

## Poster Presentations

### **Understanding perfectionism and self-compassion: A structural equation modelling approach**

REBECCA J. LINNETT and FRAENZE KIBOWSKI, Nottingham Trent University

*OBJECTIVE:* This poster illustrates findings from a study investigating the relationship between perfectionism and self-compassion. Perfectionism is a multidimensional personality trait characterised by a high level of self-critical evaluation and high personal standards (Hill & Curran, 2015). Evidence suggests that some forms of perfectionism are negatively associated with self-compassion, a mindset characterised by non-judgemental awareness of painful thoughts and feelings, a recognition that one's experiences are part of the larger human condition, and kindness towards oneself during difficult times (Neff, 2003).

This study aimed to construct and psychometrically assess a combined measure of perfectionism based on recommendations by Stoeber and Madigan (2016) and then use structural equation modelling (SEM) to investigate how each dimension of perfectionism is related to self-compassion (see Linnett & Kibowski, 2017)

*DESIGN:* The study employed a cross-sectional design using self-report surveys, administered online.

*METHODOLOGY:* Perfectionism was measured using a 79-item scale created using factors from several existing perfectionism scales (Stoeber & Madigan, 2016). Self-compassion was measured using the 26-item Self-Compassion Scale (Neff, 2003).

488 participants aged between 18 and 72 (mean age = 34) took part in the study. 83.2% of the sample were female and respondents were primarily living in the UK (66.8%) or USA (14.5%).

*RESULTS/FINDINGS:* Data analysis is still ongoing. Part I focuses on scale development via item reduction and factor analysis, whilst Part II uses SEM to test a model of the relationship between perfectionism and self-compassion.

*CONCLUSION:* This study will construct a new measure of perfectionism that will potentially capture its dimensions in a way not previously achieved. Findings from Part II will provide novel information about the relationship between perfectionism and self-compassion, and whether some forms of perfectionism are problematic for the development of a self-compassionate mindset. This information could significantly impact approaches to individual well-being and performance.

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Stoeber, J., & Madigan, D. J. (2016). Measuring perfectionism in sport, dance, and exercise: Review, critique, recommendations. In A. P. Hill (Ed.), *The psychology of perfectionism in sport, dance, and exercise*. (pp. 31–56). Oxon, UK: Routledge.

## **Adapting behaviours for successful coaching. Neuroscience-based approach**

DR MARTA CZERWIEC, BOŻENA WUJEC, COLLIN WALLACE; The Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw, Poland

*OBJECTIVE:* The main aim of the study was to investigate how and in what extent experienced coaches tend to adapt their natural behaviours to meet the expectations of the coaching session and therefore make their coaching work successful. This is the preliminary study and further research groups will be investigated, taking into account the level of experience as coaches.

*DESIGN:* The qualitative study using the ipsative neuroscience-based PRISM Brain Mapping questionnaire has been conducted. Data were gathered in May 2017, via on-line inventory, that was based on forced choice questions and responses. In each question respondents were asked to choose from the four available statements, deciding which one is “most like” and “least like” them, so that they reveal their natural and adapted behavioural preferences.

*METHODOLOGY:* The group of 25 most experienced coaches has been examined, to search for similarities or dissimilarities in their natural behaviours, in comparison to adapted behaviours presented during coaching work. The most experienced coaches are coaches that have over 5 years of practice and their main business activity is coaching (no less than 80% of their working time is dedicated to coaching).

*RESULTS/FINDINGS:* Regardless their natural ability for support others and deliver certain results, the most experienced coaches have got a great ability to flexibly adjust their behaviour to meet the requirements of the coaching session. Different patterns of natural and adapted behaviours of coaches will be presented on the colourful graphs, to make easier to see differences in behavioural patterns.

*CONCLUSION:* Neuroscience can make a major contribution to effectiveness of the coaching process by raising awareness of behavioural patterns of coaches and mechanism, which enable coaches to adapt their behaviours accordingly. This can be very useful for their professional development of coaches, by enabling them to assess their possible competence gap and to address it on the individual level.

## **What role does psychology play in a coaching supervision relationship, within an organisational context?**

ALAN WINGROVE – Blue Lion Coaching

DR. YI-LING LAI – University of Portsmouth

*OBJECTIVE:* To promote the development of evidence based coaching, by investigating common psychological factors in coaching supervision processes, within an organisational context.

