

# SANE AUSTRALIA

SANE Australia Online Peer Group

Date: 17/3/2022

**Topic:** Decoding Pop Psychology

**Description:** The lines between psycho-education, self-help and psychology are becoming increasingly blurred, especially on social media. One can notice normal emotions being pathologized into disorders or trauma. Let's come together to detangle these jargons and simple claims and answers to decode complex human psyche... as well as explore the benefits of it!

Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about Decoding Pop Psychology. This is a new peer support service we are trialling. Because of this, we really value your thoughts on how it goes, so we will send a link to a short survey at the end of this event for you to complete. While this survey is optional, it is a chance to provide feedback for us to improve our services. In case you might need to leave part way through the event, you can find the survey here now:

[https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW](https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW)

Tonight, peer support workers @earthling95 and @Mrnobody21 will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of Decoding Pop Psychology. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both. We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about mental health struggles.

@Basil (Moderator) who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety. If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ

(<https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support>) or message

@Basil (Moderator)

**mrnobody2021**  
**(PSW)**

mrnobody2021

(PSW)

earthling95

(PSW)

Basil

(Moderator)

mrnobody2021

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earthling95

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the magician

mrnobody2021

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Basil

(Moderator)

earthling95

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the magician

the magician

earthling95

(PSW)

the magician

earthling95

(PSW)

mrnobody2021

(PSW)

We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join 😊

Hello everyone :)

Evening all

Welcome everyone! Feel free to introduce yourselves. I'm mrnobody2021 :)

**What is your understanding of pop psychology?**

Welcome @the magician !

welcome themagician :)

hello people. this is a completely new topic for me. i will be learning from you.

To me, pop psychology simply means theories of psychology explained in general terms

glad you're still attending earthling95

me too @the magician . First thing that comes to my mind are those inspo posts on instagram

My understanding of pop psychology- theories about human behaviour that are 'simplified' or 'generalised'  
i just finished the first component of mental health first aid. lot of educational stuff made accurate. i guess thats psychology in general terms.

simplified or generalised is like my community education speech

Correct the magician. I was first introduced to pop psychology through random questions on the internet that could apparently determine everything about my personality and psyche - according to my favourite colour.

oh that's just so unfounded and inaccurate that stuff

It felt exciting when I was 17 haha

**With the rise of social media therapy, folks are being potentially exposed to a more 'DIY therapeutic experience' . A normal personality trait is termed as a trauma response, and having common feelings are classed as complex mental health issues. What has been your experience?**

Oh I could go on and on about this. As much as I am grateful to social media accounts that provide genuine psycho-educational content, there are some that pathologise every 'human' experience. It almost feels like I am 'missing out' and that my recovery journey needs to look a certain way. If only breathwork or meditation could 'heal' everything for me. Just because I lean more towards being independent or 'strong', it doesn't automatically make it a 'trauma response'.

earthling95 (PSW)  
earthling95 (PSW)  
tyme (PSW)  
mrnobody2021 (PSW)  
mrnobody2021 (PSW)  
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the magician  
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tyme (PSW)  
earthling95 (PSW)  
mrnobody2021 (PSW)  
earthling95 (PSW)  
mrnobody2021 (PSW)  
the magician

Welcome tyme :)

Good Evening  
I think there's certainly a risk that people end up self diagnosing. But on the other, it could be beneficial if it results in people reaching out for support.

Hey @tyme (PSW) !

Very true mrnobody2021.... self-diagnosing requires inward reflection first.

Hi mrnobody2021  
a couple of examples. churches that can heal you by praying over you or in America the popularity of a therapist for everyday life. real housewives of Beverley hills stuff.  
Makes sense, the magician. I can think of that too. Reminds me of when people go off medical treatment to find alternative 'cures'

**Pop psychology, whether through social media or other self-help sources can be extremely beneficial for some. What do you think are some of the benefits of it?**

It can give hope to people to at least start looking  
its for people living in denial and expecting medicine to be perfect  
you have to filter what you read  
Definitely @the magician! Have to be so careful to decipher fact and fiction  
I definitely think it can provide a sense of validation and belonging, it can feel comforting that i'm not alone. I think it has been a game changer in terms of normalising conversations around what it means to be human.

Yes it can provide validation in many ways

It can be tricky to navigate self help content though.

Agreed @earthling95 , I think the biggest issue is there's just so much content out there  
are we doing that here validation through pop psychology theories of our own?

earthling95  
(PSW)

That made me chuckle the magician. We surely are!

I guess nowadays, pop psych can come in the form of pics, videos, etc. Mixed media helps it reach more people so that it is easier to navigate? @earthling95

tyme (PSW)  
mrnobody2021  
(PSW)

**In recent years, we have seen a rise in public figures opening up about their mental health struggles. What has this experience been like for you?**

tyme (PSW)  
the magician

Also, apps! that makes self-navigation easier too

it makes me feel less exposed and closer to a career in advocacy

tyme (PSW)

Having public figures opening up really normalises MH struggles. IN some cultures, MH is taboo. So having people open up is a huge step forward in accepting people and understanding MH

100% tyme. I come from a culture where mental health was a taboo subject many years ago. I have personally seen how mental health awareness on social media has been a game changer- almost like a stepping stone for people to know that getting help is important and necessary, chips away the stigma I guess.

earthling95  
(PSW)  
mrnobody2021  
(PSW)

That's great to hear @the magician :)

Also, I'm sure many have experienced drs and nurses treating people with MH yet have NO understanding of the condition. This is where lived experience plays a huge role - and there is a push for it! So @the magician, way to go in advocacy!

tyme (PSW)  
earthling95  
(PSW)  
mrnobody2021  
(PSW)

I think public figures can have a 'larger than life' persona and when they open up about their struggles, it makes them very human. Just proves that money and fame can never fill the void.

