**INTERVENTIONS**

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


**ASSOCIATIONS**

*Articles examining the correlation and mechanism between mindfulness and other variables*


Thompson, N. J., Patel, A. H., Selwa, L. M.,... Fraser, R. T. (2014). Expanding the efficacy of project UPLIFT: Distance delivery of mindfulness-based depression prevention to people with epilepsy. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology.* [link]


Luders, E., Cherbuin, N., Kurth, F. (2014). Forever young (er): Potential age-defying effects of...
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50 New Cites p1

long-term meditation on gray matter atrophy. Frontiers in Psychology. [link]


METHODS

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


Blödt, S., Pach, D., Roll, S., Witt, C. M. (2014). Effectiveness of app-based relaxation for patients with chronic low back pain (relaxback) and chronic neck pain (relaxneck): Study protocol for two randomized pragmatic trials. Trials. [link]


TRIALS

Research studies newly funded by the National Institutes of Health (DEC 2014)

Veterans Affairs Medical Center San Francisco (T. Novakovic-Agopian, PI). Rehabilitation of executive function in veterans with PTSD and mild traumatic brain injury. Veterans Affairs project #5I01RX001111-02. [link]
Highlights

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

The human brain starts atrophying in the third decade of life, losing an average of 5% of its volume in each succeeding decade. Any technique that can slow or reverse that trajectory might have important benefits in terms of maintaining brain structural integrity across the lifespan. Luders et al. [Frontiers in Psychology] compared magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans of the brains of long-term meditators and a control group to determine if the correlations between age and gray matter volume differed between groups. Gray matter is the part of the brain consisting primarily of neuronal cell bodies, dendrites, and glial cells, in contrast to cerebral white matter, which consists mostly of myelinated axons.

The authors measured the volume of whole-brain gray matter and specific region gray matter in the MRI scans of 50 meditators (mean age = 50) with an average of 19 years of Zen, Vipassana, or Shamatha meditation experience – practices similar to those used in mindfulness based interventions. They then compared the gray matter volumes of the meditators with those of 50 age-matched controls drawn from a MRI database of normal adults.

Age was significantly negatively correlated with whole brain gray matter volume for both controls (r = -0.77) and meditators (r = -0.58), but the slope was significantly steeper for controls, with meditators showing less of a relationship between age and atrophy. Differences between controls and meditators were apparent in the frontal, parietal, and temporal lobes, the midbrain, and the cerebellum.

There are a range of possible explanations for these results including enhanced dendritic and synaptic growth or reduced stress-related degradation in meditators, and pre-existing differences between people who choose to become long-term meditators and those who don’t. The findings of the study support previous results suggesting that meditation may slow normal brain atrophy associated with aging, but there was a lack of evidence to suggest that meditation might actually reverse such atrophy. Longitudinal research is needed to examine if these differences are actually caused by rather than correlated with meditation. Research is also needed to determine whether these brain differences are associated with meaningful differences in psychological functioning.

Most patients with mild to moderate psychological ailments are treated in primary care settings where treatment may involve medication and/or a limited number of therapy sessions, most likely using some form of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). Therapists can be scarce, however, and one-to-one clinical interventions can be costly. Sundquist et al. [British Journal of Psychiatry] explored whether a group-delivered mindfulness-based intervention (MBI) offered within a primary care setting might have equivalent outcomes to routine standard treatment.

The authors recruited 215 primary care patients from 16 different Swedish primary care settings. The patients had mild to moderate depressive, anxiety, and adjustment disorders and were seeking therapy. The patients were largely middle-aged, female, and well-educated. Participants were randomly assigned to either a MBI or routine standard care, mainly CBT. The MBI was an 8-week group treatment modeled after Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) and delivered by primary care psychologists and social counselors who underwent a six-session training.

The three symptom rating scales were administered before and after the 8-week intervention period. Both treatment groups improved significantly on all three scales. There were no significant differences between the MBI and standard care groups over time. The MBI treatment response was dose dependent – patients attending 5 or fewer sessions improved on only one of the three anxiety and depression measures, while those attending 6-8 sessions improved on all three. The equivalence between the MBI and standard care groups persisted even when reanalyzed using only those standard care members receiving CBT.

