



Xenia

Monthly Newsletter



March

DBT Skill

IMPROVE the Moment

with this Crisis Survival skill

Imagery- Imagine being in a safe, calm place that is relaxing

and beautiful. Imagine uncomfortable sensations floating away on a breeze or a stream.

Meaning- Find a way to create something of value from the pain

Prayer- Try meditation or communing with a higher power. Look for strength to bear the pain of this moment

Relaxation- Try to relax your muscles from head to toe. Progressively release the tension from your body. Use a video or audio if the guidance is helpful.

One thing in the Moment- Focus all your attention to this very moment. Be aware of the emotional and physical sensations occurring. Let everything else be pushed aside.

Vacation- Give yourself a brief vacation or break. Go outside and take some time for a walk, go get a book to read, a drink to enjoy. Take a 1-hour break from the world and unplug.

Encouragement- Cheer for yourself! Give yourself positive affirmations "I am doing the best I can", "I can overcome this", "I have overcome the difficult before so I can do it again".

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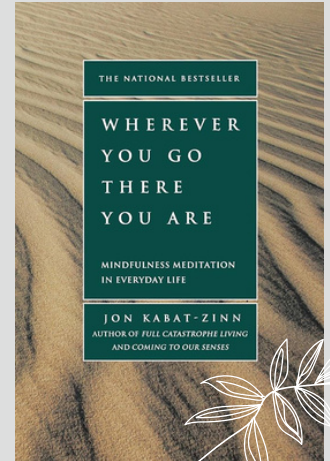
February's Book of the Month is...

Book of the Month

Wherever You Go There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life

John Kabat-Zinn

If you have ever wanted to learn how to make the art of meditation into a daily experience of your own this book is a great place to start! Not only is the book set up to almost be a meditation in and of itself, this explains the importance and meaning that "Mindfulness" should have in our every-day lives.



Therapy Activity

This month's therapy activity is: Family Photo Walk

As the weather is starting to be a little more livable outside we are loving to see this new trend on social media called a Family Photo Walk.

In this activity you go with your family to a place that can be close to home, or a special location like a trail, a museum, the park or anywhere you want to explore. Each member of the family has a camera (phone, polaroid, disposable, digital... go ahead and age yourself ha).

During the walk each member takes pictures of what is sticking out to them, and from their point of view! It's great to see the different things we all notice and learn to appreciate the things others see that maybe we missed.

After, share your photos and have fun learning about what your family experienced!



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Everywhere you look, whether it's on the news, or on social media, there are constant reports of a new "fix it all" technique to help you be cured of your mental illness. While the amount of new fads may become overwhelming, one that we would like to highlight is the holistic approach to mental health counseling.

What is a holistic approach?

A holistic approach to life and to various services is not anything new. To have a holistic approach towards anything is to look at something as "...wholes or... complete systems rather than with the analysis of, treatment of, or dissection into parts" (1). Thus, taking a holistic approach towards a person is to take into account all parts of them - their lifestyle, circumstances, environment, social circle, emotional/mental state, physical health, spirituality, etc. Holistic approaches have been used in cultures like eastern medicine practices for centuries, and have been more accepted and used in mainstream therapies as that information of the benefits has been shared.

Holistic Approach to Mental Health

Traditional mainstream therapies and their interventions/treatments have historically focused on providing care towards specific symptoms and in dealing with only a few problems that a person might be facing. A holistic approach to therapy not only seeks to treat the mental/emotional states of a person, but also to look at the root cause of the symptoms and treat the person in their entirety.

Here's a fictitious example of how a therapist may provide a holistic approach to a person's treatment. Aaron, a 35 year old male, has symptoms of depression and has been struggling for over a year. He's tried a few different therapists already, and was even on some medication, but it didn't work. He's been in and out of jobs and has been struggling to pay rent on a monthly basis. His girlfriend left him a few months ago and he hasn't fully processed the breakup.

