



Health Benefits

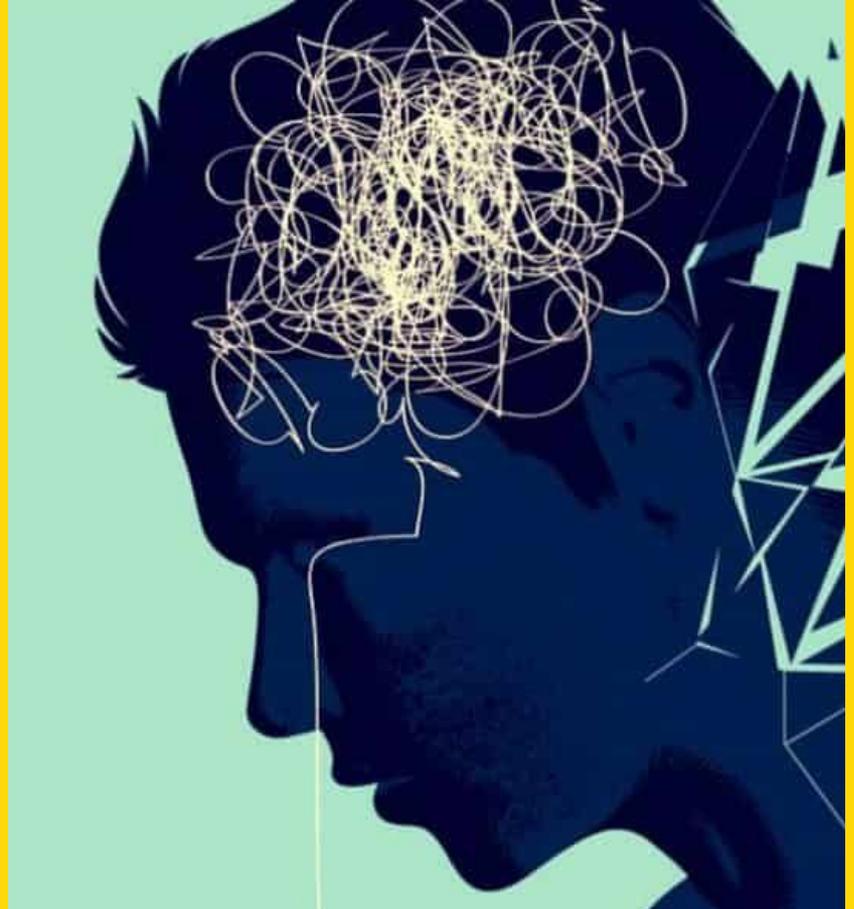
OF KINDNESS

ALTHEA FRYE, ABBEY BOHN,
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Kindness Effects on Anxiety

Abbey Bohn



Kindness & Anxiety: The Research

Kindness reduces avoidance goals in socially anxious individuals

Jennifer L. Trew • Lynn E. Alden

This study observes the effect of acts of kindness on social avoidance goals. They hypothesized that engaging in acts of kindness would reduce avoidance goals in socially anxious people more than exposure to social situations alone.

Conditions:

- Acts of kindness: perform acts of kindness
Ex. raking a neighbors lawn, donating to charity.
- Exposure only: Engage in social interactions they would normally avoid.
Ex. talking to a neighbor, asking someone to lunch
- Life Events(Control): participants were asked to record daily events to increase their awareness.
Ex. attending class, grocery shopping

All participants engaged in their assigned tasks 3 times a day, 2 days a week for 4 weeks.

