REVIEW

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A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of the Impact of Mindfulness-Based Interventions on the Well-Being of Healthcare Professionals

Tim Lomas[1] · Joan Carles Medina[2] · Itai Ivtzan[1] · Silke Rupprecht[3] · Francisco José Eiroa-Orosa[2]

Abstract

Efforts to improve the well-being of healthcare professionals include mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs). To understand the value of such initiatives, we conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of empirical studies pertaining to the use of MBIs with healthcare professionals. Databases were reviewed from the start of records to January 2016 (PROSPERO registration number: CRD42016032899). Eligibility criteria included empirical analyses of well-being outcomes acquired in relation to MBIs. Forty-one papers met the eligibility criteria, consisting of a total of 2101 participants. Studies were examined for two broad classes of well-being outcomes: (a) "negative" mental health measures such as anxiety, depression, and stress; (b) "positive" indices of well-being, such as life satisfaction, together with outcomes associated with well-being, such as emotional intelligence. MBIs were generally associated with positive outcomes in relation to most measures (albeit with moderate effect sizes), and mindfulness does appear to improve the well-being of healthcare professionals. However, the quality of the studies was inconsistent, so further research is needed, particularly high-quality randomised control trials.

Keywords Mindfulness · Meditation · Healthcare professionals · Meta-analysis

A wealth of research has accumulated indicating that healthcare professionals (HCPs) are liable to a range of mental health issues, including anxiety (Gao et al. 2012) and depression (Givens and Tjia 2002). These problems may be particularly acute among HCPs relative to other professions: a recent survey of over 3700 public sector workers in the UK found that staff working for the National Health Service were the most stressed, with 61% reporting feeling stressed all or most of the time and 59% stating that their stress is worse this year than last year (Dudman et al. 2015). These issues represent a significant problem, obviously for the well-being of the HCPs themselves, but also for patients (e.g. the ability of HCPs to treat them skilfully) and for the healthcare system (e.g. the economic cost of staff burnout) (Toppinen-Tanner et al. 2005). As such, efforts are underway to protect against or ameliorate work-related mental health issues in HCPs. Prominent among such initiatives are programmes based around mindfulness meditation—mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs)—which is the focus of this review.

Originating in the context of Buddhism around the 5th century B.C.E. (Lomas 2017), mindfulness came to prominence in the West through Kabat-Zinn's (1982) mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) programme for chronic pain. "Mindfulness" is frequently used to refer to both (1) a state/quality of mind and (2) a form of meditation that enables one to cultivate this particular state/quality. (Meditation is a broad label for mental activities which share a common focus on training the self-regulation of attention and awareness, with the goal of enhancing voluntary control of mental processes, thereby increasing well-being (Walsh and Shapiro 2006).) The most prominent operationalisation of mindfulness as a state/quality of mind is Kabat-Zinn's (2003) definition, which

✉ Francisco José Eiroa-Orosa
fjeiroa@gmail.com; feiroa@ub.edu

[1] School of Psychology, University of East London, Arthur Edwards Building, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ, UK

[2] Section of Personality, Evaluation and Psychological Treatment, Department of Clinical Psychology and Psychobiology, School of Psychology, Institute of Neurosciences, Universitat de Barcelona, Passeig de la Vall d'Hebron, 171, 08035 Barcelona, Spain

[3] Leuphana University, Scharnhorststraße 1, 21335 Lüneburg, Germany

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constructs it as "the awareness that arises through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment" (p. 145) The term mindfulness is then also deployed for meditation practices which can facilitate this mindful state/quality of mind.

In theoretical terms, the main significance of mindfulness is that it is thought to facilitate a meta-cognitive mechanism known as "decentring"—or alternatively "reperceiving" (Shapiro et al. 2006)—defined as "the ability to observe one's thoughts and feelings as temporary, objective events in the mind, as opposed to reflections of the self that are necessarily true" (Fresco et al. 2007, p. 234). For example, in mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT)—designed to prevent depressive relapse (Segal et al. 2002)—participants are taught to decentre from their cognitions, thus helping prevent a "downward spiral" of negative thoughts and worsening negative affect which could otherwise precipitate relapse. Thus, MBCT, and MBIs generally, involve "retraining awareness" so that people have greater choice in how they relate and respond to their subjective experience, rather than habitually responding in maladaptive ways (Chambers et al. 2009, p. 659). The value of this extends across diverse mental health issues. For instance, the development of decentring capabilities can help people tolerate otherwise distressing qualia, which is important given that inability to tolerate such qualia is regarded as a transdiagnostic factor underlying diverse psychopathologies (Aldao et al. 2010).

MBIs were generally limited to clinical populations initially. However, there has been increasing use of mindfulness in occupational contexts, not only for staff who may be suffering with mental health issues, but for workers "in general" (e.g. as a prophylactic against future issues). This emergent literature has been summarised in a raft of recent reviews. These include systematic reviews focusing on specific occupations, including educators (e.g. Emerson et al. 2017; Hwang et al. 2017; Lomas et al. 2017a), social workers (Trowbridge and Mische Lawson 2016), and athletes (Bühlmayer et al. 2017; Noetel et al. 2017), as well as more all-encompassing reviews, such as Lomas, Medina, Ivtzan, Rupprecht, Hart et al. (2017), which included 153 papers across all occupational spheres. These have been augmented by several meta-analyses of non-clinical populations of working adults, such as Virgili (2015) and Khoury et al. (2015). Amidst this general interest in the impact of mindfulness in occupational settings, there is a burgeoning literature focusing on HCPs specifically. This literature has already been summarised in a number of systematic reviews. These include reviews focused on specific sectors and professions, including nurses (Guillaumie et al. 2017), occupational therapists (Luken and Sammons 2016), mental health professionals (Rudaz et al. 2017), "hospital providers" (Luken and Sammons 2016), medical students (Daya and Hearn 2017), and healthcare profession students

(McConville et al. 2017), or on specific outcomes, such as empathy and emotional competency (Lamothe et al. 2016). There have also been more general reviews, such as Lomas et al. (2018), who located 81 studies across all HCP sectors and professions, as well as Eby et al. (2017), who provided a qualitative review of 67 studies. Such reviews have already offered a good indication of the value of mindfulness to HCPs, generally showing a beneficial impact with respect to well-being outcomes. However, these reviews have perhaps not revealed the full potential of mindfulness with regard to HCPs, nor have they necessarily provided a robust analysis of its utility or of its limits.

With regard to its potential, many studies have limited their focus to mental health, with a particular focus on specific common disorders such as anxiety and depression (e.g. Guillaumie et al. 2017), stress and distress (Daya and Hearn 2017), as well as employment-related conditions like burnout (Luken and Sammons 2016). However, while such outcomes are of course important, they do not give the full picture of well-being. As a construct, well-being is increasingly favoured in academia as a broad, overarching, and multidimensional term, incorporating all the ways in which a person might hope to do or be well (de Chavez et al. 2005; Lomas et al. 2015b). This not only includes mental health (as per the outcomes alluded to above) but also physical health (Larson 1999), social relationships (Bourdieu 1986), and cognitive performance (Tang et al. 2007). For instance, Pollard and Davidson (2001, p. 10) define well-being as "a state of successful performance across the life course integrating physical, cognitive and social-emotional function." Furthermore, well-being can be appraised in either deficit-based "negative" terms or asset-based "positive" terms. With the former, well-being consists in the relative absence of some undesirable phenomenon, such as mental health outcomes like anxiety or depression. However, fields like positive psychology have shown that well-being does not only mean the absence of outcomes like anxiety but also the *presence* of desirable outcomes (Diener 2000), such as "flourishing" (Keyes 2002) or "satisfaction with life" (Diener et al. 1985). The reviews of the HCP literature cited above generally restrict themselves to deficit-based mental health outcomes, as alluded to above, as indeed do many of the individual studies included within these reviews. There are some exceptions; for instance, both McConville et al. (2017) and Lamothe et al. (2016) included a focus on empathy within their systematic reviews. On the whole though, apart from Lomas et al. (2018), the reviews have not included an expansive look at all facets of well-being, which is something the current paper aims to redress.

The second limitation with the HCP reviews above is that they have not necessarily provided a robust analysis of the utility of mindfulness with respect to this population, nor of its limits. This comment is not a criticism of the reviews per se, but rather a reflection of the inherent analytical limits of reviews, even

systematic ones. Even though reviews such as Lomas et al. (2018) have sought to calculate and report on effect sizes with respect to the studies reviewed, it is still hard to gain an overall impression of the impact of mindfulness on a particular outcome (other than, for instance, simply reporting on the number of studies that have found a small, medium, or large effect size, or alternatively no effect). For that kind of comparative statistical assessment, meta-analyses are required. Unfortunately, though, to date there have been few meta-analyses focusing on HCPs, and these have been relatively limited in scope. We were only able to locate one that focused on HCPs specifically, an analysis by Burton et al. (2017) which looked just at stress, and featured only seven studies. To this end, the present paper sought to provide a more inclusive meta-analysis of mindfulness in a HCP context, one not limited to particular mental health outcomes such as stress (as per Burton et al. 2017), but rather that takes an inclusive look at the panoply of outcomes pertaining to well-being. The paper is a follow-up to the general systematic review of HCPs provided by Lomas et al. (2018), who located 81 studies across all HCP sectors; of these 81 studies, 37 were selected as being amenable to meta-analysis, as outlined below.

Method

Eligibility Criteria

Our analysis considered any study examining the pre-post or controlled effects of MBIs in HCP populations, for a wide range of well-being outcomes, including (a) "negative" mental health measures such as anxiety and depression and (b) "positive" indices of well-being, such as life satisfaction, including outcomes *associated* with well-being, such as emotional intelligence. The literature search was conducted using the MEDLINE and Scopus electronic databases; terms included in the review were mindfulness AND work OR occupation OR profession OR staff (in all fields in MEDLINE and limited to article title, abstract, and keywords in Scopus).

Search Strategies

The search was conducted as part of a broader ongoing systematic review on mindfulness in all occupations (please see Lomas, Medina, Ivtzan, Rupprecht, Hart, and Eiroa-Orosa, 2017). The dates selected were from the start of the database records to 10th January 2016. We also looked through the reference lists of studies selected for inclusion in the review for other articles that may be relevant (but which did not appear in our database search). For the current review of HCPs specifically, in terms of PICOS (participants, interventions, comparisons, outcomes, and study design), the key inclusion criteria were participants—currently employed in a healthcare context; outcomes—any pertaining to well-being (using this

term in the broad, inclusive way outlined above); and study design—any empirical study examining the quantitative pre-post or controlled effects of MBIs in HCP populations.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Exclusion criteria were theoretical articles, commentaries without statistical analyses, and studies that did not feature pre-post quantitative testing of an MBI. Studies were required to be published (or in press) in English in a peer-reviewed academic journal. The review was conducted according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Moher et al. 2009). The review protocol was registered with the International Prospective Register of Systematic Reviews (PROSPERO) database on 5th January 2016 (registration number: CRD42016032899).

Data Extraction

The following variables were extracted from each paper: type of design (i.e. randomised controlled trial [RCT] versus pre-post and non-randomised intervention studies); occupation of participants; number of experimental participants; number of control participants and nature of the control condition (if applicable); type of MBI; length of MBI; well-being outcomes; and the mean and standard deviations of principle outcomes.

As discussed above, well-being serves as an all-encompassing, multidimensional construct that includes all the ways a person might hope to do or be well (de Chavez et al. 2005). In this review, two "classes" of well-being measures were extracted. First, the main measures were psychometric scales pertaining to "deficit-based" mental health outcomes—i.e. whose relative absence is regarded as indicative of well-being, as elucidated above—such as anxiety and depression. Second, there were various positive "asset-based" psychological outcomes—i.e. whose relative presence is regarded as indicative of well-being—such as satisfaction with life. This second class included outcomes that, although not regarded as indices of well-being per se, are closely associated with it, such as emotional intelligence (Salovey and Mayer 1990). Whenever a study met the inclusion criteria to be part of the meta-analysis but did not report all the data needed to compute weighted parameters, trial authors were contacted to request all the missing information.

Quality Assessment

The Quality Assessment Tool for Quantitative Studies (QATQS; National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools 2008) was used to assess the quality of the studies. QATQS assesses methodological rigour in six areas: (a) selection bias; (b) design; (c) confounders; (d) blinding; (e) data

collection method; and (f) withdrawals and drop-outs. Each area is assessed on a quality score of 1 to 3 (1 = strong; 2 = moderate; 3 = weak). Scores for each area were collated and a global score assigned to each study. If there are no weak ratings, the study is scored 1 (strong); one weak rating leads to a 2 (moderate); and two or more weak ratings generates a 3 (weak). QATQS scoring was conducted primarily by the third author, following the guidelines outlined in the QATQS protocol. While not specifically in receipt of QATQS training, the author is a senior lecturer in psychology with over 15 years of active research experience, including with respect to conducting systematic reviews, and with respect to mindfulness specifically— see Lomas et al. (2015c) for an example of previous work in this regard)—of which he is also an experienced teacher and teacher trainer. A sample of 15 papers was independently coded by the first author; while also not specifically trained in QATQS coding, he is a senior lecturer in psychology with over 8 years of active research experience, including with respect to conducting systematic reviews of mindfulness specifically (as per Lomas et al. 2015c). There was a disagreement only with respect to one paper, where the first author disagreed with the scores for three of the QATQS criteria assigned by the third author. These discrepancies were resolved by discussion (with an amended score accepted on one of the criteria). In light of that discussion, the third author re-checked the rest of the papers, but this did not lead to any further revisions in coding.

Statistical Analyses

The meta package (Schwarzer 2007) for the R software (R Core Team 2017) was used to compute the statistical analyses and create funnel and forest plots. As we were assessing studies carried with different formats in different contexts, we chose random effects models as we assumed that the estimates of treatment effect could vary across studies because of real differences in the intervention effect (Riley et al. 2011). Only outcomes represented in three or more studies are included in the models and, therefore, forest plots, although all outcomes for all studies were included in the analyses for publication bias. We assessed publication bias using contour-enhanced funnel plots and Begg and Mazumdar's (1994) tests by outcome valence. In cases where a study reported a trial with two intervention groups and at least one control group, separate analyses were conducted for each inter-group comparison.

