

The Bob Shapell School of Social Work at Tel-Aviv University

MA in Coping with Stress, Crisis and Trauma

**An Integrative Scope of the Mind-Body: Implications for Stress,
Health, and Well-Being**

Semester I, 2014-2015

DAY, HOURS

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COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Today's western society is characterized by a dualistic view of the mind and the body. The body is referred as a 'container' for the self, rather than an integral part of it. However, and partially due to the assimilation of ancient eastern ideas in western culture, new ideas call for the need to reattach the dualistic Cartesian mind-body structure. More specifically, a growing body of knowledge demonstrates an inherent link between bodily and emotional experiences, and its implications in stress, trauma and daily life. These notions exemplify the need of integrating physiological, psychological, and social schools of thought in the aim of improving the understanding of human experience, health, and well-being.

This course is designed to promote knowledge and understanding of the correspondence between the mind and the body. For this purpose, three main scopes will be presented and discussed: a) Theoretical explanations for the inherent link between the mind and the body in developmental and interpersonal processes b) Somatic implications of stress and trauma and its correspondence with the psychological ramifications of trauma c) Cultural and political forces that shape the way we refer to the body and its experiences. Finally, a few integrative mind-body interventions will be discussed.

Course Goals:

- Gain knowledge and tools to explore and evaluate diverse human experiences through an integrative mind-body perspective
- Learn about the psychophysiological ramifications of stress and trauma
- Explore practical directions for implementing an integrative mind-body perspective in interventions

REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and participation - Attendance is mandatory. Active involvement in class discussion is encouraged.

Reading – Mandatory readings prior to each class is presented in the "required reading". All materials are accessible through the course website.

Questionnaire – During the first week of the semester, an electronic questionnaire will be sent to all students via email. We will be looking at the class data in Lesson 7 to illustrate correlations between concepts that will be discussed in class.

Please note: *Questionnaires are filled anonymously *The objective of this exercise is educational. Results will only be used for this exercise *Results are analyzed and presented in class as overall scores of all participants, and not individually
*Participation is not mandatory

A reflective experience and report (due for lesson 9)

Throughout one week, students will report in a diary associations, thoughts, feelings, and experiences that relate to the question ‘How does it feel in my body?’

**This diary is yours, and will not be submitted or presented.*

Based on this diary, report the following:

- a. Provide a short summary of your impressions, and describe your experience of writing the diary (up to two pages).
- b. Discuss your experience, and analyze it according to one of the following perspectives: social, developmental, or interpersonal explanations for the mind-body association (up to two pages).

Final paper

The following list exemplifies phenomena that involve both bodily and emotional aspects. These phenomena are considered to be linked with exposure to stress and/or trauma.

Choose one of the following phenomena:

- Hypochondriasis
 - Somatoform disorders
 - Eating disorders
 - Self mutilation
 - Panic disorders
 - Alexithymia
 - Fibromyalgia
 - Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)
 - Students may suggest other related phenomena. These require prior approval.
- a. Provide a general overview of the chosen phenomenon. Present definitions, diagnosis, epidemiological aspects, and the correlation with exposure to trauma.
 - b. Analyze the link between the mind and the body and how it may be understood in regards to the chosen phenomenon. For this purpose, relate to the following perspectives that were discussed in class:
 - Developmental and interpersonal
 - Psychophysiological
 - Cultural and political
 - c. Present an intervention that is offered for individuals who suffer from this phenomenon. Analyze whether and how the correspondence between bodily and emotional experiences is incorporated in this intervention, and offer improvements.

Papers should not exceed 14 pages (double space, not including references).

All papers should be submitted in accordance with the APA format, 6th edition.

The final paper should be printed and handed in by January 21st, 2015.

EVALUATION

Grading will be based upon attendance and participation (10%), reflective report (20%), and final paper (70%).

COURSE SCHEDULE, TOPICS, READINGS

Lesson 1

Topics

- Historical and philosophical scopes on the mind-body construct:
 - *Monism and dualism in western society*
 - *Organic food, monitored exercise, and daily meditating: Reconnecting the mind and the body (Do they really?)*

Required reading

Engel, G. L. (1977). The need for a new medical model: a challenge for biomedicine. *Science*, 196, 129-136.

Orbach, S. (2009). *Bodies*. New York: Picodar. (pp.1-19)

Lesson 2

Topics

- Developmental processes 1: The self as embodied in the bodily experiences

Required reading

Winnicott, D.W. (1960). The theory of the parent-infant relationship. In: *The maturational processes and the facilitating environment: Studies in the theory of emotional development*. Madison, Conn: International Universities Press.

Lesson 3

Topics

- Developmental processes 2: The experience of the body as self-knowledge

Required reading

Rogers, C. (1961). A therapist's view of the good life: The fully functioning person. In H. Kirschenbaum & V. L. Henderson (Eds.), *The Carl Rogers reader* (pp. 409-420). Boston New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Additional Reading

Lowen, A. (1975). *Bioenergetics: The revolutionary therapy that uses language of the body to heal the problems of the mind*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.(pp. 13-69).

Winnicott, D. W. (1954). Mind and its relation to the psyche-soma. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 27, 201-209.

