# Matters



Volume 2, Issue 4

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Issue

MONTHLY

September 2010

### BALL STATE UNIVERSITY COUNSELING PRACTICUM CLINIC

### Holistic Health: I Need a Nap!

### The Benefits of Naps and Sleep Hygiene

MA

In our society, productivity appears to be a priority in our lives. However, we have forgotten that in order to be productive we need to save some energy. Our body has limited energy resources and we tend to exhaust these resources throughout the day. Caffeine and energy drinks also play a role in tricking us into thinking that we can extend our energy levels. Yet, the energy they create is short -lived and often results in poor concentration and irritability later on.

What are some other ways to stay productive and boost energy without these miracle juices? Power naps are the answer! Research indicates that the brain needs a rest every now and then, and a short 20-minute power nap can revitalize its capacity. That way we can continue our work feeling more energetic and creative and avoid consuming tons of caffeine. Research shows that power naps decrease stress and facilitate relaxation. They also increase alertness and productivity, especially after a night with poor sleep. Taking a nap approximately 8 hours after you have awakened can help your stamina more than sleeping for 20 extra minutes in the morning. It also improves memory and learning, which can be particularly important

By: Aikaterini Psarropoulou, for certain professions and for students.

#### Other benefits of sleep:

It is good for the heart: Research shows that a 30 minute nap three times per week may significantly reduce the risk for

heart related death

It increases cognitive functioning, particularly when the duration of

> the nap is between 15 to 35 minutes. Longer than this and the benefits of napping disappear.

- It can increase motivation for exercise and by doing so, increases healthy habits.
- Finally, it boosts your creativity: A fresh mind is proven to be more creative and have more ideas than a drained and exhausted mind.

Apart from napping, having good sleep hygiene is essential for our functioning. In other words, sleeping habits are very important for our health and everyday performance. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to have a nice and relaxing sleep, but most of the time there are several things that we can do in order to make it easier for us to sleep well.

#### **Rules for Good Sleep Hygiene:**

Have a fixed bedtime and awaken time: It is

essential to have a schedule for sleep befalling asleep at certain times. Disrupting the time routine may impede you from falling asleep.

the day: A nap of 20-30 minutes during the day can help you sleep well at night but if the nap lasts an hour or more that may disrupt your

and also impede the aforementioned benefits of the short naps.

- Avoid alcohol 4-6 hours before going to bed: Alcohol has an awakening effect a few hours after you fall asleep.
- Avoid caffeine and sugary food 4-6 hours before you go to bed to
- Use comfortable bedding.
- Reserve bed for sleep and sex: it is important to not use the bed for work in order to avoid associating it with work or stress and to help your body "know" that your bed is for sleeping.
- Practice relaxation before bed: If you had a stressed day make sure that you leave your worries away from your bed. Practice yoga, deep breathing or other techniques that help you relax and release the tension of the day.
- Establish a pre-sleep ritual: This can be very helpful especially for those that have some difficulty falling asleep. Having a warm bath, reading, or performing a brief relaxation exercise helps your body "know" that it is now time to sleep.

cause the body is used to

Avoid long naps during

GUIDANCE FEATURED YOUTH FEATURED MENTAL **HEALTH ISSUE FEATURED** COUNSELOR **PROFILE** "sleeping time" FEATURED WELL-NESS ISSUE

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decrease your restlessness.

### **Monthly Guidance**

#### Dear MG,

Put simply, I am stressed! My life is a revolving deadline and it seems like I'm always rushing to complete the next thing. How do I deal? I know I need to find time to relax, but when I do, it makes me feel quilty. I'm stuck...any suggestions?

Sincerely, Counting Down to Deadline

Dear Counting Down,

I must say, you sound busy and under a lot of pressure. But "counting down" might just be your way out. Let me explain. It is not uncommon for people to feel down and uncomfortable when taking time for themselves to relax. Your key to relaxation is figuring out a way to stop those thoughts

from invading your "relax time" so that you can actually unwind! One way to do this is by counting down from 10 while closing your eyes and breathing slowly from your nose and out your mouth. The trick is to fill your thoughts with vivid images of the air going in your nose and out of your mouth. If you think about work, don't panic, just refocus on the breathing. It is helpful to imagine that the air you are breathing is blue (or any other color) so that you can "see" it going into your nose and out of your mouth. By continuing to follow your breath with your mind for a few minutes, you'll notice that thoughts about work aren't monopolizing your brain and your muscles are more relaxed. You can do this at any time of the day, between tasks, or right before a relaxation break to set the mood. Happy counting down!

Sincerely, 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.

### Featured Youth Issue: The Caring Arts Program

By: Kathleen Wheeler, MA

Art is a universal language that gives all children the opportunity and ability to learn, express themselves, and interact with others. In other words, art can level the playing field for all children regardless of their background or level of cognitive, emotional, and physical development.

There are several existing community organizations and programs in Delaware County that are designed to foster healthy youth development and learning. One such example is the Caring Arts program, which uses creative art to help youth develop healthy bodies, minds, and friendships.