As most studies reported means and standard deviations, according to the aforementioned variable grouping strategy, different scales were grouped under a common outcome type. We calculated Hedges' g standardised mean differences with 95% confidence intervals (Sedgwick and Marston 2013) for each outcome within each study design. When adding a negative valence scale to an asset-based outcome, means were recoded (multiplied by minus one) so that the valences coincided. For studies with more than one scale in the same outcome group, mean values for

each of these metrics were converted to a single mean value for the intervention and control groups respectively. The variance of the mean among scales included within the same outcome grouping was calculated using Borenstein, Hedges, Higgins, and Rothstein's method (Borenstein et al. 2009):

$$var\left(\frac{1}{m}\sum_{i=1}^{m}Y_i\right) = \left(\frac{1}{m}\right)^2\left(\sum_{i=1}^{m}V_i + \sum_{i\neq j}\left(r_{ij}\sqrt{V_i}\sqrt{V_j}\right)\right)$$

When the correlation between scales was unknown, $r = .5$ was assumed as a midpoint between total independence and total dependence. This procedure was implemented to estimate all outcomes' overall effect size, confidence intervals, sample size, and heterogeneity and was needed to preserve the statistical independence of assumptions, controlling for the risk of bias due to the inflation of the main effect size's variance.

Heterogeneity was systematically assessed among the studies using the Cochran's Q, I^2, and the τ^2 statistics. While Cochran's Q (a chi-squared distributed measure of weighted squared deviations that can be converted into a p value) is the usual test statistic, the principal advantage of I^2 (the ratio of true heterogeneity to total observed variation, i.e. the proportion of the observed variance reflecting real differences in effect size) is that it can be calculated and compared across meta-analyses of different sizes, of different types of study, and using different types of outcome data (Higgins et al. 2003). τ^2 is the variance of the true effect sizes (i.e. the actual standard deviation), calculated as part of random effects meta-analyses.

Finally, to account for possible moderators, all covariates that can usually be found in similar meta-analyses (Khoury et al. 2013; Spielmans & Flückiger 2018) and were possible to gather within the studies analysed were taken into account: study design type (non-randomised trials/quasi-experimental designs, pre-post studies, RCTs); publication year of the study; gender; age; profession (students vs. professionals); type of intervention (MBSR vs. others); treatment intensity (including a compound outcome made of treatment duration, session length, homework, retreatments, and frequency); professional activity; and studies' QATQS scores. These factors were all correlated with meta-analytic models using tests for subgroup differences and meta-regressions. These analyses were performed taking each outcome as a unit, as doing it within each study design would mean lacking an adequate sample for practically all calculations.

Results

Literature Search Results

For the broader systematic review—i.e. mindfulness across all occupations (Lomas, Medina, Ivtzan, Rupprecht, Hart, and Eiroa-Orosa, 2017)—following the removal of duplicate citations, 721 potentially relevant papers were identified. In the current

systematic review, focusing specifically on HCPs, from reviewing the abstract, 543 papers were excluded, while from the full text reviews of 178 papers, 124 further papers were also excluded. From the 54 articles within the scope of this review, 13 were not included in the analysis since they were qualitative studies, therefore leaving 41 articles. However, since inclusion in the analyses required that study designs with a specific outcome had to have been assessed by at least three different studies (Higgins and Green 2011), four studies (Gockel et al. 2013; Grepmair et al. 2007; Poulin et al. 2008 and Singh et al. 2015) were only included in publication bias analyses. This process of winnowing is shown below as a PRISMA flow diagram (see Fig. 1).

The studies comprised a total of 2101 participants (discounting participants not including in analyses due to attrition), including 1415 undertaking MBIs and 686 separate control participants. The studies ($n = 42$, as one study, Goodman and Schorling 2012; had a sample of physicians and another of other providers, considered separately for analyses) covered a range of occupations, including healthcare students ($n = 15$), physicians ($n = 5$), nurses ($n = 6$), therapists, mental health ($n = 5$), and mixed (non-specific) healthcare professionals ($n = 11$). As for study design, 24 were pre-post studies of a single sample, 12 RCTs, and 6 non-randomised studies. Details on effect sizes of the particular studies—which have also been previously described in Lomas, Medina, Ivtzan, Rupprecht, Hart, and Eiroa-Orosa (2017)—are outlined below in Table 1, and a summary of

the overall statistically significance of outcomes change is shown in Table 2. In Table 2, studies have been grouped according to the specific well-being outcomes they explicitly reported on. In most cases, particularly with respect to "deficit-based" outcome measures, studies reported on well-established common constructs (e.g. anxiety, depression, distress, and stress). In some instances, though, outcomes which were less-frequently reported on have been aggregated into larger categories. For instance, a heterogenous range of "positive" measures were reported by a number of studies, such as satisfaction with life and positive affect, and these have been aggregated into a category of "positive well-being." In addition, Table 3 shows the outcomes of the QATQS quality assessment.

Reporting Bias

We constructed two contour-enhanced funnel plots by grouping positive (e.g. satisfaction) and negative (e.g. distress) outcome measures (see Figs. 2 and 3). Singh et al. (2006) and Singh et al. (2015) were excluded from the funnel plots due to extreme SMD values (28.98 and − 3.89 respectively), and Begg and Mazumdar's (1994) tests were calculated both including and excluding them. Both funnel plots showed an apparently symmetric distribution. When testing asymmetry with Begg and Mazumdar's tests, both positive ($z = − 0.623$, $p = .53$; $z = − 0.238$, $p = .81$, including Singh et al. 2006) and negative
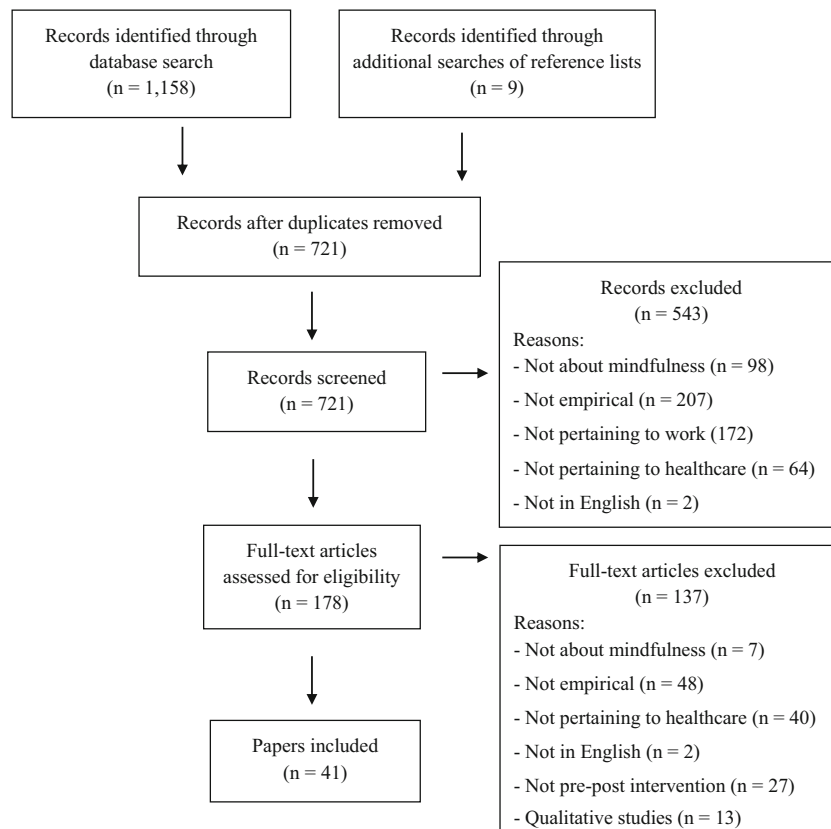

Fig. 1 The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) flow diagram

Table 1 Overview of studies

Authors	Occupation	Design	Expt. group	Control group	Intervention	Length	Control	Primary outcome(s) and effect sizes
Aggs & Bambling (2010)	Psychotherapists	Convenience sample	47	–	Mindful therapy	8 weeks	N/A	PI < stress & strain ($d = -.84$). PI > mindfulness & awareness ($d = .45$).
Barbosa et al. (2013)	Healthcare graduates	Non-randomised, convenience sample	13 (16)	15	MBSR	8 weeks	Nothing	Anxiety (–.09), burnout (emotional exhaustion, –.41; personal accomplishment, .29; and depersonalisation, –.26), and compassion and empathy (physician empathy, –.77).
Bazarko et al. (2013)	Nurses (corporate)	Pre-post, convenience sample	36 (41)	–	MBSR adaptation (6 sessions by telephone)	8 weeks	N/A	Burnout (personal burnout, –.97; work-related burnout, –.67; client-related burnout, –.30; and serenity, 1.48), compassion and empathy (physician empathy, .76; and self-compassion, 1.25), health (mental health, 1.40; and physical health, –.38), and stress and strain (perceived stress, –1.21).
Bond et al. (2013)	Trainee doctors	Pre-post, convenience sample	24 (27)	–	Mind-body course[a]	11 weeks	N/A	Compassion and empathy (self-compassion, .17; and physician empathy, .09), emotional intelligence and regulation (self-regulation, .01), and stress and strain (perceived stress, –.03).
Bonifas and Napoli (2014)	Trainee social workers	Pre-post, convenience sample	77	–	Mindfulness curriculum (specific to study)	16 weeks	N/A	Well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (quality of life, .88), and stress and strain (perceived stress, .06).
Brady et al. (2012)	Psychiatric ward professionals	Pre-post, convenience sample	16 (23)	–	MBSR adaptation	4 weeks	N/A	Burnout (emotional exhaustion, –.50; depersonalisation, –.23; and personal accomplishment, .29), mindfulness and awareness (mindfulness, .64; and intrapersonal presence, .54), and stress and strain (stress, –.70).
Burnett and Pettijohn (2015)	Healthcare employees	RCT	20 active	18 and 17	MBST	5 weeks	Passive intervention: abstention from work activity. Control: nothing	Passive intervention group: stress and strain (perceived stress, –.09). No intervention group: stress and strain (perceived stress, –.70).
Cohen and Miller (2009)	Trainee clinical psychologists	Pre-post, convenience sample	21 (28)	–	Interpersonal mindfulness training	6 weeks	N/A	Anxiety (–.46), depression (–.11), emotional intelligence and regulation (emotional intelligence, .39), mindfulness and awareness (mindful attention awareness, .48), relationships (social connectedness, .57), stress and strain (perceived stress, –.53), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (life satisfaction, .43; presence of meaning in life, .12; and searching of meaning in life, –.35).
de Vibe et al. (2013)	Trainee doctors	RCT	144	144	MBSR adaptation	6 weeks	Nothing	Burnout (burnout, –1.5), distress and anger (distress, –.77), mindfulness and awareness (nonreacting, .31; nonjudging, –.23; act aware, –.04; describe, –.06; and observe, .18), stress and strain (stress, –.27), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (subjective well-being, .43).
Dobie et al. (2016)	Mental health professionals	Pre-post, convenience sample	9	–	MBSR adaptation	8 weeks	N/A	Anxiety (–.86), depression (–.44), mindfulness and awareness (mindfulness, –.41), and stress and strain (stress, –.96).
Erogul et al. (2014)	Trainee doctors	RCT	28	30	MBCT	8 weeks	Nothing	Compassion and empathy (self-compassion, .88), resilience (resilience, .27), and stress and strain (perceived stress, –.60).
Fortney et al. (2013)	Primary care clinicians	Pre-post, convenience sample	28 (30)	–	MBSR adaptation	18 h (over 5 sessions)	N/A	Anxiety (–.47), burnout (emotional exhaustion, –.31; depersonalisation, –.22; and personal accomplishment, .50), depression (depression, –.54), compassion and empathy (compassion, –.04), resilience (resilience, .17), and stress and strain (perceived stress, –.54; and stress, –.31).
Foureur et al. (2013)	Nurses and midwives	Pre-post, convenience sample	28 (40)	–	MBSR adaptation	1 day (and 8 weeks practice)	N/A	Anxiety (–.28), depression (–.33), distress and anger (distress, –.59), stress and strain (stress, –.65), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (sense of coherence, .73).
Gauthier et al. (2015)	Paediatric ICU nurses	Pre-post, convenience sample	42 (45)	–	Mindfulness programme (specific to study)	30 days	N/A	Burnout (emotional exhaustion, –.18; depersonalisation, –.13; and personal accomplishment, .12), compassion and empathy (self-compassion, .23), mindfulness and awareness (mindful attention awareness, .07), and stress and strain (stress, –.40).

