

Volume 2, Issue 3

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BALL STATE UNIVERSITY COUNSELING PRACTICUM CLINIC

Holistic Health:

Increasing Your TOTAL Health and Well-being

By: Jennifer Walsh, MA

Holistic Health is an approach to health that emphasizes the importance of the whole individual and the interdependence of the different parts that influence a person's health. It recognizes that what • affects one part or system can affect the whole body. Therefore, a holistic approach to health is multi-faceted and mindful of the consequences of our habits and actions.

Holistic medicine sees health and wellness as a positive state, not just the absence of sickness or disease. Therefore, it emphasizes approaches to health that prevent illness and encourage personal growth and achievement. Health and wellness are the results of consciously and consistently choosing to live a quality life.

So how are these different parts defined?

- **Physical Health** This includes having a balanced diet and regular exercise. It also includes preventative actions such as using sunscreen and seeing your family doctor annually for a physical. Keep in mind that early detection of health problems can sometimes prevent later illness or disease.
- Intellectual Health This can include qualities of

ment and eventually wisdom. Being curious about the world and intellectually challenged in our careers, hobbies, and activities can improve intellectual health.

Emotional Health -This is the ability to experience and express the full range of human emotions in

sense of emotional comfort and fulfillment in day-to-day life adds to our emotional health.

- **Social Health** This involves the quality of our relationships, satisfaction in our social roles, and our sense of belonging and acceptance in our communities. Our relationships also offer a source of love and nurturance.
- Spiritual Health This focuses on having a sense of a higher meaning in life. One also likely has a value system that defines proper actions and the nature of relationships. It represents an overall, guiding purpose.

Though it includes surgery and conventional medical remedies, the holistic approach may incorporate the perspectives and healing practices of other cultures

logic and reason, sound judg- such as Chinese acupuncture or Indian Ayurvedic medicine, as well as native techniques that have been neglected or have gained a negative reputation in our culture such as herbal medicine, massage, and home-

> opathy. It is also concerned with the environmental and social factors that can affect people mentally, physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

Promotion of appropriate ways. Feeling a holistic wellness has been associated with improvements in psychological functioning and has been used to enhance prevention and treatment of physical disorders like diabetes. Research has found that emotional well-being exerts a profound influence on cardiovascu-

lar health.

FEATURED MEN-FEATURED PROFILE FEATURED WELL-

Also, social support of friends and family has been found to be important in understanding health problems such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, and immune system functioning. Spiritual well-being has been associated with positive gains in addictions recovery, depression, eating disorders, and other health behav-

All together this information supports the idea that many factors impact our health and well-being and that the more we understand these influences and try to lead a balanced and harmonious life, the healthier and more content we may be. In this issue of Mind Matters the articles focus on making connections between these different parts of ourselves - physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual- and offer recommendations on how you can increase your total health and well-being.

Monthly Guidance

Dear MG,

My friend is on a positive-thinking kick. She thinks that "looking on the bright side" makes things all better. What's up with that? Frankly, it's annoying but it also makes me wonder if I'm doomed for not being so optimistic all the time. What do you think?

Sincerely, The Realist

Dear Realist,

There is something to say about having a friend that is always so cheery. On one hand, being with a friend who can't relate to you when you are feeling low can be really frustrating. Part of feeling better when you are down is finding that others can relate to your pain. It is not surprising that you are questioning your approach to life when your friend is not taking the time to understand your point of view. On the other hand, "looking on the bright side" can be a helpful skill when times are bad. It allows us to find hope when life is bleak and solutions when things are drab. The best approach is somewhere in the middle: have some optimism without completely ignoring the negative things in life.

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.

Featured Youth Issue: Yoga For Kids

Chilling Out

By: Courtney Ryan, MA

Looking for some structure for your kids now that they are out of school? Consider introducing them to www.childrensyoga.com/ yoga! It's a great way to get in some exercise while developing a healthy coping mechanism for stress management. Yoga can also effectively increase strength, coordination, and flexibility as well as develop self-expression, selfconfidence, and the ability to relax. A number of quality books and online sources are available to instruct you and your child on the philosophy, benefits, and techniques. To list a few -

Books

- Yoga Games for Children: Fun and Fitness with Postures, Movements and Breath by Danielle Bersma, Marjoke Visscher, and Alex Kooistra.
- The Yoga Adventure for Children Playing, Dancing, Moving, Breathing, and Relaxing by Helen Purperhart and Barbra Van Anelsfort

Websites

http://yogakids.com About/ RadiantChildYoga.htm

To get you started, here are some simple instructions for child-friendly Yoga poses -

BUMPY CAMEL Begin by sitting with your legs crossed.

