

PAIN IS INEVITABLE, MISERY IS OPTIONAL: EMOTION REGULATION SKILLS IN PAIN TREATMENT

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Integrating Dialectical Behavior Therapy with the Twelve Steps

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Disclosure Information

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OBJECTIVES

- Gain a better understanding of the interaction between, biological, psychological and social factors related to chronic pain
- Understand the challenges in self-regulation with pain disorders
- Identify the vital role of emotion regulation skills in promoting self-care
- Learn effective emotion regulation skills used with the chronic and acute pain population for a more comprehensive treatment approach



CHRONIC PAIN

- Any pain lasting more than 12 weeks
- Affects an estimated 20% of the population worldwide
 - Approx 25.3 million in the U.S. (Nahin, 2015)
- Current ICD-10 includes diagnostic codes for Chronic Pain

Treede, R.D. et. al. 2015





Physiological Change



Fight or Flight Response



Stress Mediators

Allostasis

Allostatic
Load

THE STRESS RESPONSE



ALLOSTATIC LOAD

- **Primary Response**
 - Release of Hormones
- **Secondary Response**
 - Behavioral Responses

McEwen, 2016

THE OVERLAP OF CHRONIC PAIN AND STRESS

- Stress: A process by which a challenging emotional physiological event or series of events results in adaptive or maladaptive changes required to regain homeostasis and/or stability
- Chronic Pain and stress are both adaptive in protecting the organism

Abdallah, C.G. and Geha, P. 2017

INCREASE IN MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

- Chronic Pain is a risk factor for developing depression and anxiety (D/A)
- Depression and anxiety may influence the longitudinal course of D/A
- Patients with depression are at high risk of experiencing chronic pain
- Mood swings, anger expression and interpersonal relationships affected

Gerrits, MM. 2014

INCREASE IN MALADAPTIVE BEHAVIORS

Opioid misuse

Excessive
alcohol or other
drug use

Taking more
medications
than prescribed

Isolation

Relationship
strain

- Definition of Addiction:

“Addiction is a primary, chronic disease of brain reward, motivation, memory and related circuitry. Dysfunction in these circuits leads to characteristic biological, psychological, social and spiritual manifestations. This is reflected in an individual pathologically pursuing reward and/or relief by substance use and other behaviors. Addiction is characterized by inability to consistently abstain, impairment in behavioral control, craving, diminished recognition of significant problems with one’s behaviors and interpersonal relationships, and a dysfunctional emotional response. Like other chronic diseases, addiction often involves cycles of relapse and remission. Without treatment or engagement in recovery activities, addiction is progressive and can result in disability or premature death.”

ASAM

1

What have you seen with patients/clients who present with chronic pain issues (ie. Behaviors, complaints, worldview, etc...)

2

How do they make you feel?
What's your countertransference to them?

3

How do you currently treat these patients or how is chronic pain incorporated into their treatment plan?

GROUP ACTIVITY



Inability to express emotions at the intensity appropriate for the situation

Challenges in maintaining non-anguished emotional expression

Lability

EMOTION DYSREGULATION





EMOTION DYSREGULATION

EMOTION REGULATION

- Close association between emotions and pain
- Effectively manage and respond to an emotional experience
- Ability to use healthy strategies
- Stay in line with one's values and goals

EMOTION REGULATION

- Ability to identify and label one's own emotions
- Maintains balance with changing emotions
- Reduces vulnerability to “Emotional Mind”
- Consistently uses skills to maintain a balanced state

EMOTION REGULATION SKILLS

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Interpersonal Effectiveness

Cognitive Restructuring

Schema Focused Interventions

MINDFULNESS

- “Moment to moment, non-judgmental awareness, cultivated by practice...”
- Having our mind “full” of what is going on in the present moment
- Data demonstrates that consistent mindfulness practice:
 - Improves mood
 - Decreases stress
 - Improves level of acceptance and open-mindedness
 - Decreases heart rate and blood pressure

