

Changing Roles of Mental Health Professionals

By: Amy Mitchell, M.A.

Once upon a time, psychologists were doctors only for people who were thought of as having “mental problems.” Now, you might find a psychologist working right next to your family doctor. According to the American Psychological Association, this is because mental health professionals are now part of the group of people who can take care of patients’ overall health and wellness. Doctor’s offices, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, and outpatient surgery centers are just some of the places you might run into a psychologist or counselor these days. They have become more and more a part of the “team” of doctors who are helping you with your health.

What is a mental health professional? What do they do? These are good questions. Because psychologists and counselors are kind of new to the scene, sometimes people don’t know all that they can do. Master’s level counselors and psychologists are trained to know some things about these topics:



- listening and communicating
- actions, thoughts, and feelings
- how big life changes impact people
- making choices (especially health choices)
- how gender, age, language, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation might impact people’s health needs
- how people are impacted by the people and things going on around them

Mental health professionals have some rules about what they can and can’t do. A list of some of the things they can do includes:

- working together with other health care providers, doctors, nurses, and staff, to make sure that patients get the best help possible.
- helping patients know what is going on with their health, and help patients stay informed about their

health and how to make healthy choices for themselves.

- being there with a patient, family, and friends who are dealing with the news of a long-term illness, or the loss of a loved one.
- Sharing information about activities like how to eat well, exercise, sleep better, or use meditation to improve your health.
- helping with changing health behaviors like smoking and weight control..
- assisting patients and families in finding helpful resources.

Psychologists and counselors are an important part of your healthcare team. How can they help your health today?

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Monthly Guidance

Dear MG,

I have chronic back pain from a herniated disc in my back. I've had surgery and tried lots of different medications, but I'm still in pain every day. It's really taking a toll on me because I can't do a lot of the things I enjoy. One of my friends told me that I should see a counselor, but I think that's ridiculous: what is a counselor going to do about my pain? I'm not depressed about it; I just want it to go away. What do you think I should do?

Sincerely,

Moaning in Muncie

Dear Moaning,

While a counselor may not be able to entirely relieve your pain, there are actually a lot of ways that a mental health professional can help with pain symptoms.

Although back pain is physical, the way you think about pain and the way you react to it can have a big impact on your daily life. Counselors are trained to help you develop coping skills so that you can better manage this pain. Some of the things you might explore with a counselor to help you feel better include:

- Cognitive-behavioral strategies, such as relaxation training, hypnosis, and biofeedback (a way of training your body to respond differently)
- Acceptance strategies that help you to acknowledge pain without letting it control you
- Ways to distract yourself so that you don't focus on the pain as much
- Finding social support and making the most of your social circle

According to the American Psychological Association, there are dozens of research studies showing that these ways to manage pain actually do help, particularly for chronic low back pain. People who have worked with a

counselor to address pain not only report better quality of life, but they also report that they experience pain less intensely than they did before they started counseling. So even if you're not depressed, you can still benefit from seeing a counselor! Many of the counselors at the Ball State University Practicum Clinic are trained to work with clients who have disabilities, including chronic pain.

Monthly Guidance [MG] is here to answer questions about relationships and personal issues. If you would like to ask MG a question, you may call the Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic and leave an anonymous message for MG. Or, you may send your question in writing to the address on the back page of this newsletter. If you choose to ask MG a question, the identity of the person submitting the question will remain completely anonymous. Please keep in mind when writing your questions that space is limited. Due to time constraints, MG cannot answer all questions, but will try to choose questions that are representative of a broad range of issues. If your question does not get answered and you would like to discuss it, please call Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic at (765) 285-8047. Please be advised that MG is neither a crisis/emergency service nor a correspondence therapy service. If you need either immediate attention or ongoing therapy, call Ball State Counseling Practicum Clinic at (765) 285-8047.

Featured Youth Issue: What Can School Counselors Do For You and Your Children?

By: Kodee Walls, M.A.

School counselors have many different jobs in a school. They work with students on academic, career, social and personal development. School counselors work with different grade levels in school. One of the things that school counselors do with students in grade school is help them learn about different kinds of jobs. At the middle school level, counselors might help children learn about good relationships. School counselors may also help high school students get ready for life after high school.

