



The Second International Meditation Festival in Seoul: Academic Conference

Buddhist Practice System & Modern Meditation

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2. Commoditization of meditation → capitalist spirituality
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웰빙 Well-being



increases

life satisfaction
happiness
gratitude
self-confidence
optimism
curiosity
creativity
autonomy
emotional intelligence
relationship
attention
memory
brain health
affect regulation
good eating habits
self-care

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웰빙 Well-being

decreases

anxiety
depression
stress
suicide ideation
stroke
hypertension
diabetes
breast cancer
suicide
anger disorder
sense of shame
emotional disorder
cognitive disorder
worry
rumination
eating disorder
manic depression
psychosis...

자기연민과 웰빙 Self-compassion & Well-being

increase

life satisfaction
happiness
gratitude
self-confidence
self-conviction
optimism
wisdom
curiosity
creativity
autonomy
hope
sense of connection
emotional intelligence
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Zessin, Dickhauser & Garbadee, 2015



자기연민과 웰빙 Self-compassion & Well-being

decrease

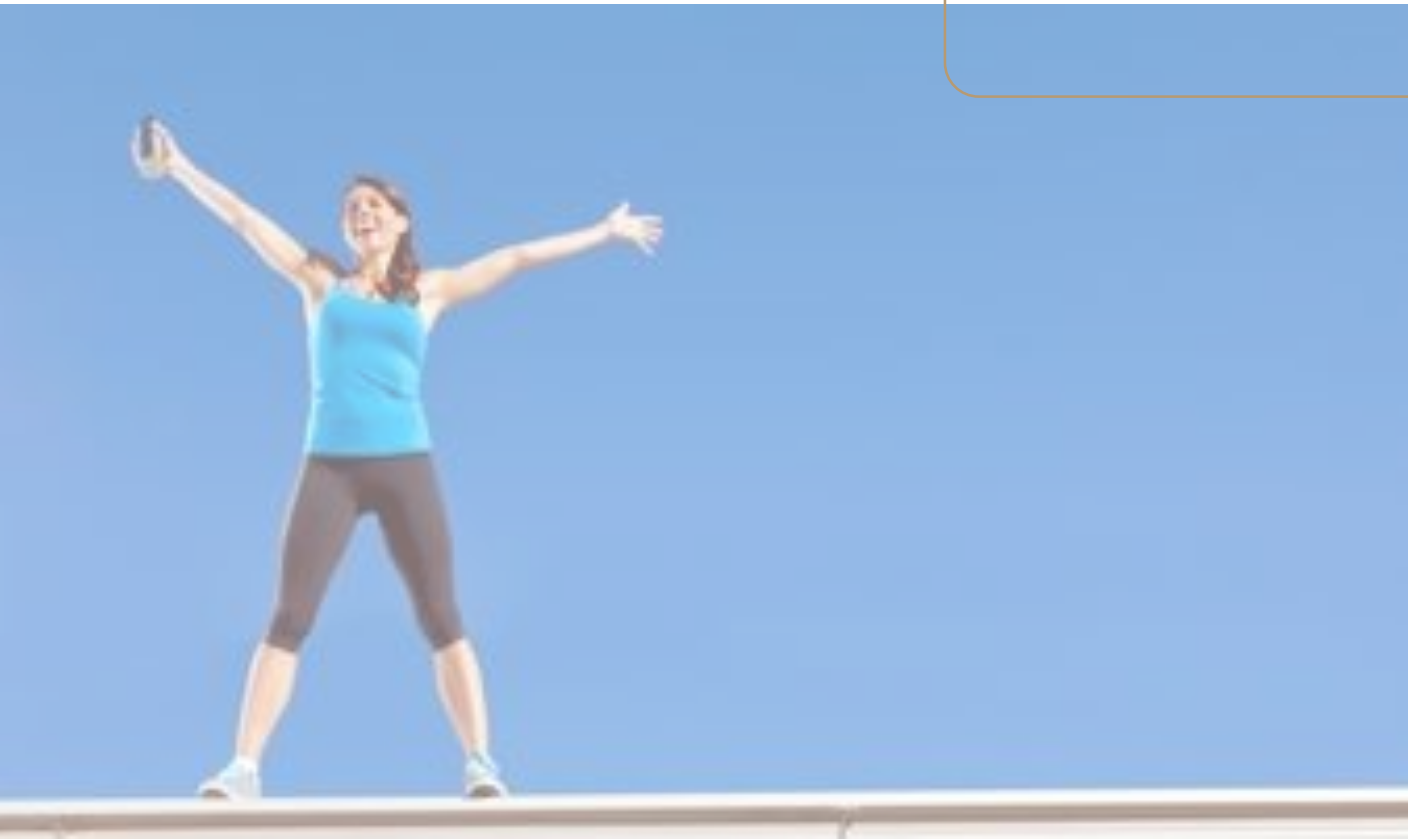
anxiety
depression
stress
maladjustment
perfectionism
self-criticism
rumination
sense of shame
suicidal tendencies

