Analysis of the Effect of Mindfulness Meditation Training on the Psychological Adjustment for the Public under the New Coronary Pneumonia Epidemic Situation

Binbin Wang, Shoutong Xu

lecturer of School of Law and Sociology, University of Sanya, 572022, China.
Email: 1791753048@qq.com.

Research information:
This research has been financed by Hainan Provincial Social Science Planning Project in 2019 "Research on Floating Population Management and Social Services in Hainan Ethnic Areas" (HNSK(GJ)19-13)

Abstract: With the new coronavirus pneumonia continues to spread, the severe epidemic situation has caused widespread concern in society. With the extension of home isolation time and the influence of some online rumors, people panic over the epidemic and show obvious anxiety. Therefore, it is particularly important to do psychological adjustments for the public. Based on mindfulness meditation training, this article first introduces the psychological crisis and causes of the public during the new coronary pneumonia epidemic, secondly introduces mindfulness meditation and its mechanism, and finally puts forward specific measures to scientifically and rationally use mindfulness meditation training to adjust the mental state of the general public to make them have a reasonable view of the disease, calmly deal with the epidemic, and finally win the battle of prevention and control.

Keywords: New Coronary Pneumonia Epidemic; Mindfulness Meditation Training; Psychological Adjustment

At present, the outbreak of new coronavirus pneumonia has seriously affected people’s normal lives, and it has also brought tremendous pressure to people from all walks of life. While fighting against the epidemic, the state and society are also paying more and more attention to the psychological state of the public when facing the epidemic, and taking corresponding measures to adjust to the psychological crisis.

1. Psychological crisis and its causes during the new coronary pneumonia epidemic

1.1 Causes of the social environment

The epidemic of new coronavirus pneumonia is mainly spread through respiratory droplets and contact, and has the characteristics of suddenness, extensiveness and uncertainty. As provinces and cities have successively launched the "first-level response to major public health emergencies," the official release of confirmed diagnosis data has shown an increasing trend. With the promulgation and implementation of strict traffic control, residential community control and isolation policies, the terrible virus makes people fall into anxiety and panic.

1.2 Reasons for the network information environment

The current Internet information spreads fast and has a wide range. People who are isolated at home during the epidemic are
more concerned about the news of the epidemic through the Internet. During the period, various information about the epidemic also appeared on the network. In addition to the information that truly reflects the epidemic, it is also full of negative information such as falsehoods and rumors. In this case, people often ignore some positive information, for example, medical staff in various places provide support to Wuhan, material support in various places, and the number of new cases declines. On the contrary, selective listening and dissemination of false and negative information can easily cause people’s anxiety and panic emotions[1].

1.3 Reasons for individual psychological differences

First, people’s "suspicious disease" psychology. During the epidemic, people will be too worried about being infected. Once the body is unwell, there will be various symptoms, for example, the body temperature rising, coughing, etc., when these symptoms appear, it is suspected that they are infected, which produces intense stress reactions or emotional disorders.

Second, alternative trauma. It means that individuals witnessing others experiencing disasters will have empathy, which indirectly leads to the same troubles in their own bodies and mind. Those who have severe alternative trauma will be mentally devastated, especially when people watch some news information about the epidemic and feel addicted to grief and tension.

Third, mental fatigue. With long-term and high attention to the epidemic information, some people will feel psychological fatigue. Early on, they have too much sympathy and emotion that are excessively invested in the epidemic. With time passes by, indifferent, numb psychological reactions generate over time.

Fourth, there are problems in interpersonal communication. During the epidemic, the virus was quarantined. Many people lived in isolation at home for a long time, which resulted in a lack of interpersonal communication. Some relatives and friends stayed in the field because of the epidemic and could not go home for the reunion. Excessive worry causes anxiety and panic.

2. Mindfulness meditation and its mechanism

2.1 Concept of mindfulness meditation

Mindfulness meditation originated in Buddhism, meaning awareness, attention, and remembering. First of all, awareness refers to the awareness of oneself and the external environment; attention is the awareness of awareness that helps individuals understand the internal and external world from a more comprehensive perspective; memory is to maintain awareness and attention at every moment.

In 1921, Western scholars first proposed "mindfulness" and "mind awareness", which refers to the conscious concentration of the current state or behavior, and the heart does not make any judgments about it. It is a kind of inner and outer experience of awareness self-psychological adjustment method.

At present, mindfulness has been divorced from religion and is used in the field of psychotherapy. It focuses on acceptance and non-judgment in the state of mindfulness. In other words, it is to accept oneself, not to reject the dark side of oneself, and to accept the true and imperfect self.

In the 1970s and 1980s, American psychologist Jon Kabat-Zinn founded the Mindfulness Decompression Therapy, which uses "intentional attention" and "non-judgment of things" to produce a sense of awareness. The core of mindfulness is to focus on the present, not to judge the current state and ideas, to pay attention to things at any time, any place, and to pay attention to itself rather than expectations for it.

2.2 The effect of mindfulness meditation training on mental health

First of all, mindfulness meditation helps to enhance the individual’s subjective well-being and reduce the individual’s loneliness. Daily meditation through mindfulness can increase the individual’s positive emotional experience in daily life, reduce negative emotional experience, and improve the individual’s quality of life and happiness.

Secondly, mindfulness meditation has a good intervention effect on the treatment of mental illness. For example, Mindfulness Decompression Therapy has been widely used in the treatment of different mental and psychiatric diseases, and has achieved good results in clinical applications. It is effective in the treatment of anxiety, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder, which has good intervention effects.

Furthermore, mindfulness meditation training can help change the way we deal with fear memory. Mindfulness meditation can
help us realize that fear and threats are out of proportion, reduce fear responses to stimuli, break anxious habits, and improve and regulate emotions.

