NEWS BREAK

Article: A Seattle program aims to improve mental health with more affordable, and accessible, counseling

Section: THE MIX, E10

Sunday’s News Break selects an article from Sunday, October 21, 2018 of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a small group or larger, class discussion.

*Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Objectives:

Students will talk define stigma and whether it’s still attached to those experiencing mental illness in today’s society? How are our thoughts shifting about it? Do they think it’s getting better in schools and in our local community, the more we talk about it and share personal experiences about mental illness? They’ll also discuss that stress is a prime factor for physical and mental illness. They’ll share their personal stressors and what strategies and tools they use to calm down in those situations.
Pre-Reading Discussion:

- What do you know about mental illness? What about mental wellness?
- Do you think people are talking about mental illness more? Why?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using context clues? A context clue is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

“That means those in need of treatment may wait months for limited care. In a country where the stigma surrounding mental illness persists, seeking help can be a difficult step to take — and it can be a discouraging blow when a person who takes that step receives the message that there isn’t a place for them.”

Write your guess and then look up the definition and write it below your guess. How close did you come to the correct definition?

**Stigma Guess:**

**Stigma Definition:**

Comprehension Questions:

1. Approximately one in five adults will experience mental illness in any given year, but only half of them will get treatment. Why? What ranks high on the list as to why people don’t have access to mental-health-care access?
2. Many providers don’t accept Medicaid and those that do often have what?
3. In a country where the stigma surrounding mental illness persists, seeking help can be a difficult step to take — and it can be a discouraging blow when a person who takes that step receives what message?
4. A program at Bastyr University’s Bastyr Center for Natural Health in Seattle may offer a solution. What are they offering?
5. The sessions address a range of issues. What are some topics the article mentions?
6. Tom Farmer, assistant professor and director of clinical training for Bastyr’s counseling and psychology department, says that clients are seen in shifts throughout the day. What times are clients seen?
7. Are there waitlists for this program?
8. In general, clients work with the same student clinician for between _____ and _____ weeks.
9. Mental health impacts every aspect of our lives, and everyone can benefit from __________________—— not just those who suffer from severe, chronic mental illness.
10. As Farmer points out, ____________ is a prime risk factor for a number of physical illnesses.

Discussion Questions (small/large groups), Journal Prompts or Essay Questions:

- What surprised you in the article?
- What did you already know about?
- Do you think there is a stigma attached to having mental illness? Why?
- Do you think it’s getting better in schools and in our local community, the more we talk about it and share personal experiences about mental illness? Why or why not?
- Stress is a prime factor for physical and mental illness. Do you ever have stress? What stresses you out? How do you keep calm when you face these stressors?

Approximately one in five adults will experience mental illness in any given year, but only half of them will get treatment.

- Did this statistic surprise you? Why or why not?

“It’s really solid counseling in the sense that there’s an experienced staff overseeing it,” he says. The licensed professionals are just a few steps away in another room, and closely monitor each session through a live video feed. The sessions are structured much like any other therapy session, with the student clinician and client in chairs facing each other as they focus on concrete problem- and solution-based treatment.

“Clients might even forget that there’s a supervisor in another room watching the session,” Farmer says. “They get into the therapeutic process and will do the work for weeks and will just kind of forget that I’m even there.”

- Do you think this is a great option for some people going through difficult times?
• How do you think this impacts the learning for the student counselor, as they get to have hands-on and interactive learning with a client?
• Will this better prepare the students for real world clinical practice when they graduate? Why or why not?
• How is this a win-win for both the student counselor and the individual seeking help?
• If you were struggling, would you seek help through talking with someone?

**In general, clients work with the same student clinician for between 11 and 13 weeks (the length of the student clinicians’ academic quarter).**

“Our work does try to focus on specific issues, so [the clients] will work with the student clinicians for that length of time, or until the issue is resolved,” Farmer says. But that’s not a hard-and-fast rule — if clients need support for a longer period, they can always come back for the next quarter to continue working on behavior and health issues with a new student clinician.

• Do you think the length of time with the same student clinician is a good thing? Why or why not?

“Mental health is related to a lot of the more important things in life, like how we manage relationships, how we feel connected, moving towards people rather than away from people,” Farmer says. It’s directly related to our satisfaction and happiness in life, which means we’re more effective in every endeavor we take on, whether it’s raising children, being a good employee, or excelling at a passion like running marathons.

“Getting good mental-health services doesn’t just promote the absence of depression or anxiety,” Farmer says. “It promotes us living fully as holistic human beings.”

• Do you agree with Farmer’s assessment on mental health, how it’s related to our satisfaction and happiness in life…that it promotes us living fully as holistic human beings? Why or why not?
• What does holistic mean?
• What do you do to promote happiness in your life?

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Newsbreak Answer Key: October 21, 2018

Pre-Reading Discussion:

Answers will vary

Vocabulary Building:

*Stigma*: a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person. "The stigma of having gone to prison will always be with me." ·

Comprehension Answers:

1. Cost isn’t the sole barrier to mental-health-care access, but it ranks high on the list.
2. Lengthy waitlists and packed schedules. That means those in need of treatment may wait months for limited care.
3. That there isn’t a place for them.
4. Under close monitoring by a licensed mental-health professional, student clinicians conduct 45-minute therapy sessions with clients ranging in age from 18 to 90 at a reduced rate of $20 per session.
5. From mental-health conditions like depression and anxiety to situational stress caused by work, life transitions or relationships.
6. 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.
7. There is rarely, if ever, a waitlist.
8. 11-13 weeks
9. Counseling
10. Stress

Discussion Questions (small/large groups), Journal Prompts or Essay Questions: Answers will vary

*Holistic*: incorporating the concept of holism, or the idea that the whole is more than merely the sum of its parts, in theory or practice: *holistic psychology*.

*Medicine/Medical*: identifying with principles of holism in a system of therapeutics, especially one considered outside the mainstream of scientific medicine, as naturopathy or chiropractic, and often involving nutritional measures: *holistic medicine*.