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**MBSR intervention for chronic fibromyalgic pain**

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**Abstract**

**Introduction:** Fibromyalgia (FM) is a chronic syndrome characterized by widespread musculoskeletal pain, sleep disturbances, asthenia, fatigue, and a set of cognitive symptoms named "fibro fog". The quality of life of FM patients is significantly lower than in other rheumatic diseases. The most recent studies confirm the crucial role of chronic stress (distress) both in the etiology and in the maintenance of the syndrome, aggravating the already compromised condition of central sensitization. Given the clinical complexity of FM, the treatment requires a multidimensional approach; in this regard, the scientific community has recently become interested in the contribution of contemplative practices and mindfulness, as regards the reduction of stress. The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of a Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction intervention (MBSR) on FM patients. **Method:** Over a period of three years, four groups of women with FM (N=28) underwent an MBSR intervention, followed by psychological testing (pretest–posttest design), including: anxiety (SAS), perceived stress (PSS), mindfulness (MAAS), sleep quality (PSQI) and general well-being (PGWBI) measures. Given the sample size, t-test and other non-parametric tests were performed. **Results:** Overall, the findings showed a significant improvement after MBSR (PSS, SAS, PSQI, PGWBI <.05). Participants showed lower levels of stress and anxiety after the intervention, and an increasing of general wellbeing and sleep quality. **Conclusions:** The present pilot study confirmed the effectiveness of mindfulness-based interventions in reducing stress and improving sleep awareness and quality in FM patients. Future studies should include control groups while increasing the sample size.

**The effects of defensive functioning on perceived stress and burnout in the healthcare of chronic diseases**

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**Abstract**

Working in the healthcare of chronic diseases affects healthcare professionals' (HP) well-being and their psychological response to perceived stress. Implicit emotional regulation, conceptualized as defensive functioning, mediates individual's reactions to internal and external stressors and is essential in protecting individuals from psychological distress. As symptoms of distress frequently occur in HP working with chronic medical conditions, our study aimed at exploring the relationship between defense mechanisms and perceived stress and burnout and how they change during the COVID-19 emergency.

A convenience sample of 126 HP working with chronic diseases responded to an online survey to test the impact of defense mechanisms on stress and burnout before (August 2020) and during (December 2020) the second wave of COVID-19 in Italy. Self-report assessment was conducted using the Defense Mechanisms Rating Scales-Self-Report-30 (DMRS-SR-30), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI).

Pearson correlations analyses showed significant association between overall defensive functioning (ODF) and psychological well-being in HP working with chronic medical conditions. In particular, immature defenses were found associated with higher levels of stress and burnout, while mature defenses were found associated with lower distress. Regression analyses showed that higher scores on ODF and mature defenses assessed before the second wave of COVID-19 predicted lower levels of stress and burnout during the second healthcare emergency for COVID-19.

Defense mechanisms play an important role in dealing with work-related psychological distress experienced in the healthcare of chronic diseases, especially during healthcare crises as the COVID-19 pandemic. The systematic assessment of defense mechanisms among healthcare professionals might help the early detection of vulnerable workers and the timely activation of psychological support.

**Clinical psychology supporting medicine: job related emotional experience in gynaecologists practising or opposing abortion**

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**Abstract**

Psychological and sociological research studies about abortion are usually related to the construct of "abortion stigma" and they are mainly focused on women's experiences than on providers' ones. The present study tries to understand the subjective perspective of physicians in relation to abortion and consciousness objection in order to deeper understand the emotional dynamics taking part to their workplace's and job's emotional experience. Structured interviews were administrated to 19