

# Integration of Whole Health Lifestyle in Women Veterans Primary Care Clinic: A Feasibility Study

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# Objectives

- Describe barriers to lifestyle management in healthcare
- Need for the implementation of an integrative lifestyle management
- Feasibility study results in women Veterans
- The way forward



# Case Study

Frances Fatigued is a 50-year-old African American female Veteran seeing HCP for help with weight loss, overall wellness, and generalized fatigue. She walks once a week for 1 mile and does household chores like cleaning, cooking, and dishwashing.

- BMI 34
- Waist circumference 36 inches
- BP: 140/84
- Heart rate resting 60
- Labs: Lipids, CBC, CMP, TSH, HbA1C unremarkable
- Medical history: Anxiety, Depression, PTSD, Hypertension, Hyperlipidemia, B/L knee osteoarthritis
- Social History: Divorced, past smoker 1.5 ppd quit 2020
- Medications: Atorvastatin, Amlodipine, HCTZ, Sertraline, Vitamin D
- Screening: Mammogram, colonoscopy unremarkable
- Immunizations: Up to date

# Need for Comprehensive Integrated Lifestyle

- The leading cause of death for adults in the United States are related to lifestyle — tobacco use, poor diet, physical inactivity, and excessive alcohol consumption <sup>1</sup>
- Merely encouraging patients at the end of an office visit to attempt lifestyle changes yields limited results <sup>2</sup>
- Provider counseling promotes healthy habits <sup>3</sup>



