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Mindfulness and Ubuntu: Foundations of inner health

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For over 30 years mindfulness, which originated in Buddhism, has been used in a secular way in health care, subsequently in mental health and education. Research shows mindfulness results in three skills: attention control, emotional regulation, self-regulation. Mindfulness training includes breath awareness. Ubuntu, the interconnectedness of people, with African roots and a spirit of Namaste is spreading worldwide. Ubuntu promotes community, the person in the community and kindles a sense of belonging. Research on a sense of belonging in education shows that belonging programs reduce academic gaps in racial/ethnic and gender achievement and improve health outcomes. Also, researchers in a large cross-cultural community sample found a clear link between feeling connected to a group and happiness; and recommends health professionals encourage patients to join groups. Research shows loneliness and social isolation are two grave factors in today's society amongst both young adults and older people, this loneliness correlates to challenges for inner health. Also that while negative interactions do not necessarily reduce one's sense of belonging in the community, they diminish feelings of wellbeing. Conflict prevention and resolution skills are cultivated in training for both mindfulness and Ubuntu, with some differences. Combining mindfulness with Ubuntu makes for a more grounded, connected, the healthier person leading a meaningful life.

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