

THE SELF-CARE EDUCATION FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS USING MINDFULNESS

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Background

Recent studies have consistently shown medical students experience high rate psychological symptoms. Under this circumstance teaching mindfulness is a possible option. However, there are few consistent educational courses in medical schools in Japan.

Method

Showa University (Tokyo, Japan) launched an intensive self-care program based on mindfulness for 600 first-year healthcare professional students in 2015 (120 medicine, 110 dentistry, 210 pharmacist, 100 nursing, 60 PT and OT). The target achievements of this program were as follows:

- Understand the needs of self-care,
- Enhance self-awareness,
- Evaluate evidence of mindfulness for mental diseases,
- Practice formal/informal mindfulness-based activities.

This program consisted of a 90-minutes lecture, and consecutive reflective activities completing personal journals and portfolio follow the lectures. The students are required to plan how to make use of what they learned in this course. The students were asked to complete a questionnaire after the course.

Results

The questionnaire indicated that 98% of the students were satisfied with the course materials. In particular, some participants stated that regular mindfulness-based practices such as meditation, breathing method, and even informal mindfulness activities in daily life reduced test anxiety, mood-dependent behavior, and absence of flexibility. Descriptions from the e-portfolio showed that the participants understood the importance of body-mind relationship and evitable stressors around them.

Conclusion

Teaching mindfulness could encourage healthcare students to understand the necessity of self-care at early stages of their professional training. The results would help to develop our next stage of this self-care program based on mindfulness, 12 weekly 1.5-hours session.■