Kindness & Anxiety

Results:

Observed levels of social avoidance goals, daily anxiety levels and positive affect in all the of condition groups



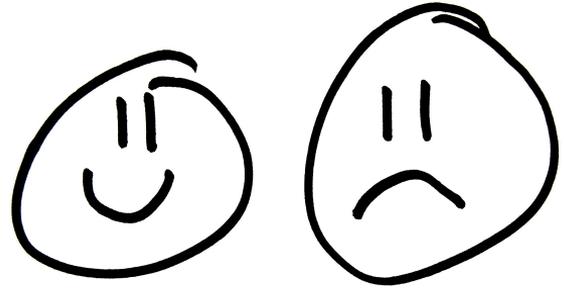
- Participants in the acts of kindness condition experienced a greater reduction in social avoidance goals than participants in the control condition and the exposure only condition.
- The results also showed a corresponding decrease of state-level social anxiety in the acts of kindness group and exposure only group.
- Acts of kindness and exposure alone did not increase PA

Kindness & Anxiety

Health Benefits:

People high in neuroticism tend to dwell and focus on themselves in excess which causes higher levels of stress and anxiety.

Dwelling and too much self reflection lead to an increase in negative affect and a decrease in self confidence(Lyubomirsky).



Promoting kindness and positive outcomes for others draws the focus away from oneself, therefore reducing stress and anxiety levels caused by dwelling.

Kindness & Anxiety

Health Benefits continued...



“Although strongly motivated to avoid negative social outcomes, socially anxious individuals are more likely to experience them, in part because their self-protective behaviors impair their social interactions”(e.g.Alden and Bieling 1998).

“Thus, acts of kindness may help to strengthen social relationships, increase social engagement, and broaden social networks” (Kurtz and Lyubomirsky 2008; Otake et al. 2006).

Studies show that strong social ties are necessary for people to live their happiest lives (Diener and Seligman) and form a sense of belonging(Sandstrom and Dunn).

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Kindness and Physical Health

Chloe Graves



Social Media & Kindness

- Social media has been noted to be useful during weight loss if kindness is applied.
 - Kindness as a form of motivation and support over social media is positively related to weight-loss outcomes.
 - Kindness is positively associated with self-monitoring behaviors.
 - This provides insight for platform providers to improve social media sites for healthcare practitioners in their efforts to advise individuals on weight-loss .



Health Benefits

Reduced Stress

Studies have found that people are more likely to report feeling less stressed on days that they show higher levels of kindness (ex: holding doors open, giving directions, etc.).

Heart Health

People who provide support to their social networks have better blood pressure than those who don't.

Overall Well-being

Kindness leads to higher levels of happiness, better self-esteem, lower rates of depression, release of endorphins, and improved emotional well-being.

Health Benefits

- Increased positive emotions produced increased vagal tone, an effect mediated by increased perception of social connections
- Perceptions of social connections through positive emotions build physical health, indexed at vagal tone.
- Positive emotions, positive social connections, and physical health influence one another in a self-sustaining upward-spiral dynamic.

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An illustration of several hands of different colors (pink, orange, blue, green) holding hearts of various colors (red, pink, purple) against a light blue background. The hands are positioned around the central text, creating a sense of unity and care.

Kindness based meditation

And its benefits on health!

-Joe Ferrante

Meditation



Definition

Meditation can be defined as “a family of self-regulation practices that focus on training attention and awareness in order to bring mental processes under greater voluntary control” (Walsh & Shapiro, 2006, p. 228)

Kindness based meditation?..

Mindfulness meditation has seemingly been the most popular form in western culture, but we can see kindness as the focus of meditation in many traditions as well!

So what is Kindness Meditation?

-Kindness based meditation, or KBM, could be seen as meditation techniques specific in the sense that they are intended to cultivate altruism, compassion, and kindness.

-One example of a KBM would be the loving-kindness meditation. This type of KBM has been practiced in various schools of buddhist thought, and focuses on repetition of a mantra intended to cultivate love and acceptance for all.

-traditional LKM often follows a similar structure, beginning with the mantra directed at oneself, then moving to other loved ones, progressively directing the mantra at individuals/groups that have less and less relation to the individual practicing LKM, with it eventually directed at all living things.

-LKM is one form of KBM, among many others, all with specific objectives regarding kindness and direction of intent.

