

Susan Cane*Integrating Spirituality: Alternative Treatments for Children and Adolescents with Externalizing Problem Behaviors*

This study explored the evolvment of spirituality and mindfulness as a therapeutic intervention for therapy with children and adolescents with externalizing problem behaviors. The study questioned the effectiveness of this form of intervention and possible reduction of psychotropic medication use for children and adolescents. Interviews were conducted with four qualified and licensed therapists with experience in this area. Information was gathered regarding the positive and negative outcomes from incorporating this form of therapy. Educating not only clients and families but also current and future therapists involved discussions about interventions as well as the therapists deeper understanding of the treatment process. This study delved into the areas of efficacy for the clients and families to develop spirituality and mindfulness as an accepted form of intervention. The need for the development of empirical data through research was identified as an important factor for future therapists.

Carlee Casey*Exploring the Use of EMDR Therapy in the Treatment of Women with a History of Childhood Sexual Abuse*

The present study examines the use of EMDR therapy and its effectiveness when used with women who have a history of childhood sexual abuse (CSA). Current literature is explored, then compared with the results derived from information gathered through four interviews with counselors currently participating in the use of EMDR therapy with the CSA population. The major emergent themes, including personal responses from the participants, therapeutic challenges, the value of the therapeutic relationship, important clinical issues, and how EMDR therapy addressed the needs of the CSA population are discussed and analyzed. Participants all agreed that EMDR therapy was a useful and beneficial treatment with the populations they were serving. For the purpose of this study, populations served focused only on women with a history of CSA and the consequent physical, emotional, mental, and relational difficulties they faced during the execution of EMDR therapy.

Gabrielle DeFriese*Inseparable Body and Mind: Conceptualizing Physical Health and Chronic Illness and its Relationship to Adverse Childhood Experiences*

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have a profound impact on physical health in adulthood. There has been limited research about integrating this link within both the medical and mental health fields. Moreover, there is a significant lack of research on psychotherapeutic modalities effective for adults with poor physical health resulting from childhood trauma. This study explored the effects of ACEs on physical health, and the ways in which mental health professionals treat this population. Four psychotherapists with experience in treating adults with physical illness, each of whom also had a focus on trauma, were individually interviewed. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and qualitative data were coded and analyzed. Six themes emerged: The manifestation of trauma, stigmas, impacts of physical illness, treatment, therapeutic results, and integration of the medical and mental health fields. The data were examined based on the literature reviewed related to the topic. Findings from this study add to the limited available research regarding working with ACEs and adults with poor physical health

in psychotherapy. Further research is needed about the integration of the two fields and efforts toward preventative care.

Flor De Lis Elizondo

Mitigating Stress in Law Enforcement Officers: Examining Stressors, Stress-Related Outcomes and Effective Treatment Models

The present study explores the stressors and stress-related outcomes found with law enforcement officers and further explores how mental health clinicians aid officers in mitigating levels of stress with effective treatments models. Four participant mental health clinicians were interviewed regarding their experience in treating law enforcement officers. Among the interviews, five major themes emerged from the data: (a) external and internal contributors to treatment seeking, (b) cultural barriers to treatment seeking, (c) effective treatment models, (d) clinician qualities to help build the therapeutic relationship and (e) facilitating change. The results from the study pertaining to contributors and barriers to treatment seeking, effective treatment models and some aspects of clinician qualities to help build the therapeutic relationship and facilitating change are supported by the existing literature. This study contains a discussion of previous literature, results derived from this present study as situated with prior research, followed by implications, limitations and areas for future research.

