

Research on the Benefits of Mindfulness

Mindfulness training has become one of the most researched mind-body programs in the world.

Research shows evidence that mindfulness can enhance mental and physical wellbeing, and reduces stress.

"Mindfulness is a way of being that can be cultivated by:
"paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and
non-judgmentally"
(Kabat-Zinn 1994)

The practice of mindfulness helps train and refine the mind and body to become more stable and insightful, thereby increasing optimal functioning. It integrates modern science with the core of the world's meditative and wisdom traditions.



Stress Reduction

- ◆ Meditation enhances brain function. It soothes the parts of the brain that produce stress hormones (Tang, Ma, Wang, Fan, Feg, Lu, Yu, Sui, Rothbart, Fan, & Posner 2007).
- ◆ Mindfulness treatment produced fewer overall symptoms of stress; fewer cardiopulmonary and gastrointestinal symptoms; less emotional irritability, depression, and cognitive disorganization; and fewer habitual patterns of stress (Speca, Carlson, Goodey & Angen 2000).

Brain Function

- ◆ Mindfulness improves working memory, creativity, attention span and reaction speeds. It also enhances mental and physical stamina and resilience (Jha, et al. 2007).
- ◆ Sustained meditation leads to brain neuroplasticity, which is the brain's ability to change, structurally and functionally, on the basis of environmental input (Davidson, R. J., Lutz, A. 2008).
- ◆ Parts of the brain known as the cerebral cortex were thicker in 20 people who meditated. The region plays a critical role in decision making, working memory, and brain-body interactions (Sara Lazar 2005).
- ◆ Experienced meditators exhibit high levels of gamma wave activity and display an ability to not get stuck on a particular stimulus. They are able to control their thoughts and reactivity (Davidson, R. J., Lutz, A. 2008).

Emotional Wellbeing

- ◆ Mindfulness practice increases positive emotions. Positive emotions trigger upward spirals toward emotional well-being and lead to a longer and healthier life (Fredrickson, B. L. & Joiner, T. (2002).
- ◆ Anxiety and depression symptoms were significantly reduced using mindfulness (Piet, Jacob, Würtzen, Hanne, Zachariae, Robert 2012).
- ◆ Mindfulness is at least as good as drugs or counseling for the treatment of clinical-level depression (Segal, Williams, & Teasdale 2002)
- ◆ Psychological distress was lessened in women with early breast cancer (Bridge et al. British Medical Journal 1988).

Physical Wellbeing

- ◆ Recent trials suggest that average pain levels can be reduced by 57% while accomplished meditators report reductions of up to 93% (Zeidan, Martucci, Kraft, Gordon, McHaffie, & Coghill 2011)

- ◆ Meditation improves the immune system. Regular meditators are admitted to hospital far less often for cancer, heart disease and numerous infectious diseases (Davidson, Kabat-Zinn, Schumacher, Rosenkranz, Muller, Santorelli, Urbanowski, Harrington, Bonus, & Sheridan 2003).
- ◆ Mindfulness Training is an effective Intervention for Fibromyalgia by helping meditators cope with pain, anxiety, depression and somatic complaints and by improving quality of life (QoL) (Grossman P. · Tiefenthaler-Gilmer U. · Raysz A. · Kesper U. Psychother Psychosom 2007).
- ◆ Survival rates of metastatic breast cancer patients have been significantly improved by relaxation and meditation training (Fawzy 1993, Spiegel 1989)

Relationships

- ◆ Regular meditators enjoy better and more fulfilling relationships (Hick, S. E., Segal, Z. V. & Bien, T 2008).
- ◆ Mindfulness programs with couples favorably impacted couples' levels of relationship satisfaction, autonomy, relatedness, closeness, acceptance of one another, and relationship distress (James W. Carson, , Kimberly M. Carson, Karen M. Gil, Donald H. Baucom 2004).

Workplace

- ◆ Job strain may be positively associated with higher health care services. Improving psychosocial working conditions and educating workers on stress-coping mechanisms could be beneficial for the physical and mental health of workers (Sunday Azagba; Mesbah F Sharaf 2011).
- ◆ The best leaders realize that being able to live in the present moment is the secret to both personal power and strategic advantage (Paul David Walker 2009).



Overall Quality of Life

- ◆ Clinical trials show that mindfulness improves mood and quality of life in chronic pain conditions and in challenging medical illnesses, including cancer (Speca, Carlson, Goodey & Angen 2000).
- ◆ MBSR participation was associated with enhanced quality of life and decreased stress symptoms in breast and prostate cancer patients (Carlson, Speca, Patel, Goodey 2004).