



The Healthy Thinking Initiative

Stress Management and Mental Health Clinics, Inc.

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(Date)

Dear Dr. _____,

We are currently working with a patient of yours, _____, (Date of Birth _____) in our mindfulness training. During the group, we offer the opportunity, for those who are interested, to investigate the possibility of reducing or even eliminating their anti-depressant medication. Forty percent of those who regularly practice the skills taught in mindfulness based cognitive meditation have been shown in clinical studies to be able to remain free of a depressive disorder, without medication, throughout a three year follow up (Ma & Teasdale, 2002; Teasdale, 2000).

We do not advise any of our participants to discontinue medication unless they consult first with their prescribing professional. We do not recommend that any of our participants discontinue their medication if they are still experiencing symptoms of depression or if they have not completed their recommended course of treatment.

If a participant expresses an interest in reducing or eliminating medication, we require that they first consult their medical provider. At the half-way point of our eight session group we request that they complete a depression symptom inventory. In consultation with their doctor, they are then ready to begin to follow the prescribed path to discontinue their anti-depressant medication. At this time in their training, they have learned enough about mindfulness meditation that they can utilize these skills to manage feelings of sadness or distress without becoming depressed. We repeat the depression inventory again at the last of the eight sessions to assess whether they remain free of symptoms of depression. We follow up with these participants four months after the end of our training and we administer the inventory for a third time. If they are still without symptoms, we provide them with additional inventories so that they can continue to assess the level of depressive symptoms for the next 18 months.

If a participant begins to show symptoms of depression again, after discontinuing their medication, we recommend that they immediately contact their prescribing professional to re-assess the necessary course of treatment.

There are many participants who are satisfied with their medication and want to learn the skills of mindfulness meditation as another tool in their efforts to remain free of the symptoms of depression. We support those who choose to remain on medication.

We do not recommend reduction or elimination of medication to any of our participants, but we do make them aware of the opportunities suggested in the clinical research.

If you, as the prescribing professional, do not believe that it is advisable that this participant discontinue his or her medication, we will support your decision fully. We understand that you have a unique perspective on your patient that encompasses all aspects of his or her well being.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at my office, (Phone: 262-544-6486).

Respectfully submitted,