Il's Winter Over Yet?

I hope by the time you read this, the answer is, “YES!” However, I am not holding my breath. It has been a long one for sure, longer for some than others. During this time of year, I think it is time to think a little about self-care. After all, we cannot do our best for our clients, if we are not healthy, both mentally and physically. Having thought that, I came across a short article from the American Counseling Association’s Counseling Corner Blog that I would like to share.

Are the Winter Blues Getting You Down?

With winter here, perhaps you’re not quite feeling your normal self. Maybe you’re a bit sluggish, a little irritable, sleeping longer, or just feeling a little down in general? Welcome to what’s commonly called the “winter blues” or the “winter blahs.”

This is a fairly common problem and while it’s often minor, there are times when it can be a quite serious issue. Some people find winter weather affects them strongly enough that it makes daily life difficult. Severe cases are known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and can be serious enough to warrant treatment by a mental health professional.

But for most of us these winter blues are just a minor inconvenience and, fortunately, one that you can do something about.

One contributing factor is the shorter days and lack of sunlight in winter. The obvious cure is to increase the amount of light in your life. If it’s a bright, sunny day, bundle up and get outside for a bit. If it’s gray and dreary, try turning on extra lights to brighten things up and use broad spectrum bulbs (often sold as “therapy lights”) that simulate natural sunlight.

Exercise also helps fight those tired and sluggish feelings. Just a short daily walk or gym workout can help your body and mind overcome feelings of low energy.

And even small changes can make a difference. When you’re feeling down, give a friend a call and talk about happy things. Watch a favorite funny TV show or movie. Read a book that you know you’ll enjoy or spend some time on a hobby that makes you feel...
Getting involved with others is another way to feel better. Start going out more, whether it’s socializing with friends or volunteering at your church, a local shelter, or nonprofit agency. Helping others almost always brings better feelings, and when you combine that good work with a nice bright smile, you may find you just don’t have time to feel blue.

Of course, there are many things that can cause sad feelings besides cold, gray skies. If you find that you just can’t overcome such feelings, and they’re interfering with your enjoyment of a normal life, seek help. A professional counselor can both help pinpoint the cause of your feelings and suggest ways to overcome the problem.

Bottom line? Take action and don’t let the winter blues take the fun out of your life.

Take heart, the days are getting longer and the sun warmer, and as always happens, spring will get to North Dakota eventually.

When my daughters were in elementary school, I decided to answer the call to serve as a Girl Scout Leader for my daughter’s troop. At first it was a bit of guilt that prodded me into service. “There’s no one else and if you don’t do it, we can’t have a troop!” Who can turn down a cute little one who has those persuasive eyes! Thinking back, I’m guessing someone else may have, but I relented. Something that I remember from that service was that we should “leave it better than when we came!” Whether it is a campsite, a program, or a relationship, our mark should improve the situation.

I’m hoping that all of us are doing this in our personal lives. Can we say the same for our counseling associations? Are our associations better because we are a member?
Are we helping others or wait to be served?
Do we volunteer, even in small ways, to help with a Silent Auction donation or working a shift, or even moving a few chairs to help set up, if needed?
Are we volunteering to present programs in our areas of expertise to improve the break-out session variety or staying home because the conference just “doesn’t live up to what I need”?
Are we serving on committees when asked or just telling others that “it isn’t being done correctly”?
Are we stepping forward into a leadership role to share our talents?
Each of us must decide how we can “leave it better than when we came” however large or small. If everyone would decide to take a turn at helping in one small way, we would have so much help, we couldn’t use all of that help! Consider an appropriate role to improve our counseling world whether it is to present a program, volunteer for a committee, write to your legislator, or run for an office in your division or association! Working together, we can make our Counseling World in North Dakota “better than when we came!”

