

# REBECCA J. NORTH

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## EDUCATION

**Ph.D. Psychology** . University of Texas at Austin . May 2010

**M.A. Psychology** . UT . August 2007

Research area: Happiness and Well-Being

Dissertation: “From Failure to Flourishing: A Cognitive, Emotional, and Behavioral Model”

**Master of Public Affairs** . Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, UT . May 2004

Master’s thesis: “Valuing Academic Achievement and Emotional Health in Schools”

**A.B. History** . Princeton University . June 1998

Senior thesis: “The Breakdown of Democracy in Chile in 1973”

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

I am a psychology researcher, author, speaker, educator, and consultant.

**Researcher**. My research is in the area of happiness and well-being—human flourishing, more broadly. A big question in my research is: How can negative experiences foster positive change? I wrote a book, *Your Hidden Superpowers: How the Whole Truth of Failure Can Change Our Lives*, that draws on science and stories to investigate the relationship between failure and success and challenge the prevailing view of failure. My own research is listed in the “Publications” section. I also have been a consultant for others’ research.

**Consultant/Research Director** . *The Charles Butt Foundation* . January 2020 – January 2021

- As a consultant, I was the research director of a project investigating how income inequalities affect educational outcomes and other life outcomes for students in Texas public schools.

**Statistical Consultant/Postdoctoral Researcher**. *UT Department of Psychology* . Sept 2010 - May 2012

- Collaborated on research project funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and involving the Women’s Health Initiative (WHI) Observational Sample
- Conducted statistical analyses for studies examining social and emotional factors that predict health outcomes in a socioeconomically and ethnically diverse sample of over 90,000 women

**Author.** *Your Hidden Superpowers: How the Whole Truth of Failure Can Change Our Lives* (Severn River Publishing). December 2018.

**Book Description:** *Your Hidden Superpowers: How the Whole Truth of Failure Can Change Our Lives* reveals that the way we think about failure affects our lives powerfully, often in ways we don't see. This book aims to expose the whole truth of failure by taking a fresh, frank look at the topic—rewriting the story we tell ourselves about failure. It draws on scientific research, my own and others', and stories, including personal interviews I conducted with inspiring, well-known individuals from a wide range of fields: poetry and literature, politics, sports, education, business, and, more generally, leadership. Ultimately, the book puts forth a vision of how shifting our view of failure would shift how we lead our lives and yield profound benefits for us as individuals and as a society by exposing hidden resources within us—innovations, breakthroughs, joy, meaning, and magic yet to be discovered.

**Speaker.** I speak about my book to a variety of groups. The specific focus of each talk is tailored to the group but always involves some aspect of considering how the way we view failure affects how we live, lead, decide, innovate, imagine, connect, and dare. Below are some of my speaking engagements.

- 2023 Speaker for Brooke Howe Laws Endowed Speaker Series, St. Stephen's Episcopal School, Austin, TX (Four talks—to faculty/staff, upper school students, middle school students, and parents), January 2023
- Tiger Author Talk, Princeton Club of Austin—Austin, TX, July 2022
- Center for Spiritual and Ethical Education Conference “Healthy and Thriving Middle School Students”—St. Andrew's School, Austin, TX, April 2022
- Princeton University Class of 1998 Panel on Health and Happiness (Virtual), April 2022
- Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin – Guest speaker in Public Management course, November 2021
- St. David's Foundation, Communications team (Virtual), August 2021
- Princeton University, Princeton Perspective Project (Virtual), March 2021
- Duke University Women's Forum, Austin chapter (Virtual), October 2020
- ChIPs (Chiefs in Intellectual Property) New York chapter (Virtual), June 2020
  - ChIPs is an organization of women who are leaders in technology, law, and policy.

**Educator.** I currently am a Lecturer at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs and in the Human Dimensions of Organizations graduate program at the University of Texas at Austin and also teach at Huston-Tillotson University, a historically black university in Austin, Texas, where I have been an adjunct professor for many years.

