iRest® Integrative Restoration, A Meditative Approach to Healing: Bringing Calm and Ease to Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence and/or Stalking

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ABSTRACT:
Participants are guided through an 8 step-meditation protocol; developer: Richard C. Miller, “Emotions”, “Beliefs” – thoughts or beliefs that are held (www.irest.us) “Heartfelt Desire” – what they want more than anything else in life, “Intentions”, “Feelings” and based and is shown to have positive effects on a number of biological and psychological conditions in PTSD disorder (PTSD) and other stress symptoms and increases resiliency for survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) and/or stalking. Through purposeful sampling, two participants were selected to receive the intervention for 8-mediation sessions over a 5-week period. In order to compare differences, one participant met criteria for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and one participant did not. Findings indicate the iRest has the capacity to impact PTSD symptoms and increase resiliency for survivors of intimate partner violence and/or stalking.

LITERATURE REVIEW:
• Prior iRest research has addressed military trauma populations (iRest).
• No published studies of iRest research with IPV survivors in general and as an intervention for trauma recovery in particular.
• No published studies on the impact of meditation on survivors of stalking trauma
• IPV is a significant social problem; severe physical violence 1/4 women; 16% of women have experienced stalking (NSVS).
• Psychological abuse by an adult intimate partner rather than more severe types of physical abuse appear to cause a higher incidence of PTSD with consequences that can include depression, hypervigilant behavior and hyperarousal (Mechanic).
• Avoidant coping is an important aspect of PTSD that survivors and helping professionals need to consider when evaluating interventions, as mindfulness meditation seems to play a significant part in the reduction of avoidance (Lang).
• Increased resiliency can impact a survivors ability to cope and find purpose in their lives from their suffering and to have an effect on their recovery (Anderson).

RESEARCH AIM:
The purpose of this research study is to examine if iRest reduces symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other stress symptoms and increases resiliency for survivors of intimate partner violence and/or stalking.

INTRODUCTION: IREST INTEGRATIVE RESTORATION
IRest – Integrative Restoration Yoga Nidra is a practice of deep relaxation and meditation that is evidence based and is shown to have positive effects on a number of biological and psychological conditions in which participants explore areas including their “Inner Resource” – place of safety and security, “Heartfelt Desire” – what they want more than anything else in life, “Intentions”, “Feelings” and “Emotions”, “Beliefs” – thoughts or beliefs that are held (www.irest.us).

Participants are guided through an 8 step-meditation protocol; developer: Richard C. Miller, PhD
• Week one: Assessment, Consent, and Orientation Meditation #1 Inner Resource
• Week two: Meditation #2 Heartfelt Desire and Intention Meditation #3 Body Sensing and Breath Sensing
• Week three: Meditation #4 Feelings and Emotions Meditation #5 Beliefs
• Week four: Meditation #6 Joy Meditation #7 Pure Awareness/Pure Being
• Week five: Meditation #8 Integration/Inner Strength Interview and Post Assessment

OUTCOME MEASURES
• Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist (PCL-C), a self-report 17-item measure of PTSD.
• Connor Davidson Resiliency Scale (CD-RISC), a 25-item measure designed to understand resiliency related to psycho-social-spiritual aspects.
• MQ – Mindfulness Questionnaire, short form of Five Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire (Bartlett).
• Depression, Anxiety, Stress (DASS) Scale, a 21-item measure with five severity ratings: normal, mild, moderate, severe, and extremely severe.
• Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), a 5-item measure.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS METHODS:
This study is currently ongoing; additional data will be collected from a 10-week format (1 x week) to compare with a 5-week protocol (2 x week).

Data Analysis
Data for this project includes verbatim transcripts of digitally-voice recorded interviews that are transcribed and coded. Journal entries, a demographics scale, 5 – measures: PTSD Check List (PCL-C) Scale, Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale (DASS), Connor-Davidson Scale (CD-RISC), Perceived Stress Scale and (PSS), Mindfulness Questionnaire (MQ).

FINDINGS
The preliminary findings of the single-subject design show a reduction in PTSD symptoms and an increase in resiliency. For the participant that met criteria for PTSD, there was a greater increase in resiliency and a clinically significant reduction in PTSD symptomology.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION:
• Participant one (P1) did not meet criteria for PTSD.
• Participant two (P2) did meet criteria for PTSD.

CONCLUSIONS
• iRest proves to be beneficial for those who have or have not met criteria for PTSD. Through this study, however, we have found that individuals who are living with PTSD symptoms, such as nightmares and anxiety, experience a reduction of symptoms in general, however, those who meet criteria for PTSD have a clinically significant reduction in PTSD symptomology such as difficulty sleeping, anxiety, depression, and anger.
• Participants, regardless of criteria met for PTSD, mention a sense of loss due to their traumatic experience and that through iRest they reconnected with the inner self they thought no longer existed.
• It is through this reconnection with self that survivors were able to increase their resiliency, coping, self-efficacy, awareness, self-reliance, sense of calm, patience, and connect to family and peer relationships through pride and the ability to help with the knowledge they have gained [teaching others through the iRest skills they have learned].

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REFERENCES
References are available, please see researcher for handout.