

UPCD

Understanding Resilience in its wider context

Book of Proceedings 2022

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Foreword

Hello everyone, and welcome to the 9th International Psychology Conference Dubai (IPCD), brought to you by Heriot-Watt University (HWU). On behalf of the IPCD committee, we are proud to bring you our first fully in-person conference since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the world slowly recovers from the financial, social, occupational, and societal consequences of the pandemic, the concept of “resilience” came up time and again in public discourse. From students trying to recover from stifled learning milestones missed over the course of their online teaching, to loneliness and isolation impacting on people’s well-being, the importance of fostering resilience across different contexts was brought to the forefront of policy-making and practice. Moreover, it highlighted the important role that psychological practitioners play, and the necessity of working collaboratively with other professions and communities, to allow for collective psychological health to be increased.

The committee wants to thank our event partner, the Dubai Knowledge Park Conference Centre, for being able to provide such wonderful facilities at short notice... we did not anticipate the demand for in-person professional development that so many of you wanted! And of course, a big thank you to all of our supporters and sponsors, without whom none of this would be possible:

- Heriot-Watt University: whose Dubai campus has hosted us since our inception in 2013;
- our Gold Sponsors: Talogy and Welliba; and
- our Associate Partners: Hoopfull, Chearful, and the Middle East Psychological Association (MEPA).

Thank you to all of our speakers, who brought an insightful array of presentations, panels and workshops. And finally, thank you to our attendees – it was clear from the energy across the two days that everyone was excited to be interacting face-to-face again.

We aim to continue to bring you high-quality, practice-focused professional development for those working in the GCC and MENA regions specifically, as well as across the world in general.

Be sure to stay connected with us through LinkedIn ([LinkedIn.com/company/ipcdubai](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ipcdubai)), Facebook ([@ipcd.psychology](https://www.facebook.com/ipcd.psychology)), Twitter ([@PsychDXB](https://twitter.com/PsychDXB)) and Instagram ([@ipcd_psychology_conf_dxb](https://www.instagram.com/ipcd_psychology_conf_dxb)), and of course, our IPCD website (www.psych-me.com).

Dr. Alia Al Serkal

Vice President – People Learning
& Growth, Emirates Integrated
Telecommunications
Company PJSC (“du”)

Dr. Çakil Agnew

Associate Professor of
Psychology, Heriot-Watt
University Dubai Campus

Dr. Kirin Hilliar

Assistant Professor of
Psychology, Heriot-Watt
University Dubai Campus

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A special thank you to our sponsors who contributed to the success of the conference.



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PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



Agenda

Clinical and Counselling Psychology Stream

8.30 - 9.00

Conference Registrations

9.00 - 9.15

Opening Session

9.30 - 10.00

How resilience and social support strengthen the psychological well-being of inmates with life sentences | *Dr. Imaduddin Hamzah*

10.05 - 10.35

Resilience in Ageing: What can we learn? | *Dr. Zaynab D'Elia*

10.40 - 11.10

Mental Health: One of the most important challenges of the 21st Century | *Dr. Nabhit Kapur*

11.20 - 12.20

Keynote: The Leader, Manager and Individual Role in Strengthening Resilience | *Dr. Derek Mowbray*

12.25 - 13.25

Lunch Break

13.30 - 14.00

Resilience, Spirituality and Art Therapy | *Natalia Gomez Carlier & Sara Powell*

14.05 - 15.10

Panel: Transitioning from in-vivo to immersive technologies in CBT | *Dr. Per Carlbring, Bilal Awan, Dr. Sulaima Daboul & Marc Thornton*

15.15 - 16.15

Keynote: Construing Resilience as a Relational and Transactional Process: A Cultural Perspective | *Dr. Hani Henry*

16.20 - 16.50

Afternoon Break

16.55 - 17.25

The Islamic modification of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Muslims with Depression | *Farid Elazar*

17.30 - 18.00

The future of mental health services: The role of tele-services | *Devika Mankani & Priya Cima*

18.05 - 18.15

Closing Session

20.00 - 23.00

Conference Dinner



Agenda

Organisational and Design Psychology Stream

8.30 - 9.00

Conference Registrations

9.00 - 9.15

Opening Session

9.30 - 10.00

How intercultural skills can make us more resilient | *Silvia King & Roberta Pagliarulo*

10.05 - 10.35

Sponsored: How do we prepare our leaders and organizations for the ever-increasing demand of 'being more resilient'? | *Madeleine Harling*

10.40 - 11.10

Practical lessons learnt in developing a Resilience assessment within the UAE in adherence to the EFPA guidelines | *Dr. Angela de Jong*

11.20 - 12.20

Keynote: The Leader, Manager and Individual Role in Strengthening Resilience | *Dr. Derek Mowbray*

12.25 - 13.25

Lunch Break

13.30 - 14.00

Sponsored: Thriving organizations through better Employee Experience | *Richard T. Justenhoven, Dr. Katharina Lochner & Carmen Lobbe*

14.05 - 15.10

Panel: Mental Toughness: Placing resilience in context to creating a 'lens' shedding new insights on key issues in people development | *Doug Strycharczyk, Dr. John Perry & Andrea Naylor*

15.15 - 16.15

Keynote: Construing Resilience as a Relational and Transactional Process: A Cultural Perspective | *Dr. Hani Henry*

16.20 - 16.50

Afternoon Break

16.55 - 17.25

Dear Machine, Can I trust you? The effectiveness of Artificial Intelligent interviews in predicting individual differences during the hiring process | *Rehab Kadry & Dr. Cakil Agnew*

17.30 - 18.00

'Reality Shock!': Understanding the socialisation of young people's work values as they enter the workspace | *Dr. Lucy Bolton, Dr. Kerrie Unsworth & Dr. Militza Callinan*

18.05 - 18.15

Closing Session

20.00 - 23.00

Conference Dinner



Agenda

Youth, Education, Community & Positive Psychology Stream

8.30 - 9.00

Conference Registrations

9.00 - 9.15

Opening Session

9.30 - 10.00

Using change management, story frameworks, and identity focus to build resilience based on the increasing relevance of the Third Culture Kid (TCK) experience | *Mr. Christopher O'Shaughnessy*

10.05 - 10.35

Why not start development of resilience from the very first moment? | *Dr. Maria Weissenböeck*

10.40 - 11.10

Sources of Resilience in Abused Children During the Legal Child Protection Process in both Jordan and United Arab Emirates (UAE) | *Dr. Taghreed M. Abu Sarhan & Dr. Karen S. Rotabi-Cesares*

11.20 - 12.20

Keynote: The Leader, Manager and Individual Role in Strengthening Resilience | *Dr. Derek Mowbray*

12.25 - 13.25

Lunch Break

13.30 - 14.00

Thanks for asking! How UAE-based university students conceptualize happiness and what universities can do to improve it | *Dr. Louise Lambert, Vaishnavi Varma, Suhaina Mayet, Yasmeen Khadri & Jessica Vedanayaga*

14.05 - 14.35

Learning from South African child protection Social workers about grit as a driving source of resilience in the workplace | *Dr. Ansie Fouché, Dr. Elmien Truter, Ms. Emma Boonzaaier & Mr. Mahloma Molakeng*

14.40 - 15.10

Using dance from a psychological viewpoint for resilience in daily life | *Ms. Nisha Suresh*

15.15 - 16.15

Keynote: Construing Resilience as a Relational and Transactional Process: A Cultural Perspective | *Dr. Hani Henry*

16.20 - 16.50

Afternoon Break

16.55 - 17.25

Why do we stay? Examining factors that enhance resilience and longevity among UAE expatriates | *Dr. Amy Kellogg*

17.30 - 18.00

Can the Phoenix still rise? A closer look into how resilience works in times of accumulating traumas in Lebanon | *Dr. Myriam El Khoury-Malhame*

18.05 - 18.15

Closing Session

20.00 - 23.00

Conference Dinner



Agenda

Workshop Stream 1: Enhancing resilience at work

9.00 - 9.30

Morning Workshop Registrations and Coffee

9.30 - 12.30

How to develop a WELCOMING team: Understanding, perspective and doing as key ingredients.

Dr. Anna Sedda, Dr. Zuhrah Beevi, & Dr. Cakil Agnew

12.30 - 14.00

Lunch Break

13.30 - 14.00

Afternoon Workshop Registrations

14.00 - 17.00

Resilience training for mental health practitioners.

Dr. Ananya Sinha

Workshop Stream 2: Enhancing resilience of vulnerable groups

9.00 - 9.30

Morning Workshop Registrations and Coffee

9.30 - 12.30

Exploring the impact of collaborative theatre in the creation of a culture of resilience.

Lauren Noble, Dr. Kirin Hilliar & Dr. Lamyia Tawfik

12.30 - 14.00

Lunch Break

13.30 - 14.00

Afternoon Workshop Registrations

14.00 - 17.00

Understanding embodied resilience in the neurodiverse community.

Mrs. Tarana Khatri

Keynote

The Leader, Manager and Individual Role in Strengthening Resilience.

Resilience is a choice, largely based on attitude combined with an imperative to overcome an adversity because it is in our best interests to do so. Add to this is our assessment of adversity and the situation in which it occurs, and an assessment as to our skills in overcoming the adversity.

Resilience is the ability to rise to, and overcome, potentially stressful events without experiencing stress oneself. For this to happen, we have to transform a potential threat into a challenge, as a perceived challenge energises us to take action.

This presentation will describe the problems for which resilience is a possible solution. Why being resilient is important. What resilience is and how it differs from coping. The four pillars of resilience and how these need to be either maintained or enhanced for resilience to occur. The role of leaders in creating the working environment that both reduces the need for resilience and enhances the reasons for choosing to be resilient when the need arises. Some ideas for strengthening the foundations of personal resilience will be introduced.

Dr. Derek Mowbray

Dr. Derek Mowbray is an Organisation Health Psychologist who specialises in the primary prevention of stress in the workplace. His approach is to create the workplace as a 'fabulous place to work; a place where people get out of bed in the morning and run to work'.

