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monitor on psychology



ANNUAL GUIDE

15 Emerging Trends for 2021

What's ahead for psychologists and the field



Psychologists' research can help us bridge the gap in our divided nation. Page 3

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ANNUAL GUIDE

TRENDS REPORT 2021

This year's report on the emerging trends in psychology looks at how COVID-19 continues to change the way psychologists do research, deliver services, and train students and how psychologists' expertise is needed now more than ever. Psychologists are helping to improve lives everywhere by leveraging social media and apps, reaching out to underserved communities, leading efforts to end systemic racism and police brutality, and working to heal our fractured nation.

3 Healing the Political Divide

7 Social Media Is Increasing Impact

8 The Fight Against Racism Must Continue

12 Psychology Research Is Front and Center

14 Mental Health Apps Are Gaining Traction

15 Psychologists' Skills Are in Great Demand

17 The National Mental Health Crisis

19 The Great Distance Learning Experiment Continues

22 There's a New Push to Reach Underserved Communities

25 Psychology's Involvement in Policing

26 Psychologists Are Moving Up in Academia

30 COVID-19 Has Reshaped APA's Advocacy

32 Online Therapy Is Here to Stay

36 Advocacy Will Help Secure Expanded Telehealth Coverage

37 Employers Are Increasing Support for Mental Health

COVER: ILLUSTRATION BY JING JING TSONG/THE ISPOT



MICHAEL AUSTIN/THE ISPOT

2021 Trends Report

Psychologists offered solutions for many of the problems of 2020. What will this year hold?

In dozens of interviews, the *Monitor* asked psychologists across the spectrum of specialties what they saw as the emerging trends of 2021.

There is wide agreement that psychology holds the answers to many difficult issues we will face, including how to support employees struggling with burnout and work-life balance, garner acceptance of the COVID-19 vaccines, and educate students in a variety of formats.

Not all of the trends we found are a celebration of success. The psychology of racism and how to end it struggles to find a place in the national conversation. The push to reach underserved communities is missing a unified call to action. Physical distancing is stymieing progress for many psychological scientists.

One major question remains: Is psychology doing enough to share its knowledge with the world? Share your thoughts on what's ahead via email at tspiner@apa.org.

—Trent Spiner, Editor in Chief

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Healing the Political Divide

How did we become such a divided nation, and how can psychologists help us find common ground?

BY KIRK WALDROFF

With votes now tallied and, in some cases, electoral outcomes having been determined by extremely narrow margins and marked by legal challenges, there is no doubt that the political divide in the United States is a central trait of the country. And as this divide seems likely to continue to grow, for many of us it feels uncrossable. Yet psychological science suggests that it is both possible and imperative for members of our society to find common ground.

WHAT IS ACTUALLY GOING ON?

To decrease the political divide, we must understand the various factors that work to separate us. One thing we can do now as individuals is pause and consider our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and identify the psychological factors at play. The ability to place our own behaviors and the behaviors of others into a psychological framework can allow us to reflect on what we are experiencing and help us understand and shape our actions.

"Existential fear appears to be at the heart of what drives polarization," says Kirk Schneider, PhD, an adjunct faculty member at Saybrook University in California and Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York.

"One reason we tend to become fixated and polarized is because of individual and collective trauma that associates with a profound sense of insignificance," says Schneider. In this state, people may feel that they don't matter and fear "ultimately being wiped away or extinguished," he adds.

And if existential fear is indeed a root of polarization, our sometimes warped view of the other side can perpetuate it.

"Some of this divide is a matter of perception," says Tania Israel, PhD, a professor of counseling psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and author of *Beyond Your Bubble* (APA, 2020), a book about connecting across the political divide. "Most people are not on the extremes of any of these issues, but most of what we hear is from people who are more on the extremes."

In other words, people have a natural tendency to conceptualize everyone on the other side of the political spectrum as if they were the same as the leaders and spokespeople on that side.

"[Leaders] can be very effective at creating and strengthening 'mutual radicalization,'" says Fathali Moghaddam, PhD, using a term he coined to describe the growth of two opposing sides toward more and more extreme stances. Moghaddam, a professor and director of the Interdisciplinary Program in Cognitive Science at Georgetown University and author of the book *Mutual Radicalization* (APA, 2018), says that it's important to also recognize that certain forms of leadership foment and thrive on extreme polarization.

"If that kind of leadership wins out," says Moghaddam, "then you're going to have further mutual radicalization and further polarization and further irrationality in society," a point demonstrated in his book through case studies of extremists on the political left and right, including radical White nationalists and Islamic jihadis.

Knowing that the political divide we are experiencing may be due, in part, to our own feelings of fear and misperceptions about others and seeing that those thoughts and feelings can be inflamed by political leaders gives us the ability to better understand how we've gotten to where we are. But there is a lot of work to be done to bring people together. Behavioral research can provide insights into how to bridge the political divide.

APPROACHING THE DIVIDE

"Research indicates that the divisiveness will continue to grow if fear of the other and the wounds fueling that fear are not addressed," says Schneider.

One way to mitigate the divisiveness is to physically bring people together in safe, highly structured dialogue groups, as Schneider elaborates in his most recent book, *The Depolarizing of America: A Guidebook for Social Healing* (University Professors Press, 2020). Over the past 15 years, he has developed and participated in dialogue groups, and the outcomes are promising. He notes that post-workshop surveys among 1,800 participants in a dialogue organized by Braver Angels found that about 79% of the participants felt that they

FURTHER READING

Beyond your bubble: How to connect across the political divide
Israel, T. APA Books, 2020

The perception gap
More in Common, 2019

Mutual radicalization: How groups and nations drive each other to extremes
Moghaddam, F. APA Books, 2018

Intellectual humility in public discourse
Lynch, M. P., et al. University of Connecticut Humanities Institute, 2016



STEFAN BONESS/VISUM/REDUX



RICHARD JOPSON/CAMERA PRESS/REDUX

Protesters rallying against the travel ban from majority-Muslim countries (previous page) and a passionate Trump supporter from Florida (above) embody the growing divide in our nation.

better understood "the experiences, feelings, and beliefs of those on the other side," and that they, in turn, felt better understood. About 75% of participants felt less angry and less estranged toward those on the other side following the workshops, and about 80% felt that they were "more able to start constructive conversations" with them (Braver Angels, 2018).

There are also opportunities to reach out to the other side in our existing relationships.

Jeanne Safer, PhD, a psychotherapist for over 45 years, author of *I Love You, but I Hate Your Politics* (All Points Books, 2019), and host of a podcast by the same name, reminds us that things aren't as black-and-white as they may sometimes seem. "No matter a person's politics, there are gray areas in all sides of the spectrum," says Safer.

And she should understand this as well as anybody—she describes herself as a "die-hard liberal happily married to a stalwart conservative" for 40 years. While writing her book, Safer interviewed 50 politically mixed couples and discovered several helpful insights. Chiefly, she says, we must focus on our shared core values.

We must also let go of our tendencies to want to bring someone to our own side of the political divide. "People are married to the notion that they can change minds—this almost always isn't true," says Safer.

Furthermore, she reminds us that we don't always have to be drawn into an argument. "Sometimes it's perfectly fine to just walk away," says Safer.

In our personal relationships, Israel stresses to keep in mind our own sometimes faulty perceptions of the other side. "Don't make assumptions about someone based on their vote. Instead, I encourage people to be curious about what their vote meant to them. That's an opportunity to open up a conversation to learn more about people that

are important to us."

Israel urges that "curiosity and respect for someone else's views are the foundation" for bridging the political divide.

She also cautions that social media limits our ability to have effective conversations. On social media, says Israel, "people feel like they're having conversations with people, but they're not really interacting as full human beings." She recommends that we should be having political conversations "face-to-face rather than Facebook-to-Facebook."

Concentrating on face-to-face, mutually respectful, and curious conversations can work even in seemingly hopeless situations. Qasim Rashid, JD, a Democratic candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives in Virginia, experienced this firsthand during his campaign. While hosting a rally in late October 2020, protesters arrived to disrupt the event. Rather than ignoring them or asking them to leave, he invited the other side into conversation.

"Everyone I talked to had different reasons they were supporting my opposition, but we were able to have honest, open conversations," says Rashid. "That's given me a lot of hope that people on both sides are willing to listen, even in this time of extreme polarization."

Moghaddam's work on the psychological foundations of democracy and dictatorship emphasizes the need for conversations like the one at Rashid's rally. He urges going "beyond name-calling and trying to understand the other side without being disdainful and oppressive against the other side."

"And this goes for both sides," he stresses. "It's a matter of Democrats and Republicans really looking at one another and recognizing that we have superordinate goals that need to be achieved—goals that both sides desire but neither side can achieve without the active cooperation of the other side."

Moghaddam also reminds us that conducting mutually respectful conversations across the divide becomes much easier under leadership that "identifies superordinate goals in a cooperative way."

HOW CAN PSYCHOLOGISTS HELP?

Psychologists, whether scientists, clinicians, educators, or otherwise, have a particular expertise they can apply to bridging the political divide.

One way psychologists can reach people directly is by working with organizations that facilitate research and dialogue, such as Braver Angels and the



GAYATRI MALHOTRA/UNSPLASH

National Institute for Civil Discourse. Many of these groups offer supportive, highly structured programming aimed at helping people learn about and understand one another as opposed to persuading or imposing one's views on the other side.

This step alone is psychosocially valuable because it promotes discovery and an enlarged capacity for human civility. But it also tends to be a cornerstone for enhancing the likelihood of conflicting parties to find common ground, says Schneider. "This is because it creates conditions for empathy and resonance between the parties that likely would not even be given a chance in the absence of such supportive and structured formats."

But not every American will be willing to participate in a dialogue group, especially those on the fringes of the political spectrum. To achieve even greater public impact, psychologists must look to systemic changes.

Public education, for example, is a way psychologists may contribute, says Moghaddam. "Because mutual radicalization is mostly an irrational and emotional collective process, individuals are not necessarily aware of what is pushing them to more and more extreme positions," he says, and being cognizant of the underpinnings of emotions and behavior can go a long way toward effecting change on an individual level.

Scientists must strive to share their research as broadly as possible. And they don't have to do it alone. Organizations like More in Common work to conduct research and communicate findings to audiences where they can have the greatest impact.

Advocacy is essential as well. Other countries that have made strides in addressing the political divide relied heavily on government-led reconciliation efforts. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, for example, has been fundamental in addressing disparities and conflict around apartheid.

Were the United States to consider similar, government-backed efforts, psychologists must be part of the call to do so. And the behavioral expertise of the field would be central to success.

"The collective mental health of the nation is at risk," says Moghaddam. "Just as we should rely on epidemiological science to tell us when there is a vaccine ready for mass use, we have to rely on psychological science to guide us through these mental health issues."

