



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Ageing Mind Initiative

Issue 24 May 2015 Newsletter
www.uq.edu.au/ami

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The May edition of the AMI Newsletter has seen some studies re-advertise and also showcases some exciting new research. Please take the time to look at all of the studies in this edition as even the re-advertised studies are still eagerly looking for participants.



We are excited to inform you of a number of events showcasing ageing related research. These events are for both researchers in the field but also for interested members of the community. For example the Queensland Dementia Training Study Centre has its next free event on "Family Carers of People with Dementia: Strength through Grief" (page 6).

Thank you again for your ongoing support of the AMI Newsletter. If you have any questions please email them through to: ami@uq.edu.au



ISSUE QUOTE:

"Nature gives you the face you have at twenty; it is up to you to merit the face you have at fifty." Coco Chanel (1983-1971)

Feature Story: Hear and Communicate Research Project

Are you finding it hard to communicate with a family member with dementia and hearing loss?

Many older adults experience dementia and hearing loss which can both impact communication with family and friends. Hearing aids and communication training can help people hear and communicate. However, hearing aids are sometimes not worn and communication training is not always offered. For people with dementia, it is important that we manage hearing loss to optimise communication function.

The aim of the proposed study is to evaluate a training program for caregivers of people with dementia and hearing loss. The training program will train caregivers in how they can support hearing, communication, and memory function in their family member. The program will be delivered by telehealth, straight into the participants' homes.

Can you help? We are seeking volunteers who are caring for a family member with dementia and hearing loss, and who are living independently in the community. People of all ages are invited to participate.

What is involved? The training program will run over 3 weeks. Each week, participants will be asked to 1) watch a short video (10-20 min) and complete a home activity; and 2) participate in a training session with a Speech Pathologist over a computer or iPad. You will be able to complete

the training program in your own home. Each week, caregivers will learn new strategies to support hearing aid use, memory, and communication. Before and after the training program, participants will be asked to complete some questionnaires. The questionnaires will ask about you and your family member's overall health and well-being; and your family member's hearing aid use, memory, and communication.

This study has the potential to improve communication between people with dementia and their caregivers. This, in turn, may prolong good psychosocial wellbeing for both. For more information on how you can be involved, please contact:

Eril McKinnon
Email: e.mckinnon@uq.edu.au
Ph: (07) 3346 7489



Research Updates

Healthy ageing through gardening

The importance of nature and gardens to human well-being is acknowledged in the Chinese proverb – if you want to be happy, plant a garden. Recognition of the healing properties of gardens dates back centuries, to ancient Egypt, when Court physicians prescribed a ‘walk in the palace garden’ to remedy mental fatigue or illness. Intuitively, gardeners recognise the well-being benefits of simply being in, or actively working in a garden.

Our study sampled 331 older adult gardeners with the aim of exploring the perceived effects of regular contact with nature through gardens. Participants reported numerous psychological, physiological and tangible positive benefits of gardening, and increased social benefits for those who belonged to gardening groups. Gardening provided these older adults with opportunities for nurturing the environment and the responsibility of caring for, and raising plants.

Older gardeners obtained identity and achievement benefits from their gardening – plant cuttings, flowers, fruit, herbs and vegetables, were noted as the tangible rewards for their efforts, which were kept or gifted to family and friends.

Having a garden to actively engage in provided participants with an outlet for purposeful activity. Importantly, for older adults actively engaged in the upkeep of their home garden, gardening provided opportunities for increased physical activity and exercise. Increased physical activity can prevent osteoporosis, reduce the risk of some cancers, Type 2 diabetes, depression and heart disease.

The importance of gardening was acknowledged as being much more than a leisure pursuit for these older adults, who saw it as being critical to their physical and psychological wellbeing.

~ Theresa Scott



News from the Community

Professor Nancy Pachana, co-founder of the Ageing Mind Initiative, took a trip in March of this year to the Torres Strait Islands, along with colleagues from James Cook University, as part of a project to collect information on the prevalence of dementia and related physical and mental health conditions, in the Torres Strait.

