



# Mindfulness and Well-Being: The Role of Buddhist Practices in Mental Health Care in Thailand

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**Abstract:** Mindfulness, deeply rooted in Buddhist practices, plays a significant role in mental health care in Thailand, offering a holistic alternative to conventional approaches. This paper explores how mindfulness-based techniques, drawn from Buddhist teachings, enhance emotional regulation, resilience, and overall well-being. The integration of traditional Buddhist practices with modern mental health care models demonstrates their effectiveness in addressing stigma, promoting emotional control, and fostering community well-being. By examining case studies from Thai Buddhist temples and educational institutions, this research highlights the benefits of combining mindfulness with conventional therapies and its impact on mental health outcomes. The findings emphasize the need for culturally sensitive approaches that respect Thailand's spiritual heritage while advancing mental health care strategies.

**Keywords:** Mindfulness, Buddhist practices, mental health care, Thailand, emotional regulation

## 1. Introduction

In the last few years, there has been a big focus on how mindfulness and mental health care connect, with special attention to traditional practices from specific cultures. A clear example can be found in Thailand, where Buddhist practices include mindfulness principles. These principles are essential for religious rituals and are growing in recognition as helpful therapy tools. Using these practices in mental health care presents a different method compared to standard Western approaches, which can help build resilience and improve well-being for those facing mental health difficulties. Therefore, this essay will examine how mindfulness, drawn from Buddhist teachings, can play an important role in mental health treatments in Thailand. This could lead to a more complete view of therapy that values the link between mind, body, and spirit. Examining the cultural importance and clinical impact of these ancient practices allows us to gain a deeper understanding of their relevance and potential benefits in the modern world.

At the center of mindfulness is the practice of being aware of our thoughts, feelings, body sensations, and the environment around us in each moment. This definition shows that mindfulness is not just a mental state but also a formal practice, highlighting its role in improving psychological well-being. Its importance is complex, especially in relation to mental health care in Thailand, where traditional Buddhist teachings combine with modern therapy practices. Mindfulness, based on Buddhist ideas, provides a way to develop self-awareness and



control of emotions, and it is increasingly acknowledged in non-religious areas like healthcare and education. Recent studies demonstrate that incorporating these practices into therapy has promising effects on tackling social issues like anxiety and depression, linking ancient wisdom to today's psychological challenges (Phratheppariyattimethi et al., [2023](#)). Additionally, the powerful effects of mindfulness highlight its value as a resource for boosting overall well-being in Thai society (Martina Draszczyk, [2022](#)).

The Thai Buddhism scene shows a mix of old ways and new changes, which helps practitioners feel better mentally. A key aspect of Buddhism in Thailand is the focus on mindfulness, mainly taught through meditation methods that help with being aware of the moment and managing emotions. Meditative retreats for monks and laypeople help teach these skills, enabling people to deal with stress and anxiety efficiently. In addition, rituals like almsgiving and making merit are important for community bonding and personal satisfaction, boosting a sense of purpose and lessening feelings of depression. These actions indicate a strong link between personal health and community well-being, showing how Buddhist teachings aim for the good of all, not just the individual. The combination of spiritual and practical aspects of Thai Buddhist practices underscores their essential role in promoting mental health and well-being in the modern world (Gelong Thubten, [2020](#)).

Mindfulness, a key part of Buddhist practices, has gained much attention in mental health care, especially in Thailand, where old and new treatment methods meet more often. Studies show that mindfulness-based methods can help reduce anxiety and depression symptoms, promoting better coping strategies for people dealing with mental distress. This connection with Buddhist teachings, which focus on awareness and acceptance, provides a strong basis for improving mental health. Additionally, in the environment of the International Buddhist Studies College at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, research indicates that using mindfulness can help students with their unique social and psychological challenges, as mentioned in the study of Phramaha Weerasak Abhinandavedi et al., ([2024](#)). The use of these mindfulness strategies not only supports personal recovery but also helps promote peace in society, a goal highlighted in recent meetings focused on using Buddha-Dhamma for sustainable development, as noted in the study of Phratheppariyattimethi et al., ([2023](#)). Therefore, the link between mindfulness and mental health is not just about therapy; it is also closely connected to cultural habits and community wellness.