Part of the processes involved in prevention are those required to strengthen the resilience of organisations and individuals. He is an Independent Technical Expert in psychological well-being to the European Commission, and was previously a visiting Professor of Psychology at Northumbria and Gloucestershire Universities. He is a director of MAS and OrganisationHealth.

Derek has a doctorate in the psychology of leadership, is a Fellow of the British Psychological Society, a Chartered Scientist, and Fellow of The Institute of Health and Social Care Management. In 1988-89, he researched and was the author of a joint BPS/DoH funded Review of Clinical Psychology which was judged by The Psychologist as one of the best pieces of research of that decade. He combines his practical experience with his academic work to provide clients with sound practical solutions to the psychological problems created by organisations and people in the workplace.



Keynote

Construing Resilience as a Relational and Transactional Process: A Cultural Perspective

Resilience has often been conceptualized as a measure of personal hardiness, invulnerability and self-sufficiency. However, Froma Walsh has argued that resilience is a process that involves positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity. She also noted that resilience is an ongoing interaction between nature and nurture that is encouraged by supportive relationships. Guided by this relational and transactional understanding of resilience, this session examines a variety of sociocultural factors that would strengthen the resilience of Egyptian women and members of certain marginalized groups in Egypt. It also examines how resilience can be fostered through a healthy adaptation to numerous adverse conditions that these populations often face in Egypt.

Case studies of Egyptian women have suggested that their resilience is manifested in their ability to change the conditions that oppress them by having both a psychological sense of personal control as well as a concern for having social influence, political power and legal rights. This resilience is also fostered by their ability to develop locally developed strategies such as careful negotiation with men, educating their children about the negative effects of gender inequalities, and inspiring the new generation to change the status quo.

On the other hand, case studies of other marginalized groups in Egypt have suggested that their resilience is strengthened by their ability to identify the conditions that marginalize and demean them as well as their efforts to change these conditions. They also use strategies that allow them to integrate their different identities within the demands and expectations of the host or dominant culture. "

Dr. Hani Henry

Dr. Hani Henry is a full professor of psychology and the current Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HUSS) at the American University in Cairo. He received his PhD in Clinical Psychology from Miami University of Ohio, USA in 2006. His research has focused on the central role of culture (broadly defined), and its impact on a wide array of psychological processes experienced by members of marginalized and underprivileged populations. For example, his research has examined cultural issues related to the psychological experiences of immigrants, refugees, Egyptian women, and gay men.

Professor Henry is the former chair of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology and Egyptology at the American University in Cairo. He also founded the MA program in counseling and community psychology. He is a current member of the American Psychological Association (APA), DIV45 (Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race), and DIV52 (International Psychology).



Sponsored



Thriving organisations through better Employee Experience

Organisations can only thrive when the individuals working with them thrive. Poor Employee Experience (EX) leads to a range of problems, including long-term absenteeism due to poor mental health or fluctuation because of unmet employee needs. Current approaches to keeping employees healthy and productive are measuring and addressing satisfaction, culture, engagement, and establishing corporate health management.

Although these approaches are certainly valuable, they have three major shortcomings: they are conceptually incomplete, they lack user-centricity, and they suffer from poor data quality. This presentation presents a new and more holistic approach to measuring and improving EX.

Based on an extensive literature review, the strongest influence factors on EX have been identified, resulting in a holistic model that goes beyond just happiness and incorporates realising one's potential, having personal resources available for dealing with stress and change, and external factors that can either enhance or hamper EX. For each factor definitions, and high and low score descriptions were developed, creating the basis for item creation. Based on reliability studies with an average of 200 participants, a final set of 67 items were selected. Same as for the creation of personalised insights and individual feedback for the participants, the items focused on the subjective experience of the measured constructs to meet the need for user-centricity. Additionally, the assessment methodology and design of the digital solution enable an ongoing measurement using insights from research on persuasive technology and data privacy to improve data quality.

The approach presented in this presentation can empower employees to take charge of their own and their team's EX by engaging and involving them. Moreover, it will enable organisations to get an up-to-date understanding of their employees, so that they can respond in a timely and targeted manner. Through this, organisations will see lower absenteeism and fluctuation, and improve productivity.

Richard T. Justenhoven

Richard T. Justenhoven, Chief Measurement Strategist at Welliba, is a leading organisational psychologist and an acknowledged expert in the design, implementation and evaluation of online psychometrics, assessments, and solutions. Apart from working at Welliba, he is currently finalising his PhD in artificial intelligence and psychology at the Free University in Berlin, Germany. As Chief Measurement Strategist at Welliba, he oversees the creation of ground-breaking, off-the-shelf products, and bespoke client solutions, that stem from technological innovations and the application of business psychology and practical workplace research.

A Prior to that, Richard was an Associate Partner at AON, leading the Global Portfolio Development Team for the Assessment Solution Line. Richard started his professional journey at cut-e (a company acquired by Aon in 2017) in 2011.



Sponsored



Thriving organisations through better Employee Experience

As an acclaimed writer on all aspects of assessment, for the HR and recruitment media as well as peer-reviewed journals and books, Richard presents regularly at international business and psychology conferences, holds guest lectures at various universities across Europe and has been invited to various amounts of TV shows and round tables.

He speaks English, German and Spanish and holds a degree in business psychology as well as a first-class masters in organisational psychology, both from Hochschule Fresenius in Hamburg. He regularly supervises student master thesis projects on issues relating to innovation, Artificial Intelligence, gamification, and user experience. Richard holds multiple patents in the area of psychometrics and AI which are in active use by multiple companies. Richard lives near Hamburg, Germany, with his wife Lena. In his spare time, he is a trained and active firefighter and a keen rower. He competed in national and international rowing events before becoming a competitive sports coach for five years, training rowers to international and Olympic standard.

Dr. Katharina Lochner

Dr. Katharina Lochner, Scientific Advisor for Welliba, is an organisational psychologist with over 20 years of experience in the areas of digitalisation in HR, psychometric assessment, and wellbeing. In these areas, she has presented at international conferences and published articles and books. She is currently working as a Scientific Advisor and HR Consultant. Throughout her career, she has always been at the intersection of science, practice, and IT. After completing her degree in psychology with a focus on industrial-organisational psychology at RWTH Aachen University, she worked as an HR Consultant at ITB Consulting in Bonn. After that, her passion for hang gliding took her to Australia and various European countries for two years. She worked at international competitions, but also continued to work as a freelance HR Consultant.

Dr. Katharina Lochner, Scientific Advisor for Welliba, is an organisational psychologist with over 20 years of experience in the areas of digitalisation in HR, psychometric assessment, and wellbeing. In these areas, she has presented at international conferences and published articles and books. She is currently working as a Scientific Advisor and HR Consultant. Throughout her career, she has always been at the intersection of science, practice, and IT. After completing her degree in psychology with a focus on industrial organisational psychology at RWTH Aachen University, she worked as an HR Consultant at ITB Consulting in Bonn. After that, her passion for hang gliding took her to Australia and various European countries for two years. She worked at international competitions, but also continued to work as a freelance HR Consultant. After leaving University of Europe for Applied Sciences, she turned to full-time consulting again and currently advises companies, including Welliba, in the areas of HR, psychometric assessment, and wellbeing.



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Welliba

Thriving organisations through better Employee Experience

Carmen Lobbe

Carmen Lobbe, Expert in Behavioural Science Solutions at Welliba, is an organizational psychologist with a great passion for evidence-based solutions in the area of personnel assessment, development, and employee experience. As an expert in behavioural science solutions and product portfolio management, she translates research findings from positive psychology and behavioural science into online solutions that help employees and organisations thrive. Under the unification of state-of-the-art requirements from psychometrics, UX, IT, and the latest labour market developments, she develops, implements, and validates innovative online products.

After completing her bachelor's and master's studies in business psychology at the University of Applied Sciences in Osnabrück and Kassel University in Kassel, Carmen started her professional career at Aon's Assessments Solutions in 2019. As a project manager of global portfolio development, she created concepts for various psychometric-based online assessments and implemented them globally. After gaining much experience in more and more complex projects and online systems, she took a new challenge as an expert for behavioural science solutions at Welliba, where she can focus even more on wellbeing and employee experience as topics of her heart. Just recently she published her work on positive psychology as a scientific paper in a peer-reviewed journal where she studied the potential of positive psychology in the working world.



Sponsored Talk



How do we prepare our leaders and organizations for the ever-increasing demand of 'being more resilient'?

As the world of work continues to change, the key attributes of leaders continue to be debated and reviewed. At the end of 2021, we surveyed 1,077 employees, 828 leaders and interviewed 35 HR Executives in 34 countries to obtain a comprehensive, balanced view of what leaders and employees see as being crucial for leadership in the coming years. Not surprisingly, behaviours and approaches directly related to resilience have stood out as being key in the expectation of employees from their leaders as well as leaders of themselves. During this session, we will share key insights and themes that raise the question of how we prepare our leaders and organizations for the ever-increasing demand of 'being more resilient'.

Madeleine Harling

Madeleine is a passionate Organizational Psychologist Consultant and Talent Solutions professional with 7 years' experience working in the field of psychology, 5 years specifically located in the Middle East. She has increased organization effectiveness by designing and delivering high impact solutions via the creation of evidence-based assessment and development initiatives integrating best-practice organizational psychology.

Madeleine has extensive experience in end-to-end learning solutions and is a specialist in the MBTI, as well as coaching and emotional intelligence initiatives, delivering engaging learning journeys across Mid-Level Management to C-Suite Executives. She has a diverse client portfolio including Samsung, TDRA, HSBC and Zurich Insurance.

In addition, she has broad experience identifying and selecting high potential talent for development and selection purposes, leading and managing client projects from concept to delivery. Madeleine is trained in multiple psychometric instruments that enable her to work at various levels in the organization and across industry.



