Topic: Meditation and Art (Literature Review)

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**Meditation and Art**

**(Literature Review)**

Wellness is thought to be an essential concept and an underlying principle when dealing with improvement in wellbeing, strength and betterment of life. As far as mental health of any individual is concerned, it is progressive construct in association with social wellness of societies. Any person who has good mental health is not only having no illness but it ensures inclusive wellness. Countries across the world such as Canada or the United Kingdom are focusing a lot on wellness in their policies. The way other treatments or preventions are vital in assuring better health, people having mental illnesses should experience wellness through different perspectives for health promotion (Gross *et al.,* 2019). This is why physical health and mental health is comprised of mental, physical and social wellbeing, rather than being a state in which the individual had no illness or frailty.

The way any patient who is suffering from any kind of mental illness or addiction perceives wellness or wellbeing determines the recovery of patient. Several researches have been conducted on mental wellness and recovery. Studies have explained mental recovery in following words, ‘‘A journey of healing and transformation enabling a person with a mental health problem to live a meaningful life in a community of his or her choice while striving to achieve his or her full potential’’. In simple terms, a person is mentally healthy if he or she is living a sober and earnest life up to full potential. This depicts a very solid relation between health and wellness, in terms of sense, purpose, drive and understanding. This also gives rise to a very strong mutual association between wellness and recovery that they both aid in explaining each other or they are explained by each other (Cummings & Bentley, 2018). To recover from any mental illness and to ensure a wholesome mental health revolves around observe the individuals beyond their illness, issues, capabilities, potentials, comforts, visions and making the individuals understand their real social standing so that they give life some sense and value. In short, health comes from wellness. Studies recommend that health services should be positioned in such a way that they promote wellness along with necessary treatment. This will transform the hypothesis that health is much more than illness being absent, a fact (Gross *et al.,* 2019).

It has been seen that day by day the consideration towards wellness and interventions assuring better health is being increased, especially for those who deal with mental illnesses continuously such as depression or mental fatigue. This will support the overall wellness of the population as well as the upsetting inconsistent affliction of physical health problems (Cummings & Bentley, 2018). If health services are to be designed to upsurge wellness instead of only getting rid of the ailment then the health professionals are ought to deal with individuals differently. For wellness in mental health services, for example dealing with depression, interventions of positive psychology and dealing the patient with positive psychology is very important (Gross *et al.,* 2019). These wellness perspectives can be art of any kind or meditation and much more.

It is progressively more evident that wellness in lives of individuals comes from what they experience. These experiences can be the interpersonal connections with some person which involve opinions, emotions and feelings. The experiences may also involve the interaction and communication with the communities across the border (Cummings & Bentley, 2018). Lucidity, steadiness and confidence are a part of the experiences related to wellness. This enables individuals with any kind of problems to have a good sense of self-assurance and competence along with the ability to have faith on themselves, their decisions and capabilities. Individuals will understand themselves and will live a meaningful life in which they are aware of what they want and how they can get that.

On the road to recovery from any kind of addiction or dependence doesn’t only mean to stay clearheaded or temperate but it is a continuous progression that incorporates cure and healing at every stage. Lack of wellness makes a person prone to addiction as well as affects the person mentally, physically and emotionally. So the treatments should be such that they should involve wellness practices and all such aspects that effect on the health completely and positively. New energy, vivacity, liveliness and ray of hope for the upcoming years should be inculcated in the patient. The common health problems and conditions such as cardiac arrests and high blood pressure deteriorate the person’s health; on the other hand addiction of any kind requires the treatment to be complete and all-inclusive, affecting the person at each level. It was thought that substance addiction is only because of weak strength of will, resolution and poor moral character of a person. However, it is a disorder that upsets the body and mind physiologically. Lack of wellness causes a person to think that the treatment or any rehabilitation program is just to detox the effect of substance and is just for the time being. But, in actuality, it is an ongoing developmental procedure that involves personal growth and enhancement of self-confidence. It takes in making the right choices that will benefit the person’s wellbeing. When addiction or substance abuse becomes a part of life then it is necessary to encompass the treatment with all perspective of wellness to the extent it is possible (Lamb *et al.,* 2016).