With traditional therapy, the goal of the therapist is to help Aaron learn to manage his emotions and be able to process the events going on in his life. A holistic approach focuses on Aaron as a whole. Not only would they focus on his depression, but the therapist may also refer him to housing assistance to help with rent. They could also help him set goals to find a stable, well-paying job. They may go online with him to job searches to help him see options and to process how he feels about that. They could help him start with the basics such as maintaining a healthy lifestyle by incorporating exercise, sufficient sleep, and good eating habits to ensure that his body is able to function well.

A holistic approach acknowledges that systems within a person's life are interconnected and intertwined, so a symptom doesn't necessarily always have only one source, but could result from multiple facets of a person's life.



What are the benefits of a holistic approach to mental health?

With the holistic approach, there are many benefits. Northern Kentucky University has been implementing holistic approaches within their nursing program and have found some benefits to be (2):

(continue)





What is a Holistic Approach to Mental Health (cont)

- Improvements to diet and physical health
- Teaching a person how to shift their perspectives on certain things
- Learning how to manage stress

Research also shows that by implementing holistic approaches within addiction counseling could also lead to (3):

- Higher rates of program completion
- Treating depression and anxiety



Overall, a holistic approach is focused on providing long term recovery when it comes to your mental health.

Assessments

You may have noticed that in our lobby we now have a new assessment for clients to fill out! The assessments there are the

PHQ-9 & GAD-7

These assessment help the therapists monitor symptoms like depression and anxiety. When clients are able to see progress they feel more validated in their experiences and are able to make achievable goals that they feel more confident in!

We are asking all clients to complete the assessment (front & back) while waiting to go into their session and bring it to their clinician. The clinician will enter it in and use it to chart your progress!

What does a holistic approach look like?

When a therapist implements a holistic approach to your treatment, they are tailoring it to your needs and values. Some of the ways they can help the *entire* you would be to invite you to meet with a nutritionist to improve your physical health. Other ways would include teaching you how to practice yoga and mindfulness techniques to help stay relaxed and focused. They can add teaching social skills to support you in having a strong social circle. Sometimes they will refer you to meeting with specialists in specific areas to support you in different areas of growth and learning, like an accountant or a college academic office to talk about options.

The thing with a holistic approach is there's no one way to implement it. Just as every person is different, so should they be treated according to their needs.

Reach Out

Here at Xenia, our therapists will always look to tailor support for your specific needs. Whether that means implementing various approaches or simply focusing on the mental/emotional aspect of a treatment, we promise that they will always strive to help you with their knowledge and abilities. Reach out today to schedule an appointment!



February Book Review

Eight Dates

by John Gottman, PhD, Julie Schwartz Gottman, PhD,
Doug Abrams, & Rachel Carlton Abrams, MD

"Our partners don't always have to think like we think. That's what makes life interesting—it would be boring to be married to yourself. In fact, that's called being single."

When we get into any type of relationship, especially a romantic/intimate relationship, we quickly realize that the other person has differences. They think differently, they have different likes and patterns, and because of that we can feel we are not on the same page. In this book the Gottman's discuss the ways to get us back on the "same page" using 8 dates.



"most couples don't get any training in relationships, and often they don't learn how to communicate with each other until they go to therapy, and that's often too late."

Eight Dates has a unique set up that gives couples the opportunity to literally go on 8 dates and ask each other important insightful questions. In an interview, Dr. Julie Gottman made that observation that many couples start out dating trying to put their best foot forward but not getting to the more vulnerable questions for one another. Then as the relationship progresses the conversations become more about the every day tasks like "whose going to call the plumber?". In this book we are given examples and prompts for questions that can help us and our partner learn to communicate about the things that matter.

"Yes, it's serious and important work, but we also want you to have fun. Find the moments of humor. Find the joy, even when it feels difficult. Don't forget why you fell in love with each other, and most important, don't forget to laugh."

I personally LOVED the set up for the different date themes. On the "Dreams" date it was fun to have the examples of places we could go in order to discuss the dreams we have. Not only does the book give guidance on questions, it helps you pick a fun location, the things you need to prep to be ready for the discussion at the date, and some ways you can trouble-shoot when there are differences in communication. not only does this give you the topic of conversation, but the dates also help you find the atmosphere and *experience* you want to have together. One goal of my husband and I is to work through the book and report back!

-HAILEY MAIRE, LCSW