks are the most appropriate for predicting reading performance.

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### **Personality and P plater risks**

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Young adults represent a disproportionate percentage of road-related accidents in Victoria. This is a result of various factors, such as experience, gender, cultural influence, peer support/pressure, and personality. The general aims of this study are to explore the relationship between driver behaviour in young adults (focusing on, but not restricted to 'P platers'), and Goldberg's Five Factor Model of personality. This study will involve the administration of a questionnaire to participants (aged 18-24), which includes the 50-item International Personality Item Pool to determine a participant's strengths and weaknesses in the five personality areas. The questionnaire also identifies certain 'risky' driving behaviours and experiences – such as speeding, drink driving, and involvement in collisions. This paper will provide an overview of the previous literature in this area, as well as discuss the findings from this study in regard to the relationship between driver behaviour and personality factors.

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### **Psychologists' cognitive and emotional responses to working with Borderline Personality Disorder clients**

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Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is commonly recognised throughout theoretical and clinical accounts as one of the most challenging mental health disorders to treat, however, there has been limited empirical investigation into characteristic psychologist's reactions evoked by this diagnostic group. The aim of this study was to investigate cognitive and emotional responses of psychologists treating BPD. Psychologists currently working with BPD clients gave informed consent to be interviewed regarding their responses to this client group. In addition, the Impact Message Inventory (IMI-C) and the Psychotherapy Relationship Questionnaire (PRQ) were completed. Transcripts from a semi-structured interview of psychologist's counter transference experiences were coded and scored to reflect core ideas and responses that were

consistent across cases, whilst allowing for individual variation. Major themes that emerged included significant psychologist anxiety and worry both before and after sessions, and confusion and frustration within the session in relation to implementing specific therapeutic tasks and skills. Self-report measures supported the transactional patterns found within the client-therapist dyad. The results from this study increase the current knowledge of common themes, origins and manifestations of counter transference reactions in the treatment of BPD, aiding psychologists to incorporate this clinically important information into the treatment process.

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### Meeting the rational and irrational selves: Defining the essential role of accurate language in therapy

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While Cognitive Therapy has derived schemas that are purported to underlie cognitive processing, Albert Ellis in REBT was always clear about his view that acceptance of 'self', 'other' and 'the world' was the core of rational cognitive processing and, thus, healthy emotional reactions. Influenced by the work Karen Horney (1950), Ellis describes the dynamics of the core irrational versus the rational selves – the former striving to 'prove' its value of self, the latter simply 'accepting' its value of self and focussing on enjoying and managing life experiences. Drawn from this concept a model is presented which delineates the processes stemming from these opposing core self constructs – described as the NOT-OK and OK selves – and highlights the importance of accurate language in the therapeutic context. This model depicts the destructive influence of the 'self-esteem' movement over the last 35 years with its promotion of language which has evolved around the concept of 'self'. This language has reinforced the NOT-OK self, evaluated through the Theory of Opposites. Examples of common problematic language use are provided, such as the notion of *'feeling bad about ourselves'* - global evaluations which demonstrate evidence that slippage in the use of terms is the enemy of truth.

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### Psychology and the research enterprise: Moving beyond the enduring hegemony of positivism

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Almost since its inception, psychology has embraced the positivist orientation of the natural sciences. The research enterprise in psychology has reinforced this through its insistence that psychological science is objective, generalisable, and value free (or neutral). Consequently, experimental designs are privileged over other forms of enquiry and alternate epistemologies, methodologies, and methods remain marginalised within the discipline. We argue that alternate methodologies, and the philosophies that underpin the research endeavour, should be included in mainstream psychology programmes so that the existing imbalance is rectified. Achieving this balance will mean that psychology will be better positioned to address applied research problems and students will graduate with the skills and knowledge that they will need in the multidisciplinary workforce they will enter. We discuss recommendations for how psychology in Australia can move towards embracing methodological and epistemological pluralism.

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### Executive function and social skills in preschool children with high functioning autism

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The Executive Dysfunction Hypothesis is predominant among the theories proposed to account for the social skill impairments of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs). Empirical studies are needed to examine possible associations between the frequently reported deficits in executive function and social skill in children with High Functioning Autism (HFA). Participants in this study were 81 parents of typically developing preschool children and 14 parents of preschool children with HFA. Parents completed the Early Childhood Questionnaire (ECQ) as a measure of developmental status and social functioning and the preschool version of the Behaviour Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF-P). Children were

matched by mental age and gender. When compared with the typically developing preschool child, preschool children with HFA had significantly higher scores on the ECQ Social Withdrawal and Social Skills Deficits scales. Preschool children with HFA also had significantly higher BRIEF-P ratings on each of the five scales. For the preschool children with HFA, global Social Skill was negatively correlated with BRIEF Global Composite scores. Preschool children with HFA display marked differences in their social skill development compared to typically developing preschoolers that are associated with executive dysfunction.

### **Dispositional rumination and depressed mood**

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The relationship between rumination and depressed mood is well supported in the literature. Recently, however, the way in which rumination is currently defined and measured (The Response Style Questionnaire; RSQ) have been criticised for being biased towards depressed mood and its symptoms. This paper describes the initial investigation of The Dispositional Rumination Scale (DRS). This scale was designed to measure a general tendency towards a ruminative style of the thinking regardless of content or valence. Mood, rumination and stressful events were assessed in a sample of undergraduate students over a 3-week period. The DRS was able to predict future depressed mood beyond baseline mood, whereas the RSQ was not. Further, the DRS was able to predict future depressed mood after both stress and baseline mood were controlled for whereas the RSQ did not. Because the RSQ may be tapping depressive symptoms, it may share much of the variance accounted for by baseline mood. The DRS is not limited in this way and thus may be better able to examine the role of ruminative thought in depressed mood as well as other disorders. Theoretical and clinical implications are discussed.

### **Oxytocin as a mediator of the unique interoceptive effects of 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA, "ecstasy") in the rat**

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MDMA ("Ecstasy") use results in distinctive mood changes, most likely due to its enhancement of serotonin (5HT) release. Activation of 5HT-1A postsynaptic receptors stimulates the release of oxytocin in the central nervous system, where it regulates mood. Using a drug discrimination paradigm, we examined how alterations in oxytocin levels affect conditioned behavioural responses. Male and female Sprague Dawley rats ( $N=24$ ) were trained to respond to MDMA and a related stimulant, amphetamine (AMP), and saline using a three lever drug discrimination paradigm. In the first study, the extent to which operant responding generalized to the training drugs following administration of carbetocin (an oxytocin analogue) or atosiban (oxytocin receptor antagonist) or combinations of these drugs was evaluated. The results supported the hypotheses that the addition of an oxytocin analogue (carbetocin) would partially substitute and enhance the MDMA-like effects of the training drugs, whereas blocking oxytocin receptors with atosiban resulted in some disruption to MDMA-appropriate responding. It was concluded that oxytocin receptor activation is involved in MDMA-specific interoceptive cues, and that this is one of the features of MDMA that distinguishes it subjectively from AMP. (This work was supported by Clive and Vera Ramaciotti Establishment; atosiban was given by Ferring Pharmaceuticals).

### **Contextual Modular Therapy (CMT): Brief psychotherapy for women with breast cancer**

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Breast cancer affects women at all levels of their life: Emotionally, spiritually and relationally and such an existential trauma requires women to confront, review and potentially refocus their lives. Psychotherapy can help women with breast cancer to cope better with the emotional difficulties associated

with the disease. This paper describes a brief integrated psychotherapy of a woman approaching the first anniversary of her breast cancer diagnosis. The therapy focussed on uncovering her underlying anxieties and fears, engaging in an exploration of their origins, and contextualising her past, present and future relationships. Contextual Modular Therapy (CMT) (Macnab, 1991) proved robust for this client who had a premorbid history of anxiety. The treatment outcome resulted in the woman re-establishing a sense of control, changing her perceptions of herself and others, and considering how she might now live given her breast cancer treatment.

### Commonalities in risk factors for problem gambling and internet dependence

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Despite mounting interest in the concept of “internet dependence”, there has been much debate among researchers regarding the appropriate theoretical conceptualization and definition for problems related to excessive Internet use. The most commonly applied conceptual approach has been to define excessive Internet use as a behavioural addiction, similar to pathological or problem gambling. This perspective views excessive Internet use as an impulse control disorder that does not involve an intoxicant but which shares characteristics of substance dependence. Moreover, although Internet addiction or dependence has not yet been included as a diagnosis in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) nosological system, researchers have modelled proposed criteria on the DSM-IV criteria for pathological gambling. In order to contribute to the understanding of internet dependence as a disorder resembling problem gambling, the current study aimed to examine the degree to which risk factors empirically identified for problem gambling are relevant to the study of internet dependence. Risk factors such as depression, anxiety, stressors, and social support were examined in a sample of university students from a number of Victorian universities. The implications of the findings in relation to the conceptualization and management of these disorders are discussed.

### The impact of belief systems on approval towards heterosexual and lesbian couples accessing assisted reproductive technology (ART)

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The current study examined levels of approval towards heterosexual and lesbian couples accessing assisted reproductive technology (ART), and the impact that beliefs systems, such as religion, religious attributions and just world beliefs, have upon such attitudes. Undergraduate psychology students ( $N = 324$ ) completed measures assessing demographics, religious affiliation, religiosity, God locus of health control and beliefs in a just world (self and others) as well as ratings of approval for the use of ART by both heterosexual and lesbian couples. Results showed that approval was higher for heterosexual versus lesbian couple access. No effect was found for religious affiliation regarding levels of approval for use by heterosexuals; however, Christians (as opposed to catholic or no religion) had the lowest levels of approval towards use by lesbians. Multiple regression analyses revealed that religiosity (but not religious affiliation) and God locus of health control were the strongest (negative) predictors of approval towards heterosexual use; whereas being male, Christian, high in religiosity and low in belief in a just world (self) were predictive of negative attitudes towards use by lesbians. Results suggest that religiosity and religious attributions may be more important in explaining attitudes to ART than religious affiliation per se.

### Ecstasy (methylenedioxymethamphetamine) addiction: Dependence, but not as we know it?

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The prevalence of ‘ecstasy’ (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine) use in the Australian adult population has more than doubled in the past decade. While common, use is typically infrequent, and there remains some controversy as to whether a true dependence syndrome exists in relation to ecstasy: with few presenting to treatment, scant case reports of dependence, and animal studies suggesting the absence of physical signs of



dependence associated with the drug. Despite this, dependence on ecstasy can be diagnosed within both hallucinogen and amphetamine dependence categories according to DSM-IV-TR. We aimed to examine the characteristics of dependence in relation to use of ecstasy using the Severity of Dependence Scale and the Composite International Diagnostic Interview among two large cohorts of frequent (at least monthly) ecstasy consumers recruited in the Ecstasy and Related Drug Reporting System. Findings suggest that the internal structures of these scales are less homogeneous in relation to use of ecstasy than for other drugs; however they retain some validity, as high symptom scores were related to behaviours reflective of dependence, such as higher usage levels, engagement in risk behaviours and the experience of problems. These results are discussed in reference to the applicability of the concept of dependence to ecstasy use.

#### **Circadian rest/activity rhythms as predictors of mood in a small sample of outpatients with bipolar disorder**

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Circadian rhythm disturbance has been shown to play a key role in the pathogenesis of bipolar disorder. While the evidence in favour of a role for circadian rhythm dysregulation in bipolar disorder is increasingly prominent in the relevant literature, the mechanism of rhythm disturbance is currently open to debate. The aim of the current study was to investigate attenuation of the circadian rhythm as the means by which the circadian clock is disturbed in affected populations. Six euthymic bipolar outpatients self-monitored their sleeping patterns, 24-hour rest/activity (circadian) rhythms, and moods for between 63 and 177 consecutive days using Chronorecord and wrist actigraphy. It was expected that attenuation of the rest/activity rhythm amplitude and longer time spent in bed would be associated with lower mood ratings in the outpatient sample. Concomitant time series analysis using the Box-Jenkins ARIMA methodology revealed predicted (positive) associations at the synchronous lag between mood and the amplitude of the rest/activity rhythm

for all participants, though only one was found to be significant. The findings for the relationship between mood and sleep length were less consistent. These findings are discussed in the context of how they might relate to the onset and maintenance of clinical mood episodes.

#### **What makes a happy cop? Longitudinal predictors of police officer well-being**

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There is a predominant belief within both scientific and lay populations that policing is a stressful occupation, by virtue of officers' exposure to stressful and traumatic events. However, much of the research conducted with police personnel fails to consider the role of the organisation in facilitating and maintaining employee well-being. Furthermore, it is now widely argued that individual factors (e.g. personality) have a differential impact on responses to stressful and traumatising events. This paper presents data from a multi-method longitudinal study of police officer well-being. Officers were approached as recruits, and followed into their second year of operations. Changes in stress and satisfaction were charted using a quantitative methodology, and the implications of prior traumatic experience/s, personality and coping in response to occupational experiences are discussed. Qualitative studies explored changes in officers' perceptions of their role within the organisation, and found satisfaction is determined, to a large extent, by effective socialisation into the police organisational culture. Overall results suggest that prior trauma may actually facilitate officer resilience to later work-trauma, and that the police organisation plays a pivotal role in determining the well-being of officers. The project provides important insights into the dynamics of individual adjustment in the police profession.

### **The relationships between learning approaches, personality, and academic success: School leavers versus nonschool leavers**

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The aim of this study was to examine the relationships between approaches to learning, personality, and academic success in a sample of 177 first-year psychology students. Most of the students ( $N = 144$ ; 81.4%) were first-year tertiary students (school leavers); 33 students (18.6%) had more than one-year tertiary experience (nonschool leaver). The students were enrolled either on-campus or via distance education at the University of Southern Queensland and completed an online survey for course credit. Academic achievement was measured as grade point average (GPA). This paper will report the relationships among the key variables. Univariate analyses of variance showed that nonschool leavers obtained higher GPAs and scored higher on the Deep and Strategic learning approaches than did school leavers. Conversely, school leavers scored higher on the Surface approach to learning. A regression analysis showed that the Strategic approach predicted GPA. None of the five personality traits were related to academic achievement. However, Intellect and Conscientiousness were each found to predict the Deep approach to learning; Conscientiousness was found to predict the Strategic approach to learning; and Emotional Stability and Intellect were each found to predict the Surface approach to learning. The implications of these findings are discussed.

### **Psychologists' attitudes about providing physical activity advice and counselling as part of psychological treatment**

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Regular physical activity (PA) can provide psychological benefits. This study assessed psychologists' attitudes about providing PA advice/counselling. A questionnaire was mailed to 620 psychologists to assess current practices, confidence, acceptability and perceived effectiveness of PA counselling. From 236 respondents, 52% reported often/always recommending PA, and 12%

reported often/always providing PA counselling. Qualitative data indicated that psychologists were more likely to do PA counselling when they had a personal interest in PA or experience in the health/fitness industry, and with clients with stress/depression/anxiety. Most respondents were confident to recommend PA (86%), give general advice (83%), discuss options (80%), set goals (73%), and identify and problem-solve barriers (80%). Fewer respondents were confident to tailor PA counselling (32%), and a lack of resources and relevant knowledge was identified as a barrier. Multivariable linear regression analyses indicated that psychologists providing PA counselling were more likely than those who did not ( $p < 0.05$ ) to exercise regularly, counsel mid-aged adults, practise solution-focused therapy, be confident in providing general PA counselling, think PA counselling by psychologists was appropriate and acceptable, and believe that PA could be beneficial in managing complex conditions. This study indicates that psychologists can have a role in promoting PA as part of psychological treatment.

### **Wellbeing in long-term primary carers: Biopsychosocial outcomes**

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Carers are vital to sustaining the independence and optimal functioning of some of the most vulnerable members of the Australian community, yet carers themselves are at risk of poor psychological health outcomes as well as premature morbidity and mortality. Indeed, carers often subjugate their own needs in order to fulfil their caring role. This study examined the correlates of wellbeing in primary carers. The consequences of providing extended informal care were investigated using a mixed methodology, including questionnaires, saliva sampling and individual interviews. Reported stress, distress, wellbeing and coping in 30 carers and 30 age and gender matched non-carers, were compared with their biological correlates including sleep and stress hormones. The quantitative and qualitative findings are used to explore physiological and psychological bases of carer wellbeing. This research has the potential to inform policy on the growing population

of Australian carers and to add to the developing wellbeing literature.

### **Children's reporting of a witnessed adult transgression: Implications for child sexual abuse disclosures**

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Although controversial, there is increasing evidence that children frequently do not report sexual abuse when it occurs. This reluctance and delay in reporting often casts doubt on the veracity of their allegations. Therefore, it is crucial that children report abuse soon after it occurs. Not only does early disclosure facilitate criminal proceedings relating to the abuse but it also stops the abuse and enables the child to receive therapeutic intervention to deal with it. To investigate factors that promote and impede children's disclosures an analogue study was conducted in which children witnessed a staged event involving an adult committing a minor transgression. Participants were 64 predominantly Caucasian boys and girls from two age groups (4 and 8 years). Eleven of the 64 children disclosed the transgression. Disclosure did not vary by gender or age. Logistic regression analyses revealed that the strongest predictor of children not disclosing the transgression was their belief in the need to comply with the transgressor's request to keep the transgression secret. The most frequent reason provided by children who did disclose the transgression was that the activity was wrong. These findings highlight the need to teach children that they should not always comply with an adults request to keep a secret.

### **Situational influences on children's trustworthiness: The role of promises**

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The ability to keep promises is often considered the hallmark of trustworthiness and honesty. However, promises are made in diverse contexts for a variety of reasons. The legal system requires that children promise to tell the truth about witnessed or experienced events and peers ask friends to promise to keep secrets usually about everyday events. Promises can serve both to inhibit (promise to keep a secret) and to promote (promise to tell the truth)

honesty. Eight vignettes were constructed in which an adult committed an antisocial act or engaged in a prosocial one and asked the child not to reveal the activity, with or without a promise (secrecy promise). Later, the child was asked to tell the truth about the secret, with or without a promise (truth promise). There were 96 predominantly Caucasian participants (5, 8, & 11 years). Results revealed that children believed that truth promises were more likely to elicit truth telling about an antisocial than a prosocial activity. However, they believed that secrecy promises were more likely to promote secret keeping about a prosocial than an antisocial activity. Different sociocognitive factors mediated keeping secrecy and truth promises depending on whether the activities were antisocial or prosocial. The influence of context on trustworthiness is discussed.

### **Adolescent peer aggression: Gender-linked sociocognitive processes**

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A significant amount of research attests to sex differences in aggressive behaviour. It has been shown that from an early age boys are more aggressive than girls. Most of this research, however, has focussed on children's physical aggression. More recently, there has been attention to other forms of aggression, particularly relational aggression. Relational aggression involves indirect forms of aggression aimed at disrupting relationships and includes behaviours such as spreading rumours and social exclusion. This form of aggression is favoured by girls, however, boys also engage in it. These findings have led to a re-examination of the generally held belief that males are more aggressive than females. This research examined the extent to which the same sociocognitive processes are involved in the different types of aggression (physical, relational, verbal) and whether these processes are moderated by gender. Participants were 737 boys and girls, predominately Caucasian, from Grades 7 and 9. As expected, the relationship between the sociocognitive measures and aggressive conduct varied depending on aggression type and gender of the aggressor. The role of sociocognitive processes in the maintenance of sex differentiated aggressive behaviour is discussed.

### Social comparison processes, prototypes and exercise

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This research examined direct and mediating influences of social comparisons, perceptions of active/inactive prototypes, and perceived control on exercise behaviour. One hundred and forty respondents reported on weekly exercise, perceived control, perceived personal risk resulting from inactivity, preferred level of social comparison, as well as psychological distancing from, and favourability of active and in-active prototypes. Results indicated that those who made upward comparisons with others who are better at maintaining physical activity (a) were more psychologically distanced from inactive prototypes ( $\beta = .46$ ) and (b) had greater perceptions of control over their ability to exercise ( $\beta = .43$ ). Both psychological distancing from an inactive prototype and perceived control mediated the effect of preferred level of social comparison on exercise. The three variable model (social comparison, psychological distancing and perceived control) explained 41% of the variance in exercise behaviour. Importantly, upward comparisons in assessing physical activity were made by those who were more physically active. The findings can advise on how comparison targets may be implemented in health promotion programs aimed at motivating populations to be more active.

### Attachment styles and health-related behaviours as contributors to non-illness mortality

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This qualitative study investigates a much neglected area of non-illness mortality in an Indigenous community by focusing on attachment styles and health-related behaviours. The study uses a semi-structured format to explore the relationships between attachment styles, health-related behaviours such as diet and drinking, and risk for non-illness mortality. The focus group of informants consists of a rural sample of indigenous persons residing in Far North Queensland who have already lost a family member to suicide. The impact of nutrition on

physical health is mostly explained by the higher levels of obesity in Indigenous persons compared to non-Indigenous individuals. A healthy diet and low alcohol consumption are more likely in persons who are part of a supportive kin network. This project provides a greater understanding of the role of attachments and dietary deficiencies in the well-documented problem of aboriginal non-illness mortality. The findings have implications for health care workers in rural and remote aboriginal communities, and can inform primary care interventions to help stem non-illness mortality.

### Internet self-help for depression: Preliminary findings informing best-practice

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Internet communication has been found to have potential application to the development of interventions targeting mild to moderate levels of depression. It has already been shown to facilitate coping behaviour among young adults with depression; as an ongoing preventative measure for chronic low level depression; and as a tool that may be used for group support for depression sufferers that are comorbid with social fearfulness. Independently, individual online self-help tools for depression, such as online information (known as, 'psycho-education'), group forum support, or consumer-only use of CBT modules such as MoodGYM, have demonstrated some support and treatment for depression sufferers. Given this, the current study investigated the following questions: 1. Which individual tool for online self-help for low and moderate depression is the most effective? 2. What combinations, if any, of online self-help tools for depression are most efficacious in treating low and moderate levels of depression? 3. How effective are these tools in comparison, and in conjunction with, traditional CBT counselling? This funded study is still underway, therefore only preliminary results will be presented and discussed in relation to how a best-practice model can be developed for individual use of self-help depression tools online as well as with combined treatment intervention (i.e. traditional CBT counselling + online self-help tools).

### **Our motivations are important too! A qualitative analysis of masters squash players in Australia**

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This study examined the presence of motivational factors for 73 mature-age squash players in Australia. Comparisons between gender, three distinct age groups, and three levels of ability were made which measured aspects of motivation, competitiveness, goal, win and temperament. Each subject took part in an in-depth, personal interview which was semi-structured to allow for exploration of areas of interest and elaboration of responses. Qualitative analysis of results via the Leximancer program revealed that differences in responses between mature-age squash players according to age, gender and ability level were not considered to be different. Therefore, the motivations, and aspects of competitiveness, goal, win and temperament to participate in Masters squash were similar for participants regardless of their age, ability and gender. Masters squash competitions appear beneficial by providing mature-age individuals with the opportunity to continue to play their chosen sport at a competitive level into later life, to maintain valued social contacts and enhance their enjoyment of the game, which are consistent with the participants' individual temperament and aspirations. They also allow for personal satisfaction, achievement and continued health and psychological benefits.

### **Interhemispheric asymmetries in the processing of biological motion cues**

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Behavioural correlates of hemispheric processing asymmetries have been demonstrated in a limited array of perceptual processing tasks. Here we tested for the existence of such asymmetries in the processing of visually-defined biological motion (BM). Our data suggest that BM processing is mediated by hemispheric specialisations manifesting at the behavioural level. Such specialisations were evident both in free viewing and controlled eye-movement conditions. The consistency of those findings with accounts of BM sensitivity that focus

on the social- and survival-related value it confers will be discussed.

### **Learning to use a computer spreadsheet application: The effectiveness of error management and counterfactual thinking training strategies**

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This study compares the effectiveness of two different approaches – error management training (EMT) and counterfactual thinking (CFT) – as training strategies with novice learners gaining basic competence in using a computer spreadsheet application. EMT is an approach that encourages learning through exploration and making errors, whereas CFT encourages adaptive behaviour through “what if” and “if only” thoughts to reflect on how one may behave differently to yield a more desirable outcome. The significance of this study is that it brings together two approaches for improving adaptive behaviour that have not been jointly examined previously. The implications of findings for instructional design in information systems training in educational settings and in industry are discussed.

### **A qualitative study of young adults' accounts of parental divorce during childhood and adolescence**

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This paper presents the results of analyses of data from life story interviews with 40 young adults who experienced parental divorce during childhood or adolescence. It examines the participants' perceptions of the impact of the divorce upon themselves and their lives. It also presents the results of an intensive analysis of seven of the accounts with emphasis on the ways in which the participants make sense of the end of their parents' marriage. Five of the forty participants believed that the divorce had a positive effect on them. The remainder believed it had detrimental effects although many thought that they developed strengths as a result of the experiences. In the second analysis, participants often considered their mothers' and fathers' stories of the divorce as part of developing their own stories. In doing so, they judged who was responsible for the

divorce and developed a personal theory of how it happened. Their stories also demonstrated a balance between struggling with the difficulties and the development of personal capabilities or strengths.

### **All norms are not created equal: Differences in sustained attention in urban and regional Australian children – the Melbourne effect**

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A majority of standardised psychological tests do not discriminate between urban and regional participants in their normative data. While there is evidence to suggest some cognitive differences between regional and urban children, the findings have not been consistently replicated. In the current study, 198 Australian children in Years 1, 3, and 5, were administered the Score! subtest of the Test of Everyday Attention for Children as part of a larger executive function battery. This task is a measure of simple sustained attention. Normative data was based on a sample of children who resided in Melbourne, Australia. It was hypothesised that results for the sample from the current study, which included regional and urban children from New South Wales and Victoria, would concur with the normative data. Despite performance on all other executive function tests being consistent with published norms, the sample demonstrated significantly lower scores on the Score! test compared to normative data. A subsequent analysis found that urban participants performed significantly better compared to the regional sample, while no differences were found between urban subgroups based on geographical location. Implications of selecting a normative sample from a restricted geographical area or socio-economic group are also discussed.

### **Advanced theory of mind in Chinese-Australian, Greek-Australian and a general community sample of Australian children**

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The Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test was developed as a 'pure' test of theory of mind. It was designed to remove some of the linguistic and social cognitive features confounding other advanced

theory of mind tasks. The children's version of this test was originally normed on a British sample. An Australian normative study found that mean scores did not significantly differ across populations. The present study found that mean scores for group-administered tests were equivalent to individually administered data in a general Australian population of children enrolled in Year 5 in the Northern Territory. In addition, mean test scores showed no significant differences between Chinese-Australian, Greek-Australian and a general community sample of Year 5 students in the Northern Territory when administered in group settings. Results suggest group testing of the Eyes Test in primary school children is a viable method of administration and could potentially be used for screening purposes. In addition, children raised in Australia, regardless of sub-cultural group, perform at similar levels on this test. Although the children's version of the Eyes Test needs further validation as a test of theory of mind, this study provides initial support for its use with Australian children.

### **Pain sensitivity following induced stress in headache sufferers**

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Stress may contribute to Chronic Tension-Type Headache (CTH) through hyperalgesic effects on already sensitized pain pathways in CTH sufferers. This hypothesis could be partially tested by examining effects of stress on pain sensitivity in CTH sufferers. We measured cephalic and extra-cephalic pressure pain thresholds (PPT) in sixteen CTH and fifteen healthy Control subjects before and after exposure to a fifteen-minute stressful mental task. PPT at head and hand were lower in the CTH compared to Control group both before and after task exposure. PPT decreased from pre to post task in both groups, with a significantly greater pre to post task reduction in cephalic PPT in the CTH compared to Control group. Subjective stress increased from pre to post task in both groups and did not differ between groups. Our results indicate an enhanced hyperalgesic effect of stress on cephalic pressure-pain sensitivity in the CTH sufferers compared to the healthy Controls. The results support the hypothesis that stress may contribute to CTH through

hyperalgesic effects on already sensitized pain pathways in CTH sufferers.

### **The role of somatosensory feedback in Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Three cases treated with mindfulness-integrated CBT**

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**A**ttention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a complex developmental disorder of self-control which involves impairment in cognitive flexibility that necessitates the intentional switching of attention from one stimulus to another. Mindfulness training is a meditative technique which involves the training of sustained attention, cognitive flexibility and experiential acceptance. Two adults and a child with ADHD (aged 64, 39 and 12) undertook a 12-week program which integrates daily mindfulness training sessions and cognitive behaviour therapy. The first part of treatment required participants to sit closed eyes and attend to each inhalation and exhalation at the entrance of the nostrils and switch attention back to the breath as soon as focus was lost (e.g., disengaging from a distracting thought). The second part of treatment required participants to scan their body in an effort to develop somatosensory awareness and acceptance of all sensations, including agitation. All showed abnormally poor somatosensory awareness at pre-treatment, which improved during training. All showed improvement in mood and self-confidence, and decreased agitation. The child also demonstrated marked improvement in cooperation with parents. Importantly, there was a distinct correlation between increased ability to feel body sensations and decreased hyperactivity, pointing to a possible impairment in somatosensory feedback in ADHD.

### **Preschool children's counterfactual inferences: The causal length effect revisited**

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**R**esearch into young children's counterfactual thinking is equivocal about how children's counterfactual responses to causal events may be affected by the length of the causal inference required. This study examined the causal length effect

closely in 3- and 4-year-old children ( $N=87$ ). Children participated in two counterfactual inference tasks. One task entailed listening to stories that depicted a causally-related sequence of events and making counterfactual emotional judgements about the experience of the main story characters. The other task involved viewing a causally-related sequence of physical events being acted out and drawing a counterfactual inference about a potential alternative outcome. Children at each age level were randomly assigned to answer test questions that required a long, medium, or short counterfactual inference. Children's language ability was also assessed. Four-year-olds outperformed 3-year-olds in both tasks, but this age difference was mediated by children's language ability. More striking was the complete absence of difference among causal length conditions in children's responses in both tasks. Our results support other studies that question the nature of the causal length effect in children's counterfactual reasoning. We discuss the possibility that children's developing understanding of temporal versus causal relationships may account for discrepant findings regarding the causal length effect.

### **The effect of counterfactual priming on women's decisions regarding mammography screening**

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**T**he counterfactual priming effect occurs when "what if" and "if only" thoughts about one event broadens one's mind-set to consider a more diverse range of evidence and possibilities in a different decision making or problem solving context. This study examined this effect as applied to mammography screening decisions. We hypothesized that: (i) counterfactual priming would encourage women to seek out information of crucial relevance to the decision to start mammography screening at an earlier age (e.g., family history) rather than information that focuses on peripheral considerations (e.g., discomfort); and (ii) regardless of the actual decision about commencing screening, counterfactually-primed individuals would feel more justified about their decision, and would report less regret should they subsequently receive an early-stage breast cancer diagnosis. We tested these hypotheses with undergraduate female students ( $N=82$ ) using a

role-playing decision-making task. Participants in the experimental group read a story designed to prime a counterfactual mind-set at the outset of their participation, whereas participants in a control group did not. The data supported both of our hypotheses. Our discussion will focus on a proposed theoretical model that postulates the conceptual links between counterfactual priming, information-seeking behaviour in the decision-making process, decision justification, and decision-related regret.

### Opening the sport psychology consultation: Lessons from Giges, Ravizza, and Murphy

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In *Virtual Sport Psychology: Three Approaches to Sport Psychology Consulting* (Brewer, Van Raalte, & Petitpas, 2000), three distinguished sport psychologists display how they do sport psychology with the same athlete-client. In this paper we use conversation analysis to examine the openings to these sport psychology consultations. How professionals open consultations have been found to impact on the trajectory of medical, physiotherapy, psychotherapy, and dietician consultations. So openings are important. Conversation analysis allows a rigorous, fine-grained analysis of the properties of interaction. In our conversational analysis we display the distinctive configurations that characterise Burt Giges, Ken Ravizza, and Shane Murphy idiosyncratic styles. We also display communalities in how these experienced practitioners open their sport psychology consultations. Secondly, we consider how the Australian sport psychology community should use this and other works of exemplary practice. For instance, should exemplary practices be used as a standard to evaluate experienced practitioners, such as those working at State and National Sports Institutes? Alternatively, should they be used to assess the competencies of graduating sport psychology students for satisfactory entry level practice? Or are they best deployed as a general resource vicariously guiding beginning students through observation and modelling?

### Emotion identification skills predict socio-emotional functioning

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Amongst adults, low emotion identification skill (EIS) relates to poor emotion regulation strategies, higher rates of anxiety and depression, and higher rates of somatic illness and disease. Little research has examined EIS in adolescence and, in particular, the longitudinal impact of EIS on social support and affective experience. Six hundred and sixty-seven high school students completed measures of EIS, social support and positive and negative affects in Grade 8, and again in Grade 9. Repeated measure ANOVAS revealed that negative affects increased and positive affects decreased from Grades 8 to 9. Structural equation modelling revealed that low EIS predicted increases in fear, decreases in positive affect, and decreases in the quality and quantity of social support. Amongst boys, low EIS also predicted increases in sadness. We discuss the implications of these findings for early prevention programmes.

