

IBMT Introduction

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Integrative Body-Mind Training (IBMT) originates from ancient eastern contemplative traditions, including traditional Chinese medicine, Zen, Taoism and other lineages but also includes latest findings in neuroscience and psychology. IBMT stresses no effort or less effort to control thoughts, and the natural achievement of a state of restful alertness that allows a high degree of awareness and balance of the body, mind, and environment. The meditation state is facilitated through training and trainer-group dynamics, harmony, and resonance. A number of randomized clinical trials (RCTs) indicate that IBMT improves attention, creativity, working memory, self-regulation and immune function, reduces stress, induces neuroplasticity through interaction between the central and the autonomic nervous systems. IBMT has also been used in prevention and treatment of addiction, anxiety and depression, stress related disorders such as PTSD, TBI and aging related disorders (Tang et al, *TICS*, 2009, 2012, 2014; Tang et al, *PNAS*, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013; Tang et al, *Nat Rev Neurosci.*, 2015; Ding et al, 2013, 2014; Fan et al, 2010, 2014). If you are interested how IBMT works, please see papers (Tang, 2011; Tang et al, 2017, 2019) and Springer Nature book (Tang, 2017).

IBMT system has three levels: (i) body-mind health (BMH), (ii) body-mind balance (BMB) and (iii) body-mind transformation (BMT). In each level, instructed and guided by the qualified coach, IBMT has core theories and key techniques that can support practitioners to go through each step and achieve health, balance, happiness, wisdom, and compassion.

IBMT Level One mainly involves several body–mind techniques (bodiffulness and mindfulness) such as body relaxation, mental imagery and mindfulness training, accompanied with selected music background developed by Dr. Tang and his teachers many years ago. There are misunderstandings about which method or technique is mindfulness, see clarification on *How mind-body practice works - integration or separation (Tang et al., 2017)*. IBMT techniques help practitioners to better prepare ('warm up') first, and then go through these practices via a 'direct experience' to achieve a balanced attention control, emotion regulation and self-awareness or self-transformation. In our series of studies, 5 to 20 sessions of IBMT level one has been used. It often included (i) pre-session, (ii) practice session, and (iii) post-session to help and facilitate experiential learning (Tang, 2005, 2007, 2009; Tang et al, *CDP*, 2012; Tang et al, *Nat Rev Neurosci.*, 2015).

In the pre-session, the coach gathers participants to have an introduction and free question-and-answer meeting about IBMT theory and practice to ensure a basic understanding of IBMT for the novices. The coach also sets up the exact time, training room and ground discipline for the group practice. During this stage, the most important thing for the coach is to create a harmonious and relaxed atmosphere for effective practice (Tang, 2005, 2007, 2017).

In the training session, participants follow the coach's instruction and compact disc to practice. During the training session, the coach observes body cues to identify those who are struggling

with the method and gives proper feedback immediately. After each training session, the coach may give responses to questions raised by the participants, helps those who have difficulties or misunderstanding of the practice.

In the post-session, every participant fills out a questionnaire, comments and evaluates the practice. When the IBMT onsite class ends, IBMT coach will follow participant's practice to support the gradual and steady progress and transformation.

IBMT involves explicit and implicit learning and experience. To ensure appropriate experience, coaches are trained to help novices understand and practice IBMT properly. A qualified IBMT coach guides participants in their training by providing supporting instructions, resonance and direct experience throughout the whole sessions. If a coach is not ready internally (healthy, balanced and transformed), how do they help others? Thus, IBMT coach is not someone who has only completed three levels of IBMT training and passed associated tests in theory and technique, instead, the coach has gone through all levels of practice via own direct experience and has a deep understanding of the process. In this case, coach can really have the capacity and the ability to effectively interact with the trainees and guide them individually and in group. The role and skill of the coach in effectively engaging participants is critical, especially when working with adolescents, children and older populations. IBMT coach more likes a 'catalyst' that can promote and facilitate participants' practice and growth, for example, using an appropriate approach to help participants entering a meditation state, and have an insightful and transformative experience (Tang, 2005, 2007, 2009).

Become an IBMT Coach

First, one needs to become a student to learn IBMT. After attendance of IBMT classes by Dr. Tang or other qualified IBMT coaches, one will learn and grasp IBMT techniques and theories, then practice correctly under the guidance of IBMT coach. After certain period of practice for each IBMT level, a person who achieves all three levels of full training can apply to become a coach candidate. IBMT coach will interview, assess and check your practice and understanding of IBMT. By means of these integrative tests and measures, we can know whether you are ready and qualified to move to the next step of becoming a potential coach candidate.

The most important thing for coach is to create a harmonious, relaxed, happy, insightful and growing atmosphere and give proper feedback for effective practice. The coach believes everyone has full potential and equality and that the coach's job is to find and enjoy a person's inner beauty and capacities to help them perceive, think and act better and unfold their full potentials rather than to teach them. This requires the coach's own transformation first, then the coach can resonate with and help others. IBMT coach is recognized and certified by Dr. Tang, the founder of IBMT.

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