

Symposium Abstracts - Friday 16th July 2021

Listed by programme order

DCoP Research Programme 2019-21: from RCT to qualitative research on Clients' experiences of ACT, CBT, MBSR & psychodynamic therapy

Convenor: Professor Ho Chung Law, BPS DCoP/Empsy® R&D Group

Discussant: Elizabeth James

The Symposium showcases a £50,000 flagship research programme with the aim to advance knowledge in counselling psychology. The objectives were to raise the standard and level of engagements in research; and assess its impact on the profession, service users and the society. In the long term, we hope to maintain a high standard of professional competences with a research hub for counselling psychology. The research programme would jumpstart such development. Thus, each funded project must be exemplary with a high quality in terms of:

1. Relevance to counselling psychology.
2. Convincing rationale based on the literature.
3. Sound methodology.
4. Realistic timescales.
5. Value for money.
6. Impact of the work on the profession and / or practice.
7. Adequate dissemination strategy.

19 submissions received satisfied the above criteria and four were successful for the funding. These projects included in the symposium are:

1. {A pilot randomized controlled trial of cognitive behaviour therapy vs. cognitive psychodynamic therapy for depression}
2. {Client perspectives on preferences in therapy: A consensual qualitative research study}
3. {Survivors' stories: experiences of female perpetrated intimate partner abuse and help-seeking for mid-life and older male survivors}
4. {A randomised controlled trial of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Groups for University Students: A Pilot Study}.

An impact evaluation strategy for the whole programme will be presented at the end, followed by an open panel to answer any questions and to discuss on the structure of developing the Research Hub.



A pilot randomized controlled trial of cognitive behaviour therapy vs. cognitive psychodynamic therapy for depression

Dr Tony Ward¹, Dr Zoe Thomas¹, Daisy Walters¹

¹*University of the West of England*

Background: Many counselling psychology practitioners tend to combine a number of approaches in their work with clients. Such integrative approaches can be beneficial in allowing clients to benefit from different approaches according to their needs. However, integrative approaches are difficult to evaluate and NICE guidelines tend to refer to specific, pure, models of therapy. In the case of depression, both cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and psychodynamic approaches are recognised, but the assumption is that clients will receive one or the other. This study seeks to evaluate the efficacy of a combined approach, compared to a pure CBT approach.

Methods: Clients were recruited to a study using a randomised controlled design. Participants met DSM-V criteria for depression. Participants were randomised to receive either CBT, or CBT combined with psychodynamic perspectives (cognitive psychodynamic therapy, CPT). The PHQ-9 was used as an outcome measure. Change scores were compared across CBT and CPT groups. Participants were also followed up with interviews and this qualitative data is being analysed using thematic analysis.

Findings. To date, 25 participants have been recruited into the study. Full analysis will be complicated, as due to the pandemic many participants have received their sessions online. Preliminary analysis suggests that both approaches are efficacious, with no significant difference between the two.

Conclusions: An approach which combines CBT and psychodynamic approaches is likely to be as effective as a pure CBT approach. Some clients perceive that they gain from being able to reflect on their past experiences and relationships in therapy.



Client's experiences of preference accommodation in psychotherapy: A Consensual Qualitative Research

Mick Cooper¹, Gina Di Malta^{1,2}, Sarah Knox³, Hanne Oddli⁴, Joshua K. Swift⁵,
¹University of Roehampton, The Open University², ³Marquette University, Milwaukee, ⁴University of Oslo, ⁵Idaho State University

Background: The international psychotherapy field has seen an increasing recognition of the role that client preferences play in the psychotherapy decision-making process. Preference accommodation is associated with reduced dropout and improved outcome. Yet processes by which this happens have not been established.

Aims: The aim of this research is to conduct the first in-depth, qualitative investigation into client experiences of preferences and preference accommodation in therapy. We wanted to examine (a) what clients want from therapy; (b) whether they feel that these preferences have been elicited, discussed, and accommodated in their therapy; (c) whether this matters to them; (d) what they experience as facilitating, or impeding, in this work; and (e) the impact that this has on them.

Methodology: Consensual qualitative research (CQR) is a well-established and rigorous inductive psychotherapy method, in which researchers work collaboratively to achieve consensus in data analysis. We aimed to conduct interviews with 12 to 15 clients who have participated in a programme of pluralistic therapy.

Findings: We will present an initial insight into our emerging findings. We will also discuss the experience of analysing qualitative data in a group format, through CQR, and what we experienced as the benefits and limits of this process.

Conclusions: At the heart of counselling psychology is a desire to tailor therapy to the unique wants and needs of clients, but very little is known about how this is experienced by clients. Qualitative research in this area is essential to understanding the complexities of working with client preferences and the most effective means by which it can take place.



Survivors' stories: experiences of female perpetrated intimate partner abuse and help-seeking for mid-life and older male survivors

Dr Daisy Best¹, Dr Nikki Carthy¹, Dr Andy Divers¹
¹Teesside University, UK

Objectives: The lack of literature to explore older men who have survived female-perpetrated intimate partner abuse raises concerns about how males seek support or when presenting with injuries/psychological distress; where do they go to access support, and what services are available to them? Current knowledge and practice to support survivors of intimate partner abuse is heavily focused on a feminist discourse, which is not inclusive to males seeking help. Furthermore, the research that is available lacks a qualitative focus. Therefore, the study focuses on hearing the voices of those hidden survivors: mid-life and older males, to identify how services and individuals can respond to ensure their needs are met.

Design/ method: A narrative approach was implemented throughout the data collection to ensure the survivors' voices were central throughout the research. Interviews with mid-life to older aged men were conducted. Riessman's (2008) narrative analysis was carried to establish the various personal constructions of IPA and help-seeking experienced by this cohort of males.

Results/ Conclusions: The results of the study will provide a new source of information about a forgotten group of domestic violence survivors and the findings will help to educate key stakeholders and policy makers on how to most appropriately support mid-life to older males who are experiencing intimate partner abuse.

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A randomised controlled trial (RCT) of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Groups for University Students: A Pilot Study

Dr Jessica Jones Nielsen¹, **Dr Fran Smith**¹, Dr Trudi Edginton¹, **Dr Martina Gerada**¹, Dr Julianna Challenor², Ms Giulia Falangola¹,

¹City, University of London, ²Metanoia University

Objectives: Given the need for brief group interventions to help university students cope with mental health problems, the aim of this study is to pilot an RCT of a brief ACT and brief MBSR-informed group interventions for anxiety in university students, thus providing insight and preliminary outcome data to assess the feasibility of procedures for delivering mindfulness-based groups within university settings. It was hypothesised that intervention participants in both groups would demonstrate increases in mindfulness from pre- to post-intervention and decreases in anxiety in comparison to the waitlist control group (WLC) and that these differences would vary between groups.

Methodology: Participants (N=31) were randomised into either a 4-week intervention group informed by MBSR, a 4-week intervention group informed by ACT, or into a WLC, all completing an assessment battery at pre- and post-intervention time points.

Findings: The pilot study confirmed the feasibility of conducting mindfulness-based group interventions in a university setting for the reduction of anxiety. Findings revealed a significant reduction of the ACT group's post-intervention anxiety scores compared to the WLC group, as well as significant decreased anxiety between the ACT group's pre- and post-intervention measurements. Only some components of mindfulness resulted in significantly higher post-intervention within the ACT group alone.

Conclusions: Findings provide support for a group-based ACT intervention for university students.

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Workshop Abstracts - Friday 16th July 2021

Listed by programme order

Global Counselling Psychology Colloquy

Yetunde Ade-Serrano, Ashutosh Srivastava, Amanda Gilmour, Catriona Davis-McCabe, Mary O'Leary Wiley, Hang-Shim Lee, Charles Young

As we prepare for our annual conference on the "Age of Anxiety", we are taking the opportunity to connect with our international professional community who will share their various perspectives. Some of the international chairs of Divisions of Counselling Psychology will be joining us in celebration of the profession as well as reflecting on the year gone by. Some main points of discussion will be Counselling Psychology values, Learnings from the global pandemic, International advocacy and collaboration, and Managing the anxiety of our time.



What is Counselling Psychology & is it for me? For UG & PG not currently in training

Ben Amponsah, Elaine Kaskett, Terry Hanley

This session will provide an introduction to the profession of Counselling Psychology for those at undergraduate and postgraduate levels with an interest in pursuing a career in this field. The talk will speak to the ethos of Counselling Psychology and its defining features. It will focus on what you might expect from the application process, the interview, fees and funding options for the course, and what the training generally entails e.g. placement, therapy, supervision. Following presentations there will be time allocated for Q&A.



Working Affirmatively With Identity Based Trauma

Laura Scarrone Bonhomme¹; Dr Michael Beattie²

¹HCPC registered Chartered Clinical Psychologist, Head of Mental Health Services, Teladoc Health UK & Ireland,

²HCPC registered Chartered Counselling Psychologist, Teladoc Health UK

Background & Aims: Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) considers the operation of privilege and oppression through a range of intersecting identities. LGBTQI+ people may often have aspects of their identity problematised by others and can experience the shame of a stigmatised identity as a result. This subjective traumatic experience of oppression has been described as Identity Based Trauma.

