

Mind Matters

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY COUNSELING PRACTICUM CLINIC

Recommit to Your New Year's Resolutions!

Volume 1, Issue 2
March 2009

By Tricia Groff, MS

Are you tired of trying to maintain your New Year's resolutions? Or maybe you have already given up on one? John Norcross, a researcher who investigated people's follow-through on resolutions, found that 71 percent of participants kept their resolutions for two weeks, 64 percent kept them for a month and 50 percent kept them for three months. So, here we are looking at March. This means about half of you reading this may still be holding strong and the other half may not have been so lucky. Despite these bleak odds, there is good news: you CAN create better habits, and you don't have to rely on willpower alone to achieve them.

The appeal of having a clean slate on January 1st comes from the desire to have a clean slate and a fresh start.

This mindset can lead to use of the "all or nothing strategy," an approach that guarantees ongoing failure because it doesn't account for our ability to learn from mistakes. Additionally, if someone says "I have all of December, and then I'll start on January 1st," the message is: "This will be so bad and so difficult that I want to postpone it as long as possible. January 1st is going to be a magical date that will help me succeed."

Setting small, specific goals can help you work toward a long-term goal without being overwhelmed. For example, if a person wanted to "get organized," it would be more helpful to specify one area of life to work on first.

Remember to reward yourself with a pat on the back each time you take action that contributes positively to your long-term goal.

As you take these steps, be aware that your friends and family may be less supportive than you had hoped.

Other people get used to our habits, and sometimes even positive changes may be viewed negatively by people who know us best. For example, you may have a spouse who says that he/she will support you if you exercise regularly; however, if that means less time at home, conflict may arise. Time and communication will usually resolve such conflicts as those around you adjust to your changes.

IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE NO MOTIVATION... REASSESS YOUR REASONING FOR MAKING THE RESOLUTION IN THE FIRST PLACE.

If you have already given up on a New Year's resolution, why don't you go back and try it again? This time, look at what works for YOU. Each personality and lifestyle is different; so the one-size-fits-all quick fixes

that are regularly marketed usually don't work. It's often really helpful to understand what made the change difficult; then you can plan for these difficulties instead of being surprised by them. Additionally, changing your mindset will help as well. For example, instead of saying, "I have to exercise to lose weight," try "I really want to have more energy so that I can play with my kids." Instead of, "I'm so messy, I have to get organized," try "I want to have a space in which I can relax."

If you feel like you have no motivation to move forward, reassess your reasoning for making the resolution in the first place. Was it something

that you think you "should" do? Are you really doing it for yourself or are you trying to please someone else?

If the resolution really will contribute to the quality of your life, make it a priority. Sometimes one habit is difficult to change because other habits interfere with it. For example, if a person wants to acquire the habit of getting up early to exercise and has the habit of staying up late to watch T.V., that person actually has to change two habits: staying up late and not exercising. Making an early bedtime a priority would be a good first step to eventually exercising regularly in the morning.

As a counselor, one of my favorite aspects of therapy is helping people who are trying to make positive changes in their lives. **Figuratively speaking, every day is January 1st, holding a limitless number of ways in which you can restructure your life to be happier and healthier.** If you need some assistance in figuring out how to make these changes, the counselors at the Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic would be happy to help you.

Inside This Issue

MONTHLY GUIDANCE	2
WORD SEARCH	2
ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT FEATURE	3
FREE PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT	3
FEATURED COUNSELOR PROFILE	4
FEATURED MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE	5
FEATURED WELLNESS ISSUE	5
ABOUT OUR CLINIC	6



Monthly Guidance

Dear MG,

I'm a single mother of two teenage boys...and let me tell you...they are a handful! Between the football practices, my two jobs and the constant cooking to feed their growing bodies, I'm left exhausted! I have been desperate to find time for myself, and I've made a commitment that 2009 will be the lucky year. The problem is that I need some direction; how do I get started and make this happen once and for all?

Sincerely,
Supermom

Dear Supermom,

First and foremost, congratulations on being such a great mother and role model! It takes great wisdom to truly understand the first rule of care-giving: *care for thy self. **The energy to care for and nurture others is limited and dependent on the way we take care of ourselves.*** Self-care recharges and restocks the energy that we spend on others. Your awareness far exceeds many parents, who struggle with viewing self-care as selfish. Little do they know, only when you feel great can you truly be selfless and give to the fullest. Merely recognizing your need sets you apart!

