

The University of Hong Kong  
Department of Psychology

*Departmental Seminar*

*Repetitive Negative Thought: Innovative  
Approaches for Treating Rumination and Worry*

Date: March 13, 2013 (Wednesday)  
Time: 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.  
Venue: CPD-2.14, 2/F Central Podium Level, Centennial Campus, HKU  
Speaker: Professor Ed Watkins  
Director of the Mood Disorders Centre  
University of Exeter, U.K.

***About the Speaker:***

Professor Watkins is a research clinical psychologist and Director of the Mood Disorders Centre at the University of Exeter. He has developed a research programme investigating depressive rumination, utilising both experimental methods to understand its mechanisms and clinical process-outcome research to develop improved psychological interventions. This research programme has led to numerous publications in leading clinical psychology and psychiatry journals and has attracted research funding from the Wellcome Trust, Medical Research Council UK and NARSAD, including £3.6 million to build a new Sir Henry Wellcome Building for Mood Disorders Research. His key contributions have been in the experimental understanding of psychopathology, with a particular focus on cognition-emotion interactions and rumination, and the development and evaluation of new psychological interventions for mood disorders (Rumination-focused CBT; Concreteness Training).

The Mood Disorders Centre is a partnership between the University of Exeter and the National Health Service (NHS). It provides a centre for psychological research, assessment, treatment and training that aims to benefit all people who suffer from mood disorders.

***Abstract:***

Repetitive negative thought has been identified as an important causal factor in several psychological disorders, most notably depression, generalized anxiety disorder, social anxiety disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Despite this, there have been few explicit attempts to directly target negative repetitive thought: standard CBT has tended to target the content of individual negative automatic thoughts rather than the overall process of repetitive negative thinking. In recent years, an increased understanding of the mechanisms underpinning repetitive negative thinking has provided the opportunity for more innovative approaches to treat repetitive negative thought. For example, recent work has indicated that one key element within repetitive negative thought might be the processing style adopted during such thought. Such developments have resulted in two treatments that target repetitive negative thought: Rumination-focused CBT, which builds on a behavioral activation framework; and concreteness training, a guided self-help training utilizing a cognitive bias modification approach. This presentation will outline the key results of these trials and possible lessons for further taking forward our treatment of repetitive negative thought and its transdiagnostic implications.