

# Can intensive mindfulness training improve depression?

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Credit: Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., publishers

Depression affects about 350 million people worldwide and is the leading cause of disability. Mindfulness training is a promising approach to decreasing depressive symptoms. The success of an intensive mindfulness meditation program on reducing depression, and how

factors such as age, gender, and spirituality affect an individual's response to training are presented in *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*.

Jeffrey Greeson, PhD, Duke University Medical Center (Durham, NC) and University of Pennsylvania, Perelman School of Medicine (Philadelphia), and coauthors, also from McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario, Canada), Broadleaf Health (Guelph, Ontario, Canada), and University of Southampton (U.K.), compared how individual differences in religious beliefs, spirituality, the ability to achieve mindfulness, gender, and age affect levels of depressive symptoms after completing an 8-week course in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR).

In the article "[Decreased Symptoms of Depression after Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction: Potential Moderating Effects of Religiosity, Spirituality, Trait Mindfulness, Sex, and Age](#)," the authors report that overall, [depressive symptoms](#) decreased substantially for nearly all of the subgroups of participants, and they suggest that MBSR can be helpful whether its use is intended by the individual as a secular or spiritual practice.

**More information:** The article is available free on *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* website until April 10, 2015.

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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