

# PSYCHED

DECEMBER 2015 ISSUE NO. 12

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**HOW TO CRACK MULTIPLE CHOICE**

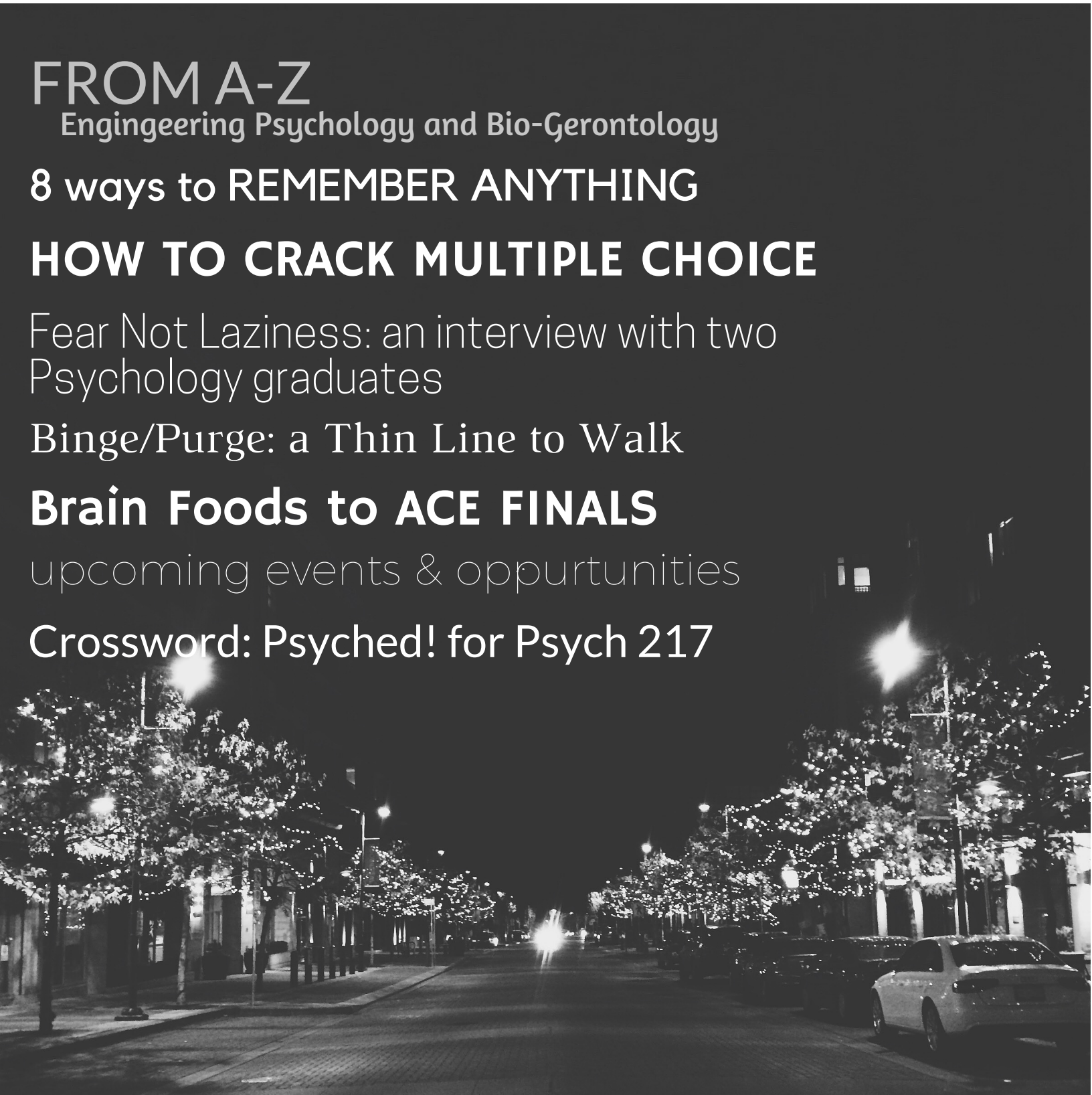
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**Crossword: Psyched! for Psych 217**



# PSYCHED

Welcome to the official newsletter of the UBC Psychology Students' Association – Psyched! – where students come together to share different articles about the latest departmental news, new developments, interesting stories, and whatever else is running wild in the UBC psychology department and the world of psychology in general.