Caring Arts is a psycho-educational group program designed to give children with emotional disabilities in kindergarten-6th grade necessary creative outlets for social interaction and opportunities for learning and personal development in a safe environment. The Caring Arts program is a place where children are warmly accepted for who they are. Children participate in various creative art

activities, such as visual art, music, and drama, that stimulate their minds, as well as physical activities, such as dance and yoga, that stimulate their bodies. They learn age-appropriate social skills and engage in the learning process through teamwork and problem solving in order to foster positive relationships with peers and adults.

Youth learn to identify feelings and are taught relaxation techniques and effective coping strategies to manage their emotions. The Caring Arts program Cost: is also beneficial in providing parents some relief time from the stresses of parenting while the children are involved in Caring Arts.

### When:

The Caring Arts program runs for 10 Saturday mornings (9-12 pm) in both the Fall (September - November) and Spring (January - April), as well as 1 week (9-2 pm Monday through Friday) during the summer.

The Caring Arts Program is located at the Hillcroft Services, Inc. building at 202 E. Haines Street, Muncie.



Mural created by the children of caring arts

The cost is \$10 per child each season. Financial aid is available.

Because this program is designed for children with emotional disabilities in kindergarten-6th grade, a referral from a medical doctor or mental health professional (such as a psychiatrist, school counselor, or psychologist) is required to enroll a child in Caring Arts.

Parents who are interested in receiving more information about the Caring Arts program or would like to enroll their child in Caring Arts can contact Courtney Ryan, Caring Arts Assistant Director, at the Ball State Practicum Clinic (phone: 765-285-8047).

### Featured Mental Health Issue: Mindfulness

### **Awareness of Your Everyday Experiences**

By: Kelly Clougher, MA

The practice of mindfulness is an easy way to improve your overall health. Mindfulness entails paying attention and being aware of your present events and experiences. It also means acknowledging and accepting those experiences. It has numerous benefits to your emotional and physical health, especially stress reduction. Mindfulness is widely practiced because of its health advantages, and it can be used whenever needed - at work, home, or the grocery store. Below are some mindfulness exercises you can try.

### **Deep Breathing:**

The goal of this exercise is to focus on your breathing. You should take a deep, slow breath through your nose



and then exhale out of your mouth. Pay attention to your posture and the rhythm of your breathing. Try to complete 10 deep breaths; however you may have to increase or decrease this number depending on how you feel. This exercise is helpful when you are feeling angry, anxious, or tense.

#### Listen to Music

Many times when people listen to music they vaguely pay attention to the actual tune, lyrics, or instruments

being used. An easy way to practice staying present is to listen to any type of music you find enjoyable. While listening to the music,

direct all of your attention and energy on the song. Focus on the lyrics, changes in pitch and tone, type of instruments played, vibrations you feel, and any emotions or memories the music brings up for you. Listening to music as a mindfulness tool can be useful when you are sad, nervous, mad, or overwhelmed, and it can help people who have a difficult time falling asleep.

#### **Clean the House:**

Usually people view cleaning the house as a chore; however, thinking of it as a mindfulness exercise can make it more enjoyable. The next time you clean make a point to change your attitude about the activity so that it is a thing you get to do, rather than have to do. Then, put all of your attention toward the room or thing you are cleaning. For

example, if you are doing the dishes focus on your five senses such as the smell of the soap, sound of the water, sight of the bubbles, and feel of the glass plate and warm water. You can also acknowledge the patterns you follow each time you do the dishes. What do you wash first? What do you wash last? How to you load the dishwasher? How do you scrub the dishes? Many find this mindfulness tool very helpful with stress reduction.

#### Go for a Walk:

This is a great way to practice mindfulness and improve your health, because it is a form of exer-



way to reduce your stress. Go for a walk by yourself and, again, focus on your senses. What do you see, hear, smell, and feel? Focus on even the small details such as the color of the leaves,

feel of the wind on your face, texture of the bark on trees, and the smell of different flowers as you pass them. Pay attention to the color of the sky, birds flying above you, and trees blowing in the wind. Going for a peaceful walk can help you gather your thoughts, calm your nerves, decrease your anxiety, and ease your anger.

These four exercises are suggestions to get you started and to help you understand how easy mindfulness can be. You can also come up with other activities and exercises that work for you such as taking a bath or taking a leisurely drive. Have fun experiencing your mindful self!

### **Featured Counselor Profile**

### Jennifer Walsh, 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.

Jennifer Walsh 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, as well as working with clients and families at Associates in Behavioral Counseling, a local private practice. The following is a discussion with Jennifer, one of many talented individuals employed at the Clinic.

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

I knew after I received my bachelor's degree that I would need to get my PhD to have the skill and freedom needed to eventually start my own private practice. I decided to go to Ball State because they had a master's degree that allowed me to double major in counseling and social psychology, my two main interest areas. Since my experience in the master's program was so positive, I decided to stay at Ball State to get my doctoral degree as well.

