Mindfulness
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A Christian Framework of its practice, implications and Quantitative study with Christian University students

Mindfulness defined

• A meditative practice that cultivates present-moment awareness and attention, a non-judgmental stance, intentional observation of one’s thoughts, heightened sense of experience and self-awareness

• It is also a theoretical concept rooted in Buddhist religious philosophy—eightfold path

Lastly, it is a practice that Christians can use both personally and professionally, drawing from our own faith traditions

Emotion & Mindfulness

Neurological studies show better attention and decision-making capacity

- DBT, CBT and MBCT: In clinical work, reduction in levels of stress, depression, anxiety, OCD, PTSD
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- DBT has shown promise in treating difficult and complex clinical cases of complex trauma, PTSD and Borderline Personality Disorder
  - Harned, Jackson, Comtois, & Linehan, 2010; Harned, Korslund, Foa, & Linehan, 2010; Harned, Comtois, & Linehan, 2010

- Prevention of burnout, increased resiliency and increased empathy in the SW
  - McGarrigle, 2011; Shier & Graham, 2011
Mindfulness Practices

- Deep breathing with guided imagery - Genesis 2:2
- Reflective journaling after a period of attunement and quiet - Psalm 34:11
- Yoga practice, Tai Chi, Martial Arts
- Christian traditions: guided imagery with Christian symbols, Lectio Divina, centering prayer, healing

- It is practical
- It can be done in any agency setting
- It can be enfolded in therapies: DBT, ACT, MBCt
- It is accessible anytime
- It does take practice

Theoretical roots

- Various theoretical sources
- Buddhism, Christianity, Psychology
- Eastern and Western perspectives
- Integrative approaches

Christian Integration

- Integrating faith and psychology
- Mindfulness practices
- Healing and transformation

Christian Mindfulness

- St. Hildegard de Bingen-1179 – sacred imagery
- St Ignatius of Loyola-Jesuit 1491 Spiritual Exercises
- Centering Prayer-Keating modern Trappist
- Lectio Divina-Merton, Keating

Mindfulness Intervention

- Mindfulness-Attention and Awareness Scale - 15 questions
- Perceived Stress Scale – 10 questions
- Delivered online
- Training Modules via MP3 files -12
- Randomized Controlled, Experimental

Study of Christian University Students

- Worry is a constructed reality that decreases with mindfulness practice
- Contemplative skills lead to acceptance and awareness of God’s providence
- Buddhist view: Enlightenment state leads to a reframed view
- Christian view: A focus on God’s truths leads to a reframed view

- Equanimity replaces feelings of worry.
- A focus on God’s truths leads to acceptance with the peace that comes from God.
**Descriptive Statistics**

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**MAAS-Scale**

**MAAS-Post Experimental**
Implications

- An online delivery can bring about mindfulness skills
- Stress reduction?
- Utility in SW practice enfolded into DBT, ACT, MBCT—CEU trainings
- SW first, then client to practice the skills
- Provides a model where a faith integration can be more explicit
  - Issues of informed consent here
Debrief

- What did you picture?
- What did you feel?
- Any concerns?
- Feedback and questions

References

References (cont’d)


