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Calm Your Mind. *life*

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At the core of Counseling Psychology lies the commitment to fostering psychological wellbeing through evidence based, client centered approaches. Our Counseling Psychologists utilize modalities such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Mindfulness based interventions, and Solution focused techniques to help clients navigate a range of concerns—from adjustment disorders and academic burnout to interpersonal conflict and identity development. Through the therapeutic alliance, we create a safe, confidential space where clients can engage in self-exploration, enhance emotional regulation, and build adaptive coping strategies. Whether you're seeking short-term support or long-term insight-oriented therapy, our goal is to empower individuals toward greater self-efficacy, resilience, and holistic mental health.

We understand that reaching out can feel vulnerable, but accessing support is a powerful act of self-advocacy. Our team values inclusivity, cultural competence, and trauma-informed care to ensure that every person feels seen and heard. At **SU Counseling Services®**, your mental health journey is guided by empathy, professional integrity, and a deep respect for your lived experience. Let us walk alongside you—because healing starts InMind, and grows from within.

Interview with Dr. G.V. Kumar, Psychologist

by Dr. Kavitha Kannan, Counseling Psychologist and Corporate Trainer

Dr. G.V. Kumar, M.B.A., M.Sc., Ph.D. a famous Psychologist with 40 years of vast experience. Practising as Psychologist, Psychometrician, Psychotherapist, Hypnotherapist, Sex Therapist, Motivational Speaker, Research Guide, Professor of Psychology, Corporate and Soft Skills Trainer since 1983.

Q: What challenges do Counseling Psychologists typically face?

A: *The Counseling Psychologist profession, while deeply meaningful, presents a wide range of complex challenges.*

Psychologists often face emotional strain from burnout, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma due to continuous exposure to clients' pain, trauma, and crises.

Managing high-risk, resistant, or non-compliant clients can be emotionally taxing and legally sensitive, especially when dealing with suicidal ideation, abuse, or severe mental illness.

Ethical dilemmas, such as navigating confidentiality, dual relationships, and cultural sensitivity, demand constant self-awareness and careful judgment.

Systemic and workplace issues—like excessive caseloads, limited resources, staff shortages, and the frustrations of insurance and billing—can further complicate daily practice. The profession also requires a major investment in time and money for education, licensing, supervision, and continuing education, with relatively limited paths for advancement outside of clinical or academic roles.

The growing demand for teletherapy, while offering flexibility, introduces challenges in maintaining rapport, reading nonverbal cues, and managing technology. On top of all this, psychologists must constantly confront societal stigma around mental health, work to build trust with diverse populations, and maintain their own mental health and work-life balance. Despite these hurdles, many find the role deeply fulfilling, driven by a strong desire to help others lead healthier, more meaningful lives.

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Mind Matters >>>

Brain Working Recursive Therapy (BWRT)

by Sudhakar Haridoss, Counseling Psychologist

What is BWRT?

Brain Working Recursive Therapy (BWRT) is a modern psychological therapy developed by UK therapist **Terence Watts**. It's a practical, logical approach that doesn't require clients to talk about distressing experiences. Instead, the focus is on how you feel and how you'd prefer to feel. BWRT uses neuroscience principles and your brain's own processes to help bring about change. Only certified practitioners are allowed to use it and must follow a strict ethical code.

How BWRT Works

BWRT works by interrupting and rewiring the brain's automatic responses before they fully register as conscious reactions. When a person is triggered by a phobia or fear, the brain reacts based on a pre-learned pattern. BWRT targets that split-second moment between stimulus and response, allowing the brain to replace an old fear-based reaction with a new, calmer one.

This is achieved through a guided visualization technique where clients mentally "freeze" the moment just before the anxiety starts and reprogram it with their preferred outcome. Since the brain can't distinguish between real and vividly imagined experiences, this technique effectively retrains the brain to respond differently. As a result, BWRT offers rapid and long-lasting change, often within just a few sessions.

How BWRT Helps with Phobias

Phobias are irrational fears that can cause intense anxiety and panic. Common examples include fear of heights, spiders, flying, or confined spaces, while some rare ones include fear of newspapers or beards. These fears often start in childhood, typically due to a traumatic experience or sometimes genetic predisposition. Symptoms can range from nausea and sweating to a racing heart and avoidance behavior, and in severe cases, phobias can disrupt everyday life.



What to Expect in a Session?

BWRT sessions are private and non-invasive. You won't need to share personal or painful stories. Instead, you'll answer a few questions to help determine if the therapy is suitable for you, along with some background information on your issue. The practitioner guides you through the process while you focus on how you want to feel instead of how you feel now. The therapy is solution-focused, goal-oriented, and can be particularly empowering for those seeking fast and lasting relief from fears, phobias, or trauma-based reactions.

You can find out more about [BWRT here](#); The Terence Watts BWRT Institute.

