



The Counseling Center News

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TCC NEWS

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We hope you have enjoyed some leisure time and relaxation this summer. Everyone here has taken some time off to rest and refresh, and yet there has been lots accomplished. Keeping you up to date on what we are working on, and involved in, will help you to become familiar with who we are.

We have continued a monthly networking lunch during the summer. This gives us the opportunity to meet with colleagues and learn about their area of expertise and share information. This summer our guests have included a psychiatrist new to the area, a naturopathic doctor, and a holistic physician.

Several of our therapists have attended a continuing education course on the treatment of compulsive sexuality.

Three of us, each a yoga teacher, have been teaching at the Hopewell Cancer Support Center this summer.

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Yoga and the Healing Power of Breath

By Gayle Bohlman

“All spiritual traditions and practices emphasize breath as our connection to the life force.”

Breath is a powerful tool in seeking health, balance and wellness in mind, body and soul. All spiritual traditions and practices emphasize breath as our connection to the life force. In Greek, pneuma is the word for breath and also for spirit. In Sanskrit, prana, in Chinese medicine, chi, in Japanese, Ki, and in Hebrew, ruah refer to breath. All of these words drawing our attention to our dependence on that which gives us life. The breath serves as a metaphor for our dependence on something greater than our selves. Breathing in, we are “inspired” and filled with that which animates us.

How we breathe can be viewed as a metaphor to our relationship

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EMDR for Large and Small Trauma

By Wayne J. King

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) has been found to be an effective therapeutic technique for treating psychological distress resulting from trauma. In 2004, the American Psychiatric Association listed EMDR as an effective treatment for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. When people think of trauma, they often imagine life-threatening situations or situations in which someone could be seriously harmed, for example, natural disasters, incidents of torture or abuse, or serious motor vehicle accidents. It is clear to see that such events could have a deep impact on someone's life and they would be suitable memories to process using EMDR. But, what about those events that don't threaten our lives or even threaten physical harm? What about the experience of being teased or frequently criticized? What about a child who, despite his or her intelligence, has difficulty focusing in school and has to struggle to keep up with the rest of the class? What impact could these kinds of experiences have and could EMDR be used to process the thoughts and feelings from these events? To answer these questions, let's look at how experiences can impact an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Our lives are made up of the experiences we have. These experiences, good or bad, have the potential to shape how we understand ourselves, other people, and the world around us. This is our belief system. This belief system shapes our emotional responses to our environment. We then choose a course of action based on our emotional response. This pattern of thinking, feeling and behaving can become fairly rigid over time. Even years after the incident or incidents that shaped it have ended, we might still think, feel, and behave in the same manner we did when we first encountered that situation.

Let's look at an example. Imagine a child who is frequently teased

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Linda Beam, LCSW-C is our newest therapist. Over the summer Linda taught two four-day trainings at Salisbury University. The courses were offered for addictions professionals. Both trainings were experiential in nature and combined a western approach to self-care with eastern techniques.

In September, Linda will present "Self-care for Clinicians" at the Jewish Family Services and in October, "Stress Reduction" at the DHMH Suicide Prevention Conference.

Our lives are made up of experiences that have the potential to shape how we understand ourselves

Children in Divorce- The Coparenting Solution

By Terry McGeehan, LCPC

High levels of conflict between divorcing parents can create more stress for children than the actual divorce. Divorce often results in a dramatic decrease in arguing between parents. Developing a functional coparenting relationship can minimize arguing, reduce conflict and create a positive, emotionally safe environment for children. Transitioning from married couple to coparenting partners is not easy. The following ideas and behaviors can offer support in this transition.

Redefine your Relationship: Think of yourself and your ex as professional parents with the common job of raising your children. It is not uncommon to work with someone who is not your friend, yet focusing on getting the job done, and doing it well, can allow you to rely on that person's strengths while accepting his/her weaknesses.

Respect you Child's Relationship with the Other Parent: Your child needs and deserves a loving relationship with both parents. While the other parent may not have the same strengths that you do, he/she usually has something to offer your child. There are many different ways to parent a child, not a right way and a wrong way. Abuse in any form is not acceptable and warrants professional help. Give the respect you hope to receive. Do not say negative things about the other parent in front of your child. The child loves this parent, putting him/her down hurts your child.

Choose your Battles Wisely: Focus on the things you can control and let go of the things you can't. By attending to your own thoughts, feelings and behaviors you can enhance your relationship with your child. If you sense an argument brewing, become proactive in de-escalating it. Try saying, "I want to discuss this with you but I need to give it more thought" or "I don't think we are going to resolve this now, let's talk later", and then walk away or hang up the phone. When conflicts need to be addressed, do not try to control the outcome, collaborate and use "soft" language. For example, "I wonder if you would consider..." rather than "I think you should...", "I know you will figure it out but can I make a suggestion" rather than "That will not work, this is what you should do..". Do not fight in front of your children.

While the marriage may be ending, the family and the role of parenting continues.

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to life. Are we grasping or holding tight? Do we have trouble letting go of the exhale? Is the flow of breath deep and full?

Attending to the breath offers us the opportunity to achieve improvements in the efficiency of the breath. Research has shown that breathing techniques can help prevent disease, lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels. The practice of yoga and breath work has been shown to improve sleep, and reduce anxiety and depression. The deeper the relaxation in our breathing, the more we move the body from a destructive metabolic state to a constructive one.

"...consider including a few minutes each day for deep breathing, and notice the effects."

The practice of yoga offers instruction in mindful breathing techniques that will enhance the efficiency of your natural breath. As you approach a busy Fall schedule, consider including a few minutes each day for deep breathing, and notice the effects.

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at school. As a result of the teasing, this child might come to believe that there is something wrong with him. This belief might lead to feeling sad or depressed. The resulting behavior might be for the child to socially withdraw. Now, let's fast forward to a time where this person is now an adult. If he is still holding onto the belief that there is something wrong with him, his reactions to criticism or being the butt of a good-natured joke may be more intense than someone without that negative belief. As a result of the criticism or joke, this person may cycle through the old established pattern of thinking something is wrong with him, feeling sad or depressed, and then socially withdrawing. Now that we've looked at the connections among experiences, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors, let's talk about the role that EMDR can play in un-learning negative beliefs.

The goal of EMDR is to break the connection between past experiences and current negative self-beliefs and emotional/physical distress so the person can act more effectively in the present.

When the treatment is successfully completed, the person is no longer distressed by the past, triggered by current events, and can manage future incidents effectively. During EMDR sessions, clients finally free themselves from their negative beliefs about themselves and are able to establish new, positive beliefs that they can actually feel are true.

The goal of EMDR is to break the connection between past experiences and current distress



We have had a positive response to our first newsletter and invite you to continue to dialogue with us. We appreciate your feedback.

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