

IN THIS ISSUE

How Mindfulness Practice Reduces Pain

Mindfulness practice reduces perceived pain levels by up to 30 percent.

Negative Emotions Intensify Pain

Chronic pain is a physical and emotional experience. Your emotional state, whether it be sadness, frustration, or happiness, affects how you experience pain. Negative thoughts and emotions increase pain levels.

For example, if you have a headache and are angry about a work conflict, the pain feels worse than if you have the same headache while outside, enjoying the sunshine, feeling content and free.

Emotions affect the experience of pain because the brain processes the physical and emotional aspects of pain together.

1. Pain is registered in the brain through multiple inputs.
2. One set of inputs reports the location and intensity of the pain (physical experience).
3. Another set of inputs connects to the emotional center of the brain, called the limbic system, and reports how unpleasant the pain feels (emotional experience).
4. From here, circuits adjust the pain signal, either increasing or decreasing it. Then, the brain lets *you* know how it feels.

Mindfulness Separates “You” From “Pain”

Mindfulness meditation decreases the communication between the parts of the brain responsible for relaying pain information (thalamus) and the parts that generate self-awareness (default mode network).

Mindfulness fosters a nonreactive sense of self, which includes the experience of pain. The benefits of mindfulness can be gained from a practice of just 20 minutes a day.

Mindfulness Meditation Quick-Start

Here is a simple guide to get started on a mindfulness meditation practice.

1. Sit in a comfortable position.
2. Focus on your breath, paying attention to breathing in and out. Don't think or follow any thought streams that pop up. Say “in” as you breathe in and “out” as you breathe out; this blocks intrusive thoughts.
3. Start with five minutes a day and work up to 20 minutes a day. Find what works for you.

During meditation, don't think about anything. If a thought pops up, do not follow it; refocus on your breath. Think of your thoughts as clouds. You are watching them and letting them pass. Focus on blue skies. If the sky fills with clouds, refocus on your breath, refocus on the blue sky.

IPS Spotlight!	p. 2
Clinical Corner	p. 3
Housing	p. 4
Around Town	P. 5
Calendar	P. 6

Impact's Summer Hours

Starting May 3 – Aug 30, 2024

Mon – Thur 9:00am – 5:00pm

Friday 9:00am – 1:00pm

New Hours

Maria Moreno, RN

Impact's nurse, Maria has new hours.

Mondays-Off

Tuesday 9-5

Wednesday 9-5

Thursday 9-1

Fridays-Off

Impact's Housing

Phone Numbers

Non-Urgent Maintenance

847-220-4433

maintenance@impactbehavioral.org

Emergency Maintenance

(Examples: heat out, burst water pipe, lockout, etc.)

During Business Hours

847-532-0026

After Business Hours/Weekends

847-220-4433

Need PPE? Ask Us! Impact has masks, hand sanitizer, and nitrile gloves available for participants.



IPS Spotlight!

*By, Alondra Solis Rios
Employment Specialist*

Since April 2023, I've been assisting Daniela who exclusively speaks Spanish. When we first began working together, she lacked a resume, having retired from her role as a Teacher in Venezuela from 1980-2009. Expressing her desire to find a part-time job to feel useful and contribute at home, we crafted a resume to highlight her skills and experience.

Despite encountering numerous challenges due to English language requirements at many local places, Daniela remained motivated throughout our job search plan. Undeterred by rejections, she stayed optimistic and open to opportunities. In our collaborative efforts, she expressed interest in applying for a crossing guard position at Chicago Public Schools. After submitting her application, we followed up with an email to address language concerns. Subsequently, she received a positive response, indicating that speaking only Spanish wouldn't be a barrier.

Following a successful interview, Daniela was offered the crossing guard position, which she began in December. Daniela finds fulfillment in her role, enjoying the flexibility of short working hours in the morning and afternoon when school dismisses.



- The employment team has placed 187 participants since 7/1/23!
- Our employment rate is 38%!
- Our 90-day retention rate is at 80%!
- The employment team has connected with over 3,000 employers this fiscal year!
- Please welcome Katie McDonald and Miranda Blackburn to the employment team! Katie will be working with participants at LSSI and Miranda will be working with participants at Erie.
- *"Fear kills more dreams than failure ever will." - Suzy Kassem*

Clinical Corner

6 Tips for Making Difficult Decisions

Challenging decisions often pit our core values against each other.

What to Consider When Faced with a Challenging Decision

1) Rather than thinking about it dichotomously or as a right or wrong decision, consider what the “best” decision is under the circumstances. Thinking about it in absolutes evokes fear and anxiety. Most people experience decision-making as dreaded because they fear the “devastating” consequences attached to a “wrong,” “failed” and “bad” decision. This could also lead to prolonged decision-making. All decisions have a redeeming value and could be an impetus for learning, growing, and reconsideration. Few, if any, decisions lead to dire consequences even though our mind tells us to believe it is so.

