Self-Care Is the Heart of All Health Care: for Our Patients and Ourselves

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James S. Gordon, MD
Founder and Director: The Center for Mind-Body Medicine
www.cmbm.org
Low Morale and Burnout in Health Care Professionals

- Survey conducted on 1,205 physicians in 2006
- Out of 1,201 respondents
  - Scale of 1-10 (1 – very low, 10 – very high)
  - 46% rated their own overall morale as a physician working in the US healthcare as 5 or lower; 55% reported a 6 or higher
  - Contrarily, 60% rated the morale of physicians they supervise or work with as a 5 or lower, and 40% as a 6 or higher
- Causes of diminishing morale:
  - Low reimbursement rates (21.9% of respondents)
  - Loss of autonomy (21.2%)
  - Bureaucratic red tape (16.8%)
  - Patient overload (12.1%)
  - Loss of respect (11.8%)
  - Medical malpractice environment (10.5%)
  - However many doctors wrote that it’s a combination of all these factors affecting their morale

Bill Steiger. Doctors say morale is hurting (survey). The Physician Executive. 2006; p.6.
Low Morale and Burnout in Health Care Professionals

- Results of several studies show 21-67% of mental health workers may be experiencing high levels of burnout.
- Of 7,288 physicians, 45.8% reported at least 1 symptom of burnout; highest rates of burnout among physicians at front line of care access—family medicine, general internal medicine, and emergency medicine.
- 67% of the 266 physicians surveyed from academic medical hospitals reported experiencing high levels of Burnout.

Therapies that require a professional and also stimulate one’s capacity for self-hearing, e.g. acupuncture, herbal medicine, musculoskeletal manipulation, group support, etc.
Self-Care

- Autogenics and Biofeedback
- Exercise
- Prayer
- Nutrition
- Relaxation
- Self-Awareness
- Meditation
- Imagery/Self-Hypnosis

Mind-Body Skills Groups Techniques
The Central Role of Self-Care in Integrative Medicine

“Physician: Heal Thyself”

- Hippocrates
Soft Belly Breathing
The Importance of Hope

- Helplessness and hopelessness are hallmarks of and major contributors to depression, anxiety, stress, and psychiatric disorders generally.
- Hope and acting on our own behalf are powerful antidotes
- Hope begets change
The Importance of Hope

- People who are hopeful generally do better and feel better than those who are not, regardless of biological status or physical disability.

- The mental health professional is not only there to treat but also to teach, encourage, to transform the experience of depression from victimization by a disease to awakening and to transforming an imbalance.
Engagement: The Effects of Choice

Nursing Home Study

- One floor was asked to take responsibility for making choices in their living environment and for making their complaints known to staff.
- Control group was told that the staff were taking full responsibility for their satisfaction.
- Participants selected furnishings, decorations, engaged in menu planning, and cared for plants, etc.
- Decision making, active participants showed significant increase in activity, happiness and longevity. Control group became more debilitated in just 3 weeks.

Challenge, Commitment, and Control

Personality and Illness Study

- Executives completed stress and illness questionnaires to determine if they were either high stress/low illness or high stress/high illness.
- Three months later, a second set of questionnaires containing several personality tests were sent to the executives.
- This study found that high/stress low illness executives show, by comparison with high stress/high illness executives, more hardiness, that is, have a stronger commitment to self, an attitude of vigorousness towards the environment, a sense of meaningfulness, and an internal locus of control.

The Central Role of Self-Care

We cannot teach self-care to others if we do not practice it ourselves.
The Central Role of Self-Care

Everything that occurs on a mental or emotional level affects the body, and vice versa.

