



RESEARCH RUNDOWN

Measuring Mindful Care

Mindfulness training is beneficial for caregivers who work with persons with developmental disabilities (DD). It seems to have a positive impact on both the caregiver and the people they support. However, very few studies have looked at how mindfulness training affects caregiving behaviour. We plan to design a tool that can be used to measure mindful caregiving behaviours.

What is the research about?

When caregivers who work with persons with DD receive mindfulness training it appears to change the way that they provide care. For example, they seem more engaged, calm, and responsive. Positive behaviour changes also occur in the persons served. Yet few studies have directly measured observable changes in caregiver behaviour following mindfulness training. It is unclear which behaviours change and by how much.

The goals of this study are to:

1. Identify observable caregiving behaviours that are consistent with mindfulness. We call these *mindful care behaviours*.
2. Design a tool to measure those behaviours.
3. Test the tool.

What will the researchers do?

1. We will talk to mindfulness experts and ask them to identify mindful care behaviours.
2. We will ask St.Amant staff to rate the importance of each behaviour for the care experience of the person served. The ratings will be made using a 4-point scale ranging from "not at all important" to "very important". Any behaviour with an average rating of 2.5

What you need to know:

We will develop and test a tool that can be used to measure mindful care behaviours. In the future this tool could be used for training, evaluation, and mindfulness program development. It will also contribute to better caregiving and better quality of life for persons with DD.

or less will be removed. A measurement tool will be created using the remaining behaviours. It will list the behaviours, along with spaces to indicate whether or not a caregiver engaged in each behaviour during a specific period of time.

3. We will train people how to use the tool. Then they will test the tool by using it to measure mindful caregiving in staff members at St.Amant. Users will then provide feedback about the tool.



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What do the researchers hope to find?

By the end of the study we should have a list of mindful care behaviours that can be easily observed. We expect these behaviours to be relevant to caregivers who support persons with DD. The behaviours will also be the basis for our measurement tool. Ideally the tool will be easy to use. However, any feedback that users have about the tool will be useful.

Why is it important?

This study will improve our understanding of how mindfulness training affects caregiving behaviour. The tool we design will make it possible to measure mindful care behaviours. In the future the tool could be used to assess mindful caregiving in caregivers who support persons with DD. The tool could also be used to evaluate mindfulness training programs. This may encourage healthcare service providers to start using caregiver mindfulness training programs or change existing ones. Ultimately this research will contribute to better caregiving.

Research Team

Jessica Duris, Department of Psychology,
University of Manitoba

Dr. Toby Martin, Department of Psychology,
University of Manitoba; St.Amant Research
Centre

* Team members and affiliations may have
changed

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Additional Resources

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At the time of writing this project was ongoing,
version date: November, 2019. Latest versions
are available at <http://stamant.ca/research/our-research/project-summaries/>