

THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT'S

WELLNESS BULLETIN

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BECOMING AWARE OF NEEDS

BY DR. LINDY MCMULLIN
DIRECTOR OF THE PSYCHOLOGY
DEPARTMENT
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Recently, someone shared with me that they felt alone with their friends, who knew they were going through a difficult period, but refrained from asking questions or delving deeper. We certainly do not need to play the therapist when someone is not feeling well. However, neither should we brush things off.

We all have needs. Needs for kindness and space in which to be authentic. Wellbeing and mental health stretches into daily life. It is not reserved for special occasions. Often, we ask someone how they are, and we are not aware that we are asking – How are you? It's more of a habit rather than

wanting to know how someone is doing. Awareness is usually self-centered rather than centered on others, but it is a practice that needs to become a concern with some self-reflection. So how aware are you when you park your car? How aware are you when you ask someone how they are feeling and if they have shared with you that a family member is feeling poorly? Do you remember to ask them how they are doing? Do you truly listen to what someone is saying and ask pertinent questions to find out details? If you can, write down your answers on a piece of paper. Become aware that these are enlightening areas that require your attention. Whilst you are at it, do a time raincheck.



**THE PRINCESS AND
THE PEA:
AN OVERVIEW OF
FEMALE
ARCHETYPES THROUGH
THE AGES
& THE MODERN DATING**
APRIL 3/17/24 & MAY
8/15/22



**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL
IMPACT OF
PERI- AND MENOPAUSE
ON
WOMEN, AS WELL AS
ITS IMPACT
ON PARTNERS AND
FAMILIES**
APRIL 24



**SHADOW WORK IN
CLINICAL
PRACTICE: THEORY,
APPLICATION, AND
ETHICAL
CONTAINMENT**
MAY 8

MORE INFORMATION FOR ALL
THESE EVENTS AT END OF
BULLETIN



How much time do you spend in Nature? When last did you stare at a leaf and ask a tree if you can share its space, respecting that nature is not a slave to humanity, but rather a co-worker. These are a few ideas that are meant to bring a different awareness to you. Take a deep breath. Ask how much better one can travel through life, rather than how much worse it can get? Remember that everything you come across in life is a lesson to be learned so, remain in awareness. Often one can be constantly resisting which may give a sense of control, but it is a door that shuts. Awareness opens the door. Resistance shuts doors, so become aware of the levels of resistance you may have placed in your inner world. Resistance is no doubt a safety mechanism, however, learning to become aware of needs gives one the opportunity to accept and love the self, become aware of its shadow and become an alchemist who can differentiate between what is healthy and what is not. Always remember that healthy living is the key to finding inner peace, and in its turn, inner peace is essential to well being.



Manifesting Your Dream Reality: A Whimsical Hocus Pocus or a Logic in Focus?

BY ISLEM WESLATI
MSPSY/CMHC PROGRAM



“Manifestation” is a concept that is deemed to be unempirical and rarely talked about in a scientific manner. With Pop culture pushing various practices to cosmically attract success in life such as visualization, positive self-talk and other symbolic actions (Dixon et al., 2025). In August, I attended a Webinar about the Neuroscience of Manifestation. The speaker Emily McDonald, who is a neuroscientist, shared a few insights about her studies in lab research. It was mentioned that the Reticular Activating System (RAS) filters out 99% of our reality and only lets in what our subconscious minds believe to be true. Second, is that our Default Mode Network (DMN) keeps us running on autopilot, which makes repeating the past easier and safer than allowing new possibilities and thus, reinforces our current identity. In other words, “reality” does not exist in the physical world, it exists in our nervous system which is constantly filtering, predicting and shaping our experiences based on our subconscious wiring. But what does neuroscience say about the subconscious mind?

The speaker broke down the network of seven systems in the brain that were responsible for our programming in a marvelous way.

- Starting with the **Default Mode Network** that is active when we are not consciously engaged and is responsible for our internal narrative.
- Moving on to the **Reward System** (dopamine), thinking of motivation, habits, subconscious desires tied to addictive behaviors, become hardwired into the nervous system.
- The **Limbic System** is the emotional memory storage of the brain, and it contains the amygdala and hippocampus.