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Zessin, Dickhauser & Garbadee, 2015



신체건강 Physical health



Balanced diet
Reduced ill health symptoms
Self-report
Regular exercise
Reduced drinking
Good sleep
Healthy sexual relationship

Critical Awareness about Western Meditation



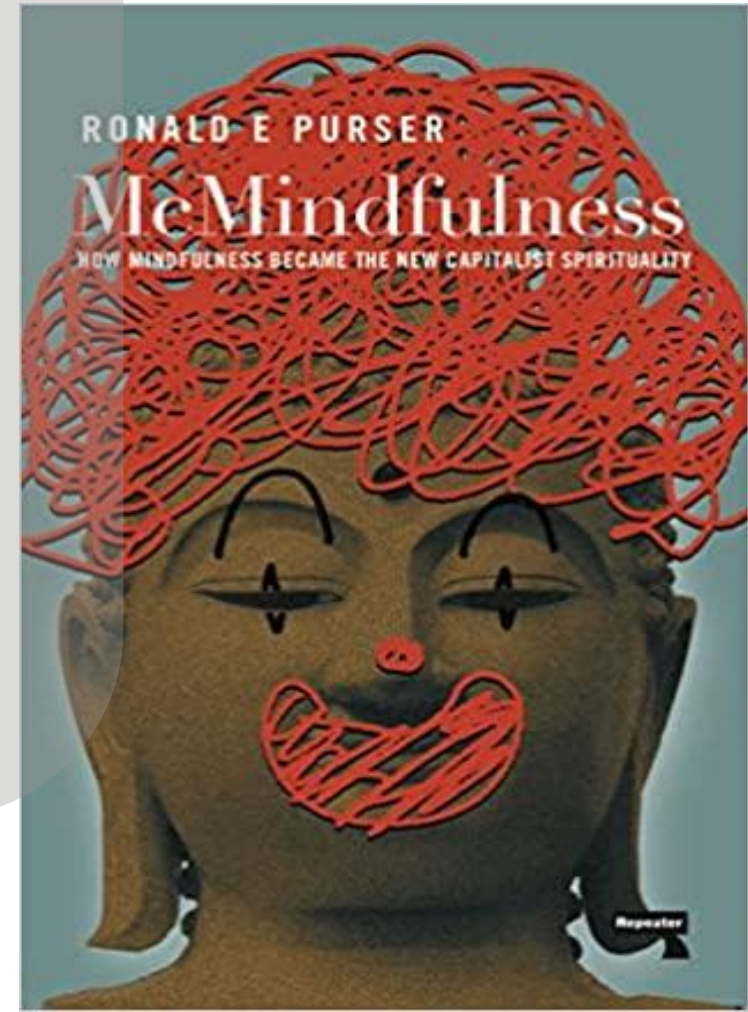
I . 2-1. Commoditization of meditation, capitalist spirituality

mindfulness has gone **mainstream**. Some have even called it a **revolution**.

But what if, instead of changing the world, mindfulness has become a banal form of **capitalist spirituality** that mindlessly avoids social and political transformation, reinforcing the neoliberal status quo?

In *McMindfulness*, Ronald Purser debunks the so-called "mindfulness revolution," exposing how corporations, schools, governments and the military have coopted it as technique for social control and self-pacification. A lively and razor-sharp critique, Purser busts the myths its salesmen rely on, challenging the narrative that stress is self-imposed and mindfulness is the cure-all.

If we are to harness the truly revolutionary potential of mindfulness, we have to cast off its **neoliberal shackles**, liberating mindfulness for a collective awakening.



Purser's view of McM mindfulness

01

It is used not as a means to wake up individuals and groups from the three poisons of greed, hatred and delusion, but has been converted to a therapeutic technique which reinforces these three poisons. The technique tends to instigate desires.

