



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Global Health Academy



Edinburgh
Neuroscience

Mindfulness for Depression Theory and Practice



Wesak Day, Mental Health Awareness Week
and European Year of the Brain



Depression is...

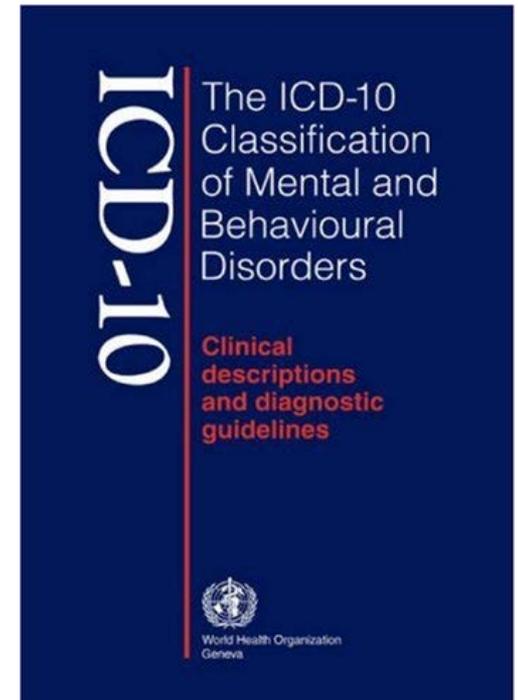
- Depressed mood, most of the day, nearly every day, for >2 weeks
- Energy lacking, with easy fatigue, feeling tired all the time
- Previously pleasurable activities are no longer (and hold no interest)
- Restlessness or Retardation of the body
- Eating (and weight) disrupted
- Sleep disturbance
- Suicidal thoughts or thoughts of death
- Inappropriate guilt, self-reproach or worthlessness
- Out of confidence or self-esteem
- Not being able to concentrate or think clearly



4 symptoms = mild depression

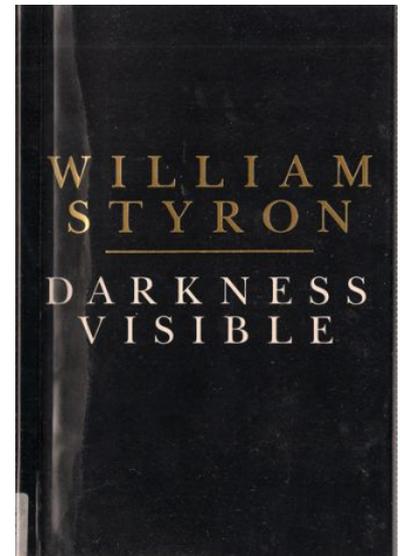
6 symptoms = moderate (+/- somatic syndrome)