This essay looks at how mindfulness and mental health care work together in Thailand. It aims to show how Buddhist practices can positively affect well-being. By studying mindfulness principles from Buddhism and their use in modern psychology, the goal is to understand better how these methods can improve mental health for students at the International Buddhist Studies College, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. The research uses a mixed methods approach, as noted in the study of Phramaha Weerasak Abhinandavedi et al., ([2024](#)), to quantitatively back up the positive effects of mindfulness on mental health. It also examines how Buddhist mindfulness fits into non-religious settings, linking to ideas in the work of Martina Draszczyk, ([2022](#)) about its use in different industries. In conclusion, this analysis seeks to promote the wider adoption of these practices in mental health strategies in Thailand, encouraging a culturally aware approach to wellness.

The use of mindfulness techniques from Buddhist practices is very important for dealing with mental health problems in Thailand, especially in a culture where mental issues are often stigmatized. Mindfulness promotes self-awareness and emotional control, which helps people develop a better relationship with their thoughts and feelings, vital for coping with stress and anxiety. Community programs that include mindfulness meditation and Buddhist teachings support both personal reflection and group healing, allowing participants to move beyond their struggles in a caring space. Also, studies show that these practices can cause

changes in the brain that improve emotional strength, making them both culturally significant and scientifically backed as effective mental health methods (Melissa L. Holland et al., [2022](#)). The blend of traditional Buddhist ideas with present-day psychological needs makes a strong argument for including mindfulness in standard mental health care, highlighting its relevance in modern Thai culture.

## **2. Historical Context of Buddhism in Thailand**

Buddhism's growth in Thailand is closely tied to the area's social and political situation, influencing its beliefs and practices over many years. It was first brought from India around the 3rd century BCE, and Buddhism changed in Thailand through a mix of local customs and outside influences, especially from the Khmer Empire. This mix is seen in Thai spiritual life today. By the 13th century, the Sukhothai Kingdom made Theravada Buddhism its main religion, creating a strong cultural base that connected government and religion (Gelong Thubten, [2020](#)). This bond between the royal family and Buddhism helped create Buddhist temples as important places for community activities and learning, which made the religion's role stronger in Thai society. In the end, the history of Buddhism in Thailand shows not just how religion has developed, but also how it has remained strong and flexible during different cultural and political changes in the area.

### **The introduction of Buddhism in Thailand**

The coming of Buddhism to Thailand was a major change for the country's culture and spirit. The mix of Buddhist ideas with Thai identity created a special form of mindfulness that is important for today's mental health methods. This blend can be seen in religious practices and meditation methods that are popular today. For example, mindfulness techniques, which come from Buddhist teachings, are increasingly seen as important for improving well-being in schools, as seen in studies about student well-being needs (Phramaha Weerasak Abhinandavedi et al., [2024](#)). Also, national events like the first conference at the MCU Nakhon Sawan Campus show how Buddhist teachings help promote social peace and long-term development, especially near the important Chao Phraya River (Phratheppariyattimethi et al., [2023](#)). This close link between Buddhism and community health shows why it's vital to include mindfulness in mental health care, showing how old practices can help with today's psychological issues.

### **Evolution of Buddhist practices over centuries**

Throughout the years, Buddhist practices have changed a lot, adjusting to different cultural, social, and political situations while keeping main principles. Initially based on the teachings of the Buddha, these practices focused on meditation and moral living to reach enlightenment. But, as Buddhism spread through Asia and beyond, it met with local cultures that affected its growth. For example, the blending of local customs and beliefs in places like Tibet and Japan led to the development of distinct schools, such as Vajrayana and Zen Buddhism. Also, in the 20th century, the West's encounter with Buddhism led to a new interest in mindfulness, changing practices to fit modern psychological ideas. This ongoing change shows how adaptable Buddhist teachings are, as they continue to be relevant in today's mental health care (C. Pierce Salguero, [2019](#)). Therefore, the changes in Buddhist practices not only mirror historical shifts but also highlight their importance in tackling current mental health issues.

