The Transcendental Meditation Program: A Non-Pharmaceutical Approach to Treating Anxiety

www.tmwomenprofessionals.org/Nurses

Research shows the TM® technique is highly effective in reducing anxiety

An anxiety epidemic is sweeping the U.S., reports the July 17 issue of Business Insider. “America is turning into a country of hand-wringers,” writes author Maura Kelley. “Nearly one in five of us—40 million American adults—suffer from anxiety disorders, the most common class of psychiatric ailment we have.”

While pharmaceuticals are often used to manage this modern malaise, there is growing interest in more natural, long-lasting solutions without side-effects. Published, peer-reviewed studies have found that the TM program reduces activation of the sympathetic nervous system, which in turn reduces stress hormones such as adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol.


“Research has shown that the practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique is on average twice as effective in reducing anxiety and changing and reducing the physiological correlates of stress, which are at the basis of the body’s healing response and at the basis of prevention of disease and promotion of health,” says research scientist Robert Schneider, M.D.
**ACTIVITY 1: Identifying Symptoms of Impaired Situation Awareness in the Workplace**

**Objective:** Understand the symptoms of impaired Situation Awareness that debilitating executive judgment and decision making in dynamic settings under stress by applying to your daily experience. These symptoms, taken together or individually, can contribute to greater errors in judgment, as well as arriving at decisions without taking into account all available information or premature closure.

**Instruction:** As individual breakout teams, identify an example of the above listed symptom(s) of impaired Situation Awareness as experienced on the job in your work as a healthcare professional. Provide an example and a value to the degree this symptom is experienced in your line of work on a daily basis. If the symptom is not relevant, enter the term “NA”.

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| Requisite Memory Trap    | “features of the current situation, brought together into the central repository (short term memory), rapidly fading away due to limited caching that exceeds approximately seven plus or minus two chunks” (Endsley et al, 2003, p. 33) | ![Diagram](Requisite_Memory_Trap.png) |                      | 1= one to two times/week
2 = 3 to 4 times /week
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(NA = not applicable) |

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**WAFOS (Workload, anxiety, fatigue, and other stressors)**

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| Workload, anxiety, fatigue, and other stressors (WAFOS) | “a taxing of SA due to environmental conditions within which a decision maker must operate when one’s well-being is at stake.” (Endsley et al, 2003, p. 35) | ![Pictorial representation](image) | ![Work-related example](image) | 1= one to two times/week  
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<td>Data Overload</td>
<td>“information intake that quickly outpaces the ability of the decision maker’s sensory and cognitive system; when there is more data than can be processed by the human brain, leading to the person’s SA becoming outdated or containing gaps” (Endsley et al, 2003, p. 36)</td>
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**MISPLACED SALIENCE**

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<td>Misplaced Salience</td>
<td>“many pieces of information vying for one’s attention exceeding the decision maker’s capacity to seek out information relevant to his/her goals” (Endsley et al, 2003, p. 37)</td>
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<td>Complexity creep</td>
<td>“the inability of the decision maker to form sufficient internal representations of the features making up a system and how it works due to feature escalation” (Endsley et al, 2003, p. 39)</td>
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**ERRANT MENTAL MODELS**

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<td>Errant mental models</td>
<td>“a false or errant internal representation or ‘map’ making it difficult for a decision maker to detect cues and explain away conflicting cues to fit the mental model they have selected” (Endsley et al, 2003, p. 40)</td>
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OUT-OF-THE-LOOP SYNDROME

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<td>Out-of-the-loop syndrome</td>
<td>“a gap in understanding on how [the situation] is performing and the state of the elements [the situation] is supposed to be controlling” (Endsley et al, 2003, p. 41). Often associated with automation, but not limited to automation.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Out-of-the-loop Syndrome" /></td>
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#### ATTENTIONAL TUNNELING

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| Attentional Tunneling       | Fixating on a set of information to the exclusion of others (Endsley et al, 2003, p. 32) | ![Attention Tunneling](image) |                      | 1 = one to two times/week
                                                                                                               |                            | 2 = 3 to 4 times/week
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REGRESSION

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<td>Regression</td>
<td>A cognitive overload to the brain’s processing ability results in the individual “forgetting” past training and automatic response not only does not “kick in”, but the individual responds as if they had never received training.</td>
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Summary of Policy Statement Issued by the American Heart Association

According to the American Heart Association, the Transcendental Meditation technique is the only meditation practice that has been shown to lower blood pressure.

According to the AHA,* “Because of many negative studies or mixed results and a paucity of available trials, all other meditation techniques [including Mindfulness] received a ‘Class III, no benefit, Level of Evidence C’ recommendation. Thus, other meditation techniques are not recommended in clinical practice to lower BP at this time.”

The AHA scientific statement also reported the finding that lower blood pressure through Transcendental Meditation practice is associated with substantially reduced rates of death, heart attack and stroke.

The AHA scientific statement concludes that alternative treatments that include the Transcendental Meditation technique are recommended for consideration in treatment plans for all individuals with blood pressure greater than 120/80 mm Hg.

Currently, there are over 340 peer reviewed research studies on the Transcendental Meditation Program.

This is a list of research 2007-present

References