Table 1 (continued)

Authors	Occupation	Design	Expt. group	Control group	Intervention	Length	Control	Primary outcome(s) and effect sizes
Gockel et al. (2013)	Trainee social workers	Convenience sample	38	94	MBSR adaptation	10 weeks	N/A	PI > job performance (counselling self-efficacy, d = .53), mindfulness & awareness (mindfulness, d = .72, p = .034).
Goodman and Schorling (2012)	Healthcare professionals	Pre-post, convenience sample	73 (93)	—	Mindfulness for healthcare providers	8 weeks	N/A	Physicians sample: Burnout (emotional exhaustion, −.72; depersonalisation, −.44; and personal accomplishment, .60), health (physical health, −.16; and mental health, 1.00). Other healthcare providers sample: Burnout (emotional exhaustion, −.29; depersonalisation, −.27; and personal accomplishment, .44), and health (physical health, −.02; and mental health, .78).
Grepmair et al. (2007)	Trainee psychotherapists	Non-randomised, convenience sample	58	55	Mindfulness programme (specific to study)	9 weeks	Pre-training	Job performance (patients' distress, −.93).
Hallman et al. (2014)	Psychiatric service professionals	Pre-post, convenience sample	12 (13)	—	MBSR	8 days	N/A	Mindfulness and awareness (mindfulness, .68), and stress and strain (perceived stress, −.20).
Hopkins and Proeve (2013)	Trainee psychologists	Pre-post, convenience sample	11 (12)	—	MBCT	8 weeks	N/A	Compassion and empathy (emotional concern, −.40; perspective taking, −.37; personal distress, −.23; and fantasy, −.30), mindfulness and awareness (nonreacting, .77; observe, .43; nonjudging, 1.27; act aware, .11; and describe, .18), and stress and strain, (perceived stress, −.67).
Johnson et al. (2015)	Healthcare professionals	Non-randomised, convenience sample	18 (20)	19 (20)	Resilience training	8 weeks	Wait-list	Anxiety (state, −1.02; and trait, −1.41), depression (depression with the CESD-10, −1.50; and depression with the PHQ-9, −1.56), health (health responsibility, .96; interpersonal relations, 1.40; nutrition, .34; physical activity, .81; spiritual growth, .99; stress management, 1.17; absenteeism, −.50; activity impairment, −1.23; presenteeism, −1.28; and work productivity loss, −1.38), and stress and strain (perceived stress, −1.30).
Kemper and Khirallah (2015)	Health professionals	Pre-post, convenience sample	112 one module and 102 the other	—	Introduction to mindfulness, and mindfulness in daily life	1 h	N/A	Mindfulness and awareness (cognitive and affective mindfulness, .24; and mindful attention awareness, .20), and resilience (resilience, .21).
Krasner et al. (2009)	Primary care physicians	Pre-post, convenience sample	59 (70)	—	Mindfulness programme (specific to study)	8 weeks	N/A	Burnout (emotional exhaustion, −.37; depersonalisation, −.19; and personal accomplishment, .15), compassion and empathy (physician empathy, .36), distress and anger (distress, −.47), mindfulness and awareness (mindfulness, .86).
Mackenzie et al. (2006)	Nurses	RCT	16	14	MBSR adaptation	4 weeks	Wait-list	Burnout (emotional exhaustion, 3.44; depersonalisation, −.20; and personal accomplishment, 8.27), well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (relaxation dispositions, .24; intrinsic job satisfaction, .17; satisfaction with life, −.13; and sense of coherence, .16).
Manotas et al. (2014)	Healthcare professionals	RCT	40 (66)	43 (65)	MBSR adaptation	4 weeks	NR	Distress and anger (distress, −.61), mindfulness and awareness (nonreacting, .03; nonjudging, .32; act aware, −.29; describe, −.28; Observe, .23; and total mindfulness, .07), and stress and strain (perceived stress, −.68).
Martin-Asuero and García-Banda (2010)	Healthcare professionals	Pre-post, selected sample	29	—	MBSR adaptation	8 weeks	N/A	Distress and anger (psychological distress, −.59), emotional intelligence and regulation (rumination, −.19), stress and strain (daily stress, −.39), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing, (negative affect, −.26).
Martin-Asuero et al. (2014)	Healthcare professionals	RCT	43	25	MBSR adaptation	8 weeks	Wait-list	Burnout (emotional exhaustion, −7.20; depersonalisation, −1.80; and personal accomplishment, 1.40), compassion and empathy (physician empathy, .40), distress and anger (distress, −.83), and mindfulness and awareness (nonreacting, 1.21; nonjudging, .49; act aware, .84; describe, .44; and observe, 1.27).

Table 1 (continued)

Authors	Occupation	Design	Expt. group	Control group	Intervention	Length	Control	Primary outcome(s) and effect sizes
McConachie et al. (2014)	Support staff	RCT	66	54	Acceptance and mindfulness workshop	1.5 days	Wait-list	Distress and anger (distress, −.35), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (mental well-being, .17).
Newsome et al. (2012)	Trainee helping professionals	Pre-post, convenience sample	31	—	Mindfulness programme (specific to study)	6 weeks	N/A	Compassion and empathy (self-compassion, 1.13), mindfulness and awareness (mindful attention awareness, .91), and stress and strain (perceived stress, −1.01).
Noone and Hastings (2010)	Disability support workers	Pre-post, convenience sample	34	—	Promotion of acceptance in carers and teachers	1.5 days	N/A	Distress and anger (distress, −.54) and stress and strain (stress, −.13).
Pflugeisen et al. (2016)	Physicians	Pre-post, convenience sample	19 (23)	—	MBSR adaptation	8 weeks	N/A	Burnout (emotional exhaustion, −.46; depersonalisation, −.32; and personal accomplishment, .56), mindfulness and awareness (mindfulness skills, .84), and stress and strain (perceived stress, −.87).
Pipe et al. (2009)	Nurses	RCT	15	17	MBSR adaptation	4 weeks	Wait-list	Anxiety (−.21), depression (−.54), distress and anger (psychological distress, −.39), job performance (caring efficacy, .48), and relationships (interpersonal sensitivity, −.38).
Poulin et al. (2008)	Nurses	Non-randomised, convenience sample	16	10 and 14	MBSR adaptation	4 weeks	Imagery and progressive muscle relaxation, and wait-list	Mindfulness vs. imagery and progressive muscle relaxation: burnout (emotional exhaustion, −.07; depersonalisation, −.16; and personal accomplishment, .73), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (relaxation, −.63; and satisfaction with life, .15). Mindfulness vs. wait-list: burnout (emotional exhaustion, .22; depersonalisation, .00; and personal accomplishment, 1.32), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (relaxation, .24; and satisfaction with life, −.07).
Raab et al. (2015)	Mental health professionals	Pre-post, convenience sample	22	—	MBSR	8 weeks	N/A	Burnout (emotional exhaustion, −.20; depersonalisation, −.11; and personal accomplishment, .20), compassion and empathy (self-compassion, .48), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (quality of life, .02).
Rimes and Wingrove (2011)	Trainee clinical psychologists	Pre-post, convenience sample	20	—	MBCT	8 weeks	N/A	Anxiety (.26), compassion and empathy (empathic concern, .00; fantasy, .52; personal distress, −.06; perspective taking, −.03; and self-compassion, .48), depression (depression, .00; and rumination, −.57), mindfulness and awareness (nonreacting, .59; nonjudging, .52; act aware, .10; describe, .31; and observe, .38), and stress and strain (perceived stress, −.23).
Shapiro et al. (2005)	Healthcare professionals	RCT	10 (18)	18 (20)	MBSR	8 weeks	Wait-list	Burnout (emotional exhaustion, −2.10; depersonalisation, −3.38; and personal accomplishment, 3.38), compassion and empathy (self-compassion, .02), distress and anger (distress, −.07), stress and strain (perceived stress, −.15), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (satisfaction with life, .15).
Shapiro et al. (2007)	Trainee psychotherapists	Non-randomised, convenience sample	22	32 (42)	MBSR	8 weeks	Psychology courses	Anxiety (state, −.55; and trait, −.91), compassion and empathy (self-compassion, .42), depression (rumination, −.41), mindfulness and awareness (mindful attention awareness, .36), stress and strain (perceived stress, −.67), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (positive affect, .57; and negative affect, −.46).
Shapiro et al. (1998)	Trainee doctors	RCT	37	36	Stress reduction and relaxation	7 weeks	Wait-list	Anxiety (state, −.46; and trait, −.59), compassion and empathy (empathy, .47), depression (depression, −.46), distress and anger (psychological distress, −.69), and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (spirituality, .32).
Singh et al. (2015)	Disability professionals	Convenience sample	9	—	Mindfulness-based positive behavioural support	7 weeks	N/A	PI < stress & strain (perceived stress, $d = −3.89$).

Table 1 (continued)

Authors	Occupation	Design	Expt. group	Control group	Intervention	Length	Control	Primary outcome(s) and effect sizes
Singh et al. (2006)	Psychiatric staff	Convenience sample	18 (3 teams)	18 (same as experimental group)	Mindfulness-based mentoring	11, 8 or 6 sessions	Control within & between teams	PI > job performance (d = 28.98).
Song and Lindquist (2015)	Trainee nurses	RCT	21 (25)	23 (25)	MBSR	8 weeks	Wait-list	Anxiety (−.50), depression (−.70), mindfulness and awareness (mindful attention awareness, .13), and stress and strain (stress, −.85).
West et al. (2014)	Physicians	RCT	35 (37)	37	Small group curriculum[b]	9 months	Nothing	Compassion and empathy (physician empathy, −.05); stress and strain (perceived stress, .13); and well-being, satisfaction and flourishing (job satisfaction, −.14).

expt experimental group, *cnt* control group, *PI* post-intervention, *NR* not-reported, *MBCT* mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, *MBSR* mindfulness-based stress reduction, *MBST* mindfulness-based stress reduction therapy. *MM* mindfulness meditation, *NCC* neural correlates of consciousness, *NR* not recorded, *N/A* not applicable, *NA* not available, *RCT* randomised controlled trial

[a] Mindfulness just one component of broader intervention

[b] Number in parenthesis is the initial sample size (if different from sample size featured in analysis)

($z = - 0.792$, $p = 0.43$; $z = - 1.113$, $p = .27$, including Singh et al. 2015) outcomes showed no statistically significant asymmetry.

"Negative" Well-Being Outcomes

Anxiety Mindfulness appears to have a beneficial impact upon anxiety (which was the only dependent variable with enough studies to perform calculations in all three design types), as shown in Fig. 4 below. Effect sizes for non-randomised trials, pre-post studies and RCTs were − 1.01 (95% CI = − 2.06, − 0.04, $p = .059$), − 0.31 (95% CI = − 0.62, − 0.01, $p < 0.05$) and − 0.49 (95% CI = − 0.81, − 0.16, $p < 0.005$) respectively, with most studies showing a reduction in anxiety as a result of the intervention. High and statistically significant heterogeneity was found just for non-randomised trials ($I^2 = 85\%$, $\tau^2 = .724$, $\chi^2 = 13.19$, $p < .001$). No statistically significant results were found for any moderator (and calculations could not be carried using MSBR or homework as independent variable, as only one study did not use this intervention model in its implementation, and all studies included take-home activities).

Burnout Mindfulness appears to have a beneficial impact upon burnout, as shown in Fig. 5 below, with effect sizes of − 0.51 (95% CI = − 0.70, − 0.32, $p < .0001$) for pre-post studies and − 0.31 (95% CI = − 0.57, − 0.04, $p = .024$) for RCTs. Heterogeneity was not statistically significant in both cases. In addition, one study (Mackenzie et al. 2006) had significant differences between groups at pre-intervention time, which needs to be taken into account when interpreting the results. No statistically significant results were found for any moderator or between study designs.

Depression Mindfulness appears to have a beneficial impact upon depression, as shown in Fig. 6 below, with effect sizes of − 0.29 (95% CI = − 0.55, − 0.03, $p < .05$) for pre-post designs and − 0.55 (95% CI = − 0.87, − 0.22, $p = .001$) for RCTs. In these analyses, neither heterogeneity nor subgroup differences showed statistical significance. No statistically significant results were found for any moderator or between study designs.

Distress Mindfulness appears to have a beneficial impact upon distress and anger, as shown in Fig. 7 below, with effect sizes of − 0.54 (95% CI = − 0.75, − 0.33, $p < .0001$) for pre-post and − 0.61 (95% CI = − 0.79, − 0.44, $p < .0001$) for RCTs. Neither heterogeneity nor the design subgroup differences or any moderator showed statistically significant differences.

Stress Mindfulness appears to have a beneficial impact upon stress, as shown in Fig. 8 below, with effect sizes of − 0.58 (95% CI = − 0.81, − 0.34, $p < .0001$) for pre-post and − 0.42 (95% CI = − 0.67, − 0.17, $p = .0001$) for RCTs. High and

Table 2 Summary of statistically significance of common outcomes across all studies

Outcome	Number of studies assessing	Statistical improvement related to mindfulness intervention	No statistically significant change in relation to mindfulness intervention[a]
Anxiety	11	10	1
Burnout	14	7	7
Compassion	12	9	3
Depression	9	4	5
Distress	13	11	2
Emotional regulation	3	0	3
Empathy	7	6	1
Health	3	3	0
Job performance	4	3	1
Mindfulness	19	15	4
Stress	27	19	8
Positive well-being	14	7	7

[a] The studies included in this category showed no statistically significant improvements in the given outcome. None of the studies showed statistically significant deteriorations

statistically significant heterogeneity was found just for pre-post designs ($I^2 = 66\%$, $\tau^2 = .154$, $\chi^2 = 50.5$, $p < .0001$), but the subgroup differences were not. Additionally, one study included here (Burnett and Pettijohn 2015) observed significant pre-intervention differences between the two groups; hence, its results must be interpreted with caution. No statistically significant results were found for any moderator.

"Positive" Well-Being Outcomes

Compassion Mindfulness appears to have a beneficial impact upon compassion, as shown in Fig. 9 below, with effect sizes of 0.52 (95% CI = 0.15, 0.90, $p = .006$) for pre-post and 0.35 (95% CI = − 0.08, 0.78, $p = .109$) for RCTs (although the latter was not statistically significant). Both had high heterogeneity levels, but statistical significance was only reached with pre-post designs ($I^2 = 71\%$, $\tau^2 = .181$, $\chi^2 = 20.93$, $p = .002$). Hence, again, results should be interpreted with caution. Statistically significant higher effect sizes were found in studies carried using the original MSBR ($Q = 4.53$, $p < .05$) and including retreatments ($Q = 5.22$, $p < .05$). Calculations could not be carried using homework as independent variable as all studies included take-home activities.

Emotional Intelligence and Regulation There was only enough information to perform meta-analytic calculations for pre-post designs with this variable. In contrast to other outcomes, the results showed no significant differences in emotional intelligence and regulation after mindfulness practice. As Fig. 10 displays, although there was a mild improvement, it did not reach statistical significance, with an overall effect size of 0.18 (95% CI = − 0.14, 0.51, $p =$

0.26). The level of heterogeneity was non-significant. No statistically significant results were found for any moderator.

