

The importance of collaboration and compassion in mental health treatment of anxiety disorders

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Abstract

Statement of the Problem: Mental health treatment continues to evolve around the world. The importance of collaboration among professionals in the mental health care field is a critical part of the effective treatment of patients suffering from mental health illnesses, specifically those high functioning with anxiety disorders. There are different dimensions to collaboration. The first dimension is collaboration among health care professionals, in a more inclusive setting whenever possible: (Patient, Psychotherapist/Psychologist, Psychiatrist, General Practitioner/ Doctor). Another dimension of collaboration, the individual draws upon different support systems, which are detrimental for the patient's well-being. These support systems must be identified and collaboration with such systems should be actively explored as social interactions and sense of belonging. Human connections bring us together as a healthier society. The third dimension of collaboration is within the individual themselves, taking into consideration the patient as a whole: their mental state, physical state, and spiritual state. This is a more holistic approach to mental health, acknowledging we are multi-dimensional beings. This way, the effectiveness of mindfulness and other approaches can be observed more consistently in the mental health treatment of anxiety disorders. According to the Mental Health Foundation, UK, "A clear distinction is often made between "mind" and "body". But when considering mental health and physical health, the two should not be thought as separate". Lastly and more importantly, compassion is the bond of all these dimensions. Research indicates that self-compassion is relevant to psychological well-being. Teaching compassion, practicing, and modeling self-compassion in a non-judgmental and nurturing environment, is detrimental for the healing process of the patient.



Biography:

Myra Braun, MS, LPC, is an American Psychotherapist, who works in private practice in Southern Wisconsin, USA. She received her Master of Science in Community Counseling from Concordia University. Her undergrad work includes degrees in Education, Psychology, Criminal Justice and Sociology. She is bilingual in Spanish. Myra has done further trainings nationally and internationally on various approaches to the treatment of anxiety; including the benefits of hypnosis, mindfulness, and other evidence-based treatments. Her focus is on anxiety, stress management, trauma recovery, relationship counseling, and life transitions.

Speaker Publications:

1. Baer, R.A. Lykins, E. L., & Peters, J. R. (2012). Mindfulness and self-compassion as predictors of psychological wellbeing in long-term mediators and matched nonmediators. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 7(3), 230-238
2. Gilbert, P. (2009) Introducing Compassion-focused therapy. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 15(3), 199-208.
3. Lanchar, D., & Gruber, C. P. Personality inventory for youth (PIY) manual: technical guide. Los Angeles: Western Psychological Services.
4. Neff, K. (2003a) Self-compassion: an alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude toward oneself. *Self and Identity*, 2(3), 223-250.
5. Neff, K. (2003b) The development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity*, 2(3), 223-250.

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