Theorized link between KBM and health



-There is extensive evidence that being altruistic can enhance and individuals health and wellbeing (for the giver and receiver). As well as this, there is evidence that even just thinking about doing things for others has benefits to physical health and mental well being!

-In this sense, we can see the potential power of KBM, as focused thought regarding altruism, kindness, or compassion, could be an easily tapped source of health and well being at no expense to the individual!

Meta analysis of KBM research

-In a meta-analysis of results from 33 studies on KBM, main results (a culmination of comparisons between controls and other forms of meditation) showed increase in positive emotions, increased the perceived value of states of positivity, reduction in depression compared to passive control groups, increased state of relaxation during intervention, and increase in conditional goal setting. (Galiente, 2014)



-Although inconsistent in the entirety of comparisons, KBM was favorable over relaxation techniques, neutral visualization, and mindfulness meditation in terms of improved health and wellbeing. (criterion for health and well being varied, but was generally defined by presence of positive emotion and satisfaction with life)

LKM compared to Exercise

An analysis was done in which the effects of Loving kindness meditation were compared to the effects of Exercise. Although none of the results are statistically significant, I believe that simple sessions of LKM being comparable to exercise in terms of benefits on well being, in all of these different aspects, is an undoubtable merit of the practice in and of itself.

	Scale	LKM	LE
Well-being (mean, SD)	14–70	45.13 (8.78)	46.08 (8.26)
Pleasant emotions (mean, SD)	5–25	15.80 (3.56)	16.04 (3.53)
Unpleasant emotions (mean, SD)	5–25	12.42 (3.77)	12.04 (3.78)
Empathic concern (median, 25–75C)	0–28	22 (18–25)	22 (19–25)
Perspective taking (median, 25–75C)	0–28	18 (15–22)	19 (15–23)
Perceived stress (mean, SD)	0–40	19.69 (7.46)	18.79 (7.21)
Depression (median, 25–75C)	0–15	5 (3–7)	4 (3–6)
Anxiety (mean, SD)	0–15	6.60 (3.17)	6.09 (3.24)
Outward irritability (median, 25–75C)	0–12	4 (2–5)	3 (2–5)
Inward irritability (median, 25–75C)	0–12	3 (1–5)	3 (1–5)
Satisfaction with life (mean, SD)	5–35	21.30 (6.54)	21.71 (6.66)
Symptoms (median, 25–75C)	0–79	17.5 (9–31)	18 (8–29)

LKM and social connectedness



- A study was conducted in which 93 participants meditated for an average of 1.7 hours per month, as compared to a control group, which simply imagined the likeness of individuals they know, rather than using LKM with positive regard to the individuals imagined.
- The participation was followed by examination regarding mood/ positive and negative emotions
- Subjects were also assessed with explicit evaluative responses (indicating how similar they felt to a picture of an individual depicting a specific emotion, using a seven point likert scale)
- The final measure was implicit evaluative responses (priming task in which subjects were presented with pictures of individuals for two seconds, then asked to quickly match with succession of words that either had negative or positive connotations).

Results

Analysis of variance on Mood

-Using A 2x2 ANOVA (analysis of variance), we see a significant Group \times Time interaction for positive mood, $F(1, 82) = 11.17, p < .001, \eta^2 = .99,$ and a moderate interaction for negative mood, $F(1, 82) = 3.46, p < .07, \eta^2 = .85, \eta^2 = .04.$

Explicit evaluative response

-it was seen through the explicit evaluative response test that the LKM participants noticed more positivity in the individuals, but also perceived much more positivity in the neutral individuals.

Implicit evaluative response

-As for the implicit evaluative response, we also saw a significant increase in positive perceptions of individuals in the LKM group.