We aim to keep undergraduate students, graduate students, staff, faculty and alumni “in the know” about one of UBC’s most diverse and populated departments.

It is our goal to provide insight about opportunities for student involvement and career possibilities after graduation, to increase knowledge about cutting-edge research being explored within the department and to give members of our academic community an opportunity to voice their thoughts about topics that matter and are relevant to all of us.

Editor in Chief // Sahiba Walia

Assitant Editor in Chief // Janine Bananitan



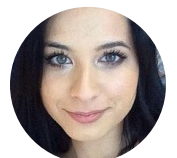
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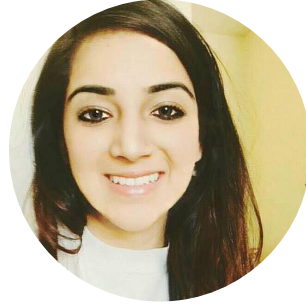
Reporters // Natalie Lam, Angela Martinovic,  
Mahima Sharma, Nonie Sudhakar



Marketing // Harleen Cheema



## EDITOR'S NOTE



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

*Sahiba Walia*

Hello friends,

Last month of the year has already dawned upon us... which means that eggnog, Christmas presents and family time are approaching! But before we get too carried away with the holiday spirit, we must endure the process of finals and term papers. Our team hopes to lift the burden of these final few weeks of school from you by sharing tips on efficient learning strategies and brain boosting foods that increase brain power.

Sometimes during periods of immense demands of working, I find myself dazing off to less pressing matters such as 'what am I going to do in my future'. If you are on the same page, I recommend reading the section on unconventional careers in the field of Psychology and take advantage of some useful advice from grad students.

Lastly, good luck studying and do not let stress get the best of you. 'Pain is temporary and GPA is forever' is only true to an extent. Make sure you take care of your health, both physical and mental.

Ho Ho Ho...

# FROM A-Z

All you need to know about Engineering Psychology and Bio-Gerontology

*By: Mahima Sharma*

*Edited By: Ciara Southgate*

Are you still mulling over what path to take after graduation? Are you absolutely sure that a nine-to-five desk job just wouldn't cut it? Does the thought of teaching a bunch of first year undergrads make you cringe? What if I told you that you could make an ordinary, everyday-use laptop into a self-sufficient, thinking machine that anticipates your every thought even before you can? What if there was a way to anticipate aviation disasters based on what goes on in the minds of the people involved – from passengers and crew to pilots and technicians?

Psychology is one of the most popular undergraduate specialties, and telling anyone you're taking psychology is bound to be followed by the question, "Oh, so does that mean you can read my mind?" This is the primary perception in an average person's head – that it's all got to do with trying to uncover the human mind. I'll let you in on a secret: whether you want to work as a social worker or as a therapist, we have many more options than we did at the start of this millennium. Most of these have nothing to do with spending your day in an office taking notes on a clipboard across from a patient on a fancy leather sofa.

## Engineering Psychology

Engineering Psychology is an up-and-coming field that's quite malleable – literally – to your needs and aspirations. The field studies how people interact with machines, and psychologists in this field are often employed by the industry to help design equipment that is both efficient and user-friendly. They do this using research on how the human brain processes information and their knowledge of how machines operate. One of an Engineering Psychologist's main goals when working on an existing machine or designing a new one is to figure out how best they can improve on what they already have, to make it more enjoyable for users. Applications include cockpit communication and navigation systems that make planes safer for commercial use; and automobile control and navigation systems that enable the computer to mould itself according to the feedback provided by the driver, making the interface smoother to use. Does this sound similar to artificial intelligence? That's because this is where the future of human cognitive technology is headed.

