

Psymposium

Volume 32 Number 1 - June 2021

Psychologists' Association of Alberta

Understanding People | Working Together

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Our Mission
The Mission of the PAA is to advance the science-based profession of psychology and to promote the well-being and potential of all Albertans.

Our Vision
PAA & its members are recognized leaders in enhancing the psychological health of all Albertans.

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Featured Content

9 **The Universe Within**
No Regrets

10 **Ethics – The Impossible Imperative**
Two Forms of Idiocy

12 **New Kids on the Block**
Psychedelic Assisted Psychotherapy

13 **Innovative Practices in Psychology**

15 **Technology Task Force**
Psychological Practice in Telepsychology: Technology in Practice Survey

16 **Getting Schooled**
Mentorship within Post-Secondary Teaching and Learning Environments

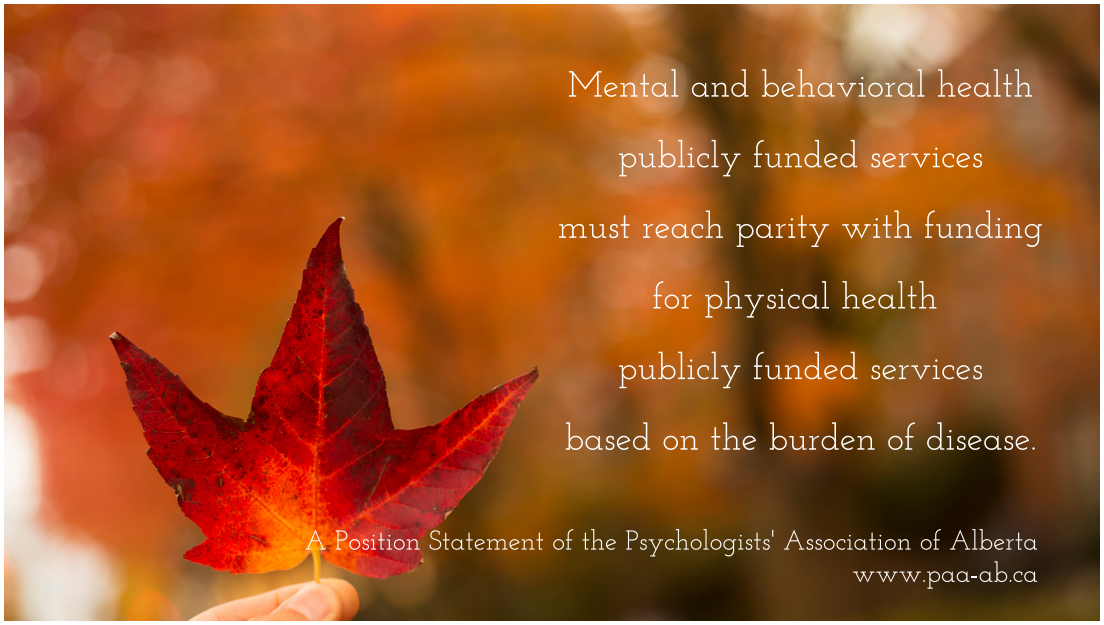
20 **A Book Review**
Influence, The Psychology of Persuasion By Robert B. Cialdini, PhD., Unabridged Audiobook, released 2016 by HarperAudio

22 **Empowering Canadians via Social Media to Work Together Against Misinformation**
Our #ScienceUpFirst Initiative

23 **As Interest in Psychedelic Medicines Surges, Psychology Can be Part of this New Wave**

Contents

4 Editor's Letter
4 Alberta Psychology Showcase
5 PAA Award Winner in Spotlight
5 Welcome New PAA Members
6 Notes from the CEO's Desk
7 Welcome New Board Reps
7 Collaborating
7 Thank you Volunteers
8 Board Notes
9 Welcome New Student Intern
11 Alberta Psychology in the Media
12 Psymposium Trivia
14 Committees & Task Forces
14 PAA Racism in Alberta Psychology Taskforce
17 Psychology Month in Alberta
17 Psychology Shaping the Landscape
18 Students' Corner
18 2021 Science Fair Award Winners
19 PAA Volunteer Opportunities
21 Continuing Professional Development
22 Upcoming 2021 Town Halls
23 PAA Board Meeting Dates 2021
24 PAA Referral Service
24 Awards Celebration



Editor's Letter



"Simple reminders such as monitor and move can serve us well in tracking our own physical activity and mental health throughout the day."

By Michelle Vandegriend, Ph.D., R. Psych

Most of us are familiar with *Newton's First Law of Motion*: *a body at rest will remain at rest and a body in motion will remain in motion unless an outside force acts on it.* As I write this article, I am keenly aware that it is Mental Health Week in Canada, and as psychologists we are very much aware of how consistency in physical fitness has a significant impact on mental health. Regular exercise can create "an immunity" or a buffer around stress levels, anxiety, and depression.

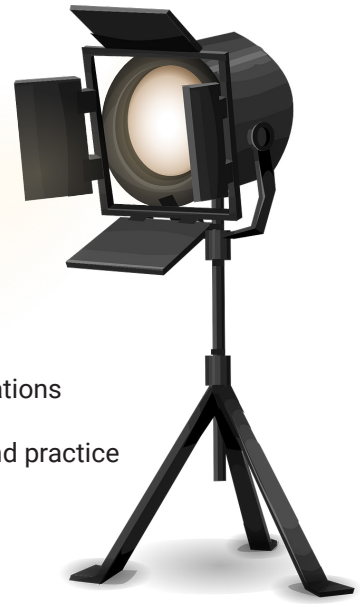
With fitness facilities and recreation centers being periodically closed over the past year, sedentary behaviour has become an unintended and indirect fallout. Many of us have made the transition to work from home or remotely, and much of our time and associated behaviours may have become deskbound or simply dormant. Many of us have spent over a year staring into our computer screens with clients, colleagues, and peers, with our focus shifting to online sessions and meetings.

Simple reminders such as *monitor and move* can serve us well in tracking our own physical activity and mental health throughout the day. Further examples include the integration of stretching in between sessions, having a "stand-up" video session or meeting, restructuring our work area to maximize movement, or incorporating a run or walk during a lunch break. Even a little activity can go a long way.

With pleasurable weather upon us, now is the time to transition from online to outdoors and to enjoy all that summer has to offer.

PAA Editor-In-Chief
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Alberta Psychology Showcase



PAA members have a wealth of expertise in science and practice. We want to showcase your work online and in Psymposium. Email Kim@paa-ab.ca and share your recent:

- Implementation Science
- Program Evaluations
- Therapeutic Tool Development
- Research or Project Grants
- Research Projects
- Psychological Science Publications

Check future Psymposium issues for this regular feature to stay up to date with research and practice in Alberta psychology.

PAA Award Winner in Spotlight



Dr. Jac Andrews

We would like to spotlight **Dr. Jac Andrews**, winner of PAA Psychologist of the Year Award 2020!

Dr. Andrews exemplifies the role of an academic psychologist. Over his 32-year career, Dr. Andrews has played a critical role in advocating for the profession of school psychology. In the past two years, he has led our School and Applied Child Psychology (SACP) program towards accreditation with the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA).

Dr. Andrews' work has focused on mental health and the promotion of the profession of psychology within the context of education. He has supervised projects examining mindfulness-based cognitive therapy to reduce anxiety in school-aged children, social-cognitive variables and their relation to bullying and anxiety in children, and the relation between parenting stress and children's anxiety. He is a strong advocate for the profession of psychology, demonstrating his passion and commitment through his leadership roles, research program, and community partnerships.

This award is extended to qualifying PAA members to celebrate excellent work being conducted in the field of psychology. This non-monetary award is designed to acknowledge significant achievement or contributions over the previous two-year period in any of the following categories – advocacy, clinical / counselling, school / educational, developmental, social, industrial / organizational, and research.

