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David Lynch  
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## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION ON TM AND TRAUMA/PTSD

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### **Impact of Transcendental Meditation on Psychotropic Medication Use Among Active Duty Military Service Members With Anxiety and PTSD<sup>1</sup>**

This study included 74 active-duty service members with PTSD or anxiety disorder. Half the service members voluntarily practiced Transcendental Meditation regularly in addition to other therapies; half did not. In just one month after learning the TM technique, there was a significant reduction in psychotropic medication usage among the TM group:

- TM meditators: 83.7% stabilized, reduced or stopped using medication. 10.9% increased.
  - Non-meditators: 59.4% stabilized, reduced or stopped using medication. 40.5% increased.
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### **Meditation Programs for Veterans With Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: Aggregate Findings From a Multi-Site Evaluation<sup>2</sup>**

This meta-analysis looked at several sites, one of which, the Michigan VA Hospital, implemented a randomized controlled trial of TM. All participants in the study were receiving mental health services. A total of 19 veterans learned TM with 24 treatment-as-usual controls. Trauma symptom severity significantly decreased in the TM group compared to controls. The TM group had a 36% reduction in PTSD assessment scores compared to an 18% reduction for the control group who received the standard VA therapy.

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### **Reduced Trauma Symptoms and Perceived Stress in Male Prison Inmates through the Transcendental Meditation Program: A Randomized Controlled Trial<sup>3</sup>**

This randomized controlled trial of 181 male prison inmates in Oregon found significant reductions in total trauma symptoms, anxiety, depression, dissociation, and sleep disturbance subscales, and perceived stress in the TM group compared with controls. The TM group had a 47% reduction in PTSD assessment scores compared to a 12% reduction for the control group.

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### **Transcendental Meditation and Reduced Trauma Symptoms in Female Inmates: A Randomized Controlled Study<sup>4</sup>**

This randomized controlled trial of 22 female prison inmates in Oregon found a significant effect of TM on total trauma symptoms with significant effects on intrusions and hyperarousal subscales. The TM group had a 45% reduction in PTSD assessment scores compared to a 22% reduction for the control group.

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### **DLF Internal Evaluation of Veteran Outcomes<sup>5</sup>**

In 2016, the David Lynch Foundation received pre-surveys from 233 veterans or active duty military personnel instructed in TM. Of those individuals, 77% completed at least one post-instruction survey (at 1, 3, or 6 months). Individuals experienced a 51% reduction in trauma symptoms, a 42% reduction in depression, and 25% improvement in sleep quality.

- Trauma: Before learning TM, 65% of individuals had PCL scores consistent with a provisional PTSD diagnosis. Of those who completed the 1-month post-test, approximately 70% were no longer in that range.
  - Depression: Before learning TM, 88% of individuals had CES-D scores that put them at risk of clinical depression. Of those who completed the 1-month post-test, approximately 40% no longer scored at risk.
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### **Department of Defense \$2.4 million PTSD Study at the San Diego VA**

In this randomized controlled trial of 203 veterans with documented PTSD, participants were randomly assigned to one of three treatment groups:

1. Transcendental Meditation
2. Prolonged Exposure (PE) (the gold standard treatment for PTSD)
3. Health education control group

The treatment phase of this study has been completed. One of the researchers is planning to present the results at a scientific conference soon. We are optimistic about the results.

- <sup>1</sup> Mil Med. 2016 Jan;181(1):56-63. doi: 10.7205/MILMED-D-14-00333.
- <sup>2</sup> Psychol Trauma. 2016 May;8(3):365-74. doi: 10.1037/tra0000106. Epub 2016 Jan 11. This was measured by the Clinically Administered PTSD Scale, the gold standard for PTSD diagnosis. The scale ranges from 0-80. The TM group averaged a score of 73.5 before instruction (margin of error = 6.22.) The control group averaged 74.1 (margin of error = 4.92)
- <sup>3</sup> Perm J. 2016 Fall;20(4):43-47. doi: 10.7812/TPP/16-007. Epub 2016 Oct 7. This was measured by the Trauma Symptoms Checklist, which evaluates symptomatology in adults associated with childhood or adult traumatic experiences. In the prison studies, we used a modified version for the prison population which ranges from 0 to 90 in total score. The TM group averaged a score of 23.68 before instruction (margin of error = 13.11.) The control group averaged 30.12 (margin of error = 16.1.)
- <sup>4</sup> Perm J. 2017;21. doi: 10.7812/TPP/16-008. Epub 2017 Jan 17. This was measured by the civilian version of the PCL, an assessment used by the VA to screen for PTSD. PCL-C scores range from 17-85. The TM group averaged a score of 53 before instruction (margin of error 17.35.) The control group averaged 52.4 (margin of error 13.05.)
- <sup>5</sup> Trauma was measured using the PCL-5, which has a score that can range from 0-80 with a cut-point of 33. The group averaged a score of 39.3 before instruction. Depression was measured using the CES-D, which has a score that can range from 0-60 with a cut-point of 16. The group averaged a score of 26.8 before instruction. Sleep quality was measured using MOS Sleep Scale, which has a score that can range from 10-60. The group averaged a score of 34.2 before instruction.