And following an election that, for many, felt like the most polarized of a lifetime, this piece seems critical. "This is what our profession is all about," says Moghaddam. ■

2

Social Media Is Increasing Impact

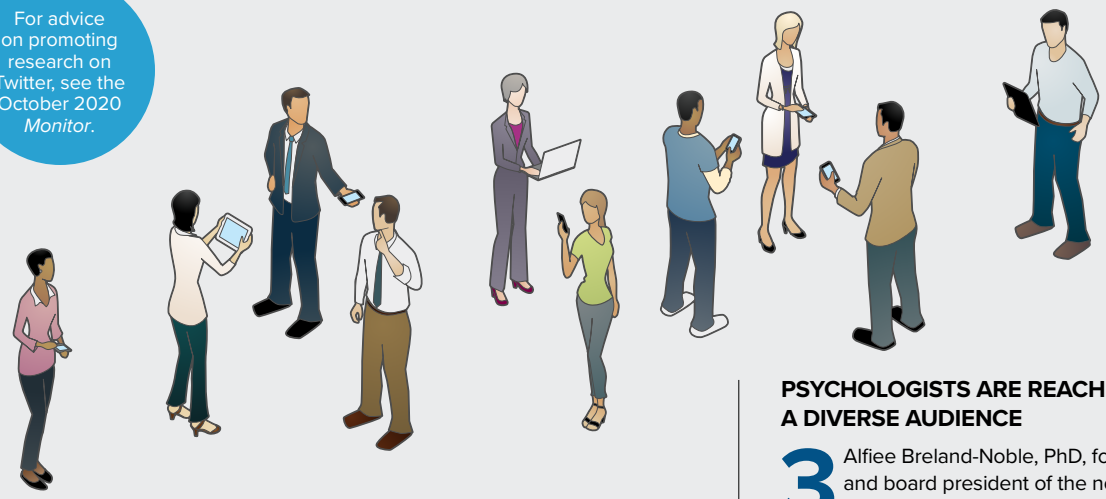
3 ways psychologists are broadening their reach via social platforms

BY ZARA ABRAMS

RESEARCHERS ARE RELEASING RESULTS EARLIER

1 Psychologists are increasingly sharing work that's still in progress, especially on Twitter, says Jay Van Bavel, PhD, an associate professor of psychology and neural sciences at New York University. ¶ "That comes with a risk, because many of these studies haven't been vetted by peer review," he says. "On the other hand, there's **a greater urgency to share actionable information,** especially during a global pandemic." ¶ Building on the field's leadership in the open science movement, **psychologists are now leveraging social media to share data sets** and preliminary findings with other scientists, policymakers, and the general public. Early insights during the pandemic have helped promote mask-wearing, combat what Van Bavel calls "the avalanche of false information" about the coronavirus, and address the mental health challenges associated with social isolation.

For advice on promoting research on Twitter, see the October 2020 *Monitor*.



MATHISWORKS/GETTY IMAGES

CLINICIANS ARE SHARING MORE MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE

2 "When states started to issue lockdown orders, we saw a surge in people seeking mental health resources on social media," says Sam Chlebowski, vice president of sales and marketing at Brighter Vision, a marketing firm for therapists. ¶ Clinical psychologists, including Janine Kreft, PsyD, of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, **launched Instagram and TikTok accounts focused on psychoeducation,** and those already on social media started posting advice for navigating quarantine. Kreft says videos are "digestible, fun, and accessible to so many more people" than long blocks of text. Much of her content involves communication role-play as well as tips for coping with anxiety. ¶ As the pandemic unfolds, clinicians have also been **sharing relevant research and practical tips for juggling remote work and childcare and helping patients use telehealth,** Chlebowski says. ¶ Through these public interactions, "psychologists are being more vulnerable and human," says Kevin Nadal, PhD, a professor of psychology at the City University of New York who has written about both his personal experiences and his academic research on racism and homophobia via Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. That has had a humanizing effect that has helped normalize seeking therapy, he adds.

PSYCHOLOGISTS ARE REACHING A DIVERSE AUDIENCE

3 Alfiee Breland-Noble, PhD, founder and board president of the nonprofit AAKOMA Project, uses Instagram Live, Facebook Live, and Twitter chats to share wellness strategies and spark conversations about mental health with marginalized groups, including **LGBTQ youth and families of color.** ¶ "For the communities that I serve, I find I can spread the word faster and further when I use social media," she says. ¶ Breland-Noble also hosts scientists, activists, and other experts on her channels, which also include podcasts and YouTube. She features diverse voices—such as meditation and yoga teachers of color during a weekly series on mindfulness. ¶ **"We can use social media as a way of 'giving psychology away'** so that it isn't something that only an elite educated group gets, but something that everyone has access to," says Nadal.

3

The Fight Against Racism Must Continue

Psychologists are looking inward to dismantle racism within the field

BY ZARA ABRAMS



JAMES STEINBERG/THE ISPOT

In the midst of America's racial reckoning, psychologists are playing a key role in rethinking bias, policing, and other issues. But psychologists say the field itself has its own systemic injustices to dismantle.

Steven O. Roberts, PhD, an assistant professor of psychology at Stanford University, and colleagues, for instance, reviewed nearly five decades of psychological research and found substantial racial inequality in publishing, research he hopes gains more traction as the field takes a closer look. Others in the field are shedding light on unfair practices in the hiring, training, and retention of faculty and practitioners of color. In some cases, racial inequities are even being addressed more broadly at the systemic level.

"Many disciplines are looking inward right now, and we are no exception," says Roberts. "The idea is to review psychology, but not for the sake of tearing it down—for the sake of making it more equitable and inclusive."

Racial- and ethnic-minority psychologists say these efforts are promising but that there's a long way to go—and the discipline will need to face its shortcomings head-on, including governance and policies of organizations such as APA.

"Psychologists are human beings. We have implicit biases that operate outside of our awareness," says Art Blume, PhD, a professor of psychology at Washington State University and president of APA's Div. 45 (Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity, and Race). "An honest approach to anti-racism involves embracing the limits of our objectivity—in our science, practice, and pedagogy."

INCREASING DIVERSITY IN RESEARCH

Racial disparities in psychological research, including who receives funding from the National Institutes of Health and others, are starting to make headlines. But those findings aren't new. In 1983, James Jones, PhD, now a professor emeritus of psychological and brain sciences and Africana studies at the University of Delaware, was already documenting psychology's lack of focus on people of color (Jones, J. M., "The concept of race in the history of social psychology," 1983).

"Scholars of color have been talking about this for decades, but people were not listening," Roberts says.

Now, Roberts and his team have used a new approach—one that explores how the identities of editors, authors, and participants are all systematically connected. Across social, developmental, and cognitive psychology, they found that most editors and authors are White, and that these editors published fewer publications on race and racism, as well as publications with fewer participants of color (*Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 2020).

"In psychology, almost everything we know is about White people, but Whites don't represent the entirety of human capacity," says Jones.

Roberts and his colleagues recommend that journals employ racially diverse editors and reviewers and establish task forces to regularly review diversity among authors and samples. In response, the Society for Research in Child Development is revamping its peer-review process to consider racial diversity among participants as a review criterion. Roberts hopes other associations and journals will follow suit.

Even the titles of psychological research studies show bias that favors White American samples. In a study of more than 5,000 articles, Bobby Cheon, PhD, an assistant professor in the Division of Psychology at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, and colleagues found that article titles were much more likely to mention race, ethnicity, and nationality when study samples were not White American (*Social Psychological and Personality Science*, Vol. 11, No. 7, 2020). The implication is that studies of White Americans are often seen as representing normative or standard human behavior, while research on other groups produces findings that may be perceived as less generalizable or culturally constrained.

Cheon says journals should mandate that authors specify limitations to generalizing their findings in the body of a paper, whether they're studying White American college students or people from Singapore. Journals should also highlight or incentivize studies that include racially and ethnically diverse samples to help encourage psychologists to recruit such populations.

"Our current incentive structure prioritizes research that people perceive to have a wider impact or be more generalizable, which may undermine efforts to increase equity and diversity among participants," he says.

ANTI-RACISM AND HEALING FOR ACADEMICS

While some psychologists are working to reform research and publishing, others are applying their research and skills toward education and healing.

"The movement for Black lives became so intense this year that we couldn't escape from it," says Della Mosley, PhD, an assistant professor of counseling psychology at the University of Florida (UF). "We asked ourselves: Is doing research really the best use of our abilities as psychologists right now? Is moving through academia like it's business as usual even ethical while this war on Black bodies and spirits is taking place?"

Together with a doctoral student, Pearis Bellamy, Mosley launched Academics for Black Survival and Wellness, an anti-racism and racial-healing movement grounded in Black feminist principles and Mosley's theory, Critical Consciousness of Anti-Black Racism (*Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 2020). More than 15,000 academics, hailing from psychology, medicine, the fine arts, and other disciplines, attended the group's workshops last summer.

The initiative offers healing for Black academics and education for their non-Black colleagues. Mosley and her team host a series of wellness activities for Black students and faculty, including self-care, financial planning, and mentorship. They also deliver extensive anti-racism training to non-Black academics, starting with an introduction to

FURTHER READING

The fallacy of a raceless Latinidad: Action guidelines for centering Blackness in Latinx psychology
Adames, H. Y., et al.
Journal of Latinx Psychology, 2020

Eliminating race-based mental health disparities: Promoting equity and culturally responsive care across settings
Williams, M. T., et al. (Eds.)
Context Press, 2019

Decolonizing psychological science: Introduction to the special thematic section
Adams, G., et al.
Journal of Social and Political Psychology, 2015



VLADIMIR VLADIMIROV/GETTY IMAGES

anti-Black racism, power analytics, and racial trauma. Other lessons cover the history of racism in the United States and the activist ally role that non-Black academics can play. About 2,000 participants have joined "accountability groups," typically 10 members or fewer, to extend their anti-racism work after formal training ends, Bellamy says. For example, a non-Black accountability group at UF is helping amplify messages from the school's Black Affairs program across the student body.

CHANGE FROM THE TOP DOWN

Universities are also increasingly prioritizing racial diversity in recruitment and admissions—and slowly, the makeup of psychology programs is changing. In 2019, 38% of psychology graduate students identified as people of color, up from 29% in 2009—and the share of tenured faculty and academic leaders of color is increasing ("The state of the psychology training pipeline and workforce," APA, 2018; "Racial/ethnic minority representation among the academic psychology workforce continues to increase," APA, 2020).

But more work is needed to address the troubling leaky pipeline that results in dwindling numbers of psychologists of color retained at the doctoral and tenure-track levels, says Monnica Williams, PhD, ABPP, a clinical psychologist and the Canada research chair for mental health disparities at the University of Ottawa. Though 31% of psychology doctoral degrees are awarded to racial and ethnic minorities, only 18% of associate professors and 12% of full professors in psychology departments identify as people of color ("Psychology faculty salaries," APA Center for Workforce Studies, 2018–2019).

In 2019, 38% of psychology graduate students identified as people of color, up from 29% in 2009.

Departments should create a formal retention plan and assign mentors to meet regularly with academics of color to discuss and address race-related issues, Williams says. Having more than one person of color among

the faculty in a department is also key for creating a culture of support and diversity.

She also points to a need to better prepare clinicians of color for race-related challenges they may face—such as an encounter with a patient who holds racist views—which has been tougher to address because clinical practice tends to be more diffuse and individualized than academia.

