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HOW DIFFERENT IS THE FROGSTICITY ADDICTION PROGRAM?

BY ROB HAMILTON
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Most inpatient addiction treatment programs run for 21 to 30 days. In contrast, the FrogSticity outpatient program extends over three months. Our intensive program utilises neuroplasticity to empower every addict to reclaim control of their life and generate a healthy future free of addiction. FrogSticity maximises flexibility and choice, so that participants can access optimal care and treatment, whilst continuing with normal daily activities, including working.

The program is designed so that addicts don't have to commit to full-time residential treatment, take extended leave from employment, or desert their families and community. FrogSticity allows participants to carry on working and living at home, whilst accessing comprehensive addiction treatment services provided by our professional team. To enable participants to continue to work while attending the program, therapeutic group sessions are scheduled after hours, whilst individual therapy sessions can be booked at times that suit the participant.

The program's flexibility fosters personal agency, minimising the stigma often associated with addiction care and treatment. Our program is designed to help individuals surmount their unique challenges in a supportive learning environment aligned with real-life contexts.

We take a personalised approach, tailoring therapeutic interventions to match the individual's needs and address unique challenges. This orientation boosts treatment efficacy and enhances meaningful, lasting recovery.



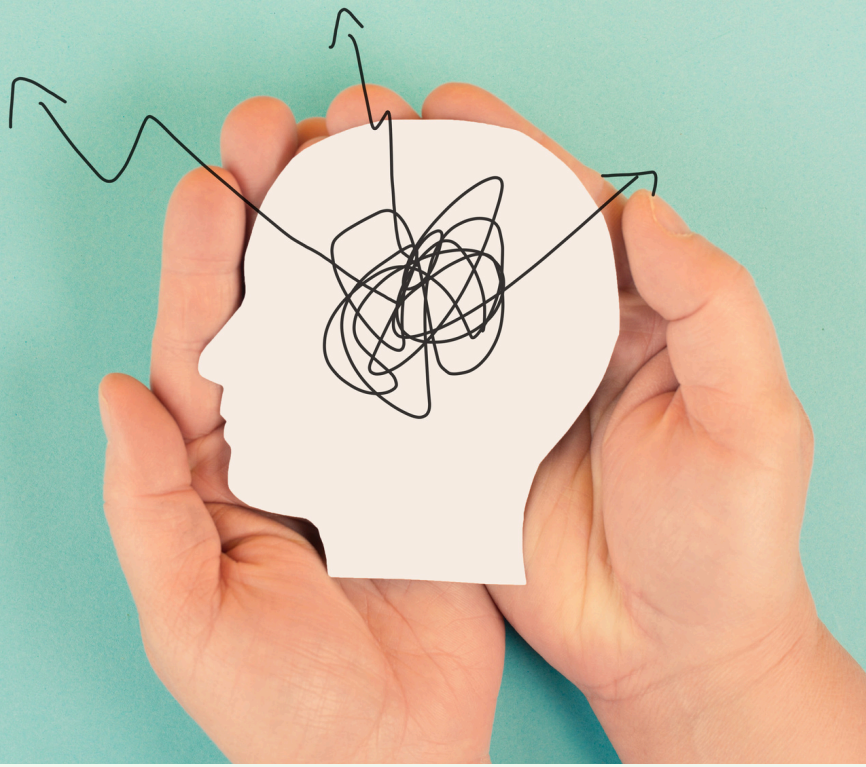
FrogSticity is designed to minimise disruption of daily life and cut down on the opportunity costs of recovery, compared to full-time residential addiction treatment. Our biopsychosocial approach encompasses comprehensive care, addressing the critical physiological, emotional, psychological and social facets of addiction.

FrogSticity participants have ample daily opportunities to practise newly acquired coping strategies in the real environment as they learn. Immediate implementation of new skills utilises neurodiversity to enhance learning and consolidate development of healthy new habits free of the compulsion of addiction.

The FrogSticity program begins with a comprehensive personal assessment to identify specific needs and tailor a treatment plan, including evaluation by a psychiatrist. Regular individual sessions with a psychologist and an occupational therapist specialising in addiction follow.

Group psychoeducational sessions are facilitated by experienced professionals, drawing on the most recent scientific research findings regarding addiction. Group and individual sessions address key concerns that underlie addiction, enabling every individual to acquire the coping skills they need. Groups also provide an opportunity to share experiences with addicts facing similar challenges and to learn from them.

