

# When the Body Insists: Updating Beliefs about Interoception in Neuropsychiatry

In this interdisciplinary talk, I will put forward the idea that neuropsychiatric disorders such as eating, somatic and functional symptom disorders that lie at the heart of the mental-physical health interface can be best understood as disorders of the bodily self. More specifically, I will present experimental (explicit belief updating), neuroimaging (structural connectivity analyses), computational (precision optimisation) and clinical (biofeedback intervention) evidence from studies in patients with functional, neuropsychological and eating disorders, revealing abnormalities in how low levels of interoceptive processing are integrated with higher-order, metacognitive beliefs about one's self-efficacy and sense of control. As a result of such abnormalities in the expected uncertainty of interoceptive signals, patients experience a perpetual, intolerable uncertainty about their physiological, interoceptive states and their own ability to self-regulate, which they attempt to resolve by rigid behavioural control, such as eating restriction or excessive exercise in the case of eating disorders.

## **Katerina FOTOPOULOU**

PhD. Professor in Psychodynamic Neuroscience,  
University College London

## **Francesco PAGNINI**

Professore Ordinario di Psicologia Clinica,  
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

## Lezione aperta

**Mercoledì 16 novembre 2022**

**Aula C.110, ore 14,45 - 17.45**

Via Carducci, 28/30 - Milano



**UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA**  
del Sacro Cuore