

Abstract Annotation: Mindfulness as a Predictor of Positive Reappraisal and Burnout in Standardized Patients

Annotated by Cate Nicholas, U of Vermont

Holly A Gerzina and Erik Porfeti (2012) Mindfulness as a Predictor of Positive Reappraisal and Burnout in Standardized Patients, *Teaching and Learning in Medicine: An International Journal*, 24:4, 309-314.

This study explored the SP characteristics that might serve as protective factors (positive reappraisal and mindfulness) when playing emotionally intense roles which could contribute to burnout.

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Abstract:

Background: Standardized patients (SPs) portray emotionally intense roles that can have unintended deleterious effects including burnout. *Purpose:* This study explored SP characteristics that could serve as protective factors against these adverse effects. The literature suggests that positive reappraisal and mindfulness are protective factors, with positive reappraisal mediating the relationship between mindfulness and burnout. *Methods:* Seventy-six SPs completed an instrument measuring burnout, positive reappraisal, and mindfulness. Multiple regression was performed to test the hypothesized mediator model. *Results:* The results revealed that mindfulness and positive reappraisal explained a meaningful portion of SP burnout variance ($R^2 = .31$ $p < .01$). Germane to the mediator model, all correlations were significant: mindfulness and positive reappraisal (a) $r = .668$; positive reappraisal and burnout (b) $r = -.527$; and mindfulness and burnout (c) $r = -.496$, $p < .01$. When positive reappraisal and mindfulness were included in the model, the previously significant relationship c was no longer statistically significant. The combination of these three relationships supports a mediator model. *Conclusions:* Education to enhance mindfulness and positive reappraisal offers a way to offset the adverse effects of portraying intense emotional patient experiences.

Annotation:

76 SPs (convenience sampling) completed a survey instrument which measured burnout (a chronic state of exhaustion), positive reappraisal (coping strategy that promote stressful situations as positive or neutral) and mindfulness (attention to the present experience and considering alternative appraisal of a situation as a way to reduce stress).

Results indicated that mindfulness and positive reappraisal offset the effects of playing intense emotional SP roles and reduce the incidence of burnout.

The limitations of this project are that it was a small study in one institution and survey instruments do not confirm causation.

Results also indicate that SP training should include methods to enhance mindfulness to improve positive reappraisal which will decrease burnout. The next step is to consider how recruitment and use of debriefing can prevent and protect against stress and burnout.

As SP educators it is important that recruitment and training should include factors that may protect against burnout for SPs who play highly intense cases.