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The life-skills and recovery tools acquired in the program prepare participants for long-term, sustainable recovery. At the end of the three-month program, we help individuals develop their own robust after-care plans to bolster ongoing recovery and minimise risk of relapse.

FrogSticity also involves families of addicts in the recovery process, helping heal relationships, improve communication and inform family members about the real facts of addiction. Family inclusion fosters a supportive social environment and enhances individual recovery.

We encourage each participant to be patient about their recovery process, since change can't happen overnight. The program maximises opportunities for self-discovery, empowering all addicts to identify the unique roots of their addiction, and understand their personal triggers and cravings.

Our focus is on the development of adaptive coping strategies to manage stress and resist urges to use. Family therapy groups help participants build a more robust safety net.

Without effective intervention, ongoing engagement in active addiction will jeopardise physical and emotional well-being, impair quality of life and ruin relationships. There is no need to be defeated by the addiction monster!

Contact us to find out more about how FrogSticity can empower you to reclaim your life and create a better future.



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Trauma-informed care	Online resources
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Life skills training	assessments

To secure your spot, or for more information, contact us:

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NATIONAL HEALTHCARE INSURANCE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

By Mbalenhle Dlamini

On May 15, 2024, President Cyril Ramaphosa officially signed the National Healthcare Insurance (NHI) bill into law. There has been controversy about the effectiveness of this law on the healthcare system. The NHI is designed to provide all South Africans with full access to healthcare services in both the public and private sectors. The NHI aims to cover hospital visits, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, mental health services, emergency medical services, and more. Statistics show a significant lack of mental health services, especially within the public sector in South Africa. This article will discuss the potential impact of the NHI on mental health services in South Africa



The National Healthcare Insurance

The NHI will purchase comprehensive healthcare services from both private and public healthcare facilities (Kleintjes et al., 2021). It will function as medical aid for all South Africans, with no additional costs required when receiving healthcare in facilities that partner with the NHI, as it will cover the full cost of care (Kleintjes et al., 2021). Theoretically, the NHI serves a beneficial purpose in the healthcare system.

However, examining similar systems in first-world countries such as the United Kingdom reveals that they have not always been effective. South Africa's healthcare system faces numerous daily challenges, including a lack of resources, staff shortages, corruption, and violence. Therefore, implementing the NHI in an unstable healthcare system may not be the ideal solution.

Mental Health in South Africa

The mental health of South Africans is concerning. Research indicates that South Africa has a significant mental health treatment gap (Sordahl et al., 2023). Conditions such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse are prevalent and significantly affect the country's mental health (Sordahl et al., 2023). It is estimated that one in six adults in South Africa meets the diagnostic criteria for depression, anxiety, or substance abuse within a 12-month period (Morar et al., 2024). Additionally, 75% of South Africans living with common mental health conditions do not receive treatment. Statistics show that the treatment gap is as high as 92%, meaning only 1 in 10 people in South Africa receive the treatment they need. This lack of treatment is caused by various factors, including a shortage of mental health practitioners and inadequate funding (only 5% of the 2023 budget was allocated to mental health).



NHI + Mental Health Services

If the NHI serves as medical aid, it could provide South Africans with greater access to mental health services, potentially bridging the mental health treatment gap and improving the overall mental health state of the country. However, the Psychological Society of South Africa has noted that psychologists were not included in the white paper as part of the healthcare practitioners covered by the NHI. Psychologists can significantly contribute to mental healthcare, including the screening and management of mental health problems. Given the high rates of crime, trauma, and violence in the country, psychological services are crucial. Despite this, the NHI will still provide opportunities for citizens to access other mental healthcare practitioners, which could have a positive impact.

In conclusion, the NHI has the potential to benefit the mental health field in South Africa by reducing the mental health treatment gap and improving overall healthcare. However, concerns remain about the NHI's effectiveness, particularly in the mental health sector. The NHI is expected to be fully implemented by 2026, and the question remains: will it have a positive impact on the healthcare system?

-Mbalenhle Dlamini



“Public Health depends on winning over hearts and minds. It’s not enough to just have a good policy, you have to convince people to actually follow it”

-Leana S. Wen



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NAVIGATING ADHD & LOW SELF-ESTEEM AS A YOUNG ADULT

Exploring how living with ADHD as a young adult impacts self-esteem.