*DESIGN:* This is the first study to research coaching supervision applying mixed methodology. It will gather in-depth information from both parties (supervisors and coaches) through interviews and focus groups. This will be followed with a quantitative cross-validation analysis.

*METHODOLOGY:* This research will be conducted in four key stages:

- A semi-systematic review will be conducted, integrating existing evidence on the role psychology plays in the supervision process in professional helping interventions; coaching, mentoring and counselling etc.

As coaching supervision is a very recently developed area of research, limited studies exist for a proper systematic literature review. Therefore, we have decided to include areas of similar professional helping relationships and only follow certain features of a systematic review in this literature analysis e.g. specific search terms and inclusion criteria.

- Use of Critical incident interviews will elicit the perspectives of both supervisors and coaches on what common factors contribute to an effective coaching supervision session. This will be through storytelling and self-reflective processes.

- Focus group sessions with supervisors and coaches will be conducted, to cross-analyse both parties' priorities on common factors in effective coaching supervision processes.

- Initial findings from the interview and focus group sessions will be transformed into a questionnaire. Real supervisor-coach dyads will then be invited to cross validate the draft framework.

*RESULTS/FINDINGS:* From these findings, a coaching supervision framework will be established.

*CONCLUSION:* Coaching supervision has been highlighted as an emerging area for the development of evidence-based coaching (Grant, 2012). The number of coaching supervision studies is growing, yet lack solid research to determine common factors making coaching supervision effective or the role psychology plays. This research will investigate these factors with all related stakeholders for a cross-analysis.

*REFERENCES:* Grant A (2012) Australian coaches' views on coaching supervision: A study with implications for Australian coach education, training and practice. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching & Mentoring* 10(2).

## **Coaching Character Strengths and Mindfulness for Achieving Flow in Tennis Performance**

URSZULA WOLSKI, Buckinghamshire New University

The aim of the research is to explore the relationship between character strengths and mindfulness during one-to-one coaching sessions with amateur tennis players. The coaching sessions are also intended to encourage the development of Flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) and to improve performance. Tennis is a game of two parts, a physical game as well as a mental game which Gallwey (2015) refers to as the inner game of tennis. This mental game is one that can make a difference between winning and losing. Whilst much research exists within the sports psychology literature and within positive psychology on the use of character strengths, and on mindfulness, there is little that examines both character strengths and mindfulness in sports performance. One program that does look at strengths and mindfulness is Ryan Niemiec's Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP).

Based on the MBSP program, over a course of 10 weeks, a group of amateur tennis players who compete in local leagues and tournaments will be asked to listen to the 10 audio tracks available from Niemiec's (2013) book. Alongside this, participants will also be asked to participate in daily

mindfulness practice, such as pausing for a moment and focusing on breathing. They will be asked to keep a journal in order to record what they did, their thoughts and feelings and whether they experienced any change, either positive or negative. Prior to the sessions, participants will be asked to complete the VIA strengths assessment in order to identify their character strengths. To minimise any ethical issues, participants will be fully briefed at the start of the program, informed of anonymity and confidentiality, as well as the right to withdraw at any time. The researcher will endeavour to ensure that no harm, physically or psychologically, will come to the participants.

Data analysis will be carried out using an inductive thematic approach which will examine the relationship between each participant's strengths and what mindfulness techniques they preferred and were most successful in implementing on the tennis court. It is anticipated that a relationship will exist between character strengths and the types of mindfulness practice used. Change will be measured over time by analysing the participant's journal entries. The nature of these relationships should provide a greater understanding of strengths and mindfulness methods, inform more targeted coaching methods based on a positive diagnosis of people's strengths and examine the effectiveness of a MBSP coaching programme in improving tennis performance.

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## **Fostering Hope during Transformational Change - How can the coachee be supported?**

### **A theoretical proposal**

SARAH SMITH, Buckinghamshire New University

Hope may play a pivotal role in not only goal directed behaviour, but in development and growth over time, and perhaps most especially in times of transformational change. In today's context of rapid and constant change, fostering hope may be more important than ever. Much of the research into hope within the field of positive psychology draws on Snyder's (1994) goal directed model of hope. More recently, hope has been described as a future directed network, constructed from biosychosocial resources (Scioli et al, 2011).

