

Complementary and Integrative Health Practices in Occupational Therapy are Here to Stay

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Complementary and Integrative Health

- These practices were historically called Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) (Bradshaw, 2014; AOTA, 2017)
 - Were defined to be practices that were outside of conventional or mainstream healthcare (NCCAM, 2014)
- NCCAM was changed to the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) in 2015 (Bradshaw, 2016; AOTA, 2017)
 - Suggests a greater openness to and shift towards integrative approaches (Bradshaw, 2016)
- Nomenclature is inconsistent in the current literature and in practice
 - Suggests growth and expansion into new paradigms for addressing health and wellness
 - Eliminated the term *alternative* due to efficacy of many IH practices
 - Nomenclature can be confusing to navigate for practitioners and clients alike
 - Other common names include *integrative medicine*, *complementary health approaches* (CHA), *holistic services*, and *integrative health* (NCCIH, 2019a)
- We choose to use Integrative Health (IH) because it implies an intentional dovetailing of allopathic practices with complementary health approaches or CHA (NCCIH, 2019a)
 - IH promotes a holistic and client-centered approach to health and wellness (NCCIH, 2019a)
 - According to NCCIH (2019a), complementary health approaches include:
 - A. Natural Products (ie. herbs, vitamins and minerals, and probiotics)
 - B. Mind and body practices (ie. yoga, chiropractic care, meditation, acupuncture, relaxation techniques, Tai Chi, and Qi Gong, among others)
 - C. Others that exist outside these categories (ie. Shamanism, Ayurveda, TCM)

OT and Integrative Health

- The profession's holistic philosophical background and value for client-centered care supports CHA in OT practice (AOTA, 2017)
- AOTA supports the inclusion of several CHA when services are provided by responsible and competent OT practitioners within an OT plan of care that is client-centered and occupation-based in its position paper "OT and Complementary Health Approaches and Integrative Health" (AOTA, 2017)
- Collaboration with the client is essential when incorporating CHA into interventions to ensure the client's values, beliefs, and wishes are respected (AOTA, 2017)
- OT practitioners are bound by the ethical and performance standards that ensure safe and effective interventions (AOTA, 2017)
- OT practitioners are responsible for maintaining continued competency in all CHA and must practice in accordance with federal and state laws (AOTA, 2017)
 - Additional training and obtaining additional credentials or licensure is required when incorporating CHA that fall outside the scope of OT practice
 - Referral and collaboration with CHA specialists is encouraged

Real world Examples

- Ask us! We have many real world examples to share!
- OT in IH is being used with clients across the lifespan and with various individuals, groups, and clinical conditions.
 - Children of all ages
 - Adults of all ages
 - Physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental health conditions
- The Holistic OT Community has social media platforms, blogs, videos, and audio recordings that highlight how OT is already part of IH and advocates for those practicing IH. Check out this community at HolisticOT.org

Evidence for Integrative Health Currently Being Used in OT

- IH is being implemented in OT both education and practice, making this a timely topic as well as an excellent time for exploring best practices and opportunities for inclusion of these products and services
- **In OT education**
 - There is a small body of evidence that CHA content is being included in OT education with widely varying content delivery methods; independent learning opportunities was the most common method (Bradshaw, 2016)
 - A quarter of OT educators reported having a good understanding of IH and of those, twice as many were comfortable teaching general content than teaching students to incorporate CHA into OT. Those who had additional training in CHA reported feeling equally capable of teaching both (Bradshaw, 2016)
 - IH content being included in OT education is expanding (Bradshaw, 2016). Some examples gathered informally through HolisticOT.org, include but are not limited to:
 - Michelle Bradshaw at Ithaca College- full semester elective on CHA in OT education and practice
 - Richard Sabel at Columbia and SUNY Downstate- integrative electives and content imbedded in other courses
 - Arlene Schmid at Colorado State University- one lecture about IH in a course
 - Rochelle McLaughlin at SJSU- course on IM and advanced certification for Mindfulness-Based OT
 - Jeramie Silveria at Salem State University- semester course on various CHA services
 - Other programs have content that varies by instructor and delivery methods
- **In OT practice**
 - Interest in IH is present within the OT profession, as evidenced by the growing number of publications in scholarly and trade journals, posts on and membership in social media groups, and growing number of presentations available at AOTA's annual conference
 - Practitioners who are interested in IH can join an established community called HolisticOT.org for resources, competency development, and mentorship from OT experts already practicing IH
 - Ask our speakers **Mandy Lubas**, **Betsy Shandalov**, and **Emmy Vadnais** about IH in their practices!



