

Abstract

Positivity resonance is a construct used to measure the quality of social connection characterized by shared positive affect, caring nonverbal synchrony, and biological synchrony. Mindfulness meditation and loving-kindness meditation have been shown to increase individual positive affect and social connectedness and therefore may bolster positivity resonance. Using data from a diverse sample of midlife adults raised in low-SES homes (N=113), we utilize multilevel models to test the novel hypothesis that participants will report increased positivity resonance as a function of the duration and frequency of their meditation practice. Participants reported their frequency and duration of meditation practice daily and completed bi-weekly Day Reconstruction Method surveys about positivity resonance for 10 weeks, during which they received 6 weeks of meditation training in either mindfulness or loving-kindness. Contrary to our predictions, the results of the multilevel models demonstrated a marginal and negative within-persons association between meditation duration and same-day positivity resonance, and the same pattern of results held for meditation frequency and positivity resonance. A simple slopes analysis demonstrated that for participants with higher depression scores, meditating more frequently than other participants was associated with lower positivity resonance scores. Exploratory analyses revealed that participants who tended to meditate more than others also tended to socialize significantly less. These findings suggest there may be trait-level differences between people who meditate more and those who meditate less, and they indicate a need for further research into the impacts of meditation practice on positivity resonance.