

Mindfulness Meditation and Effectiveness in Psychological and Physical Problems

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Abstract

Mindfulness meditation is a relaxation strategy that can be helpful in calming the mind by improve our tendency to try to control our emotions now being examined scientifically found to be key element in stress reduction and overall happiness. Mindfulness meditation focus on facts and objective information about current experiences, including emotions, thoughts, memories and sensations. Our aim is to notice these experiences without judgement or any attempt to change them. We simply observe them, like our own breathing or cloud in the sky . The goal of mindfulness describe all kinds of experiences objectively and non judgmentally, focusing on the facts about the present moment and helps to retrain the brain and not reacting to situations. Mindfulness meditation greatly increase our self awareness, deepen our understanding of how our thoughts and emotions arisen response to stressors and how we tend to react to them. Coping skills improve and we are able to frame problems in the proper perspective, perceive them realistically and solve them effectively rather than falling back on old coping mechanisms such as alcohol or drugs. Through mindfulness meditation we become better able to delink action from impulse which helps rewire those old reward-motivation neural circuits that have been driving our surrender to unhealthy impulses and craving. A western philosophers described a mindful path to become more aware of thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations. This article intends to present the effectiveness of mindfulness meditation practice in the physical health, mental health and social well being of the human being.

Key Words: Effectiveness, Mindfulness, Meditation, Psychological, physical, Problems.

History of Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness practice involved in various religion and secular traditions from Hinduism and Buddhism also rooted in Jewish, Islamic, Christian and more recently extend to non religious meditation. Every religion have some type of praying technique that helps shift our thoughts away from usual preoccupation and focus towards an appreciation of the present movement.

The root of this technique is originate from Buddhist meditation practices founded about 2600 years ago and has enjoyed a tremendous surge in popularity and used more and more by psychologist and physicians in the last 20 years or so to help people regulate their emotions and calm their minds. Further more Professor Emeritus John, Kabat founder and former director of the stress reduction clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical centre helped to bring the practice of mindful meditation in to mainstream medicine and demonstrated that practicing it can bring increases in both physical and psychological problems as well as positive change in health attitude and behaviours

Introduction

Mindfulness meditation intervention have become increasingly popular in every sector of society, including healthcare, education, business. Mindfulness is the practice of purposely bringing ones attention in the present moment without evaluation Research has shown that mindfulness meditation have significant health benefits including decreased stress, insomnia, anxiety, depression pain , enhancing personal well-being, perceptual sensitivity, processing speed, empathy, concentration, reaction time motor skills and cognitive performance including short-and long term memory recall and academic performance, adaptation ,taking skilful decisions, decontextualization, content, focus, insight, improve self esteem ,self efficacy, problem solving capacity and treat addiction. The practice of mindfulness appears to provide therapeutic benefits to people with psychiatric disorders including psychosis, rumination and worry and has the preventive strategy to halt the development of mental heath problems. There is also evidence that mindfulness meditation may influence physical health by continual activation of the sympathetic nervous system, hypothalamus, pituitary ,adrenal axis also favourably influence the immune system . Other studies support mindfulness appears to bring about lowered activity of the default mode network of the brain and there by lowering the risk of developing dementia and Alzheimer's diseases.

What is Mindful Meditation

Mindfulness meditation is a mental training practice that teaches to slow down racing thoughts, let go of negativity, and calm both mind and body. It combine meditation with mindfulness can be defined as a mental status hat involves being fully focused on “ the now” not on the past or future, so that can acknowledge and accept the thoughts feelings and sensations without judgement.

The Science of Mindful Meditation

According to neuro science research mindfulness meditation practices dampen activity of Amygdala, which is responsible for emotional regulation in the brain, and increases the connection between the amygdala and prefrontal cortex. Both of the parts of the brain help us to be less reactive to stressors and to receive better from stress when we experience.

Steps of Mindfulness Meditation

- Get comfortable, Find a quiet place where you won't be disturbed
- Get in position. Might be sitting cross legged on allow cushion on a floor or upright in a chair.
- Get relaxed.
- Focus on your breaths
- Bring your thoughts back to centre.
- Make a commitment.

Technique of Mindfulness Meditation

This technique can be practice following instruction in books or on tape or by a instructor instruction.

Sit quietly and focus on breathing such as sensation of air flowing in to the nostrils and out of the mouth or belly rising and falling as inhale and exhale. Allow thoughts to come and go without judgement and return to your focus on breath.

Body sensation-Notice body sensation like itch or tingling without judgement. Notice each part of the body in succession from head to toe.

Sensory- Notice sight, sound, smell, taste or touch without judgement and let them go.

Emotions- Allow and accept the presence of emotions to be present without judgement.

Urge surfing- Cope with cravings like addictive substances or behaviours. Allow them to pass Notice how body feels as the craving enters, Replace the wish for the craving to away with the certain knowledge that it will subside.

Stay with it-By practicing over times provides greater happiness and self awareness as we become comfortable with a wider range of experience.

Informal practice-By focusing your attention on the moment to moment sensation during every day activities by doing single task at a time and giving it full attention as brushing the teeth fully present on it and involves all of the senses.

