Description of the WILD 5 Wellness Program and Its Utility in Individuals Suffering from a Psychiatric Illness: Results from a 30-day Intervention with an Optional 90-day Extension Phase

Saundra Jain, MA, PsyD, LPC; Nancy Daniels, PMHCS, RN; Suzanne Grantham, PMHNP; Joseph A Simpson, MD; Janice Veenhuizen, MD, FRCPC; Rakesh Jain, MD, MPH

Introduction

It is becoming more apparent that the battle against mental illnesses can’t be adequately conquered with just medications and traditional psychotherapy. In the last ten years, the role of positive psychology and positive interventions is receiving considerable attention from the field. This study, the WILD 5 Wellness Program, significantly examines the clinical validity and utility of wellness-based interventions. This 30-day study compared five interventions and tracked multiple markers over this time period to assess for outcomes in these patients. In this study, 82 individuals with a major psychiatric disorder were recruited from private practices from Texas, California, Oregon, and Canada. The following changes were found at the end of this 30-day wellness program:

- Depression, as measured by the PHQ-9 improved by 43% (p<0.0001);
- Anxiety, as measured by the GAD-7 improved by 21.4% (p<0.001);
- Insomnia, as measured by the PSQI improved by 60% (p<0.0001);
- Emotional Eating, as measured by the DEBQ improved by 14% (p<0.0001);
- Mental Wellness, as measured by the WHO-5 improved by 60% (p<0.0001).

Methods: Five well-validated wellness interventions were utilized in this study. These interventions included physical exercise (30-minutes a day), mindfulness-based meditation (at least 8-minutes a day), sleep hygiene (including daily tracking of sleep), a healthy diet; MAAS to measure levels of mindfulness; SCS to measure social connectedness; and DEBQ to measure emotional eating patterns. We were also very interested in assessing for Wellness, and therefore used multiple instruments to measure wellness including the WHO-5, and a new instrument called the WILD 5 Wellness Program: Depression, as measured by PHQ-9 improved by 43% (p<0.0001); Anxiety, as measured by the GAD-7 improved by 21.4% (p<0.001); Sleep quality, as measured by the PSQI improved by 60% (p<0.0001); Emotional Eating, as measured by the DEBQ improved by 14% (p<0.0001); and Mental Wellness, as measured by the WHO-5 improved by 60% (p<0.0001). Mindfulness was examined using the MAAS. A 21-day intervention period was utilized, followed by the pre-post data was captured and analyzed using the StatPlus statistical package. ANCOVA analysis with a p value set at p<0.05. The scales used in this study were the PHQ-9 for the measurement of depression; GAD-7 for the measurement of anxiety; SSS for the measurement of social connectedness; MAAS to measure levels of mindfulness; SCS to measure social connectedness; and DEBQ to measure emotional eating patterns. Demographics: The following changes were found at the end of this 30-day wellness program:

- Importance of Mental Health: 9.2 9.1 9.0 9.1
- Importance of Enthusiasm: 7.7 7.5 7.4 7.6
- Importance of Happiness: 8.5 7.7 7.5 8.0
- Importance of Optimism: 8.2 7.9 7.8 8.5

Results

In the 30-day intervention phase, post-treatment evaluation revealed significant improvements in multiple components of mental wellness. These were the findings: Happiness improved by 30%; Enthusiasm, resilience and optimism, each improved with each of these measures tracked in both the 30-day program and the 90-day extension program.

Conclusion:

Specific, targeted and prescriptive Wellness interventions, as created by the five interventions, had substantial and positive benefits noted, not just on measures of mood, anxiety, sleep, etc., but also on multiple components of mental wellness.