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Mental Health and Coping Mechanisms

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MENTAL HEALTH AND COPING MECHANISMS

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GOALS

- Mental health includes an individuals social, physical, and psychological needs.
 - In today's society, mental health is severely stigmatized. Being a sociology major, I wanted to incorporate how we can tackle stigma and improve society for everyone's benefit.
 - For my COR class I wanted to stress the importance of balance in our lives as busy college students. I hoped to reach students on a closer level and serve as not only a campus resource but also a true mentor.
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METHODS

- Over the course of the semester, I have used various work sheets that focus on how everyone can improve their mental health.
 - I used work sheets and power points.
 - My lesson had students fill out this work sheet and then we discussed our answers as a group.
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EXAMPLE WORK SHEET

This is My House

Have each participant draw a house. Offer these guidelines as they work through the exercise:

1. The foundation should be your personal philosophy, similar to a personal mission statement - might explain how you approach life or the goals you attempt to achieve in the long term.
2. The walls are values you use to support your philosophy.
3. The door is some important part of you and whom you borrowed it from.
4. The window is something of which you are proud.
5. The roof is your protective mechanism. In other words, when you are challenged, what do you use to protect yourself, change the subject, or divert attention (e.g., humor).
6. The chimney is how you have fun and blow off steam.

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

- 1. I have students the work sheet and they were given 25 minutes to construct their “houses.”
 - 2. We went in a circle and discussed the important things in our lives that we all added to this work sheet. This was to take a step back from the busy college life and reflect on what is stable in our lives. It is important to validate struggle but how we choose to cope is even more important.
 - 3. Everyone had a chance to participate and speak about things that may make them a bit uncomfortable.
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REFLECTION/EXPERIENCE

- I believe that bringing attention to difficult conversations is important. I think that as human beings we must recognize what is holding us back in life while also recognizing what we are grateful for.
 - This sheet specifically focused on gratitude, I wanted students to remember they have people in their lives that love and care for them.
 - Mental health is one of the most challenging topics to discuss with other people. Therefore, I decided to open the floor for a group discussion so that it is not such an awkward topic to discuss with your peers.
 - Most of the students were very engaged and liked the activity because it was an activity to work towards breaking the stigma.
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RESEARCH

- My research sources are journal articles from jstor.
 - “Mental Health” by Graham Thornicroft and Geraldine Strathdee facilitated my lesson planning by outlining the importance of mental health outreach. The article focused on how it is important to teach mental health with purpose and create safe spaces for individuals.
 - “Mental Health: Progress and Problems” by Philip Berger, Beatrix Hamburg and David Hamburg is a scientific and psychological journal article that discusses different mental disorders. I incorporated this into my lesson by talking about mental illnesses and how to seek help when you are unsure of how to carry on.
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CITATIONS

- Berger, Philip, et al. “Mental Health: Progress and Problems.” *Daedalus*, vol. 106, no. 1, 1977, pp. 261–76. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20024469>. Accessed 27 Nov. 2022.
 - Thornicroft, Graham, and Geraldine Strathdee. “Mental Health.” *BMJ: British Medical Journal*, vol. 303, no. 6799, 1991, pp. 410–12. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29712685>. Accessed 27 Nov. 2022.
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