Age-related illness is a major concern for the Torres Strait community, with the population particularly vulnerable to age-related health conditions. Prof Pachana reported "The Torres Strait region has an increasingly ageing population and there is very real interest in how to cope with concerning behaviours in people with dementia," she said. "In general there is a demand for direction on how to improve and maintain health in later life."

As this region is so remote, it can be difficult to collect high quality data. Without this knowledge, it is difficult to design effective interventions and supports. Professor Pachana spoke on local Radio 4MW on Thursday Island about healthy ageing and recognizing the signs of dementia onset (see picture). She also discussed the cultural sensitivity of the Geriatric Anxiety Inventory for this population (page 7).



Upcoming Events

The Alzheimer's Association International Conference® (AAIC)

offers a comprehensive look at Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, including the most up-to-date basic science and the newest findings and practice for prevention and treatment.

Be there when the latest clinical trial results are announced and discover the newest research on neuroimaging and biomarkers in preclinical Alzheimer's disease; inflammation and vascular contributions to dementia; health disparities, epidemiology and risk factors;

novel methods and technology in assessment, diagnosis and care; genetic factors of Alzheimer's; vascular factors; tau and tau imaging; and neurodegeneration.

Sessions from the invited program of particular interest to researchers and physicians include:

- The Blood Brain Barrier In Alzheimer's Disease
- What Will It Take To End Alzheimer's?
- Models of Alzheimer's Disease: Insights From The Oldest Old
- Clinical And Research Utility Of Alzheimer Biomarkers



**Alzheimer's Association
International Conference®**
Washington, D.C., United States | July 18-23, 2015

Be a part of progress as it happens.



Upcoming Events



APS - Psychology and Ageing Interest Group (PAIG-Qld) has pleasure in welcoming Professor Sara Qualls to Brisbane on the 6th June for a full-day workshop. Registration details will be available in the near future, so please keep an eye out for upcoming details about this special event via the APS website <https://groups.psychology.org.au/paig/>.

Workshop outline

Aging families can be surprised when psychologists emphasize the stresses of caregiving, because across the lifespan, “caregiving is just what families do.” Yet caregivers experience increased burden and distress, care recipients often struggle to adapt, and the impact of the transition into caregiving family structures reverberates throughout the family. Psychologists can help families address the challenges and opportunities of caregiving while navigating the transitions.

Caregiver Family Therapy (CFT) offers a systemic approach to intervention that integrates many evidence based approaches within a structured model. Clinicians use six steps to tailor interventions that guide families through difficult decisions, changes in roles, and more effectiveness within the healthcare system. Clinical cases are used to illustrate the tools and strategies that help family systems adapt.

Sara Honn Qualls, Ph.D. is Kraemer Family Professor of Aging Studies, Professor of Psychology, and Director of the Gerontology Center at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs. Dr. Qualls’ clinical work with family caregivers for over 30 years led to development of Caregiver Family Therapy model that she uses to train students. She has published several books on mental health and aging, including Caregiver Family Therapy in 2013.

She served on an American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force on Caregiving that produced the APA Caregiver Briefcase online tool. For her service to the field, Dr. Qualls received the Award for the Advancement of Psychology and Aging from the APA Committee on Aging, and the Distinguished Mentorship Award from the Society of Clinical Geropsychology. At UCCS, she helped found a doctoral program and training clinic focused on geropsychology where she trains students in CFT, and she serves as Faculty Director of an integrated health and wellness services center.



Upcoming Events

QLD DTSC Guest Lecture

Family Carers of People with Dementia: Strength Through Grief?

Presented by Doctor Patricia Shuter Research Associate Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation (IHBI), Queensland University of Technology

Date: Tuesday 12 May 2015
Time: 5:00pm to 6:30pm (Registration from 4:30pm)
Venue: Seminar Room Q430, Institute for Health and Biomedical Innovation (IHBI)
QUT, Cnr 60 Musk Ave and Blamey St, Kelvin Grove, 4059
Cost: This free lecture is being provided by the QLD DTSC at no cost to participants under funding from the Australian Government. However registering to attend the event is essential (please see registration info).