Like a mental health counselor, a school counselor goes through training to become a counselor. A school counselor can help with different mental health problems. The main difference between school counselors and mental health counselors is that school counselors help

children to do their best in school. The school counselor has goals for students, just like teachers do. School counselors want students to achieve their highest ability with academics, social relationships, and career goals. Sometimes, when a student is upset, he or she cannot focus on school work. The student may be upset because he is afraid of taking exams, is having a disagreement with a friend, or is experiencing a change at home. When something like this happens, the school counselor will talk to the student about what is happening. This is so the school counselor can help the student get back to class.

Sometimes, more serious problems come up and school counselors will need to call a mental health counselor. One of these times is when a student has said that he is thinking about hurting themselves or someone else. Another time is when a student says he is a victim of abuse. Parents will be called if a student says they want to hurt themselves or

someone else or mention any type of abuse.

One important thing to remember is that school counselors do not do the same work as mental health counselors. They can talk to students for a few minutes to make sure they are okay, but it is important for the student to get back to class. If something comes up that is too big for a school counselor, the school may ask you or your child to talk to a mental health counselor. Finally, keep in mind that school counselors are in the school to support your child. They want the best academically, socially, and career wise for your child and will work with you to make that happen.



Featured Mental Health Issue:

Are you having trouble sleeping?

By: *Manisha Rustagi, M.A.*

Do you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep? Do you still feel tired when you wake up? Do you suffer from daytime sleepiness? If you answer yes to any of these questions, then you may be suffering from insomnia or sleep disturbance.

A person is said to be suffering from insomnia if he or she is unable to get the amount of sleep required to feel rested and refreshed upon waking up. Sometimes this only lasts for a few nights, but for other people, it can go on for a month or even more.

The National Institute of Health (NIH) estimated that 50-70 million Americans suffer from sleep-related disorders. Moreover, sleep disturbance affects people from all walks of life: both women and men and people from different ethnic backgrounds. Without treatment,

sleep problems can even lead to heart disease, depression, diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, stroke and substance abuse.

Sleep problems can result from both physical and mental health issues, so if you're having trouble sleeping, it's important to figure out what the cause is so that it can be treated. If you are having trouble sleeping as a result of worries or feeling down, and your sleep problems have lasted for more than a few weeks, now is the time to call a counselor or psychologist for help.

The Ball State Practicum Clinic provides low cost counseling services for people living in the Muncie area. The counselors who work in our clinic are trained to help people with a variety of mental health

issues, including sleep problems. Your counselor will use a combination of techniques like behavior therapy, relaxation training, and cognitive therapy to help you sleep. If life stress is keeping you awake, your counselor can help you learn coping techniques so that you can manage it better. In some cases, it might also be helpful to see your family physician, who can prescribe medication that will help you to sleep. However, medications are most effective if they are used in combination with counseling.



Meet Our New Clinic Coordinator!

By: *Emily Barnum, M.A.*

The Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic would like to introduce our new Clinic Coordinator, Amber Spaw! Amber comes to us from Yorktown, Indiana, where she lives with her husband and three children. Prior to joining our clinic, Amber worked at Indiana University Ball Memorial Hospital in the Pediatric Clinic and at IU Health Revenue Cycle Services. During her time at these locations, Amber worked with patient accounts and insurance problems associated with patient treatment until she became an account analyst. In an interview, Amber said, "I love working with the intelligent students from the department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services. I feel like we offer excellent services to our community and hope to help

the growth of our clinic." Amber expressed that she enjoys the wide diversity of our clients and counseling clinic staff. She stated that this job is never boring and she is constantly working with new groups of individuals and a variety of situations.

When Amber is not in the Practicum Clinic, she enjoys spending time with her family. Amber's eldest daughter, Taylor, is a freshman at Ball State University, which makes it easy for Amber to spend time with her. Her youngest two daughters are in middle and elementary school in Yorktown, IN. When Amber has additional time, which isn't often, she enjoys running and reading books, her favorite being "Wuthering Heights." She also has a love for animals. Currently, Amber has two dogs named Charlie and Lola, and also

one fish, named Sigmund. Amber is excited about continuing her work in the Practicum Clinic and our future move back to the Teachers College location.