Panels

Transitioning from in-vivo to immersive technologies in CBT

PsycReality has signed collaboration partnership with MEPA for 5 years for academic / clinical research and commercializing the product in Middle East region. There are about 13 psychologists doing academic and clinical research with published articles from those psychologists. This panel discussion will give an opportunity to the audience to listen to the verdict from those who have been using newest technologies in psychology, and also to those who have been doing research. This discussion will educate and invite the audience to get involved in the discussion of technological advancements in psychology.

We have also psychologists from Europe who have treated nearly 2000 patients in last 3-4 years using VR. Also, Dr. Per Carlbring has written (peer reviewed) over 300 articles on psychology, phobias, anxiety and use of technology.

This panel discussion will enlighten the audience as how immersive and innovative technologies helping mental health professionals solve anxiety, phobias and fears better and faster through immersive technologies, education and scientific research. Also the use of additional technologies such as VR, AI, Haptic & 360° real videos (first ever used in psychology)

According to W.H.O. there are nearly 950 million people in the world suffering from mental illnesses, these numbers excluded the 60% increase in anxiety for EU population alone during COVID.

We have conducted initial clinical trials in Vienna, which has shown over 90% improvement in patient's conditions through exposure therapy and also have reduced the treatment time by up to 50%.

Based on our first clinical trials, we have adapted the changes and added more technologies i.e. use of neurofeedback and haptic technology to see real time brain activity alongside giving real sensation of stimuli on patient's body.

Mental Health is one of the least privileged sectors in the large scheme of the Health domain. We are making use of technology in mental health more accessible in a timely manner and also more economical.

Panelists

Transitioning from in-vivo to immersive technologies in CBT



Dr. Per Carlbring

Professor at Stockholm University
Editor-in-Chief of CBT www.cognbehavther.com
Author of more than 300 articles.



Bilal Awan

Award-winning entrepreneur
CEO of PsycReality
Member of the APA
All-Ireland All-Star Accredited, Thought Leader in I.T.
Security



Dr. Sulaima Daboul

Medical Doctor with expertise in Mental
Health research across the Arab region,
and the USA



Marc Thornton

Multi award winning professional and author of book
(Winning Life-long Customers)
All-Ireland All-Star Accredited, Thought Leader in marketing
(2018)
Head of Marketing - Deloitte

Panels

Mental Toughness: Placing resilience in context to create a "lens" shedding new insights on key issues in people development

Mental Toughness is a concept long understood to be important in people and organisation development. It is a personality trait which describes how we respond mentally to stress, pressure, opportunity and challenge. Linked to meta-cognition, it explains in part how we think when events occur around us. In turn this helps us to understand why we behave the way we do. With a provenance stretching back to Plato's Fortitude and the Stoics, recent research carried by Dr. Perry, Doug Strycharczyk and Dr. Clough identified 8 factors which combine to create a picture of mental toughness and mental sensitivity.

These factors are closely related to:

- Resilience - our ability to recover from an adverse situation and
- Positivity - our approach to life - seeing threat or opportunity in situations.

This allows us to consider resilience in a wider context than just a survival strategy. The interplay with positivity explains how we can do more - how we can prosper, first explored by Suzanne Kobasa in her work on Hardiness. This granularity, the multidimensionality of Mental Toughness, is important and very useful to the practitioner and the researcher alike. Firstly, there are many approaches exploring this area. The mental toughness concept has a capability to explain approaches such as mindset, grit, resilience, attitude, positive psychology, etc in one overarching concept.

Secondly, and very important from the practitioner's and the leader's perspective, the framework appears to work well as a "lens" through which other ideas, important for good practice in people can be understood - and how these play out to resilience and mental toughness.

The eight factors can examine issues such as leadership, teamworking, trust, psychological safety, curiosity, innovation, etc in a way that sheds new light and understanding on each and from more than one perspective. Doing so in a way that enables the connections between those issues to be understood too.

Usefully, a by-product of the research was the development of a psychometric measure - the MTPlus - which brings a capability for diagnosis and for evaluation to an aspect of personality otherwise very difficult to assess reliably. The mental toughness concept is an "enabler" bring a capability to understand the complexity of human behaviour in an accessible way.

Attendees will:

- Learn what mental toughness
- Participate in an exercise which illustrates its application
- Be able to discuss with those already using the concept the potential applications of the concept and the associated measure

Panelists

Mental Toughness: Placing resilience in context to create a "lens" shedding new insights on key issues in people development



Doug Strycharczyk

Doug Strycharczyk is the CEO of AQR International. Founded in 1989, AQR is a leading OD consultancy working in more than 80 countries. Doug has worked in the Gulf region for many years with many significant organisations.



Dr. John Perry

Dr. John Perry is a Lecturer in Sport and Exercise Psychology. Previously, John has held lecturing positions at several UK universities and most recently, was head of psychology at Mary Immaculate College in Ireland. John's primary research interests are in mental toughness, stress, and coping, all of which have direct implication for practitioners.



Andrea Naylor

Andrea Naylor currently leads Talent Development across the Etihad Airways group and supports the business with coaching, mentoring and leadership development initiatives. Andrea has 30+ years of experience in the fields of Career Guidance, Leadership Development, Organizational Development and Coaching.



ΨPCD

Workshops

How to develop a WELCOMING team: Understanding, perspective and doing as key ingredients.

Resilient teams are not perfect teams. They face mistakes, stress and moments of exhaustion. However, a resilient teaching team knows this is a moment, and they bounce back. Mostly, they can overcome adversity through supporting each other, sharing the load and by ensuring that everyone in team, irrespective of their seniority and background, contributes to the conversation. Heriot-Watt is a global University, where we work closely with colleagues who are located far away and with a diverse cultural background. In other words, we work in global teams.

Currently, it is not well known what makes a team a welcoming place: studies on teamwork tell us that feeling part of a group that shares the same values, aims that is supportive in overcoming barriers and obstacles, and finding opportunities to grow, is key to success. However, this the end goal, not how to get there. One of the issues is the fast pace of the workplace, and the lack of resources to turn to: teams do not always have capacity to stop and reflect on what is needed by their team and why, so they can improve their experience.

Can we use our experience at Heriot-Watt to promote collaboration, sharing and support and provide a path to building a resilient team? In our research project, WELCOME, we asked colleagues about their wellbeing, engagement, learning, collaboration, opportunities, mind-set, and professional development opportunities when working in a global team. We are interviewing groups using semi structured questions to open the conversation. A qualitative approach, based on thematic analysis, is used to confirm the themes that we think drive the individual experience of working in a global team, as well as to map new themes that spontaneously emerge from these conversations. The data collected from WELCOME allow to develop principles to guide reflection and collaborative practice in teams that are global in their identity. We can use the WELCOME experience to help others reflect on their experience in teams and the psychological factors that act as barriers or enablers of resilience in practice.

Dr. Anna Sedda

Dr. Anna Sedda is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (Advanced HE, 2022). She has a PhD in Psychology, 2010, from the University of Pavia (Italy), and is a Certified Professional Psychologist (June 2007) with the Italy National Board of Psychologists (OPL). She holds a BSc. & MSc. in Psychology, 2006, from the University of Pavia (Italy). Her Professional Associations include the British Psychological Society (BPS) as an Education Committee member (2019 - present); British Neuropsychological Society (BNS, 2016 - present); and British Association for Cognitive Neuroscience Neuropsychological Society (BACN; 2017 - present). She has extensive experience running events where scientific findings are translated for a non-academic audience, including using stand-up comedy. More recently, she has focused on teams from diverse backgrounds and multidisciplinary backgrounds. Her research outputs are available [here](#)



Dr. Cakil Agnew

Dr. Cakil Agnew is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Heriot-Watt University, Dubai. Dr. Agnew received her PhD from the University of Aberdeen in 2010. Following her PhD, she worked as a postdoctoral research fellow in the Industrial Psychology Research Centre at the University of Aberdeen. She then joined Heriot-Watt in 2014



Co-author: Dr. Zuhrah Beevi

Exploring the impact of collaborative theatre in the creation of a culture of resilience.

Bullying is a pervasive concern across educational institutions, at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Educational initiatives and interventions have had mixed results – student engagement is often superficial, pastoral systems already in place are often overwhelmed or under-equipped, and different age groups may not view initiatives or interventions as impactful or relevant which leads to a lack of realistic solution-focused structures being implemented. Collaborative theatre, and other performing arts-based initiatives, are being increasingly utilized, as these techniques allow students to be directly and actively involved in both devising and delivering the educational content.

In this interactive workshop, the facilitators will discuss the theory of collaborative theatre as an educational platform, and allow participants to take on the role of students in devising a new performance piece. Participants will also hear from students who have been involved in such theatrical pieces at their own school, and hear their reflections on its impact on them individually, as well as the school community collectively.

Lauren Noble

Lauren Noble is the founder and creative director of co|laboratory, a theatre company which harnesses the collaborative potential that exists in the intersectional spaces between industries. As an award-winning director and scriptwriter with a passion for arts education, Lauren is uniquely situated to empower others using a holistic pedagogy which responds to the constantly evolving educational and artistic landscape of the 21st century. Lauren has a BA Honours in Drama and Performance Studies and is also a qualified theatre teacher with over 10 years' experience in the drama classrooms of Durban and Dubai.



Dr. Kirin Hilliar

Dr. Kirin Hilliar completed her PhD and her Master of Psychology (Forensic) at the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Australia. Her work has taken her across the fields of forensic, organisational, and clinical psychology in Australia and the UAE, including corrective custodial services, forensic mental health, workplace recruitment assessments and therapeutic services. Alongside her full-time role at Heriot-Watt University, Dubai, she also works part-time as a psychologist at a clinic in Dubai.



Dr. Lamya Tawfik

Dr. Lamya Tawfik is an Egyptian performing artist with an interest in Children's development and culture. She is an actress, storyteller and presenter. Her performing arts journey started in 2009. Since then she has performed in English, Arabic and Italian with several theater groups in Dubai including Danú, Dubai Drama Group, ITACA, DramaDonne, and Artbox Group. As a storyteller, she has performed in many children's events, storytelling festivals and also told stories at the Sharjah International Book Fair and the Louvre Abu Dhabi. holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Journalism and Mass Communication from the American University in Cairo and a Doctorate Degree in Childhood Studies



Understanding embodied resilience in the neurodiverse community.