In this engaging and interactive workshop, we explore existing research in the field of trauma to describe the processes and experiences that gender and sexually diverse individuals go through when realising their identity. Thinking about and conceptualising client experiences of being rejected or shamed because of aspects of their identity as trauma can help to unlock different ways of working with and working through client material.

The workshop aims to:

- Support a better understanding of gender, sexual, and relationship diversity
- Promote confidence to work affirmatively
- Learn how to rethink and apply trauma-informed approaches to work with IBT

Key elements: The workshop will explore the following:

- What is Identity Based Trauma and who may experience it
- Understanding the process and effects of trauma
- Why holding a stigmatised identity characteristic may be traumatic
- LGBTQI+ identities, shame and coping mechanisms
- Trauma informed ways of working with shame and stigma in LGBTQI+ identities

Conclusions: This interactive workshop seeks to reconceptualise shame and stigma in LGBTQI+ identities through a trauma-informed lens to enrich our practice with people who might have experienced traumatic oppression and stigmatisation simply because they hold a particular sexuality or gender identity characteristic.



“That’s what people do.., don’t they?” Recognising undiagnosed borderline ASD traits and implications for treatment

Dr Ariana Jordan¹

¹Metanoia Institute, London, UK, ²Jordan Educational Services Ltd, Kenley, UK

Background/Aims: According to the National Autistic Society, 1 in 100 people are on the autistic spectrum, with ever increasing diagnoses. The discourse of psychological literature on ASD is often positioned within abnormality and disability, which lacks relevance to the many people with borderline ASD traits, whose difficulties are more implicit and often undetected. For this population, the demands of everyday life in work and relationships, exacerbated by the current pandemic, often cause chronic and intense, generalised anxiety, which can result in burnout, relationship breakdown, and even suicidality. However, ASD’s characteristic nature means that psychological treatments can often be ineffective, leaving this population with added anxiety and distress. Drawing upon clinical practice and psychological literature, this interactive online workshop aims to equip participants with the ability to identify the possible presence of borderline ASD traits in their clients. Participants will also be guided in modifying their interventions when working with individuals and couples, so that outcomes can be more effective and inclusive.

Key Elements: The workshop will involve short informational presentations, interspersed with small group sessions where participants will be able to discuss modifications needed in their own treatment modalities in order to meet client need when working with individuals and couples.

Conclusions: Greater knowledge and understanding of the frequency of borderline ASD traits within the general population is currently needed. Through accurate detection, counselling psychologists and other healthcare professionals can adapt treatments and interventions so as to bring understanding and improved outcomes to this often troubled and lesser known community.



A Day in the Life of a Counselling Psychologist

Phillipa Capel, Christina Richards, Susan Stevens, Ohemaa Nkansa-Dwamena, Sue Whitcombe, Khushi Haria

The session will capture the array of Counselling Psychologists' experiences working in diverse settings in the UK. We will showcase Counselling Psychologists who work in various settings in order to illustrate their varied experiences and skills, as well as challenges faced in multiple contexts. This may include clinical practice, research, management, independent practice, teaching, service development and evaluation, and community outreach. Following six presentations there will be a 20 minutes time allocated for Q&A.



How and Why? Training pathways for counselling psychologists in neuropsychology

Dr Susan Van Scoyoc, Dr Louise Fletcher

This year significant changes have been made to open up post qualification training in neuropsychology.

For many years we have had counselling psychologists often working within neuropsychology posts but unable to access the further specialised training. This has now changed. This presentation will consider why one might want to take on this additional post qualification training and how this can be achieved.



Discussion Panel - Friday 16th July 2021

“Communicating A Vision for Transformation” - Working with GPs to manage anxiety in newly transformed ‘Community GP integrated Mental Health Services (GPimhs)’

Dr Anita Sattar-Jenkins, Dr David Kirkpatrick¹, Katherine Hulatt¹, Ana Pracchia¹, Balazs Adam¹, Dr Neelima Reddi¹

¹*Surrey And Borders Partnership NHS Trust, Surrey, United Kingdom*

Issues/themes focus on how patients battling with mental health difficulties struggle to identify with services and “meet the criteria” to access treatment. Patients continue to fall between the gaps of primary and secondary services. Stress and anxiety ripples through services, impacting GPs’ wellbeing and staff retention rates. I invite the audience to consider how bridging the gap diminishes the risk of splitting and the possibility of patients falling through the gaps in a 60-minute discussion panel. Evidence supporting GPimhs-working will be presented using data, service user and GP feedback.

The Chair invites her colleagues from GPimhs to present a patient’s journey, using pre-recorded presentations that showcase professional practice, thus demonstrating anxiety containment and utilizing a trauma-informed approach. The GPimhs administrator will demonstrate the referral process, showcasing how upskilled staff are ready to listen at the front door. The mental health practitioner showcases stepping out of the comfort zones of MDTs, how referrals are triaged and assessed to facilitate understanding and to normalise patient narratives, including a period of ‘checking-in’ and containment. The pharmacist and psychiatrist work collaboratively to eliminate anxiety across services and the consultant psychologist invites the audience to discuss the role of GPimhs, as an early implementer site involved in NHS England’s community mental health transformation program, breaking down the barriers between health, social care, voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations. Finally, the Chair highlights that GPimhs ensure that patients feel understood and are not passed to and from services, where rejection can potentially re-traumatise them.



Oral Presentations - Friday 16th July 2021

The Effects of Perceived Racial Difference on the Therapeutic Relationship

Ms Wei Xin Chan¹

¹*Glasgow Caledonian University*

Purpose: Following race-related events that transpired in 2020, I felt the age of anxiety catch up with me as I reflected on my own competencies with navigating inter-racial relationships in the context of therapy. This presentation provides an overview of research I undertook to explore the effects of perceived racial differences on the therapeutic relationship. I will highlight how these findings relate to the field of counselling psychology and our ethos in professional practice as a division.

Background: The presentation delineates the client and practitioner factors excavated from research, and their influence on inter-racial therapeutic relationships and therapy itself. The Racial/Cultural Identity Model (RCID) developed by Atkinson, Morten and Sue (1998) will be introduced to supplement our discussion about the more subtle elements that may undergird these therapeutic processes. I will further propose the implications these findings have on our professional practice, and share my own experiences and reflections from negotiating inter-racial therapeutic relationships in the position of a client in therapy, as well as a counselling psychologist trainee identifying as Singaporean-Chinese who facilitates therapy with clients in Scotland.

Method: Literature Search

Key Points: Inter-racial therapeutic relationships are not significant predictors of treatment outcome. While they may present with challenges, inter-racial therapeutic relationships could also bring to therapy elements facilitative of the client's internal processing and self-understanding.

Conclusions: Perceived racial difference may bear lesser weight on the therapeutic relationship than the practitioner's way of being in therapy. Ruptures within inter-racial therapeutic relationships are natural, and are also repairable.



How new case law impacts issues of consent, Fitness to Practice & litigation

Dr Philip Cox¹

¹*Psychotherapy & Counselling Union, Teddington, United Kingdom*

Practice Purpose: This presentation offers an important update on how new case law impacts the issues of consent and negligence. The aim is to raise awareness of how to safeguard self and others when seeking and recording consent, in order to avoid professional conduct issues or litigation problems.

Background: Regarding practice issues concerning informed consent and negligence, the Bolam test of acting in accordance with the practice of competent respected professional opinion has been superseded by the Supreme Court ruling in *Montgomery v Lanarkshire Health Board*.

Key Points: The new case law has overturned professional paternalism and replaced it with the value of self-determination. The patient/client is no longer a passive recipient of clinical treatment, but a partner in the provision of that treatment. However, while previous clinical and ethical dilemmas seem resolved new practice dilemmas have been created.

Conclusions: *Montgomery v Lanarkshire* impacts the consent process and can figure in Fitness to Practice cases and litigation. New practice dilemmas and potential practice pitfalls merit discussion and dissemination. Awareness of *Montgomery v Lanarkshire* is an ethical issue. A key limitation is how few practitioners and trainers seem aware of the new case law. Counselling Psychology's value of self-determination and exploration of ethical dilemmas places it at the heart of an informed debate, praxis and training.



The Experiences of Black and Minority Ethnic Trainees in the Counselling Psychology Profession in the United Kingdom

Dashnye Daloye¹

¹*The University of Manchester*

Aims - The aim of the study was to capture the training experiences of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) trainee counselling psychologists in the UK because there is a lacuna in the research and literature. It is hoped that the findings will highlight the experiences of BME trainees within the counselling psychology training courses.

Methods - A qualitative approach was adopted; semi-structured interviews were conducted with five self-identified BME trainees. The accounts were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Finding - The analytic procedure highlighted five main superordinate themes which were constructed from participants' accounts. All five participants contributed to every superordinate theme generated, which were: The need to belong; Lack of diversity; The impact of support on the self; Versatile BME trainee identity; and Managing a range of challenges. Each superordinate theme featured two related subordinate themes.

Conclusion - Initiatives to attract more applicants from BME groups need to be considered by training programmes, the British Psychological Society (BPS) and Division of Counselling Psychology (DCoP). Training programmes need to explicitly state their commitment to supporting trainees from BME groups with regards to their experiences of difference. Participants called for ethnic diversity in this profession. The importance of BME representation in the training arena was emphasised; BME trainees want to feel represented. In addition, the Eurocentric bias in the programmes' teaching process needs to be addressed.