"There's very little specific training, literature, or even thought on how to prepare therapists of color in all professional aspects," Williams says.

Clinicians of color should have access to mentors from their own racial or ethnic group, she says, which can aid in navigating professional hurdles.

At the systemic level, change remains a challenge—and many say change within APA needs to move faster. Williams calls for stricter accreditation rules that require psychology programs to employ tenure-track faculty of color and recruit and retain racial- and ethnic-minority students. Currently, APA-accredited programs must show systematic efforts to attract and retain students and faculty of color, but programs are not penalized for falling short because of factors that may not be under their control.

Other proposed solutions involve elevating the role of ethnic-minority psychological associations (EMPAs) within APA. Theopia Jackson, PhD, president of the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi), says each EMPA should have a decision-making role at APA, for instance by adding seats to the Council of Representatives—a change that would mean bylaws need to be amended. That requires a two-thirds consenting vote of membership, but members have rejected the measure in three separate votes in the past. It was voted on a fourth time in December 2020 with strong support from APA governance; the vote was not decided before *Monitor* press time.



Protestors across the country marched the streets in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.

"In psychology, almost everything we know is about White people, but Whites don't represent the entirety of human capacity."

JAMES JONES, PHD, PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BRAIN SCIENCES AND AFRICANA STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

"APA should leverage its power and influence to privilege the voices of [EMPAs] that are dedicated to promoting cultural ways of being," Jackson says. For example, when addressing the needs of any ethnic group, APA should strategically include, consult, or defer to the science and scholarship of the respective ethnic psychological association.

Meanwhile, some institutional reforms gained momentum in 2020. Blume launched Div. 45's Warrior's Path Task Force, charged with identifying barriers in APA's governance, bylaws, and association rules that favor the status quo and harm psychologists of color.

Other institutions in the psychology field are facing their own racial reckoning. The National Latinx Psychological Association (NLPA) is working to hire a consultant on the Afro-Latinx experience who can help the organization center Blackness in its work. Changes will involve improving representation on the NLPA's leadership council, updating the organization's mission statement, and producing a special issue of the *Journal of Latinx Psychology* that will feature Afro-Latinx research.

"Social justice is so key to NLPA's mission that we have to change the way our systems work," says Andrea Romero, PhD, president of NLPA and vice provost for faculty affairs at the University of Arizona. "And we have to set it up in a way that will sustain anti-racist work in the future."

"Issues of systemic racism have become more salient than ever before," says Jones. "I believe that because those messages have become so potent in our minds and our society, psychologists will continue pressing to find ways to address it." ■

JULIAN WAN/UNSPLASH

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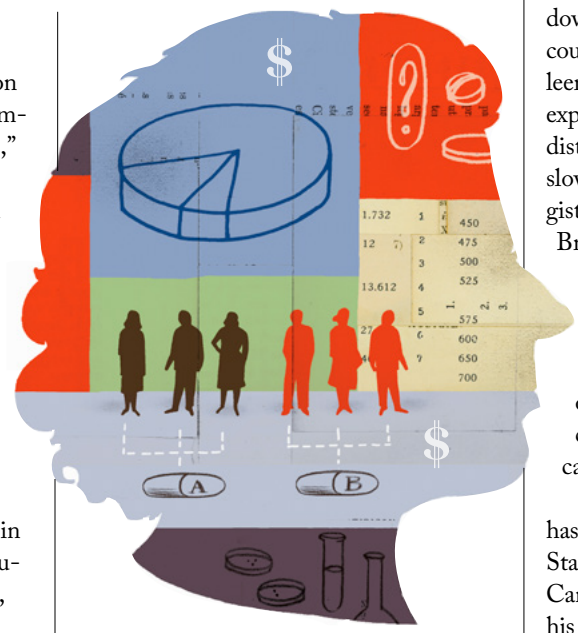
Psychology Research Is Front and Center

Though the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted research, it has also highlighted the importance of psychology

BY STEPHANIE PAPPAS

Physical distancing requirements around the COVID-19 pandemic have created undeniable difficulties for many psychology research projects that relied on in-person interactions, forcing academics to be flexible and creative. ¶ In response, many researchers are moving as much work as possible online. Meanwhile, funding agencies are supporting accommodations on existing grants where possible and will likely be turning an eye toward research that could help prepare for the next pandemic.

"The pandemic has illustrated the importance of social and behavioral research, especially since our mitigation strategies and their impacts are predominately social and behavioral in nature," says William Riley, PhD, the director of the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). "I believe it also increases the burden on social and behavioral scientists applying for grant funding to make a strong case for the public health impact of their research moving forward."



LEIGH WELLS/IKON IMAGES

The impacts of the pandemic on research have varied widely, even within labs. At the Rice University psychoneuroimmunology lab of Chris Fagundes, PhD, some graduate students were able to pivot immediately to analyzing existing data from home. Others who were in the process of conducting in-person experiments will see their degrees delayed by at least six months to a year. The biggest challenge has been avoiding laying off lab staff whose salaries are paid by stalled grants, Fagundes says. Fortunately, his lab's emphasis on stress and the immune system made it possible to apply for supplemental grants through NIH to focus on pandemic-related outcomes. It's a strategy that can both benefit lab employees and inform public health.

Post-lockdown, some researchers have been able to resume in-person activities with precautions and protective equipment. Others remain in limbo. Many scientists who work with rodents had to euthanize animals during lockdowns because animal care technicians could not work. Some of these scientists, leery of future shutdowns, have delayed expanding their colonies again. Socially distanced in-person research also moves slowly, says BJ Casey, PhD, a psychologist and collaborator on the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development™ study at Yale University. Many families are reluctant to come in for brain imaging during a pandemic, Casey says. "All of us were far too optimistic that once we began to scan children again, we would be able to catch up fairly rapidly," she says.

The sudden shift to virtual activities has occasionally been positive. At Penn State University, psychologist Daryl Cameron, PhD, was forced to move his "Expanding Empathy" symposia online, but he was pleasantly surprised that the change allowed panelists to participate in a conversation about empathy and COVID-19. "Getting everyone together like that for the panel webinar wouldn't have happened in the



While future federal funding depends on the decisions of a new Congress, NSF and NIH officials do say that the pandemic has brought the importance of psychology research to the forefront.

in-person iteration of events," Cameron says.

Families in Casey's study have appreciated doing psychological assessments online rather than having to travel to her lab. Other researchers report more time to prepare papers for publication, a freedom reflected in the 25% increase in submissions to APA journals between January and September 2020 compared with January to September 2019. Data in some fields, however, suggests a gender gap in submissions, with women submitting fewer papers for publication (Kibbe, M. R., *JAMA Surgery*, Vol. 155, No. 9, 2020). APA is working to analyze data on submissions by gender to its journals, but the data were not available at press time.

Some researchers have been able to resume in-person activities with precautions and protocols in place.

Funding agencies have made efforts to support researchers during the pandemic upheaval. Like NIH, the National Science Foundation (NSF) has also offered COVID-19 opportunities: Its Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) had funded 240 RAPID Awards for a total of $32.4 million as of October 2020. That same month, NIH announced the Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics Underserved Populations (RADx-UP) initiative, a $500 million program aimed at improving COVID-19 testing in vulnerable populations. Awardees include psychologists such as Leslie Leve, PhD, of the University of Oregon, whose project will implement an outreach and testing program for Oregon's Latinx community, and Mary Cwik, PhD, a clinical psychologist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, whose project will test interventions to expand testing access to American Indian communities.

While future federal funding depends on the decisions of a new Congress, NSF and NIH officials do say that the pandemic has brought the importance of psychology research to the forefront.

"If you are doing psychology research and you have the ability to tie your research agenda to the amazing public impact you could have at a moment like this, this agency would be receptive to those proposals," says Arthur Lupia, PhD, the head of SBE. "We're living in a society that desperately needs that kind of insight." ■

● **Funding resources** For information on federal funding opportunities and conducting research during COVID-19, visit APA's website at www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/science-research.

UCHAR/GETTY IMAGES

5

Mental Health Apps Are Gaining Traction

Self-help apps are leading more people to therapy rather than replacing it, psychologists say

BY REBECCA A. CLAY

The COVID-19 pandemic could accelerate the development of mental health apps. That's good news for psychology because these types of apps can lead users to therapy and enhance treatment, say psychologists. ¶ Mental health–related self-help apps now number somewhere between 10,000 and 20,000, estimates Stephen Schueller, PhD, executive director of One Mind PsyberGuide, a nonprofit organization offering accurate, unbiased information about such apps. The number can be hard to track as new apps are constantly being developed and older ones are taken off the market, says Schueller. "A lot of the growth is in products that are developed by individuals or small teams without any real intention or plan for long-term support," he says. The number of apps with robust business plans and teams to back them—like Calm and Happify, or what Schueller calls "upper-tier products"—is increasing more slowly.

Apps could spur people's interest in working with a psychologist, says Schueller. "Apps might be a gateway to subsequent care," he says. "Someone might download a CBT app, realize it's helpful, and then find a therapist to help more."

And while some psychologists may worry that apps could replace therapy, that's not happening, says C. Vaile Wright, PhD, senior director for health care innovation at APA, citing a study that found that just two apps—Headspace and Calm—account for 90% of active users (Wasil, A. R., et al., *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 2020). "I really don't think



CALVIN DEXTER/GETTY IMAGES

people are turning to mindfulness apps as a replacement for therapy," says Wright. Once people are in therapy, apps can help psychologists enhance patients' progress. "A lot of work that happens in therapy actually happens outside the therapy office," says Wright. "Apps can facilitate that work." Apps can also help patients address co-occurring problems like insomnia or serve as booster sessions once therapy has ended.

There are some potential downsides, however. "Anyone can put an app up on the various app stores, so a lot of these are probably not that helpful," says David C. Mohr, PhD, who directs the Center for Behavioral Intervention Technologies at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University. (While the Food and Drug Administration regulates the small number of so-called "digital therapeutics" that aim to provide actual treatment, it doesn't regulate self-help apps in the wellness space.) Ineffective apps could turn people off the idea of seeking therapy or disrupt a treatment plan a psychologist has already laid out, says Mohr. "And a few apps can be just plain dangerous," adds Mohr, citing a study that found the content of some apps for bipolar disorder inconsistent with established treatment practice (Nicholas, J., et al., *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 2015).

To ensure that self-help apps are a boon to psychologists and their patients going forward, clinicians need to get more involved, says Wright. "It's important that psychologists serve as subject matter experts and consultants to companies developing apps," she says. "Psychologists also need to be leaders in the regulatory field as well, since it's a murky space right now."