- The **Cardiac Nervous System**, since the heart has its own nervous system which communicates with brain via the Vagus nerve.
- Equally important, the **Enteric Nervous System** also known as the “second brain” in our gut, which explains that gut feelings aren’t metaphorical, but biological.
- Furthermore, the **Reticular Activating System**, directly tied to focus and selective perception or in other words “energy flows where attention goes.”
- Last but not least, the **Prefrontal Cortex**, that helps interpret the sensory data, creating meaning and forming beliefs about reality. In other words, it is the conscious thought that directs subconscious activity.

All the above explains how Neuroscience reminds us that we are constantly manifesting our realities not through magic, but through attention and repetition. In fact, the “Law of Attraction” may be a cognitive law and not a cosmic one, because we tend to attract what matches our most practiced beliefs and emotional states.

Maybe the magic in manifestation is not wishing for a new reality, but in wiring ourselves to see one.

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LIVING HEROICALLY: THE PERSONAL HERO TECHNIQUE

BY HOLLY PATRICK, MSPSY
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR
HELLENIC AMERICAN UNIVERSITY ALUMNI



“The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.”

~ Nelson Mandela

Heroism Science is a growing and evolving multidisciplinary field that aims to understand the essence of heroism (Allison, 2016). It enriches the field of psychology by encouraging individuals to “live heroically,” that is, to embody the attributes of a hero that allow us to face adversity with courage, vigor and resilience. To achieve this, individuals are encouraged to focus less on their perceived negative qualities, and instead to identify, develop, and discover the heroic qualities within themselves (Allison, 2016).

Heroism Science relies heavily on the **hero archetype**; an empowering symbol that does not represent a perfectly brave character, but rather someone who struggles deeply and perseveres despite having all odds stacked against them (Petric, 2023). As life can often feel like a “school of suffering,” the hero archetype becomes not only inspiring, but also deeply relatable.

The term **archetype** was introduced by Carl Jung in 1919 to describe symbols of *psychic energies* that exist beneath the surface of consciousness (Jung, 1970/2010). These energies emerge from what he called the *collective unconscious* and are expressed through universal

images and themes, often revealed through myths and fairytales (Jung & Kerenyi, 1963). Some examples of archetypes include *the shadow*, *the wise old man*, *the great mother*, *the anima*, *the animus* and as already mentioned, *the hero* (Petric, 2023). Interestingly, although archetypes are believed to arise from a shared consciousness, Jung explains that these energies are altered as they filter through our own *personal consciousness*; each individual painting the archetypes with their own unique brush and color (Jung, 1970/2010). In other words, the characters and stories we feel drawn to, reject, admire or fear may reflect something meaningful within us.

One way all these concepts may be applied therapeutically is through **bibliotherapy** (Lawson, 2005), which encourages individuals to select a story that is meaningful to them and to reflect on which characters they most identify with, while drawing parallels between the character's life journey and their own. Similarly, Bland (2019) developed the **Personal Hero Technique (PHT)**, a second-order change strategy and reflective exercise, designed to promote self-awareness and personal transformation. The technique involves choosing a hero or heroine, one that resonates deeply, and then exploring the following:

- *What are five qualities you admire about them?*
- *What are five ways you are already similar to them?*
- *What are five things you could do to become more like them?*

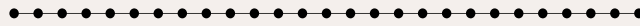
After completing this reflection, individuals are invited to draw insights from their responses and to set an intention to live more in alignment with the heroic qualities they identified.

The Personal Hero Technique can be especially useful during times when an individual is struggling to recognize their own strengths, courage, or resilience. It serves as a reminder that the qualities you admire are not outside of you, but already exist within you.

Living heroically does not mean being fearless. Courage is not the absence of fear, but the willingness to face it. It also means accepting that life is not easy and suffering is real, and while we may resist this reality, it does not mean we are incapable of meeting it.

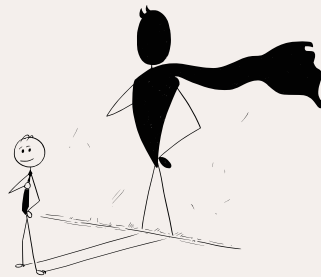


In this way, the invitation is simple: to begin seeing yourself not as separate from the hero, but as someone who already carries those qualities within, learning, struggling, and persevering through it all.



Holly Patrick is an alumna of Hellenic American University and works as an integrative Mental Health Counselor, drawing from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Internal Family Systems (IFS) and Mindfulness to promote emotional well-being. If you are someone you know may be in need of support, you are warmly invited to connect.

