
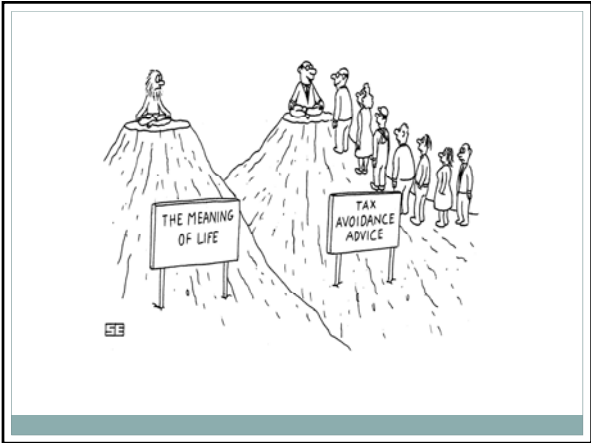


Mindfulness Meditation Explained





Chronology in the US


- Popularized by an American group in the 1970s, founded Insight Meditation Society, have a center in Barre, MA and outside San Francisco (Spirit Rock)
- Spent time in SE Asia as peace corps/Burma, Sri Lanka, & Thailand
- Intentionally omitted ritual, ceremonial and cultural aspects, this would be a barrier
- Focus on Mindfulness as central teaching

Geographic Differences

- Northern sects saw Buddha as a God (Tibet, China)
- (Zen,
- Southern sects saw the Buddha as a teacher (Burma, Thailand)
- Important because....

Mindfulness includes three things

- **Intention** to practice mindfulness
- **Attention** to the present moment
- **Attitude** of kind, open acceptance of all experience
 - (Shapiro et al., 2006)
- Integration of attention, intention, and attitude facilitate **REPER** shift in perspective =



What happens?

- **Neurological differences**
 - Sense of self over time/narrative (me)
 - Sense of 'I' in the moment
 - Associated with different brain structures
 - (Farb et al.)
 - Problem-Solving (Lehrer)
 - Subjects given Compound Remote Associate Problems
 - 3 words that can be associated: pine, crab, sauce
 - When left cortex engaged, solving may be impaired, when right cortex allowed to work (when relaxed) problem solved as if by insight – immediate knowing – EEG/300 miliseconds before person says 'ah ha' see alpha waves from R hemisphere – fmri/r. anterior superior temporal gyrus active in second before insight

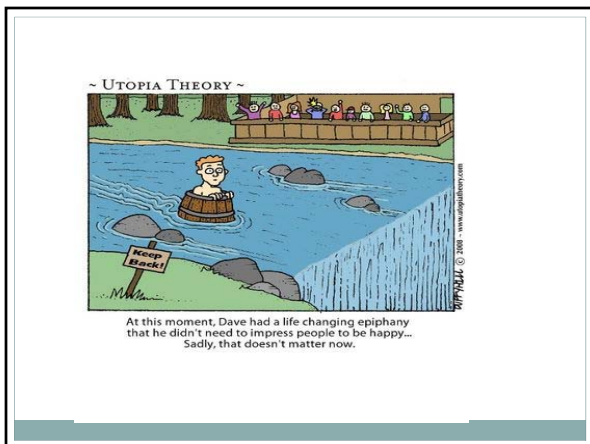


Both CBT and MBSR encourage becoming aware of thoughts and feelings, but there are **important differences**

CBT asks the practitioner to **judge** which thoughts are irrational, unrealistic, or illogical, and use "cognitive restructuring" to replace them with rational, realistic, or logical thoughts

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction teaches the **acceptance** of all thoughts & feelings without judgment, allowing the person to "reperceive" their **experience** in a kinder, more accepting manner

This **reperception** facilitates self-regulation, coping flexibility, and values clarification that may result in reduced stress and distress



Use in Treatment of Depression

- **Affective** qualities (mood) are the **central targets of meditative** practices (Lutz, Dunn & Davidson, 2007).
- In eastern traditions, the cognitive changes that occur with mental training, such as improvement in focused attention, are viewed as **building blocks & tools** to achieve **transformation** in the **emotional** realm (Dalai Lama & Ekman, 2008)
- **Changes the relationship** one has to his/her emotions so they are viewed as **fleeting phenomena** that appear to the self, instead of a fundamental component of Self (letting go)

