

Psychological Applications and Trends

2021

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FOREWORD

This book contains a compilation of papers presented at the International Psychological Applications Conference and Trends (InPACT) 2021, organized by the World Institute for Advanced Research and Science (W.I.A.R.S.), that this year has been converted into a fully Virtual Conference as a result of the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic.

Modern psychology offers a large range of scientific fields where it can be applied. The goal of understanding individuals and groups (mental functions and behavioral standpoints), from this academic and practical scientific discipline, aims ultimately to benefit society.

The International Conference seeks to provide some answers and explore the several areas within the Psychology field, new developments in studies and proposals for future scientific projects. The goal is to offer a worldwide connection between psychologists, researchers and lecturers, from a wide range of academic fields, interested in exploring and giving their contribution in psychological issues. We take pride in having been able to connect and bring together academics, scholars, practitioners and others interested in a field that is fertile in new perspectives, ideas and knowledge.

We counted on an extensive variety of contributors and presenters, which can supplement the view of the human essence and behavior, showing the impact of their different personal, academic and cultural experiences. This is, certainly, one of the reasons there are nationalities and cultures represented, inspiring multi-disciplinary collaborative links, fomenting intellectual encounter and development.

InPACT 2021 received 358 submissions, from more than 40 different countries from all over the world, reviewed by a double-blind process. Submissions were prepared to take form of Oral Presentations, Posters and Workshops. 117 submissions (overall, 33% acceptance rate) were accepted for presentation in the conference.

The conference also includes:

- Two keynote presentations, one by Prof. Dr. Sara Tai (Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology & Consultant Clinical Psychologist, School of Health Sciences, CeNTrUM, Division of Psychology and Mental Health, The University of Manchester, United Kingdom), and one by Dr. Caroline Hickman (Lecturer in Social Work and Climate Psychology, Department of Social & Policy Sciences, University of Bath, and practicing Psychotherapist & Board Member of the Climate Psychology Alliance, United Kingdom).
- One Special Talk by Prof. Dr. Michael Wang (Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Leicester; Chair, Association of Clinical Psychologists, United Kingdom).

We would like to express our gratitude to our invitees.

The Conference addresses different categories inside Applied Psychology area and papers fit broadly into one of the named themes and sub-themes. The conference program includes six main broad-ranging categories that cover diversified interest areas:

- **CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Emotions and related psychological processes; Assessment; Psychotherapy and counseling; Addictive behaviors; Eating disorders; Personality disorders; Quality of life and mental health; Communication within relationships; Services of mental health; and Psychopathology.
- **EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Language and cognitive processes; School environment and childhood disorders; Parenting and parenting related processes; Learning and technology; Psychology in schools; Intelligence and creativity; Motivation in classroom; Perspectives on teaching; Assessment and evaluation; and Individual differences in learning.

- **SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Cross-cultural dimensions of mental disorders; Employment issues and training; Organizational psychology; Psychology in politics and international issues; Social factors in adolescence and its development; Social anxiety and self-esteem; Immigration and social policy; Self-efficacy and identity development; Parenting and social support; Addiction and stigmatization; and Psychological and social impact of virtual networks.
- **LEGAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Violence and trauma; Mass-media and aggression; Intra-familial violence; Juvenile delinquency; Aggressive behavior in childhood; Internet offending; Working with crime perpetrators; Forensic psychology; Violent risk assessment; and Law enforcement and stress.
- **COGNITIVE AND EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY:** Perception, memory and attention; Decision making and problem-solving; Concept formation, reasoning and judgment; Language processing; Learning skills and education; Cognitive Neuroscience; Computer analogies and information processing (Artificial Intelligence and computer simulations); Social and cultural factors in the cognitive approach; Experimental methods, research and statistics; and Biopsychology.
- **PSYCHOANALYSIS AND PSYCHOANALYTICAL PSYCHOTHERAPY:** Psychoanalysis and psychology; The unconscious; The Oedipus complex; Psychoanalysis of children; Pathological mourning; Addictive personalities; Borderline organizations; Narcissistic personalities; Anxiety and phobias; Psychosis; Neuropsychoanalysis.

This book contains the results of the different researches conducted by authors who focused on what they are passionate about: to study and develop research in areas related to Psychology and its applications. It includes an extensive variety of contributors and presenters that are hereby sharing with us their different personal, academic and cultural experiences.

We would like to thank all the authors and participants, the members of the academic scientific committee, and of course, to the organizing and administration team for making and putting this conference together.

