I applaud the decision to allow a wider range of submissions for the conference. In particular, I applaud the inclusive decision to make talks optional which allows us to protect our mental health by avoiding anything difficult.

I also commend the decision to suspend paper poster at the conference. This decision greatly helps the environment and helps each one of us to achieve our personal climate goals. For instance, it has helped me to offset the carbon footprint I have accrued by burning eco coal in my wood burner at home. This has helped to reduce my use of expensive gas and has thus helped my mental health by allowing me to stay warm while writing my dissertation. Additionally, “a fire can help induce a trance-like relaxation” (Lynn, 2014) and all for £6.67 for a ten-kilo bag from Aldi.

The decision to continue online exams was extremely beneficial to my social life. I believe it should be continued going forward to allow all future students to enjoy the same benefit. As an example of how this policy has enhanced my studies, it has allowed me to fly to Malaga every weekend and to do valuable psychology research at the beach and in various nocturnal cultural venues. Furthermore, during 2nd and 3rd year, I was only able to manage visits to Malaga every 2nd weekend. My final year has thus been of extreme beneficial to my mental health. Just to think, before COVID students had to study longer hours and focus on academic work with little benefit to their mental health and social life. Whereas now, social life and mental health take precedence over academic rigor.

Returning to the main topic, my dissertation (Crawford, 2023). While investigating previous work in the field, I stumbled on many papers that contained research that was antiquated. These papers made a series of problematic claims. I don’t understand why these papers have not been retracted or cancelled. I feel strongly that as a field, psychology should act fast and take appropriate measures to ensure we create a safe environment for researchers.

While my experience in psychology at Glasgow university has been overall positive, I do have some critical feedback. During first year I had the unfortunate experience of enduring peer-to-peer learning. I feel that this teaching method was not inclusive and negatively impacted my mental health. This was because reading other students work inevitably forced me to compare my writing style with others. This allowed me to see my mistakes and thus lowered my confidence. As such it did not create a safe learning environment. I’m sure this also negatively affected other students with divergent learning styles. Furthermore, it encouraged an oppressive atmosphere where ‘facts’ were prioritized over feelings.

Dana Lynn, C. (2014) Hearth and campfire influences on arterial blood pressure: Defraying the costs of the social brain through Fireside relaxation. *Evolutionary Psychology*, 12(5), 147470491401200. http://doi.org/10.1177/147470491401200509