### From distress to success: Teaching coping skills to secondary students with few resources

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Adolescents with few resources use non-productive coping strategies and are particularly vulnerable to stress. Two studies evaluated the effectiveness of a cognitive-behavioural coping skills program with secondary students who have relatively few resources. Of particular interest were students who reported the lowest level of resources according to scores on the Revised Resources Inventory scale, students representing the lowest quartile. In Study 1 significant positive correlations were found pre-program between level of identified resources, and the Productive and Reference to Others coping styles. Significant negative correlations were found for Non-Productive coping and distress. Post-program, low resources students showed a significant increase in use of Reference to Others coping, namely Social Support. In Study 2 results showed a significant increase in the reported use of the Productive coping style and a significant reduction in



Non-Productive coping for the experimental group. Both studies provide support for coping skills training for low resource students.

### **Minimising the impacts of stress and burn-out through mental health education and support in law enforcement**

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Police work is stressful. There is a significant body of literature on the effects of chronic stress in the workplace. However, low-grade burnout – that is, the generalised decrease in the ability to cope with the demands of one’s personal and professional life – can equally lead to mental health issues. These can include anxiety, depression, sleep disturbance and increases in drug and alcohol use, which if not addressed can lead to long term consequences on an individual’s wellbeing. Increasingly police organisations are developing and implementing peer support and mental health awareness programs which augment the layers of support offered by internal psychological services within the workplace. This paper will explore several programs provided by the Wellbeing Services team within the Australian Federal Police to unsworn members and new police recruits. These programs are designed to educate individuals on the need for a greater awareness into the growing pressures and mental health issues that exist in working in a law enforcement environment.

### **The relationship between bullying behaviour, age, aggression, school climate, and tolerance to human diversity**

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This study was conducted to examine the influence of age, aggression levels, the quality of school life, and tolerance to human diversity on bullying behaviour. The sample consisted on 104 adolescent males aged between 12 and 18 years, attending both rural and city schools. Bullying behaviour includes the tendency for someone to bully, and the tendency for them to be victimised. Analyses revealed a higher level of reported victimisation among younger teenagers compared to older ones confirming previous research that bullying

is age related. Specifically, younger adolescents are victimised verbally and socially more frequently than older adolescents. However, regression analyses did not find age a significant predictor of bullying, whilst aggression levels and quality of school life were significant predictors. The findings showed that bullies and victims both tend to have high levels of aggression and lower school satisfaction. In contrast, tolerance to human diversity and bullying were independent of each other with the implication that both a tolerant and an anti-bullying stance are prosocial in nature. The results will be discussed along with their importance for future research. The relevance of the findings to anti-bullying interventions is also considered.

### **Positive thoughts: Are they all helpful?**

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Traditionally, concepts of mental health have held a central role for accurate perceptions of reality, which is consistent with REBT theory. This has been questioned in recent years with some authors (Taylor & Brown, 1988) proposing a Social Psychological Model, which suggests that well-being is basically synonymous with mental health. Furthermore, it is claimed that such positive mental health is generally based upon positive illusions. Such a controversy generates a number of questions when considering positive beliefs and emotional experiences, some of which the REBT framework appears well suited to answer. This paper reviews a key aspect of REBT, the distinction between unhealthy and healthy emotions, and the role irrational and rational beliefs play in relation to these emotions. As with other areas of psychology, the focus of REBT over the years has been directed to clients’ negative emotional experiences. In an attempt to address this and further develop REBT, the present paper reviews and challenges recent claims from the realm of social psychology that positive illusions promote mental health. It is proposed that a similar dichotomy of healthy and unhealthy positive emotions also exists, and a basic framework for working with this positive dichotomy is introduced.

### **Second life - second personality? Personality assessment in virtual worlds**

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The normative and psychometric properties of most of the well-established personality measures in use today are drawn from traditional pen and paper administration. However, the widespread use of the Internet in the mid 1990s prompted explorations of the ethical, practical and psychometric implications of the Web-based administration of these tools. Research has since provided strong evidence of the psychometric comparability of many personality measures in both their pen-and-paper and Web-based forms (Collins, 2004). The present paper explores the next frontier of Internet-based personality assessment: virtual worlds. Gartner Inc. (2007) forecasts that by 2012, eighty percent of all Internet users will have a 'second life', that is, they will have a personal presence in a public virtual world. Today, virtual worlds such as Second Life provide unique opportunities for the exploration of the inevitable philosophical, ethical, and practical questions of 'virtual' psychological assessment.

### **Combined CBT and psychodrama groups: Initial outcome measures**

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Recent changes to Medicare funding have provided opportunities for psychologists to expand from individual to group practice. Combining Psychodrama with CBT has proved to be a successful group intervention in a variety of settings and with diverse client populations. This presentation will address the development, structure and outcomes for small groups run from private practice. The Melbourne groups are for clients with depression and/or anxiety and run over twelve weeks. The focus of the groups is on new role development and improved relationships. Outcome measures were collected at baseline, 6 and 12 week intervals, and 3 months post intervention. Clients developed healthier functioning through the combination of CBT and Psychodrama

### **Assessing the impact of clinical education on the attitudes of health professionals towards working with Borderline Personality Disorder: A comparison of theoretical frameworks in generating long-term attitudinal change**

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This paper describes recent research conducted on the impact of attending targeted clinical education on Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) on the attitudes of health professionals, in an attempt to promote a more empathetic response and nuanced understanding when working with patients diagnosed with this complex disorder. The research also examined which form of clinical education had the greater impact on improving attitudes, using cognitive-behavioural theory and more traditional psychoanalytic theory. A demographic questionnaire and attitudinal tool to quantify clinician attitudes were used to assess the attitudes of mental health and emergency medicine practitioners across a New Zealand and two Australian health services, pre and post education attendance and at 6-month follow-up. Compared to a control condition, examination of the attitude ratings revealed statistically significant differences in attitude scores for all participants in working with BPD following attendance at either of the education programs. The type of education provided, cognitive-behavioural theory or psychoanalytic theory, produced similar results. To determine the most efficacious form of training in generating more long-term attitudinal change, a follow-up of attitude ratings of these health professionals was completed over a 6-month period. A comparison of the two clinical frameworks in promoting attitudinal change produced interesting results.

### **Future directions in alcohol use disorder treatment research**

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In spite of advances in the psychological treatment of Alcohol Use Disorders (AUDs) over the last decade, outcomes remain modest. Parallel research in disciplines of machine learning, clinical pharmacology and molecular biology have contributed to our understanding of both the

aetiology and treatment of AUDs. This paper argues that cross-disciplinary research is essential to progress AUD treatment. Three examples are presented. Promising pilot data which demonstrates the superior capabilities of non-linear modelling in predicting alcohol treatment outcomes is compared with linear statistics. A second body of work reviews the evidence for the application of pharmacotherapy (anti-craving and relapse-prevention agents) as the single largest advance in AUD treatment over the past decade. Included is a review of local data which demonstrates the efficacy of Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy when combined with adjunctive pharmacotherapy. The final series of studies report on the identification of specific genetic loci as risk markers for Alcohol Dependence severity. Recent findings that examine the relationship between these genetic markers and psychological mechanisms also known to be associated with alcohol misuse are discussed. The paper concludes that psychologists must embrace research design technologies and evidence-based findings from their non-psychologist colleagues to improve AUD treatment outcomes.

### Modelling the experience of trauma in a White-Australian sample

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The field of trauma research has recently expanded to include not only the adverse effects of experiencing a traumatic event, but also the potential for beneficial outcomes. A notable example of such research is Posttraumatic Growth (PTG), a salutogenic construct that acknowledges the multitude of responses to an experience of life crises. Subtle differences have been demonstrated between the Australian construction of PTG outcomes and those in the US literature. Thus this study expanded upon previous research to encompass a salutogenic approach to understanding the Australian trauma survivor's experience. Grounded Theory methodology was employed to elucidate themes of the Australian experience of trauma that were grounded in qualitative data, which were used to construct a model of post-trauma adaptation for this sample. The model is robust and includes both the adverse effects of trauma, for example loss of control

and self-deprecation, and the potential positive outcomes of such an experience, such as increased compassion towards others. It also looks at the social support, or the lack thereof, received by survivors and how that affected their adaptation. Understanding the experience of such events from a holistic perspective is vital in providing appropriate support for survivors of trauma.

### Models of positive post-trauma adaptation in multicultural Australia: Humanitarian migrant perspectives

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The potential for survivors of traumatic events to adapt to their post-trauma life in positive ways has been acknowledged in cultures across the world. Cross-cultural research within the field of Posttraumatic Growth, however, has found that the experience of positive adaptation can differ across cultures. This may be due to differences in the proximate and distal influences on members of a given culture, that is, the expectations and coping mechanisms sanctioned in the culture at large, and in the primary reference groups of the trauma survivor. This study used a Grounded Theory approach to constructing a model of the experience of trauma for a White Australian sample, and for three African nations (Sierra Leone, Liberia and Sudan) whose countrymen have resettled in Australia through its humanitarian migration stream. This presentation will highlight the themes elucidated from these four groups, focussing on differences between the African-Australian and White-Australian models, for example, the use of religious coping. An understanding of the differences in the experience of trauma for different cultural groups impacts on how mental health professionals in Australia can provide culturally sensitive support for humanitarian migrants that is based in a detailed understanding of the needs of these Australians.

### **Australian baby boom career women reject 'retirement' and embrace 're-evolvement'**

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Worldwide attention is focused on the massive baby boom cohort as they transition into their later years. The purpose of this research was to investigate factors which Australian baby boom career women identified as essential to successful ageing. This paper reports two major findings from a national survey comprised of 1052 baby boom women. A significant number of women born from 1946 to 1964 rejected the concept of 'retirement', a time of withdrawal from the workforce, instead envisioning their post-career years as a time of 're-evolvement', comprising a multitude of paid and unpaid activities previously postponed. Another finding provided evidence that early and late baby boomer's current level of life satisfaction and post career expectations were dissimilar, indicating that the baby boom cohort is comprised of at least two diverse groups. This research is expected to culminate with the development of a conceptual model of post-career re-evolvement for Australian baby boom career women that recognises these cohort differences and provides a realistic framework of re-evolvement, not retirement, for these women. It is anticipated that this model will assist in the development of better social strategies to ensure positive and productive ageing experiences for Australian baby boom career women.

### **The impact of spinal cord injury on psychological status**

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It is believed spinal cord injury (SCI) places the affected individual at a high risk of psychological disorder. The aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between SCI and negative psychological states. Levels of negative psychological states in 33 people with SCI living in the community were compared to able-bodied controls matched for age and sex. People with SCI were recruited from the community, or were already participating in a broader study on the influence of SCI on brain wave

activity. In order to determine levels of negative psychological states, the Profile of Mood States and the Spielberger Trait Anxiety Inventory were completed by all participants. The SCI group was found to have raised levels of psychopathology, with 20% having elevated negative psychological states typical of people with a psychiatric disorder. Results suggest people with SCI have an increased risk of suffering debilitating levels of psychopathology. Future research needs to investigate psychosocial rehabilitation strategies for lowering negative psychological states such as depressive mood in people with SCI after they have completed their rehabilitation program.

### **Critical reading and writing (CRW) in first-year psychology: Mass screening and targeted assistance**

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Many beginning students struggle with their university study because their high-school experience did not yield the basic or enabling skills essential to tertiary learning activities. A diagnostic program was designed to identify and assist students in developing psychology-specific academic literacy skills in the large Introductory Psychology 1A course at UNSW. In an early lecture period, all students were required to make a written response to a text passage (CRW test). This test required them to take and argue a position. Trained assessors marked their responses according to a number of criteria that ranged from spelling and grammar to the logic of their argument (which position they took was irrelevant). The bottom-scoring 50 students were then contacted and offered special tutorials to assist them with writing their laboratory report. In addition, a second CRW test was offered to this assisted group of students as well as a control group of students (a second chance to make up percentage points). Students who participated in the tutorials showed improvement on some, but not all, assessment criteria. The implications of these findings are discussed in terms of discipline- vs. non-discipline-specific assessment criteria, and in terms of a cost-benefit analysis of the exercise.

## Graduate attributes and undergraduate psychology education

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This paper will describe the process of delineating the graduate attributes (GA) of the undergraduate (UG) program. We have developed a comprehensive list of the capacities or attributes that UG students of psychology can develop during their four years at university. The attributes comprise the knowledge, skills and values that are consistent with the science and application of psychology: Knowledge and Understanding; Research Methods; Critical Thinking Skills; Values; Communication Skills; and Learning and Application. Each attribute is accompanied by a list of suggested student learning outcomes. The learning outcomes provide students with focal points to demonstrate their progressive attainment of the GA, and they support academics in defining the criteria for measuring student performance. The GA and related learning outcomes are intended as recommendations based on research and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including international comparisons. Different levels of development of these GA and learning outcomes would be expected across the four years of the program. Strategies for the integration of GA development into the UG curriculum, as well as implications for postgraduate education, are discussed. [Supported by the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education]

## Attentional and attributional biases in impulsive-aggressive young women

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Previous research has shown aggressive individuals in forensic samples demonstrate patterns of vigilance to aggressively-themed stimuli (Smith & Waterman, 2003; 2004). In addition aggressive individuals have been found to misattribute hostile intent to ambiguous cues (Dodge & Schwartz, 1997). To date, however, no research has explored these effects in non-clinical female samples. Four groups of female students (impulsive-aggressive, aggressive, impulsive, control) were selected on the basis of

scores on the Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire and the I7 Impulsivity Questionnaire. It was hypothesised that impulsive-aggressive women and aggressive women would demonstrate an attentional bias towards aggressive facial stimuli during a dot probe task. Results partially supported this hypothesis, with aggressive women and impulsive women demonstrating an attentional bias towards the aggressive stimuli. However impulsive-aggressive women did not demonstrate this bias. Post-task aggressiveness ratings of facial stimuli were used to investigate attributional biases among this population. It was hypothesised that impulsive-aggressive women would rate neutral faces as significantly more aggressive than other women. This was supported. These data suggest a dichotomous relationship between trait aggression and co-existing trait impulsivity, in that aggressive women differ in terms of their susceptibility to attentional and attributional bias dependent on the level of coexisting trait impulsivity.

## Review of refugee mental health and wellbeing in Australia

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Drawing on a literature review prepared for the Australian Psychological Society on concerns related to the mental health and wellbeing of refugees and refugee claimants in the Australian context, this paper examines factors influencing refugees' psychological adjustment in the resettlement phase, including systemic and socio-political factors impacting on resettlement. Research findings suggest that mental health and wellbeing outcomes are influenced by complex combinations of pre-displacement, displacement, resettlement and systemic factors, with detention of, or award of temporary residence to, refugees who are already experiencing psychological distress on arrival being a case in point. More research is needed into the combined, path-wise relationships between the psychosocial pre-determinants and psychological sequelae of the refugee experience.

### **Cognitive errors and perfectionism in children: Construct validity of the Adaptive/Maladaptive Perfectionism Scale**

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This study provides evidence for the construct-related validity of the Adaptive/Maladaptive Perfectionism Scale (AMPS) by investigating its relationships with measures of positive and negative affect, cognitive errors, and dichotomous thinking in 10-12 year old children. We hypothesised that the reportedly maladaptive subscales, Sensitivity to Mistakes, Compulsiveness, and Need for Admiration would show positive associations with negative affect and negative thinking styles, while the adaptive subscale Contingent Self Esteem would be positively related to positive affect and negatively related to negative affect and negative thinking styles. A non-clinical sample of 204 children completed the AMPS, the Positive and Negative Affect Scale for Children, the Children's Negative Cognitive Errors Scale and the Dichotomous Thinking Scale for Children. Correlational analyses provided evidence to validate the maladaptive subscales and some validation of the adaptive subscale. Maladaptive perfectionism was a significant predictor of children's negative thinking styles scores even after controlling for negative affect. Adaptive perfectionism did not predict negative thinking styles after controlling for positive affect. The results have implications for using the AMPS to identify adaptive and maladaptive features of perfectionism in children, particularly those who may be at risk of developing clinical disorders due to their maladaptive perfectionism and negative thinking styles.

### **Balancing drug use and parental responsibilities: The challenges faced by mums who use amphetamine**

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Participants were ten women who (1) are mothers who are caring for at least one pre-school aged child, and (2) use amphetamine at least 4 days per week in an average week (with or without other substance use). These women were interviewed about their experience of balancing the demands of

parenting with the demands of their drug use. Qualitative data were collected within three broad domains: how one's parenting role is challenged by the demands of drug use, strategies used to minimise harm to one's children, and what support services would assist them to prevent drug-related harm to their children. The findings are discussed in relation to forensic practice (e.g., parenting evaluations for Family Court or Child-Protection Applications) and public health policy (e.g., population-based harm-reduction strategies).

### **The epidemiology of "ecstasy" use and related harm - what do we know?**

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There is good evidence that the use of "ecstasy", the street name for pills containing MDMA, has increased around the world in recent years, and Australia has been no exception to that trend. Australia has the benefit of multiple state and national data sources that can inform about trends in the use and harm related to ecstasy use among at risk populations, and at a population level. The aim of the current paper is to discuss the epidemiology of ecstasy use and harm over time in New South Wales, Australia, with a focus upon sentinel groups of regular ecstasy users (REU) recruited for the Ecstasy and related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS). The paper also considers these trends in the broader context of other indicators of ecstasy markets, patterns of use and harm. It will also provide a summary of recent work conducted through the EDRS examining associations between patterns of ecstasy use and risk behaviours and adverse consequences, including sexual and injection risk, social problems and mental health problems. The implications of this work for researchers, clinicians and those involved in harm reduction will be considered.

### **Experiences of trauma and loss in problem gamblers**

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A particularly high prevalence of traumatic experience in samples of problem gamblers has

been documented in several recent studies. The prevalence of PTSD in samples of problem gamblers seeking treatment has been estimated in various studies to be in the realm of 12.5% to 34%, substantially higher than in the general population. Particularly high rates of abuse have been recorded. For example, Kausch, Ruge, and Rowland (2006), found that 64% of a sample of problem gamblers seeking treatment had suffered some form of abuse prior to the onset of their problem gambling (41% reported physical, and 24% sexual abuse). Following on from a pilot study which has been described previously, the present study presents data from an effectiveness study of integrative psychotherapy with problem gamblers seeking treatment. It examines the prevalence and nature of traumatic experiences reported. Statistical comparisons are made between those with and without a history of trauma and between subgroups formed according to type of traumatic experience. Emotion regulation is discussed as the most important underlying mechanism explaining the link between trauma and problem gambling, and implications for functional analysis of individual cases and treatment are considered.

### The AUT program in counselling psychology

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This paper outlines the AUT program in counselling psychology and attempts to explain the local conditions that have produced the void the program fills. Though responding to local need, the program was developed largely under the guidance and enthusiasm of practising psychologists from other countries, and draws its inspiration from colleagues trained in the US, Australia, and the UK. Its international character has been established, not only through the diverse background of its academic staff, but by the program's popularity with students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Preliminary research examining how interns referential systems, conceived in dialogical terms, change as a result of their training, is presented.

### W.A.R. and compliance with anti-doping policy in sport

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The purpose of this research is to investigate the issues and perceptions that feature in the decision making process of complying or not complying with anti-doping policies in sport. Social science approaches are applied to investigate the likely intentions or actions concerning performance enhancing drug (PED) use. Five experimental groups are incorporated in the design of this study: non-active participants, regular exercisers, amateur sporting club members, professional athletes, and coaches or trainers. The sample size for each experimental group is 50, with a total of 250 participants. Each participant is presented with a randomised selection of scenarios describing a sports person in a number of different contexts. Participants are asked to rate the scenario on the risk of PED use and potential contributing factors. Data analysis will focus on the comparisons between the different levels of sport engagement of each group and the different influencing factors presented in the scenarios. This research will provide a greater understanding of the underlying motivations of PED use and will provide valuable information for those engaged with and in sport. A follow up study is intended to address those factors found to increase the probability of compliance or non compliance with anti-doping policies.

### Factors influencing the impact of secondary exposure to trauma

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Some theorists argue clinicians working with traumatised clients may develop *secondary traumatic stress* (STS) while others argue they may experience *vicarious trauma* (VT), or lasting alterations to basic cognitive beliefs, and *burnout* through cumulative secondary exposure to trauma. Disagreement exists as to whether these constructs are interrelated but distinct processes, or represent different aspects of a developmental process. This study investigated the impact of secondary exposure to trauma upon the development of STS, VT and

burnout and the relationships between these constructs. Individual vulnerability factors were also investigated. Sixty mental health clinicians completed a questionnaire battery consisting of: demographics, work-related trauma and past history of trauma; and measures of STS, VT, burnout, empathy, and social support. Secondary exposure to graphic details of client trauma was related to both STS and VT. While correlated, STS, VT and burnout are separate processes. STS mediated the relationship between secondary exposure to trauma and VT, which in turn mediated the relationship between STS and burnout. Social support moderated the relationship between exposure to client trauma and VT. Empathy, current distress regarding past trauma, and work-related trauma, potentially increase clinicians' vulnerability. Developmental conceptualisations of the relationship between STS, VT and burnout were supported.

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#### **A trait-state model of statistics achievement: An examination of gender and self-worth protective differences**

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Structural equation modelling was used to test a trait→state→performance model. Trait and state measures of motivational constructs (self-efficacy, effort, worry) in addition to gender and self-worth protective status were used to predict statistics achievement for 237 undergraduate students in the U.S. While self-efficacy has been shown to be related to achievement, it may impact achievement through other variables (e.g., effort, worry). In support of the hypothesized model, each trait measure had a direct effect on its corresponding state measure; state worry and state effort had significant direct relationships to statistics achievement while state self-efficacy did not; and trait measures were distinguishable from their corresponding state measures as demonstrated by disattenuated correlations. Furthermore, women attained higher levels of achievement than men due to higher levels of effort while self-worth protective individuals attained lower levels of achievement due to less effort and higher levels of worry than non-self-worth protective individuals. While self-efficacy was not directly related to achievement, it facilitated reduced worry and increased effort, resulting in higher levels of achievement. Based on these findings, teachers should boost self-efficacy in order to increase

effort for men and self-worth protective individuals and decrease worry for self-worth protective students thereby improving statistics achievement.

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#### **Y's, X's, & Boomers: Do they differ with respect to critical organisational variables?**

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As the boomers move closer to retirement and the Y's are entering the paid workforce in increasing numbers, there is an increasing amount of commentary in the popular media about differences between these three with respect to some critical organisational variables – engagement, commitment, and intention to quit. The present research investigated differences between these three groups in a sample of 113 participants. Analyses revealed significant differences between the three groups on each of the variables of interest. However, the patterns of differences were not consistent. While there was no difference between the Y's and X's with respect to engagement and commitment both were significantly lower on commitment than the boomers and both were significantly higher than the boomers on intention to quit. On the other hand, for engagement there was a linear relationship between the three groups with the Y's the lowest and the boomers the higher. Results are discussed within a social exchange framework.

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#### **From problem to solution: Working together to make a difference**

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In line with current research into changes in service delivery models, educational psychologists from Catholic Education, Parramatta, initiated a pilot project in 2005, to trial a solution-focused, consultative model of service delivery to schools. Three primary and two secondary systemic schools across Western Sydney participated in the project, the focus being firstly, changes in service delivery by educational psychologists from individual casework to solution-focused consultation, and secondly, the professional development of teachers. The intent was to encourage collaboration between special education and classroom teachers; to encourage a shift in their



thinking and practice from problem to solution; and to improve their identification, assessment and intervention skills. At the same time the educational psychologists implemented a solution-focused, consultative model of service delivery, referral package and student learning profile. Findings from an independent review process revealed support from all stakeholders for the consultative model in its ability to provide a more effective service for students with special needs and a comprehensive framework for empowering and developing their teachers. The role of the educational psychologist as a partner in the education process at the school level was considerably enhanced.

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### **Accepting the ODDS (Oppositional and Defiant Disorder): Moving students from exclusion to inclusion while promoting resilience and wellbeing**

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**O**ppositional defiant behaviour presents particular challenges for inclusive practitioners. Accepting the ODDS can be daunting for beginning teachers, school executives and support service staff. This study outlines how a behaviour consultant and a school counsellor drew upon a conceptual model of resilience to promote student and staff wellbeing in the upper primary school. Three girls in their final two terms of Primary School, with a diagnosis of Oppositional Defiant Behaviour and a school history of exclusion through school detentions and suspensions became the subjects of a Group Education Plan (GEP). The GEP specifically targeted inclusive practices and featured positive psychology, solution focussed and cognitive behaviour therapies. Students reported positive outcomes from the intervention strategies instigated to promote an inclusive teaching and learning environment. Recent experience has demonstrated that such students can be successfully included in high school if their transition is supported.

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### **Peer friendship: A protective factor against relational aggression**

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**A**lthough bullying is a significant problem in many schools, there has been little empirical investigation into the processes which moderate risk factors between adolescent problem behaviour and relational aggression specifically. One protective function that has received less attention than others is that of peer friendship (Hodges et al., 1999). The aim of the present study was to examine the nature of close friendships in victims, bullies and witnesses of relational aggression and to better understand how these friendships could provide a protective function against relational aggression. More than 1200 students in grades 7 and 9 in NSW high schools completed a questionnaire examining social (e.g. identity of friends, social acceptance) and personal (e.g. friendship quality, self-efficacy) characteristics of both the adolescent and their nominated very best friend. In addition, the study investigated whether peer friendship moderates the relationship between relational victimization and adolescent's internalizing and externalizing behaviours. The results will provide important information for the development of interventions, such as peer support programs, which focus on attenuating bullying behaviour through the use of peer friendships.

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### **Recent introduction of MBS item numbers for psychological services: Impact on psychologists and client outcomes**

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**I**n November 2006, the Better Access program was introduced as part of the Council of Australian Governments reform package. This national program aims to improve consumer access to psychologists and other mental health providers, via a series of new Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) item numbers. This study aims to investigate the uptake of the new item numbers and evaluate the impact on psychologists and their clients. Funded by the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund, the project is being completed in partnership by the University

of Melbourne and the Australian Psychological Society. Data sources include MBS data of uptake of the item numbers and interviews with psychologists and their clients. Data are being collected over four six-month periods to detect changes over time. Preliminary data show that uptake has been rapid; by December 2007 Medicare was billed for 1,530,753 sessions rendered by allied health professionals, by far exceeding predicted numbers for the first five years of the initiative. Thirty-eight psychologists and four clients consented in the first six months, with 32 and two interviewed, respectively. Interview data from the first six month period suggest that, overall, psychologist and client experiences of the MBS item numbers have been overwhelmingly positive.

### **Improving the validity of self-ratings of abilities: The impact of rating format and order**

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Previous research has found self-ratings of abilities to have low validity. Aiming to identify new ways to improve self-ratings, this study investigated the effects of rating format (single-item global rating versus multiple-item dimensional rating) on the validity of self-rated abilities. A self-rating measure of communication skills was developed for data collection from 178 medical students in this study. The measure consisted of a single item assessing communication skills in general and eleven specific items, with each evaluating a particular dimension of communication skills. Students' self-ratings were correlated with ratings from two groups of raters, namely communication tutors and clinical tutors, to establish validity. Results showed that students tended to provide more accurate and valid self-ratings when using multiple items measuring the specific dimensions of communication skills than when using a single, global item. In addition, we found that the validity of students' self-ratings on the single item was improved when students rated themselves on the multiple items prior to the single item. Theoretical and practical implications of the findings are discussed, and future research directions are suggested.

### **Is there a basis for the notion of athletic identity?**

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Despite the intuitive appeal of the notion of an "athletic identity", a growing body of research and theory suggests that identity is a complex multidimensional entity. The present study tested this notion by exploring relations between athletic identity, as measured by the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS: Brewer, Raalte, & Linder, 1993) and aspects of self-concept, as measured by the Self-Description Questionnaire III (SDQ: Marsh, 1992). The participants in the study were 917 athletes (476 females) on sporting scholarships linked with the Australian Institute of Sport and were therefore representative of a group for whom the term "athletic identity" has strong relevance. The SDQ requires respondents to rate the accuracy of characteristics as self-descriptors and also the importance of each characteristic. Regarding the accuracy scores, we did not find any relationship between AIMS athletic identity and SDQ sporting self-concept but we did find gender-linked relationships between athletic identity and different aspects of SDQ academic self-concept. For the SDQ importance ratings, we observed a significant relationship between athletic identity and sporting self-concept for both genders and also between athletic identity and verbal self-concept for females. We discuss what these and other findings mean for the notion of athletic identity.

### **A psychoneuroimmunological model of multiple sclerosis**

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This psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) model of MS uses the coalition of genetics, immunology, endocrinology, virology, neurology, psychology and environmental factors to explain the genesis and progress of the disease. Combining the knowledge of all of these disciplines with the notions of a systemic condition called the multiple sclerosis trait (MST) and the concept that the immune system serves as a sixth sense, this model opens up possibilities of collaboration and integration as well as a wide expanse of opportunities for research, treatment and,

potentially, prevention options for MS. These opportunities are outside the traditional medical and pharmaceutical approaches but inside the scientifically sound and evidence-based models of research and practice. The PNI model encourages collaborative, multidisciplinary approaches that take into account all of the abovementioned factors simultaneously in MS research and management. The paper offers an opportunity for debate and discussion on this novel approach to MS.

### **Perceptions of compared with beliefs about sleep: The merits of an illness perception questionnaire for sleep problems**

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This research aimed to investigate whether the Illness Perception Questionnaire Revised (IPQ-R; Moss-Morris et al., 2002) adapted to sleep problems might be utilised as an alternative to the Dysfunctional Beliefs about Sleep-10 (DBAS-10; Edinger & Wohlgegmuth, 2001) questionnaire. Study 1 recruited 227 individuals aged between 18 and 90 years from the community who were seeking help to improve their sleep. The IPQ-R, DBAS-10, and Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Inventory (PSQI; Buysse et al., 1989) were utilised in a cross-sectional design to assess perceptions of sleep and severity of insomnia respectively. Results from principal component analysis and hierarchical regression showed that the IPQ-R for insomnia had sound psychometric properties, and that the predictor variables accounted for 27% of the variance in PSQI global scores. Furthermore the properties of the IPQ-R for insomnia compared favourably with the DBAS-10. A subsequent, prospective study, examined the relationships between these measures from participants in a CBT-based program for insomnia. The results showed moderate effect sizes in the predicted directions in most of the IPQ-R subscales, and provided evidence for the IPQ-R to be used in preference to the DBAS-10. The value of focussing on illness perceptions rather than dysfunctional beliefs about sleep in therapy is considered.

### **Relationship between spirituality and mental health in Iranian college students**

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The aim of the current study was to investigate the relationship between spirituality and mental health in college students. To this end 306 students were selected from the University of Tehran by means of a proportional sampling procedure. The Symptom Checklist 90-R (SCL 90-R) as well as the Spiritual Experiences Scale were administered by a trained research assistant. Analysis of the data using a multiple correlation analysis revealed that students with a higher score in spirituality were less anxious, less depressed and less hostile. Using a multiple regression analysis findings also showed that mental health of college students can be predicted by dimensions of the spirituality scale including "finding meaning in life", "transcendental mystical experiences", and "lack of spiritual experiences". Theoretical implications of the findings and their practical application for spiritual interventions were discussed in the paper.

### **Binge drinking in young Australians: The underlying beliefs, prediction of and cluster analysis**

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This study aimed to use cluster analysis and other statistical techniques to examine the underlying factors that influence binge drinking among Australian young people. Participants completed a number of scales to assess drinking behaviour, perceived parental and peer norms and area of upbringing. Participants also responded to three drinking stories to examine the underlying beliefs that influence the decision to binge drink. The analyses uncovered four belief categories in favour of binge drinking and nine against. The belief category used was found to be associated with drinking behaviour and dependent on the situation. The results further suggested that perceived parental drinking behaviours and perceived peer drinking behaviours respectively were positively related to drinking level. In addition, males consumed significantly more alcohol than females and rural

respondents consumed significantly more alcohol than urban respondents. The cluster analysis revealed five distinct groups in the data.

### **Learning difficulties and cognitive processes assessment: A model for clinical practice**

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Considerable controversy is currently centred upon the policies and procedures for identifying students with specific learning disabilities (SLD). This “contentious, heated debate” (Mather & Kaufman, 2006, p.747) is being waged between those who advocate for the use of problem-solving models incorporating curriculum-based measurement (or response to intervention, RTI) and those who support the continued use of traditional norm-referenced assessment, including cognitive measures, as part of the diagnostic process. In an effort to integrate and demonstrate the value of both RTI and cognitive assessment for the process of accurate SLD identification, this paper describes a theory-driven cognitive processing measures approach based on Flanagan, Ortiz, Alfonso and Dynda’s (2006) Operational Definition of Learning Difficulties coupled with Hale and Fiorello’s (2004) Cognitive Hypothesis Testing (CHT) Model for Learning Difficulties Identification and Intervention. Based on this approach, it is argued that a selective approach to learning difficulties assessment that incorporates historical data, cognitive processing measures, achievement tests, and clinical judgment within such a formalised assessment framework will permit more accurate diagnoses to be made and more appropriate individualised interventions to be devised in consequence.

