
MINDFULNESS AND PSYCHIATRY: CAN THE OLD PRACTICE BE A NEW TOOL?

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Introduction: Mindfulness is rooted in old and philosophical traditions, but its practice does not require the domain of those cultures or their vocabulary, allowing it to become widespread and increasingly popular. In this way and having its psychological concept of focusing of attention and awareness, Mindfulness is desirable for many clinicians worldwide. Over recent years many doctors were enthused by the technique and many others are still learning and integrating it in their clinical and therapeutic work, particularly in Mental Health.

Objective: The authors aim to describe in what way the Mindfulness technique is being applied to the psychiatric field and what type of results are being achieved for the different psychiatric disorders.

Methods: Exhaustive review of the literature in what concerns Mindfulness and its applications in Psychiatry, using PubMed database.

Results: Studies show that Mindfulness has different results and outcomes accordingly to the different psychiatric diagnostic categories. The literature shows an overall improvement in the different populations of psychiatric patients, raising the hypothesis that the discrepancy may be related to differences in the duration of the illness, its baseline severity, individual characteristics, motivation for adherence and maintenance of the practice, among other factors.

Conclusions: Mindfulness practice, inherited from ancient traditions, is now being applied to several mental pathologies with some positive outcomes, particularly in Depression, Anxiety, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, Psycho-Oncology, Obsessive-compulsive Disorder and Substance Abuse. More studies are needed to validate this trend but so far it seems to be a promising psychotherapeutic technique for specific situations and patients.