

# Therapeutic perspectives and effective therapeutic practices with alcohol and love addictions

## Regent's Centre for Relational Studies and Psychological Wellbeing

### 6th Annual One-Day Conference

**Saturday 8 June 2019**

09:00 to 16:30

Registration from 08:30

Regent's University London

Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London NW1 4NS

### *Who should attend?*

- › Psychotherapists, counsellors, and psychologists
- › Students of psychotherapy and psychology
- › Academics and researchers
- › Universities and FE colleges
- › Education authorities
- › Social services
- › Community safety teams
- › Community support officers
- › Criminal justice practitioners
- › Equality and diversity practitioners
- › Anti-social behaviour coordinators
- › Family justice centres
- › Family protection units
- › Health service professionals
- › Outreach and support teams
- › Community and voluntary organisations

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£110 (£90 if received by 31 March 2019)

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## Brian D. Earp

### *Does Addiction Change Who You Are?*

Brian Earp is Associate Director of the Yale-Hastings Program in Ethics and Health Policy at Yale University and The Hastings Center, and a Research Fellow in the Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics at the University of Oxford. His work is cross-disciplinary, following training in philosophy, cognitive science, psychology, history and sociology of science and medicine, and ethics. His research has been covered in *Nature*, *Popular Science*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The Atlantic* and *New Scientist*, among others. Brian conducted graduate research in psychological methods as a Henry Fellow of New College, Oxford, with additional work on the philosophy of science and philosophy of mind, which he went on to publish in peer-reviewed journals. He also conducted graduate research in the history, philosophy, and sociology of science, technology, and medicine as a Cambridge Trust Scholar and Rausing Award recipient at Trinity College, Cambridge. After spending a year in residence as the inaugural Presidential Scholar in Bioethics at The Hastings Center in Garrison, New York, Brian is now a Gordon Fellow, Irene Battell Larned Fellow, McDougall Writing Fellow, Benjamin Franklin Graduate Fellow, and PhD student in philosophy and psychology at Yale University. His essays have been translated into Polish, German, Italian, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Hebrew.

Recent literature on addiction and judgments about the characteristics of agents has focused on the implications of adopting a 'brain disease' versus 'moral weakness' model of addiction. Typically, such judgments have to do with what capacities an agent has (e.g. the ability to abstain from substance use). Much less work, however, has been conducted on the relationship between addiction and judgments about an agent's identity, including whether or to what extent an individual is seen as the same person after becoming addicted. We conducted a series of studies (total N = 3,620) to assess lay attitudes concerning addiction and identity persistence. In Study 1, we found that US participants judged an agent who became addicted to drugs as being closer to 'a completely different person' than 'completely the same person' as the agent who existed prior to the addiction. In Studies 2-6, we investigated the intuitive basis for this result, finding that lay judgments of altered identity as a consequence of drug use and addiction are driven primarily by perceived negative changes in the moral character of drug users, who are seen as having deviated from their good true selves.

## Joanna Holroyd and Dr Maria Luca

### *Psychotherapy with Clients with Addiction(s): A Grounded Study of Effective Therapeutic Approaches*

Joanna Holroyd is a UKCP accredited psychotherapist who trained at Regent's University London. During her training, Joanna completed a three-year clinical placement in an addictions service and subsequently decided to undertake qualitative research in this area for her dissertation. She now works in IAPT for the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and during the last academic year was a visiting lecturer at the University of Greenwich.

Addiction is a multifaceted topic with social, cultural and political undertones and influences. It can be considered challenging to work with psychotherapeutically. To counter this pejorative conjecture, this study aims to explore what approaches experienced therapists consider to be effective in their clinical work. To investigate what has proved important and therapeutically helpful empirically, a qualitative grounded theory (GT) approach is employed. A constructivist GT is adopted, as this allows for congruency with my epistemological, ontological and axiological preferences. The sampling procedure was purposive and 10 semi-structured interviews (and two pilot interviews) were conducted with leading experts working with addictions. The interviews were transcribed and analysed using constructivist GT analytic procedures. One core category emerged from the data: what was revealed to be effective in working with addictions is a unique, contextualised, collaborative and creative therapeutic approach. Five sub-categories transpired: 1) contextual factors; 2) therapist factors; 3) client factors; 4) conceptualisations; 5) therapeutic work. The findings indicate that through engagement with unique psychosocial understandings of clients, therapists enhance their own understandings of the phenomenon of addiction, and develop more effective ways of working therapeutically. It is argued that an individualised and creative approach, anchored in the particular needs, personal preferences or beliefs of the client, is given preference over rigid adherence to any particular therapeutic model.