Without moral standards, and vision of ethics and public good, it is used for enhanced concentration, leadership training and self-development → To gain a competitive edge

Purser's view of McM mindfulness

Regarding the source of stress, it excludes the need to explore sociopolitical and economical conditions like injustice, inequality, & environmental destruction, and makes pathological diagnosis of stress in relation to individual mental issues.

→ Fundamental solution is found not in the change of society but in therapy, it argues.

→ → A view greatly appealing to government policy makers

e.g.

Accept negative feelings. Let go of them and do not be seized by them.

→ By regarding emotions like anger, sadness and disappointment as individual's pathological symptoms, it eliminates possibilities of emotions arising in political terms.

02

“Mindfulness broker” “Mindfulness merchant”



Ronald Purser
San Francisco State University

Meditation is a translation of
Pali term “Bhavana”(lit. cultivate)

....

“They use meditation as a tool to achieve better academic performance, wealth and success. They ignore precepts.”

I . 2-3. Is meditation a commodity? A skillful means?

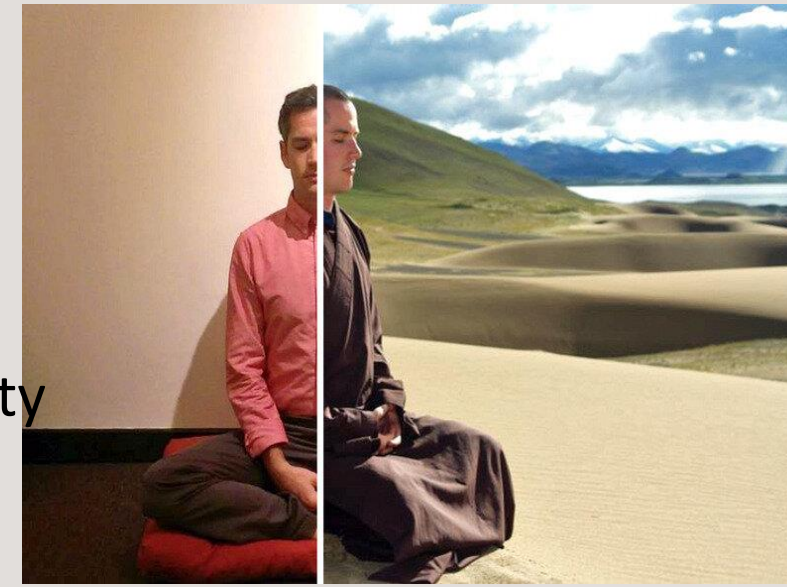


돈을 지불하는 즉시 행복을 얻는다.
간편하고, 빠르고, 즉효, 에고 강화

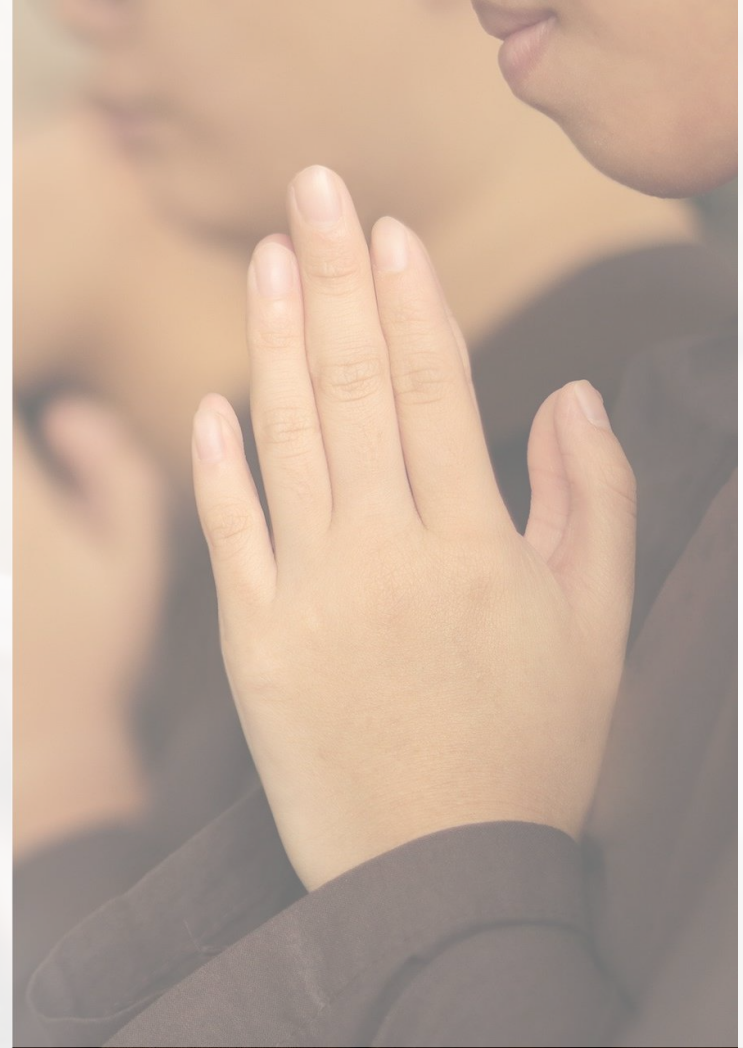
- Hamburger University: major in hamburgerology, minor in French fries studies → get certificate
- Meditation programs also cultivate teachers thru automation & standardized training.
→ provided thru batch process

