

The background features a mix of organic, abstract shapes in various colors: a large orange shape at the top, a light blue shape on the left, a red shape on the right, and a brown shape at the bottom right. There are also green leaves on the right side and a pattern of red dots on the left side. A thin black line curves across the top left.

THE EFFECTS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH

By: Logan Sherrer, a doctorate of occupational
therapy student

OBJECTIVES

1. Participants can explain how engaging with the climbing community can support their climbing ability
2. Participants are able to explain the benefits of community engagement for mental health
3. Participants possess a greater value in community engagement to support their mental health



WHAT DOES
COMMUNITY MEAN
TO YOU?

ABOUT COMMUNITY

- Community can be found in a variety of settings
 - Shared sports
 - Hobby groups
 - Cultural groups
 - Family
 - Religious groups
- Community offers a shared physical and social space where individuals have a shared ideology and common interests
 - Commonalities allow us to relate to one another
 - Within these communities we build close relationships and friendships
- Community provides us with a sense of belonging and a safety net for when we may need to ask for help or comfort

The background features several abstract, organic shapes in vibrant colors: a large orange shape in the top left, a blue shape below it, a light green shape in the top right, a dark red shape on the right side, and a yellow shape in the bottom left with a pattern of small red dots. In the bottom right corner, there is a stylized illustration of a plant with green leaves and a thin black stem.

● HOW DOES SPENDING
TIME WITH OTHERS
MAKE YOU FEEL?

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Community provides us with a support system
 - Communities may offer us support through hard times
 - Community support may give us additional piece of mind when enduring mental health struggles, illness, or other tough situations
- Being around like minded individuals gives us joy
 - When we around people like us it is easier to let our guard down and relax
- Building friendships allows us to have others to lean on for advice or company
 - The root of friendships is a shared activity, space, or interest
 - From the foundations of friendship we continue to develop friendships through those commonalities and they continue to build as you spend more time together

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY engagement (CONT.)

- Community engagement has shown to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety
 - When spending time with others we are able to clear our mind of stressors and live in the moment
- There is such a thing as negative community which can have an inverse effect on mental health
 - It's important to assess your social surroundings and if things appear unhealthy find ways to modify these situations
 - Unhealthy community engagement can be associated with socioeconomic status and sometimes may be difficult to avoid



The background features several abstract, organic shapes in vibrant colors: a large orange shape in the top left, a blue shape below it, a light green shape in the top right, a dark red shape on the right side, and a yellow shape in the bottom left with a pattern of small red dots. In the bottom right corner, there is a stylized illustration of a plant with green leaves and a thin black stem.

**DO YOU FEEL THAT THE
COMMUNITY ASPECT OF
CLIMBING INCREASES YOUR
enjoyment? HOW?**

CLIMBING COMMUNITY

- Climbing is a sport that has a reputation for being community driven
- Through climbing we have the opportunity to work with others to discuss beta, belay one another, and shared accomplishments
- Finding community in climbing
 - Many gyms offer social meet ups
 - Respectfully offer belays to other
 - Cheer on a stranger
 - Use social media for community outreach to your local climbing community



The background features several abstract, organic shapes in vibrant colors: a large orange shape in the top left, a blue shape below it, a light green shape in the top right, a dark red shape on the right side, and a yellow shape in the bottom left with a pattern of small red dots. In the bottom right corner, there is a stylized illustration of a plant with green leaves and a thin black stem.

● WHAT ARE WAYS THAT
YOU'VE FOUND TO HELP
BUILD COMMUNITY IN
YOUR LIVES?