8 symptoms = severe depression



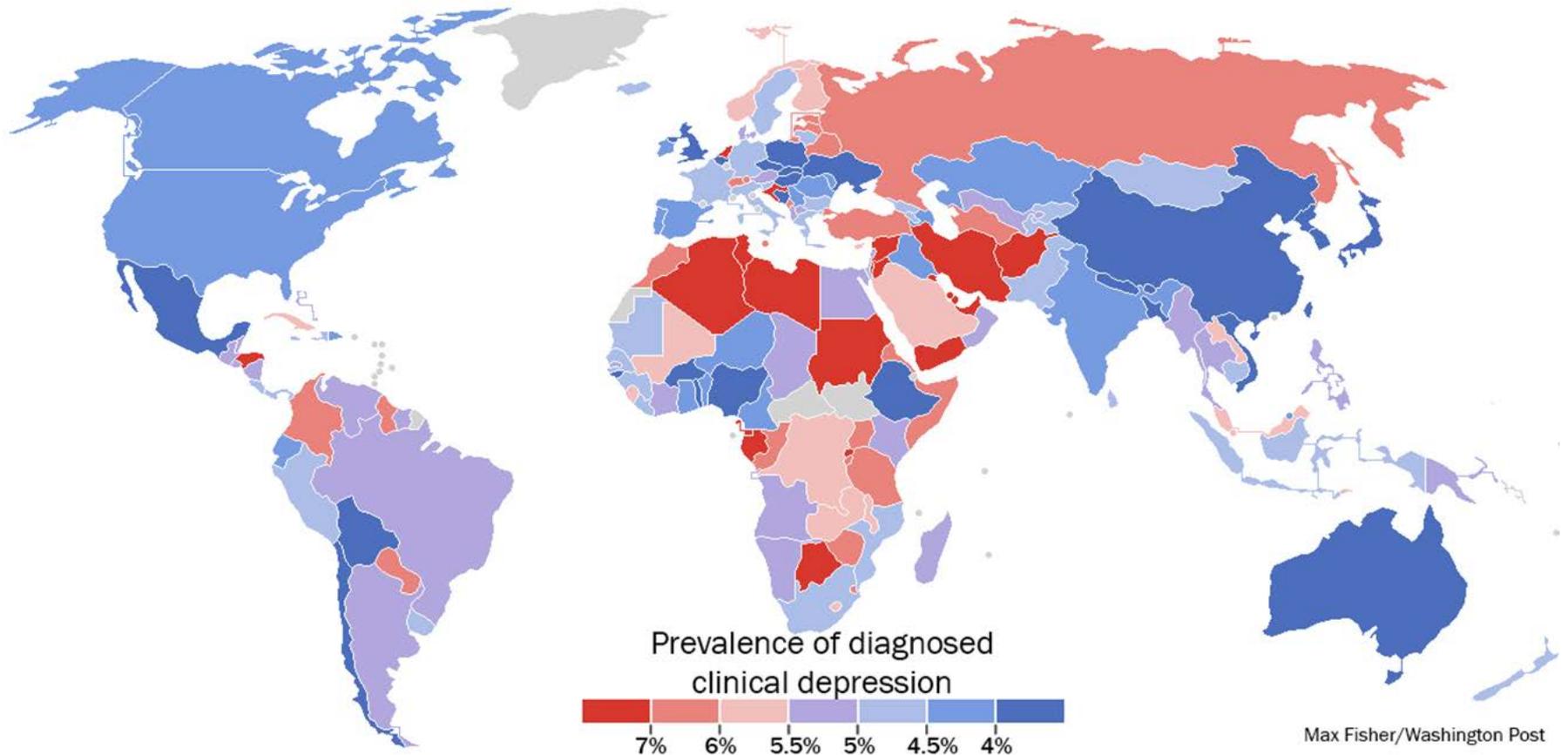
Mild...Moderate...Severe

- “It was not really alarming at first, since the change was subtle, but I did notice that my surroundings took on a different tone at certain times: the shadows of nightfall seemed more sombre, my mornings were less buoyant, walks in the woods became less zestful...
- ...I could no longer concentrate during those afternoon hours...and the act of writing itself, becoming more and more difficult and exhausting, stalled, then finally ceased..... Ultimately, the body is affected and feels sapped, drained...I found myself eating only for subsistence: food, like everything else within the scope of sensation, was utterly without savor. Most distressing of all the instinctual disruptions was that of sleep....Exhaustion combined with sleeplessness is a rare torture...
- ...despair...comes to resemble the diabolical discomfort of being imprisoned in a fiercely over-heated room. And because no breeze stirs this caldron, because there is no escape from this smothering confinement, it is entirely natural that the victim begins to think ceaselessly of oblivion.”



