

# A THERAPIST AND A TRAINER WALK INTO A FITNESS CENTER: A TEAM APPROACH TO TREATING ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION IN COLLEGE STUDENTS.

**Competency Area(s):** Programming, Research & Evaluation

Your presentation should support a participant's growth in the [Professional Competencies for Leaders in Collegiate Recreation](#)

**Competency Level:** Practical

## **Learning Outcomes**

Learning outcomes should articulate what new knowledge and skills participants will be able to apply as a result of your program

1. Describe how exercise can be used as a front-line treatment for anxiety and depression.
2. Explain how cross-campus partnerships can enhance the profile of Campus Recreation across their respective institution.
3. Pursue collaborations on your campus and that will increase student success and retention.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The program description should provide context to your proposal. Why are you proposing this content? Why is relevant to campus recreation professionals?

The purpose of this program is to discuss the creation, successes, and challenges of the Move For Mental Health program at Wentworth Institute of Technology. This program, spawned out of the increasing amount of research available pertaining to utilizing exercise as a front line treatment for anxiety and depression by the Counseling office, pairs a student who has been diagnosed with anxiety and depression with a personal trainer based out of the Institute's fitness center.

Through weekly appointments with their trainer, along with on-going therapy from the counseling center, the Move For Mental Health program has served over 100 students in varying capacities over the past 5 years. Since the fitness center on the Wentworth campus is shared by two other small colleges, the Move For Mental Health program is truly a collaboration between 3 institutions, their individual Counseling offices, and the shared fitness center (operated by a single professional).

Given the success of this program at three colleges with minimal amount of resources, we believe that this program could be very successful at other institutions both large and small. Bridging the gap between the mind (Counseling Services) and the body (Fitness and Recreation), has allowed for a symbiotic relationship between the Counselor and the trainer that works extremely well to provide the very best services to the student allowing them to not only survive, but to thrive. The coping skills learned in therapy, combined with the confidence, self-awareness, and endorphins gained from physical fitness provide these students with the tools to help them manage their symptoms, reduce their likelihood of needing medication, and increase their likelihood of success both in and out of the classroom. In this lecture style presentation, we will talk about the research that spawned this program, the challenges faced in the creation of the program, and the successes of the program, as the attendees hear from some of our students as to how this program affected their lives.

### **OUTLINE /ACTIVITIES**

The outline should provide an overview of how you present information and engage participants

Lecture Portion of the Program Introductions Inspiration / Research Around Exercise and Its' Effects on Anxiety and Depression Can a Therapist and A Personal Trainer Work Together? Challenges in Working With Students With Anxiety and Depression Some Success Stories Expanding The Program For the Future Questions and Answers

### **SHORT SUMMARY**

The Counseling Office and Fitness and Recreation might seem like the "odd couple" when it comes to student success. However, for three colleges, it has produced a transformative program. Find out how this collaboration between a therapist and a personal trainer has been a game changer for students dealing with anxiety and depression, and how it has not only allowed them to persist at college, but to shine.

### **Presentation Duration**

NIRSA provides different presentation opportunities of various length.

60 minutes