Welcome New PAA Members

Saadiya Ali
Stephanie Archer
Heather Armstrong
Mohammadhossein Askari
Elisabeth Bellamy
Stacey Bjornstad
Sabrina Brady
Inverpal Braich
Edwin Brobbel
Cheryl Bruce
Kali Brummitt
Tahirah Butt
Aimee Calayo
Harpreet Chana
Polly Chawla
Alysha Cooper
Megan Cowie
Benjamin Coxson
Lindsay Cuncins
Emma Davidson
Stephanie Dean
Katelyn Reimer Dewald
Shalpinder Dhothar
Carmela Di Flumeri
Rachelle Diamond
Jennifer Donnan
Megan Duffy

Marli Duncan
Laurie Escott
Joan Ewasiw
Elise Farand
Jane Fix
Kelsey Friesen
Sarah Fung
Andra Gramescu
Jaimee Grossklaus
Tina Hackett-Myles
Jillian Harbin
Molly Harper
Brodie Hill
Faren Honess
Tawny Hosker
Mohamed Hussein
Michael Aaron Jensen
Rana Kamel
Kirsten Kelly
Eric Keskin
Mitch King
katie kinsella
Cassandra Kleefman
Kirstie Kneppers
Eric krepstekies
Jennifer Aasman Kumm
Erica Lane

Alexandra Larsen
Ruoyi Liu
Ying Ying Liu
Abigail Logan
Alyssa Ma
Christine MacDonald
Midhula Kalpak Madhu
Kiana Mann
Emily McDonald
Dermot McLoughlin
June McMaster
June Meyer
Cynthia Mikolas
Elizabeth Millington
Kelly Mills
Cheong Min Baek
Roderick Mitchell
Joanna Moen
Rhonda Monts
Emilie Morin-Yaremchuk
Kenneth Murdoch
Claire Murray
Amelia Musselman
Harmony Nimchuk
Abhay Parmar
Aisha Penddah
Tracy Pham

Shelley Pitzel
Christina Rinaldi
Michel Rivkind
Megan Roberts
Megan-Joy Rockey
Sheena Ryan
Hadiseh Safai Honarvari
Ashima Saini
Harpreet Sarao
Candace Sayles
Erin Shumlich
Cailea Slifka
Gregory Smith
Erin Smith
Lisa Smithson
Serena Smygwaty
Ashley Surette
Jaclyn Van Hierden
Ria Vardeleon
Claudia Vasquez
Marilyn Faye Archer Wilson
Amy Wolgemuth
Astrid Woodard

Notes from the CEO's Desk



"The entire discipline has a role in achieving a society in which all its members can benefit from psychology's best practices, research discoveries, and training practices."

- Jennifer R Kelly, APA 2021 President

By Dr. Judi L Malone, PAA CEO
Registered Psychologist (AB/AUS)

This year, PAA celebrates our 25th Anniversary. Looking forward, I am galvanized by our potential in shaping health equity. The pandemic has laid bare the systemic injustices that contribute to health disparities, and psychologists play a vital role in dismantling these barriers.

Health Equity

We all have psychological health. We do not all have access to opportunities that support health behaviours. This ranges from services and support when there is a health crisis through to access to services and support in advance of a psychological health concern. Health equity exists when we have addressed social determinants of health including racism.

PAA Position Statement
Discrimination harms, diversity strengthens. Diversity increases tolerance and psychological health and is the model for a caring society.

Core Foundations
Across health professions, there is a need to examine if curricula and clinical training perpetuate health inequities and how this might be evaluated. We can develop tools for self-assessment of practice and self-reflexive questions for entering areas of practice. And, as practitioners, we can embrace our role as advocates.

Groundwork
We have a responsibility to society and there is an urgent need to be aware of communities to be served. We can embed practice within community, advertise in ways suited to community, listen to community needs, and become aware of resources in the community. We can be timely and responsive to community needs and deliver on promises. And we can target measures considered beneficial by the community.

When working towards health equity, it is essential to understand the impacts of trauma. To be a leader in bringing people together and speaking up for change. And to be persistent despite experiences of systemic racism.

Allyship
And what of the important role of allyship? To be successful as an ally, this is a role steeped in humility. Although allies may seek to impact change, our role is to provide space for others and be part of the solution. There are many options for allyship. Learn, and read research about health disparities. Meet with those impacted but remain aware of your privilege. Volunteer in an area of health equity that you are passionate about; in that setting, learn, not as expert but as helper. And champion a role and voice for those who should be represented at tables of influence.

Where to Start
Build your own cultural competence and strengthen your therapeutic relationship with clients from underserved communities. Build meaningful partnerships with other health providers to better serve diverse clients. Build and maintain a successful practice that effectively serves diverse populations. Expand your role. Get active in peer discussions of racism. Stand together with groups and organizations impacting change. Volunteer and support advocacy and social justice. Become involved in your professional association.

Together we can change health disparities.

Judi

Welcome New Board Reps



Thank you to outgoing PAA Board Members **Dr. David St. Arnault** and **Chelsea Hobbs** for your service and commitment to the PAA membership!

And welcome to new our board representatives, **Vanessa Siso**, Student Representative and **April Salciano,** Provisional Representative. We look forward to your insights!



Vanessa Siso, Student Representative

April Salciano, Provisional Representative

Collaborating

Fostering the Profession: Learning - Leading Psychology as a Profession

PAA, & our members, are committed to maximizing our impact through strategic relationships with other psychology groups in addition to maintaining a strong relationship with the College of Alberta Psychologists. That includes:

American Psychological Association

- Dr Lana Hawkins was elected to the APA Council of Representatives
- Robert McGarva as Rural Health Coordinator Representative for Alberta
- Dr Judi Malone as the CESPPA representative for Alberta
- Nicki Wilson as Division 31 Representative

Canadian Council of Professional Associations of Psychology

- Dr Judi Malone serves as the vice-chair of CPAP
- Dr Sally MacLean serves as representative
- Tatiana Lund as representative of National Committee of Psychologist Wellness

Canadian Psychological Association

- Dr Judi Malone serves on the CPA board representing the provinces

Association of Canadian Psychology Regulatory Organizations

- Dr Judi Malone serves as the liaison of the provinces to ACPRO
- Tatiana Lund as representative of National Committee of Psychologist Wellness

Alberta Health Services

- Dr Judi Malone participates in the:
  - » AHS Professional Practice Council for Psychology
  - » AHS Clinical Strategic Network for Addiction & Mental Health
  - » Alberta Mental Health Research Hub - Addictions & Mental Health

Thank you Volunteers

Thank you for your dedication to the profession, and in particular all of you who help to serve:

- » PAA's Board
- » Committees & Task Forces
- » Psymposium (Editor & Columnists)
- » The PAA Practice Advisor Program
- » The Media Psychologists Program
- » The Disaster Response Network
- » Public Education Events and Presentations (Science Award Judges and Presenters, Public and Career Speakers and Exhibitors.)



Special thanks to

- » Dr Lana Hawkins - APA Council of Representative
- » Nicki Wilson - APA Division 31 Representative
- » Robert McGarva - APA Rural Health Coordinator Representative for Alberta
- » Dr Judy Moench - Disaster Response Network Coordinator
- » Tatiana Lund - Representative, National Committee on Psychologist Wellness

We are very proud of all our volunteers, and grateful for your continuous support. The gift of your time is priceless as we all move through these difficult times together.

Board Notes



"PAA is commemorating its 25th anniversary this year."

By Nicki Wilson, R. Psych

It is with great pleasure that we announce that the Psychologists' Association of Alberta (PAA) is commemorating its 25th anniversary this year. We have indeed come a long way since the start of the association. When the organization formed as a distinct organization in 1996 starting with 3 employees and a goal of a small membership, we could hardly foresee our growth to a prominent association with a staff of 7 and a membership of over 3,000. The original goal of the association was to provide a common purpose and unite the psychologists of Alberta.



The benefits of joining the PAA expanded to professional development, referral services, mentorship and networking opportunities, access to resources, and advocacy support for the profession. Members have been able to take part in developing the standards and best practices of the profession, opportunities to network with other members, and membership group discounts.

