

Relationship between physical and mental health



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Recent studies often talk about mental health and physical health, but it is necessary to look for both of them together. Generally, mental health can be defined as how people feel, think and act when faced with life's problems. In addition, a mental disease causes feelings of unhappiness, loss of hope, sleeping problems, changes in eating habits, loss of interest in natural activities, and pains which have no physical description. Occasionally, mental and physical illnesses appear similarity in many of symptoms, such as a decrease in food cravings and energy levels. Therefore, this essay aims to argue specific situations could have an effect on both mental and physical health. This essay will consider depression, exercise, humour and environment respectively.

Depression is one of the most popular mental diseases in the world. It is a feeling of sadness and low self-esteem, which is experienced by a someone over a long period of time; also, it can change physical health, behaviour and appearance (Mead, et al., 2009 and Ishii, et al., 2011). Roughly, 450 million people are afflicted by depression worldwide as well it attacks one out of every five people throughout their lifetime in some countries (World Health Organization, 2001). In addition, the mood can be influenced by the lifestyle, past experiences and genetic factors (BBC website cited in Woodward, 2014). Generally, depression can be treated with antidepressants, psychological therapies or a mixture of both. Nevertheless, antidepressants may have opposing side effects and adherence can be poor (Mead, et al., 2009). One of the secrets of mental stability is avoiding negative opinions, is being able to notice when you are 'choosing' or 'allowing yourself' to think positively rather than negatively (BBC website cited in Woodward, 2014).

Besides, they say that the persons who continually appear to be in a good mood have higher levels of hormone endorphins, neurotransmitters dopamine and serotonin. These are secreted by the brain and make people feel good when they are enjoying themselves or when something nice occurs.

Exercise and physical activity are linked to higher quality of life and health. Numerous scientists researched on this subject and all of them found out a significant correlation between physical activity and mental health, but they have differed in what kind, when, how, and how many exercises are needed. Penedo & Dahn (2005) state that exercise improves mood and decreases symptoms of anxiety and depression. They show that people diagnosed with depression undergoing an aerobic-exercise intervention exhibited great improvements in depression comparable to people who receiving only psychotropic treatment. In addition, in another study (Ishii, et al., 2011) it suggests that practicing in at least 60-150 minutes per week of intermediate to energetic physical activity, inhibit depression and boost good mental health. Conversely, one report states that more than a hundred scientific studies dealing with exercise and mental health, and not all of these studies show statistically important benefits with exercise training (President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition website cited in Woodward, 2014). Furthermore, Hamer, et al. (2009) indicate that the link between exercise and higher levels of life was noncausal, and mediated by genetic factors that affect both exercise behaviour and well-being. They go on to say that physical activity and positive happiness, which appear to be an independent risk factor for health. For these reasons, regular exercise is connected with

better mental health, although there is a lack of consensus about the optimal volume and nature of activity to accomplish these benefits.

Many researches show that a good sense of humour works as a good ‘immunity medicine’, raising resistance to disease (Stanton and Morris, 2003 cited in Woodward, 2014). According to these researches, the capability to see the funny aspect of things enhances both physical and mental well-being. Dr. Berk says that, “ the best clinicians understand that there is an intrinsic physiological intervention brought about by positive emotions such as mirthful laughter, optimism and hope. Lifestyle choices have a significant impact on health and disease and these are choices which the patient exercise control relative to prevention and treatment” (ScienceDaily website, 2009 cited in Woodward, 2014). They approve that laughter and humour may not work out life’s troubles, however, it does set people in a better place to tackle them. These examples show that laughter helps to relax the body by decreasing blood pressure and tension in the muscles.

The environment has large effects on mental and physical health of human. It is more challenging to be physically active while living in an insecure or unhealthy region. CMHA (2008) states that housing insecurity may be especially stressful and bring on poorer mental and physical health. Their research show that mental disease can affect the social and cognitive function and reduce energy levels, which can negatively affect the adoption of healthy behaviours. People may lack motivation to look after of their health; moreover, they may take unhealthy eating and sleeping habits, smoke or abuse substances, as an effect or reaction to their symptoms, contributing to worse health effects (CMHA, 2008). One such study

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demonstrates that people living in low-income families are more likely to hurt mental health problems than their wealthier peers (Ishii, et al., 2011). For these reasons, people living with higher penury, jobless, lack of stable housing, and social isolation, are higher susceptible to mental and physical illnesses.

To summarise, mental and physical health are inextricably linked. A large number of studies have encouraged that practicing at a minimal level of at least 60 minutes/week of any physical activity, and take an enough humour time in a nice place that will help to have a healthy body and mind.

Although, more accurate studies are required, to prove what kind and how physical activity demand for each specific illness.

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