

**8<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF COACHING PSYCHOLOGY**  
***'POSITIVE & COACHING PSYCHOLOGY'***  
***Enhancing Resilience, Performance & Health***

**SESSION ABSTRACTS AND SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES**

---

**DAY ONE**  
**MASTERCLASSES**

**Using psychological flexibility in your coaching**

DR RACHAEL SKEWS

This masterclass is aimed at individuals looking to use acceptance and commitment theory (ACT) based interventions and techniques with groups and individuals in their coaching psychology and coaching practice. The masterclass will provide an overview of ACT theory, and techniques that can be used to enhance performance and wellbeing in coaching contexts.

You will be provided with an accessible summary of relevant research, drawing on cutting edge theory and research developed by the Institute of Management Studies at Goldsmiths. You will also have the opportunity to undertake exercises throughout the session, so you can experience ACT for yourself. This will include mindfulness practices, group-based exercises and individual activities.

**Dr Rachael Skews**

Rachael is a lecturer in occupational psychology at the Institute of Management Studies, Goldsmiths, University of London. Her core research area is contextual behavioural science in coaching psychology. This includes investigating the effectiveness of coaching interventions in changing behaviour, the mechanisms of change in coaching, and the role of psychological flexibility in behaviour change.

Before joining the Institute, Rachael was a business consultant for UK and international organisations, working with clients from a range of industries and sectors. Her consultancy experience encompasses talent development, assessment, leadership development, coaching, career management, stress management and wellbeing in the workplace. She is a member of the British Psychological Society's Special Group for Coaching Psychology, and the Association for Business Psychology. Rachael is the Honorary Secretary of the International Society for Coaching Psychology.

## **Appreciative Coaching as a Positive & Coaching Psychologist**

DR CERI SIMS

This masterclass offers an opportunity to learn about and gain some experience in applying Appreciative approaches and principles to coaching conversations and sessions. The class is aimed at coaches, psychologists, psychology students and/or positive psychologists (PP) with an ambition to acquire experience with and skills of coaching psychology methods based on positive psychology principles and practices. The class offers a healthy balance of discussing core academic background with opportunities for experiential learning. Attendees need to be prepared to work in pairs or threes and explore coaching psychology methods and techniques.

The 'way of being' a PP coach is explored in some detail through the practice of reflective learning and communicating presence through openness and the development of an appreciative 'muscle' when in conversation with another. The principles of Appreciative Inquiry (Whitney & Cooperrider, 2005) are explored in relation to coaching dialogues (Orem, Binkert & Clancy) and the masterclass involves the application of these principles through the various stages of coaching. The workshop also offers innovative ways in which the structured steps of appreciative coaching can be enhanced using conversational skills and tools for building Wellbeing, Strengths, Hope and Resilience. An awareness of the importance of engaging with and embracing difficult emotions as well as positive states is also explored with the intention of coaching the whole person as a PP coaching psychologist (Sims, 2017).

**Orem, S. L., Binkert, J., & Clancy, A. L. (2007).** *Appreciative coaching: A positive process for change.* John Wiley & Sons.

**Sims, C. M. (2017)** *Second wave positive psychology coaching difficult emotions: Introducing the mnemonic of 'TEARS HOPE'.* *The Coaching Psychologist*, 13 (2). pp. 66-79. ISSN 1748-1104 **Whitney, D., & Cooperrider, D. (2005).** *Appreciative inquiry: A positive revolution in change.* Berrett-Koehler, California.

### **Dr Ceri Sims, PhD, PG Cert HE, CPsychol**

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

the International Journal of Listening).

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

If you are interested in attending the BNU Positive Psychology in Coaching course run by Dr. Ceri Sims or are interested in any other courses in positive psychology and/or coaching please email [ceri.sims@bucks.ac.uk](mailto:ceri.sims@bucks.ac.uk).

## DAY TWO

### KEYNOTE

#### **Using coaching psychology as a disability accommodation for neurodiversity - evidence and ethics**

NANCY DOYLE

Further details will be available soon.

#### **Nancy Doyle**

Nancy Doyle is an Occupational Psychologist, based in both Europe and the USA, specialising in 'neurodiversity' or hidden disability. Nancy is the founder and CEO of Genius Within, an award-winning social enterprise based in the UK which provides support to over 6000 individuals and 200 companies per year through Assessments and Coaching. Over 90% of Genius Within graduates retain their employment and 24% go on to be promoted within one year. Nancy's work was featured in the BBC documentary 'Employable Me'.

Nancy says: "Disability Inclusion is an economic, social and moral imperative. We all lose when human potential is squandered."

