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# Self-Regulation, Mindfulness and Meditative Relaxation

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## A global coping strategy for the Pandemia

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## Overview



### Coping with pandemic stress

Recent surveys show that a growing number of population is facing increased stress and anxiety during the pandemic crisis:

*„Elevated levels of adverse mental health conditions, substance use, and suicidal ideation were reported by adults in the United States in June 2020. The prevalence of symptoms of anxiety disorder was approximately three times those reported in the second quarter of 2019 (25.5% versus 8.1%), and prevalence of depressive disorder was approximately four times that reported in the second quarter of 2019 (24.3% versus 6.5%)“*

*Source: MMWR / August 14, 2020 / Vol. 69 / No. 32*

*US Department of Health and Human Services/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Although self-regulation has become recognized for its foundational role in promoting wellbeing across the lifespan including physical, emotional, social and economic health and educational achievement, it has not played a major role in coping with the increasing negative side-effects of the current pandemic crisis.

**„Self-regulation is the act of managing one’s thoughts and feelings to engage in goal-directed actions such as organizing behavior, controlling impulses, and solving problems constructively.“**

When dealing with toxic stress such as during an existential crisis, self-regulation helps both individuals and social groups to retain emotional and behavioral self-control (mental-well-being) as well as to direct activity in a goal-oriented and problem solving context.

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Adapting self-regulation techniques usually requires a positive, warm „co-regulation“ environment with experienced and skilled „care-givers“ or professionals, who help overcome severe stress and gradually get patients accustomed to a self-regulatory environment in the daily lives.

During a pandemic crisis with an increasing demand of protective „social distancing“ to avoid infection, this classic self-regulatory regime is hardly to be provided.

Yet much like digital and web-based formats of distant learning, certain self-regulation techniques that help to better cope with stress and anxiety can be provided via the world wide web and applied safely via smartphome with a minimum effort and expense.

### **Mindfulness and Meditative Relaxation**

A central technique to achieve mental and emotional self-control is Mindfulness.

Mindfulness is defined as a meditative experience or practice that reduces negative self-talk , fostering a positive state of mind in the here and now presence.

Research has shown that mindfulness helps reduce anxiety and depression. Mindfulness teaches us how to respond to stress with awareness of what is happening in the present moment, rather than simply acting instinctively, unaware of what emotions or motives may be driving that decision.

### **Obstacles towards Mindfulness**

Stress and related negative self-talk triggers negative emotions such as depression or anxiety, which gradually is being conceptualized as downward spiral. It is maintained by a routine of external and internal stress stimuli. Most stress patients are unaware of this negative process. In addition the stress symptoms reduce the ability to calm down and experience relief of stress symptoms such as muscular tension, pain, anxiety or depression through a practice of self-regulation. To learn self-regulation as a form of stress management thus is very challenging, oftentimes resulting in a failure to introduce an upwards spiral towards inner balance and stress relief and mindfulness.

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## Digital Formats of Mindfulness and Meditative Relaxation

Neuroscience shows that positive and negative states of mind are commonly related to certain brain wave patterns (EEG). High EEG patterns above 14 Hz (Beta waves) are related to negative emotions and anxiety, while lower EEG patterns below 14 Hz (Alpha waves) are associated with a more positive mental state of relaxation, meditative experiences and mindful attention.

Traditional practices to induce lower alpha frequencies are the chanting of mantras, singing of music or dancing rhythmically to sound patterns that induce an alpha rhythm.

As a response to the rhythm the brainwaves follow and resonate with the sound and moving patterns. These traditional approaches are generally embedded into regional religious or spiritual traditions. During the past decades psychological research developed a number of contemporized practices which provide modern people to practice mindfulness, meditative experiences without the context of religious practice.

The most reknown modern meditative practices are

- a) **Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)** after Kabat-Zinn and
- b) **Brain Wave Music** which contains a digital simulation of brain wave patterns to which the listeners` brain will respond to while listening.

The central aspect of modern contemporizations of meditative experiences is to provide easy and quicker access without depending on traditional religious systems and thus expand circulation of meditative practices especially in developed , urban industrial societies.

### Calmée Mindfulness

The Calmée Mindfulness Experience applies both Brain Wave Music as well as Mindfulness Techniques for an integrated daily meditative experience which can easily be applied with a smart phone with connected head phones or bluetooth loud speaker.

The sound technology was developed with Technical University Munich in a research project to mentally support orthopedic therapy of injured athletes who suffered

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from pain and depression during rehabilitation. The study was conducted by Sports Science Institute of Technical University Munich.

The Calmée sound technology combines brain wave frequencies and digitized musical mantras which allow for a smooth and reliable meditative experience which within minutes reduces stress symptoms, anxiety and depression and in the mid- and long term assists the listener in managing stress and anxiety leading towards a more mindful balanced life style.

### **Calmée Sound & Light Sphere**

The Calmée light and sound sphere is a sound and light art object which combines an ambient LED light program with a bluetooth loudspeaker which when used with Calmée meditative sounds creates a meditative space (bubble) which allows for a single or group meditation experience. It is designed for daily application to reduce stress symptoms, anxiety and depressive states and thus eliminating negative side-effects of the Pandemic crisis and related restrictions in social behavior and personal freedom.

In addition the meditative self-regulation practice helps to boost the psycho-neuro-immune reaction and thus is a valuable contribution to reduce the infection rate especially in families and teams.

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[www.calmee.com](http://www.calmee.com)

[www.road2sustainability.org](http://www.road2sustainability.org)

World Health Summit Entry:

<https://youtu.be/MySoDztc8As>