Finally, mindfulness meditation has a significant effect on improving the physical and mental symptoms of healthy people, especially college students, the elderly, company employees, medical staff, and sports athletes, and helps to improve the positive state of mind[2].

2.3 The regulation effect of mindfulness meditation on emotions

In the physical and mental health of the individual, mindfulness meditation plays a role in regulating attention and emotions. Through mindfulness meditation training, the individual’s experience of stimulus awareness becomes clearer, and this self-awareness is used to cope with the pressures in life. In daily life, individuals use mindfulness meditation training to have a positive emotional experience, change their strategies for expressing emotions, and improve their ability to regulate emotions. Short-term mindfulness meditation can increase an individual’s empathetic focus, reduce the individual’s response to emotional stimuli, and ease emotional disorders. Long-term mindfulness meditation training promotes the emotional stability of individuals and enhances their ability to accept emotions.

2.4 Implementation plan for mindfulness meditation

In 1979, Joe Kabakin, a Ph.D. in molecular biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, founded the 8-week systemic treatment plan at Massachusetts Hospital. This decompression training operating system program includes breathing exercises, body scanning, standing and stretching exercises. The methods of mindfulness meditation include mountain meditation, lake meditation, walking meditation, standing meditation, and lying meditation. When you meditate, you should find a comfortable posture to practice activities. In a quiet environment, wear loose clothes, empty your bladder and gastrointestinal tract, adjust your breathing, relax your body, maintain a calm and irresistible mentality, and focus on one thing[3].

3. How to use mindfulness meditation training to adjust mental state during the new epidemic pneumonia

This article mainly points out how to use mindfulness meditation to adjust the mental state of students, medical staff, cadre leaders, patients with new coronary pneumonia, family members and isolation personnel.

3.1 Application of mindfulness meditation in the student population

Mindfulness meditation training helps to improve the physical and mental health of students, reduce their stress and anxiety symptoms, and improve the symptoms of mood disorders. During the epidemic period, students’ vacations were extended, they were unable to return to school on time, and home isolation could not be studied normally. Learning delays, playing games, and watching TV occurred. However, because of the pressure on examinations and future academic development, because of a lack of learning, students will fall into low motivation and anxiety. In this regard, they can use mindfulness meditation to reduce trait anxiety and psychological depression, improve the empathy experience, face this phenomenon by oneself, accept oneself, and slowly put oneself in a relaxed situation to associate and imagine the future.

3.2 Application of mindfulness meditation in medical staff

Mindfulness meditation training helps medical staff to manage stress, prevent and treat job burnout. In the special period of the epidemic, medical staff are in a high-risk environment and high-intensity working environment. Whether they are facing patients or in a severe epidemic, they are placed in a highly nervous psychological mood. In this regard, medical staff can use mindfulness meditation to relieve psychological pressure. Face the current environment with a brand-new, momentary, non-evaluation awareness, accept the outbreak, and face the situation and the fear and anxiety caused by the outbreak with an open mind[4].

3.3 Application of mindfulness meditation in leading cadres

During the epidemic of the new coronavirus pneumonia, when people were in a panic, leading cadres at all levels adhered to their posts, relied on the front command, and took the epidemic prevention and control work as the focus. They not only strengthen prevention and control to do a good job of isolation and inspection, but also do a good job of publicizing knowledge points on
epidemic prevention and control, and guide the group to actively do epidemic prevention and control. Before the great pressure, leading cadres can adjust their awareness of stress situations through mindfulness meditation training to promote problem-solving and management of stress. Through daily mindfulness meditation, they can focus their attention on epidemic prevention and control. To ensure the safety of the people’s lives, reduce the risk of infection and contain the spread of the epidemic, thereby improving work efficiency.

3.4 Application of mindfulness meditation in patients with new coronary pneumonia and their families

During the epidemic, from the diagnosis to isolation treatment, the patients and their family members of New Coronary Pneumonia endure and pay not only the hard work of seeking medical treatment, but also the fear after diagnosis. Some of them worry about their families, some have guilt, self-blame and anger emotions, etc. These complex emotions make them deeply anxious and frightened. In this regard, in addition to believing that the attending doctor is actively treating, patients and family members must appropriately vent bad emotions, use mindfulness meditation to self-adjust, give themselves some positive psychological hints, stop catastrophic thinking, and ask themselves that their current ideas are in line with reality? Apart from the catastrophic results that can be thought of, are there any other explanations? By adjusting unreasonable thoughts and beliefs to better regulate emotions.

3.5 Application of mindfulness meditation in isolation

During the isolation period, some people’s negative emotions will once exceed a certain level, "I am infected, will I die? What about my family? These negative emotions seriously affect daily life. Therefore, isolation personnel can use mindfulness meditation to relax, actively learn to understand the prevention and control knowledge and policies of the epidemic situation, and fulfill social responsibilities. At the same time, they can distract attention through narration, crying, sports, and listening to music. They can also study cooking, ao cleaning, seek online entertainment and learning resources to relax, self-cultivate and relieve anxiety, irritability and fear during isolation8.

4. Conclusion

In short, the scope of mindfulness meditation is not restricted by occupation. Everyone can use mindfulness meditation training to manage stress and discover the inner power to cope with the dilemma and impermanence of life. Especially in the special period of the epidemic, the power of mindfulness meditation becomes more prominent. This article explores the psychological adjustment of mindfulness meditation training for all kinds of personnel under the new coronary pneumonia epidemic situation, and points out the positive effect of mindfulness meditation on physical and mental health, helping to help people accept individual psychological emotions and view the epidemic more actively and frankly.

References