The Development Process of the Practice of Gratitude to the Buddha to Enhance Emotional Well-Being for Working Professionals

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Abstract

This study developed and evaluated a 14-day Buddhānussati-based gratitude practice program designed to support emotional well-being among working professionals. The objectives were to examine participants' emotional and spiritual needs, construct a structured practice protocol, and explore preliminary changes following implementation. A mixed-methods research-and-development design was conducted in three phases: a qualitative needs assessment; program development and validation by 9 experts; and a one-group pretest–posttest implementation with 17 working professionals. Quantitative data were collected using the PERMA-Profiler, while qualitative data were obtained through semistructured interviews and participant reflections. The needs assessment identified emotional fatigue, cognitive overload, social isolation, performance anxiety, and a diminished sense of meaning. In response, the program adopted a sequential structure: forgiveness and khama-kamma reflection, recollection of the Buddha's qualities through Buddhānussati and Dhamma Kita (melodic Dhamma chanting), and integration into daily routines. Descriptive results showed that the overall well-being mean increased from 4.21 before the program to 4.43 after the program. The largest mean changes occurred in Positive Emotion (+0.35) and Meaning (+0.25), followed by Emotional Regulation (+0.23) and Relationships (+0.18). Participants also reported greater calm, attentional stability, relational awareness, and purpose. Because the study used a small purposive sample, self-reported outcomes, a short intervention period, and no control group or inferential analysis, the findings indicate feasibility and potential benefit rather than established effectiveness. The study contributes a preliminary applied model linking forgiveness, Buddhist recollection, gratitude, and brief workplace-compatible contemplative practice.

Keywords: Buddhānussati; Gratitude; Emotional Well-being; Working Professionals; Mental Immunity; Dhamma Kita

Introduction

Contemporary working life is characterized by rapid technological change, continuous communication, high performance expectations, and increasingly blurred boundaries between occupational and personal time. Although employment can provide identity, social connection, and meaning, unmanaged psychosocial demands may contribute to stress, emotional exhaustion, reduced attentional clarity, and interpersonal difficulty. International guidance consequently treats mental health at work as both an organizational responsibility and an individual well-being concern (World Health Organization, 2022). For working professionals, emotional well-being involves more than the absence of distress; it includes positive emotion, engagement, supportive relationships, meaning, accomplishment, and the capacity to regulate responses under pressure (Butler & Kern, 2016; Seligman, 2011).

Positive psychology research identifies gratitude as a cognitive-affective orientation that directs attention toward benefits, sources of support, and valued aspects of experience. Experimental and meta-analytic findings indicate that structured gratitude activities can improve well-being, although effects are typically modest and depend on the population, intervention format, and outcome assessed (Cregg & Cheavens, 2021; Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Wood et al., 2010). Spiritual gratitude may also be associated with meaning and spiritual well-being when appreciation is directed toward a transcendent source or moral ideal (Rosmarin et al., 2011; Mills et al., 2015). These findings support the use of gratitude as a reflective practice but do not justify assuming that all gratitude interventions produce lasting psychological change.

Mindfulness and related contemplative practices provide a complementary mechanism. By strengthening present-moment awareness and reducing automatic reactivity, mindfulness may support emotional regulation and reduce exhaustion in workplace contexts (Baer, 2003; Hülsheger et al., 2013; Lomas et al., 2018). Forgiveness-oriented interventions may likewise reduce persistent anger, guilt, and resentment, thereby creating greater readiness for constructive emotional engagement (Wade et al., 2014). From a Buddhist perspective, ethical restraint, wise attention, gratitude, and recollection are not isolated techniques but mutually supportive aspects of mental cultivation. Buddhānussati, or recollection of the Buddha, directs attention toward qualities regarded as worthy of confidence and emulation, while gratitude is presented as a rare and valuable personal quality in the early Buddhist discourses (Bodhi Bhikkhu, 2012).

Despite increasing research on gratitude, mindfulness, and workplace well-being, limited empirical attention has been given to a structured program that combines forgiveness, Buddhānussati, and melodic Dhamma chanting in a brief format suitable for working professionals. The present study addresses this gap by developing and preliminarily evaluating a 14-day program organized around the "cleansing," "cultivating," and "stabilizing" phases. Rather than claiming clinical efficacy, the study examines the program's conceptual coherence, feasibility, and preliminary association with changes in self-reported well-being and participant experience.

Research Objectives

1. To study the problems and circumstances of working professionals
2. To study the development process of the practice of gratitude to the Buddha and its effects on emotional well-being for working professionals.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of the developed Buddhānussati and forgiveness practice program on the emotional well-being of participating working professionals.

Literature Review

Gratitude, Spirituality, and Emotional Well-Being

Gratitude is commonly conceptualized as both a temporary emotional response and a broader disposition to recognize benefits received from people, circumstances, or transcendent sources. Emmons and McCullough (2003) demonstrated that systematic attention to blessings can influence positive affect and subjective well-being. Subsequent reviews and meta-analyses have found generally beneficial but heterogeneous effects, indicating that gratitude practices should be evaluated according to intervention intensity, comparison conditions, and participant characteristics (Cregg & Cheavens, 2021; Wood et al., 2010). Gratitude is therefore better treated as a potentially useful process than as a universally effective intervention.