If we position the mental health services to focus on endorsing personal wellness then there are various models such services that employ several perspectives of wellness. This is now a very thoughtful idea and also challenging since the clinical procedures and care pathways will have to be transformed by making a good use of evidence based practices. Research indicates that to engage or reengage the individuals in their lives and to give a meaning and reason to their lives by letting them know their value and role in the society is a key feature for mental health wellness. All of the above mentioned rationales points to the idea that wellness is better than treating illness (Gross *et al.,* 2019).

There are several wellness perspectives or models that can help in mental health wellbeing. One of these models is art. There is an association between art and mental health. This helps in the individual’s wellness since observing or creating art is able to bring about the optimistic and positive emotional changes in the person. Art helps in improving mental health wellness in several ways. The most important reason is that art can let the individual know their aesthetic quality which will consequently boost self-esteem, self-awareness and the individual’s frame of mind. Scientific research has depicted that the heart rate, respiration and blood pressure of the individual slows down if he or she is focusing on a creative activity that he or she is relishing. This focus and single-mindedness is much like meditation. Furthermore, making art aids the individuals in a way that the hands and eyes are exercised. Art improves the coordination between individual’s eyes and hands. Moreover the neurological pathways are also stimulated by creating and observing art. The reason to the above mentioned positive outcomes is that when a person manifests any kind of art it provides the individual with an outlet from suppressed and hidden emotions. Through artistic expression, the emotions of anger and fear come out and are taken to the forefront, which resultantly can be called up and addressed by the health therapists. By giving a complete benign space to the imagination and manifestation of individual, the therapist will be able to dig down to the complex and tricky emotional injuries of the individual who are going through any kind of mental illness, poor emotional growth or any kind of trauma or strain rooted in past (Jensen & Bonde, 2018).

Art is not only about painting or drawing. It encompasses other kinds of artistic expressions such as writing, poetry, music and many others. Poetry is thought to be pivotal for mental health wellness. Poetry is very beneficial in aiding the individuals in finding their own voice and let them know their astuteness and wisdom they possess but they cannot experience it for the reason that they are unable to find the apt words and terms. Writing, more specifically expressive writing gives the individual a chance for self-expression which cannot be sensed through normal conversation or ordinary words. There is a hospital in the United Kingdom that has introduced poetry in the health practices to make the patients experience expressive writing and consequently will experience wellness by expressing their emotions through small snippets (Saavedra *et al.,* 2017). Maintaining a personal diary is also a very important was that can help the individual to know about the “unconscious self”. This boosts the person’s creativity, awareness about himself as well as spirituality. It expands the horizon of the individual. It helps in improving and enhancing relationships and self-learning.

Artistic expression is not reserved to personal level only. Art has a community wide affect. As a person ages, there is a possibility that he or she will be alone or face some kind of loneliness due to lack of connections for instance no friends or no family. Other factors such as falling physical health also play a role. Chronic diseases are also increasing day by day. Such diseases are becoming one of the leading causes of death. Incidence of diabetes, addiction and mental illnesses is also increasing by each day. These physical chronic diseases have effect on mental health, giving rise to the problems such as stress, depression and trauma. Such problem can lead to heart diseases. Creative activities have the power to reduce the stress and depression. Creative art activities can mitigate the load of physical chronic diseases as the person has the art to think about. This at the end of the day will promote mental health wellness. Studies have found that music, visual arts, movement based creativity and writing are the forms of artistic expression that have positive impact on the person, resulting in mental wellness. In these artistic expressions, creativity and modalities are used to bring about a positive change and foster health (Saavedra *et al.,* 2017).

Reasoning ability is challenged by art. This comes under the non-verbal feature of artistic expressions. It helps the individuals to involve the “cognitive component” to understand what they have made and its verbal, nonverbal and visual aspects. Art therapy is considered very enjoyable and creative, if the surrounding is sympathetic and reassuring. By getting involved in any kind of art helps people in their future to have good social connections and friends. Support in the community is also enhanced. When a person gets in touch with arts the loneliness and seclusion is diminished. Art acts as a companion and companionship improves mental health. The old age houses should also incorporate creative activities. This will aid in better interactions among the residents of the old age house, enhancing attitude, mood and wellness. It is now an appreciated notion that art and culture have an essential role especially in the lives of people with certain mental issue or addiction (Jensen & Bonde, 2018).

