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MINDFULNESS MEDITATION PROGRAM FOR PARENTS

JENNIFER L. LOTHERT

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
the requirement for the degree of
Doctorate of Nursing Practice

AUGSBURG UNIVERSITY
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
2022

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**Augsburg University
Department of Nursing
Doctor of Nursing Practice Program
Scholarly Project Approval Form**

This is to certify that **Jennifer Lothert** has successfully presented her scholarly doctoral project entitled “*Mindfulness Meditation Program for Parents*” and fulfilled the requirements for the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.

Date of presentation: April 12, 2022

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Presentations
Mindfulness Meditation Program for Parents
April 12 & 13, 2022
Augsburg University
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dedication

This scholarly project is dedicated to my children, Jaxon and Briggs. You were the inspiration behind this project. I will always strive to be a better parent and role model for you both!

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my family, friends, and DNP cohorts for your support and encouragement throughout the last four years of this DNP program. Without your love and support this would not have been possible. I would especially like to thank my children, Jaxon and Briggs, for being patient and understanding every time I had to say, “one minute, Mom is studying.” I hope that my determination and commitment will inspire you. Thank you to all that were involved in my success.

Abstract

A literature search on parenting stress determined there is a need for treatment options to reduce parenting stress. Stress resulting from parenting can be

physically and emotionally damaging to both the parent and their child.

Mindfulness meditation provides parents with the skills to become conscious of their emotions before acting upon them. Newman's (1994) Health as Expanding Consciousness Theory (HEC) explained that as a person continues to develop, the person's consciousness expands and coexists with the universe, resulting in higher levels of consciousness. The more conscious parents become will help to reduce the parenting stress they are experiencing. The scholarly project provided mindfulness meditation education to seven females and three males resulting in reduced parenting stress. Mindfulness meditation can be implemented into daily nursing practice to reduce parenting stress.

Keywords: parenting stress, mindfulness meditation, consciousness

Mindfulness Meditation Program for Parents

Chapter One: Introduction

Many parents would agree that although parenting is rewarding, it also comes with its own set of challenges. Daily life stressors such as work, unfortunate life events, and social relationships can all play a part in increased stress in parents' lives; however, parenting stress frequently affects parenting behavior and child development more than daily life stressors (Deater-Deckard, 2004). Parenting stress can be defined as incidental or recurrent activity that results in negative psychological and physiological reactions stemming from the difficulties of parenting (Deater-Deckard, 2004; Deater-Deckard & Scarr, 1996). Parenting stress is subjective in that what one parent might consider stressful another parent might consider a daily hassle of parenting. According to Deater-Deckard (2004), another factor in differentiating parenting stress is parents' availability to parenting resources, parents' beliefs of what is acceptable child behavior, and parents' self-esteem about their parenting abilities. Parenting stress can lead to negative parenting behaviors that leave a child to feel afraid, angry, or resentful, while the parents often feel guilty after having a stress reaction related to parenting stress. Because parenting stress can have a negative effect on both parents and children, it is essential for parents to find ways to cope with issues proactively and as they arise. Mindfulness meditation provides parents with consciousness to parenting in the present moment; therefore, improving their quality of parenting. Newman's (1986) concept of consciousness provides the theoretical framework for this Doctor of Nursing practice (DNP) project. Newman explained in her Health as Expanding Consciousness Theory (HEC), that as a person continues to develop, the person's consciousness expands and coexists with the universe, resulting in higher

levels of consciousness. The greater attention (consciousness) that is paid to a situation the more appropriate the response to the situation will be. Therefore, parents could use mindfulness meditation so they can be aware of what energy they are creating and transmitting to their children. This scholarly project will focus on exploring the use of mindfulness meditation practices as a method to reduce parenting stress.

Background

In the literature, mindfulness and meditation are often used synonymously although they have a different meaning. Kabat-Zinn (2015b) explained that meditation is the vessel to mindfulness. Kabat-Zinn further explained that mindfulness occurs anytime people are cognizant of the present moment and the realization of returning to the present is the meditation. Corthorn and Milicic (2016) defined mindfulness as a state of attention characterized by being aware, attentive, and open while being nonjudgmental and nonreactive when the experience unfolds. A mindfulness meditation practice allows parents time to process and explore options instead of acting on initial impulses.

Parenting stress can lead to behavioral and emotional problems in children and mental and physical health problems for the parents (Deater-Deckard, 2004). Mindfulness meditation provides parents with an option to connect with their children, therefore, improving their quality of parenting and reducing parenting stress. This practice allows parents time to process and explore options instead of acting on initial impulses. The human body is designed to respond to stressors without having to stop and think when confronted with any perceived threat. Using mindfulness meditation practices can alter the body's responses to specific stressors or can identify them before they are acted upon. Sampaio, Lima, and Ladeia (2017) described that mindfulness meditation is to be used to

open the perception of the conscious without a person criticizing or responding to his or her own opinions and emotions. Using mindfulness meditation can help parents be more present in the moment, thus allowing them to be more conscious of their decisions, actions, and reactions to a situation. Campbell, Thoburn, and Leonard (2017) found that the more mindful parents are was associated with increased awareness and reaction to their child's needs and the association of mindfulness and decreased levels of parenting stress. Due to reduced parenting stress, positive parenting behaviors are more likely (Campbell et al., 2017; Deater-Deckard, 2004). Mindfulness meditation has many benefits for parents and the parent-child relationship.

Problem Statement

The problem with parenting stress is not only the acute repercussions but also its possible long-term effects on parents and children. Parenting stress has bi-directional effects on the child and parent: if a child is having problems, parenting stress is likely to increase, and if the parents are having problems with stress, it is likely the child's problems will increase (Deater-Deckard, 2004; Neece, Green, & Baker, 2012). These results have the potential to become a vicious cycle between parents and their children if action is not taken to remedy the situation. Chronic parenting stress has been linked to depression and anxiety in parents and behavior problems, inability to cope with stressors, somatic complaints, and mental health issues in children (Deater-Deckard, 2004). Parenting stress affects every parent at some point (often daily) in the parent-child relationship. Parents must be given adequate coping tools to manage parenting stress. Nurse practitioners (NPs) can help identify parenting stress and provide resources to

parents. There will always be parenting stress, but there may be ways to reduce the severity of parenting stress and its effects on parents and children.

Purpose of Scholarly Project

The purpose of this scholarly project is to develop a mindfulness meditation program designed for parents who associate with parenting stress. This program will give parents a tool they can use to decrease parenting stress and help parents to connect in the present moment with their child.

Clinical Question

The clinical question associated with this scholarly project is: Will the implementation of mindfulness meditation decrease parenting stress and increase parents awareness of being present when engaging with their children? The clinical question will be explored through the implementation of this scholarly project.

Objectives

The objective of the scholarly project is to give parents an evidence-based alternative way to cope with the effects of parenting stress so they can be present when engaging with their children. This will be accomplished by these specific objectives:

1. Identify signs and symptoms associated with parenting stress
2. Identify complications related to parenting stress
3. Review literature that identifies benefits of mindfulness meditation in parenting
4. Identify Metis associated with mindfulness meditation in parenting
5. Implement a mindfulness meditation program in a group of parents

Patient Population and Healthcare Setting for Implementation of Project

This project will be implemented in a community setting that would be convenient for parents to gather. This location will provide a private space for gathering, presentation, and discussion.

Doctoral Nursing Practice Education Essentials

This scholarly project will fulfill the Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (DNP Essentials) set forth by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). The DNP Essentials that align with this project are Essential III, VI, VII, and VIII. DNP Essential III is achieved by synthesizing research and applying it to practice. DNP Essential VI involves collaboration with professionals who interact with parents in community and support group settings. DNP Essential VII by implementing mindfulness meditation to prevent parenting stress, which when left untreated can lead to chronic health issues for both parents and children, therefore putting the health of the Nation at risk. Lastly, this scholarly project applies DNP Essential VIII by focusing on the complexity of parenting stress and offer an alternative way to promote improvement in parents' health. This scholarly project will also fulfill requirements for the National Organization of Nurses core competencies.

All parents experience parenting stress at some level. Because parenting stress is subjective, parents may have differences of opinion as to what is considered parenting stressor and non-stressor. Parents may have different ways of coping when it comes to parenting stress, or they may not be coping at all. When parents are not able to manage parenting stress, their inter-personal relationships can be affected. Mindfulness meditation is a treatment that parents can use to help alleviate or reduce parenting stress

before it affects the parent-child relationship. Mindfulness meditation allows parents to have moments of parenting stress, acknowledge them in a non-judgmental fashion, and proceed in the present moment. DNP essentials III, IV, VII, and VIII will be met with the development and implementation of a mindfulness meditation program for parenting stress. Chapter Two will focus on the research literature related to meditation, parenting stress, and the concept of openness associated with Newman's Theory of Health as Expanded Consciousness.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Effective coping mechanisms are imperative to provide parents with the tools needed to deal with parenting stress. The ability to effectively cope not only benefits parents but also their children. Although there has been extensive research on using mindfulness meditations for parenting stress, these studies often involve parents of children with special needs or chronic conditions. Limited research has focused on mindfulness meditation in reducing parenting stress itself. However limited, existing research helps to prove the need and importance of using mindfulness meditation to improve parents' coping mechanisms. A Metis story will explain how mindfulness meditation reduced parenting stress by changing this writer's stress reaction, which resulted in happier children and a happier parent. This chapter will include a review of concepts related to this scholarly project and will include stress, parenting, stress, mindfulness meditation practices as a method to reduce parenting stress and the concept of health as expanded consciousness.

