Introduction

Learning how to manage stress is a huge component of one’s health. This whole idea came about when Dr. Jennifer Bird, an English professor at FAU, was a patient of mine and created a journal of how she was feeling each day. This helped me see other contributing factors for her symptoms and led to her getting 100% better in physical therapy. We both went more into depth about that style of writing (multigenre writing) which led to research projects and multiple publications about this topic. We researched how a subject’s positive outlook related to objective measures for physical therapy surveys and found groundbreaking results. Turns out the higher the subject’s positive outlook, the more gains they made in physical therapy. There was also a link between higher scores with artistic writing, and objective gains they made as well. That seemed to suggest an idea that writing may be a catalyst in healing. This led to another research project that had subjects at FAU write freely about how they were feeling in a journal on four different sessions. Besides finding out that a vast majority of college students were stressed, there seemed to be a correlation for subjects demonstrating a more positive writing voice and having less anxiety on the HRQOL (Health Related Quality of Life) survey. This led Dr. Bird’s search to collaborate with more professionals to create this book. This book discusses similar issues on health and the benefits that certain variables can have on it such as: religion, finding inner peace, self-awareness, dealing with grief, self-directed learning, promoting change, stress management, holistic patient experiences, meditation, nutrition, psycho-spiritual psychotherapy. All of these components are crucial to one’s health and you will gain a deeper understanding of each of these after reading this book. As a practitioner in the health field I cannot express how crucial it is to manage stress for maintaining one’s health.

This book’s intent is not to make you do everything it talks about but simply allows you to make more educated decisions for your health. Patients that stay healthy heal quicker, are less prone to injuries, less prone to certain diseases, and have a higher quality of life. It may also help you make wiser decisions in life by managing stress.

Religion and finding inner peace have several benefits that will be further discussed in the book. Keep your mind open while reading about these experiences and what was taken out of them by the authors no matter your religious views. It may change your life more than you would think.

Self-awareness is something crucial in the medical field. It is something that could help people in the medical field make the proper diagnosis when you see them. Physicians and Physical Therapists need to know your symptoms when you see them since it allows them to rule certain things in and others out. A lot of diagnoses can be similar but one difference in symptoms could be a totally different thing. Self-awareness also will help you realize what is helping, versus what is making you worse. This can also make one more accountable for their health as an individual and motivate them to educate themselves more prior to going to a Doctor. You don’t have to try to diagnose yourself since a majority of the time
it will be incorrect and could scare you more than anything, but it might help you to ask more educated questions that could help you out more in the long run. Any question though is a good question and it is recommended that you prepare questions in advance of a Doctor visit. A simple question such as “is it normal that I lost 10 pounds in a week and have night pain?” The answer is no and could lead to proper testing to be performed along with the Doctor making proper referrals and performing appropriate tests.

Learning different ways to deal with grief can decrease stress levels and allow one to have a more positive outlook on life whether that is through artwork, writing, working with a psychologist, etc. Having a higher positive outlook has been proven to lead to a higher potential for recovery gains in physical therapy. It can also help motivate a patient to perform suggested exercises for healing in physical therapy. Just keeping the mindset you will get better helps one set goals for themselves, which in-turn leads to a higher potential of meeting those goals and getting better. Perhaps that goal could be related to keeping on track with a proper diet. It could make you re-evaluate your eating habits and start along a healthy path potentially leading to more longevity.

Each of these chapters dive much further into each individual topic. This is an eclectic approach from people in different fields to enhance a person’s quality of life with greater health benefits. The book defines collaboration with all of the professionals in different fields coming together. So put on your seatbelt while reading this book because you will be on the ride of your life for health.

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