I think there's a lot of potential for positive change in regards to public figures sharing their experience of complex mental health issues

the magician  
earthling95  
(PSW)

yes that becomes like Taylor swifts reputation!

the magician  
mrnobody2021  
(PSW)

I do feel conflicted sometimes. There are times when it gets tough separating the art from the artist.

stories of Daniel Johns are what had impact on me growing up and now

earthling95  
(PSW)  
mrnobody2021  
(PSW)

Same here @the magician !

Britney Spears for me.

**Why is pop psychology so popular online? Is it simply because it's so accessible or does it also highlight how under resourced and underdeveloped our mental health systems are?**

tyme (PSW)  
the magician  
tyme (PSW)

Accessibility is a HUGE factor - time, cost, ease of access... much easier than being on a waitlist for months!

there are definitely not enough social MH options at the moment. covid has tested us but its also shut us down.

Agree @the magician - COVID

**mrnobody2021**  
**(PSW)**

the magician  
**earthling95**

**(PSW)**

**mrnobody2021**  
**(PSW)**

the magician  
**earthling95**

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the magician  
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the magician  
**mrnobody2021**

**(PSW)**

the magician  
**earthling95**

**(PSW)**

**tyme (PSW)**  
**earthling95**

**(PSW)**

the magician  
**mrnobody2021**

**(PSW)**

**earthling95**

**(PSW)**

**earthling95**

**(PSW)**

**mrnobody2021**

**(PSW)**

**mrnobody2021**

**(PSW)**

**tyme (PSW)**

Agreed @the magician . I think the lack of services definitely leads to some people looking for alternatives online.

accessibility to NDIS funds are getting tricky for MH clients. and the system will be in turmoil when it crashes.

'Covid has tested us but it has also shut us down' - so apt the magician.

Yeah the NDIS is certainly tough to navigate

print it?

Take a bow, the magician!

haha you're funny

**In your own personal recovery experience, how do you differentiate between fact and misinformation when looking at mental health resources online?**

does it check out with what the latest research your psychiatrists tells you about.

If you want to be super safe, it's always best to take online content with a grain of salt. Especially if it isn't well referenced.

I come u with ideas for where research should be headed but its not in the current funding scope agenda

I usually trust my gut or do my own research. I have found myself overthinking when I look at mental health resources because I am not able to journal a certain way or 'feel my feelings' 24x7 . I think recovery looks different for all of us. My therapist has been extremely supportive as well.

Whatever I read, I like to discuss it with my trusted therapist and then do some more research.

tyme- this can help us make informed decisions

having a biomedical education would help.

XD

Hahahah

Just curious- what are some of your trusted sources?

**According to your own experience, what's a movie/TV show that has resonated with your recovery journey?**

Its Bojack Horseman for me!

LOL @mrnobody2021., I'm my own journey - I don't have a movie that resonates. Can't think of one anyway :)

earthling95  
(PSW)

Bojack Horseman for sure!!!

earthling95  
(PSW)

So nuanced. So complex. So human..and so hilarious!

earthling95  
(PSW)

Rain man had an impact on me growing up as well.

i grew up with an episode of country practice with someone with schizophrenia but portrayed as split personality and i thought cool two different lives . i was 12.

the magician  
mrnobody2021  
(PSW)

Oh thats interesting @the magician , my family watched that show. I cant remember that episode though

earthling95  
mrnobody2021  
(PSW)

That's interesting..i'm going to have a look at this show

**Have you learned anything helpful from others' experiences here tonight that you might be able to apply in your own life? If yes, what did you learn?**

the magician  
mrnobody2021  
(PSW)

that we are al in common. same street.

the magician  
earthling95  
(PSW)  
mrnobody2021  
(PSW)

100% @the magician !

one thing yo can do for MH. tell me i'm here if you haven't read it.

That tiktok videos cannot define my complex human psyche.

Well said @earthling95

everybody's different yet we're al the same just nobody thinks so....

the magician  
earthling95  
(PSW)  
mrnobody2021  
(PSW)

Life's a jigsaw puzzle

**Tonight's topic may have brought up some heavy feelings. Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do? 😊**

the magician  
tyme (PSW)  
earthling95  
(PSW)

we have to come from a place of hope that there is the distinct possibility everything will turn out fine. make it a mantra.

love it @the magician

the magician  
tyme (PSW)  
earthling95  
(PSW)

Brilliant! Thanks for sharing the magician

see you all next week. thanks for the discussion.

I'll be having something to eat after this :)

I might watch a show and get some sleep :)

**mrnobody2021**  
**(PSW)**

the magician

Thanks for attending @the magician !

chips and tv for me

**mrnobody2021**  
**(PSW)**

**earthling95**

**(PSW)**

[We would like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. We would love to hear your Feedback, it will take a few minutes. Please click on this link: http://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW](http://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW)

Thanks for attending folks! Take care ☺

**mrnobody2021**  
**(PSW)**

[Thank you for joining and we hope you enjoyed this discussion :\). If you'd like to be informed when our next Peer Group Chat we will be taking place, You can sign up to our mailing list http://www.sane.org/peer-support/online-mental-health-meet-up. You can also ask questions for us to discuss In the future.](http://www.sane.org/peer-support/online-mental-health-meet-up)