**Table S1. Characteristics of included studies**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Study, Year, Country | Participants a | **Intervention (I)****Comparator (C) b, c** | Intervention and comparator categories d | **Delivery / Format** | **Intervention length**  | **Outcome measure (scale) e** | **Outcome definition and category (Mental Ill Health (MIH) & Positive Mental Health (PMH) &Academic Performance) (AP))f, g** | **Post-int. follow-up h, i** |
| Braithwaite SR, 2009, US [52] | Undergraduate psychology students18 M/ 51 F | I: Relationship education C: Placebo 38 I/ 39 C  | Psycho-educationalInactive | Universal /Individual internet-based | 1 session+ emails,~7 weeks | BDI BAI | Depressive symptoms (MIH)Anxiety symptoms (MIH | 8 months |
| Chase JA, 2013, US **[34]** | Psychology majors 29 M/ 103 F | I1: Goal setting + values C: Goal setting alone 51 I/ 48 C | Mind-body relatedActive | Universal /Individual internet-based | 1 session+ emails + 2.5 h individual goal setting ~4 weeks  | GPA  | Academic performance (AP) | 3 months  |
| Cheng M, 2015, China **[53]j** | University students 30 M/ 36 F | I: Meaning-centered approach C: No intervention 34 I/ 32 C | Psycho-educationalInactive | Universal / Group | 9 sessions, 2-2.5 h/each,9 weeks | RSES | Self-esteem (PMH) | 3 months |
| Chiauzzi E, 2008, US **[35]k** | 1st-4th-yr students with high stress perception 116 M/123 F | I: Stress managementC1: Control website C2: No treatment 77 I/ 78 C1/80 C2 | CBT-relatedInactiveInactive | Selective /Individual internet-based  | 4 sessions,20 min/each,2 weeks  | HPLP SM  | Stress management (PMH) | 5 months |
| Erogul M, 2014, US **[54]** | 1st-yr medical students 31 M/ 26 F | I: MBSRC: No treatment 28 I / 29 C | Mind-body relatedInactive | Universal / Group  | 8 sessions,75 min/each, 8 weeks | PSS-10SCSRS | Perceived stress (MIH) Self-compassion (PMH)Resilience (PMH) | 6 months |
| Fontana AM, 1999, US **[55]** | Undergraduate psychology students 22 M/ 14 F | I: Peer-led stress inoculation trainingC: Waitlist18 I / 18 C | CBT-relatedInactive | Universal / Group | 6 sessions,45 min**/**each | STAI | State anxiety (MIH) | 6 months |
| Franklin J, 2012, Australia**[56]** | 1st-yr students 21 M/ 31 F (in intervention groups) | I1: PAAL I2: Self-regulationC: No-treatment 27 I1/25 I2/2183C | Psycho-educationalPsycho-educationalInactive  | Universal / in pairs | 7 sessions,9 h in total,7 weeks | GPA | Academic performance (AP) | 12 months18 months |
| Gortner E-M, 2006, US **[57]** | Undergraduate students with elevated depressive symptoms in past and low current symptoms27 M/ 70 F | I: Expressive writing C: Control writing 57 I/ 40 C  | Mind-body relatedInactive | Selective / Group | 3 sessions, 20 min**/**each, 3 days | BDI | Depressive symptoms (MIH) | 6 months |