Jean Baird
NDCA Past President
2019 NDCA Annual Conference - Thank You Members

Looking back at the last couple of months, it truly has been a whirlwind. I just wanted to take a few minutes to say THANKS to all of you and express my deep appreciation for your encouraging words, support and everything you did to help make our 2019 NDCA Conference a great success. No matter where I turned, I heard the words "Leslie, is there anything I can do to help?" "You have done a great job!" or "I have really enjoyed the conference." That is such awesome support and a huge reward for all of the hard work that went into planning the conference! When I began to put together the conference, I asked myself, what would the members want, what would serve them well, how can I make this great for them. I have to tell you, I attended a few national conferences and don’t believe they come close to the quality we provided right here in North Dakota. Again, THANK YOU! Also, thank you to the many members who stepped up and presented, especially those who presented twice. A very appreciated thanks to Carol Buchholz Holland, Counselor Educator from NDSU, who unselfishly gives her time by hosting the CEU for our members each year and quickly responded to an alternative when the Pre-Conference was cancelled. Responses from evaluations and feedback provided from many members indicate the 2019 NDCA Conference was a big success. We were fortunate to have some wonderful Keynote speakers and talent entertainment. Although it was stated, we have had David Kaplan here before and “why have Kaplan back for ethics”, I am glad that we did, being that he will be retiring in the near future.

I hope that after being back home for a couple of months you have the opportunity to reflect on the 2019 NDCA Conference and have actually inspired those you serve with wisdom, vision, innovation, action and results. Moving Forward is important in life if you want to make progress. Forward is defined as toward the front; in the direction that one is facing or traveling; onward so as to make progress; towards a successful conclusion; toward the future; and ahead in time. It is my hope for each of you that you were able to find a piece of something, no matter how big or small, from this conference to give you the momentum to move forward and to realize that it takes more than just one…to inspire a movement…we must Move Forward Together.

With the information you obtained and experienced through the 2019 NDCA Conference, I hope you are inspiring others with some of your new wisdom. Where would you like to be next year? Five years from now? Ten years from now? Envision where you want to be, and you have taken the first step in your advancement towards your goal for the future. Visual clarity is a valuable first part of inspiration—a dream with a deadline, with passion, plant the seeds of great ideas for your future and you will have what you envision. Use the information that you gathered to approach and invent new ways to help your clients, and you will both be Moving Forward…Together.

Soon I will have the honor of serving as your President and look forward to the opportunity to continue moving our organization from very good to great. This summer we will be doing strategic planning as a board and will be looking at our strengths, weaknesses, and challenges as we move forward to be the best organization for our members. In the words of Albert Einstein, I leave you with this… “Life is like riding a bicycle, to keep your balance, you must keep moving.” Have a wonderful summer!


Leslie Lemke
NDCA President - Elect
Thank you to all who attended, presented, volunteered and assisted in any way with the Midwinter Conference! What a great time it was catching up with friends, meeting new peers, collaborating with other professionals and learning some skills to bring back home. I have been trying to adjust to a transition from the President of the Mental Health Division to President Elect-Elect of the North Dakota Counseling Association. Learning the state and national division roles has been a roller coaster of a ride so far! I appreciate the opportunity to be able to travel to historic locations, collaborate with my peers, receive information about the workings of other state chapters and to refine my advocating and lobbying skills! I have learned so much already and I am excited for the year to come.

I am in the initial stages of planning for the 2020 NDCA Annual Conference and I am filled with excitement (and fear) about the opportunity I have been given to plan our conference. To think I have been given the responsibility of selecting our speakers, deciding our FOOD and helping to honor North Dakotas finest counselors. That is an honor in itself!

I am still in the works of locating and reaching out to the counseling professionals in our state who are not attending the conference or becoming members of our professional association. I would like to understand what is keeping them from joining and see how we can provide what is lacking. I hope to reach out to all of the current members, as well, and gather suggestions and interests for future sessions. My goal is to reignite “The Fire Within” each of us!!

Jada Hofland
President Elect - Elect/Membership Chair

We made it through another Midwinter Conference and are feeling rejuvenated and eager for the upcoming year. NDMHCA held a preconference on February 9th with Dr. Jim Korcuska and Megan Degenstein presenting on the topic of “What’s New in Supervision”. We were pleased to have approximately 60 attendees at the preconference, despite the winter weather conditions. Thank you to Dr. Korcuska and Megan for sharing your expertise with us all!

Each year, NDMHCA conducts a fundraiser at the Midwinter conference and this year we were able to raise nearly $500 for Invisible Innocence, a nonprofit organization based in Bismarck whose mission is to “Give Hope and a Home to Survivors of Human Trafficking”. You can learn more about Invisible Innocence and make a donation on their website: https://www.invisibleinnocence.org/donate.html.

