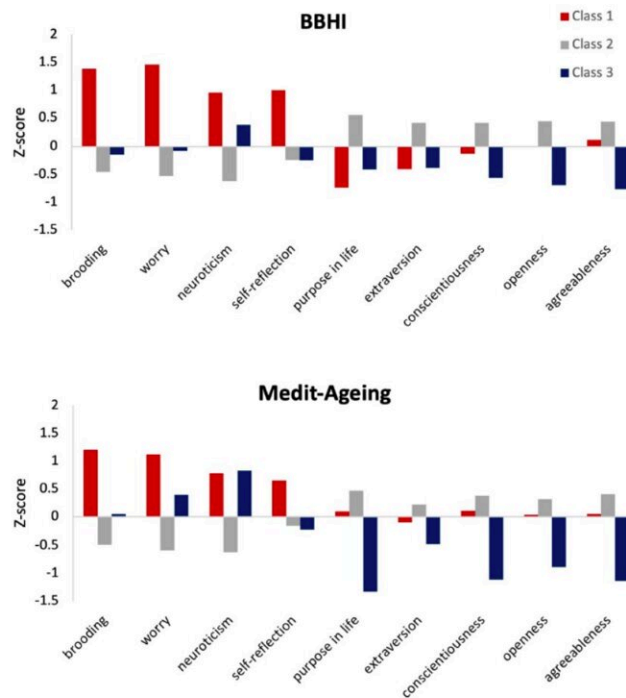


# Incorporating psychological treatment into dementia prevention

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Results from a latent profile analysis (LPA) in two independent European cohorts: the middle-aged Barcelona Brain Health Initiative (BBHI, N=741, mean age 53) and the older-adult Medit-Ageing (N=279, mean age 71) studies. T. Credit: 2023 Bartrés-Faz et al.

Modifiable risk and protective factors (e.g., engaging in active lifestyles and avoiding alcohol or smoking, amongst others) are [key agents](#) for

dementia prevention, and they also exert an [important effect](#) on cognitive trajectories of non-demented older adults. In a new editorial published in the journal *Aging*, researchers David Bartrés-Faz, Cristina Solé-Padullés and Natalie L. Marchant from the University of Barcelona discuss recent research that has begun to identify psychological processes that confer relative risk and protection.

They write, "For example, repetitive negative thinking (RNT), a [cognitive process](#) defined by self-relevant, persistent thoughts that elaborate on negative themes, has been associated with greater burden of typical Alzheimer's disease (AD) pathological brain markers and accelerated [cognitive decline](#) over time [3]."

In contrast, [self-reflection](#), as well as purpose in life and other components of psychological well being, may help to maintain cognition and boost cognitive resilience against [neuropathological burden](#). The possibility of incorporating psychological elements as key players in affecting one of the most important public health issues of the century opens a window of great therapeutic opportunity, particularly because fundamental [psychological processes](#) are at the core of cognitive-behavioral interventions that may help [reduce dementia risk](#). However, for this emergent area to develop and wield maximum benefit, major unanswered questions need to be addressed. In their editorial, the researchers highlight three main areas for future research.

"In summary, we propose that with momentum gathering, now is the time for psychology to make important contributions to cognitive aging and dementia prevention research," write the researchers.

**More information:** David Bartrés-Faz et al, Cognitive aging and dementia prevention: the time for psychology?, *Aging* (2023). [DOI: 10.18632/aging.204562](https://doi.org/10.18632/aging.204562)

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