It is also important to highlight some of the specific work and innovations that the PAA has accomplished over the years with the support of our staff and membership:

» Continually increasing membership growth through innovation, engagement, and support. The membership continues to be engaged through active volunteer networks for leaders and contributors within the profession.

» The association has matured into trusted advocates– the voice by and for the profession and for the psychological health of Albertans. The PAA is considered a collaborative leader in the profession in Canada and North America.

» The association has initiated ongoing outcome-informed practices and research. A systematized media infrastructure for psychological science and expertise was created.

» The association has addressed many issues of importance including the Doctoral standard, technology in professional practice, psychology's role in Truth and Reconciliation, racism in Alberta psychology, and many other issues.

» The association founded an award-winning Practice Advisor Program.

» The association is known for the quality professional development grounded in best and evidence-based practices.

» The association has instituted an active and successful referral network for the membership.

» Incorporated student engagement and professional career lifespan considerations in programming.

» Produced a website and a full online social media presence and established trusted communications with the membership through email, newsletters, and social media.

» Developed an outstanding awards program for our profession in Alberta.

» Co-founded an optimal professionally managed liability insurance program and many other benefit programs in the community.

Our members have been an essential part of our association's journey and success. We greatly appreciate and value all of the contributions to the profession of psychology. With your support, we will continue to advance the science-based profession of psychology and continue to promote the well-being and potential of all Albertans.

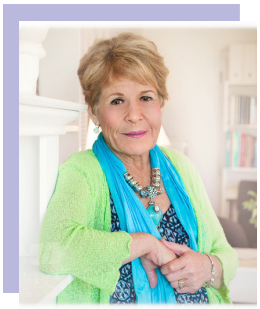
Proudly,

Nicki Wilson, M.Sc. R. Psych

Your President

The Universe Within

No Regrets



"What actually happens in our lives may be less important than what we learn from the experiences."

By Gwen Randall-Young, R. Psych

Some of the clients I work with look back and regret not having done things differently. Perhaps they would not have rushed into marriage, or they might have completed more schooling. They may have tried harder to save a relationship or walked away sooner. They may have taken more time for themselves or learned to ask for what they really wanted. We might also question the things that we had no control over: a difficult childhood, the death or illness of friends or loved ones, accidents, the inability to conceive a child, not having found a soul mate, friends moving away, or jobs coming to an end.

This can lead to a myriad of "what ifs" and "if onlys." Somehow, there is the thought that our lives could have been different, or even should have been different. It is as if we are artists, looking at our unfinished painting, and thinking we could have painted something different. I am not so sure about that.

While it does seem that we have choices, we cannot be definitively certain about what exactly causes us to make each choice the way that we do. Our entire history–and the whole of our body, mind, and soul–as well as our dreams and visions–all play a part. We must also realize that we are not in this alone. Our lives are not one-man/one-woman shows. Rather, our lives are intricately intertwined with those of others. We play roles in other peoples' lives, as they play roles in ours. In turn, their lives are intricately connected with those of many others as well. It is a complex web of interconnections dating back to the beginning of time, and perhaps even further back to previous lives, and forward to all those yet to be born, whose lives will have some connection with ours.

Considered in this way, our lives are but one strand in the human tapestry. In relation to the entire design, they may be exactly as they are meant to be. Both our personal designs and the overall, grand design may be playing themselves out for us to see, just as a novel does, with its many layers of meaning underscoring its primary, literal meaning. What actually happens in our lives may be less important than what we learn from the experiences, and how we use those experiences to deepen our own sense of meaning and understanding. More important than the individual events is how we use the meaning derived from them to inform and direct the rest of our lives.

Clearly, we do not have control over many of the external events in life, but we do have control over our inner "atmosphere." When we put our lives in the broader context as described above, we can detach somewhat from the details of the drama, and focus instead on the intricacy, complexity, and wonder of the totality of the production.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and award-winning psychologist. For permission to reprint this article, or to obtain books, CDs or MP3s, visit www.gwen.ca. Follow Gwen on Facebook for daily inspiration.



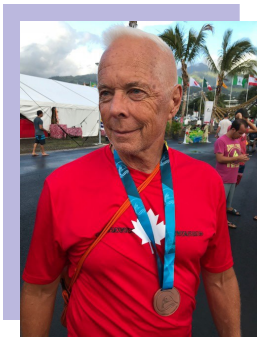
Welcome New Student Intern

I just completed the first year of my Master of Arts in Psychology program at Carleton University in Ottawa. Last summer I graduated from MacEwan University with my Bachelor of Arts in Honours Psychology, and I won the PAA Undergraduate Thesis Research Award. I am really excited to intern with the PAA this summer conducting the program evaluation and learning more about the PAA!

- Jessie Swanek

Ethics – The Impossible Imperative

Two Forms of Idiocy



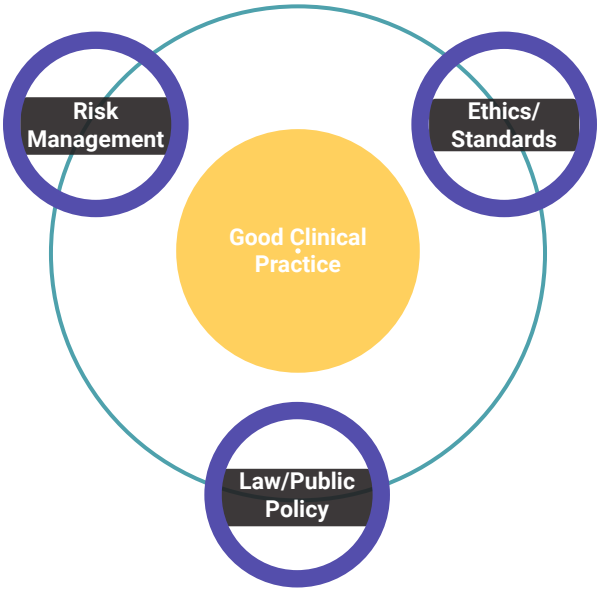
"There are two kinds of idiocy which plague us in our day to day decision making."

By Dr. Jon Amundson, Ph.D., R. Psych

Slavoj Zizek has stated there are two kinds of idiocy which plague us in our day to day decision making. The first he describes is akin to the behaviour of Sheldon in *The Big Bang Theory*. Here we see the problem with **literalization** in matters of conduct. This literal sense of things before us is akin to deontological emphasis in our ethics; the aspiration pursuit of actualizing the higher values which relate to the best ways people can be, one with another. The second 'idiocy' is simply falling into the loss of oneself in expediency and the conventional or convenient; the **utilitarian** aspects of our codes, standards and guidelines. What is the most expedient route in relation to others around us or abutting our decisions? While the first is like the child in the fairy tale of the emperor's new clothes; the second is like the motivationally blind crowd standing by.

We begin with this reference because the issue of ethical conduct revolves around these -returning to fairy tales – "too hot/too cold" postures. To find the "just right," it is useful to visit some economic theory. Risking getting a bit theoretically top heavy here, nonetheless let's introduce Goodhart's Law. This law states, simply, that what we measure will become the very product we seek to produce. Further, this measurement, i.e. in commodity production, will also then distort and alter any other measurements. With ethics then if we cling too tightly to literal emphasis in ethics, we will produce more rigid and ethically reductionist policy and guidelines. If we seek to rigidify ethics in specification, more of the same will be our product: if we see risk management and indemnification as our "product" we will become more likely to behave to achieve that end. The cost of this emphasis will be to "second-tier" good clinical practice.

Nonetheless, when clinical practice is the salient measure, practice may be reduced to simply maintaining engagement and patient numbers. Often those of us long in the field just see being busy as the end in itself. A full patient load–is it not enough? Hence, we run into one of Amundson's recurring themes, that of management of competing contingencies. In the June 2020 issue of Psymposium, the following diagram was featured reflecting good clinical practice orbited by risk management, ethics/ standards, and law/public policy.



