Chapter 25

Complementary and Alternative Treatments

Psychosomatic Illnesses
Stress, Pain, and

Open Focus Training for

Mind-Body Medicine Program for

Korean Canadian Lifestyles

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Transitions Among Modes of Attention

Recent advances in understanding of cognitive neuroscience have revealed that the brain is capable of rapidly switching between different modes of attention. This flexibility is crucial for effective adaptation to changing environments and for the coordination of complex cognitive tasks. The ability to shift attention depends on the integration of various brain regions, including the prefrontal cortex, parietal lobes, and the basal ganglia.

The Development of Open Focus and Narrow Focus

Open focus and narrow focus are two distinct modes of attention that can influence decision-making and problem-solving. Open focus allows for the exploration of novel ideas and the generation of creative solutions, whereas narrow focus facilitates the execution of tasks that require precision and accuracy. The balance between these two modes is essential for optimizing cognitive performance and adapting to different contexts.

Open Focus Versus Narrow Focus

Open focus is characterized by a greater allocation of attentional resources to novel and unpredictable stimuli. This mode is particularly useful in situations where the task demands are uncertain or when the environment is highly changing. In contrast, narrow focus is associated with a more focused allocation of attention to specific, well-defined tasks. This mode is beneficial for tasks that require high levels of concentration and accuracy, such as technical manual work or skilled motor activities.
The Open Focus Model of Pain

The Open Focus model is a representation of pain that emphasizes the role of attentional processes in pain perception. In this model, the focus of attention is on pain-free, non-painful, and less painful sensations. The model suggests that pain is a by-product of the brain's attempt to detect and respond to threats to the body. The brain's response to pain is influenced by various factors, including the intensity of the pain stimulus, the context in which the pain occurs, and the individual's previous experiences with pain.

### Levels of Focal Awareness

1. **LEVEL OF AWARENESS:**
   - **Alpha (8-12 Hz):** Relaxed, focused attention.
   - **Beta (13-30 Hz):** Increased focus, alertness.
   - **Gamma (30-100 Hz):** High-frequency, high-level processing.

2. **LEVEL OF BRAIN ACTIVITY:**
   - **Whole-brain symphony:** Coordination of brain activity across different regions.
   - **Brain-activated symphony:** Focus on specific brain regions.

3. **LEVEL OF COHERENCE:**
   - **High coherence:** Strong, efficient brain activity.
   - **Low coherence:** Weak, inefficient brain activity.

4. **LEVEL OF INTENSITY:**
   - **Low intensity:** Mild, manageable pain.
   - **High intensity:** Severe, unmanageable pain.

### Pain Theories and the Open Focus Approach

The Open Focus model provides a framework for understanding pain and its impact on an individual's daily life. By focusing on pain-free, non-painful, and less painful sensations, the model suggests that pain can be reduced and managed through various strategies, including mindfulness, relaxation, and cognitive strategies.

### Pain Management Techniques

1. **Mindfulness meditation:** Focus on the present moment, without judgment.
2. **Progressive muscle relaxation:** Tensing and relaxing different muscle groups.
3. **Cognitive-behavioral therapy:** Replacing negative thoughts with positive ones.
4. **Physical therapy:** Strengthening muscles and improving mobility.

### Table 25.1: Modes of Attention, Effects on the Central Nervous System, and Electroencephalographic Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description and Examples</th>
<th>Electroencephalographic Patterns</th>
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| **Narrow-objective focus** | **Alpha (8-12 Hz):** Relaxed, focused attention.
| **Narrow-invested mode**   | **Beta (13-30 Hz):** Increased focus, alertness. |
| **Dilute-objective mode**   | **Gamma (30-100 Hz):** High-frequency, high-level processing. |
| **Dilute-invested mode**    | **Whole-brain symphony:** Coordination of brain activity across different regions. |

### Additional Notes

- The table above categorizes different modes of attention and their effects on the central nervous system and electroencephalographic patterns.
- The Open Focus model emphasizes the importance of managing pain by focusing on pain-free, non-painful, and less painful sensations.
- Mindfulness meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and physical therapy are examples of pain management techniques.
Expanding Your Awareness of Visual Space (Adapted)

The experience

The experience of being aware of visual space is a complex one that involves both conscious and unconscious processes. It is influenced by various factors such as lighting, color, and perspective, and can vary depending on the context in which it occurs.

Open Focus Exercise: Expanding Space

Open Focus Training

Complementary and Integrative Treatments
Clinical Guidelines

Depression and Pain Follow-up

Clinical Case: Open Focus for Anxiety

Open Focus Therapy

Complementary and integrative treatments

Open Focus Therapy is a mindfulness-based therapy that aims to help individuals develop a non-judgmental awareness of their thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations. It is based on the idea that by focusing on present moment experience, individuals can gain insights into their patterns of thinking and behavior, and learn to respond to difficult situations in a more adaptive way.

Complementary and integrative treatments refer to a range of therapies that are used in addition to traditional medical treatments to support physical and emotional well-being. These treatments may include therapies such as acupuncture, herbal medicine, massage therapy, and meditation.

In this case, the therapist may use a combination of Open Focus Therapy and complementary treatments to help the patient manage symptoms of anxiety and depression. The therapist may also encourage the patient to engage in regular exercise, eat a healthy diet, and get adequate sleep, as these factors can also impact mental health.

By addressing both the mental and physical aspects of the patient's experience, the therapist can help the patient develop a more integrated approach to managing their symptoms. This approach may involve a combination of techniques, such as mindfulness meditation, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and yoga, to help the patient develop greater awareness and acceptance of their thoughts and emotions.

The therapist may also work with the patient to identify and address any underlying factors that may be contributing to their symptoms, such as stress, trauma, or underlying medical conditions. By addressing these factors, the therapist can help the patient develop a more comprehensive approach to managing their symptoms and improving their overall well-being.
References

Key Points

Complementary and Integrative Therapies