



Ageing Mind Initiative

Issue 31 March 2017 Newsletter
www.uq.edu.au/ami

Have you ever wanted us to write about a particular topic or answer some relevant ageing-related questions? If yes, why don't you email us at ami@uq.edu.au with your ideas and we can try to include it in the next quarterly edition of the Newsletter.

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In this months edition of the Newsletter we have some exciting new research projects including a call out to people who have ideas about communication and technology (page 7), a study looking at adjustment to retirement (page 12) and a study trying to explore how different thinking skills relate to language and emotion (page 8).

We also have some older studies that are in the final stages of recruitment but still need more participants. Please pass on this Newsletter to anyone you think may be interested in volunteering their time and knowledge. You can always contact the researchers directly to find out more about how to get involved.



There has never been a better time to volunteer!

ISSUE QUOTE:

“Let us never know what old age is. Let us know the happiness time brings, not count the years”
~ Ausonius

Altruism – Good for You and Me

Helping other people doesn't just help those you are assisting. New research from Gruenwald and colleagues indicates it also has significant benefits to the person providing the care and assistance. In particular, this seems to hold true for older adults.

Generativity is defined as the desire to give back, particularly to younger generations. This is particularly powerful for many older adults who have great skills, wisdom and life experience to share.

Gruenwald and colleagues found that when older adults feel more generative, they feel that they have contributed to the welfare and well-being of others. This in turn may have a link to living longer.

An investigation of people between 70-79 years of age found that participants who were more generative, felt more useful to family and friends and were more mobile. Additionally they reported that they felt less likely to die over the seven year study period. This last finding seems to be backed by other research that shows adults who feel less useful die earlier and at much higher rates (Gruenwald et al., 2009).

The effect of perception of usefulness is so strong that even a simple story can prime people to perform better on cognitive tests of memory. In another study, researchers gave participants news stories that either focused on the value of aging population and generativity, or a story that focused on the aging population as a burden on the rest of society. Not surprisingly, the participants who read the story

about generative potential, performed higher on a memory test.

Studies like these highlight the importance of not only feeling useful in later life e.g., generativity but also the perception that people have towards older adults and their ability to contribute to society in a meaningful way. Too often we hear the negative stories of ageing and neglect the positive ones. Perhaps we should all be focusing on the wealth of knowledge and experience that this population has to offer in helping us solve the problems of the future.

One way to help do this is to get out, and get active. Finding a way to contribute based on your unique skills and interests. Volunteering is one simple way in which this can be done.

If you are interested in getting involved as a volunteer, look up Volunteering Queensland's website. You can search for positions that by location, area of interest, your availability or by keyword.

Whether you are helping sick animals, providing company for those who are lonely, helping fix up a garden or doing website design, there is likely to be something that tickles your interest.

<https://volunteeringqld.org.au/>

Article by E. Poulsen



volunteering
queensland

Book Updates



The book launch of “Ageing: a very short introduction” at Avid reader was a raging success.

It was wonderful and inspiring to see so many community members, academics and professionals engage in the discussion and ask thought provoking questions.

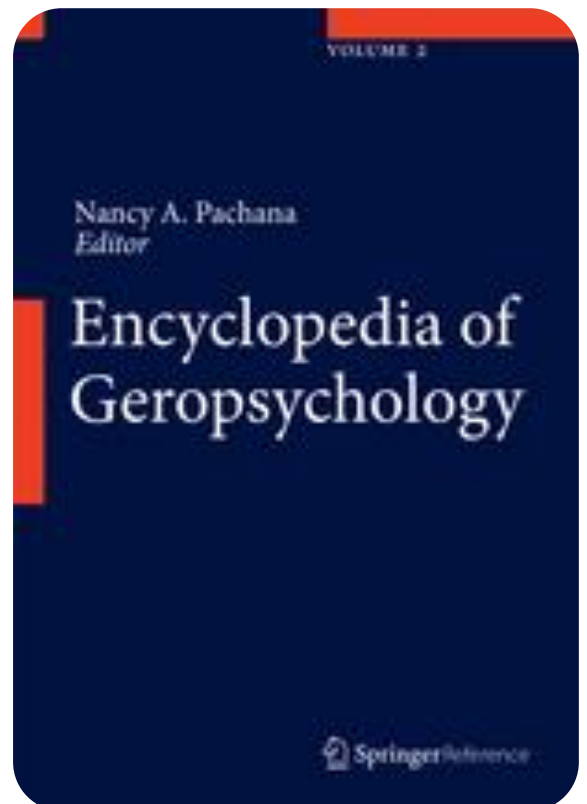
Thank you to Avid reader for hosting such a streamlined event.

