

**PHQ-9, HAM-A and BDI Scores in Depression and Anxiety improved using Calligraphy Meditation and Chanting Mantra – A Randomized Controlled Blind Study; XVI European Congress for Integrative Medicine, Integrative Medicine, The Challenge, Madrid November 15-17, 2024.**

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**Background and Objective:**

It is well documented that meditation itself and painting calligraphy can positively influence depression and anxiety. Currently, in the world about 280 million people have depression and 301 million suffer from anxiety (noted to be the most common mental health diagnosis).\*\*

In the authors experience, not only painting calligraphy, but even simply tracing the lines with fingers can bring the practitioner into a mindfulness state, especially if it is combined with a chanting mantra. Authors have aimed to study the effect of combining mindfulness practice and art therapy on depression and anxiety.

**Method:**

Twenty subjects were enrolled into a Randomized Controlled Blind Study that was IRB approved. Authors studied the effect of meditation by tracing calligraphy and chanting mantras using standard questionnaires including Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A) and Beck's Depression Inventory (BDI). Upon entry of the study, subjects received an energy transmission and were instructed to practice tracing Chinese Calligraphy together with a chanting mantra for 10 minutes a day at minimum, to participate in an online 30-minute group session 5x week, and to attend other meditation events. The PHQ-9, HAM-A and BDI questionnaires were administered at the start of the study, and at every end of the month until subjects completed the study.

**Results:**

A two-way repeated measures ANOVA analysis showed statistically significant improvements in two of the indexes while one index had improved but not significantly. Specifically, PHQ-9 scores significantly differed over time,  $F(2,20)=4.262$ ,  $p=0.029$  with scores improving significantly between baseline and at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month for both treatment and control groups ( $p=0.051$ ). HAM-A scores significantly differed over time,  $F(1.5,9)=5.092$ ,  $p=0.040$  where the combined scores of treatment and control groups showed significant improvement between the end of month 2 and month 3 ( $p=0.053$ ). BDI scores did not show a statistically significant difference over time,  $F(1.4,11.5)=0.812$ ,  $p=0.43$ .

**Conclusions:**

Our results showed that meditation with Tao calligraphy tracing and mantra chanting is an effective modality that can be integrated into conventional treatment of depression. It is easy to learn and practice. We did not observe any significant side-effects.

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