Rethinking Cultural Competency in CBT: An Ethnographic Response for counselling psychologist

Baraa Gashlan¹

¹*University Of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom*

The purpose of this paper is to critically evaluate the cultural competency concept within counselling psychology and particularly within cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and present an ethnographic alternative. Herein I discuss cultural competency as conceptualised within the literature and evaluate the concept of culture as it exists in cultural competency models. I present the limitations of cultural competency especially in regard to the

definition of culture. Despite the growing number of studies that support the cultural competency approach, there remains a shortage of rigorous research evaluating the impact of certain cultural competency techniques on outcomes (Benuto & O'Donohue, 2015), including those concerned with mitigating the effects of racial and ethnic disparities. Therefore, health systems are struggling to improve their services to minority populations and demand proof, in the form of empirical evidence, that cultural competency actually "works" (Coye & Alvarez, 1999; Lavizzo-Mourey & Mackenzie, 1996). Although, there is substantial research to suggest that cultural competency should work, health systems lack evidence about which cultural competency techniques are effective and less evidence on how to implement them properly. Furthermore, much of the cultural competency literature discusses the importance of cultural awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and skills but does not describe how a health system is supposed to become culturally competent. An ethnographic approach is also presented to be considered by therapists to go beyond traditional concepts of culture and adopt more contemporary ones. By using the ethnographic approach, Counselling psychologist can enhance the therapeutic relationship and go beyond offering empathy.



What can counselling psychologists do about prescribed drug dependence?

Dr Anne Guy²

¹Department of Psychology, University of Roehampton, London , United Kingdom, ²All-Party Parliamentary Group for Prescribed Drug Dependence, , Purpose

This presentation aims to highlight the professional practice implications of prescribed psychiatric drug dependence and withdrawal.

Background: Psychiatric drug prescribing has almost doubled in the last 20 years, with nearly a quarter of the adult UK population prescribed a psychiatric drug in the last year. Following a Public Health England review, the Royal College of Psychiatrists (2019) acknowledged that dependency on and withdrawal from prescription drugs can be a significant problem. A recent survey of therapists found that most said they would welcome professional guidance when working with this issue. In response to these developments, the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Prescribed Drug Dependence facilitated the development of guidance for psychological therapists which has now been published.

Methods/ Key points: Counselling psychologists face a range of issues when working in this field including: keeping to the boundaries of professional competence; the need for information about drug effects and withdrawal reactions; and the impact of psychiatric drugs on therapeutic work. This presentation will summarise the main issues and professional practice implications for those working with clients taking or withdrawing from psychiatric drugs. It will also highlight opportunities for further training.

Conclusions: This presentation aims to help counselling psychologists understand their role in supporting clients to make informed decisions about their therapeutic treatment when taking or withdrawing from prescribed psychiatric drugs. Participants will be encouraged to refer to the new professional guidance now available and to consider their practice in the light of debates about the medical model of psychological distress.



Racialized Representations of Muslims and Islam in the Social Media: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Pakistani Muslim HE students' perceptions and experiences

Ms Ishba Rehman¹

¹University Of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

Background: Research specific to Muslim minority perspectives on social media representations of Islam is limited, and literature pertaining to Muslim students experiences of the phenomenon, almost non-existent.

Methodology: As part of the study, six Muslim students attending university education in Britain were interviewed (using semi structured interviews) regarding their perceptions and experiences of the dominant social media depictions of Muslims and Islam. An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of the data collected led to the development of four key super-ordinate themes (with 11 sub-themes).

Findings: An intersectional approach was taken to identify the 4 key themes. These included: 'The self within the world of social media', 'The self and the other', 'Making sense of intersecting identities' and 'Processing and coping'. The study found the social media to be significant in the development and transmission of negative portrayals pertaining to Muslims and Islam. Such portrayals were found to be relevant to the lived experience of the participants particularly in relation to how they construct and experience their multiple intersecting identities (including their psychosocial impact).

Conclusions: The findings of the research are aimed at offering an understanding of the discursive power of the social media particularly in forming perceptions pertaining to racialized identities and in turn inform psychological research and practice in relation to working with this diverse ethnic and religious group.

Key words: Muslims, Islam, Social Media, psychosocial, lived experience, intersecting identities.

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What Effect Can the Integration of Counselling Psychology and Exercise Have on Addressing Anxiety in Men?

Mr Oliver Twizell¹

¹University Of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

The purpose of this presentation is to address the under-researched area of utilising sport within UK counselling psychology, with a specific focus on how to engage men struggling with mental health and to address their difficulties with anxiety. Within the UK, men are less likely than women to seek support related to their mental ill-health however, more men are referred to acute mental health hospitals. This indicates that there is a large proportion of men who are affected by mental ill-health but are not voluntarily accessing support when anxiety symptoms are presenting. A substantive literature search is explored on how sport may be an appropriate vehicle to approach some men currently not engaging in therapy in its traditional form with suggestions offered on how to better engage these men. This exploration looks at further opportunities for counselling psychology to integrate exercise within the therapy setting with the view to reduce anxiety. This presentation addresses the current limited literature on the effects exercise can have on anxiety and presents opportunities for integrating exercise and counselling psychology to support male wellbeing. Exercise within therapy is a vastly under-utilised tool and this presentation explores the exciting opportunities for counselling psychology to take a lead on this. Reflective practice will be utilised within a humanistic framework in order to encourage a broader, more genuine way of relating to men without the constraints of a medical model.

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Poster Abstracts - Friday 16th July 2021

Theme: Multicultural

Listed by presenting day and theme then alphabetical by presenting author

Brexit: the non-native speaking counselling and psychotherapy trainees' lived experience of working with native speaking clients

Giovanna Bucci¹, Mr Alan Priest¹

¹*Metanoia Institute, London, United Kingdom*

Objectives: The socio-political changes occurring in post-Brexit UK are likely to have an impact on the increasing number of non-native therapists and counselling psychologists who live and practice here. This study tackles the under-researched area of non-native trainees practicing in post-Brexit UK and their lived experience of working in English as their second language with native speaking clients.

Methods: Following ethical approval (Ref: 14/20-21), data was collected from individual, semi-structured interviews of 6 non-native psychotherapy and counselling trainees (age range=20-49) working in post-Brexit UK. In order to gain in-depth information on their subjective accounts, data was analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

Results: Themes emerged of Brexit and the practitioner's use of Self, the emotional experience of Brexit, Brexit as catalyst for power-dynamics, compliance and acceptance. Participants described heterogeneous effects of Brexit on key aspects of their life, training and practice, including complex and painful feelings: grief, fear, non-nativeness-related anxiety, disempowerment and a sense of betrayal and resentment for feeling unwanted and violated in their rights.

Also, participants highlighted the roles played by native clients, supervisors and personal therapists.

Conclusions: The study raised important questions about the impact of Brexit on the well-being of non-native counselling and psychotherapy trainees living and practising in the UK, on their sense of identity and belonging, and on the dynamics forming and emerging in the room. Hopefully, these findings will raise further awareness concerning non-native practitioners' need for appropriate support during training.



Exploring the role of cultural orientation on pain experience and coping strategies of pain patients in West Midlands Pain Clinics

Laura Buzzing¹

¹*University Of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton, United Kingdom*

Chronic pain is defined as persistent pain lasting over three months, with no end point, biological explanation and psychological difficulties. Several studies have reported that culturally informed coping strategies play a significant role in self-management of chronic pain, influencing pain behaviours, severity, chronicity and beliefs an individual holds about their pain experience. Due to a paucity of mixed methods research in this area, this approach will be used to ground the research in patients' individual experiences, stemming from a philosophically pragmatic viewpoint.

The aim of this research is to provide deeper insight into the relationships between cultural orientation and patients' pain severity, chronicity, coping strategy and experience.

150 -200 participants will be recruited from NHS Hospitals, offering pain management services in the West Midlands, and advertisements on social media. Participants will answer the following questionnaires through Qualtrics: Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture, McGill Pain Inventory: Short Form, Pain Coping Inventory and Pain Catastrophising Scale. The results will be analysed by Structural Equation Model (SEM), a multivariate statistical technique, conducted through SPSS AMOS. Participants will be asked to volunteer for a semi-structured interview, analysed using thematic analysis.

By triangulating both studies, expected findings will be that cultural orientation will affect severity, chronicity and influence coping strategies and individual pain experience. An idiographic approach where each person's unique psychological structure emerges, explaining their coping strategies, will lead study results.

The results of this study will inform clinical practice for counselling psychologists working in West Midlands pain clinics with patients suffering from chronic pain.

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Systematic Review: Views of Arabs who live in English-speaking countries about mental health illnesses and psychotherapy services

Baraa Gashlan¹

¹*University Of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom*

Purpose: This paper aimed to review qualitative literature about how Arabs in English-speaking countries perceive and talk about mental health illnesses and psychotherapy services.

