

**9<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF COACHING PSYCHOLOGY**  
***‘POSITIVE & COACHING PSYCHOLOGY’***  
***Wellbeing, Sustainability & Achieving Balance***

**SESSION ABSTRACTS AND SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES**

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**DAY ONE MASTERCLASSES**

**How to Use Acceptance and Commitment in Your Coaching to Enhance Wellbeing and Sustainability**

DR RACHAEL SKEWS

This masterclass is aimed at individuals who would like to learn how acceptance and commitment theory (ACT) based coaching enhances performance and wellbeing.

The masterclass will focus specifically on the connection between ACT-based coaching, wellbeing and sustainability. During the masterclass, we will draw on evidence from positive, occupational, and evolutionary psychology, to form an understanding of how to increase wellbeing and sustainable behaviours. This will include new developments in behavioural science, and prosocial behaviours.

As part of the masterclass, you will have the opportunity to undertake exercises, so you can experience ACT for yourself. The masterclass will provide a practical and evidence-based approach to using ACT in your coaching, specifically focusing on wellbeing and sustainability.

**Dr Rachael Skews**



Rachael is a lecturer in occupational psychology at the Institute of Management Studies (IMS) at Goldsmiths, University of London. Before joining the IMS, Rachael worked in business consultancy with a range of clients from industries across the private, public, and third sectors, both in the UK and internationally. Her consultancy experience encompasses: Leadership and talent development; workplace assessment; coaching; career management and transition; wellbeing in the workplace; stress management; and post-trauma in the workplace.

Rachael's research focuses primarily on performance and development coaching. She has investigated the effectiveness of coaching interventions using ACT-based coaching. She is

interested in how coaching can help people to change behaviour and achieve goals. This includes understanding the processes (or mechanisms of change) through which coaching works. She has conducted research investigating the role of psychological flexibility in behaviour change, and also contrasted different processes of change to highlight the most likely pathways that coaching interventions work through.

In addition to her core research interests, Rachael is an advocate of evidence-based practice in management and occupational psychology. She is interested in how evidence produced by academics and practitioners can help organisations and individuals to perform better, and enhance their wellbeing, so performance is sustainable. She is keen to train work psychologists in the processes and skills required for evidence-based practice.

Rachael teaches in a range of areas for industry and academia: Coaching psychology; psychological flexibility in the workplace; professional and applied research skills; evidence-based practice in occupational psychology and consultancy; and workplace assessment and selection. She is the Programme Director for the MSc in Occupational Psychology and PGCert in Coaching programmes at the IMS. She is the convenor for postgraduate research at the IMS.

Rachael is a chartered psychologist, and a full member of the British Psychological Society's (BPS) Division of Occupational Psychology. She is a member of the BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology. She is a Director of the International Society for Coaching Psychology, a Fellow of the Centre for Evidence Based Management, and an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

**When I am working at my best, it's like what?**  
**Coaching for neurodiversity as an inclusion strategy**

DR NANCY DOYLE

This masterclass will feature:

1. Knowledge transfer – what IS neurodiversity, how ND presents in the applied settings, the disability status, the talent potential, evidence from evaluative research as to what makes a successful coaching intervention
2. Pedagogical approach - Group based exercises featuring Clean Coaching techniques which have value as a metacognitive development exercise for neurodiversity
3. Demonstration - Coaching a typical ND area (volunteer required!)
4. Practise - 1:1 coaching practise in threes, to 'try on' a process for eliciting a sense of mastery for clients
5. Plenary - Reflections on experience and absorbing into practice

**Dr Nancy Doyle**



Dr Nancy Doyle, founder and CEO of Genius Within, an international social enterprise dedicated to developing talent and achieving success with **ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Tourette Syndrome, Mental Health**, and embracing neurodiversity.

Genius Within works with thousands of individual clients and employers every year, with a team of 150 psychologists and coaches. Nancy's work has contributed to the positive narrative around embracing our cognitive diversity through her professional practice, research, policy influencing, television documentaries, webinars, articles and publications.

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## DAY TWO KEYNOTES

### **The “always on culture”: why don’t people disconnect anymore and how can we address this through coaching**

PROF ALMUTH MACDOWALL

This keynote will commence with a brief overview of how digital technology is changing the way we work including the time spent online versus other activities. Using technology can be a great helper and aid flexibility but can also ‘enslave’ people to their devices, this will be discussed in the light of recent research including systematic reviews and a survey of organisational practice both of which highlight the importance of social norms and implicit expectations. It also needs to be part of this discussion that there is a real growth in online coaching, which legitimises technology use in this context.

To conclude, implications for coaching practice will be discussed.

#### **Prof Almuth McDowall**



Almuth is a Professor of Organizational Psychology at Birkbeck University of London where she heads up her department as part of her school’s senior management team. Committed to impact to practice, her research interests include work-life balance, coaching and professional development, and how to support special requirements in the workplace.