HOW TO FIND COMMUNITY

- When in a negative mental health space it can be difficult to put oneself out there to find community
 - In these situations start small
 - Spend time with one person you are comfortable with
 - Give a good friend or family member a call
- Many hobbies have communities or groups that meet to share common interests
 - Speak to people who work at community spaces
 - Many hobbies and locations that host these hobbies have groups or community engagement events
- Social media has become a great place to connect with like minded people
 - Facebook groups
 - Organize your own community outreach

survey



GROUP SIGN-UPS

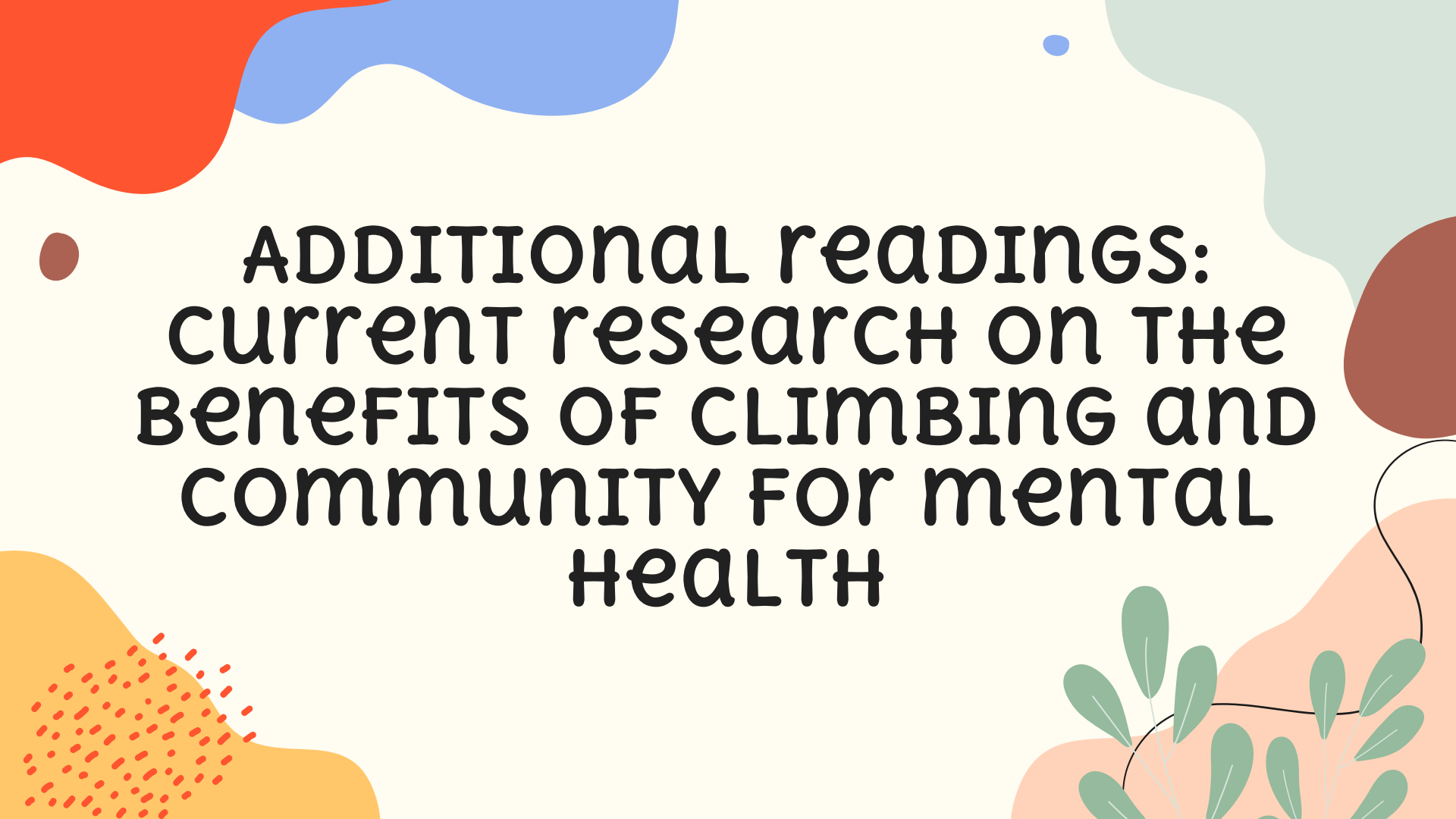
Thank you for your interest in The Spot's mindfulness series! If you want to learn more consider using the links below to sign up for one or more mental health groups led by Logan Sherrer, a Doctorate of Occupational therapy student.

