

Abstract

Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) has been proven to be an effective psychological intervention for preventing depression relapse and recently extended to treat active depression patients. Empirical studies on the possible mechanisms of change are still limited. Mindfulness and self-compassion are believed to be two key mechanisms of change that mediate MBCT treatment effect. Both concepts are rooted in Buddhist psychology and metaphorically speaking, two wings of a bird both are necessary to fly. Relationship of mindfulness and self-compassion has not been thoroughly tested up to date. Majority of current evidences is based on either cross-sectional or pre-post analysis data. A longitudinal design was conducted in this study involving 113 active depression patients to examine the temporal change in mindfulness and self-compassion along MBCT treatment. Data collected in three waves: a) beginning (session 1); b) mid-program (session 4); c) close to end (session 7). 3-waves cross-lagged panel model analysis was used to examine the temporal change relationship of mindfulness and self-compassion. The result indicated that there was reciprocal relationship between mindfulness and self-compassion. This reciprocal interaction form positive upward spiral feedback loop that may promote both traits which are beneficial to psychological wellbeing.

Keywords: MBCT, Mindfulness, Self-compassion, Depression.