From above justifications it can be brought to light that enjoyment with arts, creative activities help the individual to communicate the inner feelings and emotions which further help in facing the challenges because of compromised mental health. The individual feels confident and resilient. Foundational mental issues such as stress or depression are reduced. This is essentially a non-medical approach that can be used to improve mental health along with the mental wellness. It is also economical for the patients as it can save money. Moreover, art affects the person in such a way that a person feels responsible for his wellbeing. He preserves and sustains the inquisitiveness and take towards better life.

Meditation is another wellness perspective that can help to achieve better mental health. It is basically focusing and concentrating on something such as any picture, sound or idiom while breathing. It helps to alleviate stress and the person feels very calm and composed. Stress is the underlying cause for many mental issues. While in stress, human body releases the hormone known as adrenaline (Cakmur, 2020). Adrenaline makes the respiration rate, heart rate and blood pressure increase. Several studies have shown the meditation helps in decreasing the blood pressure. Other psychological diseases such as insomnia, anxiety can also be treated by meditation (Ong *et al.,* 2014).

Certain studies have shown that meditation can physically change the structure of brain which can enhance the ability to process information. Effects of aging can be slowed down. Other wellbeing benefits include better immune system, better brain response and better sleep cycle. The simple form of meditation can be just sitting quietly at a quiet place while concentrating on your respiration. Individual’s mind would stroll (Subramaniam & Rangasamy, 2018).

As far as childhood mental health issues are considered, it invites monetary burden, personal damage and destroys family wellbeing. Mental health care consultants find meditation an economical as well as a sustainable method. Outcomes of meditation are very beneficial since the suicidal thoughts are lessened. Impulsiveness, psychological disruptions, stress and depression are decreased. Noticeable enhancements in strength of mind, sleep cycle, emotional intelligence, decision making, impulse control, as well as social capability can be seen. Consequently, individuals perform better in their daily life and it also noticeable improves mental health wellness. Research suggests that better results can be achieved regarding mental wellness if meditation is integrated with artistic expressions such as music, visual art and writing (Cheng, 2016). In other words, this means that meditation has the potential to ensure better mental health. It is a therapeutic and a healing wellness model that is economically beneficial as well as it does not have any side effects. So meditation as a wellness model can help for better mental health in humans.

In conclusion, health is something that is not the absence of disease but promotion of wellness. Studies have shown that wellness models are of same importance as the medical treatment for prevention of mental illnesses. It is evident that if a person is happy and full of joy, he or she is living a quality life full of mental wellness. Individual will have better heart rate and much enhanced brain functionality. This let down stress, depression and anxiety and promotes wellness. Now there is an important need to employ such models and perspectives into the present mental health services. This will definitely promote mental health wellness. Involvement of art and meditation in mental healthcare treatments points towards viable and sustainable approaches that will promote mental well-being. As described above, art will help in better understanding of social roles as well as mitigation of mental illness. In a very similar way, wicked and malicious effects of society on individual’s mental state can be reduced. There are people who would miss some chance and will start worrying about it. This is thought to be a little thing but it compromises mental health. Social comparisons cause stress and anxiety which may lead to bigger mental problems. Meditation proves to be very helpful in this regard as it diminishes to complex negative emotions, since it drives a person to be able to understand himself better and focus on the important things rather than lack of enthusiasm and pessimism. These wellness models do not go in contradiction to any medical view. Medical sciences also believe in bring all dimensions at one stage. These models also support the biomedical perspective that the focus should not only be on the illness and sickness indications but the nature and mindset of the person as well. Creativity, manifestation, mindfulness and meditation are such acts that help in finding the true self and act as a pool that provides satisfaction and mental wellness. The better we are able to understand the association between wellness and mental health, the better we will understand and apply the wellness models in mental health care practices.

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