

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTONOMOUS PARENTING STYLE,  
MINDFULNESS LEVEL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

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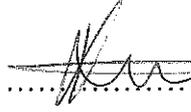
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The relationship between autonomous parenting style, mindfulness level and  
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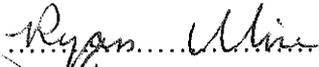
Özerklik veren ebeveynlik stili, bilinçli farkındalık ve psikolojik sağlık arasındaki ilişki

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4) Self Determination Theory

## **Abstract**

This thesis explored the relationship among autonomy support by parents, mindful awareness and psychological well-being (levels of depression, anxiety and stress). The data was collected from 130 undergraduates: 94 of them female and 36 of them male. Firstly, correlation analysis was run for examining the relationship among autonomy support by parents, mindful awareness and levels of depression, anxiety and stress. Secondly, multiple regression analyses were conducted to explore how much of the variance accounted for psychological well-being (stress, anxiety and depression symptoms) by the paternal and maternal autonomy support and/or mindfulness and also how much of the variance is accounted for mindful awareness by the paternal and maternal autonomy support. Independent samples t-test was conducted to explore professional psychological help's contribution to any changes regarding mindful awareness level and psychological well-being (depression, anxiety and stress symptoms). Results showed that maternal autonomy support predicted higher mindfulness level and psychological well-being except stress level but paternal autonomy support did not predict psychological well-being at all. Also, results showed that professional psychological help contributed significantly to lower levels of stress. The findings of this study give insights into the understanding of parenting styles in terms of providing experience of momentary thoughts, emotions and psychologically functional being.

## Özet

Bu tez çalışmasında otonomi (özerklik) veren ebeveynlik stili, bilinçli farkındalık ve psikolojik sağlık arasındaki ilişki incelenmiştir. Veriler 94'ü kadın ve 36'sı erkek olan 130 lisans öğrencisinden toplanmıştır. Otonomi (özerklik) veren ebeveynlik stili, bilinçli farkındalık ve psikolojik sağlık arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek için korelasyon analizi kullanılmıştır. Bu değişkenler arasındaki ilişkinin gücünü incelemek için çoklu regresyon analizleri kullanılmıştır. Ek olarak, alınan psikolojik desteğin bilinçli farkındalık ve psikolojik sağlık (depresyon, anksiyete ve stres seviyeleri) üzerindeki etkisini incelemek için t-test kullanılmıştır. Sonuçlar ebeveynler tarafından sağlanan otonomi ve bilinçli farkındalık seviyesi arasında pozitif bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Diğer bir yandan, anne tarafından sağlanan otonomi ile anksiyete ve depresyon seviyeleri arasında negatif bir ilişki bulunmuştur. Buna ek olarak, baba tarafından sağlanan otonomi seviyesinin psikolojik sağlık ile önemli bir ilişkisi olmadığı bulunmuştur. Alınan psikolojik desteğin stres seviyesi üzerinde bir etkisi olduğu görülmüştür. Bu tez otonomi sağlayan ebeveynlik stilinin farkındalık ve psikolojik sağlık ile ilişkisini inceleyerek ebeveynlerin tutumlarına yönelik entegratif bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır.

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## Table of Content

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. Background Information for the Topic .....	2
1.2. Statement of the Problem .....	6
2. Literature Review.....	8
2.2 Parenting Styles and Self Determination Theory.....	9
2.2.1. Attachment theory .....	9
2.2.2. Parenting styles and earlier research .....	9
2.2.3. Authoritative parenting and need for autonomy .....	13
2.3. Mindfulness and Being Mindfully Aware.....	17
2.3.1 The relationship between autonomy, awareness and mindfulness.....	17
2.3.2. Relation of autonomy and secure attachment with ‘repetition compulsion’.....	18
2.3.3. Being mindful and concentrating on ‘here and now’ .....	19
2.3.4. The relation with self-worth and self-esteem.....	22
2.3.5. Transcending the sense of self; Integration with Buddhist perspective.....	24
2.4. The Symptoms of Anxiety, Stress and Depression.....	25
2.5. The Possible Effects of Having Received Professional Psychological Help .....	27
2.6. Conclusion.....	28
3. Method .....	32
3.1. Design .....	32
3.2. Subjects .....	33
3.3. Instruments.....	34
3.3.1. Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS).....	34

3.3.2. Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) .....	35
3.3.3. Depression Stress Anxiety Scale (DASS).....	36
3.3.4. Demographical Information .....	36
3.4. Procedure.....	37
4. Results.....	39
4.1. Description of the Sample .....	39
4.2. Results related to the Hypotheses .....	40
5. Discussion .....	44
5.1. On the Relationship between Autonomous Parenting and Mindful Awareness ..	44
5.3. On the Relationship between Mindful Awareness and Psychological	
Well-Being .....	45
5.4. On the Difference in the Findings between Maternal and Paternal Support for	
Autonomy.....	45
5.5. On the Relationship between Autonomous Parenting and Levels of Stress .....	50
5.6. On the Relationship between Professional Psychological Help and Levels of	
Stress .....	51
5.7. Limitations and Implications for Further Research .....	52
5.8. Conclusion.....	53
6. References.....	55
Appendices.....	62
Appendix A: Demographics Form.....	63
Appendix B: Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS).....	64
Appendix C: Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS).....	67
Appendix D: Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS).....	69

### List of Tables

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample depending on the Demographic Variables.....	39
Table 2: Correlations among Maternal and Paternal Autonomy Scores, Mindful Awareness Level, Levels of Depression, Anxiety and Stress.....	40
Table 3: Directional Relationship Found between Maternal and Paternal Support for Autonomy, Mindful Awareness Level and Levels of Depression, Anxiety and Stress..	42
Table 4: Frequencies and T-test Values for the Subjects who Received and Did Not Received Professional Psychological Help.....	43

## 1. Introduction

As a scientific discipline, psychology has been interested in searching, exploring and detailing the development of human behavior and experience. The research on human development and experience is mostly concerned with the concepts of socialization and adaptation to the environment. Socialization is an important issue for investigating growth oriented demonstrations of human development because it consists of both the family and society dynamics that can be adapted from birth to death.

