

# PHD PSYCHOLOGISTS NEWS

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST 2025

## PhD Psychologists team

Because Well-Being Builds  
Empowered Professionals and  
a Thriving University.



**Universiteit  
Leiden**



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# 1.1. OUR TEAM, OUR VISION

**We believe that behind every PhD candidate is a human being with unique needs, strengths, and challenges.**

In our team:

- We work with empathy and professional expertise
- We offer a place where vulnerability is welcomed and growth is supported



# 1.2. OUR TEAM, OUR VISION

Through our guidance, those who seek our support find:

- **A sense of being seen and heard**
- **A safe space to reflect, feel, and grow**
- **A stronger foundation for moving forward in life**

**They learn to say:**

“I am good enough.”

“My emotions are human.”

“Mistakes are part of the PhD journey.”

“I can do this.”

Most importantly, **they discover that seeking help can be a positive and empowering experience.**

# 2. HOW CAN THE PHD PSYCHOLOGIST HELP?

You can turn to the PhD psychologist with problems arising from your PhD trajectory and other related personal problems, for example:

- Excessive (work) pressure, work-life imbalance
- Physical and mental stress
- Exhaustion and burn-out
- Concentration problems
- Motivation problems
- Procrastination
- Anxiety issues, including fear of failure and panic attacks
- Mood issues
- Perfectionism, imposter syndrome
- Uncertainty (about your future)
- Difficulties being assertive
- Low or negative self-esteem
- Social isolation, loneliness
- Adjustment problems, culture shock
- Problems with supervision or other aspects of the working environment

# 3. WHO ARE THE PHD PSYCHOLOGISTS?

**Agnes van Rossum**



Agnes van Rossum worked for many years as a scientist in the position of technician, PhD candidate and post-doc, obtaining her PhD in 2006. She quit science in 2010. Agnes studied clinical and health psychology at Utrecht University, after which she started her own practice as psychologist and walk-and-talk coach. In the role of PhD psychologist, Agnes brings her two worlds together.

**Margarita Lourido**



Margarita Lourido obtained her PhD in Clinical Psychology in Barcelona in 2016. She has an extensive international background which has included work and study in numerous countries such as Colombia, the USA, Spain and the Netherlands. Since 2018, she has had her own practice as a coach-psychologist through which she channels her passion for helping highly-educated internationals navigate the challenges of establishing a life and career abroad.

# 4. UPCOMING ACTIVITIES



## ACT TRAINING

Status:  
Registration is open  
Starting 25 Sept 2025

### **For Dutch speakers**

In deze ACT-training leer je anders met moeilijke situaties om te gaan, vanuit acceptatie en aanvaarding.

[Link ACT TRAINING](#)

## AD(H)D PHD PEER SUPPORT GROUP

Status:  
Registration  
permanently open

A safe space for PhD candidates with signs of AD(H)D to share, connect, and grow together.

Via email ask for more information and how to register

## GET MORE SUCCESS WITH LESS STRESS COURSE

Status:  
Registration is open  
Starting 20 Jan 2025

In this course, you will gain insight into how to take more care of your mental well-being.

[Link GET MORE SUCCESS WITH LESS STRESS COURSE](#)

## NAVIGATING A NEW CULTURE WORKSHOP SERIES

Status:  
Registration is open  
Starting 7 Oct 2025

International PhD candidates face many challenges living abroad. Overcoming cultural barriers boosts their success.

[Link NAVIGATING A NEW CULTURE WORKSHOP SERIES](#)

For signing up, please send an e-mail to [phdpsychologist@SEA.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:phdpsychologist@SEA.leidenuniv.nl)

# 5.1. BUILDING WELL-BEING AWARENESS TOGETHER

On June 20, in honor of **World Refugee Day**, PhD psychologist Margarita Lourido led a heartfelt workshop titled **“From Loss to Growth: Adapting, Healing and Thriving in a New Culture.”**

**Organized by Meeting Point** and hosted by Roswitha Kazic and Jeroen Berkvens, the event brought together university staff and refugees to reflect on the emotional journey of building a life abroad.

In line with the theme **“In Praise of Community Building,”** the workshop offered a safe and compassionate space to acknowledge loss, embrace self-care, and explore what community can offer in times of hardship. Participants got practical tips for navigating cultural adaptation, while honoring the resilience and strength it takes to start again.

***“The life you’re building abroad may not have started under ideal circumstances, but your future can still reflect your hopes, your goals, and your strength.” –Margarita Lourido–.***



# 5.2. BUILDING WELL-BEING AWARENESS TOGETHER



Please let us know how we can help you create well-being awareness in your faculty. Invite us to talk in your event, these are the options that we have to offer you:

1.

10 – 15 min presentation. **Introduction to PhD psychologists' services.**

2.

90 – 120 min workshop. **Coping with living abroad.**

3.

90 min workshop. **From Surviving to Thriving in PhD Life:**  
Leading Your Path to Success by Overcoming Self-sabotage

Invite us to be part of your event (with anticipation) by sending an e-mail to [phdpsychologist@SEA.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:phdpsychologist@SEA.leidenuniv.nl)

# 6.1. YOUR STORY, YOUR STRENGTH

## **Navigating the Storm: You're Not Alone**

Starting a PhD is often described as an exciting intellectual journey, but it's also a deeply personal one. Behind every research question is a human being navigating new systems, expectations, and relationships. And sometimes, those challenges become overwhelming.

In this edition, we share the honest story of a fellow PhD candidate who arrived full of motivation, but soon started struggling with interpersonal tensions and self-doubt.

**It's a powerful reminder that asking for help is not a setback, it's a turning point.** This PhD candidate journey shows that with the right support and tools, it's possible to find clarity, regain motivation, and move forward with more resilience and self-trust.

*Here's the PhD candidate story:*

# 6.2. YOUR STORY, YOUR STRENGTH

## TESTIMONIAL FROM PHD CANDIDATE – INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS

*“Starting a PhD can feel like stepping into a completely new world. I arrived at Leiden excited and curious, eager to dive into my research. But soon, I found myself struggling with conflicts with a colleague and a supervisor who preferred to avoid confrontation. As gossip spread, my excitement turned to self-doubt, and the environment became more isolating.*

*After trying to address the issue through official channels, I realized that sometimes the right tools are needed to navigate these situations. That's when I turned to the university's PhD psychologist.”*



## 6.3. YOUR STORY, YOUR STRENGTH

*“Through sessions, I learned how to define my core problems, set boundaries while maintaining professionalism, and distinguish between real challenges and the fears I was creating in my mind. I also gained insights into managing relationships, communicating my needs, and preparing for difficult conversations.*

*Over time, things began to improve. While not everything is perfect, I now have tools I use every day to manage emotions and approach challenges with a healthier mindset. The curiosity that once drove me to start my PhD is coming back, with self-care at the forefront.*

***If you're facing similar struggles, don't wait until it feels unbearable. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness—it's a way to equip yourself to thrive. A PhD is just the next step in your career; it should never come at the expense of your well-being.”***



# CONTACT US



Visit our [website](#) by scanning the QR code.  
Don't hesitate to contact us, send an email to:  
[PhDpsychologist@sea.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:PhDpsychologist@sea.leidenuniv.nl)

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