## INVITED PAPERS & MINI WORKSHOPS

### **Enhancing lifelong health and resilience through family life coaching**

KIMBERLEY ALLEN, MARGARET MACHARA, TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY; DEBBIE KRUEGEL-FARR, NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE

Healthy relationships and positive parenting have long been attributed to positive outcomes for resiliency in children as supportive familial relationships positively affect physical and mental health (Umberson & Montez, 2010). However, there is a new crop of research showing that positive parenting and supportive families can also greatly influence health and wellbeing of adults over the life course.

Epigenetic research indicates children raised in stressful or neglectful environments produce stress hormones that negatively impact development (Phillips & Shonkoff, 2000), high numbers of adverse childhood experiences increase risks for medical illness across the life course (Shonkoff et al., 2009). Good parenting can buffer those negative impacts in that high quality parent-child attachment is associated with a child's ability to regulate emotions and cope with stress (Zimmer-Gembeck et al, 2015).

Adults who were raised with high adverse experiences routinely showed high levels of chronic illness in adulthood, but those who reported high levels of maternal nurturance offset the chronic disease consequences of childhood disadvantage (Miller et al, 2011). Family life coaching (FLC) serves as a mechanism to support parents and families and is a growing field that has positively impacted the health and wellbeing of many families (Machara, Kruenegel-Farr, Allen, & Feigal, 2017).

This paper will provide evidence the efficacy of family life coaching as approach to help combat the negative effects of adversity and promote positive relationships and long-term health outcomes in families. This paper will also will showcase case studies of family life coaching programs that are creating a positive impact for parents and families.

#### References:

- Machara, M., Kruenegel-Farr, D., Allen, K., & Feigal, T. (2017). Family life coaching. *Coaching Psychology International* 10(1), 6-14.
- Miller, G. E., Margie, E. L., Chen, E., Gruenewald, T. L., Karlamangla, A. S., & Seeman, T. E. (2011). Pathways to resilience: Maternal nurturance as a buffer against the effects of childhood poverty on metabolic syndrome at midlife. *Psychological Science*, 22(12), 1591-1599. doi: [10.1177/0956797611419170](https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797611419170)
- Phillips, D. A., & Shonkoff, J. P. (Eds.). (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. doi: 10.17226/9824
- Shonkoff JP, Boyce WT, McEwen BS. (2009). Neuroscience, molecular biology, and the childhood roots of health disparities: Building a new framework for health promotion and disease prevention. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 301, 2252-2259. [PubMed: 19491187]
- Umberson, D., & Montez, J. K. (2010). Social relationships and health: A flashpoint for health policy. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 51(1), S54-S66. doi:10.1177/0022146510383501
- Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J., Webb, H. J., Pepping, C. A., Swan, K., Merlo, O., Skinner, E. A., Dunbar, M. (2015). Review: Is parent-child attachment a correlate of children's emotion regulation and coping? *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, doi:10.1177/0165025415618276

**Kimberly Allen, PhD, BCC, CFLE,**

Kimberly is an Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Programs for the Youth, Family, and Community Sciences program at North Carolina State University. Her areas of expertise include family life coaching, parent education, teaching with technology, and reaching underserved youth audiences. Dr. Allen is author of the book *Theory, Research, and Practical Guidelines for Family Life Coaching*. E-mail: [kimberly\\_allen@ncsu.edu](mailto:kimberly_allen@ncsu.edu)

**Coaching from the Heart**

DR ZELDA DI BLASI,

Systematic reviews of positive psychology interventions (PPIs) have shown these to be effective in enhancing wellbeing, while reducing depressive symptoms (e.g. Sin and Lyubomirsky, 2009). There are also specific positive psychology coaching interventions that have been shown to increase wellbeing (Madden, Green, & Grant, 2011).

Understanding how these interventions can boost wellbeing is important in advancing the field. For example, research suggests that gratitude, or habitually appreciating the positive aspects of our lives, is strongly associated with wellbeing, including mood, life satisfaction and quality of life (Wood et al., 2010). There is little research linking how practicing or cultivating gratitude is linked to physical health (Mills et al., 2015), or how these interventions can increase physical health (Emmons & McCullogh, 2003).

Heart rate variability (HRV) is used to measure variation in heartbeat intervals and is used in stress research to identify autonomic function. A RCT recently evaluated the effects of an 8-week gratitude intervention compared with treatment as usual on HRV and inflammation in a group of 70 patients with heart failure.

This study found gratitude to reduce inflammation and to increase HRV, during journaling tasks. In this presentation, I am to outline research from the HeartMath institute to outline how gratitude influences HRV, and conduct a live demonstration to show how coaches can use biofeedback to demonstrate the role of gratitude in activating coherence, reducing stress and enhancing wellbeing.