Resilience is often referred to as the processes adapted by individuals to cope with adversity, stress and trauma. A person's ability and pattern of resilience is based on an integration of cognitive, emotional, social and physical domains of the self and their interaction with the environment.

An Embodied approach to resilience would focus on a bottom-up understanding of the process (Tsachor & Shafir, 2017). Neuropsychological research has supported an existing belief of the role of kinetic, facial and postural impact on emotional experiences. Many fields have supported this connection namely Sensory experiencing (Levine et al., 2015), Polyvagal theory (Porges & Dana, 2018) and Dance Movement Psychotherapy (Tortora, 2006).

Our experiences are defined by perceived understanding of our bodies' engagement with the environment (Tortora, 2006). Our bodies are designed to read physiological signals that facilitate an appropriate response chain. In perceived threatening situations, these signals form an alarm system calling the body to action to create a sense of safety and stability. These actions are what we observe as an individual's pattern of resilience.

Neurodiversity refers to variations in cognitive and emotional processes that do not conform to what is perceived as 'typical' styles of being. This often includes individuals with ASD, ADD, ADHD and Learning difficulties (Hendrickx, 2010). Individuals from this community perceive stress and adversity very differently from neurotypicals. Stress is chronically present in everyday life within social interaction, work/school performance and emotional regulation. The varied neurological pathways process the information from internal and external receptors differently. Strengthening internal receptors while supporting the development of healthy external protective factors can help build healthy patterns of coping in these individuals. Resilience within this population facilitates an effective form of living that gives them the opportunity to maximize their potential.

This presentation aims to focus on the somatic approach drawn from Dance Movement Psychotherapy and the polyvagal theory when working on building resilience in the Neurodiverse population. This approach combines the interoceptive, proprioceptive and kinesthetic experience of the individual to supplement awareness and learning. Verbal discussion helps cognitively integrate this learning and transfer it into day-to-day life. The reduced dependence on verbalisation offers comfort to neurodiverse individuals for whom language is limited or challenging.

Tarana Khatri

Tarana Khatri is a DHA-licensed Counseling Psychologist and a Registered Practicing Member with the Association of Dance Movement Psychotherapy (ADMP, UK). She has been an active part of the field of Mental Health for the last 8 Years. In this time, she has been an advocate for accessibility to mental health services and ethical mental health practice. She has played a critical role in establishing Creative Arts Therapy in India through policy building, training, publications and conference presentations. In her professional practice, she has worked with Adults with Anxiety and Mood disorders and Neurodiverse children and adults (ASD, ADHD, Dyslexia and other neurodevelopmental challenges). She is a visiting faculty for the PG Diploma in Expressive Arts Therapy, St. Xavier's College (Mumbai) and has taught on other certificate courses across the country.

She is the Co-founder of Synchrony, a Creative Arts Therapy organization and a Founding member of Indian Association of Dance Movement Therapy (IADMT). She is currently on the Education and Training Committee of IADMT. She is also an Ethics Committee Member of ADMP(UK). She founded Horizon Therapy Centre (India) that focused on integration of creative modalities into therapeutic interventions. She is currently working at Somerset Clinic Dubai as a Counseling Psychologist and as a School Counselor at Safa British School.



Resilience training for mental health practitioners.

It costs to care for others. Skovholt, Grier, and Hanson (2001) underline the occupational hazard for members of a "high touch" profession, such as therapists, counselors, nurses, teachers, and social workers. Counselor burnout has been well documented (Lee, Cho, Kissinger, & Ogle, 2010). Burnout is described as a state of mental and emotional depletion coupled with physical exhaustion (Osborn, 2004) that results from high work demands and low job satisfaction (Lee et al., 2010). This workshop will help mental health practitioners to help build resilience and to provide respite from the demands of their work.

Healthcare professionals are experiencing unprecedented levels of occupational stress and, particularly post the COVID-19 pandemic (Johnson et. al, 2020). Higher stress and burnout in health professionals is linked with the delivery of poorer quality, less safe patient care across healthcare settings. In order to better support healthcare professionals, a tailored resilience workshop will help in addressing the intrinsic challenges of healthcare work in health professionals and students and help in better mental health of mental health practitioners and more efficient therapeutic service delivery.

An interactive and participative training framework will be used, including both individual and group-based activities, to familiarize participants with methods of addressing burnout and building resilience as a mental health practitioner. The workshop will use examples and case vignettes which will allow for both global/universal and local/contextual perspectives; along with videos, questionnaires, activity sheets and experiential exercises like buzz group activity, role play and facilitated group discussion. Additional resource materials and self-directed learning assignments will be provided to support continued professional development after the workshop.

Dr. Ananya Sinha

Dr. Ananya Sinha is an RCI-registered trauma-informed, LGBTQ-affirmative Clinical Psychologist with over 10 years of experience. She is the Founder & CEO of TherapHeal, a global online mental health organization. She is an International Affiliate member of the American Psychological Association (APA).

She pursued her M.Phil. in Clinical psychology from the Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences (IHBAS), Delhi and her Ph.D. from the prestigious Department of Clinical Psychology, NIMHANS, an institute of national importance (INC). She has been the university topper in her MPhil course and believes in providing empathetic, safe, non-judgemental spaces to her clients. She regards her profession as an opportunity to serve people and help them overcome their challenges.

She has extensively worked with multicultural clients and is specialised in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, Trauma focused work, Couple Therapy and LGBT affirmative therapy. She had served as a Clinical Psychologist in Dum Dum Central Correctional Home, West Bengal and in multiple mental health clinics.





ΨPCD

Clinical and Counselling Psychology Stream

How resilience and social support strengthen the psychological well-being of inmates with life sentences.

Many resilience studies focus on groups of subjects in organizations, people with serious illness, and individuals with acute stress. How is the resilience of a person with a strong stressful condition, such as a life sentence in prison? These questions are important to broaden the understanding of the theory of resilience and individual adaptation in a prison environment to keep having a good Psychological Well-Being. The study of the positive relationship between resilience, social support, and psychological well-being in the general group found significant conclusions.

However, studies on this topic in special groups, such as life imprisonment, are still very limited. The Inmates with life sentences face more severe sources of psychological distress than other groups. The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between resilience and social support with strengthening the psychological well-being of inmates with life sentences.

This study examined 115 inmates with life sentences in Indonesia using The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), the Social Provisions Scale (SPS), and the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale (RPWBS). The research findings conclude that the higher the resilience and social support, the better the psychological well-being conditions of inmates with life sentences. The implication of this study is to recommend a psychosocial development program for inmates with life sentences to prevent mental health disorders.

Dr. Imaduddin Hamzah

Dr. Imaduddin Hamzah is a researcher and lecturer at the Penitentiary Polytechnic, Indonesia. The focus of his studies is personality psychology and mental health in correctional institutions. He is also very interested in studying mental health from the perspective of Islamic psychology. His educational background includes a Bachelor's in Psychology, a Master of Science in Criminology and completing a Psychology Doctoral Program.

As a researcher, he has published several journal articles on the themes of gratitude, self-control, personality, shame, coping, and resilience of inmates and prison officers. The two chapter books in Indonesian that he has published are 1) Clinical Psychology in a correctional context and 2) Prison Psychology



Resilience in Ageing: What can we learn?

The world is facing an ageing population, with 1.4 billion individuals estimated to be over 60 by 2030, compared to 1 billion in 2020 (AARP, 2021). How we enable health and happiness in this population will increasingly impact mental health on the individual, family, and societal levels in the 21st century. Perhaps for this reason, the United Nations has named 2021-2030, the Decade of Healthy Ageing (<https://www.decadeofhealthyageing.org/>). Prompted by this emphasis on the needs of this segment of society, and by an increasing awareness of the lack of scholarly information in understanding how to support these individuals, research in this area has been increasing.

One of the goals of such research, and indeed of the UN initiatives, has been to identify ways to increase physical and mental health in the ageing population. In addition to combating ageism and elder abuse (Mikton et al., 2022), research aims at establishing evidence-based practices to improve physical health, including increased mobility and better nutrition, and exploring options for the older person to weave into a social web of support has been identified as a viable approach. Invigorating individuals in the later decades of life has an impact on their self-esteem, and helps them return to being a powerful force in their families and societies.

This presentation will present research and discuss initiatives being taken to support the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health of our elders. In addition, in accordance with the latest UN directives, we will examine what we can learn from the ageing population. Specifically, we will look at the issue of resilience amongst older persons, especially women, how this has been developed, how it endures, and what we as a society can learn from our resilient elders.

Dr. Zaynab D'Elia

Dr. Zaynab D'Elia, PhD, is a Distinguished Core Professor at National University, San Diego, USA. She has been privileged to study under some classic psychologists from the Golden Age of counseling, such as Carl Rogers, Viktor Frankl, and Albert Ellis.

In the decades since, she has been involved as a psychotherapist, family counselor, prison reform psychologist, and most recently served on hospice and palliative care teams.

Freshly trained in narrative therapy, some of her current research focuses are moral disengagement, healthy aging, and stress and resilience in health care workers. Dr. D'Elia divides her time between work and research in Canada and in the Middle East.



Mental Health: One of the most important challenges in the 21st Century

Mental Health is an unavoidable part of our overall health and cannot be ignored. In the past few years, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, people are unable to ignore the impact created by various factors that impact on our mental and emotional health, such as enforced social isolation due to restrictions imposed to manage the pandemic. A lot of people are unaware that the challenges they are facing can be due to disorders, illnesses, or chemical imbalances in their brains – all of which can be improved with the right kind of help.