VS

- Revolution breaking the boundary of monastic and secular life
- Transitional process in which traditional Buddhist elements such as precepts and monastic community are reevaluated during assimilation process



II. Traditional Buddhist Practice System & Context of Practice



1. *Awakening of Mahayana Faith*

Generosity

Generously give physical, emotional, and spiritual teachings

Ethics

- *Observe ethics and morality in one's actions of body, speech and mind
- *practice self-improvement (one's mental purity)
- ethics of not doing evil, ethics of doing good
- *altruistic practice-benefit all beings

Patience

- *Endure all things that sway one's mind such as gain/loss, praise/blame, & sorrow/joy.
- *know emptiness & "self and other are part of a single reality"
- *Graciously endure blame and hatred from others

Joyous effort

Bodhisattvas courageously strive to give benefits and peace to all beings. They cultivate the merits of saving themselves to save others.

Samatha Vipassana

- ⑦ Samatha- Practice to stop the wavering mind, focus on a single object & become one with it
=>Meditative absorption- Enter it thru "hearing-thinking-practicing" training
- ⑦ Vipassana-Practice to observe closely the process of wavering mind
=>Wisdom- Five aggregates illuminate sympathy
- Mindfulness is the starting platform to practice samatha & vipassana

2. *Thirty Verses on Consciousness-Only*

Preparation

Stage of accruing **meritorious virtues** & **wisdom virtues** –six perfections, 37 factors of enlightenment, four immeasurables, four ways bodhisattvas approach & save people, three contemplations (on consciousness-only, no self-nature, & things as they are)

Application

Stage to try harder & make more effort - four wholesome roots, four contemplations of Yogacara, four stages of meditation

Proficiency

Stage to see the truth, stage of the path of seeing-emptiness of subject and object (non-conceptualizing awareness, four contemplations of Yogacara)

Practice

Stage of cultivation- stage to attain supramundane wisdom, cessation of afflictive & cognitive hindrances. Achieve the ultimate concentration (nirvana), achieve the ultimate wisdom(bodhi), practice of ten perfections, complete the four immeasurables & four ways of bodhisattvas to save

Completion

Perfection of the ultimate enlightenment. Buddhahood. Manifestation of four wisdom, edification of beings



1) The ultimate purpose of practice

Provide beings with benefits and peace
Escape suffering and attain happiness



2) Practice methods

To save oneself- 37 factors of enlightenment
To save others- four immeasurables, four ways of bodhisattvas
To save self in order to save others- six perfections