More information: www.mindfulwithholly.com



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FROM ATHENS TO AMMAN: HOW A TRIP TO JORDAN SHIFTED MY PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS THE MIDDLE EAST

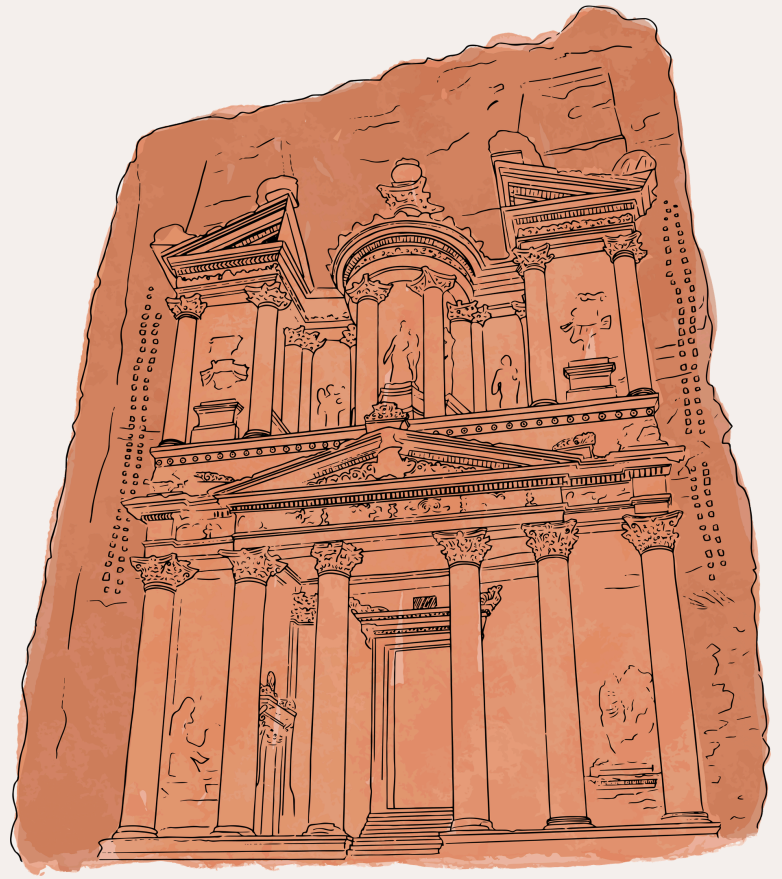
BY ANGELOS VAROTSIS
BSPSY PROGRAM



Before this trip, the Middle East was mostly an idea in my mind, shaped by news, second-hand stories, and vague stereotypes. When the chance came to join the HAU Field Study to Jordan this Fall, it felt like the right moment to replace distance with direct experience. I chose to participate, because travelling with the university gives structure, a safety net, and the wellbeing I would not have, had I set off alone. We had full days of appointments with local leaders – from media, academia, foundations, among others – and evenings to explore the city, negotiate in the market, and try new dishes.

From the first days in Amman, what struck me most was how welcome I felt. People were openly hospitable, offering food, directions, and help without hesitation. Cultural differences were obvious, many women were covered, gestures and body language were unfamiliar, but none of it came with hostility. Experiencing daily kindness from strangers quietly dismantled a lot of the anxiety I had absorbed from a distance. Walking those streets myself felt completely different from watching them through a screen. The group I travelled with also shaped the trip in meaningful ways. I met new classmates, deepened existing friendships, and having familiar faces around created a sense of security. A few memorable moments were floating in the Dead Sea with another student; the two of us drifting in heavy water, surrounded by quiet desert, felt like a shared pause from normal life. The visit to iLearn, an organization working with Palestinian and Syrian children from the Al Baqa'a refugee camp was the most challenging and meaningful part of the trip. Some of the girls were very hesitant around physical proximity. When I stood to take a picture, one girl quickly placed a chair between us. Instead of insisting on my idea of “normal,” I stepped back and gave her more space. Despite the differences, the kids were joyful, curious, and clearly happy we were there.