| Hamdan-Mansour AM, 2009, Jordan **[58]** | Students with elevated depressive symptoms 46 M/ 38 F | I: Teaching Kids to Cope modifiedC: No- treatment 44 I/ 40 C | CBT-related | Selective / Group | 10 sessions, 45 min/each,10 weeks | PSS-10BDIWCQWCQ | Perceived stress (MIH)Depressive symptoms (MIH)Passive coping (MIH)Active coping (PMH) | 3 months |
| Higgins D, 2006, US **[36]** | 1st-yr students with elevated symptoms of worry 25 M/ 53 F | I: CBT workshop C: No-treatment 38 I/ 40 C | CBT-related Inactive | Selective / Group | 2 sessions, 2 h/each, 2 days | PSWQBDIGADQ-IVBAI | Self-reported worry (MIH)Depressive symptoms (MIH)Anxiety symptoms (MIH)State anxiety (MIH) | 6 months12 months |
| Jones MC, 2000, Scotland **[37]** | Nursing students with elevated symptoms of distress 11 M/ 68 F | I: Multi-modal stress management C: Waitlist 40 I/ 39 C | CBT-related  | Selective / Group | 6 sessions, 2 h/each, 6 weeks | GHQ-30 STAISTAIBDI BSSIWCQWCQWCQ | Psychological distress (MIH)State anxiety (MIH)Trait anxiety (MIH)Depressive symptoms (MIH)Perceived stress (MIH)Passive coping (MIH)General coping (PMH)Direct coping (PMH) | 3 months |
| Kanji N, 2006, UK **[38]** | Undergraduate nursing students8 M/ 85 F | I: Autogenic trainingC1: Attention control (laughter therapy) C2: Time control 32 I/ 30 C1/ 31 C2 | Mind-body-relatedActiveInactive | Universal / Group | 8 sessions, 2 h/each,8 weeks | STAISTAI | State anxiety (MIH)Trait anxiety (MIH) | 3 months6 months9 months12 months |
| Kattelmann K, 2014, US **[59]** | 1st-3rd-yr students 505 M/ 1134 F | I: Young Adults Eating and Active for Health C: No treatment 824 I/815 C | Psycho-educational Inactive | Universal / Individual internet-based | 10 sessions+ emails, 10 weeks | PSS-14 | Perceived stress (MIH) | 12 months |
| Kenardy J, 2006, Australia **[60]** | 1st-yr psychology students with elevated symptoms of anxiety  | I: Online Anxiety Prevention Program C: No treatment 36 I/ 38 C | CBT-related  | Selective /Individual internet-based | 6 sessions, 6 weeks | ASICES-D | Anxiety symptoms (MIH) Depressive symptoms (MIH) | 4½ months |
| Li M, 2015, China **[61]** | 1st-2nd-yr students 36 M/ 170 F | I: Baduanjin exercises C: Physical activity as-usual 101 I/ 105 C | Mind-body relatedInactive | Universal, / Group | 60 sessions,1 h/each,12 weeks  | PSQICPSSGSES SES  | Quality of sleep (MIH)Stress (MIH)Self-efficacy (PMH)Self-esteem (PMH) | 3 months |
| Mak WWS, 2015, Honkong **[41]** | University students and staff 95 M/ 191 F | I1: HAPA-enhanced mindfulnessI2: Basis mindfulness C: Waitlist105 I1/104 I2/ 79 C | Mind-body relatedMind-body relatedInactive | Universal **/** Individual internet-based | 8 sessions, 30 min/each,8 weeks  | PSS-10 DASS-21WHO-5 | Perceived stress (MIH)Psychological distress (MIH)Mental well-being (PMH) | 3 months |
| Pachankis JE, 2010, US **[62]** | Undergraduate students77 M/ 0 F | I1: Expressive writing only I2: Writing & Reading C: Neutral writing 27 I1/ 25 I2/25 C | Mind-body relatedMind-body relatedInactive | Selective / Individual | 3 sessions,20 min/each,3 days | CES-D SCL-90RSES | Depressive symptoms (MIH)Psychological distress (MIH)Self-esteem (PMH) | 3 months |
