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Acupuncture for PTSD

PTSD is a physiological disorder that results from being exposed to a traumatic event. It can affect anyone at any point in their life. The disorder can result in several symptoms including, but not limited to anxiety, irritability, insomnia, nightmares, and flashbacks. **Studies showed acupuncture is effective to treat PTSD.** Acupuncture treatments also have benefits such as a decrease in depression and physical pain. Soldiers, police officers, fire fighters and countless others who have been diagnosed with PTSD are using acupuncture to experience relief.

Dr. Priscilla Kerr, Prairie Medical Acupuncture Clinic, WinnipegAcupunctureClinic.ca

Tips to Better Handle Stress

You may be stressed if you experience the following symptoms frequently: Weight loss, sleep disturbances, irritability, anxiety or panic attacks, frustration, low self-esteem, negative self-talk, under-eating, or over-eating. **Here are 6 stress-management tips:** 1) Identify your stress triggers. 2) Stay away from things and people that trigger your stress. 3) Enjoy two hours of "me time" per day. 4) Meditate and practice deep breathing. 5) Split your "to-do" list with your family. 6) Create a magic "mantra" for yourself. For example, "I am the boss of my life." Keep repeating it to yourself during stress and continue this exercise until the mantra becomes a part of your reality.

Amit Thakkar, Pharmacist, Millennium Medical Centre & Pharmacy, MillenniumMedical.ca

Meet Your Practitioner

Meet Mandy Fraser - Individual and Relational Therapist/ Yoga Practitioner (BAH, MMFT, they/them). Mandy is an experienced clinician specializing in helping people navigate relationships. They teach coping skills to regulate strong emotions so that we can work on safely unearthing root causes of problematic patterns. Mandy enjoys helping people connect to their true selves; prioritizing creating safety so clients can experience vulnerability without being overwhelmed. **As a member of the queer community, they are passionate about working with 2SLGBTQ+ individuals.** Whether the issue is related to gender/sexual identity, or you simply want to experience therapy in a queer affirming space, they would love to support your process!

Safe Harbour Therapy, SafeHarbourTherapy.com

Self Care is NOT Selfish

Rates of occupational burnout are at an ALL TIME HIGH. And while self-care will not solve everything, "whole" modelling - being authentic and vulnerable and adopting a philosophy that 'you need to be well to do well' can help. It will help you and inspire your colleagues. The cliché is true - you need to put on your own mask before helping someone else. **If your jug is empty, how can you fill someone else's cup?** So, take some time to invest in self-care and celebrate it with others on **International Self Care Day on July 24th** and beyond.

Victoria Grainger, WellnessWorksCanada.ca

Human-Focused Initiative

Employee engagement is a driver of a company's success. Creating a work-life balance is a key factor for great business performance outcomes. **A Human Resources Strategy focused on work-life balance is seen as a benefit to individuals and employers.** Individuals report increased job satisfaction, a greater sense of job security, better physical and mental health, and reduced levels of job stress. The organization faces less absenteeism/presenteeism, lateness, and staff turnover rates. In addition, there is increased retention of valuable employees, higher employee loyalty and commitment towards the organization, improved productivity and enhanced organizational image as an employer of choice.

Laura Kusko, CF-ACC. CPHR. SHRM-SCP | #Balance | HashtagBalance.ca

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Heartburn? Bloating? Abdominal Pain?
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MINDFUL RECOVERY

DEFINITION: Maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens.

DID YOU KNOW: Stress is identified as one of the major causes of relapse, as well as inter-personal conflict, and negative emotions. Many treatment centres across North America now incorporate various stress reduction techniques as adjunct therapies, such as yoga and meditation in treating individuals with addiction and mental health problems as well as their families. Many centres also offer the same opportunities to their staff as it is recognized that these techniques when practiced offer increased self-awareness, a renewed spiritual connection, increased creativity, and a decrease in negative emotional responses to life stressors.

FROM A RECOVERY LENS: We all experience the basic human dilemma "that even when we know we are doing something harmful and destructive; we cannot always manage to put that insight into practice." As individuals in recovery practice the techniques of mindfulness, they experience a growing ability to face life and deal with life deeply and effectively with mindfulness practice.

• **Mindfulness** is a natural antidote for many problems involved in addiction, which at its core is a way of avoiding life rather than being aware of it.

• **Mindfulness** assists people in recovery to rebuild their lives with greater clarity and experience greater peace and insight. This includes the awareness that life is limited, and therefore precious, and the choices we make today can limit our choices in future.

• **Mindfulness** recovery is getting back in touch with your true nature, and exploring a harmonious path to recovery.

• **Mindfulness** provides a gentle way to begin to face the pain and perceptions that has been blunted by addiction and mental health problems, and closing off our emotions. By gaining or regaining our ability to be in touch with the simple pleasures of life, we reduce the need to fill the void with destructive behaviours including drugs and alcohol.

RELAPSE PREVENTION: When we hurry through life, we often miss the simple joys that could give us pleasure. Research supports that the practice of mindfulness reduces stress levels, which is one of the major causes of relapse. As recovery is a process, mindfulness teaches that it is important to maintain a compassionate attitude towards the experience, seeing it in context. It is a learning process rather than the end of the world. Awareness of what triggered the slip allows the person to form a plan to deal with the situation in the future, and is helpful, as well as intrinsically healing.

MINDFUL PRACTICES

Return to the present moment.
When we become overwhelmed by memories of the past, worries about the future, and other distractions, we are unable to think clearly and our tension mounts, and the person experiencing an addiction problem becomes high-risk for relapse. By bringing a gentle, compassionate awareness to thoughts and feelings, the need to engage in addictive behaviour diminishes.

Consider your life as a story you are still writing.
Many people hold on to life scripts or distorted views of who they are. Rewriting one's life story allows for forgiveness and compassion towards oneself and others.

Use journaling to deepen awareness of your life story.
Regular journaling brings repetitive problems and patterns to light and aids in understanding and wisdom about one's choices.

Practice meditation.
When you become aware and more accepting of your personal pain as well as the joy and the beauty of life, you establish a firm foundation for recovery.

Find ways to connect with the natural world.
Conscious, mindful choices about our recreational time prevent us from engaging in former behaviours, and leave room to explore higher qualities such as artistic and spiritual activities.

Cultivate healthy relationships.
As one becomes aware of both healthy and destructive relationship patterns, we have the choice to leave behind those which do not support recovery.

Explore dreams to expand your view of who you are.
Dreams offer clues about what is missing and what is out of balance. These may be blind spots that we have difficulty seeing consciously.

Learn to hold and embrace difficult emotions.
There are many well-established ways for dealing with our difficult emotions, seek them out.

Practice, practice, practice. Direct experience brings peace.

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