

How mindfulness meditation can enhance mind control

[Researchers] conducted a large-scale human study enrolling subjects in a weekly 8-week course in simple, widely-practiced meditation techniques, to test their effect as a potential training tool for BCI control. A total of 76 people participated in this study, each being randomly assigned to the meditation group or the control group, which had no preparation during these 8 weeks.

Up to 10 sessions of [brain-computer interface, or] BCI study were conducted with each subject.

[Researcher Bin] He's work shows that humans with just eight lessons in mindfulness-based attention and training (MBAT) demonstrated significant advantages compared to those with no prior meditation training, both in their initial ability to control BCI's and in the time it took for them to achieve full proficiency.

After subjects in the MBAT group completed their training course they, along with a control group, were charged with learning to control a simple BCI system by navigating a cursor across a computer screen using their thought. This required them to concentrate their focus and visualize the movement of the cursor within their head.

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[T]he researchers found that differences in brain activity between the two sample groups corresponded directly with their success. The meditation group showed significantly enhanced capability of modulating their alpha rhythm, the activity pattern monitored by the BCI system to mentally control the movement of a computer cursor.

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