Empathy As in the case of emotional intelligence, only pre-post designs were numerous enough to perform calculations. Mindfulness appears to have a beneficial impact upon empathy, as shown in Fig. 11 below, with an effect size of 0.31 (95% CI = 0.02, 0.60, $p < .05$). Heterogeneity and subgroup differences were non-significant, and no statistically significant correlations were found with any moderator.

Positive well-being Mindfulness appears to have a beneficial impact upon "positive well-being" (e.g. life satisfaction), as shown in Fig. 12 below, with effect sizes of 0.49 (95% CI = 0.14, 0.83, $p = .005$) for pre-post and 0.27 (95% CI = 0.12, 0.43, $p < .001$) for RCTs. With pre-post designs, the heterogeneity was statistically significant ($I^2 = 58\%$, $\tau^2 = .088$, $\chi^2 = 9.59$, $p = .05$). Subgroup differences were non-significant. Statistically significant correlations were found for intervention intensity (QM = 4.718, $p < .05$) with higher gains for more intense interventions and for profession ($Q = 4.18$, $p < .05$) with higher gains for students.

Mindfulness Mindfulness practice appears to have a beneficial impact upon mindfulness, as shown in Fig. 13 below, with effect sizes of 0.52 (95% CI = 0.31, 0.73, $p < .0001$) for pre-post and 0.34 (95% CI = − 0.06, 0.73, $p = .09$) for RCTs (although the latter was not statistically significant). Heterogeneity was relatively high and statistically significant in both cases (pre-post: $I^2 = 46\%$, $\tau^2 = .056$, $\chi^2 = 20.29$, $p = .04$, RCTs: $I^2 = 72\%$, $\tau^2 = .136$, $\chi^2 = 14.3$, $p < .01$), but subgroup differences were not. Statistically significant

Table 3 QATQS scoring assessment of studies

Authors	Selection bias	Design	Cofounders	blinding	Data collection	Attrition	Global
Aggs & Bambling (2010)	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
Barbosa et al. (2013)	3	3	2	3	2	2	3
Bazarko et al. (2013)	2	3	3	3	2	1	3
Bond et al. (2013)	3	3	3	3	2	2	3
Bonifas and Napoli (2014)	3	3	3	3	1	1	3
Brady et al. (2012)	3	3	3	3	2	2	3
Burnett and Pettijohn (2015)	3	2	2	3	1	2	3
Cohen and Miller (2009)	3	3	3	3	1	2	3
de Vibe et al. (2013)	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Dobie et al. (2016)	3	3	3	3	1	1	3
Erogul et al. (2014)	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Fortney et al. (2013)	3	3	3	3	1	1	3
Foureur et al. (2013)	3	3	3	3	1	2	3
Gauthier et al. (2015)	3	3	3	3	1	2	3
Gockel et al. (2013)	3	3	3	3	1	2	3
Goodman and Schorling (2012)	2	3	3	3	1	3	3
Grepmair et al. (2007)	2	2	1	2	1	1	2
Hallman et al. (2014)	2	3	3	2	1	1	3
Hopkins and Proeve (2013)	3	3	3	3	1	2	3
Johnson et al. (2015)	3	3	1	3	1	2	3
Kemper and Khirallah (2015)	3	3	3	3	1	2	3
Krasner et al. (2009)	2	3	3	3	1	2	3
Mackenzie et al. (2006)	3	2	2	3	1	2	3
Manotas et al. (2014)	2	2	1	3	1	2	2
Martín-Asuero and García-Banda (2010)	2	3	3	3	1	1	3
Martín-Asuero et al. (2014)	2	2	2	3	1	1	2
McConachie et al. (2014)	2	1	1	3	1	2	2
Newsome et al. (2012)	1	3	3	2	1	2	3
Noone and Hastings (2010)	1	3	3	1	1	3	3
Pflugeisen et al. (2016)	1	3	3	2	2	1	3
Pipe et al. (2009)	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
Poulin et al. (2008)	1	2	1	1	1	3	2
Raab et al. (2015)	1	3	3	2	1	2	3
Rimes and Wingrove (2011)	1	3	3	1	1	3	3
Shapiro et al. (1998)	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
Shapiro et al. (2005)	1	1	2	2	1	3	2
Shapiro et al. (2007)	1	2	1	2	1	1	1
Singh et al. (2015)	1	3	3	1	1	3	2
Singh et al. (2006)	1	3	3	1	2	2	3
Song and Lindquist (2015)	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
West et al. (2014)	1	1	1	1	1	2	1

correlations were found for intervention intensity ($QM = 4.888$, $p < .05$) with higher gains for more intense interventions. Additionally, and contrarily to what we found for compassion, higher effect sizes were found in studies not using the original MSBR ($Q = 4.53$, $p < .05$).

Discussion

Overall, MBIs appeared to have a positive impact upon most outcome measures (albeit with moderate effect sizes), of which there was a great range. As discussed above, one of the prerogatives of the current review was to take an inclusive

Fig. 2 Funnel plot of positive outcomes. Footnote: funnel plot including the 37 articles fulfilling all inclusion and exclusion criteria

approach to well-being, viewing this as a multidimensional construct encompassing the myriad ways a person might hope

to do or be well (de Chavez et al. 2005). Such an approach differentiates the current paper from previous analyses on the
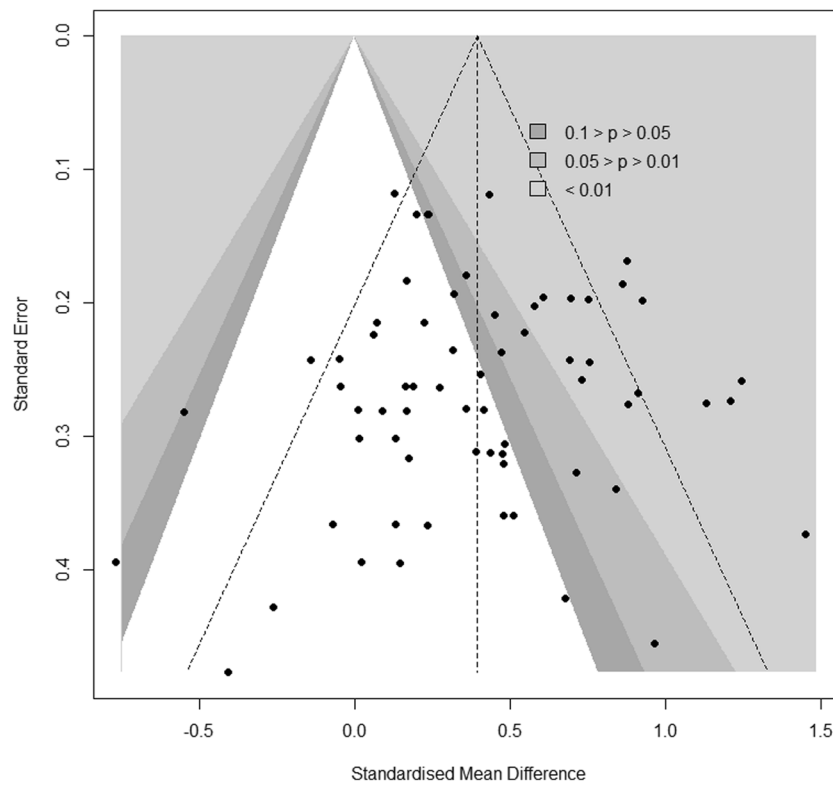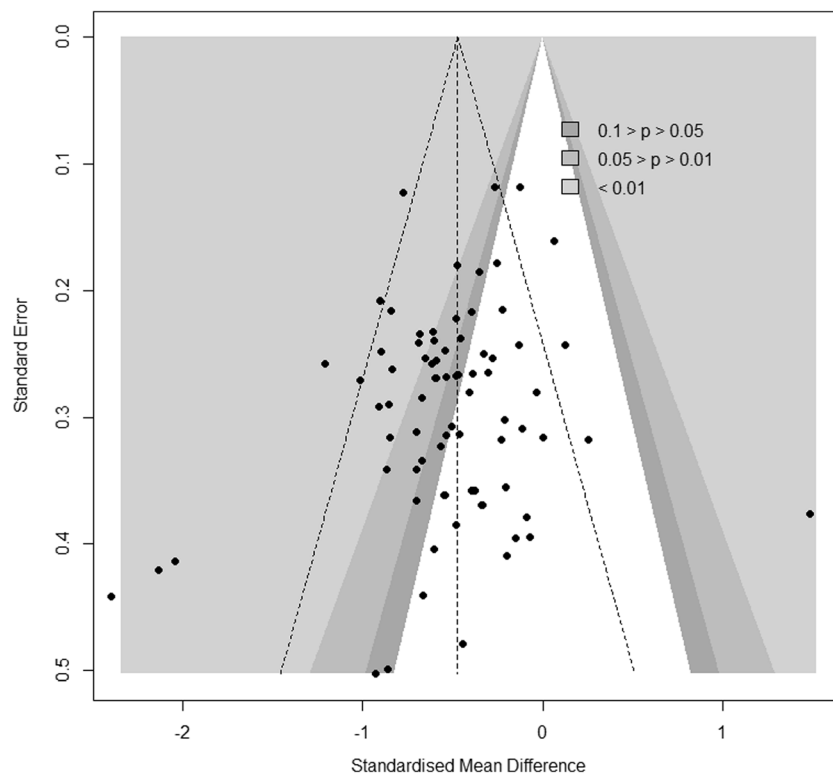

Fig. 3 Funnel plot of negative outcomes. Footnote: funnel plot including the 37 articles fulfilling all inclusion and exclusion criteria

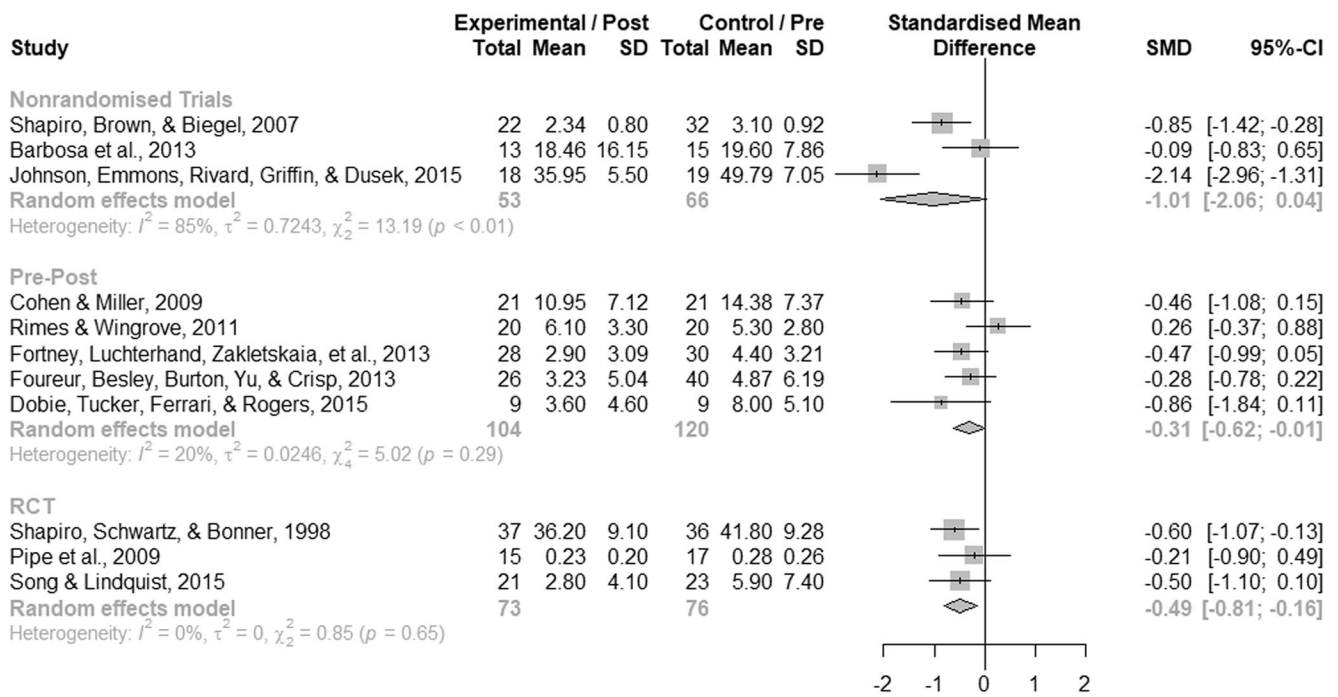| Study	Experimental / Post Total	Mean	SD	Control / Pre Total	Mean	SD	Standardised Mean Difference	SMD	95%-CI
Nonrandomised Trials									
Shapiro, Brown, & Biegel, 2007	22	2.34	0.80	32	3.10	0.92		-0.85	[-1.42; -0.28]
Barbosa et al., 2013	13	18.46	16.15	15	19.60	7.86		-0.09	[-0.83; 0.65]
Johnson, Emmons, Rivard, Griffin, & Dusek, 2015	18	35.95	5.50	19	49.79	7.05		-2.14	[-2.96; -1.31]
Random effects model	53			66				-1.01	[-2.06; 0.04]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 85\%$, $\tau^2 = 0.7243$, $\chi_2^2 = 13.19$ ($p < 0.01$)									
Pre-Post									
Cohen & Miller, 2009	21	10.95	7.12	21	14.38	7.37		-0.46	[-1.08; 0.15]
Rimes & Wingrove, 2011	20	6.10	3.30	20	5.30	2.80		0.26	[-0.37; 0.88]
Fortney, Luchterhand, Zakletskaia, et al., 2013	28	2.90	3.09	30	4.40	3.21		-0.47	[-0.99; 0.05]
Foureur, Besley, Burton, Yu, & Crisp, 2013	26	3.23	5.04	40	4.87	6.19		-0.28	[-0.78; 0.22]
Dobie, Tucker, Ferrari, & Rogers, 2015	9	3.60	4.60	9	8.00	5.10		-0.86	[-1.84; 0.11]
Random effects model	104			120				-0.31	[-0.62; -0.01]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 20\%$, $\tau^2 = 0.0246$, $\chi_4^2 = 5.02$ ($p = 0.29$)									
RCT									
Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bonner, 1998	37	36.20	9.10	36	41.80	9.28		-0.60	[-1.07; -0.13]
Pipe et al., 2009	15	0.23	0.20	17	0.28	0.26		-0.21	[-0.90; 0.49]
Song & Lindquist, 2015	21	2.80	4.10	23	5.90	7.40		-0.50	[-1.10; 0.10]
Random effects model	73			76				-0.49	[-0.81; -0.16]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 0\%$, $\tau^2 = 0$, $\chi_2^2 = 0.85$ ($p = 0.65$)									