# Speakers

## Dr Ryan Kemp

### *Getting 'out of it' – addiction as existence*

Ryan Kemp PhD, is a consultant clinical psychologist and psychotherapist. He trained in South Africa and London and has over 20 years' experience in a variety of mental health settings. He is currently Director of Therapies at Central & North West London NHS Foundation Trust and visiting lecturer at Regent's University London. He was previously chair of the Faculty of Addiction at the British Psychological Society and has a wide range of clinical experience, including drugs, alcohol, gambling and technology-based addictions (computer games, internet). Ryan is an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society and a member of the Society for Existential Analysis. His first book, *Transcending Addiction*, explores addiction by giving a deep phenomenological description of this complex syndrome.

Alcohol abuse causes enormous problems in society, resulting in hundreds of thousands of deaths and costing the NHS billions every year. And yet there remains a battle of ideas around what actually constitutes addiction. Neuroscience sees addiction as a brain disorder, while psychology generally sees it as an impulse control issue. Outside the academy, the 12-step traditions organise their programmes around a vague notion of addiction as a disease. My aim will be to outline the most current qualitative research describing what addiction is, coupled with how a variety of therapies have approached the phenomenon. Finally I will attempt a consolidated phenomenological description of addiction and the key milestone issues involved in recovery. While there is no single route to recovery and every individual must find their own route, there are key issues and processes created by taking up an addictive way of being in the world. If these key issues are not addressed, it is unlikely that attempts at recovery will be maintained.

## Professor Desa Markovic

### *'Sexual compulsivity', 'addictions', or 'hypersexuality': contrasting perspectives*

Professor Desa Markovic is Head of Programmes for Psychotherapy & Counselling and Professor in Systemic Psychotherapy at Regent's University London. She is a UKCP registered systemic psychotherapist and supervisor and a COSRT accredited psychosexual therapist and supervisor. She has worked as a systemic and psychosexual therapist in various contexts, including psychiatric hospitals, psychosexual clinics and private practice. She held senior academic posts at various psychotherapy training organisations, including senior tutor at Kensington Consultation Centre (KCC), Central School of Counselling and Therapy, Relate, and Porterbrook Clinic in Sheffield. She was assistant director and director of training at the Institute of Family Therapy in London. Desa has given lectures and presentations at numerous national and international conferences such as the North American Society for Psychotherapy Research, the European Society for Psychotherapy Research, the European Federation of Sexology and several World Association of Sexual Health conferences, including Sweden, Australia, Canada, Brazil and Singapore. In 2014 she was awarded Fellowship of the Sheffield Society for the Study of Sexuality and Relationships for her contribution to sexology. Her book, *Working with sexual issues in psychotherapy; a practical guide using a social constructionist framework*, was published by Palgrave MacMillan in 2017. Over the past years she has published several chapters on the subject of systemic and psychosexual therapy and articles in peer-reviewed journals such as *Human Systems* (KCC and Leeds University Research Centre), *Sexual and Relationship Therapy* (Routledge) and *Australian and New Zealand Journal for Family Therapy*.

Many labels have been used and are currently in use to refer to 'sexual compulsivity', 'sexual addictions', or 'hypersexuality', depending on the theoretical and ethical positioning. This issue has been a subject of much controversy and debate within sexology, psychosexual therapy, psychiatry and psychotherapy, triggering strong reactions and extreme opposing viewpoints. This presentation will discuss the historically significant as well as the currently prevailing views on the origins, diagnostic criteria, symptomatology and the proposed forms of treatment of this phenomenon, highlighting the points of connection as well as contrast amongst these different perspectives.

# Speakers

## Dr Stanton Peele

### *Love and Addiction: Parent Version*

Stanton Peele has been a cutting-edge figure in the addiction field for four decades. Since publishing (with Archie Brodsky) *Love and Addiction* in 1975, Stanton has been a leader in virtually every development in the field: the discovery that the addictive properties of drugs are invariably exaggerated; that non-drug involvements (like love, sex, and gambling) may be addictive; that addictive experience is a function of people's expectations and circumstances; that people often recover from addiction and alcoholism in the natural course of their lives, without being treated; that 12-step, AA treatment is not the be-all and end-all and that practical life-management therapies are most effective; that people's self-empowerment, values and purpose in life (as opposed to seeing themselves as powerless) can be the light out of the tunnel; and that people generally don't get better all at once, but make gradual improvements (called harm reduction) in their lives that lead them out of addiction. Along the way, Stanton has written 12 books (including *The Meaning of Addiction*, *Diseasing of America*, *The Truth About Addiction and Recovery*, *7 Tools to Beat Addiction* and *Addiction-Proof Your Child*) and 250 professional articles, won numerous awards (including from the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* and the Drug Policy Alliance, the leading drug policy reform organisation in America), and created the Life Process Program for addiction treatment, which continues to be utilised worldwide.

