

Invited Presenter

CBM;

Become a Better Practitioner by Being Your Own Best Behavior Therapist

Chair: Amy Murrell (University of North Texas)

ROBERT STROMER (George Brown College)



During the first 3.5 decades of his career, Robert was a school psychologist, educational consultant and program coordinator, mental health clinician, university teacher, and researcher. Published accounts of his work are mostly about research on stimulus control and derived performances in humans. He served on the editorial boards of the *Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior* and *The Behavior Analyst*, and was both a board member and an associate editor for the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*. For the last 12 years, Robert's been teaching in George Brown College's behavioral science programs for

undergraduates: he also supervised services for a classroom of children with autism. In areas of personal and professional development, his current interests concern matters of medical and health care, self-management, treatment adherence, behavior therapy, and today's mindfulness-based therapies and self-help practices. He maintains an ambitious program of self-experimentation on matters of health and wellness, coaches others in such practices, and pursues advanced studies and teacher certifications in mindfulness meditation and compassion. Going forward he hopes to share lessons learned from self-help investigations with college students, parents, and colleagues, and with peers who are enjoying old age as best they can.

Abstract: Learning to be “your own best therapist” may be essential to becoming a competent and joyful practitioner. An informed self-care repertoire often leads to satisfying ways to manage stress and deal with emotional issues; and, importantly, it prepares the practitioner to help other analysts take care of themselves and their clients. To accomplish such results, we suggest a self-care approach that draws from basic learning principles and self-management strategies, combined with the values, attitudes, and practices of mindfulness meditation. Using this approach, I'll describe how I revamped my daily life for a more satisfying and productive existence. Initially, the aim was to address health and emotional issues; later, the focus turned to maintenance and elaboration of skills learned. My procedures targeted both public and private events and included: direct and indirect measures, journaling, formal and informal practices, and social networking. Recent variants of the program use neurofeedback and experience sampling technologies to monitor and evaluate formal and informal practices, respectively. The outcomes have been remarkably satisfying, “cusp like” in nature, and impactful across several key personal values: health and wellness, relationships, professional and personal growth. Colleagues have conducted similar investigations and achieved satisfying results. College students have responded favorably to a program designed expressly for emerging adults, and selected graduates are being groomed as peer facilitators in the program. Our hope is to offer the program college wide to help address growing concerns about students' health and wellness.