‘Darkness Visible
(A memoir of
madness)’ by
William Styron
1990

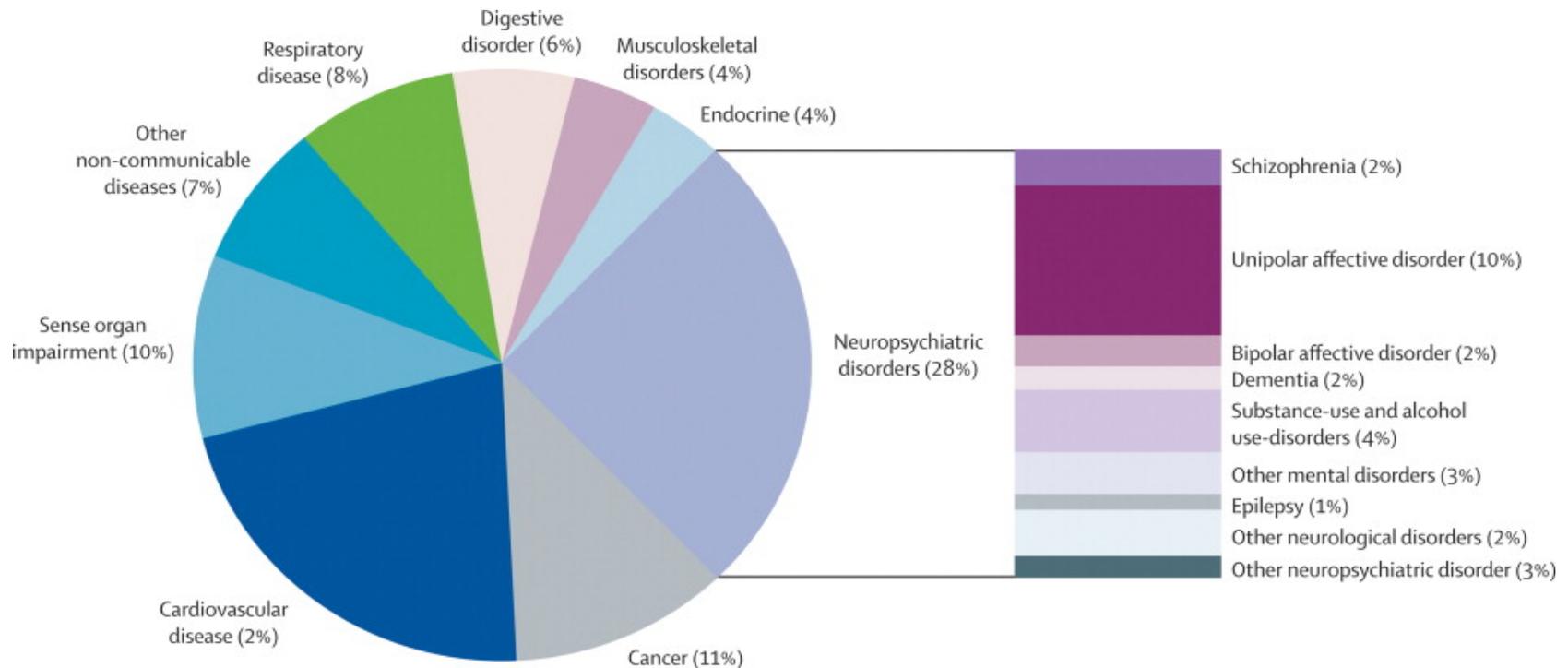
...a global problem



The global point prevalence of MDD, adjusting for methodological differences across 120 studies, is 4.7% (4.4–5.0%). See: Ferraria et al (2013) Global variation in the prevalence and incidence of major depressive disorder: a systematic review of the epidemiological literature

....disabling

- With impaired function over an average duration of ~6 months, depression is the most disabling single condition affecting mankind (10% of all DALYs)



So, if it is that common and disabling, how come I don't know anyone ?

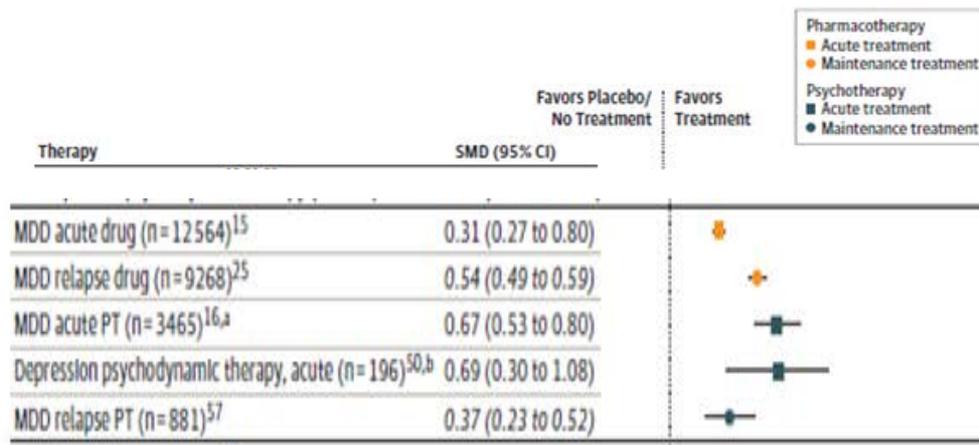
Because depression is stigmatised:

- People don't talk about it
- They hide it and / or themselves
- ~80% have experienced discrimination, and 1 in 3 say they have been avoided or shunned because of it (Lasalvia et al. Lancet 2013)
- With the result that most people with depression miss out on what is usually effective treatment...



Fortunately, treatments work!

