The development and evaluation of a Facilitated Environment for Peer Learning and Reflection. (Key focus: Embodiment of Mindfulness)

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Abstract: Although there are guidelines around core mindfulness teacher competencies, models of how to enhance these competencies outside of the formal education setting are lacking. Surveys suggest that a large majority of mindfulness teachers (66%) are not currently being supervised. To address this issue, a 5-week mindfulness-based online facilitated peer learning reflective environment (weekly 90-minute sessions; n=10) was piloted in order to support mindfulness teachers in their personal and professional development and to assess efficacy of online learning communities as a way to develop teacher competence. Using the Body in Mind Training Framework methodology, this study explored how the key elements of mindfulness are expressed in everyday lives, and how these are woven into teaching. Taking into consideration a strong emphasis on the importance of implicit embodiment of compassion as a vital element of embodied mindfulness-based teaching, it was investigated whether or not the programme would have a positive effect on mindfulness teachers' subjective self-compassion and mindfulness, using pre- and post-training measures for mindfulness outcome variables. It was concluded that this programme both contributed to filling in the secular supervision availability gap and possibly facilitated higher levels of embodiment of mindfulness in mindfulness teachers (as measured by increased self-awareness and reduced levels of self-judgment).