

Dr Jeannie Higgins

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Summary

Dr Jean (known as Jeannie) Higgins is a specialist clinical psychologist, a community and organisational consultant with over thirty years of clinical, research, community and policy experience. She is also a trained yoga and meditation teacher. Dr Higgins has worked in acute psychiatry, community health, developmental disabilities, university teaching, alternative and substitute care for abused and neglected adolescents; the provision of shop front and country outreach services for war veterans and their families, relationship education and counseling; and in the well-being of emergency service personnel such as medical practitioners, police, nurses, fire-fighters and ambulance officers. For over twenty years, Dr Higgins has run a busy consultancy in Canberra, Australia. She works very closely with the multiple systems that impact on health, social and vocational outcomes. Dr Higgins provides professional staff training, mentorship, health facilitation and practical support to individuals, families, groups and local, national and international organisations who facilitate the knowledge, wisdom and resources of vulnerable people.

Relevant Qualifications and Clinical Experience

PhD (Clinical Psychology)

Full member Australian Psychological Society, APS, and its College of Clinical Psychologists

Qualified Yoga & Meditation teacher (Full member Yoga Australia)

Ongoing Professional development requirements of APS and its Clinical College and Yoga Australia.

37 years of clinical psychological work in teaching hospitals, government funded psychological counseling services (Vietnam Veterans Counseling Service), national clinical monitoring services (Attorney General's Dept.), NGO services and private practice.

Organisational Consultancies

Policy development experience at local, state/territory and national levels

Skills in Evidence-Based Practice

Facilitation of sustained transformational changes in the implementation of theoretically informed best practice evidence-based interventions, including:

- severe clinical presentation across a range of disorders including traumatic stress reactions, chronic illness and pain, anxiety, depression, bereavement and grief, eating disorders, OCD, substance abuse, relationship dysfunction and management of psychotic disorders
- Prevention and intervention in the negative consequences of traumatic stress reactions and the facilitation post-traumatic evolution and growth
- Adjustment and recovery following acute injury
- Management of chronic pain and illness, including the use of safe movement to maximise psychological and physical well being
- Interpersonal and systemic interventions in the well-being of couples, parents, children, groups and organisations
- Menopause and mid-life issues in women

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- Pregnancy and childbirth, transitions
- Responsible conflict resolution, assertion and social skills training
- Successful prevention and management of occupational distress
- Motivational analysis and enhancement
- Goal setting
- Stress management
- Effective interventions for body image and self-worth issues
- Substance abuse
- Later life transitions including life review and integration of ageing, retirement, illness, bereavement and death.
- Staff training and supervision in sustained lifestyle change

Organisational Consultancies

- Consultation concerning traumatic stress reactions with Australian Nurses Federation, Police Federation of Australia, Emergency Services Australia – Australian Capital Territory (ACT) (Fire-fighters, Ambulance Service, Rural Fire Service, and State Emergency Service), Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia –ACT Branch, Victims Support Service- ACT Branch, ACT Division of General Practitioners, Communities at Work (community development organisation)
- Provision of Independent Pre-liability and Medico- legal Assessments to Comcare Australia and numerous other national insurance companies
- Provision of Employee Assistance Program psychological consultancy services to the Department of Defence and the National Registration Authority over several years
- Organisational Consultancy Police Association of NSW & the Australian Federal Police on occupational wellbeing
- Beyond Blue & Medecins Sans Frontiers (recognised provider)
- Commonwealth Government Case Managers, Human Resource Personnel and Rehabilitation Providers on successful and sustained vocational rehabilitation
- Fibromyalgia self-help group, Arthritis Foundation, RSI & Overuse Injury Association of the ACT, Staff of the Australian National University on the successful management of acute and chronic injuries and pain
- International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS) over a number of years in Canada, Istanbul and Melbourne on research and treatment issues in traumatic stress reactions,
- Invited speaker on an expert panel discussing the relevance and validity of evidence in psychological therapies at a conference co-hosted by the National Centre for Post Traumatic Mental Health and Australasian Society for Traumatic stress Studies (ASTSS).
- Nursing Federation of Australia on violence in the workplace
- Professional supervision over several years of Sports Psychologists from the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) who provide psychological consultancy to Olympic athletes and teams representing Australia in the Olympic and Commonwealth Games and World Championships