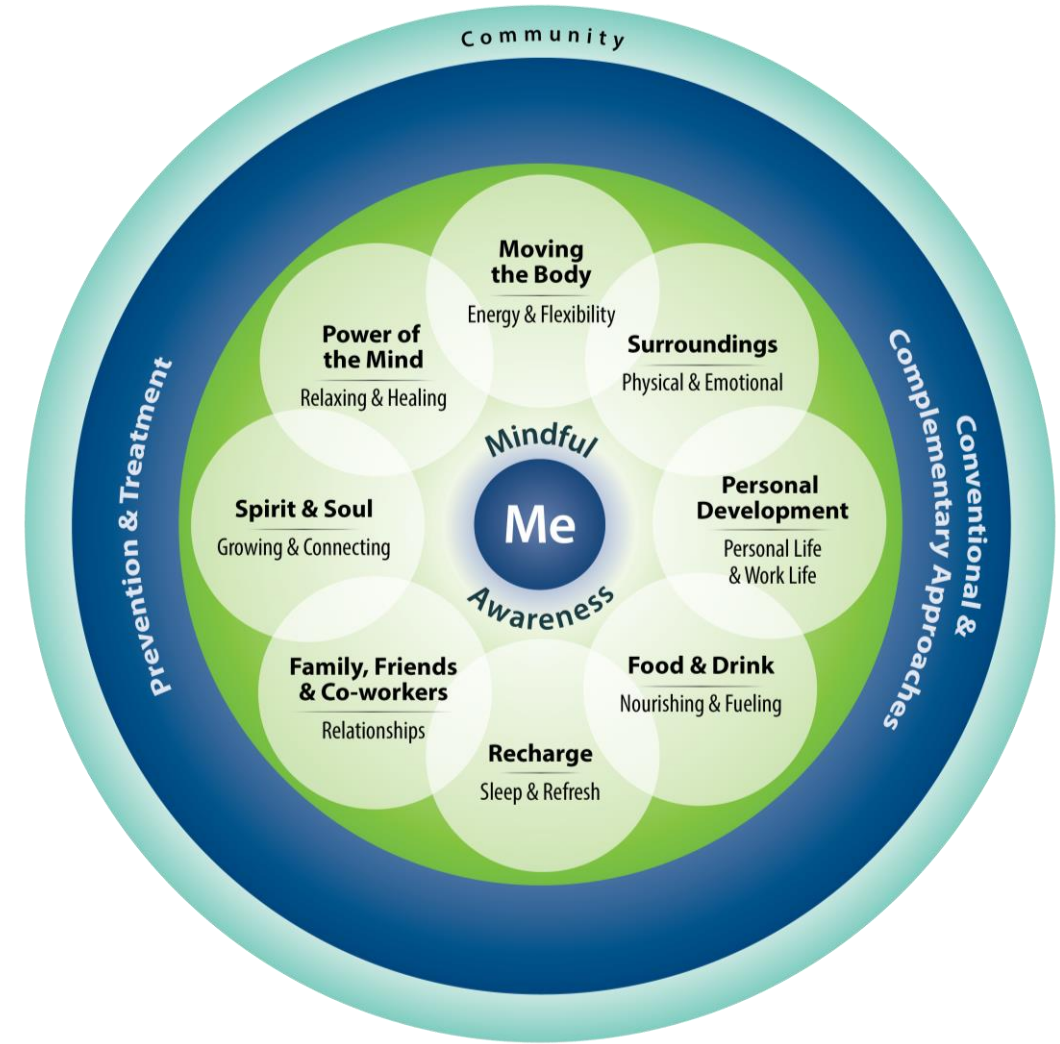
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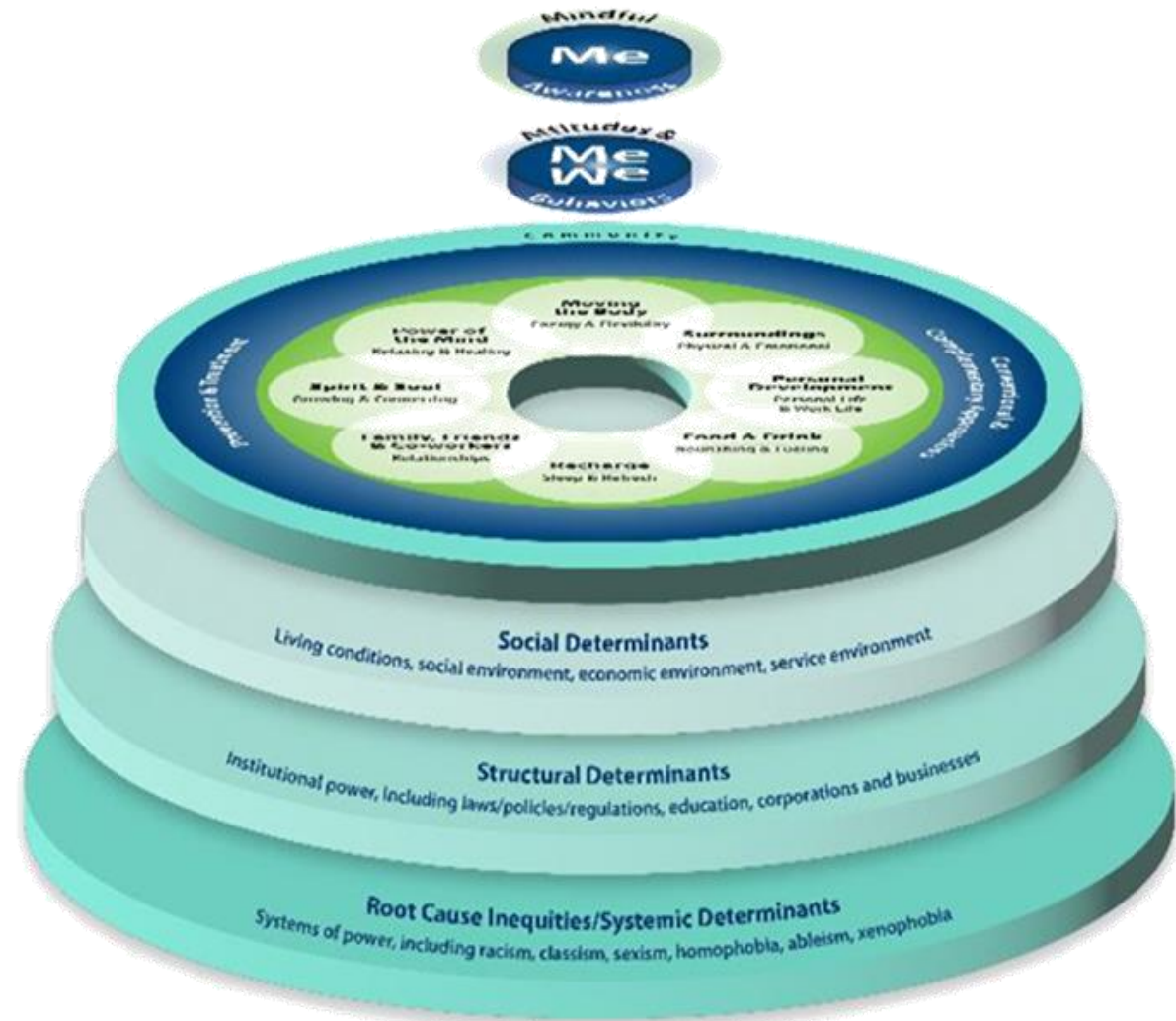
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# What is Whole Health?