**Dr Zelda Di Blasi, PhD, MPsychSc,**

Zelda is a Chartered Psychologist and co-director and trainer of a Masters in Coaching Psychology at University College Cork where she lectures in Positive, Health, Social and Coaching Psychology. She has published widely in journals including the Lancet and the British Medical Journal. Zelda is also representative on the International Advisory Board of the ISCP International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research and an Honorary Research Fellow of the International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research.

## **Primary study in coaching relationship, key factors to facilitate an effective coaching alliance but also including the stakeholders' perspectives**

DR YI-LING LAI

This paper will examine the role psychology plays in the coaching alliance process including the three-way contracting between the coaching psychologist, coachee and the organisation.

The session will also discuss to what extent and in what way coaching psychology can facilitate a greater coaching alliance, particularly in terms of the three-way contracting process.

### **Dr Yi-Ling Lai PhD in Occupational Psychology CPsychol**

Yi-Ling is the Senior Lecturer in Organisation Studies & Human Resource Management, University of Portsmouth. Her research interest mainly focuses on the application of psychological coaching approaches into organisational learning and development strategy; such as the coaching alliance, and coaching supervision. Prior to Yi-Ling's academic career, she had several years' experience in a global talent management consulting firm, applying psychological approaches in leadership development. Yi-Ling has a mixed academic and industrial background, and welcome any research project collaborations in the relevant areas.

## **Coaching beyond the diversity, intersectionality and #MeToo**

DR HO LAW

This session aims to help the participants appreciate the importance of understanding the complexity of diversity in coaching and propose a new model of coaching that is underpinned by the psychology of self and intersectionality for international practice.

The presentation will first provide a review of the recent emerging crises of equality across the diverse sections of society reported in the media and discusses their implications to coaching internationally.

The session will provide the participants with a set of challenging questions as part of their coaching psychology toolkit for reflection and peer supervision on their practice that is within and beyond their coaching space.

### **Dr Ho Law CPsychol**

Ho is a Director of ISCP, Founder, Empsy® Cambridge Coaching Psychology Group, Honorary Professor of Research & Psychology, Colombo Institute, is an internationally consultant with over 30 years experience in research and practice. Ho is the former Programme Advisor for Coaching at the University of Cambridge, former Programme Leader in MSc Coaching Psychology at the University of East London and visiting professor of Coaching Psychology at the University of Lisbon and East China Normal University.

## **Ecopsychology informed positive and coaching psychology practice: literally the next step**

DR SIOBHAIN O'RIORDAN & PROF STEPHEN PALMER

There is an increasing focus within psychology and the allied professions upon understanding the range of possible positive health benefits that can be drawn from spending time in our natural environment. This is of interest to coaches, positive and coaching psychologists who might draw on Ecopsychology in areas such as supporting coachees to improve wellbeing and psychological restoration, manage stress levels, enhance cognitive resourcefulness and encourage their efforts to develop achievable 'self-coaching' strategies focused on outdoor activities (see Palmer, 2015). This approach can introduce people to interventions such as 'Walk and Talk' coaching, seeking out opportunities to spend more time outdoors to engage with the natural world, participating in Green or Blue exercise and some types of Animal Assisted Interventions.

This interactive session aims to offer insights and experiences on key themes relating to helping coachees through Ecopsychology and Positive Psychology alongside an overview of coaching models and techniques. To illustrate the approach in practice, delegates will be invited to participate in Green and Blue Coaching Exercises 'on the move' during this conference session (weather dependent). So, if you are planning on joining us please do bring appropriate footwear/clothing for a short outdoor activity and perhaps an umbrella!

### Reference

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

### **Dr Siobhain O'Riordan CPsychol**

Siobhain is a Chartered Psychologist, Chartered Scientist and International Society for Coaching Psychology Accredited Coaching Psychologist and Supervisor. She is a Course Co-Director/Trainer on the coaching and coaching psychology programmes at the Centre for Coaching and Centre for Stress Management (UK).

Currently Siobhain is Editor of *Coaching Psychology International* and a Co-Editor of the *European Journal of Applied Positive Psychology* and the *International Journal of Stress Prevention and Well-being*. Siobhain is also the Founder Chair of the International Society for Coaching Psychology and a member of the International Research Centre Development Team of the ISCP International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research (<http://www.iscpresearch.org>).

### **Professor Stephen Palmer, PhD**

Professor Palmer is the Founder Director of the Centre for Coaching. He is a Chartered Psychologist, an APECS Accredited Executive Coach and Supervisor, International Society for Coaching Psychology Accredited Coaching Psychologist and Supervisor. He is President and Fellow of the [International Society for Coaching Psychology](#), Honorary President and Honorary Fellow of the [International Stress Management Association](#), Honorary Fellow and former President of the [Association for Coaching](#). He is Co-Editor of the [International](#)



[Journal of Stress Prevention and Wellbeing](#), and the [European Journal of Applied Positive Psychology](#). He has written/edited over 50 books including the [Handbook of Coaching Psychology](#), [Cognitive Behavioural Coaching in Practice](#), [Developmental Coaching](#), [The Coaching Relationship](#) and [Solution Focused Coaching in Practice](#). He developed the [PRACTICE model of coaching](#). Stephen's other posts include being [Visiting Professor of Work Based Learning and Stress Management](#) at the [Work and Learning Research Centre](#), Middlesex University and [Adjunct Professor of Coaching Psychology](#) at the Coaching Psychology Unit, Department of Communication and Psychology, Aalborg University, Denmark.

