

Holistic Wellness & The Brain

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ABSTRACT

A customized treatment algorithm for individuals living with ASD, ADHD, anxiety and depression. Integration of the whole person, mind-body-heart-spirit, producing an individually-tailored 16-week holistic-based therapy (HBT) program, integrating Mindfulness Based Stress Therapy (MBSR), Nutritional Psychiatry, Yoga Therapy and Music Therapy.

A growing body of research has demonstrated the efficacy of mindfulness in enhancing cognition, attention, neural processes and broad psychological well-being. Mindfulness and meditation have proven to reduce activity in the limbic system, decreasing emotional reactivity, contributing to reduced acute aggression, self-injury, stress and antisocial behavior in individuals.

HBT integrates the gut-brain axis, which science proves the significant impact of gut flora and how microbes communicate with the brain. Similarly, the vagus nerve which controls the parasympathetic nervous system, is the largest nerve connecting the gut and brain. This connection impacts neurotransmitters such as serotonin contributing to mental health, behavior, mood and the ability to focus.

HBT integrates yoga therapy, when doing yoga, the brain develops new connections and changes occur in the brain structure and function. This connection improves cognitive skills such as memory, attention, awareness, thought and language. Studies have shown

that individuals who regularly did yoga had thicker cerebral cortex and hippocampus, suggesting improved memory, reasoning, decision making, learning and mental acuity. Yoga therapy increases endorphins and elevates gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), improving mood and decreasing anxiety and depression symptoms.

Music therapy has been shown to facilitate neuroplasticity increasing overall well-being and quality of life. Music activates cognitive, motor and speech centers in the brain through accessing shared neural systems. Furthermore, research has found that music and rhythmic vibrations trigger chemical releases within the brain – enhancing endorphins, dopamine, immunoglobulin and decreasing cortisol, altering an individual's mental and physical state.

BIOGRAPHY

Erica Solis has completed her MBA from Concordia University. She is a certified yoga teacher, reiki practitioner as well as autism specialist and mental health provider through the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES). Erica has been studying mental health and chronic pain for nearly 10 years as a business executive as well as a healer, specifically in areas of mind-body-heart-spirit connection.

She has been recognized as an Outstanding Leader in health & wellness by Health 2.0 and as a mover and shaker in the Brain Health space via several publications such as The California Business Journal.

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