

## Press release

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### Basic information

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Main supervisor: Lone Overby Fjorback

Title of dissertation: Compassion Cultivation Training for informal caregivers of people with a mental illness

Date for defence: 14/1/2022 at (time of day): 14:00 Place: Online:  
<https://aarhusuniversity.zoom.us/j/64077601821>

Press release (Danish)

Compassion træning til pårørende af folk med en psykisk lidelse

At være pårørende til et menneske med en psykisk lidelse er hårdt både for den pårørendes fysiske og psykiske helbred og der er op til 50% større sandsynlighed for at den pårørende selv udvikler depression, angst og stress. Derfor er det vigtigt at undersøge effekten af forebyggende interventioner der kan fremme den pårørende mentale sundhed. Ph.d'en indeholder et stort randomiseret, kontrolleret studie, hvor 161 pårørende til mennesker med en psykisk lidelse deltog på et 8-ugers manualiseret compassiontræningsprogram. Ved 6 måneders opfølgning var de pårørendes symptomer på depression, angst og stress fortsat nedsat, og deres generelle trivsel øget. Studiet har stor generaliserbarhed, da de pårørende var mellem 18-75 år gamle, deres kære havde forskellige typer af psykiske lidelser, og interventionen blev givet både i Jylland og København. Ydermere blev der undersøgt hvilke mediatorer, der skabte effekten af nedsatte symptomer på depression, angst og stress. Resultater af mediationsanalyser viste, at både mindfulness og self-compassion medierede effekten. Et nyt ph.d.-projekt fra Aarhus Universitet, Health. Projektet er gennemført af Nanja Holland Hansen, der forsvaret det d. 14/1/2022 Forsvaret af ph.d.-projektet er offentligt og finder sted den 14/1/2022 kl. 14 online: <https://aarhusuniversity.zoom.us/j/64077601821>.

Titlen på projektet er "Compassion Cultivation Training for informal caregivers of people with a mental illness".

Yderligere oplysninger: Ph.d.-studerende Nanja Holland Hansen, e-mail: [nanjahh@clin.au.dk](mailto:nanjahh@clin.au.dk), tlf. 22131805. Bedømmelsesudvalg: Associate Professor Mette Terp Høybye - chairman of the committee and moderator of the defence Interacting Minds Centre, Department of Clinical Medicine, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark Honorary Lecturer (Psychology) Clara Strauss University of Sussex, Sussex House, Palmer Brighton, United Kingdom Professor Merete Nordentoft Danish Research Institute for Suicide Prevention - DRISP Mental Health Center Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Press release (English)

Informal caregivers of people with a mental illness are at an increased risk of developing depression, anxiety and stress. It is therefore important to investigate preventive interventions that may increase informal caregivers mental health. The PhD. project investigated, in a randomized controlled trial, the effectiveness of a compassion cultivation training program for informal caregivers of people with a mental illness on symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress. 161 informal caregivers were included in the study and results showed that at 6-months follow-up symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress remained decreased and their overall well-being continued to be increased. The study has great generalizability as the informal caregivers were between 18-75 years old, their loved ones suffered from a variety of mental illness and the study was conducted at two different geographical locations in Denmark. Moreover, a mediation analysis was conducted to investigate which mediators drove the effect on depression, anxiety and stress. Results showed that mindfulness and self-compassion were

mediators of the effect. This is a new PhD project from Aarhus University, Health. The project was carried out by Nanja Holland Hansen, who defends her dissertation on 14/1/2022. The defence is public and takes place on 14/1/2022 at 14:00, Online: <https://aarhusuniversity.zoom.us/j/64077601821>. The title of the project is "Compassion Cultivation Training for informal caregivers of people with a mental illness". For more information, please contact PhD student Nanja Holland Hansen, email: [nanjahh@clin.au.dk](mailto:nanjahh@clin.au.dk), Phone +45 22131805

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Press release (English)

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