(x-axis: -2 -1 0 1 2)

Fig. 4 Forest plot of anxiety outcomes. Footnote: scale by article in alphabetical order. Barbosa et al. 2013: Burns Anxiety Inventory; Cohen and Miller 2009: Beck Anxiety Inventory; Dobie et al. 2016: Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scales (DASS)–Anxiety; Fortney et al. 2013: DASS–Anxiety; Foureur et al. 2013: DASS–Anxiety; Johnson et al. 2015: State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI); Pipe et al. 2009: Symptom Checklis t-90-R–Anxiety; Rimes and Wingrove 2011: Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scales–Anxiety; Shapiro et al. 2007: STAI; Shapiro et al. 1998: STAI; Song and Lindquist 2015: DASS–Anxiety

impact of mindfulness in HCPs, which have tended to just focus on "deficit-based" mental health outcomes such as anxiety and depression. For instance, the only meta-analysis we located concentrating on HCPs specifically was just concerned with stress, featuring only seven studies (Burton et al. 2017). By contrast, the current review looked at two broad classes of well-being outcomes: (a) negative "deficit-based" mental health outcomes (e.g. depression), (b) positive

Study	Experimental / Post Total	Mean	SD	Control / Pre Total	Mean	SD	Standardised Mean Difference	SMD	95%-CI
Pre-Post									
Krasner et al., 2009	59	24.17	7.51	68	26.13	7.79		-0.25	[-0.60; 0.10]
Brady, OConnor, Burgermeister, & Hanson, 2009	16	-7.27	5.26	16	-3.87	6.77		-0.55	[-1.25; 0.16]
Goodman & Schorling, 2012 Physicians	51	-4.33	4.35	51	-0.13	4.88		-0.90	[-1.31; -0.49]
Goodman & Schorling, 2012 Other providers	42	-6.07	4.29	42	-3.90	4.62		-0.48	[-0.92; -0.05]
Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, & Kreitzer, 2013	36	26.01	12.02	36	37.85	13.93		-0.90	[-1.39; -0.41]
Fortney, Luchterhand, Zakletskaia, et al., 2013	28	-0.30	4.54	30	2.00	4.88		-0.48	[-1.00; 0.04]
Gauthier, Meyer, Grefe, & Gold, 2015	42	-0.28	4.88	45	0.84	5.16		-0.22	[-0.64; 0.20]
Raab, Sogge, Parker, & Flament, 2015	22	-0.79	0.59	22	-0.62	0.96		-0.21	[-0.81; 0.38]
Pflugeisen, Drummond, Ebersole, et al., 2016	19	-4.50	5.20	19	-0.83	5.45		-0.67	[-1.33; -0.02]
Random effects model	315			329				-0.51	[-0.70; -0.32]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 28\%$, $\tau^2 = 0.0230$, $\chi_8^2 = 11.08$ ($p = 0.20$)									
RCT									
Shapiro, Astin, Bishop, & Cordova, 2005	10	-4.60	5.39	18	-1.48	4.85		-0.60	[-1.39; 0.19]
Mackenzie, Poulin, & Seidman-Carlson, 2006	16	-5.38	4.36	14	-3.70	5.25		-0.34	[-1.06; 0.38]
de Vibe et al., 2013	144	32.90	12.10	144	34.40	11.20		-0.13	[-0.36; 0.10]
Martin-Asuero et al., 2014	25	-4.73	4.94	43	-1.27	5.93		-0.61	[-1.12; -0.11]
Random effects model	195			219				-0.31	[-0.57; -0.04]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 22\%$, $\tau^2 = 0.0189$, $\chi_3^2 = 3.87$ ($p = 0.28$)									

(x-axis: -1 -0.5 0 0.5 1)

Fig. 5 Forest plot of burnout outcomes. Footnote: scale by article in alphabetical order. Bazarko et al. 2013: Copenhagen Burnout Inventory; Brady et al. 2012: Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI); De Vibe et al. 2013: MBI–Student version; Fortney et al. 2013: MBI; Gauthier et al. 2015: MBI; Goodman and Schorling 2012: MBI; Krasner et al. 2009: MBI; Martín-Asuero et al. 2014: MBI; Mackenzie et al. 2006: MBI; Martín-Asuero et al. 2014: MBI; Pflugeisen et al. 2016: MBI; Raab et al. 2015; MBI; Shapiro et al. 2005: MBI

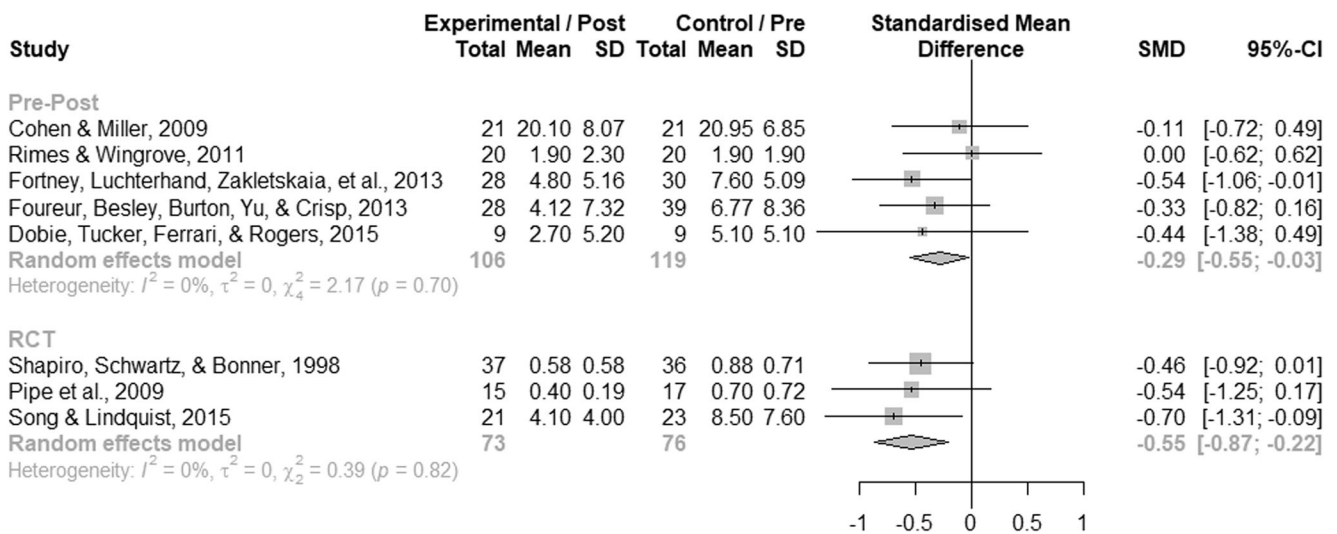| Study	Experimental / Post Total	Mean	SD	Control / Pre Total	Mean	SD	Standardised Mean Difference	SMD	95%-CI
Pre-Post									
Cohen & Miller, 2009	21	20.10	8.07	21	20.95	6.85		-0.11	[-0.72; 0.49]
Rimes & Wingrove, 2011	20	1.90	2.30	20	1.90	1.90		0.00	[-0.62; 0.62]
Fortney, Luchterhand, Zakletskaia, et al., 2013	28	4.80	5.16	30	7.60	5.09		-0.54	[-1.06; -0.01]
Foureur, Besley, Burton, Yu, & Crisp, 2013	28	4.12	7.32	39	6.77	8.36		-0.33	[-0.82; 0.16]
Dobie, Tucker, Ferrari, & Rogers, 2015	9	2.70	5.20	9	5.10	5.10		-0.44	[-1.38; 0.49]
Random effects model	106			119				-0.29	[-0.55; -0.03]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 0\%$, $\tau^2 = 0$, $\chi_4^2 = 2.17$ ($p = 0.70$)									
RCT									
Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bonner, 1998	37	0.58	0.58	36	0.88	0.71		-0.46	[-0.92; 0.01]
Pipe et al., 2009	15	0.40	0.19	17	0.70	0.72		-0.54	[-1.25; 0.17]
Song & Lindquist, 2015	21	4.10	4.00	23	8.50	7.60		-0.70	[-1.31; -0.09]
Random effects model	73			76				-0.55	[-0.87; -0.22]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 0\%$, $\tau^2 = 0$, $\chi_2^2 = 0.39$ ($p = 0.82$)									

-1   -0.5   0   0.5   1

Fig. 6 Forest plot of depression outcomes. Footnote: scale by article in alphabetical order. Cohen and Miller 2009: Center for Epidemiological Studies–Depression Scale; Dobie et al. 2016: Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scales (DASS)–Depression; Fortney et al. 2013: DASS–Depression; Foureur et al. 2013: DASS–Depression; Pipe et al. 2009: Symptom Checklist 90–R (SCL-90-R)–Depression; Rimes and Wingrove 2011: Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale–Depression; Shapiro et al. 1998: SCL-90-R–Depression; Song and Lindquist 2015: DASS–Depression

"asset-based" psychological outcomes (e.g. satisfaction with life), as well as outcomes associated with well-being (e.g. emotional intelligence). Let us consider these classes in turn.

First, the analysis supports the contention that MBIs can be helpful in addressing the mental health needs of HCPs. Effect sizes ranging from small to medium were observed in the expected direction (i.e. reduced burden) for all measures, including anxiety (− 1.01 for non-randomised trials, − 0.49 for RCTs, and − 0.31 for pre-post studies), burnout (− 0.31 RCTs and − 0.51 pre-post), depression (− 0.55 and − 0.29), distress (− 0.61 and − 0.54) and stress (− 0.42 and − 0.58). All random effects models performed on negative outcomes, except anxiety (non-randomised trials), yielded statistically significant results of around half standardised average difference. These findings somewhat align with previous meta-analyses looking at the impact of mindfulness on such measures in non-clinical
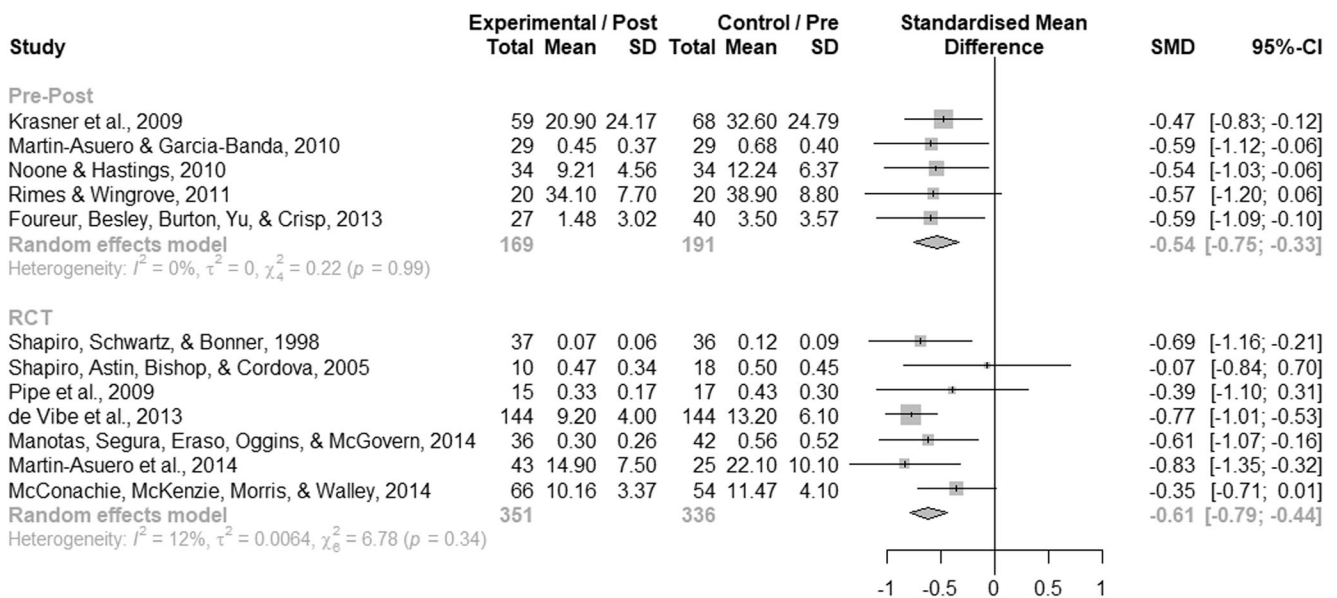
Study	Experimental / Post Total	Mean	SD	Control / Pre Total	Mean	SD	Standardised Mean Difference	SMD	95%-CI
Pre-Post									
Krasner et al., 2009	59	20.90	24.17	68	32.60	24.79		-0.47	[-0.83; -0.12]
Martin-Asuero & Garcia-Banda, 2010	29	0.45	0.37	29	0.68	0.40		-0.59	[-1.12; -0.06]
Noone & Hastings, 2010	34	9.21	4.56	34	12.24	6.37		-0.54	[-1.03; -0.06]
Rimes & Wingrove, 2011	20	34.10	7.70	20	38.90	8.80		-0.57	[-1.20; 0.06]
Foureur, Besley, Burton, Yu, & Crisp, 2013	27	1.48	3.02	40	3.50	3.57		-0.59	[-1.09; -0.10]
Random effects model	169			191				-0.54	[-0.75; -0.33]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 0\%$, $\tau^2 = 0$, $\chi_4^2 = 0.22$ ($p = 0.99$)									
RCT									
Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bonner, 1998	37	0.07	0.06	36	0.12	0.09		-0.69	[-1.16; -0.21]
Shapiro, Astin, Bishop, & Cordova, 2005	10	0.47	0.34	18	0.50	0.45		-0.07	[-0.84; 0.70]
Pipe et al., 2009	15	0.33	0.17	17	0.43	0.30		-0.39	[-1.10; 0.31]
de Vibe et al., 2013	144	9.20	4.00	144	13.20	6.10		-0.77	[-1.01; -0.53]
Manotas, Segura, Eraso, Oggins, & McGovern, 2014	36	0.30	0.26	42	0.56	0.52		-0.61	[-1.07; -0.16]
Martin-Asuero et al., 2014	43	14.90	7.50	25	22.10	10.10		-0.83	[-1.35; -0.32]
McConachie, McKenzie, Morris, & Walley, 2014	66	10.16	3.37	54	11.47	4.10		-0.35	[-0.71; 0.01]
Random effects model	351			336				-0.61	[-0.79; -0.44]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 12\%$, $\tau^2 = 0.0064$, $\chi_6^2 = 6.78$ ($p = 0.34$)									

