

Agata MROWIEC

[agata.mrowiec@doctoral.uj.edu.pl](mailto:agata.mrowiec@doctoral.uj.edu.pl)

*Jagiellonian University  
Department of Inorganic Chemistry*



## **Why Is Boredom Essential in a Chemical Laboratory? – The Chemistry of Boredom**

Would Alexander Fleming have discovered penicillin if he had not been bored? The phenomenon of boredom has many side effects, therefore why would someone call it essential? It can be a serious problem concerning our health, principally, it can cause serious accidents in a place such as a chemical laboratory where safety depends on continuous vigilance. To conduct an experiment and to be sure that its results are credible, a chemist performs a myriad of trials. Therefore, hardly anyone does not get bored in a chemical laboratory. When performing for the thousandth time the same procedure which demands a high degree of precision or taking a measurement for several hours. In fact, this type of circumstances often results in a positive outcome leading to an increased creativity. In a situation when we cannot escape physically from doing a task which is not engaging enough for us, our attention focuses more on internal thoughts, feelings and experiences. Being bored enables scientists to come up with new ideas as well as to break the routine and to be more innovative in their work. In my paper, I present a chemical point of view on the feeling of boredom, which is experienced by people when the level of neurotransmitter dopamine is lowered. I also argue that long-lasting boredom can be beneficial for scientific work.