

Book Review

Mindfulness

Series: *Advances in Psychotherapy – Evidence-Based Practice*, volume 37

Katie Witkiewitz, Core R. Roos, Dana Dharmakaya Colgan and Sarah Bowen,
Hogrefe Publishing, 2017, 100 pp. (paperback)

ISBN: 978-0-88937-414-0

doi: [10.1027/00414-000](https://doi.org/10.1027/00414-000)

doi: [10.1017/S1352465817000509](https://doi.org/10.1017/S1352465817000509)

Mindfulness is a rapidly growing field, with numerous conceptualizations and applications across multiple disorders. This book provides a concise overview of its conceptual roots, as well as current models, assessment and treatment, with consistent reference to empirical evidence and practical tips for implementation. It is primarily targeted at therapists, although would be well suited to students and others keen to gain introductory knowledge of mindfulness-based therapy. Key details are highlighted in the side margins throughout the book, to guide readers to salient take-away points. The sections are structured in an intuitive way, and the writing style is generally accessible and easy to read.

The book importantly starts by defining mindfulness and covering three key processes of awareness of experience, attentional regulation, and cultivation of qualities such as kindness, curiosity, acceptance and non-reactivity. This is followed by a consideration of its roots in Buddhist traditions and practices, which the authors note as helpful in providing a richer understanding, if not necessary for delivery in the context of contemporary healthcare settings.

The next section covers existing ‘models and theories’ of mindfulness, including those extending from mindfulness-based stress reduction, and related models such as dialectical behaviour therapy, and acceptance and commitment therapy. While there is perhaps some overlap between models and their resulting interventions, this is nevertheless a useful overview of the most widely implemented approaches to mindfulness-based therapy. Following this, key mechanisms of action are outlined (e.g. emotion regulation, flexibility), which provides foundational knowledge with regard to how mindfulness is expected to work, and is likely to help therapists to identify and emphasize these elements during therapy.

The last two sections of the book are dedicated to assessment and treatment, which are both structured clearly to outline key issues and provide evidence-based recommendations for practice. Measurement is covered first, with different ways of assessing mindfulness outlined (e.g. state vs trait, objective vs self-report). This is followed by a comprehensive coverage of issues related to treatment, including an important section on recommended therapeutic approaches and facilitator characteristics that the authors consider to be most conducive to successful implementation. The authors provide empirical support for these recommendations, and offer numerous practical guidelines for leading mindfulness practices and adapting for various participant groups and settings, with concrete examples offered throughout.

Throughout the book, the authors helpfully highlight distinctions between differing perspectives (e.g. Eastern vs Western conceptualizations, concentration vs mindfulness, formal

vs informal practices), and also point out where inconsistencies or lack of evidence still remains. The book also provides a list of further resources, as well as an appendix including example mindfulness exercises. *Mindfulness* is therefore an informative yet compact book that will provide an easy-to-read introduction and an ideal starting guide for therapists and clinicians interested in pursuing mindfulness-based treatments, as well as for anyone wishing to gain a foundational understanding of mindfulness in the context of treatment for psychiatric disorders.

DR MELISSA ATKINSON

Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Appearance Research, University of West England