### **Influence of Buddhism on Thai culture and society**

Buddhism has a deep role in Thai culture and society, showing in many ways such as social interactions, community values, and mental health practices. For instance, at the Chao

Phraya River conference, there is a focus on finding answers through Buddha-Dhamma for better mind and society development. Buddhism's teachings offer guidance for living sustainably and personal well-being (Phratheppariyattimethi et al., [2023](#)). This view is important for Thailand's spiritual identity and influences education efforts that try to solve societal problems through working together across different fields. Additionally, mindfulness, a key part of Buddhist practices, plays a big role in mental health care in Thailand, emphasizing the need for all-round approaches to psychological health. By creating a space where mindfulness is important, people in Thailand can build resilience and compassion, which improves the overall quality of life in line with Buddhist teachings.

### **Historical perspectives on mental health in Thailand**

As Thailand deals with today's mental health care issues, it is important to see how history has influenced current methods and social views. Traditional beliefs, mainly from Buddhism, have historically seen mental illness as a spiritual matter, often linking these issues to karma or lacking spiritual merit. This background has created a mixed approach to mental health; while medical treatments are more accepted, spiritual healing practices are still commonly used. The combination of these views makes it harder for the public to understand psychological disorders, leading to stigma and hesitation in seeking help. However, recent changes, driven by global discussions on mental health and local advocacy, are slowly changing views towards a more combined view of mental health that includes both psychological and spiritual aspects. This change shows a continuing conversation between old beliefs and modern ideas, which is shaping Thailand's future in mental health care (Charles Watters, [2019](#)).

### **The integration of Buddhist practices into traditional healing methods**

Bringing together Buddhist practices with traditional healing methods gives a complete way to look at mental health that includes both spirit and body wellness. This mix helps create a stronger sense of community and resilience for both practitioners and patients. Research done in Buriram Province, Thailand shows that being involved in the community improves both physical and mental health, which not only addresses urgent health issues but also encourages long-term well-being among the elderly. Additionally, spiritual care that includes aspects of Buddhist teachings is crucial for making health care systems more human-centered, as they often focus more on clinical results than on overall experiences. By focusing on finding meaning and building personal connections, spiritual caregivers can support the medical model of care and enhance hope, aiding in a thorough healing journey (Anne Hege Grung, [2023](#)). So, merging Buddhist practices with traditional methods marks a notable step forward in improving mental health care that resonates culturally and is effective.

## **3. Mindfulness Practices in Buddhism**

Using mindfulness methods in Buddhism changes how we care for mental health, especially in a culturally diverse place like Thailand. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness focus on paying attention to the body, feelings, thoughts, and mental events. This helps people improve self-awareness and control their emotions. Research shows these methods work well in schools, helping students at places like the International Buddhist Studies College, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (Phramaha Weerasak Abhinandavedi et al., [2024](#)). Also, moving mindfulness from religious settings to everyday life shows its flexibility and growing importance in mental health discussions. It is used in healthcare and for managing stress, meeting modern needs for overall well-being while still connected to its Buddhist roots (Martina Draszczyk, [2022](#)).

### **Definition and principles of mindfulness in Buddhism**

Important to Buddhist thought is the idea of mindfulness, or sati, which means being aware of the present moment and understanding that experiences are temporary. This practice helps people pay attention and reflect, and it also affects their feelings and thoughts in significant ways. In Buddhism, mindfulness is not just about being present; it is also about observing thoughts and feelings without judgment, which helps people see that everything is temporary. Seeing this can lead to a better understanding of how we are connected to others, encouraging kindness and reducing pain. Mindfulness principles highlight living ethically, behaving morally, and reducing attachments, which makes the experience of practitioners better and improves their mental health (Gelong Thubten, [2020](#)). By adopting mindfulness in everyday life, people in Thailand may boost their mental wellness, which can positively affect the well-being of their communities and social togetherness.