Stress

Everyone is born with an instinctive response to stress as a means of survival. The stress response, also known as fight or flight response, starts in the autonomic nervous system. The autonomic nervous system sends signals to the sympathetic nervous system to release hormones to speed up the heart rate, slow digestion, increase respirations, and affect other functions (Kindsvatter & Geroski, 2013; McKernan & Lucas-Thompson, 2018). Once the perceived stress threat has been identified, the body either continues to produce hormones to keep the body in high alert, or it signals the parasympathetic nervous system to reverse the effects of the sympathetic nervous system and calm the

body (Kindsvatter & Geroski, 2013; McKernan & Lucas-Thompson, 2018). Although the stress response is thought to benefit potentially harmful situations, it also has an important role in maintaining health.

Parenting Stress

Parenting stress differs from other types of stress, as the root of the stress stems from the parent-child relationship. Parenting stress is created from the physical demands of parenting, such as providing food, clothing, and housing, and the psychological demands, such as being available emotionally, providing affection, and paying attention to the child (Deater-Deckard, 2004; Deater-Deckard & Scarr, 1996; Mash & Johnson, 1990). Demographic factors, social relationships, resources, environmental characteristics, parents' perception of a child's behavior, and a parent's perception of parenting competence can also play a part in parenting stress (Abidin, 1992; Deater-Deckard, 2004; Deater-Deckard & Scarr, 1996; Mash & Johnson, 1990; Ostberg & Hagekull, 2013). Dealing with a temper-tantrum, running to soccer, financing and delivering to activities like piano lessons and dance class, all in the same evening are considered typical daily hassles; however, it can turn into parenting stress when coping with daily hassles becomes ineffective (Deater-Deckard, 2004; Deater-Deckard & Scarr, 1996). If parents are not able to find effective ways of coping with their parenting stress, it can have negative outcomes for both the parent and child.

Effects of Parenting Stress

When parenting stress persists, there can be negative consequences for the parent. Depression, drug and alcohol use, and negative parenting behavior can result from ineffective coping of parenting stress (Deater-Deckard, 2004; Deater-Deckard & Scarr,

1996). Depression can cause parents to struggle with regulating their own emotions; however, children need parents to be psychologically available to guide and nurture their own psychological development. Deater-Deckard (2004) and the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children research team found that mothers who reported depression symptoms experienced increased parenting stress the following year. Deater-Deckard explained drug and or alcohol use had been linked to ineffective coping strategies of parenting stress. Deater-Deckard explained that parenting behavior is related to parents' perception of their parenting, what is going on in their life, and their perceived parent-child relationship. The bi-directional effects of parenting stress show negative parenting behaviors affect their child's behavior, and their child's behavior affects the level of parenting stress, which can lead back to negative parenting behaviors (Cherry, Gerstein, & Ciciolla, 2019; Deater-Deckard, 2004; Neece et al., 2012). The effects that parenting stress can have on a parent directly affect the parent-child relationship.

When parenting stress affects parenting behaviors, the child's development becomes at risk, and behavioral and emotional problems can arise. Externalizing behaviors include attention difficulties, defiant behavior, hyperactivity, and aggression; these behaviors have been reported in parents that have high parenting stress (Deater-Deckard, 2004; Mackler, Kelleher, Shanahan, Calkins, Keane, & O'Brien, 2015; Silinskas et al., 2019). High levels of parenting stress and external behaviors were found in toddlers and early adolescence (Cherry, et al., 2019; Neece, et al., 2012; Ostberg & Hagekull, 2013; Silinskas et al., 2019). Deater-Deckard (2004) reported attachment disorders increase for children whose parents associate with parenting stress. Deater-Deckard explained that when there is an increase in parenting stress, parental sensitivity,

and timely responsiveness decrease, leaving the child to feel insecure. As children are developing, learned behavior from modeling parent's behavior occurs. If children are seeing their parents get angry and lash out, they too will display this behavior in their social cognition (Deater-Deckard, 2004). Parenting stress can put children at risk for many behavioral and psychological risks.

Meditation

Over the last 50 years, the Western world has conducted research on the relationship between meditation and its effects on health. Meditation has become the generic term to generalize the many different types of meditation there are (Nash, Newberg, & Awasthi, 2019; Sampaio, et al., 2017; Sharma, 2015). Meditation is derived from the Sanskrit word dhyana, which translates to attention and contemplation (Sampaio, et al., 2017). Although each type of meditation practice has different qualities, they all have an intention that requires a focus on one's self (Nash, et al., 2019; Sampaio, et al., 2017; Sharma, 2015). Meditation, used as a healing modality in India, has roots stemming from over 3000 years ago (Sampaio, et al., 2017). Over the years, it has branched out and become what it is today. Early research focused on the physiological changes meditation causes. Results including decreased heart rate, decreased respiration rate, lowered muscle tension, and lower oxygen consumption were found in people who practiced meditation versus the placebo groups (Malec & Sippelle, 1977; Throll, 1982). Throll's (1982) research also noted the significance between people who had a regular meditation practice versus those who intermittently practiced having long term decreases in their respiration rates, oxygen consumption, and heart rates. More recently, Chung, Brooks, Rai, Balk, & Rai, (2012) found that people who meditated one time a week on

average had decreased blood pressure, decreased anxiety, and reported an improvement in the quality of life. With the advancement of technology, researchers have been able to show changes in the brain occurring during and after meditation. Tang et al. (2009) found that meditation aids in emotion regulation. Lutz et al. (2009) reported that meditation practices could help to cultivate and sustain attention. Psychological stress and the use of meditation has been a focus of much research. Meditation practices have shown to decrease anxiety, stress, (Burns, Lee, & Brown, 2011; Elder, Nidich, Moriarty, & Nidich, 2014; Goyal et al., 2014; Lemay, Hoolahan, & Buchanan, 2018) and reduce depression (Arias, Steinberg, & Trestman, 2006; Burns, et al., 2011; Elder, et al., 2014; Goyal et al., 2014). Research shows that meditation produces physiological changes and psychological changes to the mind and body.

Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness meditation is a way to condition one's mind to be consciously aware of what is going on in the present moment. Mindfulness is defined as a state of attention characterized by being aware, attentive, and open while being nonjudgmental and nonreactive when the experience unfolds (Corthorn & Milicic, 2016; Kabat-Zinn, 2004; Kabat-Zinn, 2006; Kabat-Zinn, 2015a; Van Dam et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2019). Meditation in mindfulness occurs when returning to the intention once a distraction has occurred (Kabat-Zinn, 2015b). Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) incorporates many different meditative practices into the program. Functional awareness meditation, mindfully eating, walking meditation, yoga, and body scans are some of the mindfulness trainings that people are instructed on though Williams and Kabat-Zinn (2011) explained that there are many meditations that could fit under the umbrella of mindfulness.

Mindfulness can be cultivated or learned over time (Kabat-Zinn, 2015a); the more one practices mindfulness, the more aware one becomes about being mindful. As people grow and learn, they gradually start to rely on their subconscious to get through day-to-day activities. Kabat-Zinn (2004) explained that the more humans use unconsciousness or the subconscious, the more they will miss out on the present moment and all its beauty. Because of the way the body and mind work, humans must consciously work on mindfulness. Condensed, mindfulness meditation provides people with the ability to learn to pay attention.

Effects of Mindfulness Meditation

Many positive benefits are associated with using mindfulness meditation in parenting. Interestingly, the research reviewed used two different methods to assess for mindfulness: The first way was to utilize a mediation model, and the second way was by using a MBSR or mindful parenting classes (MPC) that taught mindful parenting practices. Both ways of assessment provided positive results in the effects of mindfulness meditation on parenting. Parents who trained in MBSR or mindful parenting reported decreased parenting stress (LeWallen & Neece, 2015; Minor, Carlson, Mackenzie, Zernicke, & Jones, 2008; Neece, 2013; van der Oord, Bogels, & Peijnenbury, 2011; Xu, 2017). Depression and depression symptoms, which can be a direct effect of parenting stress, were shown to decrease in parents using a MBSR or MPC program (Minor et al., 2008; Neece, 2013). Neece (2013) reported that at intake, there were no differences in parental stress, depression, or general life satisfaction measures between groups. However, the first treatment group expressed less depression and increased life satisfaction than the second group that had to wait longer to take the MBSR program.

Parents with MBSR or MPC training also reported a more positive reaction to stressors (van der Oord, Bogels, & Peijnenbury, 2011; Xu, 2017). Parents noted that they could communicate and express their feelings more effectively after the MBSR training.

Another adverse effect of parenting stress is negative child behaviors. Parents who took the MBSR or MPC program reported an increase in positive child behaviors (Lewallen & Neece, 2015; Neece, 2013; van der Oord, et al., 2011;). In research using a mediation model, parents reported a significant decrease in parenting stress (Campbell, et al., 2017; Waters, 2016), a positive reaction to stressors, and positive parenting behavior (Corthorn & Milicic, 2016; Parent, Mckee, Rough, & Forehand, 2016). Campbell et al., (2017) explained that mindful parenting was directly associated with parent's responsiveness to their child's behaviors and needs; therefore, decreasing parenting stress does correlate with increased levels of mindfulness in parenting. This research supports the positive benefits for parenting with the use of mindfulness meditation.