Mental health and physical health are best understood as inextricable.
Self-Care is the Heart of Health Care

- Self-awareness and self-expression
  - Journals and narratives
  - Drawings
  - Movement and dance

- Relaxation

- Autogenics and biofeedback

- Meditation
  - Concentrative
    - Awareness
    - Expressive
Self Care is the Heart of Health Care

- Imagery/self-hypnosis

- Exercise
  - Improved mood
  - Enhanced immunity
  - Reduced symptoms
  - Increased longevity/decreased risk of cancer and heart disease

- Nutrition

- Prayer
Self Awareness is or can be crucial to self-care just as it is in psychotherapy. It’s hard to know what to do if you don’t know what’s happening or why. And once you know you can move ahead.
7 Pillars: Self-Care

A. Self-Expression

Expressive Writing

- Not speaking of traumatic events is associated with long-term stress and disease
- After writing about the traumatic event over four days, students confronting the experience showed significant improvement in subjective distress and immune function, and a decrease in health center visits
- Those who held back less and disclosed more showed the greatest improvement in immune function

7 Pillars: Self-Care

A. Self-Expression

Written Expression For Physical Health

- Group 1: disclosed personal traumatic experience via body movements for 10 minutes/day for 3 consecutive days & then wrote about it for 10 minutes
- Group 2: Danced but did not write about trauma
- Group 3: Engaged in routine exercise program

Results: over 3 month period, members of all groups reported that they felt happier and healthier
  - Only Group 1 showed better physical health and improved grade average

Conclusion: Combining movement and written expression is superior to movement alone

7 Pillars: Self-Care

A. Self-Expression

Mindfulness-Based Art Therapy

- 42 women with cancer diagnosis randomized to 5 week art therapy treatment group or wait-list control group
- Each session was led by one of two trained art therapists. The aim of the intervention was to
  1) offer time and space for expression and reflection
  2) give support in the process of restoring body image
  3) reduce stress and supporting agency 6 months after the start of radiotherapy treatment
- women who participated in the individual art therapy sessions significantly improved their overall QoL and general health compared with the control group

Relaxation

Relaxation is our Birthright
B. Relaxation

Relaxation Techniques for Anxiety

- Meta analysis of 27 RCT studies showed that relaxation techniques (Jacobson’s progressive muscular relaxation, autogenic training, “applied relaxation” and meditation) were all significantly and consistently effective in reducing anxiety.

- In general both concentrative and mindfulness meditation proved superior to other relaxation techniques.

Biofeedback

- Approach to relaxation and self-regulation
  - Reduce autonomic nervous system arousal
  - Manages stress
  - Supports and facilitates the natural self-healing mechanisms
  - Reduced anxiety and depression in cancer patients
C. Biofeedback

Used In Conjunction With Other Forms of Therapies

- Biofeedback, when used in conjunction with other forms of relaxation therapies such as music, autogenic and imagery training, significantly improved physiological functions including respiratory and heart rate and athletic performance in a professional speed skating team.

- The integration of mental skills (e.g., relaxation, imagery, self-talk, focus, breathing, reaction time readiness, music relaxation) and biofeedback self-regulation may have improved athletes performance for the World Cup competitions and the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games

Migraine patients had high levels of anxiety and depression. Negative mood states such as anxiety and depression were related to physical complaints and headache.

The anxiety and depression scores in the migraine patients were reduced after 4 weeks of biofeedback treatment with autogenic training as compared to control (which received no active treatment, except simple biofeedback measurements).

> 50% reduction in headache scores in treatment group vs. monitored group

7 Pillars: Self-Care

C. Biofeedback

Other Kinds of Biofeedback

- Heart Rate Variability Biofeedback (HRV-BF)
  - 154 patients with coronary artery disease exhibited restoration of cardiac autonomic balance and decreased hostility following HRV-BF

- Neurofeedback (NF)
  - The results indicate that NF effectively reduced inattention symptoms on ADHD scales and reaction time in neuropsychological tests among children with ADHD


1. **Meditation is the Heart of Medicine and of Self-Care**
   - Specific therapeutic benefits:
     - Decreased stress, lowered blood pressure and blood sugar,
     - improved mood, enhanced immunity, etc.

2. **Meditation Transforms Us**
   - Meditation enlarges our perspective, allows us to see the world and ourselves more clearly, less judgmentally, and more compassionately.
7 Pillars: Self-Care

D. Meditation
Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction in Cancer Patients

- 229 women after surgery, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy for breast cancer were randomly assigned to the 8-week mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) program or standard care.
- Results showed decreased anxiety, anger, depression, confusion and overall symptoms of stress.
- MSBR improved mood, breast- and endocrine-related quality of life, and well-being more effectively than standard care in women with stage 0 to III breast cancer, and these results persisted at three months.