Destinee Nicole Gannuscio

Strength, Safety, and Survival: Exploring the Use of Mindfulness Practices to Address Intimacy and Sexual Functioning in Individuals with a History of Abuse

Relational dysfunction is a common phenomenon in individuals that have a history of physical or sexual abuse. This dysfunction often stems from a lack of understanding in regard to the neurobiological impact of trauma, along with the emergence of maladaptive behaviors that serve as a survival mechanism in individuals whose sense of survival and safety has previously been violated. This qualitative study explored the experience of clinicians in using mind-body awareness practices, inclusive of yoga and guided meditation, in working with individuals with an abuse history and the secondary role it has on intimate partner functioning. Five mental health clinicians were interviewed about their experiences, which were recorded and analyzed to identify emerging themes in the data. The major themes were (a) mind-body awareness, (b) opportunities for choice-making, (c) impaired sexual response, (d) clinician responsibilities, (e) approaches to treatment, and (f) sociocultural context. The results from this study can be used as a tool to help better-inform clinicians, clients, and the general public about the therapeutic work that often occurs with traumatized individuals, along with highlighting important areas of consideration in regular interactions with this population.

Sarah Iaccarino

Social Media, Self-Esteem and Young People: Utilizing Mindfulness to Combat the Negative Effects of Social Media Use in Adolescents and Emerging Adults

The present study explores how social media affects self-esteem in adolescents and emerging adults, as well as how the utilization of mindfulness techniques can serve as a protectant against potential negative effects that social media may have on self-esteem. Relevant literature was examined and new data was collected through a qualitative research method, which involved interviewing three mental health clinicians who specialize in this population. The participants were asked about their experiences working with adolescents and emerging adults who

experience self-esteem issues related to social media use, as well as how they incorporate mindfulness techniques into their work with this population. Qualitative analysis of the interviews after they were recorded, transcribed, and coded revealed six themes and two subthemes. The results provided data indicating that social media use has both positive and negative effects on the self-esteem of adolescents and emerging adults. The discussion includes an analysis of the results with the existing body of literature, as well as suggests clinical implications and recommendations for future research.

Krishna Kharva

Investigating Therapeutic Interventions for Transgender Adolescents Lacking Gender-Affirming Support

This qualitative study explores the effects of a lack of gender-affirming support on the mental health of transgender adolescents and the potential treatments options. After a thorough examination of past and current literature on the subject, three mental health professionals with experience in the field were individually interviewed regarding their experiences treating transgender adolescents. Transcriptions of the interviews were analyzed by two researchers in order to discern meaning. The primary themes that emerged included: societal effects, mental health, support, managing expectations, therapist attributes, and conducting therapy. Participants reported the importance of gender-affirming support on mental health outcomes for transgender adolescents. They also described various treatment options they have found to be effective in therapy with the target population. Clinical implications of the findings and areas of future research are discussed.

Dalia Marchoud

Keeping up with Adolescents: How Therapists Can Manage the Effects of Social Media Use Among Adolescents

As the digital age is rapidly increasing, social media has become pervasive in the lives of adolescents. The use of social media has resulted in positive and negative outcomes among adolescents. This study contributes to how therapists can manage the use of social media with their adolescent clients. Using a qualitative research design, four therapists who work directly with adolescents were interviewed. Results indicate that social media use affects adolescents' psychological well-being by social comparison; distraction; emotional functioning, such as anxiety, depression, and sleep; fear of missing out. However, social media affected adolescents' positively by allowing for connection through social support and forming an identity. Furthermore, the therapists refute the belief that social media should be cut out from adolescents' lives completely. Rather, they suggest managing it uniquely to each individual case. There are studies that show correlation between social media use and adolescents' psychological well-being, but research has been neglected regarding causation.

Elizabeth Martinez

Therapists Working with Parents and Their Adolescents to Address Their Adolescents' Well-being

The present study examined therapists working with parents and their adolescents to address adolescent's well-being and additionally improve the parent-adolescent relationship. Four therapists were interviewed regarding their experience in working with parents and their adolescents. Information was gathered via a semi-structured interview format and analyzed to address common themes and differences between the participants that may confirm or contradict

previous literature. The results revealed six major themes, which are the effects of parenting practices on adolescents, contributors to family stress, families seeking treatment, benefits and challenges to treatment, treatment in action, role of the therapist, and change within the parent-adolescent relationship. Results suggest that the parent-adolescent relationship is essential to the development and overall wellbeing on the adolescent. Participants discussed several concepts to take into account when working with families in counseling in order to better facilitate the therapeutic process for parents and their adolescents. Results of the study and limitations are further discussed.