Looking forward to continuing our collaboration in the future,

Prof. Clara Pracana

*Full and Training Member of the Portuguese Association of Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, Portugal
Conference and Program Co-Chair*

Prof. Michael Wang

*Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Leicester, United Kingdom
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KEYNOTE LECTURES

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR WORKING WITH PEOPLE EXPERIENCING PSYCHOSIS: A FOCUS ON PRINCIPLES

Prof. Dr. Sara Tai

BA(Hons), MSc, D.ClinPsy, CPsychol,

*Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology & Consultant Clinical Psychologist, School of Health Sciences,
CeNTrUM (Centre for New Treatments and Understanding in Mental Health), Division of Psychology
and Mental Health, The University of Manchester (United Kingdom)*

Abstract

The UK National Institute for Care and Health Excellence (NICE) recommends that all people experiencing psychosis are offered psychological therapies, e.g. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), to target distress associated with symptoms and improve functioning. However, clinicians working with people experiencing psychoses face multiple challenges. Usually, individuals' descriptions of their problems don't match the problem outlined in the referral. Comorbid presentations are the rule rather than the exception, yet evidence-based treatments are designed to be disorder or problem specific. Existing interventions are designed to be delivered in weekly or fortnightly schedules, yet end up being delivered according to variable and unpredictable schedules due to cancelled and missed appointments. Most treatments emphasise using unique strategies and techniques, yet many of these activities reflect common underlying evidence-based principles of effective treatment. Psychological therapy that is applicable to any problem, 'transdiagnostically', using a variable treatment session schedule, and based on robust principles of psychological distress and psychological change, would be extremely useful. In this keynote, Sara will introduce three principles frequently identified in the literature and integral to providing effective and efficient therapy for psychoses. The principles: control; conflict; and reorganisation will be described and explained using practical illustrations. The importance of control to people's mental health and general wellbeing is emphasised repeatedly throughout the literature, particularly for people experiencing psychosis. When control is not mentioned explicitly, concepts such as regulation and self-determination point to the same principle. Conflict (incongruence, dissonance, dilemmas, being in two minds) is also commonly discussed and is a general formulation underlying the distress that manifests in various symptom patterns. People become psychologically distressed and develop psychosis when they want to achieve two incompatible goals at the same time. An example of such conflict might be wanting to forget a past traumatic event but also needing to remember it in order to understand how it happened and prevent it happening again. The third principle, reorganisation, has strong support in the literature, and is the process of change in which new perspectives, insights, and points of view are developed. This keynote explains the way in which these three principles can be integrated to understand psychosis and enhance the effectiveness of therapy by enabling clinicians to work flexibly and responsively. Data from recent studies will also be presented to illustrate the feasibility and acceptability of a principles-based approach to working with people experiencing psychosis.

Keywords: *Psychosis, psychological interventions, principles-based-approach, control, conflict.*

Biography

Dr. Sara Tai is a Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology at the University of Manchester and Consultant Clinical Psychologist with Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust. She is a reflexive scientist practitioner, therapist, educator and researcher, who has worked in a range of mental health settings, with people experiencing a broad range of serious and enduring problems affecting their mental health. She has worked with people experiencing psychosis for over 20 years, including early intervention, community, and acute psychiatric in-patient services. Sara is a clinician-researcher who has been developing a transdiagnostic cognitive therapy (the Method of Levels, MOL) since 2005. Her work elucidates how key psychological mechanisms such as control and awareness cross traditional diagnostic boundaries and help unify apparently disparate therapeutic traditions. She is an experienced practitioner, researcher, and trainer of CBT and MOL. Her work not only helps explain the nature and origin of psychological distress but, with colleagues, offers new therapeutic opportunities. She provides supervision and workshops internationally and conducts research, including large clinical trials in the UK, USA, Canada, China, and across Europe. She has published widely in this area, including the book “A principles-based approach to counselling and psychotherapy”.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF CLIMATE ANXIETY, GRIEF, HOPE & DESPAIR

Dr. Caroline Hickman

*Lecturer in Social Work and Climate Psychology, Department of Social & Policy Sciences, University of Bath, and practicing Psychotherapist & Board Member of the Climate Psychology Alliance (CPA)
(United Kingdom)*

Abstract

Climate-anxiety is increasingly being recognised as an emotionally congruent response to the worrying news about the environment from around the world. As our fears grow about environmental and climate change related problems it can be hard to know how to psychologically cope with these unprecedented and unpredictable global catastrophes. However, the complex feelings evoked by increasing awareness are not just anxiety; people report feeling existential and planetary grief, hope and hopelessness, nihilism and despair.

These emergent psychological challenges can bring us face to face with our own feelings of vulnerability, fragility, hope and resilience, as well as concerns about the planet. Navigating these complex times is perhaps the greatest challenge that humanity has yet faced, and psychology and psychotherapy has undoubtedly a central role to play in this.

