INTerventions

Articles testing the applied science and implementation of mindfulness-based interventions


Bayesian case-control study. Psychologica Belgica. [link]


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**ASSOCIATIONS**

Articles examining the correlation and mechanism between mindfulness and other variables

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Chesin, M. S., Jeglic, E. L. (2015). Factors associated with recurrent suicidal ideation among racially and ethnically diverse college students with a history of suicide attempt: The role of mindfulness. *Archives of Suicide Research*. [link]


palliative care professionals seeking mindfulness training: Prevalence and vulnerability. *Palliative Medicine.* [link]


**METHODS**

Articles developing empirical procedures to advance the measurement and methodology of mindfulness


**REVIEWS**

Articles reviewing content areas of mindfulness or conducting meta-analyses of published research

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TRIALS

Research studies newly funded by the National Institutes of Health (JUL 2015)

Chicago State University (A. El-Alfy, PI). Urban mindfulness and addictions research. NIH/NIDA project #5R24DA036410-03. [link]

Colorado State University (L. Shomaker, PI). Depression and insulin resistance in adolescents. NIH/NICHD project #5R00HD069516-05. [link]

Miriam Hospital (M. Carey, PI). Mindfulness training to improve ART adherence and reduce risk behavior among persons living with HIV. NIH/NCCIH project #1R34AT008930-01. [link]

Northern Illinois University (J. Crouch, PI). Reactions to prolonged infant crying in parents at risk for child physical abuse.

NIH/NICHD project #1R15HD080041-01A1. [link]

Pacific University (M. Christopher, PI). A pilot trial of mindfulness-based resilience training among police officers. NIH/NCCIH project #1R21AT008854-01. [link]

University of Iowa (F. Abboud, PI). Does anxiety cause vascular dysfunction through inflammation and SNS activation? NIH/NHLBI project #5P01HL014388-42. [link]

University of New Mexico (M. Pearson, PI). Psychological and neural mechanisms of mindfulness and cognitive retraining. NIH/NIAAA project #1R21AA023661-01. [link]

University of Wisconsin-Madison (R. Davidson, PI). Neural and behavioral correlates of the impact of meditation. NIH/NCCIH project #5P01AT004952-08. [link]

Wake Forest University (R. Wells, PI). Mindfulness and mechanisms of pain processing in adults with migraines. NIH/NCCIH project #1K23AT008406-01A1. [link]

Wayne State University (A. Cano, PI). Preliminary test of an integrative intervention to alleviate chronic pain and IMP. NIH/NCCIH project #5R21AT007939-02. [link]
**Highlights**

*A summary of select studies from the issue, providing a snapshot of some of the latest research findings*

The high emotional demands of public school teaching can contribute to impaired teacher morale, professional burnout, and the fact that 40-50% of teachers quit teaching within their first five years on the job. Prior research supports the efficacy of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) in improving teacher well-being and reducing burnout, but what processes underlie their effectiveness? In a randomized, controlled trial, **Taylor et al. [Mindfulness]** tested how a MBI affected teachers’ emotional regulation, forgiveness, and compassion, and whether these factors contributed, in turn, to reducing stress.

The researchers randomly assigned a predominantly female cohort of 59 Canadian elementary and secondary school teachers to either a Stress Management and Relaxation Training (SMART) program or a wait-list control. The 9-week SMART program shared components with MBSR (the body scan, sitting, walking, movement and eating meditations) and included specific training in emotional regulation, forgiveness and loving-kindness. Participants completed self-report measures before and after training and at four-month follow-up. Participants were also interviewed after training about job stress and attitudes towards difficult students and colleagues.

The teachers found the SMART program "quite helpful." SMART program teachers showed significant and large declines in occupational stress compared to controls, a difference that remained marginally significant at four month follow-up. In post-training interviews, SMART participants used significantly fewer negative emotional words than controls when discussing work stressors, and used significantly more positive emotional words than controls when describing challenging students. SMART participants also showed significant and moderately sized improvements on measures of emotional regulation efficacy and dispositional forgiveness compared to controls. Dispositional forgiveness was significantly associated with decreased stress.

This study extends previous findings supporting the efficacy of MBIs in reducing teacher stress, and clarifies distinct processes contributing to their potential efficacy. It is limited by its small sample size, lack of active controls and lack of in-classroom behavioral measures.

Adolescence is a time of rapid growth in young people’s capacity to self-regulate their emotions and maintain focus on goals, as well as a time of rapid brain development. In a longitudinal study, **Friedel et al. [Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience]** explored the relationship between changes in brain areas previously linked to mindfulness and the development of the tendency to be mindful of experience (dispositional mindfulness) in adolescents. The researchers studied the prefrontal cortex (an area involved in goal directed behavior and emotional regulation) and the insula (an area involved in the awareness of internal bodily states). As adolescents mature, their cerebral cortices tend to thin out as neurons are selectively pruned and circuits become more efficient. The researchers predicted that a higher degree of cortical thinning would correlate with higher levels of dispositional mindfulness.

The researchers analyzed the magnetic resonance images (MRIs) of 82 male and female adolescents who were scanned at ages 16 and 19, and also completed the Mindfulness Attention and Awareness Scale (MAAS) at age 19. The participants were also assessed on measures of temperament and intelligence. Dispositional mindfulness was positively correlated with measures of cognitive reappraisal, attention, and inhibitory control, and negatively correlated with frustration, aggression, and depressed mood. The researchers analyzed possible relationships between cortical thinning and dispositional mindfulness in twenty regions of the prefrontal and insular cortex. Prefrontal cortical thinning proved unrelated to dispositional mindfulness, but was correlated with IQ. There was a significant correlation between a lesser degree of left anterior insular thinning and greater dispositional mindfulness. Although not predicted, this finding partially accords with prior cross-sectional research showing a relationship between greater insular thickness and mindfulness and meditation practice in adults.

This is the first longitudinal study exploring the linkage between brain development and dispositional mindfulness in adolescence. It suggests that while greater prefrontal cortical thinning is related to higher general intelligence, reduced insular cortical thinning is related to greater dispositional mindfulness.
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Events & Conferences
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INFO: http://www.rotmanexecutive.com/renewalretreat

Research & Education
Funding for Mindfulness Teachers and Researchers: Now Closed
The American Mindfulness Research Association (AMRA) Professional Development Award program is now closed. We have received applications from an impressive pool of early career professionals, which are now under review. This competitive grant provides $500 awards to promising researchers and teachers for their commitment to excellence in mindfulness research and practice. Application deadline was July 20, 2015.
INFO: For details visit https://goamra.org/about/grants/

Books & Media
New Book! Mindfulness for Teachers
Based upon the author’s extensive experience as a mindfulness practitioner, teacher, teacher educator and scientist, this book offers valuable research-based information about how mindfulness can help teachers manage the stressful demands of the classroom, cultivate an exceptional learning environment, and revitalize teaching and learning.
INFO: Go to http://amzn.com/0393708071

Mindful Medical Practice: Clinical Narratives
Patricia Dobkin’s new book, forwarded by Ron Epstein, showcases how mindfulness enhances clinician-patient relationships while adding depth and meaning to their work. Each chapter, authored by physicians or allied professionals, provides therapeutic insights across a broad spectrum of specialties and settings in five countries.

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