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Meditation has been extensively researched for its ability to help with concentration, self-awareness, and mood regulation. New research has begun exploring its influence on anxiety and how it can be used as a daily tool to address stress.

In a recently published study, 89 participants were asked to take part in an eight-week stress management program. The participants were randomly divided into two groups: one focusing on established stress management methods, such as improving nutrition and sleep habits, while the research group focused their efforts on mindful meditation. Mindful meditation is a simple method that includes sitting in a peaceful environment, paying attention to breathing patterns, and allowing one's attention to wander for a fixed amount of time. Prior to starting and upon completion of the program, participants took the Trier Social Stress Test, an experimental technique intended to prompt anxiety responses, while having several physiological markers of anxiety monitored. The results: those in the experimental mindful meditation group showed significant decreases in stress hormone ACTH and inflammatory proteins IL-6 and TNF-a after having completed the program, while the control group actually exhibited worsened responses. Those who practiced mindful meditation also self-reported significantly lower levels of stress overall than participants in the control group.

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Anxiety can affect our well-being in many ways and is one of the primary triggers that leads to disrupting our healthy lifestyle plans. Can't find the motivation to hit the gym? Find yourself eating fast food after a hard day? Try finding a quiet place in your home, diffusing your favorite grounding essential oil blend, and letting your mind wander for a few minutes.

Bibliography

- Learn about exercise and stress resilience.
- Read about the unity of yoga and essential oils.

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