Featured Counselor Profile

Nehad Sandozi, M.S.

By: Laura Walker, M.A.

This column is a way for the community to learn about the diverse talents, both master's and doctoral students, employed at the Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic.

Nehad Sandozi received her M.A. in clinical psychology from Ball State University and is currently a second-year doctoral student in the Department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services. Nehad is currently seeing clients at the Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic. The following is a discussion with Nehad, one of the many talented individuals employed at the Ball State University Practicum Clinic.

How did you decide to pursue your PhD in Counseling Psychology?

I initially became interested in counseling psychology after an undergraduate course in psychotherapy. Although I was a psychology major, it wasn't until that class that I began considering how therapy could truly impact peoples' lives. After that class, I went on to complete a master's degree in clinical psychology, but soon realized that I preferred more of a balance between research and clinical work, hence my ultimate decision to pursue a doctoral degree in counseling psychology.

What are your clinical interests?

I have a wide range of clinical interests, but one of my major areas of focus is related to brain injuries. Along with brain injuries, I am interested in developing a better understanding of other conditions that impact people's cognitive functioning, specifically dementia and Alzheimer's disease. I am particularly interested in clinical interventions that improve coping skills

in individuals with these brain conditions and their families.

Are you currently doing any research?

My current research focus is my dissertation. Fortunately, I've had the chance to collaborate with researchers at Indiana University on a NIH-funded grant looking at the prevalence of mild cognitive impairments in an ethnically diverse sample. I hope to not only gain a better understand of the prevalence of this condition in an ethnic minority sample, but also what demographic and health factors further impact this condition. Along with my dissertation, I am collaborating with a group of fellow graduate students on a research project focused on the unique issues faced by veterans. We will be presenting this research at the annual American Psychological Association (APA) conference this upcoming year.

What has been your most influential (or exciting, or enjoyable) work experience?

My current practicum position at the IU School of Medicine Neuropsychology Department has been exciting in many ways! Neuropsychology involves studying how brain functioning relates to behavior and psychological functioning. I've had the opportunity to conduct neuropsychological evaluations for adults with a wide range of concerns. I even have the opportunity to participate in case conferences with the neurology and psychiatry departments! This has truly been an eye-opening experience.

Are there any populations that you especially enjoy working with in counseling?

In general, I enjoy working with adults. My theoretical orientation tends to be a blend between interpersonal and cognitive-behavioral therapy, and therefore I prefer working with adult clients who are more insight-oriented.

What do you hope to do after you graduate?

After graduation, I'd ideally like to do an internship at a VA or hospital setting with a major emphasis on neuropsychology. After internship, I'd ultimately like to work at a Veterans Affairs Medical Center or hospital as a neuropsychologist. Considering that I enjoy doing assessments as well as therapy, the ideal site would allow me to blend both of my interests!



Nehad Sandozi, doctoral student in the Department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services

Featured Wellness Issue

Emotional Eating: How to Stop the Cycle

By: Lauren Young, M.S.

Have you ever been in a bad mood and thought that eating your favorite meal or food would help that mood go away? If so, you're not alone; research suggests that emotions have an important impact on our eating patterns and even our weight.

What is Emotional Eating?

Emotional eating can be defined as eating to suppress or soothe negative emotions like stress, anger, sadness, or boredom. It can also be used for positive emotions like happiness and in celebration of positive experiences such as holidays and birthdays. Therefore, we may emotionally eat because we will associate positive feelings and experiences with the food we are eating. We might also eat to distract us from whatever is bothering us by focusing on the taste, smell, or pleasure of eating rather than the actual problem or worry. To find out if you are an emotional eater, you could ask yourself these questions:

- Is your hunger often paired with an upsetting emotion?



- Do you find yourself eating unconsciously, unmindfully, or on "autopilot"?
- Do you eat when you aren't hungry or when you are full?

If you answered 'yes' to any of the previous questions, you might emotionally eat. The good news is that once you can identify these behaviors, you can change them!

Emotional Hunger vs. Physical Hunger: What's the Difference?

There are many differences between the two reasons to eat, although those differences might be difficult to see sometimes. Below is a list that will help you recognize how they are different so that you can reduce your emotional eating.