### **Coaching Psychology from a second wave positive psychology perspective with strengths - based appreciative coaching for leaders**

DR CERI SIMS

A central feature of positive psychology coaching is identifying and developing individual strengths (Linley, Woolston & Biswas-Diener, 2009; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Snyder & Lopez, 2009). Although positive psychology coaching (PPC) has been shown to improve management effectiveness (Evers, Brouwers & Tomic, 2006) and productivity (Olivero, Bane & Kopelman, 1997) as well as increasing flourishing (Grant, 2007), limitations of PPC have been an avoidance of the ‘dark sides’ of people which have been shown to impede healthy interpersonal relationships, learning and growth (Nelson & Hogan, 2009). There is also evidence that leaders may already be playing to their strengths in excess to the detriment of their team, with these ‘lopsided’ leaders being at risk of derailing rather than bringing positive outcomes (Kaiser & Overfield, 2011). Thus, leaders in senior positions may need to learn to identify risks in overplaying their strengths, regulate them and even downplay them in certain situations.

Positive Psychology has recently moved into a second wave or PP2 (Held, 2004; Ivztan et al., 2015; Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014; Lomas & Ivztan, 2016, Wong, 2011) that incorporates

the darker human states more explicitly into its agenda. Sims (2017) has identified a range of techniques a PP2 coach can apply that adopts this more holistic approach to PPC.

There is evidence to show that being with the coachee through discomfort during strengths coaching is more helpful than avoiding these difficulties (Clifford, 2011). Appreciative Coaching (Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2007) from Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 2017; Lewis, 2011) is discussed as a way of adopting a radically appreciative gaze for working with resistance and shadow in coaching (Crestani, 2015; Fitzgerald & Oliver, 2012).

This keynote presentation discusses an Appreciative Coaching programme with a senior leader that incorporates Strengthscope® assessment and feedback for the identification of strengths underplayed, strengths in overdrive and limiting weaknesses in leadership development.

#### References:

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- Wong, P. T. (2011). Positive psychology 2.0: Towards a balanced interactive model of the good life. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne*, 52(2), 69.
- Strengthscope: <https://www.strengthscope.com/>

**Dr Ceri Sims**

Dr Ceri Sims, PhD, PG Cert HE, CPsychol, is Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Buckinghamshire New University. She is chartered by the British Psychological Society and is on their register of coaching psychologists and a member of the ISCP. She was a research scientist for the Medical Research Council and has also taught and researched at Durham, Newcastle, London and Middlesex universities. Her PhD and early research background was in developmental psychology with a focus on young children and children with atypical developments. She has researched and published on a range of topics, including developmental disorders, multicultural perceptions of well-being, personality and communication, inclusive leadership and coaching psychology with recent publications in peer-reviewed coaching and applied positive psychology journals (The International Coaching Psychology Review, The Coaching Psychologist and The European Journal of Applied Positive Psychology (EJAPP)). She is also on the International editorial board of EJAPP and has acted as editor on various psychology journals, including recently for the International Journal of Listening).

Dr Sims leads modules on Bucks New University's Masters in Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) course, runs a 'Positive Psychology in Coaching' course and Leadership Programme for NHS trusts. She is also an external examiner for the Applied Coaching and Positive Psychology Masters degree at the University College Cork as well as a member of the advisory team for the ISCP's International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research. As a self-confessed 'Pracademic', Ceri's interests are in bringing the rich background and rigour of psychology, (positive psychology in particular), to the artful and creative practice of Coaching Psychology. She is the director of the coaching company Positive Minds Alliance Ltd.

## **MORNING SESSION - INVITED PAPERS**

### **STREAM 1: MENTAL HEALTH**

#### **How do coaches and coaching psychologists deal with mental health issues arising within their coaching practice: Survey results and beyond**

**PROF STEPHEN PALMER**

This paper reports on the results of an *ISCP International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research* survey that investigated how coaches and coaching psychologists dealt with mental health issues arising within their coaching and coaching psychology practice. The survey also enquired into what percentage of practitioners have received training on tackling mental health issues on their coach training courses. The paper includes recommendations regarding interventions and referrals.

#### **Prof Stephen Palmer**



Founder Director of the Centre for Coaching, London. He is President of the International Society for Coaching Psychology, Honorary Fellow and former President of the Association for Coaching. He is an ISCP Accredited Coaching Psychologist and Supervisor. He is Co-Editor of the *European Journal of Applied Positive Psychology* and has written/edited 50 books including the *Handbook of Coaching Psychology* (with Whybrow). He is Co-ordinating Director of the ISCP International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research, Professor of Practice at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David and Adjunct Professor of Coaching Psychology at Aalborg University, Denmark.

#### **Time to Flourish: designing coaching psychology programmes to promote resilience and wellbeing in students and communities**

**DR GISELE DIAS**, UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH

**PRISCILLA AKUTU-CARTER**, ENCOURAGING HER

Poor mental health within the student population has become increasingly prevalent, with research suggesting that these figures are set to rise rapidly in the coming years. In this context, the search for evidence-based strategies to equip university students with the necessary skills to improve levels of resilience and wellbeing has become paramount. This presentation will aim to describe the results of a pilot run of 'Time to Flourish: Achieving your Potential', a coaching psychology programme designed to enhance wellbeing and help prevent mental health issues in university students. The programme was based on the integrative cognitive-behavioural coaching model and delivered in 10 x 2-hour sessions to taught postgraduate students in the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience at King's College London, between October 2018 and February 2019. Students' appraisal of the pilot suggested that it was effective in equipping them with important practical tools for an enhanced experience of living, within and outside academia.