### **Parent ratings of the ADHD items of the Disruptive Behaviour Rating Scale: Analyses of their IRT properties and gender invariance based on the generalised partial credit model**

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Generalised partial credit model (GPCM), which is based on item response theory (IRT), was used to evaluate the psychometric properties and test gender invariance for the DSM-IV inattention (IA) and hyperactivity/impulsivity (HI) items. To

accomplish this, parents completed the Disruptive Behaviour Rating Scale (DBRS; Barkley & Murphy, 1998) for 403 boys and 380 girls, between 6 and 11 years of age. The results for the GPCM for the slope parameters showed that all items were generally good for discriminating their respective latent traits. The results for the location parameters showed that endorsement of higher ratings of all the items in the DBRS would require a considerable amount of the relevant latent traits (IA or HI) to be present. In relation to the differential item functioning (DIF) analyses, this study found invariance for all the slope parameters for both the IA and HI items. For location parameters, there was no DIF for all the IA items, and seven of the nine HI items. Thus there was good support for the psychometric properties and gender invariance for the ADHD items in the DBRS. These findings extend existing data on the psychometric properties and gender invariance of ADHD rating scales.

### **Business coaching: Case study of Appreciative Facilitation in a professional sport organisation**

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This presentation describes the author’s experience during February, 2008 as an invited facilitator with the Western Australian Cricket Association (WACA). Over a 2-day period participants, including the WACA CEO, Coach, High Performance Manager, Game Development Manager, Cricket Officer Manager, Human Resources Officer and an Executive Board member, discussed a range of issues under the heading of “building the optimal cricket operation”. Facilitation is simply about bringing the best out of people and groups when planning and implementing organisational change efforts. *Appreciative Facilitation* is about a particular approach to facilitation using *Appreciative Inquiry* (AI) as the process model of choice for group interactions. Key principles include: appreciate yourself and others in the change process; apply your experience and knowledge; be provocative and creatively envision a desired future; and collaborate in the process. In *Appreciative Facilitation* the participant in change is central to each phase in the AI 4-D Cycle: Discover – participants explored what gives life to WACA Cricket Operations, when it is at its best; Dream –

based on what was discovered participants envisioned what Cricket Operations might be in the future; Design – participants co-constructed WACA organisational arrangements to support the shared vision; and Destiny – ways and means of sustaining commitment to the future were developed.

### **Community beliefs regarding teacher-student sexual relationships related to teacher and student gender**

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This research used a vignette methodology to examine whether beliefs about teacher-student sexual relations are influenced by teacher and student gender and respondent age group and parental status. The sample comprised two groups: 31 female and 25 male parents of adolescents and 70 female and 28 male recent secondary school graduates. Participants responded to vignettes depicting a sexual relationship between a male teacher and female student or between a female teacher and male student. In the vignettes the teacher was aged 22 years and the student 17 years old. Results showed that beliefs about teacher-student sexual relations were generally negative. However, young adult females had more negative beliefs about teacher-student sexual relationships than did young adult males. Also, parents of adolescents had stronger negative beliefs about teacher-student sexual relations than did young adults. Parents of adolescents were more likely to believe such relationships were harmful and more supportive of legal sanctions against such relationships than were young adults. It was concluded that the public hold differing beliefs about teacher-student sexual relations and that age and gender influence beliefs regarding sexual relationships that arguably breach the duty of care between student and teacher.

### **The supervisory relationship: Managing difficulties with supervisees**

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Like the therapeutic alliance, the supervisory relationship has been shown to be central to good supervision outcomes. This paper examines

how supervisors manage difficulties that arise in the supervisory relationship. It presents data from a qualitative project based on intensive interviews with 7 supervisor-supervisee dyads, entailing 21 interviews in total. The supervisors were a purposive sample consisting of senior members of the profession with considerable expertise in supervision. Interviews were first conducted with supervisors on their theory of supervision and application of that theory in practice. An Interpersonal Recall Method was then used to independently explore supervisor and supervisee reflections on one of their videotaped supervision sessions. This paper examines data from the perspective of supervisors and reports on data from three domains: i) the kind of relationship difficulties that arose in supervision; ii) the supervisory events they found most difficult; iii) how they managed these difficulties in the context of the supervisory relationship.

### **Psychological discriminators in skilled tennis performance: A model for talent development**

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This study explored the specific nature and development of various psychological skills and characteristics of skilled tennis performance. A questionnaire was administered to 156 (skilled, state level and above = 61, lesser-skilled = 95) Australian tennis players between 11 and 35 years of age. Sport-specific measures of coping skill, confidence, commitment, mental toughness, anxiety, perfectionism and optimism were incorporated into a psychological test battery. Multivariate and univariate ANOVA revealed that the skilled tennis players exhibited higher levels of sport-specific psychological attributes and adaptive perfectionism than their lesser-skilled counterparts. Analysis across age indicated that this particular psychological profile was evident at an early age (i.e., at an under 13 level). There were no differences between the skill groups with respect to anxiety and optimism. Follow-up discriminant function analysis indicated that a combination of four characteristics, namely, Perseverance and Value from the MTI (Middleton et al., 2004), Involvement Opportunities from the SCM (Scanlan et al., 1993) and Personal Standards from the MPS (Frost et al., 1990), successfully discriminated

between the two skill groups. These findings have important implications for future practices relating to talent identification and psychological training, specific to tennis. Recommendations for future multi-factorial investigations will be presented.

### **“Better life for our daughters?” Advancing global justice for women**

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The United Nations Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3 focuses on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. A series of ‘gender indicators’ has been developed to track progress towards this global goal across sectors and nations. The indicators span areas such as education, infrastructure, property rights and employment. In this paper, I draw on these indicators to invite a critical assessment of community psychology’s actual and potential contributions to global social justice for women. Key questions in any such assessment include: Whose needs are being met? In what ways is power distributed and enacted in particular contexts? Whose voices and priorities are privileged and how are they authorised? As community psychology moves toward a more interdisciplinary and global identity, feminist-informed human rights perspectives can not only strengthen community psychology but also enhance the field’s capacity to enact gendered social justice within the global community.

### **Consequences of suppression versus acceptance of emotions in social phobia**

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Socially anxious individuals often engage in ineffective attempts to regulate their emotions, including emotional suppression. Suppression may exacerbate symptoms of anxiety, decrease memory for social situations, and ultimately reduce effective social performance. In contrast, acceptance of emotions during a social experience (experiencing emotions without trying to change or control them) does not require continual self-regulation and may lead to reduced distress and improved memory for details. In the current study, we investigated the

emotional and cognitive effects of different emotion regulation strategies among social phobia patients. We predicted that, relative to comparison conditions, patients who suppressed their emotions would experience increased distress, more negative cognitions, and decreased willingness to perform future tasks. In addition, we predicted that suppression efforts would reduce cognitive resources available and decrease the fidelity of memory of the experience. Sixty social phobia patients were randomly assigned to one of three groups: suppression, acceptance, and no instruction. All participants presented a controversial article and completed state measures of anxiety and distress, as well as measures of negative cognitions and memory for the task. Consistent with hypotheses, suppression was associated with increased negative emotions, more negative cognitions, and decreased willingness to perform another similar task.

### **A brief skills-based alcohol education program for adults with long-term substance dependencies: Preliminary results from a randomised controlled trial**

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The problematic use of drugs is often reduced by a significant residential treatment experience. However, a consistent finding of large-scale international outcomes studies is that the problematic use of alcohol often begins, continues or escalates following such treatment. To date, few drug treatment agencies include alcohol specific modules in the services they provide. Furthermore, it appears that no specific program has been evaluated as effective in reducing problematic alcohol use within a poly drug using population. Through a collaborative partnership involving Deakin University, Odyssey House Victoria, Windana and the University of Washington, a skills-based program was developed with funding from the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation. The intervention program had four key elements: mindfulness-based cognitive therapy; alcohol expectancies; relapse prevention; and alcohol related harm reduction. The program was delivered through a combination of group work, therapeutic letters and individual

telephone counselling, with participants setting their own abstinence or controlled drinking goals. A randomised controlled trial ( $N=150$ ) compared the effectiveness of the program to an information only control group across two residential treatment sites, with 3-month and 9-month follow up interviews. This presentation will outline the preliminary results at 3 months including client satisfaction and qualitative feedback.

### **A meta-analytic study on marriage and relationship researches in Turkey: A preliminary report**

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The main objective of this study is to put forward the studies on marriage and relationship counselling in Turkey by examining and analysing the studies' main criteria. The specific objectives are: 1) to create a common point of view between the professionals working in the area by sharing the methods and the results of the studies in turkey, 2) to collect and assess in all marriage and counselling studies information on factors affecting impact of the techniques used in the therapies, and 3) to make proposals and recommendations for the future of marriage and relationship counselling and therapies. The meta-analytical techniques will be used to conduct the objectives of the present study. Results will be discussed in terms of future contributions to the area by exchanging the related information with the professionals working in the area.

### **Strengthening couple relationships to enhance human well being: What psychology has to offer**

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Across human cultures almost all people form committed couples relationships, and the quality and stability of those relationships has a powerful effect on the health and well being of adults and children. In Australia the direct economic costs of couple relationship problems exceed \$5 billion annually. In Western countries, including Australia, governments, community and health agencies seek to promote positive couple relationships to reduce human suffering and economic costs. A key element of these efforts is the provision of couple relationship

education, which aims to enhance couple relationships and prevent relationship problems, as distinct from providing therapy for distressed couples. There is a growing evidence base that allows identification, albeit with limited accuracy, of couples at risk for future relationship problems. Assessments can inform couples about their relationships strengths and challenges, and education programs can enhance couple relationship knowledge and skills. Such education enhances couples' maintenance of high relationship satisfaction, improves coping with stressful life situations, and might reduce the rate of relationship separations. The potential impact of couple relationship education is limited by ongoing challenges being addressed in current research: to develop programs for couples that are easily accessed, to address couple needs at different points in the life cycle, and to develop systems that cost-effectively disseminate programs to couples.

### **Strengthening parental identity after childhood death – efficacy of psychodrama and small-group work**

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Moreno's Psychodramatic Role Theory offers a comprehensive framework for the assessment and progressive development of client role systems including relationships with self and with deceased significant others. Facilitating an open exploration of the impact of the bereavement on the parent's sense of self together with the continuing development of interactive exchange between a bereaved parent and their deceased child, has been found to be effective in strengthening identity. This presentation outlines and evaluates a group-work program specifically designed to focus on the identity issues of parents, bereaved through the death of their children at varying lengths of time and through a range of causes including suicide, accident and long term illness. Six consecutive 2 hour group-work sessions were held with a review session and evaluation a month later. Clients reported an increased sense of self, motivation and engagement with life.

### **The Child and Adolescent Measurement Scale (CAMS): Investigation of the reliability and validity in an Australian parent sample**

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The Child and Adolescent Measurement Scale (CAMS) is a 50-item outcome measure specifically designed to measure youth's emotional and behaviour problems over time. The CAMS is comprised of three scales, Social Competence, Acuity and Symptom Severity and has respondent versions for parents/caregivers, youth, teachers and clinical staff. The CAMS was introduced as a routine outcome measure in a metropolitan Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in 2002. This paper reports on parent/carer reports for 909 children and adolescents ages 5 to 18 years referred to the CAMHS. Results indicate adequate internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Principal components analysis supports a four factor solution: Externalising behaviour, internalizing behaviour, social functioning and risk taking/serious conduct. The utility of the CAMS for an Australian child and adolescent mental health sample is discussed.

### **The Australian standardisations of the WISC-IV, WIAT-II and CELF-4**

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The Australian adaptation and co-standardisation of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fourth Edition (WISC-IV), the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – Second Edition (WIAT-II), and the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – Fourth Edition (CELF-4) provided comprehensive normative and clinical data for these measures, along with the opportunity to examine cross-cultural differences. This paper reviews the Australian adaptation of the three instruments and the methodology of the co-standardisation process. The standardisation revealed differences between Australian and US participants on these tests, with Australian children obtaining higher average raw scores on the intelligence, language, reading and spelling measures, but lower average scores on written arithmetic and written expression. Cultural

issues assumed to influence differences in test performance include educational emphases and school curricula, along with the ethnic diversity of samples. These cultural factors have implications for score interpretation, and for the selection and use of intelligence, language and achievement tests in Australia.

### **Does deployment to a remote Cape York community affect Police?**

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Policing is a high-stress occupation (Anderson, Litzenberger, & Plecas, 2002). For officers based in Queensland's Cape York Peninsula there are the added challenges of remoteness, including limited public transport, social isolation and limited services, in addition to tropical climate, cultural differences, and Alcohol Management Plans. Little training or information is given to officers and their families to enable them to better cope with these challenges. It was hypothesised that these additional aspects of life in Cape York would create marital dissatisfaction, induce alcohol abuse, increase stress, depression and anxiety, and decrease mental and physical health. There is little research currently available with regard to working in remote locations and even less specifically relating to working in Cape York. Results showed no significant differences between the officers and spouses in the remote group and either the rural or metropolitan control groups. The implications of these findings are discussed.

### **Evaluating curriculum change**

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Health science education in Australia has undergone significant change in the last two decades. Generic undergraduate programs have proliferated and many professional preparation programs have moved to a graduate entry mode. These changes have occurred in the context of international pressure for consistent higher education qualifications and industry pressure to prepare graduates with a range of 'generic' workplace skills. This paper describes curriculum evaluation in a three year generic undergraduate degree in health sciences.



The evaluation was designed to provide ongoing monitoring of a range of criteria to allow responsiveness to feedback, embedding in standard processes to ensure sustainability, and generalisation to other courses. Data were collected from surveys, interviews, focus groups, mapping, and existing university records concerning: academics who design and deliver curriculum; students who receive and interpret the curriculum; characteristics of individual units of study; financial resources to deliver the curriculum; and the policy and industry framework in which the curriculum is situated. Early findings indicate that the information collected for the evaluation has already influenced learning and teaching practices, particularly concerning assessment and feedback. The challenges for implementing the evaluation, particularly managing stakeholder expectations, will be discussed, as will the implications for education and training in psychology.

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### **Process-Experiential Emotion-Focused Therapy (PEEFT) supervision “in mode”**

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The Process-Experiential Emotion-Focused Therapy (PEEFT) approach to therapy employs a series of client markers or indicators of experience, in order to direct the therapist in the choice of effective process interventions or tasks. Traditionally, supervision in this area tends to focus on the appropriate use of these tasks, the analysis of client emotional processing and the relationship developing between the client and counsellor. While the method is expressive and process-oriented, the supervision experience is potentially content heavy and directive. As part of a PEEFT supervision group we have been exploring the method's markers, to inform a supervision practice that is more process based. Tasks such as empty chair and two-chair work are used to debrief the therapist, bring the client more to life, and to clarify for the counsellor those blind spots and dilemmas they are experiencing in the counselling relationship. Supervision becomes less concentrated on the unknown client's story and more on the counsellor's and supervisor's "known" experiencing. As this exploration continues, we are developing a theory of supervision that effectively supports the counsellor's work with the client, by continuing to

enhance their own experience of the tasks and by highlighting the processes operating in the counselling relationship.

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### **Systematic case studies of four depressed young women counselled with Process-Experiential Emotion-Focused Therapy (PEEFT)**

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Process-Experiential Emotion-Focused Therapy (PEEFT) is an evidenced-based, manualised, experiential therapy developed by Les Greenberg, Robert Elliott and Laura Rice from the mid 1980s, that emphasises the quality of the client-therapist relationship and offers efficient techniques to assist clients to deal with emotional experience in the present moment. Experiential treatments have been found to be effective with depression, anxiety and trauma in adults. The research presented in this paper investigated in-therapy experiences and treatment effects of four severely depressed young women (aged 20 to 26) counselled with PEEFT. Specifically, this study had been designed to investigate change processes, using established quantitative instruments and careful observation of work with the four young women in twelve-session treatment modules in a naturalistic setting. The expanded single case design allows a more interpretive approach to examining client change and its causes. After six sessions three out of the four young women's level of depression was assessed as within the mild to moderate ranges. All four women described major shifts in their perceptions of themselves and their world view. Finally, Grounded Theory Analysis offered a proven systematic method to make sense of the resultant rich qualitative data to provide a theory of change from the client's perspective.

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### **Training in Process-Experiential Emotion-Focused Therapy (PEEFT): Investigation of student experiences between 2005 and 2007**

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Training in Process-Experiential Emotion-Focused Therapy (PEEFT) involves experiential learning in the form of both skill development and personal growth via live practice in client and therapist roles. According to developers of PEEFT, learners have

described the process as an ‘existential leap-of-faith’ in which they have to ‘jump in’ and take a chance with clients. On the one hand, training can be stressful, anxiety provoking, and induce unrealistic expectations evoking levels of inadequacy. However, on the other hand, practicing PEEFT amounts to learning a new way of thinking about people generally, and clients specifically, and a new way of listening and being with them that is both professionally and personally extremely rewarding. The aim of the two research projects presented was to assess trainees’ general satisfaction with their training. A second research question investigated the importance of group processes, and the success of training ‘in mode’ utilising both qualitative and quantitative methodology. Participants were past students enrolled in the Master of Counselling Programs at La Trobe University. Part 1 involved email feedback, Part 2 involved 40 past students anonymously completing a series of pencil-and-paper inventories and Part 3 entailed interviewing past students with the resulting transcripts analysed utilising Grounded Theory Analysis.

### **Dysgraphia: Developing a test to identify students who “read well but their spelling’s appalling”**

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**D**ysgraphia has been used to describe difficulty with spelling and writing that is surprising given apparently sound reading. Dysgraphia could stem from underdeveloped phoneme awareness, forcing students to over-rely on visual processing for literacy, falsely extending Frith’s (1985) *logographic* stage. Affected students would fail to automatise skills in Frith’s *alphabetic* stage and not progress to the final *orthographic* stage. We explored this hypothesis by comparing phoneme awareness and literacy in 19 students with dysgraphia and 15 typically developing students (aged 9 to 14); and developed a test to identify use of logographic, alphabetic and orthographic strategies. Students with dysgraphia showed inadequate phoneme awareness and a preference for visually-based skills; they were inefficient in alphabetic skills and made very poor use of orthographic strategies. Discriminant analysis of test results accurately classified students with dysgraphia and those with normal literacy ( $p = .97$ ).

These results provide insights into the aetiology of dysgraphia, and have implications for assessment, intervention and pedagogy in Upper Primary and Secondary literacy.

### **Learned social hopelessness: The role of explanatory style in predicting social support during adolescence**

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**P**essimistic explanatory style has been shown to be related to depression. We hypothesized that adolescents with a pessimistic explanatory style would be less likely to develop supportive social support networks. Seven hundred and nineteen students (351 males and 366 females; 2 unknown; Mean age = 12.28,  $SD = .49$ ) completed an anonymous survey in Grades 7 through 10. Explanatory style was assessed in Grades 7 and 9, sadness was assessed in Grades 7 through 10, and quantity and quality of social support was assessed in Grades 8, 9, and 10. Structural equation modelling was used to conduct cross-lagged panel analyses of the four waves of data. Pessimistic explanatory style predicted lower levels of social support, and lower social support from the family predicted higher levels of pessimistic explanatory style. Additional analyses suggested that the effects could not be explained by sadness or by assuming that pessimistic adolescents were less liked by their peers. Pessimistic adolescents feel unable to influence their social worlds in positive ways and consequently may not take actions to develop and maintain social support networks.

### **What helps recovery from an eating disorder: The sufferer’s perspective**

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**S**cant attention has been paid in the research literature to the perspective of eating disorder sufferers regarding factors they believe facilitate recovery. Two models of change, the Transtheoretical Model (TTM) and the Adaptive Change Model (ACM), each propose various factors theorised to facilitate change or recovery. The current study was designed to explore whether participants consider these proposed factors to be

important in the recovery process, and if there are elements of recovery not described in the TTM or ACM that they consider important. One hundred and eighty six (179 female) recovered and recovering eating disorder sufferers were asked about what they believe helps someone recover from an eating disorder. Participants' responses contained 419 response units, which were coded and categorised into factors of the TTM and ACM by four trained raters. Inter-rater reliability, using Krippendorff's alpha, was poor for the TTM ( $\alpha=0.47$ ) and ACM ( $\alpha=0.53$ ), indicating eating disorder sufferers do not describe change in the same manner as the models. Subsequent content analysis of participants' responses revealed factors participants believe to be helpful to recovery, such as support from others, awareness and expression of one's thoughts and feelings, and developing acceptance and responsibility for oneself.

### Personality changes and the occurrence of dementia

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Previous reports have suggested that personality changes are associated with the development of dementia, notably increased social isolation and passivity in people later diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Here data from the first two waves of the Canadian Study of Health and Aging (CSHA) are used to evaluate differences in personality characteristics between 99 people with dementia and 270 controls assessed to be cognitively intact. Ratings on seven variables from the Cambridge Examination for Mental Disorders of the Elderly (CAMDEX) at CSHA-1 by proxy informants for the person being rated were compared for normal controls and the group diagnosed with dementia five years later in CSHA-2. Most of the sample was female (63.1%), with a mean age of 77.5 years ( $SD = 6.44$ ) and a mean of 9.4 years of education ( $SD = 4.19$ ). Personality changes were twice as common in the dementia group as in normal controls, with aggravation of premorbid personality features, and changes in mood also being more common, while other personality factors did not differ between groups. These results are at odds with some earlier studies, suggesting that further studies of people in the early stages of

dementia are needed to better understand the development of dementia.

### Body image ideals of thinness and muscularity for self and others

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Body image ideals for both genders now incorporate leanness and muscularity dimensions. Sociocultural theory proposes that internalisation mediates the impact of exposure to societal body shape ideals disseminated in the media on body dissatisfaction. Using Fallon and Rozin's figural stimuli paradigm, current ideals for leanness and muscularity for the self and others were investigated. The impact of internalisation of societal body ideals on body expectations of the opposite gender was also investigated. Ninety-five males and 106 females aged between 18 and 30 used separate figural stimuli sets varying in muscularity and leanness to report their perceptions of the body shape matching their current, ideal, most attractive in the opposite sex and most attractive to the opposite sex. Media consumption, internalisation and body shape expectations of the opposite sex was also assessed. While female and males' body image concerns were primarily related to leanness and muscularity, respectively, both were important to both genders. Consumption of leanness-related media was associated with leanness internalisation for both genders. However, consumption of muscularity or leanness-related media was unrelated to body dissatisfaction for either gender. Females' body dissatisfaction and both genders' internalisation of body image ideals were related to expectations of the opposite sex.

### The developmental structure of the therapists' thinking and their experience of building the therapeutic alliance

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The psychological development of therapists and its association with their experience in building and maintaining a therapeutic alliance was explored using a constructivist developmental approach. Eight female psychologists participated in two semi-

structured interviews: The Therapeutic Alliance Interview, and The Subject-Object Interview, which explored their underlying epistemological framework. Five themes salient to the therapists' experience of the therapeutic alliance were derived - Expectations of Supervision, Authentic Self, Values/Goals, Managing Risks, and Self-Care. Therapists were found to vary in their level of cognitive complexity with Subject-Object Scores ranging from 3<sup>rd</sup> order to post 4<sup>th</sup> order structure. Cognitive development was found to be associated with therapists' experience of the therapeutic alliance. A model of therapists' development based on their cognitive development describes four types of therapists - The Caring Listener, The Self-Observant Therapist, The Self-Aware Therapist, and The Holistic Therapist. It was concluded that the task of constructing a beneficial therapeutic alliance requires complex cognitive structure. Therapists who do not have fully fourth order thinking struggle to meet this demand. This has important implications for the treatment that clients receive as well. Recommendations are made for changes in the conceptualisation of clinical competence, and in the selection of clinical supervisors by governing bodies.

### **'Beating the rush': A web-based intervention for amphetamine use**

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Although the number of Australians using amphetamines has stabilised, the number of people using amphetamines remains high and the incidence of harms associated with amphetamine use continues to increase. Research has shown face-to-face delivery of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) to be an effective intervention for the treatment of amphetamine use. Recent literature has shown CBT interventions delivered via the Internet effectively treat substance use including alcohol and tobacco use. Web-based interventions provide an innovative way of disseminating evidence-based treatment to clients who may be unwilling or unable to present for face-to-face treatment as this form of treatment delivery has been found to reduce barriers that are associated with face-to-face treatment. Despite evidence to suggest the usefulness of web-based interventions in treating substance use, no previous research has investigated whether CBT delivered via the Internet

is an effective intervention for treating amphetamine use. Thus, the aim of this research is to establish whether a web-based CBT intervention is effective in treating amphetamine use and its associated harms. This presentation will report on the current status of web-based interventions and describe the development of a web-based brief intervention for amphetamine use.

### **Managing the physical and psychological toll on firefighters**

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The demands of fireground operations challenge effective leadership. This paper addresses findings from several studies investigating the physical and psychological stressors experienced by firefighters. Previous research suggests that about 50% of volunteer firefighters experience a near-miss incident during operations at some time. Data from firefighters showed that those deployed to the fireline during the 2006/7 season worked a mean shift length of 20 hours. Those who worked night shift experienced particularly heavy workloads, and averaged about 3-4 hours sleep between shifts. Although the firefighters reported satisfaction with their experience overall, interviews revealed a typical pattern of readjustment following deployment wherein firefighters had to recover from the heavy physical and emotional toll of their deployment and reintegrate into every-day life. Interview data indicated that many staff in leadership roles adopted a "sink-or-swim" approach to firefighter recovery and that debriefing following deployment was conducted on an *ad hoc* basis. The best predictor of effective fireground leadership was recent experience in a leader role on the fireground. It seems that agencies need to broaden the scope of the fireground leader role to be more actively concerned with the physical and psychological well-being of firefighters under their command, both during and after operations.

### Organisational and occupational decision making: 'Baby Boomers' - retire or retain?

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The abolition of mandatory retirement in many Australian organisations created new vocational choice dilemmas. With early 'Baby Boomers' (born 1946-1964) in their 60s, individuals and organisations are considering how to retain productive employment and employees. The APS has published findings of a 2007 survey on attitudes towards ageing which challenged previous negative assumptions. The acceptance of age 65 as the normal time to cease full-time employment can no longer be taken for granted. Retirement can be a stage in work transition. Emerging issues include the gendered nature of ageism, deciding financial readiness, and planning retirement activities. Offering redundancies to older workers as 'early' retirement is increasingly viewed as discrimination. Stereotypes about older workers interest and ability to learn new skills are also being questioned. Government and community perceptions still contain mixed messages: our shrinking labour force cannot support an ageing population; skilled older workers need to be retained to maintain productivity; older workers should "[expletive deleted]- off" to allow career paths for 'Generation X'; and retired people have a right to have a well earned rest. This paper will cover preliminary findings from a current study of the experiences of a group of Australians aged 55 and over.

### Changing aggressive behaviour in schools through increasing levels of belongingness

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Baumeister and Leary (1995) reviewed an abundance of evidence that suggested the need to belong is a fundamental human striving. When this need is thwarted and an individual experiences social exclusion, a variety of negative consequences emerge. Amongst these consequences is an increase in aggressive behaviour, poor self-regulation, and decreases in prosocial activity. The current paper attempts to conceptualise the proposed causal relationship between insufficient levels of

belongingness and subsequent aggressive behaviour. The association between social exclusion, suicidal behaviour, and violent behaviour is reviewed. Specific reference is made to the violent and fatal shootings in North American and European schools in order to provide an in-depth examination of the relationship between rejection and aggression. In addition, the improvement of social connectedness and belongingness status is proposed as a means of changing aggressive behaviour, particularly within the school setting. Finally, the current paper attempts to highlight the need for understanding and developing psychological assessment for evaluating the level of school threat as well as at risk individuals.

### Psychological support for sworn and unsworn staff dealing with explicit materials

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The internet has provided a vehicle to facilitate the distribution of illegal and explicit materials to a wider audience than was previously possible. This has opened up a new range of criminal activity to which law enforcement has been required to respond. This activity includes the distribution of child pornography and extremely violent material, and the investigation of such crimes involves exposing staff to this disturbing material on a regular basis. There is currently no available research on the long term effects of viewing such material. This paper will discuss the model that psychologists within the Australian Federal Police have developed to support staff working in this area. Topics to be covered include selection and suitability, ongoing monitoring, training, development of best practice, including a discussion of qualitative data that has informed the formulation of same, and interagency liaison.

### An investigation of the impact of psychological trauma on the neuropsychological functioning of school aged children

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Neuropsychological investigations of psychologically distressed adults have shown deficits in memory, learning, and attention. However, similar studies on children are lacking,

thus the aim of this study was to ascertain to what extent children exhibit neuropsychological dysfunction after psychological trauma. Furthermore, because of the high incidence of violent crime in Johannesburg, South Africa, this study was able to assess a much higher number of children than previous studies. The Children's PTSD scale was used to assess whether the participants met a full or sub-clinical PTSD diagnosis. A computerised neuropsychological test battery (CNS Vital Signs) was administered. The neuropsychological profiles of trauma-exposed groups were compared to a group of controls using various statistical methods. The preliminary results are very interesting, showing differences between the groups in certain aspects of neuropsychological functioning. In addition, it seems that children previously exposed to trauma, but not meeting all PTSD criteria may also suffer impairments of neuropsychological functioning. The study includes a qualitative component; several participants were interviewed, in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the ways in which children interpret their own experiences of trauma. The results are interpreted against a backdrop of existing literature on the consequences of trauma on the neuropsychological functioning of children.

#### **Brief integrative therapy for problem gambling: The application of a new treatment method**

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This paper discusses the application of a structured, time-limited, and integrated treatment program for problem gambling. Drawing from psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioural, existential and positive psychology, this method aims to explore factors that have led the individual to gamble excessively. The method views gambling as a symptom of underlying and unresolved concerns, and therefore aims to identify these concerns that give rise to the gambling behaviour. The paper will discuss the rationale and aims for the method and outline the session by session structure of the approach. In addition, it will discuss the results of a recent study where the method was applied to a population of individuals who identified themselves as gambling too much. In particular, the results will be discussed in relation to a number of pre and post-

test measures relating to self-esteem, purpose in life, coping and reduced gambling behaviour.

#### **The assessment and upgrade of Practice Management Standards within a university-based clinical training unit**

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The Private Practice Management Standards (PPMS) for Psychology Self-Assessment Instrument (APS, 2007) can be used to provide a structured method for evaluating practice management standards in university-based Clinical Training Units. The PPMS was administered within the Clinical Training Unit of the University of Western Sydney, and the results of this self assessment process suggested directions for improvement in practice management procedures. Over the next six months a series of quality improvements in practice management processes were implemented, and the PPMS was readministered with improvements registered across all areas. Some areas, however, remained in need of further upgrade, and it is anticipated that the annual administration of the PPMS will allow these performance indicators to be monitored in order to ensure an eventual uniform improvement across all standard areas.

#### **The biological origins of well-being: Investigating the relationships between temperament, character strengths and resilience**

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Investigating positive psychological functioning, including salutogenesis and fortigenesis (sources of health, strength, resilience) is becoming as important as researching pathogenesis (sources of illness) has been in the field of psychology. Researchers have identified specific strengths that contribute to overall psychological well-being. Whether or not certain characteristics can be attributed to nature or nurture is the cause of much debate, such as in the field of epigenetics. The current study aims to contribute to an explanation of how people can develop and maintain psychological well-being by investigating possible biological origins of positive psychological characteristics. The aims of this study were twofold;

firstly, to investigate biological origins of psychological well-being by exploring the relationship between temperament, character strengths and resilience in a large diverse South African sample ( $N=1000$ ), and secondly, to investigate relationships between character strengths and resilience in order to ascertain whether or not specific strengths are associated with resilience. Four self-report measures were used; Zuckerman-Kuhlman Personality Questionnaire for temperament, Values in Action Scale for character strengths, and the Sense of Coherence Scale and Resilience Scale to measure salutogenesis/resilience. Canonical correlations and multiple regression analysis indicate statistically significant relationships between certain biologically based temperament traits, character strengths and resilience. These results have implications for intervention, including developing and nurturing individuals' character strengths thereby enhancing their capacity for resilience and overall psychological well-being.

#### **Old friends: The human-animal bond in Ericksonian old age**

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Companion animals have played an important role in the lives of humans throughout history. Theories such as Bowlby's (1982) attachment theory and Bronnfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory have attempted to explain the human-animal bond, a bond that makes no economic sense and sees some pets elevated to human status as surrogate friends or children. In this paper Erickson's theory of psychosocial development is adopted as a framework within which to explore this enduring human-animal bond during later stages of life. Erik Erikson's eighth stage of development and Joan Erikson's (Erikson & Erikson, 1997) proposed ninth stage, describe negative components of old age, including uncertainty about status and role, and feelings of loneliness and uselessness. These components can erode basic strengths achieved during earlier psychosocial crises and threaten successful resolution of final life stages. Companion animals may hold the potential to reverse emerging dystonic elements of old age and promote systonic elements of security, love, trust and child-like vitality important for the achievement of wisdom and spiritual

gerotranscendence. A critical analysis of the research literature will be presented to demonstrate a synthesis between the human-animal bond and Ericksonian principles of life-span development in order to explain and validate the consuming passion some humans feel towards their companion animals.