Photo: Nancy Pachana attending to the long line of avid readers waiting to get their books signed

The Encyclopaedia of Geropsychology has also hit the shelves. Edited by Nancy Pachana, the book also includes articles from a broad range of experts in ageing.

It is a comprehensive coverage of the entire breadth of the field, giving readers access to all major subareas and illustrating their interconnections with other disciplines. Entries delve deep into key areas of geropsychology such as perception, cognition, clinical, organizational, health, social, experimental and neuropsychology.

In addition to that, the encyclopedia covers related disciplines such as neuroscience, social science, population health, public policy issues pertaining to retirement, epidemiology and demography and medicine. This encyclopedia is relevant to a wide audience that include researchers, clinicians, students, policy makers and nongovernmental agencies.



Ageing Events

Ageing Consciously Retreat

Joyful Awakenings, A Brisbane based alternative and holistic health service, is hosting an enlightening weekend retreat at Springbrook Theosophical Retreat Centre. Held in a relaxed and social atmosphere, this unique three-day experience will show men and women aged 50 and above how to age with purpose. The twilight years can also be the most creative years of one's life and this engaging retreat will allow guests to connect and share with others walking the same journey.

Under the guidance of friendly facilitators, guests will be invited to participate in interactive workshop sessions, inclusive of experiential exercises and small group

discussion; heart math technique and the 120 meditation session; and optional yoga, bush walks and a labyrinth walk.

Come and discover your own internal awareness, create a space of connection, collaborate and enjoy a sense of community and oneness at this retreat.

Where: 2184 Springbrook Rd, Springbrook, QLD

Dates: 19/20/21 May 2017

Time: Arrival between 3–4pm (for a 5pm start)

Farewell: 3pm Sunday

Price: Early Bird \$395 + booking fee (book by the 1st April 2017)

Full Price: \$465 + booking fee

Contact: rutherford_marlene@yahoo.com.au

Ph 0403 312 237



Website Review: Geodiversity

Republished from Wikipedia (23.02.2017)

Gerodiversity is the multicultural approach to issues of aging. This approach provides a theoretical foundation for the medical and psychological treatment of older adults within an ecological context that includes their cultural identity and heritage, social environment, community, family system, and significant relationships (Iwasaki, Tazeau, Kimmel, & McCallum, 2009). Gerodiversity encompasses a [social justice](#) framework, which considers the social and historical dynamics of privilege and inequality (Iwasaki et al., 2009). In addition to issues of aging, gerodiversity includes race, ethnicity, language, gender identity, socioeconomic status, physical ability or disability, sexual orientation, level of education, country of origin, location of residence, and religion or spirituality.

Gerodiversity builds on the field of [clinical geropsychology](#), which applies psychological and developmental methods to understanding the behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and biological aspects of aging in the context of providing clinical care to older adults. The goal is to develop culturally competent, scientific methods for the psychological and medical treatment of the aging population (Iwasaki et al., 2009). According to this perspective, in order to ethically and scientifically provide

optimal care to older adults, clinicians must be aware of the cultural factors in health care utilization, including use of physical and mental health care. Moreover, from this perspective, clinicians must continually work to improve their multicultural knowledge base, skill set, and attitudes towards cultural diversity.

