

MBCT: Break Free From Automatic Negative Thoughts

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Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) is psychological therapy which blends features of cognitive therapy with mindfulness techniques of Buddhism. MBCT involves accepting thoughts and feelings without judgement rather than trying to push them out of consciousness, with a goal of correcting cognitive distortions. MBCT was founded by Zindel Segal, Mark Williams and John Teasdale, who based MBCT on a program developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn called mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), which was adapted for use with major depressive disorder. The aim of MBCT is not directly to relaxation or happiness in themselves, but rather, a "freedom from the tendency to get drawn into automatic reactions to thoughts, feelings, and events". MBCT programs usually consist of eight weekly two-hour classes with weekly assignments to be done outside of session. The aim of the program is to enhance awareness so clients are able to respond to things instead of react to them.

Benefits

MBCT prioritizes learning how to pay attention or concentrate with purpose, in each moment and most importantly, without judgment. Through mindfulness, clients can recognize that holding onto some of these feelings are ineffective and mentally destructive. Mindfulness is also thought by Fulton et al. to be useful for the therapists as well during therapy sessions.

The UK National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommends MBCT for patients that have suffered from three or more major episodes of depression. The specific goal of MBCT is to prevent relapse into a subsequent major depressive episode, with, "wonderful clinical trials across three different continents."