Findings from an exploration of three personal border-crossing experiences using autoethnographic methods, suggest that Snyder and Scioli's different approaches to conceptualising hope may offer useful and complementary frameworks for supporting the development of hope in times of transformational change. The author posits that focussed coaching approaches may increase levels of hopefulness in times of uncertainty and proposes a holistic model for application in one-to-one coaching contexts. The model outlines a diagnostic framework which can be used by the coach to target specific areas for focus with the coachee, with a view to building biosychosocial resources and increasing 'willpower' and 'waypower' in relation to goals.

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## **The use of The Self Compassion Break (SCB) as a Coaching tool**

SARAH MONK, Buckinghamshire New University

The Self Compassion Break (Neff, 2011) is a brief Loving Kindness Practice used in moments of challenge to promote self compassion and aid self soothing. In an 8 week autoethnographic study, the author examined the use of this technique as a self coaching strategy in difficult situations and reflected on the experiences in a journal. The results indicated subjectively improved coping, connection and increased self kindness. Initially, it was hypothesised that these effects could be seen as an 'undoing' effect of positive emotions (Fredrickson, Mancuso, Branigan & Tugade 2000), however it was concluded that the process was better conceptualised as an emotion regulation technique (Gross 2015).

A pilot study is proposed using an adapted form of the SCB as a brief positive psychology coaching intervention, with a sample of 4 paid carers of people with physical disabilities. Similar interventions have been found to be beneficial in a student population (Smeets, Neff, Alberts & Peters 2014). Carers in these contexts provide the majority of the direct contact received by vulnerable people but often have little support and training (Jorgensen, Parsons, Reid, Weidenbohm, Parsons & Jacobs 2009). High turnover is common in these roles and has been related to high job stress, low job satisfaction and poorer client care (Castle, Engberg, Anderson & Men 2007, Ejaz, Noelker, Menne & Bagaka's 2008).

It is hypothesised that coaching the use of the SCB for carers in stressful situations will lead to improved wellbeing. The pilot study compares pre and post intervention measures of life and job satisfaction, subjective well being and symptoms of anxiety and depression. It also uses semi structured interviews with the participants to assess the perceived utility of the approach and possible underlying mechanisms. The potential and benefits of the SCB as a coaching tool in wider care settings is discussed.

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## **Flourishing after divorce through the application of Appreciative Coaching & positive psychology**

ROMY BROOKS, Buckinghamshire New University

An interactive poster based on autoethnographic research.

Research on divorce outcomes has focused on either recovery from or continued declines in psychological, social and physical wellbeing in adults following divorce (Amato, 2010). To explore positive change and psychological growth following divorce, this poster presents a symbolic, creative, interactive representation of how positive psychology interventions may be used within the framework of appreciative coaching as a means to re-build, re-shape and re-create a best-reflected-self during and after divorce, utilising the 5 core principles of appreciative inquiry (AI) in Appreciative Coaching (Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2011).

The 5 AI principles being explored are language and what we say to ourselves (Constructionist), the questions we ask ourselves (Simultaneity), the imagined future we create for ourselves (Anticipatory), what we choose to learn and be curious about (Poetic), and the positive questions that lead to positive change (Positivity).

This autoethnographic research focuses on the blending of appreciative inquiry, dialogic in approach, with empirically-evidenced positive psychological interventions. It explores concepts of mindfulness, gratitude, acceptance, hope, courage, and resilience through the transformational process of divorce by way of creating a physical representation of this journey of change. The model developed suggests that appreciative coaching incorporating positive psychology interventions might be a means of supporting individuals to enable them to flourish and achieve positive outcomes throughout the period of time following marital discord and divorce. Further research on applying these principles and practices within the context of coaching is proposed as the next step in this regard.

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### **Hope and Coaching: Gazing at stones and stars**

LEE NEWITT, OMAC, AACT - Coach and Director at Seahorse Educational Partnerships CIC  
Buckinghamshire New University

This study examines the influence of hope in the developmental journey of the author over the lifespan, in order to gain greater insight into the nature of hope itself and how it might support the development of others during coaching. Research has focused on three hope concepts: 1. Hope as an experience (Herth, 2000) 2. Hope as an emotion (Scioli, 2011) 3. Hope as a cognition (Little, Snyder & Wehmeyer, 2006).