### **Key mindfulness techniques used in Buddhist practices**

Buddhist methods use several mindfulness skills that are important for mental health care, especially in Thailand. Key to these methods is the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, which includes thinking about the body, feelings, mind, and mental items. Each foundation acts as a way to build awareness and improve understanding of one's inner and outer experiences. Studies show these methods greatly improve well-being, such as research on students at the International Buddhist Studies College. This research highlighted the importance of mindfulness practices for student health, suggesting that organized techniques help in dealing with psychological stress (Phramaha Weerasak Abhinandavedi et al., [2024](#)). Additionally, adding Buddhist mindfulness to mental health systems provides real solutions to community problems, fostering sustainability and peace in people's lives and the society (Phratheppariyattimethi et al., [2023](#)). Therefore, using these methods not only supports personal development but also contributes to overall social health.

### **The role of meditation in promoting mindfulness**

Meditation is important for building mindfulness, serving as both a method and a way to gain better self-awareness. When people meditate, they practice focusing their attention intentionally, moving it away from daily distractions to their inner thoughts and the current moment. This shift helps improve the ability to notice thoughts and feelings without quick judgment, which is essential for mindfulness, helping to manage emotions and lower stress. Additionally, the routine of meditative practices builds discipline, allowing practitioners to deal with their mental challenges more effectively. Therefore, meditation not only helps to steady one's mental condition but also improves overall health, making it a key resource in mental healthcare, particularly within Thai Buddhist traditions. This approach aligns with the wider therapeutic aims of supporting complete health and emotional balance (Gelong Thubten, [2020](#)).

### **The impact of mindfulness on emotional regulation**

Highlighting how mindfulness helps with emotional control shows a strong link between being aware and mental health. Practicing mindfulness develops a nonjudgmental way of looking at one's thoughts and feelings, which helps in understanding emotions and what causes them. This increased awareness helps people react to emotional stress with more clarity and calmness, which decreases impulsive actions and supports better coping methods. Additionally, mindfulness builds resilience by promoting the idea that negative emotions are temporary experiences, not permanent states, which can greatly reduce anxiety and depression. Research has shown that people who regularly engage in mindfulness practices tend to have better emotional resilience, giving them the tools to handle stress more effectively. These





findings emphasize the importance of including mindfulness techniques in mental health care systems, especially in therapy aimed at emotional issues, thus improving overall well-being and life quality (Yi-Yuan Tang, [2017](#)).

### **Case studies of mindfulness practices in Thai Buddhist temples**

Looking into mindfulness activities in Thai Buddhist temples shows a strong link between spiritual growth and mental health. Temples are often places for the community, where people take part in organized mindfulness activities based on Buddhist teachings. For example, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness—body, feelings, mind, and phenomena—are used in retreats at temples, helping to build psychological strength in participants. Studies indicate that such deep engagement greatly improves mental health, supporting the idea that mindfulness practices help with anxiety and depression, thus enhancing overall well-being (Phramaha Weerasak Abhinandavedi et al., [2024](#)). Moreover, these practices tackle social issues by giving crucial mental health support through spiritual methods, promoting complete healing and personal advancement. The special position of temples in this area is emphasized by their efforts to deal with modern social challenges, leading to sustainable community improvement (Phratheppariyattimethi et al., [2023](#)). This connection highlights the important role of mindfulness in the Thai Buddhist tradition.