Take hold of your outside ankle. This is your saddle. We are going to ride our camel across the desert. Breathe in deeply as you stretch your body forward, chest and stomach out. Breathe out as you slump back, spine is curved, chest is caved in. Keep moving this way and get faster and faster. Remember it is very hot on the desert and we want to get across it quickly! (20-40 seconds). Bumpy Camel gives you a flexible spine, keeps your back muscles relaxed and strong, and helps you digest your food.

COBRA Come into Cobra pose by lying on your stomach. Put your hands on the floor under your shoulders. Stretch



your upper body up high, with your arms straight and your stomach resting on the ground. Stretch your head as far back as you can and HISS! You are a very fierce cobra snake! Keep stretching and

hissing on the exhale for a minute. Then breathe in and lift your tail up. Try to bring your head and tail close together. Can they touch each other?

TRAIN Let's take a train to a jungle far away from here. Sit with your legs crossed. Bring your arms to your sides with your elbows bent. Make fists of your hands. As you punch one arm out straight in front, breathe in. As you punch the other arm out, bring the first arm back to your side and breathe out powerfully through your nose. Keep switching arms and punching out. Listen to your breath--does it sound like train wheels? Now breathe in deeply, and breathe out, as our train arrives at its destination.

Featured Mental Health Issue: Exercise

A Workout for a Better Life

By: Björg S. Hermannsdóttir, MA

Just as our bodies need proper rest and nourishment to function well, they also need regular physical exercise to stay healthy. Despite that, many people go through their daily routine without any exercise at all, which increases the risk of physical and mental problems and often decreases their quality of life.

What are the benefits of exercise?

Most people know that exercise is important for general physical health and weight management. However, other benefits may not be as widely known. Researchers have actually found that physical exercise can reduce symptoms of depression and

can also make future episodes of depression less likely. In fact, studies have shown that for people with mild depression, physical exercise can be of great help, with or without other treatment options. Other studies have shown that exercising in a natural environment (e.g. in a park or near a river or a forest) can reduce anxiety and increase people's quality of life.

Selecting the environment

For people who live in unsafe neighborhoods or who do not have access to an affordable gym or other sport facilities, finding a place to exercise can be a challenge. In addition, ice and cold weather can make outdoor activities less feasible during the winter

months. However, with a little creativity, most people should be able to find a safe place to exercise in their immediate environment. Sidewalks and trails for walking, running, or biking can be found in most neighborhoods and stairs can be used to increase the intensity of a workout when time is limited. People can even use malls for indoor walking when the weather is rough and a few square feet in a person's living room can be

> used for squats, pushups, skipping, and other exercises that do not require much space.

What type of exercise do you enjoy?

When choosing exercise for long-term health benefits, it is important to consider what type of exercise you enjoy. By selecting

interesting, you are not only adding more fun to your life, but you may also be more likely to exercise more than you would otherwise. If you generally enjoy outdoor activities more than working out at a gym, you may want to consider exercise like walking, running, and biking. Also, if you prefer exercising with other people rather than alone, you could contact local sports clubs for information about their services. The opportunities are

many and the choice is yours!

Exercising regularly

When people start exercising for the first time or after a long break,



they often experience difficulty with keeping their exercise regular over time. Some people may start out exercising vigorously several times a week, only to find themselves back in their old routine a few weeks later. Other people may start a regular exercise program that later turns out to conflict with their work schedule, family life, or some form of exercise that you find other demands. Therefore, to make sure that exercise becomes a regular part of your life, it is important to start with a moderate amount of exercise, such as going for a 20minute walk three times per week, and slowly increase the frequency and intensity of exercise as physical strength improves. That way, physical exercise is more likely to become a healthy habit for life.

Featured Counselor Profile

Summer Ibarra, MA

By: Mona Ghosheh, MEd

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.

Summer Ibarra is studying to receive her doctoral degree from the Department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services. She is currently seeing clients at the Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic while also working with clients and families affected by brain injury at the Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana in Indianapolis and providing supportive counseling services for clients and families affected by cancer at the Ball Memorial Cancer Center. The following is a discussion with Summer, one of many talented individuals employed at the Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic.

How did you decide to pursue your PhD in Counseling Psychology?

I made my decision to pursue a PhD in Counseling Psychology after having completed the Master's program in Counseling from the same department. During my Master's training, I began to realize that my career goals included engaging in both clinical and research activities. I felt that in order to become a clinician and researcher at the level to which I hoped to work, it would require further schooling.

