Managing student mental health

Jung-Wei Chen
Molly Robison
Steve Weber, Advisor
This Presentation

Problem
Evolution
Findings
Video
Future work
Problem
Depression & Intertemporal choice
Problem

Counseling

Underuse
Most Days

Overuse
Finals Week
Problem

Mental Health Stigma

“Now, let’s see what your problem is...”

“Try some pills and see which ones won’t turn you into an addict.”

“Just shut up and deal with it.”
Our goal

Problem: Mental health care is serious and scary

Solution: Make it as simple as taking an aspirin
Evolution
Evolution

Scope 1:
Get more people into counseling
- Streamline appointment process
- Improve Tang Center resources
Welcome to eTang, your online patient portal

Most popular links:

- Make appointments here.
- Manage your profile (update phone, change Primary Care Provider) here.
- Refill prescriptions by sending a new message to Pharmacy here.
- Order your own STI and Pregnancy test by sending a new message to the lab here.
- See your lab results in Medical Records here.

Never been here before?
Start by filling out your "REQUIRED Forms" - click Forms.

Tang Tips

- Be prepared - see five tips to make the most of your medical visit.
Tang Center

Home

Individual Counseling
Groups
Satellite Offices
Urgent Concerns
Prevention, Education + Outreach
Psychiatry
Career Library
Meet the Staff
Self Help Resources
Look for the Signs
Helping a Student in Distress
Be Well to Do Well
Internships/Fellowship Program
CARE Services for Faculty/Staff

Center effort to encourage students to take care of their lives. The goal of Tang is not just to address illness but to support students in living balanced and fulfilled lives.

Taking care of yourself translates to doing better in school. Merely working harder does not ensure doing better. In fact, we know that academic success is related to several aspects of health: having a nutritious diet, getting enough sleep, regular exercise, and managing stress.

How can this website help you?

- **Educational Resources**
  - Access to a variety of resources and information related to mental health services and support.
  - Links to satellite offices and urgent concerns for immediate assistance.
  - Resources for prevention, education, and outreach to promote awareness and preventive measures.
  - Services for career library and self-help resources to support professional development and personal well-being.
  - Assistance with internships and fellowships, enhancing opportunities for students.
  - CARE services for faculty and staff, offering additional support network.

- **Community Engagement**
  - Opportunities for students to engage with the Tang Center and its services.
  - Information on how to help others in distress, promoting a supportive and inclusive community.
  - Resources for helping a student in distress, offering guidance on how to support and refer students in need.

- **Wellness and Balance**
  - Emphasis on the importance of wellness, including nutrition, sleep, exercise, and stress management, in achieving academic success.

The Tang Center provides a holistic approach to student wellness, recognizing that academic success is interconnected with overall well-being. By offering a range of services and resources, the Tang Center aims to support students in their academic pursuits while promoting a healthy lifestyle and mental health.
1. Mastering Stress

UC Berkeley students work hard and face high stress. Stress is here to stay: even though we wish it weren’t so, it will always be a part of our lives. It’s not about avoiding stress but knowing yourself (your limits and your strengths) and being proactive.

There are times when demands we face tax us to the point that we feel we cannot cope. We begin to feel overwhelmed, anxious, depressed, helpless, and/or angry. Some of us have physical symptoms such as sleep and/or appetite disturbance, physical tension, or depleted energy. Others might experience intellectual roadblocks from stress such as test anxiety, procrastination, or lack of motivation. Stress can impact us socially as well, by causing us to withdraw, feel isolated, or even become aggressive.

Believe it or not, sometimes a little stress can be helpful, motivating us to prepare and perform. Finding the right balance and attitude towards stress helps. Take time to learn more about stress and how to manage it.

Resources:

1. Information on Stress management
   - Stress Management Techniques and Practices, About.com: Stress Management
   - Stress Management, MayoClinic.com
   - Deep Breathing and Relaxation Exercises from Dartmouth College
2. Articles
   - Finding Balance: Four Tips for Graduate Students
   - Happy New Year: How do you want to spend it?
   - Facing Public Speaking and other things that make you anxious
3. Tang Resources for Stress Management
   - CPS: Counseling appointments
   - Health coaching appointments- Health Promotion
   - Health and Wellness Groups
   - Tang Stress Chair
   - Pet hugs!

2. Resilience

Stress happens- Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of significant sources of stress. Even if we aren’t in control of stressors, what we are in control of how we choose to deal with it.

Factors associated with resilience include: making realistic plans and following through, having a positive view of yourself, communication and problem solving skills and management of strong feelings and emotions.

- Resilience quiz
- Authentic happiness (University of Pennsylvania site which includes multiple self-assessments)
Scope 2: Surprise!
You have mental health!
- Increase awareness
- Break down barriers to seeking help
Final Scope:
Stress tracking and stress-reduction techniques
- Check-in with stress levels
- Suggests strategies
Findings

People are concerned about overmedication

- Don't want to become dependent
- Dislike idea of drugs
People use entertainment to de-stress

- Watching videos, etc
- Different people have different coping methods
- Not very beneficial, but...
People have mixed feelings about therapy

- Would support someone they knew in therapy
- Reluctant to let others know if they personally had therapy
Findings

Stress is 'normal'

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Work Begins

Fuck Off

Panic

Deadline

All The Work While Crying
People aren’t sure what therapy entails

- “There's lots of talking?”
- “I guess they help you solve your problems.”
People value mental health
Video
Hey, want to catch a movie today?
Future
Future work

Build out the app

- Actual phone app, not web-based
- Fully-functional, all features
- Scalable for large populations
Future work

Extend to other universities

- For now focus on college; may extend to high school
Frequent updates: keep users coming back

- Reduce churn rate (retain users)
- Add new content such as strategies, information/resources
Future Work

Easing in and graduating users

- Start with familiar activities
- Suggest more therapeutic strategies
- Help users make these decisions on their own
Future work

Pilot test

Have a group of students use app for at least a month, then gather results of how well it actually works
Future work

Context Awareness & Wearables

- Catch you on the way down
- Warn you in precarious situations
Questions?