Spiritual forms of gratitude may extend beyond positive appraisal by connecting experience to meaning, moral orientation, and perceived relationship with a sacred source. Mills et al. (2015) found that gratitude was associated with spiritual well-being in a clinical population, while Watkins et al. (2021) examined gratitude directed toward God as a distinctive religious orientation. Although

such findings cannot be transferred automatically across religious traditions, they support the proposition that gratitude anchored in a spiritual framework may differ experientially from secular gratitude exercises. Within Buddhist traditions, gratitude and appreciation are associated with recognition of benefit, moral sensitivity, and respect for worthy persons (Bodhi Bhikkhu, 2012).

Mindfulness, Forgiveness, and Workplace Well-Being

Mindfulness-based interventions cultivate receptive awareness of present experience and have been widely adapted for clinical, educational, and occupational settings. Reviews indicate that mindfulness programs can reduce psychological stress and support well-being, although study quality and effect sizes vary (Baer, 2003; Goyal et al., 2014). In the workplace, mindfulness has been associated with lower emotional exhaustion and improved job satisfaction through emotion-regulation processes (Hülsheger et al., 2013). A systematic review and meta-analysis likewise reported beneficial workplace outcomes while emphasizing heterogeneity in program content and research design (Lomas et al., 2018).

Forgiveness is relevant when emotional distress is sustained by perceived injury, guilt, hostility, or unresolved relational conflict. Meta-analytic evidence suggests that structured forgiveness interventions can reduce negative affect and improve psychological outcomes (Wade et al., 2014). Forgiveness should not be interpreted as excusing harm or removing accountability; rather, it may involve a deliberate reduction in retaliatory motivation and persistent resentment. This distinction is important for the present program, which positions forgiveness and khama-kamma reflection as preparatory practices intended to reduce emotional obstruction before gratitude-oriented recollection.

Buddhānussati, Positive Emotion, and Meaning

Buddhānussati is the recollection of the Buddha through sustained attention to qualities traditionally summarized in the formula of the Buddha's virtues. In applied terms, this practice may function as attentional redirection toward a stable moral and spiritual exemplar. Such redirection is conceptually compatible with broaden-and-build theory, which proposes that positive emotions can expand momentary thought–action repertoires and contribute to enduring personal resources (Fredrickson, 2001). Loving-kindness practice has similarly been associated with increases in positive emotion and psychosocial resources over time (Fredrickson et al., 2008). These parallels should be

understood as conceptual correspondences rather than claims that Buddhist constructs and positive psychological constructs are equivalent.

The use of melodic chanting adds a sensory and cultural dimension to the intervention. Research on contemplative and rhythmic practices suggests that auditory structure can facilitate sustained attention and emotional engagement, but the physiological mechanisms and comparative advantages of Dhamma Kita specifically remain insufficiently established. Accordingly, the present study treats melodic chanting as a program component whose acceptability and perceived usefulness require empirical assessment, not as a proven method for autonomic regulation. The central research gap is therefore the absence of a clearly specified, workplace-compatible program that sequences forgiveness, Buddhānussati, and brief daily integration and then examines both quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

This study utilizes a four-stage developmental approach grounded in applied Buddhist psychology to alter the emotional landscape of modern workers. The Analysis and Synthesis phase outlines the specific emotional challenges faced by working professionals and the strategies needed to mitigate them. The study combines modern delivery methods with traditional spiritual practices. The Program Development stage carefully establishes a protocol that aligns with professionals' usual workflows and accounts for the current environment. It also draws attention to cultural metaphors that show involvement and pragmatism. The second part of the paradigm stresses the importance of empirical validation and careful evaluation for long-term use. This phase evaluates the intervention's efficacy in alleviating stress and rumination while fostering positive affect and prosocial behavior. The Final Model Presentation introduces the "Model of Gratitude to Buddha Practice" as a robust foundation for enduring psychological well-being. This adaptable framework is suitable for professional training, public health initiatives, and individual practice. It integrates traditional self-reflection with a systematic growth cycle to offer a sustainable solution for emotional resilience and "Luminous Mind" in the contemporary workplace.