Requirements for work:

You can usually enter the job market with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and strong work experience. However, many experts believe that a Masters in an Applied Psychology field proves immensely helpful. An undergraduate degree in engineering is not an absolute requirement, but having one would only serve to increase your market value to a prospective employer.

Expert profile:

Here's the link to a website that features an interview with an engineering psychologist, for your perusal:  
<http://careersinpsychology.org/interview/dr-neville-stanton/>

## Bio-Gerontology

Bio-gerontology is an emerging field that attempts to answer the question of how and why we age, and how to slow the aging process. A sub-field of gerontology, bio-gerontology focuses on the biological reasons behind aging. No one likes to age, and though some may not fear it much as others do, this is one question that's plagued humankind since time immemorial.

To find an answer to this question, researchers in the field focus on chronic, degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, arthritis, cancer, osteoporosis, and various cardio-vascular illnesses. The majority of the research is done on animal models to identify the development of certain diseases to which animals respond similarly to people. A background in psychology helps to gain a deeper understanding of the ways a therapist can help their patients understand their diseases and improve their stress coping strategies. Additionally, a researcher with a background in psychology can design experiments in a way that takes emotional element of chronic old-age diseases into perspective. This research could possibly help us live longer and be more comfortable during our old age. The good news is that it's quite a narrow field, so new positions are opening up almost daily! With starting salaries upwards of \$60,000, it's a field that's only going to get more lucrative.

Requirements for work:

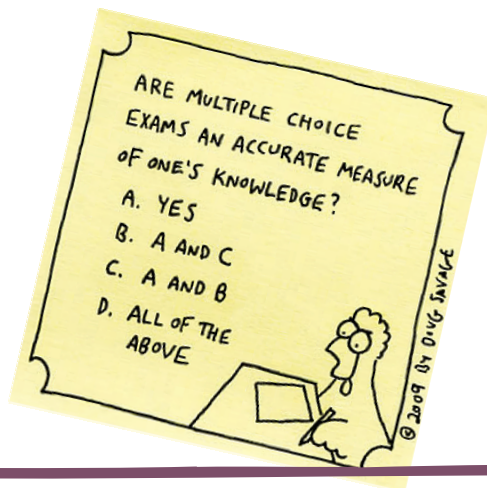
To work in this field, a Bachelors degree in any science field is mandatory, and a Bachelors in psychology can be supplemented with a double major in biology. Degrees in gerontology, biology, chemistry, or pre-med are also acceptable and are usually followed by a Masters or Ph.D.

Expert profile:

Aubrey de Grey is one of the most famous bio-gerontologists today. His stringent belief is that humans can live to unimaginable ages, and he is currently working on a tissue repair strategy that has positive implications for rejuvenating the body and can lead to indefinite life.

# 8 WAYS TO REMEMBER ANYTHING and HOW TO CRACK MULTIPLE CHOICE

By: Nonie Sudhakar  
Edited By: Kate Coady



1. BECOME INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING.
2. FIND A WAY TO LEVERAGE YOUR VISUAL MEMORY.
3. CREATE A MENTAL MEMORY TREE.
4. ASSOCIATE WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO LEARN WITH WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW.
5. WRITE OUT THE ITEMS TO BE MEMORIZED OVER AND OVER AND OVER.
6. WHEN READING FOR RETENTION, SUMMARIZE EACH PARAGRAPH IN THE MARGIN.
7. DO MOST OF YOUR STUDYING IN THE AFTERNOON.
8. GET ADEQUATE SLEEP IN ORDER TO CONSOLIDATE AND RETAIN

[HTTPS://WWW.PSYCHOLOGYTODAY.COM/BLOG/HAPPINESS-IN-WORLD/200911/EIGHT-WAYS-REMEMBER-ANYTHING](https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/happiness-in-world/200911/eight-ways-remember-anything)

1. Look over the test and pace yourself based on the type of questions.
2. Take short breaks. This helps clear your head and stay fresh during the exam.
3. Don't skip around the exam. Answer questions in order. If you are stuck, simply mark the answer you believe right and place a question mark next to it. If you have time you can go back to it later. Try to keep your guesses to less than 10% of the questions.
4. Spaced practice is better than massed practice. Late night cramming is usually a recipe for poor retention, mental and physical fatigue, and careless mistakes on the exam.

