Empowering Recovery and Resilience with Mindfulness

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WELCOME!

Please add your *questions* in the chat box anytime throughout the webinar.
Ruth Colón-Wagner currently works with NYAPRS as the Director of Training & Development and has over 30 years of experience in the fields of Child Welfare, Homeless Services, Employment, and Mental Health Care working with children, adults, and families. For the last 25 of those years Ruth has worked in a variety of leadership positions. Prior to joining NYAPRS, Ruth served as Director of Rehabilitation and Treatment of adult mental health services in the Hudson Valley region of New York. Through a systematic culture change process, Ruth brought recovery-based, person-centered and culturally competent approaches to increase staff competency and increase client outcomes.

Ruth also works to bring various trainings, webinars and conferences on Cultural Competency issues that includes the cultural construct in America, racism, systemic oppression, the racial divide, realities of power and white privilege, micro aggressions and solutions for community transformation. Ruth was trained in Undoing Racism® by The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond.

As Director of Training & Development, Ruth manages various System Transformation initiatives which includes individualized technical assistance to organizations around the nation on Organizational Culture Change from traditional care to a recovery-oriented system of care. Technical assistance on building infrastructure, organizational capacity and board development. Ruth’s other specialties include Group Facilitation, Program Management and Compassion Fatigue. Ruth is also certified as a Dialectical Behavioral Therapist, a Functional Family Therapist and a Life Skills Educator. Ruth received her MSW from Hunter College School of Social Work and is licensed as a social worker in New York State.
An organization of people who use and/or provide community mental health recovery services and supports dedicated to improving services and social conditions for people with psychiatric disabilities by promoting their...
Today’s Objectives

• Identify the connection between mindfulness and resiliency
• Identify the research behind the benefits of mindfulness practice
• Identify mindfulness practices for use with the people you serve
• Recognize ways of using mindfulness as a practitioner for self-care
Question:

What is one way you would like to incorporate mindfulness into your personal and professional life?
“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”

— Jon Kabat-Zinn
Mind Full, or Mindful?
Empirically Supported Benefits of Mindfulness

- Reduced rumination
- Stress reduction
- Boosts to working memory
- Focus
- Less emotional reactivity
- More cognitive flexibility
- Relationship satisfaction
- Self-insight

American Psychological Association, 2012
Mindfulness and the Body

• Brain Structure
  • Associated with changes in 8 brain regions key to introspection and awareness, body awareness, memory consolidation, self-control, emotion regulation, and communication within and between brain hemispheres

• Cardiovascular Health
  • Mindfulness is connected to having a healthier heart and lungs

• Immune Functioning
  • Reduces markers of inflammation correlated with decreased immune function and disease.
  • Increases helper cells involved in destroying infections, and increased telomerase activity promoting stability of chromosomes and prevention of deterioration.
Resilience

The process of effectively coping with adversity—it's about bouncing back from difficulties. The great thing about resilience is that it's not a personality trait; it involves a way of paying attention, thinking, and behaving that anyone can learn.
In childhood I ate some emotional soup and have been trying all my life to digest it.

Billy Ray Chitwood
Stressful Event + Negative thoughts = Emotional Soup

Mindfulness ↓ rumination and, if practiced regularly, changes your brain so that you’re more resilient to future stressful events.
Mindfulness and Personal Resilience

Busy Lives
Well-being is a skill that can be cultivated and trained.

“I bounce back from set-backs and, if things don’t go according to plan, I make another plan.”

“Mindful people … can better cope with difficult thoughts and emotions without becoming overwhelmed or shutting down (emotionally).”
THE PRESENT MOMENT
is the field on which the game of life happens
~ Eckhart Tolle

Practicing Presence
Mindfulness is so powerful that the fact that it comes out of Buddhism is irrelevant.

Jon Kabat-Zinn
• Skepticism is natural and healthy, but can limit openness
• Shift misunderstanding and resistance into curiosity
• Use secular language, creating safety and inclusivity
• Discuss science demonstrating benefits on health/wellbeing
• Introduce in terms of potential and offer in voluntary or exploratory way
• Emphasize adaptability, person-centered practice
• Normalize it!