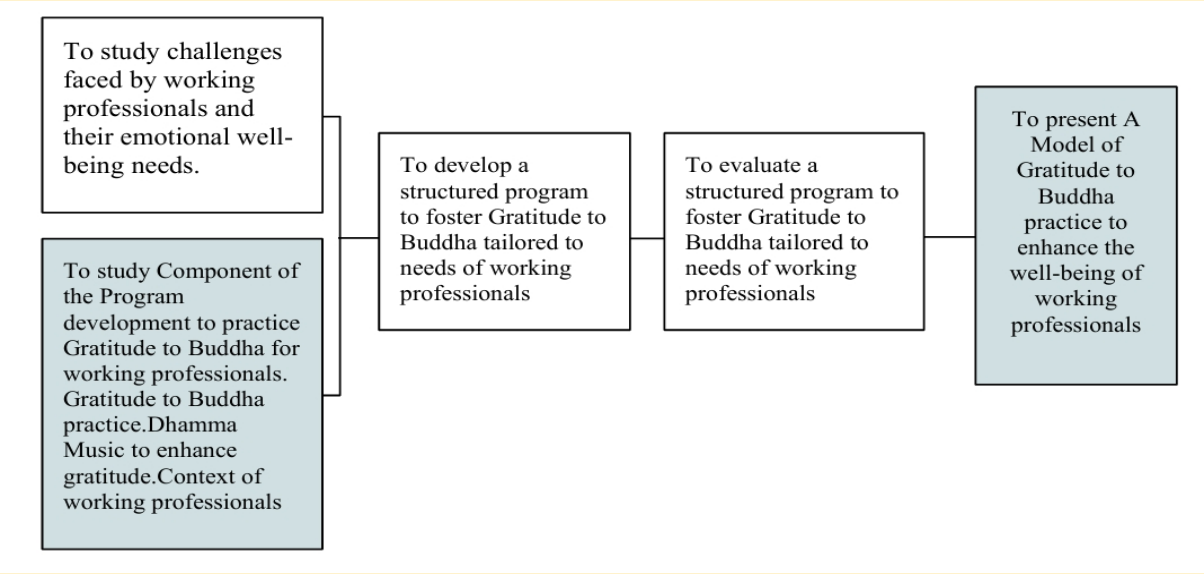


Figure 1: Conceptual Frameworks

Research Methodology

The study employed a rigorous Mixed-Methods Research (MMR) approach following a three-phase Research and Development (R&D) scheme. This combination method allows the use of both qualitative and quantitative data in three ways to provide a full picture of the proposed intervention plan. The study is structured in a series of steps that together form a path from theoretical research to concrete proof.

Phase I: Needs Assessment and Qualitative Exploration

The initial phase will consist of qualitative semi-structured interviews with seventeen carefully selected Buddhist scholars and mental health practitioners to understand the specific emotional, cognitive, and spiritual needs of working professionals. The cohort was assessed to identify the major institutional stressors and psychological deficits contributing to employee burnout. The qualitative reflections underwent rigorous thematic analysis to identify key themes that informed the structural design of the practice intervention.

Phase II: Program Development and Expert Validation

In the second step, the structured intervention model was initially designed and underwent a rigorous content validation process. To ensure the draft protocol was theoretically correct, morally acceptable, and usable in high-stress work environments, it was given to a group of nine prominent scholars and practitioners

(N=9) in the fields of Buddhist studies, clinical psychology, and new mindfulness frameworks. The experts who validated the "Cleansing-before-Cultivating" method examined its construction and confirmed that Forgiveness should be the first step before developing spiritual gratitude through Buddhānussati. The nine experts' qualitative feedback and Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) suggestions were carefully examined and synthesized. This led to the development of the 14-day micro-practice protocol and to the conclusion that Dhamma Kita (melodic chanting) is the most effective way for modern corporate professionals to relax their autonomic nervous systems.

Phase III: Experimental Evaluation and Ethical Safeguards

The last stage was the evaluation of the developed program's effectiveness using a pre-test-post-test quasi-experimental design with 17 working professionals who exhibited high levels of stress at baseline. The main quantitative tool was the PERMA-Profiler assessment, which measures structural dimensions of human flourishing, and structured qualitative interviews were used to collect participant reflections. Quantitative data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, specifically the Mean and Standard Deviation, to map emotional changes, and thematic and content analysis was used to assess qualitative feedback.

Ethical safeguards and protection of human subjects: This research was conducted in full compliance with institutional ethical standards. All working professionals who participated gave written informed consent prior to the start of the 14-day intervention period. Participants were clearly advised of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty, and confidentiality was maintained throughout the data collection process by anonymizing individual identities using key codes (KP 1 to KP 17). Thus, this multi-step methodological framework provides an empirical, evidence-based structure that demonstrates the structured model's utility as a practical, non-ritualistic method for enhancing psychological health and emotional stability in contemporary corporate contexts.

Research Results

Objective 1: To study the problems and circumstances of working professionals.

The empirical study of the main objective demonstrated a significant well-being deficit among modern working professionals, reflected in constant

emotional fatigue, cognitive overload, and a significant decrease in satisfaction with everyday life. Quantitative and qualitative data indicated a high-stress baseline, directly correlating with the Buddhist psychological state of mental agitation and restlessness, named Uddhacca-kukkucca. The source of this alarming baseline condition is largely the unending digital connectivity, whimsical institutional demands, and burdensome professional responsibilities that push employees towards cognitive fragmentation and deep-seated internal insecurity. Based on the multi-dimensional PERMA framework, the study's results show that participants exhibited a significant lack across all structural dimensions, with a critical lack of Positive Emotion and Meaning (Seligman, 2011). This systemic deficit highlights a profound psychic disconnect between the participants' daily corporate responsibilities and their fundamental personal values. To provide a structured and transparent overview of these baseline vulnerability patterns, the primary emotional and situational challenges identified during the needs assessment phase were systematically organized. Table 1.1 presents the structural breakdown of these workplace difficulties, with representative qualitative evidence from the key informants (KP 1 to KP 17) to provide a sense of the real-world professional experiences underpinning the quantitative metrics.