**Lecturer** . *The University of Texas at Austin, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs and Human Dimensions of Organizations (HDO) program, Austin, TX* . Fall 2022 – Present

- At the LBJ School of Public Affairs, I am teaching a graduate course called “Psychology for Policy Analysis” that explores how psychological research can inform public policy (Spring 2023).
- In HDO, I taught a graduate course called “Reimagining Work” that guided students to reimagine work at organizations by drawing on various disciplines, including psychology, sociology, history, journalism, and business, and through honing independent thinking (Fall 2022).

**Adjunct Professor** . *Huston-Tillotson University, Austin, TX* . Fall 2014 - Present

- Teaching undergraduate-level courses for adult degree program at a historically black university
  - Senior Seminar, Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Summer 2021, Spring 2020, Winter 2020, Summer 2019, Winter 2019, Summer 2018, Fall 2017, Spring 2017, Spring 2016
  - Human Growth and Development, Spring 2021, Spring 2016
  - Statistics, Fall 2019, Summer 2017, Fall 2015
  - Social Psychology, Spring 2016 and 2015
  - Abnormal Psychology, Fall 2015
  - Research Methods, Spring 2015
  - Health Psychology, Winter 2014 – 15
  - Adolescent Psychology, Fall 2014
- Revised curriculum for adult degree program
  - Revised the curriculum for eight courses in the psychology major, Fall 2021
- Developed curriculum for adult degree program
  - Senior Seminar, Spring 2016
  - Abnormal Psychology, Summer 2015
  - Health Psychology, Fall 2014
- Taught in the traditional undergraduate program
  - Research Methods (Summer 2022, Spring 2016), Health Psychology (Summer 2022), Statistics (Summer and Fall 2015)

**Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology** . *Southwestern University* . August 2016 – June 2019

- Mind Reading, Summer 2018
  - This course explored topics relating to the mind, human experience, and psychological growth through reading trade books in the field of psychology and talking about them.
- Principles of Psychology, Fall/Spring 2018-19, Fall/Spring 2017-18, Fall/Spring 2016-17
- Lifespan Development, Fall/Spring 2018-19, Fall/Spring 2017-18, Fall/Spring 2016-17
- Health Psychology, Spring 2017

**Lecturer** . *University of Texas, Department of Psychology*

- Abnormal Psychology, Summer and Spring 2016
- Emotion, Fall 2015

- Health Psychology, Summer 2013
- Introduction to Psychology, Summer 2010

**Lecturer** . LBJ School of Public Affairs . Fall 2012

- Taught a course called Introduction to Empirical Methods on quantitative methods that apply to policy analysis to first-year graduate students

**Course Instructor** . University of Texas

- *Department of Psychology*: Introduction to Psychology, Summer 2009
- *LBJ School of Public Affairs, Inman Scholars Summer Leadership Program*: Introduction to Quantitative Methods for Public Policy, Summer 2007, 2008
  - Taught undergraduate-level course in differential calculus and statistics in program designed for upperclassmen—particularly students of color—interested in public policy

**First-Grade Teacher** . Teach For America . Compton Unified School District, Compton, CA . 1998 - 2001

- Taught first grade in high-poverty, high-violence area
- Earned multiple-subject teaching credential with bilingual emphasis
- Co-founded school chapter of *Do Something*, an after-school program to foster youth leadership
  - Initiated a school-wide “Praise Board” to promote kindness and reduce campus violence

GRANTS AND AWARDS

**Hogg Fellowship, UT Graduate School Continuing Fellowship** . Aug 2008 - May 2009

- Nominated by academic department and selected by UT Graduate School
- Based on accomplishments in Graduate School and a well-defined program of research