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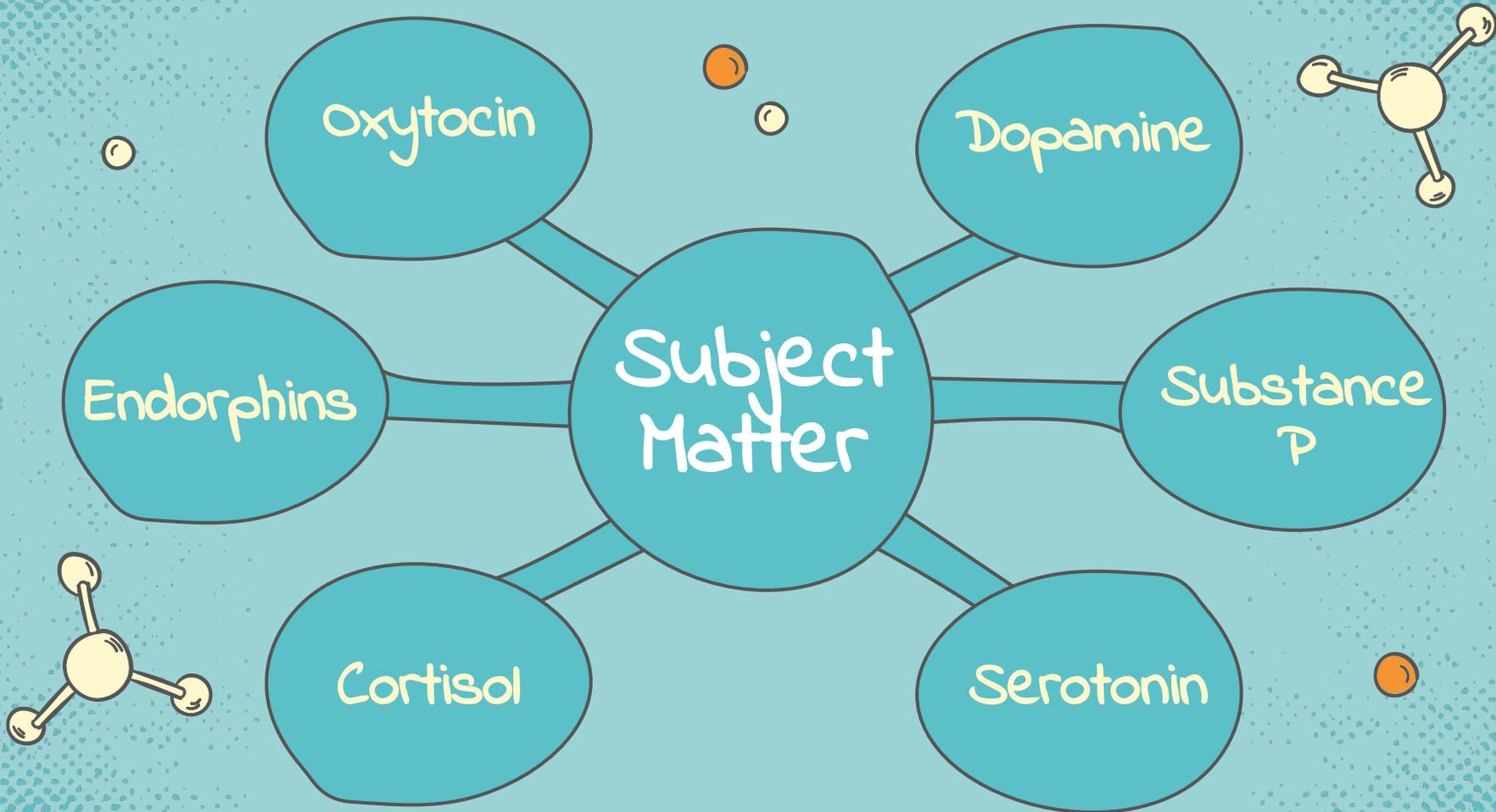
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Kindness and its Effects on Hormones and Neurotransmitters

Althea Frye



OXYTOCIN “THE LOVE HORMONE”

Oxytocin is an important hormone that is released when we are physically intimate.. We rely on oxytocin responses when we do not have enough cognitive data to form a decision, thus using oxytocin for emotional advice. It also works to maintain our body and brain’s homeostasis. Other benefits include....

