



“Diversity in the mindfulness community?”

Day: Friday 13th July 2018 Time: 10:45 – 12:00 Track: Mindfulness in Society

The first presenter is Nava Levit-Binnun. She will talk about the dissemination of MBIs in Israel with explicit acknowledgement of unique local needs.

Inge de Leeuw is the second presenter. She will talk about a study that explored how unaccompanied refugee minors experience a mindfulness-based intervention, and what the possible benefits and impediments are.

The third presenter is Amanda Fu. She will discuss a exploring the protective effects of nonattachment in sexual minority individuals, and examined the underlying mechanisms through which nonattachment promotes well-being.

Finally, Tiara Cash will discuss a study an exploratory study using a phenomenological approach to examine the student- athlete’s “life world” with intention to translate the feelings, emotions, and situations that occurred before and during retirement.

Symposium overview

Presenter 1 **Nava Levit-Binnun** - A Mindfulness-Based Framework for Social Change

Presenter 2 **Inge de Leeuw** - A Mindfulness-Based Intervention for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors: An exploratory study with mixed-methods evaluation

Presenter 3 **Amanda Fu** - Nonattachment as a protective resource for well-being in sexual minorities

Presenter 4 **Tiara Cash** - Student-Athlete Post-Athletic Assimilation Stress (PAAST): Making a Case for Mindfulness

Chair: **Nava Levit-Binnun**



A Mindfulness-Based Framework for Social Change

Asaf Federman², Amos Avisar², Nava Levit-Binnun^{1,2}

¹*Baruch Ivcher School of Psychology, Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Israel*

²*Muda Institute for Mindfulness, Science and Society, Sagol Center for Brain and Mind, Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Israel*

Background and objective: Mindfulness-Based Interventions (MBIs) have brought mindfulness to wide audiences, but still face the challenge of reaching beyond middle class Euro-American societies. Israel provides a case study for wider dissemination as its society comprises of diverse national and social groups. During the past five years, MBIs have been disseminated in Israel with explicit acknowledgement of unique local needs.

Methods: The Israeli MBSR Teacher Training (TTR) program was developed with the support and supervision of Bangor University's CMRP. Four challenges soon surfaced.

- (1) The eight-week MBSR program is not sufficient preparation for TTR.
- (2) TTR trains mindfulness *teachers*, but does not make *leaders* and *disseminators* in local communities.
- (3) Language of MBSR needed adaptation to local culture(s).
- (4) Funding creates a barrier for members of certain social groups.

To address the challenges we developed pre- and post-TTR programs, translated materials, and created funding opportunities.

Results: 130 mindfulness teachers have been trained locally. TTR now runs locally and independently, and most important: in Hebrew. We developed a yearlong program that bridges the gap between the basic MBSR and TTR. The program Deepening Mindfulness: Practice, Psychology, and Science combines weekly classes on five themes with two meditation retreats. The themes include (a) somatic practices, (b) cognition, (c) heart-practices, (d) inter-subjectivity, (e) the neuroscience and psychology of contemplative practice. We found that approx. 30% of our 70 graduates can continue to train as MBSR teachers.

Arab speakers can apply for funding to participate in both programs. Out of the first 5 Arab participants, 4 will continue to become the first Arabic speaking MBSR teachers in Israel. Finally, we developed novel post-TTR programs for Education. Graduates of TTR train to teach these programs to school teachers in various settings, including in non-Jewish communities.

Discussion and conclusion: The challenges we face are not unique to Israel and our solutions can be applicable internationally. The Israeli model can inspire similar dissemination projects in other countries, and open up a discussion about training pathways.



A Mindfulness-Based Intervention for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors: An exploratory study with mixed-methods evaluation

Katleen Van der Gucht¹, Inge De Leeuw², Jana Glas¹, Lucia De Haene^{1,2}, Peter Kuppens¹, Filip Raes^{1,2}

¹*Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium*

²*PraxisP, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium*

Background: Unaccompanied refugee minors (UMs) are a vulnerable group. They often experience worry and rumination, owing to living in refugee shelters and confronting many stressors that range from finances to health problems to personal safety concerns. The present study examines the feasibility and efficacy of a mindfulness-based program in a sample of UMs in refugee shelters in Belgium. The focus of our study is to explore how UMs experience a mindfulness-based intervention, and what the possible benefits and impediments are. We studied this using both quantitative and qualitative assessment (i.e. a mixed-method approach).

Method: We offered a mindfulness-based program to thirteen UMs, aged 13-18, staying at the shelter MinorNdako in Belgium. A first assessment took place one week before the program and a second assessment one week after the program. The impact on depressive and post-traumatic stress symptoms, and on positive and negative affect was examined using self-report questionnaires together with a qualitative assessment on how they experienced the mindfulness.

