

# New Research From **<em>Clinical Psychological Science</em>**

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Read about the latest research published in *Clinical Psychological Science*:

*Najwa C. Culver, Bram Vervliet, and Michelle G. Craske*

Although exposure therapy has been shown to be effective for treating anxiety disorders, fear symptoms can sometimes return. In this study, the researchers tested whether compound-presentation extinction trials — in which two fear-inducing stimuli are presented simultaneously — are better than single-presentation extinction trials for reducing the likelihood of relapse. Participants completed a fear-conditioning procedure before undergoing an extinction procedure that used single- and compound-stimulus presentation or only single-stimulus presentation. One week later, participants were tested on their recovery of the previously conditioned fear response. Those who had received compound extinction trials showed less recovery of the fear response than those who had received single extinction trials, suggesting that this method of treatment may improve outcomes for those with anxiety problems.

## [Response Time to Craving-Item Ratings as an Implicit Measure of Craving-Related Processes](#)

*Lisa J. Germeroth, Jennifer M. Wray, and Stephen T. Tiffany*

The craving for drugs — seen as a major driver of drug addiction — is generally assessed using explicit self-report measures; however, these types of measures can be open to biases and may not capture the full range of the craving experience. Cravings were elicited by computerized and in-person neutral and smoking-related stimuli, and the researchers implicitly measured craving by timing how long it took participants to answer questions about the cravings. The researchers found that the implicit measure of craving was better at predicting nicotine dependence than an explicit measure of craving. In addition, the implicit measure identified important differences in the craving experiences of dependent and nondependent smokers, supporting its use in addiction research and treatment.

## [Security of Attachment to Spouses in Late Life: Concurrent and Prospective Links With Cognitive and Emotional Well-Being](#)

*Robert J. Waldinger, Shiri Cohen, Marc S. Schulz, and Judith A. Crowell*

Although researchers have studied the impact of attachment in young children and adults, less is known about the effect of social attachment in older adults. Older heterosexual couples were assessed for attachment security, marital satisfaction, depression, and day-to-day psychosocial functioning. Two and a half years after initial testing, the couples completed assessments of depression, positive and negative affect, satisfaction with life, and cognitive functioning. Level of attachment security was found to be associated with concurrent levels of depression, marital conflict, marital satisfaction, and mood and to be

predictive of levels of negative affect, depression, and marital satisfaction 2.5 years later, indicating the importance of attachment in both concurrent and future well-being in older adults.

### [A Two-Hit Model of Autism: Adolescence as the Second Hit](#)

*Giorgia Picci and K. Suzanne Scherf*

Adolescence is often characterized by stressful social and hormonal changes, making it a difficult time for teens. In this article, the authors propose a two-hit model of autism in which prenatal genetic and environmental disruptions to development serve as a “first hit,” creating neural circuits that are inherently vulnerable. Atypical neural reorganization, combined with social and hormonal stressors in adolescence, serves as a “second hit,” compounding and adding to existing vulnerabilities and hindering the development of adult levels of social and adaptive functioning. The authors hope the two-hit model will serve as a framework for translational and basic research about the factors that impede the development of adult levels of functioning in people with autism.