It is important to note that self-care has no boundaries or specific requirements. It's unique and personal to each individual. Whereas one individual's idea of self-care may be a vacation to an isolated location, someone else's might be spending 30 minutes curled up with a book. **The first and most important step is to identify what self-care specifically means to you.** What is it that you would like to do during "me time" and how much time is necessary to do it? Let what you visualize as calming and energizing lead you to some ideas. Once

THE ENERGY TO CARE FOR AND NURTURE OTHERS IS LIMITED AND DEPENDENT ON THE WAY WE TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES.

you have asked and answered these questions, you must implement them into your life.

However, many individuals have difficulty following through with their ideas because of inadequate planning. **You need to carefully plan and schedule your "me time" to ensure that you not only have the time but that you also have all the resources necessary to follow through.**

For example, you may recruit your adolescent children to prepare dinner once a week or collaborate with other parents for a football practice carpool to find more time. You may also need to gather necessary information or resources for your new

self-care activity. For example, if exercising is your self-care activity, you may want to get a physical examination, locate a neighborhood gym, or read up on exercise techniques.

These beginning changes will build your self-confidence, strengthen your commitment and make implementing your goals feel like a breeze! If you run into problems or obstacles, don't be discouraged! This is a normal process of trial and error and the trick is to continue trying. If your well-intentioned goals are still not working out, you have the Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic counselors on your side. A counselor can help you identify areas overlooked and help make your goals a reality! Good luck and take care!

— MG

Monthly Guidance [MG] is here to answer questions about relationships and personal issues. If you would like to ask MG a question, you may call the Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic and leave an anonymous message for MG. Or, you may send your question in writing to the address on the back page of this newsletter. If you choose to ask MG a question, the identity of the person submitting the question will remain completely anonymous. Please keep in mind when writing your questions that space is limited. Due to time constraints, MG cannot answer all questions, but will try to choose questions that are representative of a broad range of issues. If your question does not get answered and you would like to discuss it, please call Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic at (765) 285-8047.

Please be advised that MG is neither a crisis/emergency service nor a correspondence therapy service. If you need either immediate attention or ongoing therapy, call Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic at (765) 285-8047.

Word Search

L	A	U	G	H	T	E	R	C	C	C	A	E
T	N	E	M	P	O	L	E	V	E	D	X	S
P	I	H	R	D	N	E	Y	V	O	S	S	T
O	S	S	N	O	I	T	U	L	O	S	E	R
H	E	M	A	T	A	V	E	E	G	E	X	O
E	L	N	E	N	P	S	E	C	D	P	U	P
C	F	T	U	D	C	R	H	R	E	E	A	P
O	C	E	T	E	I	A	R	S	S	R	L	U
N	A	D	N	N	N	T	I	V	L	I	I	S
O	R	C	O	G	O	C	A	L	I	E	T	E
M	E	Y	E	C	R	O	O	T	S	L	Y	Y
Y	P	A	R	E	H	T	Y	L	I	M	A	F
E	O	A	X	C	C	T	C	X	E	O	E	P
I	P	E	C	O	U	N	S	E	L	I	N	G

Directions: The fourteen words listed below are from the current issue of *Mind Matters* and can be found in the puzzle to the right.

The words appear forward and backward and diagonally, vertically, and horizontally.

MEDITATION	FAMILY THERAPY
CHRONIC PAIN	DEVELOPMENT
ADOLESCENCE	CHANGE
RESOLUTIONS	EXERCISE
SELF CARE	SEXUALITY
ECONOMY	DIVERSITY
LAUGHTER	COUNSELING

Helping Parents Understand the “Craziness” of Adolescence: Behavior in Context

By Jerry Novack, MA, NCC

As your children reach adolescence, you may notice significant changes in their attitudes, friends, personalities, and interests. You may also find yourself wondering what happened to the child you thought you knew so well! It works like this: for the first part of their lives, **children’s primary goal is to attach to their parents or primary caregiver.** Remember this: “Hey, mom. Look at me,” “Hey, dad, did you see that?” **As they enter adolescence, those same kids, now confident in their attachment to you, must establish their own independent identities.** This usually begins around age 12 with rebellion, arguments, expressing embarrassment about their families, and experimental behavior. More specifically, this could mean poor grades, questionable friends, and trouble in school.

This rebellion often builds to a crescendo in high school because the child, now an adolescent capable of making decisions, driving, voting, and joining the military, must live in restrictive home and school environments. After high school, adolescents often experience another brief struggle as they transition into college or work. As these roles become more familiar and they achieve some physical and emotional space between themselves and other authority figures (e.g., parents, teachers, bosses), **they settle into adult identities where they can love and appreciate their families without sacrificing their independence.**

Take a moment. **You probably remember**

a similar pattern between you and your parents. You might recall them as “square,” “strict,” “unreasonable,” or “crazy.” Now, your kids seem “wild,” “out-of-control,” or “insane.” Of course, times have changed. The drugs are worse now. The violence is worse now. The consequences are worse now. The theme, however, remains the same. Kids and their parents struggle during adolescence.