Some of the primary reasons for this unawareness are lack of knowledge regarding various mental disorders and conditions, lack of accessibility to resources, treatment expenses, and stigmas faced around mental health disorders. Many people have undiagnosed mental health disorders, including disorders such as mood and compulsive disorders, that remain untreated and unresolved. If we are to fully combat people's health in a holistic manner, we need to take a step forward and work towards tackling one of the most important challenges of the 21st century – mental health.

Dr. Nabhit Kapur

Dr. Nabhit Kapur is a well-known psychologist who is well-versed in understanding mental health as well as studying and grasping behaviours of how people communicate with each another.

He is also an author, TEDx speaker, and internationally recognized ambassador for mental health and peace.



Resiliency, Spirituality & Art Therapy.

Resilience is the capacity to recover from adversity (Levine, 2022). It refers to how individuals can use their internal resources and strength to cope with challenges and maintain functioning and even positive growth, in difficult circumstances. Researchers have found it difficult to discern what creates resilience as adverse childhood experiences do not always result in psychopathology, nor does it relate to any specific biological makeup; resilience is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon (Levine, 2022). Studies have found that resilience relates to temperament, health, intelligence, purpose, and connection, among others. Spirituality has been identified as a protective and resilience-related resource (Curry, 2009; Fallot, 2007; Gonçalves et al., 2015; Koenig et al., 2012; Park, 2012). Mental health studies have shown that spirituality protects against stress, emotional and physiological strain providing direction (Park, 2012). It is also essential in constructing meaning, coping with stress, nurturing forgiveness, and even physical health (Curry, 2009).

Spirituality is one of the pillars of the intervention model developed in art psychotherapy for the Arabian Gulf (Powell et al., 2021); this presentation continues to explore this model, focusing on the relationship between resilience, spirituality, and art psychotherapy. The model uses a phenomenological perspective to define spirituality and distinguish it from religion. Spirituality involves experiences that modify the standard mode of operation from a self, identity, and brain perspective; influence lifestyle, behavior, thought, and personality; and generate a maintained change in how the person understands the other, and the self and the universe (MacDonald et al., 2015). This definition of spirituality addresses the person, the community, the evolution of the self and facilitates a cross-cultural study of spirituality.

There is a time-honored relationship between creativity, expressive arts, spirituality, and in facing adversity (Feen-Callgan, 1995), studies however are overall limited (Bella & Serlin, 2013). Throughout time, healing and the arts have been connected; shamans incorporated ritual, dancing, drumming, symbols, and imagery to cure illnesses. Art psychotherapy creates an experience of the present that can reveal a spiritual dimension (Farrelly-Hansen, 2001). The language of art fosters an awareness of the self and its possibility of transcendence. A process-based approach invites the whole person to the full expression of human experience and provides immediate and direct access to the present moment. In art psychotherapy, experience can be reframed, and new knowledge can reveal the depth of human potential, resiliency, and spiritual connection.

Natalia Gomez Carlier

Natalia Gomez Carlier earned her degree in Psychology from Universidad de Los Andes, a Master's in Art Therapy from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and is currently a Ph.D. student of Transpersonal Psychology at the California Institute of Integral Studies. She is also a Registered Board-Certified Art Therapist with the American Art Therapy Association.



Sara Powell

Sara Powell is the founder of ATIC Psychological and Counselling Centre. She is from the UK, a Third Culture Kid, growing up in the Gulf. She is an Art Psychotherapist and is registered with the Health Care Profession Council (HCPC) UK and is a member of the British Association of Art Therapists (BAAT). Sara has over 11 years of clinical experience and has provided psychotherapy to children, adolescents, adults, families, and has facilitated a variety of groups and programs.

The Islamic modification of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Muslims with Depression.

With nearly 1.5 billion adherents, the religion of Islam is rapidly growing across the world. Accompanying the growth of Islam is a rise in the prevalence of mental illnesses. Today, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is one of the most widely applied psychotherapeutic techniques for treating a variety of mental disorders. In the past, CBT has been modified to better suit the differing cultural demands of patients from non-Western backgrounds, and favourable outcomes were seen. In light of this, this review aims to answer the question; 'Is an Islamically-modified version of CBT more effective for treating depression in Muslims than conventional CBT?'

This review summarized the available publications on Islamically-informed attempts at conducting psychotherapy for Muslims with depression, as well as the evidence for the efficacies of these attempts. Sources were found using PubMed, PsychInfo and SmartCat Rug. Our search yielded eight attempts at an Islamically-informed version of psychotherapy, including four publications demonstrating the efficacy of Islamically-adapted psychotherapeutic techniques. A recurrent finding was that the improvement of depressive symptoms in Muslim patients was greater following the implementation of psychotherapeutic techniques or strategies that included Islamic elements than from conventional psychotherapy. However, no studies exist that compare Islamically-guided psychotherapeutic approaches with conventional CBT on their ability to alleviate depressive symptoms in Muslims. More research is needed on this topic in order to produce a culturally adapted evidence-based manual for conducting CBT with Muslims.

Mr. Farid ('Fred') Elazar

Mr. Fred Elazar is a Psychologist at ACPN who completed his Bachelor's degree in Psychology at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, and his Master's degree in Clinical Psychology at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands in 2020. He completed his practicum training in Tilburg, the Netherlands in 2020 with his graduate thesis on 'Islamic Modification of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Muslims with Depression'. Mr. Elazar has three years of experience in clinical psychology in the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, and the Netherlands. He received his training in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in the Netherlands, after which he started working as a psychologist in Dubai amidst the COVID19 pandemic. Since 2020, Mr. Elazar has catered to those with significant impact on mental health while also working with those having medium to long-term COVID19 effects.

Mr. Elazar is an active speaker leading webinars, seminars, and lectures on topics in psychology at high schools and universities across the GCC. Mr. Elazar also works, in parallel, in academia as Adjunct Instructor of Psychology at University of Balmand, Dubai and American University Dubai. Mr. Elazar works with adolescents and adults on a wide array of conditions. He employs CBT to address issues such as anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive conditions, eating disorders, mood disturbances such as depression; self-esteem concerns, as well as impulse control management. A special topic of interest to Mr. Elazar is addressing addictive video gaming behaviors and challenges in young adults through his CBT approach."



The future of mental health services: The role of tele-services

Post the initial spike in the use of technology platforms during the pandemic, we are continuing to see the uptake in utilization of tele-mental health services. Research studies carried out pre and post pandemic show the growth from 33% to 50% in 2021. A surprising 97% of practitioners surveyed in a study in 2021 reported that tele-mental health should stay. Studies with clients are even more common, with a greatly positive response relating to personal criteria. But what is the new patient journey, and the measure of efficacy when it comes to tele-mental health services?

We present a view on some of the research studies done on clients' responses to their clinical requirements after receiving online sessions. Practitioners have got their own learning curve on this journey, and with tele-mental health the new way forward, there are changes that we must adapt to enhance efficiency in practice.

Devika Mankani

Devika is a licensed Psychologist with over 18 years of experience working in mental health. She is proud to say she works in her dream job, which involves working with individuals and families to facilitate flourishing relationships. Through a variety of youth development programs and adult workshops, she has had the privilege of working with over 15,000 individuals and children in the United States and Dubai.

Devika's approach to psychotherapy is guided by an integrated method of humanistic, cognitive and behavioral therapies with a mind-body focus. With a keen interest in the neuro-biological basis of health and well-being, Devika believes that the journey of understanding your unconscious beliefs can lead you to a shift where you connect with your true self and your strengths.

In addition to clinical practice at the Hundred Wellness Centre in Dubai, she is the Chief Positive Psychologist at Fortes Education Schools. During the pandemic, she co-founded [Chearful.com](#), an online tele-mental health platform aimed to support practitioners and clients through their journey of self-discovery and healing.



Priya Cima

Priya's academic career started in Psychology, with an interest consistently maintained in this area and expanding to include organizational and individual well-being as she realized the importance of a holistic approach to community health. Her work in the public and private sectors have allowed her to develop significant insight and skills within areas of sector-/organization-wide policy and procedures, governance and regulatory frameworks, and strategic well-being initiatives.

Having grown up and worked for over 20 years in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Priya has gained a strong understanding of working within a multi-cultural environment, and she has shared these insights at international conferences relating to organizational development, employee well-being and health. Her priority is to enhance individual well-being through establishing safe environments where people can access the tools and resources they need to build healthy lifestyles.





ΨPCD

Organisational and Design Psychology Stream

How intercultural skills can make us more resilient.

The global pandemic as well as stressors as a result of the VUCA (i.e., volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous) world of associated, rapid changes has made clients' resilience the topic of many coaching conversations. However, practitioners have been affected by the same forces themselves, and resilience has emerged increasingly as a topic in coaching supervision, too. Resilience can be defined as "the ability to persist in the face of challenges and to bounce back from adversity" (Reivich, Seligman, & McBride, 2011, p. 25). But what makes people resilient? One protective factor appear to be positive relationships, social support and connections with others (e.g., Bonanno, Galea, Bucciarelli, & Vlahov, 2007; Cornell et al., 2021; Panchal, Palmer, & O'Riordan, 2020; Reivich et al., 2011). Thus, the ability to create and maintain connections can be crucial for an individual's resilience. Cultural aspects can play an important role in how we form and maintain connections, for example in the context of more individualistic or collectivistic cultures (Triandis, 2001) and the ability to cope (Kuo, 2013). This has implications for practitioners' own resilience as well as how we coach clients for resilience.

Understanding how cultural environment, values and beliefs can shape mental function and behaviour is the remit of cultural neuroscience, a growing field that connects neuroscience and cultural psychology (Chiao, 2009; Sasaki & Kim, 2017). If culture shapes biology and biology shapes culture as various studies have shown (e.g., Chiao & Blizinsky, 2010; Chiao et al., 2010; Ganis, Kutas, & Sereno, 1996; Goto, Ando, Huang, Yee, & Lewis, 2010), then cultural neuroscience may inform coaching conversations. By considering aspects like biases, individualism and collectivism as phenomena of cultural neuroscience, they may help shape the coaching conversation with a view to how we (i.e., practitioner and client) connect and how the skills inherent in cultural versatility and sensitivity can increase resilience in VUCA environments that are increasingly diverse and multicultural as a result of remote work that extends the global and social reach while paradoxically reducing the direct physical connection.

