New Research From Clinical Psychological Science

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

**Attention Bias Modification (ABM): Review of Effects of Multisession ABM Training on Anxiety and Threat-Related Attention in High-Anxious Individuals**

*Karin Mogg, Allison M. Waters, and Brendan P. Bradley*

Attention bias modification (ABM) training is a computer-based technique for treating anxiety. Participants complete a series of trials in which they respond to a probe that is located in a position different from that just occupied by a threat cue. Over time, people begin to orient their attention away from threat. Another type of attention bias training is ABM-positive-search training, which instead encourages people to orient toward positive stimuli. To better understand the influence of these treatments on attention bias and anxiety, the authors examined the methodology and outcomes of 34 randomized controlled trials that investigated the effects of multisession ABM training on anxiety and attention bias in high-anxious individuals. The authors discuss their findings and provide directions for future research.

**When Feelings Lack Precision: Low Positive and Negative Emotion Differentiation and Depressive Symptoms in Daily Life**

*Lisa R. Starr, Rachel Hershenberg, Y. Irina Li, and Zoey A. Shaw*

Emotion differentiation (ED) is the ability to identify and recognize emotional states. Difficulty in discriminating between emotional states — known as low ED — has been linked to behaviors and processes associated with a range of psychopathologies. In this study, the authors examined the role of negative emotion differentiation (NED) and positive emotion differentiation (PED) in depression symptoms. The researchers examined PED, NED, depressive symptoms, and positive and negative experiences of undergraduate students (Study 1) and veterans (Study 2). The researchers found that low
NED predicted stronger associations between daily brooding and depressive symptoms (Study 1) and that low NED predicted stronger reactivity to daily negative events (Study 2). Across both studies, PED enhanced the beneficial effect of positive experiences on depressive symptoms. These findings lend support to the influence of PED and NED on daily depressive symptoms.

**Bleak Present, Bright Future: Online Episodic Future Thinking, Scarcity, Delay Discounting, and Food Demand**

*Yan Yan Sze, Jeffrey S. Stein, Warren K. Bickel, Rocco A. Paluch, and Leonard H. Epstein*

Obesity and abrupt transitions into poverty (i.e., negative income shock) have been associated with steeper delay discounting (DD) — the phenomenon of valuing larger delayed rewards less than smaller immediate rewards. Episodic future thinking (EFT) — a type of prospective thinking — has shown promise in reducing DD. The researchers examined the effect of an online administration of EFT on DD and demand for food in those experiencing a simulated negative income shock. Participants who were obese or interested in losing weight generated episodic thoughts about future events (EFT), past events (ERT), or did not generate episodic memories (NoET). Participants then read a negative or neutral job-related narrative and completed DD and food-purchasing tasks. EFT reduced DD and demand for fast food compared with ERT and NoET, even when participants were challenged by negative income shock. This finding suggests that EFT may be a scalable intervention for reducing discounting.

**Hippocampal Volume as an Amplifier of the Effect of Social Context on Adolescent Depression**

*Roberta A. Schriber, Zainab Anbari, Richard W. Robins, Rand D. Conger, Paul D. Hastings, and Amanda E. Guyer*

Adolescence is a time of social and biological changes and also a peak period for the onset of depression. Researchers examined whether the hippocampus — a part of the brain involved in binding contextual and affective elements of experience — serves a moderator of the effects of social context on the development of depression in adolescents. Mexican-origin students in the 11th grade reported aspects of their social context, including family connectedness and community crime. Six months later, researchers assessed participants for depression and measured the volume of their hippocampi using MRI. They found that depressive symptom severity of adolescents with larger left hippocampal volumes were more influenced by perceptions of social support and crime than were the depressive symptoms of adolescents with smaller left hippocampal volumes. The moderating effect of the left hippocampus on the relationship between depressive symptoms and social context indicates that it may be a marker susceptibility to social context.