In the case of socialization through family, most of the researchers have assumed that the relationship with our parents in the beginning of life is critical for the relationships we built in the rest of our lives. The studies have found that our social and relational capacities are constructed by the interaction with our parents or caregivers (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007, Bowlby, 1973, Winnicott, 1965, Deci, Ryan, 2000, Ryan, 1993). The relationship within the family, the reactions from our parents and internalization of the parents' attitudes have been used by clinicians and researchers as essential issues for finding appropriate and meaningful answers for the disabilities and problems in interpersonal relationships, fluctuations in psychological mood and well-being, also for psychological disorders.

In addition to these concepts, "awareness" is another important issue related to the development of social and relational capacities. This concept has been mostly explored based on mindfulness. Through being attentive and aware of emotions, thoughts and behaviors, people can enhance the present moment so that they can easily focus on interpersonal relationships and their role in social life. Being aware is also important to deal with stress and improve psychological well-being because focusing on

present moment helps people to reduce ruminative thoughts and the coping resource is used only to solve present moment activities (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007, Ryan, Brown, 2003). So, the growth of awareness within the family can help to reduce stress and enhance psychological health.

In the light of these issues and researches, this study attempts to analyze the parenting styles, awareness based on mindfulness and psychological well-being. The relationship between parenting style and anxiety, depressive and stress symptoms and mindfulness will be analyzed. The primary objective of the study is to determine whether parenting style predicts dispositional mindfulness and psychological well-being based on Self-Determination Theory (Deci, Ryan, 1985).

### **1.1. Background Information for the Topic**

Parenting styles and child-rearing behaviors have always been important issues for psychological research and clinicians. Accordingly, most studies have found that our social and relational capacities are constructed by the interaction with our parents or caregivers (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007, Deci&Ryan, 2000, Ryan, 1993). Thus, the parents' behaviors and attitudes towards the child (meeting the child's needs and granting a responsive and supportive environment for the child) are assumed to be critical for the development of individuality and autonomous being (Bowlby, 1973, Winnicott, 1965). Related to all these research and assumptions, self-determination theory (SDT) is developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan (1985).

SDT is based on the contradiction between internalized motivation and external controlling behaviors. Founders of the theory have explained that the cultural and social factors (not only parents) may affect people's decisions, initiatives or motives in both positive and negative ways so that their psychological well-being and individuality may

be influenced by these external factors (Ryan, Deci, 2000). Related to basic needs to be met in the beginning of life, SDT has asserted that competency, autonomy and relatedness are the basic needs that should be supported for a child's motivation and engagement in activities. Autonomous behavior has been described as experiencing volition and ownership in one's initiations for action. The sense of autonomy may be impaired when people are controlled compellingly or seductively (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007). The dynamic mechanism of introjection plays an important role for the development of autonomy and relatedness. In the first years of life, when the child begins to interact with the external world, he/she internalizes the behavior and the relationship models so that his/her sense of self can be constructed. The regulatory capacity of the self is also formed by the interaction with the caregivers and their attitudes towards the child's behaviors so that in the absence of the parents, the child can sooth herself/himself against the dangers of the world. Thus, if the caregivers have a controlling style and offer warmth and love only when the child behaves according to their wishes, the child begins to create a self-worth based on the contingent regard of significant others. Since the external regard becomes important, self-regulatory capacity is poorly developed so that in the following years, the intrinsic motivation is directed by external evaluations of successes and failures. Introjection mechanism is developed and the wishes, evaluations of the others are taken as the realistic perceptions and parts of the self (Ryan, Brown, 2003). As a result, social factors, especially parenting styles, can play a critical role in an individual's self-development.

Awareness is another important issue related to self-enhancement and motivation. In a loving and autonomy-supportive environment where the child's behaviors are mirrored and resonated by the caregivers, the child begins to develop self

observing capacity through external reactions. Since, the unbiased reactions and authenticity are reflected to the child, his/her sense of self can be constructed by realistic perceptions. In the following years, the person can be aware of herself/himself realistically and her/his self-worth does not fluctuate depending upon the external circumstances (Ryan, Brown, 2003). Mindfulness is a concept that is claimed to be closely related to awareness. Researchers have defined the concept of mindfulness as being aware and attentive to the experiences happening in the present moment. The thoughts coming through the people's minds or the experiences occurring in outer world should not be criticized or judged. Being mindful is being attentive and aware in an accepting way. Thus, this concept makes an individual experience the sense of self and perceived regard of significant others just as the mental activities (mental operations of the mind such as thinking) (Baer et al., 2006). Self-observing and regulating capacity play an important role so that these mental activities can be observed and regulated by the deeper self. By observing these mental activities in an accepting and nonjudgmental way, the person is able to differentiate his/her perception of personality from the perceived regard of significant others. In this way, he/she begins to analyze the attitudes and behaviors of others in an objective way before criticizing them in a subjective way and filtering everything depending on his/her subjective opinions. Thus, the 'subject' (the judged regard of significant others) becomes 'object' that can be screened by the reality of the self. So, the individual can observe the mental activities as an object, that is, they are not seemed as embedded in his/her mind but they are floating around the mind (Carmody et al., 2008).