**Positive Psychology Templeton Fellowship** . University of Pennsylvania . May 2005 - May 2006

- One of five graduate students selected from an international group of candidates to collaborate with senior researchers on projects at intersection of happiness and public policy
- *National Well-Being Indicators* (Coordinator: Dr. Ed Diener) sought to construct a measure of the nation’s well-being to supplement economic indicators of prosperity
- *Purpose, Productivity, and Health* (Coordinators: Drs. Chris Peterson & Martin Seligman) investigated the relationship between happiness, productivity, and physical health among employees

**Lyndon B. Johnson Congressional Fellowship** . United States Senate . May - Aug 2003

- Awarded largest summer fellowship by LBJ School of Public Affairs and worked on U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

- Prepared Senate floor speech for Senator Harkin on re-authorization of Mental Health Parity Act

## PUBLICATIONS

- Holahan, C. J., Holahan, C. K., Lim, S., Powers, D. A., & North, R. J. (in press). **Living with a smoker and physical inactivity across eight years in high-risk medical patients.** *Behavioral Medicine.*
- North, R. J. (2018). **Your hidden superpowers: How the whole truth of failure can change our lives.** Severn River Publishing.
- Holahan, C. J., North, R. J., & Moos, R. H. (2017). **Stress.** In A. Wenzel (Ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Abnormal and Clinical Psychology*, 3339 - 3343. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- North, R. J., & Swann, W. B., Jr. (2016). **What's positive about self-verification?** In C. R. Snyder, S. J. Lopez, L. M. Edwards, and S. C. Marques (Eds.) *Handbook of Positive Psychology, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition.* New York: Oxford University Press.
- North, R. J., Lewis, D. M. G., Capecehatro, M. R., Sherrill, B. N., Ravyts, S. G., & Fontan, G. (2016). **The things they carry: Characterizing the biggest problems in the lives of emerging adults.** *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 35*, 437-454.
- North, R. J., Holahan, C. J., Carlson, C. L., & Pahl, S. A. (2014). **From failure to flourishing: The roles of acceptance and goal reengagement.** *Journal of Adult Development, 21*, 239-250.
- North, R. J., Meyerson, R. L., Brown, D. N., & Holahan, C. J. (2013). **The language of psychological change: Decoding an expressive writing paradigm.** *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 32*, 142-161.
- Holahan, C. K., Holahan, C. J., North, R. J., Hayes, R. B., Powers, D. A., & Ockene, J. K. (2013). **Smoking status, physical health-related quality of life, and mortality in middle-aged and older women.** *Nicotine & Tobacco Research, 15*, 662-669.
- Holahan, C. J., North, R. J., Holahan, C. K., Hayes, R. B., Powers, D. A., & Ockene, J. K. (2012). **Social influences on smoking in middle-aged and older women.** *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors, 26*, 519-526.

- Holahan, C. J., Schutte, K. K., Brennan, P. L., North, R. J., Holahan, C. K., Moos, B. S., & Moos, R. H. (2012). **Wine consumption and 20-year mortality among late-life moderate drinkers.** *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, 73*, 80-88.
- North, R. J., Pai, A. V., Hixon, J. G., & Holahan, C. J. (2011). **Finding happiness in negative emotions: An experimental test of a novel expressive writing paradigm.** *Journal of Positive Psychology, 6*, 192-203.
- Holahan, C. K., Holahan, C. J., Velasquez, K. E., Jung, S., North, R. J., & Pahl, S. L. (2011). **Purposiveness and leisure-time physical activity in women in early midlife.** *Women and Health, 51*, 661-675.
- Holahan, C. J., Pahl, S. A., Cronkite, R. C., Holahan, C. K., North, R. J., & Moos, R. H. (2010). **Depression and vulnerability to incident physical illness across 10 years.** *Journal of Affective Disorders, 123*, 222-229.
- North, R. J., & Swann, W. B., Jr. (2009). **Self-verification 360°: Illuminating the light and dark sides.** *Self and Identity, 8*, 131-146.
- North, R. J., & Swann, W. B., Jr. (2009). **What's positive about self-verification?** In C. R. Snyder and Shane J. Lopez (Eds.) *Handbook of Positive Psychology, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (pp. 465–482). New York: Oxford University Press.
- North, R. J., Holahan, C. J., Moos, R. H., & Cronkite, R. C. (2008). **Family support, family income, and happiness: A 10-year perspective.** *Journal of Family Psychology, 22*, 475-483
- Holahan, C. K., Holahan, C. J., Velasquez, K. E., & North, R. J. (2008). **Longitudinal change in happiness during aging: The predictive role of positive expectancies.** *International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 66*, 229-241.
- Kenney, B. A., Holahan, C. J., North, R. J., & Holahan, C. K. (2005). **Depressive symptoms and cigarette smoking in American workers.** *American Journal of Health Promotion, 20*, 179-182.

## MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

- North, R. J., Stuckey, G., Sherrill, B. N., Ravyts, S. G., Casco, A. A., Schmitt, M., & Holahan, C. J. Are men less emotional than women? A linguistic analysis of gender differences in emotionality.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Holahan, C. K., Holahan, C. J., North, R. J., Hayes, R. B., Powers, D. A., & Ockene, J. K. The Relation of Smoking Status to Quality of Life in Middle-Aged and Older Women. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, Boston, MA, November 2011.

Pahl, S., Holahan, C. J., North, R. J., Kenney, B. A., Holahan, C. K., Cronkite, R. C., & Moos, R. H. Depression and Tobacco Smoking in Adulthood. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Behavioral Medicine, Montréal, Canada, April 2009.

Kenney, B. A., Holahan, C. J., Holahan, C. K., Pahl, S., North, R. J., Cronkite, R. C., & Moos, R. H. Depressive Symptoms and Physical Illness Across 10 Years. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Behavioral Medicine, Montréal, Canada, April 2009.

Holahan, C. K., Holahan, C. J., Velasquez, K. E., & North, R. J. The role of positive expectancy in predicting happiness from early to later aging. Poster presented at annual meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, Dallas, Texas, November 2006 and at 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Health Promotion Conference and Collaboratory, Center for Health Promotion Research (CHPR), Austin, TX, February 2008.

## MENTORSHIP/MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

- Led research teams, more than 50 undergraduate research assistants in total, 2005-2012
- Co-authored published papers with six undergraduate research assistants

## CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

### **Teaching Assistant in Practicum. UT Psychology Department Training Clinic** . Aug. 2007 - May 2008

- Selected by Director of Clinic to supervise doctoral students training in cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)

### **Practicum Student Therapist**

- **UT Counseling and Mental Health Center.** Aug. 2007 - May 2008
  - Provided therapy to UT students using integrative approach
- **Center for Survivors of Torture.** *Austin, TX* . Aug. 2006 - Aug. 2007
  - Provided therapy to international population of asylum seekers and refugees, including Spanish-speakers
- **Supervised by psychologist Dr. Vagdevi Meunier.** *Austin, TX* . Aug. 2006 - Oct. 2007
  - Provided therapy to individuals and couples using several different approaches

- Trained as Level 1 Gottman couples' therapist
- **UT Clinical Psychology Training Clinic.** Sept. 2005 - Aug. 2006
  - Provided cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) to adults in the Austin community

## EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE/PROFESSIONAL SKILLS/MEDIA APPEARANCES

**Reviewer** for *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, Journal of Positive Psychology, Cognition and Emotion, American Journal of Psychology, Journal of Language and Social Psychology, and Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*

**Language:** Fluent in Spanish

**Statistical Software:** SPSS, R, Excel

**Media Appearances:** Interviewed about my book on two podcasts: *Something You Should Know with Mike Carruthers*, Episode 262, and *On the Spot with Melinda Garvey*, "Re-writing Your Story: Featuring Becca North"