Example- a suicidal thought would be experienced as “depression talking” rather than a fundamental component of self
 Best used in **situational depression** – de-centering from a negative experience
Perseverating or ruminative depression
 -emphasis on letting go
Speeds recovery after the offset of a negative stimulus by preventing excessive identification with negative memory
 Requires **engagement & practice**, so **not good** for profound, **vegetative** depression



A British study used a small, randomized controlled trial of mindfulness-based therapy on **chronic-recurrent depression** (Hargus et al. 2008)

- **Purpose-** To investigate the **impact of mindfulness training** on specificity of **memory** and **meta-awareness** for improving recognition of the **warning signs** of depression
- 27 participants, 14 mindfulness training plus TAU (treatment as usual) and 13 TAU for eight weeks
- Patients were asked to describe symptoms they experienced in the period leading up to prior suicidal crisis both before & after eight weeks of mindfulness training.

○

- **Results** showed that patients randomized to **mindfulness** training showed **significant posttreatment differences** in meta-awareness and memory specificity
- **Meta-awareness** is reported to be important in preventing recurrence of major depression (Teasdale et al., 2002)
- **Meta-awareness** - the relationship one has to their thoughts. A low level is potentially dangerous because it results in an inability to distinguish the self from the content of negative thoughts, and reduces the ability to recognize symptoms of depression as symptoms and not components of self.

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- A pilot study comparing the effects of MBSR & CBSR on 8 measures consisting of **perceived stress, depression, psychological well-being, neuroticism, binge eating, energy, pain, and mindfulness** was conducted at the University of New Mexico (Smith et al., 2008)
- 50 participants, pre-post test scores across interventions using a general linear model with repeated measures
- Conducted over 8 weeks- MBSR used meditation, yoga, and body scanning exercises to increase mindfulness
- CBSR used cognitive restructuring skills & behavioral relaxation techniques to change thinking

Results

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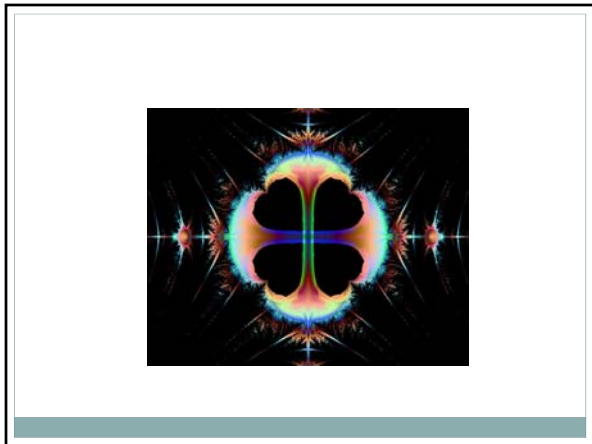
MBSR subjects improved on all eight outcomes, with all differences being significant

- CBSR improved on six of the eight outcomes with significant improvements on well-being, perceived stress, and depression
- Multivariate analyses showed that **MBSR subjects had better outcomes across all variables** when compared with the CBSR subjects
- **A systematic literature review analyzing 19 studies on MBSR** was performed by Proulx (2003) and found that mindfulness interventions appear to lead to **self-regulation, adaptive coping and improved quality of life**
 - Chiesa
 - Baer
 - Witkiewitz, Marlatt, Walker



This...is the noble truth of the cause of suffering: it is that craving – compelling, intoxicating – which causes us to be born into things again and again, ever seeking fresh delight now here, now there; it is, namely, the craving for sensual delight the craving to be something and the craving to feel nothing

Samyutta Nikaya 56:11 (trans Ajahn Amaro)



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Eight Fold Path

1. Right View Wisdom
2. Right Intention
3. Right Speech Ethical Conduct
4. Right Action
5. Right Livelihood
6. Right Effort Mental Development
7. Right Mindfulness
8. Right Concentration

The Four Sublime States

- Contemplations on the Four Sublime States:
 - Love
 - Compassion
 - Sympathetic Joy
 - Equanimity

Roots of Ignorance, mind creates..

Aversion

Greed

Delusion - make up a story about it
Pleasant or unpleasant, when we perceive a feeling – it is pleasant/unpleasant, then name it – then ideas built

Traps (often find self in these states when meditating)

- sense desire,
- restlessness,
- sloth and torpor,
- worry and care-wornness
- ill will