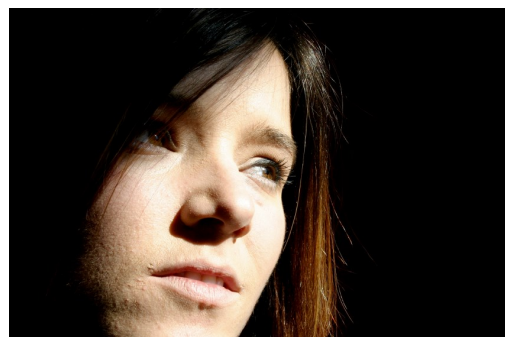
- Emotional hunger comes on suddenly; physical hunger comes on gradually.
- Emotional hunger often begins with thoughts, feelings and cues around us that we associate with food; physical hunger is associated with physical signs (like growling stomach).
- Emotional hunger feels like it can only be satisfied by certain foods you are craving; when you're physically hungry, you are open to other options.
- When you're emotionally eating you're likely to continue eating even when full; you're

more likely to stop eating when you are full when physically hungry.

- Emotional eating can leave behind feelings of guilt; physical hunger often does not.

What Can We Do?

- Recognize times when you eat emotionally and the triggers for that behavior
- Try distracting yourself: take a walk, talk to a friend, play cards, clean the house, etc. Do anything you can do take your mind off of the urge to eat.
- When you do get the urge to emotionally eat, try finding a healthier alternative to junk or comfort food.



In the end, it is important to remember that emotional eating is something that happens when we are bored, tired, sad, happy, etc. Whatever the reason, it is important for us to learn to control that reaction and find a healthier way to manage our emotions.



Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic

Ball State University
Teachers College 621
Muncie, IN 47306

Mind Matters Contributors

Editor:

Laura Walker, MA

Staff Contributors:

Emily Barnum, MA

Amy Mitchell, MA

Manisha Rustagi, MA

Kodee Walls, MA

Lauren Young, MS

Clinic Director: Theresa Kruczek, PhD, HSPP

Summer Clinic Director: Don Nicholas, PhD, HSPP

Clinic Manager: Amber Spaw

Clinic Training Advisory Committee:

Charlene Alexander, PhD

Sharon Bowman, PhD, HSPP

Don Nicholas, PhD, HSPP

Theresa Kruczek, PhD, HSPP

Kristin McGovern, PhD, HSPP

Paul Spengler, PhD, HSPP

Molly Tschopp, PhD, HSPP

Aarika White, PhD

Stefanía Ægisdóttir, PhD, HSPP

Mind Matters

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**Ball State University
Counseling Practicum Clinic**
Phone: (765) 285-8047

**305 N. College Avenue
Muncie, IN 47303**

**Small white house at the intersection
of N. College and W. Gilbert St.**

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Practicum.aspx](http://cms.bsu.edu/Academics/CollegesandDepartments/Teachers/Departments/CounselingPsych/Practicum.aspx)

Ball State University Counseling Practicum Clinic: Serving the Community Since 1969

Mission

- The clinic is a training and research facility for the Department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services.
- The clinic provides high-quality, low-cost psychological services to the Delaware County community and beyond.

Service Providers

- Over 50 graduate student counselors under the supervision of faculty.
- Faculty supervisors are licensed psychologists and counselors.

Services Offered

- Individual Counseling
- Couple Counseling
- Family Counseling
- Child/Adolescent Counseling
- Group Counseling with a focus on:
 - Parenting
 - Social skills
 - Anger control
 - Issues of concern to children and adolescents

Hours of Operation

- August-May (Spring & Fall)
 - 9 AM to 9 PM M-Th
 - 9 AM to 12 PM Fri
- May-August (Summer)
 - 9 AM to 8 PM M-Th
 - Closed on Friday
- The clinic is closed during university vacations and holidays.

All clients have the right to receive timely, competent counseling services consistent with the ethical principles and guidelines established by professional organizations. All counseling services provided at the Counseling Practicum Clinic are guided by the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of the American Counseling Association, the American School Counseling Association, the American Rehab Counseling Association, the General Guidelines for Providers of Psychological Services, and the Specialty Guidelines for the Delivery of Services by Counseling Psychologists.