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Abstract

Mindfulness and meditation have infiltrated the mainstream in the Western world in recent years, but mindfulness and meditation have been acknowledged and practiced for thousands of years. These concepts and practices have their roots in Eastern religions, primarily in Buddhism and Hinduism, but the modern Western mindfulness movement is largely secular and separated from these roots. Western mindfulness leaders, researchers, and advocates primarily present mindfulness and meditation as means to relieving stress and improving overall health and well-being. In contrast, mindfulness and meditation are traditionally practiced for religious and spiritual reasons in the Eastern world. Despite these differences, mindfulness and meditation around the world have been shaped by Eastern and Western influences. Furthermore, regardless of a person's initial intentions, practicing mindfulness and meditation can provide both secular and spiritual benefits.

Honors College
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306