Natalie Reiter was named the 2019 Outstanding Mental Health Counselor. Natalie owns Prairieland Counseling Services, LLC in Fargo where she specializes in perinatal and postpartum counseling, infertility counseling, couples counseling, and career counseling. She is also a board certified telehealth counselor. Natalie previously worked as a licensed professional clinical counselor at North Dakota State University’s Counseling Center for nearly a decade. Congratulations Natalie and thank you for your contributions to the field of mental health counseling!

NDMHCA is working hard at growing our division and being an asset to counselors throughout our state. If you are interested in becoming a member or are looking for ways to be involved, please contact us at contactndmhca@gmail.com or visit us on Facebook.

Stephanie Pritchard (right), NDMHCA President with Outstanding Mental Health Counselor Natalie Reiter
Dear Midwest Leaders,

Part of my role as Governing Council representative is serving on the Public Policy and Legislative Committee ("The Public Policy and Legislation Committee shall promote and support public policy and legislation that promotes the profession and enhances human development. The Committee shall be responsible for national and state legislative efforts related to counseling, including state licensure, and for government relations training of members.").

I’m happy to report that our committee has been busy advocating for counselors across the country. Some highlights of ACA’s efforts and monitoring of mental health legislation include:

ACA continues to work on interstate licensure portability. You can read more about these efforts in President Lambert’s Counseling Today article.

ACA continues to be aware of the U.S. Congressional Mental Health Caucus (you can find members of the Caucus here) whose mission is “Work in a bipartisan manner to raise the visibility for mental health reforms and find solutions to improve mental health care and delivery of services to those in need.”

The Senate is examining the idea of allocating funds to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to research gun violence. This topic was previously not funded because the Senate was opposed to funding research based on gun control. This research is different as it has a focus on mental health. HR 435 National Gun Violence Research Act H.R. 435 was introduced “to provide for a coordinated national research program to examine the nature, causes, consequences, and prevention of violence and unintended injury and death relating to gun ownership, use, and trafficking, and for other purposes.” There are currently 20 cosponsors. There are four cosponsors from the Midwest: Rep. Ilhan Omar (MN); Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi (IL); Congresswoman Lauren Underwood (IL); Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (MI). Please feel free to send emails to your state representatives to thank them (or encourage them) for sponsoring mental health initiatives.

The Trauma Informed Schools Act of 2018 – H.R. 7320 Introducing trauma informed care into school teaching education to identify and to help students who have been exposed to trauma. A summary is in process and you can read text here. There are a total of 12 cosponsors. In the Midwest, three representatives have cosponsored: Congresswoman Gwen Moore (WI); Congressman Andre Carson (IN); Congresswoman Cherri Bustos (IL). Please feel free to send emails to your state representatives to thank them (or encourage them) for sponsoring mental health initiatives.

The Mental Health Access Improvement Act of 2019 – S.286. This will allow counselors to bill Medicare. There are a total of 9 cosponsors. In the Midwest, two representatives have cosponsored: MI Senator Debbie Stabenow and South Dakota Senator Mark Rounds. "This bill provides for coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under Medicare. It also excludes such services from the skilled nursing facility prospective payment system, and authorizes marriage and family therapists and mental health counselors to develop discharge plans for post-hospital services." Please feel free to send emails to your state representatives to thank them (or encourage them) for sponsoring mental health initiatives.

Public comments are now open for the Veterans Community Care Program. On March 5, 2019 President Trump issued an Executive Order on a National Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End Suicide: "The United States must develop a comprehensive national public health roadmap for preventing suicide among our Nation’s veterans, with the aspiration of ending veteran suicide once and for all. This roadmap must be holistic and encompass the overall health and well-being of our Nation’s veterans." This is an opportunity to advocate for counselors to work with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Please feel free to provide public commentary to support mental health services in the VA.

Argosy University Closings – The receiver for Argosy University and the Art Institutes recently (March 6, 2019) filed a motion requesting permission to close 22 campuses. On Friday, March 8, the schools were closed. Argosy had 10 CACREP programs and 97 ACA members. ACA has extended a 12-month membership to these members impacted by the Argosy closings.

