A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workshop for Social Workers and Helping Professionals Experiencing Burnout: A Grant Proposal

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Introduction

- Workplace environments that are emotionally demanding often leave social workers coping with anxiety, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a sense of diminished personal accomplishment in the workplace (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

- Social workers working in direct service often experience excessive stress that can lead to job burnout (Adams, Boscarino & Figley, 2006).

- Social workers that work in daily contact with the critical needs of their clients have a high incidence of job burnout (Jenaro, Flores & Arias, 2007).

- Burnout critically impacts social workers and is detrimental to the quality and efficacy of client services (Kim & Lee, 2009).

- The symptoms of burnout can include lowered concentration, depression, fatigue, and health problems (Acker, 2008).

Overarching Goals

To examine the impact of burnout on social workers and to promote self-care through mindfulness-based stress reduction training in order to improve the overall well-being, quality client services, and improved job satisfaction.
Social Work Relevance

- Social workers must be aware of the significance of self care in order to prevent burnout (Acker, 2012).

- Self care is important in maintaining a sense of personal and professional balance (Jenaro et al., 2007).

- Engaging in self-care awareness and education is beneficial both to the social worker and the delivery of professional client services (Shapiro, Brown & Beigel, 2007).

- Evidence-based interventions and best practices diminish and counter the effects and impact of burnout (Kanter, 2007).

- The application of stress management techniques can prevent workplace burnout (Kanter, 2007).
Cross-Cultural Relevance

- Burnout has variations in cultural and gender impact and how it affects social workers (Acker, 2008).

- Non-White social workers experience lower levels of emotional and mental exhaustion and are less subject to burnout due to increased realistic life expectations from personal life challenges (Kim, Ji & Kao, 2011).

- Female social workers experience increased physical health ailments more so than males due to workplace stressors and job demands (Kim et al., 2011).
Methods 1

- The target population intended for services through this grant are social workers throughout the Long Beach area.

- Strategies utilized to identify and select a funding source were the use of web search engines such as Yahoo, Google, and resources such as grant.gov, Long Beach Non Profit Partnership, promindful.org, and The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation were examined for potential funding.

- Key words such as: funding, grants, burnout, social worker burnout, stress, anxiety, mental health, social workplace stressors, service provider stress, burnout prevention, and self-care were used to search for different types of funding resources.

- As a result of these searches The Weingart Foundation was selected as a source of potential funding for the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workshop.
Sources utilized for the needs assessment were self-reported questionnaires which addressed burnout in the workplace.

The questionnaires were disbursed throughout various social service agencies in the Long Beach Area. The data collected from questionnaires determined the need for the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction training workshop.

The Projected Budget Range and Categories: The estimated budget for the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Training Workshop is $15,390.00. The funding will include 1 MSW Workshop Coordinator, 1 Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Specialist, and Indirect and direct program costs. The workshop will be coordinated and facilitated three times per year for the first year.
Grant Proposal 1

- **Program Summary and Description**: A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction workshop will provide education and the application of mindfulness-based skills and techniques in order to decrease stress and burnout experienced by social workers. This six-hour workshop will be held at the Jewish Family and Children’s Services Center every three months.

- **Population Served**: The target population for the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workshop are social workers throughout the Long Beach Area who are experiencing excessive workplace stress and/or burnout.

- **Sustainability**: The Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workshop is a short term workshop, that if successful, will be continued through funding acquired through data depicting participant success and the decrease of burnout and increase in job satisfaction and the positive delivery of social services.
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- **Program Objectives:** The Mindfulness-based stress reduction training workshop will provide education regarding stress and burnout and their impact on the mind and body. Simple techniques will be practiced to help alleviate symptoms of stress and promote the utilization of mindfulness as a stress reduction tool. The objective is to increase self-awareness of reactionary responses that induce stress and to increase coping skills in response to stressors.

- **Program Evaluation:** In order to determine the effectiveness of the workshop, a self-reporting questionnaire will be disbursed for post evaluation. The questionnaire will determine if the participants had gained insight, knowledge, skills, and techniques regarding stress, burnout, and mindfulness-based stress reduction. It is the goal of the workshop to increase up to 90% participant education regarding stress and burnout as well as the necessity of self-care.
Lessons Learned

- The social service profession can be challenging and stressful. Social workers must be aware of the symptoms of excessive stress and the consequences of burnout.

- Self-care must be promoted in the workplace and social workers must seek to engage in practicing self-awareness in order to counter the impact of stress and burnout.

- The prevalence of social work burnout has increased the need for best practices interventions. Self-care workshops and training can contribute to improved well-being, quality delivery of client services, and a healthier workplace.

- Mindfulness is utilized therapeutically for anxiety, depression, and stress.

- Mindfulness is the practice of awareness of thoughts and feelings and one’s reactions to those experiences. Meditation is one form of mindfulness and can be practiced at any time to calm the mind and
References