-1   -0.5   0   0.5   1

Fig. 7 Forest plot of distress outcomes. Footnote: scale by article in alphabetical order. De Vibe et al. 2013: General Health Questionnaire 12 (GHQ-12); Foureur et al. 2013: GHQ-12; Krasner et al. 2009: Profile of Moods States (POMS); Manotas et al. 2014: Brief Symptom Inventory-18 (BSI-18); Martín-Asuero and García-Banda 2010: Positive and Negative Affect Scales (PANAS)–Negative Affect, Symptom Checklist 90–R (SCL-90-R)–GSI; Martín-Asuero et al. 2014: POMS; McConachie et al. 2014: GHQ-12; Noone and Hastings 2010: GHQ-12; 2010 Pipe et al. 2009: SCL-90-R–GSI; Rimes and Wingrove 2011: Reflection-Rumination Questionnaire; Shapiro et al. 2005: BSI-18; Shapiro et al. 1998: SCL-90-R–GSI
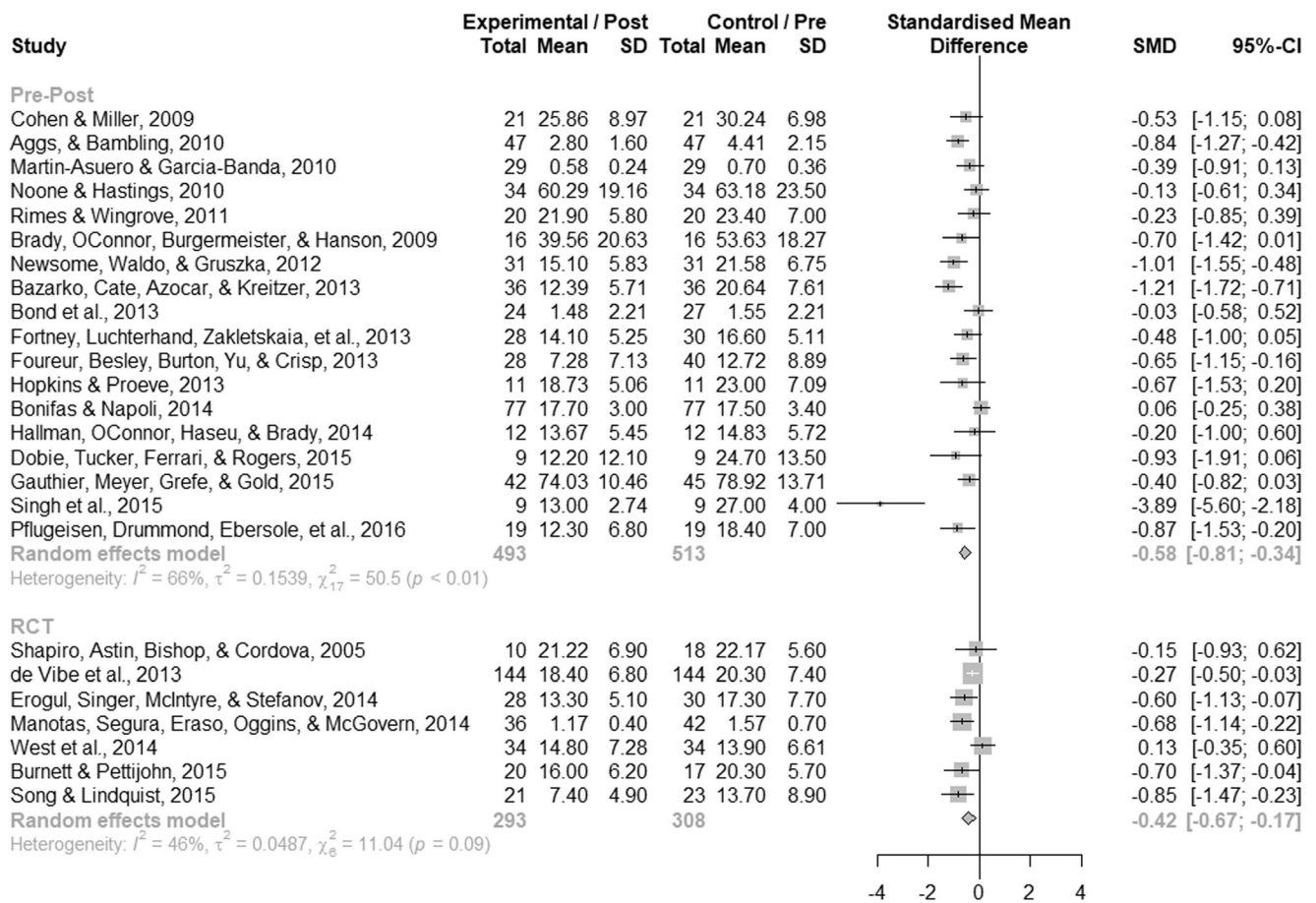
Study	Experimental / Post			Control / Pre			Standardised Mean Difference	SMD	95%-CI
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD			
Pre-Post									
Cohen & Miller, 2009	21	25.86	8.97	21	30.24	6.98		-0.53	[-1.15; 0.08]
Aggs, & Bambling, 2010	47	2.80	1.60	47	4.41	2.15		-0.84	[-1.27; -0.42]
Martin-Asuero & Garcia-Banda, 2010	29	0.58	0.24	29	0.70	0.36		-0.39	[-0.91; 0.13]
Noone & Hastings, 2010	34	60.29	19.16	34	63.18	23.50		-0.13	[-0.61; 0.34]
Rimes & Wingrove, 2011	20	21.90	5.80	20	23.40	7.00		-0.23	[-0.85; 0.39]
Brady, OConnor, Burgermeister, & Hanson, 2009	16	39.56	20.63	16	53.63	18.27		-0.70	[-1.42; 0.01]
Newsome, Waldo, & Gruszka, 2012	31	15.10	5.83	31	21.58	6.75		-1.01	[-1.55; -0.48]
Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, & Kreitzer, 2013	36	12.39	5.71	36	20.64	7.61		-1.21	[-1.72; -0.71]
Bond et al., 2013	24	1.48	2.21	27	1.55	2.21		-0.03	[-0.58; 0.52]
Fortney, Luchterhand, Zakletskaia, et al., 2013	28	14.10	5.25	30	16.60	5.11		-0.48	[-1.00; 0.05]
Foureur, Besley, Burton, Yu, & Crisp, 2013	28	7.28	7.13	40	12.72	8.89		-0.65	[-1.15; -0.16]
Hopkins & Proeve, 2013	11	18.73	5.06	11	23.00	7.09		-0.67	[-1.53; 0.20]
Bonifas & Napoli, 2014	77	17.70	3.00	77	17.50	3.40		0.06	[-0.25; 0.38]
Hallman, OConnor, Haseu, & Brady, 2014	12	13.67	5.45	12	14.83	5.72		-0.20	[-1.00; 0.60]
Dobie, Tucker, Ferrari, & Rogers, 2015	9	12.20	12.10	9	24.70	13.50		-0.93	[-1.91; 0.06]
Gauthier, Meyer, Grefe, & Gold, 2015	42	74.03	10.46	45	78.92	13.71		-0.40	[-0.82; 0.03]
Singh et al., 2015	9	13.00	2.74	9	27.00	4.00		-3.89	[-5.60; -2.18]
Pflugeisen, Drummond, Ebersole, et al., 2016	19	12.30	6.80	19	18.40	7.00		-0.87	[-1.53; -0.20]
Random effects model	**493**			**513**				**-0.58**	**[-0.81; -0.34]**
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 66\%$, $\tau^2 = 0.1539$, $\chi^2_{17} = 50.5$ ($p < 0.01$)									
RCT									
Shapiro, Astin, Bishop, & Cordova, 2005	10	21.22	6.90	18	22.17	5.60		-0.15	[-0.93; 0.62]
de Vibe et al., 2013	144	18.40	6.80	144	20.30	7.40		-0.27	[-0.50; -0.03]
Erogul, Singer, McIntyre, & Stefanov, 2014	28	13.30	5.10	30	17.30	7.70		-0.60	[-1.13; -0.07]
Manotas, Segura, Eraso, Oggins, & McGovern, 2014	36	1.17	0.40	42	1.57	0.70		-0.68	[-1.14; -0.22]
West et al., 2014	34	14.80	7.28	34	13.90	6.61		0.13	[-0.35; 0.60]
Burnett & Pettijohn, 2015	20	16.00	6.20	17	20.30	5.70		-0.70	[-1.37; -0.04]
Song & Lindquist, 2015	21	7.40	4.90	23	13.70	8.90		-0.85	[-1.47; -0.23]
Random effects model	**293**			**308**				**-0.42**	**[-0.67; -0.17]**
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 46\%$, $\tau^2 = 0.0487$, $\chi^2_6 = 11.04$ ($p = 0.09$)									

Fig. 8 Forest plot of stress outcomes. Footnote: scale by article in alphabetical order. Aggs & Bambling 2010: Single-Item 10-Point Stress Scale; Bazarko et al. 2013: Perceived Stress Scale (PSS); Bond et al. 2013: PSS; Bonifas and Napoli 2014: PSS; Brady et al. 2012: Mental Health Professionals Stress Scale; Burnett and Pettijohn 2015 (vs passive intervention): PSS; Cohen and Miller 2009: PSS; De Vibe et al. 2013: Perceived Medical School Stress; Dobie et al. 2016: Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS)–Stress; Erogul et al. 2014: PSS; Fortney et al. 2013: DASS–Stress; Fortney et al. 2013: PSS; Foureur et al. 2013: DASS–Stress; Gauthier et al. 2015: Nursing Stress Scale; Hallman et al. 2014: PSS; Hopkins and Proeve 2013: PSS; Manotas et al. 2014: PSS; Martín-Asuero and García-Banda 2010: Survey of Recent Life Experiences; Newsome et al. 2012: PSS; Noone and Hastings 2010: Staff Stressor Questionnaire; Pflugeisen et al. 2016: PSS; Rimes and Wingrove 2011: PSS; Shapiro et al. 2005: PSS; Singh et al. 2015: PSS; Song and Lindquist 2015: DASS–Stress; West et al. 2014: PSS

populations (but not HCPs specifically). For instance, analysing 29 studies of MBSR, Khoury et al. (2015) observed a large effect size with respect to stress, a medium effect in relation to anxiety, distress, and depression, and a small effect for burnout. The findings here are promising, given the mental health burdens faced by HCPs, with surveys suggested that mental health issues may be even higher among HCPs than in the general population. For instance, a longitudinal study of 318 GPs by Firth-Cozens (1998) found that 16.8% were above the threshold for depression on the depression scale of the Symptom Checklist 90, with 9.9% having some suicidal ideation (4.6% more than "occasionally"). These figures contrast with estimates that around 2.3% of the general UK adult population experience a depressive episode at any one time (i.e. in the past week), with 9% experiencing mixed anxiety and depressive disorder (The Health and Social Care Information Centre 2009). There are many hypothesised reasons for this greater liability to depression among HCPs, including

personality traits such as perfectionism, burdens of clinical responsibility, and reluctance to seek treatment (Bright and Krahn 2011). Whatever the reasons, it is encouraging that MBIs appear to help in this regard, reflecting the more established efficacy of MBIs such as MBCT with respect to depression (Segal et al. 2002). In terms of moderator analyses, no statistically significant differences were observed for any negative outcome.