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- Australasian representative on the Public Education Committee of ISTSS. This committee has representatives from the US, Europe and South Africa and they have produced a series of pamphlets to further educate the general public and other health professionals about traumatic stress reactions and its sequelae.
- Invited speaker to the ACT Division of General Practitioners on domestic violence, traumatic stress reactions and GP self-care.
- Presentations to the Australian Psychological Society, the ACT Division of General Practitioners, ACT Mental Health & The Disaster Recovery Centre, the ACT Chamber of Commerce and the National Conference of the Australasian Society of Traumatic Stress Studies and a psychological consultancy to the media on community recovery following the bushfires in the ACT in January 2003,
- Shop front facility and country outreach program to war veterans and their families,
- Senior Psychologist and Acting Principal Psychologist with the Commonwealth Attorney Generals Department and part of a specialist team of four psychologists who were responsible for monitoring and improving the quality of family services in Australia. This work involved clinical evaluation of intervention and supervisory models and methods and the piloting of preventative family skills programs across the country.
- Sports Psychology consultancy- elite athletes at both individual and team levels in Tasmania, the ACT and Sydney
- Well Being courses with staff of the Australian Choreographic Centre and other community-based organisations

Selected Publications and Presentations

- Higgins, J. (1995a,). Traumatic Stress reactions in police. Doctoral Dissertation Abstract. University of Wollongong. Australia
- Higgins, J. (1995b,). A conceptual model of traumatic stress reactions. *Beyond Survival* 13, 11-17-
- Higgins, J. (1997a, October). The reconstruction of trauma: A brief overview. *Australasian Stresspoints*. 7-10
- Higgins, J. (2000, March). Therapeutic process issues and the reconstruction of trauma. Invited Advanced Level Workshop. Abstract Third World Congress, International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS), Melbourne, Australia
- Higgins, J. (2001a, November). Traumatic stress reactions: Assessment and treatment. Invited Seminar for ACT Division of General Practitioners, Canberra, Australia
- Higgins, J. (2001b, March). Relevance and validity of evidence in psychological treatment of trauma. Invited paper presented at the National Conference for the Australasian Society for Traumatic Stress Studies and National Centre for Post Traumatic Mental Health. Canberra, Australia
- Higgins, J. (2002, February). Surviving the medico-legal process. Invited paper presented on International RSI Awareness Day to the RSI and Overuse Injury Association of the ACT. Canberra, Australia:
- Higgins, J. (2002, October). Work-related injury, stress, trauma and chronic pain. Invited presentation to AFP/ACT policing executive
- Higgins, J. (2005, September). Dramatic evolution in functioning as a possible response to a traumatic event. Paper presented at ASTSS Conference. Perth, Western Australia.
- Higgins, J. (December, 2010) Evolve with Trauma: Become your own safe, compassionate and

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wise friend. Canberra, Australia: Thawun Press.

- Higgins, J. (2011, May). Evolve with Trauma- organisations. Invited presentation Emergency Services Australia-ACT. Canberra, Australia
- Higgins, J (2016 in preparation). I am more than my trauma, loss and pain.
- Higgins, J (2016 in preparation). Therapeutic process and traumatised people.
- Higgins J. (2016 in preparation). Beyond generational trauma: Living and playing in AWE.

Selected Advocacy & Support

- International Women's Development Agency (IDWA)
- Plan International Australia
- Amnesty International Australia
- The Wilderness Society
- The Smith Family – Educate program
- AVAAZ-The world in action
- Bush Heritage Australia
- GetUp
- Change.org- The world's platform for change
- Australasian Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ASTSS)
- International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS)
- International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD)
- Blue Knot Foundation (formerly Adults Surviving Child Abuse)