By Kholofelo Mashaba

You are in your twenties, trying to figure out what career to pursue, thinking about that one embarrassing interaction you had with a coworker where you interrupted them the entire time. Or you cannot, for the life of you, understand why it takes you a whole day to complete one small school assignment, or you are questioning whether or not you have chosen the right degree to study. You have probably gone through life often being told you are not good enough or that you are not trying hard enough. You might have also lost quite a few friends in your life because of how difficult you find maintaining interpersonal relationships. Journeying through adulthood as a young person living with a neurodevelopmental disorder, such as Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which often gets misconstrued as laziness, a lack of ambition, or drive, can have debilitating outcomes (Smith, 2024). One of those outcomes includes having a low self-esteem (Hoermann, 2009).

What was originally regarded as a childhood disorder, ADHD has been found to persist well into adulthood, with adults presenting symptoms from all three presentation types: predominantly inattentive presentation, predominantly hyperactive-impulsive presentation, and a combined presentation of both inattention and hyperactive-impulsive presentation (National Institute of Mental Health, 2021). Symptoms may include, but are not limited to, struggling to regulate emotions, disorganisation, forgetfulness, trouble with interpersonal relationships, and time management concerns (National Institute of Mental Health, 2021).

Your ability to perform day-to-day activities, such as getting out of bed on time or being productive, may be impaired, or even answering text messages can be very challenging (Mayo Clinic, 2023). You might find it difficult to listen and remain focused in a long lecture or struggle to complete that project that you have been procrastinating and is due within the next 24 hours.

It is quite common to question your capabilities and be highly self-critical, often engaging in negative self-talk. Low self-esteem is not uncommon for persons with the disorder (Hoermann, 2009). Negative messaging, such as being told you are not living up to your “full potential,” becomes internalised, having lasting negative effects on one’s self-esteem and confidence (Hoermann, 2009). Contributing to this low self-esteem may also be the stigma associated with the disorder (Hoermann, 2009). Because of the nature of the disorder, some people may not consider ADHD a serious condition and tend to dismiss you and your struggles. As a young adult, living with ADHD adds to the mounting pressures and challenges that accompany this phase in your life, which is characterised by so much change (Sandstone Care, 2022). You may consider yourself a failure, someone who is falling behind the rest of their peers, and find yourself isolating from those close to you or society in general (Stavraki, 2024). The experience of living with ADHD does impact your ability to develop healthy self-esteem, as you come to see yourself as underperforming, incapable, and simply not good enough (Stavraki, 2024). As a young adult, it is already quite challenging to navigate adulthood, but doing so with ADHD makes life more difficult.

We all have a tendency to compare ourselves to others, our successes, and our careers. You have just entered your twenties and are already dealing with the frustrations and anxiety associated with this phase in your life, constantly dealing with the sense of internal failure and disappointment. These feelings contribute to low self-confidence and low self-esteem. These frustrations can be compounded and exacerbated by social media (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, 2017). It is through social media that we get a glimpse of others' lives and how far they have come. You scroll through TikTok or Instagram doubting yourself and your capabilities, wondering why you are not where you are "supposed" to be in life. But that is just it—it is merely a glimpse of someone else's life.

So, what can you do right now to help boost your self-esteem as someone living with ADHD? Our self-esteem constantly fluctuates, so it is important to consider that on your journey to adopting a more positive self-esteem (Stavraki, 2024). Additionally, your path towards improved self-esteem will look very different from others (Stavraki, 2024):

- To help boost your self-esteem, replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk (Stavraki, 2024). The challenges that many face with ADHD may impact certain outcomes, such as academic performance or your performance at work. You may internalise failures in those areas and attribute them to your inability to achieve anything worth praise or acknowledgment (Hoermann, 2009). Here, you should focus on what you have already achieved as well as your successes (Stavraki, 2024).
- In those moments where you are being self-critical, take a moment to ask yourself why you are experiencing negative feelings about yourself and shift your thinking to a more positive perception of yourself by considering your more positive attributes (Stavraki, 2024). So, you did not come first in your class, but you did pass that year. That is still an achievement.

