

A randomized controlled evaluation of a spiritually integrated treatment for sub-clinical anxiety in the Jewish community, delivered via the Internet



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Elsie Ramos Memorial Student Award Winner

Objective: This study evaluated the efficacy of a spiritually integrated treatment (SIT) for subclinical anxiety in the Jewish community. **Method:** One hundred and twenty-five self-reported religious Jewish individuals with elevated levels of stress and worry received SIT (n=36), progressive muscle relaxation (PMR, n=42), or a waitlist control condition (WLC, n=47). SIT and PMR participants accessed Internet-based treatment on a daily basis for a period of 2 weeks. All participants completed self-report assessments at pre-treatment (T1), post-treatment (T2), and 6–8-week follow-up (T3). **Results:** SIT participants reported large improvements in primary (stress and worry) and secondary (depression and intolerance of uncertainty) outcomes, and moderate improvements in spiritual outcomes (positive/negative religious coping; trust/mistrust in God). SIT participants reported greater belief in treatment credibility, greater expectancies from treatment and greater treatment satisfaction than PMR participants. SIT participants also reported better improvements in both primary outcomes (stress and worry), one of two secondary outcomes (intolerance of uncertainty), and two of four spiritual outcomes (positive religious coping and mistrust in God) compared to the WLC group, whereas PMR and WLC participants did not differ on most outcomes. **Conclusions:** Results of this investigation offer initial support for the efficacy of SITs for the treatment of subclinical anxiety symptoms among religious Jews. Results further suggest that it is important to incorporate spiritual content into treatment to help facilitate the delivery of psychotherapy to religious individuals.

Overview of SIT Program

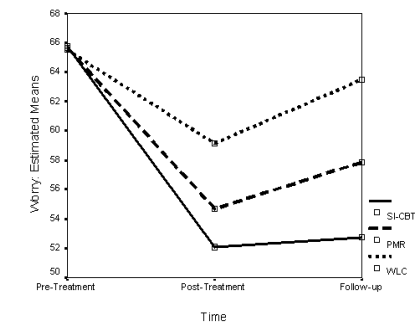
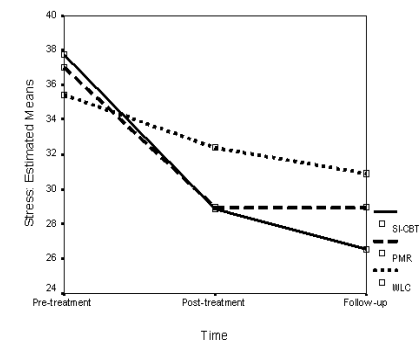
Introduction	Information/Overview of program
Stories	Inspiring anecdotes highlighting the core beliefs of trust in God
Passages	Four short excerpts from the words of Jewish sages describing trust in God
Exercises	Spiritual exercises to build trust in God
Prayer	Prayer for increased trust in God

Demographics

Variable	SIT	PMR	WLC
Age	39.7	42.0	43.2
Gender (F)	69.4%	76.2%	82.6%
Married	63.9%	47.6%	65.2%
Orthodoxy	62.9%	58.3%	71.7%

Treatment Outcomes (Effect Sizes)

Variable	SIT		PMR		WLC	
Stress	-1.37	-1.90	-1.12	-1.10	-0.77	-0.88
Worry	-1.83	-1.90	-1.12	-1.10	-0.70	-0.04
Intolerance of Uncertainty	-1.36	-1.40	-0.49	-0.47	-0.35	-0.39
Trust in God	0.61	0.56	0.08	-0.07	0.30	0.08
Mistrust in God	-0.52	-0.51	0.20	0.20	-0.07	-0.05



For more information, please contact David H. Rosmarin (617 910 7790; drosmarin@mclean.harvard.edu) or see Rosmarin, Pargament, Pirutinsky, & Mahoney, A. (2010). A randomized controlled evaluation of a spiritually-integrated treatment for subclinical anxiety in the Jewish community, delivered via the Internet. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 24(7), 799-808