

Mind-Body Interactions in Origins and Symptoms of CFS / FMS

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Notes from Slide Presentation

Overview

- I. Introduction
 - Somatic Psychology
 - Symptoms
 - Mind-Body Exercise

Overview

- II. Symptom Perspective
 - Origins
 - Variability

Overview

- III. Working with Symptoms
 - General tips
 - Somatic Psychology tools

Introduction

- Background
- Somatic Psychology (vs Psychosomatics)

Symptoms

- Fatigue, pain, nonrestful sleep
- Onset (timing, events, illness, pace)
- Variability
- Triggers
- Unawareness
- Dreams
- Oscillation of symptoms
- doing vs being
- family history?
- Improvement?

Mind-Body Exercise

- Lemon (impact from mind to body: imagination influences physiology)
- Smile (from body to mind: a physical action, movement, or body position affects emotions, thoughts, and physiology in other parts of the body)

Symptom Perspective

- Oscillation and the Nervous System
- Risk and Origins
- Variability

Oscillation occurs in nature and in us

Day to night

Winter to spring

Migration / hibernation / birth..

Hormones and chemicals in our bodies vary from day to night, am to pm

Nervous System

- Unconscious
- Involuntary
- Interacts with environment

Nervous System Oscillates

Activity (Sympathetic Nervous System, Fight Flight)

Rest (Parasympathetic Nervous System, Freeze)

Nervous System Boundaries:

In health: we stay within the window of tolerance

Symptoms: Loss of Oscillation

Symptoms: Exaggerated Oscillation

Symptoms: The Freeze State

The Freeze State

- Immobility
- Survival
- Last resort
- Extreme state
 - ▮ Also seen in hibernation
 - ▮ decreased heart rate, blood pressure, temp
 - ▮ energy conservation (brain, metabolism,...)

Origins of Chronic Illness

i. Early Risk (predisposing factors)

ii. Triggers

iii. The “final” stressor

iv. Symptom Onset

Symptoms

- Influenced by the nervous system
- The severity of the symptom: severity of past events and stressors
- An intelligent attempt to adapt
- Influenced by the environment
 - ▮ Internal: thoughts, emotions, hormones, excitement
 - ▮ External: stress, relationships, temperature,...

Symptom Variability

- Person to person ...
- Day to day ...
- Exacerbations (ie: exercise, ...)
- “Pushing” through

Symptoms: General

General

- ▮ Diet
- ▮ Activity
- ▮ Rest and sleep
- ▮ Support
- ▮ Other

Working with Symptoms

- 2. Mind-Body Tools
- Influencing nervous system regulation
 - ▮ Mindfulness
 - ▮ Curiosity
 - ▮ Nonjudgment
 - ▮ Perception
 - ▮ Interpretation

Working with Symptoms

- 3. Triggers
 - ▮ identifying them
 - ▮ predicting, anticipating, preventing, minimizing triggers

Working with Symptoms

- 4. Emotions
 - ▮ What is the truth?
 - ▮ A clue to triggers?
 - ▮ What lies underneath?
 - ▮ A call to action, change, rest?
 - ▮ A sign of overriding?
 - ▮ What are my needs

Working with Symptoms

- 5. What if?
 - a child
 - a best friend
 - a beloved pet