


Wellness for Rehabilitation Professionals:
The Mindfulness Approach

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Wellness & Stress

What is the meaning of Stress???

- ◆ Represents both a psychological and physiological reaction to a **perceived** threat that requires some action or resolution.
- ◆ Stress is essentially reflected by the rate of all wear and tear caused by life. – Hans Selye, 1956

Stress Response

- ◆ Stress has been shown to make us age at a genetic and cellular level.



Stress & Rehabilitation Professionals

- ◆ Stress is part of being in a helping profession.
- ◆ “Caring for others, in its various manifestations, places various forms of emotional, physical, and mental strain on people. It is exhausting to be constantly present for others, taking them in and helping them with their often difficult tasks of healing, growing, and learning” (Kahn, 2005, p.21).

Stress & Rehabilitation Counselor

- ◆ Individuals in the helping professions are particularly vulnerable to the experience of burnout and lowered job-satisfaction (Kirk-Brown & Wallace, 2004).
- ◆ ...burnout-prone individuals are empathetic, sensitive, dedicated, idealistic, and people-oriented...and susceptible to over identification with others (Burke & Richardson, 1996).

Stress & Rehabilitation Professionals

- ◆ The work of rehabilitation professionals is stressful because many times consumers are not appreciative, change comes slowly, and many agencies are understaffed and under-funded, and neither pay nor prestige is equivalent to other professions (Garske, 2007).

Stress & Rehabilitation Professionals

- ◆ Even the Dalai Lama (1999) suggested that those in helping professions can be fatigued by their work as it exposes them to the difficult encounters of those they are attempting to assist.
- ◆ Empathy fatigue can adversely impact the helping professional's opportunity for various areas of personal and professional well-being (Stebnicki, 2007).
- ◆ This type of "fatigue reaction" and its consequences has been recognized as "counselor impairment" by the ACA's Task Force of Counselor Wellness and Impairment (ACA, 2003).

Ethical Consideration-CRCC

- ◆ **Section D: Professional Responsibility**
 - D.1. – Professional Competence
 - d. – Monitor Effectiveness – RC continually monitor their effectiveness as professionals and take steps to improve when necessary. RC's take reasonable steps to seek peer supervision as needed to evaluate their efficacy as RC's.

Ethical Consideration - CRCC

◆ **D.3. – Functional Competence**

a. – Impairment -Rehabilitation counselors are alert to the signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems, and refrain from offering or providing professional services when such impairment is likely to harm clients or others. They seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and, if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until such time it is determined that they may safely resume their work.

Ethical Considerations-ACA

◆ **C.2.d. – MONITOR EFFECTIVENESS**

Counselors continually monitor their effectiveness as professional and take steps to improve when necessary. Counselors take reasonable steps to seek supervision to evaluate their efficacy as counselors.

Ethical Considerations-ACA

◆ **C. 2. e. – Impairment**

Counselors monitor themselves for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when impaired. They seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and, if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until it is determined that they may safely resume their work. (Continued)

Ethical Considerations-ACA

- ◆ (Continued)

Counselors assist colleagues or supervisors in recognizing their own professional impairment and provide consultation and assistance when warranted with colleagues or supervisors showing signs of impairment and intervene as appropriate to prevent imminent harm to clients.

The CDMS Code of Professional Conduct

RPC 1.03 – Competence

- ◆ a. Negligence

Certificants shall not:

- ◆ handle or neglect a case in such a manner that the certificant's conduct constitutes gross negligence (which for the purpose of this rule shall mean willful, wanton, or reckless disregard of the certificant's obligations and responsibilities).
- ◆ exhibit a pattern of negligence in the handling of the certificant's obligations or responsibilities.

The CDMS Code of Professional Conduct

- ◆ b. Impairment

- ◆ Certificants shall refrain from accepting cases and/or providing professional services when their own physical, mental, or emotional impairments have the potential to cause harm to a client or others. Certificants are to be alert to the signs of impairment, to seek assistance for problems, and, if necessary, limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities.