Marlene M. Maheu, PhD, executive director of the Telebehavioral Health Institute, agrees. "We're either going to be part of the technological revolution—and help create it and direct it with proper values—or we're going to be left behind," she says. ■

6

Psychologists' Skills Are in Great Demand

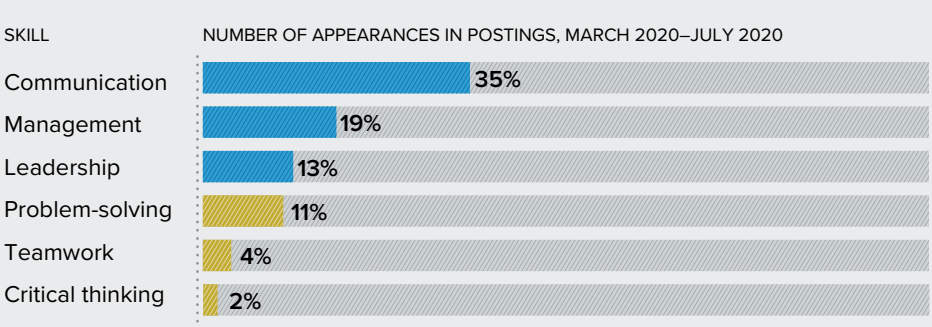
The flexibility a psychology education provides is critical in these times of uncertainty

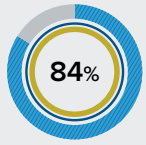
BY STEPHANIE PAPPAS AND KAREN STAMM, PhD

The coronavirus pandemic has destabilized the economy and injected uncertainty into educational and career plans for many people. But the data suggest that the versatility and human skills bestowed by a psychology education are a boon in the face of instability: Psychology doctorate holders work in 61 different occupational categories. A PhD doctorate in psychology also teaches communication, management, and leadership, the top skills appearing in job ads between March and July 2020. Alongside problem-solving, teamwork, and critical thinking, these "resilient skills" appeared in 84% of employment ads in the early phases of the pandemic, according to a recent report from the labor analytics firm Emsi. The versality is also geographical, with data indicating a great need for psychologists across the United States, especially in the Mountain West and Midwest. ■

Human Skills Are a Boon for Job Seekers

Despite the economic losses created by COVID-19, certain skills have remained in high demand. These skills, dubbed "resilient" by Emsi, are predominately human skills that are part and parcel of psychology education. Emsi analyzed requests for these skills in new job postings during the pandemic.[1]





Job postings with at least one of these six human skills



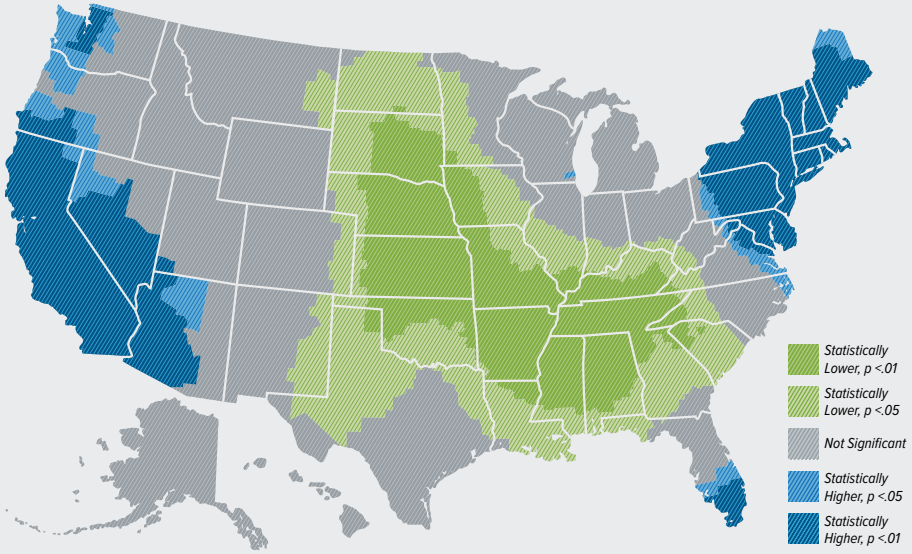
Postings with two or more of these six human skills

SOURCES: [1]EMSI, RESILIENT SKILLS REPORT, 2020. [2]2018 NATIONAL CENTER FOR THE ANALYSIS OF HEALTHCARE DATA ENHANCED STATE LICENSURE DATA. [3]SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, 2016–18 NATIONAL SURVEY OF DRUG USE AND HEALTH. [4]NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION 2017 NATIONAL SURVEY OF COLLEGE GRADUATES, AS REPORTED BY APA AT WWW.APA.ORG/WORKFORCE/DATA-TOOLS/CAREERS-PSYCHOLOGY. FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE APA CENTER FOR WORKFORCE STUDIES DATA TOOLS AT WWW.APA.ORG/WORKFORCE/DATA-TOOLS/INDEX.

INFOGRAPHICS: MARY BETH RAMSEY

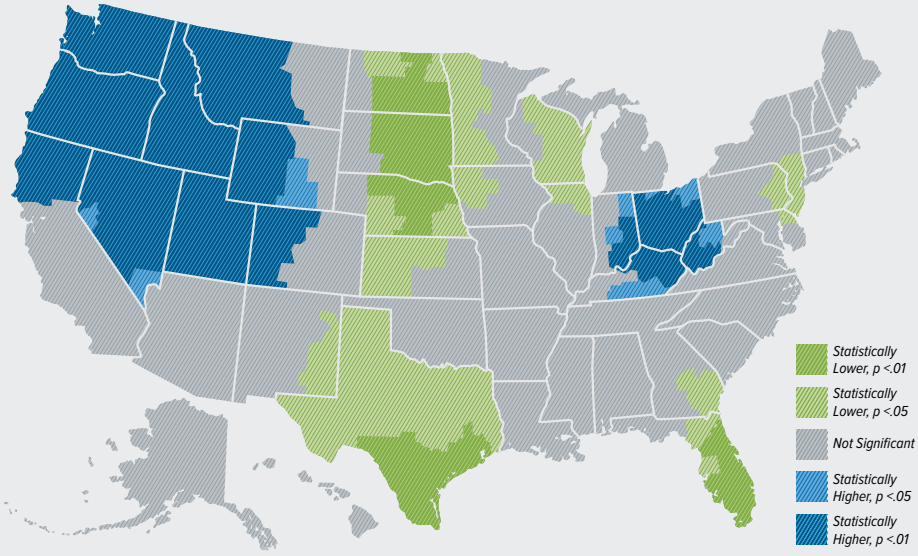
MAPPING THE U.S.

Where Psychologists Are Needed Most



Distribution of Licensed Psychologists

Psychologists have broad geographical options in the job market—they are needed wherever people live. This uneven concentration of licensed psychologists reveals where practicing psychologists are underrepresented across the United States.[2]



Populations With Mental Illness

The burden of mental illness is high but the concentration of licensed psychologists is low in all or parts of Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.[3]

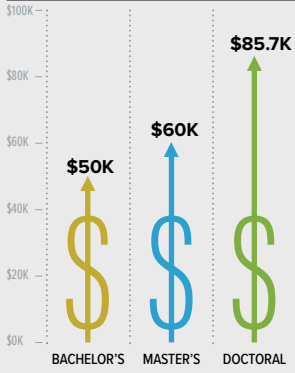


Top 10 Occupational Categories for Psychology Doctorates

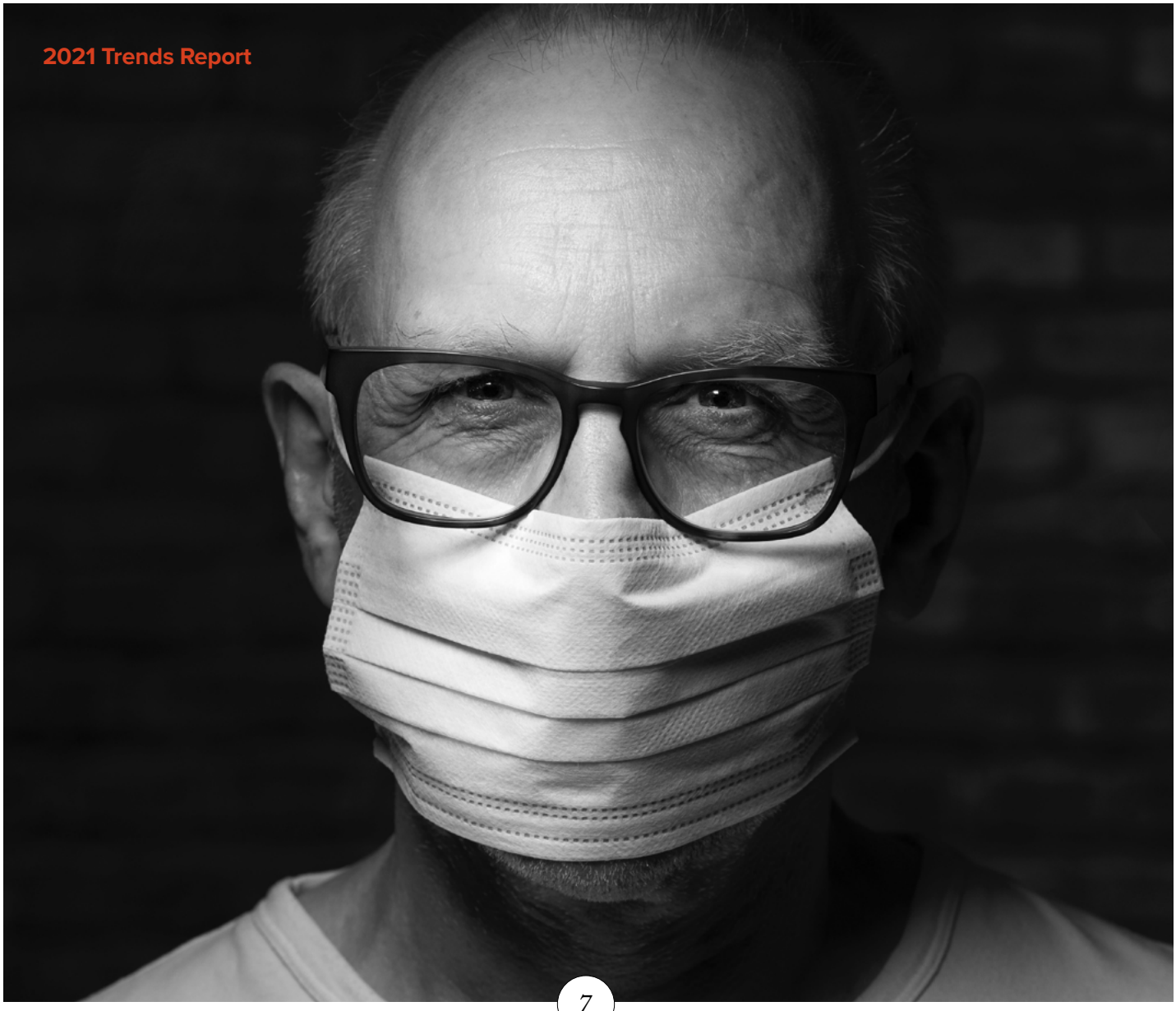
Half of psychology doctorate holders work in the top two occupational categories: **psychologist** or **psychology professor.** The other half work in 59 other occupational categories.[4]

1. PSYCHOLOGISTS
2. PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSORS
3. COUNSELORS
4. TOP-LEVEL MANAGERS & ADMINISTRATORS
5. OTHER MANAGEMENT-RELATED JOBS
6. EDUCATION PROFESSORS
7. MEDICAL/HEALTH SERVICES MANAGERS
8. MISCELLANEOUS HEALTH PRACTITIONERS
9. PERSONNEL, TRAINING, & LABOR RELATIONS SPECIALISTS
10. OTHER SERVICE OCCUPATIONS