#### **Getting in tune with the psychology of musical performance**

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The performance demands placed upon musical performers are somewhat different to those impinging upon athletes. In the case of music, not only is the performer aiming for technical perfection, but also for artistic expression and interpretation that elicits an optimal response from the audience. Also, the standards for excellence are not as clear cut as in sport, which adds to the ambiguity and tends to increase the stress for performers. Further, musical performers may, in some instances, be required to provide one-on-one auditions with record company executives in order to win recording contracts; a situation that is notoriously anxiety-inducing. Sport psychology strategies have been documented to apply across a range of musical genres, from opera to alternative rock, and for a variety of purposes related to performance, including performance anxiety and other blocks to creative expression, group dynamics and communication issues, and to promote flow, for example, during improvisation sessions among jazz musicians. This paper will (a) provide a brief overview of theory and research applied to music, (b) present a range of applications related to musical performance, and (c) provide a case study of a singer-songwriter whose traumatic personal experiences provided the creative basis for her lyrics and musical delivery.

#### **Comparing the self ratings and supervisor's rating of work criteria across two studies**

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It is a widely accepted idea that approach/appetitive and avoidance/aversive systems are central concepts in the understanding of human behaviour. In the current research we have portrayed the

behavioural approach system as the attitude towards the importance of reward and therefore examined the moderating effect of a rewarding climate on this construct. The first aim of this study was to test the assumption that the relationship between attitude towards the importance of reward as -an approach construct- and job satisfaction is moderated by a rewarding climate. The second aim was to investigate whether there is a difference between self ratings and supervisor's ratings in this regards. Specific hypotheses were tested with two data sets. Group one consisted of 800 people who have part time and casual jobs in different organisations and the second group consisted of 117 people with the same condition of study one but with supervisor ratings of job satisfaction. Results of hierarchical moderated regression provide support for the hypothesis. There are interactions between the Behavioural Approach System and a rewarding climate in the prediction of job satisfaction. Although, in a low rewarding climate the pattern of the relationship between the Behavioural Approach System and a rewarding climate is different between self ratings and supervisor ratings of job satisfaction.

#### **The horizontal and vertical components of apparent length: Distal spatial perception and the Müller-Lyer illusion**

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Despite more than a century of investigation, the psychophysical foundations of the Müller-Lyer illusion and its relation to everyday veridical perception remain unexplained. In this context, this study explored the perception of line length across series of angles in four computer-based experiments. Experiment 1 explored the perception of a single line; Experiments 2 and 3 examined the apparent length of a line when co-joined to another line; Experiment 4 investigated the perception of length when a line was proximate to but not joined with another line. Taken together, the results of these experiments indicate that the apparent length of a line varies as an additive function of its horizontal and vertical components, with the vertical component scaled by a ratio of horizontal-to-vertical. Further, they suggest that the presence of additional co-joined lines systematically alter the apparent length of a target extent, according to a scaled contribution of the horizontal and vertical

components of the additional lines. Finally, they suggest that apparent length is a contextual function, with target extents continuing to be affected by proximate, but not co-joined lines. These results offer much scope for an understanding of the Müller-Lyer illusion, and have substantial implications for theories of distal spatial perception generally.

#### **On dangerous ground: Leadership and safety at wildfires**

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Effective fireground management and leadership are crucial to the generally good record of fire fighting organisations in maintaining safety and managing the risks that are inherent in a hazardous domain. The aim of the current Safe Decision Making and Behaviour project was to investigate human factors that have the potential to compromise safety and leadership on the fireline. Interviews were conducted with 120 fire agency personnel (career and volunteers) in leadership roles at wildfires. Analyses of these interviews identified numerous challenges to effective leadership, and also the strategies that leaders adopted to manage difficulties associated with their tasks. The complex, sometimes chaotic, conditions of initial fire response were often managed by self-monitoring and a range of metacognitive self-control processes involving arousal and affect regulation, and managing information processing. Managing the motivation, fatigue and boredom of subordinates in unpleasant environments was also identified as an important leadership skill, as was prioritising and anticipating future developments when time and resources were limited. Some leaders adopted an informal mentoring role for less experienced subordinates. Identifying and better understanding how effective fireground leaders adapt to the challenges inherent in their role will assist the development of these skills for future leaders.

#### **Evaluation of the Swin-eCounselling service: One year following implementation**

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Online Counselling has received increased attention, much of it positive. This paper



presents the results from a one year post-implementation evaluation of Swinburne University's new online counselling service, *Swin-eCounselling*. The evaluation involved two stakeholders: Service Users, that is, the students of Swinburne University of Technology and TAFE; and Service Providers, that is, Swinburne Counsellors and Psychology Clinic students participating in the delivery of Swin-eCounselling. More than half of the students surveyed were aware of Swin-eCounselling, with nearly a third of those having visited the website, but only a small number having submitted a question to Ask Swin-eCounselling. The small sample size meant that the effectiveness of correspondence with an online counsellor could not be reliably determined, however, all participants found the responses they received to be helpful. A number of recommendations are made for possible improvements to the Swin-eCounselling website, its associated promotion, and future additions to the website are discussed. On the whole, the service providers appeared to enjoy participating in Swin-eCounselling and felt well supported in their roles, with some suggestions made for improvements to existing procedures. This paper provides helpful suggestions for other institutions/organisations that might be considering an online counselling presence.

### **Fitting the pieces together: Gay men's body dissatisfaction**

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The aetiology of body image distortions and associated eating and exercising behaviours involves many cultural and societal forces. Gay men's body image distortions and associated behaviours, cognitions and emotions are typically examined from two distinct paradigms: anorexia/bulimia and muscularity. Much of the literature and research findings has compared gay men and lesbians with heterosexual men and women, and have tended to feminise gay men and masculinise lesbians body image issues. This brief forum will outline an integrated framework that incorporates the disparate research findings in relation to gay men's body image distortions through the lens of a practicing clinician.

### **Paediatric medical traumatic stress: Combining the Child Trauma Screening Questionnaire and heart rate to identify children at risk**

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This study investigated the utility of combining the Child Trauma Screening Questionnaire (CTSQ, Kenardy, Spence, & Macleod, 2006) and children's heart rate (HR; emergency department and 24 hour post admission) to identify children likely to develop posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms at 1 and 6 months post-injury. Children completed the CTSQ within 2 weeks of injury. PTSD symptoms were assessed with the Anxiety Disorders Interview Schedule for DSM-IV (Silverman & Albano, 1996), for 79 children aged 7-16 years. A combination of the CTSQ plus HR (CTSQ-HR) was better than the CTSQ alone or HR alone at identifying children likely to develop PTSD symptoms. These findings suggest the CTSQ-HR screen may increase identification of children who are likely to develop PTSD symptoms, enabling the development of targeted prevention programs.

### **Risk factors for suicidal ideation within veteran versus non-veteran populations**

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Recent decades have seen an increase in the number of international military operations. Veterans of such operations are often exposed to stressful and/or traumatic events, which may result in associated mental health issues. This study examined factors impacting suicidal ideation amongst veteran and non-veteran populations. Participants included 449 male veterans, 65 female veterans, 351 male non-veterans, and 407 female non-veterans aged 16-83 years ( $M = 35.29$ ), who completed a self-report questionnaire measuring veteran status, mood state, substance use, exposure to trauma, and general life satisfaction. Results of regression analyses revealed differences in factors predicting the level of suicidal ideation amongst veterans versus non-veterans. The study's implications and recommendations for future research will be discussed.

### **On the frontline: A qualitative study of mental health practices with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) clients**

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The current study explored the contemporary mental health practices with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) clients. A phenomenological qualitative design was utilised, employing snowballing techniques to recruit a sample of participants ( $N=15$ ) who had a minimum of 12 months experience with service provision to CALD clients, from a range of professional backgrounds including: social work, psychology, counselling, counselling psychology and psychiatry. Thematic content analysis of interview transcripts was facilitated by NVivo software which aided the researcher in the identification and coding of themes reflecting the lived experiences of participants, as they manifested within and across interviews. Findings highlighted the importance of practitioner awareness and skills over cultural knowledge, and suggested that respect and rapport could compensate for a lack of cultural knowledge. Furthermore, findings discovered that the importance of practitioners knowing where to find cultural information as it is required was a priority, rather than expecting to know this cultural knowledge. Findings supported concepts from existing models of cultural competence and identified concrete practices associated with these constructs. This study identified that current culturally competent practices contribute to narrowing the gap between theory and practice of cultural competence identified in the literature, and inform directions for future research.

### **Acculturative stresses of Sudanese refugees in Australia**

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The recent increase of the Sudanese refugees in Australia has highlighted the significance of understanding and managing the acculturative stresses of this population. The present study used a qualitative methodology to study the stresses as well as the adaptation process. Twenty male and female

Sudanese residents of Brisbane participated in focus groups. They were asked to describe their stresses as a result of migration as well as the positive changes in their lives. The thematic content analyses indicated identity issues, loss of roles and authority, conflict of roles, disintegration of their values and family systems as some of the acculturative stresses. They also described a range of positive experiences, such as self development and opportunities for education and employment, improved living standard and a sense of empowerment. However, short comings of the current services were noted and suggestions to improve these systems were suggested by the participants.

### **Development and validation of the Clinging Scale**

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The present study was to develop and validate the Clinging Scale. 'Clinging' is defined as a psychological condition with a lack of now-ness, flexibility and detachment. In Study 1, the Clinging Scale with 36 items belonging to 6 different factors was developed. Study 2 was conducted to validate (construct validity and criterion-related validity) the Clinging Scale. As a result of Study 2, the Clinging Scale appeared to be valid and its validity was found to be generalised in various groups (a non-patient group, a psychiatric out-patient group, and a Vipassana meditation discipline group), classified by their psychological health and ability to adapt.

### **Paradigms of supervision**

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Clinical supervision in psychology has been provided within two quite different paradigms. Under what might be termed the technical supervision paradigm, the primary aim is to ensure that clinical interventions are provided with fidelity (e.g. per treatment manual). Supervision under this paradigm might best be understood as a form of quality assurance. Such supervision is especially important in the training of psychologists and in the management of interventions delivered in research. Implicit in this approach is two propositions: first that therapy technique is a powerful factor in therapy outcome and, second that fidelity to technique is

critical to the effectiveness of technique. By contrast, under what might be termed the process supervision paradigm, the primary aim of supervision is to provide the therapist with a 'thinking space' within which to review both treatment progress and the therapists own experience of the therapy. Supervision under this paradigm is less clearly linked to quality control and more attuned to the needs and well-being of the therapist. However, implicit in this process is the proposition that there are secondary benefits for clients insofar as therapy outcomes are a function of non-specific interpersonal factors rather than technique. This paper examines the two paradigms, investigating the theoretical coherence of each and considering the extent to which there is an empirical foundation for underlying propositions.

### **Personality factors that influence stress and psychological distress: Optimism and pessimism**

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Pessimism has recently been proposed to be a separate factor to optimism and thus only minimal research has examined their separate contributions to stress and psychological health. The present study examined the relationships between pessimism and optimism (LOT-R); to investigate which of these personality variables were the strongest predictors of stress (DASS-21) and psychological distress (GHQ-12); and, to explore whether stress mediates the relationship that psychological distress has with pessimism and optimism. One-hundred and eighty-seven male and female university students completed questionnaires that measured optimism, pessimism, stress and psychological distress. We found support for optimism and pessimism being related but independent factors. Other first order correlations showed that optimism ( $r = -.48$ ) and pessimism ( $r = .31$ ) were significantly related to stress. Standard multiple regression analyses revealed that optimism was the strongest predictor of stress (9% of the variance) and psychological distress (7% of the variance). Stress partially mediated the relationships that psychological distress had with optimism, and pessimism. Our results point towards a possible buffering impact upon pessimism on younger peoples' mental and physical health. We argue that

having both a pessimistic and optimistic outlook represents a more pragmatic and insightful view of the future.

### **Family planning service provision in rural Victoria: Perceptions and experiences of health professionals**

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Most women require access to family planning services at some point in their lives. While it is generally acknowledged that rural women face specific barriers in accessing such services, and may travel long distances for them, little is known about the impact this has on women's health and wellbeing, or the best means to reduce such barriers. This research is a two part exploration, to document and develop an understanding of the facilitators and barriers to accessing family planning services specifically within the Grampians region of Victoria. The focus is on how such access issues affect the psychosocial health of women, their ability to make timely decisions about continuation of a pregnancy, and what can be done to decrease any barriers. This paper presents the findings from the first stage, which consists of semi-structured interviews documenting the experiences and perceptions of health professionals working in the region. Part 2 of the project documents the experiences and perceptions of women service users themselves. This research is seen to have a collective benefit in providing the basis for recommendations about the design of strategies aimed at reducing any barriers identified, and promoting rural women's reproductive health.

### **Examining limits of confidentiality in real-life consultations: Concerns and considerations**

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This paper examines how confidentiality is discussed in real-life consultations. The Australian Psychological Society Code of Ethics states that clients are to be informed about the legal limits of confidentiality prior to engaging in psychological counselling and repeated when required. Training in confidentiality is also an accreditation requirement for Honours, Masters, and

Professional Doctorate programs. However little research has examined how limits of confidentiality are introduced and negotiated within real-life consultations. An initial consultation between a client and a provisionally registered psychologist was used as the data for this paper. Discursive analysis revealed that whilst the psychologist complied with her professional obligation by informing the client of the limits of confidentiality before counselling began, the way in which the psychologist enacted this made it difficult for the client to ask questions or seek clarification about these limits. Further, when the psychologist explicitly asked for client confirmation of understanding and acceptance of these limits, exactly what the client confirmed and accepted is unclear. Given that breaches of confidentiality are registration board matters, this lack of clarity and limiting of client interaction is concerning. Discussion will note the limits of this data along with the utility of examining confidentiality within real-life consultations.

### Motives and health

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What is the relationship between individuals' implicit motives (McClelland, Koestner, & Weinberger, 1989) and their health? The present study investigated the relationship between the Big Three implicit motives – need for achievement (*nAch.*), need for power (*nPow.*), and need for affiliation (*nAffil.*) – and health. Previous research has demonstrated that such implicit measures can be stronger predictors of long-term behavioural outcomes than self-report measures (McClelland, 1985). Indeed, it has been demonstrated that high *nPow.* is associated with a wide range of adverse health outcomes (Winter, 1992). Moving beyond these well documented relationships, the present authors propose that all three motives offer valuable and insightful information regarding health outcomes. This proposition was tested via analysis of the Eugene-Springfield Community Sample which is based at the Oregon Research Institute. This sample ( $N = 757$ ) completed a series of measures including such measures as: the Comprehensive Health Survey, Health-Related Coping Styles, Obsessive-Compulsive Symptoms, and Cognitive Failures. Preliminary

results have revealed strong relationships between motives and health, in particular, between *nAch.* and coping, obsessive-compulsive symptoms, and cognitive failures. Furthermore, associations between *nAffil.* and adverse medical conditions such as cancer and stroke have been discovered. Further results will be presented, and implications for research will be discussed.

### Development of a survey that supports two, three and five meta-categories of leadership behaviour

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The present paper reports the development of a leadership survey that contains lower-order factors representing a broad range of commonly researched leadership behaviours, as well as higher-order factors that support recently proposed “meta-categories” of leadership behaviour. Research into leadership, assessment, and development of leaders, continues to be hampered by the lack of a broad-ranging measure of leadership behaviour. In a recent review Yukl (2006) proposed three “meta-categories” of leadership behaviours (task-oriented behaviour, relations-oriented behaviour and change-oriented behaviour) and compared some of the major leadership assessment tools against twelve categories of behaviour within the three meta-categories. All commonly used tools were found to only cover part, and not all, of a broad range of leadership behaviours. The present paper analyses ratings of 3730 leaders drawn from a survey originally developed to support 360-degree leadership assessment. The survey covers a wide range of leadership behaviours including, among others, the categories of Vision & Inspiration, Intellectual Stimulation, Time Management, Quality Focus, Communication, Recognition, Developing Others, and Stress Management. Using cross-validated exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, the lower-order behaviour categories were confirmed, and a higher-order factor structure supporting Yukl's meta-categories was found. Implications for both leadership research and practice are discussed.

### Proactive coping and proactive aggression in children

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There is considerable concern in our community in general and in the educational community in particular at the many and varied manifestations of aggression by young people of school age. Two types of aggression, reactive and proactive, have been identified. While reactively aggressive students score higher on maladaptive coping, anger and negative thinking, proactively aggressive students do not appear to be different to their nonaggressive peers. In an effort to understand and support proactively aggressive students, this research looked at the relationship of proactive aggression to; proactive coping, anxiety, values and leadership skills, and evaluated some current programs to reduce aggression in the light of findings.

### The role of illness perceptions in sleep disturbance and daytime dysfunction in lupus

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of illness perceptions in sleep disturbance and daytime dysfunction in individuals with lupus. One hundred and fifty-four participants completed a questionnaire booklet comprised of a Lupus Medical and Symptoms Questionnaire designed by the researchers, the Illness Perception Questionnaire-Revised, and the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index. Multiple regression analyses revealed that individuals who perceived lupus as having serious consequences tended to have increased sleep disturbance. Individual's daytime dysfunction was predicted by perceptions of lupus as having serious life consequences and being a chronic condition. Additionally, it was found that negative mood was indirectly related to sleep problems. The current results indicated the need for psychological interventions to reduce sleep disturbance and daytime dysfunction resulting from dysfunctional illness-related thoughts and negative mood in individuals with lupus.

### Emerging adulthood in Australia: The role of psychosocial factors

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Emerging adulthood is a period of development bridging adolescence and young adulthood. This study examined the period of emerging adulthood for 323 Australian university educated 20-29 year olds without children via an online self-report questionnaire. Six groups of participants with differing profiles of ratings on the dimensions of emerging adulthood were identified using a clustering procedure. The six groups, Emerging Adults, Idealist Achievers, Adults, Calm Carers, Foreclosed, and Conflicted Diffused, were then compared for differences in their life goals, identity formation, and psychological distress and well-being. Implications for the counselling of young people who are distressed during this life-stage are discussed.

### The structure and clinical relevance of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) amongst adolescents

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This study investigated the structure and validity of the PANAS amongst Grade 10 students. Study 1 (388 boys; 386 girls) showed that adolescent affective experience can be structured in terms of positive affect, fear, nervousness, sadness, guilt, and anger. This structure was replicated within boys and girls. Study 2 (43 boys, 53 girls) showed that the affect subscales were related in expected ways to accepted measures of adolescent anxiety and depression. Guilt in particular was one of the most powerful predictors of depression and of aspects of anxiety. We discuss the implications of these findings for clinical practice.

### Risk assessment in child abuse: Structured and clinical assessment compared

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Child abuse assessments are often critical evidence in Children's Court and Family Court assessments. Considerable emphasis is placed on the

use of actuarial and structured risk assessment approaches in other areas of forensic psychology but considerable doubt continues to dog the use of such devices within child abuse assessments. A mix of factors, including the generally poor state of research into the predictive accuracy of child abuse assessments, lack of consistency in assessment protocols and the like are contributory. The current paper sets out a model of child abuse assessment, including the strategic use of actuarial and dynamic risk approaches and presents data on the relationship between actuarial and structured risk assessment and "traditional" clinical factors used in such assessments drawn from 170 cases.

### **Subtyping the Borderline Personality Disorder diagnosis: A principle components analysis of the DSM-IV criteria**

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There are 256 possible combinations of criteria for a DSM-IV diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) to be made, and individuals are required to share only one common characteristic. Given this apparent heterogeneity, this study examined the underlying factor structure of the DSM-IV criteria to determine whether the diagnosis could be classified in subtypes. Further, it sought to enhance the clinical interpretation of any identified subtypes by examining their relation to comorbid Axis I and II conditions. In a sample of 95 adult outpatients with a primary BPD diagnosis, a principle components analysis yielded support for three subtypes: 'emotional reactivity', 'primitive defences', and 'identity disturbance'. Results of logistic regression analyses and general linear modelling indicated the 'emotional reactivity' subtype was predictive of Anxiety Disorders and Obsessive Compulsive, Histrionic and Narcissistic Personality Disorder pathology. Additionally, the 'identity disturbance' subtype was predictive of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Antisocial Personality Disorder pathology. Considered with their Axis I and II associations, the 'emotional reactivity' subtype seems to reflect a mild level of personality dysfunction, and the 'identity disturbance' sub-type seems to reflect a more malignant and chronic form of personality dysfunction. With further research, recognition of

these sub-types may inform appropriate treatment regimes.

### **"Positive bodies: Loving the skin you're in". The outcome of a body image group program for adults with body image concerns**

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Body image is a person's perception of how their physical body appears to them and includes their feelings and attitudes towards it. A negative body image has been shown to affect a person's mental and physical health and this effect is particularly strong for women who place value on their appearance. However, the impact of body image is increasing for men and therefore intervention is needed for both. A cognitive-behavioural group intervention program was designed and implemented at the University of Canberra for men and women identifying as having body image concerns. The aim of the program was to educate adults about body image perceptions and their origins, challenge negative beliefs and behaviours associated with body image and improve positive body image perceptions and general well-being. Evaluation of the program through a pre-and post questionnaire showed improvements in body satisfaction, decreases in negative behaviours associated with body image concerns, decreased body image distress, reduced body consciousness and social physique anxiety. "Positive bodies: Loving the Skin You're In" is a program that has been run for men, women and parents of children of all ages who want to improve their own body image, health and well-being as well as that of our children. Suggestions for prevention and intervention are made based on the study's outcomes.

### **An investigation of the training of allied health professionals in chronic conditions prevention and self-management**

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As part of a larger investigation, a web-based survey was developed to assess the knowledge and skill of health professions in chronic conditions prevention and self-management. The survey was

distributed through professional associations, collegial email distribution lists, and promotion in professional newsletters. A total of 1168 health professionals completed the survey. This represented 1017 allied health professionals, 19 general practitioners (GPs), 42 practice nurses, and 90 community nurses. Given the small number of participating GPs, this group was excluded from analyses. Data analyses investigated differences between health professions, as well as investigating differences between professional clusters. Six clusters based on the nature and types of service provided by the profession were developed. These were nursing, educators, service/technical support, lifestyle behaviour, physical health and psychosocial. Some variation in knowledge and skill was found for the different professions. The results showed that the highest level of training and understanding was reported among the educators and lifestyle behaviour groups (e.g., dietitians, diabetes educators), with the lowest amount of training and understanding reported by professions offering service and technical support (e.g., pharmacists, audiologists). The psychosocial group, which included psychology, showed low levels of participation in chronic conditions prevention and self-management.

### **Mental Health Interdisciplinary Clinical Care Networks Project: A review of the pilot workshops processes and outcomes**

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The Mental Health Professions Association project on mental health interdisciplinary collaborative clinical care networks workshops investigated an extended profession-led clinical network system around Australia. The aim of the project was to develop a multidisciplinary training resource package for mental health professionals that could be used as a key resource to facilitate collaborative workshops and foster discussion regarding the implementation of collaborative primary mental health care. The resource package and local clinical network model were evaluated through a series of four pilot workshops, using a

questionnaire methodology. Pilot workshop participants included General Practitioners, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Mental health Nurses, Social Workers, and Occupational Therapists. Of the 80 participants who were recruited for the pilot workshops, less than half ( $N = 37$ ; 46%) reported that they were either participating in or had previously participated in a local professional network group. The data suggested that respondents found the content of the case-based material used in the sessions to be relevant and of a high standard. Participants identified numerous benefits from attending the groups, and expressed a strong desire for the groups to continue with the vast majority also indicating that they would recommend MHIN groups to colleagues.

### **A multidimensional evaluation of the new family law system**

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The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) is undertaking an evaluation of the family law reforms on behalf of the Australian Government. This paper outlines the principal changes to the family law system and provides details of the comprehensive evaluation of the reforms being undertaken by the Institute. The introduction of the *Family Law Amendment (Shared Parental Responsibility) Act 2006 (Cth)* has brought about major changes in how family separation is managed. The amendments are part of the new package of reforms in family law, the most significant in 30 years. The reforms are primarily concerned with improving the outcomes for children involved in family and relationship breakdowns, with a greater emphasis on encouraging parents to take responsibility for resolving disputes in a non-adversarial manner. The Institute's research program focuses on families, the service provision system, and the implementation of the legislation and changes to the court system. Each of these components involves a series of studies, including a large-scale national longitudinal study of separated parents. Together, these coordinated studies will enable a composite picture based on multiple perspectives to be developed.

### **We will survive: Maid to work in Singapore**

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In this paper, we explore the day-to-day experiences of female Filipino domestic workers, their employer-domestic relationships, coping strategies, and psychological health. In-depth interviews were conducted with 13 women working in Singapore. Using grounded theory, our research revealed high levels of variation, both within and between women, suggesting that the quality of domestic workers' lives depends largely on the personal characteristics of their employers, rather than on any system of protection. In dealing with difficult situations, women displayed positive and resilient coping strategies which enabled them to thrive despite restrictive and abusive life circumstances.

### **A partial test of a cognitive-behavioural model of problem gambling**

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Gambling and gambling problems among the Chinese (includes Chinese Diaspora) have long been noted and discussed. To date, no single theoretical framework has explored the complex interplay of factors associated with gambling and problem gambling (PG) among Chinese individuals. The aim of this study was to assess the validity of the cognitive-behavioural component of Sharpe's (2002) model of PG using structural equation modelling (SEM). Raylu and Oei's (in press) empirical analysis of Sharpe's (2002) framework found that the model assessed fit the data. Questionnaires measuring a range of gambling specific variables (e.g., gambling urge and cognitions), other gambling correlates (e.g., coping styles, personality traits, and psychological states) were distributed to 485 Chinese community participants. Results of the study did not provide support for the hypothesis that the model tested would significantly fit the data. The lack of fit in the Chinese data indicates that some changes to the model should be made to accommodate to the Chinese population. Implications of the study and suggestions for future research will be discussed.

### **Time to abandon Cook and Campbell's nomenclature to describe the validity of causal conclusions: Experimental methods are not the "gold standard" for causal research**

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The unified paradigm represents the biggest upheaval in the principles and practice of causal research in scientific psychology for almost a century (Lynd-Stevenson, 2007). For example, the nomenclature developed by Cook and Campbell (1979) is used universally by methodologists and researchers to describe the validity of causal conclusions in scientific psychology and reflects the belief that experimental methods are the "gold standard" for causal research. The unified paradigm dictates, however, that Cook and Campbell's nomenclature must be abandoned. Analysis of the unified paradigm provides the foundation for a new nomenclature and demonstrates that experimental methods are not the "gold standard" for causal research. The difference between Cook and Campbell's nomenclature and the new nomenclature is illustrated with examples from the research literature.

### **The construct of resilience - A model**

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Resilience concerns the ability one has to face the challenges of life in a manner that is essentially healthy and adaptive, and enables one to move on. Following a brief review of the literature, a model explaining the development of resilience will be presented. This model, given the complexity and instability of resilience as a construct, attempts to balance the need for parsimony with that of explanatory breadth. The model identifies three core elements believed to enable the individual to be resilient. These elements include the individual's physiological capacity to be resilient, the ability to respond adaptively to adverse events, and the ability to maintain well being. Factors identified with these elements include individual reactivity to and recovery from adverse events, the ability to be effective and efficient in the management of adverse events, and beliefs about the world and the self that promote well-being when exposed to adverse events. The



model has a basis within neurobiology and is framed within the context of Dynamic Systems Theory. The theory itself is a culmination of clinical observations with what is known from the current literature and the results of a qualitative study on the subjective experience of resilient individuals.

### **The subjective experience of resilience – A qualitative study**

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The impetus for this study grew from observations in clinical practice that many individuals survived all sorts of hardships with minimal distress, or with the ability to tolerate their distress, and move on with their lives in a positive manner. A review of the literature led to the conclusions that the research investigating resilience was making minimal inroads into understanding what made these people different, and that the richness of who they were was being lost in the research process. This dissatisfaction led to the decision to explore the construct from a phenomenological framework, and to try and discover the essential elements of resilience through analysis of the subjective experience of resilience. A qualitative study involving thirteen participants identified by their peers as resilient was undertaken and the underlying themes of their stories were analysed.

### **Primary school teachers' use of behaviour management strategies within teacher training frameworks**

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To assist school psychologists support teachers in managing student difficult behaviour, this study examined teachers' self-efficacy and behaviour management approaches, and evaluated a teacher training program. Participants comprised 91 teachers who had attended a workshop style Professional Development (PD) program, and 36 teachers who attended a school-based PD program. The Self-Efficacy in Behaviour Management scale and the Child Behaviour Survey measured the teachers' self-efficacy and/or use of behaviour management

strategies. Descriptive statistics indicated a disparity between the teachers' practices and best-practice, with positive practice and punishment used most often in managing students' difficult behaviour. Regression analysis indicated that the higher number of students per class with difficult behaviour predicted teachers' more frequent use of referral with all students, and punishment with female students. More years of teaching experience predicted more positive practice with all students, more referral with all students, and more punishment with female students. Higher levels of self-efficacy amongst teachers in regards to classroom management predicted less use of punishment with male students. Finally, an exploratory evaluation of a PD program revealed no impact of the program on teachers' strategy use or self-efficacy. These results have important implications for supporting teachers to achieve best-practice behaviour management benchmarks.

### **Sociocultural competency training for migrants in a job placement program**

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Recent migrants from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds are often unfamiliar with the implicit social rules for effective workplace interactions vital for career search and advancement in the adopted country. Job placement programs available for the unemployed may have limited use for CALD clients unless they also receive intercultural social skills training aimed at enhancing their sociocultural competency in preparation for the culturally different workplace. This paper will report the implementation and preliminary evaluation of the EXCELL (Excellence in Cultural Experiential Learning and Leadership) Program - as a sociocultural competency training module - in an innovative and comprehensive labour market program for CALD migrants in Brisbane, Australia. On completion of EXCELL, a sample of 101 migrant jobseekers (37% male, median age = 35 years, median residence in Australia = 2.25 years, 80% from non-English-speaking background) reported increases in job search confidence and intercultural social self-efficacy, compared with their pre-training survey responses. Program ratings and trainers' observations have

further indicated high levels of client satisfaction with the EXCELL training and its relevance to enhancing social interactions in job placements. The implications for future evaluation research as well as practice in employment and migrant services will be discussed.

### Developing the Martin and Pratt Nonword Reading Test

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The Martin and Pratt Nonword Reading Test is a simple to administer test of student's phonological recoding skills, one of the key skills involved in word reading without which children, and for that matter adults, are unable to read newly encountered words without assistance from others. The Martin and Pratt Nonword Reading Test was developed commencing with item selection (567 original items) early in 1995 ( $N=202$  students plus  $N=150$  students). Two forms of the nonword test each containing 54 items were then produced. Test norms were gathered from students ( $n=863$ : aged 6 to 16 years). Students ( $n=203$ ) were tested on one or both of Forms A and B and a series of 27 further reading and cognitive tests to provide validity data. The correlations between the Martin and Pratt Nonword Reading Test and other nonword reading tests were very high (ranging from .83 to .93) indicating that this test is a good indicator of students' ability to phonologically recode and then read nonwords. Correlations between this nonword reading test and other word reading tests are strongly positive, indicating good discriminant validity. Issues involved in the development of this test and in its adaptation for the United Kingdom will be discussed.

### Engagement with the learning process in first-year psychology classes

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There is a growing trend to argue that students exiting University with a degree of which a large component is Psychology, should have an understanding of Psychology as a science and be able to use this base as a guide for their practice. In order to attain the skills necessary to achieve this, it is important that students be engaged in the learning

process. During 2006 the Psychology 1 units at the University of Tasmania underwent a large overhaul which aimed, among other things, to introduce both summative and formative assessment practices. This initiative was down-scaled in 2007. In order to assess engagement in the course during 2006 and 2007, we collected Student Engagement information at two time points: at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2. Students were asked to what extent this course has emphasised various mental activities: Memorizing, analysing, synthesising and organising, evaluating, and applying. Generally students perceived no difference in the extent to which lower level cognitive processes were emphasized however across 2006 there was a significant increase in the extent to which students thought that the higher level cognitive skills of evaluating information, arguments or methods were emphasized.