The effect of mindful meditation is tend to be dose related. The more we do more effect usually get.

How Mindfulness Affects and Change The Brain

Over 10 years studies in neuroimaging investigated changes in brain morphology pertain to mindful meditation. One meta analysis taken from 21 neuroimaging studies examine the brain of 300 experienced practitioner in mindful meditation revealed of unique region of the brain were consistently changed.

These 8 regions of the brain are

- Restrolateral prefrontal cortex
- Sensory cortices
- Insular corte
- Hippocamus
- Anterior cingulate cortex
- Mid-cingulate cortex
- Superior longitudinal fasciculus

- Corpus collosum

Other Neuroimaging Study Revealed Changes in the Brain are

- Changes in brain density
- Changes in thickness of brain tissue
- An increase in the number of neurons fibers and glia in a given region
- Changes in cortical surface area
- Changes in white matter fiber density

In looking at these Research we can Certainly see a Positive Changes.

Another study conducted by Christopher Liddy an organizational behaviour doctoral candidate at Case Western Reserves Weatherhead School of Management conducted research with Darren Good, an assistant professor at Pepperdine University

The research examined over 4000 scientific papers on varying degrees of mindful meditation The researcher looked at the impact and published in the Journal of Management as,

- Mindfulness meditation positively impacts human functioning
- Mindfulness meditation can help improve the quality of attention.
- Mindfulness even though an internal quality can impact interpersonal behaviour.
- Mindfulness can help provide greater empathy and compassion.

Anxiety and Depression may Decreases after Mindful Meditation

According to meta analysis of study conducted and identified 39 studies totalling 1,140 participants receiving mindfulness therapy with anxiety, depression and other psychiatric and other medical conditions by Stefan G. Hofmann, Alice T. Sawyer and Diana Oh revealed results as mindfulness meditation therapy is a promising intervention for treating anxiety , depression and mood disorders.

Brain may Protected from Decline to Aging and Stress after Mindfulness Meditation

A study by Dr Eileen Luders at the UCLA school of medicine Andndn Nicholas Cherub in At the Centre of Research and Ageing in Australia showed that brains of long term mindfulness practitioners are protected from grey matter atrophy more than non practitioner. Another study A systematic review of research suggest mindfulness may mitigate cognitive decline and increase memory ,attention, processing and executive functioning.

Mental Clarity and Focus Improve after Mindful Meditation

A recent meta analysis of 18 studies of mindfulness meditation found may support components of cognition include short term and autobiographical memory, cognitive flexibility and meta awareness(self awareness),key skill sets, new way of thinking and responding.

Other research from Alan Wallace, Richie Davidson Ami Shii Jha, have found improvement in

attention regulation, enhanced focus, reduction in “ attentional blink” .

Mind may Wander Less after Mindfulness Meditation

A study published in proceedings of National Academy of Sciences found that the mindfulness meditation practitioner may experienced less mind wandering and able to shift out of ruminative thoughts with more ease and carryout tasks with less disturbance.

Heart Health may Improve after Mindfulness

A new study revealed that patients who received mindful meditation undergone treatment for heart disease showed significant improvement on six -minutes walking, slower heart rate , regulated respirations, indicates better heart health.

Enhanced Treatment of Mental Health

A study by Norman Farb and colleagues in Toronto found the improvement in the ability to develop discernment -That is differentiate our unique streams awareness helpful for come out of ruminate thoughts, repetitive destructive emotions, impulsive and addictive behaviours.

Self Confidence and Leadership may Improve after Mindful Meditation

A,D. Amar and colleagues at University of Westminster London area conducted a training programme published results in Academy of Management proceeding revealed that mindful training significantly enhanced their overall self confidence, improved individual skills like inspiring a shared vision and demonstrating moral intelligence.

Mindfulness Meditation for Addiction Recovery and Prevent Relapse

Eric L .Garland, Mathew O Howard et al Department of Neuroscience, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston SC, USA published article suggest Dual – process models from neuroscience suggest that addiction is driven by dysregulated interaction between bottom -up neural processes underpinning reward learning and top down neural functions subserving executive function. Over time drug use causes atrophy in prefrontal mediated cognitive control networks and hijacks striatal circuits develops compulsive seeking of drug related rewards. Mindful meditation regulating frontostriatalcircuits restoring an adaptive balance creating top down and bottom-up processes create positive behaviour.

Dr. Aleksandra Zgierka assistant professor of family medicine at University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health was researched says mindful meditation really well for relapse prevention and drug dependent people become abstinent.

Future Steps in Mindful Meditation Research

- Future research holds tremendous potential for learning more about the 1.neurophysiological process of mindful meditation and the benefits of long term practice on the brain.
- Change in gene expression as a result of mindful meditation

- Longer follow-up assessment of adolescence and young population for problem associated with drug abuse and the effectiveness of mindful meditation.

Conclusion

The revised review literature conclude that mindfulness meditation brings about various positive psychological and physiological effects including increased subjective well-being, reduced psychological symptoms, emotional reactivity, and improved behavioural regulation.

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