### **Emerging adulthood and coaching: A single case study?**

DR OLE MICHAEL SPATEN, PHD, AALBORG UNIVERSITY, DENMARK

**Introduction** The (RQ) question for this research seeks to highlight some of the aspects that are particularly important concerning youth and youth coaching and to provide an insight into reflections about a course of specific coaching sessions. The psychological intervention was coaching psychology founded in learning theories.

**Methodology:** A case study design was conducted with one client, which was initially screened by the clinical instrument for Depression, Anxiety and Stress (DASS 42). The beginning of the sessions included feedback during a specific procedure aimed at visitation for the coaching sessions. Followed by informed consent and other important start ups, video recordings of the sessions secured the psychological interventions, and was used for the subsequent analysis of the coaching sessions.

**Results:** First, a short review on coaching as a form of psychological intervention will be presented, followed by essentials in the work of emerging adults. Then a course of five coaching sessions will be presented and analyzed alongside what may be useful for the coach to keep an eye on through the sessions.

**Discussion:** Some learning points will be discussed founded on this single case research. Among other these could be mentioned:

Points of awareness in relation to youth coaching; Work with home assignments in sessions and between; Coach's work on the relationship and the structure of the coaching sessions. Limitations for this research will form the closing remarks.

### **References:**

- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55, 469-480.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning. Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Lowman, R. L. (2001). Constructing a literature from case studies: Promise and limitations of the method. *Consulting Psychology Journal*, 53, 119-123.
- McAdams, D. P. (2001). The Psychology of Life Stories *Review of General Psychology*, 5(2), 100-122
- Silverman, D. (2005). *Doing qualitative research*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications
- Lovibond, P. F., & Lovibond, S. H. (1995). The structure of negative emotional states: Comparison of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS) with the Beck Depression and Anxiety Inventories. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 33(3), 335-343

### **Dr Ole Michael Spaten**

Ole is a Licensed psychologist, BA MA PhD Specialist Psychotherapy, MISCPAccred Supervisor, Head of Psychology Master Program, Director of the Coaching Psychology Unit, Aalborg University.

Ole is a leading pioneer in Danish Coaching Psychology research; he conducted the first Randomized Control Trial in Scandinavia evaluating the effectiveness of brief cognitive behavioral coaching. The founding editor-in-chief of the Danish Journal of Coaching Psychology. Ole's research interests and publications relate to self and identity, social learning and coaching psychology.

### **Enhancing resilience in senior leaders of Schools through developing a coaching culture**

DR ANNETTE FILLERY-TRAVIS

There is a crisis in recruitment to senior leadership positions in schools in the UK. The aspiration to Headship is no longer a 'taken for granted' for senior teachers as they consider their professional trajectory. The reason most cited is the complexity of the challenge Head teachers face to provide a stimulating learning environment for children against a backdrop of ever tighter budgets, increasing regulation and the changing expectations. Supporting a coaching and mentoring culture within school has been identified as effective in allowing distributed and supported leadership by all senior staff facilitating school transformation. But schools are diverse organisations in terms of size, purpose and context and so changing cultures from the tradition 'command and control' is not trivial or well researched.

In this study we followed the experience of leaders in 99 schools in the NW of England as they bring coaching to their senior leadership teams in school. Through a questionnaire with these school leaders and subsequent in-depth interviews with 18 of the Head Teachers the factors of influence, both positive and negative, are explored. We report on their dilemmas and the impact they see in both their working practices and their own sense of wellbeing.

Throughout this Project, the voices of all have spoken passionately of a common, fundamental purpose: improving the quality of the learning of children, young people and adults. 'We have to make a difference.' This research draws together these voices and offers a picture of how coaching in schools is contributing to this agenda.

### **Dr Annette Fillery-Travis BSc, MA, PhD, CChem, FRSC**

Annette is the Head of the Wales Institute of Work Based Learning at University of Wales Trinity Saint David working with organisations across Europe and the US on developing learning strategies that enhance performance and wellbeing. She has published extensively in both academic and professional fields and is a senior Director of Studies for the UWTSB PhD and Doctorate in Professional Practice programmes which are the home of UWTSB Coaching Research Group.