



# ALL ANIMALS

## COMMUNICATION AND WELLBEING



### **An experience of mindfulness with veterinary students - are there benefits?**

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#### **Introduction and aim**

Mindfulness programs have been successfully introduced in education, including medical and veterinary university curricula.<sup>1-2</sup> The aim of this presentation is to share data about the development of a mindfulness training for veterinary students and to illustrate students' participation and feedback.

#### **Material and methods**

A short mindfulness module was created based on the format of Koru®, a mindfulness training specifically addressed to young adults.<sup>3</sup> The module consisted in 4 weekly sessions of 75-90 minutes for 12-14 students. Each session included personal and interpersonal awareness exercises. Between sessions students were asked to have 15 minutes of daily formal mindfulness practice. An anonymous on-line based questionnaire was used to get a feed-back. The data about 8 groups of students having attended the module were examined for descriptive analysis.

#### **Results**

A total of 121 students, mainly from the last 2 clinical years, participated to the training and 45 (41,2%) responded to the feedback questionnaire. Feedbacks indicated that practices during sessions were highly appreciated and that relation to the group was important. Answers suggest an increased awareness of the relation to thoughts and of communication mechanisms and a change in the approach to self-perception after training. Home practice was difficult to insert in routine time-schedule for many students. Many feedback respondents asked for more sessions and thanked for the opportunity to follow a free mindfulness training at the Veterinary Faculty.

#### **Conclusions**

The students' rate of participation and feedback suggest the interest in developing and integrating mindfulness programs in the veterinary curriculum. The inclusion of an approach to mindful interpersonal communication seems to be appreciated by the participants. Since 2017 this module has officially become an elective course at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Liège.

#### **References:**

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