A return to this depiction of contingency invites us to escape idiocy. While central to our work is good clinical practice, it is the gravitational pull of these other concerns that must be balanced. We can neither be too literal, whether regarding the use of CBT or other empirically supported models, or rules and standards and risk management, nor too cavalier in justifying what we each do (especially after a concern is raised). Using a quote that I fear I have already used but is worth repeating: Yevtushenko, the Russian post once said, "Of such is our vanity that we must remember that the creator shall only raise up those who even with the smallest steps quake with uncertainty!"

Alberta Psychology in the Media

Media Engagements

February 2021 – May 2021

25 Media Pieces

VIA

- CTV News
- 630 CHED
- Okotoks Western Wheel
- Medicine Hat News
- Global News
- Indian Head-Wolseley News
- Brain Food Cafe

THANKS TO

- Noreen Sibanda
- Dr. Angela Grace
- Dr. Kelly Schwartz
- Chantal Cote
- Dr. Ganz Ferrance
- Tara Boothby
- Dr. Nicole Racine
- David Small
- Jennifer Rioux
- Dr. Linda Hancock
- Dr. Brent Macdonald
- Dr. Erik Wikman

ON TOPICS INCLUDING

- Black-focused counselling services
- Eating Disorders Awareness Week
- Anxiety in teens
- Relationships during pandemic
- Mental health impacts of COVID-19
- Money
- Moods and emotions
- Alberta seniors' vaccines
- Health-care workers redeployed
- COVID-19 stress on moms

Webinar Presentation Engagements

Participants	Venue
Dr. Marjorie Mayer, DRN volunteer	» CMHA – Rural Mental Health Community Lead Teams - 35 participants » Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital (Psychology Department) on Psychological Coping During a Pandemic: For the Workplace - 21 participants
Dr. Judi Malone PAA staff Ada Nieminen, Kim Bernard and Cindy Kennedy	» CMHA Alberta Working Stronger virtual conference » Several informative speakers empowering 404 participants

Do you have a media or presentation engagement to report? Let us know at paa@paa-ab.ca!



New Kids on the Block
A Column for Early Career Psychologists

Psychedelic Assisted Psychotherapy



"There seems to be a great potential for a psychedelic renaissance over the coming years."

By Dr. Marc Ross (Ph.D. in Education) R. Psych

Over the last several years there has been a skyrocketing interest in psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy. Articles and studies are growing exponentially in this area, and there is a lot of excitement about the potential healing effects of various psychedelics when used within a therapeutic context. For instance, a recent Nature article titled, "How Ecstasy and Psilocybin are Shaking up Psychiatry," highlights various studies and personal stories of individuals who have suffered from long-standing psychological conditions that receive significant benefit from undergoing this form of treatment.

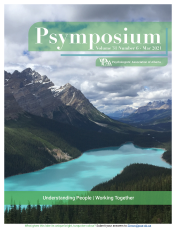
Amundson (2021) recently highlighted some of the ethical issues in his Psymposium column, and he is among others who are excited but cautious when considering the many moral and ethical implications of this resurgence. The word "resurgence" is used specifically because according to Dyck (2010), research into the healing power of psychedelics when combined with psychotherapy, began in the 60s and flourished for about a decade, before being shut down due to fears about uncontrolled, widespread use of psychedelics in the general population. Unfortunately, legislature banning these mind-altering substances made it very difficult, if not impossible, for academic researchers to continue looking into their potential benefits for mental health.

Fortunately, scholars and researchers have, as mentioned above, in the last several years, pushed for exceptions and special allowances to look more closely at how taking Ketamine, for instance, when used in a therapeutic setting, can have transformational effects on issues like PTSD, depression, and suicidality, often with long term positive results for the patient. MAPS, founded in 1986 by Rick Doblin and others, has been spearheading efforts to have MDMA-assisted psychotherapy approved by the FDA as a form of treatment for various psychological disorders, and results have been extraordinary thus far. It is highly probable that in the next year or two there will be approval from the government, and that clinics around the country (and around the world) will start offering this form of treatment to many patients in need.

There is still an enormous amount that remains unknown about how this treatment and its various substances, which include chemical compounds like Ketamine, Psilocybin, MDMA, LSD, among others, actually works from a biopsychosocial perspective (Robin Carhart-Harris, 2020). A host of neurologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and various health practitioners are hard at work trying to understand the underlying mechanisms. Clearly, it is a very exciting time for those interested in this area of research and practice, and there seems to be a great potential for a psychedelic renaissance over the coming years. And yet, as with any seemingly "new" form of revolutionary clinical intervention, caution and humility would be wise to employ.

In any event, all of this points to the ongoing desire of humans to help other humans using plants and medicines that have, in most cases, existed for millennia. So it might be worth a nod to our ancestors, both near and far, who have long been curious about exploring the far reaches of the human mind.

Psymposium Trivia



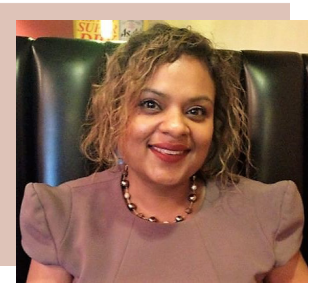
The question from our 2021 March issue:

Q: What gives this lake its unique bright, turquoise colour?

A: In the summer, glacial rock flour flows into Peyto Lake from Peyto glacier, and these suspended rock particles give the lake its unique colour!

Congratulations to PAA Full Member **Diane West-Walsh** for submitting a correct answer.

Innovative Practices in Psychology



Dr. Naheed Jawed, R. Psych



Dr. Tyson Sawchuk

This edition showcases the identification and treatment of psychogenic non-epileptic seizures (PNES) in children at the Alberta Children's Hospital. Dr. Tyson Sawchuk, a psychologist associated with this program, informs us of this disorder and available treatments.

Dr. Sawchuk, I understand you are associated with the Children's Comprehensive Epilepsy Centre (CCEC) which has developed novel treatment approaches for PNES. Can you tell us, what is PNES?

Psychogenic non-epileptic seizures are episodic phenomena involving self-limited and transient neurological states during which normal brain functions are altered. Much like a panic attack, these are triggered by heightened emotional processing and autonomic arousal abnormalities. Although the episodes can resemble various kinds of epileptic seizures in appearance, they are not associated with epileptiform discharges in any way.

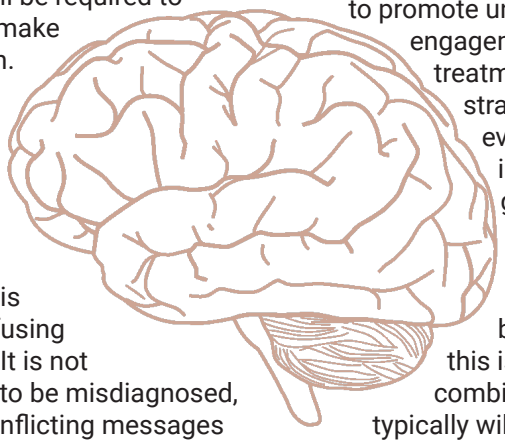
Are there any predisposing factors for children developing PNES? Is there a heritable component?

Research to date suggests there are various risk factors for development of PNES in children and adults. Like other somatic disorders, typical stressors in kids at time of diagnosis include family conflict, academic underachievement, and peer insecurity. We also find onset more common in the 1-2 years following pubertal onset.

There appears to be some heritability for PNES in terms of family history of mood/anxiety disorders.

How is PNES diagnosed? What is the impact of this disorder on the lives of those who experience PNES?

PNES patients invariably present first through emergency or medical clinics. Diagnosis is often complex and involves a thorough neurological workup to rule in/out various potential causes. The gold standard is to capture the episode in question without epileptiform correlate on an electroencephalogram, but this can be difficult to achieve. There are various observable signs and patterns which can be used to guide clinicians towards psychogenic versus epileptic or other physiologic causes, and some expertise will be required to confidently make this decision.