Background: The number of Arabs who live in English-speaking countries has been steadily increasing in the past years. The current literature confirms that Arabs in English-speaking countries face more mental health issues than other populations (Samari, 2016; Hamid & Furnham, 2013) but little research has been conducted to understand how Arabs experience mental health illnesses and utilise psychological services.

Methods: A systematic review of the literature has been conducted on selected qualitative empirical studies related to Arabs' mental health. Five digital databases (Scopus, PsychInfo, ASSIA, Medline and CINAHL Plus) were searched up to January 2019. 48 identified studies were evaluated for eligibility resulting in 7 studies qualified for data analysis. The quality of identified studies was assessed according to the guidelines for reviewing qualitative research, as outlined by Elliott, Fischer and Rennie (1999). The findings/results of the identified studies were analysed using a thematic synthesis for systematic reviews of qualitative research.

Results: Thematic analysis showed four main themes and twelve subthemes. The main themes are: assumptions about mental illness, perceptions about psychotherapy, factors affecting Arabs help-seeking behaviour, and barriers to seeking mental health help.

Conclusions: The findings of this review supported previous literature that Arabs in English countries tend to underutilise services due to their perceptions about mental illness and psychotherapy.

Keywords: Arabs, mental health, systematic review, English-speaking countries.

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Cultural and religious influences in developing mental health perceptions in Muslim young people: A grounded theory research

Iman Idjer¹

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Studies that have looked specifically at mental health in Muslims are limited (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011), however the little that are available suggest that Muslim residents in Western countries did not often use the services provided. The use of Islamic practice such as prayer, as coping mechanisms for adversities in life has been recognised as the main reason why mental health services are not sought, whilst other reasons include mental health stigma and stereotypes that exist in society (Ciftci, Jones & Corrigan, 2013). Given the immersive status of the Islamic faith, the present project aims to contribute to and build upon existing research and theory on how culture and religion impacts the development of young Muslim people's mental health perception in the UK by implementing a qualitative methodology. By implementing Grounded Theory, it allows room for the research to be constructed under conditions we may or may not be aware of rather than discovered which fosters the researchers' reflexivity about their actions and decisions (Charmaz, 2014). This will be useful in this study as it allows the data to guide and shape the direction that the findings provide. This allows the research to explore the processes of development of young Muslims' mental health perception and the way in which culture and religion have an influence. The findings of the study will shed light on the significant factors in the field of mental health literacy for this population, aiming to inform mental health services and interventions, including those of Counselling Psychologists.

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Beyond Multicultural Competency: Pluralistic Multicultural Orientation Treatment (PMCOT)

Daryl Mahon¹

¹*Outcomes Matter*

The present conceptual paper offers a model of multicultural treatment that seeks to learn from the client their important cultural identities. Pluralistic Multicultural Orientation Treatment (PMCOT) is a process-based attitudinal approach on the part of the practitioner when working with diversity and can complement the competency approach. The multicultural perspective has been discussed within the literature for many decades, however, the evidence is mixed as to its overall effectiveness. The present conceptual paper reviews effective components of multicultural practice, and effective methods for working with diversity in general, and assimilates them into this conceptual model. Multicultural Orientation, Illness Myth, Pluralistic therapy, and Feedback Informed Treatment provide the key processes of PMCOT and its commitment to learning from clients, not about clients their important cultural identities as they present in the therapy relationship. A discussion provides both strengths and limitations to this model and explores areas for further research.



The psychological experience of second-generation Somalis whose parents were forced to migrate during the Civil War: an interpretative phenomenological analysis

Raisa Kumaga¹

¹*University of East London*

Children of parents who fled during the Civil war often navigate and manage different identities while striving to succeed in life despite bearing the legacy of the forced migration. Studies on the mental health of refugees generally focus on the direct experience of forced migration but tend to ignore the experience of the second-generation. The holocaust survivor studies and other communities emphasise on the importance of understanding the offspring. Sangalang & Vang, (2017); and Danieli, (1998) suggest that the families that were affected by war develops traumatic symptoms that affect the next generation's mental health. The challenge with these studies are that it is mainly focused on the transmission of trauma supported by quantitative analysis under an objectivist paradigms, and do not provide a clear understanding of the subjective meaning and experience of second-generation individuals.

The meaning is unclear for Somali second-generation living in the UK since they are raised within a refugee family and are largely classified under the BAME label, which fails to reveal the unique experience of individuals. This study aims to explore the psychological experience of second-generation Somalis whose parents were forced to migrate during the Somali Civil war in the 90's. Using Interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith, 2009), the study will highlight the subjective psychological experience of second-generation Somalis living in the UK. This study shall contribute to the field of Counselling Psychology by elucidating the experience of the adult children of refugee parents which will inform formulation and assessment as well as improve access to psychological services.



Poster Abstracts - Friday 16th July 2021

Theme: Clinical

Listed by presenting day and theme then alphabetical by presenting author

How neurodiverse couples make sense of their experiences in couples therapy: an interpretative phenomenological study

Camilla Anello¹

¹Regent's University London

Current research surrounding neurodiverse couples prioritises the experiences of neurotypical partners in couples therapy and is predominantly located within the medical framework. It has a “deficit” focus and the subjective experiences of both partners are overlooked while a disabling process is observed within therapy. The experiences of heterosexual neurodiverse couples are mainly explored, with a male autistic partner and a female neurotypical partner. This constructs a restrictive view of neurodiverse couples’ experiences and other couples’ experiences are underrepresented. Considering these limitations, it is necessary to focus on the lived experiences of both partners within couples therapy from a counselling psychology perspective (CoP). This research has received ethical clearance and investigates “how neurodiverse couples make sense of their subjective experiences within couples therapy”. It aims to increase the understanding of the experiences of neurodiverse couples and develop practice recommendations for professionals. A critical realist position is taken to gain insight into participants’ meaning making. Semi-structured interviews were conducted via Zoom and analysed by an interpretative phenomenological analysis. Six couples were recruited through social media. Participants had received couples therapy and were in a relationship where one partner self-identified as autistic and one as neurotypical. Analysis is still underway, although initial themes were identified: couples therapy in a “neurotypical world”, lack of understanding of autism and different neurodiversities. This research aligns to the CoP’s social justice agenda as it represents overlooked individuals from a marginalised group and will contribute by bringing awareness to CoPs about how to best support neurodiverse couples.

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Listening Beyond Words: How Can the Communication, Sensory and Relational Experiences of Non-Speaking Autistic Adults Guide Psychotherapeutic Practice?

Keri Delport¹

¹Regents University London, London, United Kingdom

While studies suggest that 70-80% of individuals diagnosed with autism experience mental health challenges, evidence is ambiguous in psychology about what constitutes evidence-based treatment for the range of people on the autism spectrum. Current research lacks direct input from autistic individuals feeding into psychotherapeutic interventions, particularly from those who are non-speaking. Counselling psychology, with its phenomenological values, and focus on a co-constructed intersubjectivity, offers a different opportunity for engagement with clients whose sense-making on both embodied and cognitive levels, is communicated differently. This is in contrast with mainstream behavioural perspectives. Epistemologically seated in social constructionism, this constructivist grounded theory study explores how sensory, communication and relational experiences of non-speaking autistic adults can guide psychotherapeutic practice. Participants include non-speaking autistic adults residing within the UK or USA, who communicate primarily through language-based alternative and augmentative communication (AAC). Following ethical approval by Regents University London, data collection has commenced and 8 semi-structured interviews have so far been conducted using multiple online mediums. Data coding and analysis occur concurrently to data-collection and reflexivity is used throughout the research process. Initial coding has highlighted processes of shutting down (emotionally and communicatively) when verbal communication is forced, or AAC misinterpreted. Interim data suggests the need for a nuanced and integrative therapeutic approach which authentically and inclusively engages with autistic embodiment, self-regulation and meaning-making. It is hoped that this research will contribute to counselling psychology and wider practice through the conceptualisation of a sensitised model of understanding and working psychotherapeutically with non-speaking autistic adults.

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Emotion-focused therapy in the emotion regulation process for adults with depression

Joseph Mathew¹

¹Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow, United Kingdom

Abstract: The person-centred experiential (PCE) approach, such as Emotion -Focused Therapy (EFT), has an essential role in the modern psychological therapeutic approach. EFT is the evidence-based and manualised treatment for depression.

Background: EFT main goal is to help clients experience their core vulnerabilities by attending, arousing, and exploring their maladaptive schemes. Gradual exploration of these experiences allows reaching the core experiences of vulnerability. Depression conditions are widely viewed as the result of difficulties in regulating emotions or reduced use of adaptive forms of emotion regulation. During EFT therapy, an emotional process affects reappraisal strategies, which modifies the emotional framing experiences and the emotion regulation process.

Methods: This systematic review was conducted by following the guidelines of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Met-Analyses (PRISMA), between 2012 and 2020.

Results: After the initial process, potentially relevant studies were retrieved to evaluate the full texts, and finally, seven papers were selected for this literature review. These studies found a significant outcome in the therapeutic process, adaptive emotions and transform maladaptive emotions to organise the client for adaptive responses. Evidence showed that clients have an improvement in an emotional change process during EFT therapy, which has influenced their depression symptom reduction.