Drawing on integrative coaching psychology principles applied to community settings, this presentation will also discuss: 1) the design of an adaptation of Time to Flourish as a service module where students will apply the positive psychology principles learned in class to the elderly in day care centres and 2) the design of a wellbeing programme for clients of Encouraging Her, a service project that aims to bring together practical and psychological support to enhance resilience and promote empowerment in women who survived domestic abuse.

#### **Dr Gisele Dias**



Gisele is a chartered psychologist (British Psychological Society), coaching psychologist and neuroscientist. She is a Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Greenwich and has a special interest in developing and evaluating psychological interventions to promote wellbeing, resilience and positive mental health in different groups and communities.

#### **Priscilla Akutu-Carter**



Priscilla is an experienced senior management consultant within the field of Banking and Financial Services. She is currently undertaking the Centre for Coaching's Advanced Diploma in Coaching with a view to integrate learning within an award winning social enterprise called Encouraging Her, that she co-founded with her partner. The business aims to provide holistic support to female survivors of domestic abuse.

### **Male Mental Health and Coaching Psychology: Transitions and Turning Points**

SHEILA PANCHAL

This short paper will explore the mental health impact of life transitions and turning points. In particular, it will consider this topic from a male perspective. Male mental health is a significant issue and this paper suggests that life transition points may represent particular points of vulnerability. Support for men can be important at these times, and coaches can play a role here, alongside a range of other support mechanisms. The paper will also adopt a generational perspective. It will discuss the pressures and issues that men face in today's context, which can become overwhelming at transitional times such as starting work, quarter-life, becoming a parent or mid-life. It will outline differences in experiences in some of these transitions across generations, and the implications of these changes from a mental health perspective.

## Sheila Panchal



Sheila Panchal CPsychol, is a business psychologist with a focus on positive psychology and transitions. She is co-author of 'Turning 30: How to get the life you really want' (with Jackson, 2005) and co-editor of 'Developmental Coaching: Life transitions and generational perspectives' (with Palmer, 2011).

## **GLOW 1: Goals for Life – Opting for Wellness. A Coaching Psychology Research Programme for an Irish population with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD).**

HUGH O'DONOVAN, CPsychol

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is recognised as one of the most distressing disorders for clients and most difficult for clinicians to treat. Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) as a treatment based on a combination of behaviour based therapy with the addition of mindfulness practice and an acceptance based philosophy and practice, has a strong evidence base. DBT is conceptualised as occurring in stages, with stages 1 to 3 focusing on keeping the client alive, improving functioning, helping the client experience emotions, and helping the client deal with everyday problems of living. Stage 4, helping a client move forward towards “a life worth living” and a sense of meaning and purpose and connectedness with a greater whole, has until now remained largely aspirational. This is for the most part, because of resource limitations within the Irish Health system.

While coaching psychology was not previously indicated for BPD clients, there are strong conceptual and clinical similarities between DBT and mindfulness-based cognitive behavioural coaching psychology in that both are based on behavioural and cognitive principles and strategies, can incorporate mindfulness, are goal focused and solution oriented. It was in this context that a pilot bespoke coaching psychology intervention (CPI) was designed and delivered to further support clients in enhancing their well-being and in making further therapeutic gains.

Results from the initial GLOW 1 programme, while not statistically significant, along with thematic analysis, offered positive feedback and insight into the potential effectiveness of a Coaching Psychology intervention which was adapted to build on prior DBT skills training for emotionally stable individuals with diagnoses of BPD.

## Hugh O'Donovan



Hugh O'Donovan, a Chartered Coaching Psychologist (C.Psychol P.s.S.I) is a founding member and former Chair of the Coaching Psychology Group (CPG), Division of Work Psychology (DWOP), Psychological Society of Ireland. He is an honorary Vice President of the Society of Coaching Psychology and also a founding member of the Special Group in Coaching Psychology (British Psychological Society).

Professionally, Hugh runs a successful work psychology and coaching psychology practice. He is programme co-director of the first Coaching / Coaching Psychology Higher Diploma to be anchored in an Applied Psychology Department in Ireland. He is also co-founder of the first Masters in Coaching Psychology programme to be delivered in an Irish University. His published model of coaching (CRAIC) for the Irish Coaching Psychology context is a first in the Irish Coaching Psychology field and it was used as the overarching psychological framework for the GLOW 1 programme

## STREAM 2 : ECOPSYCHOLOGY & WELLBEING

### **Regenerative Coaching: Creating a coaching and coaching psychology practice with the planet in mind**

DR ALISON WHYBROW

This paper offers a potential frame for coaching psychology and coaching in response to the present and emerging climate crisis. Drawing on publications about the state of our climate and earth, indigenous wisdom, systems thinking and progressive perspectives, the paper signposts some key points of context and explores the opportunity that coaches and coaching psychologists have to respond to what is emerging. As Brick and van der Linden, point out: *"Now that the physical science is clear, the fundamental problem of climate change is psychological"* (2018, p32). Given this, there is a significant role for coaching psychologists to play in this unfolding crisis, in supporting the design of effective individual and organisational responses.