If you would like to read more on these topics you can do so by viewing the following links:

[1 Demographics and characteristics to consider in geriatric populations](#)

[2 Sex and gender](#)

[3 Race and ethnicity](#)

[4 Sexual and gender minorities](#)

[5 Religious and/or spiritual identity](#)

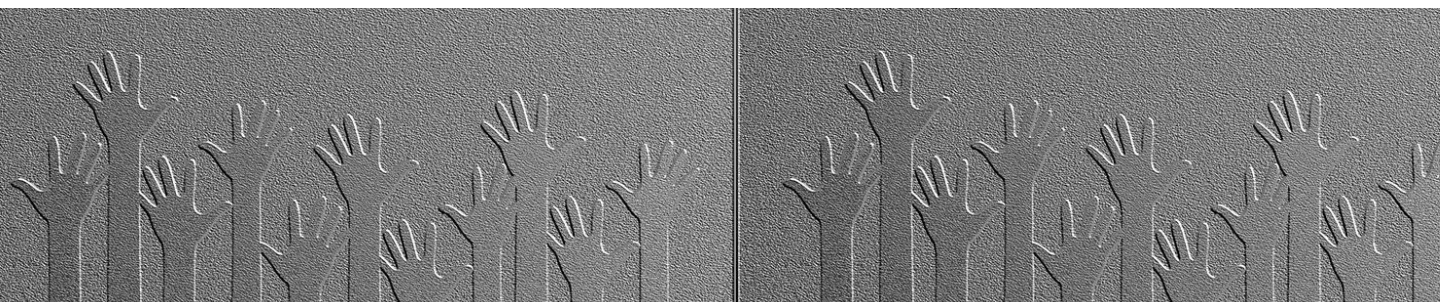
[6 Ability and disability status](#)

[7 Socioeconomic status](#)

[8 Rural versus urban living environment](#)

[9 National identity/origins](#)

[10 Courses of action](#)



Current Ageing Research

The following projects are looking for participants. Make a difference in Ageing Research today. Sign up now!

Sleep and Neuroplasticity

Amongst its many functions, sleep plays a critical role in consolidating the memories and skill that were acquired during the day. When we learn a new skill or store a memory, certain physiological processes, known collectively as **neural plasticity**, take place that retain the acquired information. During a particular phase of sleep known as slow wave sleep (SWS), large, highly synchronous bursts of low-frequency brain activity known as **slow-wave oscillations** are critical in consolidating these plastic changes. Consolidation is important in promoting long-term storage of information.

Despite the undeniably important role that sleep plays in promoting neural plasticity, there are many amongst us who find it difficult to sleep properly, and thus, to gain benefit from a good night's sleep. One demographic particularly prone to poor sleep is the elderly, and poor sleep in this group has recently been causally linked to memory dysfunction. Impairments in memory manifest because of impaired plasticity mechanisms.

Recently, non-invasive brain stimulation, transcranial discrete current stimulation (tDCS), has been used to induce these oscillations in the awake human brain, and has consequently enhanced memory. The project described uses

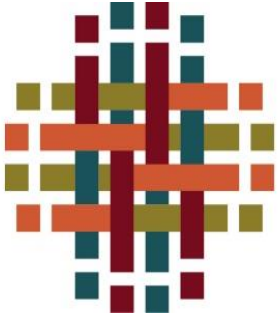
tDCS to harness the beneficial effects of sleep in promoting plasticity in the brain in young and elderly people.

The Queensland Brain Institute (QBI) are currently running studies to investigate these processes further.

For more information, please contact:
Claire Bradley
claire.bradley@uq.edu.au



RESEARCH PROJECTS



ARC CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE DYNAMICS OF LANGUAGE

Do you have ideas about communication and technology?