Health as Expanded Consciousness

Consciousness is an essential part of mindfulness meditation. Often in the literature, consciousness is used synonymously with the word awareness. Consciousness has a wide variety of definitions depending on the science defining it. Consciousness is also challenging to explain because consciousness is subjective, and there is no physical way to test another person's consciousness. Consciousness can be defined as one's perception and awareness of information going on with everything around them (Baars, 1997; Schooler, 2002). For example, looking is used to become conscious of what is being seen (Barrs, 1997). Mindfulness meditation is a quality of consciousness; often this quality of consciousness leads us to a meta-consciousness state. Meta-consciousness is

being consciously aware of being consciousness (Holas & Jankowski, 2013; Lutz, Hha, Dunne, & Saron, 2015; Schooler, 2002; Sipe & Eisendrath, 2012). In mindfulness meditation, this awareness is noted when the meditator becomes distracted during meditation and then becomes aware that the distraction has occurred.

Newman (1986) applied the concept of consciousness in her HEC Theory. Newman (1986) explained that the wholeness of a person could be looked at as a system of consciousness. Newman defined consciousness as the knowledge volume of the system and the ability of the system to interact with the environment. Newman explained that as a person continues to develop, the person's consciousness expands and coexists with the universe, resulting in higher levels of consciousness. The greater attention, or consciousness, that is paid to a situation the more appropriate the response to the situation will be.

Gaps in the Literature

Although there has been much research on mindfulness meditation and parenting stress, gaps in the literature have been noted. Females are the primary participants in all of the research that has been reviewed in this search, perhaps because the mothers claimed they were the primary caregiver even if their partner was in the picture. An abundance of research included parenting stress for parents of children with a development disability or behavioral problems. However, there was limited research where parenting stress was the primary diagnosis. Lastly, because parents receiving mindfulness training knew they were involved in a treatment, this part of the study could not be a blind trial. In the future, it would be beneficial to have research focused on

parenting stress as the primary reason for the research and the effects of mindfulness meditation on parenting stress.

Metis

This writer participated in a mindful parenting class at Clouds in the Waters Zen Center in St. Paul, Minnesota. The class was designed around the teachings of the Brahma Viharas, which include love, compassion, joy, and equanimity. The class's teacher explained that this type of mindfulness meditation is to help parents become present in the moment and extend unconditional love, compassion, and joy towards others (D. Benjamin, personal communication, February 14, 2019). By practicing these mindfulness meditations, this writer has noticed a new awareness in the moment. For example, if the author's children are not listening to her, this author is able to be aware of her anger, and instead of acting on it, can now transform that anger into a loving emotion to better communicate with her children. This transformation has led to decreased parenting stress, increased happiness for the parent, and increased happiness in the children. This experience shows that mindfulness meditation practice can change a parent's reactivity and facilitate positive parenting behaviors.

Most people must deal with stress at some point in their lives. The human body is designed to handle stressful events. Although the body can automatically physically adjust itself in stressful situations, it does not have the automatic ability to change the outcome that has resulted from a stress response. Becoming a parent adds to a new type of stress on top of life's daily stressors. The physical and psychological demands of parenting in addition to daily parenting hassles can lead to parenting stress if an effective coping strategy is not in place. Parenting stress can lead to negative outcomes in the

parent-child relationship and for both the parent and the child individually. Negative parenting behavior caused by parenting stress puts the child at risk for behavioral and emotional problems. The vicious cycle of negative parenting behavior and child behavioral and emotional problems can cause the parent-child relationship to become volatile if a mediator is not introduced. Meditation, specifically mindfulness meditation, can be that mediator that helps to break up the vicious cycle parenting stress can cause. Mindfulness focuses on being aware of what is going on in the present moment to reduce the stress response, which often has negative consequences for parents and children. The more mindfulness is practiced, the more one becomes aware of being mindful always. In this way, mindfulness teaches parents to be aware of stress response leading to a more positive reaction to stressors that promote positive child behaviors. Mindfulness meditation provides an exercise for one's consciousness to promote a change in one's conscious behavior. Newman's work with consciousness in her HEC Theory shows that the expansion of consciousness is needed for the growth and development of the person. The higher the level of consciousness that is put into a situation, the more appropriate the response will be to the situation. Mindfulness meditation allows parents to have a more conscious response in times of parenting stress. Chapter three will further explain how Newman's HEC Theory applies to the use of mindfulness meditation in parenting stress.

Chapter Three: Project and Theoretical Framework

Nursing theory is the foundation of the DNP scholarly project. Utilizing a nursing theory allows for an organized way to view and explain how mindfulness meditation can be beneficial in treating parenting stress. Through a holistic nursing lens, nurses introduce mindfulness meditation to help reduce parenting stress and decrease reactivity to stressful stimuli caused by parenting. A mindfulness meditation practice embodies Newman's HEC Theory by cultivating personal awareness, which leads to the greater insight of one's consciousness or patterns of energy, therefore leading to health as the consciousness expands.

Description of Project

In this scholarly project, this author will be teaching a 1-hour mindfulness meditation class for three weeks to parents in rural Minnesota. The focus of the mindfulness meditation classes will be loving-kindness meditation, compassion meditation, joy meditation, and equanimity meditations. These four types of mindfulness meditation promote expansion of consciousness in the same way but with different perspectives; loving-kindness focuses on cultivating unconditional love for yourself and others (Smith, n.d.), compassion focuses on cultivating sympathy with the intent of doing something to relieve another person's suffering (Ribeiro, 2019), joy focuses on allowing the self to feel joy in the moments that arise (Miller, 2017), and equanimity focuses on allowing one to let go of the good and the bad emotions life brings (Nanda, n.d.). Utilizing these four mindfulness meditation practices can help reduce parenting stress, therefore establishing a healthy parent child relationship.

Theoretical Framework: Patterns of Knowing

To better understand Newman's theory, it is important to understand the fundamental patterns of knowing. Concisely put, patterns of knowing are how nurses know what they know. Carper (1999) described four fundamental concepts for patterns of knowing in nursing: empirical knowledge, esthetic knowledge, personal knowledge, and ethical knowledge.

Empirical knowledge is objective, testable, proven by scientific means, and can be repeated to get the same outcome (Moran, Burson, & Conrad, 2014). Nurses can gain empirical knowledge in many ways. Formal nursing education is an example of how nurses can gain empirical knowledge. Much of nursing education is based on evidence-based findings. Over the last 60 years, the field of nursing has developed a body of empirical knowledge explicitly in the science of nursing (Carper, 1999). Science of nursing research provides explanations and gives meaning to the significance of the nursing role.

Esthetic knowledge, also known as the art of nursing, is information gained from shared experiences (Moran et al., 2014). Nurses use esthetic knowledge to appreciate a patient's individual health-related experiences (Moran et al., 2014). Although esthetic knowledge is gained through individual experiences, these experiences are consciousness cultivated and can be used throughout a nurse's career with multiple different patients. *Métis* can be described as a form of esthetic knowledge. *Métis* is formed through nursing experiences or phenomena that happen repeatedly but may lack evidence-based practice.

Personal knowledge is knowing derived from being able to relate or empathize with an experience a patient is having (Moran et al., 2014). Personal knowledge is

cultivated through a nurse's awareness of self and is expressed through authentic nurse-patient relationships (Zander, 2007). Utilizing personal knowledge allows the nurse to gain perspective in what the patient is going through.

Ethical knowledge is based on a nurse's moral obligation to do no harm to a patient (Moran et al., 2014). Ethical knowledge goes beyond knowing what is right and wrong and requires actively pursuing what is best for each patient in his or her health care journey (Carper, 1999). As new treatments and life-saving technology become increasingly available, it is important for nurses to periodically check their moral compass to be sure where they stand and how they can be an ethical advocate and remain non-judgmental towards patient's needs.

Understanding the fundamental patterns of knowing clarifies Newman's concept of patterns and how understanding a pattern leads to consciousness. Knowing these patterns can help nurses better understand how a nurse should think critically and act towards a phenomenon related to patients' health care needs (Moran et al., 2014). Patterns of knowing empower nurses with a skill set that allows them to provide patients with evidence-based care related to a patient's goals through shared experiences and empathy while maintaining their moral responsibility.

Newman's Theory of Health as Expanding Consciousness

Newman used her HEC Theory to explain how health and illness are not opposites, but they are without boundaries; consequently, a person has health and illness simultaneously. Newman continued to develop and hone her theory for many years, which evolved to include the concepts of consciousness and patterns to explain the meaning of health (Masters, 2012).

Newman (1986) related that consciousness is a pattern of energy. She explained that consciousness is not singularly related to a person's awareness but that as person's become more aware of themselves, their consciousness expands, and they become aware of their surroundings and beyond. Consciousness is dependent on one's awareness of the interconnectedness of the whole. Newman emphasized the nonexistence of boundaries between the human and environmental energy fields. Energy fields are fluid, one within another. Consciousness is encompassed within all matter; it is not only learned or moments of recognized awareness. To be human is to be conscious.

