

"LISTENING TO THE SOUL"-A MINDFULNESS MEDITATION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN WITH CANCER AND THEIR PARENTS

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Background: Diagnosis of childhood cancer poses many complex and difficult challenges on the family as a whole. Academic studies have revealed that mindfulness practice may assist in coping with both physical and emotional challenges of the disease and treatments.

Aim: Offer a program that incorporates mindfulness and self-compassion with the goal of enriching existing treatment options for children with cancer and their parents.

Procedure: A program consisting of six meetings was held by professionals specializing in mindfulness, Social workers and nurses. Both groups (children & parents) were held separately and parallel.

Results: The children's group consisted of patients aged 5-18 years. They were dedicated and well committed to fully participating in the project. The meetings enabled discussing and sharing of many positive as well as negative aspects related to their illness and treatments.

The parent's group also engaged in various meditative exercises. The calmness and serenity that prevailed throughout the meetings succeeded in bringing about openness in a group that raised complex emotional and physical issues.

Conclusion: Both the children and parent's group benefited from the project. Making this service accessible to

oncology patients and their parents can improve symptom management, quality of life, subjective well-being, and increase bonding between them. In the field of oncology, mindfulness does not receive the due attention it deserves. Therefor it is imperative that we acknowledge its potential in alleviate stress when confronted with a crisis such as life threatening illness.

"A MAN'S HOME IS HIS CASTLE" – HOME CHEMOTHERAPY FOR THE WELL-BEING OF THE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES AT THE SCHNEIDER CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER.

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The management of cancer, especially in children, often increases burden for families, because of the intense stress around the time of diagnosis, the length of treatment and the frequent hospitalizations. The children suffer from many side effects such as pain, nausea, exhaustion, mouth sores and a decrease in blood count, which increases the risk of infection, anemia and bleeding and requires social isolation. Where most chemotherapy treatment has traditionally been delivered in the cancer center, there has been recently a significant shift to move more services to patients' homes. The Schneider children's Hospital in Israel developed a program aimed to deliver some parts of hematological-oncology treatment at home, to improve the quality of life and routine. This program has been proven to be safe and efficient and enables optimal quality of life.

In this article, we will review the issue of home care, the advantages and disadvantages of such treatment, evaluating its feasibility and describe what is happening in the Hematological-Oncology Department at Schneider Children's Hospital in Israel.

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SPIRITUAL CARE AS AN ADDITIONAL TOOL FOR HELPING THE PRIMARY CAREGIVER

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Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT) demands long hospitalization, that is usually longer than in other hospital departments. Therefore, in most cases, one can identify the primary caregiver of the patient.

This article provides a literature review describes the "costs", not the financial ones, that the primary caregiver must deal with, such as emotional health, as well as physical health, that the caregiver may have to encounter. This manuscript also explains what is spiritual care and its definitions. In Israel this profession is known and established only for about 12 years now. The article also shows how spiritual care may decrease the burden of the primary caregiver. As a conclusion, the authors explain that spiritual care should be offered by someone who specialized in this issue, as part of the psychosocial "tool box" for the primary caregiver in the BMT unit, as an example.

INTEGRATIVE ONCOLOGY – IMPROVING THE CARE OF ONCOLOGY PATIENTS

Einat Brinenberg, RN, MPH, Oncology nurse - Head of Integrative Oncology Clinic – Tal center, Sheba Medical Center.

Integrative medicine is all about the wellbeing of patients. It sees the patient in the center and uses a variety of treatments to enable patients to deal with their illness and/or symptoms. It includes conventional treatments, psycho-social treatments, and pain management, as well as additional treatments like Chinese Acupuncture, Shiatsu, Yoga, meditation and more. These are combined with the regular-conventional treatments with the aim of helping the patient cope better with his illness, side-effects and improving the quality of life in general during oncology treatments.

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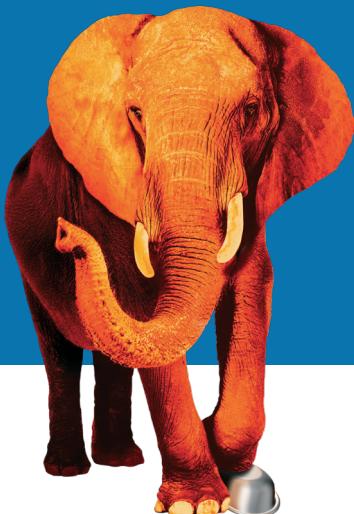
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