We are seeking people living with dementia and family members of people living with dementia to join a Lived Experience Expert Reference Group to guide a project at The University of Queensland. The Florence Project will explore the communication difficulties and needs of people with dementia and their families and investigate how we can work with people with dementia to develop new technologies to help.

The reference group would provide guidance and feedback throughout the project to ensure:

- the important issues are tackled,
- the project is designed so that people with dementia can participate without too much stress and
- that the end results are meaningful.

We are looking to be flexible as to how members of the reference group can be involved and members would be paid for their time.

Please contact Jacki Liddle on
j.liddle@uq.edu.au

or the Florence team on 07 3365 3988 if you are interested or have questions



RESEARCH PROJECTS

How do different thinking skills relate to language and emotion?

We are conducting a study to investigate a range of cognitive skills and how they relate to speech production and emotional expression.

We are seeking the help of:

Males and females aged 60-85 years with English as first language and no neurological history (e.g., brain tumour or stroke).

Why this research?

We are looking at how different aspects of cognition are related to language, and how certain parts of the brain control a range of thinking skills. For example, we will be looking at how the brain pays attention to information seen in the environment, or how a spoken or nonverbal response is produced, or how a plan or strategy is made when problem solving. The overall findings will potentially benefit patients with illnesses or conditions that affect the brain through improved assessment, more specific rehabilitation and a clearer understanding of various cognitive deficits.

What will I be asked to do?

Participating involves completing a 2-3 hour one-on-one session with the experimenter, where you will be asked to do several simple tasks that look at your thinking skills. This may involve responding verbally (i.e. speaking) or

nonverbally (e.g., pointing) to words, dots and pictures. The tasks are carried out with pen and paper or via computer. For example, you might be asked the name of an object, to talk about pictures, or respond to stimuli on computer screens by pressing a button. Each task will be explained to you beforehand with examples given. Testing sessions can be split across two days if needed.

There is no cost to participate and the study will take place at the St Lucia campus of The University of Queensland Brisbane (or at your home if suitable) at a time that is convenient for you.

If you would like to learn more or participate, please contact Amie Willis at amie.willis@uq.net.au, or on 0437 352 987.

I am happy to talk with you and answer any questions you may have. **Thank you for considering this invitation**



This study is being conducted by Honours Student Amie Willis, in association with PhD candidate Megan Barker, in collaboration with Dr Gail Robinson, a Clinical Neuropsychologist/Psychologist, and Dr Nicole Nelson (University of Queensland, School of Psychology) and has been approved by the University of Queensland Human Ethics Committee [2015000853].

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Could exercise help you learn a new language?

Volunteers required!

What is this study about?

Researchers at The University of Queensland School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences and School of Human Movement and Nutrition Sciences are seeking for volunteers to take part in a study investigating the effects of exercise on language learning in healthy older adults. Understanding how exercise affects language learning could eventually help patients with brain conditions such as stroke, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

Who can participate?

To participate in this study, you must be 60 years old and over and have English as your first language. You also need to fulfil specific eligibility criteria regarding your cognitive skills and fitness level, which can be assessed over the phone during your first contact with one of our research team member.

What does the study involve?

If you are eligible to participate, you will be asked to attend three visits within a period of two weeks at UQ's St Lucia campus in Brisbane. During the sessions, you will undergo a cognitive assessment, a fitness assessment, a single bout of either stretching, moderate-intensity cycling or high-intensity cycling, three blood samples and a short task to learn new words.

What will you receive?

Each participant will receive a free fitness assessment conducted by an accredited exercise physiologist as well as a financial compensation of \$120 for their time and travel. Complementary parking will also be provided.

Are you interested?

If you are interested and would like to know if you fulfil all the requirements in order to participate, please contact one of our research team member at ELLA@cai.uq.edu.au or call (07) 3346 7767.



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Interested in how the brain processes language?