Parental relationships among middle-class people and their children have never been closer, yet never more fraught with anxiety and lack of independence, due to over-close and fear-inspired childrearing styles, particularly – but not strictly – limited to fear of opioids. The results are highly noted increases in mental disorders in the US around anxiety and depression, along with variable degrees – but always quite high – of youthful substance-use disorders. Most alarming is a growing phenomenon of subsumed childhood identity, where young people fail to individuate. The proposed remedy for this growth in mental disorders, including all-object addictions, in the young is decreased parental supervision and allowance of greater independence and risk-taking by children in decision-making and self-management. These parental changes follow on from Carol Dweck's growth mindset model and Angela Duckworth's model of grit. What is most essential in this framework is that societal parenting styles lead directly to observed mental disorders, including addiction, and increasingly so, but in the directly opposite way in which these are ordinarily thought to operate – i.e., more intense parent connectedness leads to greater mental health.

## Dr Lymarie Rodríguez-Morales

### *A hero's journey: Becoming and transcendence in young men's addiction recovery*

Lymarie's academic background is in psychology with a research focus on mental health and wellbeing. She studied social sciences, research methods in psychology and public health at the University of Puerto Rico. She completed her PhD at Birkbeck University of London with a research project focusing on young men's experience of recovery from substance abuse in 12-step fellowships. Presently most of her research activity addresses the study of emotional experience underpinning wellbeing, the role of spirituality in recovery from mental health distress, and nature-based interventions for wellbeing. She joined the School of Psychology at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in September 2016.

In this paper, a discussion is built upon findings from a hermeneutical phenomenological study that investigated how young adult men worked through the process of recovery from addiction while participating in 12-step fellowships in the UK (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous). Alcoholics Anonymous' discourse on recovery gives prominence to a set of spiritual practices that train participants in their capacities of self-care. This investigation examined the transformations in participants' identity and sense of self as they create for themselves a new life-world amid the challenges of recovery from addiction. Four empirical studies were developed utilising a small sample of young adult men in recovery. Data collection consisted of in-depth interviews and written autobiographies. Participants' recovery, as in the mythical hero's journey, has been a quest through transformation and growth into a more genuine and balanced selfhood, necessitating the difficult transcendence of an unwholesome selfhood, manifested so powerfully in their addiction. In mythical stories, the hero develops a higher ethical conduct and authenticity as the result of a process of individuation. I reflect on the limitations of the biomedical language of addiction and the potential implications of the hero's journey myth in delineating a more human(e) and empathic discourse on young men's recovery and self-change.

# Chairs and Panel Members

## Dr Maria Luca

Dr Maria Luca is Senior Research Fellow, Reader in Psychotherapy & Counselling Psychology, Director of the Regent's Centre for Relational Studies and Psychological Wellbeing, PhD course leader and Editor of the *Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling Psychology Reflections* at the School of Psychotherapy & Psychology, Regent's University London. Her previous roles include Head of Regent's School of Psychotherapy & Counselling Psychology. Maria worked in the National Health Service for 12 years and currently has a small private practice in London. Her current research projects include sexual attraction and the erotic in therapy; sexual bullying among university students; the lived experience of migrants; medically unexplained symptoms and grounded theory. She appeared on Sky News (25/03/2016) discussing sexual bullying among young people. She has published widely including the books *Sexual Attraction in Therapy: Clinical Perspectives on Moving Beyond the Taboo - A Guide for Training and Practice* (2014) London: Wiley and *The Therapeutic Frame in the Clinical Context – Integrative Perspectives* (2004) London: Routledge.

## Professor John Nuttall

John Nuttall is Head of Regent's School of Psychotherapy & Psychology and Professor of Integrative Psychotherapy at Regent's University London, teaching theory, skills and research methods in the field. He is a professional psychotherapist in private practice. Professor Nuttall has had an extensive career in senior management in multi-national industry and commerce, and is a Certified Management Consultant and Chartered Marketer. He has written widely on management and psychotherapy and his special interests include psychotherapy integration, organisation theory, and the provision of counselling and psychotherapy in the community. He is also honorary psychotherapist and chair of the charity, West London Centre for Counselling, a major provider of therapeutic counselling in primary care.