Conclusion : EFT therapeutic techniques are very effective to stimulate the arousal of emotion and its processing. Recommendation: For future study needs to include the measuring emotion regulation amongst standard tools currently used in the EFT sessions to deepen understanding of clients' experiencing and emotion regulation.



Understanding Visible Differences

Vivienne Purcell¹

¹*Private Practice, Lyndhurst, United Kingdom*

This poster presents an outline consideration of issues for clinicians working with clients who live with a visible difference. This is a broad category, including those whose appearance is altered by illness or injury, making them 'look different', as well as those born with differences such as rosacea, missing limb, or craniofacial condition. Whatever the cause, visible difference can have a negative effect on how individuals are perceived and view themselves. One in five people have an appearance that is considered 'different' to the 'normal' population.

These differences can resonate throughout a person's lived experience, become a focus of bullying and discrimination, and impact on their mental health. There is rising professional interest in this area, due to growth of social media and the focus this puts on appearance, with some observing an increased 'beauty bias'. The impact of this, and how these concerns may be brought to therapy are highly varied.

Presenting issues for this group may not include appearance concerns, so the clinician needs to have skills in assessment and therapeutic engagement to understand how or if this impacts on the presenting problems. They also need to consider the impact of their own unexamined beliefs and fears on the therapeutic relationship. An understanding of strengths and resilience in the face of prejudice is needed, alongside the expected avoidance strategies.

Based on her 2020 book, published by Palgrave Macmillan, and including original research, Viv examines key issues in addressing the perspectives of those who live with visible difference.



An investigation into the impact of visual imagery ability on the development and experience of Mindfulness

Orla Smith¹

¹*University of Wolverhampton*

Mindfulness-based interventions employing multisensory visualizations report positive outcomes across health concerns, including anxiety, chronic pain, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder. A major difficulty reported is the high attrition rate, particularly in non-clinical populations. Visual imagery ability (VVIQ), the ability to create mental images of unseen objects, may explain such attrition. Virtual environments (VE) could effectively support

those low in VVIQ with mindfulness. The aim of this research is to explore the impact of individual differences in VVIQ in relation to state mindfulness. 140-160 non-clinical participants will be randomly assigned to one of three conditions: VE mindful exercise, mindful audio exercise, and a control. They will complete the following measures: Vividness of Visual Imagery Questionnaire (VVIQ), State Mindfulness Scale (SMS), SUS Presence Questionnaire, Likert scales assessing acceptability, future use, and enjoyment, and two open-ended experiential questions as qualitative measures. A mixed ANOVA will investigate interactions between VVIQ and mindfulness condition, and between all dependent variables. Thematic analysis will be applied to qualitative data to develop common themes. Expected outcomes are that there will be a significant interaction between VVIQ and mindfulness conditions; individuals high in VVIQ will experience similar increases in state mindfulness across the audio and VE conditions, individuals low in VVIQ will experience a more pronounced increase in state mindfulness in the VE condition, and compared to the low VVIQ audio condition, low VVIQ VE participants will report greater enjoyment and willingness to engage in future mindfulness practice. The results of this study will inform effective mindfulness-based intervention delivery.



Workshop Abstracts - Saturday 17th July 2021

Listed by programme order

Turn the Tide on Climate Anxiety: How applied psychology can support sustainable action.

Patrick Kennedy

The past few years have seen a substantial increase in the popular awareness of how climate change interacts with mental health. As a result, a growing number of psychologists have sought to offer what they can, in terms of understanding our individual and collective responses to climate information, promoting wellbeing, and supporting meaningful action. This workshop provides an overview of our current understanding of the intersection between mental health and climate change, including so-called 'indirect effects' such as climate anxiety, and key psychological mechanisms involved in resilience and adaptation. Reflecting on the work undertaken by Climate Psychologists thus far, with both individuals and various organisational groups, the workshop will then provide insights into the role of applied psychology in the wider climate movement, considering the specificities of working across global cultures and communities.



Workplace bullying and racial inequality: an existential-phenomenological exploration of the phenomenon and implications to the in-training counselling psychologist's clinical practice

Miss Maria Galani¹

¹*Visiting Psychology Lecturer at Kingston University London, London, United Kingdom*

Background/Aims: The present workshop aims to provide further understanding around the relationship between workplace bullying and racial inequalities during Covid-19 times among in- training counselling psychologists. Clinical practice implications and recommendations will also be discussed.

Expected outcomes: By the end of the workshop, it is expected that participants will have gained a better and more in-depth understanding of the complexities involved in workplace bullying and its association to racial inequalities.

Key elements, skills and activities covered: Experiential methods such as self-reflection, interactive dialogue and anonymised case discussions with participants, will be used during the workshop. Participants will have a better insight into the impact of workplace bullying on individuals, who have experienced racial injustice.

Conclusions: It is expected that participants will develop better awareness in choosing suitable therapeutic interventions with clients who have experienced workplace bullying in the form of racial discrimination.

Format of the workshop: In the first part of the workshop the facilitator will present the theoretical background (15-20 minutes) of the current topic. The second part will be experiential (30 minutes). The final part of the workshop (10-15 minutes) will focus on clinical practice outcomes and recommendations for clinical practice.

Risks there might be to participants and safeguarding actions in place: The workshop's activities (as described above) may evoke emotional distress due to personal challenges/difficulties. Therefore, all group members will need to verbally consent that the material of the workshop will remain confidential.



What is Counselling Psychology & is it for me? For UG & PG not currently in training

Dashney Daloye, Zoe Thomas

This session will provide an introduction to the profession of Counselling Psychology for those at undergraduate and postgraduate levels with an interest in pursuing a career in this field. The talk will speak to the ethos of Counselling Psychology and its defining features. It will focus on what you might expect from the application process, the interview, fees and funding options for the course, and what the training generally entails e.g. placement, therapy, supervision. Following presentations there will be time allocated for Q&A.



Understanding climate and environmental crises in relation to counselling psychology: A way forward.

Maya Gimalova

Climate change and environmental degradation have become undeniable realities. Research literature shows that changes in the environment and climate have negative impacts not only on people's physical health but also on psychological well-being, manifesting in emotional responses such as helplessness, anxiety, guilt, despair and grief. This situation raises a question about what counselling psychology's role in this is? How can we contribute both as professionals and in our individual lives? This workshop will serve as a platform for discussing these important questions. Furthermore, based on a survey conducted amongst some members of the Division of Counselling Psychology, it was revealed that qualified and training counselling psychologists wish to be informed about the consequences of climate change or environmental degradation, want to learn how to respond appropriately to clients facing climate change problem, and many expressed the need for further training. This workshop attempts to address some of these needs. In the first part I will be providing a brief overview of some relevant research literature on climate change and its impacts on human well-being. Consumed by daily lives, we rarely take a moment to pause and reflect on our connectedness to nature and what feelings might be evoked in realising its loss. Therefore, one of the aims of this workshop is to bring participants closer to this issue, we will engage in some experiential activities that are inspired by practices from deep-ecology. Additionally, it will include collaborative discussion about how counselling psychologists might address climate-related problems in various contexts.



QCoP. Questions and Answers Session for Candidates and Co-ordinating Supervisors

Prof Pam James, Dr.Nicola Hogan

The Chair of the QCoP Board and the Chief Assessor will be available to answer questions relating to the Qualification in Counselling Psychology (Independent Route). This will be of particular interest to many delegates, including current candidates who may appreciate the opportunity to speak directly to members of the Board. If you are a co-ordinating supervisor this will also be your opportunity to discuss issues and ask questions about the qualification. The undergraduate and postgraduate delegates here, who are considering counselling psychology as a career choice, may also find this a useful session to discover more about the new route to chartership as a counselling psychologist.



The Mental Health Benefits of Nature

Dr Alison Greenwood

This workshop presentation will explore the mental health benefits of engaging with the natural world. With reference to the work of the mental health charity, Dose of Nature, it will consider the benefits of an increased connection to our natural environment, both from a theoretical and practical perspective. The session will provide an overview of the dominant theories, and a brief summary of the research evidence from the past 40 years of scientific investigation. In addition, it will introduce participants to the individual elements of nature, the "active ingredients", that have a positive impact on specific psychological and physiological processes.

The workshop will describe Dose of Nature's 10-week nature prescription programme, for individuals referred by their GP with a wide range of mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, trauma, and addiction. It will also include some practical activities and exercises that attendees might incorporate into their own clinical practice in order to increase their clients' nature connectedness. At the end of the session, it is hoped that attendees will have a greater understanding of the mental health benefits of nature, as well as some practical ways of increasing their clients' engagement with the natural world.

Given the subject matter, no risks to participants are anticipated, but an email address will be provided at the end of the session, should any of the material cause undue distress.



Accessible Neuroscience for Anxiety: Actionable steps forward for our clients (and ourselves)

Heather Sequeira

Understanding the neurobiology of trauma, anxiety and stress can help us re-frame the often highly distressing responses of our brain, nervous system and body.

Far from being pathologising, it can be profoundly helpful to understand that the mechanisms behind the stress response are biologically well-understood and embedded in both the brain and body. In addition, it is empowering to know that we can translate this knowledge into practical applications to push back against the stress response. In this workshop we will distil recent research findings from neuroscience into usable knowledge in a way which invites a de-stigmatising view of high stress and anxiety. We will look at the neuronal networks of the stress response. Plus the cascade of reactions that set off the 'fight and flight' reactions into our bodies. We will also look at how our earliest experiences of attachment, predictability and threat can predispose our adult nervous system into different levels of threat arousal. Particular attention is given to the embodied brain and the social-emotional nature of stress and anxiety.