Salary Benefits of an Advanced Psychology Degree



Median salaries show psychology doctorate holders earn **$35,700 more** than individuals with a psychology bachelor's degree, and **$25,700 more** than those with a master's degree.[4]



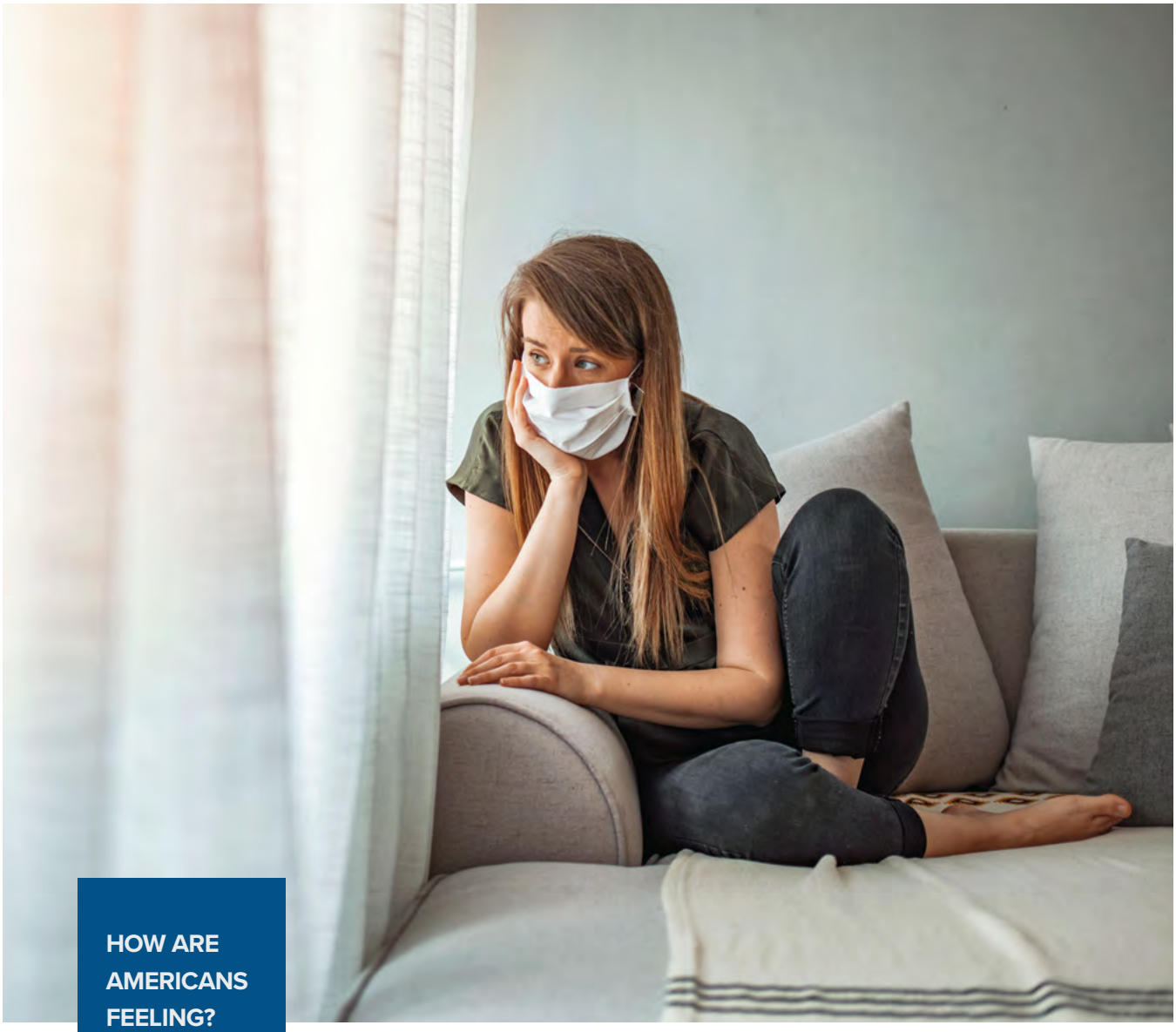
PAUL MERKI/UNSPLASH

7

The National Mental Health Crisis

Psychologists must act now to help people who need it and prevent a much more widespread crisis

APA's 2020 *Stress in America* survey released in October revealed that Americans have been profoundly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and are struggling to cope with the disruptions on top of other factors creating stress, including political conflict, the impact of racism, and an economic downturn. The combination of these compounding stressors and the persistent drumbeat of an ongoing public health emergency has prompted APA to sound the alarm on a growing mental health crisis that could yield serious health and social consequences for years to come. • READ THE FULL REPORT AND LEARN WAYS TO HELP AT WWW.STRESSINAMERICA.ORG.

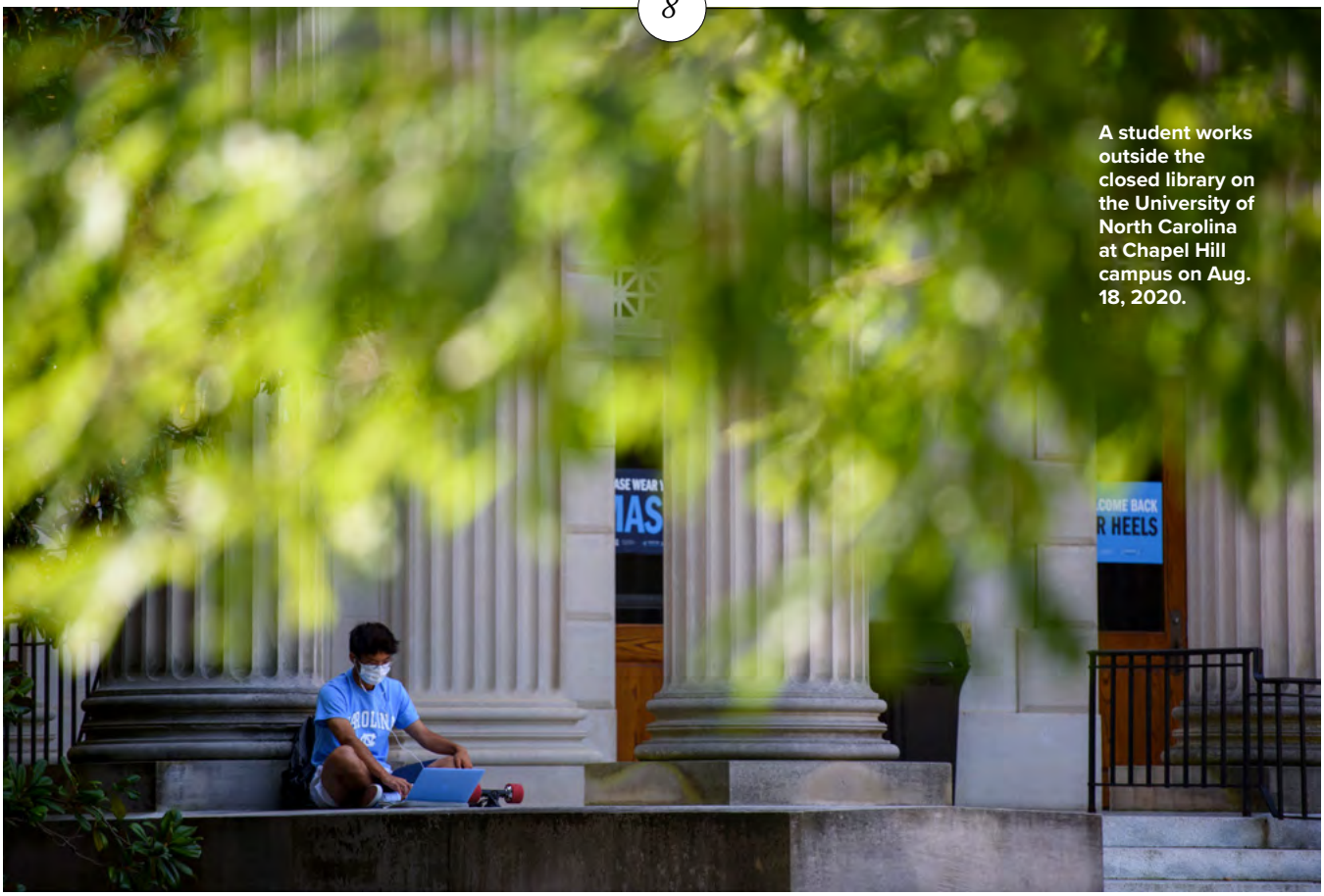


DRAGANA991/GETTY IMAGES

HOW ARE AMERICANS FEELING?

Nearly 78% of adults say the coronavirus pandemic is a significant source of stress in their life. 63% of adults say the economy is a significant source of stress, which is nearing levels reported during the 2008 recession (69%). 59% of adults, regardless of race, report that police violence toward minorities is a significant source of stress in their lives. 33% cite discrimination as a significant source of stress in their lives. Gen Z adults ages 18–23 are the most likely age group to report experiencing common symptoms of depression, with 75% noting that in the prior 2 weeks they felt so tired that they sat around and did nothing. 51% of Gen Z teens ages 13–17 say the pandemic has made planning for their future feel impossible. Despite these numerous stressors, 71% of Americans say they feel hopeful about their future. ■

8



A student works outside the closed library on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill campus on Aug. 18, 2020.

The Great Distance Learning Experiment Continues

Educators at all levels are grappling with what the changes mean now, and for the future

BY KIRSTEN WEIR

Some of the changes in education forced by the COVID-19 pandemic may lead to lasting improvements, according to educational psychologists and experts in the psychology training community. ¶ In K–12 education, many teachers are necessarily encouraging more self-management and independence in young learners—efforts that will serve them well after in-person school resumes. And 2020 has brought an increasing awareness of the importance of social and emotional learning (SEL)—a realization that proponents say is overdue, as school-based SEL programs improve social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance.



From left, Yessenia Tinno, 15, Jenikka Foster, 16, and Alexia Tinno, 17, do their schoolwork at home. They chose remote learning instead of attending classes in person at Pocatello High School near their home on the Fort Hall Reservation in Idaho.

While schools moved online last spring with hastily planned lessons, many districts spent the summer working on innovating more comprehensive distance learning programs.

"There's been a lot of energy put into thinking about kids' social and emotional needs and ways to create a sense of community—to keep them engaged and support them through the stress and anxiety of this time," says Sara Rimm-Kaufman, PhD, an educational psychologist at the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning at the University of Virginia.

But while some things are working well in distance learning, plenty of hurdles remain. Many of the same challenges that existed in the spring haven't been resolved. "Access to internet and technology is still a big barrier," she says. "And even with technology in place, many students just don't show up."

Distance learning laid bare the economic and educational disparities between students, and many still lack the technology to connect to online learning despite efforts by many school districts to provide all students with laptops and Wi-Fi.