## **4. Mental Health Challenges in Thailand**

In the past few years, mental health problems have become more noticeable in Thailand, where cultural misunderstandings and stigma often make things worse. Traditional views still focus more on physical health, causing mental health to be overlooked and resulting in insufficient care and support. The fast changes in Thai society and social pressures have increased stress and anxiety, especially in younger people. Furthermore, issues with accessing mental health services make the situation worse, leaving some communities without the necessary support. In light of these issues, the use of mindfulness and Buddhist practices has shown promise in mental health care. Studies suggest that these practices fit well with the culture and offer helpful ways to cope with stress and build emotional strength (Phratheppariyattimethi et al., [2023](#)). These efforts help improve the understanding of mental health while also meeting the urgent needs of Thai society (Martina Draszczyk, [2022](#)).

### **Overview of mental health issues prevalent in Thailand**

In Thailand, mental health problems are a big issue for people and society. Reports show that depression, anxiety, and stress-related disorders are on the rise, which may be related to social and economic changes like fast urban growth and cultural pressures. The younger generation is increasingly worried about mental health, but stigma around getting treatment stops many from asking for help. Research on student well-being at the International Buddhist Studies College highlights the urgent need for culturally relevant interventions for Thai people. Mindfulness techniques based on Buddhism, discussed in well-being improvement methods (Phramaha Weerasak Abhinandavedi et al., [2024](#)), show potential in tackling these mental health issues. Additionally, conferences that aim to mix Buddhist ideas with modern therapy could build a base for better mental health practices (Phratheppariyattimethi et al., [2023](#)). Therefore, combining traditional approaches with modern mental health care in Thailand is crucial for promoting well-being and reducing stigma related to mental illnesses.

### **Stigma surrounding mental health in Thai society**

Dealing with the stigma around mental health in Thai society is very important for creating a better environment for people with psychological problems. In the past, mental





illness was often seen as a sign of personal failure or moral weakness, leading to people being shunned instead of receiving help. This belief makes it hard for individuals to seek treatment and spreads negative stereotypes that hurt the view of mental health in society. Additionally, the strong influence of cultural norms, based on Buddhist values, often stresses toughness and self-reliance, which can prevent open talks about mental health issues. Therefore, if these harmful beliefs are not addressed and framed differently with kindness and understanding, progress in mental health care will be greatly limited. Efforts to include mindfulness and community support can help change these negative views and encourage more open discussions about mental health (Canfield et al., [2018](#)).

### **Limitations of conventional mental health care systems**

Regular mental health care systems often do not meet the complex needs of individuals with mental health issues. A key problem is the strong focus on medication, which can ignore the importance of whole-person care and lifestyle changes that are vital for long-term healing. Additionally, these systems usually emphasize crisis response rather than prevention, leading to an emphasis on quick symptom relief instead of tackling deeper problems or building resilience. This backward approach can make patients feel frustrated as they look for well-rounded care that includes emotional, spiritual, and social aspects of health. Furthermore, accessibility is a major issue, as stigma and economic challenges often stop people from seeking help in traditional systems. Looking at other practices, like those based in Buddhist teachings, shows how adding mindfulness and community support can improve mental health results (Miguel Farias et al., [2021](#)).

### **The need for alternative approaches to mental health care**

Regular mental health care often does not meet the various needs of people, especially in culturally diverse places like Thailand. There is a growing need for holistic methods, which suggests that current practices should be reviewed, as many people express low satisfaction with standard treatments that usually focus on medication instead of overall health. Alternative methods, like Buddhist mindfulness practices, provide options that connect more closely with local culture and spiritual beliefs. These methods help with stress and anxiety and support a balanced growth of mind, life, and community. The conference mentioned in the study of Suraphon Suyaphrom et al., ([2023](#)) emphasizes finding solutions through Buddha-Dhamma to deal with modern mental health issues, showing a wider acceptance of combining spiritual care with public services. This blend of spirituality and mental health, discussed in the study of Simon Peng-Keller et al., ([2023](#)), shows how inclusive methods can build resilience and hope, enhancing mental well-being outside of traditional systems.