The impact on patients then is quite significant, as reaching a diagnosis is often a confusing experience. It is not uncommon to be misdiagnosed, receiving conflicting messages from multiple healthcare providers, or even being accused of faking seizures by others, including doctors and nurses! Living with and over-coming PNES can also be a long-term struggle, as it is difficult to find providers familiar with PNES and able to treat. The quality of life in PNES patients can become severely diminished due to frequent events, preventing them from living meaningful lives and participating in education, work, and social activities.

What are treatment options for PNES and what is the success rate?

Once medical assessments are completed, a thorough psychological or psychiatric assessment can help identify factors contributing to PNES onset and maintenance, including psychiatric comorbidity such as anxiety or depression. These will need treatment in their own right. Psychoeducation at the time of diagnosis is very important to promote understanding and engagement in mental health treatment. Initial first aid strategies for managing the events are often helpful, including use of sensory grounding and controlled breathing for reduction of episodes. An SSRI can be used to help, but research suggests this is only effective in combination with CBT, which typically will look like approaches used with panic disorder. This helps to increase patient awareness of arousal states and associated situations, thoughts, and feelings which increase the likelihood of an attack. Various counter-conditioning strategies are then taught with the patient trialing various strategies to find what is most effective. Click here for the extended article.

Committees & Task Forces

Awards Adjudicating Committee

- Dr. Judi Malone (Chair)
- Dr. Emma Climie
- Dr. Kerry Mothersill
- Dr. Lynda Phillips
- Dr. Jessica Van Vliet
- Dr. Erik Wikman

Public Education & Wellness Committee

- Dr. Erin Buhr (Chair)
- Doris Bong
- Sarah Hopkins
- Dr. Patrick Keelan
- Dr. Wence Leung
- Marii-Heleen Motsmees
- Derek Pierce
- Kyle Poon

School Psychology Committee

- Dr. Mitchell Colp (Chair)
- Dr. Karin Coles
- John Laing
- Dr. Erica Makarenko
- Dr. Ryan Matchullis
- Sarah Nugent
- Michele Pentyliuk

Mentorship Task Force

- Katie Bradley
- Patricia Cruz
- Dr. Helena Dayal
- Heather Gower
- Jessica Heil
- Chelsea Hobbs
- Nathalie Mercier
- Dr. Terilyn Pott
- Julia Russell
- Tamara Stuart

Social Justice Committee

- Joanna Card (Chair)
- Clayton Falk
- Krista Forand
- Dr. Taylor McInnes
- Camille Mori
- Andrew Nicholson
- James Murch

Racism in Alberta Psychology Task Force

- Mateo Huezo (co-chair)
- Caryn Tong (co-chair)
- Asma Al-Sakaf
- Franki Harrogate
- Rupinder Hehar
- Katrina Hewton
- Chelsea Hobbs
- Cameron Pepperdine
- Sophie Yohani

Technology in Practice Committee

- Dr. Michael Stolte (Chair)
- Dr. Trevor Josephson
- Zabrina Kwan
- Andrew Luceno
- Eileen Noel

PAA-CAP Joint Task Force on TRC

- Meaghan Farquharson
- Dr. Karlee Fellner
- Dr. Judi Malone
- Dr. Deena Martin, CAP
- Loretta McConnell
- Janice Minoose
- Wilma Spear Chief
- Dr. Richard Spelliscy, CAP

PAA Racism in Alberta Psychology Taskforce

11 of your peers have been hard at work exploring racism and psychology within the Alberta context and making recommendations for actionable implementation to the PAA Board in addition to educational opportunities for PAA members or community organizations.

Vision Statement — Psychologists in Alberta have ethnic and racial cross-cultural proficiency, are representative of Alberta's diverse communities, work to decolonize the profession from within, and actively work to reduce barriers to services.

Technology Task Force

Psychological Practice in Telepsychology: Technology in Practice Survey



By Dr. Michael Stolte

"A recurring theme was a request for endorsed telepsychology platforms by regulatory bodies."

The Technology in Practice (TiP) Committee was established by the Psychologists' Association of Alberta (PAA) in February 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic declared shortly after, ethical and competent use of telepsychology was identified as a priority. Consequently, an online survey was developed by the committee to consult with the membership about current use of telepsychology in Alberta.

The survey was distributed via email to all PAA members in November 2020 (N = 3,158) via ENews. The membership roster included 2,074 psychologists (registered or life members), 539 provisional psychologists, with the remaining being students and other affiliates. Response rate was 9.72% (N = 307). The full results were released in a downloadable report here: https://psychologistsassociation.ab.ca/psychological-practice-using-telepsychology.

Here are some highlighted results:

- Psychologists have primarily adopted telepsychology in counselling practice, lesser so in other practice areas. Though the majority indicated feeling trained and prepared, at least 30% indicated a need for additional training and support.
- Telepsychology was reported to be primarily used part-time, with most psychologists using telepsychology for fewer than 20-hours per week. This contrasts with American data where up to 53% of psychologists were exclusively using online platforms during the pandemic (Sammons, VandenBos, Martin & Elchert, 2020).
- Of those using telepsychology, about 60% of psychologists reported choosing Doxy or Zoom, and an additional 20% used Jane or Owl. Doxy and Zoom are international video conferencing and document sharing platforms whereas Jane and Owl are both integrated Canadian software systems that allow for video conferencing, document sharing, payment, scheduling, and a host of other health care practice features. Psychologists' specific experiences comparing these four platforms is available in the report.
- Most respondents indicated that their chosen platforms were secure with 256-bit encryption technology and servers located in Canada.
- Audio and video were reported to be stable in most circumstances and user-friendly for both psychologists and their clients. However, at least 22% indicated concerns over audio and video quality, potentially compromising the effectiveness of the videoconferencing medium, and at least 11% reported some useability concerns, particularly for the psychologist.
- Fees were also said to be reasonable with a majority of psychologists paying less than $50 per month per user.

Qualitative responses were extensive. Many respondents indicated gratefulness for the opportunity to contribute. Many also indicated that in larger publicly funded institutions, their employers made the decision on what platform to adopt. A recurring theme was a request for endorsed telepsychology platforms by regulatory bodies and professional associations to minimize the confidentiality and security risks for both patients and clinicians. Despite the positive confidence findings above, many respondents felt ill-equipped to make an informed decision on selecting the right platform. A few comments drew attention to the limited effectiveness data on the widespread use of telepsychology and questioned its rapid adoption. Others were worried that platforms marketed as "secure and encrypted" were not as secure as perceived by the psychologists in the community, or their patients. Based on survey results, recommendations were provided.

Getting Schooled

Mentorship within Post-Secondary Teaching and Learning Environments

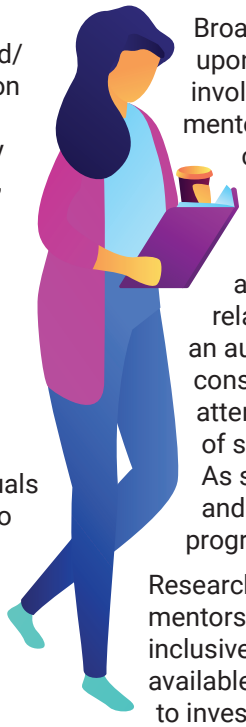
By Dr. Karin Coles

"Mentorship enhances retention of students, quality of program development and subsequent delivery, improved academic standing, and other satisfaction outcomes."

Formal and informal mentee-mentor relationships are often established within teaching and learning environments. Such relationships may involve an organically occurring and evolving relationship between student-to-student, student-to-faculty, and/or faculty-to-faculty. Alternative to, or in conjunction with, naturally occurring relationships, structured or more formal mentee-mentorship programs may be present. Within multiple learning environments, participation in mentorship programs offers potential for significant impact upon retention, pro-social skill development, academic skill development and achievement, culturally responsive educational practices, enhanced pedagogical practices, and overall increased performance within the educational institution for both students and faculty.