Pattern is the concept that Newman describes that ties her HEC Theory together. Newman (1986) explained that patterns are pieces of information that depict a whole picture; understanding the pattern is to understand the meaning of the relationships as a whole. Newman explained that patterns related to health are not always predictable because not all the information has occurred. Newman described that patterns could be seen more easily when they are looked at through a pattern of the whole. The whole cannot be understood by individual patterns; it is the individual patterns that become the whole.

Newman (1986) explained that the concept of health is accepting that disease is health; there is no separating the two; they live within one another. Newman described that disease was merely an exhibition of health, that people could have a disease and, at the same time, have health. Newman explained that health is the pattern of the whole, and that disease is just a manifestation of the whole pattern. Rejecting the idea that disease is the opposite of health gives a foundation for a boundaryless way to help patients understand and maintain their whole being.

Newman's Theory and Mindfulness Meditation with Parenting Stress

Newman's HEC Theory helps to gain a greater understanding of the connection between parenting stress and the use of mindfulness meditation practices. Newman's HEC theory focuses on the concepts of health, consciousness, and patterns (Masters, 2012). Being able to recognize patterns associated with parenting stress will help parents become more conscious of their reactions to parenting stress. Mindfulness meditation can help cultivate new patterns as parents become conscious of their response to parenting stress.

Parents' ability to recognize patterns is an essential aspect of being able to change and treat patterns of parenting stress that can lead to unwanted reactions and behaviors between the parent and child. Newman (1986) explained that the ability to comprehend patterns can lead to an enlightened understanding of human nature, therefore expanding one's consciousness. Newman reported that a transformation takes place as patterns merge together in human energy fields. Parenting stress can be a normal part of parenting; however, it becomes a problem when coping techniques are ineffective in rectifying the pattern of parenting stress (Deater-Deckard, 2004). To treat a problem, parents must become cognizant of their patterns that contribute to their parenting stress. Educating parents with mindfulness meditation practices of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity will help parents to recognize what pattern they find most stressful and help them to change their response to this stressor. Parents ability to cultivate new patterns based of the teachings of these mindfulness meditations will help parents evaluate whether the practice is working. Parents should notice a change in their

parenting stress patterns after a mindfulness meditation practice has been implemented. Once pattern recognition has been identified, a higher degree of consciousness is attained.

As parents become more aware of their parenting stress patterns, a higher level of consciousness is reached. Newman (1986) explained that consciousness is the attained state once a pattern has been recognized. Kabat-Zinn (2015X) described mindfulness meditation as the transformation from unconsciousness to consciousness, such as the moment a person acknowledges his or her mind has wandered from the task at hand and goes back to the intentional thought; that period of awareness is the conscious state of mindfulness. Mindfulness meditation retrains the brain's reactive response to a stimulus. Using loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity meditations will retrain the brain to react to the stimuli with these characteristics. Parents' ability to recognize a parenting stress pattern is attaining a higher level of consciousness. Learning these patterns gives parents the ability to create new patterns geared toward positive behavior patterns in an attempt to address parenting stress.

Newman's HEC Theory correlates well to treat parenting stress with a mindfulness meditation practice. In both parenting stress and mindfulness meditation, it is important to understand patterns and consciousness to fully comprehend an underlying problem and how it can be treated. Understanding the fundamental patterns of knowing can help nurses be aware of how to care for a patient going through parenting stress and how to guide parents to a state of awareness of their parenting stress patterns. Recognition of parenting stress patterns and mindfulness meditation practices are both fundamental in reaching a higher level of consciousness. Chapter Four will provide a summary of the methodology and evaluation of the scholarly project.

Chapter Four: Methodology and Evaluation

As previously explored in earlier chapters, a review of the scholarly research has provided statistical data that supports the beneficial use of mindfulness meditation to treat parenting stress. The goal of this scholarly project is to explore the clinical application of mindfulness meditation on parenting stress. This chapter will focus on the methods used to complete the developmental evaluation project, along with a description of the evaluation tools used to determine if parents felt that mindfulness meditation helped them to cope with parenting stress.

Preparation

In preparation for this project, extensive research was completed on mindfulness meditation and parenting stress. This author took a mindfulness parenting class, a mindfulness-based stress reduction class, completed two meditation retreats, and developed a self-practice of mindfulness meditation. Also, in preparation for this scholarly project, parents who identified with parenting stress were consulted to determine the needs of the individual and the community needs surrounding this issue. Based on the findings from these conversations, it was determined that a weekly class that met in the home of one of the participants would provide a safe and nurturing space for beginners to come to learn mindfulness meditation techniques to help cope with parenting stress.

Population and Clinical Setting

A social media platform was used for advertising a free mindfulness parenting class that was going to be held once a week for three weeks in rural central Minnesota. During the initial outreach, 15 women responded with an interest in having a weekly

mindfulness meditation class to reduce parenting stress. The social media group used consists mostly of women, but also a few men ages 25-60 years old, and all have children of various ages.

The participants will be informed that the class is voluntary, and they are free to attend as many times as they wanted or were able to participate in. It will be explained that coming to class every week for the full three weeks would be the most beneficial to understanding how mindfulness meditation can affect parenting stress. The participants will be informed that their evaluations will be anonymous and that their evaluations will be incorporated into my findings, but it would not be going towards research. The participants will also be informed that there will be an initial survey in the first class and a survey on the last class day. The participants will be informed that this scholarly project was designed to fulfill the Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice set forth by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN).

One of the participants has offered her home to use as the clinical setting for this project. This space provides local accessibility for a large group of participants to gather in a safe and private location. As previously discussed, the location of the clinical setting was determined during preparation for this project by having conversations and suggestions made by community members. Meditation is new to many people in this rural community. They felt that having the clinical setting in the privacy of someone's home would give them the privacy needed to relax and express their parenting stress concerns while feeling they were in a safe space to be vulnerable.

Intervention and Tools

Each class will meet for one hour and will be given instructions on different types of mindfulness meditation and time to practice them as a group. It will be further explained that this class will be providing four different types of mindfulness meditation throughout the course. Each class and individual meditation will teach parents new techniques they can use that can be beneficial to help with parenting stress and to help prevent parenting stress. The four types of mindfulness meditation are loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. Exploration through guided mindfulness meditations aims to provoke discussion and further personal development on the effects of mindfulness meditation practices for parenting stress.

Data Collection and Analysis

The project will address the clinical question through data collection and discussion: Will the implementation of mindfulness meditation decrease parenting stress and increase parents' awareness of being present when engaging with their children?

The questionnaire consists of 10 questions asking participants to rate on a 5-point Likert scale about their personal experiences with parenting stress and mindfulness. A Likert scale is a type of rating scale that is used to measure attitudes or opinions. By using a Likert scale, it will provide a quantitatively way to organize the data surrounding this project. The questionnaire will be used prior to learning mindfulness meditation practices and after the fourth-class session to determine if participants benefited from the class. Using a Likert scale will help to make the data comparable and to see the change in response from the initial evaluation to the end of the project's final evaluation.

Analysis of Outcomes

The outcomes of this scholarly project correlate with the findings of the existing literature. Mindfulness meditation can reduce reactivity, decrease stress, and create awareness in people that have stress related to parenting. Due to the restrictions related to the coronavirus, a cap of ten participants was issued to conform to guidelines per the Minnesota Board of Health. However, this adjustment did not affect the way the information was delivered to the group or the setting the class was complete in. Implementation was done over the course of three weeks and included three one-hour sessions of class time per week. Seven women and three men participated in the group sessions.

Before the first class, each of the participants was given a questionnaire that used the Likert scale to identify stressors related to parenting. At the end of the final class, another questionnaire was given to assess changes in parenting stress. During class, participants were educated in mindfulness medication techniques and were given time to practice and discuss mindfulness meditation. The pre-class questionnaire concluded that 9/10 people reported a moderate to a lot of stress stemming from parenting activities and requirements. The post-class questionnaire concluded that nine out of ten had a reduction of stress related to parenting activities and requirements. Seven out of ten people reported in their post-class questionnaire that their reactivity had changed for the better moderately, and two out of ten reported their reactivity was a lot better. Five out of ten people noted a moderate increase in being mindful throughout the day, while four out of ten reported a lot of increase in being mindful throughout the day. All but one person noted that mindfulness meditation techniques learned during class can reduce overall

parenting stress. These findings show promise in the use of reducing parenting stress with the use of mindfulness meditation. Chapter five will provide a summary of the significance and implications for practice related to this developmental evaluation scholarly project.

Chapter Five: Significance, Implications, and Conclusion

An intervention is warranted for parents who identify with parenting stress because of the potential effects it can have on the parent, child, and the parent-child relationship. The literature and this scholarly project have demonstrated the positive effects that mindfulness meditation can have on both parents and children. Nurse Practitioners and other primary care providers can and should advocate for their patient's mental health by educating patients on mindfulness meditation techniques to reduce parenting stress.

Significance for Nursing Practice

This scholarly project provided the evidence-based findings through development evaluation that align with current research indicating mindfulness meditation is beneficial in the treatment of parenting stress. Positive feedback from participants was noted during each class time and in a post-class survey. Some of the positive feedback included "my favorite part was learning it was ok to let things go," "I love the sense of awareness it has brought to my daily life," and "I feel like I can now reel myself in when I become sidetracked." One suggestion was to "incorporate spouses and children into the class." All but one participant noted improvement in reducing their stress related to parenting. This project has proven rewarding, educational, and beneficial to become an advanced practice nurse.