3) Practice system

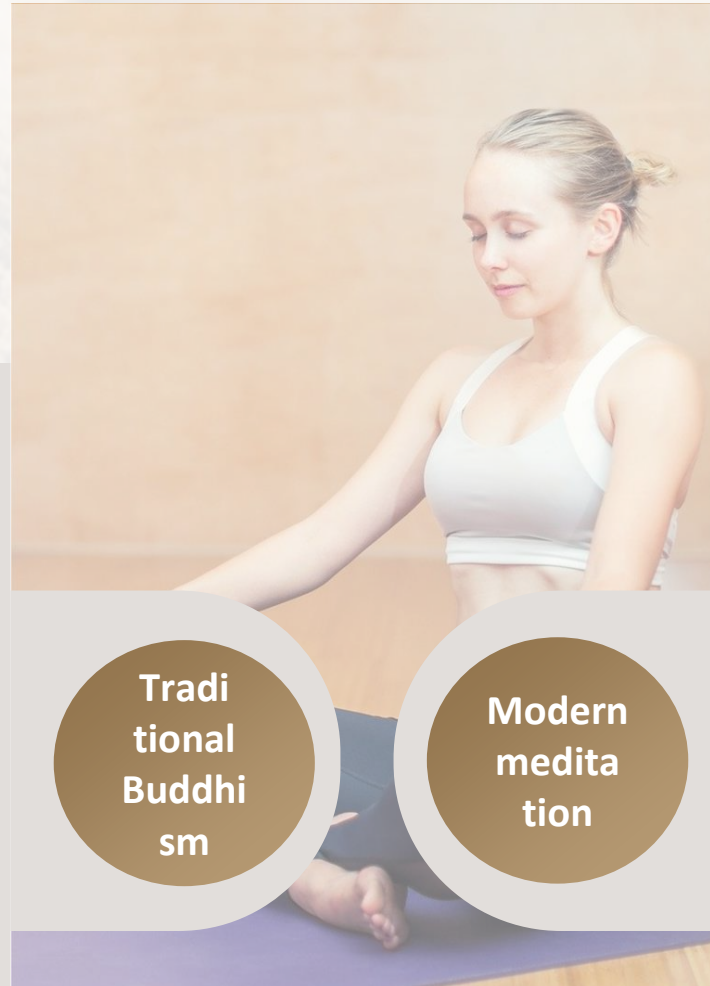
-Ethics, meditation & wisdom trainings
-faith, understanding, practice & realization

III. Comparison of Traditional Buddhist Practice and Modern — Meditation



1. The ultimate purpose of practice

- Awakening of Buddha nature and inherent enlightenment
- View of man- Each human being is a Buddha equipped with perfect wisdom; a manifestation of interdependent origination in union with all beings. Negation of independent, substantial entity



- no statement of the ultimate purpose of meditation, but meditation-related researches focus on therapy of diverse psychological issues such as stress, depression and anxiety.
- View of man-No explicit statement but lacks awareness of Buddha nature or inherent enlightenment

2. Stages of practice/meditation & context of practice

- System of ethics, meditation & wisdom / System of faith, understanding, practice & realization
- Based on the faith in one's Buddha nature & inherent enlightenment, one embarks on a journey to experience & realize them firsthand. Practice process for the sake of benefitting others & of saving oneself to save *others* (*Awakening of Mahayana Faith*)
- Process consisting of discovery of true self, self-actualization, and salvation of *beings* (*Thirty Verses on Consciousness-Only*)



- Focus on treating distressed self & wellbeing.
- Adopt practices as individual techniques without cultivating them sequentially in the context of the whole.