Jordan's landscape added another layer to the experience. Leaving the city for Petra, the scenery became almost surreal: wide stretches of sand and rock, the road cutting through an empty, quiet space. Walking through the narrow canyon and suddenly seeing the carved façade of the Nabatean Treasury in front of me was the visual highlight of the trip. Conversations with Jordanians also reshaped how I think about belonging. I learned that in the era of Alexander the Great, in Aramaic, Greeks were called flest, "people of the sea," and children born from Greeks and locals were called flestin. From flestin came



Flestine, and in extension, Palestine as we know it today. Whether or not every detail of that story is historically precise, the message was clear: our roots are more entangled than we think. Three different Jordanians called me "brother" and said that, if we went far enough back, our DNA would probably overlap.

Looking back, the trip to Jordan had a direct impact on my life. It reduced fear by replacing distant images with real encounters and strengthened my feeling of community through shared experiences. I see trips like this not as luxury additions but as powerful tools. They push students out of their bubbles, challenge quiet prejudices, and show that the "unknown" is often far more welcoming than we imagine.

Social Trends Be Aware and “Beware”



BY BARBARA K. KONDILIS, MSW, MPH, PHDC, ADJUNCT
FACULTY & ANNA NIKOLAOU, PHD, ADJUNCT FACULTY



Global trends in language and culture influence how we perceive and label behaviors and how we act, both as individuals and as members of groups. The words we choose both reflect and shape social norms, expectations, and behaviors across areas such as alcohol use, addiction patterns, and collective attitudes.

We frame this discussion through what we call the **Triple A**:
Alcohol, **A**ddictions, and **A**ttitudes.

Alcohol

Alcohol use is declining in several populations, particularly among younger adults who are increasingly more likely to choose a mocktail instead of a cocktail. Greater health awareness and changing social values appear to be contributing to this shift. Shift in “substance choice”: While alcohol and cigarette use are at all-time lows, Gen Z is increasingly interested in psychedelics, cannabis, and high-potency nicotine vaping (Abrams, 2024).

Addictions

Other addictive behaviors are rising. Street drug use is increasing, especially among younger individuals. Traditional cigarette smoking has declined in many regions, yet vaping has increased significantly, and we still do not have long term data regarding its health effects. In 2022-2023, approximately 1 in 3 (35%) people aged 18–24 had used an illicit drug in the previous 12 months (Abrams, 2024). Gambling behaviors and impulsive sexual behaviors are becoming normalized in certain contexts and are sometimes presented as typical or socially acceptable. This normalization deserves careful reflection.

Beware of experimenting with illicit substances or misusing prescription medications, including medications prescribed to others. The risks are real even when social narratives minimize them.

Attitudes

Language reflects and shapes cultural change. During COVID, the terms physical distancing were recommended to be changed to social distancing in the field of health promotion (Sorensen, et. al., 2021). In sociology, social distancing traditionally refers to degrees of social acceptance or exclusion between groups, as conceptualized by Emory S. Bogardus in the development of the Social Distance Scale in the 1920s.

Although social exclusion is not a new phenomenon and has historically characterized in-group and out-group dynamics, its current manifestations, amplified by social media, reflect evolving cultural mechanisms of belonging and marginalization.

What was once described as social exclusion is now sometimes reframed as “coordinated seclusion,” and what is commonly referred to as “cancel culture” (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/cancel-culture>) raises important questions about collective behavior, intolerance, and the boundaries between accountability and social silencing. At times, these practices can operate as forms of social censorship that limit open dialogue. Such dynamics are incompatible with the mission of academia, which depends on intellectual freedom, critical inquiry, and respectful engagement with differing viewpoints.

The impulse to silence someone rather than engage with their ideas, even in classrooms, reflects a broader cultural shift in which disagreement is handled through exclusion rather than dialogue.

At the same time, communication norms shaped by social media increasingly enter academic spaces, creating an environment in which academic freedom may be misunderstood as freedom from standards of civility rather than freedom to question ideas responsibly. In this context, expressing disagreement can, at times, blur into hostility.

These shifting trends and ideas deserve careful reflection rather than being accepted without question.

Prevention includes recognizing early signs of harassment, addressing substance-related behaviors that impair judgment, and reinforcing shared expectations of respect.



Our ANTIDOTE

Awareness

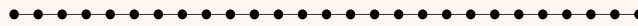
Commitment

Prevention

Awareness requires that we notice not only behavioral trends, but also the language and assumptions that normalize them. Prevention begins with **education, critical thinking, and the courage to protect open dialogue.**

As **members of an academic community**, we are entrusted with more than knowledge transmission. We are responsible for cultivating environments where questioning is encouraged, disagreement is examined thoughtfully, and intellectual growth is not constrained by pressure to conform. Universities exist to expand understanding, not to narrow it.

