

## **Transcript of 2021 3MT® presentation by Amanda Wuth, PhD Management candidate at the University of Guelph**

Imagine a camera, any camera each come equipped with auto-focus. The auto-focus is programmed to search for and focus on content that deemed familiar. This means that your camera is different from anyone else's.

Your brain works like a camera to shape your subjective reality. Subjective reality is what you believe, how you view the world, and it is different from how I or anyone else view's the world. Had anyone taken a digital camera someplace sandy? I have. And let me tell you, sand on the way it's working itself into all on the crevasses. Even when you move to a different environment, sand stays with the camera. Future images are marked by those grains of sand.

In the same way, your subjective reality is marked by your childhood. One way you might try to counteract this is by applying a filter. Simply twist it on the camera lens. Depending on the type of filter, it may enhance some colours or decrease the amount of light that is captured. Your brain also have different types of filters activated by the environment. They are automatically applied and like that your subjective reality is altered. It may produce rose-coloured glasses or enhance negative thinking.

What does this mean for us as workers? How do you filter with impact how we behave at work and our workplace attitudes? How can knowledge of these filters improve organizational policies and employee wellbeing? My work seeks to address these real-world problems by asking employees about their childhood experiences, subjective realities, and workplace behaviour. I look at the positive and negative to understand why people engage in different workplace behaviours.

This research is important, workplace behaviour is typically studied from the moment people enter the workforce, but not before. By discounting childhood experiences, which shapes subjective realities, we limit our ability to understand how subjective realities impact the workplace.

So, why should you care? Understanding how work realities are formed can lead to improved workplace conditions. It has impact for how people oriented into the workplace, who is recruited, and how interpersonal interactions are perceived.

At the end of the day, you can either change filters or you can use your camera and filter in a complimentary environment to make the best picture. My work is the first step in applying these same principles to the workplace.

– **End of transcript**