# Fear Not Laziness

## An Interview with grad student Richard Rigby & PhD student Silvian Dang

By: *Angela Martinovic*

Edited By: *Ciara Southgate*

I took some time this week to interview two students in the psychology department and get their input on some matters and concerns that a lot of undergraduate students have. Who better to address these concerns than recent graduates who have undergone the same experiences and procedures that many current undergraduates have gone and will go through? Richard Rigby, a recent graduate in behavioural neuroscience, and Silvian Dang, a current PhD student, currently TA for the Psychology 260 lab and have experienced being on both sides of the classroom: the learner and the teacher. Having background in both areas, Silvian and Richard reveal their personal struggles, achievements, and advice on student success in this month's issue of Psyched!

What made you interested in going into biopsychology and subsequently research?

Richard: I was doing a general science degree and wanted to become a forensic scientist, however, when I took a first year psych course I ended up really enjoying it. I didn't really like any of my other science courses, so when I found out I could get a BSc in psychology I was very excited. As far as research goes, I knew someone who knew Silvian. She introduced us, and he was looking for a research assistant at that time. I thought it was a paid job [laughs], but found out it was a volunteer position. I liked it enough to stay, and decided to give it a go. I ended up really enjoying it so much.

Silvian: Ever since I was little, I always liked science – biology specifically. I was in science as well, and when I was picking an elective I chose psychology because the girl I really liked was in psychology...that didn't work out [laughs]. But I really liked the course because it had both the biological and objective aspects of human experiences. The things we were learning about really resonated with me, like relationships and mental health issues. It is relatable and empirical. Research – I always liked figuring things out and that's what research is all about. I was told research was really good if I wanted to go to clinical psych or medicine, so that's what I did and when I got into it, it was a lot of fun and I continued doing it.



How did you get into the field of research and what advice would you give to students trying to get into a lab?

Richard: Do it early. Look up a researcher and find someone who has similar interests as you, read up on them, and approach them.

Silvian: I got into research because I asked my Psych 260 prof whether he happened to need RAs, since he mentioned in class that we needed research experience. He said yes and told me to contact one of his grad students, who happened to be my Psych 260 TA. He told me he didn't really need anyone for anything interesting, but that there were some menial things that needed to be done, like changing rat cages. I said sure...might as well say yes [rather] than no. Coincidentally, another student was doing her PhD at the time and she was looking for an RA, and since I was there she asked me, and that is how I got into further research. My advice would be getting your foot in the door. Once you have experience, it will be easy to market yourself to other labs and different grad programs. The important thing is to be open to doing things that aren't necessarily that perfect paid position and what you imagined. It might be scary and you might have to put up with the anxiety of asking a prof, but it is really important you do, because the opportunities don't come to you, you have to seek the opportunities. [cont.]

What are you currently researching?

Richard: I'm doing age-dissimilar relationships right now, where I am looking at multiple things such as perceived power imbalances, sexual functioning, dysfunctional relationship beliefs, sexual attitudes, and attachment style. I'm seeing whether an age difference in relationships causes problems, which is generally what society tends to believe in right now.

Silvain: My PhD is looking at sexual functions in different cultures, specifically how there is a big ethnic difference in sexual functions. For example, East Asians report much lower sexual activity and greater sexual conservatism compared to Caucasians. I am trying to figure out what the mechanism is for that cultural difference. How can we respect people's cultures and yet improve their sexual lives?

What do you plan to do with your degree and how are you preparing for this?

Richard: I don't really know yet. I'd like to do research and teaching. I've also created courses before; I did a student directed seminar on addictions. I am hoping to find a nice balance [between] research, clinical practice and teaching. I think it's still too early to see what that is going to be like, though [laughs].

