Curriculum Objectives

“Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.” —Socrates

Focusing on curriculum guidelines from MSU CHM, this project would address the teaching objectives of humanism (bio-psychosocial for patient and physician) and compassion/empathy. Further, while not specifically listed on the CHM Curriculum Guidelines, this project addresses physician wellness and self-care.

Further, this project/curriculum would ideally be incorporated into classes at CHM, COM and nursing training programs.

Rationale

- Medical student burnout is estimated at 49-51% during the course of study throughout a medical education, and suicidal ideation is estimated at 11.2%.
- Burnout that continues into medical residency has been directly correlated with higher incidence of medical errors and decreased compassion in patient care.
- Mindfulness meditation has been demonstrated to decrease symptoms of anxiety—including when provided in training sessions for medical students.
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Positive Psychology exercises have proven effective in decreasing depression symptoms—and improving positive attitude and happiness/outlook on life.
- Spirituality and spiritual practice/involvement has been correlated with decreased symptoms of depression.

Description of Curriculum

The class can be integrated into an already existing physician-patient-wellness class, and could be completed in 10 weeks, 60 minutes per class.

30 minutes: Mindfulness meditation practice and relaxation/breath training.

30 minutes: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and positive psychology exercises addressing life satisfaction, thought examination, and wellness.

Weekly topics include:

- Vision/Goals
- Joy list
- Signature Strengths
- Examining Thoughts
- Resilience
- Kindness/compassion
- Forgiveness
- Finding life purpose
- Wellness/aerobics
- Gratitude

Resources and Faculty Development

- The development of curriculum/classes suggested in this poster is currently underway by resident physicians in the MSU Psychiatry Residency Training Program, as part of a resident physician research project.

- MSU Department of Psychiatry Advisors for this project include:
  - Dr. Alyse Ley, DO; Program Director
  - Dr. Dale D’Mello, MD; Associate Professor
  - Albert Aniskiewicz, PhD, ABPP; Professor Emeritus
  - Christopher Giuliano, PhD; Assistant Professor, Clinical Psychologist; Director, MSU Outpatient Clinic Behavior Therapy

Discussion: Got Joy?

Given the high prevalence of medical student burnout and suicidal ideation, a focus on physician self-care and wellness will likely have an impact on all aspects of medical training and curriculum.

Research on meditation/mindfulness/relaxation exercises has demonstrated reduction in anxiety and depressive symptoms. Further, CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy), research has shown similar outcomes.

The combination of both techniques to focus on student wellness would allow medical students to have tools that they can use themselves—as well as use to teach their patients and other medical personnel/staff (multidisciplinary team).

Regardless, who wouldn’t welcome more joy…?