#### What are your clinical interests?

Clinically, I am interested in working with college students who may be experiencing a range of difficulties as they transition from their families to the college environment. I am also interested in

interpersonal difficulties that focus on problems of attachment. This could range from generally minor relational problems between loved ones to more long-standing personality disorders or difficulties. I think people have a fundamental need to with college students I have been attach to and feel belonging with others and that many problems that we see in counseling can be understood and treated through an interpersonally focused framework.

### Are you currently doing any research?

I am currently working on my doctoral dissertation. My research interests are focused on integrating social psychology and counseling psychology so my dissertation project is attempting to do just that. I will be investigating whether the therapeutic relationship is internalized and transferred to new relationships in clients' lives after they complete counseling from a social psychology point of view. Basically, I'm interested in understanding what impact the counseling relationship has on clients' future ways of relating to others and themselves.

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

I have to say that the people I work with closely (cohort members, some faculty members) have been incredibly influential on my development. Getting a counseling PhD can be very demanding, and I'm not sure I could do it without the unending support and inspiration I get from my coworkers. I feel very lucky to have worked with such

smart and caring individuals.

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

Aside from my interest in working focusing on working with romantic couples using emotion-focused therapy. This therapy also focuses on attachment issues, so it fits with my clinical interests as well as my theoretical orientation.

### What do you hope to do after you graduate?

Upon graduation, I hope to intern and find employment at a university counseling center. I enjoy being a part of a university environment. I would also like to eventually open my own private practice. I believe that would give me the occupational freedom I am looking for.



Jennifer Walsh, doctoral student in the Department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services

### Featured Wellness Issue: Dancing is Good for the Soul!

### Dance and Movement Can be a Part of Holistic Health

By: Holly TenBrink, MA

As you're reading this, think for a moment about the last time you danced. For many, this might be difficult to do as this is not an activity we often engage in unless taking our children to ballet classes, the occasional aerobics class, or (admit it) twirling/shaking/jiving in the privacy of our own homes.

Unfortunately, there are many things that prevent most of us from wanting to dance more often. Right now, I'll bet you're saying to yourself, "I'm not a good dancer" or "I'm not in shape enough to dance" or even "I don't have the right kind of body for dancing." Lucky for you, none of this really matters! In the words of newspaper columnist Dave Barry, "Nobody cares if you can't dance well. Just get up and dance!"

As you read through this newsletter (and for that matter last month's Mind Matters newsletter), you will notice that there are countless ways to improve one's physical and psychological well-being. These can include yoga, getting adequate rest and sleep, exercising, spending time with loved ones, and oth-

ers. Of course, dancing can be a form of exercise, but it can serve other functions as well such as self-expression, relaxation, improved body image, increased body awareness....and it is fun of course!

Although dance is sometimes associated with negative body image, dieting, and eating disorders, value is beginning to be found in some types of dance and movement. Although research on it is relatively new, Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) has been proposed as an effective treatment

for many individuals with body image concerns and unhealthy or disordered eating habits.

There are many, many different styles and forms of dance, and what may first come to one's mind is dancing in nightclubs or strict competitive dance classes and troupes. However, there is one form of dance that has been increasing in popularity throughout mainstream

fitness over the last several decades, and that is belly dance. Belly dancing is a term adopted in Western/United States culture to describe many types of Middle Eastern dance, usually performed by women, that focus on the torso, rather

right for the body of a woman." Aled though belly dancing is becoming a



popular form of exercise, most classes still instruct in a traditional manner that emphasizes the celebration and acceptance of all female bodies. Classes usually consist of women of all shapes, sizes, ages, and ethnicities. Belly danc-

ing is possible for all body types. Even a rounded abdomen is seen as desirable and visually pleasing among belly dancers, although this is never required. Given this difference from Western standards, many dancers find it liberating to bare their midriffs and feel that it is not only accepted, but encouraged. For many American women, belly dancing classes are one of the only environments in which beauty does not mean having to be thin.

Belly dancing is only one form of dance that is both physically and psychologically healthy. Of course, there are many more types of dancing to try, and one thing is certain: dancing is one fantastic way to improve your well-being, make friends, and celebrate just being you!

than the limbs of the body. Although

than the limbs of the body. Although there are certainly some negative stereotypes of belly dancing, it was originally intended as a fertility rite or performed at birthing ceremonies to celebrate femininity. It was a dance performed by women for an audience of women.

Belly dancing can be a very effective cardiovascular work-out, but is gentle without the often "pounding" movements of traditional aerobics or dance. Instead, it strengthens the muscles by practicing isolations of various body parts, and has been described as a dance that "feels

"Stifling an urge to dance is bad for your health - it rusts your spirit and your hips." - Terri Guillemets



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### **Mind Matters**

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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/

## 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 adoles-

### **Hours of Operation**

- August-May9 AM to 9 PM M-Th9 AM to 12 PM Fri
- 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.