The aim of this study is to investigate how stroke patients with communication impairment recover language function. We want to determine the best predictors of language improvement and treatment response in the critical phases of brain recovery.

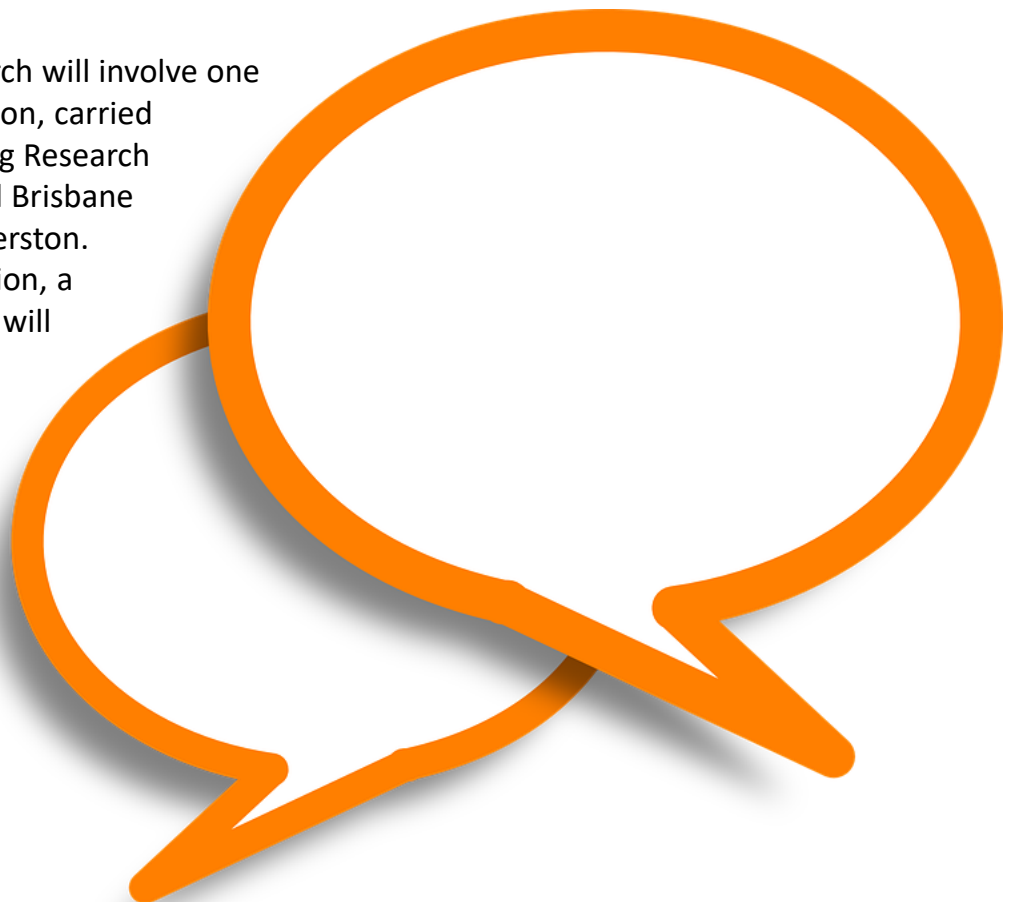
We are seeking healthy male and female participants in their late 50's and 60's who are right handed, have English as a primary language, no history of neurological disease, mental illness, or head trauma and have any metals present in the body which would be unsafe in an MRI scanner.

Participation in the research will involve one brain scanning (MRI) session, carried out at the Herston Imaging Research Facility (HIRF) at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Herston. Prior to the scanning session, a brief telephone interview will be conducted to screen for project suitability.

Suitable participants will then attend a scanning session at HIRF where they will be required to complete a functional MRI (fMRI) language task while in the scanner. The complete scanning session will last approximately one hour. Participants will be reimbursed \$30 for their time and effort.