### Behavioural management of headache triggers: Avoidance versus coping

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The traditional clinical advice to headache/migraine sufferers is that the best way to prevent headaches is to avoid the factors that trigger them. Although the logic of this advice is clear, criticisms can be offered. It is not possible to avoid all triggers and attempts to do so may prove stressful and lead to a restricted lifestyle. The advice is given in a conceptual vacuum as is not based on a theory of how a trigger acquires the capacity to precipitate a headache or how that capacity can be extinguished, and therefore what effect this advice may have on the potency of the trigger factor. Finally the empirical support for advising avoidance is very limited. Four recent laboratory studies will be reviewed that show avoidance of triggers leads to sensitisation to triggers (decreased tolerance) and exposure leads to desensitisation, in a manner analogous to anxiety. The results suggest that one aetiological pathway to developing a headache disorder is to 'cocoon' oneself away from anything that could trigger a headache thereby preventing learning to cope with the trigger. An argument will be offered that behavioural management of headache triggers should adopt a coping approach rather than an avoidance approach.

### **Non-Directive Pregnancy Support Counselling MBS item: How is it working for perinatal women?**

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The introduction of the Non-Directive Pregnancy Support Counselling (NDPSC) MBS items on November 1, 2006 offered women (and their partner), who are in the perinatal period, an opportunity to receive psychological support for any concerns they are experiencing. The perinatal period is from conception to 12 months post pregnancy. The referral to NDPSC psychology services is through the woman's General practitioner (GP). The APS undertook a review of the use of the NDPSC MBS item and surveyed all psychologists, who are eligible to use this MBS item. Unfortunately, minimal referrals from GPs to psychologists have been recorded, with only 47 services being used in an 18 month period. This is in stark contrast to GPs using an NDPSC item themselves, with 5,165 services being used with perinatal women during the same period. Written materials and strategies to promote the value of psychology services for perinatal concerns have been developed by the APS. The implementation of these materials will be presented.

### **How does the parent-child relationship account for gender differences in children's anxiety?**

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This investigation aimed to examine the influence of the familial environment on children's anxiety by exploring the surprising and counter-hypothetical findings of Matthewson, Burton-Smith and Montgomery (2004). This study revealed no gender difference in children's and parents' reported anxiety. Furthermore, the expected inverse relationship between parental support received and child anxiety was not found. The present study aimed to replicate this finding in a larger sample (60 families). In contrast to Matthewson et al (2004), it was found that the more satisfied girls were with both parents' support, the lower their anxiety. However, the more effective mothers felt as informational support providers and as companions to their sons, the

greater boys' anxiety was. Furthermore, there was no significant gender difference in children's anxiety. These findings, along with those of Matthewson et al (2004), suggest gender differences in children's anxiety do not lie in the anxiety report, but in the factors that predict it. Each parent appears to contribute differentially to boys' and girls' anxiety. Moreover, too much support may be counterproductive in alleviating children's anxiety.

### **Evidence for psychological reactance in an organisational setting**

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Brehm (1966) described psychological reactance as a motivational state, such that if a person's freedom to behave as they choose is threatened in some way, then the person will become motivationally aroused to either re-establish the lost freedom, or to ensure that there is no further loss. Depending upon the relative strength of the motivation compared to the person's assessment of likely outcomes, the person may be motivated into action. Matthias et al. (2007) argued that negative behaviours, which contribute to the poor record of information system implementation within organisations, likely contain some element of psychological reactance that may be brought about by threats directly or indirectly related to the implementation at hand. Empirical findings from a recent longitudinal study of an information system implementation in an Australian manufacturing organisation support this assertion. Elements of negative behaviour directed at the information system were likely motivated by psychological reactance generated from broader organisational issues.

### **Effects of ADHD and medication status on contingency awareness and behaviour in an incidental learning task**

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Three groups of children participated in a simple incidental learning task in which an embedded contingency between pictures displayed on a

computer screen allows RT responses to a signalled stimulus to decrease, relative to the RT of unsignalled pictures. Group CONT ( $N=24$ ) comprised a school-based normal healthy control group. The other groups, comprised of clinic-based children with a diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) tested either while taking medication (Group ADHD-On;  $N=15$ ), or following a period of medication washout (Group ADHD-Off;  $N=15$ ). The three groups did not differ in either average age or IQ. Following RT testing in 36 blocks of trials, awareness of the contingent relation between the signal and target was assessed with a pictorial recognition test. A smaller proportion of Groups ADHD-On and ADHD-Off correctly reported the embedded contingency between pictures than Group CONT, and there was no effect of medication. However, fewer children in Group ADHD-On showed evidence for modified RT performance than in Group ADHD-Off or Group CONT, which did not differ from each other. Although needing confirmation in a larger-scale evaluation, these results suggest that ADHD medication may interfere with the translation of relational knowledge into improved performance in a behavioural task.

### Attitudes of lesbians and gay men towards lesbian and gay parents

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As increasing numbers of lesbians and gay men become parents, it is important to understand how such parents are perceived across a range of communities as such perceptions are likely to impact upon their experiences of inclusion and exclusion. Whilst previous research has suggested that lesbian and gay parents experience discrimination and stigmatisation from within heterosexual, lesbian and gay communities, recent Australian research has found conflicting findings in regards to heterosexual's perceptions of lesbian and gay parents. Some such research has identified support within heterosexual samples for lesbian parents. Contrarily, other research conducted with heterosexual samples has found overwhelmingly negative perceptions of lesbian- and gay-headed households. The present study sought to further explore perceptions of lesbian and gay parents within *lesbian and gay* communities

in order to better understand the possible shifts in such perceptions compared to earlier research, and to establish the current direction of lesbian and gay perceptions in this regard. The findings suggest that lesbian and gay community members hold overwhelmingly positive attitudes towards lesbian and gay parents. This may suggest both an increased awareness of the numbers and positive experiences of lesbian- and gay-headed households, and the gradual breakdown of heteronormativity within lesbian and gay communities.

### Knowledge and self-efficacy in recognising and treating depression among aged care staff

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The current study was designed to evaluate the knowledge, skills and self-efficacy of care providers from the perspective of professionals working in the aged-care industry. Participants were 21 professional carers, 10 General Practitioners and 7 aged-care managers. Focus groups, which involved the completion of a semi-structured interview related to knowledge, recognition, confidence, referral procedures and use of screening tools for the detection of depression, were conducted. The results showed that all groups of respondents recognised significant gap in the knowledge and awareness of depression among professional care staff working with older people in both the community and residential care-settings. Skills in the detection and monitoring of depression and the self-efficacy of these care staff were also seen to be a problem. The implications of these findings in terms of training programmes for professional carers working in the aged health care sector are discussed.

### Outcome measurement in child and adolescent mental health: Clinician perspectives

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In 2003, a national outcome measurement strategy was implemented in all Australian mental health services. This paper reports on mental health service provider perceptions of the implementation and utility of outcome measurement in two metropolitan

child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). Participants were psychologists and other mental health staff ( $N= 14$ ) who participated in interviews about their experiences with outcome measurement. Results revealed differences in the organisation of and support for outcome measurement in the two CAMHS. Key themes involved need for continued support by the organisation for outcome measurement, concerns about the workload involved in data collection and entry, and issues with obtaining timely and meaningful feedback from the outcome measures.

### **Sexual self-esteem and well-being in women with Turner Syndrome**

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The hallmark features of Turner Syndrome (TS) are short stature and infertility due to underdeveloped or absent ovaries. Relatively little is understood about the psychological and emotional experiences of women living with this disorder. This study investigated the psychological well-being and sexual self-esteem of 18 women with TS, compared to a normative sample of women matched for age. Participants were administered the Psychological Well-Being Inventory (PWBI) (Ryff, 1989), and the Sexual Self-Esteem Inventory for Women (SSEI-W) (Zeanah & Schwarz, 1996). Women with TS obtained significantly lower scores on the SSEI-W and the Self-Acceptance subscale (current) of the PWBI than women in the comparison group. These findings suggest that women with TS may be more vulnerable to lower levels of sexual self-esteem, and possibly poorer psychological well-being than women in general. Further empirical exploration is required. However, the need for interventions to assist young women with TS to adjust to the psychosocial impact of their condition is clearly indicated.

### **Modelling community resilience: A means-end chain theory analysis of hazard cognitions and preparedness**

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Traditionally, development of natural hazard

mitigation strategies has been based on the assumption that providing information regarding hazards and protective measures will lead to people adopting protective measures. This paper argues that it is not information per se that determines action, but how people interpret it in the context of their experience, beliefs and expectations. The present qualitative study incorporated means-end chain theory (Gutman, 1982, 1997) to elicit more detailed information from participants regarding their decision making process regarding the adoption of preparation activities to minimise the effects of flooding. Means-end chain theory argues that knowledge is hierarchically arranged, with the decision making process progressing from concrete thoughts and actions to higher level goals that satisfy an individual's enduring and long term values. It is these values that provide the motivation to perform the particular behaviour. Interviewees were recruited from towns at risk of flooding (Benalla, Victoria and Launceston, Tasmania). Findings indicated that preparedness decisions are not made in isolation. Through community level discourse and processes importance is attached to natural hazards and protective measures. It is only when natural hazards are perceived as having greater salience than other threats that people are motivated to prepare for their effects.

### **Resourcing the least engaged students: What can alternative settings contribute?**

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Mainstream education programs at times cannot manage the behaviour and needs of a small subset of students. Yet engaging in education is crucial to immediate well being and long term success. This study attended to the attributes of the group of young people referred out of the system for a brief intervention, looking at their initial behaviours, and outcomes after the program. Aspects of this approach to intervention will be considered with analysis focusing on the concepts of coping, resilience and depression. Consideration will be given to the role resources plays in coping with the difficulties students are required to manage, in particular the difficulties created when disengaged students need to be reconnected to the mainstream system.

### Australian psychologists' willingness to implement their ethical decisions

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Previous American research has identified that psychologists' beliefs regarding what they *should* do in response to ethical dilemmas do not always correspond with what they say they *would* do. Thus in response to ethical dilemmas psychologists may be Ethically Willing (their *should* and *would* responses correspond) or Ethically Unwilling (their *should* and *would* responses differ). The current study investigated ethical willingness / unwillingness in a sample of 77 Australian psychologists. Their responses to 10 ethical scenarios were compared with those of 52 first year psychology students. Results showed that the psychologists sampled were significantly more Ethically Willing than were the students. It was also found that for the psychologists Ethical Willingness varied from 97% to 58% according to scenario, indicating that Ethical Willingness was partially dependent on the type of ethical dilemma. The study also investigated the reasons psychologists and students gave for their behaviour choices. Implications of the results for the professional acculturation of psychologists regarding ethical behaviour are discussed.

### I quit! Leadership and satisfaction with the volunteer firefighter role: Resignations and organisational responses

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Annual resignation rates for Australian volunteer-based fire agencies are about 6% of total volunteer firefighter memberships. Four studies investigated issues potentially related to leadership and volunteer resignations. 1. On 396 exit survey returns from former volunteers, reasons given for resigning were: Work/Family needs, 51%; Moved from the area, 38%; Age/Health issues, 28%; Dissatisfaction with the volunteer role, 25%. The major contributor to Dissatisfaction was poor brigade leadership. 2. A survey of 514 new volunteers found that higher levels of Intention to Remain were associated with being a member of a well-led,

inclusive, and harmonious brigade. 3. A survey of 1,589 volunteers found that about one third reported negatively on aspects of volunteer/paid staff relationships: lack of consultation; lack of respect; unhelpful interactions. 4. Interviews with 13 senior career staff who supervised the activities of volunteer brigades suggested: (a) great variability in the quality of leadership in brigades; and (b) differences among staff in their approach to brigade supervision. Overall, the findings show: (i) the importance of leadership as a factor to be addressed in order to minimise volunteer firefighter resignations; and (ii) a need for agencies to change how they approach issues of leadership in relation to their volunteers.

### Callous-unemotional traits in aggressive youths: Identifying an at risk sub-group

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Callous-Unemotional (CU) traits have consistently been found to identify a sub-group of particularly aggressive anti-social children. However, the majority of past research relies on birth cohorts with a potential confound of socioeconomic status (SES), making it difficult to identify good predictors of antisocial behaviour. The present study uses Frick's (2004) Inventory of CU traits and a measure of aggression (Child Behaviour Checklist for ages 6-18 (Achenbach, 2001) in order to select a sub-group of youths at risk for antisocial behaviour, and compare them with other children from the same low SES community on a range of variables including psychosocial functioning, parent discipline, and emotional intelligence. One hundred and seventeen children (10-11 years) and their caregivers/parents participated; from this sample two subgroups: one high on CU traits and aggression (High-CU/Agg group:  $n=20$ ) and the other low on CU traits and aggression (Low-CU/Agg group:  $n=74$ ). The analyses revealed that a high-risk group (High-CU/Agg) could be readily identified. The High-CU/Agg group differed significantly from the Low-CU/Agg group on a range of measures including psychosocial problems, stress management and parental monitoring. These results support the predictive validity of Frick's research in a low SES community.

### **An investigation of protagonist processes leading to in-session resolution of painful emotional experience during psychodrama**

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Emotional pain is experienced as a shattering of the sense of self and disconnection from others, and when unresolved can produce long term avoidant responses to affective experiencing and interpersonal interactions, which inhibits the healing process. The psychodramatic construct of healing is social atom repair, which is considered to occur through the development of a larger perspective of the social system and greater flexibility in response. A multiple-case study was undertaken to build a model of protagonist (client) processes leading to in-session resolution of painful emotional experience during psychodrama. Significant change events within 9 resolved and 6 not resolved cases were analysed using Elliott's Comprehensive Process Analysis. Four events were linked to in-session change: re-experiencing and naming the core concern; activating resourcefulness; emotional release with social atom repair and integration. Emotional release with social atom repair was linked to post-session improvements in interpersonal relationships and sense of self that were maintained at three month follow-up.

### **Adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism and psychopathology among Australian university students**

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This study examined the relationship between adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism and psychopathology: depression, anxiety and stress. Research has indicated that perfectionism is a multidimensional construct that may be construed as containing both adaptive and maladaptive components (Bieling, Israeli & Antony, 2004; Chang, 2003). Adaptive perfectionism relates to personal standards and organization, while maladaptive perfectionism relates to doubts about actions and concern over mistakes (cf.; the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale - MPS; Frost, Marten, Lahart & Rosenblate, 1990). A total of 215 Australian university students from several states were assessed on self-report questionnaires including on the six sub-

scales of the MPS and on the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scales (DASS; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). The results indicated that those scoring high on maladaptive perfectionism also scored high on psychopathology. However, adaptive perfectionism scores were not related to depression or anxiety, though there was a small but significant relationship between personal standards and stress. Implications for therapeutic outcomes are discussed.

### **Depression, loneliness and living arrangements**

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Single person households now comprise between one third and one half of all households in most Western cities. In Australia there are now more single-person households than there are households made up of couples living with children. It has been proposed that those living alone are more likely to be lonely than those who do not, and that people who are lonely are more likely to be depressed. This study investigated these issues. A sample of 4436 volunteer participants drawn from the Australian Unity Well-being database completed a survey that included demographic information, the UCLA Loneliness Scale, the DASS-21 and the Need to Belong Scale. Analyses revealed that those who live alone are neither more lonely nor more depressed than those who live with others. This finding may be explained by the lower need to belong reported by those living alone.

### **"I did not 'choke'!": Introducing a preliminary self-presentation model of "choking" in sport**

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Based on recently proposed definitions, "choking under pressure" (i.e., choking) is defined as a critical deterioration in the execution of habitual processes as a result of an elevation in anxiety levels under perceived pressure, leading to substandard performance. Researchers have provided descriptive choking models (i.e., self-focus and distraction models) with the self-focus model receiving the most empirical support, however, no one has offered explanatory models that may answer the question "why does choking occur?" Thus, the present paper is an amalgamation of three interconnected studies that,

in part, examined the psychological characteristics of “choking-susceptible” athletes using qualitative interviews, which helped to develop an explanatory model of choking. A total of 174 experienced athletes completed three psychological inventories to purposively sample 14 choking-susceptible athletes who participated in a series of single-case designs that included both low- and high-pressure phases. After the experimental phase, participants were interviewed about their experience and content analyses were conducted. Common choking-related themes were increased public self-awareness, fear of evaluation/failure, and self-monitoring techniques. Further qualitative cross-case analyses provided evidence for a preliminary self-presentation model of choking that link public self-awareness, anxiety, and conveying a positive self-presentation, which will be discussed.

#### **Competitive pressure and decision-making accuracy in a video-based simulation of soccer**

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Perceptual-cognitive skills and decision-making in sport have typically been explored using video-based protocols in settings where participants are not exposed to the type of competitive pressures that characterise a game situation. Consequently, this study aimed to investigate the influence of competitive pressure, or competitive anxiety, on decision-making accuracy. Seventy-seven (Male=44, Female=33) undergraduate students with mean age of 20.16 years ( $SD = 3.18$ ) were randomly assigned to an experimental ( $n=56$ ) or control group ( $n=21$ ) and completed a video-based perceptual decision-making test of 25 temporally occluded offensive soccer plays. Participants in the experimental group completed the test with and without competitive pressure conditions. Pressure was manipulated by introducing a competition for a monetary prize. Participants in the control condition completed the test twice without competition. All participants completed a state anxiety measure prior to each test. The competition produced significantly higher cognitive anxiety than no competition; however, this was not reflected in any significant differences in decision-making accuracy. Although not statistically significant, more experienced performers tended to score more accurately with competitive pressure.

Males had significantly higher decision accuracy scores than females with competitive pressure. Implications for decision-making under pressure will be discussed.

#### **Will universal screening for perinatal depression in Australia be a reality by 2010?**

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Kevin Rudd’s election promise of \$85M for a National Postnatal Depression Plan to improve prevention and early detection of antenatal and postnatal depression has been a major achievement and catalyst to the work of *beyondblue*. This recommendation was based on the groundwork done in 2001 by the *beyondblue* National Depression Initiative, which in a 4-year project evaluated the feasibility of universal screening for perinatal depression. The ability to treat depression is also a necessary pre-requisite for advocating this approach and a review of treatment efficacy will be presented, as will the acceptability of screening. In 2007, a consortium of perinatal mental health experts around Australia received further funding from *beyondblue* to develop a National Action Plan. 2008 sees further *beyondblue* funding, supported by the Hon Jeff Kennett, with the establishment of an Expert Working Group co-chaired by the Hon Caroline Hogg. The task is to develop a framework in consultation with key stakeholders and government departments and gain national support at all levels. The results of the *beyondblue* public health initiative will be reviewed in the context of the debate around screening, and the challenges of training and access to services. The policy, training and models proposed will be reviewed.

#### **Attachment to God, religious openness, and psychological health**

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There is much debate over the social implications of fundamentalist religions. At the level of the individual there has also been debate over the psychological impacts of closed minded (fundamentalist) and open (questing) ways of being religious. On the one hand, religious openness has



been associated with tolerance and flexibility, but on the other it has been associated with anxiety and identity confusion. It has also been suggested that a person's security of attachment to God is an important foundation for psycho-spiritual health: secure attachment to God has been related to psychological adjustment and emotional regulation. This paper presents findings of a study designed to investigate whether a person's security of relationship with God allows for mature religious openness and thence lower levels of psychological symptoms. A sample of 130 Christian adults in Sydney, Australia completed demographic questions and measures of religious questing, attachment to God and the Brief Symptom Inventory. Results were analysed using structural equation modelling. Implications of the findings for understanding helpful and unhelpful spiritual pathways to psychological health are discussed.

### **The RESILIENCE Project: Mobility impairment in Australia and South East Asia**

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The RESILIENCE project (REsearch into Social Inclusion, Locomotive Impairment and Empowerment through Networking, Collaboration and Education) is an interdisciplinary, multi-country study, which examines the impact of mobility impairment on people in Australia and South-East Asia. The first phase of the project, which included both quantitative and qualitative components, aimed to identify key themes in regard to mobility impairment. This was conducted in three countries: Australia ( $N=169$ ), Thailand ( $N=210$ ) and Malaysia ( $N=210$ ), in both urban and rural populations. The PIPP (Perceived Impact of Problem Profile) was specifically developed by the research team to measure impact and associated distress related to mobility impairment. The PIPP consists of 23 items across several personal and social domains, including perceptions about the self and self care, ability to perform various activities, personal and social relationships, participation, and independence. Participants were asked to rate the impact and distress on a 1-6 point scale (where 1 = *no impact / distress* and 6 = *extreme impact / distress*). The paper will provide a brief overview of some of the key

results obtained in regard to health-related quality of life and the impact of health on daily activities.

### **How is a perfectionist created? Development and validation of the Perfectionistic Anxious Rearing Questionnaire**

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Perfectionism is suggested to be an important feature in the development and maintenance of several forms of psychopathology. A valuable way to investigate the nature of such a trait is to explore factors contributing to its development. The anxious rearing model of perfectionism development proposes that perfectionism develops due to general parental worry about being imperfect as evidenced by focus on negative consequences of mistakes, anxious over concern about mistakes and overprotection from the negative consequences of mistakes. The current study aims to assess this model with clinically anxious children and matched controls using pre-existing and a newly developed measure, the Perfectionistic Anxious Rearing Questionnaire (PARQ). The aim of this study is to assess the psychometric properties of the PARQ.

### **Multiaxial assessment and biopsychosocial management of pain**

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Pain patients present to psychologists because they are experiencing unacceptable pain. This experience is a psychological phenomenon which involves on-going interactions amongst biological, psychological and social factors. Turk and his colleagues have proposed multiaxial assessment (Turk & Melzack, 2001) and multifactorial treatment (Turk & Gatchel, 2002) of pain in response to the complexity of the phenomenon. Despite more than 40 years of research indicating the importance of psychological and social factors in the experience of pain, the majority of pain patients receive only medical treatment and the majority of medical practitioners still use only biomedical approaches to pain-management. Notwithstanding a few good examples of multidisciplinary centres dealing with pain, the potential contribution to best practice in

pain-management from psychosocial techniques is frequently absent, presumably because of a lack of awareness within medical services of these procedures. This paper introduces a practitioner's view of evidence-based procedures for a biopsychosocial approach to pain-management.

### **Reliability and validity of group administration of the Eyes Test – Children's Version: An Australian normative study**

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The Eyes Test – Children's Version is used in Australia and the UK as a measure of theory of mind in the assessment of autism spectrum disorders. However, little is known about its psychometric properties. Normative data for Australian children is sparse. Results of group testing were compared to individual administration in Australian and British samples to assess validity of group administration. In addition, internal consistency and test-retest measures were considered. The Eyes Test was group administered to 82 primary school students in the Darwin region of the Northern Territory enrolled in mainstream classes and with no identified psychopathology. Participants were grouped in age ranges from 8 –13.25 years. Results were consistent with previous normative studies, finding that total scores on the Eyes Test increase with age, with no effect of gender. No significant differences between the first and second administration of the Eyes Test were found. An analysis of internal consistency showed a less than ideal test statistic. Results are discussed in terms of test construction theory and cultural differences between the Australian and British samples. Overall it was found that the Eyes Test is a reliable, repeatable and consistent measure that can be administered either individually or in group settings.

### **The acute psychobiological impacts of illicit ecstasy (MDMA) use in recreational environments**

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Data were gathered at parties from 41 experienced ecstasy users. Blood samples, physiological

measures and subjective reports were gathered prior to ecstasy consumption and hourly for five hours thereafter. Participants consumed between 1 and 5 ecstasy pills, ingesting doses often exceeding and in some cases tripling the maximum doses administered to humans in laboratory studies. Maximum MDMA plasma concentrations averaged 336 ng/mL, and a quarter of party-goers had MDMA plasma concentrations in the 'toxic to lethal' range according to forensic guidelines. Peak cardiovascular and thermodynamic effects also tended to exceed those in clinical studies. Heart rates increased by a mean of 24 bpm, systolic blood pressure by 22 mmHg and diastolic blood pressure by 14 mmHg. Core and skin temperatures also rose by 1.1 °C and 1.8 °C, respectively. Analyses of neurohormonal impacts are continuing and will be reported. It is apparent that recreational ecstasy users often consume considerably higher doses of the drug and experience greater physiological sequelae than those reported in controlled clinical research. Although accompanied in some cases by plasma concentrations hitherto only reported in case studies involving toxicity, participants' reports of elation indicate that these effects were not only tolerated but actively enjoyed.

### **Mindfulness-based treatment for bulimia nervosa and binge-eating: Findings from a randomised control trial**

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While individual CBT has been viewed as the treatment of choice for bulimia nervosa and binge eating, results from group treatments are less impressive. As group treatments are a popular and cost-effective approach for these client groups, it is important to identify a group-based treatment that is effective. Promising findings have recently emerged from mindfulness-based group treatments; however these studies have been compromised by methodological limitations such as small samples sizes and lack of control groups. However, as many mindfulness-based treatments contain components from other therapeutic approaches, such as cognitive therapy, the relative contribution of mindfulness components remain unknown. The main aim of the current research was to conduct a randomised controlled trial of a mindfulness-based treatment with

an adequate sample size ( $n = 80$ ), which did not contain components from other therapeutic approaches. Female participants who met criteria for bulimia or binge eating were randomly assigned to an 8-session group-mindfulness intervention or waitlist control. Measures of mindfulness, frequency of bingeing and compensatory behaviours, client functioning, eating-disordered cognitions, depression, anxiety, and stress were completed pre and post treatment, and at one-month follow-up. The results of this research demonstrate significant improvements on all variables for the treatment group compared to the waitlist control group. These findings provide support for the effectiveness of a mindfulness-only intervention for bulimia and binge eating.

#### **An interpretative phenomenological investigation of adjustment and posttraumatic growth after a diagnosis of haematological malignancy**

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A diagnosis of cancer results in a wide-range of outcomes that require considerable psychological adjustment. There is growing recognition in the field of psycho-oncology that some people experience positive life change, or Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) following cancer diagnosis. However, many studies utilise existing PTG measures designed for general trauma experiences that do not take into account life changes that may be unique to a health-related context. The current study presents an interpretative phenomenological exploration of the adjustment process and reported PTG in 6 persons diagnosed with haematological malignancies. Interviews were conducted over a 12-month period (1; 6; and 12 months post-diagnosis). Triangulation of data was provided by interviewing significant others and with quantitative assessment. Results identified positive changes not assessed by traditional PTG measures; Compassion for Others, and Health-Related Life Changes. A wide range of coping strategies are reported in the first two interviews. These appear to persist to 12 month follow-up only if the person has experienced a relapse in health, or is struggling with enduring side-effects. The results were also consistent

with prior research showing that cognitions play an important role in adaptive coping, including deliberate rumination, and downward social comparison. Exposure to positive behaviour modelling was also found to be an adaptive coping strategy.

#### **The relationship between therapeutic realizations and changes in problem gambling behaviour**

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Therapeutic realizations are one of the change processes posited by the generic model of psychotherapy (Orlinsky & Howard, 1986). This paper discusses the relationship between therapeutic realizations and changes in behaviour and psychological well-being among individuals undergoing therapy for problem gambling. Following six sessions of a brief integrative therapy, clients completed measures of gambling behaviour, psychological well-being, and a measure of therapeutic realizations (The Therapeutic Realizations Scale; Kolden, Strauman, Gittleman, Halverson, Heerey, & Schneider, 2000.) This paper will discuss the strength of the association between client's realizations over the course of the therapy and changes to both their problematic gambling behaviour and psychological well-being. These results will be discussed in the context of the relationship between therapeutic insight and psychopathology.

#### **Executive function as a predictor of driving behaviour among young drivers**

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This study explores relationships between executive functioning and driving behaviour, as well as the influences of age and sex within a sample of young Australian drivers. This study employed a self-report, cross-sectional survey research design. A purposive sample of 92 provisionally licensed drivers aged 17-25 years, took part in the study. Results revealed that young drivers who displayed poorer executive functioning were associated with increased driving violations and total negative driving behaviours such as mistakes and lapses. Hierarchical regression analyses revealed that executive function

was an important influential predictor of driving behaviours which contributed independently to the effects of age and sex. Further results and implications are discussed with regard to possible future directions for research in this area; including efforts to reduce drivers risk of motor vehicle accidents.

### **Relationships between age, executive function and driving behaviour**

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This study investigates the relationships between a component of brain functioning called executive function and driving behaviour, as well as the influences of age and sex within a sample of Australian drivers. A self-report, cross-sectional survey research design was employed on a convenience sample of 246 students aged 18-58 years from a Canberra university. Younger drivers were found to display poorer executive function and that less effective executive function was associated with increased driving violations, and total negative driving behaviours such as mistakes and lapses. Regression analyses confirmed that executive function was an important influential predictor of driving behaviours and that it contributed independent to the effects of age and sex. The strength of the influence of executive function on driving behaviour was further demonstrated by the partially mediating effect of executive function on the relationship between age and driving violations as well as total negative driving behaviours. These results suggest that higher levels of executive function may partially buffer the negative influence of youth on driving behaviours. Implications of results are discussed with regards to future research in driver safety.

### **Performance psychology applied to dance**

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The recent interest in the area of performance psychology has included a focus on applied practice within the performing arts. The use of psychology within this field has been occurring for many years, although practice has been observed to originate primarily from within clinical psychology

in dealing with 'problems' (e.g. eating disorders). During the past 15 years, increased interest and focus has come from the field of sport psychology and its application to fields such as dance. Experience with the application of sport psychology in the dance profession has shown that dancers identify primarily with the concept of performance psychology. The focus of applied performance psychology practice with dancers has been observed to incorporate principles from across sport, clinical and organisational psychology, yet packaged together in such a way that the focus is on performance enhancement - whether that be in terms of dance technique, artistry, creativity, or personal skill development both on and off the stage. This paper focuses upon sharing the practitioner's experience of the delivery of performance psychology to dancers (both professionals and dancers-in-training), and discussion of the considerations related to this undertaking within this unique population.

### **Attachment and interpersonal relationships in postnatal depression**

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Postnatal depression (PND) is a serious and debilitating mental health disorder, which has serious consequences for the woman, her partner, and their infant. Strong evidence exists for the role of interpersonal and relationship factors such as marital satisfaction and social support. This research embraced an attachment theory framework to illustrate the importance of close interpersonal relationships in the conceptualisation of postnatal depression. This study reports the results of a cross-sectional study examining the bivariate and multivariate associations between attachment insecurity, interpersonal functioning and postnatal depression by investigating the differences between a clinical group of mothers diagnosed with PND ( $n = 47$ ) and a comparison group of mothers ( $n = 68$ ) across some of their significant relationships including marital functioning, social-supports, and the mother-infant bond. The findings demonstrate that mothers with Preoccupied or Fearful adult attachment styles have significantly higher levels of postnatal depression, more marital discord, less positive views of their social support network, and

more difficult interactions with their baby than mothers with Secure or Dismissing adult attachment styles. Results from this research indicate that attachment theory offers a potentially useful framework for health professionals and therapists working with depressed mothers, their partners, and infants.

### **Helping people cope with advanced prostate cancer: Identifying and meeting their coping needs**

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The diagnosis of prostate cancer affects the psychological well-being of men and the people close to them. People coping with advanced stage disease report higher levels of depression and greater disruption to their quality of life than do people coping with early stage disease. Support person's often report higher distress than do patients. However, no research to date has explored the coping needs of people with advanced stage disease, or evaluated interventions to enhance adjustment in both patients and their support persons. This poster reports results from two studies. In the first study, couples' observed support communication, psychological functioning and unmet coping needs were assessed and informed the development of a dyadic coping intervention. The preliminary results from the second study, involving a pilot, pre-post test, single arm evaluation of the intervention on 15 couples with advanced disease, are reported.

### **The role of loneliness in the relationship between rejection sensitivity and depression**

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Past research indicates that rejection sensitivity (RS) and depression are highly correlated. In accordance with the RS model, anxiously expecting rejection reflects a cognitive-affective processing disposition which confers vulnerability to depression by undermining one's ability to form and benefit from positive relationships. However, few studies have outlined the specific mechanisms by which RS functions as a risk factor for depression. Posited within the context of an attachment/attributional

framework and utilising Weiss's conceptualisation of loneliness, the current paper presents an evaluation of the extant literature and will provide an analysis of the role of loneliness in the relationship between the RS and depression. Additionally, a mediator model, wherein loneliness mediates the relationship between RS and depression will be proposed. Possible directions for future research in this area will also be explored.

### **The profile and outcomes of cancer patients referred to a specialist psychology service**

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Specialist psychology services for cancer patients aim to assist patients to manage the emotional, social, and existential concerns that can occur with cancer. This project aimed to identify the characteristics and outcomes of clients referred to a specialist psychology service for cancer patients. Client demographic, cancer illness/treatment, service usage, and functioning were recorded over a 16-month period. Results demonstrated that most patients referred to the service attended for an assessment with a psychologist. Referral to the psychology service occurred throughout the cancer diagnosis and treatment process. Attending the service was generally associated with improvement in clients' functioning. Sex, baseline severity of symptoms, number of sessions attended, diagnostic, and treatment details predicted improvement in psychological symptoms. The results of this evaluation are useful in terms of providing a better understanding of the psychology service's utilisation, process, and outcomes for clients. This can assist in the planning and development of the psychology services for cancer patients.