Lesson 4

Topics

- Arousal and regulation: The psychophysiology of stress

Required reading

Kaltsas, G. A., & Chrousos, G. P. (2007). The neuroendocrinology of stress. *Handbook of psychophysiology*, 303-318.

Additional Reading

Elenkov, I. J., & Chrousos, G. P. (2006). Stress system—organization, physiology and immunoregulation. *Neuroimmunomodulation*, 13, 257-267.

Lesson 5

Topics

- “The body remembers”: Ramifications of trauma on the mind-body

Required reading

Rothschild, B. (2003). *The Body Remembers Casebook: Unifying Methods and Models in the Treatment of Trauma and PTSD*. New York, NY: WW Norton. (pp. 3-17).

Additional Reading

Defrin, R., Ginzburg, K., Solomon, Z., Polad, E., Bloch, M., Govezensky, M., & Schreiber, S. (2008). Quantitative testing of pain perception in subjects with PTSD—implications for the mechanism of the coexistence between PTSD and chronic pain. *Pain*, 138(2), 450-459.

Lesson 6

Topics

- From body to mind: Somatic illness as a stressful and/or traumatic event

Required reading

Ginzburg, K., Solomon, Z., Dekel, R. & Bleich, A. (2006). Longitudinal study of acute stress disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder and dissociation following Myocardial Infarction. *Journal of Nervous & Mental Disease*, 74(3), 286–292.

Additional Reading

Hefferon, K., Greal, M. and Mutrie, N. (2009). Post-traumatic growth and life threatening physical illness: A systematic review of the qualitative literature. *British Journal of Health Psychology*, 194(12), 945–950.

Lesson 7

Topics

- From mind to body: Awareness, attention, and orientation to bodily experiences

Required reading

Herbert, B. M., & Pollatos, O. (2012). The body in the mind: on the relationship between interoception and embodiment. *Topics in Cognitive Science*, 4, 692-704.

Idler, E. L. & Benyamini, Y. (1997). Self-rated health and mortality: a review of twenty-seven community studies. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 38, 21-37.

Additional Reading

Ginzburg, K., Tsur, N., Barak-Nahum, A. & Defrin, R. (2014). Body awareness: Differentiating between sensitivity to and monitoring of bodily signals. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 37, 564-575.

Lesson 8

Topics

- Mindfulness: Implementing Eastern ideas in Western society

Required Reading

Brown, K. W. & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 822-848.

Additional Reading

Kabat-Zinn, J. (2003). *Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR)*. Constructivism in the Human Sciences, 8, 73-107.

Lesson 9

Topics

- Medicalization and objectification of the body: Cultural and political influences on how we perceive our body

Required reading

Law, J. (2000). The politics of breastfeeding: Assessing risks, dividing labor. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 25, 407-450.

Additional Reading

Johanson, R., Newburn, M. & Macfarlane, A. (2002). Has the medicalization of childbirth gone too far? *Education and Debate*, 324(7342), 892-895.

Jutel, A. (2009). Sociology of diagnosis: a preliminary review. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 31(2), 278–299.

Thomas, S. L., & Ellertson, C. (2000). Nuisance or natural and healthy? Should monthly menstruation be optional for women. *Lancet*, 355, 922-924.

Lesson 10

Topics

- Pain as case study: Fibromyalgia, phantom pain, and self-mutilation from an integrative point of view

Required reading

Schattner, E. & Shahar, G. (2011). Role of pain personification in pain-related depression: An object relations perspective. *Psychiatry*, 74(1), 14-21.

Additional Reading

Farber, S. K. (2008). Dissociation, traumatic attachments, and self-harm: Eating disorders and self-mutilation. *Clinical social work journal*, 36, 63-72.

Lesson 11

Topics

- Interventions 1: Overview of current intervention methods for treating the traumatized mind-body

Required reading

Phillipot, P., & Segal, Z. (2009). Mindfulness based psychological interventions: Developing emotional awareness for better being. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 16(10-12), 10-12.

Rothschild, B. (2003). *The Body Remembers Casebook: Unifying Methods and Models in the Treatment of Trauma and PTSD*. New York, NY: WW Norton. (pp. 17-24).

Additional Reading

Levine, P.A. (1997). *Waking the Tiger: The Innate Capacity to Transform Overwhelming Experiences*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

Lesson 12

Topics

- Interventions 2: Critical and integrative view of the mind-body: implications for designing interventions

Required reading

Chiesa, A., Brambilla, P. & Serretti, A. (2010). Functional neural correlates of mindfulness meditation in comparison with psychotherapy, pharmacotherapy and placebo effect. Is there a link? *ACTA Neuropsychiatrica*, 22, 104-117.

Recommended additional course reading

Bremner, J.D. (2005). *Does Stress Damage the Brain?: Understanding Trauma-Related Disorders from a Mind-Body Perspective*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Damasio, A. R. (2005). *Descartes' error: Emotion, reason, and the human brain*. New York: Penguin Books.

Ogden, J. (2012). *Health Psychology: A Textbook*. Maidenhead, Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

Ogden, T. H. (1992). *The primitive edge of experience*. Jason Aronson.