Corina Mendoza

Exploring the Application of Narrative Therapy with Adult Latinx Survivors of Childhood Abuse

Child abuse can occur in any cultural or ethnic group and the effects of childhood abuse can be devastating. When working with Latinx survivors of childhood abuse, cultural sensitivity and cultural adaptation of approaches with Latinx clients may allow for clients to better respond to treatment. In the present study four therapists were interviewed about their experiences using narrative therapy with adult Latinx survivors of childhood abuse. The data revealed five major themes: Latinx cultural barriers, Latinx community resilience, narrative therapy effectiveness with cultural diversity, multicultural counseling competencies, and counselor awareness. The findings provided suggestions for narrative therapy as a treatment modality that may help adult Latinx survivors of childhood abuse.

Weeda Nawabi

Being Kind to Yourself: Self-Compassion and Emotional Well-Being of Female Adolescents

The period of adolescence is marked with many transitions and challenges. In this critical developmental period, adolescents go through a fast physiological and psychological growth that may affect their well-being. This study explored the effect of self-compassion and mindfulness among female adolescents with internalizing disorders using a qualitative study. Three mental health professional with experience using mindfulness interventions were individually interviewed using a semi-structured interview approach. Data was analyzed using a phenomenological approach and revealed five themes: Obstacles and challenges of adolescents (with the subthemes of the role of self-concept, and social and cultural challenges), gender roles (with the subtheme of acceptance), internalizing disorders among adolescents, the importance of therapeutic relationship with adolescents (with the subthemes of being authentic, understanding adolescent's vulnerability, and rewarding experience), and success in using mindfulness (with the subthemes of universality of mindfulness interventions, awareness of the present moment, and mindfulness as a helpful tool). The findings in this study generated expected outcomes as well as some unique considerations that clinicians may find helpful when they work with female adolescents with internalizing disorders. The implications of the research on clinical practice, recommendations for future research, and the limitations of the present study were examined as well.

Ramon Pacheco

Body Dissatisfaction in Gay Men: Etiology and Treatment Using a Cognitive-Behavioral Framework

The purpose of this qualitative study was to uncover the variables that contribute to body image dissatisfaction (BID) in gay men and its appropriate clinical treatment utilizing cognitive

behavioral therapy (CBT). A review of the literature demonstrated the biopsychosocial implications that issues related to body image have on the general population and gay men. Minority stress, objectification theory, and media pressures were identified as contributing to its etiology. CBT was also identified as an advantageous treatment modality with strong empirical foundations for the treatment of clinical body image issues. This study interviewed three mental health professionals with experience working with the target population to discover any concordances or discordances between the literature and clinical settings. Overall, the literature and the findings from this study suggest that gay men are at higher risk for body image dissatisfaction due to media pressures and minority stress variables such as internalized heterosexism. It was also discovered that sexual minority men coping with BID were more likely to experience comorbid disorders like anxiety, depression, substance use, sexual dysfunction, and eating disorders. This qualitative study and the current literature supported CBT and its interventions as being beneficial in treating BID in gay men.

Kimberlin Alyssa Phillips

Gang Affiliated Youth and Mental Health Services

The present study explores counselors' experiences working with gang-affiliated youth. The author examined the risks, experiences, and perceived benefits of gang involved youth. A qualitative methodology was used and the participants were asked a series of semi-structured questions. Data analysis revealed seven core themes: broken family, crisis and trauma, trust and respect, case management, corrective emotional experience, resilience, and self care. Future research should include more treatment strategies for counselors that work with gang-affiliated youth. If there were interventions that could identify youth most at risk, those youths could be given more resources and support within their schools and communities to help them make safer choices.

