

Departmental Seminar

Novel Approaches of Mindfulness-Based Interventions in Promoting Mental Well-Being

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | September 18, 2017 (Monday)

Rm 813, 8/F, The Jockey Club Tower | Centennial Campus | The University of Hong Kong



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Abstract

In recent years, there has been much attention to the positive effects of mindfulness on mental well-being. To date, much of the focus has been on the effects of meditation, with studies showing that meditation alters brain function and self-reports of mindfulness, compassion and overall well-being. However, meditation does not appeal to everyone, especially because it is often viewed as being too time consuming. As such, we have been focusing on novel approaches for delivering mindfulness to people of all ages, with the goal of producing “transformative” effects in a relatively short amount of time. To this end, we studied the effectiveness of two novel approaches, in both Hong Kong and California, to allow cross-cultural comparisons. The first is a workshop called “Principles of Clarity” (POC), created by Professor Dobkins at UC San Diego. This workshop is a combination of lectures and mental exercises, which incorporates principles from neuroscience, Buddhism, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and positive psychology, and is led as either an 8-week course (2 hours each week), or a 2-day course (8 hours each day). The second is a novel exercise method called “IntenSati” (“Sati” meaning “awareness” in Pali), originated in New York City by Patricia Moreno, which is a high-intensity aerobic workout with positive affirmations grounded in mindfulness principles. The IntenSati session, which is led by Professor Dobkins, lasts for 1 hour. Using several different psychological measures (collected pre- and post-workshop), our findings show that the POC workshop, the IntenSati workout, as well as a combination of the two methods, enhances psychological well-being (i.e., self-acceptance, environmental mastery, and positive relations with others), increases feelings of hope, as well as the skills targeted in the POC workshop. Remarkably, the effects of IntenSati on moods and mental well-being were maintained at five-month follow up. These findings indicate that novel workshops/exercise methods of this sort can be an effective approach in delivering mindfulness-based interventions to the community.

~All are Welcome~