The subject of awareness related to both parenting style and mindfulness can have an effect on rumination and the symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression. The

studies have found that mindfulness is correlated with more autonomous regulation and less introjection (Ryan, Brown, 2003). So, not being judgmental to the facts and the thoughts, accepting all of them can bring out greater satisfaction with oneself and higher psychological well-being. By being aware and not criticizing, the reality is not filtered through distorted perception of interpersonal interactions and contingent regard of others so that the inner conflict reduces and affect regulation can be done properly. Maladaptive defenses such as avoidance that is mostly common in anxiety due to negative emotional conditions can be replaced with more adaptive coping mechanism by mindfulness (Taylor et al., 2011). As a result, being mindful and aware reduces stress and anxiety. In the case of parenting style, related to the assumption that less controlling and more authentic parents provide a supportive and autonomous environment for their children, the children grow up by being endowed with a large set of resources to deal with stress. In the absence of their parents, the child can manage the threat coming from outside and sooth herself/himself by the help of high self-regulating capacity. So, anxiety and depressive symptoms which are mostly associated to the distortions in perception of the inner self and outer world can be less (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007).

Depending on the research about theoretical models and the related issues mentioned above, the need for more studies about three main concepts (parenting styles, mindfulness and psychological well-being) seems to be clear. In addition, brief mindfulness training methods have been used in laboratory setting to search for the effect on reducing stress, but, since the relaxation methods and exercises are variable, the direct effect of being mindful cannot be found. So, apart from doing a laboratory research and searching for a direct effect, this study will focus on the exploration of a

meaningful relationship between these three concepts. Also, taking the perception of parenting styles as a predictor may be useful for understanding the base and development of awareness and acceptance so that this may have an important role on reducing stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms.

Finally, having received professional psychological help is an important issue to reduce levels of depression, anxiety and stress. In addition, most psychotherapeutic methods are based on the 'here and now' relationship between the patient and the therapist. Long-term psychotherapy may have an effect on reducing the levels of anxiety, depression and stress by focusing on momentary thoughts and behaviors of the patient through the sessions. Thus, taking the professional psychological help as a predictor for higher mindful awareness and psychological well-being may be useful for both the patient and the therapist to understand the possible reasons for defense mechanisms and past experiences.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

In Turkey, there exist some studies that have investigated the concept of autonomy and awareness based on the self-determination theory (Kocayörük, 2012, Özyeşil, Arslan, Kesici, Deniz, 2011). Although these studies reveal invaluable data, more research has to be made because the studies in Turkey have mostly explored and been interested in the standardization of the scales and comparing the questionnaires.

This study aims to understand and explain the undergraduates' perceived parenting style (related to their own parents) and its relation with awareness and psychological health. Özyeşil, Arslan, Kesici and Deniz (2011) have found a significant negative correlation between mindful awareness and stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms on a sample of 302 undergraduates. There may be so many factors apart from

mindful awareness and stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms that might have affected the relationship mentioned in the study. So, this study, by adding the parental attitudes and styles as a predictor may provide an additional light to the existing studies.

In this study, the correlation between autonomous parenting style, mindfulness and psychological well-being (stress, anxiety and depression level) will be explored.. Based on SDT, autonomy, relatedness and competency associated with parenting style and their relations to being mindfully aware will be explored. Also, dispositional mindfulness is hypothesized to be correlated with decreased levels of anxiety, depression and stress symptoms. So, the relationship among parenting style and levels of anxiety, depression and stress and mindfulness will be analyzed.

To conclude, this study will help us to understand the relation between people's perceptions of early relationships with their parents and psychological well-being. Also, the relation between having received professional psychological help, mindful awareness level and psychological well-being will be explored. Exploring these and being aware is important because psychotherapeutic methods are mostly dependent on the here-and-now relationship with the therapist in the sessions. For recognizing and acknowledging the role of ruminative thoughts, maladaptive defenses and fluctuations in self-worth in therapy and analyzing them related to mindfulness and awareness may be beneficial for therapeutic approaches and treatment period.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. General Introduction**

This study explores 130 undergraduates' perceptions about the early relationships with their parents and their relation with mindful awareness and psychological well-being at İstanbul Bilgi University and other convenient universities in İstanbul. Their perceptions about their parents' rearing styles will help us to analyze their relation to their mindful awareness and stress, anxiety and depression levels. In addition, professional psychological help will be explored in terms of its contribution to any changes in mindful awareness level and levels of depression, stress and anxiety.

In this study, three concepts (the parenting styles, mindfulness and levels of stress, anxiety depressive) will be analyzed based on Self-Determination Theory (SDT). In this section, firstly, parenting styles, attitudes and their possible consequences will be described. According to SDT, three basic needs that are autonomy, relatedness and competency will be explained and their connection to interpersonal relations and psychological well-being will be discussed by exploring some theoretical models. Secondly, mindfulness, especially mindful awareness and its relation to SDT will be described. Lastly, psychological well-being and its relation with parenting styles and SDT will be discussed. Psychological well-being will be explored by explaining reported maladaptive defense mechanisms and possible symptoms that may cause dysfunction in a person's life. Then their possible relations with parenting styles and mindful awareness will be discussed.

