

Guest Lecture
University of Glasgow
January 29th, a Thursday

Rohan Gunatillake.
21awake.com



**BUDDHIFY.
BRINGING
MINDFULNESS
TO LIFE.**

- 1. A brief history of mindfulness.**
- 2. The criticism of mindfulness research**
- 3. New frontiers.**

Act I

A brief history of mindfulness

- From the mountaintop to the desktop.

Phase 1: Early Buddhism.

- Mindfulness as one of several core practices.**

Phase 2: Spread across Asia.

- Development of schools from 500BC.**
- Dominance of monastic forms.**
- Mindfulness as central to the Burmese 20th century tradition.**
- Mahasi Sayadaw (1904-1982), U Ba Khin 'invent' the meditation retreat.**

Phase 3: The Hippies Go Seeking.

- Key figures: Sharon Salzberg, Christina Feldman, Jack Kornfield, Joseph Goldstein.**
- First time that students started moving across different traditions.**

Phase 4: The Hippies Return.

- Insight Meditation Society (1975)**
- Gaia House (1983)**
- Spirit Rock (1987)**
- Western teachers with western students on western soil**
- Meditation unbundled from Buddhism**

Phase 5: The Clinical Application

- John Kabat-Zinn**
- Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction**
- Mindfulness unbundled from meditation.**
- Growth in research base, psychological & neuroscientific**

Phase 6: The Market Place

- Clinical (e.g. NICE accreditation))**
- Corporate (e.g. Google SIY)**
- Performance (e.g. Seattle Seahawks)**
- Children (e.g. Mindfulness in Schools)**
- General (e.g. Headspace, buddhify)**
- Spiritual (e.g. Gaia House)**

References

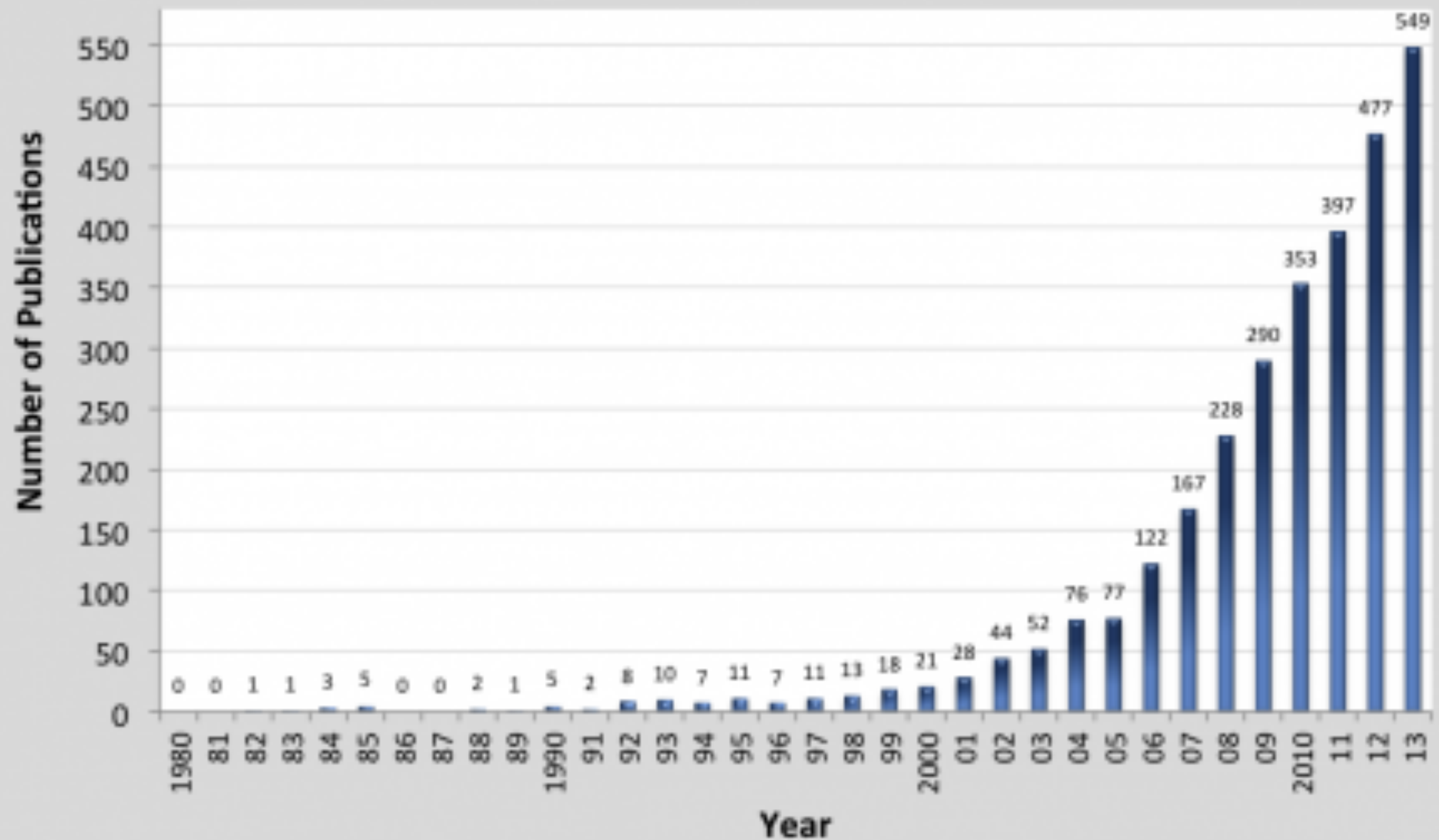
[https://goamra.org/
mindfulnet.org](https://goamra.org/mindfulnet.org)

