

2019-2020 SUMMER SPEAKER SERIES

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TALK: Stress Management and Meaning
Making: Theories and Interventions

ABSTRACT

In this presentation, I will talk about stress management and managing the extreme case of stress–trauma. I will address stress management from the perspective of future orientation. Our team has investigated the relationship between future orientation and time perception through three paradigms, namely experimental discounting, task prioritization, and the temporal Doppler effect. We have found that future orientation involves an ability to see through temporal distance and accurately perceive the importance of future events. On the other hand, the model of meaning making reflects the latest contributions of positive psychology to the field of trauma research. In our endeavors to advance this theory, we propose that one type of constructive meaning making is to distance oneself from the stressful events. In addition, two implicit methods, the directed-forgetting task and use of cognitive words are used to construct cognitive representations of the “meaning made”. Finally, we have developed two low intensity interventions to help people cope with stress and trauma.

BIOGRAPHY

Yiqun Gan is a professor at School of Psychological and Cognitive Sciences, Peking University, China. After receiving her PhD from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1998, she has published over 100 research papers as the first or the corresponding author. Her papers have appeared in top international journals such as *Journal of Personality and Health Psychology*. She has been the principal investigator on several research projects funded by the National Science Foundation of China. She currently serves as the Secretary of Division 8 of International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP). She is an Associate Editor for three SCI/SSCI indexed journals “*Applied Psychology: Health and Well-being*”, “*European Journal of Cancer Care*” and “*Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology*”. Her research on future orientation and resilience has embraced numerous state-of-the-art techniques such as laboratory experiments, molecular genetics, physiological indexes, eye tracking, and ERP. She has been awarded the fellowship of International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP), and is a Distinguished International Affiliate (fellow equivalent) at Society for Health Psychology (Division 38) of American Psychological Association (APA).