Silvain: I am still trying to figure it out. I like teaching a lot. My most favourite thing is research, in terms of the actual ideals that are involved in research, but in reality research is a difficult field because it is difficult to find jobs and funding. It is not a very forgiving career, in [that] you are always going, "What is my next paper? When do I get my next grant? How do I cope with getting bad reviews on a paper?" It is a matter of whether you want that kind of life or a more stable, better-paid career in clinical work, but not getting the privilege in discovering new things all the time. So that is the decision I am trying to make right now.

Any tips on how to be successful and do well in undergrad?

Richard: My first two years were not the greatest, but I slowly started finding things I was more interested in. Slowly but surely, my marks got better. For me, finding research is what made me a better psychologist, and that's when my grades got better. It's really important to be involved in things, such as being in mental-awareness clubs, running student directed seminars, and volunteering. Also, choose to do optional papers as opposed to exams if you can.

Silvain: Maybe what underlies that is the importance of finding something that is meaningful to you in your undergraduate studies. If you are -

in undergrad because your parents want you to be here, society says you should be here, the school says you have to be here 'cause you already paid them, then I think it is very hard to be motivated and it's very hard to work hard. Don't get me wrong - it is a lot of work, but if you find that this is a waste of your time and you aren't motivated, then why do you want to waste your time? [Why not] instead put that energy into something you do find meaningful? A part of undergrad is you get to explore. Try to find something that is really meaningful to you, whether that is through research, academic course work, social aspects such as volunteering, or involvement on campus. Also, go to class [laughs]. The hour you spend in class will save you three to four hours studying at home. If you want to be academically successful, really try to see the underlying meaning in what you are learning. Look for the things that will be applicable across courses and across topics, and try to see the connections between things. We live in an age that if you need any details or information you can search it up on the Internet; the interpretation and synthesis of what you are learning is what is key. Also, exam tip: know the medium questions really well. Not worth spending tons of hours on details if you can't know the medium type questions really well.

What is the end goal for the research you are doing now?

Richard: For me, I'm not really thinking of an end goal. I am thinking more about how my research is going to expand. With my current research of power dynamics in relationships, I would like to take that in other fields I am interested in branching out and seeing where else I can take this story

Silvain: The goal of science should be [finding out] how we improve people's lives or the society we live in. So for my research, one of the end goals is to really understand how cultures -

interact with the idea of sexuality, and therefore we can learn to better accept different ways of expressing sexuality and different phenotypes of sexual behaviour in the world. So hopefully this leads to less discrimination and less prejudice, but also helps people comprehend how sometimes our cultural understandings of sexuality prevents us from getting satisfaction in our sex lives and helps people have better sex lives.

Do you have advice on how to time manage well?

Richard: Yeah...[laughs] I think probably the best advice, for people like me who end up taking on too much, is to limit yourself. Teach yourself that saying no can be a good thing.

Silvain: Oh god, I still can't do that [laughs]. I procrastinate and a lot of people procrastinate. Procrastination is often a manifestation of perfectionism or just anxiety. We think we procrastinate because we are lazy, but it is actually an avoidance strategy because the work is in some ways scary, or threatening to us, so therefore we don't want to approach it; we want to run away from it. The problem is the more you run away from things you are scared of, the scarier they become. Be brave and face your fears. It kind of sucks to have to write and do things, but just do it. What is it that you are scared of? Is it that you can't phrase something properly? Is it the volume of writing that is too daunting? Is it that if you hand in a paper that has too many mistakes, that it means you are a terrible person? Each of these things have strategies to combat them. For example, if you have a huge paper due, then break it down. When you start something, it then becomes much easier to continue, as opposed to staring at a blank page that needs to be turned into 20 pages of words - that's the scary part. Don't worry about making it perfect the first time through; you can edit later. Just start writing. Face your fears.

