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SHOULD PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BE EXORCISED OR EXERCISED IN EATING DISORDER TREATMENT?

New Workshop at 2014 iaedp Symposium Tackles Issue

PEKIN, ILL (Jan. 27, 2014) – Physical activity or exercise is often extolled for its physical and psychological health benefits. Nevertheless, unhealthy physical activity is a common symptom among many eating disorder patients. A new workshop at the 2014 iaedp Symposium in St. Petersburg, Florida, February 26-March 2, will discuss when and how symptomatic exercise might best be treated.

Conventional wisdom suggests that physical activity should not be a part of eating disorder treatment because it would be medically risky and would impede weight restoration in patients who need to gain weight. Additionally, some healthcare professionals believe that some of these patients have an “exercise addiction;” that is, the activity is thought to be out of the patient’s control, and thus should be avoided. Contrary to “conventional wisdom,” the literature on exercise in eating disorder treatment suggests that not only is physical activity safe for eating disorder patients, it is also beneficial.

Kimberli McCallum, MD, CEDS, FAPA, along with co-presenter, Ron A. Thompson, PhD, FAED, will not only explore how symptomatic exercise might best be treated, but will also describe how the idea was presented to the treatment staff at an eating disorder treatment facility, and how it is currently being implemented.

Additionally, both presenters will discuss why intensive treatment, especially at the inpatient or residential level of care, would be the ideal time to re-educate the eating disorder patient regarding cognitions and attitudes related to healthy exercise. It would also present the opportunity to retrain patients regarding how to make exercise fun and social rather than compulsive, as well as how to appropriately use exercise for emotional regulation.

About iaedp: Since 1985, the [International Association of Eating Disorders Professionals](#) has provided education and training standards to an international and multidisciplinary group of various healthcare treatment providers and helping professions.