Table 1. PERMA-Based Structural Breakdown of Emotional and Workplace Challenges

PERMA Dimension	Primary Theme (Challenges)	% of Informants (N=17)	Representative Quote from Key Informants
P – Positive Emotion	Emotional Exhaustion and Stress	80%	"I feel stressed every day; there's no space for joy after work." — KP 2
E – Engagement	Burnout & Lack of Flow	65%	"My mind wanders to my to-do list even when I'm trying to rest." — KP 11
R – Relationships	Social Isolation	70%	"Working so hard makes me feel lonely; I've lost touch with my support system." — KP 4
M – Meaning	Lack of Purpose	60%	"I just work for money now. I feel like my life lacks a deeper spiritual goal." — KP 17
A – Accomplishment	Anxiety & Perfectionism	55%	"Even with success, I worry about failure and societal expectations." — KP 15

The diagnostic results also revealed a lack of internal psychological defenses within the workforce. Specifically, there was a progressive decline in participants' Sati (mindfulness) and attentional control under conditions of

decision-making pressure and heavy workloads (Smith, 2020). This cognitive vulnerability often results in overactivation of threat responses and chronic rumination, which exacerbate feelings of isolation and hopelessness (Wei et al., 2025). An important and relevant finding from this baseline needs analysis is that modern professionals showed a clear preference for devotional practice over and above secular mindfulness practice. Roughly 70% of respondents reported feeling greater, more immediate internal peace and psychological stability when their cognitive focus was explicitly anchored to a clear external object of faith (Saddhā) than when engaging in unguided present-moment observation (Watkins et al., 2021).

As a result, the empirical data collected in this phase reconfirm the immediate practical need for a sustainable "Spiritual Anchor." This anchor must be presented as a modern, non-ritualistic micro-practice that serves as a highly accessible, portable refuge in volatile corporate environments (Jiwattanasuk, 2022; Satitpatanaphan, 2025). This baseline assessment provides empirical justification for the next phase of the study, confirming that the proposed intervention must successfully integrate traditional spiritual devotion with modern temporal efficiency. It is a highly effective way to transform stressful professional routines into a sustainable state of psychological resilience and emotional well-being. It translates the historical spiritual security into a functional asset in the corporate setting.

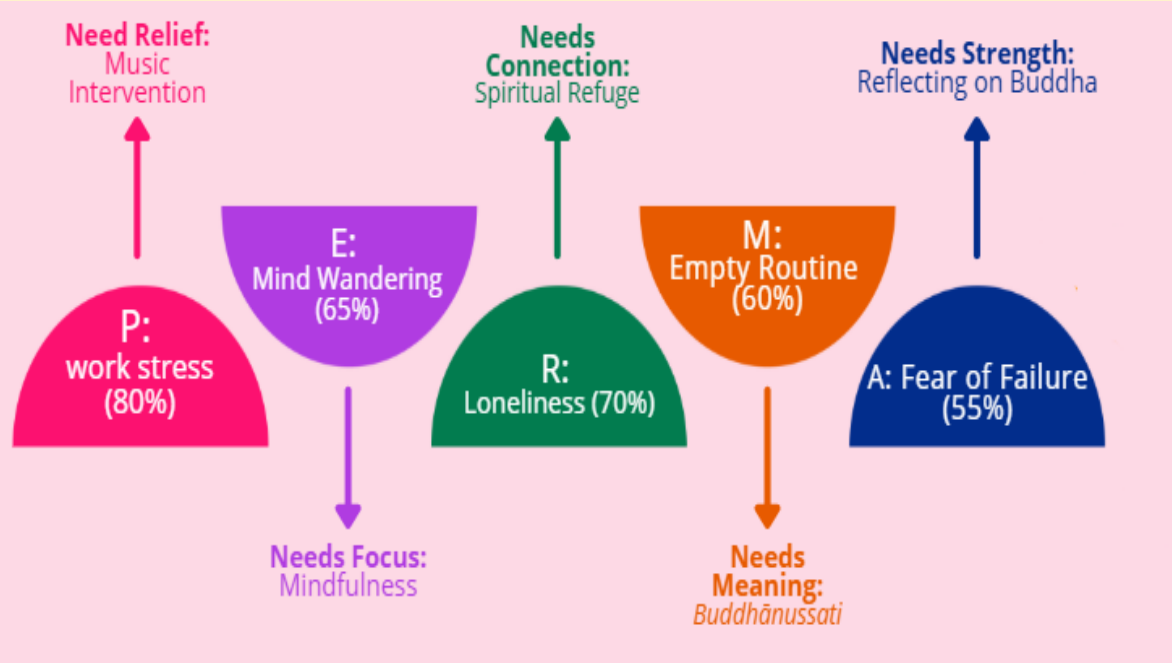


Figure 2: Identifying the Needs of Working Professionals

Objective No. 2: To Study the Components and Develop a Structured Gratitude to Buddha Program

The intervention was designed to be tested for real-world effectiveness in a quasi-experimental research setting with a strict 14-day micro-practice protocol. The course was carefully sequenced into developmental segments to fit the limited time available in busy professional schedules (Satitpatanaphan, 2025).

The course targeted the important first three days of mental clarity, including formal forgiveness methods and structured karma apologies to effectively address workplace guilt, interpersonal conflicts and recurring cognitive issues (Fredrickson, 2001). Between days 4-10, the importance of contemplation was revealed, now that the emotional foundation was in place. In this case, the focus was on a systematic collection of the Buddha's qualities (Buddhānussati) interwoven with calming, sensory-enhancing elements of Dhamma Kita (melodic chanting). This combination was specifically intended to promote parasympathetic dominance and to calm mental unrest (Jiwattanasuk, 2022; Weder, 2022). The final section, concerning Days 11–14, focused on the continued incorporation and stabilization of these practices and instructed individuals to concentrate on building up long-term psychological resources and developing eudaimonic resilience to effectively ward off occupational burnout (Anālayo, 2021; Seligman, 2011).

