Use of Mindfulness Techniques

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Mindfulness is one of the psychological processes that make human beings form a rightful thought while engaging with the world around them. In a broader perspective, mindfulness refers to the process of bringing an individual's attention to the external and internal experiences taking place presently (Lee et al., 2017). A person can only acquire such experiences through training and medication. Therefore, it is correct to assert that mindfulness is a type of meditation whereby a person focuses on being intensely aware of what he or she feels and senses at the moment without judgment or interpretation. As such, awareness stands out as of the important aspects of mindfulness. Practicing mindfulness in this regard allows people to accept how they feel at any given moment. Again, practicing mindfulness gives one a sense of freedom. A person gets tuned into the present, discards memories, and imagines the future. This paper will therefore attempt to explore the efficacy of mindfulness techniques including those practices that help the body relax and reduce the mind. The mindful techniques will be geared towards improving one's attention.

As Gu et al. (2018) argue, meditation is one of the mindfulness techniques that play a critical role in boosting one's memory. When an individual is presented with several tasks, the brain automatically starts multifunctioning. In that process the concentration levels depleted. In such a situation, one may end up making a great mistake inadvertently. For instance, a student busy writing a project upon receiving an urgent phone call of a friend coming to visit him may end up losing concentration immediately he hangs up the call. The initially focused attention on the project work declines following the telephone messages' distraction. Therefore, taking time to meditate in such contexts boost the memory of a person and helps him or her stay focused.

Again, meditation as an effective mindfulness practice helps in taming stress reactions. In normal circumstances, people release more stress hormones before waking up (Norouzi et al., 2020). As such, as one wakes up, the activities of the day ahead trigger the flight or fight instincts. In such a situation, some people get submerged by the thoughts about the day. Immediately the thoughts of the day pop in a person's mind, stress sets in and eventually leads to reduced concentration and attention. Conversely, some people take their time early in the morning to meditate upon the daily activities (Jensen et al., 2017). In that regard, they end up fighting stress and stand a better chance of remaining active throughout the day.

Further practice of mindfulness and meditation affects the brain's functionality. The human brain despite being the most essential body organ is considered to have plasticity. The brain is plastic in that it can learn, grow and change over time. Meditation, therefore, affects the structure of the brain, its thought patterns, and functions. As such, meditation over positive thoughts makes the brain's synapses strong and helps one remain composed and active (Tarrasch, 2018). For example, one may easily meditate by just going for a walk. By focusing on the steps and feeling how the feet hit the ground and how the legs move refreshes the mind. The sensations of the surroundings like the hot sun and cool breeze make one feel fresh. Nonetheless, indulgence in negative feelings and thoughts makes the brain's synapses loosen thus interfering with a person's attentive skills. Meditation thus makes a person fully understand his or her emotions, feelings, and thoughts thereby improving creativity and attention skills.

Practicing mindfulness also creates new connections in the brain that help improve one's attention. According to Mak et al. (2018), mindfulness through focusing on one's breath, repetition of positive things, and interrupting the stress cycle make one achieve some growth of new neural brain networks. Besides the increase of the neural brain network, practicing

mindfulness increases the brain's gray matter. Gray matter generally has the actual brain cells. Therefore, an increase of the gray matters' density translates to the increase of cell connectivity from the brain to other body parts. As such, such normal body functions and other psychological body operations such as attention and creativity improves.

Structured mindfulness practices are also attributed to increased attention. Various practices like sitting meditations, body scan meditations, and other engaging outdoor practices are considered key to helping one know his or her mind, train, and free the mind for better focus.

It is a fact that human beings create problems and sufferings in their minds. Individual's sense of self: what constitutes a person, is mainly influenced by such activities resulting from discrimination, personal attachments, and ego-centrism (Jensen et al., 2017). Therefore, a practice of reflection through structured mindfulness without judgment makes a person discover more about his or her feelings, reactions, and motivations. Subsequently, the discovery contributes to individual awareness as a person becomes attuned to what he or she thinks without judgment but rather with an overarching focus or rather improved attention.

Moreover, structured mindfulness practices train and shape the mind. Knowing or becoming aware of one's thoughts, motivations and feelings lead to a relaxed mindset (Evans et al., 2018). In such a context, a person becomes composed and only explores various ways of staying calm and peaceful with themselves and others. a person thus gains more focus and concentrates on creating a conducive atmosphere within their surroundings. Attention becomes evident through an individual's ardent ambition to instill ethical virtues, generosity, discernment, and the courage to motivate others to embrace the same values.

Mindfulness also helps one free his or her mind. Allowing our minds to get rid of non-beneficial practices like judgment, anger, frustrations among other negative thoughts makes one feel free in the mind (Tarrasch, 2018). Detaching from such negative thoughts frees the mind. A free mind makes one have a clear view of all life aspects by letting out unwanted emotions and allows one to remain relaxed by allowing more positive attributes in their mind. As such, a person's working memory capacity improves greatly towards the positive end.

Again, as Gu et al. (2018) suggest, a free and positively increased working memory accelerates metacognitive awareness. Detachment from an individual's mental processes and own feelings helps one perceive them as momentary occurrences and transient rather than who a person is. In turn, a person easily loses the negative thinking behaviors and replaces them with positive behavior, in so doing, the metacognitive awareness gets boosted thereby resulting in increased individual's attention.

The practice of mindfulness can therefore be said to have various benefits towards improving one's attention (Tarrasch, 2018). To begin with, a formal approach to mindfulness unveils basic practices that help one stay in the present. Practices like sitting on a straight-backed chair, focusing on breathing aspects, narrowed concentration and the consideration of sensations or thoughts without judgments as bad or good enables people to have expanded awareness.

Secondly, mindfulness has been a significant factor in human cognition. Mindfulness meditation enables one to boost his or her visual-spatial processing, executive functioning, and working memory (Tarrasch, 2018). In most cases, it comes out clear that a person’s sustained attention accrues from a proper functioning memory. Therefore, mindfulness helps to make one's memory more functional which in turn leads to sustained attention.

Moreover, mindfulness has become a powerful tool for the brain following the reduced distractions. A trained mind through positive practices of mindfulness instills a calm, relaxed, and concentrated mind. Distractions are considered as negative attributes to the concentration that pulls a person's attention in different ways (Lee et al., 2017). Therefore, regulation of information in a single way through mindfulness helps one have a relaxed mindset hence better retentive skills. The practice of mindfulness and meditation suppresses distracting and irrelevant sensations and facilitates the regulation of the flow of sensory information to the brain regions for proper concentration.

Nonetheless, the implementation of the Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) program for the population interest has not been a walk on the park. As Norouzi et al. (2020) argue, the key challenge comes with the rigidity of many people to change their unproductive thoughts. It becomes quite demoralizing to find some people unable to let go of thought patterns that are not serving them well. Some people may be convinced but later relapses on the same negative emotional responses and behaviors. In that regard, the full implementation of MBSR has not been quite effective in most groups of people.

To wrap it all, it is true to affirm that the efficacy of mindfulness techniques plays a significant role in the improvement of a person's attention. Mindfulness does not only entail living life in slow motion. However, mindfulness is more of enhancing a person's awareness and focus in life. It calls for staying on track with people, stripping away distractions, and taking control of one's mindfulness. Also, the practice of mindfulness helps one fully understand his or her emotions feelings, and thoughts towards shaping his or her life. Therefore, for one to have a healthier, happier, and more importantly a calmer life, it is prudent for one to consider mindfulness and meditation.

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