

‘Reflect on the lives you continue to enhance’

Rumina Taylor



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One unforgettable moment

Last year my daughter Amelia was born. I remember feeling immensely proud of myself for getting through the whole thing, before I was hit with a wave of anxiety and responsibility which left me feeling rather overwhelmed. I soon realised my life would never quite be the same again, and I would now always be somewhat unreliable and incompetent as I faced the challenges of motherhood and all the joy that it brings.

One flaw

In trying to be helpful I have a real tendency to ‘take over’ tasks especially in my personal life, which can be disempowering for others. I have learnt to ‘sit on my hands’ more and support and encourage my loved ones, but there’s still more work to do.

One inspiration

Baroness Susan Greenfield. When I was 15, deciding what subjects to study at A-level and more broadly what career to pursue – and feeling like I hadn’t a clue, I was fortunate enough to attend a talk she gave. She talked about her love for science, in particular brain physiology. I subsequently followed her work and felt empowered that women can succeed in science.

One important decision

Choosing which particular area of psychology to pursue after leaving university. I had always been interested in occupational psychology and had enjoyed the teaching at university. My thesis also involved carrying out research within a workplace setting, so I felt my future was already decided. However, clinical psychology interested me. The turning point was when a close family member suffered with significant anxiety and engaged in talking therapy, which was most beneficial. This motivated me to find out more about the profession. I was fortunate to be able to complete a work experience placement over the summer within a local hospital and shadow a clinical psychologist. The work was extremely rewarding, and I was fascinated by how much human behaviour could differ. I was left with the question: ‘Why do we do the things we do?’ I decided

to go for it and pursued a career in clinical psychology, and I have no regrets.

One proud moment

Winning a Health Service Journal Patient Safety Award in 2015 for our Family Work Service, which I designed and led. When I was working as a clinical psychologist across a number of acute inpatient wards, we used to receive complaints from family members, and the teams felt they lacked skills in working with carers and loved ones. We managed to form a small team (three nurses, two doctors and myself) of family workers who were provided with additional training and launched a service across the wards to provide support and intervention for families and service users. Outcome data showed the benefit in terms of carer and service-user wellbeing, and we also reduced the number of complaints, so the Trust were happy!

One influential person

Professor Derek Johnston, my undergraduate research supervisor, was very kind and patient with me. He taught me how to go about conducting research and emphasised the importance of and rationale for contributing to an evidence base. I carried out an interesting study looking at the balance between staff effort at work and rewards received, and the impact imbalance can have on a person's wellbeing. I still hold the effort-reward model in

mind and try and encourage myself to not let my work and life roles get out of balance.

One thing I'd like to do more

Play the piano. At one time I was quite good! However, following university with my focus on getting an assistant psychologist post and the lack of space in my small flat, piano playing slipped off the radar. I only play as a treat nowadays when visiting my parents.

One place

Agios Tychonas in Cyprus. I visit once a year and it truly feels like home. The environment allows an escape from ordinary life and reality. Being there offers a chance for reflection and the opportunity for my mind to have a well-deserved rest.

One final thought

To my fellow psychologists, we are all aware of how tough it is managing increasing workload with limited funding within the NHS and lots of our effort-reward models may feel imbalanced. At times, as a profession, I don't think we give ourselves enough praise or 'show off' the great work we do on a daily basis. No matter what grade you are or stage of your career, every now and again reflect on the brilliant work you do and the lives you continue to enhance and change.



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2017

Conference	Date	Venue	Website
Social Psychology Section	31 Aug–1 Sept	College Court, Leicester	www.bps.org.uk/social2017
Division of Health Psychology	6–8 Sept	Mercure Cardiff Holland House Hotel	www.bps.org.uk/dhp2017
Developmental Psychology Section	13–15 Sept	Crowne Plaza, Stratford-upon-Avon	www.bps.org.uk/dev2017
Faculty for Children, Young People & their Families	26–27 Sept	Hilton Reading	www.bps.org.uk/cyfp2017
Psychology4Students	21 Nov 5 Dec	Nottingham Trent University The Kia Oval, London	www.bps.org.uk/P4S2017
Psychology4Graduates	6 Dec	The Kia Oval, London	www.bps.org.uk/P4G2017
Division of Sport & Exercise Psychology	11–12 Dec	Radisson Blu Glasgow	www.bps.org.uk/dsep2017

2018

Division of Occupational Psychology	10–12 Jan	Crowne Plaza, Stratford-upon-Avon	www.bps.org.uk/dop2018
Division of Clinical Psychology	17–18 Jan	Mercure Cardiff Holland House Hotel	www.bps.org.uk/dcp2018
Annual Conference	2–4 May	East Midlands CC, Nottingham	www.bps.org.uk/ac2018
Division of Academics, Researchers & Teachers	6–7 June	Birmingham City University	www.bps.org.uk/dartp2018
Division of Counselling Psychology	6–7 June	Hilton, Newcastle Gateshead	www.bps.org.uk/dcop2018