

How do mindfulness, compassion and need fulfillment affect satisfaction in midlife married couples?

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Many people practice mindfulness or self-compassion techniques in their everyday life as part of their normal self-care routine. Although many

studies support the individual benefits of mindfulness and self-compassion, few have focused on romantic relationship outcomes. A new study published in *Personal Relationships* has examined how mindfulness, self- and other-compassion, and need fulfillment relate to relationship and sexual satisfaction in midlife married couples.

The study involved survey results from 640 adults aged 40–59 years who were residing in Canada and were married.

Mindfulness is the nonjudgmental attention and awareness to present moment experiences; other-compassion and [self-compassion](#) describe a kind disposition toward others and oneself; and need fulfillment is broken down to autonomy needs (feeling uncoerced in one's actions), competence needs (feeling capable), and relatedness needs (feeling connected to others).

Statistical analyses of participants' responses showed a complex interplay between these factors, and highlighted the importance of need fulfillment, especially relatedness needs, in connecting higher [mindfulness](#) and self-compassion to higher satisfaction in midlife married couples.

"Romantic relationships are wonderfully complex and affected by a great many personal and interpersonal variables. We utilized an analytic approach that could model that complexity," said corresponding author Christopher Quinn-Nilas, Ph.D., of Memorial University.

"Our results, although preliminary and exploratory, suggest that there may be positive relational benefits to being mindful and self-compassionate. But these positive benefits appear to occur indirectly (via associations with more proximal variables, like need fulfillment in the relationship), which is consistent with emerging theory in this area."

More information: Mindfulness Networks: Analyzing Associations with Self-Compassion, Other-Compassion, Need Fulfillment, and Satisfaction in Midlife Married Canadians, *Personal Relationships* (2024). DOI: [10.1111/per.12546](https://doi.org/10.1111/per.12546)

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