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# Mindfulness as a protective factor against body dissatisfaction: mechanism of action

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Mindfulness is the tendency to pay attention, on purpose and in an open and non-judgmental way, to experiences. An association between higher dispositional mindfulness and body satisfaction has been demonstrated, but the mechanism of this association remains unclear. In the present study, thought suppression was tested as a mediator of the association between mindfulness and body satisfaction, and mindfulness was tested as a protective factor against lowered body satisfaction. In Study 1, participants (N = 234) completed online measures of mindfulness, thought suppression, and body satisfaction. After controlling for depression, self-esteem, and BMI, *describing*, *acting with awareness*, and *non-judgement* were related to higher body satisfaction. When controlling only for BMI, lower thought suppression mediated the relations between higher *describing*, *acting with awareness*, and *non-reactivity* and higher body satisfaction. *Observing* was neither directly nor indirectly related to body satisfaction. In Study 2, participants (N = 69) wrote about a disliked body part or disliked weather, and then completed either a mindfulness or relaxation induction. They then completed measures of state mindfulness and body satisfaction. The mindfulness induction did not result in higher body satisfaction compared to the relaxation induction. Our results suggest that thought suppression mediates the association between body satisfaction and facets of mindfulness involving a metacognitive component. However, self-administered mindfulness inductions do not appear to result in higher state body satisfaction than relaxation inductions. Furthermore, it does not appear that a writing task is sufficient to reduce body satisfaction.