

Alternate approaches to Counselling

Alternative therapies (AT) are new trends in counselling profession. There is not a specific definition of AT but types of AT have their own definitions.

- ☐ Art therapy (visual art therapy, music therapy, drama therapy, dance/movement therapy, and expressive writing therapy),
- ☐ Yoga
- ☐ Meditation
- ☐ Story telling
- ☐ Psychodrama
- ☐ Medical Clowning
- ☐ Laughter therapy
- ☐ Movement therapy

AT are powerful ways to communicate with clients. Some clients may have difficulty in expressing their feelings and thoughts verbally. These clients may think that thoughts and feelings are too painful to put into words.

According to Selekman (1997), children and adolescent who tend to express their feelings with nonverbal verbs, may not benefit from talk therapy. In such cases, using AT may help clients who express emotions and beliefs more easily because it provides another language to clients

These AT activities help clients to reduce stress, resolve problems and conflicts, and enhance their sense of well-beings. Research also shows that students who received AT such as play therapy experienced a significant increase in self efficacy. Literature support using AT in the school settings but few research exists about which AT can be implemented in school settings.

Art Therapy

- ❑ Art therapy is psychotherapeutic intervention which uses art with expressive and communicative channels.
- ❑ Art has many forms and various methods such as visual art, music, dance/movement, drama and expressive writings in counseling sessions.
- ❑ Art therapy has three stages as entry, exploration and action-taking.
 - Entry stage focuses on clients' goals
 - Exploration stage focuses on clients' problems and
 - action-taking stage focuses on clients' solutions.
- ❑ Art therapy is appropriate for preschool, elementary school, middle school, and high school pupils.
- ❑ Art therapy uses visual and verbal tools to help children express themselves more easily.
- ❑ Art therapy provides less defensive environment for adolescent so adolescent clients feel accepted by the counselor.

Yoga Therapy

- ❖ **Yoga** is a type of therapy that uses yoga postures, breathing exercises, meditation, and guided imagery to improve mental and physical health.
- ❖ The holistic focus of yoga therapy encourages the integration of mind, body, and spirit.
- ❖ Modern yoga therapy covers a broad range of therapeutic modalities, incorporating elements from both physical therapy and psychotherapy.
- ❖ Yoga therapy is a growing field and scientific evidence has begun to emphasize its efficacy.

ISSUES TREATED BY YOGA THERAPY

- ❖ It is used to treat existing mental and physical health issues, but can also be used as a self-care strategy for prevention and maintenance.
- ❖ Yoga therapy is well established as a treatment for depression and anxiety.
- ❖ A meta-analysis cited in the Primary Care Companion for CNS Disorders found that yoga therapy also shows promise for the treatment of posttraumatic stress (PTSD) and schizophrenia.
- ❖ Additionally, yoga therapists have begun to develop treatment modalities to suit children with autism.
- ❖ Yoga therapy is also emerging as an effective treatment for substance abuse issues. Mental health professionals point out the way yoga positively impacts the parts of the mind and body susceptible to addiction.

PRACTICE AND BENEFITS OF YOGA THERAPY

Yoga therapy is practiced in a wide range of formats. Physical therapists, for example, often implement yoga techniques in their delivery of massage and other treatments. Yoga therapy practice can resemble physical therapy, rehabilitative therapy, and/or psychotherapy. Unlike a standard yoga class, yoga therapy sessions are typically conducted in one-on-one or small group settings. Yoga therapy can be provided as an adjunct therapy to complement other forms of treatment, or it can be used to directly treat a specific issue. Yoga techniques range from simple to advanced, and can be enjoyed by people of all ages.

Potential benefits from yoga therapy include stress reduction, psychological well-being, improved diet, and efficient functioning of bodily systems. A 2011 qualitative study from *Inkanyiso: Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* examined the effects of yoga therapy on anxiety. The findings not only indicated that yoga therapy effectively reduced subjects' anxiety, but improvement across several dimensions of physical and mental health including physicality, relaxation, and mindfulness.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOGA THERAPY

When a person decides to initiate yoga therapy, the therapist will first conduct an initial assessment. This assessment is designed to do the following:

- Identify health problems
- Assess lifestyle and physical capability
- Discuss reasons for seeking therapy
- Create a course of treatment

Once the treatment plan is established in this first consultation, the frequency of sessions is agreed upon and sessions are scheduled.

MEDITATION

- Meditation therapy is “a method of relaxation and consciousness expansion by focusing on a mantra or a keyword, sound, or image while eliminating outside stimuli from one’s awareness”
- There are many types of meditation. Examples include mindfulness, body scan, loving-kindness, walking, Zen, mantra, and transcendental meditations.
- They can be further categorized into insight or calming and guided or unguided. In the world of meditation, there is an approach for everyone.
- Each type of meditation has a few things in common:
 - choosing a quiet spot,
 - finding a comfortable posture, and
 - focusing your attention while remaining open
- The duration of a meditation practice is as short as one minute to several hours.
- There also is not a “right” or “only” way to practice. It is as diverse as the people who practice it.