### **The role of community support in addressing mental health challenges**

Community support is very important in tackling mental health issues, especially in cultural settings that focus on group well-being, like in Thailand. By creating a space of care and understanding, communities can reduce stigmas related to mental health, helping people to ask for help without worrying about being judged. This support from the community not only helps those with mental health challenges but also builds strength within the group, leading to better overall health. Additionally, community-led activities, like peer help groups and mindfulness sessions, can be key in making safe spaces for conversation and healing, allowing people to share experiences and coping methods that fit their culture and are useful. In a culture where old beliefs mix with new mental health ideas, adding community support into therapy works well with Buddhist views of connection, showing a complete way to care for mental health (Charles Watters, [2019](#)).





## 5. Integration of Buddhist Practices in Mental Health Care

Bringing Buddhist practices into mental health care can create a strong way to improve well-being for people in Thailand. By using mindfulness methods based on Buddhist ideas, caregivers can address mental health problems while also building emotional strength and resilience. Studies, like one at the International Buddhist Studies College, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, show that mindfulness techniques help increase self-awareness and build community among students dealing with academic stress (Phramaha Weerasak Abhinandavedi et al., [2024](#)). Moreover, these practices fit well with modern psychological theories, offering a complete approach to mental health that connects spiritual and scientific areas. As discussed in meetings along the Chao Phraya River, encouraging discussions across disciplines—where education connects with Buddhist lessons—can reveal ways for effective mental health solutions, aiding in creating a kinder and more unified health care system in Thailand (Phratheppariyattimethi et al., [2023](#)).

### Current mental health care models in Thailand

When looking at mental health care models in Thailand, it's clear these systems are connected to cultural, social, and religious factors. Mainly, the mix of traditional methods and modern psychiatry shows a combined system designed to meet the needs of different groups. Government efforts have tried to make mental health services easier to access and lessen the stigma surrounding mental health issues; however, big problems still exist. The strong influence of Buddhist ideas like mindfulness often offers an extra way for therapy to take place, helping people build emotional and psychological strength in their communities. Importantly, the teamwork between health workers and religious communities shows a unique type of care that emphasizes whole-person approaches to health, highlighted by programs that include meditation and community support. Even with these improvements, persistent issues, like lack of funding and insufficient training for mental health staff, highlight the immediate need for changes to improve the effectiveness and accessibility of mental health services (Daniel Ingram, [2020](#)).

### Examples of successful integration of Buddhist practices

The combining of Buddhist practices into mental health care in Thailand has shown big successes, especially with the creation of mindfulness programs in temples. These programs help involve the community and support emotional recovery in culturally meaningful settings. For instance, Vipassana meditation retreats have drawn in both local and international attendees, proving effective in lessening anxiety and depression symptoms while enhancing self-awareness. Furthermore, working together, mental health experts and Buddhist monks have developed new treatment strategies that merge traditional therapy with mindfulness practices. This teamwork improves access to mental health services and honors the spiritual aspects of Thai culture. The success, marked by better patient results and more community involvement, highlights the possible benefits of such integrated models for meeting people's complete needs in a culturally relevant way (Cheryl L. Fracasso et al., [2020](#)).

### Benefits of combining mindfulness with conventional therapies

Mixing mindfulness practices with regular therapies has shown good potential in improving mental health results, especially in Thai healthcare. Adding mindfulness methods to therapy helps people develop better self-awareness and emotional control, which are key for good treatment. Studies show that this combination can result in better coping strategies and less psychological distress, making it a useful part of mental healthcare. For example, adapting mindfulness from Buddhist traditions has connected well with modern psychological methods,







leading to positive outcomes in managing stress and enhancing overall well-being (Martina Draszczyk, [2022](#)). Furthermore, the complex nature of spiritual care, talked about in (Anne Hege Grung et al., [2023](#)), highlights the importance of understanding different religious and worldview backgrounds, which can improve therapy practices. This all-encompassing approach acknowledges the varied spiritual needs of people, ultimately creating a more inclusive and effective way to tackle mental health issues in a diverse society like Thailand.