Kabat-Zinn, 2018; Walsh, et. al, 2019

DISTRESS TOLERANCE

- Distracting with a skill
 - Contributing
 - Counting Your Blessings
 - (opposite)Emotions
 - Meaning
 - Relaxation
 - Seeking Guidance
 - Encouragement
- Accepting Reality
 - Radical Acceptance
 - Turning the Mind
 - Willingness vs Willfulness



Relationship
Dynamics

Sick Role
Codependency



Re-Creating New Roles



Mutual Support and Allies



Mutual Purpose / Mutual Respect

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS



INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS SKILLS

Three goals of Interpersonal Effectiveness:

- Keep Relationships
- Cope with Conflict
- Negotiate with Others

Skills

- DEAR MAN
- SHARE
- Solution Focused Feedback



Cognitive Restructuring



Examining Automatic Thoughts



Relaxation Training



Physical Activity



Relapse Prevention Techniques

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY



SCHEMA-FOCUSED SKILLS

- **Negative Belief Systems**
- **Life Traps**
- **Operant Behavioral Techniques**

TRAUMA

- Co-morbidity
- Mutual Maintenance
- Shared Vulnerability
- Shared emotional and physiological responses to stress

GROUP ACTIVITY

1

What are some interventions or modalities you use with depression, anxiety and other mental health concerns?

2

Which of these models we discussed do you think would be beneficial for your patients or a specific patient?

3

What therapeutic differences have you noticed with chronic pain patients vs. other patients?

INTEGRATION IS KEY

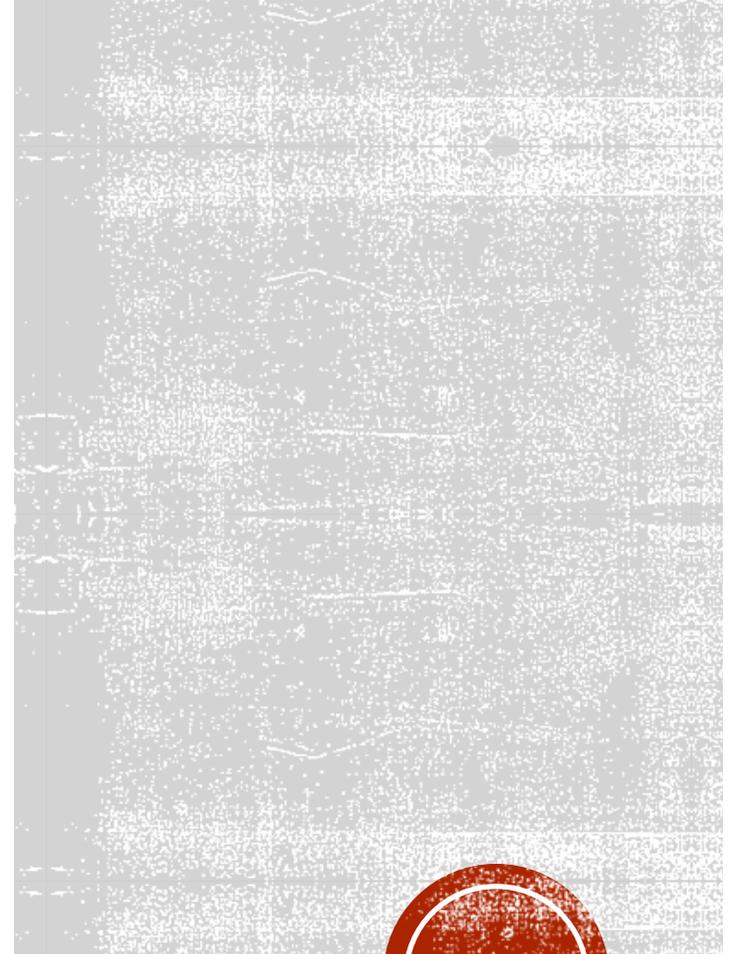
Group Sessions

Individual Coping Skills Coaching

Individual Therapy Sessions

Follow-up Check-Ins

SUMMARY / QUESTIONS



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