

Press release

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Basic information

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Department of: Clinical Medicine

Main supervisor: Andreas Roepstorff (AU) and Willem Kuyken(Oxford)

Title of dissertation: How does Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy work in the Treatment of Recurrent Depression?

Date for defence: 13/8/2021 at (time of day): 13 Place: Auditorium 2, room 1441-112, Tåsingegade, Aarhus Universitet

Press release (Danish)

Hvordan virker Mindfulness-Based Kognitiv Terapi i behandlingen af tilbagevendende depression?

I et nyt ph.d.-projekt fra Aarhus Universitet, Health undersøger hvordan Mindfulness-Based Kognitiv terapi virker i behandling af tilbagevendende depression. Projektet er gennemført af Anne Maj van der Velden, der forsvare det d. 13/8/2021.

Depression er ifølge verdenssundhedsorganisationen WHO blandt de største sygdomsbyrder på verdensplan og tager ofte en kronisk form med hyppige tilbagevendende episoder. Mindfulness-Baseret Kognitiv Terapi (MBKT) er en effektiv behandling til forebygning af tilbagevendende depression, men kan ligesom validerede farmakologiske behandlinger kan blot halvere risikoen for tilbagefald. Videnskaben har endnu en begrænset forståelse af mekanismerne bag effektiv MBKT behandling. Denne PhD afhandling undersøgt derfor mulige neurale, kardiofysiologiske og psykologiske virkningsmekanismer for Mindfulness-Baseret Kognitiv Terapi (MBKT) i behandlingen af tilbagevendende depression. Vi fandt at MBKT er effektiv behandling til at reducere depressive symptomer og tilbagefaldsrisiko; og at neurale og fysiologiske ændringer spiller muligvis en rolle i ændringen i psykologiske processer såsom øget metakognitiv bevidsthed, non-reaktivitet, opmærksomhed, og kropbevidsthed, som kan ligge til grund for forbedringen i depressive symptomer efter behandling med MBKT.

Forsvaret af ph.d.-projektet er offentligt og finder sted den 13/8 kl. 13 i lokale 1441-112 (Aud. 2), Tåsingegade, Aarhus Universitet, 8000 Aarhus. Titlen på projektet er "How does Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy work in the Treatment of Recurrent Depression?". For yderligere oplysninger kontakt: Ph.d.-studerende Anne Maj van der Velden, e-mail: am.vandervelden@clin.au.dk, tlf. 29375967.

Press release (English)

How does Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy work in the Treatment of Recurrent Depression?

Major depressive disorder (MDD) is one of the most prevalent and debilitating affective disorders and a leading cause of disability worldwide. Much of the burden of depression is a consequence of MDD tending to take a recurrent course. Hence optimizing preventative treatments for recurrence of depression is a high priority within the field of mental health. Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) is an effective treatment for prevention of relapse risk amongst individuals with a history of recurrent MDD, recommended in the Danish National Health guidelines and by the National Institute

for Clinical and Health Excellence (NICE) as preventative treatment for recurrent depression. However, only about half experience sustained recovery or remission following MBCT. To improve clinical outcomes, we need to identify key therapeutic mechanisms of change. This PhD project investigated putative mechanisms of Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) in the treatment of recurrent depression by conducting an interdisciplinary multi-modal randomized controlled trial with an embedded experimental paradigm examining neural, cardiophysiological and psychological change processes following MBCT treatment. We found that MBCT is an effective treatment for reducing depression symptoms post treatment and at 12 month follow up amongst individuals with recurrent depression, and that neural and cardiophysiological changes following MBCT treatment were connected to changes in psychological processes such as decentering, non-reactivity, and the ability to attend and listen to body sensations, which may be a core skills underlying clinical improvement in MBCT for recurrent depression. The project was carried out by Anne Maj van der Velden, who is defending her dissertation on 'How does Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy work in the Treatment of Recurrent Depression?'

The defence is public and takes place on 13/8 at 1 pm in room 1441-112 (Aud. 2) on Tåsingevej Aarhus University, Aarhus. The title of the project is How does Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy work in the Treatment of Recurrent Depression?. For more information, please contact PhD student Anne Maj van der Velden, e-mail: am.vandervelden@clin.au.dk, Phone +45 29375967.

Assessment committee:

Professor Gregers Wegener, MD PhD Dsc(med), Department of Clinical Medicine, Aarhus Universitet (chairman).

Professor Anne Speckens, MD PhD, Department of Psychiatry, Radboud University, The Netherlands.

Associate Professor Norman Farb, PhD, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto, Canada

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