Ruby Phun

Exploring Therapists' Use of Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavior Therapy with Adverse Childhood Experiences in Adults

This qualitative study examines how counselors utilized trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapy (TF-CBT), on the adults with adverse childhood experience (ACE). Data were gathered from reviewing research articles and interviewing three counselors who use this counseling approach with the adult population. There were eight themes found from the data included: the receptiveness of the children and young adults, the precontemplation stage for adults, males and females' engagingness and emotion in therapy, numbing and shutting down, comorbidity with substance abuse, the importance of therapeutic relationship (with three other subthemes), and the success in using of TF-CBT with adults (with three other subthemes). The findings of this research confirmed that besides the children and adolescents population, TF-CBT was successfully utilized by other counselors with the adults group.

Madeline Sober

Clinical Treatment of Youth with Severe Mental Illness: Clinician's Perspectives of Factors that Influence Mental Health Outcomes

Recent studies indicate a vast range of factors influence access to and utilization of mental health care, treatment outcomes, and overall mental health outcomes. This qualitative study interviewed five licensed mental health clinicians examining various internal and external contextual factors

that influence mental health outcomes for youth experiencing severe mental illness. This study provided the perspectives of clinicians who work with this population on those factors they find most influential in addition to how they work to improve outcomes for this population. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and qualitative analysis methods were used to analyze the data for emerging themes. The study's results may offer insight to mental health professionals that could be applied clinically to benefit this population and that could be addressed systemically among the mental health profession to improve mental health in our communities on a larger scale. The results of this study provide comprehensive information on prominent factors that influence mental health outcomes for youth with severe mental illness, including education, environmental factors, family factors, client factors, and clinical factors. Additionally, the results demonstrate the complexity of mental health treatment for this population and highlight several systemic issues giving direction for future growth in our field.

Lindsey A. Warwick

Clinicians' Experiences Utilizing EMDR to Treat Complicated Grief in Bereaved Adults

The present study was an examination of the utility of EMDR therapy on bereaved adults experiencing complicated grief; as well as clinicians' experiences working within this field. Seven clinicians were interviewed regarding their experiences of utilizing EMDR therapy for adults with complicated grief due to the death of a loved one. Information was gathered through a semi-structured interview format and analyzed to address emerging themes between participants that may confirm, contradict, or expand the current literature. The results highlighted five major themes including clinicians' personal experiences with grief, factors that complicate grief, attachment theory, features of treatment, and sociocultural influences. The results suggested that EMDR therapy is useful in the treatment of complicated grief, especially when combined with other interventions that facilitate continuing bonds, meaning-making, and resiliency building. The results also highlighted potential factors to prevent future complicated grief, which, thus far, have not been thoroughly examined in the current research. Limitations of this study include the fact that three out of the seven clinicians interviewed utilized a modified version of EMDR therapy geared primarily toward grief and continuing bonds, which may have influenced the overall results.

Maria Zabeti

Coping Strategies of Adult Women who Experienced Child Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a pervasive concern throughout the United States and abroad. Many adult survivors of CSA tend to engage in unhealthy coping strategies that can lead to mental health challenges as adults. This analysis will explore some of the mental health consequences experienced by adult women survivors of CSA. In the literature review maladaptive coping strategies that women with CSA tend to use will be reviewed along with examining adaptive coping strategies. There has been limited research studies on CSA and EMDR exclusively. Because of the limitation, there will be a discussion on the treatment of EMDR on relational traumas that include CSA, multiple traumas in childhood, domestic violence, and sexual trauma. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four mental health clinicians who treated adult women with CSA. After the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and after the data was analyzed, eight themes emerged. The eight themes were: (1) Importance of Resourcing Before Treatment, (2) Therapeutic Relationship, (3) Substance Use, (4) Challenges of Dissociation, (5) Social Support, (6) Somatic Experiencing Through EMDR, (7) Self-Care for Therapists, and (8)

Making Peace and Sense of the Trauma. Some of the findings such as substance use issues, social support, making peace and sense of the trauma, and resourcing before treatment were supported by the literature. The other themes expanded on the findings on how women with CSA can also be supported in therapy.