

A pilot study of mindfulness based cognitive therapy for improving well-being of healthy and ill individuals in Japan: Final report

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Background

Previous studies have already shown that mindfulness based cognitive therapy (MBCT) is effective for improving symptoms of diseases. However, a limited number of papers has evaluated whether it is also effective for improving subjective well-being across the world and no research has been done under Japanese setting. Furthermore, it is still unknown how different MBCT affect to different health status populations.

Objectives

The aim of this study was to evaluate preliminarily feasibility and effectiveness of MBCT for improving subjective well-being among different health status populations.

Methods

Design

A single-arm mixed group observational study.

Samples

Healthy individuals (HIs) and mildly mentally ill patients (MMIPs).

Intervention

MBCT minimally modified for focusing on improving subjective well-being. Eight Weekly classes followed by six monthly booster sessions was provided.

Outcome

Subjective well-being measured by the 5-item World Health Organization Well-Being Index (WHO-5) was set as primary outcome. Other scales measured included the Satisfaction with life scale (SWLS), Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) etc.

Results

Twelve HIs and 12 MMIPs participated in the program. Attendance rate was considerably high at 8 weeks (82%), and no adverse events was observed. Significant improvement in SWLS, FFMQ was observed at week 8. At week 32, scores of WHO-5 as well as above mentioned two scales showed significant improvement compared to those at baseline. In subgroup analyses, significant improvement was observed in SWLS at week 20 and FFMQ at week 8 in HIs, while it was confirmed in WHO-5, SWLS and FFMQ at week 32 in MMIPs.

Discussion

This study showed that MBCT improves well-being and is feasible under Japanese setting. The difference in baseline scores between two groups might have affected differences in improvement patterns of subjective well-being. A randomized-control with larger samples is warranted in next step.

Conclusion MBCT was well accepted by Japanese population and could yield favorable effect on improvement of their subjective well-being.