Meanwhile, teachers are often overwhelmed by learning new technologies and creating lessons that work online—something few educators were trained to do. "There's a lot of energy being put into online learning, but it's still incredibly hard," Rimm-Kaufman says.

SIMULATING THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

Though undergraduate and graduate students may be more adept at engaging with online learning tools, college students face many of the same challenges as K–12 students, says Viji Sathy, PhD, a professor of psychology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. They also face disparities in access to technology and struggle to find social



connection amid restrictions on many campuses or in remote learning environments. "It's a lot harder to create community in this format, when people feel so isolated," Sathy says.

Yet there have been silver linings in the move to online learning, says Sathy. More professors are now engaging in pedagogical discussions instead of assuming they can simply translate in-person lessons to an online platform, she says. "There's a new willingness to admit they need guidance and more efforts to access the resources that can help them."

Many of the efforts to optimize instruction will outlast the pandemic, Sathy adds. "Once they develop those resources, they can take them back to the face-to-face environment."

College and graduate students attending classes from home have missed out on social connections and one-on-one interactions with faculty.

This experience may also have raised the profile of online learning, says Francine Conway, PhD, dean of the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology at Rutgers University and past president of the National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology. "There's a stigma regarding online learning, especially in doctoral training. It's often perceived as lower quality, and there's the perception that advisers can't adequately train and supervise students using online platforms," Conway says. "That perception hasn't kept pace with the reality."

Virtual education can often be just as effective as in-person learning, she says, thanks to new digital learning platforms, increasing student ease with technology, and a large and growing research literature around online learning. Yet there are challenges, especially in the area of hands-on research and disruptions to internships and practicum training. And some face-to-face interaction is necessary to achieve the competencies required to be a psychologist. Nevertheless, this year of online learning has underscored that there are benefits to going remote, at least in part.

"While there is a need to further support faculty around delivering online content, there are best practices out there. It does a disservice to faculty to assume they won't adapt to this new environment," Conway says. "Online learning is here whether we like it or not, and it's time our profession embraces it." ■

SANTIAGA/GETTY IMAGES

9



Antonio Wiggins cuts the hair of James Bennett inside his barbershop in Jackson, Mississippi, on Sept. 26, 2020. Wiggins often begins by talking about sports, but the conversations tend to turn quickly to his clients' well-being and other weighty subjects.

There's a New Push to Reach Underserved Communities

Psychology must harness the growing awareness of barriers to care and advance real change

BY KIRSTEN WEIR

The twin pandemics of COVID-19 and continued racial injustice have shone a spotlight on health disparities and underscored the need for more research and outreach to better support diverse and underserved communities. ¶ To be sure, many psychologists have been doing this work for years. But more psychologists are coming to understand how issues of diversity and health disparities are relevant to their work, and more journals are implementing procedures to make sure research addresses socioeconomic factors, says Cindy Juntunen, PhD, chair of APA's Task Force on Developing Guidelines for Psychological Practice With Low-Income and Economically Marginalized Clients. A growing public dialogue about racial justice—and the recognition that COVID-19 disproportionately impacts underserved communities—is

CHANDAN KHANNA/GETTY IMAGES



RYAN MCGINNIS/ALAMY

Telehealth is expanding access to mental health care for people in rural areas, who may live hundreds of miles from the nearest provider.

forcing psychologists to rethink how they reach out and interact with clients.

"For anyone who cares about these issues, progress has often felt like an uphill battle. But I see people beginning to look at these issues in new ways," Juntunen says. "COVID-19 has in some ways increased the likelihood of reaching underserved communities because practitioners are realizing they need different ways to reach their clients."

Some rural communities are already beginning to benefit from that realization. Rural areas have higher-than-average rates of poverty and substance use, yet the nearest mental health professional may be hundreds of miles away. Increasingly, providers are reaching these clients through telehealth—an option that accelerated suddenly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In one recent example, two managed-care organizations in rural North Carolina partnered to donate smartphones to 1,000 low-income patients to access mental health services.

> "Even if we have a clinic on every corner, people won't come if they don't have stable housing or food security. If we really want to improve mental health, we have to change the systems."
>
> SHERRY MOLOCK, PhD, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Yet telehealth can't solve all the challenges facing underserved communities. Marginalized communities often face hardships such as poverty and a history of racial trauma, which can increase the risk of mental health problems and substance use. Seeking therapy often means traveling outside one's own community and accepting services from providers—usually White—who don't tend to share

one's lived experiences. Those providers may not understand the nuances of what people in underserved communities need and how best to provide that care, says clinical psychologist Howard Stevenson, PhD, an expert on racial trauma at the University of Pennsylvania. "Psychology training doesn't necessarily prepare people to be clued in to these cultural sensitivities," he says.

Despite such challenges, a variety of psychology-based efforts are aiming to break down the barriers. The Loveland Therapy Fund, for instance, was launched in 2018 with enthusiastic crowdfunding support and provides financial assistance to Black women and girls seeking therapy nationwide. While individual treatment is valuable, reaching underserved communities often means rethinking the traditional model of one-on-one treatment, says Stevenson, who has created community-based interventions. With colleagues Loretta Jemmott, PhD, and John Jemmott, PhD, he created a program to train Black barbers in high-risk neighborhoods in violence reduction and HIV-risk reduction. The barbers educate clients organically when they come in for haircuts. Many other successful initiatives also focus on reaching people where they are. The Sources of Strength youth suicide prevention program, for example, teaches high school students to be peer leaders in changing the norms around seeking help for mental health.

But funding for such community efforts is often hard to come by, says Sherry Molock, PhD,



Efforts to reach communities of color have seen ebbs and flows in both interest and funding over the years.

RICH LEGG/GETTY IMAGES

a psychologist at The George Washington University who studies mental health and suicide prevention in Black youth and young adults. Molock argues that to advance real change, mental health professionals need bigger-picture thinking. "Even if we have a clinic on every corner, people won't come if they don't have stable housing or food security," she says. "If we really want to improve mental health, we have to change the systems." In addition to social and economic investments, that includes putting forth a stronger effort to train a more diverse psychology workforce, spending more time on these topics in the classroom, and conducting more research to adapt therapeutic models to be culturally relevant.

While the events of 2020 have focused attention on these disparities in need and access to mental health care, people in underserved groups have been painfully aware of these gaps their entire lives. Efforts to reach those groups, especially communities of color, have often seen ebbs and flows in both interest and funding. In that sense, Molock says, she hopes this most recent public awakening is more than just a trend. "This isn't a fad," she says. "This has to be something we're committed to doing." ■



MATTHEW COUGHLIN

10

Psychology's Involvement in Policing

Police departments are turning to new research and interventions

Psychologists are tackling overly aggressive, racially biased policing on multiple fronts. New research on officer behavior, implicit bias, and candidate screening is shaping legislation and agency priorities. Meanwhile, police departments around the country are increasingly embracing psychological interventions that leverage peer intervention and "procedurally just" policing—which prioritizes trust and communication—with promising results. See the October 2020 *Monitor* for more. — *Zara Abrams*

• IN JUNE 2020, APA LAUNCHED AN EXPEDITED PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE ON REDUCING POLICE VIOLENCE AGAINST AFRICAN AMERICANS.

Following an officer-involved fatal shooting in his hometown of Pensacola, Florida, in 2019, psychologist and former police chief Dr. Cedric Alexander began working as a consultant with the city's police department on ways to improve officer training and build trust between law enforcement and the community. A nationally recognized public safety expert with nearly 40 years of law enforcement experience, Alexander consults for public safety agencies throughout the United States.

11

Psychologists Are Moving Up in Academia



ANNA & ELENA BALBUSSO/THE ISPOT

With conflict resolution skills and ability to understand data, psychologists are poised to excel at academic leadership roles

BY ZARA ABRAMS

Psychologists may have been slow to climb the ranks of academia, but that's changing. Between 2003 and 2015, the number of psychologists in academic leadership positions grew by 61%, according to the APA Center for Workforce Studies ("Increases in psychologists in academic leadership," 2020). ¶ Their interpersonal skills, data analysis experience, and understanding of human behavior make psychologists a great fit for academic leadership, say those at the top. ¶ Now, the slashed budgets, falling enrollment, and rapid shift to remote instruction ushered in by the COVID-19 pandemic are making the jobs of academic administrators harder—and more essential—than ever. Amid that uncertainty, skills like active listening, problem-solving, and conflict resolution are helping psychologists in leadership positions keep their institutions afloat. ¶ "Since March, it's really been about crisis management, and that's required a lot of tough decisions," says Sarah Mangelsdorf, PhD, president of the University of Rochester.

Mangelsdorf began her career in the University of Michigan's psychology department. She later held roles such as psychology department chair, dean, provost, and vice chancellor for academic affairs across several universities. Like many of her colleagues, she didn't picture herself as an academic leader, but she says that psychologists who end up in such roles tend to excel and enjoy the work.

Even in such hard times as these, leaders like psychologist Marvin Chun, PhD, dean of Yale College, are embracing the opportunities afforded by academic administration to improve conditions for faculty and students across the board, for instance by increasing scholarship funds that aid low-income students. Others are applying psychological insights to things like student success and remote work to make learning during a pandemic as impactful as possible.

"Psychologists have this interesting mixture of training that prepares them very well for academic administration," Mangelsdorf says. "I would encourage more people from the field to consider stepping into these roles."



In her role as president of Barnard College, Dr. Sian Beilock often draws on her experience with data analytics and running a research lab.

COURTESY OF BARNARD COLLEGE

TRANSLATABLE SKILLS FOR LEADERSHIP

Those who've assumed leadership positions say the work psychologists do on a daily basis sharpens the skills needed to run a higher education institution.

For one, psychologists can use their experience collecting, processing, and analyzing data—and drawing conclusions from it—to assess school- or university-wide trends and determine what changes to make. Mangelsdorf, for example, has run regression models that analyze gender differences in salary at institutions where she has worked. As a result of those analyses, she and her colleagues began to address some of the salary inequities they discovered among genders.

"As psychologists, we have pretty good training in data analytics, and I have found that immensely helpful over the years," she says.

At Barnard College at Columbia University, President Sian Beilock, PhD, challenges her staff to cite numerical data and to avoid vague generalizations about

what "everyone is saying."

"I want data that show the full picture, because I know that the loudest voice or the most recent data point can change our interpretations," she says.

Beilock's experience running a lab with around 20 students and postdoctoral scholars also helped prepare her for the demands of her current role. While some of her students required structured deadlines and evaluations, others thrived with a more hands-off approach.

"I learned that everyone needs to be led in a different way, so I bring that understanding into the leadership I do now," she says.

Psychologists working in academic administration are even drawing on research they've conducted to inform their institution's priorities. Gail Hackett, PhD, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), studied the role of self-efficacy in career development among women and minority populations. She then channeled those findings into initiatives to improve student retention and graduation rates for those groups at VCU and Arizona State University, where she previously worked.

Others have used their research experience to inform their institution's COVID-19 response. Psychologist Peter Salovey, PhD, president of Yale University, has studied the effects of message framing on promoting health-related behaviors, including cancer and HIV prevention.

"These lines of work have helped me make scientifically based decisions that both safeguard public health and help to maintain the continuity of the university's commitment to teaching and learning," Salovey says.