To explore these concepts an autoethnographical study was undertaken over eight weeks using three methods. Firstly, daily meditation was used as a contemplative inquiry with reflections being recorded afterwards (Zajonc, 2009). Secondly, positive and negative life experiences were mapped to identify 'chapters' of experience (Worth, 2011). Finally, a narrative was written for each chapter using six questions and these were analysed for hope markers (McDermott & Snyder, 1999).

To apply the concepts to a coaching model for supporting the development of hope over time in coachees, emphasis is given to three aspects of the developmental journey where hope was shown to play a key role in attaining successful outcomes: direction, alignment and movement. A concentric model of hope is proposed to explain the relationship between hope and a coachee's developmental journey. Finally, three areas of research into coaching practice where hope may play a significant

role are discussed: narrative coaching (McAdams,1993), coaching as experiential learning (Fosnot & Perry, 2013) and strengths development (Biswas-Deiner, Kashdan and Minhas, 2011).

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## **A proposal for a Programme to support Career Development of Women in Financial Services using a Coaching and Positive Psychology Approach**

ALISON BIRCH; MAPP Student, New Bucks University

(The programme has not yet received ethical approval to be conducted from either Buckinghamshire New University or any specific financial services company, so is currently an outline proposal only).

In 2016 the UK government published a 'Women in Finance Charter' to encourage Financial Services businesses to sign up to gender equality targets, in order to promote greater diversity across the industry, which sees gender imbalance as a source of significant risk to economic and financial stability.

A group coaching and co-coaching approach is proposed to deliver a programme of positive psychology interventions (PPIs) to support women working in Financial Services. Meta-analysis of 51 such PPIs have been shown to significantly enhance well-being and reduce depressive symptoms (Sin & Lyumbomirsky, 2009). The aim is that these sessions will be to examine whether they increase career flourishing and bring improvements in overcoming barriers to success for these women.

The programme would consist of 11 themes of development, delivered over the course of a year to achieve clearly defined outcome intentions.

#### Coaching Themes:

Programme Introduction & co-coaching techniques  
Mindset & Thinking styles  
Self-Efficacy, Authenticity & Courage  
Strengths  
Hope & Goals  
Resilience  
Emotions & Emotional Intelligence  
Optimism, Positivity & well-being  
Supporting Others & Collaboration  
Mental Toughness & Grit

## Power of Narrative & the Ongoing Story

Participants would receive monthly group coaching sessions to explore each theme, enabled by the application of appropriate PPIs. Each session would be followed by a 1:1 co-coaching session with a group member to allow deeper exploration and reflection, supporting a double-loop learning experience. The group and co-coaching approach is intended to influence organisational and industry culture from the inside out, through the foundation and promotion of social and peer networks, building of shared experience, and generation of a propagation effect across organisations and the industry through on-going peer-coaching relationships.

The hypotheses are that the PPI coaching programme will deliver career benefits to individuals through personal development. Evidence of coaching outcomes will be measured by comparing changes in scores on the Utrecht Work & Well-being Survey (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2006) and the Psychological Well-Being scale (Ryff, 1989).

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## **Developing the skill of focused attention for Alpine Skiers to foster more flow experiences**

DEREK TATE, Buckinghamshire New University

The purpose of this poster is to look at the theory of focused attention and how it is applied, practically, to the coaching of Alpine skiers.

It is posited that coaches (trainers of ski instructors) who develop the skill of focused attention for Alpine skiers (ski instructors) enhance their learning of motor skills and increase the likelihood of experiencing flow. Focused attention is one of the nine components of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, Latter, & Duranso, 2017; Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999) and is “an active process that can be improved over time” (p. 26). Focused attention can be further divided into effortful attention, using explicit memory and effortless attention using implicit memory with the latter more likely to lead to flow. Transient Hypofrontality (Dietrich, 2009) theorises that, as you narrow your attention to the task in hand, and provided you are well practiced at that task, the learner’s attention becomes effortless.

Research should focus on experienced coaches who develop the skill of focused attention in their learners and whether it subsequently leads to more flow experiences in the coachees. Two ski coaches working with approximately eight ski instructors, engaged in training for their next level of certification in the Irish ski instructor qualification pathway, will be recruited to participate in semi-structured interviews. The data will subsequently be analysed for themes.

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