### **Strategies that enhance student engagement during the teaching of statistics in psychology programs**

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The profession of psychology is based on the principles of scientific investigation and analysis. However, students in psychology programs generally rate the study of research methods and statistics low

on indicators such as relevance and interest. This paper will examine some methods that have been used to enhance student engagement and learning during a first year statistics course. The use of on-line and in-class computer-based interactive exercises can illustrate statistical concepts such as sampling, regression, and hypothesis testing in a novel way. A data gathering questionnaire completed in the first class can also provide raw data of interest to students for illustrative purposes throughout the course. Finally, using student-relevant and discipline-relevant examples of statistical concepts with the odd funny photo thrown in can maintain student attention during lectures. Evaluation of these approaches indicates that each can play a role to promote student learning and engagement in statistics courses for psychology students.

### **The psychophysiological profile of elite and novice athletes during a precision sport**

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**A**thletes' skill levels are reflected in not only their performance, but also in their psychophysiological responses during a sport. This paper examines cardiovascular responses that were measured during a series of putts in golf. Elite athletes showed an overall lower heart rate, greater variability in heart rate, a greater phasic deceleration in heart rate just prior to the putt, and a greater tendency to exhale just before the putt when compared to novice athletes. Instructions that encouraged athletes to modify their attentional focus during the putting task had a greater effect on cardiovascular responses in novice athletes than in elite athletes. The cardiovascular profiles appeared to reflect the interplay between the attentional focus strategy, arousal regulation, and the physical demands of the putting task. The measurement of cardiovascular activity may be useful during training and assessment to promote the psychophysiological patterns associated with enhanced performance during precision sports.

### **The indicator for intervention pilot study: A snapshot from psychology**

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**S**ince 2005, the Australian Department of Health and Ageing has funded the APS to develop and pilot test a code set for use as an 'Indicator for Intervention' (IFI) to add to a standard 'Allied Health Minimum Data Set'. This study is auspiced by the National Allied Health Classification Committee who have been developing the data set since the early 1990's. IFI codes indicate the primary reason a patient/client has sought assistance from an Allied Health professional. The IFI is functional in nature indicating the concern or symptom of primary importance, rather than representing a diagnosis or intervention. Approximately 400 professionals from eleven allied health professions were involved in this pilot study. As part of the pilot, 1791 data entries were collected from 67 Psychologists working in public health services in metropolitan, regional and remote areas across Australia. These entries include the allocated IFI code(s) and patient/client demographic information. Participating psychologists worked in a variety of settings including Acute Hospitals and Community Health Services, and the IFI codes used varied across settings. In addition, 24 psychologists participated in a reliability study involving allocation of IFI codes to a set of case-studies. An indicator of reliability above the set benchmark was achieved.

### **Coping strategies and pain during physiotherapy treatment**

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**W**hile a significant amount of research has been conducted investigating the role of coping strategies in relation to those with chronic pain or in experimental pain situations, relatively little has explored their spontaneous use in real-life painful situations. Participants were 192 individuals presenting for physiotherapy treatment of low back pain, who completed VAS pain scores before and after treatment, and a modified version of the Coping Strategies Questionnaire (CSQ; Rosenstiel and Keefe,

1983). Using coping self-statements (such as 'Although it hurt I just kept going') was the most frequently used coping strategy reported by the sample, and reinterpreting pain sensations (such as 'I imagined that the pain was outside my body') was the least frequently used. Regression analyses using post-treatment VAS pain scores and pre to post-treatment change in VAS pain score found that, after controlling for pain levels before treatment, only reinterpreting pain sensations made a significant contribution to variance in either dependent variable. The implications of these findings will be reviewed in light of other relevant findings.

### **The long cold night: Comparing expeditioner and partner experiences during Antarctic absences**

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The Antarctic environment poses both physical and psychological challenges to human performance, particularly during the austral winter. Additionally, Antarctic employment involves prolonged separation from existing social support networks. Previous research has demonstrated variations in expeditioners mood whilst in Antarctica and the subsequent impacts on both physical and psychological functioning (Bechtel, 1991; Evans, Stokols, & Carrere, 1987; Palmi, 1963; Steel & Suedfeld, 1991). However, the concurrent experience of partners and the potential influence this has on expeditioner health during Antarctic residence is not well understood. Incorporating a cross-lagged, longitudinal design the present study investigates the experience of Antarctic absences in expeditioners and their partners, and explores the interactive nature of these processes. In particular, it highlights the significant differences in psychological health across Antarctic absence and provides a rationale for variance between expeditioners and partners based on data obtained from qualitative interviews. This research provides a more holistic understanding of Antarctic employment, and identifies implications for individual and dyadic adjustment at later stages of the Antarctic employment experience.

### **Canvassing the emotions: Women, creativity and mental health in context**

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This paper concerns the role of visual art in the lives of women who have experienced mental ill health. As in other areas of art history where women are rarely mentioned, little has been written about the relationship between women's creativity and wellbeing. Even less has been documented about the actual experiences and views of women experiencing mental ill health who produce/d visual art. In the 1950s, art programs were introduced across a number of Victorian psychiatric institutions, and continued until the closure of stand-alone psychiatric institutions in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Since then, a number of innovative community-based art programs for people experiencing mental ill health have evolved across Victoria. However such art making opportunities have not been systematically quantified or identified. This project focuses on interviews with women who produced art in psychiatric institutions or who produce art in community settings, about the role and meaning of creativity in their lives, providing both historical and contemporary perspectives on the interaction between creativity, gender and wellbeing. Such knowledge enables a richer appreciation of the challenges for current and future mental health services to consider the role that creativity has to play in women's wellbeing.

### **Life regrets and subjective well-being in older adults**

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This study investigated several aspects of life regrets in older adults, including the relationships between regret characteristics (number reported, negative consequences, intensity) and subjective well-being (life satisfaction, depressive symptoms) One hundred and thirteen female and 45 male participants (aged 65 to 94 years), predominantly residing in suburban areas of Sydney and Wollongong, completed written questionnaires. Slightly more than half the respondents reported having one or more life regrets. Regrets most commonly related to the life domains of education,

career, marriage and romantic relationships, parenting and self-development. Participants with no life regrets reported greater life satisfaction than those with three or more regrets. Number of regrets was not related to depressive symptoms. In order to further explore the relationship between life regrets and subjective well-being, a measure of dispositional negativity and of physical health were considered in combination with two aspects of regrets (negative consequences and intensity). Multiple regression analyses showed that, after controlling for the effects of dispositional negativity and physical health, regret consequences contributed uniquely to predicting both measures of subjective well-being. However, regret intensity appeared more influential than regret consequences for the prediction of depressive symptoms.

#### **Exploring the influence of psychological factors on breastfeeding duration: Phase 1, perceptions of mothers and clinicians**

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The important health affects of breastfeeding are well known, yet currently only a minority of Australian women breastfeed for long enough for the full range of benefits to be attained. Socio-demographic determinants of breastfeeding duration identified to date are not easily modified and therefore offer limited opportunities for increasing breastfeeding duration. It is also apparent that individual differences of a psychological nature may have an overriding effect on breastfeeding success. This study aimed to list the individual psychological differences thought to have an effect on breastfeeding duration by subject matter experts. Participants included three groups of mothers who had breastfed for varied lengths of time ( $n=17$ ), and one group of breastfeeding clinicians ( $n=4$ ). The Nominal Group Technique was employed to generate a list of factors thought by group members to influence breastfeeding duration. The transcribed group discussions were also explored using thematic analysis. Forty-five psychological factors thought to influence the duration of breastfeeding were identified. Factors considered 'most important' included the mother's

priorities and mothering self-efficacy, faith in breast milk, adaptability, stress and breastfeeding self-efficacy. The identification of these factors represents an important step in the discovery of modifiable psychological differences capable of increasing breastfeeding duration.

#### **Exploring the influence of psychological factors on breastfeeding duration: Phase 2, the quantitative enquiry**

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The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between women's psychological characteristics and breastfeeding duration, after controlling for socio-demographic factors. The literature suggests that psychological factors may influence breastfeeding behaviour, but studies are few. Existing evidence and the results of Phase 1 of this study were used to construct a list of psychological factors which were tested for their association with breastfeeding duration in the current design. Participants completed the initial questionnaire within 14 days of the birth ( $N = 375$ ) and were contacted by telephone at 6 months postpartum to ascertain their current feeding method, and the time of weaning where appropriate. The data showed that 44% of the sample experienced signs of postnatal distress in the 14 days following the birth. The duration of breastfeeding was significantly associated with dispositional optimism, breastfeeding self-efficacy, faith in breast milk, breastfeeding expectations, anxiety, planned duration and the time of the infant feeding decision. After removing the effect of socio-demographic characteristics, unique predictors of both fully and any breastfeeding duration were identified among the psychological variables. These results demonstrate the importance of individual psychological differences to breastfeeding duration.



## Community psychology in schools: Challenges and hope

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Schools exist as communities in their own right as well as microcosms of their local and broader national and global communities. School policies, procedures and rules assist the school community to function more effectively. Any existing strengths and weaknesses in these wider communities are likely to play out in various ways within the school community. Community psychologists recognize the importance of links between local community and school communities and are interested in exploring issues of inclusion, connectedness and power imbalances. They also place emphasis on how values operate within all relationships and institutions. With much talk in schools recently about values and promoting student voices, community psychologists are well placed to work with schools to ensure that this talk is more than rhetoric. By promoting more reflective practices around traditional ways of working, we can assist schools to achieve culture shifts that enhance the engagement and resilience of all community members. This paper provides two examples of school projects taking place in schools in the western suburbs of Melbourne: one is a student-led peer drug education program in several secondary colleges and the other project utilizes an emotional intelligence framework to assist school staff in reflecting on practices and developing programs for students.

## Effect of problem-solving focussed cognitive behaviour therapy on suicidal behaviour

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This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of a problem-solving focussed cognitive behaviour therapy on hopelessness, temporal perspective, general self-efficacy, pain impact and problem-solving confidence among suicide attempters. The link between problem-solving deficits and suicide attempt or completed suicide is supported by a number of studies. A total of thirty four parasuicidal mental health patients with recurrent suicidal ideations participated in this study. The participants

comprised nineteen patients assigned to the treatment group and fifteen patients in the waiting list group. The participants were matched for age, years of education and number of suicide attempts. All participants completed questionnaire measures of hopelessness, temporal orientation, self efficacy, pain impact and problem-solving confidence at pre-treatment and post treatment. The treatment group received a seven session problem-solving cognitive behaviour therapy program comprising a problem solving training phase and suicide inoculation training phase (adapted from Meichenbaum's (1977) stress inoculation model). To control for therapist variables the researcher alone conducted the treatment program. Results demonstrated significant pre and post treatment differences in scores on measures of hopelessness, temporal orientation and problem-solving confidence. No significant differences were observed in the pre and post measures of pain or general self efficacy. The study lends support to the view that problem-solving deficits are consistently identified among suicidal persons. It also highlights the potential impact of problem-solving focussed intervention to modifying temporal perspectives.

## Youth who care for their parents: The nature and impact of young care giving

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This study addresses an emerging social crisis: the adverse impacts on youngsters caring for a disabled/ill family member. These youngsters are often referred to as 'young caregivers'. Although there are approximately 347,700 young carers in Australia little is known about the nature of young care giving and predictors of adjustment. This study explored (1) the nature of young care giving tasks, (2) relations between adjustment outcomes and both care giving experiences and tasks, and (3) comparisons between youth of a parent with physical illness/disability and youth of a parent with mental illness/disability. Eighty-one youngsters aged 10 to 25 years of a parent with illness/disability completed questionnaires measuring demographics, parental illness/disability variables, care giving tasks and experiences, and adjustment outcomes. Factor analysis of a care giving task checklist revealed four

dimensions: Instrumental Care, Psycho-Emotional Care, Personal Care, Domestic Care. After controlling for relevant demographics and parental illness/disability variables, lower perceived self-maturity related to care giving and greater care giving isolation predicted poorer adjustment outcomes. Youth of a parent with physical illness/disability reported more personal care tasks and less care giving discomfort than youth of a parent with a mental illness, although the groups did not differ on adjustment. Young carer policy and practice implications are discussed.

### **MDMA or 'ecstasy' and bioenergetic stress in recreational drug users**

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**M**DMMA (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine) or 'Ecstasy' has been used as a recreational drug for over twenty years. It is a powerful indirect monoaminergic agonist, stimulating the release and inhibiting the reuptake of serotonin (5-HT) and other neurotransmitters. This boost in neurotransmitter activity can generate intense feelings of elation and pleasure, hyperactivity and hyperthermia. This psychophysiological arousal may be exacerbated by high ambient temperatures and prolonged dancing (Parrott, 2002). After taking Ecstasy many users report rebound depression and lethargy due to monoaminergic depletion. The psychobiological problems of regular Ecstasy/MDMA use include selective deficits in learning/memory, higher cognitive processing, sleep, appetite, psychiatric wellbeing, and sex. Various drug and non-drug factors can influence these deficits. Novice users remain relatively unimpaired, whereas the majority of heavy users report psychobiological problems. Prolonged dancing and feeling hot at dances and raves are also associated with more psychobiological problems (Parrott 2004; Parrott et al, 2006). This is consistent with the animal literature, where high ambient temperature and other metabolic stimulants boost the acute effects of MDMA, and cause greater serotonergic neurotoxicity. These multiple influences are integrated within a bioenergetic stress model (Parrott, 2006).

### **The idealisation of thin figures and appearance concerns in middle school children**

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**C**onsiderable research has been conducted on adolescent body image including the idealisation of thin figures particularly for females (Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2005). For example, a survey conducted by Mission Australia (2007) found that for 11-24 year olds body image was their top concern. These idealisations are associated with negative feelings and thoughts towards oneself and engagement in sometimes-dangerous behaviours (Thompson & Chad, 2002). Less research has been conducted on preadolescents even though children as young as 6 have been shown to be dissatisfied with their bodies (Dohnt & Tiggemann). This study investigates figure preferences in 10-12 year olds and the presence of body dissatisfaction and social physique anxiety (SPA) commonly seen in older ages. Thirty boys and 30 girls were recruited from a private school in Canberra and completed a self-report questionnaire consisting of the Figure Perception and Preference Rating Scale and the SPAS. Results revealed boys and girls nominated a significantly thinner ideal figure than they perceived their actual figure. As seen in the adult literature, gender differences were evident, with females higher in SPA. Results are discussed in relation to the young age at which figure perceptions are formed and the implications to prevention and intervention of body image concerns in children.

### **Assessment of psychosocial unmet needs among young people who have a parent with cancer**

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**C**onfrontation with a parent's cancer is a very distressing experience and often results in serious unmet needs for young people, particularly as cancer shifts toward a chronic condition, increasing the psychosocial burden for family members. To date, research in this area has been limited by the fact that no self-report instrument exists to measure these needs and consequently develop and deliver appropriate services to this population. The current presentation investigates the piloting of an

instrument developed to measure the psychosocial needs of young people who have a parent with cancer – the Offspring Cancer Needs Instrument (OCNI). One-hundred and sixteen young people between the ages of 12 and 24 participated in the study. Results yielded the following ranking (from most to least unmet) of the initial OCNI domains: expressing and coping with feelings; peer support; supportive education and work environment; information; access to support services; respite and recreation; family factors; carer support. Further, with regard to specific need items: ‘friends to understand what I was going through’; ‘help with concentrating on tasks’; ‘information about what to do if I notice a particular side-effect or symptom’ were the three most unmet needs. Validity considerations of the instrument will also be reported on.

### Brain, behaviour and evolution

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Standard atlases using identical nomenclature enable scientists to navigate seamlessly between the brain of humans and experimental animals to test hypotheses inspired by human considerations and relate data from experimental animals to humans. In current atlas construction we use evidence from transgenic mice and birds to propose a new plan for the organization and function of certain brain regions of mammals. The human brain features many more homologies with the brain of monkey (e.g., virtually all areas of the cortex are homologous), of the rat and of the bird than previously thought. Areas which are shown to be homologous are likely to have similar function, as for example are 9/46 of the prefrontal cortex, which is homologous in human and monkey and is involved in executive processing in working memory in both species. Using MR images in mice and non-human primates we are attempting to provide 3D volumes of canonical brains against which transgenic varieties with clinical significance can be compared. The author concludes that, the brain is wonderful, but it is not omniscient. Both the dazzling technological success of our species and the worrisome environmental degradation it has produced are reflections of the function of our brains.

### Analysis of a mixed-species exhibit for orangutans (*Pongo pygmaeus abelii*) and siamangs (*Hylobates syndactylus*) at Adelaide Zoo

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Despite the abundance of mixed-species exhibits being designed and implemented in zoos worldwide, few studies have evaluated the impact such housing has on the individual animals involved. The present study documents the patterns of behaviour and interaction between a male/female pair of orangutans (*Pongo pygmaeus abelii*) and siamangs (*Hylobates syndactylus*) within a captive mixed-species setting. Over a six-week period, 180 hours of observations were conducted utilising instantaneous scan sampling at three-minute intervals. Findings indicated a highly successful mixed-species exhibit, characterised by a lack of agonistic encounters and without segregation of the exhibit by species. A rare array of inter-species interactions were observed between the female orangutan and siamangs including frequent grooming, playful wrestling, chasing, and embracing. These behaviours accounted for 7% of the female orangutan’s daily activity budget, testament to the stimulation afforded by this combination. Of concern was the high level of time spent in terrestrial locations (75% for the orangutans) and lack of climbing behaviour for all individuals. Results suggest mixed-species primate exhibits can be very successful when individuals are carefully selected, providing an enriched captive setting and heightened viewing experience for the visiting public. However, both species would benefit from exhibit redesign to facilitate natural behavioural patterns.

### Cognitive behaviour therapy for psychosis

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Psychotic disorders are frequently chronic and debilitating illnesses that commonly first emerge in late-adolescence or early adulthood. The onset phase of these disorders is commonly characterised by identifiable changes in behaviour, and functioning and the experience of low-grade psychotic symptoms or other psychological symptoms. Over the last decade substantial steps have been made towards identifying young people during this onset phase and

in the development and evaluation of interventions aimed at stopping the progression towards full-blown illness. This presentation will review work conducted at the Personal Assessment and Crisis Evaluation (PACE) Clinic in Melbourne which has been at the forefront of this endeavour. Particular attention will be paid to investigation into the role of stress and coping in the onset of psychotic illness and the importance of psychological interventions at this stage of illness.

### **Stress-reduction interventions: Staff perceptions of what works**

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To address the paucity of research evaluating stress interventions, this study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of perceived stress-reduction measures implemented at 13 universities between 2000 and 2003/4. Non-casual staff at these universities were surveyed in 2000 and again in 2003/4, with a response rate of 25% on both occasions. Based on results from the 2000 survey, interventions were recommended to improve employee well-being. In the 2003/4 survey, staff were asked to indicate whether their overall level of stress had changed during the previous three/four years, and if so, to describe the major causes of the change. In the sample of 4615 participants, 12% ( $n = 542$ ) reported that their level of stress had decreased, 27% ( $n = 1266$ ) reported no change, and 61% ( $n = 2807$ ) reported that their level of stress had increased. Thematic analyses found that the key perceived causes of decreased stress were changes in job/work role, increased staffing and resource levels, changes of heads of organisational unit, the use of strategies to reduce and/or manage stress, improved work practices, and increased self awareness of stress. Perceived causes of increased stress were also analysed. These results identify the importance of implementing strategies that enhance employee well-being.

### **The well-being of adolescent refugees involved in the Good Starts study, during the first two years of their resettlement in Melbourne, Australia**

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This paper presents some findings from the Good Starts longitudinal research project for refugee youth which is being conducted by the Refugee Health Research Centre, La Trobe University. Previous research on the well-being of refugees resettled in industrialized countries has shown that post migration factors (such as residing with at least one family member, peer relationships, exposure to bullying, accommodation type, and economic opportunities) can be as important as previous trauma in explaining outcomes. Good Starts focuses on the first four years of resettlement, and combines ethnographic data with survey data on key issues such as self-esteem, coping styles, school environment, and social support. This paper describes data from the first 2 cohorts, collected during the first two years of resettlement ( $n=82$ ). Cluster analysis followed by longitudinal analysis showed that, over the 2-year period, the scores for a cluster encompassing close to half of the participants decreased significantly on the indicators for trust, belonging, and social support, while a significant increase was found for environmental quality of life. The paper also discusses the findings from qualitative interviews held in years 3 and 4 of data collection with a smaller sample of youth and explores their narratives of belonging.

### **Cutting edge technologies in independent practice: Using virtual reality and biofeedback approaches to anxiety disorders**

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In a high impact multimedia presentation, I will discuss and demonstrate the utility of employing effective, albeit expensive technologies to advance the treatment of anxiety disorders, using fear of flying, which affects between 1 in 6 and 1 and 12 of the general population, as the example disorder. I will argue that conventional CBT is insufficient for the task, and in addition argue that the objective measure

of arousal will prove to be a necessary component of treatment in the future, as more demand for evidence of efficacy is placed on psychologists. Attendees will be both entertained and challenged by this fast paced presentation.

**Attachment to God and psychological health: Considering assessment of attachment to God in research, clinical care and psychotherapy**

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I ncreasingly the significance of spirituality in research and clinical setting is being considered when addressing psychological health and wellbeing. One important relationship in some clients/patients' lives is that with their conception of a Higher Power/God. This relationship often comes to the fore during times of crisis and loss, and illness. Researchers and practitioners wanting to respond in ways that include attachment to God and more broadly spirituality may (i) feel uncertain as to which assessment tools to select; (ii) lack confidence to discuss spirituality with their patients/clients; and/or (iii) believe they require specialised training to administer psycho-spiritual measures. This paper presents an overview of recently developed quantitative and qualitative attachment to God assessment tools that can be used to provide practitioners with an insight into a foundational aspect of their clients/patients' relationship with God. Recent research applications of the tools in the area of psychological health and consideration of broad attachment to God themes in relation to bereavement related interviews are presented. Drawing upon psychotherapy cases where a relationship with God was crucial to the patient's inner world, consideration of the role of human and spiritual attachment as it relates to psychotherapy and recovery is discussed.

**Shadowed by illness: Qualitative psycho-social research helping to identify the needs and experiences of well siblings living in Australian families caring for children with life limiting conditions**

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W ell siblings face a range of challenges when their brother or sister is diagnosed with a life limiting condition. Qualitative psycho-social interview-based research provides an ideal vehicle for tapping into and learning from well siblings' experiences of growing up in the shadow of their sibling's illness. This paper reports on experiences of well siblings, ranging in age from 6 to 30 years, their in-depth, open-ended and audio-taped interviews drawn from a larger Australian qualitative study of 91 family members' (29 family units) experiences of caring for a child or adolescent with a life-limiting condition. Themes related to disclosure of illness information to others, attunement to ill sibling's experiences, sibling relationships, siblings' quality of life, grief and death of the ill child are discussed. Health care professionals will be able to reflect upon ways in which they can both formally and informally support well siblings across their sibling's illness journey.

**Relational aggression through the eyes of early adolescents: Experience, motivation, interpretation and gender**

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R elational aggression negatively impacts upon many adolescents' lives. Relational aggression has been operationalised as a range of negative behaviours that manipulate or damage others' relationships (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Although research in this area has escalated rapidly in the past 10 years, it is time to ask fundamental questions about relational aggression and victimisation in order to implement more optimal measurement strategies and school-based interventions. The overarching purpose of this study was to do this by identifying girls and boys with a history of victimisation and perpetration for participation in semi-structured

interviews. A total of 33 (55% girls) early adolescents aged 11-to-13 years were interviewed. Students attended two Australian schools. The interviews were designed to gather information on early adolescents' explanations and past experiences of relational aggression. Although a range of peer-related problems have been studied by collecting interview data (e.g., Card, 2007; de Bruyn & Cillessen, 2006), and there have been recent efforts to refine the definition of relational aggression (Bowie, 2007; Currie, Kelly, & Pomerantz, 2007), there have been few studies that provide rich descriptions of relationally aggressive behaviours using direct accounts from girls and boys who engage in or experience these behaviours more than their peers.

### **(Re)-introducing hypertext to the teaching of psychology: A wikiproject in careers development for first-year undergraduates**

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The use of hypertext in teaching, particularly within a collaborative context, was popular for a brief time toward the end of the last century. However hypertext did not have the impact on teaching practices expected of it, to a large part because of the absence of appropriate software for its implementation in higher education settings. This left the educator having to focus on teaching skills in (say) HTML, rather than psychological content and process. The recent exponential growth of social networking, the success of Wikipedia, and the integration of effective hypertext tools within products like Blackboard, suggest that this barrier may have diminished. Students in a First-year unit collaborated in the development of wikis describing the results of their research in a Careers Project. In contrast to previous experience, this hypertext task was easy to implement within Blackboard and required little technical support for students to be able to succeed. Students gave positive feedback on the unit, and some issues typically associated with group work were also alleviated by working in this environment. Hypertext offers opportunities to educators seeking resource-efficient ways of promoting graduate attributes related to communication and collaboration, and recent

technological developments have made implementation more feasible.

### **Personality – a resource or risk for successful development**

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Personality is a construct that is used in reference to the unique characteristics of mature individuals. For children, individual characteristics have commonly been described in terms of temperament and observable behaviour. These involve emotional as well as social components. Traditionally, researchers have paid more attention to children's socio-emotional behaviour that indicates poor adaptation to the social environment than to behaviour that indicates good adaptation. Consequently, more is known about the ongoing development of aggressive children than of well-adjusted children. The present paper addresses, first, the issue of individual differences in socio-emotional behaviour in childhood and respective life paths up to adulthood; second, the emergence of adult personality traits from the child's socio-emotional characteristics; and third, the role of personality in successful development. Current research results suggest, for instance, that high self-regulation in emotional and social behaviour forms a basis for adult consciousness and is associated with good health and longevity. In contrast, low self-regulation is associated with vulnerability to the accumulation of problems in social and psychological functioning. Personality seems to be a risk for successful development when it involves characteristics of antisocial personality preceded by high bullying, emotional ability, and difficulty in impulse control in childhood.

### **Critical psychology – An approach for changing environmental behaviour change policies**

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Behaviour change policies addressing climate change rely on either attitude change or, more recently, on forcing behaviour change through laws. I argue that the effect of these policies is uncertain or slow because they conceptualise the individual and society as being in opposition to each other, e.g. the

competing interests found in the 'commons dilemma'. These policies and the underlying individual/societal relations reflect the way in which people are forced to act within a competitive market society, but ignore their capacity to act collectively and for the common good. Critical Psychology through its historical analysis suggests that individuals need to collectively control their societal relations and that depriving individuals of their societal capacity for action *creates* an antagonism between them and society. This approach could transform the way in which Psychology understands behaviour change, by looking at ways to build on people's capacity for action and on organisations that foster solidarity like trade unions and other social movements. To elaborate I present results of a cross-national survey on environmental concerns and discuss what could be learned from, e.g. trade union policies around climate change.

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#### Does humour at work make a difference?

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Previous research in humour has concentrated on the individual's general use of humour. The aim of our research into the Humour at Work (HAW) scale was to establish whether the climate of a workplace can be described in terms of the type of humour used by employees. Items were constructed from a wide variety of theoretical and empirical sources. Three hundred and fifty participants were recruited on-line and formed an international (English language proficient) and Australian sample. Exploratory factor analysis revealed 8 scales describing undesirable and desirable uses of humour at work. These scales were presented to a second sample of employed people, together with measures of humour in general, personality, mood, social desirability and altruism. The scale was subjected to confirmatory factor analysis and then structural equation modelling was used to validate the adjusted scale. The final version of the HAW was used to predict global job satisfaction and occupational climate.

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#### Do better mousetraps make better teachers: A model for effective university teaching

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This presentation will reflect on some of the key issues underlying effective university teaching. While there is a growing recognition of the importance of teaching and learning at universities by both the government and universities, it is a simple fact that teaching and learning is not accorded a level of importance commensurate with what students contribute to universities. University academics require no formal teaching qualifications, there is little consequence for poor teaching, and excellence in teaching is not rewarded to the same extent as excellence in research. This presentation will present data around these issues, and will propose and discuss a model of good university teaching that incorporates the full context in which university teaching and learning takes place. A research agenda will be proposed to address a range of important questions derived from the model: What distinguishes an outstanding and memorable teacher from a good teacher? What is the most efficient area of intervention for poor teachers? Does the same intervention strategy for poor teachers work for good teachers? It will be concluded that, while there is still considerable work to be done, we can be cautiously optimistic about the future of Australian university teaching and learning.

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#### Is exposure and response prevention treatment for obsessive-compulsive disorder as aversive as we think?

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Meta-analytical studies have confirmed that Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP) is the psychological treatment of choice for Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD). This behavioural treatment involves the client confronting feared stimuli whilst refraining from completing their usual ritualistic responses. This form of treatment is associated with response rates between 63-90%. However, it has been estimated that approximately 30% of clients either refuse or drop-out of treatment. One major hypothesis that has been put forward to explain this phenomenon is that the treatment is

experienced as too aversive for clients. However, this explanation has largely been based on clinical observation and anecdotal evidence rather than actual clinical data. The aim of the present study was to investigate the treatment experience of a group of OCD clients with a specific focus on obtaining their feedback on the experience of completing ERP. A group of 10 clients with OCD who either dropped out or completed ERP in the previous 18 months were included in the study. Individual interviews were conducted with each participant and themes were collated. A number of specific and non-specific factors emerged as effecting engagement with ERP. Treatment aversiveness did not emerge as a universal factor in the experience of ERP. Results will be discussed in terms of other factors effecting treatment experience and implications for improving treatment accessibility and outcome for OCD.

### **Climate change is much more than climate change**

RESER, JP. (Griffith University)  
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This paper examines why the name and construct of 'climate change' encompasses much more than actual climate change, and why this greatly matters. The case is made that it is urgently necessary for there to be a much clearer reframing and conceptualising of just what climate change is and entails if there is to be a more effective and collaborative addressing of those human impacts contributing to and consequent upon climate change. Central to this perspective and argument is the fact that what people are experiencing and responding to in the context of climate change are principally indirect and virtual media and information technology *representations* of climate change – not changes in global weather patterns or ongoing environmental impacts per se. Effective strategies for addressing climate change and its more consequential human impacts must be informed by a better understanding of how this phenomenon is being represented, experienced, and understood by the public, and by those in policy relevant institutions and governments. The paper argues that psychology can play a crucial bridging role across the natural, social, and management sciences, and can more strategically identify effective methods and more appropriate behaviour change targets with respect to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

### **Depressive symptoms and psychosocial functioning in preadolescent children**

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The current study was designed to determine the percentage of children "at risk" of depression or evidencing clinical levels of depression. Further, the contribution of affect, four aspects of self-concept and peer relationship to clinical depression was also evaluated. Respondents were 510 children (270 boys, 240 girls) who ranged in age from 7-13 years (mean = 9.39). Children completed questionnaire measures of the above variables. The results demonstrated that 23% of children were either in the "at risk" or clinical range of depression. Negative affect, academic self-concept, social self-concept and global self-worth predicted levels of depression. There were also differences between clinically depressed, "at risk" participants, and normal children on these variables. Given these high levels of depression, it is important to implement health promotion programs for children who evidence depression symptoms to prevent the onset of clinical depression.

### **The impact of platonic and romantic relationship quality on self-esteem in young adulthood**

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According to lifespan perspectives, achieving the intimacy goals and identity formation of young adulthood depends in part on competence in navigating peer relationships. The current study extended the work of Thomas and Daubman (2001) on adolescent peer relationships and self-esteem. Data were analysed from 300 young adults comprising equal groups according to gender and the presence of a current romantic partner. Scales measuring Interpersonal Reward, Relationship Strength, and Maintenance Difficulty were completed in reference to a close same-, and opposite-sex friend, and an opposite-sex romantic partner where appropriate. Stepwise regression indicated that the negative aspects of close relationships predicted self-esteem more strongly and consistently than did positive aspects of relationships. Further, self-esteem was predicted by romantic partnership for males but not females.



Results challenge the belief that romantic partnership is more salient to the self-worth of females, and indicate the importance of young adults resolving and managing tension and strain in close relationships.

### **Short-term volunteer telephone counselling support for people at high risk of suicide in the community: Impact on clients and counsellors**

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Volunteer telephone counselling to people at risk of suicide living in the community is part of the wider mental health care system in Australia. Lifeline Australia is a major provider of such a service and has recently piloted an expanded telephone counselling service through *Lifeline's Suicide Crisis Support Program* (LSCSP). The program offers an informal support (an experienced Lifeline telephone counsellor volunteer) who provides short-term emotional support via out-going telephone calls. This program has been trialling at eight Lifeline Centres, and research has investigated its effectiveness for the clients and also the impact on LSCSP counsellors in this demanding volunteer role. A sample of program clients was assessed via structured interview at commencement and completion of the program to determine whether program objectives were met, and improvements were evident. A survey questionnaire compared LSCSP counsellors with regular Lifeline telephone counsellors on measures of wellbeing and job satisfaction. Both quantitative and qualitative measures demonstrated that the LSCSP counsellors valued their expanded role. The research contributes to our knowledge of how volunteer-based non-clinical community supports can work in collaboration with mainstream mental health services.