The findings suggest that 8 sessions of a group-delivered MBI provide essentially the same symptomatic relief as an average of six sessions of individually-delivered CBT when delivered as usual within a primary care setting. There was no long-term follow-up, so it remains to be seen whether this equivalence persists over time.
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Events & Conferences

Mindfulness Research Meeting in Seattle

Research call - 2015 CMRP conference
Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice Mindfulness in Society conference, 3 – 7 July 2015 Venue: Crowne Plaza, Chester, UK Call for research now open Deadline 13th February 2015 “A chance to refresh yourself, learn from others and share experiences.”
INFO: For details and registration: http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/Conference2015.php

Mindfulness and Compassion Conference
Mindfulness and Compassion Conference 2015 in San Francisco. The Art and Science of Contemplative Practice conference will bring together internationally recognized academic scholars in the neurosciences, psychology, medicine, and education with seasoned Buddhist contemplatives. Date: June 3-6, 2015 Location: San Francisco State University.
INFO: Contact: info@mcc2015.org www.mcc2015.org

Introduction to MBCP Professional Retreat
This 6-day retreat is designed for those who are interested in learning about Mindfulness-Based Childbirth and Parenting (MBCP) or applying mindfulness to other settings. This retreat may be of interest to medical and mental health professionals seeking an introduction to mindfulness meditation and understanding its complementary relationship to obstetrics, midwifery, nursing, pediatrics, family medicine, and clinical psychology. 18-24 January 2015, Petaluma, CA 26 March - 1 April 2015, Vesseaux, France
INFO: Visit: www.mindfulbirthing.org

ADHD & Mindfulness Tele-Class
Join a 9-session tele-class to learn about and practice mindfulness for ADHD. The winter session will be held February 3 through March 31, 2015, on Tuesday evenings, from 7:30 to 9 pm Eastern. Classes include lecture, discussion and mindfulness exercises.
INFO: Register at www.lizahmann.com/mindfulness.html

Mindfulness-Based Inquiry Training
This 3-day training is for teachers of mindfulness-based interventions and mindfulness-based psychotherapists. This training intensive will provide participants the opportunity to develop an understanding of the theories, intentions and specific elements of mindful inquiry, as well to develop skill and confidence in facilitating the inquiry process. The training, facilitated by Diane Reibel, PhD, director of Jefferson’s Mindfulness Institute will be held on Thursday April 30th through Saturday May 2nd, 2015, in Philadelphia, PA.
INFO: For more information and registration visit: www.jefferson.edu/mindfulness ("professional training")

Research & Education

Advanced teacher training in MYmind
Advanced teacher training for mental health practitioners in MYmind: a Mindfulness training for children with ADHD/Autism and their parents by prof. Dr. Susan Bögels and Dr. Joke Hellemons in Amsterdam. September 7th - 11th 2015.
INFO: Visit: http://www.uvamindsyou.nl/site/english-training/mindfulness-training-for-professionals Contact: info@uvamindsyou.nl

Continued...
Online Community for Mindful Scientists

The Center for Mindfulness at UMASS Medical School is happy to announce the start of cfmHOME, a new online community dedicated to supporting mindfulness practitioners, teachers, and researchers. For scientists in particular, a dedicated room of HOME (the “Science Corner”) has been designed for exploring and sharing peer-level, cutting-edge conversation and information about timely topics such as mindfulness in basic scientific research, clinical trials/case studies, public presentation/perception, and applied medical practices.

INFO: www.cfmHOME.org

Books & Media

Transpersonal Development book

Transpersonal Development: Cultivating the Human Resources of Peace, Wisdom, Purpose and Oneness by Richard and Bonney Schaub was first used in a Federal Mind-Body Grant from the Veterans Administration. Expanded edition, step-by-step methods, patient and client outcomes, all described.

INFO: http://www.florencepress.com

Employment & Volunteer

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