Overview of Key Content: The impact of grief has not previously been widely considered as factor influencing health and well-being of family caregivers in its own right, and it has largely been subsumed under the rubric of burden and depression. This presentation will show how recent studies of grief have concluded that grief, as a separate entity, is a primary determinant of caregiver well-being and that interventions that directly target grief have the potential to improve outcomes for these caregivers.

About the Presenter: Dr Patricia Shuter works as a research associate in the Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation at Queensland University of Technology. Over the past 15 years Patricia has worked on research projects relating to dementia, aged care, and health promotion. Her PhD was the first longitudinal study to examine the role of grief throughout the dementia care-giving trajectory prior to and following the death of the person with dementia. This research has been the topic of journal articles and conference presentations.

Registration Brisbane Only: Registration for this lecture closes on Wednesday 6 May 12pm. Places are limited – to avoid disappointment please register by clicking on the below link:
<https://register.eventarc.com/29879/12May2015>

Due to large number of attendees anyone who hasn't registered may not be able to attend due to seating availability and health and safety legislation.

Registration Regional Videoconference Sites: Should you wish to attend the guest lecture at any of the regional videoconference sites, you must contact the person listed for that specific site listed on the attached flyer.

If you would like any further information about this event please contact the QLD DTSC on 07 3138 3822 or qlddtsc@qut.edu.au



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GERIATRIC ANXIETY INVENTORY (GAI)

INFORMATION SHEET



ASSESSING ANXIETY IN THE AGEING

ANXIETY IN THE AGEING

While everyone has experienced anxiety at one time or another, ongoing high levels of anxiety have the potential to impact on the overall health and wellbeing of older people. To instigate appropriate treatments for older adults with anxiety, improved assessment is needed. With this in mind, a team from The University of Queensland (UQ) has developed a diagnostic tool to enable easier and more accurate screening of anxiety in older people.

ABOUT THE GERIATRIC ANXIETY INVENTORY

The Geriatric Anxiety Inventory (GAI) is a 20-item self-report questionnaire covering topics related to anxiety symptoms. These typical symptoms include feelings of fearfulness, worry, physical symptoms of anxiety such as a nervous stomach and concerns about the impacts of worry and anxiety. There is also a shorter 5-item version of the GAI suitable for incorporation in a more general mental health assessment process.

The design of the questionnaire is straightforward and intentionally limits the response options to "agree" or "disagree", allowing the GAI to be easily administered by a range of health care professionals across various clinical settings. The GAI is also simple enough to be effectively administered over the telephone.

GET THE GAI

The GAI is available under license. Depending on what you want to use it for will determine the type of license you will need. Say you want to use it in your clinical practice, then a commercial use license is for you. You want to use the GAI in your academic teaching? Then you need a non-commercial use license.

Go to gai.net.au or scan the QR code.



CLIENTS

Here is just a sample of some of our happy GAI users from across the world:



Exceptional People. Exceptional Care.



Western Health

GAI INVENTORS



Professor
Nancy Pachana



Professor
Gerard Byrne

Current Ageing Research

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

Word selection in people with Parkinson's disease.

Do you ever have difficulty thinking of the right words to say? Perhaps you have experienced the frustration of feeling as though the words you need are on the tip of your tongue but you can't quite get them out?

Most adults have around 50 000 different words in their vocabulary - how is it that we are able to choose which ones we want to use so quickly when we speak? And how is this process altered when our brain is affected by disease?

Both healthy volunteers and individuals with Parkinson's disease are needed to participate in an fMRI (functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging) study. This research will investigate how language production is affected by Parkinson's disease.

We are seeking healthy older adults over the age of 55 years, who are right handed, have English as their first language, and have no history of neurological disease, mental illness or head trauma.