What happens to your brain when you retire?

by Dr. Kavitha Kannan, Counseling Psychologist and Corporate Trainer

Retirement marks a major life transition, not just for your lifestyle but also for your brain. The sudden shift away from structured work life can lead to both positive and challenging changes in mental function. Understanding how retirement affects the brain can help you take steps to stay sharp, resilient, and emotionally healthy.

Cognitive Changes After Retirement:

Retirement brings a major shift in daily mental demands. Without the regular cognitive challenges from work, some retirees may experience mild cognitive slowing. Mental stimulation plays a crucial role in keeping the brain sharp and agile. Studies show that when mental tasks decrease, memory and problem-solving abilities can decline over time. This highlights the importance of staying mentally active even after leaving the workforce.

Risk of Cognitive Decline Without Mental Activity:

The brain thrives on challenge and novelty. Without regular engagement in mentally stimulating activities like learning, problem-solving, or even strategic games, cognitive functions can weaken. Research suggests retirees who remain mentally idle are at greater risk for dementia and memory issues. Continuous brain engagement acts like exercise, keeping neural pathways strong. Retirement should encourage a new chapter of lifelong learning and curiosity.

Importance of Mental Stimulation:

Keeping the brain active after retirement is essential for long-term mental health. Activities like reading, learning new skills, puzzles, or playing musical instruments help create new neural connections. Even small actions, such as switching routines or trying new hobbies, stimulate brain plasticity. Mental challenges can delay or reduce the risk of cognitive diseases.

Just as physical fitness is crucial, mental fitness must be a retirement priority.

Role of Social Connections in Brain Health:

Strong social networks are critical for preserving brain function. Regular social interaction stimulates memory, attention, and emotional regulation, keeping the mind lively. Isolation, on the other hand, can lead to cognitive and emotional decline, especially depression. Social activities like group hobbies, volunteering, or casual meetups can protect the brain's health. Staying socially active is like giving your brain a daily workout.

Emotional Changes and Brain Chemistry:

Retirement can bring emotional shifts that directly affect brain health. Feelings of loss of purpose, loneliness, or stress can alter brain chemistry, increasing the risk of depression and anxiety. These emotional changes, if unmanaged, can negatively impact cognitive functioning. Building resilience and adopting a positive, flexible mindset helps maintain emotional and mental balance. A healthy brain depends equally on emotional wellbeing and intellectual activity.

Mind Matters >>>

Attachment Styles and Relationship Patterns

Our early relational experiences—particularly those with primary caregivers—serve as the blueprint for how we form and maintain connections throughout life.

In the Counseling Psychology, the attachment theory provides a framework to understand the interpersonal dynamics through established styles: secure, anxious-preoccupied, dismissive-avoidant, and fearful-avoidant (or disorganized).

These attachment styles influence our internal working models of self and others, shaping core beliefs around trust, intimacy, and emotional safety.

Clinically, we often see manifestations such as hyperactivation of the attachment system (clinginess, fear of rejection) or deactivation strategies (emotional withdrawal, discomfort with vulnerability).

In therapy, unpacking these relational templates allows for corrective emotional experiences within the therapeutic alliance, where clients can explore maladaptive schemas, increase emotional attunement, and begin to develop earned secure attachment.

Interventions may include schema therapy, emotion-focused techniques, or psychodynamic exploration to facilitate insight and relational growth.



Recognizing and reshaping attachment-related behaviors isn't just about improving relationships—it's about fostering a more cohesive sense of self and cultivating relational resilience across the lifespan.

Dealing with Feelings >>>

Emotional Agility in a Fast-Paced World

by Srikanth Vaigundam, Psychologist and Yoga Instructor

In today's fast-moving world, many people struggle with emotional overload—ranging from anxiety and irritability to numbness or burnout. Yet, few of us are ever taught *how* to feel.

The phrase “dealing with feeling” reminds us that emotions are not problems to be fixed, but signals to be understood. In counseling psychology, we emphasize that all emotions—even the uncomfortable ones—have value.

They act as internal messengers, alerting us to unmet needs, personal boundaries, or deeper psychological patterns that need attention.

Understanding Emotional Agility

Coined by psychologist Dr. Susan David, *emotional agility* refers to our ability to be with our thoughts and emotions in a way that is open, curious, and flexible. Rather than avoiding difficult feelings or becoming entangled in them, emotional agility teaches us to observe emotions without judgment, name them accurately, and choose responses aligned with our values.

In therapy, we often help clients recognize when they're engaging in emotional suppression, denial, or rumination—all of which can contribute to long-term stress and mental health difficulties.

Therapeutic Tools for Emotional Regulation

At SU Counseling Services, our clinicians use evidence-based modalities like **Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)**, **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)**, and **Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT)** to teach practical emotion regulation strategies. These may include skills such as identifying primary versus secondary emotions, increasing distress tolerance, practicing radical acceptance, and enhancing emotional awareness through mindfulness.

We also focus on developing **interoceptive awareness**—the ability to tune into bodily sensations that signal emotional states—so clients can catch emotional reactions early and respond adaptively.

