TERESA HARRIS, 
PSYCHOLOGIST AND LICENSED 
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR

Hometown: Bay City, Texas
City of residence: Satellite Beach
Family: Daughter, Kaelyn Harris
Hobbies: Swimming, scuba diving, reading
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KRISTIN WOODLING, LICENSED 
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR

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KNOW YOUR HEALTH PRO

Practice takes a team approach to well-being

By George White
For FLORIDA TODAY

Psychologist Teresa Harris is heading up a new team at Pamper Your Mind, including licensed mental health counselor Kristin Woodling.

The idea is to have an accredited facility with several related disciplines, based on the idea of an all-encompassing health spa. But this one centers on the mind. The office includes a chiropractor, dietitian, esthetician, massage therapist and personal trainer. They also supervise mental health counselor interns.

"The idea is that women will easily say they've had a stressful week and go get a massage or pedicure, but the idea of going to counseling and acknowledging that they are doing it is hard," Woodling said.

"The idea of Pamper Your Mind is to make it more accessible if you're having a hard time; it's OK to reach out for help and we've created this office around that idea," she said.

Harris and Woodling discussed their new idea and how each of their specialties fit in the equation.

QUESTION: What are the key differences between a psychologist and a licensed mental health counselor?

Harris: A psychologist has more education and has easier access — more employment opportunities — within universities as a teacher. I coordinate a counseling program at Webster University. I wouldn't be able to do that if I didn't have a doctoral degree. We also can test formally (IQ, achievement, personality) to merge into our biopsychosocial histories that people give us in order to give a full picture of that.

Woodling: A licensed mental health counselor focuses more on the talk therapy, setting treatment goals and helping get clients to where they want to be emotionally. Every counselor has their own theory and their own approach. I'm more with a cognitive-behavioral emphasis where we focus on (how) thought and emotions are tied in with our behaviors. In addition to individual counseling, we have group therapy and couples counseling.

Q: How do you deal with the stigma attached to seeking mental health counseling?

Woodling: When I talk to my clients, sometimes they have a tendency to think other people's problems are worse than (theirs). I don't need counseling or I should just be able to get over this, so they wait until they hit rock bottom before they acknowledge some support or help would be helpful in their lives. Removing that stigma, once you realize that you think you could benefit from support. ... It doesn't mean you're crazy coming in to (us).

Harris: It's really difficult if we're going through a problem where we're jolted or whatever. If we're educated and we're smart, we tend to have trouble with buying into that we need someone else to help us with our problems.

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