Participation will involve an assessment session at The University of Queensland's Centre for Clinical Research (based at the Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital, Herston). You will be asked to perform several thinking,

memory and language tasks. A separate fMRI brain scan at the Centre for Advanced Imaging, based at the University of Queensland St Lucia Campus, will also be required. During this session you will complete a language task while your brain is being scanned. Overall, participation in this project is expected to involve two separate sessions, lasting a total of up to 5 hours. Participants will be reimbursed \$30 for participation in the fMRI scan and transport reimbursement will be provided as required.

To learn more, please contact Megan Isaacs (07 3346 5579) or email m.isaacs@uq.edu.au



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Healthy Participants and Participants with Neck Pain needed for Balance Study.

Healthy Participants and Participants with Neck Pain needed for Balance Study. A PhD project at the University of Queensland is seeking both healthy participants and individuals with neck pain above the age of 60. We are investigating how neck pain may influence balance.

Participants will complete some questionnaires and perform various tests related to your neck function and balance. You will gain a greater appreciation of your physical function such as posture, strength, sensation and balance and feedback on your performance will be provided. The entire experiment will take 2 hours and may be conducted at your home or at the University of Queensland, Brisbane.

If you would like to participate in this study or would like further information, Please contact:

June Quek

Email: june.quek@uq.net.au

Phone: 0431 005 641.



Healthy Adults for Language Study

We are seeking participants between 60-80 years of age for a study investigating the effects of normal healthy ageing on language ability. The study will assess baseline levels of speech ability using various new and standard language tasks. For example, participants will be shown images and asked to describe them in their own words. The tasks will take just over an hour and will be conducted at the University of Queensland, Brisbane Australia.

For more information, please email Daniel: daniel.madden@uqconnect.edu.au
Ph 0449 665 547

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Assessing thinking skills using virtual reality technology

After stroke, people often have problems with their cognition (memory, problem solving, attention and language). Deficits in cognition can impact people's daily activities, quality of life, and their ability to return home. Thus, identifying these issues is important to maximise rehabilitation and improve the quality of life for stroke survivors.

We have developed a virtual reality cognitive test to find out whether this method of assessing cognition is better than the usual pen-and-paper tests. Part of this process involves determining the performance of **healthy adults** without a history of stroke, other neurological diseases, mental illness, alcohol abuse or head trauma.

Participation in the study will involve a 10 minute test, where memory, language, problems solving will be tested. Then, a more detailed assessment of thinking skills will be administered using the pen-and-paper methods (approximately 1 hour). A virtual reality cognitive test will be administered using an Android tablet (approximately 20 minutes). At the end of the session, you may be required to do a task in a kitchen setting (10 minutes). No prior computer skills are needed to participate.

You will only attend one session, but rest periods will be used during testing if needed. The research will take place at the University of Queensland Centre for Clinical Research (UQCCR), which is at the Royal Brisbane &