2) Break down the decision by the core values that are operating for you so that you can see why that position is so meaningful to you. You can use this while helping someone else to work through a challenge or, as a parent, you can use this with your children to teach them to effectively problem-solve and identify the values that will drive their behaviors. This is a valuable lesson to learn in our early development.

3) There are pain and discomfort in values, and there are values in pain and discomfort. Your values are your guiding principles and represent who you are and what is meaningful to you. They guide your actions. There are deep emotions attached to these values and when you feel that they are being compromised, you are bound to feel uncomfortable.

Ask yourself, would you truly want to be “okay” when these get challenged. (e.g. If you see someone cutting a line that you have been waiting in, you become enraged because it rubs against your value of fairness and justice. Of course, you wouldn’t want to be okay with their unjust behavior, but you also have the choice whether to physically accost the person because of their behavior or assertively and respectfully ask them to move to the end of the line.)

4) Thoughtfully problem-solve and balance out both the emotional and intellectual variables. Some of us are more emotionally driven and some of us more intellectually driven. Intentionally and proactively lean in the direction you tend to be less drawn to.

5) Make attempts to expand the way you look at things and ask yourself, “What else can I consider?” or “Is there anything else here that I’m not fully considering?” We sometimes get stuck on our own values and principles without considering those of others. We need to be willing to be more open and expansive.

6) In order to fully process your decision and problem-solve, consider trying this exercise. Draw a square with four quadrants. List what the advantages and disadvantages are for each of the quadrants. Go quadrant by quadrant starting from left to right, first concentrating on the top and then make your way to the bottom. After all four are complete, stipulate on a scale from 1 to 5 how important each item in each quadrant is for you.

Add up the numbers on the diagonal quadrants (e.g., advantages of changing jobs and disadvantages of changing jobs versus advantages of not changing jobs and disadvantages of not changing jobs). Compare the two sets of numbers and discuss which was greater. If the numbers are close, think about why you are so split. For both positions, contemplate whether values would be able to be maintained if you remained in that situation. Also, go back to considering which values are more prominent in this circumstance and what decision will allow you to be your best self.

Traditional problem-solving methods include defining the decision, analyzing it, developing alternatives, selecting the best solution, implementing the solution, analyzing the results, and learning from them. By identifying your core values and processing and problem-solving them, you can make the “best” decisions, but they may not be free of emotional discomfort. Making decisions can be challenging without the residual struggle and dread attached to them.

Impact Housing Upcoming Inspections

Re-inspection Dates

First Re-inspection Apr 15 - 17

The May housing re-inspection will be conducted for individual units that require further attention to meet our inspection standards. These inspections are scheduled for the following dates below, to ensure that all units are brought up to the desired level of quality and safety.

Second Re-inspection May 20 - 24





Free Tours by Foot

Free Tours by Foot offers free walking tours around Chicago in both English and Spanish. Select the tour you'd like and reserve the date and time here:

<https://freetoursbyfoot.com/chicago-tours/>

Architecture Tours, Skyscraper Tours, Loop & Millenium Park Tours, Chicago Riverwalk Tours and more!



Producemobile!

- Fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Free of charge.**
- 2nd Tuesday of Every Month, 9:30 am to 11:30 am.
- **Upcoming Dates: Apr 9, May 14, June 11.**
- Will be asked to register one time only and be given a GCFD pantry card to use in the future. Those who have already registered should bring their GCFD pantry cards with them.
- Walk-up line only, help will be available to carry your produce to your vehicle.
- Masks required.
- Bring a wheeled cart and/or strong bags with handles.
- Cook County residents only.
- While supplies last.

Robert Crown Center

1801 Main St., Evanston

Call (847) 475-1150 for more information.



Spring Flower Show

Sweet Gnome Chicago

Through May 12

Free!

Lincoln Park Conservatory:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/lincoln-park-conservancy-17342067619>



April 2024

Important Dates, Groups, and Events

If you have an appointment scheduled with Dr. Solomon, someone from Impact will contact you about your appointment.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	April Fool's Day	Noon: Knitting Online with Briana				
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		Eid Noon: Knitting Online with Briana				
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Tax Day	Noon: Knitting Online with Briana			Lanam-Rapp 1pm: Bingo with Lois/Group Game Contact Briana/Dan	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Passover	Noon: Knitting Online with Briana			Lanam-Rapp 1pm: Bingo with Lois/Group Game Contact Briana/Dan	
28	29	30				
		Noon: Knitting Online with Briana				

To Join a Group, Contact the Group Organizer

Briana Hornsby- email bhornsby@impactbehavioral.org or call (847) 323-5682
 Dan Grinberg-email dgrinberg@impactbehavioral.org or call (872) 230-6918
 Tiana Smith-email tsmith@impactbehavioral.org or call (847) 440-6201