Specifically, we will be taking a brief tour of this fast-evolving field, including:

- Understanding three types of stress (2 helpful, 1 unhelpful)
- Understanding the cascade of reactions that deposit adrenaline, acetylcholine and other chemicals into the body
- Understanding the way our early attachments calibrate our stress system
- Learning practical applications that we can use ourselves / with clients to manage our state of alertness.
- Understand how distinct breath patterns affect feelings of stress and alertness. Plus how we can utilise them.
- How to work alongside our biological clock to promote effective stress coping
- How sleep interacts with the stress response
- Understanding the effect of physical exercise on stress reactivity

After attending this workshop attendees should walk away with insights from the world of neurobiology to augment our psychological therapies to lessen worry, enhance wellbeing and inspire meaningful action.



Discussion panel - Saturday 17th July 2021

How can counselling psychologists engage with minority ethnic communities in relation to COVID-19 pandemic?

Dr Dominique Fray-Aitken¹, Anamika Majumdar¹, Alisha Sinclair¹, Latoyah Gittens¹

¹*Black And Asian Counselling Psychologists Group*

Chair: Dr Dominique Fray-Aitken

Panellists: Anamika Majumdar, Alisha Sinclair, and Latoyah Gittens

Background: Considering the current social and political climate, it is important to consider how counselling psychologists engage with minority ethnic communities to start to repair relationships that may be deeply rooted in feelings of mistrust. These feelings may originate from experiences of social injustice and it is important for us to consider what role we play in maintaining these feelings of mistrust and how we can moderate or change them in order to better support minority ethnic communities during the COVID-19 pandemic and these challenging times.

Aims: We aim to: highlight the portrayal of minority ethnic communities in the media during the pandemic; understand why these communities may be experiencing increased anxiety regarding their health and mortality and how this impacts health behaviours; identify strategies to improve engagement in psychological therapy; and raise ethical considerations and obstacles to engagement.

Key Elements: This 60-minute discussion will touch on a brief history of the treatment of ethnic minorities in healthcare and then progress to discussing the aims of the panel, which will include roleplays to demonstrate strategies, ethical considerations and obstacles to engagement. A reflective space will also be provided for both the panel and the audience to reflect on the processes discussed during this panel discussion.

Conclusions: Counselling psychologists have the capacity to continue to make a difference in the processes of working effectively with minority ethnic communities and this reflective panel discussion will hopefully highlight additional considerations and methods to continue to improve our work and engagement with these communities.



Oral Presentation Abstract - Saturday 17th July 2021

Happiness Revisited: a literature review on happiness

Mr Jose Syam Kumar Bandi

¹*Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow, Scotland*

The opinion paper presentation aims to review the contributions of the earlier studies on the area of happiness. There is no dearth of research on negative aspects people struggle with, but there is not enough research on the positive aspects people cherish. The secondary data collection was drawn on the theme of happiness reflected in three different sections. Firstly, the religious view on happiness reflected in various world religions, both Oriental and Semitic. Secondly, the views of notable philosophers of different periods were referred.. Finally, the scientific studies by positive psychologists like Martin Seligman and Ed Diener were explored. The presentation is based on the theoretical foundations of Humanistic Psychology and Positive Psychology. Maslow felt that psychology had only a 'pessimistic, negative, and limited conceptions of human beings. It had dwelt far more on human frailties than on human strengths, seeking to explore people's sins while neglecting their virtues. Psychology, he said, has voluntarily restricted itself to only half of its rightful jurisdiction and that the darker, meaner half. Building on Abraham Maslow, Martin Seligman and others developed research interest on positive aspects and Happiness studies. A few authors have called Ed Diener as 'Dr. Happiness'. The presentation concludes that while studying the negative aspects of human personality, it is vital to investigate the positive aspects like happiness. Negative aspects of life are not solely the absence of positive ones. Positive and negative aspects can coexist. Studying happiness will help people to find ways to seek and pursue happiness.



Psychological Strategies and Interventions in the Treatment of (Adult) Third Culture Kids: A Systematic Scoping Review

Dr Laura Cariola^{1,2}, Dr Kareena McAloney-Kocaman¹

¹Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow, United Kingdom, ²University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Purpose: The aim of this scoping review was to systematically search the academic and non-academic literature to synthesise and critically appraise the evidence-base of psychological counselling strategies and interventions in the treatment of the (A)TCK population presenting with psychological distress.

Background: The term “Third Culture Kid” (TCK) describes children whose parents are in globally mobile employment, such as members of the armed forces, NGOs and intergovernmental employees. The term (A)TCK characterises TCKs reaching adulthood. (A)TCKs often encounter challenges, such as repeated relocations and relational losses, which are risk factors for the development of various mental health problems.

Methods/Key Points: A search of academic and grey literature was conducted using the ASSIA, CINAHL, ProQuest, PsycInfo, Scopus, Sociological Abstracts, and Web of Science Core Collection databases published before December 2020. Inclusion criteria focused on English language publications and talking therapies relevant to ATCKs (≥18 years). Twenty-six articles were included that provided information on the current state of the evidence-base of psychological counselling strategies and interventions in the treatment of the (A)TCK population.

Conclusion: The identified literature is largely heterogeneous in relation to aims, focus and methodology. One shared key element is the provision of a safe environment in which (A)TCK clients feel supported to explore their transcultural identity and transitional experiences. The literature puts forward various interventions, including relational, humanistic and integrative approaches, to resolve identity and relational problems associated with (A)TCKs mobile upbringing. Highlighted is the ethical obligation of practitioners to deliver culturally appropriate psychological interventions for a growing transcultural population.



How to respect the client's narcissistic defences: omnipotence of thought and thought action fusion in OCD

Dr. Tanya Carpenter¹

¹University Of Worcester, UK

Purpose: The purpose of the paper is to draw parallels between what Freud termed 'omnipotence of thought' and what CBT refers to as 'thought action fusion' (TAF). In so doing, the paper proposes recommendations for a more integrative approach to this phenomena which has been observed primarily in OCD, but also found in depression, eating disorders and anxiety disorders.

Background: In his 1913 writings on 'totem and taboo', Freud outlines the concept of 'omnipotence of thought' as reported by his patient 'The Rat Man'. Freud discusses the importance of this narcissistic defence to protect against the fear of total powerlessness.

The current paper posits that 100 years later, this phenomena occurs in CBT literature under the name 'likelihood thought-action fusion'. This cognitive distortion has struggled to reliably respond to traditional CBT techniques despite its counterpart 'moral thought action fusion' responding well to the same intervention.

Methods: The current paper therefore analyses the literature pertaining to the two concepts (omnipotence of thought and likelihood TAF) to demonstrate parallels between the two phenomena.

Keypoints: In so doing, the paper highlights potential reasons roadblocks may occur with thought challenging in likelihood TAF since psychodynamically, this technique may be experienced as an attack on an important defence.

Conclusion: The paper proposes that there is a need to work more integratively to consider and respect this defence and to explore its underlying use with clients by employing appropriate formulation work, considering the therapeutic relationship and allowing the client choices within the therapy framework.



Why do female adolescents stop cutting? An interpretative phenomenological analysis

Ms Helen Holmes¹

¹NHS, London, UK, ²Roehampton University, London, UK

Background: There has been a recent sharp rise in female adolescent self-harm. With a wealth of literature on why female adolescents self-harm, there is a paucity about why females stop. Self-harm amongst female adolescents is a rising problem; inadequate self-harm identification and engagement with treatment being central hurdles. The predicted main difficulties of self-harm for female adolescents appeared social, such as impulsivity, self-regulation and self-punishment, improved by a more thorough understanding of this complex problem by family, peers, schools, and services. Aims of this study: 1) to explore the social and other lived experiences contributing to female adolescent self-harm cessation, for which there is a paucity of research; 2) to increase understanding of the complexity of self-harm and for this to be channelled into creating better informed and effective interventions; 3) to create detailed, specialized training for staff in schools and outreach for excluded female adolescents; 4) to contribute to theoretical and clinical knowledge. Methodology: This qualitative study explores the social and other lived experiences contributing to female adolescent self-harm cessation; the first interpretative phenomenological analysis on this subject. Findings: Five in-depth interviews indicated that in schools there are more curative impacts on self-harm than is currently documented, revealing a significant gap in research. Moreover, forming positive relationships, especially a romantic relationship helped stop self-harm. Conclusion: Female, adolescent self-harm behaviour manages feelings of insult, assault and impulsivity following parent, sibling and peer invalidation, with support being sought through social media, often as a distraction from the core issues.



Staying Well during COVID-19: A Staff Wellbeing Workshop Initiative

Miss Fauzia Khan¹, Ms Samina Allie¹

¹Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, West Bromwich, Sandwell, United Kingdom

Purpose: The aim of this presentation is to detail a staff wellbeing initiative that was pioneered by a Chartered Psychologist and an Assistant Psychologist at an acute psychiatric hospital during the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The primary aims of the workshops were to offer staff a safe space to focus on their own wellbeing needs, and allow them to make sense of their thoughts and feelings, while introducing them to new coping strategies.

