Peer-Based Group Well-being Coaching as a tool for Promoting Faculty and Staff well being —a campus culture-change initiative

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OBJECTIVES

1. Describe a model for group-based, peer well-being coaching.

2. Discuss how group-based peer coaching can impact overall well-being for faculty and staff within an academic community.
THANKS TO OUR TEAM:

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE (GAC):
1. Stephen Bennett, PsyD,
2. Judy Douglas
3. Heather Dale, PA-C

Jayne Sommers, MA [GAC alumni, PhD student at UMN]

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA (UMN) — CENTER FOR SPIRITUALITY AND HEALING:
1. Karen Lawson, MD, ABIHM
2. Becky Gorman, PA
• 2005 UMN launched the first graduate training program in Integrative Health Coaching at a major 4-year University,
• gained significant experience in design and implementation of specific educational curriculum,
• including the development of a foundation model—the 4-Pillars of Health Coaching.
• In recent years, exploring professional health coaching in a group setting.
The 4-Pillars of Health Coaching

- Mindful Presence
- Safe & Sacred Space
- Authentic Communication
- Self-Awareness
BACKGROUND--GAC

- Over 5 years of accelerating wellbeing efforts,
- Task force on Wellbeing had already developed a comprehensive Gustavus Wellbeing Model, offered MBSR and contemplative practices, as well as, workshops on vocation, for faculty and students.
- 2012, GAC committed “to purposefully foster the health and wellbeing of individual members of the college, creating a healthy organizational culture in which all members of the community can thrive personally and professionally.”
Gustavus Adolphus College Wellness Model
PURPOSE

In a collaborative team, these two groups came together to:

1. develop a model of peer-based, group well-being coaching to support a cultural shift toward greater overall well-being on an academic campus;

2. to pilot this model with staff and faculty, prior to bringing to the student body
METHODS

• Jan to May, 2012, blended design team developed a new group well-being coaching model and the curriculum for training.

• June, 10 Gustavus staff, one faculty, and two community professionals took part in a three-day wellbeing coaching training, including deep listening skills, effective questioning, mindful presence, and goal setting.
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GROUP PEER-BASED WELLBEING COACHING

GUSTAVUS and UMN
TRAINING OBJECTIVES (participant)

- Increased self-awareness—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually
- Increased ability to authentically communicate with others
- Increased ability and desire to be in the present moment
- Increased ability and willingness to actively support safe relational space
- Heightened self-empowerment and internal responsibility in making choices which support Well-being at all levels.
TRAINING OBJECTIVES (participant)

- Enhanced understanding of one’s self

- Increased personal resiliency and ability to navigate the stresses and challenges of contemporary life in a way that fosters optimal creativity, joy, health, and productivity

- Increased ability to recognize the importance and validity of self-care

- Increased ability to identify and apply tools for self-awareness, stress management, emotional intelligence, and conscious relationship.
TRAINING OBJECTIVES (PEER-FACILITATOR)

- Agreement to follow Group Ground Rules
  - Define Confidentiality for Group Safety and Freedom
  - Discuss Consistent Expectations
  - Describe and support group values and code of conduct
- Facilitative leadership
  - Demonstrate directing and re-directing
  - Create non-judgmental atmosphere
  - Track and manage participant engagement
  - Manage time flow of group meeting
METHODS

• Of those 13 participants, 8 went on to facilitate four, peer-based coaching groups for 14 Gustavus faculty and staff.
• During summer, groups met 5 to 7 times.
• At the end of each session, participants completed basic evaluation questions:
  1. Please rate your overall experience in your coaching group today (1-4) (1 = not satisfied, 2 = satisfied, 3 = very satisfied, and 4 = extremely satisfied)
  2. Please identify anything you could have done to improve our experience/rating in today’s group?
  3. Any additional comments?
METHODS

On-going:

• During fall, one group of 6 met for 8 weekly sessions.

• In 1/2013, four coaching groups (6 each) met for the four week J-term.

• Some of these faculty facilitators have gone on to mentor students who were trained in Aug. to lead groups of Sophomores as part of a prospective, controlled pilot study in Spring 2013. (Sommer; Bennett)
RESULTS…on-going
The avg. rating from summer participants was 3.6, fall and J-term evaluations both avg 3.4. Qualitative feedback was also highly favorable:
• “The power of authentic communication, support without fixing is a good way to be.”
• “I was able to share my deepest thoughts.”
• “I was honest.”
• “It was wonderful hearing myself talk and set some beginning goals.”
• “Shifted from thinking to doing”
RESULTS—challenges identified

- “Struggled with the impact of friendship and wanting to help/fix/offer a solution”
- “Facilitator struggled with a balance between maintaining the structure of the group while also letting the group be what it needs to be for the members.”
- “Facilitator can be more relaxed/go with flow of process instead of married to structure.”
- “I need to learn how to ask more open questions, rather than giving directions.”
CONCLUSION:

1. This group coaching model, and the pilot for faculty and staff was well received and satisfactory to participants.
2. Faculty/staff groups allowed us to develop model, training, and gain insights from ongoing peer group coaching sessions.
3. This experience has laid helpful groundwork for supporting subsequent student peer-based group coaching initiative, which began in August. (See separate presentation about student pilot evaluation)