This presentation explores:

- The role of and awareness for culture and cultural neuroscience for resilience
- How cultural neuroscience and cross-cultural skills can be applied in coaching conversations
- How the coachee culture can be leveraged for resilience
- How intercultural sensitivity and skills can be leveraged in any complex, uncertain and ambiguous contexts for resilience.

Silvia King

Silvia King is an enthusiastic empowerer of people and Positive Psychology Coach. She is a PhD candidate with Heriot Watt University, exploring Coaching Psychology in a Middle East context, and is also adjunct faculty. Silvia holds an MA/lic.oec.publ. (Business Management) from the University of Zurich and an MSc in Applied Positive Psychology and Coaching Psychology from the University of East London (MAPPCP). She is a graduate member of the British Psychological Society (MBPsS) and an EMCC-accredited Practitioner coach. Silvia is the co-creator of the ICF-certified course "Develop your cultural sensitivity for successful cross-cultural coaching, mentoring & leadership". Her publications include peer-reviewed academic journal articles and book chapters.



Roberta Pagliarulo

Roberta Pagliarulo has a solid experience as coach and mentor with top management and executives in multicultural contexts. She holds the ICF credential PCC and has over 10 years of experience as trainer and supervisor in Certification Coaching Courses in Italy and Asia. Roberta is the co-creator of the ICF-certified course "Develop your cultural sensitivity for successful cross-cultural coaching, mentoring & leadership". She is also guest speaker at international coaching and HR conferences.



Practical lessons learnt in developing a Resilience assessment within the UAE in adherence to the EFPA guidelines.

The aim of this presentation is to share practical lessons learnt in the journey to validate a home-grown resilience assessment within the UAE whilst adhering to the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA) guidelines in preparation for the British Psychological Society (BPS) review of the instrument.

The why?

The business case to this project was based on the belief that this region is ready to have its own psychometric assessments developed - psychometric assessments that are embedded in the UAE / Emirati culture, belief system, values, and language, and that are tailored to the specific indigenous population profile and their needs. Factual evidence validating this belief lies in the ever-increasing number of actual psychometric tests used in the local economy, as well as the increasing level of awareness regarding the value and benefits of using psychometric assessments during selection, development, and other organizational processes within UAE companies. An increase in the number of UAE Nationals who are BPS-registered test users is further evidence of the increased awareness of the worth of psychometric test use. Additionally, it is important to note that most test publishers and distributors operating in the region have not merely translated an array of psychometric instruments but have localized these. But one step better would be to develop psychometrics specifically for this population group.

The what?

The current trend of employers understanding the importance and need of employee resilience, well-being, and the holistic focus on employees, powerfully accentuated by the pandemic, has not gone unnoticed in this region either. The attendees will therefore be given a glimpse into the process of developing and validating a psychometric instrument in preparation for the BPS review within the field of resilience. The uniqueness of this project is that it is an Arabic psychometric instrument measuring resilience across four scales that was developed by and for UAE Nationals specifically - not an instrument that was translated, or localized; but rather, was home-grown within the UAE in a very large employer of Emiratis. The resilience assessment comprised four main psychological constructs embedded in resilience theory and models, namely self-actualization, locus of control, emotional intelligence, and sense of coherence. Additionally, these four main constructs were each sub-categorized into: physical, cognitive, affective, motivational, and interpersonal characteristics.

Practical lessons learnt in developing a Resilience assessment within the UAE in adherence to the EFPA guidelines.

The how?

The participants will be taken through the journey starting of the research process that started with a comprehensive literature study, understanding the EFPA and BPS guidelines and requirements; assessment design - designing good items, including social desirability scales; drafting a realistic and achievable research design; finalizing the statistical plan; peer review of the assessment and the research process and all related details by subject matter experts and partners; pilot testing in the target population; data collection; statistical analyses (validity, reliability, bias) to documenting and, finally, BPS review submission."

Dr. Angela de Jong

Dr. Angela de Jong is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist (AFBPsS) and Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society who has recently added the International Coaching Federation's ACC credential to her portfolio. Her career stretches across several countries and all continents (minus the very cold one), and has taken her on interesting journeys across the globe tasked to identify talent, develop potential, increase competence and / or accelerate possibilities. She has offered her knowledge, insights, and expertise in both the private and public sectors, and she believes herself to be an ever-curious, non-stop learning worker, researcher, psychologist, coach, mother, friend and human-being.

Focusing on assessment and psychometrics, she has presented several academic papers on selection techniques, candidates' perceptions of these selection techniques, as well as strategic human capital risks at international psychology conferences, with the same being published in international psychology journals and business magazines. Within the Middle East region especially, she contributed the chapter 'Psychometrics in the UAE workforce: Are we measuring capability with a thermometer?' in the book 'Mental Health and Psychological Practice in the United Arab Emirates', published by Palgrave Macmillan. Her webinar on 'A peek into developing assessments within the UAE in adherence to the EFPA guidelines - based on practical lessons learnt' still runs as a paid event for the BPS on the BPS Learn platform.

More recently, her focused has shifted towards the topic of employee resilience, well-being, wellness, and occupational health, while assessment and psychometrics, of course still feature strongly. In this project she aims to create a scientific validated measure for resilience, based on sound research and proven models, suitable for use within the UAE that is available in Arabic.



Dear Machine, Can I trust you? The effectiveness of Artificial Intelligent interviews in predicting individual differences during the hiring process.

In the digital era, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing numerous tasks and processes currently managed by the human capital. It is safe to say that AI has a significant disruptive impact to either augment or potentially replace numerous human tasks and activities across multiple diversified industries whether it be manufacturing, retail, healthcare, logistics, etc. (Dwivedi et.al, 2021).

The increased acceleration of cognitive technologies and advancements in AI technology, plays a critical role in how organizations rethink their ability to thrive and achieve outcomes that were not previously feasible. Hence, more than ever organizations are now redefining their processes in order to be able to use a combination of people and technology to leverage their abilities. For instance, AI is currently augmenting the hiring process in more than one way, such as using AI to improve candidate experience, or support recruiters by taking over the mundane tasks of gathering and analyzing information. Also, more organizations are now examining how AI can assist hiring decisions and help recruiters in not missing out on crucial talent.

The aim of this study was to investigate the potential effectiveness of AI interviews to predict apparent personality traits (automatic personality perception) based on visual, audio, and language cues obtained from interview videos by comparing the personality traits results obtained from the video interviews for n=100 participants'/volunteers' to the participants'/volunteers' personality traits results obtained from completing a traditional traits self-inventory (BFI-44).

Quantitative data was then collected and analyzed using quantitative survey methodology to determine whether AI interviews can effectively be applied within the field of HR or not. The study examined whether AI interviews can be utilized with minimal risk of bias and unfairness or more precautions must be considered before using AI interviews.

Rehab Khadry

Rehab Kadry works as an Associate Principal at Korn Ferry where she is responsible for delivering Korn Ferry Digital Talent Solutions. She is a proficient consultant with extensive experience across the EMEA region in L&D and HR consultancy, with more than 12 years of practical experience working with clients across multiple sectors including technology, automotive, pharmaceutical, and fast-moving consumer goods sector as well as those in the government and public sector where she had been heavily involved at the planning, execution and measurement levels.

She holds a Master's degree in Organizational Psychology with Coaching, and several certifications, namely Training & Instructional Delivery and Human Resource Management Diploma from Heriot Watt University, Florida International University, and the American University in Cairo, and in Personal Success Guidance from True Colors International, USA. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences

Co-author: Dr. Cakil Agnew



'Reality shock!': Understanding the socialisation of young people's work values as they enter the workplace.

The aim of this research was to examine, through a mixed methods approach, young people's work values as they transition into organisations and the psychological factors affecting those values. The transition of young people from full-time education to the workplace is a challenging period, often stressful and uncertain, as young adults take the first steps into their new working lives within a new environment (Lyons et al., 2015; Sullivan & Ariss, 2021; Wray-Lake et al., 2011). Over the years, it has been recognised that this is a critical transitional stage for young people, deserving particular attention in both academia and practice (Busque-Carrier et al., 2021; Johnson & Mortimer, 2011). There are currently contradictory research findings around the work values of young people, with their specific values and experiences not being supported by the large body of empirical research on those of previous generations (Lyons & Kuron, 2014).

38 interviews were conducted with young people working in organisations on a training scheme (e.g., placement, internship), and data thematically analysed. Following this a longitudinal survey was designed, gather data at three time points: pre-entry (n=454), one month into employment (n=229) and four to six months into employment (n=171). Moderated mediation models were run to explore the stability of work values and moderating effects from key variables.

Study findings will be discussed in the presentation session, yet entering an organisation was found to be a challenging time, creating 'reality shock' and not always matching high work value preferences. Interestingly social work values were more susceptible to perceive work values, suggesting more social authenticity when desired work values were being met. This research adds insight to the work values theory, particularly from the eyes of young people, and questioning their work values hierarchical structure and meaning.

This presentation links to the conference theme - understanding resilience - from a person-organisation fit and socialisation perspective. Both individuals entering the workplace, as well as organisations, should aim to be resilient when navigating this turbulent time of flux and adjustment. By stabilising oneself after the initial organisational entry period, young employees can adapt to their new environment to enhance their 'fit' (Arieli et al., 2020). On the other hand, organisations can support new employees through awareness and flexibility, therefore reaping the benefits of retaining new staff and securing a positive psychological contract (Baruch & Rousseau, 2019).

Dr. Lucy Bolton

Dr. Lucy Bolton is an Assistant Professor in Business Psychology and the Programme Director for the MSc Business Psychology programmes at Heriot Watt University Dubai. Being a Chartered Occupational Psychologist (BPS/HPCP) and a Certified Coach (AC), Lucy lectures on courses in Coaching Psychology, Social and Organisational Change, Diversity and Research Methods at the postgraduate level. Lucy also supervises MSc dissertations on various topics related to Business Psychology and Coaching in the workplace. Lucy is a trained Occupational Test User (TUA / TUP) with the British Psychological Society, being certified in Trait, TEIQue and NEO-PR-R, and also being trained to deliver psychometric training.