For more information about the Committee’s work please visit
our Government Affairs session 2019 Advocacy and Legislation Briefing at the conference in New Orleans on Friday March 29 4PM-5PM in the Convention Center Room 231-232.

On another note - the ACA Executive Committee are excited to have Born this Way Foundation co-founder (and Lady Gaga’s mother) Cynthia Germanotta as our keynote speaker on March 9:00 to 10:30 AM at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. I look forward to seeing you all at the conference and please feel free to contact me with questions.

Dr. Michele Kerulis, LCPC, CC-AASP
Midwest Region Representative
Executive Committee Member
Core Faculty, Counseling@Northwestern
The Family Institute at Northwestern University
Chicago, IL

Thank you to my reading team of Holly Kersten from Max, Erin Klingenberg from Valley City, Haley Jeannotte from Williston, and Jen Lubinski from Grand Forks for ranking our applications for our awarded scholarships this year. Thank you also to our Executive Director Marcia Foss for sending their scholarship checks to the universities to be applied to spring tuition. All of these lady’s help is greatly appreciated.

If getting involved in a committee is something that you are interested in, please send me an email at mmickelson280@mygfschools.org. We have room for several more committee members.

Melissa Mickelson
Grad Scholarship Chair

Thank you to all who donated items for the Silent Auction and to all who bid on those items!! It was a rock star of an auction and wouldn’t have been so amazing without the help of all of our conference attendees! A special thank you to Erin Klingenberg, Graduate Scholarship Committee member and Jada Hofland, NDCA President Elect-Elect for getting the room set up with bid sheets out!

Please be thinking of Silent Auction baskets for next year! Our hope is that it can be even bigger than this year and additional scholarships can be awarded as a result of the generosity of our divisions and members!

Melissa Mickelson
Grad Scholarship Chair

Scholarship Committee
Thank you and Welcome

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Melissa Mickelson
Grad Scholarship Chair

Silent Auction
Academic/CTE Scholarship Applications

Applications are open for the North Dakota Academic and Career and Technical Education (CTE) Scholarship, and will remain open until Friday, June 7. Current seniors can apply for the scholarship online. Please send WorkKeys scores to NDDPI. If you have questions regarding the scholarship, please contact Jim Upgren at 701-328-2244.

Principal Verification Report NO LONGER REQUIRED for Academic/CTE Scholarship!

Effective this year (2018-2019), we will no longer administer the Principal Verification Report for the Academic/CTE Scholarship. With eTranscript now simplifying our scholarship review process, we feel there is no longer a need for schools to complete this report. Please contact Jim Upgren at 701-328-2244 with questions.

Educational Career Pathway Courses

Starting with the 2018-2019 school year, NDDPI has made available two courses as part of an education career pathway: Teaching Profession (20084) and Educational Methodology (20085). Students taking these courses learn valuable skills needed to become a successful teacher, such as effective instructional strategies, inquiry-based learning, growth mindset, using data to guide instruction, and building relationships with students. These courses can also be set up so that students spend some of the class time visiting classrooms in local schools to learn from practicing teachers and participate in classroom experiences.

Any teacher with a valid teaching license may teach these courses. Students taking these classes will be a step ahead of other students when they begin their coursework for teacher preparation in college. In addition, schools can reach out to colleges and universities to see if there is interest in offering these classes for dual credit and have them count towards their first teacher preparation courses at the college level. These classes have been identified in the North Dakota K-12 Education Strategic Vision as one method in which to promote the teaching field to high school students, in hopes of increasing the number of teacher candidates in the state.

We are excited to promote this opportunity for North Dakota students, and we are hopeful more schools will choose to offer these courses. If you are interested in offering these courses or if you have questions, please contact Jim Upgren at 701-328-2244.