7 Pillars: Self-Care

D. Meditation
Changes Brain Structure

- **Treatment:** 8-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Program

- Magnetic resonance images taken of treatment and control groups’ brain structure 2 weeks before and after the MBSR program

- **Results:** analysis of MR images found increased grey-matter density in hippocampus, important for learning and memory, and in structures associated with self-awareness, compassion, and introspection & decreased grey-matter density in amygdala
  - Participants reported reductions in stress while none of these changes seen in control group

Meditation

- Concentrative
- Awareness
- Expressive
Meditation Changes Our Brain Anatomy

Areas of increased thickness in red: insula, Brodmann area (BA) 9/10, somatosensory cortex, auditory cortex.

Cortical Thickness

- The brains of typical western meditation practitioners (about 2-6 hours weekly) were compared to those with no experience of meditation.
- Brain regions associated with attention, interoception (perception of internal sensation) and sensory processing were thicker in the meditation group.
- Among those who meditate cortical thickness increased with years of meditation.

Cortical Thickness

- Neuro-imaging quantified white matter integrity in the brains of 46 experienced meditators compared with 46 matched meditation-naive volunteers.

- Meditators showed greater cortical thickness in the anterior regions of the brain, located in frontal and temporal areas and thinner cortical thickness of brain regions in the lateral and medial parietal areas.

- These adaptations are involved with enhanced:
  - control and execution of voluntary motor functions
  - emotional regulation (critical for social adaptation)
  - egocentric processing of one’s own body’s in spatial context
  - cognitive functions such as improved attention and self-perception

Meditation Increases Brain Matter Density in Specific Regions

- A longitudinal study analyzed the brains of meditation-naive participants before and after an 8-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction course.
- Results showed significantly increased gray matter concentration in regions involved in learning and memory processes, emotion regulation, and perspective taking:
  - Left Hippocampus
  - Posterior Cingulate Cortex
  - Temporo-parietal Junction
  - Cerebellum

Meditation Increases Brain Matter Density in Specific Regions

Gray matter concentration in the left hippocampus.
Meditation’s Effect on Genetic Expression

- Researchers tracked men with low risk prostate cancer who had opted-out of conventional treatment and instead chosen an intensive 3-month lifestyle and nutritional program.
- **Treatment:** 60 minutes of stress management included yoga, breathing, meditation, imagery and progressive relaxation; a low fat, plant based diet.
- **Results:**
  - Improvements in weight, abdominal obesity, BP, and lipid profile
  - Patients reported significant reduction in psychological distress
  - Down-regulation of a set of RAS family oncogenes, some of which may be normally increased in tumor tissues
  - Significant modulation of biological processes that have critical roles in tumorigenesis, including protein metabolism and modification, intracellular protein traffic, and protein phosphorylation

Imagery is...

- The dominant language of the unconscious mind
- A vital source of information and inspiration
- “The beat beneath the music”
**Imagery is...**

- A place where Mind-Body-Spirit Therapies interact
  - Hypnosis
  - Biofeedback
  - Meditation
  - Psychotherapy
  - Prayer
Imagery is...

the communication mechanism between perception, emotion, and bodily change

(Achterberg, 1985)
Types of Imagery

**Feeling State Imagery** – Imagery that changes one’s mood or emotional state in a very broad way

**End State Imagery** – Imagery that highlights concrete goals one is striving for

**Biologically Correct Imagery** – Imagery that focuses on what is actually occurring microscopically in the cells and organs of the body

(Naparstek, 1994)
Types of Imagery (cont.)