Whole Health is an approach to healthcare that **empowers and equips** people to take charge of their **health and well-being** and to live their **life to the fullest**.



# Moving from “what’s the matter” to “what matters?”



# Whole Health Lifestyle at Women's Health Cleveland VA

## Interdisciplinary team

- Physician
- Physical therapist
- Registered Dietician
- Psychologist
- Whole Health Coach
- Chaplain

## Components

- Initial 60-minute lifestyle assessment
- Exercise FITT (Frequency, intensity, type, time), sleep and nutrition prescriptions
- Resources: Pantry lists, blender, recipe books

## 4-7-8 Breathing





# Exercise Prescription

**FITT personalized to their baseline cardiopulmonary health, MSK health**

## Cardiovascular

Frequency : 4 times a week

- Intensity:
- Moderate to vigorous effort
- Talk sing test
- Rating of perceived exertion scale
- Heart rate range

Time : 150 mins per week of moderate exercise or  
75 minutes per week of vigorous exercise



A blank medical prescription form with the following fields: Patient Name, Address, Prescription, Refill (0 1 2 3 4 5), Label, Signature, and Date.

## Resistance exercise

Frequency: At least 2 days/week up to every other day

Intensity:

- Moderate effort
- Rating of perceived exertion scale
- Percent of 1 repetition maximum

Time: 8 to 12 Reps  
2 to 3 sets



# Nutrition Prescription

- 1 Bowl of steamed Broccoli three times a week
- Salad with greens for lunch four times per week
- Whole grains one meal daily
- Three colors of food daily
- Reduce processed meats to 1 time per week



# Didactics and QI Metrics

QI questionnaires (GAD-7, PHQ9, AAQ-II, LSS, VA pain) and PROMIS-10 scores completed at the start and the end of the program



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## Shared Medical Appointments

1. Orientation and Introduction to Whole Health
2. Sleep Physiology and Management
3. Healthy Nutrition predominantly Whole Food Plant-based Diet
4. Physical Activity and Moving the Body
5. Skin Care and Infection Prevention and Control
6. Mental health and positive psychology
7. Mindfulness and Stress Management
8. Spirituality
9. Work life purpose
10. Wrap Up

# Results

- The participants at the end of the study had statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ) improvements in depression (decreased 49%), anxiety (decreased 50%), neuroplasticity (decreased 19%), and pain scores (decreased 20%).
- At the end of the program, all participants felt they had the knowledge to heal and were empowered to take care of their own health.