So, what’s my point? You’ve got a “normal” teenager at home who wears only black, seldom smiles, and is in danger of failing sophomore year. As parents, you must still **set boundaries and enforce consequences in relation to those boundaries.** Consequences can be enjoyable, such as praise for helping with the dishes, or unpleasant, like being grounded for the weekend after disregarding curfew. It’s important to remember that positive consequences such as your attention or rewards are typically much more effective than punishments.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO BE PARENTS. YOUR ADOLESCENTS NEED YOU IN THIS ROLE MORE THAN THEY NEED YOU AS A FRIEND.

Adolescents thrive when they have a balance of freedom and structure. Younger children obviously require more rules and structure than they do freedom. As they age, the rules and boundaries can loosen in favor of more freedom, but they cannot disappear completely. For example, an eight o'clock bed time might develop into, “Be home by eleven.” That said, if your child is not home by whatever time you decide, consequences must be enforced. In fact, even though your children will likely fight, yell and swear, they will respect you more and develop a greater appreciation for your boundaries if you stick to your guns. If your child is regularly home by the specified time, then other positive consequences can be enforced; namely more freedoms.



As you and your children negotiate their adolescence, there are some things you can do to **help the transition and maintain healthy relationships.** Try your best to give your teens your undivided attention when they attempt to communicate with you; in other words, mute the TV or put down your newspaper so you can focus! **Offer respect to your child in order to receive respect in return.** This means respecting them with your tone of voice in conversation and with things like their growing need for space and individuality. Encourage open communication by adopting a nonjudgmental stance. Finally, consider the adage about “choosing your battles.” When interacting with your children, identify areas where you can compromise, for instance in their expression of style, and areas that are non-negotiable, for instance issues of personal safety. By setting clearly communicated boundaries you may lessen the opportunity for spontaneous conflict. Finally, by setting a good example for your children, both through actions and words, you will more effectively earn their respect.

Your child’s adolescence will not be easy for you. **However, remember that your child is likely struggling with this transition just as much as you are.** Don’t be afraid to be the parent. They need you in this role more than they need you as a friend. If problematic behaviors become excessive, consider them in the context of other struggles in the family or social situation. Finally, if you feel overwhelmed, frustrated or powerless, you might consider joining your child in family counseling with one of the competent and understanding clinicians at the Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic.

Free Personality Assessment



By Sera Gruszka, MA

Would you like to learn more about yourself? If so, we would like to share an exciting service available to you.

From now until May 2009, you have the opportunity to take a personality measure (MMPI-2) and receive feedback on the results for **FREE.**

Typically, these services would cost about \$300. The information provided by the personality measure may assist you and your therapist as you work on your goals in counseling.

This opportunity is part of a research study examining the impact of personality feedback. In order to participate in this study, you must be at least 19 years of age and be able to read at the 8th-grade level. If you are interested in participating or want more information, contact the Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic at (765) 285-8047.

Featured Counselor Profile

Sarah Barnard

By Jenelle N. Boo, MA
With Sarah Barnard

This column is a way for the community to learn about the diverse talents, both master's and doctoral students, employed at the Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic.

Sarah Barnard is studying to receive her master's degree in counseling and social psychology from the Department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services. She is currently seeing clients at the Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic while taking courses and working for the Office of Study Abroad in the Rinker Center for International Programs on campus.

Hi Sarah! How did you decide to pursue your master's degree in counseling?

I knew since my freshman year as an undergraduate that I wanted to study psychology and to ultimately become a therapist. I have always known that I wanted to be in a helping profession. Originally, I entered Ball State as an art education major because I wanted to become a high school art teacher. As soon as I took my first course in psychology, I realized that was the field of study I wanted to pursue in my education.

What are your clinical interests?