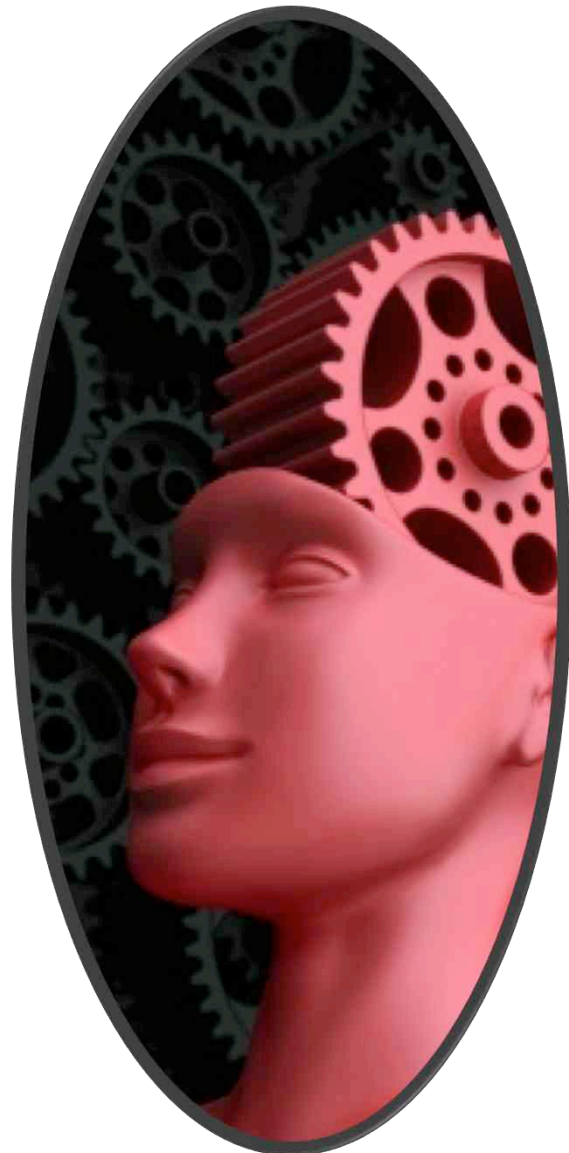
Women's Hospital, Brisbane. You will be reimbursed for parking costs at The Wilson Car Park.

If you have any further questions about this study or would be interested in participation please contact:

Kylie Wall

Email: k.wall1@uq.edu.au

Mobile: 0433039866



RESEARCH PROJECTS

Healthy Adults for Emotional Inhibition in Parkinson's Disease Study

We invite healthy adults to participate in our research and help us understand more about how emotions are controlled in Parkinson's disease (PD). This PD study seeks healthy adults to act as a comparison group for people with PD. If you are a right handed healthy adult over 50 years, who is free of PD, and have no history of any other brain conditions (e.g. Alzheimer's, dementia, stroke, etc.), brain injuries, brain surgery, depression, anxiety or related conditions, you are invited to participate in this PD research project.

Background and Aims of the Project

PD is a chronic and disabling brain disease affecting 80,000 Australians. People with PD experience problems with their movement such as uncontrollable tremor, stiffness, slowness and loss of balance. Other problems like emotional disturbances such as anxiety and depression are common in PD patients. It is estimated that up to 90% of patients experience anxiety and depression and these problems significantly reduce their quality of life. Emotional disturbances in PD are poorly identified and therefore are untreated. The purpose of this study is to understand how PD alters one's ability to identify relevant stimuli and inhibit irrelevant stimuli. In order to do this, we have developed a computer task that you will perform while we simultaneously record your brain waves using a non-invasive technique called electroencephalography or EEG.

What is required of you?

Completing a questionnaire in your own time

We would like you to complete a questionnaire. We will mail/email this questionnaire to you. This questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes of your time to complete.

Completing a brief assessment

Secondly, we will ask you to participate in a brief assessment that will take approximately 30 minutes. We will conduct this assessment at the University of Queensland Centre for Clinical Research located at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. During this assessment we will ask you questions about your cognition (eg: attention, memory), and mood. We would like to video record the interview for learning purposes and future reference, if you consent to do so.

On the same day of the assessment we would like you to also participate in an EEG in which you will perform a language task where we will record your brain waves. A netted cap which holds electrodes will be placed on your head to record brain waves. These electrodes only record electrical activity over the scalp and you will not feel any discomfort like electrical impulses. The language task involves looking at words on a computer screen and making decisions about them. It will approximately take 2 hours in total to complete this part of the project. We will reimburse you with \$30 to cover some of your travel or parking costs involved with assisting us with this research project.

For more information contact:

Ms Tiffany Au

Telephone (07) 33465577, Email:

t.au@uq.edu.au

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Can Brain Stimulation Improve Learning in Older Adults?

Even healthy older people frequently struggle to remember the names of people they have met for the first time or report problems remembering new information. We are currently conducting a study to find out if those age-associated problems can be alleviated using a new brain stimulation technique (transcranial Direct Current Stimulation, tDCS).