All but the highest-level administrators should aim to maintain teaching and research activities, says Chun. Even as dean, he still mentors graduate and undergraduate students and conducts neuroimaging research throughout the year, saving heavy writing projects for summer recess.

"Staying active in research and teaching at the university helps me better serve faculty and students because I see their experiences firsthand," he says.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

If there's one thing that can make or break a career in academic administration, it's interpersonal skills.

"The range of interpersonal conflicts and personnel issues are so vast that they overwhelm people who are not prepared for them," Hackett says.



University of Puget Sound President Dr. Isiaah Crawford says the active-listening and problem-solving skills he honed as a clinician enrich his work as an academic administrator.

SY BEAN/UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND

The most effective leaders listen, empathize, and work collaboratively with the range of stakeholder groups at a university, including students, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni.

"There are so many different constituents that don't always see eye to eye," Beilock says. "You effect change by bringing groups together, so it requires seeing where people are and figuring out how to work towards a common goal."

Psychologists' broad understanding of personalities, communication, and behavior helps prepare them to manage those conflicts, but some skills that clinicians develop—such as mediation and active listening—can be particularly helpful, says Isiaah Crawford, PhD, president of the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington.

Throughout his early career, Crawford taught clinical and community psychology courses at Loyola University in Chicago, provided care in a community mental health clinic, and maintained his own psychotherapy practice. He says that clinical work helped shape his problem-solving and coaching skills—and gave him a deep appreciation for the human condition.

"As psychologists, we often engage with people when they're not at their best, but we can see beyond that to what is possible," Crawford says. "Administrators apply the same skills to work through a situation and find a mutually beneficial outcome."

APPLYING PSYCHOLOGICAL FINDINGS

On top of the skills and training that make psychologists successful administrators, applying psychological findings on group dynamics, communication, and other topics can make them highly effective leaders.

Beilock says she relies heavily on what she knows about human behavior. For instance, she's careful not to make the fundamental attribution error of assuming a person's behaviors are mainly driven by their personality or identity rather than by situational factors.

Mangelsdorf draws on group behavior literature to understand various aspects of university life, such as the dynamics of faculty senate meetings. Those insights have also helped her form effective search committees. For instance, studies show that in male-dominated fields, a single woman on a committee is not well positioned to advocate for increased gender equity (Fine, E., & Handelsman, J., "Searching for excellence & diversity: A guide for search committees," Women in Science & Engineering Leadership Institute, 2012).

She also relies on psychological strategies—including empathic and transparent communication—to strategically enact change, such as in making the unpopular decision to shift to remote learning when the coronavirus pandemic struck in March.

"We can use psychological principles to get people to buy in and to show them their voices are being heard," Mangelsdorf says.

HOW TO MAKE THE MOVE

The best way to learn about academic administration is to dive right in, leaders say. Tell your chair or mentor you'd like to join a search committee or tenure review committee in your department.

"Make yourself available. It always starts with small assignments, and then one thing leads to another," Chun says.

Beilock also suggests joining a committee that focuses on school or university initiatives, which can help aspiring administrators learn how their department fits into the broader institution. For example, when she was at the University of Chicago, Beilock joined the university senate's committee of the council, an elected group of faculty that attended biweekly meetings with the president and provost.

"It was the first time I really got to see the operations of an institution outside my lab and my department," she says. "I got really interested in how you can drive change at an institutional level."

Declining enrollment, budget reductions, and planning for the uncertainties associated with the pandemic make this a challenging time to lead a higher education institution, Crawford says. Amid such challenges, finding a sense of accomplishment is key. Crawford says he approaches his work as a service-oriented leader and values the daily contributions he makes to the university and its faculty, staff, and students.

"If psychologists are interested in academic leadership, this is the time to step up," Salovey says. "I hope they will draw from their experiences to guide their colleagues and students through this public health crisis." ■

FURTHER READING

Careers in academe
Supplement to the *Chronicle of Higher Education,* 2017

Take charge! Advice from leaders to early career psychologists
Stringer, H.
APA Monitor on Psychology, March 2017

Should you change leadership jobs in the middle of a pandemic?
May, S.
Chronicle of Higher Education, 2020

12

COVID-19 Has Reshaped APA'S Advocacy

New advocacy efforts may lead to positive long-term gains

BY TORI DEANGELIS





For Mental Health Inclusion

APA has been pressing legislators to include sizable levels of mental health and psychosocial services in federal COVID-19 relief plans and to address the disproportionate effects of the virus on vulnerable populations, including nursing home residents, people of color, Native Americans, and veterans. In a July 2020 letter to Senate leadership, for example, APA asked Congress to provide **"robust support"** for mental and behavioral health in its next relief package.

APA has also been addressing the psychological effects of COVID-19 on older adults. As one example, APA submitted research-based testimony at a Senate hearing in June 2020 describing how social isolation and loneliness can harm people's long-term health and how psychologists can increase people's resilience.

For Telemental Health

In April 2020, APA scored a major victory for psychologists and their patients by helping expand access to, and reimbursement for, Medicare telehealth services. Specifically, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) temporarily lifted restrictions so patients can receive these services in any geographic location and setting, including their homes. In addition, CMS expanded coverage of certain telemental health services and temporarily waived certain requirements so that during the pandemic psychologists can provide most of their typical services via audio-only telephones.

APA wants to continue these practices beyond the pandemic, so APA's advocacy team is now calling for both Medicare and self-insured plans to permanently expand telehealth reimbursement as well as a range of mental health benefits.

• **For more on APA's latest advocacy activities, visit www.apaservices.org/advocacy.**

LEFT: ANDRE CHAMBON/UNSPLASH; RIGHT: JUDE BECK/UNSPLASH

APA has been pressing legislators to include sizable levels of mental health and psychosocial services in federal COVID-19 relief plans and to address the disproportionate effects of the virus on vulnerable populations.





BAONA/GETTY IMAGES;RIGHT: MARSBARS/GETTY IMAGES

For Evidence-Based Interventions

APA is ramping up efforts to educate policymakers on how psychological science can continue to help people cope with and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, given the current misgivings some have about COVID-19 vaccines, APA CEO Arthur C. Evans Jr., PhD, wrote an op-ed piece for the political news website The Hill that highlighted the ways that behavioral science can **encourage wary individuals to receive vaccines.**

APA is also advocating for research funding and more accurate data collection to study the ways in which COVID-19 disproportionately harms racial and ethnic populations and to determine how to target prevention and treatment in communities most at risk.

Through Coalition-Building

Increasingly, APA has been joining with like-minded groups to champion causes related to COVID-19, mental health, immigration, and other key topics as a way to maximize impact and amplify APA's voice on society's most critical issues. In 2020, for example, APA partnered with other major mental health organizations to form the **Friends of the National Institute of Mental Health,** dedicated to advancing the public's understanding of mental health and improving treatment of mental illness, and it's part of similar coalitions that join scientific, health provider, and consumer groups to share information and strengthen policy support. At the onset of the pandemic, for example, APA led efforts with the Mental Health Liaison Group to ensure that psychologists and other front-line workers receive personal protective equipment.

13



Online Therapy Is Here to Stay

COVID-19 dramatically impacted psychology practice. What does the future of telepsychology hold?

BY HANNAH CALKINS

With telehealth usage rates skyrocketing, experts say resolving concerns around privacy and security, access to care, and payments for providers will be critical as many psychologists adjust to providing care remotely during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. ¶ Resolving those concerns will be critical to making sure psychologists can continue offering telehealth as demand for mental health services grows, particularly services offered virtually. ¶ Several studies have already proven telepsychology's effectiveness. And research from Jeanine Turner, PhD, a professor of communication, culture, and technology at Georgetown University who has followed telehealth's growth over the past two decades, has shown that both patients and providers who use telehealth

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VIKING/GETTY IMAGES

generally view it favorably.

While the technology and infrastructure for telehealth has been available since the mid-1990s, Turner says the health care industry never would have embraced telehealth fully without a status quo–ending event like a pandemic.

"Last year, within weeks, the system had to absorb all the challenges of wide-scale adoption," says Turner. "Now, it's taken off—and there will be no going back."

ASSESSING OUTCOMES

The COVID-19 pandemic has basically forced most health care providers to see patients remotely, but psychologists have unique concerns and questions about the virtual delivery of their services. For instance, how might technology impact the therapeutic alliance? And mental health care, by definition, has a strong emotional dimension. Can that really be honored online?

It appears that it can, according to Ashley Batastini, PhD, an assistant professor in the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and Research at the University of Memphis.

Batastini and her colleagues recently published a large meta-analytic study that compared clinical interventions and assessments delivered via videoconferencing with those delivered in-person. Overall, they found that in-person and virtual interventions produced similar outcomes. Likewise, assessments produced similar opinions across modalities, she says.

"It was important for us to compare virtual delivery to in-person delivery, and not to baseline," Batastini says. "We wanted to see how much physical presence in the same room mattered."

The result was not a surprise to Batastini and her team. She says their conclusions were in line with the existing literature on telepsychology, including a 2016 meta-analysis by the same team that focused on correctional and forensic telepsychology. (Batastini and her colleagues did uncover one interesting surprise in the new study: Women appear to have better outcomes following virtual interventions than in-person interventions, something that merits further research, she says.)

Batastini hopes that this study will help assuage lingering concerns that psychologists may have about the impact of virtual delivery on their services.

"I think telepsychology is here to stay, and it's important for us to adapt, not resist," she says.

ENSURING QUALITY, SECURITY, AND PRIVACY

Batastini does have a word of caution for those "hailing telepsychology as the key to improving access to care." While her team's study had a compelling conclusion, it also revealed some significant limitations in the existing literature on telepsychology—namely, inconsistent quality across studies.

"What we know is certainly promising, but we need more scientifically rigorous studies and a better understanding of what works and for whom," she says.

She emphasizes the importance of improving all patients'

access to the internet and to private spaces, which are both crucial for the success of virtual interventions or assessments.

"For vulnerable or underserved clients, this task may prove more difficult. One possibility psychologists might consider is establishing partnerships with local community organizations or other spaces that offer private, centralized, and clean spaces for clients to attend sessions, such as libraries, medical centers, community colleges, or courthouses," Batastini says.

But concerns about the privacy and security of telepsychology are not limited to the patient's side of the screen. Psychologists need to be aware of the general privacy and security risks, such as the possibility of data breaches, and take steps to minimize them. According to Batastini, there are two components to managing these risks.

First, psychologists must do their own research and make certain that the platforms they're using are compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), particularly with HIPAA's Security Rule and Privacy Rule.

There are a variety of platforms to choose from, but providers should not assume that what they are using is HIPAA-compliant, she says.

The second way to strengthen your security is through informed consent. Batastini recommends that psychologists use a thorough, clear consent form that both informs patients about potential risks and lets them know how these risks are being managed. For example, psychologists should tell their patients about any technical controls they're using to protect privacy, such as encryption, firewalls, and anti-virus and anti-malware software. They should also implement and inform patients about their policies and procedures concerning the safe storage, transfer, and disposal of patient data.