We have an opportunity to widen the systemic frame of our coaching interventions as we work with organisational leaders. There are those who will argue that this is not our place, however, if the questions central to our existential crisis are not up for consideration in coaching conversations with those who have a systemic impact on our ability to shift from an

extinction pathway to life giving pathway then the frame of the coaching intervention is not big enough.

As coaches we have the skills and stance to offer a place to hold a regenerative dialogue that includes our planet and its biosphere as worthwhile elements for consideration. One way of doing this is to adopt a regenerative coaching approach. We explore this approach and what this might mean for you and your practice, your clients and our profession. We will have the opportunity to understand how this already materialises in our work and how we might stretch further to deepen our impact and enhance the pace of our collective learning.

### References:

Brick, C., & van der Linden, S. (2018, September). Yawning at the apocalypse. *The Psychologist*, 30-35.

### Dr Alison Whybrow



Dr Alison Whybrow CPsychol, AfBPS is an experienced as a facilitator, coach, supervisor and author, Alison's aspiration is to live according to her core values, impacting regeneratively on people, systems and the more than human world, boldly inviting others to step up and stand out. Her clients are those who realise their current way of operating is no longer fit for purpose if they are to achieve their future business, interpersonal and wider world impact.

### **Ecopsychology Executive Coaching: A one year follow up study examining the influence of 'Walk-and-talk' vs 'Sit-and-Talk' coaching sessions.**

DR ZELDA DI BLASI AND STEPHEN PALMER

Background: Excessive sitting and sedentary lifestyles have been linked to physical and mental illness. New research has focused on encouraging employees to be more physically active at work and using activity trackers to monitor and compare the effects of 'walking treadmill' vs 'standing desks'. There is some evidence to suggest that activities such as walking in natural environments are more beneficial than indoor activities. As meetings are often a core component of organisational life, comparing the wellbeing effects of one-to-one meetings conducted outdoors, with those conducted while sitting indoors is potentially an important area of research needing further investigation. In this study, the focus was on the monthly meetings between managers who had just completed a coaching and positive psychology leadership training programme and their direct reports.

Objective: This study aimed to examine the effects on wellbeing on employees who participated in a 'walk-and-talk' vs 'sit-and-talk' coaching sessions conducted by managers trained in coaching skills in an organisational setting.

**Methods:** Using an online survey the effects of two types of coaching sessions over four months in 9 employees from an energy company based in Ireland were evaluated. Characteristics such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, wellbeing, perceived stress and mood were assessed at baseline and after each monthly coaching session where all participants were either: sitting (Time 1), walking (Time 2), sitting (Time 3) and walking (Time 4). At a one-year follow-up we assessed these outcome measures, and examined barriers and benefits of continued practice in walk-and-talk sessions.

**Results:** Repeated measures ANOVA will be used to analyse changes in outcome measures. Findings will be discussed in light of the study's strengths and weaknesses, including recommendations for further practice and future research.

#### **Dr Zelda Di Blasi**



Zelda is a Chartered Psychologist and co-director and trainer of a Masters in Coaching Psychology at University College Cork where she lectures in Positive and Health Psychology. Zelda has an Advanced Diploma in Personal, Leadership, Executive Coaching and is an Honorary Research Fellow of the International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research.

#### **Prof Stephen Palmer**



Stephen Palmer is Professor of Practice at the International Academy for Professional Practice and Applied Research, University of Wales Trinity Saint David. He is Co-ordinating Director of the ISCP International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research. His other roles include being Director of the Centre for Coaching, London. He is interested in how ecopsychology research findings can inform positive and coaching psychology practice in order to improve the wellbeing of employees and also communities.

### **The importance of Positive Group Coaching Interventions in Promoting Wellbeing at Workplace: BeST Program presentation**

MARCELA ALMEIDA ALVES,\* Maria João Gouveia\* and Stephen Palmer\*\*

Positive Occupational Health Psychology is a new domain in Occupational Health Psychology, inspired and informed by the Positive Psychology movement, that emphasises the importance of promoting health and wellbeing in the workplace rather than only preventing or managing stress. The PERMA model is a theoretical framework in Positive Psychology to assist in understanding psychological health or flourishing. It is a multidimensional model focusing on five key areas: Positive Emotions (P), Engagement (E), Relationships (R), Meaning (M) and Accomplishment (A). Positive Group Coaching Psychology Interventions (PGCPIs) in

workplaces, based on the PERMA model, could contribute to the improvement of employee wellbeing and health. In the European Union, organizations have the responsibility to safeguard the health and safety of workers (Directive 89/391/EEC) and PGCPs could be a suitable methodology.