Wellness & Stress

- ◆ So we know that work as a rehabilitation professional has some inherent elements that we can allow to translate into stress --- that can adversely impact our wellness.


The question is ---

How do we win the battle with stress?

Wellness & Stress

- ◆ There are several things that we might utilize that will help us.
- ◆ One thing to consider which is having more and more of a scientific foundation associated with it.

The Frenzy/Power of Life (Work)



Monkey Brain



Yes There is.....

YES THERE IS....



MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment.

MINDFULNESS

“Mindfulness is awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgementally. It’s about knowing what is on your mind.”

JON KABAT-ZINN




Mindfulness

- ◆ **Mindfulness** is shown to provide health benefits that are important for those working in a field that can be perceived as stressful and over time if left unabated can adversely impact our physical, mental, and emotional health.

Mindfulness

Not a leftover hippie concept



Mindfulness

Companies throughout the USA are onboard with Mindfulness

- ◆ 22% of companies offer Mindfulness training.
- ◆ 21% plan to add a Mindfulness training component in '17.
- ◆ Mindfulness training enables workers to manage stress levels, improve memory, improve concentration.

- National Business Group on Health and Fidelity Investments study (2016)

Mindfulness

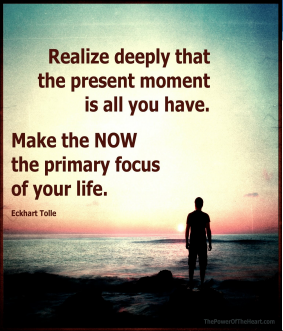
- ◆ Decreased levels of stress
- ◆ Improved decision-making
- ◆ Improved creativity
- ◆ Better listeners
- ◆ Increase memory
- ◆ Increase in concentration

Nurturing Mindfulness

- ◆ “Mindfulness is awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally. It’s about knowing what is on your mind.”

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

Nurturing Mindfulness



Realize deeply that the present moment is all you have.

Make the NOW the primary focus of your life.

Eckhart Tolle

Nurturing Mindfulness

- ◆ Pay close attention to your breathing, especially when you're feeling intense emotions.
- ◆ Notice—really notice—what you're sensing in a given moment, the sights, sounds, and smells that ordinarily slip by without reaching your conscious awareness.

Nurturing Mindfulness

- ◆ Recognize that your thoughts and emotions are fleeting and do not define you, an insight that can free you from negative thought patterns.
- ◆ Tune into your body's physical sensations, from the water hitting your skin in the shower to the way your body rests in your office chair.

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

Mindfulness Cognitive Restructuring

What you can't change, you might change your perspective



Mindfulness Cognitive Restructuring


- ◆ CR involves learning how to think differently, to change fundamental 'faulty thinking,' and replace it with more rational, realistic, and perhaps positive thinking." Sally R. Connolly (2009)

Mindfulness Cognitive Restructuring

The steps in cognitive restructuring are:

1. identifying irrational thoughts,
2. challenging/disputing them, and
3. replacing them with more realistic, rational, and positive thoughts.

Mindfulness
Cognitive Restructuring




Mindfulness
Cognitive Restructuring

When we are no longer able to
change a situation - we are
challenged to change ourselves.
Viktor E. Frankl

Mindfulness
Cognitive Restructuring

Life is 10% what happens to you
and 90% how you react to it.
Charles R. Swindoll

CONTROL & WORRY



"IF IT CAN BE SOLVED, THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY,
AND IF CAN'T BE SOLVED, WORRY IS OF NO USE."

Mindfulness The Happiness Factor

- ◆ Research has shown that we can intentionally change our brain and learn to be happier.
- ◆ Do 3 things daily---
 1. 5 minutes of meditation everyday before work
 2. Make a list of 3 good things that happened in your workday (focusing our minds on positive)
 3. Perform one random act of kindness.

Mindfulness The Happiness Factor

- ◆ Individuals that engaged in this practice for 30 days gained new grey matter in their prefrontal cortex, which is the area associated w/attention, emotion regulation & decision-making.

- Richie Davidson, Ph.D., Neuroscientist -Univ. of Wisconsin-Center for Investigating Minds

