

Practice Management Insight

A report on events affecting Oklahoma providers

May 2020

ThinkTeleHealth

During these uncertain times, OrionNet Systems wants to make sure we're always able to accommodate our client base and membership, so that we can continue to serve the mental health needs of their communities. With COVID-19 in full swing, our CEO Clyde Wafford leapt into action along with our experienced development and support teams to get the development and testing of the Telehealth functionality off the ground. We wanted to take a moment to say thank you to everyone that supports us in all our endeavors. A BIG thank you also goes out to the staff at OrionNet Systems!

Consciously training our sense of gratitude is good for mental health

Research shows that people who live their lives with a sense of gratitude are happier and less likely to suffer from psychological issues. A study by the University of Twente shows that training yourself to be more thankful can help people to feel better and increase mental resilience. This is the first time that this has been demonstrated convincingly. Professor of Positive Mental Health Ernst Bohlmeijer explains: "Previously, research into exercises to train people's sense of gratitude had not been able to discern much effect. So we decided to study the effect of a six-week training. The results of the study were published today in the *Journal of Happiness Studies*."

The study, which was carried out at the University of Twente and involved 217 participants, shows that a six-week training in which participants trained their sense of gratitude led to an increase in gratitude as well as a sizeable increase in their sense of well-being.

[More Information](#)

Meat eaters tend to have better psychological health than vegetarians

People who avoid meat consumption tend to have worse psychological health than those who eat meat, according to new research published in *Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition*. The study, which did not draw any conclusions about causation, found that vegetarians/vegans were at a greater risk of depression, anxiety, and self-harm. "Dietary choices have been a powerful indicator of social class and subsequent mate selection (e.g., whom we marry) since antiquity. Consequently, 'what we eat' and 'how we eat' are integral parts of our identity and directly influence our health via physiological, social, and psychological pathways," explained study author [Urska Dobersek](#), an assistant professor at the University of Southern Indiana.

[More Information](#)

The corona virus pandemic has taken a toll on our collective mental health. Can nutrition help?

May is [Mental Health Month](#), but 2020 might as well be International Mental Health Year. Even though physical distancing is saving lives amid the coronavirus pandemic, the resulting isolation — accompanied by job loss for many people — is leaving a trail of depression and anxiety in its wake, even among some people who haven't grappled with those mental health issues before.

In 2018, long before we ever heard of COVID-19, one in five U.S. adults experienced mental illness, according to the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#), with anxiety disorders and depression being the most common. Unfortunate stigma attached to simply having a mental illness.

[More Information](#)

How to your mental well-being during COVID-19

May is [mental health month](#). It's a good time to note how the [COVID-19 public health crisis](#) could be affecting your sanity, according to Marylou Sudders, the Massachusetts secretary of health and human services. Those impacts can take many forms, Sudders said, whether loneliness, situational depression, anxiety from the fear of contagion, grief due to loss, or worries of economic security. "I want to remind all of us that it's reasonable to feel anxiety and stress right now," she said during a [press conference](#) Thursday.

A [nationwide Gallup poll](#), conducted from March 21 to April 5, found that 60 percent of American adults are plagued with daily stress and anxiety.

[More Information](#)

How are Mindfulness, Stress and Your Well-Being Connected?

Recently I came across two new, unrelated studies that together provide new evidence about the impact of [mindfulness](#) practice. One looked at the potential impact of being "in the moment" when you're facing [stressful](#) problems or challenges that often arise in daily life—perhaps even more so, now, during the pandemic. Does it really help? Or can it hinder figuring out what you need to do to diminish your stress? The other study also looked at mindfulness, but with a broader focus: how it may affect or impede well-being over time as you deal with change over the years.

Interest in practicing mindfulness has become pretty mainstream in recent years as a way to help you stay focused and centered in the face of distracting emotions and thoughts.

[More Information](#)

Can mindfulness help us in the midst of COVID-19 and beyond?

Over the past 12 months *Transformation* has been running a special series on "[Mindfulness and social change](#)," designed to explore the relationships between contemplative practices like meditation, individual experiences of stress and strength, and structural issues in society like racism, sexism and inequality. One would think that these links could be especially important in times like the present, when the Coronavirus pandemic places exceptional pressures on individuals *and* reveals that these pressures are unequally distributed according to social and economic position. But is that true?