“We think we procrastinate because we are **LAZY** but it is actually an avoidance strategy because the work is in some ways scary, or threatening to us, so therefore we don't want to approach it; we want to run away from it. The problem is that the more you run away from things you are scared of, **the scarier they become.**”

# BRAIN FOODS TO ACE FINALS

*By: Sahiba Walia*

*Edited by: Janine Binanitan*

It's time to give caffeine a short break and replace it with healthy brain boosting foods that will strengthen your memory, improve concentration, and reduce fatigue.

## GOOD FATS

Avoid any type of saturated or trans fat as it hinders with the eye-brain coordination and can cause learning difficulties in the long run.

Avoid: Trans and saturated fats that are found in foods like ready-to-make cake mixes, crackers, pizzas, French fries, fried meat etc.

Consume: Omega-3 oils from fish, nuts, seeds and dark leafy greens, salmon, flaxseed oil, walnuts, and eggs. Omega 6 oils can be found in corn and safflower oils as well as borage oil.

## PROTEIN

Proteins help support our neurons which are the basic functional units of our brain. High tyrosine proteins are known to boost one's neurotransmitters that carry out signals in neurons, therefore increasing concentration.

Consume: Such high tyrosine products including seafood, dairy products, and soy products. (Choose the one's low in salt).

## CARBS & OTHER NUTRIENTS

Research explains how complex carbs is what our body needs to achieve a more versatile source of energy unlike foods with excessive sugar which temporarily provide energy and eventually lead to drowsiness and headaches.

Consume: Complex carbohydrates found in quinoa, barley and whole-wheat products, which are also rich in fiber.

Other nutrients:

Consume: Zinc (helps in learning), found in red meat, seeds, nuts etc. A diet high in vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients i.e. fruits and vegetables. Lastly, drink lots of water and sleep for 6-8 hours to keep your energy levels up and mind awake throughout the day!





# Binge/Purge: A Thin Line to Walk

## An Introduction to Bulimia Nervosa

By: Natalie Lam

Edited By: Ciara Southgate

Most of us are used to the experience of a food coma, or the feeling of eating just a bit too much at Christmas dinner. This of course, is followed by us sitting with our protruding stomachs and wallowing in shame for the rest of the night, but most of us manage to forget the incident altogether soon after. However, as of 2013, for the 6.3 million people who suffer from bulimia nervosa, “forgetting” is not as easy when they face the struggles of insensible overeating and the following guilt on a daily basis.

### What is Bulimia nervosa?

According to The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), Bulimia nervosa is classified as one of the many eating disorders, characterized by cycles of frequent binge eating and desperate measures to avoid weight gaining. Patients who suffer from bulimia nervosa constantly battle with the overwhelming compulsion to binge eat – consuming almost 3000-5000 calories within a short period of time – and succumb to the shame of this overeating afterwards. As a form of reaction formation, many bulimic individuals adopt extreme measures including purging, excessive exercising and fasting.

### Bulimia nervosa v.s. Anorexia?

Bulimia nervosa is less likely to be recognized as an immediate or serious threat to an individual, as unlike anorexia, it may not lead to significantly low body weight. Although individuals may fall under the normal weight range, symptoms including intense fear of weight gaining, and obsessions about body image, mirror those of anorexia's.

### Symptoms of Bulimia nervosa

- Negative self-evaluation about body shape and/or weight.
- Inability to stop eating, resulting in physical pain after eating.
- Frequent induced vomiting after meals.
- Recurrent use of diuretics, laxatives, or enemas after eating.
- Excessive exercising to burn off calories.
- Inflamed and sore throat from repeated vomiting.
- Severe dehydration from purging.
- Fluctuations in weight due to alternating bingeing and purging.

### Causes

Like many disorders, bulimia nervosa is caused by a complex interaction between genes and sociocultural pressures. Heritability appears to be high in this disorder, Claudino estimated that genetic influence may account for anywhere between 28-83% of the variance. However, a possible confound may be that family members with bulimia nervosa are comparatively more critical about one's body shape or weight. This reinforcement of the importance of weight losing within the home setting might increase the risk of one developing bulimia nervosa.