Table 2. Thematic Analysis of Emotional Well-being Challenges with Qualitative Evidence

PERMA Dimension	Challenge (N=17)	Design Strategy
P: Positive Emotion	80% Exhaustion	Dhamma Kita Music
E: Engagement	65% Distraction	Audio Guided Focus
R: Relationships	70% Social Isolation	Forgiveness Practice
M: Meaning	60% Lack of Purpose	*Buddhānussati*
A: Accomplishment	55% Performance Anxiety	14-Day Micro-practice

The working professional group (N=17) who had a confirmed baseline of high stress and severe emotional exhaustion in their respective corporate sectors were purposefully chosen for the experimental stage (Satitpatanaphan, 2025). They were a dense group, demographically and professionally, highly educated, mid-career, in high-pressure operational settings. As for the distribution of vocations, the majority of the sample comprises full-time corporate and company

employees (around 70%) and independent business owners and specialized management professionals, who face high institutional demands and daily decision-making pressures (Smith, 2020). Geographically, all participants were active working professionals in urban corporate sectors, with an age distribution primarily clustered around mid-career milestones, which directly correlates with heightened risks of vocational stagnation and structural burnout. Using this distinctive professional profile, the study collected a substantial dataset to evaluate the potential of a structured approach to spiritual gratitude to convert professional emotional exhaustion into sustainable psychological well-being by implementing a short 5- to 10-minute daily schedule.

It was a fundamental result from a panel of nine recognized experts during the content validation phase. It was found that the integration of Forgiveness (Khama-kamma) and Karma Apology is the mandatory and indispensable introductory component of the developed model. The validating experts pointed out that spiritual gratitude and positive emotional states can only be developed successfully if practitioners first systematically cleanse their internal cognitive space of residual ill will, hidden hostility, and workplace rivalries. This expert perspective is strongly supported by Fredrickson's (2001) positive psychology framework, which holds that the strategic deployment of positive psychological interventions can be optimized only when the preceding negative emotional obstructions and affective barriers are resolved. Without this initial mental clearing phase, residual anger, guilt, and resentment act as defensive cognitive blocks that actively block the generation of meditative joy, appreciative satisfaction, and sustainable emotional resilience in high-stress corporate environments.

When this inner emotional basis is decluttered, the developed program is offered to be introduced into the practice of Dhamma Kita (melodic chanting) as a novel sensory-enhanced anchor to help modern-day professionals who are dealing with heavy workloads and extensive cognitive noise. This rhythmic auditory stimulation is designed to capture sensory attention, stabilize the autonomic nervous system, and promote an effective shift toward parasympathetic dominance. Supporting this mechanism are neurobiological data reviewed by Weder (2022) that demonstrate that a switch in cognitive focus from professional threat states to reflective appreciation modulates neural networks, providing practitioners from diverse and multicultural backgrounds with an accessible and culturally adaptive way to deepen concentration.

The 14-day intervention protocol uses the traditional understanding of consecutive practice, called Anupada, to ensure the sustainability of this inner growth. This sequence of steps is intended to ease and guide the transition from a hard, high-stress work life to a mode of contemplation, of peace and quietness of the mind. Anālayo Bhikkhu (2021) describes systematic, gradual meditation practices to strengthen lasting habits and overcome mental blocks. It adapts the old contemplative practices into a quick daily micro-practice, without any ritual, that easily fits the fast pace of our modern digital lives. This approach helps busy people sharpen their focus, build their mental resilience, and cultivate a radiant mind amid the pressures of modern life.



Figure 3: Developed practice program 14days

Objective No. 3: To Evaluate the Effectiveness of the Gratitude to Buddha Program

The empirical evaluation for the third objective provides clear evidence that the 14-Day Buddhānussati and Forgiveness Practice protocol provides promising improvements on the emotional well-being and psychological resilience of the participating working professionals. Multi-dimensional PERMA-Profiler instrument quantitative tracking showed the cohort's Overall Well-being score improved from a pre-test Mean of 4.21 to a post-test Mean of 4.43. This positive variance is a functional shift from a stable 'High' well-being baseline to the 'Highest' overall well-being category in line with the established

assessment criteria. This quantifiable change indicates that even a short, systematically focused spiritual micro-practice can be effective in helping the professional mind shift from high-stress baselines to states of sustainable calm, thereby facilitating the recovery of the Pabhassara-citta (Luminous Mind) amidst intense institutional demands.

To interpret these quantitative shifts accurately, the mean score ranges were evaluated using standardized psychological interpretation levels. Table 3. Specific mean score cut-offs for assessing participants' subjective well-being states throughout the intervention period.

Table 3. Mean Score Interpretation Levels for Participant Well-Being

Mean Score Range	Interpretation Level (Well-being)
4.21 – 5.00	Highest
3.41 – 4.20	High
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
1.81 – 2.60	Low
1.00-1.80	Lowest

According to these criteria, the pre-test and post-test differences were assessed for each structural pillar of the PERMA model. The complete statistical analysis is given in Table 4. The exact mean changes ( ) for each dimension after the 14-day protocol are given in Table 4.

The most notable enhancements were observed in Positive Emotion (+0.35) and Meaning (+0.25), providing considerable empirical support for the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Gratitude. Through the practice of Buddhānussati, participants effectively developed lasting spiritual and emotional reserves that alleviated emotional fatigue and addressed the "meaning gap" recognized in the initial phase. The increase in Emotional Regulation (+0.23) also indicates that the practice serves as a Mental Buffer, strengthening Mindfulness and Concentration. This helps people deal with too much information and not react as strongly to things that happen at work. Lastly, the increase in Relationships (+0.18) shows that the first two parts of Forgiveness and Karma Apology worked to reduce hostility between people, create positive relationships, and show that 14 days is enough time to start building habits that last and improve mental health.