Relevancy of Integrative Health in OT

- Incorporating CHA in OT education and practice keeps occupational therapy relevant in the dynamic healthcare system where IH is becoming mainstream
 - Some healthcare fields are evolving to include IH designations or specialties (American Holistic Nursing Association, 2019; Academy of Integrative Medicine, 2019; Holistic Medicine, 2019)
 - Examples: Holistic Nursing Clinician, Holistic Medicine, Integrative Medicine MD
 - OT practitioners would have more tools in their tool kit in clinical practice
- OT educators and practitioners may benefit from personally using IH
 - More effective with students and clients when attending to their personal health and wellness
 - Self-care and burnout prevention, better help clients if they know how to heal themselves (Luken & Sammons, 2016)
 - Prevent or recover from disease or illness (Benson & Proctor, 2010)
- OT students may benefit from the knowledge and application of IH during the educational process
 - Learn positive coping and stress management approaches that may help with their performance with coursework, fieldwork, and NBCOT exam
- OT clients may benefit from IH as methods to promote participation in meaningful occupations
 - Expand interventions to include CHA to address various conditions, such as pain, anxiety, and emotional regulation (The Joint Commission, 2019)
 - Clients may have the opportunity for better outcomes, as seen with research supporting efficacy of most IH approaches (NCCIH, 2019b)

OT Expanding into Integrative Health

- Evidence shows that CHA and IH can be beneficial for individuals, groups, populations, and clinical conditions that occupational therapy practitioners frequently work with including:
 - Mindful-based yoga, provided by an OT with yoga instructor certification, improved fatigue and physical, cognitive, and emotional symptoms in adolescents with postconcussion symptoms (Paniccia et al., 2019)
 - Yoga for neurological and older adult populations included benefits of improved postural control, flexibility, and relaxation along with decreased anxiety and depression (Green et al., 2019)
 - Mindfulness-based interventions, yoga, and qi gong within an OT plan of care enhanced quality of life, mental health, and well-being in clients with and survivors of cancer (Hunter, Gibson, and D'Amico, 2016)
 - Evidence supports the use CHA in an OT plan of care (AOTA, 2017).

Strategies and Opportunities for OT to Expand with Integrative Health

Strategies

- Develop knowledge about CHA products and services that can be used to support healing for OT clients
 - Continuing education experiences
 - Review of the literature
 - Explore CHA for personal use to enhance application to clinical practice
 - Refer to and collaborate with IH practitioners
- Collaborate with IH practitioners from other disciplines
 - Practitioners within allopathic medicine that use IH such as physical therapists and mental health practitioners
 - Groups such as Consortium of Academic Health Centers for Integrative Medicine, American Holistic Nursing Association, Integrative and Holistic Physicians help disseminate evidence related to IH
 - Attend conferences with like-minded professionals, International Association of Yoga Therapists

Opportunities

- Advocacy at the client, educational, professional, and policy levels
 - Promote IH in healthcare policy
 - AOTA continues efforts to advocate for rehab in the research agendas of National Institutes of Health, including NCCIH (AOTA, 2019)
 - Expand on the wellness mindset in the classroom, in healthcare teams, with clients, within the OT profession
- Develop IH practices by creating practices that promote health and wellness for individuals, groups, or populations. For example:
 - Community based older adult group "Mind, Body, and Soul" (OT Practice, 10/24/18)
 - Continuing education, professional development, and consulting for OT practitioners (Emmy Vadnais)
 - Educates rehab professionals, teaches kids motor skills and SI using yoga and mindfulness, and treats pain and trauma using yoga and meditation (Betsy Shandalov)
 - Integrating yoga, Ayurveda, Shamanic Healing, and other modalities into practice (Mandy Lubas)
 - Promoting OTS self-care during OT education (Michelle Bradshaw)

Resources

- Options for continuing education continue to grow and vary from short courses to formal trainings or certifications
 - "OT with CHAIH" through AOTA and many others depending on the topic of interest
- The literature about the potential benefits of CHA is vast and the literature for IH including OT is growing
 - Use search terms such as "complementary", "integrative medicine", "integrative health", "complementary and alternative medicine", and "holistic" to search
 - Use similar search terms in OT specific journals, such as AJOT, OT Practice, Advance for OT Practitioners, BJOT, and many more
- Experience personal healing and train in approaches that interest you