## **2.2. Parenting Styles and Self Determination Theory**

### **2.2.1 Attachment theory**

The relationship between child and parents/caregivers has been taken into consideration to analyze the future interpersonal relations and psychological well-being. In the studies, i.e. the observations of Bowlby (1973, 1980), it had been found that the attachment styles of people are constructed depending on the attachments built in early phases of life. In the developmental period, the child's relations with the primary caregivers are assumed to be very essential for his/her future relations with others. Most of the researchers have analyzed the attachment concept and by the help of these studies the interactions between the caregiver and the child have begun to be seen as the predictors of the interpersonal relations in the adult life (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, Deci, 2000).

According to the observations and studies about attachment styles, the dominant types are found as; secure, avoidant, ambivalent and disorganized (Ainsworth, 1978, Main, Solomon, 1986). Through analyzing caregiver-infant relationship, the researchers have begun to discuss the effects on adult relations so, in 1980s; adult attachment styles have been categorized as secure, avoidant or anxious-ambivalent on the one hand and secure, dismissive, preoccupied, or fearful on the other (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, Deci, 2000). The anxiety/avoidance based relationship has been found as the predictor of maladaptive defenses and stress whenever there is an emotion arousing stimuli, in future relations of an adult. The secure type, however, defines a warm, responsive and autonomy granting environment for a child-caregiver relationship and later for an adult relationship. In early relations with the caregivers, the child can develop the feeling that her/his needs can be met and her/his behaviors, signals can be understood. The infant,

step by step, learns to improve his/her self-regulation capacity so that he/she may sooth himself/herself in the absence of the caregivers (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, Deci, 2000, Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007). The most important thing in this relationship can be ‘autonomy’ which is related to awareness, acceptance and functionality and also categorized as one of the basic needs by self-determination theory (Ryan, Deci, 1985).

### **2.2.2. Parenting styles and earlier research**

In the case of parenting behaviors and parent-infant relationship, Baumrind (1967, 1971) has developed a theory of parenting styles. Her theory was mostly based on the socialization of the child and the role of the parents in this process. According to this theory, parenting styles are divided into three main categories; authoritarian, authoritative and permissive based on responsiveness and demandingness dimensions (Darling, Steinberg, 1993).

Earlier than parenting styles theory, this socialization concept has also been investigated by psychodynamic theorists. By adding another aspect as emotional bond, they have focused on the internal world of the child which is mostly affected by the emotional relationship with the parent. Psychosexual, psychosocial and personality development of the child are taken into account. Based on Freudian theory, the researchers, who have given priority to the psychodynamic perspective on child development, have investigated the libidinal and biological needs of the infant and the conflict which is inevitable in parent-child relationship. They argued that this conflictual relationship between the parents’ desires and the infant’s needs constructs the strength and borders of ego and superego, the latter of which is mostly based on societal rules and parental demands. The responsiveness and demandingness concepts are considered as the desires of the parents. Thus, the first relationship constructed in

infant's life is taken as mostly unidirectional relationship. The differences in parental attitudes are essential so that the research and observations are mostly based on parents' behaviors and practices. They also have argued that the environment in which the infant's desires and needs are fulfilled and mirrored, the warmth, love and nurture are given unconditionally, thus the child can develop and internalize the soothing capacity and self-regulation of the parent can help the child to manifest ego strength and autonomy (Darling, Steinberg, 1993, Soenens, Vansteenkiste, 2005).

On the other hand, learning theorists and behaviorists have tried to conceptualize the parenting styles by doing research on parents' behaviors. Parenting practices has been conceptualized as a way to capture the differences in child's development. These practices can be defined as quantitative behaviors that are expressed to the child when there is a goal towards socialization, achievement, relations with peers and independence. The outcome of the practices in child's development is essential because the behaviors are structured depending on the prediction of the consequences. In addition to goals, the practices can also been differentiated and categorized due to tolerance, need for control, applying rules and punishment. The observations and analyzes was mostly based on the feedback and reinforcement by parents towards the children's behaviors. Both the psychoanalytical and behaviorist/learning perspective agree that the attitudes and beliefs about parenting, the child's temperament are all important during the period of development (Darling, Steinberg, 1993).

Baumrind has set a different perspective on child development. Her theory has captured many factors including parenting behaviors and practices and more importantly, she has analyzed these behaviors and practices in a combination. The 'psychological control' determinant has been added to examine the different styles of

parents (authoritative, authoritarian and permissive) and it has been found that the behaviors or practices including 'control' may be distinguished depending on the parents' attitudes toward the child. Thus, rather than analyzing every factor as a different stimuli, she has examined the identified factors in a combination so as to analyze the effect on one another (Baumrind & Black, 1967). Also, considering bidirectional relationship between the parent and the child, she discriminated the parents' attitudes towards the child and child's influence on his/her parents. In earlier theories, the influence of the child had not been counted as a variable. Thus, through examining the effects separately, she has asserted that, in authoritative parenting, the feedback, support and formulating the desired behaviors of the child may make the child understand and realize the appropriate response to her/his parents so that both the parents' and the child's attitudes may be altered. In the case of 'control', since the reciprocity in the relationship is essential and the parent helps the child to perceive the articulation of 'control' concept through explanation and formulations, the child may develop an independent and autonomous sense of being. More importantly, by the help of his/her first relation partners, he/she may understand the bidirectionality and responsibility in interpersonal relationships (Lewis, 1981).