We are looking for **healthy older adults over 55 years of age**, who are right-handed, have English as a primary language, with no history of neurological diseases, mental illness or head trauma.

Participation in the study will involve an initial assessment during which memory, language and other functions will be tested (2-3 hours), **a series of word learning sessions held over 5 consecutive days** (approx. 1.5 hours each), and two additional follow-up sessions 1 week and 3 months after the learning period (2-3 hours/each).

During the learning sessions, we will attach 2 electrodes to your scalp using a rubber band and apply a very weak constant current to your head (tDCS). This technique is a safe procedure with no

known adverse side effects except for a mild tingling sensation or itching when the machine is turned on for about 30 seconds.

You will receive \$250 as reimbursement for your time and travel for the entire duration of the study. The research will take place at the UQ Centre for Clinical Research (UQCCR) which is at the Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital.

If you have any further questions about this study or would be interested in participation please contact:

Garon Perceval

email: g.perceval@uq.edu.au

phone 0421235651



RESEARCH PROJECTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!!!!

Internet-based **Hip **O**steo**A**rthritis **P**ain Exacerbation (iHOAP) Study**

Do you have **hip** osteoarthritis? Do you experience pain on most days?
If so, you are invited to take part in an **online** study, conducted by the Institute of Bone and Joint Research at the University of Sydney along with the Centre for Health, Exercise and Sports Medicine (CHESM) at the Department of Physiotherapy, University of Melbourne to help researchers determine the factors that influence your level of hip pain (e.g. weather, physical activity, foot-wear, hip injury, etc.).

You will need to complete **10 online** questionnaires over three months related to your hip pain, and will be compensated up to \$50 for completing the surveys.

To be eligible for the iHOAP study you must:

- be aged over 40 years,
- have at least one hip with pain on most days that fluctuates
- have an active email account and access to the internet
- have hip osteoarthritis diagnosed on an x-ray and have access to that x-ray

For further information and to register, go to www.ihoapstudy.info.
This study has been approved by the University of Sydney Ethics Committee, HREC No 2014/801.



iHOAP:
Internet based Hip OsteoArthritis
Pain exacerbation Study

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Resisting Age Stereotypes

Research has shown that when we are conscious of our age it can affect the way we think and do things – perhaps leading us to walk or think more slowly. Moreover, age stereotypes have been shown to have a negative impact on people's daily activities and quality of life, simply by affecting the way that people perceive themselves. The challenge is helping people resist these stereotypes and the present study investigates one way that may achieve this outcome.

Participation in this study will involve commenting and rating the content of age-related posters, completing several tests of mental ability (e.g. language, problem solving, memory), and answering questions about any

recent worries you may have experienced. The study will take approximately 45 minutes of your time. You can take part in the study at The University of Queensland (St Lucia Campus), Garden City Shopping Centre Library, or in any other location you feel would be convenient for you.

Your involvement in this study will be beneficial in helping us to develop interventions and strategies that enhance the mental resilience in older adults.

If you are 60 years or older and interested in hearing more about, or taking part in, the study, please get in touch with Soha Golshani.

Mobile: 0433 582 900,

Email: soha.golshani@uq.net.au

Challenging Age Stereotypes to Improve Cognitive Performance

Research has shown that seeing ourselves as older can actually affect the way we perform – affecting the way we think and the way we move. Resisting such stereotypes is a challenge and in this study we are exploring ways to overcome them.

Participation in the study will involve reading an article, completing some tasks of mental ability in areas of memory, language and concentration and answering a few questions relating to any worries you may have experienced recently. The whole process would take around 45 minutes to an hour. The study can be completed at the University of Queensland, St Lucia or in your home; whichever is most convenient for you. You need to attend only one session.

over the age of sixty can participate. Your involvement in this project would be of great benefit as the findings may contribute to the development of interventions to enhance mental resilience and mental skills in older adults. Being a University of Queensland approved study, all data will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time. A single hour of your valuable time would be greatly appreciated. If you have any further questions about this study or would be interested in participation please contact:

Rupa Kar

Email: rupa.kar@uqconnect.edu.au

Mobile: 0421016192



RESEARCH PROJECTS

What attitudes and key factors contribute to 'successful ageing'?