This talk will explore a relational psychological approach to support ourselves and clients in navigating these unprecedented times. It will examine unconscious process, uncertainty, ambivalence and attachment, inner and external relational worlds, the threat of collapse internally into despair, or the flight to hope externally; we will look at the shadow of eco-anxiety and the archetypal images and dreams that adults, young people and children are now bringing to the therapy room.

Biography

Caroline is a lecturer at the University of Bath in social work and climate psychology. A practicing psychotherapist & board member of the Climate Psychology Alliance (CPA). Currently for CPA she is supporting the development of a range of therapeutic outreach projects and supporting the development of a service providing climate crisis aware psychotherapy.

With CPA she is also creating a series of podcasts on Climate Psychology & Eco-Anxiety – ‘Climate Crisis Conversations – Catastrophe or Transformation’.

Caroline works with schools, parent groups, youth activist groups and as a psychotherapist with children & young people & adults dealing with eco anxiety and distress about the climate & biodiversity crisis.

Through the University she has been researching children & young people’s feelings including eco-anxiety about the climate and biodiversity crisis for 5 years to uncover and explore different stories, narratives and images around our defences against the ‘difficult truth’ we are facing. Her climate change research is with children & young people in the UK, The Brazil, USA, Maldives, Nigeria & Bangladesh.

SPECIAL TALK

FRONTLINE HEALTHCARE STAFF SUPPORT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: THE ROLE OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Prof. Dr. Michael Wang

Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Leicester; Chair, Association of Clinical Psychologists (United Kingdom)

Abstract

The Coronavirus pandemic has created huge stress on frontline healthcare staff in every country with unprecedented pressure on hospital services and ICUs, and much greater frequency of patient death. In the UK, clinical psychologists are well placed to provide mental health care and support to medical, nursing and paramedical staff, given common employment in the British National Health Service (NHS) and their competences in managing stress and common mental health problems. The author has contributed to the organization and provision of psychological staff support systems at national level through his membership of a national expert advisory group and through the Association of Clinical Psychologists UK (the professional body for clinical psychologists) which has been providing one-to-one support to ICU consultants and senior managers in the NHS.

The author will describe the various support systems for frontline NHS staff and their impact.

Keywords: *Coronavirus pandemic, healthcare worker support, work stress, ICU.*

Biography

Prof. Michael Wang, BSc(Hons), MSc(Clin.Psy), PhD, C. Psychol., FBPSS, is Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology in the Clinical Psychology Unit, Centre for Medicine, University of Leicester, and former Director of the National Health Service-funded Doctoral Postgraduate Clinical Psychology Training Course (2005-2014). He is a former Chair of the Division of Clinical Psychology of the British Psychological Society. Prof. Wang is also a full practitioner member of the BPS Division of Neuropsychology and a member of the BPS Division of Health Psychology. He is Chair of the Association of Clinical Psychologists UK.

He has worked as a clinical psychologist for 40 years. Prior to his appointment in Leicester he was Director of the 6-year, integrated Doctoral Clinical Psychology Training Course at the University of Hull. Throughout his academic career he has maintained an Honorary Consultant role in the NHS, treating patients with anxiety disorders, depression and obsessional compulsive disorder. He has more than 20 years' experience of examining patients with traumatic brain injury for the UK courts.

He obtained his three degrees from the University of Manchester: following graduating with a BSc in Psychology in 1978 he began his professional postgraduate training in Clinical Psychology in the Faculty of Medicine. Subsequently he completed a research PhD in 1990 which investigated learning and memory in alcoholics.

Over recent years Prof Wang has gained an international reputation for his research on cognitive and memory function during general anaesthesia. In 2004 he organized the 6th International Symposium on Memory and Awareness in Anaesthesia and Intensive Care (in Hull) – the foremost international forum for clinical research in this particular field. He has held appointments on a number of prominent committees in the British Psychological Society including the professional accrediting body for clinical psychology training, and a committee that is in the process of determining national standards for competence in the use

of neuropsychological tests. He has served as an expert advisor on a NICE (UK) Committee in relation to the monitoring of depth of anaesthesia and also as an expert member of the Royal College of Anaesthesia's National Audit Project 5 (a national audit of anaesthetic awareness reports). In 1999 he was made Fellow of the British Psychological Society and is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine.

In 2015 he was awarded the Humphry Davy Medal by the Royal College of Anaesthetists for his contribution to the understanding of accidental awareness during general anaesthesia.

Prof. Wang has published more than 60 papers in peer-reviewed journals, and numerous book chapters. He has been an invited speaker at international conferences on more than 30 occasions. In collaboration with colleagues he has won more than £1.2 million in research funding. He has supervised more than 40 doctoral research projects over the past 25 years. He has been a regular contributor and session chair at recent InPACT conferences, and recently joined the conference team as a co-organiser.

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