

37th World Summit on Positive Psychology, Happiness, Mindfulness & Wellness

April 29, 2024 | Paris, France

Volume : 13

Mindfulness Meditation programs for reduction of anxiety disorders

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Statement of the problem: An estimated 4.05% of the global population has an anxiety disorder, translating to 301 million people. The number of persons affected has increased by more than 55% from 1990 to 2019, and continue to increase in prevalence. According to large population-based surveys, up to 33.7% of the population are affected by an anxiety disorder during their lifetime.

Anxiety disorders are common, highly distressing, and impairing conditions. Effective treatments exist, but many patients do not access or respond to them. Mindfulness-based interventions are popular and are proven to decrease anxiety. The purpose of this study was to show and determine changes in anxiety levels in people using mindfulness-based meditations.

Methods: After our on-line meditation training for 297 people with extensive instructions about mindfulness-based techniques, 47 people participated in our on-line survey to determine the level of situational and personal anxiety before doing meditations and 3 months later. The Spielberger-Hanin anxiety test (40-item self-completed questionnaire) was used to determine the anxiety levels.

Findings: There were 43 women and 4 men who participated in our research with the average age of 41 years (age range 23 - 64 years). Before applying meditation practices the average s-anxiety and p-anxiety score level was high (54 and 53 points, respectively). 49% of participants meditated several times per week but not every day, with 36 % of participants meditating every day once or twice a day. Majority of people who participated in research (81%) used guided pre-recorded mindfulness meditations to enhance the process. After 3 months of performing meditations there was a significant reduction in s-anxiety by 31% (OR: 15,6 95% CI: 4,54-29,46) and in p-anxiety by 29% (OR: 2,8 95% CI: 1,06-19,06). Most significant reduction of average s-anxiety levels were observed in a group of participants who meditated every day, with 40% reduction respectively.

Conclusion and significance: These results suggest that mindfulness practices have a significant beneficial effect on people with high or moderate anxiety levels and should be considered as a primary tool by healthcare professionals.

Biography

Doctor Ribakovs is radiologist certified in Germany, Freiburg in 2017, with a special interest in neuroradiology. Dr Ribakova is internal medicine doctor also certified in Germany, Freiburg in 2021. In 2018 we launched an on-line platform, educating people in different areas of lifestyle medicine such as nutrition, yoga, meditation practices, psychological support. Our team member Jelena Safronova, qualified psychologist, helps people with psychological issues and helps bring mind in balance. Recently our project grew into the European Academy of Lifestyle Medicine (Lifemed), educating people and healthcare professionals all over the world.

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Abstract received : September 18, 2023 | Abstract accepted : September 19, 2023 | Abstract published : 04-05-2024