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“It’s OK Not to be OK” - TMR collaborates with Howard University College of Pharmacy for mental health awareness week

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Written by Seid Suleyman & Jing Wu || Edited by Jing Wu

“You don’t realize how difficult dealing with your mental health is until it happens to you.”

The Howard University-College of Pharmacy APhA-ASP and ASCP student chapters’ “It’s OK Not to Be OK” Mental Health Awareness Week was inspired by a student leader’s own experience.

Feelings of depression, anxiety, and being overwhelmed are very common. Yet, despite the prevalence of these emotions, people still tend to feel isolated and uncomfortable with admitting to having a mental health concern or taking action to improve their mental state.

Many in the healthcare field are able to speak about how stressful their work can be and how rigorous their academic programs are to achieve their healthcare roles. For student pharmacists, the ability to stay resilient in all aspects of their lives during school and beyond is vital.



The mental health awareness week started off with a two-day workshop hosted by TMR, where the first day focused on an introduction to mental health and the second day on coping and resilience.

On day one of the workshop, Dr. Jing Wu, clarified what mental health is and how it contributes to overall well-being. Throughout her presentation, students were encouraged to turn to their partners to discuss their thoughts and feelings. Many mental health organizations agree that one of the best ways to destigmatize mental health is to have an open and honest conversation. This workshop served as a safe space for students to practice speaking about mental health in a way they may not have before.

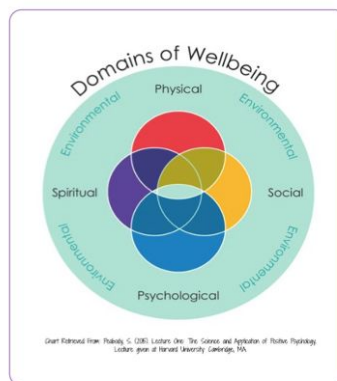
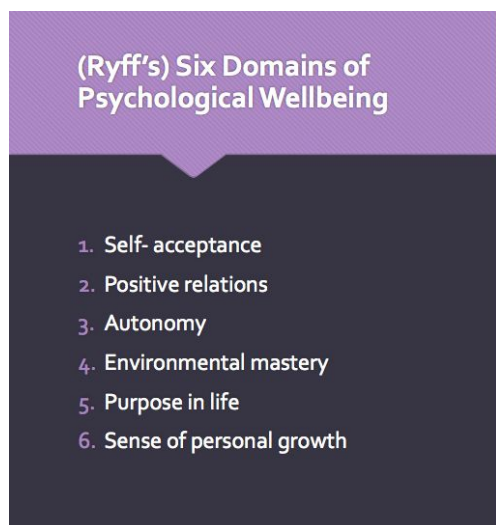
Opinions were then shared visually using a polling presentation software. Students also worked through a case study on how to recognize whether there might be an issue and how to approach someone who may



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be feeling chronically depressed and anxious. The presentation wrapped up with Dr. Wu emphasizing the importance of sharing our stories and being open to having vulnerable conversations.

The MindReset members and the attendants continued to chat well past the end of the event. A general consensus was that as soon-to-be healthcare professionals, students felt as though they were all in a unique position to improve negative mental health statistics.



Day two was much more discussion based and built on the information provided on day one. Dr. Wu returned to begin the workshop with a self-awareness exercise. Students were encouraged to think about their own health in regards to the six different domains of the psychological domain of wellbeing and they rated their perceptions on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 = Very Low and 7 = Very High. For each psychological domain, the average score and most common responses are listed below:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Self-acceptance | 4.69 - Somewhat Low & High |
| 2. Positive relations* | 5.25 - Somewhat High |
| 3. Autonomy* | 4.73 - High |
| 4. Environmental mastery | 3.93 - Neutral & Somewhat High |
| 5. Purpose in life | 5.06 - Somewhat High & High |
| 6. Sense of personal growth | 5.13 - Somewhat High & High |

* Mix-up in question order may contribute to inaccurate estimate.

Environmental mastery, or the ability to meet the demands of one's situation ranked the lowest. In general, many health professionals do not feel as though they have the ability to change their unsatisfactory environments. This is part of the reason why developing coping strategies are necessary.

Dr. Wu listened in on the small group discussions and brought students back for a large group conversation. Many students indicated feeling a little awkward because they were not accustomed to speaking about these areas with their peers. Many students shared how "refreshing" and "surprising" these conversations were as they revealed how similar their peer's experiences were to their own. This was likely a useful exercise for individuals who attended both days of the workshop because the day

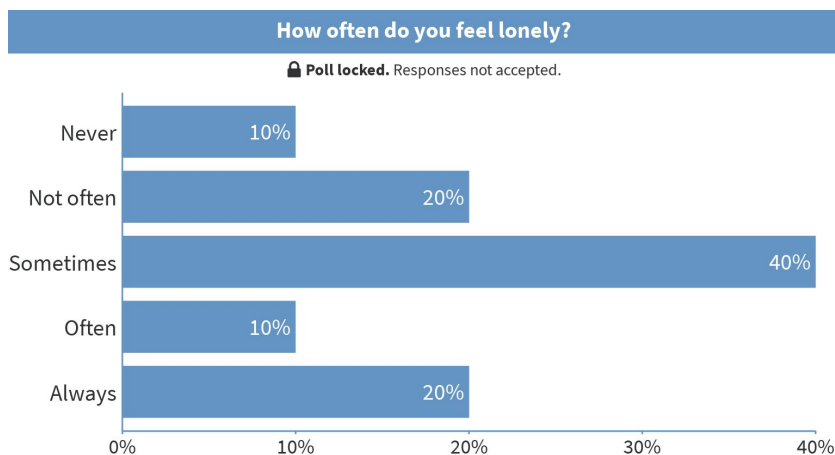


The MindReset

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before, 40% of respondents to the question, “How often do you feel lonely?” indicated feeling sometimes lonely, 10% often lonely, and 30% always lonely. Loneliness is an increasing epidemic in the United States and The MindReset community is one effort to decrease this potentially damaging feeling.



The remainder of the week included hosting other guest speakers to facilitate lessons on nutrition, exercise, and exploring mechanisms to reduce stress. By the end of the week, over 50 student pharmacists attended, many noting they felt more prepared to approach mental health issues and found the workshops helpful.

Remember, mental health stigma is reduced by normalizing having conversations about it and seeking help. The MindReset looks forward to hosting many more events in the weeks and months to come! Follow our progress and learn more at our [website](#). Additionally, if you or someone you know would benefit from some support, please do not hesitate to connect with our community.

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