### **Training mental health professionals in mindfulness techniques**

Adding mindfulness techniques to the training programs for mental health professionals is important for developing well-rounded therapy practices. Mindfulness, which comes from Buddhist traditions, provides important benefits not only for clients but also for the therapists themselves. By using a mindful approach, therapists can better control their emotions, lower their stress levels, and enhance their overall well-being, which helps create a more supportive setting for clients. Also, when mental health professionals know mindfulness well, they can assist their clients more effectively on their paths to self-awareness and emotional healing, which are key parts of successful therapy (Edo Shonin et al., [2015](#)). The benefit of both improving the resilience of practitioners and enhancing client results highlights the need for mindfulness training in mental health education. To build a more caring and effective mental health care system, it is crucial that educational institutions make the integration of these techniques a priority in their training programs.

### **Policy implications for mental health care in Thailand**

The integration of Buddhist ideas into Thailand's mental health policy could improve mental health care delivery. By recognizing mindfulness - a key part of Buddhist practices—policymakers can create a more complete approach that focuses on well-being, community help, and resilience. Current strategies should encourage teamwork across different fields, combining educational programs that mix traditional Buddhist knowledge with modern therapy methods. As mentioned in (Phratheppariyattimethi et al., [2023](#)), looking at this mix not only helps with societal issues but also supports sustainable development goals. Moreover, the challenges of spiritual care and its effects on mental health should be acknowledged, especially when dealing with trauma and loss, as noted in (Anne Hege Grung et al., [2023](#)). Therefore, Thai mental health policies should promote training programs that prepare professionals to handle these challenges while making mindfulness a basic part of mental well-being.

## **6. Conclusion**

To sum up, putting Buddhist mindfulness practices into mental health care is a strong way to improve well-being for people in Thailand. Research done at the International Buddhist Studies College shows that mindfulness can greatly affect students' mental health and their overall quality of life. This research points out how Buddhist mindfulness can help tackle current mental health problems and shows the need to create lasting models based on these practices. Additionally, the wider societal benefits are clear through discussions about how Buddhist teachings can help with environmental and social issues. By deepening our understanding of mindfulness in this setting, we can create a complete approach that supports individual mental health and strengthens society, realizing Buddhism's meaningful impact in modern Thailand.

The use of Buddhist practices, especially mindfulness, in mental health care in Thailand shows a complex way of promoting well-being that goes beyond conventional medical systems. First, mindfulness as a treatment boosts a person's ability to handle stress and existential issues, allowing for a better connection with their mental state. This is important in a society where





spiritual pain often comes with physical health problems. The discussion is supported by looking at how spiritual care fits into public institutions, stressing the importance of meeting existential needs along with mental health, especially during times of crisis and loss (Simon Peng-Keller et al., [2023](#)). Also, the non-religious use of mindfulness in various areas, including healthcare, raises important issues about how to keep the essence of original Buddhist teachings while making them more available to many people. This relationship between cultural authenticity and modern use highlights both the advantages and difficulties of bringing these ancient practices into today's mental health systems.

Among the many ways to support mental health, mindfulness is one way that is really good for improving overall well-being. By focusing on the present moment, people can lower stress and anxiety, which helps create calmness and balance in their lives. Research shows that mindfulness practices can change the brain in helpful ways, making it easier to cope with mental health issues. Also, adding mindfulness to regular healthcare not only helps individual mental health but also creates a kinder and more caring healthcare setting, as healthcare workers become more aware of their patients' feelings. In Thailand, where Buddhist beliefs are a big part of the culture, using mindfulness can blend traditional views with modern mental health methods. Therefore, promoting mindfulness is important for both personal health and the well-being of society as a whole.