- Maintaining close relationships can be daunting for those with ADHD. In this case, surround yourself with people who have an intimate understanding of the disorder as well as your experience with it (Stavraki, 2024). Having a support system can help you refrain from isolating yourself from others (Stavraki, 2024). Find a buddy who understands that you are not missing in action (MIA) or that you hate them if you have not texted them in days.
- Struggling with your self-confidence can be tough, but it might help to put down that phone and stop comparing yourself to others on social media. Remind yourself that people on social media rarely share the bad and the ugly (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, 2017). Consider where you are in life and how far you have come instead of wishing you were in someone else's shoes.
- Lastly, do not be afraid to ask for help and seek support (Stavraki, 2024), whether that is tapping into your immediate social network or consulting with mental health professionals. It does not hurt to lean on others, especially when you need it the most. Importantly, remember to give yourself some grace!

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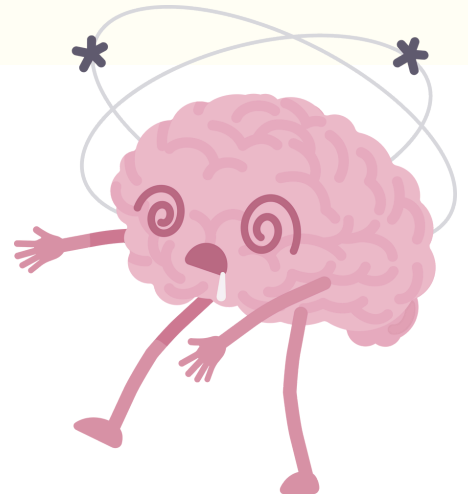
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STRESS MANAGEMENT

By Kiara Govender

Stress is defined as a physiological or psychological response elicited when an individual's state of equilibrium, commonly referred to as homeostasis, is disrupted or challenged by internal or external stimuli. (Lu, Wei, & Li, 2021). Therefore, understanding one's stressors, finding stress management techniques, and maintaining a positive attitude can help to ensure a fulfilled life (Ye, et al., 2020).



STRESS

Stress can materialise in various ways for different individuals. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders states that symptoms of stress can be categorised into physiological symptoms and psychological symptoms (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Physiological symptoms include an increased heart rate, sweating, muscle tension, and psychological symptoms include irritability, difficulty concentrating, and intrusive thoughts. Notably, stress has been associated with the onset of maladaptive anxiety (Leuner & Shors, 2013). Therefore, stress management can be a crucial factor to ensure that one lives a happy and healthy life (Worthen & Cash, 2023). Effective stress management techniques entail integrating diverse practices into one's lifestyle. This includes yoga, breathing exercises, lifestyle changes, and listening to music (Sharma & Rush, 2014).

MANAGEMENT

Breathing Exercises

Breathing practices which were taught by the Krishnamacharya tradition of yoga can be followed to help manage stress levels through calming the mind (Mohan & Krishna-Charya, 2002). Yoga movements traditionally serve as a method to prepare the practitioner to focus on their breathing whilst sitting. Slow breathing exercises have proved to be helpful in reducing psychological stress. This is done by extending exhalation compared to inhalation which has been observed by Birdee et al. to decrease psychological stress (Birdee, et al., 2023).

Lifestyle Change

Lifestyle changes such as regular exercise helps to ease stress and improve one's mood. This can also be associated with managing depression, and other health outcomes (Hamer, Endrighi, & Poole, 2012). Additionally, the therapeutic influence of music on the psychobiological stress response underscores its utility as a stress management tool. In a study conducted by Thoma, et al, it was understood that listening to music can positively impact one's psychobiological stress system, which includes mental and biological processing of an individual (Thoma, et al., 2013) (Nash & Thebarg, 2006).

Considering the challenges precipitated by the Covid-19 pandemic, heightened levels of stress have become pervasive (Ye, et al., 2020). Having experienced lockdown constraints, loss of loved ones and lifestyle changes, being able to manage stress and remain optimistic has been highly crucial. These habits were adopted to reduce anxiety and maintain balanced life. There may be many others who have struggled with adapting to the changes brought about by the pandemic. Therefore, creating awareness and educating people about stressors as well as how to manage it, can aid in improving their quality of life.

In summation, identifying stressors, adopting stress management techniques, maintaining a balanced lifestyle, and cultivating a positive mindset, can aid in effectively managing stress as well as helping to build resilience. Ultimately, by prioritising these practices, individuals can aspire to achieve enhanced well-being and thrive across various domains of life.

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Until next time, as always, our wish for you is to heal, learn and grow.

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