One of the disadvantages of this scholarly project was the amount of times participants were able to attend the mindfulness meditation group. Training the body to allow for mindfulness meditation takes time and repetition. This could be addressed in a few ways including offering alternative days and times of the week, providing childcare

during group times, or providing guided meditation videos for parents to watch at their convenience.

While participants were instructed to practice at home, there is still validity in having additional group sessions where additional instruction and mindfulness meditation techniques could be given. Parents may have additionally benefited from a one-on-one session to individualize their parenting stress symptoms to a customized mindfulness meditation practice.

A social media platform made it possible to reach many people in a short time. At the time of implementation, there were additional restrictions due to the coronavirus pandemic. Class size had to be limited to a group of 10 to safely gather per the direction from the Minnesota Governor and Minnesota Board of Health. Although this scholarly project and developmental evaluation met the required number of participants, it would be beneficial to have a larger number of participants in future research.

Replication of this scholarly project would be appropriate and easy to do in a multitude of settings including churches, schools, community education sites, and primary care clinics. Having alternative sites could provide additional times groups could meet and a more convenient location for parents to travel to. Some parents may already be associated with groups within these communities and therefore feel more comfortable opening up in group settings to discuss their parenting stress.

Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice

The eight DNP Essentials (see Appendix A) were developed in 2006 by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) as part of the practice-focused degree, the Doctor of Nursing Practice (AACN, 2006). These Essentials were designed

to prepare nurses to use scientific literature and research methodology to advance the expertise of nursing practice (AACN,2006). This scholarly project addressed four of the DNP Essentials.

Essential III: Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice

The participants in this scholarly project completed two questionnaires', one prior to the first class (see Appendix B) and one following the last class (see Appendix C). The results of the survey correlated with the existing literature supporting mindfulness meditation does aid in decreasing parenting stress. The questionnaire was created using a Likert scale so parents could express how often they resonated with symptoms of parenting stress. Nine out of ten participants reported their parenting stress reduced after receiving mindfulness meditation instruction and time to practice.

Essential VI: Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes

This scholarly project collaborated with individual community members interested in decreasing parenting stress. Parents who trained in MBSR or mindful parenting reported decreased parenting stress (LeWallen & Neece, 2015; Minor, Carlson, Mackenzie, Zernicke, & Jones, 2008; Neece, 2013; van der Oord, Bogels, & Peijnenbury, 2011; Xu, 2017). While this project utilized members of the community, replication of this project would be beneficial in many different types of settings. Primary care providers and pediatricians could incorporate a mindfulness meditation tool into wellness visits to encourage parenting stress prevention or to cope with preexisting parenting stress.

Essential VII: Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation's Health

Parenting stress should always be discussed with the parent's primary care provider regardless if mindfulness meditation is used. Depression, drug and alcohol use, and negative parenting behavior can result from ineffective coping of parenting stress (Deater-Deckard, 2004; Deater-Deckard & Scarr, 1996). The primary care provider should closely monitor the effects of parenting stress on the parent individually to determine a patient-centered treatment plan. If a parent is suffering greatly from parenting stress, mindfulness meditation may best be used in addition to medication-based treatment.

Although it is impossible to avoid parenting stress entirely, parents must learn how to recognize it and find coping mechanisms to help deal with the stress. When parenting stress affects parenting behaviors, the child's development becomes at risk, and behavioral and emotional problems can arise. Recognition by the provider and parent, along with coping skills to be able to manage parenting stress, are imperative in the prevention of negative consequences for the parent, child, and parent-child relationship.

Essential VIII: Advanced Nursing Practice

This project has had an impact on nursing and advanced practice nursing. The findings in this project, along with the current evidence in the research and literature suggest mindfulness meditation can decrease parenting stress. Although this project focused on decreasing parenting stress in parents, the research and literature support a reduction in parenting stress not only has effects on the parent but also the child and parent-child relationship.

Nurses may incorporate mindfulness meditation techniques and resources as part of their patient education plan. Currently, there is no requirement needed to teach mindfulness meditation and therefore nurses of all degrees are eligible to provide mindfulness meditation education. Nurses continue to be the number one trusted profession in America (Reinhart, 2020), and therefore have a platform in which they can reach parents in need of help with parenting stress. The survey conducted by Gallop reported that 85% of Americans ranked nurses as high or very high in honesty and ethical standards (Reinhart, 2020). Nurses can continue to earn the trust of the American people by reaching out to provide education and empathy for patients with parenting stress.

National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties Practitioner

The purpose of this scholarly project is to advance quality of care, practice inquiry, and leadership competencies (as identified by the NONPF, 2022). The NONPF promotes excellence in nurse practitioner education by having competencies in place to guide the nurse practitioner along their educational journey. There are nine competencies, scientific foundation, leadership, quality, practice inquiry, technology and information literacy, policy, health delivery system, ethics, and independent practice that outline the depth and knowledge so a nurse practitioner can provide their patients with holistic care. The competencies set forth by NONPF provide educational guidance to enhance health outcomes of the nurse practitioner.

Quality of Care

The NONPF quality competency (2022) promotes the use of evidence-based practice as the foundation of clinical practice. This scholarly project implemented the benefits of mindfulness meditation on parenting stress in a small group setting and

showed positive outcomes that aligned with the supporting research that was initially gathered. Nine out of ten people noted an increase in mindfulness throughout the day after taking this writers mindfulness meditation class. This competency serves as a guide for nurse practitioner to always be utilizing an evidence-based practice to ensure patients are getting the highest quality of care.

Practice Inquiry

Historically, Western medicine has used an allopathic approach to treating patients. However, over the last 40 years researchers have spent more time inquiring about complementary alternative medicine and focusing their research to provide evidence-based data that guides a holistic approach to practicing medicine. The NONFP practice inquiry competencies (2022) encourage nurse practitioners to analyze the outcomes in their own practice to improve health outcomes and the quality of clinical practice.

Leadership

The leadership competency encourages the individual to look at health care as a whole and initiate change to provide high quality and cost-effective care across the health care system (2022). In the last 30 years health care costs have gone up tenfold, making it difficult for patients to afford quality health care (Kim, Tanner, Foster, & Kim, 2015). This scholarly project utilizes an evidence-based modality that has no accompanying costs; Therefore, making it affordable to all patients.

Implications for Nursing Practice

Parents benefit from the use of mindfulness meditation to reduce parenting stress. Parents who are taught mindfulness meditation techniques may reduce their stress which in turn benefits the parent-child relationship. Just as negative parenting behavior can affect a child's development, positive parenting behavior can affect a child's development for the better. Children will use learned behavior from modeling their parent's behavior. If children see their parents be less reactive to stressful situations they in turn will display this behavior. Nurse Practitioners and primary care providers should seek out parents with parenting stress and offer mindfulness meditation as an option for treatment. Mindfulness meditation is a treatment that can be done in the comfort of one's home and it has no financial responsibilities to be concerned with when using a patient-centered approach to individualize treatment. Nurse Practitioners and primary care providers should consider mindfulness meditation as an adjunct or alternative therapy and acknowledge the evidence-based literature that shows it is an effective treatment for parenting stress.

This scholarly project demonstrates the need for practice changes in health care. Symptoms of parenting stress often go unrecognized and unacknowledged. Utilizing mindfulness meditation as a form of prevention and treatment in parenting stress can create better outcomes for parents, children, and the parent-child relationship. Nurses, nurse practitioners, primary care providers, and pediatricians can collaborate to provide mindfulness meditation tools and resources to parents. Findings in this scholarly project concur with the existing literature suggesting mindfulness meditation can decrease parenting stress and help parents to connect in the present moment with their child.

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Appendix A:

Pre-Class Questionnaire

	1 Not at all	2 A little	3 Moderate	4 A lot	5 Always
1. How much of your stress stems from parenting activities?					
2. How often to you do jobs or tasks automatically without being aware of what you're doing...i.e. autopilot					
3. How often do you acknowledge your thoughts or feelings during the day?					
4. Have you ever felt guilty or become sad/upset after you've yelled at or disciplined your child?					
5. Do you rush through your children's activities without paying attention to them?					
6. How often do you catch yourself daydreaming or becoming distracted from the task at hand during the day?					
7. Do you think mindfulness meditation could reduce your reactivity to stressful situations regarding to parenting?					
8. Have you ever found yourself listening to your child with one ear and doing something else at the same time?					
9. Have you previously tried working to reduce your parenting stress?					
10. Do you feel that using mindfulness meditation could reduce your parenting stress?					

Appendix B:

Post Class Questionnaire

	1 Not at all	2 A little	3 Moderate	4 A lot	5 Always
1. Have you noticed your parenting stress level reduce?					
2. Have you noticed your reactivity has changed for the better?					
3. Have you noticed yourself being mindful intermittently throughout the day?					
4. Do you think the mindfulness meditation techniques you learned can help reduce your parenting stress?					
5. Do you think you will continue to practice mindfulness meditation?					

What was your favorite part of class?

How did you like the presentation of the materials?