The aim of this study is to investigate the BeST Programme: Promoting Wellbeing and Health at Work. It was designed in order to test the effectiveness of a PGCP for the promotion of Wellbeing and Health at Work. The 12 week programme consists of weekly face-to-face sessions lasting 90 minutes. The measures assessed health behaviours, ways of living, vitality, psychological flourishing, self-efficacy, levels of depression, anxiety, stress and work engagement. The initial results of the BeST Programme indicates that PGCPs could be an important approach for promote wellbeing at workplace.

**Marcela Almeida Alves**

Clinical, Health and Coach Psychologist with 14 years of experience. PhD student at ISPA - Instituto Universitário. I do research in Positive Psychology, Coaching Psychology and Health Occupational Psychology Interventions. My current project is 'Psychological Flourishing at Workplace. I am also interested in the promotion of work-life balance.

Well-being & Health Group - Applied Psychology Research Center – Capabilities and Inclusion (APPSY-CI); ISPA-Instituto Universitário\*  
Wales Institute for Work Based Learning, University of Wales Trinity Saint David\*\*  
ISCP International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research^

## AFTERNOON SESSIONS – INVITED & FOCUSED PAPERS

### STREAM 1: APPLIED COACHING PSYCHOLOGY

#### **Coaching Psychology – Consulting Psychology**

DR OLE MICHAEL SPATEN

During more than 100 years, psychology as a scientific discipline has spread itself over a number of working fields, two of them being coaching and consulting psychology. Some researchers understand coaching-psychology as a practice embedded in consulting psychology as business intervention (Lowman, 2016).

This presentation will provide an overview of different approaches to consulting, and coaching-psychology through a literature review in addition to inquiries like “how to become a consulting psychologist”, and interview questions like “how psychologists experience working in this field”. Among other inquiries in this field, the review will include research from Liebowitz & Blattner, 2015; Lowman, 2016 and Sperry, 2013. Limitations for this investigation is addressed in the end besides the question if the world of consulting can learn from the practice of coaching.



#### **Dr Ole Michael Spaten**

Dr Ole Michael Spaten is a licensed psychologist, BA MA Phd Specialist psychotherapy, MISCPAccred Supervisor, Fellow ISCP, Head of Psychology Master Program, Director of the Coaching Psychology Unit and Senior Researcher at Department of Communication and Psychology, Aalborg University.

An award winning psychologist. Ole Michael Spaten is a leading pioneer in Danish Coaching Psychology research; he conducted the first Randomised Control Trial in Scandinavia evaluating the effectiveness of brief cognitive behavioural coaching. He is the founding editor-in-chief of the Danish Journal of coaching Psychology. Ole’s research interests and publications relate to self and identity, social learning, coaching psychology-psychotherapy practice and intervention.

#### **Group coaching supervision for internal coaches: implications for coaching psychology**

ALAN WINGROVE Faculty of Business and Law, University of Portsmouth, UK

This presentation will share outcomes, from a systematic literature review, that revealed differences in how external coaches and internal coaches experience group coaching supervision. The objectives are:

- To share the existing evidence for group coaching supervision for internal coaches, from researching empirical studies.
- To promote the practice of evidence-based coaching supervision by identifying common factors in an effective group coaching supervision process.

The questions it will address are:

- What are the common factors in an effective group coaching supervision relationship?
- To what extent do psychological factors impact on group coaching supervision processes?

The research is a review of the empirical literature, published in peer-reviewed journals, published between 2003 and 2018. The process for identifying relevant papers was:

- 5 databases searched
- 10 search terms
- 6 inclusion criteria such as 'primary research'
- 394 papers identified (n=394)
- After duplicates removed, 45 full texts acquired and read (n=45)
- 18 papers met all 6 inclusion criteria (n=18)

Results: Whilst all three styles of coaching supervision are researched within these papers (one-to-one, group and peer group) 78% (n=14) researched group and peer group supervision, as well as one-to-one supervision. Of these 14, 36% (n=5) papers research only external executive coaches. 50% (n=7) research both external executive coaches and internal coaches. 14% (n=2) research internal coaches only.

Findings: The research shows group coaching supervision as having positive psychological outcomes. Although both external and internal coaches used supervision to provide a community of practice, this was a more prominent purpose for internal coaches. Participants also experience negative aspects; primarily caused by the lack of a supervisor or by a poorly qualified supervisor.

Finally, further research is required into theories and models of group coaching supervision for internal coaches that ensure it is a positive experience, both psychologically and developmentally.

### Alan Wingrove



Alan is a qualified and experienced Business & Executive Leadership Coach and Coaching Supervisor. He has over twenty years of senior and executive leadership experience and has worked with clients from the UK, Eastern and Western Europe, China, Iraq, UAE, Africa, Australia, America and Bermuda.

Alan is currently a doctoral student, with the University of Portsmouth, researching internal coaching supervision.

## Relationship quality and negative effects in coaching

DR ALANNA O'BROIN

Whilst coaching research has demonstrated that coaching produces positive effects on multiple variables (Jones et al., 2015), and the Working Alliance to be positively related to coaching outcomes (de Haan et al., 2016), negative effects also occur in coaching.