Finally, Batastini says, "the form should also communicate what the patient can do to minimize risks in their own environment," such as finding a private space where they won't be overheard.

As use of telepsychology grows, psychologists need to be aware of its general privacy and security risks, such as the possibility of data breaches, and take steps to minimize them.

Psychologists who practice telehealth should also be familiar with the applicable privacy laws in their state, says Deborah Baker, JD, director of legal and regulatory policy in APA's Office of Legal and Regulatory Affairs. "For example, in the event of a data breach, a state may also have its own notification requirement in addition to what HIPAA requires," she says.

TELEHEALTH COVERAGE AND REIMBURSEMENT

It's likely that many practicing psychologists will continue using telepsychology even after the public health crisis has passed. Having come to value telepsychology's flexibility, psychologists may want to use it more than they did before the pandemic.

The key will be making sure they can get paid for it.

Fortunately, according to Connie Galietti, JD, director of legal and professional affairs in APA's Office of Legal and Regulatory Affairs, most major commercial insurers appear to be supportive of the explosion in telepsychology services prompted by COVID-19.

"States have different laws and mandates regarding telepsychology coverage, and not every state requires insurers to reimburse these kinds of services at parity with in-person services" during normal times, she says. "But with the pandemic, many states have mandated, and many insurers have provided, expanded telehealth coverage and policies, so that's been very helpful for psychologists and their patients."

There have been a few bumps, however. For example, Galietti says that some insurers require all telehealth providers—not just mental health providers—to use proprietary platforms, such as Teladoc, which often require additional credentialing and fees.

"We're advocating for them to allow psychologists to use any HIPAA-compliant platforms," she says. (APA cannot recommend or endorse any HIPAA-compliant telehealth platform vendors, but the Department of Health and Human Services offers a list of 10 vendors who claim to be HIPAA-compliant, including Zoom for Healthcare, Doxy.me, and thera-LINK.)

Another problem is that

more than half of consumers with employer-provided coverage have self-insured plans. Those plans, covered by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), aren't required to cover telepsychology, which Galietti and her APA colleagues are also advocating to change.

Finally, although the pandemic is ongoing, Galietti says there have been some attempts by insurers to revert to more restrictive coverage and policies. Some insurers may balk at spending more on telehealth, she says. But she expects significant pushback from the mental health professions (including APA) and from patients if insurance companies continue trying to limit telehealth coverage post-COVID.

"APA is advocating for states and payers to continue the current level of coverage for at least a year after the public health crisis ends. We want to avoid a sudden stop in coverage for vulnerable populations and allow insurers to make reasoned determinations—with input from APA and other stakeholders—about what telehealth policies should continue after the crisis," Galietti says.

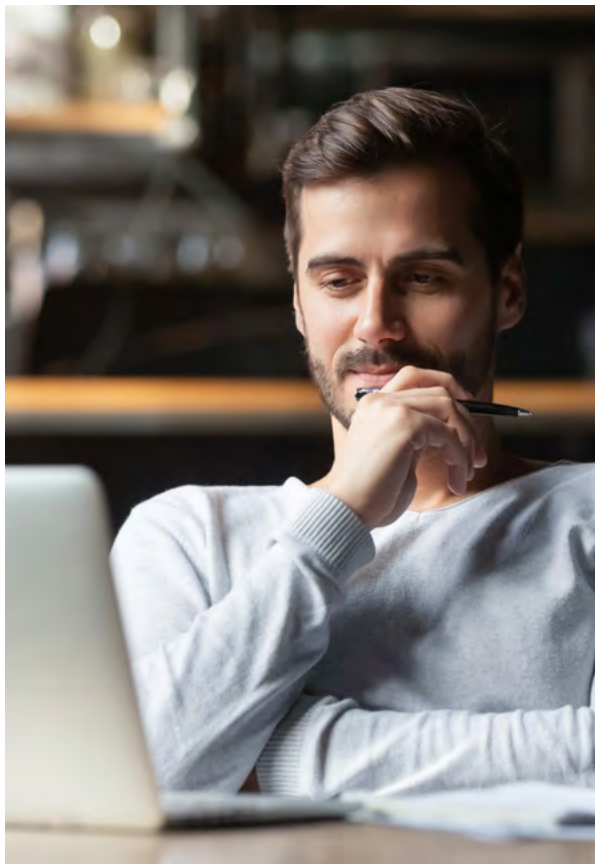
Ultimately, when advocating for any psychological services, Galietti and the Office of Legal and Regulatory Affairs team rely on the argument that treating someone's mental and behavioral health needs often improves their physical health, which lowers overall costs. This applies to telepsychology, too.

PRACTICING ACROSS STATE LINES

The COVID-19 pandemic and increasing confidence in telepsychology's quality and security have dramatically pushed the trajectory of telepsychology forward. But there is one more development shaping its horizon: interstate practice under an agreement called the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact, or PSYPACT.

PSYPACT is a fast-growing interstate licensing compact that enables psychologists in the participating compact states to practice remotely across state lines (it also lets them practice in-person in compact states on a temporary basis). Created by the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Licensing Boards (ASPPB) and administered by its PSYPACT Commission, the PSYPACT agreement became operational in 2020.

APA will continue to work to ensure psychologists are fairly reimbursed for telepsychology post-COVID.



FIZKES/GETTY IMAGES

Fifteen states have enacted PSYPACT legislation, with several more on track to do so, according to Janet Orwig, MBA, CAE, executive director of PSYPACT.

Psychologists who wish to practice under PSYPACT must obtain an authority to practice interjurisdictional telepsychology (APIT) from the PSYPACT Commission. One requirement of the APIT is an E.Passport issued by ASPPB. Applications for both opened in July 2020. Orwig says that ASPPB received grant funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which allowed them to waive E.Passport application fees through the end of 2020.

"Since we began taking applications in July, there's no way to know whether the pandemic caused a spike in interest," Orwig says. "However, as of mid-October, we had received 1,967 applications."

Orwig hopes that PSYPACT continues to increase how and where patients access mental health care.

"We are at the start of a new and exciting time in the profession of psychology where a strong foundation exists to both provide telepsychological services and provide public protection," she says. "Being able to get care anywhere is our new reality." ■

14

Advocacy Will Help Secure Expanded Telehealth Coverage

Reimbursement policy changes prompted by COVID-19 could become permanent

BY JEWEL EDWARDS-ASHMAN

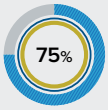
The COVID-19 public health emergency forced health care providers to use other methods besides in-person services to provide care. The crisis has also led government and commercial health care payers to reexamine their reimbursement for practitioners providing remote services during the pandemic. ¶ Last year, as traditional office visits came to a halt, many payers temporarily began reimbursing psychologists at in-person rates for providing video telehealth services, audio-only or phone services, and online assessment.



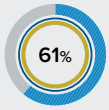
"The temporary expansion of telehealth policies prompted by the spread of COVID-19 has accelerated the adoption of telehealth for most clinicians. A year from now, I expect psychologists will continue to embrace this method of service delivery because it gives more patients access and improves continuity of care for patients with barriers to care," says Stephen Gillaspy, PhD, APA's director of health care financing.

It's unclear whether insurers will continue to allow expanded use of telehealth and audio-only services. That's why it's critical that APA and its members continue to advocate to make these policy changes permanent, Gillaspy says. "This will involve working with payers to ensure clinical quality and maintain program integrity." ■

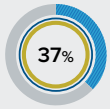
Providing Care During the Pandemic



of clinicians said they are only treating patients remotely



of clinicians are providing phone-only services



of clinicians are using a service like FaceTime or Skype to provide care

DATA FROM THE COVID-19 MEMBERSHIP PROFESSIONAL NEEDS SURVEY 2020

GRAPHICS: MARY BETH RAMSEY; PHOTO: FIZKES/GETTY IMAGES

15



Well-being initiatives such as offering mental health days are becoming more common in the workplace.

SYLVIA BUCHHOLZ/ALAMY

Employers Are Increasing Support for Mental Health

Large employers are boosting mental health resources as they recognize the strain the pandemic is putting on their employees

BY CHARLOTTE HUFF

Two-thirds of employees report that poor mental health has undercut their job performance during the COVID-19 pandemic, and 40% of employees are battling burnout, according to a survey by mental health benefits provider Lyra Health and the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions. ¶ Employees may be working relentlessly amid economic uncertainty with few social outlets, and possibly juggling childcare to boot, eviscerating any separation between work and the rest of their life, says clinical psychologist Renee Schneider, PhD, vice president of clinical quality for Lyra Health.

Meanwhile, working from home can make it difficult for supervisors to detect emerging mental health strain, Schneider says. "When we were in the office, we would see each other every day, and we don't have that same type of interaction now," she says. "So sometimes employees can go for a while before the manager learns that there's something going on."

Paying more attention to employee mental health is becoming a bigger part of the conversation in today's workplaces. Even pre-pandemic, employers were already learning to be more proactive in identifying symptoms of depression, anxiety, and other disorders. Nearly half of large employers train their managers to recognize such issues, and an additional 18% plan to begin to do so in 2021, a 2020 Business Group on Health survey found. Plus, 54% of employers will offer free or low-cost virtual mental health visits in 2021.

In recent months, more employers have invested in software training programs and digital tools to teach managers how to pick up on subtle and often virtual cues of employee distress, says Anne Richter, RN, MBA, coleader of North American health management practice for the human resources consulting firm Willis Towers Watson. "Helping a frontline manager develop those skills in very, very short order has been a clear focus as a result of the pandemic," she says.

Schneider touts the decision by Pinterest, a Lyra Health client, to offer COVID-related paid leave to better support families. Employees who may have lost childcare or who are caring for an ill family member can now take advantage of that emotional backstop for as long as four weeks, she says.

Both Schneider and Richter believe that this heightened mental health awareness will outlast the pandemic. "Now we're thinking about our employees as whole people, not just what they do with the 8 or 10 or 12 hours that they are at work," Richter says. "What are they struggling with at home that bleeds over into the workplace, and vice versa?" ■

> "When we were in the office, we would see each other every day, and we don't have that same type of interaction now. So sometimes employees can go for a while before the manager learns that there's something going on."
>
> RENEE SCHNEIDER, PhD, LYRA HEALTH

Workplace Strategies to Promote Wellness

- Training managers to schedule video calls with employees whenever feasible to look for signs of anxiety or other emotional strain rather than only catching up by phone, says Anne Richter, of Willis Towers Watson. "Did you actually look at them?"

- Providing education that a seemingly work-related change, such as missing deadlines or turning in subpar work, may signal other concerns, says Renee Schneider, PhD, of Lyra Health, who advises that supervisors take a direct approach and ask employees regularly how they are holding up.

- Establishing a central mental health services contact, one who can even make appointments, Richter says, so employees don't have to figure out where or how to get care.

- Boosting the number of mental health visits that an employer will cover. "They're seeing that employees really need a full dose of care," Schneider says.

- Delaying job evaluations or not tying evaluation results to consequences such as pay, says Schneider, a move that she applauds. "During this pandemic, additional stress is not what we need."

- Offering mental health days, a move that Schneider says all employers should consider if they don't already.



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