**Metaphoric Imagery** – Imagery that uses **symbols** to describe what is happening psychologically in the body.

**Spiritual Imagery** – Imagery that allows for a connection with a source that is greater than oneself that can enhance one’s awareness of inner wisdom and strength

(Naparstek, 1994)
Guided Imagery

- Clinical Implications:
  - Physiological relaxation
  - Stress reduction
  - Mood modulation
  - Encouraging active participation in own care
  - Empowerment
  - Discovering meaning/insight into illness
  - Enhancing self-awareness
7 Pillars: Self-Care

E. Imagery and Self-Hypnosis

Systematic Review of Effect on Cancer

- 13 RCT studies on cancer patients’ (n = 1357) response to guided imagery and hypnosis in women with breast cancer, breast cancer survivors, and in women undergoing diagnostic breast biopsy.

- **Results:** This systematic review found promising evidence for the effectiveness of hypnosis in breast cancer care.
  - In women undergoing diagnostic breast biopsy (3 RCTs), hypnosis positively influenced pain and distress
  - 1 RCT on breast cancer surgery found effects of hypnosis on pain, distress, fatigue, and nausea.
  - For women undergoing radiotherapy (3 RCTs), hypnosis combined with cognitive-behavioral therapy improved distress and fatigue.
  - 3 RCTs on women with and without a history of breast cancer experiencing hot flashes, hypnosis improved hot flashes and distress.
  - Three RCTs on women with metastatic breast cancer found effects on pain and distress

Exercise

Aside from the presence of a sympathetic and knowledgeable other person—exercise is probably the single best treatment for depression and may be as important for anxiety.
Exercise and Depression

By itself, exercise is as effective as any known treatment for depression.

Exercise should always be a significant part of any integrative approach.


Exercise and Depression

Exercise alters brain chemistry, increasing serotonin, norepinephrine, and endorphin levels.


Exercise and Depression

Exercise may promote neurogenesis.


In a longitudinal study of over 9000 people, regular physical activity was associated with a reduced likelihood of depressive symptoms at follow-up (Da Silva et al., 2012).

Mechanisms for the protective factor of exercise on depression have been studied.
Depression in Older Adults

At 10 weeks a significantly higher proportion of the exercise group (55% v. 33%) experienced a greater than 30% decline in depressive rating scale as compared to those in the health education classes.

Mather et al. Effects of Exercise on Depressive Symptoms in Older Adults with Poorly Responsive Depressive Disorder: Randomized Controlled Trial. *British Journal of Psychiatry*. 2002;180:411-415
7 Pillars: Self-Care

F. Exercise
Yoga and PTSD

- 64 women with chronic, treatment-resistant PTSD randomly assigned to two groups: trauma-informed yoga or supportive women’s health education

- Results showed yoga significantly reduced PTSD symptomatology, comparable to psychotherapeutic/psychopharmacologic approaches

Tai Chi

- Based on forty studies, totaling 3817 subjects, Tai Chi appears to be associated with improvements in psychological well-being including reduced stress, anxiety, depression and mood disturbance, and increased self-esteem.

Tai chi, also called taiji or tai chi chuan, is a form of mind-body exercise that originated from China. It combines Chinese martial arts and meditative movements that promote balance and healing of the mind and body, involving a series of slowly performed, dance-like postures that flow into one another.

Nutrition

A critical element in psychological health and prevention and treatment of chronic illness
Nutrition
Paleolithic Diet

- Hunter-gatherers 10,000 years ago
- Increased caloric demand due to physically vigorous lifestyle
- Genetic make-up today is virtually unchanged
- Typical diet consisted of wild game proteins (30% of diet), nuts, fruits, legumes, and grains

Nutrition

Paleolithic Diet

- Wild protein source is lean 12% fat content and far less influential in raising serum cholesterol as compared with high-fat domesticated sources today.

- Low sodium-to-potassium ratio is now inverted. Was 768mg:10,500mg/dl and now average 4000mg:2500mg/dl.

- Just minimal sodium increases above 768mg are required to cause a high frequency of hypertension in populations.

