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Title: Mindfulness as an intervention for School teacher stress and well-being: A mixed methods pilot study.

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**Introduction:** Existing models of change following mindfulness interventions (MIs) point to differences in the way that people in distinct professions engage in, and benefit from MIs. Work with teachers is less well developed than models of change with healthcare professionals. Although school teachers' stress, anxiety and depression as well as dispositional mindfulness, self-compassion and emotional regulation skills can all be positively affected by participation in MIs, we know little of how teachers come to experience personal and teaching related benefits.

**Method:** Using a pre-post-test design, combined with post-intervention interviews, we explored school teacher outcomes from an MI and their subjective accounts of how positive benefits emerged. In particular, we examined how participation in an MI facilitated more positive teacher-student interactions in the classroom. Twenty school teachers engaged in an MI tailored for teachers, some of whom were self-referred and others school-referred to the intervention. A random subset of eight teachers were interviewed post-intervention.

**Results:** Significant post-intervention effects on wellbeing, stress and mindfulness were reported. Thematic analysis of the interview data suggested that the MI facilitated more acceptance, understanding and awareness of problems, emotions, coping styles and personal struggle. It supported greater valuing of themselves which in turn lead to more self-care. Greater capacity for emotional regulation and a theme of 'staying out of struggle' also pointed towards a form of resilience.

**Discussion:** Mindfulness as an intervention for stress may be particularly suited to school teachers as they found they could apply their newly learnt mindfulness skills to difficult everyday work situations as they occurred. Teachers' readiness for change appeared to be an important influence on engagement and group dynamics with colleagues had a negative effect for some participants. Implications for future research are discussed.