The existence of negative effects of coaching, as a potentially regular part of the coaching process, occurring more frequently for coaches, and in successful coaching programmes (Schermully & Graßmann, 2019), calls for further examination at a detailed level, for the benefit of the coachee, and also the well-being of the coach.

Drawing from Positive Psychology of relationships concepts and approaches, findings from Critical Moments in coaching, and recent research suggesting that the Working Alliance may be beneficial to preventing unintended negative effects (Graßmann et al., 2019), this paper addresses the question of relationship quality in relation to negative effects, specifically low intensity negative effects, rare dramatic critical moments, and the question of whether and how negative effects can turn into positive effects.

### References

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- Graßmann, C., Schölmerich, F., & Schermuly, C. S. (2019). The relationship between working alliance and client outcomes in coaching: A meta-analysis. *Human Relations*, 1-24.
- Schermully, C. S., & Graßmann, C. (2019). A literature review on negative effects of coaching – what we know and what we need to know. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 12(1), 39-66.

### Dr Alanna O'Broin



Dr Alanna O'Broin, PhD, CPsychol, is a Chartered Psychologist. Alanna's doctoral research was on coachee and coach experiences of forming the coaching relationship and how the coach may adapt to the coachee. She has authored and co-authored several book chapters, and a number of peer-reviewed articles on the coaching relationship and related topics, including parallels between coaching psychology and sport psychology. Previously an investment analyst and Fund Manager for leading international investment manager 3i Group, Alanna is a practising coaching psychologist, working primarily with executives and leaders in

achieving their developmental and performance goals.

She is also an Associate Lecturer on Career Management and Coaching at Birkbeck College, University of London. Alanna was Co-Editor of *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice* until 2016, and is a Consulting Editor of *The Coaching Psychologist*.

## **STREAM 2: ECOPSYCHOLOGY AND WELLBEING – MINI WORKSHOP**

### **Ecopsychology informed positive and coaching psychology practice: a few more steps?**

**PROF STEPHEN PALMER & DR SIOBHAIN O’RIORDAN**

In recent years, we have seen a growing interest within the fields of Coaching Psychology and Positive Psychology about the role of nature and the environment in our general wellbeing, goal striving and achievement. Learning from the practical insights provided by Ecopsychology research we can draw on strategies within our coaching work such as outdoor approaches including ‘walk and talk’ sessions (Di Blasi, McCall, Twomey & Palmer, 2018), Green/Blue activities and selected Animal Assisted interventions (AAIs).

Areas where coachees might benefit from Ecopsychology interventions include stress management and psychological restoration, improving cognitive resourcefulness and supporting coachees to develop ‘self-coaching’ strategies focused on outdoor activities (e.g. Palmer, 2015). This approach can also encourage coachees to seek out and be proactive about healthier outdoor routines (e.g. walking in the park, going outside during the lunch break).

During this session we will share our latest research based on findings from two previous conference Ecopsychology workshops. This interactive session also aims to offer insights and experiences on key themes relating to helping coachees through Ecopsychology and Positive Psychology. To illustrate the approach in practice, delegates will be invited to participate in Green and Blue Coaching Exercises ‘on the move’ during this conference session (weather dependent). So, if you are planning on joining us please do bring appropriate footwear/clothing for a short outdoor walking-based activity and perhaps an umbrella!

#### **Reference**

Di Blasi, Z., McCall, J., Twomey, M. & Palmer, S. (2018). A pilot study examining the influence of ‘Walk-and-talk’ vs ‘Sit-and-Talk’ coaching sessions. Conference paper given at the ISCP International Congress of Coaching Psychology, London, 12 October 2014.

Palmer, S. (2015). Can ecopsychology research inform coaching and positive psychology practice? *Coaching Psychology International*, 8, 1, 11-15.

#### **Dr Siobhain O’Riordan**



Siobhain is a Chartered Psychologist and International Society for Coaching Psychology (ISCP) Accredited Coaching Psychologist and Supervisor. She is a Course Co-Director/Trainer at the Centre for Coaching and Centre for Stress Management (UK). Currently she is Editor of *Coaching Psychology International* and a Co-Editor of the *European Journal of Applied Positive Psychology* and the *International Journal of Stress Prevention and Well-being*. Siobhain is also the Founder Chair of the ISCP and a member of the International Research Centre Development Team of the ISCP International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research (<http://www.iscpresearch.org>).

**Prof Stephen Palmer** - See pages 7 & 12

## RESEARCH STREAMS – FOCUSED PAPERS

### RESEARCH STREAM 1

#### **What the seminal VU – Ashridge – CWRU research project tells us about presence in coaching**

TÜNDE ERDÖS

The question when and why coaches should apply which coaching strategies toward strengthening clients' self-regulatory capacities and attitudes as prerequisites of effective change outcomes remains a black box in coaching. This is unfortunate, as it is essentially the clients who are the recipients of coaching and who engage in the changing.

How well are you aware of the impact your 'being with clients' has on their self-directed goal attainment? How well do you understand the extent to which the 'unspoken' between you and your client influences the way your clients feel safe in coaching?

