

Argentine tango dance compared to mindfulness meditation and a waiting-list control...

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Full title: Argentine tango dance compared to mindfulness meditation and a waiting-list control: a randomised trial for treating depression.

OBJECTIVES: To determine whether tango dancing is as effective as mindfulness meditation in reducing symptoms of psychological stress, anxiety and depression, and in promoting well-being.

DESIGN: This study employed analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and multiple regression analysis.

PARTICIPANTS: Ninety-seven people with self-declared depression were randomised into tango dance or mindfulness meditation classes, or to control/waiting-list.

SETTING: classes were conducted in a venue suitable for both activities in the metropolitan area of Sydney, Australia.

INTERVENTIONS: Participants completed six-week programmes (1½h/week of tango or meditation). The outcome measures were assessed at pre-test and post-test.

MAIN OUTCOME MEASURES: Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale; The Self Esteem Scale; Satisfaction with Life Scale, and Mindful Attention Awareness Scale.

RESULTS: Sixty-six participants completed the program and were included in the statistical analysis. Depression levels were significantly reduced in the tango (effect size $d=0.50$, $p=.010$), and meditation groups (effect size $d=0.54$, $p=.025$), relative to waiting-list controls. Stress levels were significantly reduced only in the tango group (effect size $d=0.45$, $p=.022$). Attending tango classes was a significant predictor for the increased levels of mindfulness $R(2)=.10$, adjusted $R(2)=.07$, $F(2,59)=3.42$, $p=.039$.

CONCLUSION: Mindfulness-meditation and tango dance could be effective complementary adjuncts for the treatment of depression and/or inclusion in stress management programmes. Subsequent trials are called to explore the therapeutic mechanisms involved.

Complement Ther Med. 2012 Dec;20(6):377-84. doi: 10.1016/j.ctim.2012.07.003. Epub 2012 Aug 3. Pinniger R, Brown RF, Thorsteinsson EB, McKinley P. University of New England, Australia. rpinnige@une.edu.au

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