

## **Human Cognition, Patterning and Deacon's Absentials: The Value of Absent-mindedness in the Sense of Minding What is Absent**

**Abstract:** Important aspects of human cognition are considered in terms of patterning, a key factor in the development of human cognition and culture, which also represents a shift from focusing on what is present to what is absent. We make use of Deacon's (2012) notion of absentials with which he understands the emergence of life and sentience from abiotic matter. Logan and Tandoc's (2018) assertion that the patterning that underscores human cognition is re-examined in terms of Deacon's absentials. Several important aspects of human cognition are considered that represent a shift from focusing on what is present to what is absent, namely, language as representing the transition from percept to concept-based thinking (Logan 2007), mathematical grouping and patterning of items into sets (Logan & Pruska-Oldenhof 2018) that gave rise to verbal language as well as imaginative thinking so critical for the development of the arts, mathematics and science. The connection between information and absence is also examined in which we claim that information is an absential paralleling an idea of Deacon's.