

Practice Management Insight

A Report on Events Affecting Oklahoma Mental Health and Substance Abuse Providers

July 2020

ThinkHealth v 3.2.0 Rolled Out!

The latest version of ThinkHealth, 3.2.0, was recently introduced to our members! It has some exciting new functions and features!

Our President and CEO, Clyde Wafford, is always looking to update and improve upon our already great product, ThinkHealth! He is constantly striving to make it even more user-friendly for the agencies we serve.

We want to thank everyone involved in developing and testing the latest rendition of ThinkHealth! The developers worked diligently to make ThinkHealth v 3.2.0 a success! The QA and tech support teams spent many hours testing it.

There is a ThinkHealth v 3.2.0 webinar available on our website, which you can access by clicking on the link below and then logging in with your username and password, then go to Downloads & Training>Webinars-ThinkHealth Members>Main>ThinkHealth Update v 3.2.0 Training. (if you don't have a username and password, contact your administrator).

[More Information](#)

Coronavirus Anxiety: Coping with Stress, Fear, and Worry

Fears about COVID-19 can take an emotional toll, especially if you're already living with an anxiety disorder. But you're not powerless. These tips can help you get through this stressful time.

Understanding your anxiety

It's a frightening time. We're in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, with cities and even entire countries shutting down. Some of us are in areas that have already been affected by coronavirus. Others are bracing for what may come. And all of us are watching the headlines and wondering, "What is going to happen next?"

For many people, the uncertainty surrounding coronavirus is the hardest thing to handle. We don't know how exactly we'll be impacted or how bad things might get. And that makes it all too easy to catastrophize and spiral out into overwhelming dread and panic. But there are many things you can do—even in the face of this unique crisis—to manage your anxiety and fears.

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A Mindfulness Practice for Wearing a Mask

Pulmonologist Ni-Cheng Liang takes a look at how the breath—a common anchor of attention in meditation—can be triggering. Explore her masking practice to calm feelings of anxiety and stress when we're unable to comfortably connect with the in or out breath.

The idea of wearing a mask has become polarizing and politicized for some. As a doctor specializing in pulmonary health, I know the mask is a key part of decreasing the spread of COVID-19, along with washing hands, and maintaining six feet of distance from others. I also know the mask can be, for some, suffocating in literal and figurative senses.

The breath itself, a common anchor of attention in mindfulness practice, can be triggering. My patients, and some physicians that I lead in [awareness of breath](#) practice, tell me that focusing on their breath makes them even more anxious, and short of breath. My patients oftentimes have underlying lung disease that already takes their breath away. The sensation of air hunger, this need to take in more air, but you cannot, no matter how hard you try, is a terrifying experience. Using breath as an anchor has the potential to magnify this sensation. Perhaps even more so with a mask. And perhaps more so with the murder of George Floyd, and the dehumanizing way in which his breath was taken away.

[More Information](#)

The trouble with medicating mental illness

Psychotropic drugs have severely narrowed how we treat psychiatric disorders — to the detriment of patients and society as a whole. A look at the past suggests a better way forward.

The standard of care for the severely mentally ill in the United States has drastically changed since the 1950s, when more than half a million patients resided in enormous state hospitals. As pharmaceutical firms developed new antipsychotic medications, national policy shifted such that most of the old hospitals have now closed. Today, the majority of US patients, even those with serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar syndrome and major depression, receive only short-term, inpatient medical treatment to quell symptoms before being sent home.

The old asylums were the scenes of some well-publicized abuses and poor conditions. Yet their closures and the parallel embrace of medications did not solve the issue of how to best care for people. The current mental-health system leaves many mentally ill patients no better off, says Joel Braslow, a historian and psychiatrist at the University of California, Los Angeles. In some cases, the situation has grown worse.

[More Information](#)

Traditional PTSD therapy doesn't trigger drug relapse

People with addiction aren't getting effective treatment for PTSD due to incorrect presumptions

About a quarter of people with drug or alcohol use disorders also suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is typically caused by a traumatic or stressful life event such as rape or combat, and which leaves the person with intense anxiety. However, patients and health care providers have been reluctant to pursue the gold-standard treatment for PTSD -- cognitive behavioral therapy -- because they anticipate that thinking and talking about traumatic events during therapy will cause relapse.

Johns Hopkins researchers have now demonstrated that behavior therapy that exposes people to memories of their trauma doesn't cause relapses of opioid or other drug use, and that PTSD severity and emotional problems have decreased after the first therapy session.

[More Information](#)

COVID-19 and your mental health

Worries and anxiety about COVID-19 and its impact can be overwhelming. Social distancing makes it even more challenging. Learn ways to cope during this pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has likely brought many changes to how you live your life, and with it uncertainty, altered daily routines, financial pressures and social isolation. You may worry about getting sick, how long the pandemic will last and what the future will bring. Information overload, rumors and misinformation can make your life feel out of control and make it unclear what to do.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, you may experience stress, anxiety, fear, sadness and loneliness. And mental health disorders, including anxiety and depression, can worsen.

[More Information](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

[National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month](#)

[National Fragile X Awareness Month](#)

[National Scam Awareness Month](#)

[National Anti-Boredom Month](#)

[National Picnic Month](#)

[National Ice Cream Month](#)

July 4th
[Independence Day](#)
[National Calendar](#)

July 26
[Parent's Day](#)
[National Calendar](#)



ThinkHealth

Practice Management Software (EHR)



NBA increasing mental health resources for players during season restart

Once the NBA resumes its season in a controlled environment, players will have more to worry about than winning. They will have varying concerns about how the resumed season could affect their mental health.

Boston Celtics forward Gordon Hayward will be away from his pregnant wife, Robyn, and children until she is due to give birth sometime in September.

"It's definitely a stressful time for us," said Hayward, whose wife and children are moving to Indianapolis to be near family while he is with the Celtics as part of the NBA's 2019-20 restart at the ESPN Disney Wide World of Sports Complex near Orlando.

[More Information](#)

JULY is...

[Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month](#)

[National Cleft & Craniofacial Awareness & Prevention Month](#)

[Eye Injury Prevention Month](#)

[Sarcoma/Bone Cancer Awareness Month](#)

You can't control everything. Sometimes you just need to relax and have faith that things will work out. Let go a little and just let life happen

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Happy Parents Day

July 26th, 2020

honoring parents for the hard work and raising the next generation.



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