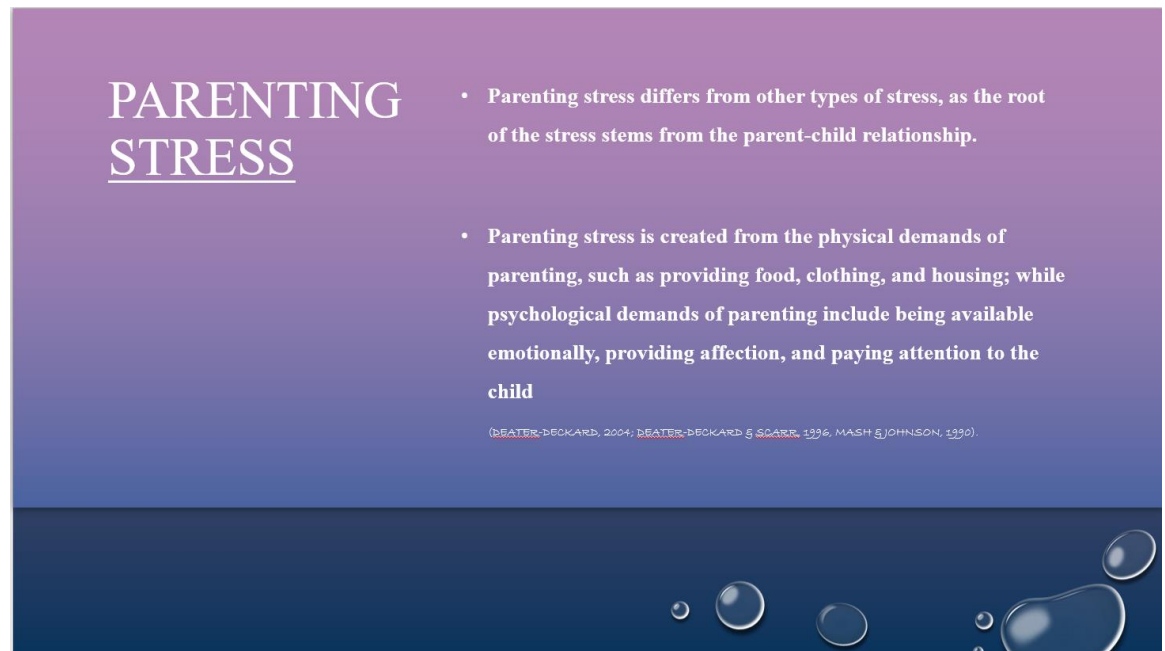
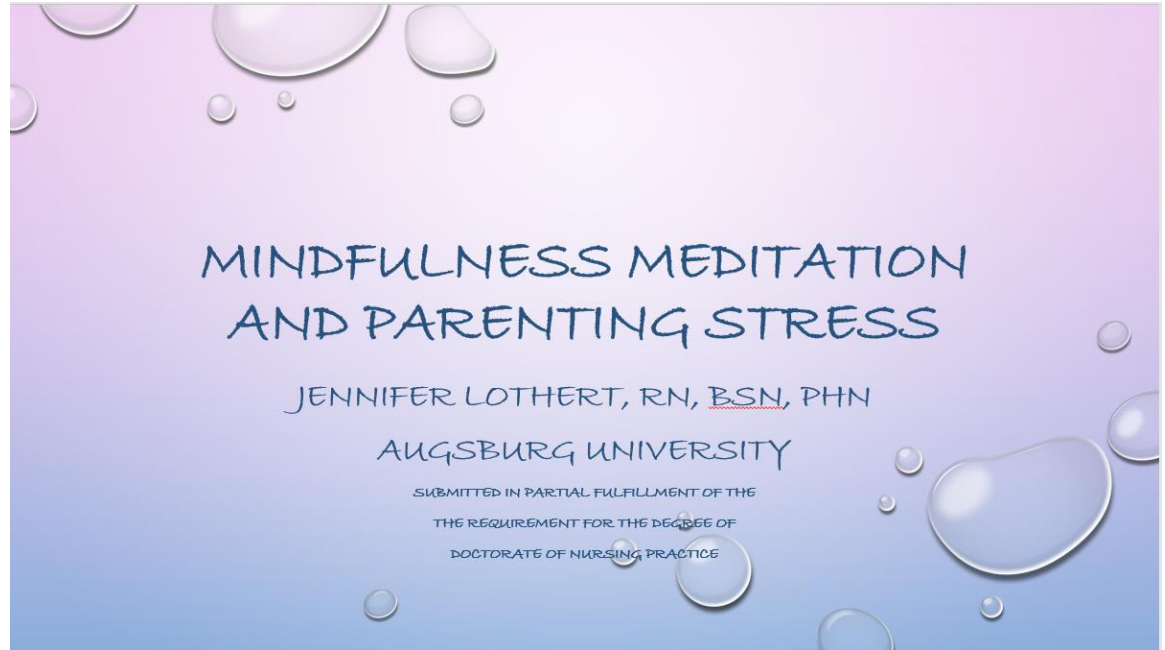
Would you recommend this class to a friend?

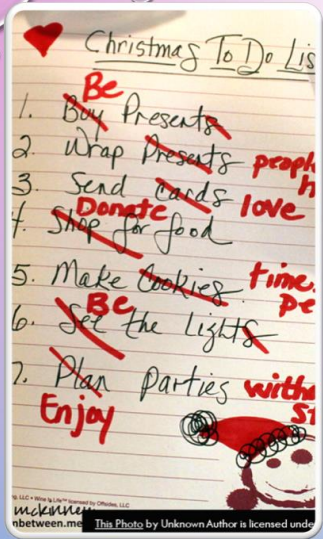
Additional suggestions:

Appendix C:

The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (AACN, 2006)

- I. Scientific Underpinnings for Practice
- II. Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking
- III. Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice
- IV. Information Systems/Technology and Patient Care Technology for the Improvement and Transformation of Health Care
- V. Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care
- VI. Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes
- VII. Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the nation's Health
- VIII. Advanced Nursing Practice





Christmas To Do List

1. ~~Buy Presents~~ **Be**
2. ~~Wrap Presents~~ **prop h**
3. ~~Send cards~~ **love**
4. ~~Shop for food~~ **Donate**
5. ~~Make Cookies~~ **time, pe**
6. ~~See the Lights~~ **Be**
7. ~~Plan parties~~ **Enjoy with St**

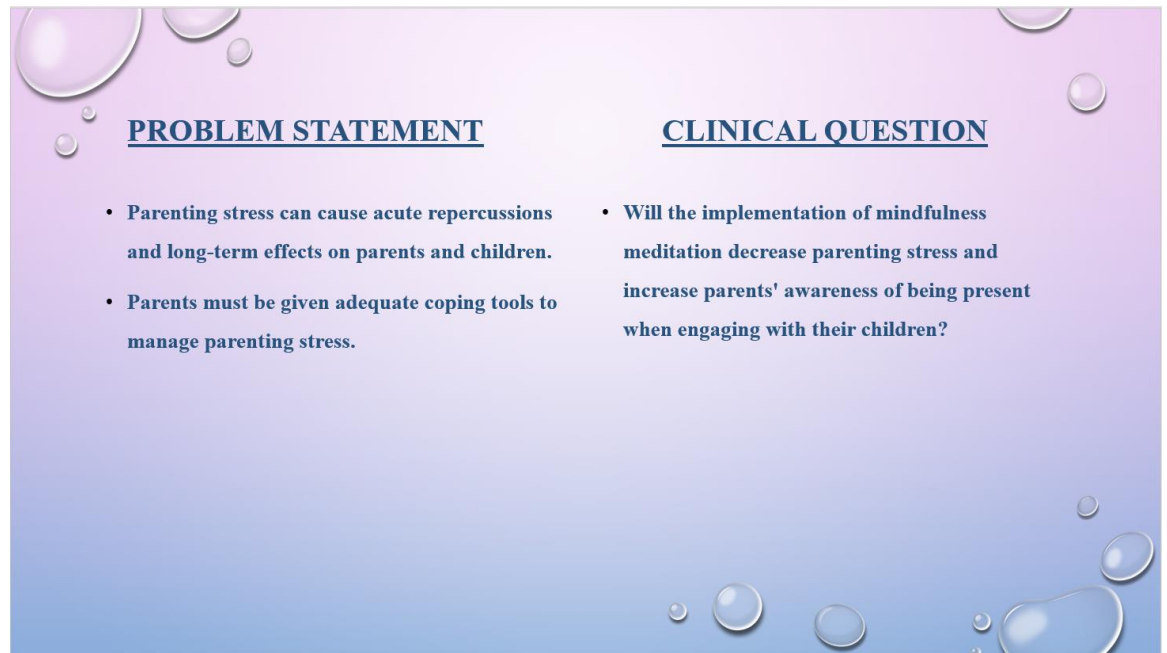
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MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

- **Mindfulness is defined as a state of attention characterized by being aware, attentive, and open while being nonjudgmental and nonreactive when the experience unfolds**
(CORTHORN & MILICIO, 2016; KABAT-ZINN, 2004; KABAT-ZINN, 2006; KABAT-ZINN, 2015; VAN DAM ET AL., 2018; WU ET AL., 2019).
- **Mindfulness meditation is a way to condition your mind into being consciously aware of what is going on in the present moment.**

EFFECTS OF PARENTING STRESS

<u>PARENT</u>	<u>CHILD</u>	<u>PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression, substance abuse, and negative parenting behaviors, can all result from ineffective coping skills <small>(DEATER-DECKARD, 2004; DEATER-DECKARD & SCARLE, 1996).</small> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When parenting stress affects parenting behaviors, the child's development becomes at risk for behavioral and emotional problems • Insecurity, shame, resentment, and fear can lead to decreased productivity or bullying in home and school settings <small>(DEATER-DECKARD, 2004; MACKLER ET AL., 2015; SILUNSKAS ET AL., 2019).</small> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting stress has bi-directional effects <small>(DEATER-DECKARD, 2004; NEEDS, GREEN, & BAKER, 2012).</small> • The vicious cycle of negative parenting behavior and child behavioral and emotional problems can cause the parent-child relationship to become volatile if a mediator is not introduced.