The Role of the Therapeutic Space

Therapy provides a secure, nonjudgmental space where clients can process emotions they may not feel safe expressing elsewhere.

Often, the therapeutic alliance itself becomes a powerful corrective emotional experience—where clients learn that it's safe to express vulnerability, anger, sadness, or fear and be met with empathy instead of rejection.

Over time, this fosters greater emotional resilience and the capacity to self-soothe during periods of distress.

Moving from Reaction to Reflection

Ultimately, dealing with feeling means moving from automatic reactivity to intentional reflection.

It's about giving yourself permission to feel without shame, and learning to regulate emotions in a way that supports your mental health and personal goals. Emotional intelligence is not about being happy all the time—it's about knowing how to respond to the full spectrum of human experience with compassion and clarity.

Forgiveness

by Srikanth Vaigundam

Forgiveness is not about condoning hurtful behavior or forgetting the past—it's about freeing yourself from the emotional burden of anger, resentment, or regret. Practicing forgiveness is a powerful step toward emotional healing and peace of mind. Here's how you can start to build this practice into your life:

- ❖ **Acknowledge the Pain Honestly:** Before you can forgive, you must validate your own feelings. Journaling or talking to a counselor can help you process what happened, how it affected you, and what emotions still linger. Forgiveness doesn't start with forgetting—it starts with feeling.
- ❖ **Practice Self-Forgiveness First:** Many of us carry guilt or self-blame. Begin with forgiving yourself—whether it's for a past decision, a mistake, or how you responded in a difficult situation. Self-forgiveness fosters self-compassion, which is essential before extending grace to others.
- ❖ **Use Guided Visualization or Letter Writing:** Try a visualization exercise where you imagine releasing the person or memory with kindness and strength. Or write a letter to someone you're forgiving—not to send, but to say what you need to say, and let go of what you no longer wish to carry.
- ❖ **Create a Forgiveness Ritual:** Symbolic actions can help release emotional weight. Burn the letter, drop a stone in water, or light a candle as a way of marking your intention to forgive and move forward. Make it meaningful to you.
- ❖ **Make It a Daily Check-In:** Forgiveness is not a one-time event—it's an ongoing practice. Each day, ask yourself: What am I still holding onto? Can I soften around it today, even just a little? Small acts of release, over time, lead to lasting emotional freedom.

Reminder: Forgiveness is a gift you give yourself—not for the sake of the past, but for the peace of your future. At CalmYourMind.life, we encourage you to approach it gently, one breath and one practice at a time.

Cultivating a Positive Mindset

by Sudhakar Haridoss

In challenging times, maintaining a positive mindset isn't about ignoring difficulties—it's about shifting your perspective to find strength, hope, and growth within them. Here are a few counseling-informed strategies to help you begin cultivating a more positive, resilient mindset in your everyday life:

Practice Cognitive Reframing: Your thoughts shape your reality. Try noticing negative automatic thoughts and gently challenge them. **Ask:** Is this thought helpful? Is it based on fact or fear? Replace harsh self-talk with more balanced, supportive inner dialogue.

Focus on What You Can Control: Anxiety often thrives in uncertainty. Redirect your energy toward what's within your control—your actions, your attitude, and your self-care routines. Let go of what you can't change, and ground yourself in the present moment.

Express Gratitude Daily: Regularly reflecting on what you're thankful for—even small things—can rewire your brain to notice the good. Try writing down three things each evening that brought you joy, comfort, or a sense of peace.

Surround Yourself with Supportive Energy: Connect with people who uplift you. Limit exposure to negativity, whether it's toxic conversations or draining media. Community matters—choose spaces that nurture optimism and emotional safety.

Embrace Mindfulness and Self-Compassion: A positive mindset doesn't mean being cheerful all the time—it means being kind to yourself even when things are tough. Practice mindfulness to stay present, and remind yourself: It's okay to have hard days.

Remember: A positive mindset isn't a destination — it's a practice. At CalmYourMind.life, we're here to support you on that journey, one thought at a time.

we are *here to listen...*

Reach out to us at
www.calmyourmind.life



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Editor's Message

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the second edition of our
CalmYourMind.life eNewsletter!

In this issue of **CalmYourMind.life** where we explore ways to nurture emotional resilience and mental well-being. Dive into expert insights with Dr. G.V. Kumar, discover Brain Working Recursive Therapy (BWRT), and learn how retirement, emotional agility, and forgiveness shape a positive mindset. Let's journey together toward a calmer, stronger mind!

At **CalmYourMind.life**, we believe in creating a safe, compassionate space where everyone feels heard and supported. This eNewsletter is an extension of that commitment, bringing valuable insights and tools to your doorstep.

Thank you for being part of our community. Together, let's continue to prioritize mental health and work towards a brighter, healthier future for all.

Best Regards

Ranee Sen

Counseling Psychologist

Editor, **CalmYourMind.life** eNewsletter

"Out of your vulnerabilities will come your strength" — Sigmund Freud