Virtual reality technology has recently received much acclaim for therapeutic affects due to its highly immersive nature. One demographic that could potentially benefit most from VR is the rapidly growing population of senior citizens. As the potential of virtual reality continues to be uncovered, it is clear that both the ancient practice of mindfulness and the new technology of VR are significant tools to improve physical, mental, and social well-being. How might these two powerful conditions benefit older adults residing in an assisted living facility?

This thesis documents an exploratory study that uses quantitative and qualitative data analysis to better understand the benefits seniors may experience while practicing mindfulness in a VR condition. The results showed that seniors experience high levels of presence and enjoyment when using VR. Furthermore, the results suggest that seniors reported higher scores on three out of five dimensions relating to their quality of life after the three-week VR mediation sessions, including overall life satisfaction, health, social relationships, independence, and emotional well-being. The qualitative data were mostly consistent with the findings of the surveys. While this study is limited, findings show that VR technology could be effective in facilitating meditation experiences, which later improves the quality of life among older adults and should continue to be investigated.