

Comparative psychometric studies and questionnaires on the effects of Tao Calligraphy Tracing Meditation in patients with Unipolar Depression after 25 hours and 50 hours.

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Introduction: Depression is a common yet in terms of individual/social significance most underestimated disease. Yearly six million (17%) of Germany's population require treatment. The international lifetime prevalence for all forms is 16 – 20 %, for Unipolar Depression (8 %). For industrialized nations, WHO predicts Unipolar Depression as the disease with the highest disease burden by 2030. Systematic meta-analysis reported that therapeutic Chinese calligraphy painting can reduce neuropsychiatric symptoms. Other studies showed that simple repetitive tracing calligraphy lines with fingers combined with mantra chanting can produce beneficial effects on SF-36 and McGill Pain Scores.

Method: The study was approved by the Hamburg Psychotherapists Ethic Chamber. The effect of Tao Calligraphy Tracing Meditation (TCTM) combined with mantra chanting was investigated using standardized psychometric questionnaires: BDI-II, PHQ-9, HAM-D and HAM-A score in 23 subjects suffering from Unipolar Depression. Questionnaires were completed at the start, after 25 and 50 hours of TCTM.

Results: ANOVA analysis showed that all indexes exhibited statistically significant positive improvement. For BDI-II: After 25 hours the score changed from 26.74 to 14.52 ($p < 0.001$), further after 50 hours to 10.09 ($p < 0.001$), which corresponds to an improvement of 59.47 %. For the PHQ-9: the score changed from 12.96 to 8 ($p < 0.001$) after 25 hours, further after 50 hours to 6.61 ($p < 0.001$), an improvement of 44.09 %. HAM-D after 25 hours, the score changed from 20.09 to 12.57 ($p < 0.001$), further after 50 hours to 6.35 ($p < 0.001$), an improvement of 67.86 %. The HAM-A score changed from 20.74 to 12.83 ($p < 0.001$) and further after 50 hours to 6.8 ($p < 0.001$), an improvement of 67.53 %.

Conclusions: Results of Group 1 indicate Tao Calligraphy Tracing Meditation combined with mantra chanting markedly improved symptoms of Unipolar Depression after 25 and after 50 hours.

Keywords: Tao Calligraphy; Unipolar Depression; meditation; before and after study

doi: 10.1016/j.eujim.2021.101964