Table 4. Statistical Evaluation and Pre-Test versus Post-Test Variations across PERMA Dimensions

Well-being Dimension	Pre-test Mean	Interpretation	Post-test Mean	Interpretation	Change (Δ)
P – Positive Emotion	4.13	High	4.48	Highest	+0.35
E – Engagement	4.31	Highest	4.41	Highest	+0.10
R – Relationships	4.13	High	4.31	Highest	+0.18
M – Meaning	4.31	Highest	4.56	Highest	+0.25
A – Accomplishment	4.22	Highest	4.34	Highest	+0.12
Emotional Regulation	4.22	Highest	4.45	Highest	+0.23
Overall Well-being	4.21	Highest	4.43	Highest	+0.22

The largest effects were found for Meaning (+0.25) and Positive Emotion (+0.35) after 14 days of intervention. The pattern is consistent with the evidence and in line with the broaden-and-build hypothesis of gratitude (Fredrickson, 2001). This theory holds that immediate gratitude increases intelligence and provides more mental resources in the long run. Through systematic Buddhānussati, participants' attention could be shifted from egocentric, work-related stresses to more elevated spiritual qualities. Emmons and McCullough (2003) and Watkins et al. (2021) found that this helped individuals avoid burnout in the workplace and find meaning in their work.

The 0.23-point increase in Emotional Regulation also indicates that the multi-part program serves as a mental cushion, strengthening Sati (mindfulness) and attentional control (Hülsheger et al., 2013). As Wei et al. (2025) suggested, this cognitive reinforcement helps corporate workers to deal with information overload and makes them relax when they face sudden stimuli in the workplace. Finally, the increase in the Relationships dimension (+0.18) shows that the early stages of Forgiveness (Khama-kamma) and Karma Apology successfully decreased hostility among people and eliminated guilt (Satitpatanaphan, 2021). This structural change improves relations among those working in high-stress environments. This suggests that a well-defined 14-day sequence is sufficient to

kick-start positive habits and build long-term mental resilience in today's professionals (Anālayo Bhikkhu, 2021; Smith, 2020).