Turning back to responsiveness and demandingness, the parenting styles has been defined as a subset of the definition of these concepts. Being responsive has been explained as the realization and acceptance of the child's independence being and measured by the contingent reinforcement by the parents. On the other hand, in relation with the socialization of the child, when a parent's demanding is high, he/she wants his/her child to socialize with the external world and also helps the child as an agent (Darling, Steinberg, 1993). Later, Maccoby and Martin (1983) have suggested another

aspect such as ‘warmth’ including the dimension of ‘responsiveness’. Warmth is distinguished slightly from contingent reinforcement, that is, it is explained as giving unconditional sensitivity and affection towards child’s signals, needs and behaviors (Maccoby, Martin, 1983).

### **2.2.3. Authoritative parenting and need for autonomy**

Based on the predictions and aspects mentioned above, autonomy, warmth, relatedness and competence concepts have been described. As mentioned before, authoritative parents create an environment in which autonomy is granted. An authoritative parent supports the reciprocal communication, does apprehensible explanations and offers explanations for his/her attitudes. Independence is encouraged within the borders of reasoned rules and policy. Thus, while autonomy is supported, the need for secure base and protection is not ignored. Conformity is not imposed by strict rules and limitations. In addition, the parent is able to distinguish between the child’s desires and the rights of an adult. The child’s and the parent’s wishes for omnipotence are not always supported. The parent does not exert unquestionable thoughts and behaviors, but also, he/she opens a way of argumentation and communication by explaining the faults that he/she can experience (Baumrind, 1968, Darling, Steinberg, 1993).

The studies and the child-parent observations have demonstrated that authoritative parenting mostly captures ‘autonomy’ as an important need. In early life, the emotional bond and the relatedness between the parents and the child should be constructed optimally so that the parents assume that the child has internalized the warmth, security and autonomy, even if they are not around their child. So, they may

assume their child can act individually and build a relationship with others without them (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007).

Autonomy refers to the ability to have choices for action and experience, being independent if it is necessary and having owned rights for living. Thus, autonomy support is essential in early development since the concept underlies the construction of being an independent individual (Soenens, Vansteenkiste, 2005). Autonomy may be encouraged when the parent/caregiver help the child to develop his/her own agenda for living, initiate his/her actions and explore the world (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, Deci, 2000). In addition, autonomy may be established by offering reasonable answers and formulations in relation to the child's demands and behaviors, understanding and mirroring the child's emotions and feelings and being able to see the outer world in child's viewpoint (Ryan, Deci, Grolnick, La Guardia, 2006). Thus, the parent should be empathic, propose alternatives for solutions and actions, also, by not being restrictive, he/she should support the child to be responsible for his behaviors and attitudes (Joussemet, Landry, Koestner, 2008).

Being autonomous also fosters self-regulation and self-soothing capacities. Self-regulating capacity refers to being able to regulate and control the emotional arousal and thoughts. The child can regulate his/her internal world if he/she realizes own desires and wishes, accepts the failures and copes with the feelings of shame and guilt. Related to these, self-regulating mechanisms work well with self-soothing capacities. As Winnicott (1965) has demonstrated, self-soothing capacity is an essential feature for development of 'sense of self'. This capacity can be encouraged by the parents in early life. The child observes the parent/caregiver as a part of the unconstructed self and she/he begins to internalize reflected warmth, protection and care as the primary internal representations

of the self. Since the sense of self cannot be perceived as separated from the self of the caregiver, the soothing/comforting capacity of the caregiver is seen as the capacity of the infant. Thus, internal representations of the related object (the caregiver) are integrated by the infant in time so that, gradually, the sense of self can be constructed independently (Winnicott, 1965).

In addition, intrinsic motivation is another important concept which is significantly related to socialization and exploration. As mentioned above, if the child is provided with the possible choices and answers for the questions and curiosity about the environment, he/she will be able to develop a sense of independent self and autonomy. Based on self-determination theory, researchers have argued that the individual has a tendency for intrinsic motivation but it can be altered (diminished or increased) by the external factors (the effect of the parents or society) (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000). Therefore, if the autonomy is encouraged in a way that is mentioned, the intrinsic motivation for activities may be fostered so that even uninteresting things, that should be done in order to be functional in society, for example; doing homework or being neat, may be welcomed by the development of intrinsic motivation (Soenens, Vansteenkiste, 2005). As a result, the need for external urges for internal motivation becomes unnecessary.

Finally, the internalization mechanism plays an important role in the need for autonomy. The main purpose, that should be considered, is internalization for the socialization and independence of the child. This mechanism underlies the adjustment for the uninteresting social activities. Almost all people have a motivation for pursuing the enjoyable activities but in the case of obligatory ones, we all need a different level or kind of motivation that encourages us. To be successful, to gain appreciation from

others and to conform to the rules of the society, the child acts depending on the internally integrated representations of the societal values and rules that are the parts of constructed self. This process can be carried out by an optimal internalization (Joussemet, Landry, Koestner, 2008). According to SDT, by the internalization process, the children adopt the values and rules of the external world since these rules are perceived as the parts of the coherent self like in the process of self-regulation and self-soothing. Speaking of the children's omnipotence that is not fully supported during development period, these well internalized and understood values and beliefs gradually become the pieces of their world that can be controlled (Soenens, Vansteenkiste, 2005).

Furthermore, relatedness and competence are the other basic needs that play critical roles for human development. The need for competence reflects the people's seeking to take initiative in everyday activities. Rather than behavioral control, the competence need can be underestimated if the parents posit rigorous psychological control on their children. That is, if they hold their children responsible of all the guilt and shame about the problems in their relationship and they do not give possible explanations, the children, in turn, may think that they cannot be successful or satisfy their parents whatever they do. In future relationships, the same underlying messages can be conveyed so that the effectiveness in a relationship or in an activity cannot be established. On the other hand, the warmth is significantly related to 'the need for relatedness'. Being empathic, giving warmth and love unconditionally may create an environment in which the emotional bond can be constructed apart from being compliant to the authorities. So, the parents can establish involvement so that the child does not have internal conflict with destructive feelings such as envy and hostility in his/her future relationships (Soenens, Vansteenkiste, 2010).