Figure 1. Comparison of Effect Sizes in Meta-analyses of Acute and Maintenance Treatment in Pharmacotherapy and Psychotherapy



Maximilian Huhn et al (2014) Efficacy of Pharmacotherapy and Psychotherapy for Adult Psychiatric Disorders: A Systematic Overview of Meta-analyses
 JAMA Psychiatry (in press) – “...pharmacotherapy trials were more likely to have large sample sizes, blinding, control groups, and intention-to-treat analyses. In contrast, psychotherapy trials had lower dropout rates and provided follow-up data”.

Antidepressants Are NOT Overprescribed!



August 8, 2014 @ 3:40 pm – 4:40 pm

The Stand in the Square, Saint Andrew Square (£5)

<https://www.edfringe.com/whats-on/spoken-word>

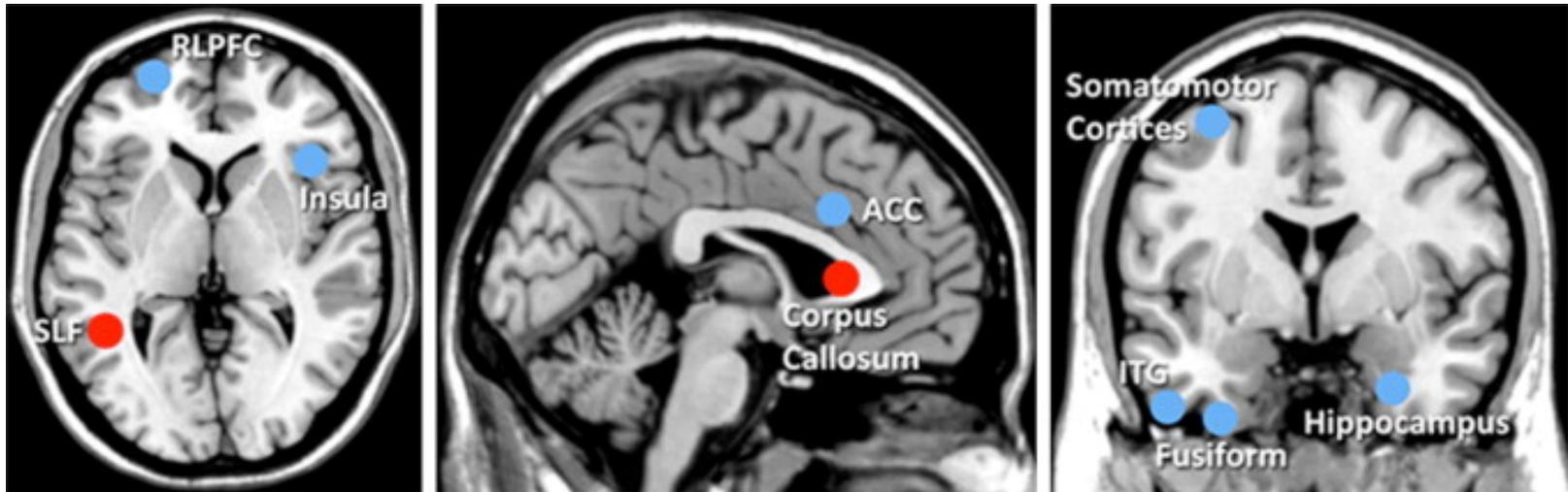


Fig. 1 Convergent brain structure differences in meditation practitioners. Note : Convergent findings from all morphometric studies of meditation practitioners (from both long-term practitioners and novices undergoing short-term training). Regional labels... Blue circles: gray matter regions; red circles: white matter pathways. ACC: anterior/mid cingulate cortex; ITG: inferior temporal gyrus; RLPFC: rostralateral prefrontal cortex; SLF: superior longitudinal fasciculus.

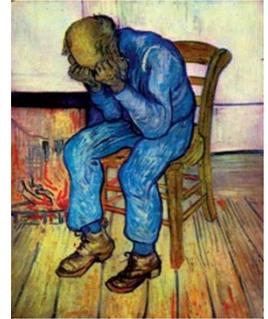
Kieran C.R. Fox , Savannah Nijeboer , Matthew L. Dixon , James L. Floman , Melissa Ellamil , Samuel P. Rumak , Pet...

Is meditation associated with altered brain structure? A systematic review and meta-analysis of morphometric neuroimaging in meditation practitioners

Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews, Volume 43, 2014, 48 - 73



Depression



- Common - 5% of people at any time
- Disabling - 10% of all global Disability
- Responds well to treatment
- Continuing treatment reduces relapse