

Exercise and Substance Use Disorder Recovery Utilizing Yoga as a Rehabilitation Aid

Caitlyn Lockwood
Healthcare Studies

Introduction

Recovery Centers of America (RCA) is a voluntary substance use disorder recovery program located in Danvers, MA. The facility accommodates approximately 200 patients of different demographics over the age of 18. RCA provides medical, case management, nursing, and other clinician care to patients throughout their stay.

- RCA provides supervised detox, residential inpatient treatment, and outpatient programs to best serve the patients seeking help in recovery and continuing their care post discharge.
- During one's stay, a patient will expect medical supervision, guidance, and a plethora of uniquely designed treatment groups focusing on topics such as relapse prevention (Recovery Centers of America, 2021).

Objectives

To provide female substance use disorder patients with a yoga and meditation treatment program to assist in their residential detox program and improve prevention of further relapses.

Background Literature

“Acute sessions of aerobic exercise decrease craving levels and seem to benefit cognitive and brain functions” (Costa et al., 2019, p. 2).

“People in the throes of SUD often suffer social exclusion and reside at the fringes of society... Individually, they are often found to suffer from anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and poor physical health (De Leon 2000). As such, they are a group for whom the potential benefits of exercise are considerable” (Fitzgerald et al., 2020, p. 1331).

“Yoga, which is a form of mind-body practice, draws its roots to India and it has been proven to reduce perceived stress, anxiety, improve physical and mental health” (Kuppili et al., 2018, p. 117-118).

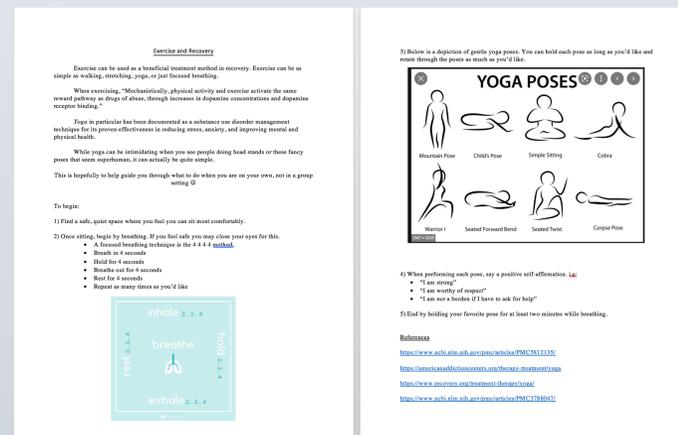
“Yoga is being considered as a holistic intervention inducing dopamine homeostasis leading to long-term benefits in management of addictive behaviors termed as “Reward Deficiency Syndrome” (Kuppili et al., 2018, p. 118).



Methods and Materials

- Study this demographic of patients.
- Participate in therapeutic groups run by fellow case managers.
- Create a lesson plan for participating patients with background information on why exercise in addiction rehabilitation is beneficial. (See Diagram “A” below)
- Implement a day and time in which group can be run.
- Record patient attitudes throughout the program with use of patient surveys .
 - Patient survey will measure subjective data on the premise of how patients felt pre and post yoga.
 - Survey will also measure the number of patients that will continue to implement yoga into their recovery treatment.

Diagram A:



Results

- Over the course of 10 weeks, 20 patients participated in this yoga and meditation group. RCA case managers and supervisors reported having three patients attend on one day was a “good number in detox.”
- Patients responded that prior to an hour of yoga they felt “tired” “depressed” “anxious” and “stressed”.
- After just one hour session together, patients reported that they felt “more centered”, “more relaxed”, “refreshed”, and “happy”.
- Out of all the patients that participated in the therapeutic yoga group over a 10 week period, 100% of them responded “Yes” to incorporating more yoga into their addiction recovery plan.
- Fifty percent of respondents reported back that they “wish they had more time in the group” or “could have yoga group more often.”

Comparing Mentality Pre and Post Yoga

Feelings Reported	Pre-Yoga	Post-Yoga
Stressed	x	
Anxious	x	
Tired	x	
Depressed	x	
Refreshed		x
Centered		x
Relaxed		x
Happy		x

Review of Data and Barriers

- In holding a therapeutic yoga group, patients verbally expressed how much better they felt after an hour session of guided yoga.
- As research suggests, exercise does provide positive intervention in addiction recovery as evidence by survey results.
- Fewer patients participated over the course of 10 weeks than expected due to withdrawal symptoms and timing of group activities.
 - Therapeutic groups interfere with the timing of the nurse's medication passes.
 - Withdrawal symptoms prohibit patients from wanting to partake in group activities.
 - Groups are not mandatory to attend while at RCA. Participating is up to each individual's discretion.

Conclusions

- Due to patients comments, it was evident that this demographic of women needed more opportunities to move during their detox recovery.
- Yoga, or any movement based therapeutic group, should be offered more than once a week in addiction recovery based on patient feedback.
- Rescheduling of group times should be reconsidered in order to improve the number of patients that participate in group sessions.

References

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Kuppili, P. P., Parmar, A., Gupta, A., & Balhara, Y. P. (2018). Role of yoga in management of substance-use disorders: A narrative review. *Journal of Neurosciences in Rural Practice, 09*(01), 117–122. https://doi.org/10.4103/jnrp.jnrp_243_17

Recovery Centers of America (2021, November) *About Recovery Centers of America*. <https://recoverycentersofamerica.com/about/>