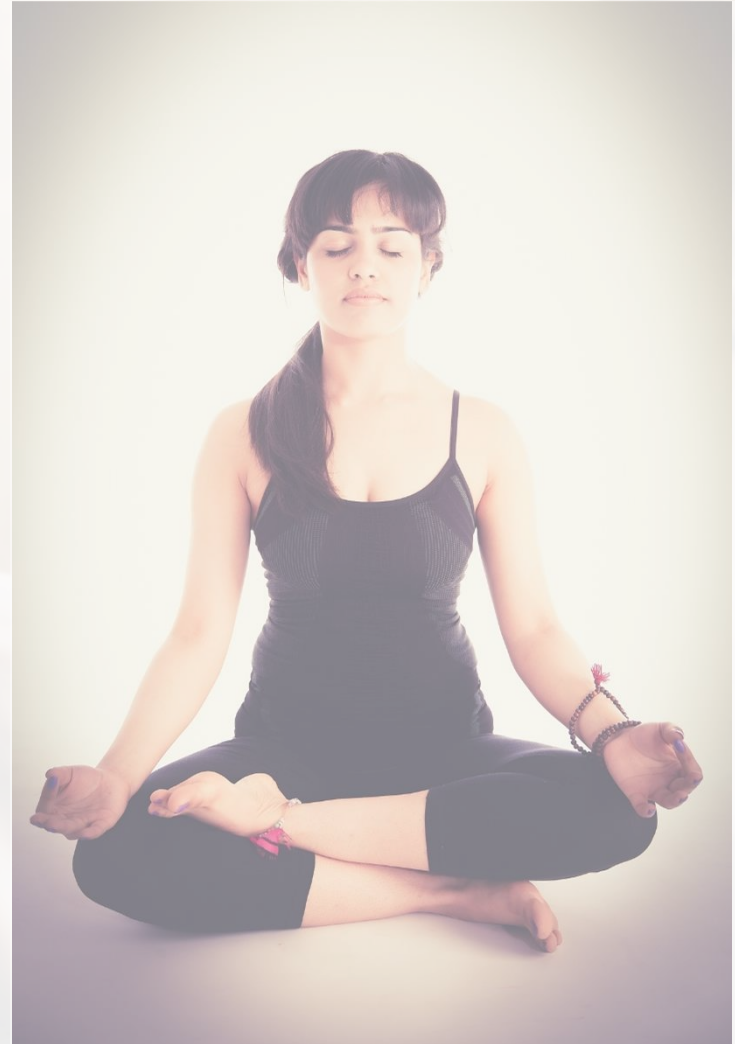
3. Practice/meditation methods

- Focused on giving benefits to beings / on saving oneself to save others
 - Stress on ethics (precepts) to refrain from harming others
 - Stress on precepts intended to promote actions to help and benefit others



- No specific statement on the ultimate purpose of meditation. Meditation-related researches focus on treating diverse mental issues like stress, depression, & anxiety
 - Focused on self-development, self-enhancement, and securing competitive edge
 - No emphasis on precepts

IV. Current State of Meditation in Korea and Overseas



Mindfulness, compassion meditation, & Seon

	mindfulness	compassion	Seon	samatha	vipassana	samadhi
Overseas academic researches	3038	1994	1952	21	17	16
Korean academic researches	872	1590	1309	68	90	129

* Web source: <http://www.riss.kr> RISS retrieved during 2011-2020

Overseas academic researches: English papers from SCIE, SSCI, SCI, AHCI, SCOPUS

Korean academic researches: Korean papers from academic journals which have been registered, registered as excellent journals, or registered as candidate journals on the Korean Citation Index (KCI)

Selection of key concepts from psychotherapy and Buddhist practice system

Psychotherapy (14)

stress, therapy
anxiety, brain
depression, well being
self-compassion, health
rumination, addiction, other-
compassion, relaxation, pain,
emotion regulation

Buddhist practice system (14)

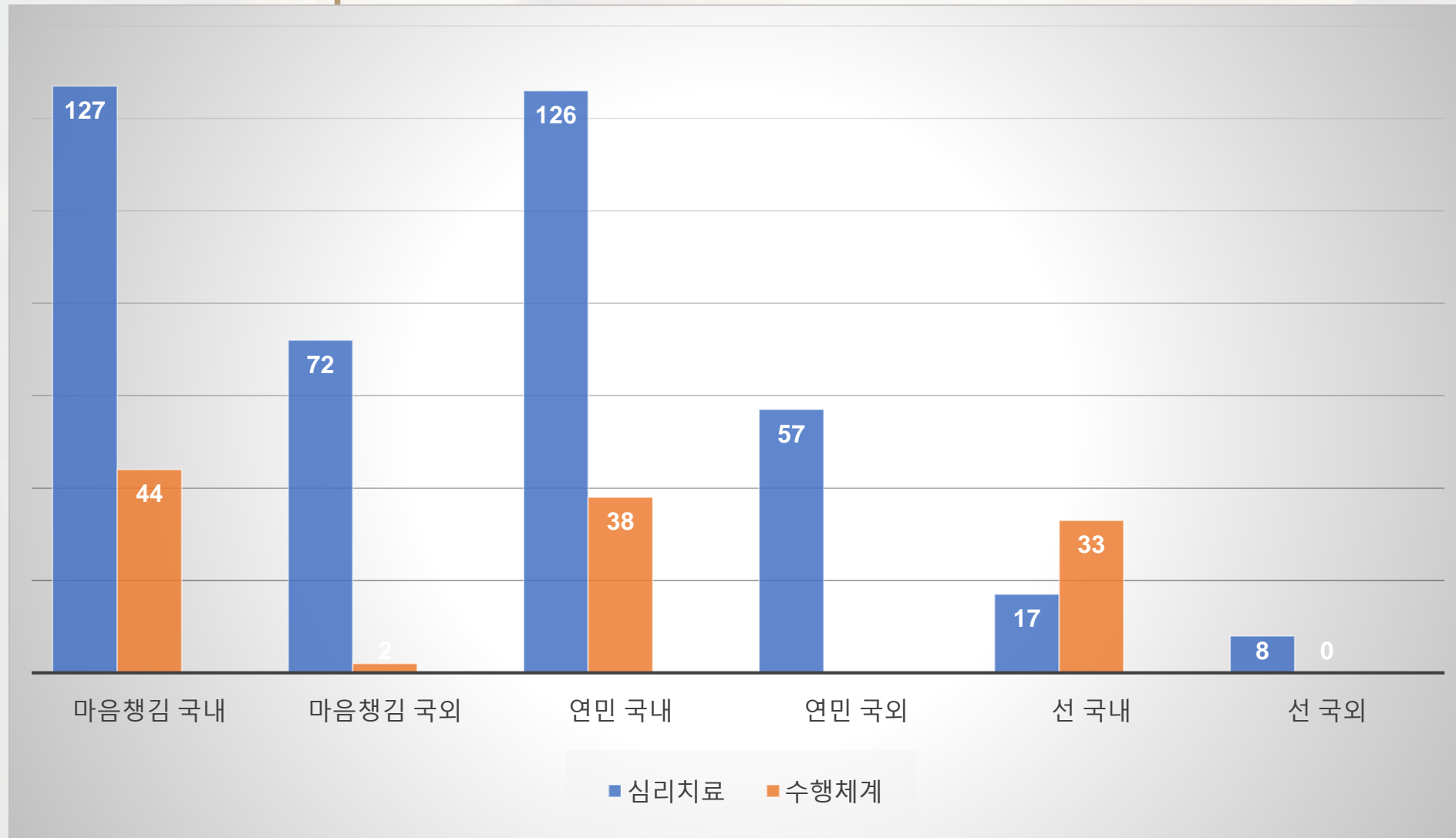
buddha-nature,
selflessness,
Interdependent origination, dana,
ignorance,
wisdom, emptiness, enlightenment,
faith, bodhisattva, ethics,
altruism