Similarly, the relatively positive results regarding stress are welcome here, especially given that stress appears to be generally higher among HCPs than in the general population. For instance, Firth-Cozens (2003) reported that the proportion of HCPs being above threshold levels of stress is around 28% in surveys, compared with about 18% in the general working population. As with depression, a similar range of factors have been implicated in elevated stress levels among HCPs, from long working hours to the burden of clinical responsibility (Sochos et al. 2012). Unfortunately, as highlighted above, these
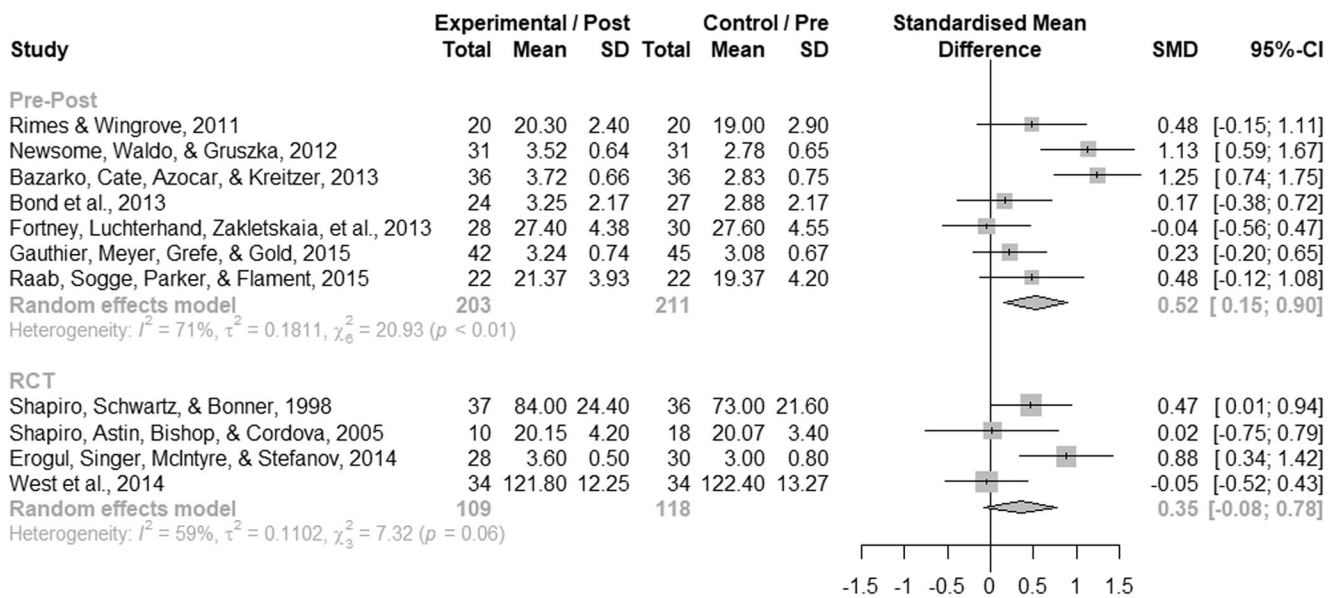
Study	Experimental / Post			Control / Pre			Standardised Mean Difference	SMD	95%-CI
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD			
Pre-Post									
Rimes & Wingrove, 2011	20	20.30	2.40	20	19.00	2.90		0.48	[-0.15; 1.11]
Newsome, Waldo, & Gruszka, 2012	31	3.52	0.64	31	2.78	0.65		1.13	[0.59; 1.67]
Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, & Kreitzer, 2013	36	3.72	0.66	36	2.83	0.75		1.25	[0.74; 1.75]
Bond et al., 2013	24	3.25	2.17	27	2.88	2.17		0.17	[-0.38; 0.72]
Fortney, Luchterhand, Zakletskaia, et al., 2013	28	27.40	4.38	30	27.60	4.55		-0.04	[-0.56; 0.47]
Gauthier, Meyer, Grefe, & Gold, 2015	42	3.24	0.74	45	3.08	0.67		0.23	[-0.20; 0.65]
Raab, Sogge, Parker, & Flament, 2015	22	21.37	3.93	22	19.37	4.20		0.48	[-0.12; 1.08]
Random effects model	203			211				0.52	[0.15; 0.90]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 71\%$, $\tau^2 = 0.1811$, $\chi^2_6 = 20.93$ ($p < 0.01$)									
RCT									
Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bonner, 1998	37	84.00	24.40	36	73.00	21.60		0.47	[0.01; 0.94]
Shapiro, Astin, Bishop, & Cordova, 2005	10	20.15	4.20	18	20.07	3.40		0.02	[-0.75; 0.79]
Erogul, Singer, McIntyre, & Stefanov, 2014	28	3.60	0.50	30	3.00	0.80		0.88	[0.34; 1.42]
West et al., 2014	34	121.80	12.25	34	122.40	13.27		-0.05	[-0.52; 0.43]
Random effects model	109			118				0.35	[-0.08; 0.78]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 59\%$, $\tau^2 = 0.1102$, $\chi^2_3 = 7.32$ ($p = 0.06$)									

-1.5 -1 -0.5 0 0.5 1 1.5

Fig. 9 Forest plot of compassion outcomes. Footnote: scale by article in alphabetical order. Bazarko et al. 2013: Self-Compassion Scale (SCS); Bond et al. 2013: SCS; Erogul et al. 2014: SCS; Fortney et al. 2013: Santa Clara Brief Compassion Scale; Gauthier et al. 2015: SCS; Newsome et al. 2012: SCS; Raab et al. 2015: SCS; Rimes and Wingrove 2011: SCS; Shapiro et al. 2005: SCS

burdens have only increased over recent years, due to factors such as curbs on healthcare spending meaning that overwork has become even more acute. As noted above, a survey of National Health Service staff found that 61% reporting feeling stressed all or most of the time, and 59% stating that their stress is worse this year than last year (Dudman et al. 2015). Thus, the small to medium effect size observed in relation to stress here is notable, although this was less than the large effect size observed by Khoury et al.'s (2015) aforementioned meta-analysis of MBSR in non-clinical populations (not HCPs specifically). Such findings show that mindfulness may have a useful role to play in ameliorating work-based stress and burnout. However, while these results are encouraging, concerns have been expressed about MBIs being used in occupational contexts as a sticking plaster to merely treat the *symptoms* of a "toxic" or otherwise challenging work environment, rather than undertaking the more difficult task of creating environments more hospitable to employees (Van Gordon et al. 2016). Moreover, such interventions can potentially place the onus on employees to "cope" with stress and burnout via MBIs, rather than on employers to render the work itself less

demanding. As such, while MBIs may well be helpful to HCPs in terms of alleviating mental health issues, it is vital that their underlying structural causes are also addressed.

The second class of well-being outcomes are more positive "asset-based" measures. These include outcomes that have recently come to prominence via the burgeoning paradigm of "positive psychology" (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000), like satisfaction with life (Diener et al. 1985) (even if such topics predate the emergence of positive psychology in the late 1990s). The relative lack of attention to such outcomes in the HCP literature considered here is somewhat reflective of the field of psychology more broadly. That is, one rationale behind the emergence of the positive psychology movement was the charge that mainstream psychology tended to be concerned with disorder, deficit and dysfunction, and paid relatively little attention to "the brighter sides of human nature," as Linley and Joseph (2004, p. 4) put it, to the ways in which humans excel and flourish. One of positive psychology's foundational metaphors of PP was of a continuum, stretching from a nominal minus 10, through zero and up to plus 10 (Keyes 2002). On that metaphor, ameliorating deficits such as mental disorder

Study	Post			Pre			Standardised Mean Difference	SMD	95%-CI
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD			
Pre-Post									
Cohen & Miller, 2009	21	124.62	14.90	21	119.19	12.06		0.39	[-0.22; 1.00]
Martin-Asuero & Garcia-Banda, 2010	29	4.07	2.27	29	3.61	2.54		0.19	[-0.33; 0.70]
Bond et al., 2013	24	3.58	7.13	27	3.49	7.13		0.01	[-0.54; 0.56]
Random effects model	74			77				0.18	[-0.14; 0.51]
Heterogeneity: $I^2 = 0\%$, $\tau^2 = 0$, $\chi^2_2 = 0.82$ ($p = 0.66$)									

-1 -0.5 0 0.5 1
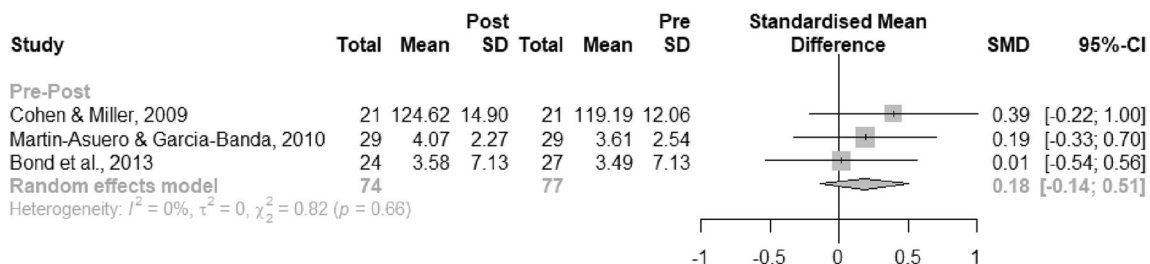
Fig. 10 Forest plot of emotional intelligence outcomes. Footnote: scale by article in alphabetical order. Bond et al. 2013: Self-Regulation Questionnaire; Cohen and Miller 2009: Self-Report of Emotional Intelligence; Martín-Asuero and García-Banda 2010: Emotional Control Questionnaire
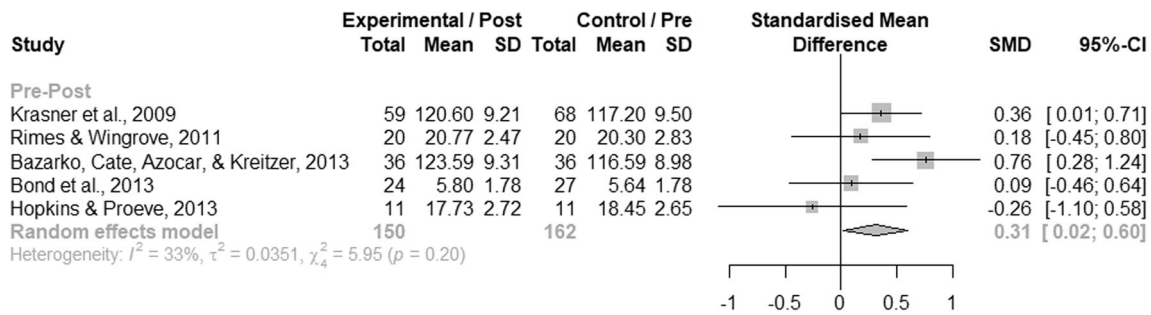
Fig. 11 Forest plot of empathy outcomes. Footnote: scale by article in alphabetical order. Bazarko et al. 2013: Jefferson Scale of Physician Empathy (JSPE); Bond et al. 2013: JSPE; Hopkins and Proeve 2013: Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI); Krasner et al. 2009: JSPE; Rimes and Wingrove 2011: IRI

constitutes bringing people up to "zero." That is hugely beneficial, as far as it goes. But being at "zero" does not necessarily mean people are flourishing (e.g. truly thriving, and fulfilling their potential). Thus, positive psychology sought to draw attention to outcomes that might represent the positive integers in this metaphor. The current review sought to capture this aspect of well-being, including such outcomes as satisfaction with life (e.g. Cohen and Miller 2009). Overall a small to medium effect size was observed (0.27 for RCTs and 0.49 for pre-post), which is encouraging (with no significant results observed for any moderator). However, this is a relatively understudied domain of well-being in the literature on mindfulness in HCPs, and further research is needed.

Relatedly, the review also included "positive" outcomes measures that, although not constitutive of well-being in themselves, are closely related to it. These include

mindfulness itself, for which an effect size of 0.52 was observed for pre-post studies, although only 0.34 for RCTs (which moreover was non-significant). The latter result is somewhat surprising and suggests that whatever benefits participants may be gaining from MBIs, it is unclear the extent to which this is attributable to increases in mindfulness itself (since, after all, this did not increase significantly in RCTs), as opposed to accruing from other rewarding components of the programme (e.g. a supportive social environment). Mindfulness also yielded some interesting results in terms of subgroup and meta-regression analyses, with variability with respect to the type of intervention (with greater effect sizes in mindfulness among studies that did not use the MBSR programme).