- Much higher fiber intake 100mg/dl as compared to 20g/dl today. High fiber favorably affected lipid metabolism.
Nutrition

Paleolithic Diet

Changes in Human Diets with Intensified Agriculture, Cooking, and Food Processing

- Increased Glycemic Load
- Decrease in Omega 3 Fatty Acid Composition
- Loss of Micro-nutrient Density
- Shift in Acid-Base Balance to Chronic Acid Load
- Inverted Sodium-Potassium Ratio
- Dramatic Drop in Fiber Content

Paleolithic Diet
Current Clinical Implications

- Participants consumed a paleolithic type diet comprised of lean meat, fruits, vegetables and nuts, and excluded non-paleolithic type foods, such as cereal grains, dairy or legumes, for 10 days.
- Even short-term consumption of a paleolithic type diet improves BP and glucose tolerance, decreases insulin secretion, increases insulin sensitivity and improves lipid profiles without weight loss in healthy sedentary humans.
- Meditate on the implications. Share the information.

Nutrition

Changes in Our Diet that Trigger Inflammation

- Sugar – refined grain flours, processed – high glycemic foods with high “carbohydrate density.”
- Increased O-6/O-3 EFA intake
- Food sensitivities such as gluten, dairy
- Not enough vegetables, fruit, fiber
- GMO and foods contaminated with environmental toxins such as game fish (mercury), non-organic fruits and vegetables with pesticide residues, BPA in plastics
Comparison with ancestral diets suggests dense acellular carbohydrates promote an inflammatory microbiota, and may be the primary dietary cause of leptin resistance and obesity

Abstract: A novel hypothesis of obesity is suggested by consideration of diet-related inflammation and evolutionary medicine. The obese homeostatically guard their elevated weight. In rodent models of high-fat diet-induced obesity, leptin resistance is seen initially at vagal afferents, blunting the actions of satiety mediators, then centrally, with gastrointestinal bacterial-triggered SOCS3 signaling implicated. In humans, dietary fat and fructose elevate systemic lipopolysaccharide, while dietary glucose also strongly activates SOCS3 signaling. Crucially however, in humans, low-carbohydrate diets spontaneously decrease weight in a way that low-fat diets do not. Furthermore, nutrition transition patterns and the health of those still eating diverse ancestral diets with abundant food suggest that neither glycemic index, altered fat,
The Spiritual Dimension

Can be seen as an aspect of life but it is better understood as that which gives our lives their fullest meaning and their greatest energy. The spiritual is not separate from, but intrinsic to who we are…

…and we forget
Spirituality is not Religion.

Religion is the name we give to the ways we organize our spiritual practices and our beliefs about the spiritual.

When religion is alive and vital it is the spirit or spirituality which enlivens it.
Spirituality is intimately connected with healing in China and India, in Judaism, Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism, and among indigenous people.

The Spirit gives life and renews life.
Every aspect of our work is spiritual…

…how we are with ourselves and others,

and with nature,

which allows us to breathe.
Religion & Depression

- Effect of religious belief relates to speed of remission of clinical depression in hospitalized older patients
- 94 depressed patients were followed every 12 weeks for 48 weeks
- Intrinsic religiosity was significantly and independently related to time of remission but church attendance and private religious activities were not
- For every 10 point increase in intrinsic religiosity there was a 70% increase in speed of remission

**Mind-Body Skills Groups**

**Principles**

- Meditative
- Safe Place
- Respect
- Educational
- Staying in the moment
- Leader as teacher *and* real person
- Power of each person to know him/herself
- Power of each person to care for him/herself
- Mutual—we are all mirrors for one another
- Group as growth organism
- Balance of structure and flexibility.
Our Model

- **Mind-Body Skills Groups**
  - 8-10 people
  - 10 sessions - 2 hours each
- Small group format - highly structured
- Integrates well with existing systems
- Mind-body approaches - experiential
  - biofeedback, meditation, guided imagery, yoga

Educational vs. Medical

Group Support

Psychological Self-Care

Self-Expression

• Words, drawings, movement
CMBM Model

- Engages people in actively helping themselves
  Focuses on strengths and capacity for self-reliance rather than psychopathology
- Optimism rather than past trauma
- Builds resiliency and recovery
- Group format naturally reproduces camaraderie
- Interfaces well with therapeutic and educational approaches
- Integrates well within existing structures: clinics, hospitals, community group
Mind-Body Skills Groups provide perhaps the most effective and most acceptable way to deal with population wide psychological trauma.
It’s Not What’s Prescribed…

It’s **What You Do**

and

**How You Do It!**


"It’s Not What’s Prescribed—It’s What You Do and How You Do It!"