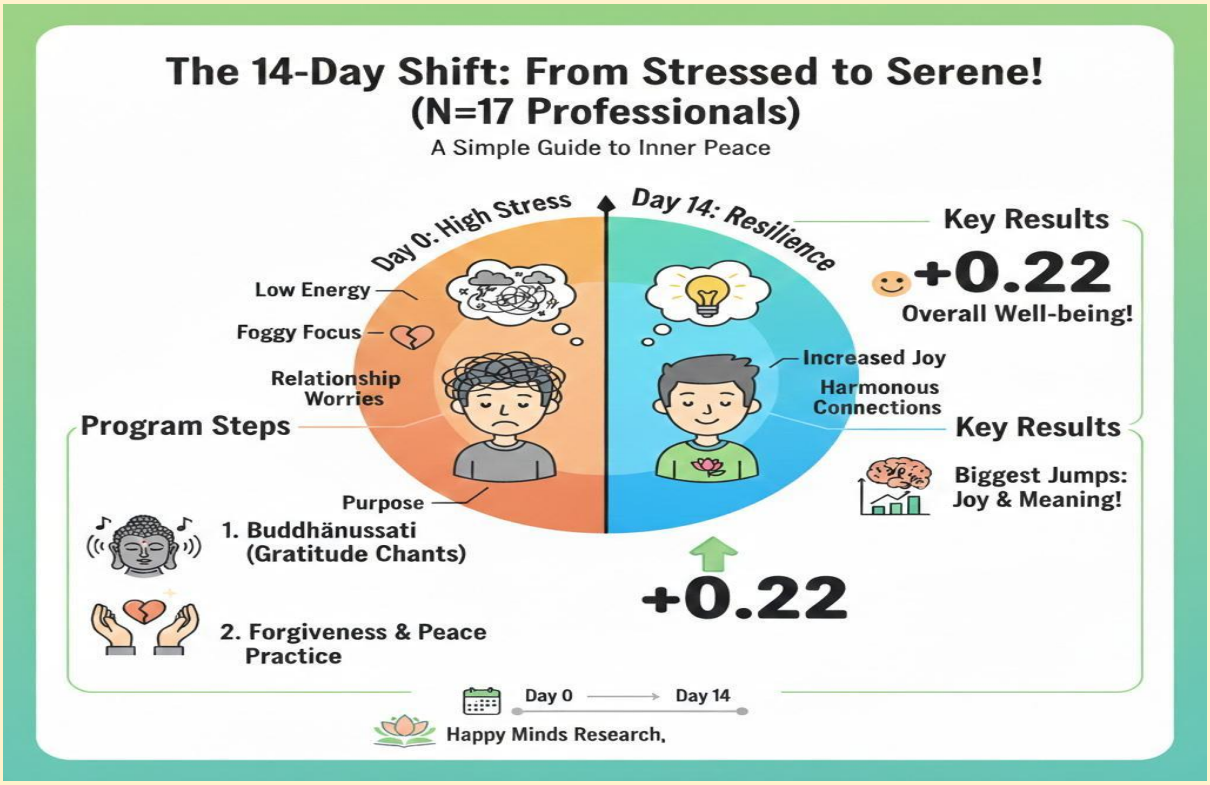


Figure 4: The result of 14-Day Buddhānussati & Forgiveness Practice

Discussion

The findings suggest that the proposed "Cleansing-before-Cultivating" sequence may serve as a useful preparatory framework for emotional development. Participants reported that forgiveness and karmic-apology practices helped them acknowledge guilt, resentment, and interpersonal tension before undertaking *Buddhānussati*. This interpretation is compatible with *sammā-saṅkappa* (Right Intention), particularly the cultivation of non-ill will. Nevertheless, because the study evaluated the complete intervention rather than testing its components separately, it cannot establish whether forgiveness was a necessary precondition for gratitude or independently produced the observed changes.

The largest descriptive improvements occurred in Positive Emotion (+0.35) and Meaning (+0.25). Recollection of the Buddha's nine qualities (*Nava-guṇa*) may have redirected attention from occupational stressors toward an admired spiritual exemplar, supporting cognitive reappraisal and purposeful engagement. This interpretation is consistent with the broaden-and-build theory,

according to which positive emotions may broaden thought–action repertoires and contribute to psychological resources (Fredrickson, 2001). It also accords with evidence that gratitude practice can improve well-being and reduce work-related stress (Cheng et al., 2015; Emmons & McCullough, 2003). The study's term "Spiritual Anchor" should therefore be understood as a proposed explanatory construct rather than a validated psychological measure.

Dhamma Kita, or melodic chanting, may have made contemplative practice more accessible to participants who experienced restlessness or difficulty with silent meditation. Preliminary research has found that brief rhythmic chanting can influence heart-rate variability and support relaxation (Inbaraj et al., 2022). However, the present study collected no physiological data and did not compare chanting with silent practice. It therefore cannot conclude that *Dhamma Kita* stabilized the autonomic nervous system or was superior to other contemplative formats.

Finally, the 14-day intervention appears sufficient to demonstrate feasibility, engagement, and short-term perceived improvement, but not enduring habit formation or "Mental Immunity." Habit research indicates that automaticity typically develops over longer and variable periods; one randomized study reported a median of 59 days among participants who successfully formed habits (Keller et al., 2021). Accordingly, the results should be treated as preliminary. Controlled studies with larger sample sizes, validated measures, component comparisons, and longer follow-up periods are required before claims of effectiveness, sustained resilience, or workplace scalability can be justified.

Knowledge from research

The principal knowledge generated by this study is a structured process that explains how Buddhānussati may be adapted as a brief contemplative practice for working professionals experiencing emotional strain, cognitive overload, and diminished meaning at work. The findings suggest that recollection of the Buddha's virtues can serve as a "Spiritual Anchor," redirecting attention from immediate occupational pressures toward qualities associated with wisdom, compassion, purity, and purposeful conduct. This shift may support emotional stability and strengthen participants' sense of meaning in their daily professional lives.

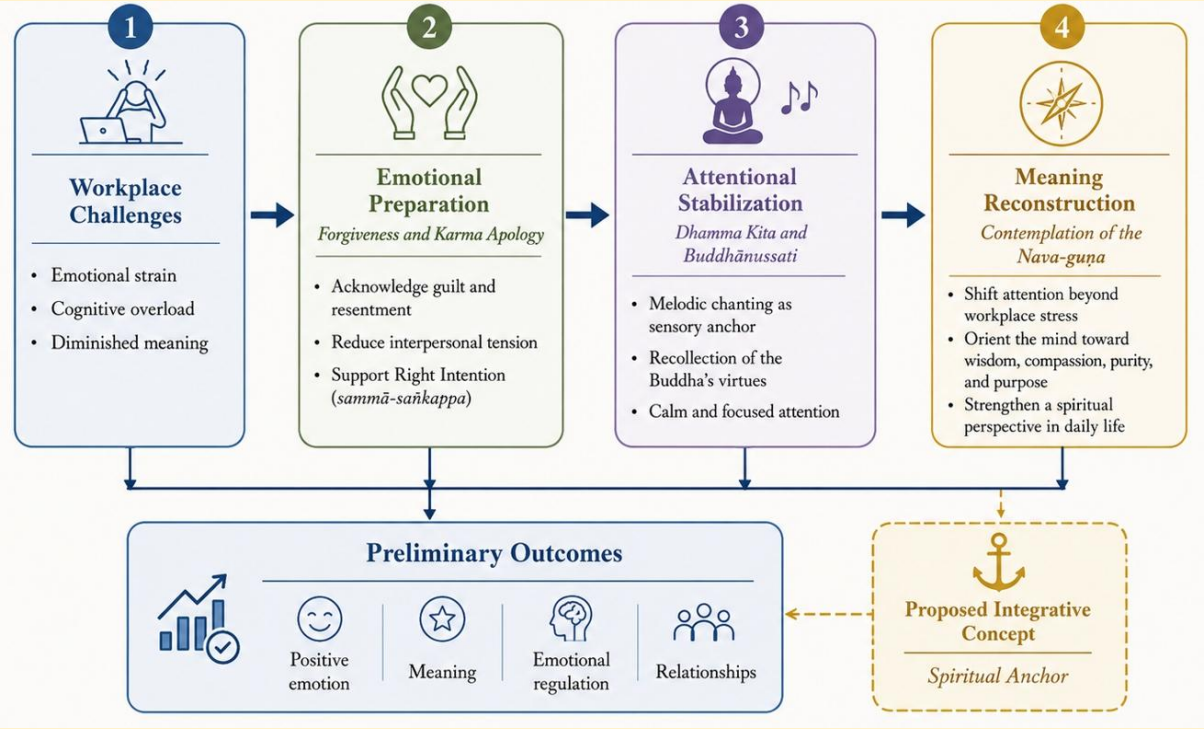


Figure 5. Buddhānussati Spiritual Anchor Model for Emotional Well-Being among Working Professionals