Background: With the arrival of the COVID-19 outbreak, it was identified that there had been a number of challenges that staff across our acute inpatient site had been facing due to the unprecedented challenges that were brought on by the pandemic. These challenges pertained to professional and personal aspects of staff's lives. In caring and helping professions, staff are often so used to taking care of the needs of others that they often lose touch with caring for themselves, so the need for such workshops was imperative.

Methods/Key Points: The initiative was first discussed with the Service Manager, Director of Nursing, and other senior managers, who endorsed its conception. All staff groups were offered this. The workshop drew on interventions from Compassion Focused Therapy, Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, Mindfulness, and creative exercises. The structure of the workshops was evaluated using a Thematic Analysis Methodology.

Conclusions: The qualitative feedback received was positive. The success of the initiative led to discussions on how this could be cascaded Trust wide, and it is now being rolled out to other teams.



'I feel like I'm in prison for a crime I didn't commit' Supporting mental health and well-being for people with congenital heart disease during the global Covid-19 pandemic

Dr Liza Morton¹, Mr Calum Calderwood², Dr Nicola Cogan², Dr Jacek Kolacz³, Dr Evan Nix³, Claire Murphy²

¹University Of Glasgow, Glasgow, Scotland, ²University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland, ³Kinsey Institute, University of Indiana, , USA

Objectives: The growing population of adults with congenital heart disease (CHD) often have lifelong experience of dealing with potentially traumatic health crises and medical uncertainty. Further, they can face increased vulnerability to anxiety, depression and PTSD. The COVID-19 pandemic may present additional challenges for this population including an increased risk of serious health complications, the psychological impact of shielding

and strict social distancing, changes to medical care provision and social stigma. Adults with CHD may also experience positive post-traumatic growth (PTG) in the face of such challenges, yet little is known as to what helps cultivate positive adaptation and PTG.

Design: The additional challenges are considered drawing from one of the researcher's lived experience and findings from a cross-sectional, anonymous, online study exploring the impact of the pandemic on mental health for adults (n=236) with CHD. Closed and open-ended questions and a series of standardised psychosocial measures of traumatic experiences, coping mechanisms, emotional regulation and PTG were measured.

Results/Analysis: Findings suggest the CHD population are at increased risk of PTSD which may be exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, positive adaptation may promote post traumatic growth. In particular, health adversity is associated with greater appreciation whilst emotional regulation is associated with post-traumatic growth.

Conclusions: We recommend a growth-focused, psychologically and trauma-informed approach to medicine and public health, recognising the importance of supporting mental health and promoting living well with CHD during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. These findings are likely generalizable to other lifelong health conditions and shielding populations.



Online supervision during the COVID-19 pandemic: A ripple effect?

Dr Marta Sant¹, Dr Claudia Psaila
¹*University Of Malta, Msida, Malta*

Purpose: This paper explores the impact and challenges of providing online supervision to practicing psychologists during the COVID-19 pandemic, from the perspective of the supervisor. The global pandemic has negatively affected people's physical and mental well-being. Many applied psychologists have shifted to online work in order to provide uninterrupted clinical services. Psychologists have also experienced other professional and personal upheavals in relation to the pandemic. Therefore, the need for supervision and supervisory support is heightened in the context of COVID-19.

Background: Online therapy is not a new phenomenon and features strengths and limitations. However, a number of psychologists may have had little to no experience and training in this this area. This raises questions regarding risk management, continuity of care, access to services and boundaries. Furthermore, supervisors too may have been required to work online with limited or no preparation.

Methods/Key Points: A critical literature review was conducted by accessing online databases including Taylor & Francis Online, PsychINFO (EBSCO) and SpringerLink. Research in the field of online supervision with trainees has indicated that online supervision can be effective. However, research regarding the provision of online supervision to applied psychologists using online platforms such as Zoom during COVID-19 is scarce.

Conclusions: Limited research focuses on the ripple effect of providing online supervision to practitioners under strain and who are working with distressed clients during the pandemic. This paper attempts to consider the implications of online supervision in a time of crisis and the effect this has had on supervisors.



Poster Abstracts - Saturday 17th July 2021

Theme: Reported Experiences

Listed by presenting day and theme then alphabetical by presenting author

Impact of length of incarceration on resilience, loneliness, cognition and ageing perceptions in older adult males using UK probation services

Emma Cooper-Samonini¹

¹*Roehampton, London, United Kingdom*

Objectives: Investigate potential differences between three groups of older adult males on five psychometric measures and to investigate the phenomenon of accelerated ageing.

Probation has changed over the last 10 years. There are now more older adults in prison and probation services for various reasons.

Ethical approval was granted from the University of Roehampton and HMPPS.

Design: Quasi-experimental. Survey data, collected data in person with 59 participants across three groups.

Recruitment: Group one - participants were recruited in the community. Group two (more than 15 years in custody) and group three (less than 5 years) were recruited via National Probation Service London division.

Sample: 59 males over 50 years old. 26 controls, 19 in group two and 14 in group three.

Questionnaires: Connor Davidson Resilience Scale -10 Item; UCLA Loneliness Scale; Brief Perceptions of Ageing Questionnaire; Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help -Short form; Montreal Cognitive Assessment.

Results: Analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS (v25) One way ANOVA significant effect of incarceration on loneliness scores, group main effect, $F(2,56)=7.20$, $p<.002$, $\eta^2=.205$ planned contrasts revealed that having any prison sentence significantly increased loneliness scores compared to no prison sentence, $t(56)=3.51$, $p<.001$. No other significant differences found between groups.

Limitations: Small sample size, confounding variables such as nature of offence and individual characteristics of participants.

Conclusions: Importance of the role of Counselling psychology in forensic settings, being a CoP does not preclude us from contributing to offender research. Support pathways for older probationers following release from prison to combat loneliness.



The relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences, Resilience, and Wellbeing in Domestic Abuse Survivors

Lloyd Gould¹

¹*University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton, United Kingdom*

Objectives: The study aims to compare the presence of ACEs between female DA survivors and a matched control group.

The secondary hypothesis tests the moderation effect of resilience on the relationship between ACEs and psychological distress (including anxiety, depression, and general psychological wellbeing).

Design: The study follows an online survey design to ensure anonymity and thus maximise response rate.

Methods: The participants include a convenience sample of adult women recruited via online support platforms and social media. Participants completed demographic and socio-economic questions, as well as the ACEs Questionnaire, the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale, and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale.

Results: Data will be analysed using a T-test to compare the presence of ACEs between female DA survivors and the matched control group and a moderated regression analysis to measure the moderation effect of resilience on the relationship between ACEs and psychopathology.

Conclusions: It is hoped that the results of the study will contribute to the support of female DA survivors by investigating whether they have experienced a higher rate of ACEs than other women. The role of resilience in mitigating the effects of ACEs on subsequent psychological distress will also be determined, and this may have implications for developing effective interventions in practice. A key limitation of the study is its reliance on a reductionistic quantitative approach. These findings will be used to inform the interview schedule for a follow-up study to gather a more subjective understanding.



A phenomenological exploration of the lived 'chemsex' experience of gay Asian men in London: What it means and how it feels for gay Asian men in London to experience chemsex

Francisco Hoi¹

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Objectives: The increased prevalence of chemsex, commonly understood as sexualised drug use among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men, is a public health concern and has caused widespread anxiety within the gay community. At present, few existing studies examine the phenomenology of chemsex, and no existing literature has specifically examined how gay Asian men in London (and the UK) experience chemsex. This research project aims to holistically capture and present an authentic first-hand reflection of chemsex experiences of gay Asian men in London and explore how they make sense of their experiences.

Design: This research project is a qualitative, phenomenological inquiry. Data will be collected using individual, single semi-structured interviews. Ethical clearance has been obtained for this research project.

Methods: Six to eight participants are selected on the basis that they self-identify as a cisgender gay Asian man aged between 25 and 45 who lives in London and has engaged in chemsex within the previous six months prior to the interview and has had a minimum of two years' chemsex experience. Interview data will be analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Results: This research project is currently in the pilot study stage and its findings will be presented at the Annual Conference.

Conclusions/ Expected Contribution: The findings of this research project will contribute to the counselling psychology discipline's knowledge-base of chemsex, and is expected to constitute a significant step toward research-informed, culturally-competent, clinical and therapeutic practice with those who engage in chemsex.



A phenomenological investigation into the lived experience of courage for clients in psychological therapy

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This poster will illustrate the findings and contributions from my counselling psychology doctoral research (in completion), which explores clients' lived experiences of courage in psychological therapy.

This research aims to develop an in-depth understanding of how clients in psychological therapy experience their courage to then understand how courage may be considered and utilised to support clients' wellbeing.

Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and object elicitation, five participants were interviewed twice using semi-structured interviews.

The findings resulted in three superordinate themes with corresponding subordinate themes.

1. Falling apart and coming back together: a). Cutting off and breaking down b). Vulnerability of sharing oneself c). From judging to valuing the self with all its shadows d). Learning to listen and be present to myself e). Getting in touch with the body.