As a result, the autonomy support, self-regulation and self-soothing capacity, intrinsic motivation, warmth and involvement are the basic concepts that should be considered while analyzing parenting styles and behaviors. All the concepts explained above are essential for the construction of the ‘independent’ self. This independency should be differentiated from being omnipotent and delinquent. In this way, constructing an ‘independent’ self means being aware of the self and the borders of the others so that the borders of the own self can be established in an appropriate way. Overvaluing external resources may diminish and self worth may be enhanced by the development of the autonomous self in a warm, supportive, empathic and optimal control granting environment. Speaking of ‘awareness’ issue, there is another concept that should be considered in a detailed manner, which is ‘mindfulness’.

### **2.3. Mindfulness and Being Mindfully Aware**

#### **2.3.1. The relationship between autonomy, awareness and mindfulness**

Based on SDT, support of autonomy is a strong predictor of mindful awareness and attention. Autonomous thinking and behaving is very much related to initiation and volition in every day actions. Since the psychological or behavioral control is rarely used in the developmental period of the child, in the following years the person can initiate his/her actions and thoughts without a force to control them. The person does not need to conceal his/her ‘core/true’ self because it is encouraged and constructed in childhood period (Ryan, Deci, 2000). The core self is stable and not changeable depending on the circumstances of the external world or the values attributed by the others. The autonomous individual has a high level of ego-strength (Hodgins, Knee, 2002). Ego functioning cannot be easily disintegrated by the effects coming from the outside. Accordingly, self-regulation capacity is high (Brown, Ryan, Creswell, 2007).

As defined above, the environment that provides autonomy, warmth and unconditional love for the children is critical for the future development of mindful awareness (Ryan, 2005). In addition to self-regulation and self-soothing capacity, the capacity of self-observation can be internalized if the parents/caregivers have the ability to mirror the child's feelings and behaviors appropriately. Thus, self-observation may be achieved if the child can perceive that the incoherent and blurred emotions or thoughts in his/her inner world have meaningful reflections and optimal sensations in the external world, that is, in caregiver's mind. So, the child has an opportunity to observe his/her reactions by the help of the caregiver and finally, to internalize the feelings and thoughts (Fonagy & Target, 1997). This reflection and internalization circle helps the child to develop awareness capacity as well. In a combination with regulative capacity, the child does not experience an emotion arousing or thought evoking stimulus as a source of anxiety or a barrier in his/her life because he/she has the capacity to observe, evaluate and regulate the flow of these emotions and thoughts (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007). In the following years, as an adult, he/she may establish secure relationships with people. In this way, mindfulness is closely related to the concept of secure attachment style and autonomy support. The mirroring and resonating capacity of the person may ease the tension that may evoke in a relationship and he/she may soothe both himself/herself and his/her partner easily (Cordon & Feeney, 2007).

### **2.3.2. Relation of autonomy and secure attachment with 'repetition compulsion'**

As an adult who has been developed in an environment in which the autonomy is granted and secure attachment is constructed, the person may not select the anxious or trouble making person as a partner. Since the problems are explained, most of the

conflicts are resolved and the anxiety is low during the developmental period, the compulsion to repeat the 'unpleasure' is rarely experienced (Ryan, Brown, 2003).

In psychodynamic perspective, the repetition compulsion, which plays a highly critical role in adult relationships, contains an unconscious desire to alter the unsatisfying experience of past relationship. Thus, the person unconsciously selects a troublemaking or ignoring partner in order to create the opportunity to reverse the feeling/emotion of unpleasure experienced due to an ignoring parent (Russell, 2006a). But, in securely attached relationships, the compulsion may not be observed because the parental reactions or emotions internalized are the realistic parts of the self, they are integrated in a meaningful form and the conflictual parts are examined and resolved by giving reasonable formulations so that the need for the other to sooth oneself or regulate the emotions is not experienced. On the other hand, since the relatedness and involvement are formed coherently, the person does not experience relatedness as a failure, he/she has the capacity to construct and regulate the relationship with the partner who is already not the replication of the attachment failure (Russell, 2006b).

### **2.3.3. Being mindful and concentrating on 'here and now'**

Mindfulness phenomenon has its roots in various important philosophical and psychological theories the strongest of which is Buddhism. In addition, mindfulness is very much related to humanistic, existentialistic and naturalistic approaches. It is a concept that covers and is based on most of the research and thoughts about human practice and observation (Brown, Ryan, Creswell, 2007). Mindfulness may be described by two cognitive concepts; attention and awareness which are the main focus of this study.

In a mindful condition, the person does not judge the thoughts, emotions or impulses passing through his/her mind or force himself/herself to follow their sequence. The attention to and awareness of these thoughts and emotions are experienced but the person does not try to intervene or repress these felt or thought stimuli. He/she takes part in the process but, rather than manipulating, he/she only observes his/her mind. He is only a witness to whatever thought and emotion he experiences in a given moment. In this way, the person may watch out the flow of automatic or ruminative thoughts and behaviors since these habitual reactions are not strictly identified with 'the sense of self'. (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007).

