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Issue 2

YOUR

PSYCHOLOGY CLINIC

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Good luck
Michelle!

Boost your happiness &
creativity with strategies
that work

The dangers of
gossip!

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER FOR 2010

Everyone at Your Psychology Clinic hope that you have had a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year. In this edition we congratulate Michelle and her husband on the arrival of their new child, Victoria. We also introduce a couple of strategies that research has shown to improve your well being, boost creativity and just what does science say about gossiping

In recent years there have been countless books promising to provide the keys to happiness. What science shows us, however, is that boosting your happiness and well being can be surprisingly simple.

Want to enjoy increased happiness? This simple exercise will help put a smile on your face.

Psychologists Robert Emmons and Michael McCullough asked people to spend a few moments each week carrying out one of three writing tasks. One group listed five things for which they were grateful, the second noted down five things that annoyed them, and the final group jotted down five events that had

taken place during the previous week.

Everyone scribbled away, with the 'gratitude' group remarking on anything from seeing the sunset on a summer day to the generosity of their friends, the 'annoyed' group listing taxes and their children arguing, and the 'events' group detailing making breakfast and driving to work. The results were startling. Compared to those in either the 'annoyed' or 'events' groups, those expressing gratitude ended up significantly happier, much more optimistic about the future, physically healthier, and they even exercised more. In other words, people that actively adopted an attitude of gratitude within their life felt happier.

A strategy to try for one week: Boost your health and happiness by spending a few moments at the start of each week or day. Try writing a list of five things that you are grateful for in your life. Try it for a week and see how it goes.



**Congratulations on the baby
Michelle!**

Michelle will be leaving us briefly for the birth of her third child in February. The team wishes her and her husband, Pablo, the best. We will miss her gentle, funny and warm personality, and her excellent management skills that keep us all organised.

YOUR PSYCHOLOGISTS



from top, Shay Addison, Dr Melissa Taylor, Frank Bergmann, Dr Lars Madsen

Your Psychology Clinic Team

Your Psychology Clinic is a specialist service providing evidence based psychological treatment for adults and couples.

Our team consists of 4 psychologists and 1 office manager. Our Psychologists are registered with the Psychologists Board of Queensland, members of the Australian Psychological Society and engage in regular professional development and training.

BOOST YOUR CREATIVITY!

Want to increase your creativity? it might be easier than you think...Gossiping is actually bad for you...

Japanese psychologists Seiji Shibata and Naoto Suzuki asked people to carry out various creativity exercises in carefully controlled office environments. Some of the offices contained a potted plant whilst others were devoid of any greenery. Time and again, the researchers discovered that the addition of the pot plant enhanced people's creativity.

Other work has produced similar conclusions with, for example, an eight-month study of creativity in the workplace conducted at Texas A&M University showing that adding flowers and plants to an office resulted in a 15% increase in ideas from male employees, and more flexible solutions to problems from their female counterparts.

Why should a little nature have these effects? According to some evolutionary psychologists, seeing greenery might initiate an ancient feeling of calm because it suggests that there will be an abundance of nearby food. Such pleasant feelings then make people more helpful, happy and creative.

A strategy to try: Boost your creativity by adding some potted plants to your surroundings.

It is official gossiping is actually bad for you...

Most of us like to pass on the odd juicy bit of information about colleagues, but is such behavior good for us? John Skowronski from Ohio University at Newark investigated the downside of spreading malicious gossip. Participants watched videotapes of actors talking about a third party (a friend of the actor). Some of the actor's comments about his friend were very

negative, such as 'He hates animals. Today he was walking to the store and he saw this puppy. So he kicked it out of his way'. Afterwards, the participants were asked to rate the personality of the speaker. Even though it was obvious that the person on the videotape was criticizing someone else, the participants consistently attributed the negative traits to the speaker. This effect, known as 'spontaneous trait transference', reveals the pluses and minuses of gossiping. When you gossip about another person, listeners unconsciously associate you with the characteristics you are describing, ultimately leading to those characteristics being 'transferred' to you.

A strategy to try: Say positive and pleasant things about friends and colleagues, and you are seen as a nice person. Constantly complain about others' failings, and people will unconsciously apply the same negative traits to you.

Your Psychology Clinic is a specialist service that was designed to provide clients and referrers with a choice of psychologists that are warm and friendly people have the specialist knowledge and skills regarding the assessment and treatment of common mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, eating disorder and trauma.

All our psychologists are registered with Medicare and most health funds.

For further information or to book a consultation call our office manager on 3368 1892 who will be able to assist you with any questions.

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DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS DEAF AND WOULD BENEFIT FROM SEEING A PSYCHOLOGIST?

Senator Rachel Siewert, of the Australian Greens, and Chair of the Community Affairs References Committee on an inquiry into hearing health in Australia, stated: 'There are currently approximately four million (one in five) people in Australia who have been identified as being deaf or having a hearing impairment.' Senator Siewert commented that: 'The primary causes of hearing impairment are changes due to ageing and the impact of noise. The Committee is particularly interested in the long term implications for hearing health of the use of machinery in industry and on the land and modern technologies such as ipods.' 1.

You may have a relative, partner or friend who is deaf. They may have a psychology appointment either on their own or you may accompany them to provide assistance. A sign language Interpreter may be useful for all parties to have full communication with each other. In psychology and other counselling appointments, being of sensitive and deep nature, it is imperative that the deaf person and their psychologist has full access to communication.

The National Auslan Interpreter Booking & Payment Service (NABS) provides FREE sign language interpreters for private medical and allied health care services. These Interpreters are fully accredited professionals. They act as the cultural and linguistic bridge between the medical practitioner and the client.

You or your Psychologist can contact NABS and request a Sign Language Interpreter, absolutely free of charge.

The national call centre is based in Brisbane and provides service all over Australia. Bookings by email, fax, SMS, email or online can be made anytime. Phone bookings are open 8

am to 8 pm Monday to Friday and on Saturdays 8 am to 1 pm, nationally.

Our friendly and helpful Call Centre operators are here to assist you.

James Kerwin, Communications Officer, NABS
<http://rachel-siewert.greensmps.org.au/media-releases>

To book a Sign Language Interpreter:

Phone: 1800 24 69 45

Fax: 1800 24 69 14

SMS: 0427 671 261

TTY: 1800 24 69 48

Email: bookings@nabs.org.au

Online: www.nabs.org.au