By remaining attentive to social shifts in alcohol use, addiction patterns, and collective attitudes, we protect both individual well-being and the integrity of our academic community.



Editor's Note:

The wellbeing of any community relies on teamwork and the awareness that RESPECT is key to improving social networks. Let's all reflect on the above article, becoming mindful that as we change, so does the world around us. The Psychology Department is dedicated to your Wellbeing, and as a community we must all slowly raise our awareness to embrace the values that are inherent at our university. Thank you, Dr. Nikolaou and Ms. Kondilis, for inviting our students at Hellenic American University to become more aware of their wellbeing and how this contributes to the wellbeing of others. Let us all make every effort to enhance our social skills, to be inclusive, non-judgmental, kind and polite and in general to become more self-aware of how we can all contribute to positive change.

Lindy McMullin Director Psychology Department HAUNIV



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EUROCRIM 2025: LOGOS OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

BY ERI IOANNIDOU
ADJUNCT FACULTY



The European Society of Criminology’s annual conference, EUROCRIM 2025, took place in Athens, Greece, from September 3rd to 6th, 2025, bringing together a remarkable number of researchers, professionals, and students from around the world. Hosting such a prestigious event in Athens was both an honor for our country and a recognition of the region’s growing contribution to the field of criminology.

This year’s conference showcased a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on innovation and new technologies in the criminal justice system. Many sessions explored how artificial intelligence and digital tools are transforming policing, sentencing, and offender rehabilitation—while raising critical questions about ethics, transparency, and human rights. Discussions on cybercrime, data security, and AI-driven decision-making highlighted how rapidly criminology must adapt to these advancements.

Alongside the focus on technology, other recurring themes included penal reform and reintegration, various forms of violence, assessment, gender and victimization, migration and border issues, and youth justice. A particularly inspiring aspect of the conference was the attention given to criminological education and the ways universities can prepare future professionals to address these complex challenges. Within this dynamic environment, I had the opportunity to deliver an oral presentation titled *“No Country for Forensic Psychologists: Educational Challenges in a Country Where Forensic Psychology Is an Undervalued Field in the Criminal Justice System.”*

The presentation examined the Greek reality, where Forensic Psychology remains underdeveloped and often misunderstood by both the public and professionals in the justice system. Using two illustrative cases -a homicide case and one involving allegation of sexual abuse- I discussed the real-world challenges forensic psychologists face, including the absence of standardized assessment protocols, the limited inclusion of psychologists in justice processes, the lack of forensic hospitals and the ongoing confusion between professional roles.

I also reflected on the educational dimension, focusing on how academic preparation can help address some of these gaps. While most Greek universities still offer limited exposure to Forensic Psychology, the Hellenic American University includes it as part of its psychology curriculum, an important step toward bridging the distance between education and professional practice. However, as the field continues to develop, there remains a broader need for structured, research-informed training opportunities that ensure consistent quality and deeper professional expertise across settings. It was rewarding to share experiences that resonated with many of the broader themes of the conference, particularly the intersection of psychology, education, and justice reform. Presenting in front of such an international audience was a meaningful opportunity to highlight both the progress and the challenges faced by Forensic Psychology in Greece.

I concluded the presentation by emphasizing the importance of adopting international best practices, strengthening collaboration between academia and the justice system, focus on evidence-based education tailored to Greek systemic needs, and integrating Forensic Psychology principles into the training of all justice-related professionals. These steps can lead to fairer, more evidence-based procedures, and to a justice system that values both expertise and humanity.

Overall, EUROCRIM 2025 was an inspiring and enriching experience. Hosting the conference in Athens brought international attention to Greek scholarship and practice, while reaffirming the importance of ongoing dialogue between criminology, psychology, and law. It was a reminder that even in fields that remain undervalued, there is significant potential for growth and that conversations like these can help shape a more informed and just society.

THE QUIET POWER OF SELF-REFLECTION

BY ARTHUR ANTONOPOULOS
BA, MA, MSPSY
ADJUNCT FACULTY

In a world where speed is glorified and stillness mistaken for laziness, self-reflection has quietly fallen out of fashion. Yet, it remains one of the most powerful tools for mental wellness – not because it promises immediate happiness, but because it helps us make sense of ourselves.