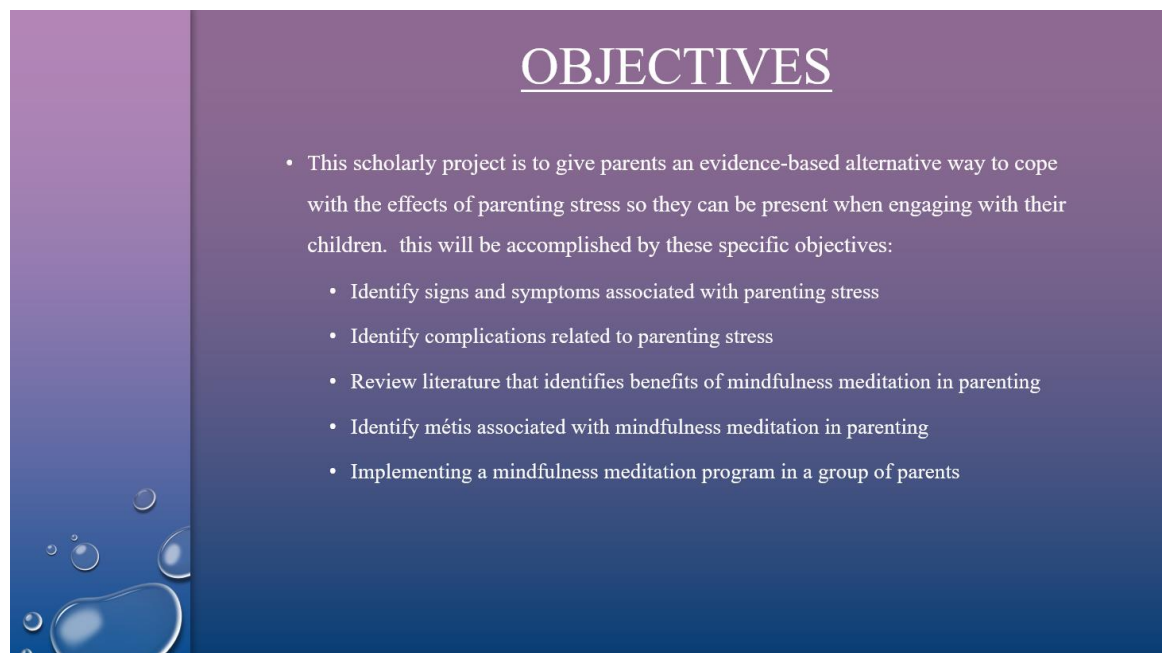


PROBLEM STATEMENT

- Parenting stress can cause acute repercussions and long-term effects on parents and children.
- Parents must be given adequate coping tools to manage parenting stress.

CLINICAL QUESTION

- Will the implementation of mindfulness meditation decrease parenting stress and increase parents' awareness of being present when engaging with their children?



OBJECTIVES

- This scholarly project is to give parents an evidence-based alternative way to cope with the effects of parenting stress so they can be present when engaging with their children. this will be accomplished by these specific objectives:
 - Identify signs and symptoms associated with parenting stress
 - Identify complications related to parenting stress
 - Review literature that identifies benefits of mindfulness meditation in parenting
 - Identify méfis associated with mindfulness meditation in parenting
 - Implementing a mindfulness meditation program in a group of parents

THE LITERATURE ON MINDFULNESS MEDITATION FOR THE TREATMENT OF PARENTING STRESS

Research using a mediation model, parents reported a significant decrease in parenting stress, a positive reaction to stressors, and positive parenting behavior

(Campbell, Tinburn, & Leonard, 2017; Corthorn & Millolo, 2016; Parent et al., 2016; Waters, 2016).

Parents who took the MBSR or MPC program reported an increase in positive child behaviors

(Lewallen and Neese, 2015; Neese, 2013; van der Dord, Bogels, & Raaijmakers, 2011).

Parents who trained in MBSR or mindful parenting reported decreased parenting stress

(Lewallen & Neese, 2015; Minor et al., 2008; Neese, 2013; van der Dord, Bogels, & Raaijmakers, 2011; Xu, 2017).

Theoretical Framework: Patterns of Knowing

- To better understand Newman’s theory, it is important to understand the Fundamental Patterns of Knowing.
- Carper (1999) described four (4) Fundamental Concepts for Patterns of Knowing in Nursing:
 - EMPIRICAL KNOWING
 - ESTHETIC KNOWING
 - PERSONAL KNOWING
 - ETHICAL KNOWING
- Knowing these patterns can help nurses better understand how to think critically and act towards a phenomenon related to patients' health care needs.

NEWMAN'S THEORY AND MINDFULNESS MEDITATION WITH PARENTING STRESS

- Newman's HEC Theory focuses on the concepts of health, consciousness, and patterns.
- Parents' ability to recognize patterns is an essential aspect of being able to change and treat patterns of parenting stress that can lead to unwanted reactions and behaviors between the parent and child.
- Newman (1986) explained that consciousness is the attained state once a pattern has been recognized.
- As parents become more aware of their parenting stress patterns, a higher level of consciousness is reached.



METHODOLOGY

A 1-Hour class on mindfulness meditation was provided to 10 parents in rural Minnesota over the course of three weeks.

the mindfulness meditation classes focused on loving-kindness meditation, compassion meditation, joy meditation, and equanimity meditations.

LOVING-KINDNESS:

Cultivating unconditional love for yourself and others (Smith, N.D.)

COMPASSION:

Cultivating sympathy with the intent of doing something to relieve another person's suffering (Ribeiro, 2019)

JOY:

Allowing the self to feel joy in the moments that arise (Miller, 2017)

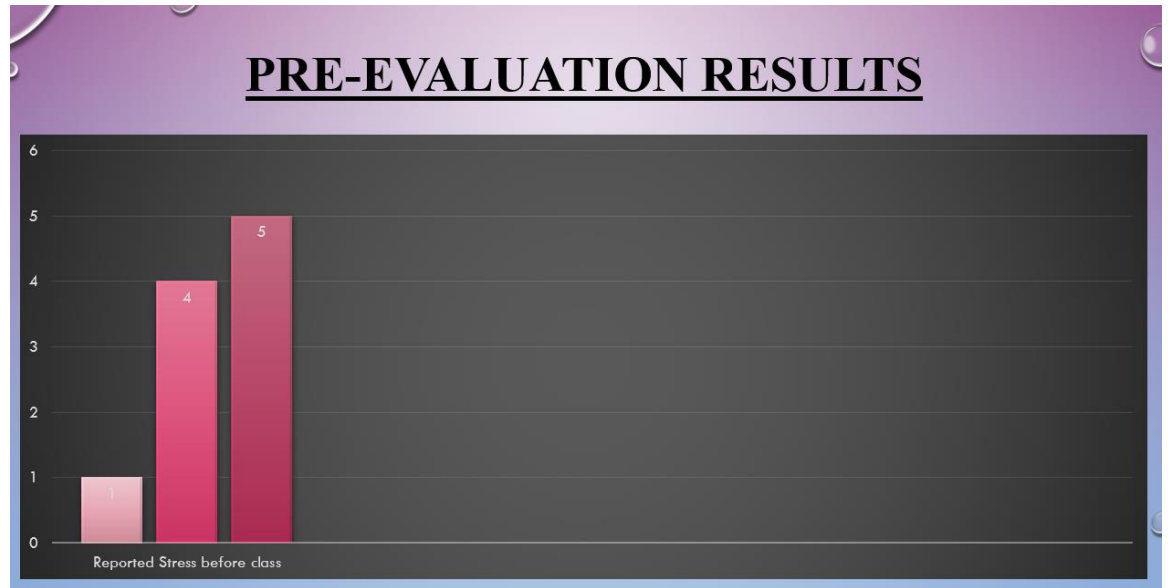
EQUANIMITY:

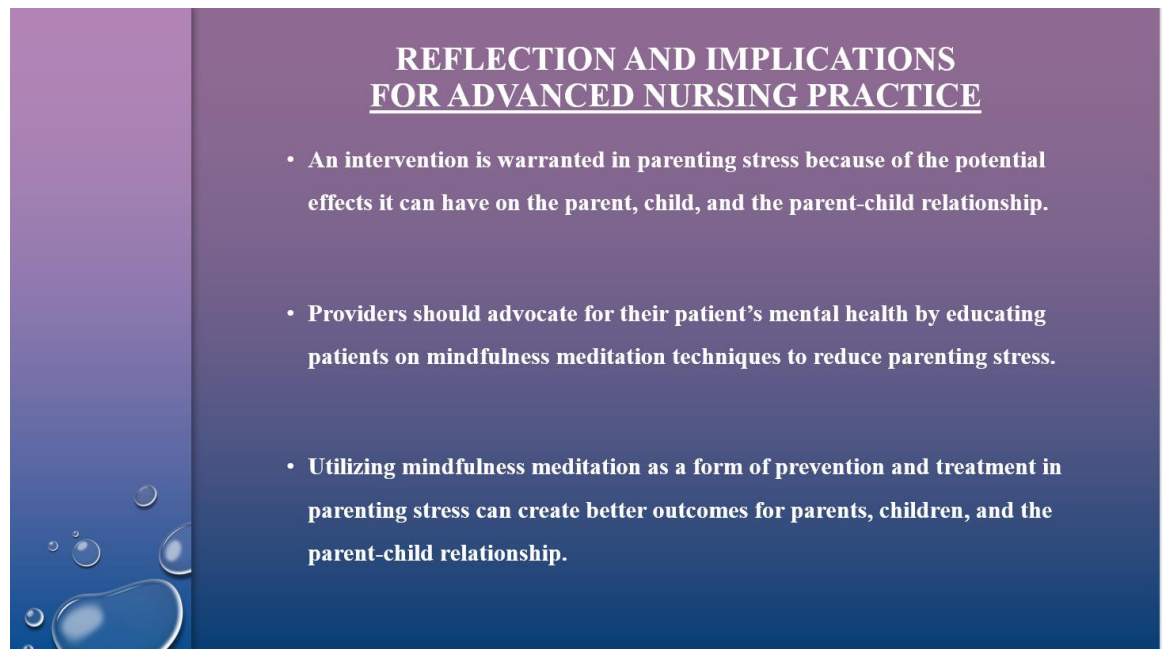
Allowing one to let go of the good and the bad emotions life brings (Bernhard, 2011).

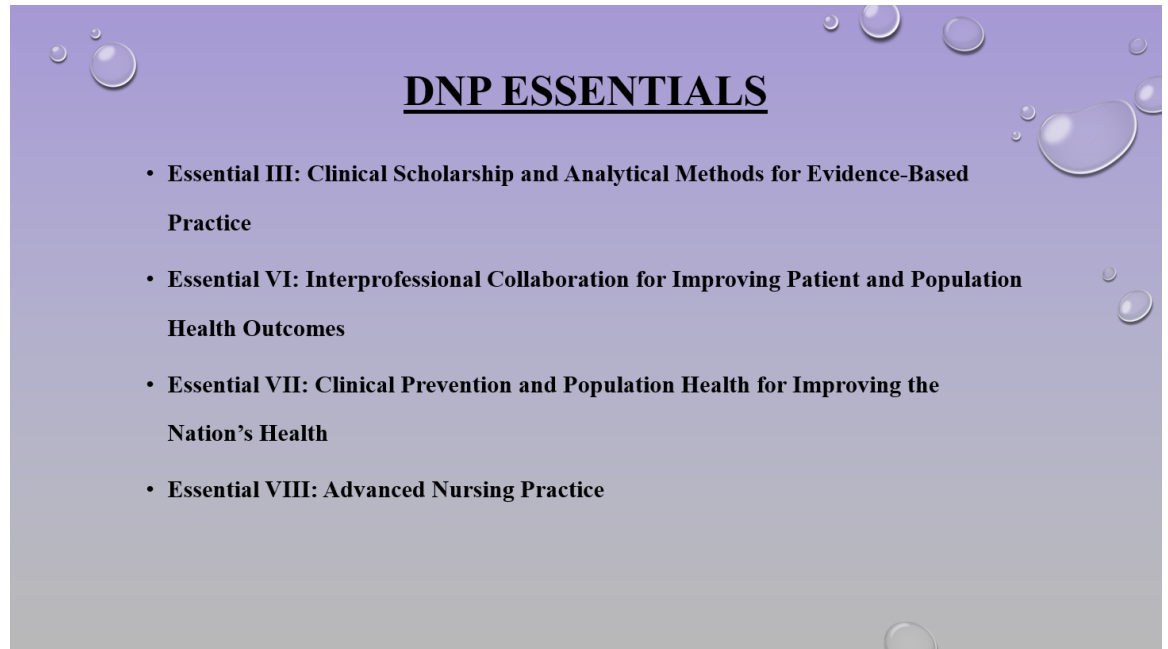
PRE-EVALUATION					
	1 Not at all	2 A little	3 Moderate	4 A lot	5 Always
1. How much of your stress level stems from parenting activities and requirements?					
2. How often do you do jobs or task automatically, without being aware of what you're doing.... i.e, autopilot?					
3. How often do you acknowledge your thoughts or feelings during the day?					
4. Have you ever felt guilty or become sad/upset after you have yelled at or disciplined your child?					
5. Do you rush through your children's activities without paying attention to them?					
6. How often do you catch yourself daydreaming or becoming distracted from the task at hand during the day?					
7. Do you think mindfulness meditation could reduce your reactivity to stressful situations regarding parenting?					
8. Have you ever found yourself listening to your children with one ear and doing something else at the same time?					
9. Have you previously tried working to reduce your parenting stress?					
10. Do you feel that using mindfulness meditation could help reduce your parenting stress?					

POST-EVALUATION					
	1 Not at All	2 A Little	3 Moderate	4 A Lot	5 Always
Have you noticed your parenting stress level reduce?					
Have you noticed your reactivity has changed for the better?					
Have you noticed yourself being mindful intermittently throughout the day?					
Do you think the mindfulness meditation techniques you learned can help reduce your parenting stress?					
Do you think you will continue to practice mindfulness meditation?					

1. What was your favorite part of class?
2. How did you like the presentation of the materials?
3. Would you recommend this class to a friend?
4. Additional suggestions:

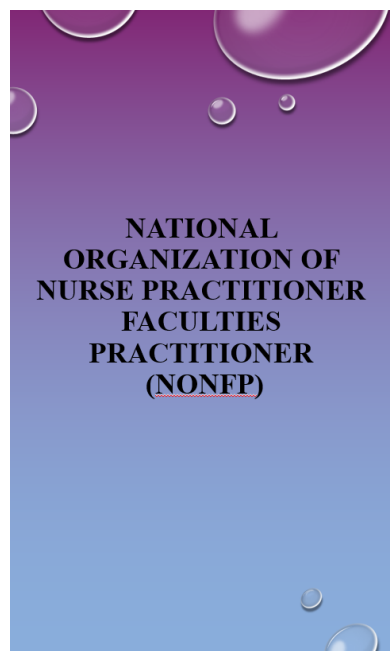






DNP ESSENTIALS

- **Essential III: Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice**
- **Essential VI: Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes**
- **Essential VII: Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation's Health**
- **Essential VIII: Advanced Nursing Practice**



**NATIONAL
ORGANIZATION OF
NURSE PRACTITIONER
FACULTIES
PRACTITIONER
(NONFP)**

**Quality
Competency**

**Practice
Inquiry
Competency**

**Leadership
Competency**

Mindfulness Meditation in Parenting Stress

Jennifer Lothert
Augsburg University

Problem Statement

- * Parenting stress has acute and possible long-term effects on parents and children (Deater-Deckard, 2004).
- * Parents must be given adequate coping tools to manage parenting stress (Deater-Deckard, 2004; Nicosi, Green, & Walker, 2012).

Objectives

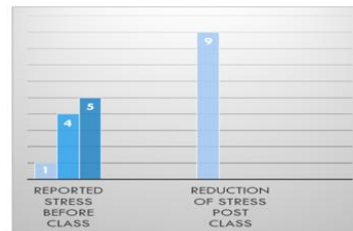
- * Identify signs and symptoms associated with parenting stress
- * Identify complications related to parenting stress
- * Implement a mindfulness meditation program in a group of parents
- * Evaluate outcomes

Project Description

DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION OF A 1-HOUR CLASS ON MINDFULNESS MEDITATION WAS PROVIDED TO 10 PARENTS IN RURAL MINNESOTA OVER CLASSES FOCUSED ON:

- * LOVING-KINDNESS MEDITATION
- * COMPASSION MEDITATION
- * JOY MEDITATION
- * EQUANIMITY MEDITATIONS WERE PROVIDED TO PARTICIPANTS

Outcomes/Results



Conclusion

- * Interventions are warranted for parents who identify with parenting stress
- * Nurse Practitioners and other primary care providers can provide information on meditation techniques as a methods to reduce parenting stress
- * Utilizing mindfulness meditation as an evidence-based intervention for prevention and treatment of parenting stress may improve outcomes for parents, children and the parent-child relationship.

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QUESTIONS?



Mindfulness Meditation in Parenting Stress

Jennifer Lothert
Augsburg University

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- * Identify signs and symptoms associated with parenting stress
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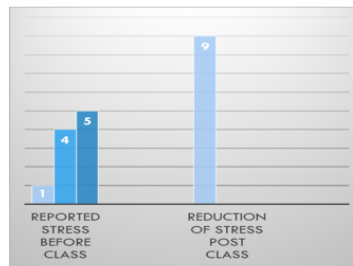
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