Co-authors: Dr. Kerrie Unsworth & Dr. Militza Callinan



YPCD

Youth, Education, Community & Positive Psychology Stream

Using change management, story frameworks, and identity focus to build resilience based on the increasing relevance of the Third Culture Kid (TCK) experience.

Many experts believe that Third Culture Kids (young people who spend a significant portion of their developmental years with multiple diverse cultural influences amidst a heightened degree of transience – an overwhelmingly common experience in the GCC region) are prototype citizens of the future. The adaptability they develop as a result of this upbringing is best expressed when TCKs are taught the language and frameworks necessary to process their experiences, often through a focus on change management skills, identity formation, and personal narrative. These skills can be useful for wider society, striving to hone resilience capabilities as the world moves closer and closer to the TCK experience.

Mr. Christopher O'Shaughnessy

Mr. Christopher O'Shaughnessy is a passionate and versatile speaker, comedian, and author who uses a unique blend of story-telling, humor, and provocative insight to engage a wide array of people on topics ranging from Third Culture Kids and the effects of globalization to building community and increasing empathy. Chris' book, *Arrivals, Departures and the Adventures In-Between*, has received high praise from students, teachers, and other experts in the TCK and international community as a resource that is both enjoyable to read at a student level, and able to instill truths, insights and skills essential to navigating life successfully as a TCK. It has also been used in teaching cross-cultural skills and instilling global awareness in a variety of disciplines at the college level and for businesses. Chris received a BA (Hons) in Youth Community Work & Applied Theology from Oxford Brookes University in 2003 and became a Certified Practitioner in Intercultural Intelligence through KnowledgeWorkx ICI certification in 2021.

Chris has delivered keynote speeches and spotlight presentations for organizations including: NAFSA Association of International Educators, Relocate Global's International Education & Schools Fair, Families in Global Transition Conference, Michigan Association of International Educators, Canadian Armed Forces UK Forum, and the Society for Adolescent Health & Medicine. Chris has also delivered presentations and workshops for universities, schools, conferences and other events across the globe including: ACS Hillingdon International School (London, UK), American School of Dubai (UAE), Chadwick International School (Seoul, South Korea), Dubai Knowledge & Human Development Authority (UAE), Dulwich College (Singapore), European Commission, International School of Amsterdam, Le Rosey (Switzerland), Michigan State University, University of Groningen (Netherlands), and the US Air Force.



Why not start development of resilience from the very first moment?

Current topics of modern brain research have shown that already early experiences cause deep marks on the brain of a fetus. These influences have not been recognized as serious for a long time. But – without overestimating every life situation – there are a lot of incidents which cause harm on the baby's mental and emotional development as well as on attachment and bonding. For example difficulties during pregnancy, complication during birth and postnatal time.

Knowledge of the brain's function combined with trauma-therapy elements such as EMDR are building a very practical approach. The method presented here I am using in my professional activities at the maternity and children's hospital, my private practice, training courses and at the University of Applied Sciences in Vienna. This short presentation may awake interest starting resilience training at a very early time. It also can be the initial situation looking for further training courses.

Dr. Maria Weissenboeck

Dr. Maria Weissenböck, Vienna/Austria Institutions: University of Applied Sciences, Women Health Center, Private Practice. She holds a PhD (Psychology), is a Clinical Psychologist, Health Psychologist, and Psychotherapist.

- State-approved Clinical and Health Psychologist and Psychotherapist in Austria since 1993
- Postgraduate of several academic trainings such as Systemic Children-Youth and Family Psychology, Critical Incident Stress Management, Emergency Psychology, Psychotraumatology, Traumafocused Therapy, EMDR, Hypnotherapy
- 20 years of experience at the Semmelweis Gynaecological and Birth Hospital and Women Health Center
- Cooperation with psychiatric departments of public and private hospitals and medical offices
- Consultant and supervisor at hospitals e.g. the Vienna University General Hospital and other organizations such as Austrian Children's Cancer society and Vienna Agency for Children and Families
- Lecturer at the University of Applied Sciences (midwives and nurses) since 1994
- Supervisor for medical staff and private clients. Main areas: Puerperium, postnatal depression, mother-child-interaction, bonding... traumata, PTBS, adaption, compulsion and anxiety disorders, panic attacks.
- Children, Youth and Family Psychology and Psychotherapy



Sources of Resilience in Abused Children During the Legal Child Protection Process in both Jordan and United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Child abuse is one of the worst forms of violence against children especially when it comes from within the family. The difficult part of the abuse is the process of investigating the abuse, going through the harsh stages of forensic medical examination, court proceedings and may be taken out of the family home to safe shelters. However, despite this significant adversity and stress they experience, some children demonstrate resilience, show high functioning and successful adjustment despite their tough experience. This paper examines factors that contribute to abused children adaptive functioning during the legal child protection process. It will mainly focus on resilience in abused children during the legal proceedings at the police investigation settings where forensic medical examinations and social work interventions are also provided. This paper explores the factors that promote resilience in abused children. It also stresses the role of service providers in developing resilience in abused children during the whole process of investigating the abuse. Child development, support from other members in the family, school achievements, loyalty to family, religious belief and good interval will be examined as factors that might contribute to displaying resilient in abused children.

The Family Protection Department in Jordan, and Social Support Centers in the police departments of each emirate of the UAE, will be studied as two cases of legal child protection bodies that investigate child abuse from within the family. The two legal bodies will also be presented as two potential settings to promote resilience in abused children all through the legal investigation process of child abuse. Quality of services provided and casework providers will be examined as pillars of child resilience in the process of child abuse investigation.

Dr. Taghreed M. Abu Sarhan

Dr. Taghreed M. Abu Sarhan joined UAEU in the Fall of 2015. She came from Jordan by way of the USA, where she completed her PhD at Bowling Green State University. She has a specialty in Human Rights Law with an emphasis on Women's Rights and Gender Studies. Prior to her joining the faculty at UAEU, her practical experience includes working with the United Nations in the Al Zaatari refugee camp—one of the largest refugee camps in the world serving many displaced Syrians.



However, her greatest point of pride in her 21 years of service lies in the Jordanian National Police where she took on a leadership role in establishing forensic social work services in which women survivors of violence received women-friendly services, including sensitive interviews of women victims by women police officers. This was a major step forward as the country readied itself for comprehensive responses to violence against women and children. Today, Jordan is a model of police response to family violence in the Arab world. She hopes to be an important voice in the UAE as policy related to family violence continues to be implemented.

Dr. Karen S. Rotabi-Cesares

Dr. Karen S. Rotabi-Cesares is a Professor of Social Work at California State University-Monterey Bay. Her area of expertise is child protection, with an emphasis on alternative care of children, particularly child adoption. Her publications focus on policy and family support, with an orientation to international models of care. Her most recent co-authored book is "From Intercountry Adoption to Global Surrogacy: A Human Rights History and New Fertility Frontiers". She previously taught at the United Arab Emirates University. She has provided pro-bono expert testimony on asylum-seeking and violence against women, as well as other human rights abuses, with an emphasis on Guatemala. She has an extensive background in accrediting human service organizations for the Council on Accreditation. In 2016, she was appointed to an expert group on child rights and surrogacy for International Social Services.



Thanks for asking! How UAE-based university students conceptualize happiness and what universities can do to improve it.

How happiness is defined depends on who is asked, but in the case of universities, student happiness is often overlooked in favor of customer service satisfaction. The voices of university students stemming from non-WEIRD countries; that is, Western, Educated, Individualistic, Rich, and Democratic, are also not commonly heard. The United Arab Emirates, a country whose population is comprised of nearly 90% expatriate residents, is a good example of such a nation: university campuses are filled by mostly students, faculty members and administration from abroad. As prevailing views of happiness currently found in the literature shape what is considered normative and inform what institutions can do to increase it, it is worth determining what is important to students themselves. Such understandings influence student expectations and behaviors; they also appear to be linked to their mental health status and subjective well-being.

Qualitative responses from over 100 students revealed that UAE-based university students are happiest around their friends and want more opportunities to connect socially in their classrooms, efforts which can be purposefully crafted by professors. They want to be treated like independent adults, but appreciate guidance and supports nonetheless. They also dislike being considered like mere paying customers and want more consumer respect despite being young. As the UAE is a nation with a short, but evolving history of university life, more research into student happiness as well as the role universities can play in securing it, is worthwhile not only for the mental health of young people, but the economic viability of the UAE as a student-attracting international pole. Such conceptualizations will also contribute to a more complete picture of well-being within positive psychology that, while growing, is still lacking in diversity.

Dr. Louise Lambert

Dr. Louise Lambert, PhD, is a Registered Psychologist (College of Alberta Psychologists, Canada), Clinical Supervisor, Researcher and Professor with almost 20 years of experience in counselling, mental health, higher education and research, and primary healthcare. She has lived in the UAE for 10 years doing organizational and educational consulting, as well as teaching and research in happiness and well-being, particularly in young people. She has many peer-reviewed empirical publications on the topic, including studies done here in the region and in Canada. Her expertise is in positive psychology and the empirical strategies used to attain greater subjective well-being.

She is currently the Head of Happiness Programming and Policy Design with HappinessMatters.org, and a professor at the Canadian University Dubai. Her work includes the positive education programs at Dubai College and Kuwait's Al Nowair Foundation, which specifically addressed well-being skills for young people, including teacher training in their delivery. Her previous clients include Masdar, KAUST (KSA), Teacherly (UK), and BSME (British Schools Middle East). Dr. Lambert is the founder and Editor of the Middle East Journal of Positive Psychology, a journal dedicated to regional happiness and well-being.

Co-authors Vaishnavi Varma, Suhaina Mayet, Yasmeen Khadri & Jessica Vedanayaga are Psychology students from the Canadian University Dubai.



