

Mindfulness Trainings International (MTi) and the training of mindfulness instructors in Brazil



A consistent set of studies have described the effects of the state of mindfulness on basic human functions that include attention, cognition, emotion, behavior, and physiology⁽¹⁻³⁾. Through an expressive contingent of researches developed over the last three decades, the results of the careful analysis of the studies produced point to evidence of the effect of the practice of mindfulness on cognitive and emotional reactivity, mindfulness state, rumination and preoccupation, self-compassion, and psychological flexibility. These mechanisms have been focused as underlying the interventions based on mindfulness (MBIs) and are related to the perspective of contribution of these practices to better parameters of quality of life and mental health⁽⁴⁾.

In general, the precursors of mindfulness in Western countries are people with long experience in contemplative practices and who uphold the principles of mindfulness practice, revealing in their biography a consistent involvement with representatives consecrated in Buddhist traditions.

From the perspective of Tibetan Buddhism there are around 2,500 years of dedication on the empirical research of the mind. Throughout this trajectory, the so-called contemplatives have accumulated a repertoire of methods focused on the relationship of man with emotions, temperament and personality traits, for a better quality of life by highlighting essential human characteristics such as kindness, freedom, peace and inner strength⁽⁵⁾.

The practice of mindfulness has been prominent in the West recently, whose repercussion resulted mainly from the interest of large research centers around the world by the results observed in practitioners. Universities and researchers recognize that practicing mindfulness provides a set of benefits and that its applicability can occur in different contexts. The scientific perspective of the MBIs is configured in Brazil as a secular integrative practice and can be implemented by trained professionals, whose training essentially includes personal experience in the development of mindfulness.

Concurrently with the development of the studies, MBIs have been offered in health services, companies, schools and other communities. According to the Mindfulness Center of Medicine, Health Care and Society of the University of Massachusetts⁽⁶⁾ and Open Mindfulness Network - ABRAMIND⁽⁷⁾, a mindfulness training program should be guided by an instructor who has necessary criteria to offer participants a correct and effective learning of the practices, guaranteeing the achievement of the expected effects.

The training of the instructor responsible for applying a mindfulness program has been the object of study. It is indicated that the training of this professional reflects on the amplitude of the results achieved by the participants⁽⁸⁾. Faced with the growing public and scientific interest in mindfulness practices, the question about the reliability of the interventions offered emerges.

In Brazil, in 2013, the Lama Janchub Reid founded a center for mindfulness offering and training, Mindfulness Trainings International - MTi, which is offering training and formation courses for mindfulness practitioners and instructors. One of the essential characteristics of the MTi is its commitment to the foundations of secular practice and a formative process that is consistent and articulated with scientific knowledge and social contribution. The training process practiced by the MTi emphasizes the maintenance of the essential intentions of practicing mindfulness in traditional environments and the delivery of an authentic teaching based on the instructor's practice.

Jangchub Reid has been meditation teacher since 1973 and has completed his training in mindfulness and Dharma studies in 1975 with Namgyal Rinpoche, a master of the main Buddhist traditions. He studied Social Anthropology at the University of Auckland and Religious Studies at the University of Canterbury in his native New Zealand. He was a member of the NZ Association of Counselors and principal director of a community therapy center in Christchurch. In his career he served as a consultant to the Department of Corrections, Department of Children, Young Persons and Families, and Family Court of New Zealand. He also worked with family therapy and helped start anti-domestic violence and parole programs. He spent many years creating and establishing meditation centers, especially at the Wangapeka Study and Retreat Center. He was a resident professor at the Queenstown Dharma Center and received teaching from great masters of Buddhism. He began teaching mindfulness in 2003, working in the UK, France and Brazil, as well as continuing part of his involvement in New Zealand. Concurrently with the establishment of Mindfulness Trainings International (MTi), he was involved in the founding of the Open Mindfulness Network (ABRAMIND).

Mindfulness Trainings International, led by Lama Janchub Reid, recorded until 2018 the training of 109 instructors to apply the training program in mindfulness practices in Brazil. The instructors trained by the MTi come from several states, among them, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Santa Catarina, Rio Grande do Sul, Rondônia, Goiás, Bahia and Pernambuco. These instructors remain active in teaching mindfulness, integrating the practices in health services, schools, companies, prisons, community centers and centers of extension and university research, such as the Center for Mindfulness and Integrative Therapies of the University of São Paulo at Ribeirão Preto College of Nursing.

The training process practiced by the MTi requires that their instructors comply in addition to the steps for qualification of teaching of mindfulness, maintenance and continuity of their development as a teacher of mindfulness. Due to its dispersion and contribution to the mindfulness that has been practiced in several Brazilian institutions, MTi represents an important role in the incorporation of mindfulness in society and in scientific research of the country.

The trajectory of the practice of mindfulness, its characteristics, its limits and potentialities, as well as the identification of its milestones in Brazil, contributes to the composition of practices increasingly aligned with the needs of the different communities of the country, especially for the process of incorporation of these practices into the health sector and universities.

Regarding the Brazilian scientific production on the subject, it is considered essential the consistency of the mindfulness interventions that have been tested, in order to produce better evidence and reduce the biases related to the capacity of the instructors responsible for applying the research protocols.

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