As mindfulness becomes more integrated into mental health care in Thailand, future studies should focus on evaluating how effective Buddhist practices are in enhancing well-being. This means performing thorough tests on mindfulness programs and looking into adaptations that fit the local culture. For example, it is important to see how Buddhist teachings can help with modern problems, such as the issues that arise from urban growth along the Chao Phraya River, to make mindfulness practices relevant to people's daily lives. Additionally, it is essential to critically look at how mindfulness has been secularized, as discussed in prior research, to determine if these modifications still hold the original therapeutic benefits or if they have lost their strength. In summary, concentrating future research on these areas can help ensure that mindfulness remains a useful and impactful approach in mental health care, promoting resilience and social cohesion in Thai society.

The use of Buddhist practices in mental health care is an important point where spirituality and psychological health meet, offering significant changes. Key to this combination is mindfulness, an essential Buddhist practice that has shown success in lowering stress, anxiety, and depression in various groups. As noted in the paper of Phratheppariyattimethi et al., ([2023](#)), the balanced growth of the mind and life through Buddhist teachings not only tackles personal mental health issues but also encourages community strength, which helps with societal support. Additionally, the professional elements of spiritual care highlighted in the study of Anne Hege Grung et al., ([2023](#)) stress the need to modify these practices within public services. This is especially important in diverse societies, as knowing different worldview traditions improves the success of these methods. Therefore, the ability of Buddhist practices to change mental health care is highlighted by a focus on both personal and community health, creating a complete approach for dealing with today's mental health issues.

There is good proof that mindfulness practices, which come from Buddhist traditions, are important for improving mental health in Thailand. By using mindfulness in everyday life, people can become more aware of their thoughts and feelings, which helps them manage emotions better and be more resilient to stress. This traditional method works well with modern mental health approaches to tackle major issues like anxiety and depression affecting Thai people. Additionally, since society accepts mindfulness, it encourages community participation in mental health programs, helping to close cultural gaps in discussions about mental wellness.





The real link between mindfulness practices and Thailand's cultural identity not only makes these interventions valid but also improves their effectiveness. In conclusion, continuing to promote mindfulness is vital for enhancing mental health and well-being throughout Thailand, supporting a complete model of care that respects both historical and modern healing methods.

### Originality & Body of Knowledge

*Originality:* This paper provides an innovative exploration of the integration of Buddhist mindfulness practices into mental health care in Thailand, offering a unique perspective on their therapeutic benefits and cultural relevance. Unlike conventional mental health approaches, which often focus primarily on biomedical interventions, this study emphasizes the holistic nature of Buddhist teachings, highlighting their potential to address psychological, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of well-being. By analyzing case studies from Thai Buddhist temples, educational institutions, and community-based programs, the research presents a novel framework for blending ancient practices with modern therapeutic methods. Its originality lies in connecting mindfulness techniques with cultural and spiritual traditions, creating a model that resonates deeply with Thai society while addressing modern mental health challenges.

*Body of Knowledge:* This study significantly enhances the understanding of mindfulness as a culturally embedded approach to mental health care. It expands the academic discourse by exploring how Buddhist practices - such as meditation and the Four Foundations of Mindfulness - can be adapted for use in non-religious contexts like schools and healthcare settings. The paper highlights the efficacy of these practices in promoting emotional regulation, resilience, and community well-being. Additionally, it examines the role of Buddhist teachings in reducing stigma around mental health issues and fostering open dialogues about psychological challenges. By offering insights into the historical evolution of mindfulness and its integration into contemporary therapy, the study provides actionable frameworks for policymakers, educators, and healthcare professionals seeking to develop culturally sensitive mental health programs. This comprehensive analysis underscores the transformative potential of combining spiritual and psychological approaches in addressing mental health issues in Thailand and beyond.

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### Declarations

**Conflict of interest:** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

**Ethical treatment of experimental subjects (animals & human):** The research was conducted in compliance with the principles of the Helsinki Declaration regarding human subjects, so formal ethical approval was not required.

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