When we pause long enough to ask “*Why did I react that way?*” or “*What am I avoiding?*”, we shift from automatic living

to intentional living. This small act of awareness can change the course of a day – or even a life. As a counselor and educator, I often remind my students and clients that reflection is not indulgence; it’s maintenance! Just as the body needs rest to recover, the mind needs reflection to realign.

This spring, take a moment to slow down. Write a few lines about your day. Notice your tone when you speak. Reflect on how your environment shapes your emotions. In doing so, you’ll begin to see patterns – and patterns are the first step toward change.

Wellness isn’t only about what we do for our bodies; it’s about how we listen to our inner dialogue. When we dare to pause and truly hear ourselves, we begin to heal from the inside out.





Three Ways to Cultivate Self-Reflection

1. Set aside five quiet minutes a day.

Reflection doesn't need to be lengthy. Spend just five minutes without distractions – no phone, no notifications – to notice your thoughts and emotional tone. Regular short pauses build greater emotional awareness over time.

2. Journal, but with purpose.

Instead of recording events, focus on meaning: What did I learn today? What challenged me? What gave me energy? This shift from narration to interpretation helps you uncover deeper patterns behind your daily experiences.

3. Ask yourself compassionate questions.

Replace “*What’s wrong with me?*” with “*What is this reaction trying to tell me?*” Self-reflection should never become self-criticism. Curiosity and kindness are what turn awareness into growth.

Oh, and while I am here, allow me to wish everyone a wonderfully
reflective spring season!

My Time in Athens

BY MARIA MOLINARI
STUDY ABROAD STUDENT

I had always dreamed of living in another country for the experience and adventure alone. I was not prepared however to learn so much about myself and my well-being. A culture so different from my own midwest American one had so many lessons in store for me! My semester in Athens taught me so many wellness practices and life skills, tools I still use today back home in Kansas City!



Even though life in Athens taught me to slow down I still found a beautiful culture that appreciates the outdoors and running!



From my valuable conversations I had with professors a key lesson learned in Athens was how I needed to invest in myself and my well-being. I have always prioritized eating well and exercising, but seeing the importance in feeding my mind, my self-worth, and my environment were challenges I had never thought of. Now, I have learned to slow down, be with myself, appreciate the quietness, and even small things like learning to forgive myself.

Slowing down and appreciating food, time spent with others, and life itself were practices I needed to implement in my life for my well-being.

Other wellness habits I had to learn was that keeping my space clean and my activities well-balanced meant caring for my mind and stress. Also learning to let loose and enjoy life, not just constantly work, were challenges I think grew me to appreciate Athens, Greece, and life itself a little bit more. Overall, my professors, classmates, and the cultural exposure I experienced helped me to see that there's more to wellness and self-care than just what you eat and if you go to the gym.



I had the opportunity to share my passions with my classmates, an experience that brought joy and appreciation for life's little experiences!





TIPS FOR LIFE

BY DR. LINDY MCMULLIN
DIRECTOR OF THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Psychological defense mechanisms that affect our Wellbeing and Quality of Life!

In psychoanalytic and psychodynamic theories, the process by which one attributes one's own positive or negative characteristics, onto another person or group, is called projection. This is often a defense mechanism in which unpleasant or unacceptable impulses, stressors, ideas, affects, or responsibilities are attributed to others. For example, the defense mechanism of projection enables a person conflicted over expressing anger to change "I hate them" to "They hate me." Such defensive patterns are often used to justify prejudice or evade responsibility. In more severe cases, they may develop into paranoid delusions in which, for example, an individual who blames others for their problems may come to believe that those others are plotting against them.

It was Sigmund Freud who first introduced defense mechanisms, which are the ways people adapt to or cope with and decrease internal stress. This is the American Psychological Association's definition of **projection**, that is always harmful to the wellbeing and mental health of individuals.

The Negative Effects of Projection may include:

- Reduced self-awareness
- Miscommunication
- Strained relationships
- Avoiding responsibility
- Biases, such as sexism, racism, homophobia, classism and partisanism
- Hindered problem-solving
- Stunted personal growth
- Difficulty experiencing intimacy and closeness with others



The Solution

- Self-reflect to recognize when you're projecting your own feelings or qualities onto others
- Meditate, Practice Mindfulness and Journal
- Question your own assumptions about how other people feel
- Be mindful that your own emotional experience is separate from others
- Seek help from a licensed mental health professional when projection interferes with your wellbeing and quality of life





WE CANNOT STOP FOR DEATH...