[Denver](#)

[Golden](#)

[Louisville](#)

[Thornton](#)

The background features several abstract, organic shapes in shades of orange, blue, and light green. In the bottom right corner, there is a stylized illustration of a plant with green leaves and a thin black stem. A small brown dot is located to the left of the text.

**ADDITIONAL READINGS:
CURRENT RESEARCH ON THE
BENEFITS OF CLIMBING AND
COMMUNITY FOR MENTAL
HEALTH**

EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Social, cultural, and community-engagement have shown to have a relationship with positive mental health outcomes
- Social engagement through community groups and shared hobbies/activities provides a sense of belonging and positive mental health
 - Community groups may include hobbies, sports, or religious/ cultural gatherings
 - Mode of community engagement shows consistent results of positive mental health outcomes regardless of how you are engaging
- There was found to be a decrease in mental health related to reduced community engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic

Information from:

Fancourt, D., Bhui, K., Chatterjee, H., Crawford, P., Crossick, G., DeNora, T., & South, J. (2021). Social, cultural and community engagement and mental health: cross-disciplinary, co-produced research agenda. *BJPsych Open*, 7(1), e3. doi:10.1192/bjo.2020.133

EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS OF ROCK CLIMBING

- Exercise alone has long time been a proven way to reduce anxiety (Karg et al., 2020)
- Exercise causes our body to increase heart rate and respiration to trick the mind into responding to a fear response even if something is not actually there
- Climbing as a form of exercise or recreation is found to be even more effective than traditional exercise alone (Karg et al., 2020)
 - Outlet for adrenaline
 - Clears the mind
 - Community engagement and support

Information from:

Karg, N., Dorscht, L., Kornhuber, J., & Luttenberger, K. (2020). Bouldering psychotherapy is more effective in the treatment of depression than physical exercise alone: Results of a multicentre randomised controlled intervention study. *BMC Psychiatry*, 20(116), 1-13.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-020-02518-y>

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Evidence suggests that community-based exercise is an effective means to provide mental health support to marginalized and lower-socioeconomic communities (Lamb et al., 2015)
- These individuals may not have as easy or comfortable access to traditional mental health services
 - Community engagement and exercise reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Climbers should continue to provide a welcoming and culturally sensitive community (Lamb et al., 2015)
 - Supportive communities help to reduce external stressors

Information from:

Lamb, Dowrick, C., Burroughs, H., Beatty, S., Edwards, S., Bristow, K., Clarke, P., Hammond, J., Waheed, W., Gabbay, M., & Gask, L. (2015). Community Engagement in a complex intervention to improve access to primary mental health care for hard-to-reach groups. *Health Expectations : an International Journal of Public Participation in Health Care and Health Policy*, 18(6), 2865–2879. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.12272>

References

- Fancourt, D., Bhui, K., Chatterjee, H., Crawford, P., Crossick, G., DeNora, T., & South, J. (2021). Social, cultural and community engagement and mental health: cross-disciplinary, co-produced research agenda. *BJPsych Open*, 7(1), e3. doi:10.1192/bjo.2020.133
- Karg, N., Dorscht, L., Kornhuber, J., & Luttenberger, K. (2020). Boulderling psychotherapy is more effective in the treatment of depression than physical exercise alone: Results of a multicentre randomised controlled intervention study. *BMC Psychiatry*, 20(116), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-020-02518-y>
- Lamb, Dowrick, C., Burroughs, H., Beatty, S., Edwards, S., Bristow, K., Clarke, P., Hammond, J., Waheed, W., Gabbay, M., & Gask, L. (2015). Community Engagement in a complex intervention to improve access to primary mental health care for hard-to-reach groups. *Health Expectations : an International Journal of Public Participation in Health Care and Health Policy*, 18(6), 2865–2879. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.12272>
- Park, E. Y., Oliver, T. R., Peppard, P. E., & Malecki, K. C. (2023). Sense of community and mental health: a cross-sectional analysis from a household survey in Wisconsin. *Family medicine and community health*, 11(2), e001971. <https://doi.org/10.1136/fmch-2022-001971>