Our longitudinal quantitative study aimed to observe 150 coach-client pairs over a period of 6-8 months. In investigating coaching as a change process, we claimed that presence as expressive of non-verbal synchrony will drive clients' self-regulatory capacities and self-directed goal attainment in coaching. Coaches' way of 'being with clients' more than their 'out-of-the toolbox way of doing coaching' session by session is the core ingredient that is likely to make a significant difference to how clients will feel capacitated to attain self-directed goals.

We investigated the indirect effects of non-verbal synchrony and goal attainment via the objective means of an innovative technology called Motion Energy Analysis. Thus, we offer a complementary perspective to the studies conducted on the main effects of the working alliance on goal attainment.

In effect, in this 20-minute presentation, we discuss the findings of this seminal research project and will investigate how your presence drives how

- 'the unspoken' in the relationship contributes to your effectiveness
- you 'are' as a coach when being at your best
- you can be the best coach in the service of your clients.

*Do you want to understand more of the unspoken in coaching, so that you can be more impactful?*

Join the tango of coaching as it is revealed on the basis of our substantial research results: learn to dance in the moment with clients as a vital way of creating focus around your responses towards greater effectiveness.

**Tünde Erdős,**

MSc. in Executive Coaching, Ashridge Accredited Executive Coach. Tünde holds an Ashridge Master's Degree in Executive Relational Coaching backed up by ICF's credentialing at MCC level and EMCC's accreditation at Senior Practitioner level as well as 10+ years of experience as an executive coach. Currently, she is a PhD candidate with VU Amsterdam, NL & Ashridge Centre for Coaching, UK & Case Western Reserve University, US

She offers conversations with a psycho-dynamic approach, which focuses on the 'players on stage' in what seems to be a mature model in addressing tasks and goals. Tünde investigates personal and organizational issues which remain unspoken, forgotten, left out, denied, or repressed towards overcoming conscious and unconscious resistance. This emphasis on the self and all the positive and negative responses that other players on the stage might trigger in the self and in each other has proven to be fruitful for all parties involved. It grew out of the requirement in her coaching work that „*You can take a horse to water but you can't make it drink.*“

**Using Coaching to Re-tune Children's Social Work**

SUZANNE TRIGGS

This qualitative 'real world' social research aimed to explore both children's social workers experiences of delivering development coaching to service users *and* service users experiences of receiving coaching from them. It is the first study globally to explore the impact and experiences of children's social workers and service users engaging in coaching. The study findings revealed that foregoing habits of 'transmitting' (advice giving, directing, leading the agenda) during coaching resulted in social workers transforming elements of their everyday practice. Using coaching initially triggered identity strain as the participants were no longer responsible for taking control and responding according to a tick-box, process driven system. As the social workers began to separate from a default 'fix it' mind set, and they began to flex their professional identity, customising it to include elements of coaching attitudes and behaviours. This enhanced how they performed as social workers in a turbulent and troubled local environment experiencing crisis. Being a coach rippled through the social workers professional and personal lives and enabled them to energetically reconnect with their values and vocational aspirations to 'make a difference' to the lives of others. Using coaching allowed social workers to foreground a practice based on the growth and agency of the service user and gave them a 'how to' skill set to make the abstract concept of empowerment a reality in their relationships. Service users responded to coaching by compartmentalising their hostile associations with the social work identity of their coach and viewing them with a new positivity. Coaching enabled service users to disrupt stagnant patterns in their lives, adopt new perspectives, take iterative steps towards change and make small transformations in their worlds.

### **Suzanne Triggs**



Suzanne is a social worker, coach, trainer and visiting lecturer at various universities where she delivers teaching to support the professional education of social workers. Suzanne has spent nearly 30 years leading different projects to improve social work practice. She has just completed her PhD on the use of coaching in children's social work and is about to embark on work utilizing her findings with the British Association of Social workers.

### **Health coaching in patients with infectious diseases**

JOANNA SUŁKOWSKA<sup>1</sup>, Dr Ilona Kuźmich<sup>1</sup>, Dr Ewa Kawalec-Kajstura<sup>1</sup>, Prof. Stephen Palmer<sup>2</sup>, Prof Tomasz Brzostek<sup>1</sup>

**Objective/Aim:** The objective is to present the challenges related to conducting research in health coaching in patients with infectious diseases.

**Design:** A systematic review of papers providing information on health coaching research in the context of patients with infectious diseases was performed to include all relevant information regarding these challenges.

**Methodology:** All relevant information from Embase and the Cochrane Library were collected and then analysed. The search strategy consisted of keywords related to health coaching as well as infectious diseases was applied to perform the systematic review.

**Results/Findings:** At the beginning, 29734 papers in the Embase and 455 in the Cochrane Library were found. In the first phase, the results from the Cochrane Library were verified. After applying of previously established criteria, 1 article was included into the systematic review. Checking the results from Embase are foreseen in the next phase. The paper will include information related to challenges of conducting research in the health coaching field in patients who suffer from infectious diseases on the basis of the systematic review (database: The Cochrane Library – full record; database: Embase – preliminary results). The complete results from both of databases will be included in an article which is foreseen.

