

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)

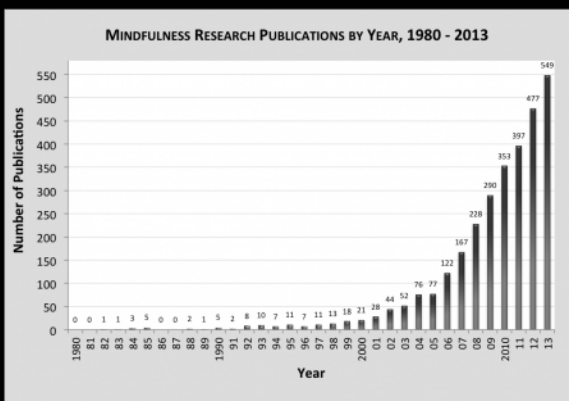
References

[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.



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)
- 'Enlightenment 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](https://www.instagram.com/rohan_21awake)