BY BARBARA K. KONDILIS, MSW,
MPH, PHDC, ADJUNCT FACULTY

Visual narratives are good for sharing and reframing loss. *Hamnet* the movie, is “A film that speaks in whispers...” as CC Magazine indicates, “It simply holds a space – for silence, for memory, for questions without answers. And that, in itself, is unforgettable” (Column 3, “Hamnet: grief, motherhood and the wound that births art” [Link Here](#)).

Directed by Chloe Zhao, based on the eponymous novel by Maggie O’Farrell. The second half of the film focuses on the parents’ grief and how Hamnet’s death inspires Shakespeare’s famous play, Hamlet.

Some reviews indicate that it is “grief porn” or it is “Shakespeare for the TikTok Generation” and the L.A. Times’s film critic Amy Nicholson called the movie “A soggy story about love and grief with enough tears to flood the river Thames...” the movie plot was “calculated in its grief manipulation” and she would “not shed one tear” (Para 4, [Link Here](#)). Well, Ms. Nicholson, it may have been based on fictional account of real-life events of the famed British author’s family, but MOST of us shed many tears. A full range of emotions from the early love story and marriage to the loss of their son Hamnet at the age of 11 in 1596, shortly before his 12th birthday. Our “Mirror Neurons” of empathy were definitely active. The pain was real, particularly to audience members who may have lost a loved one. It is a story of a family, how people approach grief and loss in different ways in order to try and heal. A lesson of grief and bereavement.

This Shakespeare version avoids the 'solemn' archetype. Shakespeare appears a fragmented man, there are moments he can only speak to the sea, "To be or not to be, that is the question." for him writing and acting in his play is a necessary act of survival that turned inner chaos into structure. "Agnes" (Jessie Buckley, who plays Shakespeare's wife lives in intimate communion with the natural world. She is a healer, herbalist, falconer, a mother to three children including twins Hamnet and Judith. Spoiler alert! The final scene where she 'reaches out' to Hamlet (the actor) as if coming to Hades herself, while her husband looks onward as Orpheus did with Euridice, is one most of the movie viewers will cherish in years to come.

Reading the critiques and some blogs, many saw the therapeutic value of narratives around loss found in literature, art, dance, cinema. One blogger stated, "This film acted like a prayer for me. From the beginning, it wove it's way in and out of my consciousness, my own lived experience, and for days, even weeks afterwards, I kept integrating it"... "Hamnet turns us on to our grief" (para 7-9,Source: [Link Here](#)). In closing, the author says, "Just as Schindler's List highlighted the horrors of the Holocaust, or Saving Private Ryan highlighted the terror of war, Hamnet highlights the burden of losing a child and the potency of life after loss."

Having myself visited Stratford-upon-Avon, I recall the transformation of the swans. It is the same transformation that people have through their stages of grief. Most counselors are called upon to help clients and families around trauma, sadness, loss. Movies like this can help us facilitate this discussion.

"Cinema therapy" is a complementary tool to address many problems...

Film documentaries are an important approach for capturing the public's attention and elevating discussions about uncomfortable or hidden topics such as death and dying, yet little attention has been given to documenting the grief experience of bereaved parents. This article focuses on one specific Collaborative Filmmaking project, Visualizing Loss, and explores the impact of participant-created film from the perspective of the audience members who attended a premiere screening. Audience members were invited to complete a post-screening survey that included questions assessing their knowledge, attitudes and reflections about grief, bereavement, palliative care, and the film. (Burke, 2025).



Key findings from research on movies and grief include:

- **Emotional Regulation & Validation:** Films help viewers navigate, express, and "contain" painful emotions, acting as a form of therapeutic, safe emotional release.
- **Empathy and Connection:** Viewers can empathize with characters, which assists in grasping, normalizing, and managing their own grief.
- **Biographic Resonance Theory:** Entertainment that resonates with a personal life crisis, such as the loss of a loved one, triggers deeper, more meaningful emotional processing.
- **"Frozen" Emotion Release:** Movies can help break through the "frozen" state of shock that often accompanies grief, allowing for necessary mourning.
- **Specific Examples:** Films like *The Babadook* are studied for representing the emotional experience of grief through genre, such as horror.