What are your clinical interests?

My primary interests fall within the areas of rehabilitation, health, and neuropsychology. Specifically, I enjoy working with individuals who have been affected by illness and disability and helping them to adjust to difficult life circumstances. I find the field of rehabilitation inspiring and very rewarding and hope to continue to work in this area in the future.

Are you currently doing any research?

I am currently involved in two research projects at the Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana. The first project involves investigation of the effectiveness of a brain injury coping skills group for individuals and families affected by brain injury. The second project is focused on establishing a measurement device for assessing an individual's level of perceived self-efficacy in managing the effects of brain injury. I am also involved in two research teams with two faculty members within our department including research in the areas of rehabilitation and health psychology.

What has been your most influential (or exciting, or enjoyable) work experience?

The most influential as well as enjoyable work experience I have had has been my work at the Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana. I have been working there for over 4 years and continue to enjoy going to work and interacting with the clients and their family members. The most inspiring aspect of working in a rehabilitation setting is the opportunity to observe a client's progress as he or she works toward their rehabilitation goals. From the inpatient to the outpa-

I enjoy working with individuals who tient settings, much improvement is have been affected by illness and often demonstrated and it is wonder-disability and helping them to adjust ful to be a part of helping these inditional to difficult life circumstances. I find viduals in meeting their goals.

Are there any populations that you especially enjoy working with in counseling?

Aside from my interest in working with individuals and families affected by illness and disability, I also enjoy helping adults learn more adaptive coping and problem-solving strategies for dealing with many different types of life stresses.

What do you hope to do after you graduate?

Upon graduation, I hope to pursue a post-doctoral fellowship in neuropsychology. After completing training in neuropsychology, I would like to work in a rehabilitation-type setting, doing both clinical and research related activities.



Summer Ibarra, doctoral student in the Department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services

Featured Wellness Issue: Practicing Meditation

Benefits to the Body, Mind, and Soul

By: Jill Sullivan, MA

Meditation in general means awareness of one object, the object of the meditation. There are many objects of meditation, some of which could include watching your breath, listening to birds, visualizing water dripping out of a faucet, or even nothing. As long as the object of the meditation is free from other distractions to the mind, it would be considered effective meditation (Meditation Society of American, 2006).

Longer-term practice of medita-

tion has positive physical, emotional, and spiritual effects. Physical health benefits include:

- Increased blood flow
- Lower levels of cortisol (chemical released when stressed)
- Decreased heart rate
- Decreased muscle tension
- Increased flow of air to the lungs
- Improved state of the immune system
- More easily able to fall asleep

Emotional or mental benefits of practicing meditation include:

- A deeper level of relaxation
- Decreased anxiety
- · Decreased irritability and

moodiness

- Improved concentration
- Enhancement of selfconfidence
- Increased happiness
 Finally, spiritual benefits of practicing meditation include:
 - Peace of mind
 - Ability to look within, beyond that of one's body and mind
 - Spiritual awakening
- Discovery of one's true being (SuccessConsciousness.com, HealthandYoga.com, 1stHolistic.com)



Be aware of your posture and eyes, sitting with your head up and your spine straight

Being able to meditate takes time. GoodlifeZen.com, provides 10 tips on how to begin meditating. They first



suggest to be aware of your posture and eyes, sitting with your head up and your spine straight and allowing your eyes to remain

open or shut, whatever is the most comfortable for you.

They also suggest allowing yourself to softly focus on whatever it is that you have placed as the object of the meditation, allowing yourself to enjoy the experience, and start slowly, sitting only for 10 minutes for your first experience. It is also very important to create your own silent place to meditate and use your own

breath as the object of meditation if desired. You could do this by allowing your breath to be natural and silently counting each in breath and out breath.

Finally, GoodlifeZen.com suggests acknowledging thoughts and emotions, but not allowing them to take your focus off of your object. Acknowledge they are there, then ask them to leave so you can **refocus** your focus. The most important tip in trying or beginning to meditate is to not get frustrated!! It takes practice!



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We're on the Web! http://www.bsu.edu/ counselingpsychology/clinic/

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 highquality, 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 (Spring & Fall)
 9 AM to 9 PM M-Th
 9 AM to 12 PM Fri
- May-August (Summer)
 9 AM to 8 PM M-Th
 Closed on Friday
- 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 Counselina Association, the General Guidelines for Providers of Psychological Services, and the Specialty Guidelines for the Delivery of Services by Counseling Psychologists.