| Peden AR, 2001, US **[39]** | University students with elevated symptoms of depression 0 M/ 92 F | I: CBT C: No treatment 46 I/ 46 C | CBT-relatedInactive | Selective / Group | 6 sessions, 1 h/each,6 weeks | CES-D BAIRSES | Depressive symptoms (MIH)Anxiety symptoms (MIH)Self-esteem (PMH) | 6 months18 months |
| Reavley NJ, 2014, Australia **[46]** | University students 293 M/ 653 F | I: MindWise C: No treatment426 I/ 341 C | Psycho-educational  | Universal / Group & individual internet-based | 2 academic years  | K6 | Psychological distress (MIH) | 6 months18 months |
| Rohde, 2014, US **[42]** | 1st & 2nd-yr students with elevated symptoms of depression25 M/ 57 F | I1: Brief CBT C1: Bibliotherapy C2: Brochure 27 I/ 22 C1/ 33 C2 | CBT-related InactiveInactive | Selective / Group | 6 sessions, 1 h/each,6 weeks | K-SADS | Psychological distress (MIH) | 6 months18 months |
| Seligman, 1999, US **[40]l** | 1st-yr students with elevated symptoms of depression111 M/ 120 F | I: Prevention workshop C: No treatment 106 I/ 119 C | CBT-related Inactive | Selective / Group | 8 sessions, 2 h /each, 8 weeks | BDIHDRS BAIHARS | Depressive symptoms (MIH)Depressive symptoms (MIH)Anxiety symptoms (MIH)Anxiety symptoms (MIH) | 6 months12 months18 months |
| Seligman MEP,2007, US **[44]** | 1st-yr students with elevated symptoms of depression79 M/ 148 F | I: Workshop C: No treatment 102 I/ 125 C | CBT-related Inactive | Selective / Group | 8 sessions + homework, 2 h /each, 8 weeks | BDIBAIFordyce Happy | Depressive symptoms (MIH)Anxiety symptoms (MIH)Happiness (PMH) | 4 months6 months |
| Shapiro SL, 2011, US **[63]** | 1st-3rd-yr students 4 M/26 F | I: MBSR C: Waitlist 15 I/ 15 C | Mind-body-related Inactive | Universal / Group | 8 sessions, 90 min/each,8 weeks  | PSS-10SCSSWB scorem | Stress (MIH)Self-compassion (PMH)Subjective well-being (PMH) | 12 months |
| Vazquez F, 2012, Spain **[45]** | University students with elevated symptoms of depression 24 M/ 109 F | I: CBTC: Relaxation training 70 I/ 63 C | Mind-body-related Active | Selective / Group | 8 sessions + homework, 90 min/each, 8 weeks  | CES-DBAI | Depressive symptoms (MIH) Anxiety symptoms (MIH) | 3 months6 months |
| Yang W, 2014,China **[43]** | 2nd-yr students with elevated symptoms of depression22 M/ 55 F | I: Attention bias modification C1: Placebo C2: No treatment 27 I/27 C1/ 23 C2 | CBT-related InactiveInactive | Selective / Group & individual internet-based | 8 sessions, 12 min/each, 2 weeks  | BDI-II STAI-T | Depressive symptoms (MIH)Trait anxiety (MIH) | 3 months7 months |
| Zheng G, 2015, China **[64]** | 1st & 2nd-yr students 65 M/ 133 F | I: Tai-Chi Chuang Exercise C: Physical activity as usual95 I/ 103 C | Mind-body relatedInactive | Universal / Group | 60 sessions,60 min/each, 12 weeks | PSQI CPSSSESGSES | Quality of sleep (MIH)Stress (MIH)Self-esteem (PMH)Self-efficacy (PMH) | 3 months |