I am interested in working with people who are experiencing a wide variety of problems to become a more well-rounded counselor. I want to use my time in school to gain as much experience as possible since I'm surrounded by educators and professionals who all have different areas of expertise. If I am counseling a person who brings an issue to therapy with which I am unfamiliar, I can use the resources around me to become more informed. I am very interested in working with clients experiencing problems in their sexuality. Specifically, I am interested in counseling people who are having problems with their sexual orienta-

tion, people who experience difficulty in their sexual functioning, and people who experience discomfort with their sexuality in general. I would also like to gain experience in counseling people with gender dysphoria, which occurs when a person experiences discontent with the biological sex they were born with. I believe that sexuality is a core aspect of human nature, yet it is a part of our lives that is often neglected and overlooked. I am also extremely interested in issues of diversity, which I believe stems from my passion for traveling and learning about other cultures. It amazes me how, as humans, we are all so different, yet so similar.

I AM EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN ISSUES OF DIVERSITY, WHICH I BELIEVE STEMS FROM MY PASSION FOR TRAVELING AND LEARNING ABOUT OTHER CULTURES.

What has influenced your clinical interests?

As far as my interest in counseling people with gender dysphoria, one of my primary influences was a panel discussion that was held in an undergraduate sexuality class. We were able to listen to the life stories of several individuals who were preparing to undergo sexual reassignment surgery. Sexual reassignment surgery is a surgical transition from one sex (either male or female) to the other. I became very interested in understanding the psychology behind gender dysphoria as well as becoming more informed on the struggles that many people with gender dysphoria face in life. My interest in human sexuality is also partially rooted in my undergraduate sexuality course. This course enlightened me on a variety of topics regarding human sexuality and also encouraged me to learn more about that area of psychology. To briefly discuss my interest in diversity, it is a topic that I have always found to be fascinating. In the past five years, I have spent time in a few different countries, such as Australia, Thailand, Germany, and New Zealand, and have been exposed to people from many different cultures. My time spent abroad has been very influential and life changing as I have encountered many different cultural views. Traveling is one of my passions in life and this alone has been the largest contributing factor to my interest in counseling people

from diverse backgrounds.

What do you enjoy most about counseling?

The fact that I have an opportunity to help people live their lives to the fullest extent. Another one of my favorite parts about counseling is helping clients develop new perspectives, or new ways of looking at their lives and the problems they experience. I am a firm believer in the holistic approach to health which includes taking care of your body as well as your mind. This is something that I like to emphasize in counseling and I frequently encourage clients to lead a healthy, well-rounded lifestyle.

What do you hope to do after you graduate?

After I graduate with my master's degree in counseling and social psychology, I plan on spending a year in Thailand to teach English to high school students. This experience will make me more marketable in my job search, and will give me knowledge relevant to multicultural issues in counseling. When I return from my year abroad, I want to move down south and begin my career as a counselor. At this point in time, I am not completely sure what kind of environment in which I would like to work. I enjoy taking things as they come because you never know what direction life is going to take you. I love counseling and I know that I am in the right profession; I will wait and see what different opportunities come my way.



Sarah is pictured here in Trier, Germany in front of the ruins of a Roman amphitheater.

Featured Mental Health Issue:

Navigating an Uncertain Economy with Hope

By Christopher A. Modica, MS

Do you remember the words of President Clinton in 1999 when he stated, "The promise of our future is limitless"? Today such words make many people cringe as they immediately think of the uncertain economy. For some, these words create feelings of regret, worry, fear, or immense sadness. It seems that people can't escape hearing about the troubled economy, the loss of thousands of jobs, or the government's attempt to try to fix the problem as quickly as possible. From nightly news programs to daily newspapers, and even in everyday conversations, we hear of our friends', family's and co-workers' struggles and fears.

How do people remain hopeful and not become anxious and depressed

in such uncertain economic times? There are a few ways to cope with whatever fears, sadness, or worries that you may have about the economy.

1. Talk about your feelings with trusted friends, family members, and co-workers.

Often, people who have worries in their lives seem to think that they are alone or worry that others might not understand their fears. In truth, many people are surprised to find out that their friends or co-workers have the exact same fears and concerns. Discussing your fears or stress about your job, finances, or family income can help you to not feel so alone or hopeless. Don't underestimate the power of encouraging one another in hard times!

2. Set aside time each day that is reserved for you to have fun or laugh, particularly with other people.

However great or small, don't allow your stress or worry about what may or may not happen tomorrow or in the

next week to ruin your life today. Laughter can be like medicine to a worrying mind.

3. Do what you can to help yourself, but don't worry about the things that are out of your control.

There are many things that you can do to prepare yourself or your family for economic hardships. It is never too late to budget your spending, put off buying things that you may not need, or save money, however large or small.

Budgeting or spending your money wisely may make you feel like you are "doing something," and not just waiting for things to change.

