

My Mental Health Newsletter

September 2016

IN THIS ISSUE: WHAT IS MINDFULNESS? · THE SEVEN ATTITUDES OF MINDFULNESS · MINDFULNESS RESOURCES

COMPASSIONATE CARE BACKED BY SCIENCE

MMH FOLLOWS EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICES, WHICH MEANS WE USE TREATMENTS AND INTERVENTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN THOROUGHLY TESTED AND RESEARCHED. THIS ENSURES THAT PROVIDE TREATMENTS THAT BEST HELP OUR CLIENTS REACH THEIR GOALS.

HOW WE HELP YOU

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS ARE TRAINED IN MEDICINE AND WORK UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A PHYSICIAN. THEY PERFORM EVALUATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS, PRESCRIBE MEDICINE, ORDER PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS AND REFERRALS AS NEEDED, AND ESTABLISH AND MANAGE TREATMENT PLANS.

LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS ARE SOCIAL WORKERS WHO ARE TRAINED IN COUNSELING. THEY HELP INDIVIDUALS DEAL WITH A VARIETY OF MENTAL HEALTH AND DAILY LIVING PROBLEMS TO IMPROVE OVERALL FUNCTIONING AND WELL-BEING.

LICENSED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS ARE MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TRAINED IN DIAGNOSING AND TREATING MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND EMOTIONAL ILLNESSES. THEY USE PSYCHOLOGICAL METHODS AND RESEARCH IN THEIR THERAPY. THEY CAN ALSO PERFORM PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS TO CLARIFY THEIR PATIENTS ISSUES AND IMPROVE TREATMENT.

Insurance

MMH PARTICIPATES WITH AETNA, CAREFIRST BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD, MAGELLAN, CIGNA, MEDICARE AND TRICARE.



A Message from Dr. Hanita Chhabra MD, Founder and Medical Director of MMH

"I have been part of a variety of psychiatric service lines in the 10 years since I completed my residency. MMH is the result of what I learned from each of those experiences. What separates MMH from the traditional approach to mental health is that we understand the divide between medication and therapy is not a natural split. Our clinicians work closely together, including meeting weekly to review any necessary cases, to ensure that our patients get the most comprehensive, compassionate, and cutting edge care available to help them feel their best."

What is Mindfulness?

All too often, we slip into autopilot mode throughout our day. When we feel stressed, bored, depressed, or anxious, it is easy for us to go through the motions of life without much thought. However, this mode of living makes us more likely to get stuck in patterns of unhealthy behavior and negative thinking.

Negative thinking is both a result and cause of negative moods. Even small negative thoughts can accumulate and spiral out of control, leading to depressive moods. One example of how this can happen is what psychologists call the "mood-congruent memory" effect: if you are

in an anxious mood, you are more likely to retrieve negative, anxiety-relevant thoughts from memory than you are to retrieve positive thoughts. However, you can learn to control these types of responses to negative thoughts by implementing mindfulness.

Mindfulness is a practice in which you turn off your autopilot and become more aware of your physical, mental, and emotional state in the present moment. This awareness allows you to better observe the current moment without automatically being controlled by how you feel or what you are thinking.

This does not mean that you ignore or suppress negative thoughts and



For more information

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THE SEVEN ATTITUDES OF MINDFULNESS

Non-Judging - Noticing what is going on inside of you without making any sort of evaluation. Thoughts are not seen as “bad” or “good”, but as just thoughts and feelings.

Patience - Letting things unfold in their own time.

Beginner’s Mind - An attitude of curiosity, wonder, and trying to see things as if seeing them for the first time instead of letting what you “know” get in the way.

Trust - Developing trust in yourself and your feelings.

Non-Striving - Practicing mindfulness with no goal other than being yourself and paying attention to where you are and how you are right now.

Acceptance – You must see and accept things as how they are right now, in the present before any change can happen.

Letting Go - Giving up control of things you cannot control.

Have feedback?

You can message us through Facebook, or anonymously through our website, and we will take your suggestions or concerns into consideration.

Why we love MMH

“Everyone here is very kind and caring. Dr. Chhabra is an angel! I would follow her anywhere to be her patient!” -LGW

“Between stimulus and response there's a space, in that space lies our power to choose our response, in our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

-Viktor Frankl, Psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor

feelings. Practicing mindfulness will enable you to separate yourself from yourself from negative thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations, before they become too overwhelming. This allows you to make more purposeful and wise choices, instead of reacting automatically to things you can’t control.

Imagine you are waiting in a long line. You might wish things were different – that the line was shorter, that things went faster, that you had chosen differently. Naturally, you may feel frustrated or irritated. Mindfulness, in this situation, allows you to better ground yourself in the moment and accept the situation you are in without the need to change anything. You don’t always have control over your situation, but you can learn how to control how you react to it.

Types of Mindfulness Therapy

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is a therapy used to help you deal with daily stress. Everybody gets stressed, but not everybody responds to stress in the same way. MBSR teaches you how to experience your stress, increase your awareness of your automatic reactions to stress, and how to better control how you behave in the face of stress. This therapy is highly effective for chronic stress, chronic pain, over eating, anxiety, and depression.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) was developed to teach people that, although psychological pain is normal, we can learn ways to live healthier, fuller lives by shifting the way we think about pain. The goal is to learn to allow negative experiences to occur instead of fighting or avoiding them, so that these negative experiences will have less impact and influence over you.

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) teaches mindfulness, among other skills, to help people change harmful patterns of behavior. The goal of mindfulness in DBT is to pay attention to and live in the moment, and to experience your emotions and thoughts fully, yet with perspective.

Coming soon!

Collen Novak LGSW and Michael Wusik PhD will be leading a mindfulness group beginning this fall. If you’re interested or would like more information, please give our office a call at (443) 354 1200.


Want to learn more?


If you’d like to learn more, we suggest reading:


“Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction” by Will Baum for *Psychology Today*


“How to Mindfully Turn an Unpleasant Experience Around” by Toni Bernhard for *Psychology Today*

Mindfulness Resources

 **Baltimore Mindfulness Project:** Mike recommends this YouTube channel that offers guided meditations.

 **Insight Timer:** Mike recommends this app, which offers many guided meditations.

 **Mindfulness: Finding Peace in a Frantic World** by Mark Williams: Colleen recommends this book (and especially recommends the three-minute breathing meditation included in the audio companion).

 **The Mindfulness Summit:** Colleen recommends signing up online for free access to a new mindfulness podcast every day of October. Contributors include experts on mental health, medicine, business, nutrition, and more.

In our next newsletter...

Psychological Testing: we’ll explain the main types of tests that we do, and how we use the results to tailor your care. We will also introduce you to the newest members of the MMH family.

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