

The official introduction of the concept of mindful movement in Science happened through the scientific paper Asztalos et al. “*Sport participation and stress among women and men*”, published in the respected scientific journal *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* (2012/13, 466-483):

*We propose the concept of mindful movement where the quality of physical activity is elevated by focusing it on a specific level of self-awareness known as mindfulness. When physical activity takes the form of mindful movement, one consciously experiences the movements of one’s body and is thereby deliberately present in the whole practice of physical activity, as if one becomes one’s own observer. Through “whole practice” we mean that simultaneously with the act of moving one’s body, one also breathes in certain ways, feels certain feelings and thinks certain thoughts. The observation of these four elements -movement, breathing, feeling and thinking- while engaging in physical activity changes the quality of the exercise, turning into mindful movement. By regular participation in mindful movement, a new “true” sense of self can be experienced. Specifically, through the practice of mindful movement, one trains oneself in experiencing a self who moves, breathes, feels and thinks, while simultaneously one’s “true self” observes the movements, the breathing, and the feelings and thoughts that are generated during physical activity. Through repeated experiencing of such retreat into one’s true self (i.e., the Observer), one may gather recognition of the trueness of this Observer-self and can manage locating it apart from the self that moves and breathes and produces different feelings and thoughts. This way, one may become aware that one’s body and one’s mind belong to one’s true self yet are not it. Similarly, one’s feelings, thoughts, emotions and problems, although may seem to belong temporarily to one’s self, should never define or become part of one’s identity. In other words, mindful practice of physical activity (or physical activity that involves mindful movement) may help individuals non-identify themselves with their feelings, thoughts, emotions and*

*problems, but watch them as an Observer. This mindful practice allows for refreshed perspectives and detached views because a healthy distance is created between an individual's true self and his or her feelings, thoughts, emotions and problems (which ultimately are the products of one's efforts to satisfy the ego's demands). This process of dissociation provides place for awareness to manifest, and that awareness translates into mindfulness, which in turn is an essential element of sound mental health.*