To find out, I asked four leading thinkers and practitioners in the mindfulness movement to give me their views. First up is [Rachel Lilley](#), a researcher-practitioner at Aberystwyth University who works on mindfulness training to improve decision making and collaboration among civil servants in the Welsh government.

[More Information](#)

Go ahead and post your old travel photos. Experts say it can improve your mood.

About a week ago, a relative sent me an Instagram post that was going viral: an image of a man holding a cardboard sign that reads, "Stop Posting Old Travel Pics." The man could have been holding the sign for me, someone who's been passing time during the [coronavirus](#) pandemic by posting old travel photos.

I knew the practice bothered people before I saw the writing on the cardboard. A friend had recently replied to one of my posts of a trip abroad last year with the message, "stop living in the past."

But I knew I wasn't alone. My social media feeds lately have been full of people sharing fond memories of trips, cookouts, concerts and other currently-impossible pastimes.

What does taking a trip down memory lane mean during a global crisis? And why are we so drawn to do so?

[More Information](#)

The best mental health tips for staying sane in isolation

As people around the world self-isolate because of Covid-19, factors like anxiety, a lack of social interaction or outdoor time and economic stressors [can lead to mental health challenges](#). While everyone's circumstances vary and people are experiencing this global pandemic in different ways, many have found relief using similar approaches. Here's what our readers [shared](#) about how they're holding up and what has helped them stay positive.

Mindfulness comes in many forms: meditation, self-affirmations, breathing techniques and writing in a diary, to name a few. Many readers have found these practices helpful in shaping a more positive mindset. One of the most popular suggestions was to practise gratitude, focusing on the small, pleasant moments each day brings, as well as larger things like family and community.

In the UK, [Amanda Owen-Meehan](#) suggests writing down three things you are grateful for every day, however small they might seem. "Also, try to write down worries and stresses as they come to mind during the day. it."

[More Information](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

May 1-31
[Mental Health Awareness Month](#)

May 1-31
[National Stroke Awareness Month](#)

May 5
[Cinco de Mayo](#)

May 7
[IPS 101 Training](#)
[IPS Fidelity Training](#)

May 10
[Mother's Day](#)

May 13
[Wellness Coach Training](#)

May 25
[Memorial Day](#)

May 26
[Moral Reconciliation Therapy Facilitator Training](#)

May 27
[Addiction Severity Index, American Society of Addiction Medicine PPC, and Oklahoma Determination of ASAM Service Level Training](#)

May 29
[National Senior Health & Fitness Day](#)

May 29
[American Society of Addiction Medicine and the Oklahoma Determination of the ASAM Service Level](#)

May 31
[National Smile Day](#)

The Fight To End The Stigma Of Mental Illness

The swiftness of COVID-19's impact has caused us to face mental health in ways we never anticipated. Suddenly, we have been forced to deal with the unexpected demands of sharing work, living and learning space while trying to protect our loved ones from an invisible threat. Many are dealing with the fear and uncertainty of lost income. Most people have realized that mental health also needs attention to keep our households running or at least sputtering.

Cut off from our usual ways of connecting with friends and coworkers, we have turned to technology to maintain crucial connections that give us the resiliency to cope with the grief, loneliness, and stress.

[More Information](#)

"Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy."

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say
cheese

HealthyPlace.com

How To Live a Mindful, Present And Fulfilling Life

People like [Elisha Goldstein](#) make mindfulness look so easy.

With a naturally calming nature and unmatched wisdom on balanced living, most would assume that Elisha always practiced a more conscious living.

Today, Elisha is a psychologist, a teacher of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), and the founder of [The Mindful Living Collective](#). In this online space, anyone can discover new teachings and practices, connect with like-minded people, and apply these lessons to their own lives.

He is also the cofounder of The Center for Mindful Living, and his books include *Uncovering Happiness*, *The Now Effect*, *A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook*, and *MBSR Everyday*.

[More Information](#)

Have a happy and safe Memorial Day weekend from your friends at OrionNet Systems!

May 25th, 2020



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