

Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for Recurrent Depressive Disorder

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Background:

Mindfulness-based therapies have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing anxiety, stress and depressive symptoms in adults¹. Depression is a chronic relapsing condition. Major depressive disorder is one of the most common causes of ill health and functional impairment².

Patients are increasingly seeking alternatives to traditional pharmacological therapies; compliance rates with antidepressant therapy are reported at 30-40%³. This demonstrates a need for alternative treatments to prevent relapse in this population.

Aims:

To assess the effectiveness of MBCT in three domains:

- ❖ Depression, anxiety and stress levels
- ❖ Mindfulness level
- ❖ Self-compassion level

Methods:

Patients with a diagnosis of Recurrent Depressive Disorder (primary or secondary diagnosis) were referred by their community mental health team to participate in an 8-week educational MBCT programme. Participants completed the Depression, Anxiety and Stress (DASS), 5-Facet Mindfulness and Self Compassion self-rated scales prior to commencing and at the end of the course. They were also invited to give qualitative feedback at the end of the course.

Data was collected from four groups who completed the course between March 2018 and March 2019. A paired samples test was used to compare pre and post intervention scores to determine effect size.

Results:

We had complete data for 19 participants out of a cohort of 34. Pre intervention scores were similar for both groups.

The mean age of the cohort was 47 years (standard deviation 10 years), 3 male, 16 female. Patients showed a clinically significant reduction of symptoms in depression, anxiety and stress (figure 1.)

Positive trends were seen in all domains of the 5-Facet Mindfulness and Self Compassions scales, with mean improvements of 28.2% and 35.3% respectively. All results were clinically significant. We also collected anonymized qualitative feedback, comments included the following:

“the course has shown me the ability to deal with my emotions and difficult situations more carefully and skillfully”

“I can stay calm when needed”

“it’s given me the tools to manage my mood myself”

“allows me to be in the moment instead of my mind drifting away”

Conclusion:

This study demonstrates the clinical benefit of MBCT for people suffering with Recurrent Depressive Disorder, supporting greater use of such alternative treatment modalities.

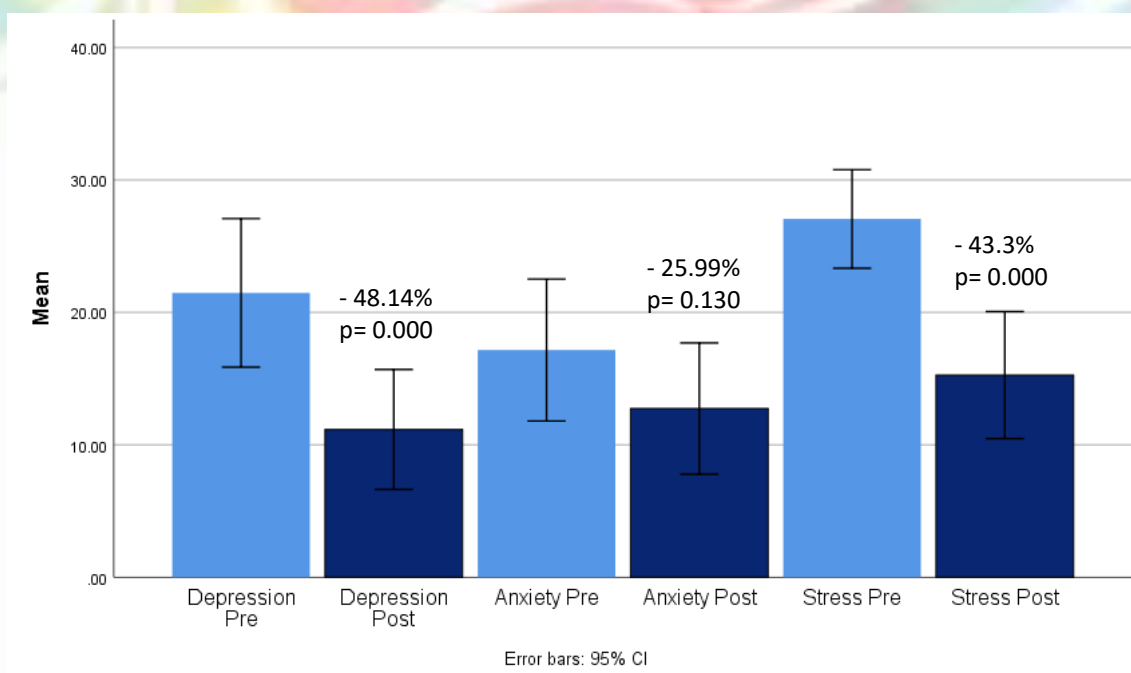


Figure 1. Mean DASS Scores Pre and Post Intervention
Ranges: Depression (0-27), Anxiety (0-19), Stress (0-33)

References:

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2. Lopez, A.D. and Murray, C.C., 1998. The global burden of disease, 1990–2020. *Nature medicine*, 4(11), p.1241.
3. Basco, M.R. and Rush, A.J., 1995. Compliance with pharmacotherapy in mood disorders. *Psychiatric Annals*, 25(5), pp.269-279.