

A Preliminary Comparison of Two Measures of Mindfulness in a Graduate Level Health Professional Student Sample

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Recent innovations in therapeutic approaches suggest mindfulness training mediates reduction of affective symptoms (ACT; Hayes et al., 1999; DBT; Linehan, 1993; MCBT; Segal et al., 2002). Indeed, mindfulness has been shown to lead to symptom reduction and increased well-being. Although interest in mindfulness has surged in the past decade, limits in the operationalization of the construct have hindered mediational analyses and researchers' ability to reliably measure mindfulness. Mindfulness is generally agreed to consist of an experience in which one's state of consciousness incorporates focused, nonjudgmental attention on the present moment (Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Linehan, 1993). However, a debate continues as to what measure most effectively and thoroughly assesses this.

Baer and colleagues (2004) propose mindfulness is comprised of four elements: observing, describing, acting with awareness, and accepting without judgment. Their measure, the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS), is one of the most commonly used measures of mindfulness. A newer measure, the Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale (PHLMS; Cardaciotto & Herbert, in progress) suggests mindfulness consists of only two factors: acceptance and awareness.

These measures will be compared in a sample of graduate level health professional students seeking treatment in a student counseling center at a major university (projected $n = 50$) via exploratory factor analyses. Though these students are part of a larger study in which Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and traditional Cognitive Behavioral Therapy are being compared, the present study will not assess the relationship of these measures to different types of treatment received. Considering the proposed relationship between mindfulness and good mental health, researchers will assess each measure's convergent and discriminant validity according to overall measures of well-being, including the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI-II), the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), and the Outcome Questionnaire (OQ).

Preliminary findings suggest....