### **Reducing stigma and increasing mental health literacy through consumer contact**

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Many types of interventions have been developed to address mental illness stigma, including community education and contact programs, where people who have experienced mental illness inform the community by sharing their lived experiences.

Schools have been identified as a particularly important setting for such interventions—to change the attitudes and behaviours of young people toward consumers and carers, and also to encourage early mental health help-seeking behaviour for young people. This study investigated the impact of a school-based education intervention (Mental Illness Education ACT), where personal contact between students and consumers and carers aims to reduce stigma, and increase mental health literacy and intentions to seek help for a mental health problem amongst high school students. A sample of almost 700 high school aged student across 13 public and private high schools and colleges throughout Canberra, was obtained. Students completed self-report questionnaires before and after participating in the education program and their results were compared with a control group. Results indicated the program was effective in decreasing stigma and increasing knowledge, but had limited effect on encouraging help-seeking intentions. Changes in empathetic concern and barriers to seeking help were investigated as possible mediators of program effectiveness.

### **The impact of consumer participation and advocacy on recovery**

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A wide range of peer-based consumer participation and advocacy roles are increasingly available for people who have experienced mental illness. One such role is as a presenter for Mental Illness Education ACT (MIEACT), where consumers and carers present at schools and other community venues, and use their personal stories as a vehicle to reduce the stigma of mental illness and improve mental health literacy among the community. A growing body of research attests to the effectiveness of such 'contact'-based programs on the recipients of the programs. However, there has been little research into the effects of delivering these programs on the presenters themselves. While there are some indications that advocacy roles may be of benefit in assisting recovery, this has not been systematically explored. This study sought to investigate the impact of an advocacy role as a consumer mental illness educator and presenter on mental health recovery. A qualitative methodology was employed interviewing

30 MIEACT presenters. The themes that were derived from the interviews revealed that broadcasting in an advocacy role promoted mental health recovery through positive identity development and a process of personal growth. Importantly, however, there were some risks involved in broadcasting and disclosure, which must be considered for consumers and carers choosing to participate in such advocacy roles.

### **Gay and heterosexual men who act as known sperm donors: A comparison of their motivations and beliefs**

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As a wider range of options become available to gay men and lesbians wishing to start families, so come with this reminders of the possible limits of gay and lesbian coalitionism. This is particularly the case where growing numbers of lesbian women negotiate with gay men to act as known sperm donors, but where these relationships are not protected, or at the very least clearly arbitrated, by the state. As a result, and where some who enter into such arrangements find their positions shifting over time, this can result in negative consequences for all parties. Using interview data with Australian gay men who have acted as known donors, this paper examines some of the discourses that shape such men's experiences. Particular attention will be paid to the implications of legal contexts wherein both donors and recipients (specifically lesbians and gay men) are not adequately supported, and how this can result in negative outcomes for all involved, but also how gay men and lesbians successfully negotiate supportive relationships in the service of family creation through known donating.

### **Emotional and behavioural problems of children referred to a Child Development Unit**

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Child Development Units (CDUs) provide a multidisciplinary approach to the assessment and management of children with developmental disabilities. However, the mental health of these children is not well understood. This study aimed to

identify the prevalence of mental health problems among children referred to a CDU. Parents of 36 children aged between 1 and 12 who had been referred to a CDU in the Adelaide metropolitan area between November 2006 and July 2007 completed measures of their child's emotional and behavioural functioning (Child Behaviour Checklist for 1.5-5 & 6-18 years, Achenbach & Rescorla, 2000, 2001). Children were rated as having a high prevalence of mental health problems with 55.6% in the clinical range for Total Problems. Among preschoolers, the most commonly reported problem was Withdrawn Behaviour (42.1%). In the school age group the most frequently identified problems were Attention Problems (64.7%), Aggressive Behaviour (52.9%) and Social Problems (52.9%). These very high rates of mental health problems need to be considered in service planning.

### **Trauma victims with PTSD have smaller amygdala than those without PTSD**

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This study employed MRI to examine the theory that post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) represents a failure to extinguish learned fears. As the amygdala and hippocampus are necessary for fear extinction to occur, both regions may be abnormal in PTSD. Twenty-five people who experienced the Tokyo subway sarin attack in 1997, 9 who later developed PTSD and 16 who did not, underwent MRI scanning. Manual tracing was employed to determine bilateral amygdala and hippocampus volumes. Results indicted that the group that had developed PTSD had significantly smaller mean bilateral amygdala volume than did the group that did not develop PTSD. Furthermore, left amygdala volume showed a significant negative correlation with severity of PTSD symptomatology. To our knowledge, this is the first observation of an association between PTSD and amygdala volume and represents support at the level of gross brain morphology for the theory of PTSD as a failure of fear extinction.

## Development and initial validation of the Brazil Mood Scale

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The present study developed and evaluated the Brazil Mood Scale, a 24-item measure based on the Brunel Mood Scale. Mood descriptors were converted into Portuguese using the translation-back translation method. The revised scale was administered on two occasions to 298 participants in Brazil (173 males and 125 females; age:  $M = 18.3$ ,  $SD = 5.1$  yr.). Exploratory factor analysis recovered the hypothesised 6-factor solution (anger, confusion, depression, fatigue, tension, vigour) at T1 and T2, explaining 68% and 72% of variance, respectively. Subscales for depression, fatigue, and vigour were recovered cleanly in both solutions; whereas the anger, confusion, and tension scales showed some complexity. Cronbach alpha coefficients were acceptable for all subscales at T1 (range = .76 - .85) and T2 (range = .79 - .90). Confirmatory factor analysis showed support for the measurement model, although some values were marginal ( $\chi^2$  /df: T1 = 2.42, T2 = 2.28; CFI: T1 = .91, T2 = .93; TLI: T1 = .88, T2 = .91; RMSEA: T1 = .06, T2 = .06). Overall, the measure showed promising psychometric characteristics and has proven to be a useful monitoring tool in a Brazilian context, having been introduced with members of the national basketball, gymnastics, judo, sailing, soccer, swimming, tennis, and volleyball teams.

## Consumer led evaluation of satisfaction with mental health services

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Surveys of mental health service consumers regularly show approximately 90% satisfaction with the services but this strong result may be tainted by administration by health professionals. The consumer evaluation of mental health services instrument used was developed by the Illawarra Institute of Mental Health to develop a better tool for the measurement of consumer satisfaction of mental

health services in NSW by having consumers highly involved in the research process. Consumer researchers were trained as researchers and were then involved in the development and administration of a survey tool. The developed tool has 26 questions based on 11 themes and has recently been administered by the trained consumer researchers to 180 consumers at a NSW mental health NGO. The results show that overall satisfaction is around 90%, similar to the level when the survey is administered by mental health professionals, but that there are some areas of specific dissatisfaction, including the stigmatising attitudes of health professionals. Data is currently being gathered across two NSW NGOs to further explore the reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction and to develop evidence based training for staff. The reasons for both satisfaction and dissatisfaction will be discussed as well as questionnaire developments tailored specifically for use by Australian NGOs.

## Can personality and emotional intelligence predict leadership style?

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The importance of effective leadership in all facets of society should not be underestimated. Past research has focused more on understanding the outcomes of effective leadership rather than on the antecedents to leadership. The aim of this study was to investigate whether personality and emotional intelligence could predict leadership style. Participants were 715 people, comprising of 290 males and 425 females living in Victoria, Australia. Participants were required to complete a demographic questionnaire, the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF), the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). Results revealed that overall emotional intelligence is not a significant predictor of leadership group. However when the emotional intelligence subscales were added in place of overall emotional intelligence scores, results revealed that the emotional intelligence subscales Managing Emotions and Perceiving Emotions were significant predictors of leadership group. Results also revealed that Independence was the most important predictor of

leadership group and that Anxiety was a significant predictor of leadership group. Implications of the findings in relation to recruitment and selection, executive coaching and training and development were discussed. Recommendations were made regarding future research using the emotional intelligence, personality and leadership constructs.

### **A longitudinal investigation of chronic stress within Australian corrections**

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This research addresses repeated calls for longitudinal coping research and contributes to applied and theoretical knowledge of the stress process. A cybernetic framework was adopted to assess causal relationships between neuroticism, coping styles, job demands and strain in a sample of Correctional Service employees. Neuroticism and job demands (monitoring and problem-solving demands) were investigated as both direct and indirect predictors of strain. Additionally, coping styles were examined as a causal predictor of wellbeing and as a mediator between the effects of demands and neuroticism on wellbeing. Participants consisted of 308 Corrective Services employees who responded to two self-report surveys administered twice in a six month period. Neuroticism did not predict strain over time when coping styles were also included in the analysis. Problem-solving demands predicted strain over time, but monitoring demands did not. Additionally, the causal relationship between coping and psychological distress produced only weak results: only one style of coping (accommodation coping) mediated the relationship between job demands and strain. In conclusion, the failure of neuroticism (and limited contribution of coping styles) to causally contribute to psychological distress supports arguments that organisations should address work-related factors, rather than personal characteristics, to actually improve the psychological health of their employees.

### **“A journey with no maps”: A case study on psychologists’ social responsibility**

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This study investigated the personal, professional and political dimensions of psychologists’ social responsibility, as constructed within a case study of one psychologist who responded to policies of deterrence by adopting a strong advocacy role in relation to a group of refugees seeking asylum in Australia. A collaborative approach to inquiry was adopted, with in-depth and unstructured interviews enabling discussions to be grounded in the psychologist/co-researcher’s experiences. Fifteen interviews were conducted over a period of eighteen months. Themes identified within the narrative were organised around personal, professional and political dimensions. Clinical categories that define refugees as traumatised were de-emphasised; instead the human faces and lives of refugees affected by policies of deterrence were foregrounded. The study also documented the holistic role of those who support refugees, highlighting both significant rewards and challenges for those involved. It is argued that our personal experiences cannot be separated from our professional roles as psychologists, and that psychologists’ responses to social issues are inherently political. Implications for future involvement in social issues, whether as citizens or as psychologists, include the importance of advocating for justice at a policy level, and the significance of practical, social and economic assistance in addition to psychological support.

### **Multiple psychological approaches to aid community integration following traumatic brain injury: A case study**

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The interaction of cognitive, behavioural and emotional sequelae following traumatic brain injury with premorbid psychosocial status often results in an emergence or exacerbation of psychological issues which impact on participation, levels of functioning and community reintegration. This paper will describe how the use of individual, group and consultative approaches assisted in managing psychological issues. The focus will be an outpatient of the Westmead Brain Injury Rehabilitation Service, who presented with a complex set of psychological problems including suicidal ideation, impulse dyscontrol, anger,

gambling, binge-eating, depression and anxiety, social isolation and family conflict. Interventions were individual therapy (modified cognitive behaviour therapy, Motivational Interviewing and solution-focused techniques), Specialised Anger Management Group, an Attendant Care programme and consultation. There was an improvement in psychological health, participation, functioning and overall community reintegration. The benefit of combining multiple approaches as well as tailoring and modifying techniques will be discussed.

### **Supervisee experiences in clinical supervision: A qualitative study**

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I ncreasing attention is being paid to the role of clinical supervision as a lifelong learning process, yet we know little about how supervisees best learn and what makes effective supervision. This paper examines supervisee experiences of the supervisory relationship. The study aimed to understand how supervisees choose their supervisor, what they experience as helpful and unhelpful, and how they manage difficulties in the supervisory relationship. The qualitative study involved in-depth interviews with 7 supervisor-supervisee dyads. Sampling began with a purposive sample of senior members of the profession with considerable expertise in supervision, and from varied theoretical orientations. Each supervisor recruited one of their supervisees. Interviews were first conducted with supervisors on their theory of supervision and application of theory in practice. An Interpersonal Process Recall method was then used to independently explore supervisor and supervisee reflections on one of their videotaped supervision sessions. This paper presents findings of the experiences of the 7 supervisees in relation to three domains: i) what they sought in supervision and how they chose their supervisor, ii) the supervisory events they found most helpful and unhelpful; iii) how they identified and managed difficulties that arose in the context of the supervisory relationship.

### **Internet-based studies of recreational ecstasy/MDMA other social drug use**

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W e have conducted several Internet investigations into recreational users of MDMA (Ecstasy) and other psychosocial drugs. These WWW studies have involved extensive sampling, strict data screening procedures, and large drug groups. The first study involved +700 participants, and revealed a pattern of selective neurocognitive deficits, with cannabis significantly associated with everyday memory problems, and MDMA linked more to prospective memory difficulties (Rodgers et al, 2003). The next study involved 206 recreational Ecstasy/MDMA users, when extensive dancing 'on-Ecstasy' was statistically linked with more memory problems, subjective complaints of depression, and concentration/organizational difficulties, in the days afterwards. Furthermore some of these psychobiological problems were also associated with self-rated thermal distress (Parrott et al, 2006). Polydrug recreational usage is also widespread (Scholey et al, 2004), and alcohol and cigarettes/nicotine can also contribute to the adverse neurocognitive/memory profiles (Heffernan et al, 2005; Ling et al, 2003). Findings from the most recent studies involving other psychoactive drugs, and objective on-line performance testing, will also be presented.

### **Low mindfulness uniquely predicts catastrophising in a fear-avoidance model of chronic pain**

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T he relationship between persistent pain and self-directed, non-reactive awareness of present moment experience (i.e., mindfulness) was explored in one of the dominant psychological theories of chronic pain – the *fear-avoidance model* (Vlaeyen &

Linton, 2000). A heterogeneous sample of 104 chronic pain outpatients at a multidisciplinary pain clinic in Western Australia completed psychometrically sound self-report measures of mindfulness and major variables in this model: Pain intensity, negative affect, pain catastrophising, pain-related fear, pain hypervigilance, and functional disability. Correlational analysis showed that, with the exception of pain intensity, mindfulness significantly negatively predicts each of these variables at a Bonferroni-corrected alpha level ( $p < .004$ ), accounting for 17–41% of their variance. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis showed low mindfulness uniquely predicts pain catastrophising when other variables are controlled, and mediates between pain intensity and catastrophising. This is the first empirical evidence substantiating the link between mindfulness and pain catastrophising, and suggests mindfulness might be added to the fear-avoidance model. Clinical implications include the use of mindfulness screening and therapies in early interventions for chronic pain.

#### **Exercise and stress: Underlying commonalities and differences**

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Both exercise and stress have known health effects: the one positive, the other negative. While there is some evidence to suggest exercise may be implicated in the experience of lower stress levels and that each may be influenced by personality dimensions, the commonality of these dimensions has not been investigated. It was the aim of this study to investigate the relationship between exercise behaviour and stress levels and to ascertain if common personality traits and coping styles contributed to these as outcomes. One hundred and ninety-one participants (122 females) mean age 29.9 ( $SD = 11.4$  years) completed measures of sociotrophy and autonomy - The Personal Style Inventory 11, the Deakin Coping Scale, Bandura's Self-efficacy Inventory, Kobasa's Hardiness Inventory, a measure of Perceived Stress, and a series of questions related to exercise behaviour, motivation, and enjoyment. The interrelationships amongst the variables, and in relation to exercise behaviour and levels of stress, will

be presented together with the implications for promoting exercise and wellbeing.

#### **Quality of life among cancer survivors who provide peer support**

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The effects of cancer have been widely investigated but less so the benefits of providing peer support by survivors of cancer. In this study, we investigated the impact of age of diagnosis, late effects of cancer, social and relationship factors, coping and personality dimensions on quality of life (QoL) of cancer survivors who provide peer support. In addition, we tested whether the reasons cancer survivors volunteer as peer supporters enhanced their QoL. Ninety-one supporters (65 females) from the total cohort of 126 volunteers, mean age 58.90 years ( $SD = 9.82$ ) participated in the study. QoL was predicted best by psychological factors ( $\beta = .93$ ) rather than physical or social, so was used as a measure of QoL. QoL was directly predicted by a sense of control and older age at diagnosis, but inversely related to late effects. While a sense of optimism predicted control and a sense of challenge as a coping function, it was only borderline in its prediction of QoL. Therapeutic benefits (for self) and energy/positive were most predictive of the survivors' reasons for volunteering, but volunteering in itself was not predictive of an enhanced sense of QoL. Implications for the recruitment and well being of peer support providers are discussed.

#### **The reactive-proactive aggression typology and its differential correlates in Asian adolescents**

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Differential relationships between reactive and proactive aggression, and narcissism, anxiety, schizotypal traits, and interpersonal relations, were examined in an Asian adolescent sample of 698 students from seventh to ninth grade. Results showed that proactive aggression significantly predicted narcissism while reactive aggression did not. However, reactive aggression emerged a significant predictor of anxiety and schizotypal traits, but

proactive aggression did not. Also, both reactive and proactive aggression were significantly related to poor interpersonal relations, with reactive aggression having a stronger relationship with poor interpersonal relations, than proactive aggression. Study findings extend current aggression research on differential correlates of reactive and proactive aggression in an Asian context, and support the theoretical distinction between reactive and proactive aggression.

### **Prevention of depression and anxiety online**

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Existing studies have shown that though psychotherapeutic treatments such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) are effective in treating adolescent anxiety, however, only a minority of sufferers seek such treatments. Barriers to accessing psychologists include shortage of skilled therapists, long waiting lists, and affordability. By utilizing the Internet, psychologists are seeking to expand the delivery avenues of psychological treatment. This research examines the long-term efficacy of online counselling to treat adolescent depression and anxiety (ADA). This research employs a repeated-measures design to examine the efficacy of online therapy. A survey collecting data on anxiety and depressive symptoms, dysfunctional thoughts, distress, and knowledge of psychological treatments was collected pre and post deliverance of treatment. Results depict that standalone face-to-face treatment of ADA is not as effective as face-to-face treatment in conjunction with online therapy. It was further observed that participants were more knowledgeable of treatment options available to them post online therapy. With respect to the wider community, this research provides information to plan an effective and accessible model of treatment delivery for ADA, building upon the existing model of the provision of mental health services in both urban and rural Australia.

### **Changing end-of-life treatment decisions creates false memories**

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Two experiments investigated the creation of false memories for end-of-life decisions and strategies to prevent those false memories. Subjects imagined hypothetical medical scenarios before deciding whether they would want to receive different treatments. They made these decisions twice, approximately four months apart. At Time 2, subjects also recalled their Time 1 decisions. In Experiment 1, subjects who recalled their Time 1 decisions before making their Time 2 decisions had the same number of false memories as subjects who made their Time 2 decisions first. In Experiment 2, giving subjects reminders about their decisions did not reduce their false memories. Additionally, showing subjects their Time 1 decisions did not increase the stability of their decisions. Across both experiments, when subjects changed their minds, they were more likely to falsely remember that their Time 1 decisions were the same as their Time 2 decisions than when their decisions stayed the same. The implications for policymakers are discussed.

### **Interference in visual memory for abstract stimuli and everyday objects**

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Shah, Miyake, Friedman, Rettinger and Hegarty (2001) suggest that the visuospatial sketchpad is closely linked to the central executive. However, most research in this area has used abstract stimuli to test visual memory. The current study compared memory for abstract stimuli to memory for pictures of everyday objects to examine whether both types of memory were impaired under dual task conditions. Thirty-seven first year psychology undergraduates aged between 18 to 48 years completed visual memory tasks for abstract polygons and everyday objects under three conditions, no secondary task, articulatory suppression and spatial tapping conditions. The results of the study showed that memory for everyday objects was higher than memory for abstract shapes. The results also revealed that memory for both types of stimuli was impaired in the articulatory suppression condition. Memory

for abstract shapes was impaired by the inclusion of the spatial tapping task but memory for everyday objects was not. These results suggest that participants use verbal labels to remember visual memory stimuli, regardless of whether the stimuli are conducive to such labelling. The results also suggest that memory for abstract stimuli likely requires central executive resources to a greater extent than memory for pictures of everyday objects.

### **The research evidence base of counselling psychology**

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Counselling psychology has drawn on and contributed to an active research base from before its inception as a distinct American Psychological Association 'Division' in 1951. Prominent early researchers contributing to the field included Rogers, Truax and Carhuff, with Carl Rogers as the first researcher to audio-record psychotherapy sessions for research purposes. Notably, much cited research regarding the evidence base of psychotherapy, and the importance of the therapeutic relationship to effective outcomes, has continued to stem from counselling psychology. This specialty's commitment and adherence to a scientist-practitioner model has been robustly debated from within, and demonstrably reaffirmed in training, practice, and use of research, as discussed in this paper.

### **A prospective assessment of the relationship between sleep quality and depression through pregnancy**

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The relationship between depressive symptoms and sleep quality was explored prospectively across pregnancy with a sample 273 women who were 15-23 weeks gestation at the outset of the study. Each woman completed the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index and Beck Depression Inventory at this time point and then at eight-week intervals after first contact, at 23-31 weeks and at 31-39 weeks gestation. Two main models of the relationship between these

two variables were tested: the first hypothesised that poorer self-reported sleep quality would predict increased depressive symptoms prospectively and the second that depressive symptoms earlier on in pregnancy would predict poorer sleep quality late in pregnancy. The first of these models was supported by our findings. Both sleep quality and depressive symptoms remained relatively stable across pregnancy, and sleep quality earlier in pregnancy predicted higher levels of depressive symptoms later in pregnancy (after controlling for prior depression levels). In contrast, there was no evidence to suggest that depressive symptoms earlier in pregnancy impacted on sleep quality later on. Given that depressive symptomatology can lead to major depression and given the prevalence of pre- and postnatal depression, our findings suggest that screening for sleep problems during pregnancy may be of clinical significance.

### **Humour effects upon stress and well-being**

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The current study aimed to investigate the influence of humour as a coping strategy on two indicators of university students' well-being. Well-being was separately assessed by an individual's level of psychological distress (GHQ-12) and their level of satisfaction with life (PWI-A). It was hypothesised that students higher in humour (Coping Humour Scale; CHS) would demonstrate less psychological distress and greater satisfaction with life while stress was expected to have both direct and indirect effects on well-being. Participants were 42 male and 136 female university students. Regression analyses revealed that high levels of stress best predict psychological distress while low levels of stress best predict satisfaction with life. Significant inverse relationships were found between humour and stress ( $r = -.25$ ), and humour with psychological distress ( $r = -.19$ ). A significant positive relationship was found between humour and satisfaction with life ( $r = .15$ ). Mediation analyses (Baron & Kenny, 1986) revealed the relationship between humour and both psychological distress and satisfaction with life were fully mediated by stress. We argue that university intervention programs that encourage awareness and discussion of emotions, and teach coping strategies



such as the use of humour could positively influence well-being.

### **Psychological dimensions of online sexual activity**

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The proposed paper is an Internet-based study of the psychological characteristics of individuals who engage in online sexual activity (OSA), or Cybersex. In the context of this paper, Cybersexual behaviour includes using the Internet to access Adult-Chat rooms, Web-camera, erotic images, and Cybersex Newsgroups. Data were collected from 1704 participants who completed an online questionnaire over a three month period. The questionnaire was regularly posted on the message boards of Google and Yahoo Cybersex Newsgroups. The research represents one of the largest international studies of OSA and includes a range of psychological variables. The research explores the relationships between a range of demographic variables including gender, age, relationship status, country of origin, and sexual orientation and a number of psychological variables. Some of the psychological variables investigated include attachment style, loneliness, depression, anxiety, stress, impulsivity and psychosexual adjustment measures such as sexual anxiety and sexual confidence. Theoretical, research and clinical implications of findings will be discussed.

### **Family history of breast cancer, health beliefs and knowledge in the practice of breast self-examination**

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The present study investigated the relationship between frequency of breast self-examination (BSE), family history of breast cancer and health beliefs in Australian women comparing both low risk (<45 years) and high risk women (>45 years). The sample was divided into two equal groups of 131 participants (low risk and high risk). Self report questionnaires administered were part of a larger study and included a bio-data and general information questionnaire on breast self-examination, and the Health Belief Model (HBM) Questionnaire.

The results revealed that *family history* of breast cancer, *knowledge* of BSE procedures and of breast cancer, and three *health beliefs* (barriers, confidence and motivation) predicted the practice or performance of BSE. Women in the high risk group (older age group) practised BSE significantly more than did women in the low risk group. An earlier analysis suggested that frequency of BSE is also associated with lower mental health (depression and anxiety tended to be higher among those practicing BSE). Further studies are needed to separate age, other demographics, and mental health issues in the practice of BSE.

### **Refugee child and adolescent help-seeking for social, behavioural and mental health problems**

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Another Western resettlement countries that many refugee children and adolescents with social, behavioural and mental health problems are not accessing mental health services. There is, however, very little refugee-specific, let alone child-specific, research in the area of help-seeking and service utilisation. Most research interest has centred on Western and, to a lesser extent, non-refugee ethnic minority adult populations. Moreover, informal help-seeking is rarely explored and most formal help-seeking research focuses on specialist mental health services and neglects the full range of service sectors and settings where mental health care is provided. This mixed-methods study investigated the informal and formal help-seeking rates and patterns of 500 refugee children and adolescents aged between 4 and 17 years from the former Republics of Yugoslavia, the Middle East, South Asia and Northern and Western Africa. This paper presents the key preliminary results of the study, with a particular focus on the qualitative findings of 13 focus groups with 84 adolescents from the above ethnic groupings. The qualitative findings reveal that refugee adolescents are very reluctant to venture beyond their close peer networks for help with their psychosocial problems due to a range of individual, cultural and service related barriers. The study has

practical implications for policymakers, service planners and service providers seeking to improve access and equity in service provision to refugee populations.

### **Attachment style and parent behaviour as predictors of fathers' emotional wellbeing following marital breakdown**

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This study investigated the influence of attachment style and parent behavioural patterns, on the life satisfaction and emotional wellbeing, of fathers, following marital breakdown. The participant fathers ( $N = 48$ ) were required to have been separated from their co-parent ex-partner for at least one year. Attachment style (secure, preoccupied, fearful avoidant, and dismissing avoidant) predicted emotional health and life satisfaction. It was suggested that three commonly observed post-separation father parent behaviours: *Stable and consistent* parenting, *Disengaged* parenting, and *Conflictual* parenting (Baum, 2004), would be associated with emotional wellbeing and life satisfaction. Analysis revealed that, although there was little relationship between fathers' attachment styles and parent behavioural styles, parent behaviour did contribute to emotional wellbeing and life satisfaction. It was also observed that re-partnered / remarried fathers ( $n = 16$ ) were more likely to be securely attached, and had significantly better mental health, with less depression and anxiety, and greater life satisfaction than single / separated fathers ( $n = 32$ ). Overall, it was concluded that fathers with conflictual parent behaviour patterns had less satisfaction with their lives, and those with fearful avoidant attachment, in particular, and those who were separated / single, were most at risk of poorer emotional wellbeing and less satisfaction with their lives.

### **Development of a web-based multimedia tool to improve and assess psychology students understanding of cultural factors impacting psychological diagnosis**

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Advances in multimedia technologies have allowed for the inclusion of web-based multimedia (WBMM) tools alongside traditional teaching methods; a development that has proven both effective and popular with tertiary students (Kahan et al, 2007; Mackey & Jinwon, 2008). This study implemented a WBMM tool designed to enhance and assess students' understanding of cultural factors impacting psychological diagnosis. To simulate the type of client information that is typically available in clinical practice, students were given a patient summary and access to a taped interview between a psychologist and young Aboriginal man. Students were instructed to choose their own research tools and resources in order to better understand their client's background and presentation. They were asked to comment on a) the client's provisional diagnosis and b) complete an online quiz regarding the cultural factors needing to be taken into account in making a psychological diagnosis (pre-test). After submitting their initial responses, students were given access to a range of psychological and cultural resources and asked to complete the cultural awareness questionnaire again (post-test). Results from a pilot study using third year psychology students will be presented.

### **Coronary heart disease risk reduction and consumption of foods rich in omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids: A psychosocial perspective using information to mediate between attitudes, intentions and decision-making behaviour**

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Long chain omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids ( $n-3$ ) are thought to benefit human health, particularly in respect to reducing risk of heart disease. However, most Australians do not consume enough  $n-3$ . Socio-demographic variables and

psychological variables such as perceptions, attitudes and beliefs impact on food-orientated health behaviours. The aim of this research was to understand what demographic, situational and psychological variables influence people's attitudes, beliefs, and ability to consume beneficial quantities of n-3 foods. A quantitative longitudinal study involved a survey of 500 adult South Australians using a (3 x 2 x 2) informational source design. Results of preliminary analyses at baseline show significant attitudinal and intentional differences toward the consumption of n-3 foods dependent upon level of heart disease risk. Information provision was also found to affect the likelihood of increasing consumption of some n-3 foods. The study has implications for how health-related information relating to n-3 and cardiac risk may be provided to enhance people's awareness and behaviour.

#### **“Mental health? I don't think Sudanese have it!”: Talking to Sudanese refugee youth about their understandings of mental health and wellbeing**

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Over the past decade, more than 22,000 Sudanese Humanitarian Entrants have resettled in Australia (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2007). Despite high levels of resilience in the Sudanese community, research suggests that experiences of pre-displacement trauma and post-displacement stressors impact negatively on the mental health of refugees. However, strategies typically used by Australian psychologists for treating mental health problems and promoting wellbeing may not be culturally appropriate or effective for Sudanese Australian young people. Hence this research project was designed to qualitatively explore and describe concepts of mental health and wellbeing held by Sudanese Australian young people resettled in Melbourne. Twenty-four Sudanese Australian young people (aged 16-24 years) participated in Study 1, a semi-structured interview designed to explore concepts of mental health and wellbeing using a constructivist, 'bottom-up' approach. Twenty-two of the same participants then took part in Study 2, a structured, mixed methods, vignette-based interview using a 'top-down' approach. Vignette characters were based on criteria

for major depressive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and schizophrenia, as well as high and low psychosocial wellbeing. Results of both studies will be presented, with a focus on implications for psychologists, such as how best to talk to Sudanese Australian young people about wellbeing.

#### **Growing older: A qualitative inquiry into the textured realities of older, rural women**

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This qualitative study explored the age-related changes and experiences of older, rural women. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and audio recorded with eight Anglo-Australian women ranging in age between 65-75 years. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and subjected to a thematic analysis, resulting in the construction of three prominent themes: (a) *the free and busy me*; (b) *the secret is being positive and pragmatic*; and (c) *narratives of growth and stagnation*. These themes were conceptualised within a feminist lifespan perspective on ageing, and highlight the pursuit of growth among older women in order to enhance the current self. Findings emphasise the construction of later life as one of liberation, resilience, and growth. Further to this, an exploration of the intersubjective dynamics between author and participants draws attention to the socially constructed nature of each woman's "self" narrative.

#### **Mood and anxiety scores predict winners and losers in tennis**

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Psychological measures have previously been shown to be predictive of sport performance across a range of sports. The present study assessed the capacity of pre-competition mood and anxiety to predict tennis results. A sample of 92 social-competitive tennis players (49 men and 43 women, mean 39.7 years, range 19-62) completed the Brunel Mood Scale (BRUMS) and the revised Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2R) prior to weekly competitions, producing a dataset of 567 matches. Discriminant function analysis showed that the outcome of matches could be correctly classified with

60% accuracy ( $p < .01$ ). Consistent with theoretical predictions, low scores for confusion, depression, tension, anger, and cognitive anxiety, and high scores for self-confidence were significant predictors of winning performances. Using the two measures independently, the BRUMS provided 56.8% correct classifications ( $p < .01$ ) and the CSAI-2R provided 58.7% ( $p < .01$ ). Notably, a much higher proportion of winners (78.5%) than losers (38.3%) were correctly classified from mood scores, suggesting greater potential for predicting winning performances from positive moods than losing performances from negative moods. Results are consistent with Morgan's mental health model and Martens' multidimensional anxiety theory, and can be used to inform interventions applied by sport psychologists with tennis players.

#### **Psychometric re-evaluation of the revised version of the Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2**

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The Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2) has been the measure of choice among anxiety researchers in the sport domain since its development in 1990. A 17-item revised version, the CSAI-2R, was developed in 2003 by Cox and colleagues. The present study re-evaluated the psychometric characteristics of the CSAI-2R. Repeated measures data from 92 social-competitive tennis players at five points in time were subjected to principal axis factoring with promax rotation. Results supported the hypothesized, 3-factor measurement model. The measurement model was recovered at all time points, with solutions explaining between 58.1% and 68.8% of variance. Minimal complexity among items was evident. Cronbach alpha coefficients exceeded criterion values for all subscales at each time point. Inter-correlations among factors were in line with theoretical predictions and supported their conceptual independence. Overall, results supported the factorial validity of the revised scale in five replications. The present findings indicate that the CSAI-2R has satisfactory psychometric characteristics, unlike those reported by Lane and colleagues in 1999 for the original CSAI-2, which showed a flawed measurement model. Results suggest

that researchers investigating anxiety in sport should use the CSAI-2R in preference to the original CSAI-2.