Learning from South African child protection Social workers about grit as a driving source of resilience in the workplace

Many children in South Africa continue to be maltreated and require Social work interventions. Child protection social workers (CPSWs) are mandated by law to protect vulnerable children, perform statutory duties, and often work in resource-restrained and hostile contexts. Globally studies reported on the resilience of CPSW, mostly from a socio-ecological perspective. With this study, we aim to open up the conversation about grit and hardiness as potential drivers of resilience in CPSWs in South Africa and contribute to the ongoing conversation in this regard.

We followed a qualitative self-report approach, and following recruitment and purposive sampling procedures, we conducted semi-structured interviews to explore the self-reported sources of resilience among 20 South African CPSWs from two provinces, the Western Cape and Free State. Thematic analysis of transcribed interviews was employed to formulate and develop the said self-reports into sources of resilience.

According to our participants, their sources of resilience were informed by: (1) A high degree of personal agency; (2) Navigating a supportive ecology through a relational agency; (3) Meaning-making mechanisms; (4) Self-care and a survival attitude; and, (5) A religious identity. Our findings go beyond earlier reports and contribute toward a more nuanced understanding of the role of grit and hardiness as potential driving sources of resilience in the workplace. We put forward an argument on our participant's behalf that to live resiliently in the face of workplace adversities, they must have grit and hardiness. We conclude by eluding policymakers that for CPSWs to be solely responsible for navigating a supportive ecology and ultimately remain resilient in the long run might be unsustainable and unfair. As such, drastic systemic changes are needed in the South African welfare system.

Dr. Ansie Fouché

Dr. Ansie Fouché is a Professor of Social work and researcher in the Department of Social Well-being at the United Arab Emirates University. Her research interests include child sexual abuse, forensic social work; pre-trial therapy; resilience; posttraumatic growth and strengths-based interventions.



Dr. Elmién Truter

Dr. Elmién Truter is an Associate Professor and Social work lecturer at the North-West University, Vanderbijlpark Campus in South Africa. Her research interests are child protection social work, resilience and prevention of child abuse.



Emma Boonzaaier

Ms. Emma Boonzaaier is a registered and practising Social worker and Master's degree graduate at the North-West University, Vanderbijlpark Campus, South Africa.



Mr. Mahloma Molakeng

Mr. Mahloma Molakeng is a registered and practising Social worker and Master's degree graduate at the North-West University, Vanderbijlpark Campus, South Africa.



Using dance from a psychological viewpoint for resilience in daily life.

Psychological resilience can be defined as mentally or emotionally dealing or coping with any major or minor crisis. On a daily basis, we deal with stress, emotional situations, and mental challenges. Everyday resilience can have a major impact on our mental health and well-being. Low resilience can affect our mood, sleep, habits, memory etc. Dance is a universal art form with mental, physical, emotional, and social well-being applications. Studies show that dance can have an impact on resilience. Dance can reduce anxiety, and stress, control symptoms of depression, and improve sleep by altering certain chemicals that are responsible for well-being and happiness. Dance even has an impact on the confidence level and self-esteem of a person. Dance increases memory by avoiding shrinkage of brain cells. Dance psychology is a new branch of psychology that tries to understand dance and dancers from a psychological perspective.

The benefits of dancing are hardly understood in many countries. With so many applications, dance is still seen as an art form. Applying dance in school, work, health care and social settings can have a major impact on mental and physical well-being including resilience.

Ms. Nisha Suresh

Ms. Nisha Suresh holds an MPhil in Psychology from Christ University in India and is a PhD candidate at Auckland University of Technology. She also holds a Master's degree in Social Work (Medical and Psychiatry) and a Master's degree in Psychology from Bharathiar University, where she received a top place in MSW. With three years of experience teaching, studying, and working with non-profits, hospitals, and clinics, Ms. Nisha is also an internationally published researcher who has presented research papers on 'dream studies' at national conferences.

Besides psychology, she has 8 years of experience as a professional dancer, choreographer, and fitness trainer both nationally and internationally. She is also an Internationally Certified Advanced Yoga Trainer who specializes in utilizing yoga and dance to improve mental health. Dance psychology, yoga and psychology, sleep, and dreams are some of her study interests.



Why do we stay? Examining factors that enhance resilience and longevity among UAE expatriates

Resilience has been defined by the American Psychological Association (APA) as “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress.” However, research has also indicated that resilience is far more nuanced than simply being a trait that one may or may not have and is often impacted by social systems and culture (Southwick et al, 2014). Expanding the definition to fit across cultures, Panter-Brick and Leckman (2013) defined resilience as “a process to harness resources and sustain wellbeing.” For expatriates, resilience is a key when it comes to adapting to cross-cultural stressors and sustaining wellbeing. Living and working abroad as an expatriate brings with it unique cultural and systemic stressors that may not be present in one’s home country. So what makes an expatriate in the UAE resilient? What factors make them want to stay longer even amidst the stress of being away from their home countries? Is there a difference between individualistic and collectivistic cultures when it comes to perseverance and a desire to stay?

The World Migration Reports (IOM, 2020) identified the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as the country with the highest proportion of expatriates. This makes the UAE a unique location to examine the factors that impact wellbeing of expatriates as well as their willingness to stay despite the many unique stressors that come with living and working abroad. In addition, the government of the UAE has a keen interest in the wellbeing of its residents. In 2016, the government instituted a Ministry of Happiness that set into motion many initiatives across schools, businesses and community with the aim of becoming the happiest country. They have also increased the opportunity for expatriates to obtain 5 and 10 year visas to incentivize expatriates to stay longer in the country.

Based upon research of over 300 expatriates currently living in the UAE, this presentation will unpack factors such as migration motivation, perceived social support and perceived God support on wellbeing as well as factors that predict longevity of stay in the UAE even in the face of challenges. From the outcomes of the study, it will further discuss how psychologists, counsellors and community workers can develop preventative strategies to support cross-cultural adjustment and resilience among expatriates in the UAE.

Dr. Amy Kellogg

Dr. Amy Kellogg is a licensed Social Counsellor with the Community Development Authority and has lived and worked in the UAE for the past 20 years. Originally from the USA, Dr. Amy graduated with her B.A. in Psychology from Grove City College and went on to pursue a M.Ed. in Counseling and Guidance at the University of Texas. Shortly after, in 2002, her husband's job transferred them overseas to Abu Dhabi, beginning their international adventure.

Dr. Amy has worked in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and Dubai, serving expat families in a variety of settings. Formerly the Head of Wellbeing and School Counsellor for Fortes Education, Amy has presented workshops on mental health topics as well as psycho-education around “Third Culture Kids” to students, faculty, and parents. She has also been a speaker for KHDA initiatives and What Works conferences on the topic of wellbeing in schools.

Currently, Amy works as a community counsellor at Fellowship Dubai, a church-based organization that aims to provide donation-based mental health support to those who otherwise could not afford it. She has just finished her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from Regent University and completed her dissertation on factors that impact wellbeing and longevity of UAE expatriates.



Can the Phoenix still rise? A closer look into how resilience works in times of accumulating traumas in Lebanon.

Mental distress and decreased functionality are highly prevalent after collective traumas. Yet, resilience and growth are also post-traumatic trademarks. Little is known however about the overall impact of accumulating chronic mass traumas on our inherent capacity to rebound after adversity.

We aim to introduce a few studies including young adults from Lebanon, at multiple time points during the additive unprecedented traumas for the past couple years, ranging from socio-political unrest, to the COVID-pandemic, the economic melt-down and the apocalyptic Beirut port explosion. We will talk about the population in general and subgroups such as health-care providers or Red Cross first aid responders. We will highlight novel methodologies factoring explicit and implicit responses to differentiate superficial and their hard-wired attitudes that subsequently influence behavior. We will also illustrate how pooling demographic data helps cluster people's experiences after a collective trauma. This entails for instance moving beyond individual factors classically assessed for psychopathology and considered vulnerability or protective factors to include environmental, social and economic factor as well as cultural and spiritual ones.

We argue that early intervention in communities suffering collective atrocities should reinforce recovery elements such as spirituality and social support. Unmeasured safety needs, uncertainties about the future and job security should be monitored for their role in maintaining psychological distress. This might on one hand facilitate targeted outreach towards at-risk subgroups. On the other, this might incentivize leadership to bolster resilience and collective growth in unstable environments that could be viewed as malleable.

Dr. Myriam El Khoury-Malhame

Dr. Myriam El Khoury-Malhame is an Assistant Professor of Psychology and currently the Program Lead in the Department of Social and Education Sciences at Lebanese American University (LAU). She strongly advocates the bi-directional connections between biology and psychology. She has combined both approaches in her trainings as a cognitive neuroscientist and a clinical psychologist. Her research interests include bio-psychological basis of stress, trauma and anxiety disorders. She investigates emotional, cognitive and attention bias, fear conditioning and sleep alterations. Recently, she focuses on positive psychology including resilience, gratitude and post-traumatic growth in addition to integrating spirituality to the cognitive behavioral affective triad of mental and physical health. She has received major grants with her team to implement practices promoting emotional intelligence in public schools in Lebanon.

She earned her PhD in Neurosciences in 2011 from AixMarseille II University in France working on the brain basis of psychotherapy in treating trauma and anxiety. She is a clinical psychologist certified in EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) and CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) and has worked in private practice with outpatient adults suffering emotional distress (PTSD, depression, addiction) for 10 years. She also works on providing psychological support in medical settings and collaborates with health care providers to better implement active listening and stress/pain management tools for patients suffering for e.g. from cancer, diabetes, obesity, Alzheimer's, etc. She actively promotes the use of simple empirically based stress management techniques in daily healthy functioning including exercising, tapping, cardiac coherence. A long-time member of the Girl Scout movement, Dr. El Khoury-Melhame has kept the wondering spirit of exploring the Lebanese hidden gems. She particularly appreciates scuba-diving, snowboarding and globetrotting.

