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
Dean of the College of Mind-Body Medicine of Saybrook University
www.cmbm.org
**Current Biomedical Model**

- CAM Therapies
  - Drugs
  - Surgery
- Psycho social approach

**New Medicine**

- Drugs & Surgery
- Therapies that require a professional
- Self Care

and stimulate capacity for self healing, e.g. acupuncture, musculo-skeletal manipulation, herbals, group support
The Central Role of Self-Care in Integrative Medicine

“Physician: Health Thyself”

- Hippocrates
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.
The Importance of Hope

**Engagement:**

**Attitude:**

**Challenge, Commitment, and 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
- Relaxation
- Autogenics and biofeedback
- Meditation

- Concentrative
  - Awareness
  - Expressive

- Journals and narratives
- Drawings
- Movement and dance
Self Care is the Heart of Health Care

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

- Exercise

- Nutrition

- Prayer
Our brains, contrary to long term teaching, have the capacity to grow and change anatomically as well as physiologically.

Neuroplasticity

Natural, non-pharmacological techniques including psychotherapy, meditation, and exercise can produce these positive changes.


The Central Role of Self-Care

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.
Self-Awareness and Self-Expression

Journals and Narratives


Self-Awareness and Self-Expression

Drawings

Movement and Dance
Relaxation

Relaxation is our Birth Right
Relaxation


Relaxation


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
Biofeedback and Autogenic Training


Biofeedback and Autogenic Training


Meditation in Clinical Practice... and Life

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.
Meditation

- Concentrative
- Awareness
- Expressive
Meditation: Its effect on the brain

Meditation


Meditation


**Meditation**


Meditation


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
Imagery and Self-Hypnosis


Imagery and Self-Hypnosis


Imagery and Self-Hypnosis


Imagery and Self-Hypnosis


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

Exercise and Depression

Exercise may promote neurogenesis.


Exercise

Improve Mood


Mather et al. (2002). Effects of Exercise on Depressive Symptoms in Older Adults with Poorly Responsive Depressive Disorder: Randomized Controlled Trial. British Journal of Psychiatry, 180; 411-415
Exercise

Improve Mood


Stewart et al. (2003). Are fitness, activity, and fatness associated with health-related quality of life and mood in older persons? Journal of Cardiopulm Rehabil, 23(2); 115-121.


Yoga and Depression


Yoga and Depression


Let Food Be Your Medicine and Medicine Your Food

- Biochemical Individuality—Roger Williams, PhD
- Nutrition influences every cell and every system’s function in the body
- Food As Medicine: A Training Program for Professionals -- June 7-10, 2012 in Washington, DC

Dr. James S. Gordon, MD ~ Kathie Swift, MS RD
Nutrition

- Possible elimination of caffeine, sugar, and simple carbohydrates

- Elimination of additives and preservatives
Nutrition

- Food sensitivities: milk, wheat, corn, soy, etc.

- Supplementation with omega-3 fatty acids, B vitamins, Selenium, and Magnesium
Nutrition


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.
Self-Care

Prayer

For oneself-evidence of the efficacy uniformly positive


Prayer (cont.)

For oneself-evidence of the efficacy uniformly positive


Self-Care

Prayer

For others—evidence for positive effect is mixed


Group Support

A universally applicable approach: the research is as good as that for many standard treatments.
Group Support as a Perennial and Necessary Part of Healing

1. The Role of the Healer

2. Role of the Family and Community


4. Support Groups
   - AA & 12 Step Programs
   - Illness Based Groups
Mind-Body Skills Groups

- History and Development
  - Personal Experience of Mind-Body Approaches
  - Scientific Literature on Mind-Body Approaches
  - Desire to Teach to Patients/Clients
  - Experiences Working with Groups
  - Economical: Time and Money
  - Group Offers Support
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.
Group Support


Group Support


Group Support


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


Conclusions

This work begins with us and continues with us.
Books

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

**Comprehensive Cancer Care: Integrating Alternative, Complementary and Conventional Therapies.**

**Manifesto for a New Medicine: Your Guide to Healing Partnerships and the Wise Use of Alternative Therapies.**
Questions and Answers

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