Professional Development Opportunities for School Counselors

NDDPI is currently working with UND, NDSU, and U-Mary to possibly offer weekly professional development opportunities for school counselors. While our discussions are in the early stages, we are thinking that each week, a different school counselor could present on a topic, and those interested could attend. Those attending a certain number of weeks (or hours) could be eligible to receive graduate credit that could be used for renewal of licenses and credentials. The goal would be for this to start in the fall of 2019, and more information will be available later this spring. Please contact Jim Upgren at 701-328-2244 with questions.
Heidi Ottmar  
North Dakota State University  
Our silent auction scholarship recipient is Heidi Ottmar. Heidi was born in Dickinson, raised on a ranch in Manning, and graduated high school in Killdeer. Heidi has attended Bismarck State College and University of Colorado - Denver and is currently attending NDSU working on completing course work for a Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.  
Heidi is very involved in leadership activities in NDSU’s College of Human Development and Education. Heidi enjoys being outside when it’s not minus 20 degrees, spending time with loved ones, reading, watching movies, going to coffee shops (she was drinking a cup of coffee that her cat was very interested in while she was filling out these questions for me so I could complete her award presentation), and exploring new places.  
Heidi loves counseling and loves the mental health field and is excited for her future.  
Heidi’s advisor is Dr. Brenda Hall at NDSU’s Counseling Program.  

NDCA Graduate Scholarship Recipient  

Tayler Morris  
North Dakota State University  
Our graduate scholarship recipient is Tayler Morris. Tayler grew up and graduated from high school in Minnesota. Tayler spent her undergraduate years at University of Minnesota - Morris and graduate years at NDSU where she is working toward completing course work for a Master’s degree in clinical mental health counseling.  
Tayler currently is completing coursework in clinical mental health counseling at NDSU as well as working as a graduate assistant for NDSU’s Student Activities Office in Civic Engagement.  
Tayler is passionate about helping others and believes counseling is one way to do that.  
Tayler’s advisor is Dr. Todd Lewis at North Dakota State University Counseling Program.
Updates from the ND Board of Addiction Counseling Examiners

The new ND Board of Addiction Counseling Examiners Administrative Rules went into effect on July 1, 2018. We wanted to share the below information with licensees:

If I am a ND licensed related mental health professional, can I still qualify for an addiction license?

Individuals licensed in ND as marriage and family therapists (LMFT), professional clinical counselors (LPCC), licensed independent clinical social workers (LICSW), or advanced clinical practice nurses are eligible to apply as a Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC) or Licensed Master Addiction Counselor (LMAC) licenses.

Requirements:
A master's or doctorate degree in the field of licensure
Meet the academic requirements for licensure as a licensed addiction counselor or a licensed master addiction counselor.
Complete board approved 350 supervised addiction-specific clinical training hours
Pass appropriate licensing examination
If pursuing a LMAC, complete 2000 hours of post licensure supervised experience

If I am a ND licensed physician, psychologist or psychiatrist, can I qualify for an addiction license?

Yes, you may qualify for a LMAC. In order to qualify for licensure you must complete board approved 350 supervised addiction-specific clinical training hours. No examination is required. No additional academic requirements need to be met.

If you have any questions, contact NDBACE office at 701-255—1439 or board@ndbace.org.

Why I Chose to Promote the Dove Self-Esteem Project
From a Male Perspective

I am a father to three young girls. I coach softball and teach middle school students. Self-esteem, body image, and body confidence is something that is addressed on a daily basis with all the females in my life. However, what I have noticed when the word self-esteem came up, everyone, even my students, pictured or thought about females. As I mentioned, I teach middle school students and yes I do see females struggle with issues regarding self-esteem and body confidence but, I also see males struggle with this issue just as much. I knew I needed to set out and find a way to help my students realize this is just not a topic for females but males, as well.

So, what is one reason I got involved as a Dove Self-Esteem cadre member? The weight room! In a 2013 Psychology Today article, Drexler1 cites statistics relative to my classroom experiences. First, 40 percent of boys in middle and high school exercise regularly. Second, boys overwhelmingly reported feeling pressured to fit a certain physical ideal of lean, muscular, and broad in the shoulders. The weightroom can be a very daunting place for anyone of any physical ability. It can be even more daunting for an 8th grade male (in a class of 8th and 9th grade peers) who has not gone through the growing process yet, as some of his peers have I had an 8th grade male go through this experience. The student came into strength class and could only bench 50 lbs, squat 45 lbs, and clean 35 lbs (really the numbers are meaningless). He got really frustrated with his numbers and the appearance that he was “weak” compared to his peers. He would not engage in group activities/interact with peers, would be last to show up for class and the first to leave, his head dropped and shoulders rounded. He also was not a member of any extracurricular activities.

