Fighting the Silent Epidemic: The Effects of Stress-Reduction Techniques on PTSD, Depression, and Anxiety

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There is a need for people who are struggling with anxiety-related disorders as well as general stress to be able to improve the quality of life and overall health. The purpose of the experiment was to create a program based on techniques of mindfulness, health, and stress-reduction that would reduce symptoms of PTSD, depression, and anxiety. The program was designed by a student in coordination with a clinical psychologist and used to test 100 adult patients medically diagnosed with one of the aforementioned disorders. Participants self-selected into the program and demographic data was collected. 85 participants completed the program. Ages ranged from 18-54, 43 females, 42 males, 39 PTSD, 23 anxiety, 20 depression, 3 comorbidities of depression and anxiety, 24 taking an antidepressant, 20 taking SSRIs, eight taking SNRIs, and 33 taking no medication. Participants were given an identification number and answered a weekly survey online, in which they self-reported blood pressure and heart rate, satisfaction with quality of life, stress levels, frequency and severity of their symptoms, as well as a Perceived Stress Scale Test at the beginning and end of the program. Participants were asked to complete a short task each day to encourage mindfulness, physical, mental, and emotional health. Overall, participants experienced a 12% decrease in severity of symptoms and an 11% increase in quality of life. There was minimal change in resting heart rate and blood pressure. This program could be a viable option for people struggling with anxiety-related disorders and improve overall wellbeing.

Awards Won:
Fourth Award of $500