Results: Multilevel analysis showed depressive symptoms and negative affect decreased, and positive affect increased, following the mindfulness training. Qualitative analyses further showed that experiences are unique and different among participants. Participants who completed the training report that they make use of the mindfulness exercises as a new coping strategy in combination with other familiar coping strategies.

Conclusion: Results suggest that it is feasible to deliver MBPs in refugee shelters for UMs and provide potential promise that MBPs are effective in alleviating symptoms of depression, in improving positive affect and reducing negative affect among UMs living in refugee shelters. These findings justify setting up a larger pragmatic trial with larger samples, including follow-up assessments to test generalizability and sustainability.



Nonattachment as a protective resource for well-being in sexual minorities

Amanda C.M. Fu, Winnie W. S. Mak

Department of Psychology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Background and objectives: Sexual minority individuals often suffer from minority stress and are at greater risk of poor mental health due to their stigmatized identities. Nonattachment represents a balanced way of relating to one's experiences—pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral—without clinging to or suppressing them. It has been linked to less rumination, better emotion regulation, and more positive mental health. In many ways, nonattachment can be seen as a resource for sexual minority individuals of being open and accepting to the struggles and suffering, without mentally grasping onto them or pushing them away. The present study explored the protective effects of nonattachment in sexual minority individuals, and examined the underlying mechanisms through which nonattachment promotes well-being.

Methods: The study consisted of 1,050 lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals. While 52.7% of the participants were female, 46% were male, and 1.3% indicated their gender as other. They had a mean age of 25.07 years old (S.D. = 6.40). They completed a self-report questionnaire on nonattachment, self-stigma, self-awareness, and well-being.

Results: Results of structural equation modeling showed that the hypothesized model fitted the data well, $\chi^2(183) = 368.10$, $p < .001$, CFI = .98, TLI = .98, RMSEA = .03, SRMR = .03. Nonattachment was related to lower level of self-stigma and higher level of self-awareness, which were in turn associated with better well-being, after controlling for socio-demographics. The model explained 41.1% variance of well-being. Bootstrapping analysis indicated that non-attachment had significant positive indirect effects on well-being through reducing self-stigma and enhancing self-awareness.

Discussion and conclusion: The present study was the first to understand the potential benefits of nonattachment in sexual minorities. For LGBT individuals, nonattachment provides a release from mental fixation, which facilitates letting go of destructive thoughts and feelings surrounding their sexual identity and reduces their endorsement of self-stigma. It also enables more objective, balanced understanding of their sexual identity and cultivates greater awareness toward the self. By mitigating self-stigma and promoting self-awareness, nonattachment contributes to better well-being. Given its psychological benefits, nonattachment can be considered to be incorporated in mental health promotion and counseling programs. Future intervention research should examine the efficacy of nonattachment training in fostering well-being among sexual minority individuals.



Student-Athlete Post-Athletic Assimilation Stress (PAAST): Making a Case for Mindfulness

Tiara Cash

Arizona State University's Center for Mindfulness, Compassion, & Resilience, Phoenix, United States

Background and Objectives: At the height of student-athlete research in concussions and trauma, Cash (2015) aimed to explore other avenues of research within this population – delving into student-athlete well-being during play and after play. This study will use the findings from *Retirement Sucks: Translating the Division 1 Student-Athlete Experience of Retirement* in aims to explore mindfulness as an aid to student-athlete retirement transition.

Methods: This exploratory study used a phenomenological approach to examine the student-athlete's "life world" with intention to translate the feelings, emotions, and situations that occurred before and during retirement, which can be defined as student-athlete retirement transition.

Results: With a better understanding of the factors involved in this transition, including five themes and the suggested PAAST (Post-Athletic Assimilation Stress) that student athletes experience (Cash, 2015), future support be suggested to help ease the journey into sport termination.

Discussion and Conclusion: As student-athletes experience this trauma solitarily, the common connection of these transition experiences and the tools/skills they gain during an athletic lifespan (approx. 12 years) will be used in likeness to common mindful practices. This discussion will focus on specific mindful practices using sports terminology and will touch on mindfulness replacing the day-to-day practice that the athlete is accustomed to in sport. As an Afro-American Woman who identified as an athlete most of my life, the investigator posits that this study could illuminate the lack of diversity present in institutions that celebrate mindfulness in the secular community. The findings of this study will reflect a lens of my ethnic commonplace in athletics with the juxtaposition of more visibility within the mindfulness community.