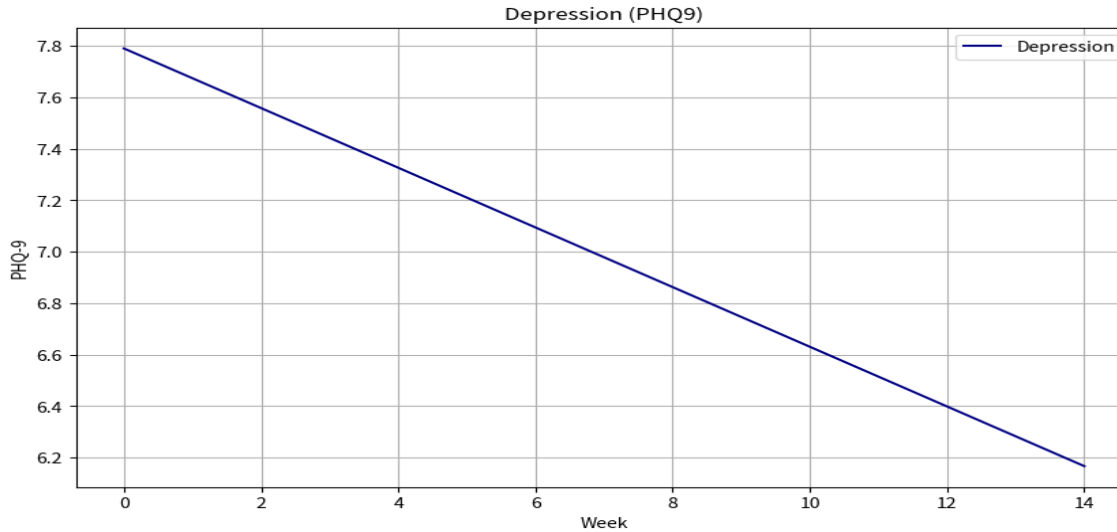


Figure 1: PHQ 9 –Depression  
49.42%  
Decrease in  
Symptoms

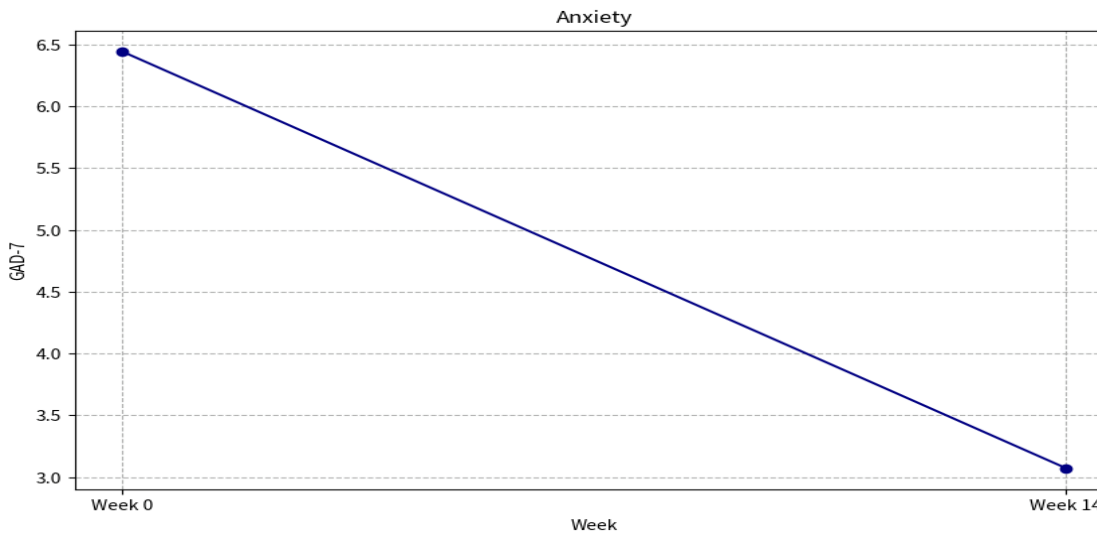


Figure 2: GAD 7 (Anxiety)-  
49.81%  
Decrease in  
Symptoms

# Way Forward

- Whole Health lifestyle Study in Primary Care men
- Expand the program as a referral-based WHLS (Whole Health Lifestyle) PACT (Patient aligned care team)
- Community building among Veterans

# Acknowledgements

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Questions