Introduction

WILD 5 Wellness: Impact of a Five-Pronged (Exercise, Mindfulness, Sleep, Social Connectedness & Nutrition) 30-Day Wellness Program on Mood, Mindfulness, Sleep Behavior, Social Connectedness, Emotional Eating and Mental Wellness

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Abstract:
Mental illness in the United States is a significant cause of disability. Healthcare practitioners have appropriately focused on treating the symptoms of mental illnesses and while some progress has been made in improving the quality of an individual's mental health outcomes, much more needs to be done (Powell, Mathby et al. 2015). In the last decade, it has become apparent that focusing on the underlying causes of mental illness is insufficient. As clinicians, we should also focus on improving elements of a patient's overall mental wellness. This paper describes the impact of a non-medication, self-directed, five-element wellness program (WILD 5 Wellness) on mood, mindfulness, sleep behavior, social connectedness, emotional eating, and mental wellness.

We created a unique mental wellness program called WILD 5 Wellness (WILD = Wellness interventions for Life's Demands). It is a five-element wellness program that is 30 days in duration. These five elements are physical exercise, mindfulness, optimized sleep, improving social connectedness and optimized nutrition. This program was developed in order to meet the needs to develop a trackable, accountable, self-directed wellness program that includes all five elements practiced on a daily basis. These five elements were selected as each one of them independently has previously demonstrated to improve mental wellness scores that show sustainable benefits (Culver, Whetten et al. 2015, El-Radhi 2015, Matsumoto, Yamaoka et al. 2015). We collected objective data to track these five elements and utilized scales well accepted by the mental health field, such as PHQ-9, GAD-7, WHO-5, PSQI, etc. This study reports pre-post changes in global well-being, as well as improvements in each of these five elements. Each of the eight study groups were comprised of 25 participants. Compliance with individual interventions was highest with social connectedness with mean compliance of 28.5 days out of the 30-day intervention, followed by sleep (25.5 days), nutrition (23.5 days), and mindfulness (21 days). These are predicted to not only help improve psychiatric symptomatology but to also improve the quality of life for these individuals. We plan to offer the WILD 5 Wellness Program for no-cost utilization by mental health professionals across the country.

Results

1. The Exercise module consists of taking a 30-minute brisk walk 6 out of 7 days per week for the duration of the 30-day program.
2. The Mindfulness module consists of meditating 10 minutes each day, 7 days a week for the duration of the 30-day program using this free smartphone app: http://www.myfitnesspal.com/
3. The Nutrition module consists of logging all meals and snacks each day for the duration of the 30-day program using this free smartphone app: http://www.myfitnesspal.com/
4. The Social Connectedness module consists of visiting a friend or family member each day of the 30-day program.
5. The Nutrition module consists of logging all meals and snacks each day for the duration of the 30-day program using this free smartphone app: http://www.myfitnesspal.com/

Conclusion

This unique intervention offers compelling proof that even a non-medication, self-directed, low-cost 30-day intervention, focusing on mental wellness offers clinically significant help with mood, anxiety, mindfulness, sleep, social connectivity, and emotional eating. These are predicted to not only help improve psychiatric symptomatology, but also improve the quality of life for these individuals. We plan to offer the WILD 5 Wellness Program for no-cost utilization by mental health professionals across the country.

Affiliations