It’s Not What’s Prescribed—
It’s What You Do and How You Do It!


Georgetown Medical Students enrolled in Mind Body Skills Group were tested for biomarkers of stress. Compared to control, they displayed:

- Significant reduction in Salivary Cortisol Levels
- Lower levels of exam-time stress measures
- Decreased dehydroepiandrosterone-sulfate levels (DHEA-S)
- Decreased testosterone levels

Mind-body skills groups for medical students

- Paper describes the Mind-Body Skills Groups model designed by CMBM and surveys its use in 15 medical schools.
- Published research demonstrates Mind-Body Skills groups model’s effectiveness in reducing stress in medical students, enhancing students’ experience of medical education, and in helping them look forward more confidently and hopefully to becoming physicians.

**Mind-Body Skills Groups & PTSD in Postwar Kosovar Adolescents**

- 82 high school students met criteria for PTSD measured by Harvard Trauma Questionnaire.

- Program conducted by teachers in an educational, supportive small group setting and included meditation, guided imagery, breathing techniques, biofeedback, and self-expression through words, drawings, and movement.

**Results**: students having symptoms indicating PTSD was significantly reduced from 100% to 18%; reduction in symptoms maintained at 3-month follow-up.

Mind-Body Skills Groups & PTSD in Gaza’s Children

- 500 children participated in mind-body skills groups
- Prior to program, 26% of children had PTSD symptoms
- 56% of those qualifying as having PTSD also qualified as having depression using Children’s Depression Inventory
- PTSD symptom scores were significantly decreased following the program (by 56%); improvement partially maintained at 7 month follow-up with a 39% decrease in scores compared to baseline
- Depression scores significantly decreased following program (29%); improvement partially maintained at 7 month follow-up with a 20% decrease in scores compared to baseline
- Children felt more hopeful about their future and their lives – statistically significant decrease in hopelessness scores (28% decrease); improvement fully maintained at follow-up

Suicide is now the leading cause of death in the army. More soldiers die by suicide than in combat or vehicle accidents, and rates are rising: July, with 38 suicides among active duty and reserve soldiers, was the worst month since the Army began counting. General Lloyd Austin III, the army's second in command, called suicide "the worst enemy I have faced in my 37 years in the army." This Thursday, the Army is calling a "Suicide Stand-Down." All units will devote the day to suicide prevention.

There are many reasons a soldier will take his own life, but one major factor is post-traumatic stress.

Anyone who undergoes trauma can experience post-traumatic stress disorder - victims of rape and other crimes, family violence, a car accident. It is epidemic, however, among soldiers, especially those who see combat. People with PTSD re-experience their trauma over and over, with nightmares or flashbacks. They are hyperaroused: the slam of a car door at home can suddenly send their minds back to Iraq. And they limit their lives by avoiding things that can bring on the anxiety - driving, for instance, or being in a crowd.

PTSD has affected soldiers since war began, but the Vietnam War was the first in which the American military started to see it as a brain injury rather than a sign of cowardice or
“The Center for Mind-Body Medicine’s program…is the most comprehensive of all [treatments], giving participants a variety of different strategies to choose from: breathing, meditation, guided visual imagery, biofeedback, self-awareness, dance, self-expression, drawing. And it is the one with the strongest evidence that it works to cure PTSD.”

Conclusions

This work begins with us and continues with us.
CMBM Uses the “Unstuck” Approach to Trauma

Unstuck: Your Guide to the Seven Stage Journey Out of Depression

- Shows you how to reduce your stress, break-up fixed patterns by engaging the body and mind, and utilize your innate wisdom to facilitate creative solutions and promote growth and healing.


Upcoming Programs

- Mind-Body Medicine PTP
  - PORTLAND, October 14 – 18, 2016
Upcoming Trainings

Mind, Mood, and Food
Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health
Stockbridge, MA, March 10 – 13, 2016

Food As Medicine
PORTLAND, OR
June 2 – 5, 2016
Questions and Answers

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