Mindfulness for improved work-life balance using art psychotherapy

Jessele Vinluan, MA(ATHR)

Countdown to Zero - Safer Care in Victoria
22 May 2017, Novotel St Kilda
Overview

• Theoretical perspectives in brief
• Activities
• Reflection
• Questions
Looking after ourselves as health professionals?

- Work Safe recognises work-related stress
- Implement preventative strategies
- Create a safe and healthy workplace environment
- Improve work-life balance.
Theoretical underpinnings
Mindfulness & art psychotherapy
Bio-psycho-social model

• An interdisciplinary model utilised in mental health

• Conceptualised by psychiatrist, George Engel

• Health & well-being based on:
  o Biological (body)
  o Psychological (mind)
  o Sociological factors (support / hobbies).
Mindfulness technique

• Beginnings from Buddhism and other spiritual traditions where one is encouraged to;
  o being in the present
  o finding one’s centre
  o paying attention to the moment
  o bearing witness

• The Mindfulness-based reduction (MBSR) was conceptualised by Jon Kabat-Zinn

• Utilises meditation and relaxation techniques.
Art psychotherapy

• An art therapy approach:
  o Integrates psychology (Freud and Jung) and creative arts
  o Promotes creative process, engages individual, non-verbal led to catharsis
  o Art in therapy – meaning/art appreciation
  o Art as therapy – doing/process/occupational
  o Art materials – important to the creative process
  o Therapist, client and art relationship

• Formal training
  o Post-graduate degree, internship and research paper
  o Register with The Australian and New Zealand Arts Therapy Association (ANZATA).

“Art is a way of knowing.”
(Pat Allen, artist & art therapist, 1995)
“Everyone’s creative acts, whatever they may be, make constructive form out of the apparent formlessness of our lives.”

(Rollo May, 1985)
Activities
Activity 1 – Body map – Phase 1

- Mindfulness & art therapy approaches
  - Pay attention to your body
  - Mark areas of aches and pains
Phase 2 - Picture of health
Activity two

• Relaxation technique
• Guided imagery
• Mindfulness approach
Examples of publications on mindfulness and art therapy
Research on mindfulness and art therapy

Identifying the evidence-base for art-based practices and their potential benefit for mental health recovery: a critical review.

Van Lith J1, Schoffelmeer AM, Farrow P.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction as supportive therapy in cancer care: systematic review.

Smith JE1, Richardson J, Hoffinan C, Pilkington K.
Literature on mindfulness art therapy & body mapping
Examples of art-based activities used as team building in a workplace.
Example – Body map drawing

- **Objective:** To attend to one’s health & well-being using art-based activity
- **Art-based Activity:** Body map
- **Materials:** Oil pastels and A4 bond paper
- **Length of activity:** 5-10 mins
- **Outcome:** Awareness, gave insight to what was causing them distress.
Example – Conversations on paper

- **Objective:** To improve communication using art-based activity
- **Art-based Activity:** Conversation on paper, in pairs
- **Materials:** Oil pastels and cartridge paper
- **Length of activity:** 5-10 mins
- **Ages:** 21-45 years old
- **Gender:** Male and females
- **Outcome:** Reported improvement in communication between colleagues.
Conclusion

- Take home messages:
  - Being ‘mindful’ is paying attention
  - Creative process allows us to understand ourselves and be in the ‘here and now’
  - Health and well-being is an interaction of Bio-psycho-social factors.
References


- http://www.mindfulnesscds.com/

- Work Safe Victoria.
Support & self-care

• Talk to your GP or mental health professional
• See an allied health e.g. chiro, physio, etc.
• Lifeline: 13 11 14
• MensLine Australia: 1300 78 99 78
• Catch up with friends or people who haven’t seen that makes you feel good
• Do activities you enjoy or take up new ones.
• Consider your nutrition / sleep.
Questions?