Studies suggest that watching films can be a constructive, and validated method for coping with the psychological, social, and emotional complexities of bereavement.

Collaborative Filmmaking was used by the Visualizing Loss project, to give parent participants the power and tools to tell and share their own stories and to harness their authentic bereavement experiences to raise awareness to support other parents and families facing similar situations. This research brief explores the impact of authentic parent-created films as tools for deepening awareness about the sensitive issues surrounding bereavement, grief, and mourning before and after a child dies; also around the ***complexity of grief***, and the value of these shared experiences in providing tailored support for grieving parents.

Research has also centered also on how carers and medical professional can cultivate their skills around grief care. Specifically, Tei and Fujino (2022) posit that the Sense of Coherence (SOC) is a resource can possibly help alleviate the aggravation of bereavement, a catalyst for medical students and trainees/residents to cultivate their coping skills in grief care. Workshops including reflective writing exercises and role-play complicated grief (CG) has rapidly emerged, including experiences of having recurrent intrusive thoughts about a person who died, being preoccupied with sorrow, and perceiving life as being purposeless (para 1, Tei and Fujino).



Furthermore, cultural practices are evidenced in installations and museum artifacts which give us insight into the ways people for centuries have addressed grief or death, as well as help us build on our own health literacy skill around this unavoidable human developmental life stage (Kondilis, 2019).

Because I could not stop for death, He kindly stopped for me; The carriage held but just ourselves and immortality. (Emily Dickinson, American poet, 1862).



(PHOTOS BY BARBARA K. KONDILIS, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, 2022)

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SPRING 2026
COUNSELING
CENTER
EVENTS



Understanding Dissociation: Awareness, Recognition & Regulation (English)	Wellness Event Lecture series	Fridays March 13/20/27 & April 3 & 10. Online 15.00 pm -17.00 pm. <i>TEAMS Invitation link to be send via the Counseling Center</i>	Anna Giabanidis MSPSY-CMHC Graduate Student
Loneliness in high-functioning adults	Wellness Event Lecture	Thursday, April 2 nd . On - site 16:00 pm to 17:30 pm <i>TEAMS Invitation link to be send via the Counseling Center</i>	Vanshika Parswal MSPSY-CMHC Graduate Student
Bias in psychology the impact of trauma on perception & behavior	Wellness Event Lecture	Wednesday, April 15 th . On-site 16:30 pm to 18:00 pm	Vanshika Parswal MSPSY-CMHC Graduate Student
<u>Distinguished Lecture Series</u> The psychological impact of peri- and menopause on women, as well as its impact on partners and families. (Greek)	Onsite lecture followed by a moderated discussion (Moderated by Dr Agorastou)	Friday, April 24 th . On-site 19:00 pm to 21:00 pm Massalias 22, 1 st floor main amphitheater <i>TEAMS Invitation link to be send via the Counseling Center</i>	Dr. Founta, MD, Gynecologist and Despoina Ploussiou, M.A, LMFT. Moderator Dr. Agorastou
The princess and the pea: <i>An overview of female archetypes through the ages & the modern dating.</i> (English)	Psychoeducational Group	Fridays April 3/17/24 & May 8/15/22. Online 17:15 pm to 18:45 pm <i>TEAMS Invitation link to be send via the Counseling Center</i>	Denia Gili, Georgina Argyriou & Alexia Karakosta MSPSY-CMHC Graduate Students
Shadow work in Clinical practice: Theory, Application, and Ethical Containment (English)	Wellness Event Lecture	Friday, May 8 th Online 15:00 pm to 18:00 pm <i>TEAMS Invitation link to be send via the Counseling Center</i>	Anna Giabanidis MSPSY-CMHC Graduate Student

Reservations

To attend an event, please respond to the link that you will receive via the Counseling Center e-mail. Some events are onsite & some online. Regardless of the modality, a TEAMS link will be e-mailed for all events.

Note: Scheduled events will be ongoing and will be updated continuously. Please check the Counseling Center updates and hauniv e-mail for Counseling Center announcements.



Contact Information:

Dr. Lindy McMullin
Director of Psychology Department
Email: lmcmullin@hauniv.edu

Send your article with references APA style - (Mate, 2017)

Hellenic American College
Massalias 22, 10680 Athens, Greece
Hellenic American University
436 Amherst St. 03063 NH, USA

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