It is important to consider how we mentor individuals interested in the field of psychology and those who enter our post-secondary programs in pursuit of such. As a profession, we are guided by our respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, responsible caring, integrity in relationships, and responsibility to society (Canadian Psychological Association [CPA], 2017). Hence, mentoring those who are studying to practice within the profession of psychology is an ethical consideration. Within the professional practice of psychology, many engage in such mentorship through more formalized roles of teaching, supervision, and consultation. Within teaching and learning environments, research has indicated that within postsecondary environments, mentorship of peer-to-peer, peer-to-faculty, and faculty-to-faculty enhances retention of students, quality of program development and subsequent delivery, improved academic standing, and other satisfaction outcomes associated with professional programs. An important element to mentorship within all environments is mentorship that attends to the cultural needs of students with diverse backgrounds and experiences. Cultural competency is an important component to consider and an ethical responsibility.

Diversity of faculty, diversity of students, and mentorship that considers cultural fit (Castellanos et al., 2016) needs to be an intentionally considered component of mentorship programs.



Broadly speaking, successful mentorship relies upon the quality of relationship between those involved. Much like therapeutic alliance, successful mentorship relationships are characterized by honest communication, open dialogue, willingness to listen, responsive time commitment practices, reflexivity, and trust (Castellanos et al, 2016; McNeven et al., 2020). Further key elements also include a non-evaluative approach to the relationship, holding space for each other, and an authentic respect for each other. Relational considerations require initial development and attention within mentorship, prior to the facilitation of specific skill development (McNeven et al., 2020). As such, careful consideration of matching mentor and mentee in formalized or structured mentorship programs is critical.

Research results support that the quality of formalized mentorship programs is often reflective of characteristics inclusive of a responsive matching process, level of training available for mentors and mentees, and commitment to investment of time (Cornelius et al., 2016). When considering the importance of the role of mentorship in guiding the development of psychology students, attention to the development of programs within postsecondary environments is warranted. How such programs are intentionally developed, fostered, and acknowledged can support program satisfaction, student retention, faculty retention and satisfaction, and subsequent professional capacity development for the broader field of psychology. By engaging in such mentorship programs, we attend to ethical responsibilities and so our students may have opportunities to cultivate various forms of support. Mentorship is an important component within our psychology teaching and learning environments and as such intentional, responsible, and responsive creation of such programs warrants our consideration.

References available upon request.

Psychology Month in Alberta

PAA increased its social media outputs (Facebook, Twitter, & LinkedIn) in February in recognition of Psychology Month.

PAA celebrated Psychology Month virtually:

- Welcome to 2021 Psychology Month video by Dr. Erin Buhr
- Quick Facts highlighting interesting facts about the profession, including figures such as Sigmund Freud, locations such as Dalhousie University, techniques such as hypnosis, and fields such as forensic psychology.
- Videos from Alberta psychologists sharing how the profession became the right path for them.
- Biographies from Alberta psychologists sharing what first interested them in the field.

Edmonton, St. Albert and Strathcona County Public Libraries displayed information on mental health and psychology. The displays included information about PAA's Referral Service and psychological concerns such as anxiety, depression, and substance use/abuse. Dr. Patrick Keelan, Public Education and Wellness Committee organized these events.

PAA's psychological resource materials were displayed at Grey Nuns Community Hospital for staff to access and at Bethel Lutheran Church, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church and St. Luke's Anglican Church for families in need.

04 February – Dr. Richard Spelliscy, Dr. Judi Malone, Dr. Lana Hawkins, Sandra Deeth and Dr. Kerry Mothersill provided a presentation for AHS PracticeWise on Psychology In and For a Pandemic Environment to 68 participants. They discussed the role of psychology and psychologists in relation to COVID-19. The session was recorded and placed in the PracticeWise library.

09 February – PAA Disaster Response Network (DRN) volunteer Kaylie Rodriguez provided a zoom webinar presentation entitled Psychological Coping During a Pandemic to 18 Alberta Ballet School students on exploring healthy holistic self-care and coping during a pandemic. The presentation was recorded and will be shared with other students.

22 February – Kay Wilson provided a virtual career presentation to junior high school students at Graminia Community School in Spruce Grove on the profession of psychologist, with PAA bookmarks and YouTube Life's Journey resource materials.

25 February – PAA Disaster Response Network (DRN) volunteer Paul McGaffrey provided a webinar presentation to Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) on Psychological Coping During a Pandemic offering support to 40 FCSS Directors and staff across the province. FCSSAA will also share the webinar slides with those who were unable to attend.

26 February – Dr. Judi Malone was part of a panel discussion at AHS Psychology Day where she provided a presentation on Pandemic Impacts and Psychology's Response to 160 participants: a review of Alberta polling information that relates to the impact of pandemic and the highlights of PAA's Disaster Response Network which has launched since March 2020.

Thank you to everyone who dedicated their time to promote psychology!

Psychology Shaping the Landscape

Health Groups

- The Alberta Health "Valuing Mental Health" Committee Collaborative Practice
- The Alberta Pain Network & Opioid Crisis Task Force
- Collaboration with the other Health Professions Act Associations
- AHS Addiction & Mental Health Strategic Clinical Network

Psychology Groups

- The Canadian Psychological Association
- The Council of Professional Associations of Psychology of Canada
- The American Psychological Association
- AHS Psychology Professional Practice Council

Provincial Advocacy Groups

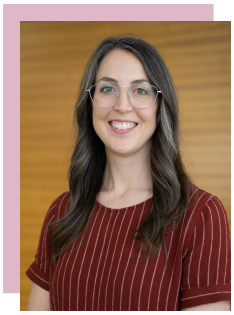
- The Palix Foundation
- CMHA Alberta
- Reforming the Family Justice System
- Gender Based Violence Initiative
- Alberta Workplace Wellness Network
- Alberta Palliative Care Competencies & Education Project
- Health Coalition of Alberta and AMHAC/psychiatry

Targeted Response Groups

- Alberta Region Parole Board: Wester Region
- Victims of Crime & Public Safety Committee
- Nursing Health Monitoring Project
- CMHA Rural Mental Health Project

Students' Corner

Students' Corner is a section of Psymposium dedicated exclusively to information of particular interest to students. If you have any questions about the information shared here or would simply like to connect, please email Vanessa Siso, Student Director, on the PAA Board of Directors at vnsssiso@gmail.com.



By Chelsea Hobbs

Hello PAA Student Members,

It has been my pleasure to serve as the Student Director on the PAA Board of Directors for the past three years. This role has provided me with immense opportunities to connect with students across the province, and I am proud of what we have accomplished. To ensure increased communication with students in various psychology programs across the province, in 2018, we launched the PAA Campus Representative program. I look forward to seeing the collaborative work of student leaders as this program continues to grow and develop. We have also been able to build a stronger community of students through:

- ongoing conversations for PAA Student Members via PAA Collaborate;
- active engagement in the PAA Student Facebook Group;
- and professional development events for students (e.g., Psychology as a Profession, So, You Are Thinking About Graduate School).

As my last act as Student Director, it is my pleasure to introduce your incoming Student Director, **Vanessa Siso**:

As a proud Canadian-Venezuelan, Vanessa has seen the power of standing up for your ideals firsthand through her past experience as an advocate for human rights and health care reforms in Washington D.C., Ottawa, and Alberta. Considering her present experience as a masters student in the Counselling Psychology program at CityUniversity of Seattle and her completed undergraduate degree from the University of Calgary in 2018, Vanessa looks forward to the responsibility of continuing to stand up for the values and learning of all psychology students across Alberta through her capacity as the new incoming Student Director for the PAA. Above all, she is looking forward to working collaboratively with other PAA student members, and her primary duties will consist of keeping student members informed of PAA initiatives and events, and representing their voices on the PAA Board.



Vanessa Siso

I know that Vanessa will serve you well, and moving forward, you can direct all of your questions and concerns to her (vnsssiso@gmail.com). Thank you for your continued engagement in your professional organization, and I wish you all a wonderful summer!

Chelsea Hobbs

Outgoing Student Director, PAA Board of Directors

2021 Science Fair Award Winners

PAA's Behavioural Science Award

Central Alberta Rotary Science Fair – Red Deer, 10 April 2021

Amaya Braatz, grade 7 student at Hugh Sutherland School in Carstairs, was the 2021 PAA award recipient for her project "The Pinocchio Effect." Congratulations Amaya!

