

Mental Health Facilitator News

This summer has been a very active time for the Mental Health Facilitator (MHF) program. The program has expanded to two additional countries through the creation of the following new partnerships:

- The Japanese Telecounseling Association conducted its first MHF training in Tokyo, where 11 participants were registered as trainers.
- Uganda Counseling and Support Services conducted its first MHF trainings in Kampala, resulting in the registration of 52 MHFs, including 42 trainers.

The following organizations also conducted trainings, extending the reach of the MHF program in their countries:

- The Catholic Diocese of Moshi in Tanzania;
- The Asociación Mexicana de Orientación Psicológica y Psicoterapia (Mexican Association of Counseling and Psychotherapy) in Mexico;
- The IUK Institut in Germany; and
- Turning Point Integrated Wellness in Malaysia.

In September, NBCC-I conducted its seventh master training at NBCC headquarters. NBCC-I was pleased to host the following participants for the training:

- Dr. Kylie Dotson-Blake
- Dr. Arline Edwards-Joseph
- Ms. Chizu Hirata
- Ms. Laura Jones
- Mr. Mark Kelly

These participants came from Antigua and Barbuda, Canada, Honduras, Japan, Portugal and the United States. The international representation led to interesting discussions on the contextualization of the program and its implementation in different regions.

In addition to its international partnerships, NBCC-I continues its work to develop domestic MHF partnerships. Potential new collaborations with U.S. universities are being explored.

Counselor Self-Care

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In their seminal paper on counselor wellness, Laurie Pearlman and Paula Mac Ian suggest activities for counselors that can promote self-care. They include discussing cases with trusted colleagues, socializing with friends and family, engaging in a hobby, exercising regularly, seeking supervision and developing a spiritual life. At the office, staff training and education, consultation and peer support, and monitoring for excess stress can assist with counselor self-care. Additionally, ACA advocates for reasonable management of case loads and a focus on those counselors who are workaholics.

Dr. Howes adds that augmenting clinical work with related activities spreads the counselor's talents. For example, he advocates writing, teaching and performing assessments as ways to work with people without tapping the reservoir that counselors use to work with clients. Journaling and even volunteering can keep the flood waters of burnout from overflowing the counselor's banks.



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