#### **Effects of attentional focus instructions on putting performance at different levels of skill development**

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Although the ability to focus attention on the task at hand is crucial in sport, it is not clear whether athletes at different levels of skill development benefit from the same attentional focus strategies during performance. Traditional skill acquisition theories suggest that novices focus internally on technique when learning to execute skills. Such a focus, however, can be counterproductive for experienced and elite athletes who often perform better with an external attentional focus. Indeed, recent research suggests that novices also benefit from an external attentional focus. The purpose of this study was to examine the putting performances of groups of novice ( $n = 18$ ), experienced ( $n = 16$ ) and elite ( $n = 16$ ) golfers when instructed to focus attention (a) their own way (baseline), (b) on an aspect of their technique, (c) on improving their initial performance, (d) on beating the best score for their group, or (e) on the ball while trusting their body to perform the skill. The results of within and between group comparisons of putting performances under the five attentional focus conditions are reported, and the implications of the findings for sport psychology interventions and coaching practices are discussed.

#### **Knowledge, beliefs and attitudes about stroke and stroke prevention among the Greek and Vietnamese older people**

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Stroke is the third most common cause of death in Australia, accounting for 10 per cent of all deaths and 25 per cent of chronic disabilities. Unfortunately, stroke continues to remain a poorly understood illness by many Australians of non-English speaking backgrounds. This study investigated the understanding of stroke, including identification of perceived stroke risk factors within two large ethnic

communities in Australia, the Vietnamese and the Greek communities. Over 200 members of the two communities were interviewed individually. The results indicated that although the Greek older people had a better knowledge about stroke than the Vietnamese, both groups had faulty beliefs and passive attitudes about stroke prevention. Issues related to stroke prevention for older persons in a multicultural society are then discussed.

### **The relationship between organisational identification, organisational commitment and turnover intentions in the Australian Defence Organisation**

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Previous research has suggested that employee commitment, and identification with the organisation, are strong negative predictors of staff turnover. This study examined how commitment and identification impact on employees' turnover intentions in the Australian Defence Organisation (ADO). A survey was conducted with 282 ADO employees from four Defence Service groups: Army, Navy, Air Force and Civilians. Participants completed measures of organisational commitment, identification with different levels of the organisation (Defence, Service, Team) and turnover intentions. Results showed that military participants identified most strongly with their service whereas civilians identified more strongly with their immediate team. Higher levels of commitment and identification were associated with lower turnover intentions. Multiple regression analysis showed that the strongest predictors of turnover intentions were: affective commitment (where employees stay because they want to), normative commitment (where employees stay because they feel they ought to), and identification with Defence as a whole, respectively. The relationship between identification and turnover intentions was mediated by affective commitment. This study offers insight into the relationship between organisational commitment and organisational identification, and has practical implications for organisations wanting to minimise employee turnover.

### **Using the internet to help treat remote clients: Results of Australian clinical trials treating common mental disorders on-line**

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Less than 50% of people with depression, social phobia, or panic disorder seek treatment, often because of difficulty accessing mental health services, stigma/embarrassment, or lack of knowledge about treatment options. The present paper describes the results of two randomized controlled trials of Internet-based treatment for social phobia ( $n = 182$ ) (Titov et al., 2008a, 2008b), and the results of preliminary trials for depression and social phobia. Each treatment program involves participants having regular email contact with a therapist, completing on-line lessons of cognitive-behavioural treatment, completing practical homework assignments, and reading and posting messages and homework assignments an on-line discussion forum. Overall results for the social phobia program are comparable to those obtained in high quality face-to-face treatment. These results indicate that Psychologist guided Internet-based treatment programs can be developed for people with social phobia, panic disorder, and depression, who might not access face-to-face treatment.

### **Using computers to help clinicians treat clients with common mental disorders: A demonstration of *The Shyness Program* for treating social phobia**

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Computers and the Internet can help Psychologists successfully treat clients with common mental disorders, either remotely or face-to-face. This paper describes how *The Shyness Program*, a successful Internet-based treatment program for people with social phobia (developed at CRUFAD, UNSW at St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney), can be of significant advantage to clinicians and consumers. Advantages to clinicians include the ability to provide the educational component of treatment in an

engaging and consistent manner, providing the clinician with more “therapy” time. Consumers can log in when convenient to read lessons or post material in the forum, repeat lessons as needed, and learn from the experiences of other consumers. The structured lessons also provide consumers with a clear sense of progress and provide discussion points for face-to-face therapy. The software program means that questionnaires can be easily administered, scored, and the results reported and analysed immediately, assisting in quality assurance. Additional teaching materials can easily be included in the program, catering for the needs of specific clients. The results of treatment satisfaction questionnaires indicate that consumers find computer and Internet-based treatment programs acceptable and effective.

### **Beyond pharmacology: Psychological interventions in HIV infection**

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The emergence of multiple drug resistant strains of HIV creates the need for a renewed focus upon the status of scientific knowledge concerning the impact of psychosocial and emotional factors upon immunity, disease progression and AIDS mortality in HIV seropositive persons. To this end, the field of psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) has provided a vast empirical data base of psychosocial determinants of immunity, illness progression and mortality in HIV infection since the early 1980's. Such data have demonstrated that psychosocial factors are highly significant predictors of behaviour known to enhance risk of exposure to HIV and therefore need to be considered as a vital foundation of primary prevention programs aiming to minimize new infection rates. This paper reviews the psychosocial factors already identified as significant to both primary and secondary prevention while outlining directions for future research, including the need for studies which permit the use of multivariate techniques such as hierarchical logistic regression and discriminant function analyses. Homophobia in particular seems to be a health menace as a determinant of high risk behaviour, immunosuppression and AIDS mortality. Cross cultural validation of research is emphasised as most

PNI studies have been conducted in the developed world, especially North America.

### **AFP psychological response to critical incidents**

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This paper will elucidate the response to critical incidents undertaken by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) multidisciplinary Wellbeing Services (WS) team. The AFP's operations extend globally and consist of staff operating in 35 liaison posts and a number of larger 'missions' around the world. As a result, the organisation 'frequently' finds itself responding to critical incidents involving its people. The presenter, a clinical psychologist in the AFP, will describe the development of and changes to the critical incident response undertaken by the organisation's Wellbeing Services team over the course of the last four years. The discussion will centre on the perspective of the WS team and its response in these situations, as well as looking at how the perception of and engagement with the service has changed over time from the organisational perspective. A number of examples will be used to discuss relevant issues involved from a psychological perspective, including the response to the Jakarta Embassy bombing in Jakarta in September 2004, the Asian Tsunami disaster victim identification effort in Phuket, Thailand in December 2004 / January 2005 and, more recently, the Garuda plane crash in Yogyakarta (March 2007).

### **Assessing practice effort and performance outcomes following failure induced shame**

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Achievement shame-prone individuals tend to attribute failure to characterological flaws, experiencing heightened anxiety and global feelings of self-debasement. As such, they are more sensitive to the negative effects of failure, disengaging from tasks that forebode failure by reigning in practice effort and as a consequence, performing poorly, irrespective of whether there are excuses for prior failure. In the present study, 72 undergraduate students who were either high or low in achievement shame-proneness were assigned to one of three

performance feedback conditions: Humiliating failure, failure allowing face-saving and success. To assess performance, they subsequently completed 12 remote associates tasks, followed by 16 unicursal tasks during what was believed to be a practice period, providing an assessment of task disengagement in the form of intentional low effort. Students high in achievement shame-proneness reported greater state anxiety and performed poorly on remote associates following humiliating failure and failure allowing face-saving. Moreover, in each of the failure conditions, high achievement shame-prone participations spent less time on the unicursal tasks, attempted fewer items, traced fewer nodes, and solved fewer problems. Implications are drawn in the terms of the manner in which the unproductive attributions made by achievement shame-prone students following failure are best altered.

### **Crisis management in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – How prepared are school counsellors in Australian schools?**

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There is increasing recognition that traumatic events impact on our school communities. This study aimed to develop a comprehensive school-based crisis management model and to identify the role of school counsellors in managing trauma. One hundred and twenty school counsellors (psychologists and social workers) were surveyed to determine current levels of crisis management training. Results showed 85% of the respondents wanted further training in dealing with traumatic events impacting on their school community. Based on these data a school crisis management model that could be applied for training purposes was developed. It is argued that this model could be applied in school jurisdictions beyond Australia.

### **Telling it like it is: The lived experience of obesity-related stigma**

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Research findings suggest that effects of stigma on the wellbeing of obese people include psychological stress, depression, participation

restrictions, increased risk of advanced disease and morbidity, and delays in seeking medical advice for treatable conditions. A Dramatic Psychological Storytelling intervention will be used as an attempt to bridge the communication gap between obese people and the wider community. The research participants' lived experiences of obesity-related stigma will be respectfully transformed into vignettes, which will be interspersed with current obesity research information for a community awareness film. Common misperceptions about obesity and obese people will be debunked. Attention will also be drawn to social conditioning, which may lead individuals to intentionally or unwittingly discriminate against and stigmatise obese people. People learn through experience and, by vicariously 'experiencing' what it is like to be stigmatised due to obesity, the audiences' understanding of the participants' lived experiences will be facilitated. The aim is to empower obese research participants, evoke in-group empathy, and enhance their self-perceived psychological wellbeing by giving them a voice and enabling them to use their lived experiences in a positive way to educate others. The researcher's personal lived experience of obesity-related stigma raises issues of objectivity versus insight for discussion.

### **The challenge of climate change; the challenge for psychology**

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The APS position paper on climate change asserts that "Psychology as a discipline is ideally positioned to provide expert advice on fostering more ecologically sensitive and sustainable behaviours and lifestyles." The discipline's desire to contribute to the resolution of the most significant global problem of the 21<sup>st</sup> century should not blind us to theoretical, methodological and ethical questions raised by psychology's involvement in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and practices. Many governments in developed economies are turning to psychology because the policy of choice is behaviour change. But psychology is not a silver bullet and cannot save the world by itself. Do individualistic perspectives dominant in psychology deflect attention from the larger social, environmental, economic and political context? Does

the current emphasis on coercive behaviour change strategies raise ethical issues concerning psychological interventions and the role of psychologists? Is the way research is currently framed on climate change awareness and concern telling us more about the problems of research methodologies rather than the problems of the environment and society? This paper critically and constructively addresses these questions. All branches of psychology have the potential to make a valuable contribution through climate change mitigation and adaptation research and practice. The paper will conclude with a discussion of the need for capacity building within psychology to ensure that our discipline plays a key role nationally and internationally in efforts to tackle climate change.

### **Verbal overshadowing: Understanding the phenomenon does make a difference**

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Studies in the misleading-suggestion paradigm have shown that when participants are instructed to be aware of the source of information they are given, participants can be less susceptible to the misinformation effect. However, previous verbal overshadowing studies have found that source monitoring instructions do not attenuate verbal overshadowing unless participants are provided with a description of the target rather than generating one themselves. This experiment investigated the effect that *understanding* the phenomenon had on recognition performance. Half the participants were naïve, and half the participants were well-educated about verbal overshadowing. Results showed an interaction between verbalisation and naivety with naïve participants in the verbalisation condition much poorer at recognising the target than those who were not naïve to the manipulation. For participants in the control conditions there was no difference in recognition performance between naïve and non-naïve participants. The results are discussed in terms of response criterion and source monitoring.

### **Primary psychological interventions in a law enforcement workplace: Risk assessment and monitoring for a deployed workforce**

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The Australian Federal Police (AFP) workplace is dynamic and diverse, no more so that with the deployed workforce. AFP members are deployed in a wide range of countries under a wide variety of security and working conditions. A key primary intervention with this group is the assessment of psychological hazards in the workplace and monitoring the psychological health of this workforce. This presentation will discuss issues surrounding the implementation of psychological risk assessments and some of the challenges that have been involved in the evolution of the psychological monitoring system that has been developed (and that continues to develop).

### **The role of coping in the relationship between depression and illness severity in chronic fatigue syndrome**

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The Self Regulatory Model (SRM) proposes that both cognitive and emotional illness representations influence the coping processes adopted in response to an illness. The current study's focus was on the emotional representations of depression and the mediatory role of coping processes on self-appraisals of illness severity, with a view to gaining a clearer understanding of the relationship between coping styles, depression and appraisals of illness severity. This study sought to explore the role of coping in the relationship between depression and self appraisals of illness severity in a population of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) sufferers using the SRM. The sample comprised of 156 participants, 34 males, and 121 females, who had been medically diagnosed with CFS, aged between 18 and 78 years. Participants were asked to complete 3 questionnaires, the Cardiac Depression Scale (CDS), the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WOCQ), and the Severity subscale of the Illness Perceptions Questionnaire-Revised (IPQ-R). Analyses revealed that two



particular subscales, social support seeking and positive reappraisals, emerged as positively contributing to self-appraisals of illness severity; thereby supporting the SRM. Furthermore, it emerged that this population experiences high levels of depression. The findings suggest that focussing on depression and particular coping styles during treatment interventions could have important implications for therapeutic interventions and subsequent outcomes.

### **Hardiness, commitment to exercise and stress: Predictors of psychological distress in University Students**

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The current study examined the role of hardiness and exercise commitment as predictors of psychological distress and stress in university students. The primary aim of the study was to examine the relative contributions of hardiness (Dispositional Resilience Scale), exercise commitment (Commitment to Running Scale adaptation) and stress (DASS-21) in predicting psychological distress (GHQ-12), and similarly, hardiness, exercise commitment and psychological distress in predicting stress. Of further interest was the possible mediating role of stress in the relationship between hardiness and psychological distress, and additionally, in the relationship between exercise commitment and psychological distress. Valid responses were obtained from 178 male and female university students, aged between 18 and 58 years, who completed a self-report test battery. Regression analyses of the data identified hardiness as a significant predictor of both psychological distress and stress. Analyses (Baron & Kenny, 1986) revealed that stress partially mediated the relationship between hardiness and psychological distress, and demonstrated a complete mediation effect in the relationship between exercise commitment and psychological distress. These findings have major implications in the development of hardiness training programs within university settings, and highlight exercise as a valid treatment option for students suffering from elevated stress levels and consequent psychological distress.

### **'Do you see what I see?' Service evaluation: An exploration and critique from the client voice perspective**

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The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of using the Client Voice paradigm in service evaluation. The Client Voice paradigm places clients' experiences, perceptions and feedback at the heart of psychotherapy and psychology, in a similar way to the consumer satisfaction movement in mental health and medical services. However, the consumer satisfaction movement frequently uses quantitative evaluation measures which assume and impose a uni-dimensional meaning upon the evaluation, and the specific utilisation of Client Voice principles to guide qualitative service evaluation research has yet to occur. To explore this, 30 callers to a Telephone Helpline in Sydney were randomly allocated to a quantitative measure (Counsellor Perception Measure (interview), CPM) or a semi-structured qualitative interview designed along Client Voice principles (Telephone Counselling Questionnaire, TCQ). While five meta-themes of counselling service evaluation emerged, demonstrating an apparent high congruence between both the quantitative and qualitative measures, clients also reported concepts of personal significance not included in the CPM items. Additionally, multiple meanings were associated with the evaluation terms and participants found difficulties with the CPM due to the imposed uni-dimensional meaning assumption. The findings from this study suggest the utilisation of Client Voice principles in qualitative service evaluation.

### **Gender differences in violent behaviour among a community sample**

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Males and females have been found to differ in their characteristics and correlates of violent behaviour. Gender differences in aggressive behaviour were explored among a community sample of adults in South East Queensland ( $N = 150$ ). Consistent with previous research, males were significantly more likely to engage in aggressive

behaviours compared to females, though this finding was limited to physical aggression. Differential predictors of involvement in aggression were investigated, including childhood risk factors, emotional control, alcohol misuse, attitudes towards violence and violent fantasies. The findings highlight potential implications for assessment and interventions of aggressive behaviours for males and females.

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### Using a constructive feedback approach to effectively reduce student plagiarism and improve scientific writing

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Plagiarism and the coverage it has received offers academics the opportunity to rethink how they teach. Plagiarism is said to be on the increase in higher education and existing internal evidence suggests that a purely deterrent approach to reducing plagiarism (i.e., detection software) is relatively ineffective. As a result of these findings and an emerging literature, the School of Psychology at the University of Sydney has decided to implement a teaching and learning approach that provides students with early and constructive feedback on their written work. This approach will involve teaching staff providing feedback on student's writing of *appropriate summaries* and *question-focused writing*, coupled with examples of what constitutes plagiarism, a very real demonstration of the occurrence of plagiarism, the ease of detection of plagiarism, and penalties for plagiarism. By comparing plagiarism levels in 2007 to 2008 the school will be able to objectively ascertain the effectiveness of this innovative approach. It is anticipated that this constructive feedback approach will also have flow-on effects of enhancing student's independent learning, improving student's scientific writing and increasing academic honesty throughout the wider university.

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### A mindfulness-based therapy for binge eating in females: A proposed effectiveness study using a multiple-case study design

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Extending on the cognitive-behavioural tradition, mindfulness approaches have been utilised to treat a number of conditions such as chronic pain, depression and anxiety (Baer, 2003). Preliminary evidence suggests it could be effective for the treatment of binge eating disorder (e.g., Kristeller & Hallet, 1999), but given the approach is relatively new in Western psychotherapy, further research is needed to examine its clinical utility with this client group. This paper describes the development of a mindfulness-based therapy designed for the individual treatment of females with binge eating problems, a manualised therapy integrating strategies from cognitive-behavioural and interpersonal therapies, based on a group program that has been running since 1995. A multiple-case study design has been selected to evaluate the effectiveness of the therapy in an effort to gather empirical data on therapy as it is actually practiced, allowing for a broader definition of what is considered effective. Sources of data include pre- and post- therapy questionnaires, session transcripts, client ratings of sessions, naturalistic data collected by the client, and semi-structured interviews. A range of indicators are used to judge effectiveness, including reduction in symptoms, client acceptability, therapeutic alliance, and improvement on a range of psychological correlates of binge eating.

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### Neurophysiological changes associated with Spinal Cord Injury: A study of brain activity and cognitive function

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Spinal cord injury (SCI) is caused by traumatic injury to the spinal cord, resulting in a loss of motor and sensory function. SCI also leads to other devastating consequences such as pain and psychological distress (i.e., depression). There is evidence for impairment in cognitive function and changes in neurophysiological measures such as brain activity in SCI. A better understanding of cognitive

function deficits and brain activity changes would be valuable to improve SCI rehabilitation. To date, no study has investigated the neurophysiological changes together with cognitive impairment in SCI participants. This study compares the brain activity using electroencephalography (EEG) and cognitive function in people with SCI ( $n=15$ ) with an able-bodied control group ( $n=15$ ). Both groups completed a set of cognitive tests (e.g., working memory tasks) and their EEG was recorded. Participants also completed psychological questionnaires such as the cognitive failure questionnaire, perceived stress scale and depression, anxiety and stress scale (DASS). The SCI group showed a decrease in alpha (8-13Hz) band activity across all cortical sites tested. The SCI group also performed poorer in the cognitive tests. The findings have implications to improve rehabilitation and warrant further research to enhance our understanding of the area.

#### **Factor structure of the original and short form of the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment**

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The Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) is the most widely used measure of adolescent attachment in the literature (Wilson & Wilkinson, 2007) yet there have been few attempts to verify its original structure or establish its validity. This paper reports the results of a study testing the factor structure of the original IPPA and a second study examining the development of a short form of the IPPA. Study One reports the results of a confirmatory factor analysis based on responses from a sample of 640 high school students aged from 14 to 18 years of age. A three factor solution for the Parent and Peer subscales was supported. Study two reports the results of a factor analysis and psychometric evaluation of a short form of the IPPA with an independent sample of 700 adolescents. In this version of the IPPA maternal and paternal attachment are assessed separately and associations with measures of attachment style are presented. Results indicate the short form is reliable, stable, and as potentially as valid as the original IPPA. Recommendations for further research into the assessment of adolescent attachment are presented.

#### **A school-based media literacy program for reducing eating disorder risk factors in young adolescents: A controlled evaluation**

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The primary objective was to examine the efficacy of an 8-lesson media literacy program designed to reduce eating disorder risk in young adolescents. 540 Grade 8 girls and boys ( $M$  age = 13.61) from 4 Adelaide Secondary Schools (public and private) participated. Eating disorder risk factors were assessed and analysed using linear mixed model analyses by group (2: media literacy program; control), gender (2: girls; boys) and time (2: post-program; 6-month follow-up), with baseline scores entered as a covariate. Main effects for group favouring media literacy were found for dieting, shape and weight concern, body dissatisfaction and feelings of ineffectiveness. Post-hoc analyses revealed media literacy girls experienced significantly lower feelings of ineffectiveness scores than control girls at post-program, while media literacy boys experienced significantly lower dieting, shape and weight concern and body dissatisfaction scores than control boys at 6-month follow-up. Reliable change indices showed the program was beneficial to both girls and boys. The findings support including males in some eating disorder prevention programs and working with participants below the age of 15 (the current trend in the field is to focus on university-aged women). A 2.5-year follow-up evaluation of this program is currently being conducted.

#### **Habitat: A longitudinal multilevel collaborative study of physical activity and health in mid-age men and women**

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To change population levels of activity, there is a need to understand behavioural patterns and influences over time. This presentation describes the design, sampling, and data collection of HABITAT, an innovative multilevel longitudinal (2007-2011) study of physical activity change in mid-age adults,

and the contribution of psychological, social, perceived environmental, area-level, and sociodemographic factors. Census Collectors Districts (CCDs) in Brisbane were ranked by their socioeconomic (SEIFA) score and 200 CCDs and 17,000 residents aged 40-64 years were selected for study inclusion. Participants are sent a mail questionnaire every two years (2007, 2009, 2011), to assess self-efficacy, attitudes, motivators, barriers, social support, neighbourhood characteristics, sociodemographic characteristics, activity and health. The baseline survey (2007) achieved a response rate of 69% with 11,125 respondents, and almost 40% were insufficiently active. A comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) database has been compiled with information on public transport, footpaths, topography, traffic volumes, street lights, tree coverage, services, and recreational facilities. The baseline profile of each area suggests varying levels of environmental support for physical activity. HABITAT will improve our understanding of physical activity, and lead the way to identify priority targets for public policy and health promotion aimed at increasing physical activity participation among mid-age Australians.

### **Identifying the attitudinal, normative, and control beliefs underlying psychologists' willingness to integrate complementary and alternative therapies into psychological practice**

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The use of complementary and alternative therapies (CAT) in Australia has risen steadily over recent years and individuals with mental health disorders are more likely to utilise CAT than are other members of the general public. Drawing on the belief basis of the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the present research investigated the beliefs that differentiated between psychologists who were high and low on willingness or intention to integrate CAT by either recommending CAT to clients or referring them to CAT practitioners. Participants, 122 practicing psychologists, completed a questionnaire assessing their attitudinal, normative, and control beliefs relating to CAT integration. A number of the beliefs discriminated between psychologists who were or were not willing or intending to integrate

CAT into their psychological practice. These beliefs reflected benefits, such as being able to offer a more holistic approach to therapy, and costs, such as not being able to follow up client progress, or the possibility of compromising one's professional reputation. Further, barriers, such as lack of scientific evidence, were rated as less likely to occur by high intendees to integrate. These findings can inform relevant governing bodies within psychology as policy is developed in relation to CAT integration into psychological practice.

### **Understanding the role of risk in psychologists' willingness and intention to integrate complementary and alternative therapies into psychological practice**

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Many clients of Australian psychologists are using complementary and alternative therapies (CAT) for their mental health, with or without their practitioners' knowledge. This study explored psychologists' willingness and intention to integrate CAT into psychological practice and was informed by responses from qualitative interviews, as well as drawing upon the established decision-making theories of the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the Prototype/Willingness Model. Participants, 122 practising psychologists, responded to survey items relating to two distinct modes of integration: (1) recommending CAT in general, and (2) providing referrals to specific CAT practitioners. The significant predictors of psychologists' intention and willingness to integrate CAT were the Theory of Planned Behaviour constructs of attitude and subjective norm, but not perceived behavioural control. Perceived risk was not a direct predictor of willingness or intention to integrate CAT into psychological practice; rather, psychologists' attitudes mediated the impact of risk perceptions on intentions and willingness to integrate CAT. Overall, the present research identified that, accompanying slightly favourable attitudes toward CAT integration are psychologists' concerns about the associated legal, ethical, and practical implications. This research contributes to a growing body of evidence that suggests Australian psychologists are motivated to

working towards a carefully integrated future in clinical practice.

### Objective tests of movement imagery predict movement skill performance

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To date, the assessment of movement imagery ability has relied on subjective reports (or questionnaires). The aim of this study was to investigate the psychometric properties of a new, objective measure of motor imagery—the Radial Pointing Task (RPT). Thirty-five healthy adults were administered the following tests: the Movement Imagery Questionnaire – Revised (MIQ-R); objective measures of movement imagery (the RPT and Mental Hand Rotation), and two measures of movement skill (a timed formboard task measuring manual dexterity, and dynamic ball balance task). For the RPT, a strong linear relationship was found between response time and ID for both the real and imagined conditions. The RPT showed moderate test-retest reliability,  $r = .60$ , reasonable concurrent validity when correlated with the MIQ-R,  $r = .30$ , and good predictive validity when correlated with speed on the formboard task,  $r = -.50$ . Results of the study showed that the RPT is a valid and reliable measure of movement imagery. The RPT was shown to be a stronger predictor of actual motor performance than the MIQ-R and may serve a useful screening function in identifying those who are likely to benefit from imagery training when learning or refining movement skills.

### Lifeline telephone counselling – changing with the 21<sup>st</sup> century

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Lifeline has played an important part in Australia's mental health landscape for 45 years, delivering the 24/7 telephone counselling service staffed by skilled volunteers. In October 2007 Lifeline achieved a world first: a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephony network across 60 locations for social service delivery. This gives more callers the opportunity to be answered on their first try as the system can scan across all locations to find an available telephone counsellor, ensuring a

quality national service for callers. This presentation covers: how access has greatly improved within the first month of operation, and that Lifeline's new telephony network dramatically increased caller access; Lifeline provides vital support for people with mental health issues across Australia, especially after hours when traditional services are closed; Operational issues, data collection, future service planning to meet consumer need; Training skilled telephone counsellors and enhanced support systems; Lifeline's strong local focus complemented with national benefits; High percentage of calls relate to mental health regardless of other issues callers experience; 30 callers a day experiencing suicide ideation; and Embracing new technologies such as SMS and email counselling that caters for different consumer needs. Lifeline and the APS will be exploring ways to more effectively respond to the complex needs of frequent callers to the telephone counselling service, and in those circumstances where the caller will benefit from coordinated responses involving other services, such as psychologists.

### Adolescent problem drinking: The benefits of integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches in extending social learning theory

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Alcohol expectancies have been proposed as important cognitive markers of alcohol misuse. The Drinking Expectancy Questionnaire for Adolescents (DEQ-A) was developed using a sample of 2020 adolescents (mean age = 14.15,  $SD=1.07$ ). Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis indicated four key expectancy subsets: Increased Confidence, Cognitive and Motor Impairment, Tension Reduction and Negative Mood. Of these four subsets expectancies of "Increased Confidence" were most strongly associated with drinking quantity and frequency. A subsequent study of 30 substance misusing adolescents using the Consensual Quantitative Research method (QCR) examined the subjective forces that shaped drinking behaviour and a more finely grained appraisal of alcohol expectancies. Both males and female substance misusing adolescents discussed the aspects of social

connectedness and positive self transformation associated with alcohol as crucial reinforcers. Familial substance misuse and the developmental transition between primary school and high school were a typically identified as important risk factors. Theoretical and practical implications of integrating quantitative and qualitative data to inform theory and the design of prevention and intervention efforts are discussed.

### **Patterns of elevated PAI validity indices in an Australian psycho legal sample: Implications for assessment**

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The purpose of the current study was to determine the rate and pattern of elevated malingering indices within a sample of persons presenting for psychological assessment for either worker's compensation claims; victims of crime compensation claims; personal injury claims; or pre sentence assessment. An archival file review of 400 psycho legal cases was conducted wherein a Personality Assessment Inventory – PAI (Morey, 1991) had been administered. Statistical analysis found that base rates for clinical and validity indices may vary dependent on presenting psychological disorder, psychological diagnosis and assessment context. Predictors of elevated PAI validity indices were identified. Implications for assessment using the PAI across forensic contexts are discussed.

### **Investigative psychology practice in NSW – the contribution of emerging research**

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In 2005 the NSW Police Force (NSWPF) commenced the first psychology position of its kind in Australia, in terms of full time assistance for state police investigations. A team of forensic psychologists operating from within the Forensic Services Group provides multiple services to assist with current and unsolved investigations in NSW PF. These services include case consultation, training in psychological aspects of offending, and conducting research in order to contribute to the body of knowledge in investigative psychology.

Psychological services have assisted in the progression of investigations through provision of offender expertise, indirect assessment and crime analysis, primarily for sexual offences and homicides. Interpretations of 'criminal profiling' techniques and the relevance to psychological practice will be discussed. As a relatively new practice of psychology, this field has been misunderstood through dramatised media representations and a paucity of relevant, evidence-based research for our population. NSWPF research contributing to this field will be reviewed, including current exploration of serial sexual assaults and serial homicides for comparison with well-known FBI models of behavioural crime analysis. Issues considered through this comparison will include offender typologies, behavioural crime linkage and offender profiling in an Australian context.

### **The impact of migration factors on the mental well being of refugee children in South Australia**

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It is well established that a range of pre and post migration experiences place refugee children and adolescents at increased risk of developing social, emotional, behavioural and psychological health problems. Despite their greater risk of developing mental health problems, many refugee children and adolescents are not accessing mental health services. This research investigated the prevalence and nature of mental health problems affecting refugee children, their rates and patterns of informal and formal help-seeking and their resilience characteristics which enabled positive coping and good social adjustment despite experiences of adversity. The research targeted 600 children and adolescents aged between 4 and 17 years from Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. This paper presents the preliminary findings of the research. Quantitative and qualitative data gathered from children, parents and school teachers have provided the first comprehensive picture of the mental health status of refugee children and adolescents living in Australia. With this information now available, it will be possible to plan more appropriate and effective mental health services

for this population group. The findings will allow new opportunities and directions for intervention which are more sensitive to refugee cultural beliefs and practices that affect the recognition, reporting and treatment of mental health problems.

### **Ten years of longitudinal research on adolescent sexual behaviour: Identifying pathways and the importance of age, gender and ethnic background**

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There has been an escalation in the number of longitudinal studies focused on adolescent sexual behaviour. When a systematic review of these longitudinal studies was conducted ( $N = 27$  studies), a number of findings emerged. After organizing studies by participant age, gender and race/ethnicity, eight key findings provide evidence for four developmental pathways to sexual behaviour. One pathway to early sexual intercourse (by age 15) included a developmental history of problem behaviours, school-related difficulties and involvement with deviant peers. A second pathway to first sexual intercourse by age 16-18 was more weakly linked to problem behaviours, was rarely associated with school difficulties, and was associated with dating and positive peer relationships. Two potential pathways to delaying first sexual intercourse until age 18 or after were identified, with one more relevant for girls and one more applicable to boys. Some commonly studied factors were rarely significantly correlated with sexual behaviour, especially after adjusting for more proximal correlates such as dating. Two other key findings included the need to consider gender, and the evidence that ethnic background may play a moderating role when testing associations of adolescent sexual debut with individual and social factors, such as relationships with family.

### **Predicting participation in a volunteering event amongst church members: Ingroup identification and the theory of planned behaviour**

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The present study tested the applicability of the theory of planned behaviour and social identity theory in predicting intention towards and actual participation in a volunteer backyard blitz (makeover

of a school playground) conducted by Careforce Church, Melbourne. Eighty-seven members of Careforce Church completed an initial questionnaire, which measured attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control and intention towards volunteering, alongside levels of identification with Christianity and with Careforce Church, and three weeks later 59 of these completed a follow-up questionnaire measuring the extent of their participation in the event. Analyses showed attitude to have no predictive power when predicting a behaviour positively regarded by the majority of the sample, with gender, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control and an interaction between identification with Christianity and subjective norm (where higher identifiers perceive stronger subjective norm) predicting intention, and behaviour predicted by intention. Unsurprisingly, men had higher perceived behavioural control over, a more positive attitude towards, and stronger intention to participate in this kind of activity.

### **Face to face(book): The role of attachment in social networking**

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Since its launch in 2004, *Facebook* has emerged as one of the most popular social networking services with over 66 million active members (facebook.com, 2008). To date, the burgeoning social networking literature has concentrated on service membership, social impact and explanations for the continuing attraction of 2-D virtual communities. No research, however, has been conducted examining the role of attachment style in members' attraction to and use of social networking services. In this paper, engagement with, and use of, *Facebook* is examined in light of members' adult attachment styles as measured via the *Experiences in Close Relationships - Revised* questionnaire (Fraley, Waller & Brennan, 2000), a self-report measure of attachment style, attachment-related anxiety, and attachment-related avoidance in adult relationships. The relationship between 'offline' attachment style and engagement in online social networking was explored via a semi-structured Web-based survey. The reflection of 'offline' attachment style in online *Facebook* relationships will be described and implications for our understanding of 'virtual attachment' will be discussed.