Students in today’s society are influenced by so many internal and external factors. These external factors, out of the control of
the teenager, have influenced this opinion of self. With a lot of these factors coming from different social media outlets where they can only post a picture or 140 characters, my students choose not to talk about their feelings and beliefs of themselves but rather post their negative thoughts. My student from the weightroom, I found, was posting things about his perceived strength level on social media. Just one of many ways I have noticed middle school boys being critical of themselves.

When teaching my unit on body confidence/body image, the biggest hurdle I have to overcome is self-talk. Typically, teenagers are wired to think they are the only ones dealing with a given situation. What they do not always realize is the person sitting next to them or two rows back is dealing with the same situation. We start every year in health class with our social-emotional unit not because it is easy (actually most challenging), but because it sets the tone for the students to begin getting to know themselves and others, so the rest of the year they can find various ways to relate the content back to helping them grow as young men and women. The Dove Self-Esteem Project Confident Me! lessons helped with this problem of talking. The discussion prompts led to great conversations about self-esteem and appearance ideals that were happening at my school. Students were challenged with this curriculum to begin looking at themselves and stop comparing to others.

Boys are going to continue to be pressured by different outlets which lead to comparison about self and possible negative self-talk characteristics becoming more evident. From the Dove Self-Esteem Confident Me! curriculum lessons done in class, the discussion that ensued about negative self-talk and realizing times it happens clicked in my weight room student’s head. He came to me after a lifting session and said he could tell he was having negative self-talk but was starting to use strategies his peers gave him from health class to help overcome those negative thoughts. This was something done by the students themselves and not me! How powerful is that! That is why I do what I do and help promote this great free curriculum anyway I can.

Oh, the weight room student… When he left as a 9th grader, he was standing tall, looking teachers and students in the eyes when communicating with them, and engaging in class and extra curricular activities. I don’t see this student as much now because he is in another building, but when I do, we talk about the positives going on in life. I always try and tell him and other past students I am proud of them and ask them one question: What is going well in your life today?

Brett Delaney is a middle school health and physical education teacher in Iowa. He is also a member of the Dove Self-Esteem cadre trainers who seek to increase awareness and encourage educators to implement the no-cost Dove Self-Esteem Project’s single or five-lesson Confident Me! curriculum. For more information about the Dove Self-Esteem Project’s Confident Me! lessons, please email Brett - bretttdelaney@gmail.com.


Brett Delaney
Middle School Health Teacher
Coach and DSEP Cadre Trainer with Cairn Guidance,
a Dove Self-Esteem Partner
Congratulations to our exemplary individuals honored at the 2019 NDCA Mid-Winter Conference Awards Luncheon! Thank you to all those who took the time to submit nominations. These awards would not be possible without you honoring your colleagues in this way!

Thank you also to Ashley Michael and Jill Vollmers, the NDCA Awards Committee members who reviewed the NDCA nominations and helped choose the winners! If any NDCA member has interest in serving on the Awards Committee, feel free to email Rebecca Ringham at rebecca.ringham@minostateu.edu.

NDCA Graduate Scholarship Awards
Tayler Morris, North Dakota State University
$1000 Scholarship Recipient
Heidi Ottmar, North Dakota State University
Silent Auction Recipient

NDCA High School Essay Award
Arianna Simeone from Grand Forks Central

NDSCA School Counselor of the Year Award
Melinda Thorton – Legacy High School – Bismarck, ND
High School

NDSCA Award for Counseling Excellence
Fargo South High School, Fargo, ND
Counselors: Vanessa Boehm, Adrienne Eider, Heidi Fiechtner, and Laurie Schlenker

NDMHC Outstanding Mental Health Counselor Award
Natalie Reiter – Prairieland Counseling Services LLC, Fargo, ND

NDCA Friend of Counselor Award
Laura Glasser, Career Resource Network Administrative Assistant at the North Dakota Department of CTE, Bismarck, ND

NDCA Outstanding New Professional Award
Jessica Moritz, Drayton Public School K-12, Drayton, ND

NDCA Glenn Dolan Award
Marilyn Orgaard, CRN Supervisor at the North Dakota Career Resource Network, Bismarck, ND