In mindfulness, present reality perception is essential. Thus, awareness is a cognitive concept that is closely related to bodily sensations and perception of the mind. 'Being aware' is the perception of the moment of both internal and external reality. Mostly, attention and awareness are coordinated when a stimulus in the environment is different enough to capture one's attention. After being aware, the person begins to attribute the subjective values to the object. Gradually, the object becomes a part of the person's past experience due to the resemblance of the feeling/emotion or image. In this kind of cognitive activity, reality is distorted in several ways. The evaluations or the values which were adopted may have an effect on our awareness and perception. As mentioned above, since the parts of the self cannot be integrated appropriately through development, the person feels an urge to integrate the perceived object into the incoherent self. This process may lead to a stigmatization or a labeling which may be adaptive most of the times. It may be adaptive because the adaptation process is easy and quick and there is no need to re-perceive the meaning or feeling (Brown, Ryan, Creswell, 2007).

On the other hand, in mindful awareness and attention processing, reality is not distorted through values or past experience. Concentrating on the 'present moment' becomes important for awareness and perception processes. The object which is being aware of is not judged depending on the self-centered evaluations and opinions. Focusing on the 'here and now' or 'present moment' does not mean blocking the thoughts, opinions or emotions which belong to past experiences. On the contrary, it means permitting the experienced or automatic thoughts, sensations, emotions and behaviors to flow freely in one's mind so that the person may watch out the flow, may be a witness to it (Brown, Ryan, Creswell, 2007). The thoughts or the emotions felt in present moment as a reaction to the attended object or event are perceived just as 'the thoughts or emotions' that are changeable due to the nature of the object/event. So, mindful awareness and attention enhances people to feel less prejudice and judgments about the external world (Niemic, Brown, Ryan, 2006).

As mentioned above, in adult relationships, the person, who has high capacity to regulate and contain the loss and suffering due to the development of secure attachment and relatedness, may perceive the related partner and the relationship as not blurred by the failures and distorted representation of the past. Depending on the self-soothing capacity, the person may realize the provisional/impermanent characteristic of the condition and sooth herself/himself whenever there is a loss or conflict in life. Since the reality is not distorted, the changing nature of external conditions is perceived accurately and the coherency and stability of 'sense of self' has been constructed, the person has the opportunity to focus on 'here and now' and analyze the problem in order to feel and cope with it (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007).

The studies based on SDT demonstrated that mindfulness is an inherent capacity. But the inherent level is not the same for everyone. And, it may alter due to developmental and rearing conditions (i.e. parenting styles mentioned above) (Brown, Ryan, 2003).

#### **2.3.4. The relation with self-worth and self-esteem**

The studies about SDT and mindfulness have found that the concentration on 'here and now' is also significantly related with self-worth and self-esteem. The parents, by providing an autonomous environment, help the child to initiate independent behaviors and thoughts, thus, to experience the external world depending on the coherent sense of self. The parts of the self are integrated in a realistic way during developmental period. Since the caregivers mirror and reflect the unconditional love and warmth, the child has built up self-worth unconditionally. External factors are not needed strongly for the self-esteem and self-worth is not changeable due to contextual effects. The interaction constructed in early life is essential for balanced self-esteem. Being judgmental, using psychological control (attributing the responsibility of guilt and shame to the child or using strict boundaries in communication) during interaction may disrupt the evolving of steady self-worth. In following years, the person may expect disapproval and he/she may be vulnerable towards the external demands so that secure relationship cannot be achieved (Kernis et al., 2000).

According to these studies, the researchers have demonstrated two kinds of self-esteem: 'contingent' and 'noncontingent'. Contingent self-esteem refers to the fluctuating self-worth due to the appreciation of successes and failures by the others/society. The noncontingent kind refers to the stability of self-worth regardless of the others' appreciation (Kernis, Brown, Brody, 2000). However, this noncontingency

does not mean that the person does not care about the evaluations and advices of the others. The difference from contingent self-worth is that, the optimal or noncontingent self-esteem provides the person to evaluate the others' perspectives as advices coming from the external world. In other words, the judgments are not experienced as the aggressive attacks or ego-boosting actions that have a critical role changing the level of self-worth. A person who has a noncontingent self-esteem is aware of the abilities and properties of the 'self', so, he/she does not need and develop a 'false self' which should be approved by the others (Ryan, Brown, 2003).

In addition, the relation between self-esteem and psychological well-being may be important. The sense of self which is being formed mostly in developmental period partly captures the evaluations, views, attributions and reactions to objects or events. The judgments and assessments represent one's self-esteem. The studies have shown that if the appraisals predicting self-esteem and self-worth are constructed in a positive way, they have more contributions to psychological well-being. On the other hand, some of the researchers have demonstrated that self concept is not a finished product but it is in process through life (Deci, Ryan, 1991, Loevinger, 1976). The person continues to integrate the experiences, values and beliefs through his/her life. So, the capacity to internalize and regulate which was established during childhood continues throughout life. Thus, the level of self-esteem is not an issue. The more important thing becomes the evaluation and integration processes. The evaluations and judgments may occupy some people's mind too much. Those are the people who have contingent self-esteem. This explains vulnerability and low psychological well-being both because of the fluctuating pattern of self-worth and also the problematic preoccupation with the concept of self (Ryan, Brown, 2003).

