

# ...with David Lavalley

Aberystwyth University, and new Chair of the Psychologist Policy Committee

## One inspiration

I was inspired by Howard Gardner and his book, *Frames of Minds: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, which I read as a student. I see great potential in testing Gardner's theories (e.g. leadership, kinesthetic intelligence) in sport and exercise settings.

## One hope for The Psychologist

As incoming Chair of the Policy Committee, I hope to see the publication continue to reach larger and more diverse audiences.

## One moment that changed the course of your career

Joining the Sport and Exercise Psychology Section (now Division) of the BPS. I'm chartered through the Division of Counselling Psychology but have research interests in sport and exercise contexts. I'm now Head of the Department of Sport and Exercise Science at Aberystwyth University.

## One alternative career path you might have chosen

A well-known career assessment inventory suggests I share interests with psychologists, sports coaches, meteorologists and people who work outdoors. A golf caddie, perhaps.

## One psychologically interesting thing about golf

Golf is a game with a considerable amount of 'down time' between shots during which distracting thoughts can occur. Because it takes only a few seconds to swing a golf club and usually no more than one minute to plan and execute a shot, a golfer who shoots level par during a round will be directly involved in planning shots for about 25 per cent of the time. To play well a golfer needs to be able to focus on the shot/putt at hand and accept that mistakes will be made. Interestingly, professional golfers are often able to accept the relatively

few mistakes they make more than recreational golfers.

## One thing that you would change about psychology

For psychology to work more towards being a unitary discipline, rather than perpetually fragmenting itself.

## One cultural recommendation

An Irish artist named Paula Higgins, now based in Queensland, Australia.

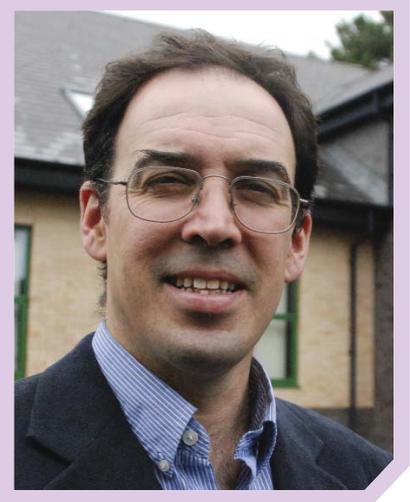
## One book that you think all psychologists should read

*Semrad: The Heart of a Therapist*. This book is a collection of quotes and anecdotes from Elvin Semrad, a psychiatrist who practised in the United States in the second half of the 20th century. He consistently emphasised that the first and most important task of the trainee practitioner is to learn to sit with the patient, listen to and hear them, and help to stand the pain they could not bear alone. Semrad wouldn't have

agreed with my choice here as he believed 'the patient is the only textbook we need'.

**One hero who has had a large impact on psychology**  
Noam Chomsky.

**One problem that psychology should deal with**  
Many psychologists are already trying to deal with the problem of how to reverse the trend of an increasingly sedentary society. Epidemiological research clearly documents the health risks associated with inactivity and psychology is helping to better understand determinants of physical (in)activity, how to help sedentary individuals adopt and maintain higher levels of



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physical activity and the effects of physical activity on psychological outcomes.

**More answers online at**  
[www.thepsychologist.org.uk](http://www.thepsychologist.org.uk)

## resource

'*Sport & Exercise Psychology Review*. After being invited to stand as newsletter editor five years ago, I took it upon myself to propose a new publication that was in line with many other Divisions. It is broadly construed and disseminates scholarly reports and information on all aspects of sport and exercise psychology. I hope it comes to occupy a visible and respected position.'

## coming soon

Articles on conspiracy theories, the naturalness of weird beliefs, student writer competition winners, deciphering the cosmic number, and much more...

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