Calgary Youth Science Fair – Calgary, 17 April 2021

Alia Damji from Branton School was the 2021 Award recipient for her project "Comparison of the sense of direction between males and females." Congratulations Alia!

Edmonton Regional Science Fair – Edmonton, 17 April 2021



Hannah Abdo

Hannah Abdo, grade 9 student at the Edmonton Islamic Academy, was the 2021 PAA award recipient for her project "Does Age Matter?" Congratulations Hannah!



Om Upadhyay

Om Upadhyay, grade 9 student at Aurora Academic Charter School, won Honourable Mention for his project "OCD & ADHD: 'Compound' Science Fair." Congratulations Om! Thanks to ERSF judge PAA Board Member Tamara Stuart.

PAA Volunteer Opportunities

Consider joining your peers!

Quality volunteers are the bricks that hold non-profit organizations together. We couldn't survive without them!



Want to help raise the public profile of our profession? Interested in sharing your expertise? Consider PAA volunteer opportunities!

PAA Committees & Task Forces

Committee & Task Force members aid PAA with various aspects of the organization such as awards, public education, and advocacy efforts.

Career Fairs

At career fairs, volunteers man the PAA display booth and may answer inquiries regarding careers in psychology and the psychology profession.

School Presentations

Various presentations at high schools and universities occur throughout the year on a variety of topics including the psychology profession, PAA, careers, and mental health.

Public Presentations

Volunteers do public speaking presentations to a variety of audiences on various topics. Examples of past presentations include: mental health awareness, organizational psychology, and psychology disorders.

PAA has several exciting opportunities that arise at different times of the year. To meet these requests, PAA needs a team of volunteers we can contact.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the office paa@paa-ab.ca to request an application.

A career making a difference.

The Job: Psychology Advisor (Psychologist)

You'll collaborate with our team and community clinicians to provide guidance around assessment and clinical care of clients with psychological reactions to workplace injuries, psychological trauma, and difficult work relations.

The difference: Helping people injured at work recover and regain quality of life

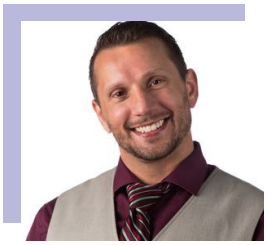
We're looking for recent psychology graduates and registered psychologists to join our dynamic Mental Health Services team. Become part of a strong and committed team who is working to bring more awareness, acceptance, and less stigma to the topic of mental health in workplaces in British Columbia.

Learn more and apply at **worksafebc.com/careers**

WorkSafeBC

A Book Review

Influence, The Psychology of Persuasion By Robert B. Cialdini, PhD., Unabridged Audiobook, released 2016 by HarperAudio



"Dr. Cialdini moves away from the "how-to" of the early chapters and discusses when influence goes horribly wrong."

Reviewed by Chris Shorrock, R. Psych., CSAT

What happens if you type "Psychology" into the search bar of Audible? You see this audio book first. I tend to do things like this wondering what the public might think of our profession. Through the first few (lengthy) chapters, I had some concerns about that. I worried people might see psychology as a means of manipulating others using the "6 weapons of influence": reciprocity, commitment and consistency, social proof, authority, liking, and scarcity.

The author provides wonderful examples from his interesting field research, such as working as a used car salesman and selling tv warranties. I immediately gained respect for Cialdini sharing his experiences of being duped into buying things he neither wants nor needs. I appreciate him humbly sharing his own blunders, wanting to provide protection to others from these same weapons of influence. Worries: lessened.

Early on I found myself battling with some of my own professional experiences and how they relate (or not) to Cialdini's work. I think any of us can relate to having a client not acting in their own best self-interest (at least from the outside perspective); this can be especially pronounced for those struggling with a severe substance use disorder. I wondered about a positive use of the weapons of influence "helping" someone find sobriety through residential treatment, for example. I had a churning in my stomach with these thoughts however, as I place our human right to choice as paramount. This includes the freedom to choose self-destructive acts, to an extent.

Dr. Cialdini moves away from the "how-to" of the early chapters and discusses when influence goes horribly wrong, using the examples of the Jonestown mass suicide, and the Stanley Milgram experiment. I appreciate the ongoing warnings this work has, and the important questions we should be asking ourselves. This again seems incredibly pertinent today regarding adherence (or not) to public health orders, receiving the Covid-19 vaccine, etc. Are we listening to experts with demonstrated knowledge? Someone with high charisma and 10 K social media followers?

This book had a surprising relevance to recent events here in Medicine Hat. The author describes the impact, the social influence, regarding suicide. I am sad to say that we had multiple young men die by suicide within a very brief time, even getting news attention. The author discusses the Werther-effect and its origins in Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther.* The original book has its main character die by suicide, and apparently the work became outlawed per disconcerting increases in suicides following. Cialdini points out statistical increases in fatal vehicle and airplane crashes following highly publicized suicide deaths and makes a chilling conclusion: there is a much higher than perceived propensity of people considering such a death. I have hope that in better understanding (some) mechanisms of influence towards suicide, perhaps we can better identify those at risk, dispel some malevolent influences, and have people choose differently.

MEMBER BENEFITS

LOGIN CANADA
GoodLife CORPORATE WELLNESS
Alamo
TD
LEXUS OF EDMONTON WEST
bms.
doxy.me
goget.fit®
red arrow
safely home
BRIGHTSQUID
SANDMAN HOTEL GROUP
greenspace

Continuing Professional Development

Primers

One-hour recorded overview of the topic. Watch anytime, anywhere. ($40 + GST).

Trauma & PTSD in First Responder Populations - **Dr. Megan McElheran**

Family Restructuring Therapy - **Dr. Stephen Carter**

Preparing for Cannabis Legalization in Canada: A Psychologists' Evidence-Based Guide - **Dr. Igor Yakovenko**

Psychology of Cannabis Addiction - **Dr. Jonathan Stea**

DIY Videos for Your Therapy Site or YouTube Channel - **Dr. Kyler Shumway**

The Erupting Addictions Pandemic **- Dr. Kevin Alderson**

The Game of Life: An Introduction to Using Basic Sport Psychology Principles in Clinical Practice **- Dr. Caelin White**

Past CPD

Traumatology 101: Psychology During a Pandemic Webinar
Online, 09 April 2020 - over 500 registered
*Recording Available for viewing ($0 for Members)

Pandemic Adaptations Panel: Counselling Psychology
Online, 21 May 2020 - over 40 registered
*Recording Available for viewing ($0 for Members)

Pandemic Adaptations Panel: Supervision in Psychology
Online, 28 May 2020 - over 30 registered
*Recording Available for viewing ($0 for Members)

Pandemic Adaptations Panel: School Psychology
Online, 03 June 2020 - over 40 registered
*Recording Available for viewing ($0 for Members)

PAA & CAP Alberta Psychology Annual Meetings & Joint Professional Development Event
Online, 02 October 2020 - over 800 registered

***EPSB ONLY** Introduction of Telepsychology in School Setting*
Online, 06 & 08 October 2020

EPPP Prep: Memory Boosting Learning Strategies
Online, 09 & 15 October 2020
Online, 11 November 2020

Psychology as a Profession: Psychology Graduate Students
Online, 21 October 2020

Psychology as a Profession: Psychology Undergraduate Students
Online, 22 October 2020

CoSponsor: Tele-Assessment of Suicide Risk for Children and Youth Amidst COVID-19
Online, 09 November, 2020

Co-Sponsor: *The Science of Reading: What School Psychologists Need to Know*
Online, 20 November 2020

Trauma & PTSD in First Responder Populations
Online, 27 November 2020

A Community of Practice Conversation about Outcome Informed Practices
Online, 03 December 2020

*Starting and Operating an Independent Professional Practice in Psychology **Virtual***
Online, February 02, 04, 09, 11, 2021

The Weight of the World: Psychologist's Role in Addressing Client's Weight-related issues
Online, 26 February 2021

Prescribing Service Dogs or Emotional Support Animals
Online, 03 March 03 2021

In the Oven

Biting the Bullet: Exposure Therapy for Phobic Avoidance with **Janet Caryk M.Ed.**
Rewriting History to Create a Better Future: Positive Prospection in Practice with **Dr. Lydia Ievleva**
Primary Care Collaboration
Professional Ethics
Restructuring Family Therapy
Psychedelics & Psychotherapy with **Dr. Megan McElheran**
Addiction Counselling with **Dr. Kevin Alderson**
Sports Psychology with **Dr. Caelin White**
Clinical Supervision with **Dr. Jeff Chang**

Empowering Canadians via Social Media to Work Together Against Misinformation

Our #ScienceUpFirst Initiative



"The recent explosion of health-related misinformation is so intense and far-reaching that the World Health Organization has dubbed it an 'infodemic'."