If you live in Brisbane and would be interested in finding out more about the study (or know of anyone who may) please contact Natasha Simons or Caitlin Fraser on **3346 6110** or email **PAPAR@cai.uq.edu.au**

Your interest in this research is much appreciated!



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Tennis Elbow Study

Do you have pain on the outside of your elbow? Is it getting worse or not improving?

We are seeking volunteers with tennis elbow to participate in a study investigating differences in sensation between people with and without tennis elbow. The information obtained will contribute to our knowledge of some of the physiological processes occurring in tendon pain, and will help us to develop more effective treatments.

What does the study involve?

Completing an online survey: We would like you to answer some simple questions about your health and elbow pain to ascertain that you do not have any medical or health related matters that exclude you from the study. This will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

2 sessions of testing: The sessions will be 2 hours and 1 hour long and will be held at the University of Queensland, St Lucia Campus. The sessions will involve:

- **A physical assessment** to confirm that you do have tennis elbow
- **A battery of non-invasive sensory measurements:** Sensory measurements test either sensation (i.e. first perception of a stimulus, such as light pressure, stroking, pin prick) or pain thresholds (i.e., the first onset of pain with a stimulus, such as pressure, heat or cold).
- **Series of questionnaires**

Parking is provided as well as a \$20 gift card reimbursement.

For further information please email Viana Vuvan at v.vuvan@uq.edu.au

To register your interest for the study, please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TennisElbow>



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Adjusting to Retirement

We are looking for people who are going to retire

We are looking for participants who are willing to take part in a three-part research study looking at the role that social networks make to retirement adjustment and well-being.

If you are about to retire (or are thinking of retiring) within the next six months, please join our study!

- Participation takes about 30 minutes to complete the first online survey.
- Then we will contact you at retirement (second part) and a few months after

retirement (third part) to ask you to complete similar online surveys.

If you are interested, please visit the following

link: <http://www.groups4health.com/survey/>

Participation in the current research is completely voluntary. The purpose of this study is to track your experience in the transition to retirement. We are happy to provide you a summary of the current research on helping people better adjust to retirement.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Ben Lam

via ben.lam@uq.edu.au.

Maintaining Mental Abilities as We Age

If you're aged 55 and over, you may be eligible to participate in a University of Queensland brain science study.

Researchers are trialling a unique, non-invasive brain stimulation technique to improve attention and speed and accuracy in decision making.

Time: **2 sessions** of about **90min**

Location: UQ Centre for Clinical Research, **Herston**

Reimbursement: **\$50**

For more information or to participate, email uq.brainstim2@gmail.com



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Telephone-delivered support and advice for people with knee osteoarthritis (Telecare Study)

Knee osteoarthritis (OA) is a major problem in Australia, and helping people to self-manage the condition is an important aim of treatment. Unfortunately, not all Australians with knee osteoarthritis have easy access to health professionals who can advise them how to self-manage their knee osteoarthritis. One way to potentially improve access to healthcare is to provide self-management advice by qualified health professionals, who are specially trained in the management of arthritis, over the telephone. At the moment, it is not clear what is the most effective self-management advice to provide over the telephone.

What will the study involve?

This project will compare two different forms of telephone-delivered support and advice for people aged over 45 with painful knee OA to find out which one works best for managing arthritis symptoms, and why. Participants will be allocated to one of two groups. Both groups will receive support and advice for the self-management of their knee OA over the telephone for a period of six months. Advice will be delivered by qualified health professionals trained in best-practice management of arthritis.

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire at three different time-points throughout the study, at the very beginning, at the end of the intervention (6 months) and then again 12 months after you complete your baseline assessment. The data that we obtain from

these questionnaires may also be used to answer other research questions relevant to the management of persistent knee pain and knee osteoarthritis.

Who can participate?