Readers might ask "Can I actually see a counselor for my financial, career,

and economic worries?" The answer is "Yes!" Many people do not know this, but individuals seek counseling for many reasons other than "mental illness" and "disorders." In fact, a recent study suggests that 86 percent of people in counseling describe economic stressors as negatively impacting their lives. Many counselors are well-trained in helping people who struggle with career issues and economic struggles. Counseling can be an oasis of hope in the middle of the barren desert that is the current economy. If you feel that your economic and career struggles are impacting your ability to function on a daily basis, consider seeking support, guidance, or help from the Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic.

DO WHAT YOU CAN TO HELP YOURSELF, BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE THINGS THAT ARE OUT OF YOUR CONTROL.



Featured Wellness Issue:

Living with Chronic Pain

By Jill Sullivan, MA

Do you have a medical condition that makes it difficult to get out of bed in the morning or impossible to work on a regular basis? You might be dealing with a chronic pain condition. The American Pain Society defines chronic pain as "an unpleasant sense of discomfort defined by its length — more than six months — and typically its resistance to conventional therapies." According to the American Chronic Pain Association, approximately 50 million Americans live with daily chronic pain. So, if you are experiencing chronic pain you are not alone! The most common sources of chronic pain are the lower back, arthritis, cancer, repetitive stress injuries, shingles, headaches, and fibromyalgia.

Although the physical symptoms of chronic pain may be the central focus of treatment by a medical doctor, the psychological

effects may be just as present in the life of someone with chronic pain. Many people living with chronic pain experience anger, frustration, and/or anxiety due to their daily physical struggle. Feelings of inadequacy and guilt over an inability to work can develop along with hopeless feelings and depression about one's situation.

Whereas a recent pain management survey reported that **men and women have equal frequency of pain, women were seen as more apt to speak to their doctors about their pain** and were somewhat more likely to say that it interferes with their mood, sleep, emotions, enjoyment of life, and ability to work or do chores (ABC News, 2005).

Many forms of treatment are available to help reduce the physical and psychological pain related to a

chronic pain condition. These

treatments include food and herbal remedies, meditation, exercise, relaxation exercises, medication, and psychological care.

Living with chronic pain on a daily basis can interfere with work and leisure and create stress within close relationships, but receiving the proper physical and psychological treatment can help. If you are living with chronic pain, you might consider seeking support through the Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic.



Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic

Ball State University
Teachers College 621
Muncie, IN 47306

Mind Matters Contributors

Editor:

Jenelle N. Boo, MA

Staff Contributors:

Mona Ghosheh, MEd
Tricia Groff, MS
Christopher A. Modica, MS
Jerry Novack, MA, NCC
Jill Sullivan, MA

Clinic Director: Theresa Kruczek, PhD, HSPP

Clinic Manager: Kenny Puckett

Clinic Advisory Committee

Stefania Aegisdottir, PhD, HSPP
Don Nicholas, PhD, HSPP
Jeong Han Kim, PhD, CRC
Kristin Perrone, PhD, HSPP
Alan Maugherman, PhD, HSPP
Paul Spengler, PhD, HSPP

Mind Matters

Volume 1, Issue 2
March 2009



Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic: Serving the Community Since 1969

Mission

- The clinic is a training and research facility for the Department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services.
- The clinic provides high quality, low-cost psychological services to the Delaware County community and beyond.

Service Providers

- Over 50 graduate student counselors under the supervision of faculty.
- Faculty supervisors are Licensed Psychologists and Counselors.

Services Offered

- Individual Counseling
- Couple Counseling
- Family Counseling
- Child/Adolescent Counseling
- Group Counseling with a focus on:
 - Parenting
 - Social skills
 - Anger control
 - Issues of concern to children and adolescents

Hours of Operation

- August-May
 - 9 AM to 9 PM M-Th
 - 9 AM to 12 PM Fri
- Summer hours are similar, but vary.
- The clinic is closed during university vacations and holidays.

All clients have the right to receive timely, competent counseling services consistent with the ethical principles and guidelines established by professional organizations. All counseling services provided at the Counseling Practicum Clinic are guided by the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of the American Counseling Association, the American School Counseling Association, the American Rehab Counseling Association, the General Guidelines for Providers of Psychological Services, and the Specialty Guidelines for the Delivery of Services by Counseling Psychologists.

Ball State University
Counseling Practicum Clinic
Phone: (765) 285-8047

Teachers College, Sixth Floor
Room 621

Ten Story Building on the corner of
Riverside and McKinley

We're on the Web!

[http://www.bsu.edu/
counselingpsychology/clinic/](http://www.bsu.edu/counselingpsychology/clinic/)