The Concept of Mindfulness: An Intervention For Children and Adolescents With Chronic Illness

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May 24th, 2015

Agenda
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• Demonstration

What is Mindfulness?

• Paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally (Kabat-Zinn, 1990.)
Video


What is not Mindfulness?

- Mindfulness is not a personality trait.
- Mindfulness is not “psychological mindedness” (Bishop et al., 2004.)
- Mindfulness is not relaxation (Jain et al., 2007.)

Research Methods

- A comprehensive search of the literature was conducted in several databases including PsycINFO, PubMed, ProQuest, CINHAL, Medline, and ERIC.
- A wide range of keywords were searched together in different combinations on a bi-weekly basis over the course of six months (November 2013- April 2014.)
- Out of 200 search results, 66 studies were relevant to the topic.
Inclusion Criteria

- Original studies published between 2003 and 2014
- Peer-reviewed
- Related to children with illnesses
- Studies on MBRS, MBCT, and mindfulness-based interventions
- 38/66 studies were selected for inclusion

Rating System

- Inclusion in review was determined by scoring articles using the Quality of Study Rating Form (Gibbs, 1989) and the Qualitative Study Quality Form (Gibbs, 2003)
- Articles that received a rating of 60 or over out of 100 possible points were selected for inclusion
- For articles that scored above 55 points, the opinion of a second rater confirmed inclusion or exclusion.
- In total, 19/38 articles met the selection criteria.

Results: Chronic Medical Conditions

- Scarcity of research, only 1 study qualified for inclusion: Lagor et al. (2013)
- Efficacy of mindfulness for children with chronic medical conditions cannot be determined from one study.
- However, positive feedback from participants suggests acceptability of mindfulness for this population of children.
- Comparative studies required to explore potential differences between different chronic medical conditions.
Results: Pain

• Again, scarcity of research.
• Only 1 study included in review: Jastrowski Mano et al. (2013)
• No significant differences between adolescents in a psychoeducation group and adolescents in a MBSR group in terms of their experiences with pain (Jastrowski Mano et al., 2013.)
• Authors experienced recruitment and retention difficulties, mindfulness may need certain adaptations for the context of pain.
• Research is required on different types of pain: chronic, acute, procedural.

Results: Depression and Anxiety

• 3 studies included in review: Ames et al. (2014); Lee et al. (2008); & Liehr & Diaz (2010)
• Mixed evidence.
• Stronger evidence for mindfulness decreasing anxiety than depression.
• Further research required.

Results: ADHD and Learning Disabilities

• 4 studies included in review: Beauchemin, Hutchins, and Patterso (2008); Haydicky et al. (2012); van der Oord, Bogels, & Peijnenburg (2012); & van de Weijer-Bergsma et al. (2011)
• Mindfulness appears promising as an intervention for children with ADHD and Learning Disabilities.
• Adaptations useful when working with ADHD populations.
• Parents being included in intervention appears to be beneficial (van de Weijer-Bergsma, Formsma, de Bruin, & Bogels, 2011; van der Oord et al., 2012.)
**Results: Psychiatric Disorders**

- 2 studies included in review: Biegel et al. (2009); Coholic (2011)

- Mindfulness appears beneficial for children with various psychiatric disorders.

- More research needed with regards to specific disorders.

**Challenges to Mindfulness Practice**

- None of the studies in this review presented examples of mindfulness having adverse effects.

- However, some challenges may occur, including:
  - Difficulty focusing (Coholic, 2011.)
  - Restlessness (Cohen-Katz et al., 2005.)
  - Stress of taking on mindfulness course (Moody et al., 2013.)

- Being too busy due to health-related demands (Jastrowski Mano et al., 2013.)

- Individual temperaments may be more or less suited to mindfulness practice (Lagor et al., 2013.)

- Difficulty continuing with mindfulness post-intervention (Ames et al., 2014; Cohen-Katz et al, 2005; van de Weijer-Bergsma et al., 2012.)
Adaptations of Mindfulness for Children

- Shorter sessions (Greenberg & Harris, 2012; Haydicky et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2008.)
- More sensory-based exercises (Greenberg & Harris, 2012; Haydicky et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2008.)
- More movement-based exercises (Greenberg & Harris, 2012; Haydicky et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2008.)

Adaptations of Mindfulness for Children

- Incorporating play and games. (Coholic, 2011; Liehr & Diaz, 2010.)
- Further adaptations may be required for specific health conditions (Biegel et al., 2009; van de Weijer-Bergsma et al., 2011; van der Oord et al., 2012.)

Implications for Practice

Involving caregivers:

- A mindful parenting practice enables parents to recognize and thus avoid automatic negative reactions, a process called de-automatization (Kang, Gruber, & Gray, 2013)
- Mindful parenting especially helpful for parents of children with autism (Beer, Ward, & Moar, 2013; Ferraioli & Harris, 2013)
- Mindfulness training led to decreases in stress, anxiety, and mood disturbances among parents and educators of children with chronic medical conditions (Benn et al., 2012; Minor et al., 2006), and decreases in depressive symptoms and anxiety for caregivers of persons with chronic illnesses (Jing Hou et al., 2014.)
Implications for Practice
Involving hospital staff

- Pediatric oncology staff reported benefits such as increased inner peace and calm, better ability to focus, and increased gratitude, compassion, and appreciation, both at work and at home following a mindfulness intervention (Moody et al., 2013.)

- Cohen-Katz et al. (2005) and Cohen-Katz et al. (2005) found that healthcare professionals showed decreased burnout compared to a control group following an 8-week MBSR intervention.

- Self-reports from health professionals indicated that they felt better equipped to provide care as a result of mindfulness practice, suggesting that patients may indirectly be benefiting as well (Cohen-Katz et al., 2005.)

Questions

Demonstration
References


References


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