



Interdisciplinary Perspective on Counselling: Focus on Mental Health

Rationale for an Interdisciplinary Perspective to Mental Health Services

- The factors that influence mental health and mental illness are complex and multidimensional
- This complexity requires professional from diverse health professions/disciplines to work together in a comprehensive manner

Biopsychosocial Conceptual Model of Mental Health and Disorders

Biological

- Genetics
- Hormone, immune, and neurotransmitter dysregulation
- Structural and functional disturbance in brain function
- etc

Psychological

- Deficits in coping and problem solving skills
- Rigid, dysfunctional cognitions
- Personality traits
- Lack of emotional awareness/maturity
- Low self esteem
- Poor judgement
- Use of immature defenses
- etc

Social

- Childhood adversity
- Interpersonal conflict
- Social isolation and inadequate social supports
- Stress and negative life events
- Abuse, trauma, bullying
- Low SES
- etc

SPIRITUALITY & HEALING IN MEDICINE:

Including the
Concept of Emergence

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**THE WESTIN COPLEY PLACE
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MASSACHUSETTS
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BENSON-HENRY INSTITUTE
FOR MIND BODY MEDICINE



The George Washington Institute for Spirituality and Health (GWish)

Benefits of an Integrated Approach to Mental Health Care

- Pool knowledge and expertise towards patient/client care
- Establish a comprehensive treatment plan to address the multidimensional needs of the patient/client
- Results in increased patient/client satisfaction and improved health outcomes
- Benefits extend to caregivers, providers, and larger health care system

Benefits of an Integrated Approach to Mental Health Care

- Increase breadth of knowledge about causes, treatment and prevention of mental disorders (e.g., journal clubs)
- Provides rich training environment for trainees from diverse disciplines
- Opportunities for research collaboration
 - treatment of mental disorders
 - primary and secondary prevention
 - service delivery
 - promotion of mental health and well-being in the population

Characteristics of Interprofessional Mental Health Teams

- Defined scope of practice
- Defined responsibilities and roles
- Defined legal liability
- Respect for team members and their respective disciplines
- High degree of collaboration
- Primary focus is on what is best for patient/client and their families

Personal Experience in an Interprofessional Mental Health Research Group

- Team Players: Psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, social workers, molecular geneticists, spiritual care provider, cardiologist, statisticians
- Research themes
 - genetics and neurobiology of anxiety
 - identifying heritable risk markers for anxiety
 - pharmacological and psychosocial interventions (IPT, CBT, self-administered CBT) for anxiety and depression
 - evaluate novel psychosocial interventions (e.g. spiritually-based psychotherapy; mindfulness meditation)
- My contribution: Design and management of studies; data analysis; diagnostic and personality assessment; assessment of treatment outcome; provision of psychotherapy; training and supervising research level psychotherapists



Thank You