A second contribution is the proposed *Cleansing-before-Cultivating* sequence. The model begins with forgiveness and karmic-apology practices intended to help participants acknowledge guilt, resentment, interpersonal conflict, and unresolved emotional tension before engaging in gratitude-based recollection. This sequence is grounded in the Buddhist principle of *sammā-saṅkappa* (Right Intention), particularly the cultivation of non-ill will. The findings indicate that preparatory reflection may foster a more receptive psychological state conducive to cultivating gratitude, appreciative joy, and respectful interpersonal engagement. However, because the study did not test each intervention component separately, this sequence should be regarded as a proposed developmental mechanism rather than a confirmed causal pathway.

The study also identifies *Dhamma Kita*—melodic chanting—as an accessible delivery format for contemplative practice. Rhythmic audio may help working professionals sustain attention and engage with *Buddhānussati* more readily than through unguided silent practice. By focusing on the *Nava-guṇa*, or Nine Virtues of the Buddha, participants were encouraged to reframe stressful experiences through a spiritually meaningful perspective. The brief daily format further demonstrated the practical feasibility of integrating contemplative practice into demanding work schedules.

Taken together, these elements form the *Buddhānussati Spiritual Anchor Model*, consisting of three interconnected processes: emotional preparation through forgiveness, attentional stabilization through melodic recollection, and meaning reconstruction through contemplation of the Buddha's virtues. Improvements in positive emotion, meaning, emotional regulation, and relationships provide preliminary support for this framework. Nevertheless, concepts such as "Mental Immunity" and *pabhassara-citta* should be understood as interpretive Buddhist constructs rather than directly measured clinical outcomes. Further controlled research is required to confirm the model's mechanisms and long-term effects.

Conclusion

This study developed and preliminarily evaluated a 14-day Buddhānussati-based gratitude practice program for working professionals. The program responded to reported challenges involving emotional fatigue, distraction, social isolation, performance anxiety, and reduced meaning. Its distinctive structure placed forgiveness and khama-kamma reflection before guided Buddhānussati and Dhamma Kita, followed by a period of integration into daily routines.

Descriptive results showed increases across the reported well-being dimensions, with the largest mean changes in Positive Emotion and Meaning. Participant reflections also suggested that the program was manageable, emotionally supportive, and relevant to workplace experience. These findings support the feasibility of translating Buddhist contemplative principles into brief, accessible practices for contemporary professionals.

The evidence remains preliminary. The small purposive sample, high baseline scores, reliance on self-report, short duration, lack of a control group, and absence of inferential statistics preclude causal or clinical claims. The program should therefore be described as a promising developmental framework rather than a proven intervention. Its strongest contribution is the Cleansing–Cultivating–Stabilizing Model, which offers a testable structure for future research on forgiveness, Buddhist recollection, gratitude, and emotional well-being.

Suggestions

Future research should expand the longitudinal scope and methodological diversity of this study to validate the long-term sustainability of the Mental Immunity effect. While the 14-day protocol was sufficient for initial habit formation, additional research over six to twelve months is necessary to assess the robustness of the Spiritual Anchor during significant life transitions or organizational crises. Comparative studies may also investigate the efficacy of the Cleansing-before-Cultivating sequence across various cultural and religious contexts. For example, they could see if secular forgiveness practices work just as well when combined with different types of contemplative gratitude. Employing neuroimaging techniques (e.g., fMRI) or physiological indicators, such as heart rate variability (HRV), would provide objective biological evidence of how Dhamma Kita stabilizes the autonomic nervous system in high-stress populations.

To prevent employee burnout, human resources and company leaders should incorporate this Micro-practice strategy into their wellness initiatives. This 14-day structured approach seamlessly integrates into professionals' daily lives, enabling businesses under significant stress to implement it effectively. Experience Tranquility Breaks incorporates sensory-rich techniques such as singing, designed to help employees unwind after making significant decisions. By fostering Meaning and Positive Emotion through gratitude-based programs, leaders can enhance employee engagement, reduce hostility among coworkers, and cultivate a more harmonious workplace.

Mental health specialists and public health authorities are advised to use this integrated framework as a transdiagnostic tool to bolster emotional resilience among vulnerable groups. The effectiveness of the Forgiveness and Karma Apology preliminary phase suggests that clinical interventions for depression and anxiety could be significantly enhanced by addressing residual guilt and animosity before the application of positive psychology techniques. Additionally, the creation of digital health platforms, such as AI-driven applications or virtual reality environments that integrate the Nava-guṇa cognitive reframing framework, can improve accessibility for individuals in remote or underserved regions. By positioning the Luminous Mind model as a form of "Emotional Hygiene," public health initiatives can empower individuals to maintain their own

mental security and psychological flourishing in an increasingly fragmented digital world.

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