There is evidence that environmental factors do play a role in this disorder, for example Susan (2013) found that females who read fashion magazines tended to have more bulimic symptoms than those who did not. Perhaps society's emphasis on skinniness acts as a propelling force that further increases one's likelihood of developing the disorder.

### Treatment

Cognitive behavioural therapy has been shown to be an effective treatment by eliminate compulsive behaviours through challenging irrational thoughts about overeating, and by introducing behavioural changes. Antidepressants, such as Prozac, may also help the anxiety triggers that accompany the overwhelming fear of weight gain.

Although bulimia nervosa seems uncontrollable, simply educating oneself on the matter may greatly benefit those who may be suffering from this disorder. If you are interested to learn more about the disorder, or wish to seek professional help in regards to bulimia nervosa, please visit HealthLink BC or BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information.

# events & opportunities

**PSA Sponsored Events:**

**Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS):** AUS is hosting its upcoming Humanities and Social Sciences Conference on January 16, 2016. The annual event showcases student-led research initiatives across the many disciplines and departments of the Faculty of Arts. Every year, many diverse research topics are drawn from across the faculty in order to provide a basis for and cater to the different interests held by students, enabling them to pursue their passions. This year's theme is Innovation.

For more information on submission dates and deadlines, please visit: <http://aus.arts.ubc.ca/events/conference/conference-proceedings-2014-2015/>

**UBC Undergraduate Journal of Psychology (UBC UJP):** UBC UJP is an annual, student-run and peer reviewed journal that provides undergraduate researchers in the psychology department with invaluable opportunities to publish their research papers and literature reviews. The journal is currently looking for quality articles investigating multiple domains of psychology research, including: clinical, health, cognitive, developmental, social/personality/culture, and behavioural neuroscience.

For more information on the journal, please visit: <http://blogs.ubc.ca/ubcundergraduatejournalofpsychology/>

If you would like to ask questions, or send in your work, please email: [ubcujp@psych.ubc.ca](mailto:ubcujp@psych.ubc.ca)

**Volunteering Opportunities:**

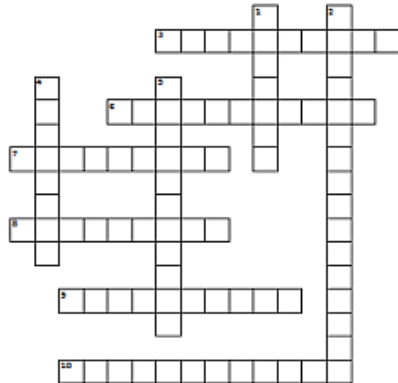
**YNOTFORTOTS:** YNOTFORTOTS is now hiring! It is a new non-profit organization with the goal of providing all children with the opportunity to play, learn and grow. The organization aims to enrich the lives of children by fundraising, and by providing them with access to the educational and recreational resources they need.

For more information about the organization, please visit: <http://ynotfortots.com/>

If you would like to ask questions or send in your resume for a volunteer position, please email: [ynotfortots@gmail.com](mailto:ynotfortots@gmail.com)

## Psyched for Psych 217

Complete the crossword to learn the top concepts for your research method final!



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Across</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 A type of validity in which scores on the measure are related to other measures of the same or very similar constructs</li> <li>6 A definition of the variable in terms of the operations or techniques the researcher uses to measure or manipulate it</li> <li>7 An active misrepresentation of information given to participants in a study</li> <li>8 An experiment that can have more than one independent variable</li> <li>9 A statement about something that may be true; Tentative idea about how two or more variables relate to each other</li> <li>10 A method used to collect and analyze numerical data</li> </ul> | <p><b>Down</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 An effect where the independent variable might appear to have no effect on the dependent measure only because participants quickly reach the maximum performance level</li> <li>2 A design in which participants are assigned to participate in all levels of the independent variable</li> <li>4 A type of measurement scale that uses numerical properties, and assume equal interval between values</li> <li>5 Psychological variable will yield the same result each time you administer the same manipulation again</li> </ul> |
|--|---|



**Psychology Students' Association**