Other positive outcomes of note included empathy and compassion. In this respect though, while significant effect
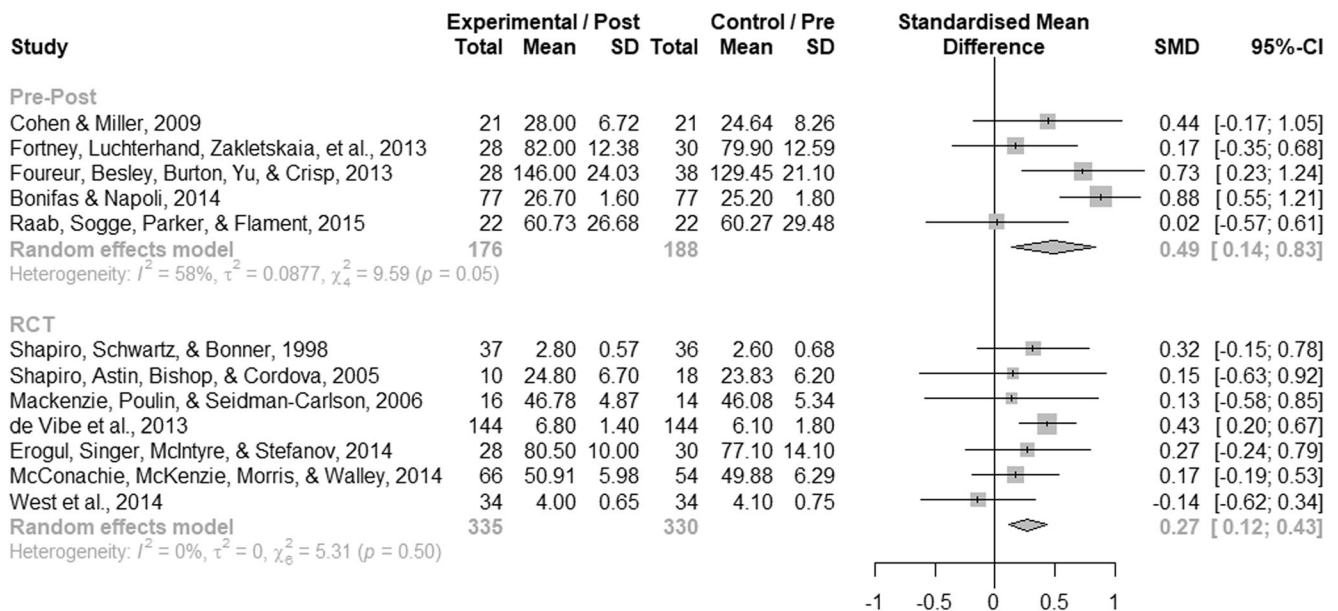
Fig. 12 Forest plot of life satisfaction & flourishing outcomes. Footnote: scale by article in alphabetical order. Bonifas and Napoli 2014: Quality of Life Index; Cohen and Miller 2009: Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ)–Search for Meaning, MLQ–Presence of meaning, Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS); De Vibe et al. 2013: Subjective Wellbeing Scale; Erogul et al. 2014: Resilience Scale; Foureur et al. 2013: Sense of Coherence (SOC); Mackenzie et al. 2006: SOC, Smith Relaxation Dispositions Inventory, SWLS, Job Satisfaction Scale; McConachie et al. 2014: Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale; Raab et al. 2015: Quality of life inventory; De Vibe et al. 2013: Subjective Wellbeing Scale; Shapiro et al. 2005: SWLS; Shapiro et al. 1998: Index of Core Spiritual Experiences; West et al. 2014: Physician Job Satisfaction Scale
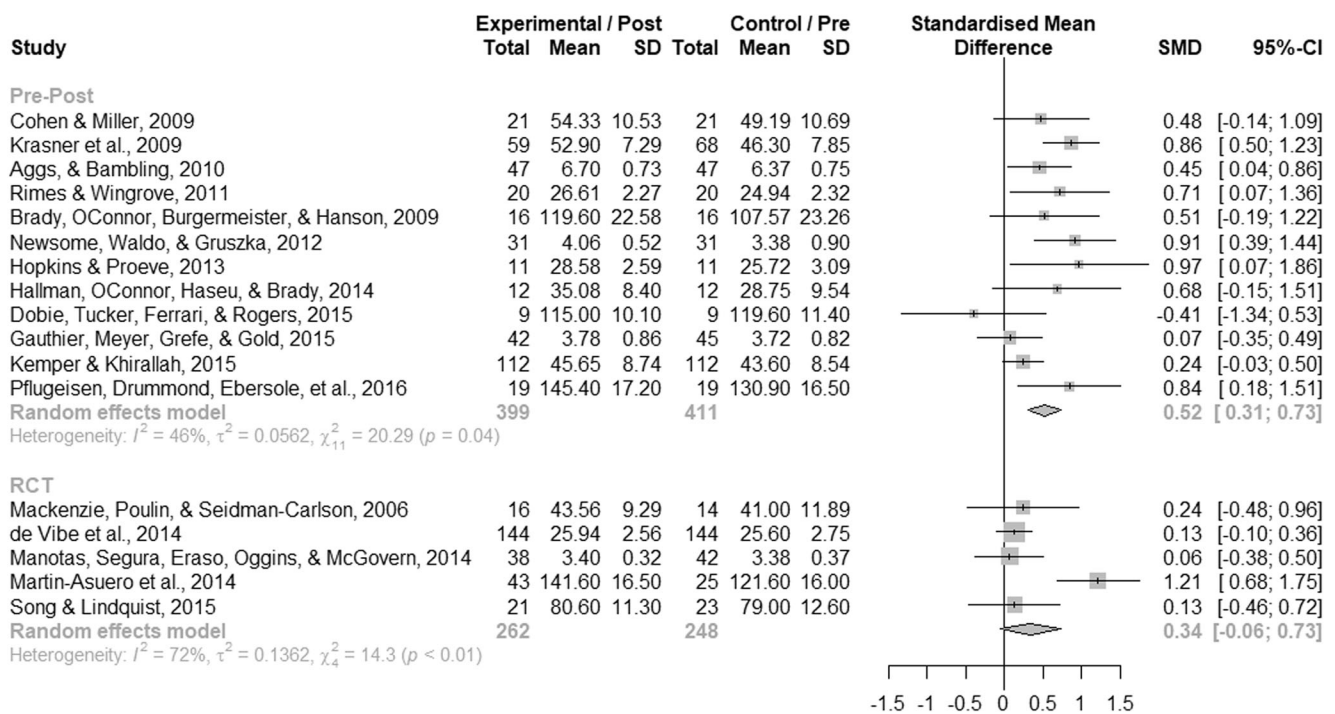
Fig. 13 Forest plot of mindfulness and awareness outcomes. Footnote: scale by article in alphabetical order. Aggs & Bambling 2010: Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ); Brady et al. 2012: Sense of Self Scale, Toronto Mindfulness Scale (TMS); Cohen and Miller 2009: Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS); de Vibe et al. 2013: FFMQ; Dobie et al. 2016: Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS); Gauthier et al. 2015: MAAS; Hallman et al. 2014: TMS; Hopkins and Proeve 2013: FFMQ; Kemper and Khirallah 2015: Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale–Revised, MAAS; Krasner et al. 2009: Baer Mindfulness Scale; Mackenzie et al. 2006: Smith Relaxation Dispositions Inventory; Manotas et al. 2014: FFMQ; Martín-Asuero et al. 2014: FFMQ; Newsome et al. 2012: MAAS; Pflugeisen et al. 2016: KIMS; Rimes and Wingrove 2011: FFMQ; Song and Lindquist 2015: MAAS

sizes were observed in pre-post studies for both empathy (0.31) and compassion (0.52), the compassion effect size (0.35) in RCTs was non-significant (while RCT calculations were not possible for empathy due to insufficient studies). Also of note here is the moderating factor of MBI, where—contrary to the mindfulness outcomes reported above—higher effect sizes were observed in studies that *did* use the original MBSR protocol. These conflicting findings regarding moderator variables preclude us from making any simple generalisations about which type of MBI is most effective. More generally, qualities of empathy and compassion are not only relevant in a HCP context because of their close association with well-being, such as the possibility that they provide a buffer against stress (Cosley et al. 2010). There is a significant literature though on the risks of "compassion fatigue" among HCPs (Coetzee and Klopper 2010), which emphasises the importance, among other things, of HCPs developing self-compassion (Boellinghaus et al. 2014).) Empathy and compassion are further interesting here, since in a healthcare context, these qualities are regarded as important occupational skills, for instance being linked to better outcomes for patients (Mannion 2014). This finding aligns with reviews which have reported on job performance metrics in HCPs, such as Guillaumie et al. (2017), who observed—in relation to mindfulness—improved

communication with colleagues, greater sensitivity to patients' experiences, clearer analyses of complex situations, and emotional regulation in stressful contexts, and likewise McConville et al. (2017), who observed better learning and clinical performance among health professional students.

This class of positive well-being-related outcomes here also included emotional intelligence and regulation. The interest in such outcomes lies, in part, with the possibility that they may play mediating roles with respect to the outcomes considered above. For instance, emotional intelligence and regulation have been studied as coping resources that can mitigate the deleterious impact of work demands for HCPs (Weng et al. 2011). These outcomes are also relevant, since theoretically they represent one of the strongest candidates for the way in which mindfulness might exert its beneficial effects upon all the outcomes considered in this review. As outlined in the introduction, theorists such as Shapiro et al. (2006) have proposed that a key way in which mindfulness operates beneficially is through a process of "reperceiving," whereby people are empowered to "decentre" from distressing qualia that might otherwise generate distress, etc. And, reperceiving could be regarded as one facet of a more general capacity of emotion regulation. For instance, Walsh and Shapiro (2006) define meditation as "a family of self-regulation practices that focus on training attention and awareness in order to bring

mental processes under greater voluntary control and thereby foster general mental well-being" (pp. 228–229). However, although improvements were noted here with respect to emotional intelligence/regulation, surprisingly (given the above-mentioned theoretical background), the effects did not reach statistical significance. Clearly, this makes one wary here about definitively granting these outcomes a pivotal role in mediating the effects of MBIs on the outcomes above and highlights the need for further research on the relevance of these psychological processes to whatever benefits may be conferred by mindfulness practice.

Overall, though, the results are fairly encouraging in terms of the value of MBIs for HCPs. However, there are various issues with the research base which must temper one's enthusiasm here and which limit the conclusions that can be drawn. The quality assessment revealed considerable variation among studies, with several prominent issues. The first is that older studies tended not to use an RCT design and more generally had a poorer quality of design compared to more recent studies. A second issue is that studies overwhelmingly featured a majority of female participants; this raises doubts concerning the ecological validity of these studies when it comes to their relevance for both males and females (and see Lomas et al. (2015a) for potential gendered differences in the way men may respond to meditation practice). A third issue was blinding, i.e. whether or not participants were aware of the research question and whether assessors were aware of the intervention, which was rarely addressed by studies.

Furthermore, there are other issues beyond those around quality. First, there is considerable heterogeneity in the design of the studies—including type of MBI and outcome measures—which makes it difficult to conduct comparative assessments and hence to draw robust conclusions about the research as a whole. A further issue is that the research is biased towards "negative" psychiatric outcomes (e.g. anxiety, stress, depression), with relatively little attention to "positive" outcomes that are specifically relevant to the work arena, such as work engagement or creativity. Finally, despite not having obtained statistically significant results in our calculations, our appraisal of the literature base is likely to have been hindered by publication bias, i.e. the "file-drawer problem," in that studies with less conclusive or even negative results are less likely to be published (Smith 1980). It was not feasible to collect data from unpublished trials of MBIs with HCPs, which means that the studies reviewed must inevitably be regarded as a somewhat selective survey of the studies that have been conducted in this arena. As an additional point, it should also be noted that it was necessary to perform the calculations with moderating variables using all study designs together (rather than separately according to specific designs, i.e. randomised vs non-randomised). The reason is that separating such analyses by specific designs would generate an unwieldy proliferation of subgroups, many of which would

have had just one or even no studies within them. Future meta-analyses, with a greater pool of studies to draw on, may well be able to perform calculations separated by study designs, which would be ideal.

Based on the critiques above, the following recommendations can be made vis-à-vis future work in this area, including in relation to the (a) outcomes, (b) study design, (c) type of MBI, and (d) cost-benefit analyses. First, it would be good to see a diversification of outcome measures. Currently, most studies focus on deficit-based well-being measures, such as anxiety and stress. While those outcomes are important, and the focus on them is understandable given the clinical context in which MBIs were developed, they do not provide the "whole picture" with regard to well-being. As fields like positive psychology have emphasised, well-being is also a question of asset-based outcomes (whose *presence* is indicative of well-being), such as life satisfaction or positive affect. As such, we recommend that all studies consider including at least one such asset-based outcome in their assessment. Relatedly, when researching MBIs in occupational contexts specifically, we also recommend the inclusion of asset-based outcomes that are particularly germane to this arena, but which have so far received hardly attention at all (and none in the studies reviewed here). These could include, for instance, creativity and leadership (see Kudesia (2015) and George (2012) for reflections on links in the workplace between mindfulness and creativity and leadership respectively).

Second, our QATQS review of the general quality of studies leads us to several recommendations regarding the design of the research. Most importantly, where possible, studies should implement an RCT design, ideally with large numbers of participants (determined by a priori power calculations drawing on estimated effect size). Moreover, in addition to a wait-list control protocol, the design of studies would be improved if trials included an "active" control group. A good example of this in an occupational context is Wolever et al. (2012), who included yoga as an active control. Such designs will better enable any positive effects to be ascribed to mindfulness per se (i.e. rather than simply being involved in an absorbing group activity). Relatedly, studies should pay more attention to the extent to which participants are actually practising mindfulness (e.g. in terms of adherence to homework activities). As Vettese et al. (2009) noted, failure to track such participation is a perennial issue in MBI research, and this trend was observed in the studies analysed here. Additionally, beyond people simply participating in an MBI, much more knowledge is needed about the *extent* and *quality* of their involvement with meditation. In that respect, besides quantitatively tracking participation, studies could incorporate a qualitative element to their assessment (see Lomas et al. (2013, 2014a, b, 2015a, 2016) on the value of qualitative analyses in relation to mindfulness practice).

Third, where possible, trials should involve well-established MBIs (i.e. rather than bespoke adaptations), to better enable comparison and aggregation across studies. Of the 81 studies analysed in Lomas et al.'s (2018) general systematic review of HCPs—of which the current paper provides a meta-analysis of 42—the 56 intervention studies used a range of different MBIs. These included MBSR ($n = 9$), MBSR adaptations (15), and MBCT (5), together with a range of other less-well-established programmes (16), as well as bespoke interventions seemingly created for that particular study (21). For the purposes of assessing the value of MBIs in occupational contexts it would be helpful—at least in this point in our early understanding of this particular context—for studies to use established MBIs such as MBSR and MBCT, rather than creating bespoke programmes or adaptations. Having said that though, we also recognise the value of moving beyond MBIs developed primarily for clinical contexts (e.g. MBSR), and creating MBIs specifically for the workplace, including for particular types of occupation (e.g. HCPs). For instance, Goodman and Schorling (2012) created and used a bespoke MBSR adaptation called "Mindfulness for Healthcare Providers," which was specifically tailored for a HCP context. As such, we would not want to discourage that kind of innovation. Thus, as the research moves forward, it will be helpful to see a balance between the implementation and assessment of established MBIs on the one hand and innovation and adaption of these into occupational contexts on the other.

Finally, the case for implementing mindfulness in occupational contexts will be enhanced considerably—certainly from the perspective of employers—through cost-benefit analyses. If MBIs can be seen to generate an overall net gain, there are strong incentives for these to be introduced in the workplace. Unfortunately though, few such analyses currently exist (Edwards et al. 2015). There are some valuable and instructive exceptions though. For instance, analysing the impact of "mindful organising" across three large hospitals, Vogus et al. (2014) calculated that this generated a 13.6% decrease in turnover, representing an average hospital saving of between $169,000 and $1,014,560. Such analyses will be very valuable in terms of generating organisational buy-in to the potential of mindfulness, thus helping facilitate research going forward that can enable the promise of the research reviewed here to be substantiated (see Edwards et al. (2015) for recommendations on conducting such analyses). Nevertheless, despite the limitations and issues with the current research base, the evidence of the value of mindfulness for HCPs is strong, and one might speculate that this will only strengthen over the years ahead.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.

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(All meta-analysis papers are indicated by *)

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