

NEWS RELEASE

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WORLD-FIRST FOR BIPOLAR DISORDER

Meditation and cognitive behavior therapy may help those with Bipolar Disorder, according to researchers from the Black Dog Institute and the University of New South Wales (UNSW).

They are trialling the techniques to see if they reduce relapse rates triggered by stress and anxiety for those with the condition.

Known as Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), the treatment over the past couple of years has shown to be of benefit for people with depression.

“Mindfulness includes techniques such as meditation in combination with cognitive therapy,” according to Professor Philip Mitchell, Head of the School of Psychiatry at UNSW

“Mindfulness has been shown to improve symptoms and reduce the incidence of relapse for depression. We think it is very likely to minimise relapse rates in Bipolar Disorder as these are often triggered by stress and anxiety,” says Professor Mitchell, who is based at the Black Dog Institute.

“Relapse rates are high with Bipolar Disorder and despite advances in medication, relapse rates continue to spiral, particularly with those who have high levels of anxiety in conjunction with their Bipolar Disorder.”

With a \$60,000 grant from Rotary, the Institute and the UNSW are undertaking this world-first trial of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy with Bipolar Disorder sufferers.

The trial is starting immediately and will adapt the mindfulness program currently used for depression sufferers.

The mindfulness therapy will be delivered to Bipolar Disorder sufferers during an eight-week program at the Institute’s Randwick facility. People between 18 and 70 years of age, who have Bipolar Disorder, are eligible to participate.

Part of the trial entry criteria is that participants are on mood stabilising medication and are being managed by a General Practitioner or a Psychiatrist.

The trial is being supported by a \$60,000 grant from Rotary.

To join the program contact: 02 9382 9266 or email: mindfulness@unsw.edu.au

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