- Social bonds, emotional warmth, trusting others
 - Oxytocin helps us become more trusting, more giving, friendlier, and even increases loyalty.
- Heart Health
 - Oxytocin releases a chemical (nitric oxide) that helps dilate blood vessels, which causes lowered blood pressure
- Self-esteem and emotional warmth increase
 - A University of British Columbia study showed that participants who engaged in 6 acts of kindness in a week had a significant increase in positive affect, satisfaction within their relationships, “and a decrease in social avoidance in socially anxious individuals.”



Dopamine

“The Feel-Good Hormone”

- Dopamine is responsible for the brain's pleasure and reward systems
- It can give our brain feelings of euphoria
- Sometimes referred to as “helper's high”
- Helps us with motivation and feelings of satisfaction



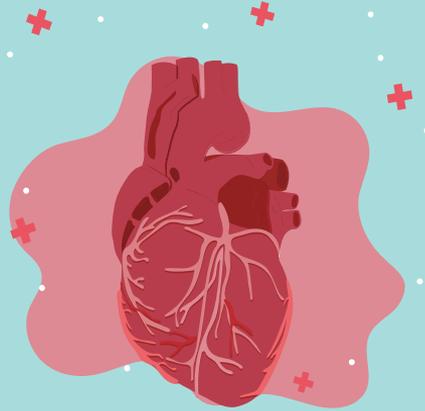
Serotonin

“The Happy Hormone”

- Production of serotonin can lead to an increase in energy level
- Helps regulate mood
- Alongside to oxytocin, it can lower levels of aggressiveness and promotes feelings of compassion
- Increase levels of happiness
- Encourages wound healing
- Helps alleviate anxiety



Stress Regulation



ENDORPHINS

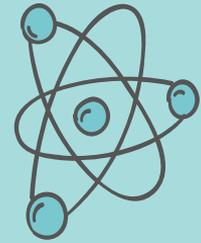
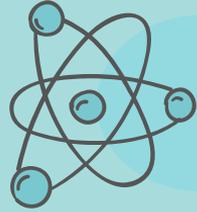
- Responsible for the euphoric feeling referred to as the “runner’s high”
- Associated as the brain’s natural pain killer
- Promotes happiness and aides w/ stress

CORTISOL

- “Fight-or-flight” hormone and responds to stress
- Lowers blood pressure and helps with weight lost
- Studies show kind people have lower cortisol and thus increases overall lifespan

SUBSTANCE P

- Body’s first responder to extreme stressors
- Releases neurogenic inflammation to respond to injury and neurotransmitter chemicals that blocks pain
- Viewed as body’s immediate defense



<https://www.stylist.co.uk/life/mindfulness-exercises-simple-techniques-at-work-in-office/354599>

Mindfulness-Based Therapy

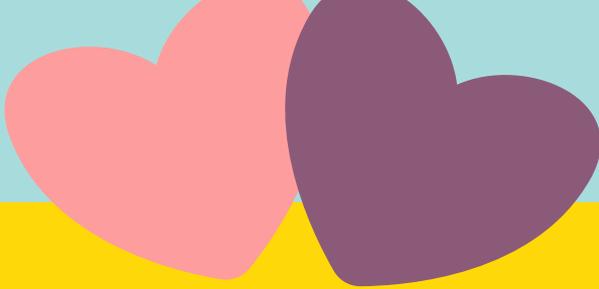
Mindfulness-based therapy includes daily acts of kindness in interventions

to help alleviate psychological and some physiological symptoms.

Alongside meditation and gratitude journaling. However, acts of kindness

needs to be repeated constantly! One act will not be sufficient enough to

benefit for the rest of the week!



THANK YOU

and remember to

**TREAT PEOPLE
WITH KINDNESS**

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