

There is a plethora of research on the efficacy of mindfulness meditation. Cross disciplinary studies are examining the mechanisms by which the simple behavior of focused attention with kindness will positively influence the feelings, cognition, neurology, and biology of the individual, leading to improvements in mental health, outlook, coping, and health.

Take notes from the course video on the research in each of the three categories of study:

Symptom Reduction

Biological Markers

Neuroplasticity

Summary of what we are learning from the mindfulness research:

1. The quality of research on mindfulness has improved with moderate to strong positive effects.
2. Research has expanded to examine symptom reports, biomedical markers, neuroplasticity, and experience of self-compassion.
3. With training in mindfulness meditation, benefits have been noted in working memory, cognition, reduced stress, lessened anxiety and depression, and response to illness.
4. Mindfulness meditation has been linked to stronger immunity, reduction in markers of inflammation in the body, and stronger neural connections in the brain.
5. The practice of mindfulness increases the experience of self-compassion, compassion toward others and improved relationship to others.

Your continued familiarity with the research will increase your effectiveness as a practitioner and teacher of mindfulness.

### Reflection Questions

What questions do you have that may be addressed through research?

How will you integrate your understanding of research into your teaching?

## Supplemental Activities

## The Science Behind Mindfulness Video

Supplement your understanding with this video that provides an illustrated explanation of how mindfulness is good for the brain.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTA0j8FfCvs>

What is your take-away?

Stay current by continuing your study of the research on mindfulness that is the best fit for your context. Here is a brief list to get you started:

- Center for Mindfulness and Human Potential. Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, University of California, Santa Barbara  
<https://www.cmhp.ucsb.edu/>
- Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School  
<https://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/>
- Curry School of Education, University of Virginia  
<https://curry.virginia.edu/>
- Go American Mindfulness Research Association. Pasadena, California.  
<https://goamra.org/>
- Greater Good Science Center. University of California - Berkeley  
<https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/>
- School of Human Ecology and the Center for Healthy Minds, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
<https://centerhealthyminds.org/>
- University of Oxford Research Centre  
<https://www.psych.ox.ac.uk/research/mindfulness>

What habits of study will you develop to stay informed on current research findings in your role as a teacher of mindfulness?