By Jonathan N. Stea, Ph.D., R. Psych

Firmly embedded in both our Canadian Code of Ethics and our Standards of Practice, psychologists have an ethical responsibility to promote and practice evidence-based patient care and public health.

We live in an era where social media platforms are ever-present and they have a substantial impact on the dissemination of information that can influence not only popular culture, but also trajectories of public health, politics, and elections. The recent explosion of health-related misinformation is so intense and far-reaching that the World Health Organization has dubbed it an "infodemic."

In this vein, I am both humbled and honoured to serve alongside a national coalition of scientists, communicators, and health experts to empower Canadians to work together against misinformation about COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines. Our initiative, #ScienceUpFirst (www.ScienceUpFirst.com) is a digital awareness and engagement campaign that floods and disrupts social media, in an effort to debunk misinformation, and amplify best-in-class science-based content.

The purpose of this campaign is to debunk misinformation and conspiracy theories related to COVID-19 vaccines, virus transmission, governments' response, etc. We envision this framework to be used beyond the COVID-19 pandemic to address other types of science misinformation with respect to mental health and addiction.

The project launched at the end of January and garnered over 8,500 posts and more than 42 million views across social media platforms in its first week.

There are three distinct ways to join the movement:

1. Follow @ScienceUpFirst on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, and engage and share with your networks using the hashtag #ScienceUpFirst.
2. Tag @ScienceUpFirst in COVID-19 science-based posts AND misinformation posts on all social media channels.
3. Visit www.ScienceUpFirst.com to sign-up for a regular newsletter.

The spread of health-related misinformation and fake science news is not a trivial matter. When it comes to health, lives can be at stake. Please join me as psychologists in an effort to do our part to help.

Jonathan N. Stea, Ph.D., R. Psych, is a registered and practicing clinical psychologist in Calgary, and Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Calgary. Clinically, he specializes in the assessment and treatment of concurrent addictive and psychiatric disorders. Read his science communication articles at: https://psyc.ucalgary.ca/profiles/jonathan-n-stea. Follow him on Twitter: @jonathanstea.

Upcoming 2021 Town Halls

Connect with PAA and CAP!

Red Deer
Lethbridge
Medicine Hat
Fort McMurray
Lloydminster

10 June → Online
30 September
01 October
TBD November
TBD December

Watch for your community-specific invitation to RSVP in your email prior to the event.

Contact: ada@paa-ab.ca.

As Interest in Psychedelic Medicines Surges, Psychology Can be Part of this New Wave



"Psychedelic treatment in combination with psychotherapy can represent a new frontier for psychology."

By Dr. Megan McElheran, R. Psych

When I was first introduced to the idea around 2010 that psychedelic medications were being studied as potentially effective treatments for mental health conditions such as Major Depressive Disorder, I was skeptical. I had been superficially aware of the history of psychedelics and their storied past within psychology and psychiatry and wondered how significant their place could become again in contemporary mental health treatment. However, my interest was piqued as I started to sift through the more recent, and quite reputable studies regarding the efficacy of psychedelic treatments.

Having stayed connected to the empirical literature that has identified the positive effects of MDMA, ketamine, LSD and psilocybin on treatment-resistant depression and PTSD (among other conditions), my interest grew from being a curious bystander to an active participant in learning exactly how the psychedelics were posited to have such beneficial effects as reported in the research. As an example, in 2000, researchers from Johns Hopkins were granted regulatory approval from the Food and Drug Administration to reinitiate studies using psilocybin as a treatment intervention. Since 2006, Johns Hopkins researchers have published fascinating results from studies using psilocybin as a treatment intervention for end-of-life anxiety and Major Depression. In 2016 they published a psilocybin trial with participants diagnosed with terminal cancer who were suffering from clinically significant anxiety and existential dread. The psilocybin intervention, paired with preparatory and integrative psychotherapy, influenced statistically significant reductions in reported symptoms.

Another psychedelic medicine, ketamine, has been studied particularly as an intervention for treatment-resistant depression (TRD). In 2021 Charney and colleagues published a randomized control trial in which ketamine was used as a treatment intervention for participants suffering from chronic symptoms of PTSD. The positive effect of ketamine was experienced after the first dose and was sustained for almost a full month, with clinically significant reductions of symptoms across three of four PTSD symptom domains, and with a commensurate reduction of symptoms of depression. This study was the first of its kind, and it demonstrated the applicability of ketamine to client populations beyond those struggling with TRD.

As a psychologist, what is particularly intriguing in these studies is the significant role psychotherapy has played. There appears to be a significant opportunity for psychology to play a crucial role in how the psychedelic technologies are increasingly integrated into clinical practice, since what seems particularly important relative to the effectiveness of the psychedelic medicines has to do with 'set' (meaning the mindset in which the individual enters the psychedelic experience) and 'setting' (meaning the physical and environmental context in which the psychedelic experience takes place). Psychedelic treatment in combination with psychotherapy can represent a new frontier for psychology. In keeping with our standards of practice, the psychedelic technologies must be disseminated in an ethical, rigorous and diligent fashion, with guidelines and competencies established to support this initiative. Now is the time for psychology to seriously consider involving itself in this promising new field.

References available upon request.

PAA Board Meeting Dates 2021



- 10 September 2021, Board Meeting
- 10 September 2021, PAA AGM Online, 12:00 - 1:00 PM
- 05 November 2021, Board Meeting, Edmonton, PAA Offices
- 04 February 2022, Board Meeting, Edmonton, PAA Offices

PAA Referral Service

The PAA Referral Service is designed to provide the public with contact information of registered psychologists who are a match for their region/area of need.

PAA members (who are registered psychologists) can join the Referral Service throughout the year. The yearly fee of $200.00 plus GST (prorated after 01 May) is economical marketing.

Since January, we averaged: 2,000 referrals per month. That's 92 per day.

Accounting for over-the-phone referrals we direct at PAA, these numbers will be even higher.

Participating psychologists are listed in our online directory, & their contact information is also provided to prospective clients through the PAA Referral Service telephone line.

Referral Service participants may also opt to advertise with a direct link to their own website for an additional fee.

With excellent value for your marketing dollar investment, the PAA Referral Service is an ideal advertising strategy for those in private practice.

PAA Referral Service can be activated in the membership portal under **Account>Membership>Addons**

Awards Celebration

Did you become a fully registered psychologist between 31 March 2021 and 01 April 2021? Are you a recipient of one of the 2021 PAA Awards?

If so, PAA would like to invite you to the 2021 Awards and Welcome to the Profession Celebration! The 2021 awards will be presented on Friday **17 September 2021**, Calgary Telus Convention Centre.

PAA recognizes companies, psychologists, & others through a series of awards on an annual basis. 2021 awards nominations are now closed. However, nominations for PAA awards may be submitted at anytime. The deadline for the next award cycle is 30 April 2022. To RSVP, or for more info, contact Ada: ada@paa-ab.ca.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting of the Membership of the Psychologists' Association of Alberta

The PAA Board of Directors is hereby providing notice pursuant to PAA bylaw 6.3, to call an Annual General Meeting of the membership as follows:

Date: Friday 10 September 2021
Time 12:00 PM
Location: Online