Current state of research on mindfulness, compassion meditation and Seon

	Mindfulness		Compassion		Seon	
	Korea	overseas	Korea	overseas	Korea	overseas
Psycho therapy	127	72	126	57	17	8
Buddhist practice system	44	2	38	0	33	0

**The numbers represent sum total of research ratio in each category

Current state of research on mindfulness, compassion meditation and Seon



IV. Current State of Meditation Research in Korea and Overseas

		마음챙김		연민	
Psychotherapy-related research		Korea (872)	overseas (3038)	Korea (1590)	overseas (1994)
1	스트레스	30	17	12	4
2	치료	20	15	3	4
3	불안	17	6	7	2
4	뇌	3	2	1	0
5	우울	17	5	6	2
6	웰빙	2	3	6	3
7	자기연민	9	2	39	26
8	건강	10	12	5	11
9	반추	2	1	1	0
10	중독	3	1	0	0
11	타자연민	4	0	38	2
12	이완	1	1	0	0
13	통증	6	5	7	2
14	감정조절	3	2	1	1
Sum total		127%	72%	126%	57%

Research on Buddhist practice system		Korea	overseas	Korea	overseas
1	불성	1	0	1	0
2	무아	3	0	0	0
3	연기	2	0	0	0
4	보시	0	0	0	0
5	무지	0	0	0	0
6	지혜	3	0	0	0
7	공성	1	0	0	0
8	깨달음	4	0	5	0
9	믿음	2	0	5	0
10	보살	1	0	5	0
11	계	2	0	8	0
12	이타	1	0	1	0
13	알아차림	18	1	6	0
14	의식	6	1	7	0
Sum total		44%	2%	38%	0%

V . Discussion





Topics of meditation research

- Ultimate purpose of practice: interdependent origination, selflessness, emptiness, impermanence, view of man
- Research related to practice system or context of practice
- Practice methods- To save oneself in order to save others, give benefit & peace to beings