a Participants’ characteristics are reported as in the original trials. Several studies are missing the educational level or gender frequencies.

b Comparator group defined in the original study as waitlist with delayed intervention was not included if intervention was provided before the end of follow-up Chase JA; (34). Comparison was made between the remaining trial arms. Table reported comparators used in meta-analysis.

c In the trials with multiple interventions of similar nature, i.e. if interventions shared the same features and components and, therefore, belonged to the same category, effect sizes (Hedges’ g) calculated for each intervention were combined (35, 41). Similar approach was applied to studies with multiple control groups (35, 42, 43). An exception was a study by Kanji N et al. (38), where two control groups – an attention control and a time control – were included separately as considered to be different in approach and content and, thus, representing active and inactive comparisons, respectively.

d As suggested by Conley, et al. (15), original interventions were grouped into: (i) cognitive behaviour therapy-related if focusing on identifying and changing unhelpful cognitions, behaviours and emotional regulation; (ii) mind-body-related, i.e. interventions that facilitate the mind's capacity to affect bodily function and symptoms; and (iii) psycho-educational-related focusing on information, discussion and didactic communication on, e.g. stress-reduction and coping. Categorization was based on the original definitions, if provided, and otherwise by us.

e

Adapted Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia for School-Age Children (K-SADS); Anxiety Sensitivity Index (ASI); Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI); Beck Depression Inventory (BDI); Beck & Srivastava Stress Inventory (BSSI); Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D); Chinese Perceived Stress Scale (CPSS); Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21); Fordyce Emotions Questionnaire (Fordyce Happy); Generalized Anxiety Disorder Questionnaire (GADQ-IV); General Health Questionnaire); General Self-efficacy Scale (GSES); Grade Point Average (GPA); Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HARS); Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS); Health Action Process Approach **(**HAPA**);** Health Promoting Lifestyle Profile (HPLP); Kessler Psychological Distress Scale, 6 items (K6); Mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR); Overall Subjective Wellbeing score (SWB score); Penn Scale Worry questionnaire (PSWQ); Perceived Stress Scale; Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI); Preparation, Action, Adaptive Learning (PAAL); Resilience Scale (RS); Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES); Self-Compassion Scale (SCS); Self Esteem Scale (SES) = Chinese version; Self-Symptom Intensity Scale (SCL-90); State and Trait Anxiety Instrument (STAI); State-Trait Anxiety Inventory-Trait version (STAI-T).The Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ); World Health Organization Well-Being Index (WHO-5).

f Outcomes were classified into mental ill-health: anxiety symptoms, depressive symptoms, psychological distress, (perceived) stress, self-reported worry, passive coping, (including suppression), and deteriorated quality of sleep. Further, positive mental health and academic performance outcomes: self-esteem, self-compassion, self-efficacy, mental or subjective well-being, resilience, active coping, (including general and direct coping), happiness, stress management and academic performance.

g If the trial reported several measures for the same outcome at a given follow-up time point (e.g. for depressive symptoms assessed by both the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale and Beck Depression Inventory) the effect sizes (Hedges’ g) were combined to obtain the single outcome measure per intervention at each measurement point (36-40). That also refers to the state and trait anxiety (or anxiety symptoms) to be measured separately within the same study Higgins DM (36)), Jones MC (37), Kanji N (38). Likewise, measures of general and direct coping were combined within a study to obtain a single measure of active coping Jones MC (38).

h If original study reported post-baseline follow-up it was re-calculated into post-interventional follow-up by subtracting the length of interventions from the reported months.

i For meta-analysis post-intervention follow-ups were categorized as 3-6 months, 7-12 months, and 13-18 months. If a given study provided several outcome measures falling in the same length category (e.g., for both 3 and 6 month follow-ups), follow-up close to the upper boundary (i.e., 6 months) was chosen (38, 44, 45).

j Depression and anxiety, both measured with GHQ-20, were not retrieved from Cheng M et al. (53) to be used in the meta-analysis due to unclearness with interpretation of original measurements.

k Measures on anxiety from Chiauzzi E et al. (35) were not retrieved due to missing quantitative data.

l Outcome measures during the follow-up periods longer than 18 months were not retrieved from Seligman et al. (1999) (47).

m Overall Subjective Wellbeing score composed of scores measured by Positive and Negative Affect Schedule and The Satisfaction with Life Scale