

Book Review

The Neuroscience of Meditation by Yi-Yuan Tang and Rongxiang Tang, Academic Press, 2020, 234 pp.

This book is a good presentation of certain aspects of the science of meditation. However, it is frankly misnamed. It should be *The Neuroscience of Mindfulness Meditation* or *Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)* as that is what is primarily covered. Mindfulness is not synonymous with meditation. There are many other forms of well-researched meditation techniques including Benson's *Relaxation Response*, which over four decades has revealed many positive health benefits and neuroscientific results.

Other notable meditation techniques include Transcendental Meditation or TM, briefly mentioned by the authors, and Kirtan Kriya (KK) from the Kundalini Yoga tradition. It is worth noting that KK has a surfeit of neuroscientific research behind it, and has been widely published in many prestigious scientific journals, including this one.

Moreover, in the preface the authors state that meditation is part of Buddhism and Hinduism but in reality, meditation in one aspect or another is also part of every major religion, including Judaism, Sikhism, Islam, and Christianity to some degree.

Moreover, the practical application of secular types of meditation is part of the lifestyle of many people these days.

On a positive note, the discussion of precision medicine and how meditation may fit into that is well discussed. Other chapters discuss theoretical frameworks of individual differences and many other very notable academic topics. Genetics, the effect on the nervous system, specific brain regions involved in meditation, personality and meditation, meditation over the lifespan are other chapters. The book ends with directions for the future.

This well-researched, indexed, and referenced, content dense scientific paperback book is excellent for those interested in reading and studying the art and science of primarily mindfulness meditation.

While the concept of psychological well-being is covered briefly, two aspects of any type of meditation that are unfortunately missing are any mention of spiritual development or instruction in actually how to meditate. For that, I refer the reader to the article entitled *Stress, Meditation and Alzheimer's Disease Prevention* published in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* [1].

Dharma Singh Khalsa, MD

President/Medical Director

Alzheimer's Research and Prevention Foundation

E-mail: Drdharma@alzheimersprevention.org.

REFERENCES

- [1] Khalsa DS (2015) Stress, meditation, and Alzheimer's disease prevention: where the evidence stands. *J Alzheimers Dis* **48**, 1-12.