Methodologies of meditation research

theoretical vs. quantitative
Phenomenological, qualitative research



Practice and action

Absolute truth-ideal
Relative truth-practical



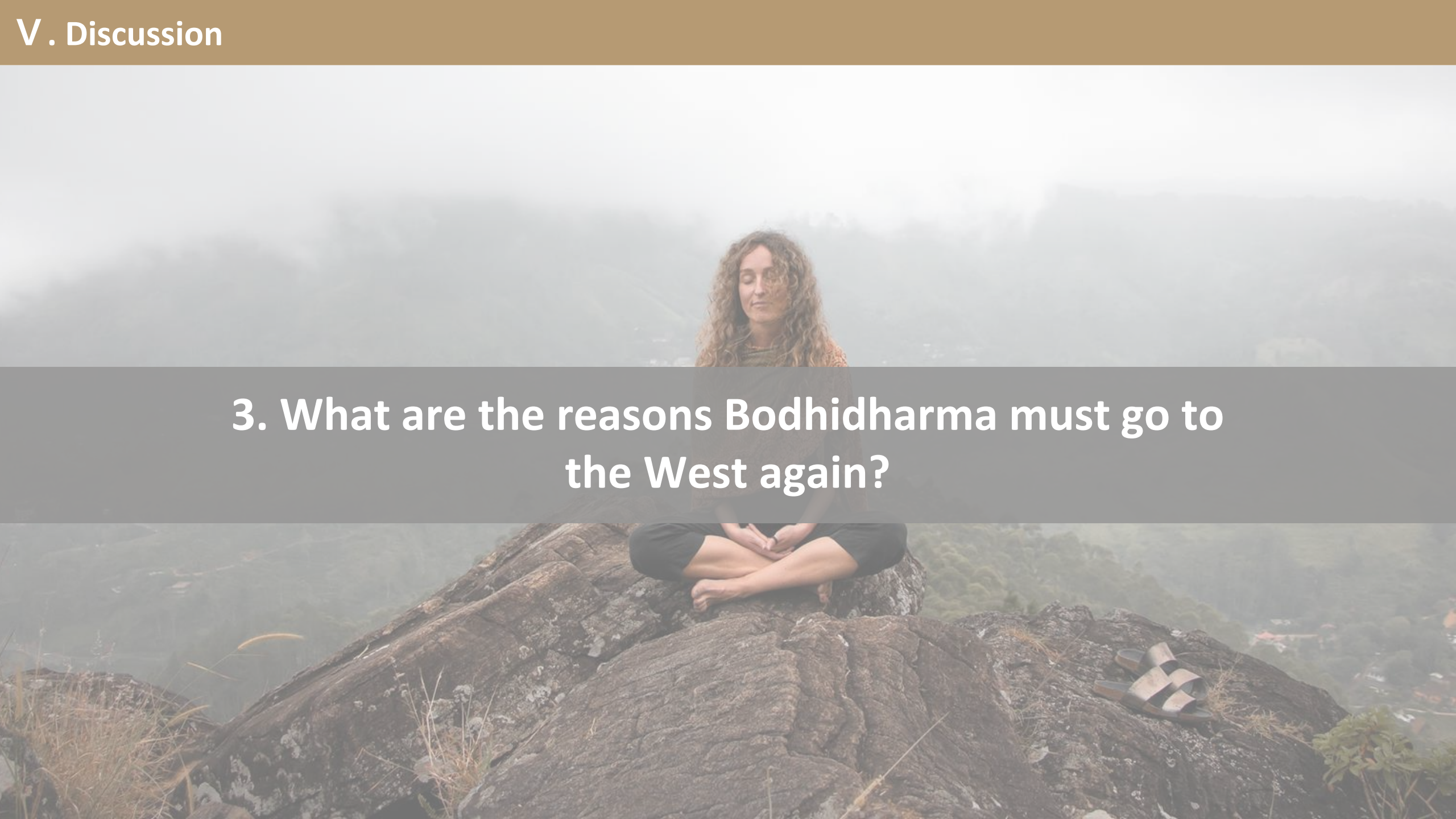
Practice of the Middle Way

A close-up photograph of a weathered, dark metal Buddha head sculpture. The sculpture shows signs of age and corrosion, with a textured surface. The eyes are closed, and the nose is prominent. A semi-transparent dark grey rectangular box is overlaid across the center of the image, containing white text.

1. What made Bodhidharma go to the West?



2. What made Bodhidharma come to the East?

A woman with long, curly brown hair is sitting in a meditative lotus position on a large, dark, textured rock. She is wearing a dark long-sleeved top and dark pants. Her eyes are closed, and her hands are resting on her knees. To her right, a pair of black and white sandals lies on the rock. The background is a misty, mountainous landscape with green hills and a small town visible in the distance. A semi-transparent dark grey banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text.

3. What are the reasons Bodhidharma must go to the West again?

A person is shown in profile from the chest up, facing right. Their hands are clasped together in a prayer position, held near their face. The person's face is partially obscured by a warm, orange and yellow light that also illuminates their hands. The background is a soft, out-of-focus gradient of light colors. On the right side of the image, there is a large, semi-transparent grey rectangle with rounded corners. Inside this rectangle, the words "THAN", "K", and "YOU" are stacked vertically in a large, white, sans-serif font. Below the grey rectangle, there is a small, brown, L-shaped graphic element.

THAN
K
YOU

Seogwang Seunim