**Conclusion:** The results indicated the lack of clinical trials as well as randomized controlled trials in this field. Hence the information which was collected may be useful in preparing future research protocols aimed at verifying efficacy of health coaching in context of patients with infectious diseases.

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## RESEARCH STREAM 2

### **Coaching character strengths and mindfulness for achieving flow in tennis performance**

DR URSZULA WOLSKI

Tennis is a game of two parts, the physical game and the mental game which Gallwey (2015) calls the *Inner Game* of tennis. While most players at club level can deal with the physical game, it is the mental game that can result in a poorer performance and the difference between winning and losing a match. Using Ryan Niemiec's (2013) Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP) the aim was to explore whether developing strengths and mindfulness during tennis coaching sessions improves performance. Coaching sessions lasting in 90 minutes duration was carried out by the researcher with a group of five amateur tennis players over the course of 8 weeks.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with each participant after the 8 weeks and data was analysed using Thematic Analysis. In total, four main themes were identified: Strengths Awareness and Strengths Blindness, Mindfulness Awareness and Practice, Tennis Performance and Evaluation of the Course. In conclusion it was found that the course was beneficial to all tennis players who participated as it created greater awareness and mindfulness of character strengths and how to use them which resulted in changes both on and off the court, with some report of flow experiences.

#### **References**

- Gallwey, T. (2015). *The Inner Game of Tennis: The Ultimate Guide to the Mental Side of Peak Performance*. London: Pan Books.
- Niemiec, R.M. (2013). *Mindfulness and Character Strengths: A Practical Guide to Flourishing*. Hogrefe Publishing.

**Dr Urszula Wolski** is a Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Northampton. Her research interests are in new technologies for social research, qualitative research methods and software, the sociology of sport and Positive Psychology. Current research within the Sociology of Sport is looking at gender inequalities within tennis coaching roles. Previous research within the field of Positive Psychology looked at the integration of character strengths and mindfulness for achieving flow in tennis performance and forthcoming research is examining the relationship between character strengths and participation in sport and physical activity to promote positive ageing.

#### **Modes of Meaning in Coaching**

LEE NEWITT

This paper will share the findings from an integrative review of narrative identity literature using meta-ethnography as the method of synthesis. First, each of the three established narrative identity theories; MacAdams 'Life Story Model', Hermans 'Dialogical self' and White

and Epston's 'Narrative Therapy' will be interpreted and contrasted with respect to how each model creates story and meaning. Second, from the synthesis of these models an integrative model of narrative identity was derived that has implications for how practitioners such as coaches, therapists may work with clients stories. It may be from a person's relationship with their experience of the world that four distinct and yet overlapping modes of meaning are created. The model further suggests that polarities between these modes of meaning might play an important role in shaping a sense of 'who we are'. Again this has implications for how questions may be used by practitioners to uncover and further unfold stories with clients. 'Strengths and weakness' or 'virtues and vices' may be thought of as dynamic positions of equilibrium between the experiential content in the different modes of meaning that help shape character within their story. If this is the case, how can this knowledge help 'practitioners 'shift a client's equilibrium so that they may face life's challenges and grow?

**Lee Newitt** is currently studying for the MSc Applied Positive Psychology at Bucks New University. He is an accredited coach, therapist, trainer and speaker. Lee has a background as a teacher and as a research chemist at Durham University. Lee's research interests cover narrative psychology, existential positive psychology and transpersonal psychology.

### **Her Story: Using fiction writing and positive psychology to create a positive personal narrative**

JANE DENNIS

Women face cultural, physical and psychological challenges which can detrimentally impact careers and personal lives. These challenges are additional to those experienced by men and can lead to the setting of psychological boundaries. 51% of the population are told stories about themselves, how they should behave and what they can and can't achieve through many arenas such as personal relationships, the media, familial expectations and religion which can lead to self-limiting beliefs and feelings of vulnerability. Finding one's own positive story and vocabulary is key to re-framing our personal narrative and imagining ourselves at our best. By using a combination of narrative therapeutic techniques, positive psychology and creative writing, in both group workshops and 1:1 coaching, women are given the tools to thrive and flourish through positive self-exploration and creating fictional stories, poems, haikus and expressive words which represent them at their best. Mindfulness and identification of where positive psychological methods, such as character strength identification and building on positive emotions, is explored through targeted fiction reading and followed up with individual and/or group coaching sessions.

#### **Jane Dennis**

After years in senior positions in aviation and the corporate world, Jane moved to a small Mediterranean island with her young children. In Malta, she worked as a leadership and people consultant helping emerging and established businesses to make the very best of their strongest and most expensive assets; people. Here she also wrote two novels and

gained degrees in Philosophy and Creative Writing. Whilst new policies and laws addressed part of the inequalities experienced by women, cultural change was slow and so Jane produced and presented a prime-time TV show, interviewing women of impact and influence and sharing their stories. Guests included Her Excellency, The President of Malta. Now back in the UK, Jane has completed her MAPP and is using this knowledge in her role as an L&D professional, coach and parent. This is her story.