Research participants needed: Australian males and females aged 50 years and over.

The purpose of this project is to investigate the relationship between physical activity, perceived social connection and attitudes to ageing that promote successful ageing in Australian adults aged 50 years and older. Successful ageing is broadly defined as the physical, mental and social wellbeing in late adulthood. As much of world's population adapts to the living longer lives, gaining a greater understanding of what attitudes and key factors contribute to successful ageing is gathering increasing importance.

Participation in this research is voluntary and all information will remain securely anonymous. If you decide to take part you would be required to complete an online

survey that will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes of your time. A summary of the study outcomes will be available on request at the end of 2015.

The Principal Researchers for this study are Honours students at the University of Southern Queensland. The project has been approved by USQ's Human Ethics Committee: Code H15REA052

If you are interested in participating in this study please follow the link and complete the survey.

<https://psi.usq.edu.au/ols/?p=ATA15>

If you have any further queries please contact:
Michelle Harris: g1220582@uqmail.usq.edu.au
Debra Redley: u1017274@uqmail.usq.edu.au

Thank you for your contribution.



RESEARCH PROJECTS



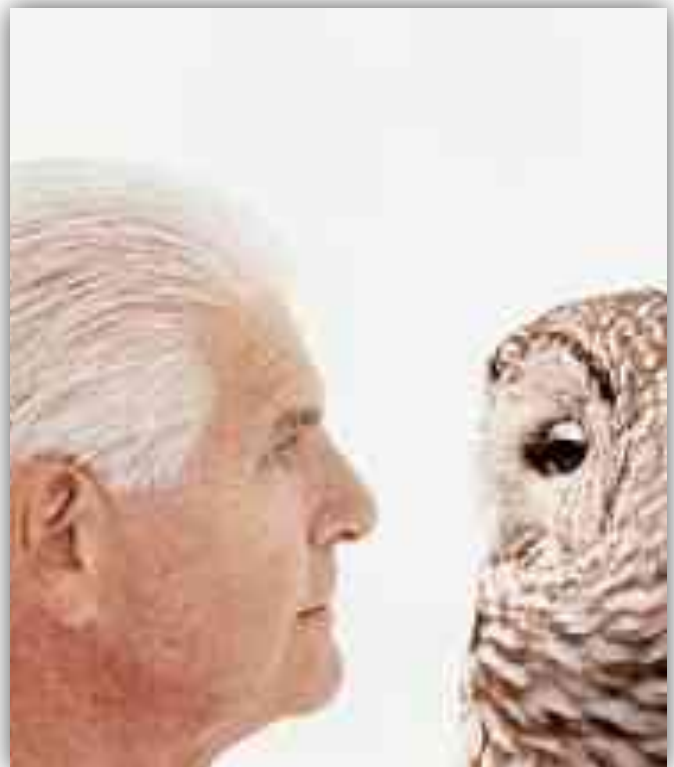
New Wisdom Project in 2015: The Getting of Wisdom

Pots of gold at the end of the rainbow, the brass ring on the merry-go-round, the getting of wisdom... all of these things are considered elusive, difficult to grasp, nigh impossible! However, history and research tells us that the getting of wisdom is actually attainable, not necessarily all of the time by all of the people, but there are those among us who have been known to be wise.

PhD candidate, Leander Mitchell (University of Queensland), is therefore seeking your assistance. She and her supervisor, Professor Nancy Pachana, are looking to learn more about wisdom, in particular, the measurement of wisdom.

If you are interested in helping to discover more about the elusive concept of wisdom and how it might be best measured, please contact Leander Mitchell for more information.

Leander Mitchell
The University of Queensland
St Lucia, Brisbane
Queensland
Tel.: (07) 3040 8464
Email: leander.mitchell@uqconnect.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