[http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/
www.themindfulnessinitiative.org.uk](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/)

Act II

Mindfulness Research & Its Critics.

MINDFULNESS RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS BY YEAR, 1980 - 2013



American Mindfulness Research Association.

Research Contexts.

ADHD, Aggression, Alcohol abuse, Autism, Astma, Bipolar disorder, Blood pressure, Brain injuries, Cancer, Chronic Pain, Depression & anxiety, Diabetes, Eating disorders, Fibromyalgia, Heart Disease, IBS, Learning difficulties, MS, OCD etc.

References

American Mindfulness Research Association: <https://goamra.org/>
Bangor (UK researcher): <http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/>
Parliamentary initiative: www.themindfulnessinitiative.org.uk
Mental Health Foundation: <http://bemindful.co.uk/>
General aggregation of research papers: mindfulnet.org

Research Criticisms.

- Defining mindfulness & meditation.
- Quality of instruction/researcher.
- Few Random Control Trials.
- Ease of self-report scales.
- 'Blobology'.
- Hours != Expertise.
- 'Dark Night' effects.
- Little delivery model innovation.

‘as a whole, firm conclusions on the effects of meditation practices in healthcare cannot be drawn based on the available evidence’.

‘the central problem is the confusion what constitutes, meditation’

- Meditation Practices for Health (Ospina et al, US Dept for Health)**
- 813 studies reviewed, 2007**

References

Defining an Agenda for Future Research on the Clinical Application of Mindfulness Practice (Dimidjian, Linehan)

Willoughby Britton - www.brittonlab.com

Willoughby Britton's talk at 2012 Buddhist Geeks conference

Meditation Practices for Health (Ospina et al, US Dept for Health, 2007)

Act III

New Frontiers.

- Mindfulness, but not as we know it.**

Current Delivery.

- **Face to face MBSR/MBCT**
- **Face to face Meditation Classes**
- **Books (e.g. Frantic World)**
- **Online classes (e.g. Be Mindful)**
- **Consumer tech (guided audio)**

Digital.

- User-centred design.**
- Delivery model innovation.**
- Learning from games industry.**

Social.

- Mindfulness as a multi-player game.**

Devices.

- **‘Contemplative’ or ‘Transformative’ technology**
- **Melon, Muse, Emotiv**
- **Electroencephalography (EEG)**
- **‘Englightenment Engineering’**

Risks.

- **Corporatisation.**
- **Supply & Demand.**
- **Quality Control / Regulation.**
- **Lack of Innovation.**
- **Unintended Consequences.**

References

www.thinkmelon.com

www.choosemuse.com

Wired.com (USA): Enlightenment Engineering

www.kennethfolkdharm.com (Social Noting protocols)

www.transtechlab.com Sofia University, Palo Alto

Thank you.

- rohan@21awake.com
- @rohan_21awake