How do I introduce this to the people I serve?
### Table 1
Examples of mindfulness-based interventions for clients

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Practical mindfulness-based interventions to use with clients</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotion regulation</strong></td>
<td>“Can you stay with what is happening right now? ... Can you breathe with what is happening right now?”¹</td>
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<td>“What can you tell me about your experience right now? Notice any changes in your feeling, however subtle.”²</td>
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<td><strong>Decreased reactivity and increased response flexibility</strong></td>
<td>Slowly scan your entire body starting at your toes. Notice any sensations in your body without trying to change them.³</td>
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<td>Can you allow and accept this feeling and stay in touch with it without reacting to it? If not, what is happening in your experience that’s reacting to this feeling? ⁴</td>
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<td><strong>Interpersonal benefits</strong></td>
<td>For couples: Face each other, look into each other’s eyes and notice what reactions, feelings and thoughts arise.⁵</td>
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<td>For couples: Face each other, look into each other’s eyes, and practice sending loving-kindness to one another.⁵</td>
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<td><strong>Intrapersonal benefits</strong></td>
<td>Therapist and client can practice mindfulness meditation together during the therapy session.⁶</td>
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<td>Informal daily practice can include: walking and eating meditations, such as mentally saying “lifting ... stepping forward ... heel touching ... toe touching ... lifting ...” when walking.⁷</td>
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Overcoming Obstacles

• Making the time
• Surfacing of difficult emotions
• Sticking with it - Creating habit
• Limited social involvement in practice
• Being with experience
  - Staying with body and not getting swept away
• Lack of stimulation
• Lack of motivation without immediate results
Exercises and Techniques

Practice

- The Breath
- Body Scan
- Object Meditation
- Guided Imagery
- Mindful Eating
- Walking Meditation
- Mindful Stretching
- Affirmation/Mantra
Loving Kindness or “Metta” Meditation
Journaling

“It’s like whispering to oneself and listening at the same time.”

– Mina Murray
Journaling: No Wrong Way

- Reflect on your day
- Mindful moments
- Recurring themes
- Use technology
Journaling: daily exercise

- Calm - online journal to print out
- Digital: Evernote (and paper journal)
- Law of Attraction – journal and planner
  - Awareness & self discovery – find your life purpose
  - Mission & Vision statement
  - Set big goals
  - Create a life statement
  - Make a clear strategy
  - Take action – monthly, weekly
  - Feel good
  - Reflect and celebrate

- Visualize daily
- Meditate daily
- Spend time in nature
- Accept and let go
- Self care
- Give back
- Entertainment
Mindfulness & Self-Care for Providers

- Prevent Burnout/Compassion Fatigue
- Enhance capacity to be present with others
- Attending to your own well-being translates to your ability to support others

“Mindfulness not only makes it possible to survey our internal landscape with compassion and curiosity but can also actively steer us in the right direction for self-care” (Van der Kolk, 2014)
Recovery &

Resiliency

When you bend with the wind but don’t break in the storm.
Let’s Practice!
Meditation Apps

Inscape is for beginners, experts, and anyone in between.
1. Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)
2. Five Obstacles to Mindfulness
3. Examples of Mindfulness Based Interventions for Clients
4. 6 Simple Practices from the Masters
5. 4-7-8 Breath Relaxation Exercise
6. “Metta” or Loving Kindness Meditation Exercise
7. Progressive Muscle Relaxation
8. Guided Imagery
Question:

What is one way you would like to incorporate mindfulness into your personal and professional life?
Q & A

Ruth Colon-Wagner, LMSW
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Upcoming Events

Engaging Youth at Risk for Psychosis
Thursday, 6/13 – 1 PM

Complex Trauma Throughout the Lifespan: Considerations for Practice to Support Healthy Aging
Wednesday, 6/26 – 1:30 PM

Suicide Prevention Among School-Age Children
Thursday, 6/27 – 12 PM

If you have any questions, please contact ctac.info@nyu.edu
References

National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine (nicabm)

Institute for Healthcare Improvement


https://www.mindful.org/


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