We are looking for participants who are aged over 45 years with knee pain on most days who are able to commit approximately 12 months to the study and have access to a telephone. You cannot participate in this study if you: have had a knee replacement in your most painful knee, have had any knee surgery within the last 3 months or are on the waiting list for surgery, or if you suffer from Rheumatoid Arthritis, neurological or cardiovascular conditions.

What are the benefits of participating?

By participating in the study you may find you gain some improvement in pain and in your ability to carry out normal physical activities. You may gain increased knowledge about osteoarthritis and learn useful strategies for self-managing the condition. Importantly, you will be helping us find out what to recommend to others with knee OA in the future.

To register your interest for this study, please [click here](#) to access the online survey.

OR email the trial coordinator **Penny Campbell:** penelope.campbell@unimelb.edu.au



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Cognitive impairment in Parkinson's disease: fMRI study

We are conducting a research study examining cognitive impairment in Parkinson's disease. The main purpose of this study is to identify markers for early detection of mild cognitive impairment in Parkinson's disease and underlying brain mechanisms.

We are seeking for healthy individuals, aged 50 – 85 years, with English as a first language, fMRI eligible and no history of neurological disease, mental illness or brain injury.

We will assess each participant with comprehensive interviews and scanning of brain images using fMRI while participant perform specific tasks.

If you wish to participate, you will be invited to

- complete a questionnaire mailed to you
- complete an interview (2 to 3 hrs) conducted at the University of Queensland Centre for Clinical Research, Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital
- complete fMRI session where you lie on the magnetic imaging scanner which will measure the blood flow of the brain.

This fMRI session will be conducted at the brand-new imaging facility located at University of Queensland Centre for Clinical Research, Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital.

You will receive \$50 per visit for your time and travel for your appointment.

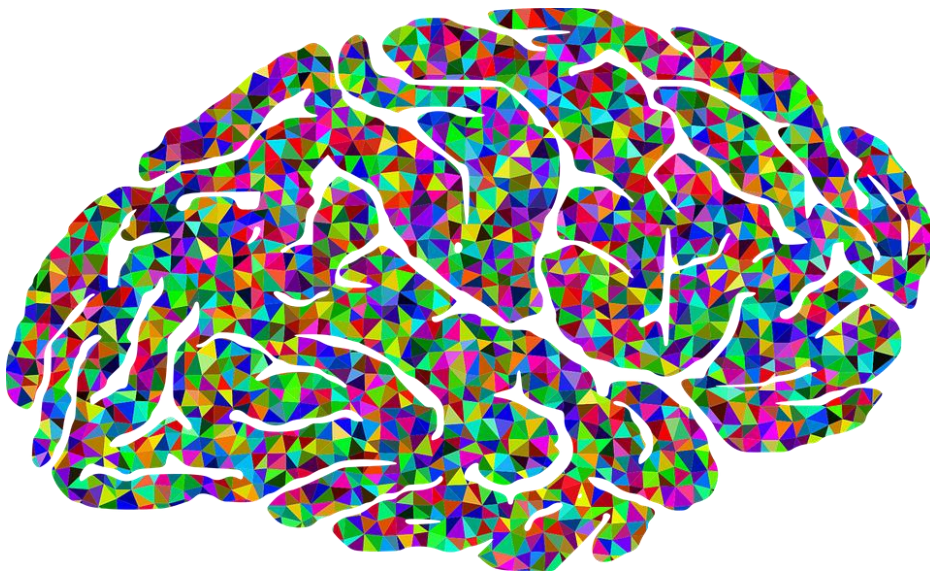
If you are interested in taking part in this study or if you want to know more about this study,

Please contact:

Julia Yang

Ph (07) 3346 5582 or

j.yang1@uq.edu.au



For additional information or to be added to the AMI mailing list and Listserve, please contact us via email at ami@uq.edu.au.

Alternatively you may contact Dr Nancy Pachana at School of Psychology, The University of Queensland ST LUCIA QLD 4072 or Tel. 07-3365-6832