2. Learning courage within therapy: a). Holding back and taking risks with the therapist b). Who decides who is courageous c). Influence of time d). Therapist role modelling courage.
3. Translating courage from therapy into life: a). Assimilating interpersonal courage from therapy into personal relationships b). Choosing what to share c). Choosing to no longer be a passenger in life d). Continually finding new ways to live fully e). Deepening courage through research participation f). Reclaiming my voice.

The findings suggest that courage supports clients to deal with distress and develop strength-based attributes, and that it is subjective and developed as a process. Thus understanding courage has applied implications for counselling psychology and training to support wellbeing.



Fathers' experiences of having a son experiencing an Eating Disorder

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With high mortality and poor recovery rates, eating disorders (EDs) do not just affect those directly experiencing them. Parents of individuals experiencing EDs report negative impacts on their psychosocial wellbeing. Fathers' experiences have been underexplored relative to those of mothers. The sparse research considering fathers as a distinct subset has been in the context of female EDs. Despite an increase in male ED experiences, no study has focused exclusively on the experience of fathers whose sons experience EDs. With a social justice agenda at its core, counselling psychology is well positioned to give these fathers an opportunity to be heard. This study sought to explore how fathers make meaning of their experiences, asking "What is fathers' experience of their sons' ED?". Following ethical approval, seven British fathers of 16-24-year-old males experiencing EDs were recruited through social media and ED charities. Semi-structured interviews were analysed according to the principles of interpretative phenomenological analysis. Three superordinate themes emerged from the data: "The Eating Disorder Challenges a Shared Sense of Masculinity", "Three's a Crowd: The Eating Disorder Invades, and Alters the Sanctity of the Father-Son Relationship", and "The Chaos of the Eating Disorder Experience Challenges Fathers' Masculine Identity". A transcending theme of dualism was highlighted. Clinical implications for Counselling Psychology include suggestions for engaging with and supporting fathers of sons. Research suggestions include the importance of, and ways of exploring, fathers' embodied experiences. Indirectly, by improving our understanding of, and support for fathers, a positive impact can be had on their sons.



Does Self Blaming and Catastrophizing Associate With Dating Abuse Victimization and Perpetration in Dating Young Adults?

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Objective: Previous literature underscores how negative emotion regulation strategies (i.e., catastrophizing, self blame) relate to mental health problems like depression, anxiety, and stress (Kraaij et al. 2003; Lavanya and Manjula, 2017; Potthoff et al., 2016). Further, catastrophizing is associated with trait anger, whereas anger control reduces catastrophizing (Martin and Dehlin, 2005). However, little research evaluates these negative emotion regulation strategies as related to dating abuse. Therefore, this study investigates if self blaming and catastrophizing relate to dating abuse victimization and perpetration in dating young adults.

Design and Method: Dating young adults (N=92; Mage= 19.6 years) from diverse sexual orientations and racial backgrounds participated in a cross-sectional study. Participants reported on dating abuse victimization and perpetration using Conflict in Adolescent Dating Relationships Inventory and catastrophizing and self-blame on the Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire.

Results: Results indicated that self blame was unrelated to either dating abuse victimization or perpetration. Although catastrophizing was unrelated to dating abuse victimization, it was related to perpetration of threats (p=0.044), emotional/verbal abuse (p=0.018), and total perpetration (p=0.011). These results did not differ by gender, sexual orientation, or race.

Conclusion: Counsellors involved in dating abuse prevention and intervention programs should attempt to reduce catastrophizing by clients. This intervention may also help reduce perpetration of threats, emotional/verbal abuse and overall perpetration in dating relationships. Future research should investigate if intervention programs for

dating abuse perpetration yield better results when negative emotional regulation strategies such as catastrophizing are targeted.



A Thematic Analysis on Exploring How Individuals with Atypical Anorexia Experience the Difficulties and Challenges of Help-Seeking

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A diagnosis of Atypical Anorexia (AA) is given when all symptoms of Anorexia Nervosa (AN) are present, except individuals remain within a Body Mass Index that is considered “normal” or above. Existing literature has highlighted that despite higher presenting weight, there are similarities in deterioration of physical health, psychological distress, heightened suicide ideations and higher mortality rates between AN and AA. Further difficulties and challenges have been highlighted within the help-seeking process for individuals with AA due to the “atypical” categorisation. However, no study has investigated how this population has experienced the difficulties and challenges when seeking help. Therefore, this research focuses on how individuals with atypical anorexia experience the difficulties and challenges of help-seeking. Reflexive Thematic Analysis from a Critical Realist epistemological position will be used to analyse the data collected using semi-structured interviews from 10-15 individuals diagnosed with AA. The aim is to improve understanding of the experienced difficulties and challenges and any possible further psychological impact from these experiences. Ethical approval has been received from Regent’s University London and data collection stage has commenced. This research hopes to develop an in-depth understanding on whether the difficulties and challenges of the help-seeking process has any further psychological health consequences which may impact wellbeing during recovery. This research hopes to broaden investigation of how services could remove barriers to support, furthering interests of clients and the Counselling Psychology profession by contributing to the understanding of AA, and to facilitate earlier interventions and more appropriate explorations within the therapeutic space.



Poster Abstracts - Saturday 17th July 2021

Theme: Affluence and Climate Change

Listed by presenting day and theme then alphabetical by presenting author

Trapped at the Top: Experiences and Challenges of Extreme Affluence

Beth Anfilogoff¹

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Rates of psychological distress in young people are growing. In 2019, a US study found that the group experiencing the highest increase in depression was young people from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. A body of quantitative literature suggests that disordered eating, anxiety and substance abuse are particularly prevalent in affluent youth (AY). Limited qualitative literature describes wealthy environments as imbued with extreme pressure to achieve, with peers positioned as competitors and high levels of alienation from caregivers. As the entirety of this research is from the US, the impact of cultural context highlights a gap for a Europe-based study. The paucity of qualitative literature suggests a need to understand the lived experiences of AY. This study will consider the RQ "what are the experiences and challenges of growing up in a very high net-worth family?". Underpinned by a critical realist framework this study will seek to give a voice to AY. Data were collected utilising semi-structured interviews with 6 participants aged 18-25 from very high net-worth families, recruited via social media. Interpretive phenomenological analysis will create super-ordinate and sub-ordinate themes by synthesising data and applying a double hermeneutic process. Analysis is ongoing, however themes emerging currently are: 1) A guilty secret? Shame and silence in the wealth bubble; "An inescapable ideology": Entangled in a powerful web of wealth, and 2) Battle for identity: Finding a sense of self. The implications for clinical practice will contribute to the profession's ability to serve this population when they present in our consulting rooms.

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Research Poster Presentation on An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of how young climate activists experience continual exposure to information about climate change

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Climate change is a multidimensional problem, posing a threat to the ecosystem and to society. Its long-term implications extend beyond physical impacts, causing distressing psychological responses. Particularly young people report being more susceptible to psychological sequelae of environmental degradation. Additionally, they will be the ones handling future negative consequences, which might be the reason for the increase of youth activists' movements. Many studies have investigated youth's cognitive and emotional responses to the direct consequences of climate change. However, recently attention has diverted to the possibility of indirect effects such as anxiety associated with informational awareness. Receiving conflicting messages about climate change might lead to disengagement and worry. Nevertheless, being an activist means being immersed in climate-related information daily, the consequences of which have not been understood. Therefore, this qualitative study explores how young climate activists experience continual exposure to information about climate change. Semi-structured interviews with seven climate activists between the ages of 16-29 were completed. Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) with a critical realist position is used to make sense of participant's lived-experiences. In the consulting room, counselling psychologists (CoPs) might encounter those who suffer from direct climate change damages and those who experience indirect impacts. Thus, it is vital for CoPs to understand the consequences of climate change awareness to provide appropriate support and pay attention to the needs of a more vulnerable group. Through this study, climate activists might also learn about their shared experiences which might help to sustain their activism. The initial findings will be presented.

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Navigating emotional engagement with climate change through social relationships: A thematic analysis

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Objectives: The climate and ecological emergency is one of the greatest threats facing humanity. The climate emergency has numerous impacts, with disproportionate effects on the most marginalised in society. However, there are social and psychological barriers to engagement with the issue. Individuals can experience difficulties in social contexts with others who are not similarly engaging with the climate crisis. This study aims to explore how individuals who are emotionally engaging with climate change experience their social relationships, and to explore

the role of social relationships in individual or collective action in response to the climate crisis. An objective of this research is to offer guidance to enable therapists to more effectively support clients who are engaging with climate change.

Design: This study uses a qualitative design chosen to obtain rich data about participants' experiences, while considering how sociocultural contexts shape these experiences.

Methods: Participants will be living in the UK, aged over 18 and will self-identify as feeling emotionally affected by climate change. Ten to twenty participants will be recruited through activist organisations. During semi-structured individual interviews, participants will also be asked to create a sociogram. This will aid discussion of relationships and how these might have shifted following climate change engagement. An experiential reflexive thematic analysis will be conducted in order to identify themes.

Results: This section has not yet been completed.

Conclusions: The findings of this study could have the potential to influence policy and to reduce harms associated with climate change through improving mitigation and adaptation responses.