In dynamic view based on SDT, when self-esteem and self-worth become an important issue in one's life, this may mean that basic needs are not met enough in early childhood period. In some family environments, the parents may use conditional regard for their children, that is, they only give warmth and relatedness whenever the child obeys their rules and achieve something. This approach may lead to a feeling that the self can be worthy only when it is approved by the others and relatedness cannot be achieved if one is not worthy (Assor, Roth, Deci, 2003). So, in the following years, the person may try to fulfill the invented gaps about being worthwhile in the sense of self by the regards of others. However, the fulfillment process cannot be easily achieved because the regards of others, the events or the achievement goals are not stable and they are different from one another. The person while pursuing relatedness and involvement may find himself/herself psychologically lost and depressed (Ryan, Deci, Grolnick, 1995). Also, this process prevents growth and enhancement of the coherent self (Ryan, Brown, 2003). In addition, this process may cause risky behavior and compulsive activity which will be analyzed in the next sections in detail.

### **2.3.5. Transcending the sense of self; Integration with Buddhist perspective**

Regarding SDT and mindfulness, obsession with self-worth, either in positive or negative way, seems to be problematic. Indeed, most western psychology schools have asserted that high level of self-esteem, except the boosted one which is caused by the narcissistic split in childhood, contributes to high psychological well-being and if it is low, it may lead to a problem. Buddhist views merge well with mindfulness and SDT theories about the sense of self. Both perspectives have argued that self-worth is not an issue to be discussed and both the high and low levels of self-esteem may lead to trouble in one's life. The individuals

can be independent and realistic by trusting on inner spiritual essence, not by constructing a ‘sense of self’ based on others’ views (Ryan, Brown, 2003).

By transcending the sense of self and self-worth, SDT and Buddhist view have tried to make explanations beyond the self concept. Thus, they extended the borders of the self and have argued that people have no definite self that can be restricted and each experience in life is a reflection of ‘sense of self’. SDT has asserted that being authentic and emphatic is essential for psychological well-being and functionality in life. Related to this, the emotions or behaviors that integrate well with the realistic parts of the self (the evaluations or choices within the coherent self), if the person concentrates on the present moment and he/she is aware of what is happening. He/she does not force himself/herself to behave or feel in accordance with the others’ wishes, thus, to enhance his/her self-esteem. The important thing here is establishing the authenticity (Deci, Ryan, 2000). Likewise, in Buddhist perspective, awareness of the moment and temporary nature of earthly events and objects are considered. Actually, Buddhist view concentrates on ‘no self’ issue. In this perspective, the person believes that there is no definite or real self that should be trusted upon. Although, the unchangeable coherent self of SDT and ‘no self’ issue of Buddhism seem to represent the contrary views, they converge on the idea of mirroring and reflection of the self and temporary nature of the external factors (Ryan, Brown, 2003).

## **2.4. The Symptoms of Anxiety, Stress and Depression**

### **2.4.1. Relation with the past experience**

Returning back to the subject of attachment, studies have argued that a person may embody some level of each type. Therefore, it may be more appropriate to focus on

different dimensions that cover attachment styles such as; the perception and modeling of the self and the other or anxiety/avoidance perspective (Brennan, Clark, Shaver, 1998, La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, Deci, 2000). From anxiety/avoidance dimension perspective, also converging with the model of 'self' and 'other' perspective, the researchers have asserted the anxious or avoidant types of adult attachment may be as a result of relation problems with parents in early childhood period. In SDT, theorists have argued that the need for autonomy, relatedness and competency is inborn. Thus, through life, unmet needs, satisfaction of these needs or the level of satisfaction may decide the level of relatedness, stress or anxiety people experience in their adult relationships and their life (Deci, Ryan, 1991, 2000).

Taking stress and anxiety as the important determinants in relatedness and involvement, a person who has a history of insecure attachment, mostly tries to use psychological defenses much when encountering an emotion arousing stimulus or an event that she/he has to cope with (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003). In mindfulness perspective, the 'present moment' cannot be felt or thought because the disruption or filtering mechanism (psychological defense mechanisms) should be used in order to overcome the emotion or the event. Reality is distorted by defenses because the person, unconsciously, may think that he/she is not sufficient to relate to an object in external world, or he/she cannot be independent and free individual, if he/she feels something deep or relates to an object in external world. Thus, the 'here and now' is tried to be suppressed to experience less pain and stress, the person does not experience present moment. But on the contrary, the person feels much more pain and anxiety, if the relatedness and involvement can never be experienced (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007).

In psychodynamic view, repetition compulsion concept can be analyzed. Freud (1920) has argued that the death instinct plays a significant role in repetition compulsion. The organism (here, the person) tries to die and kill the moment by repeating the 'unpleasure'. Then, the psychoanalytic theories have argued that people re-enact because every replication of the past relation embodies the way to restore the past experience (Russell, 2006b). Thus, re-enacting the past, has a goal to restore the problematic past relationships in early life, leads to pulling the mind away from the moment and disruption of reality. As a result, this causes stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms because the process includes disappointment and mourning as well as the hope for restoration. Since it is so hard to really experience these emotions, the person develops defense mechanisms. So, killing the present moment leads to replication of anxiety or stress in people's minds (Russell, 2006a). Similar to the findings and observations of earlier research, this study assumes that the problematic relationships in childhood and thus, low level of mindful awareness leads to high levels of stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms in adult life.

#### **2.4.2. 'Introjection' rather than 'internalization'**

Autonomy granting environment is necessary in early life both for the establishment of authentic, independent self and psychological well-being. As mentioned above, controlling environment may prevent the construction of intrinsic motivation because the desire to act is precluded by the external forces. In following years, the individual may have no motivation and see the external world as a sum of tasks to be done. SDT has asserted that self-regulation capacity cannot be developed under the pressure originated from external world. Since being successful and functional in life is dependent on the regulation by the external factors, the person has to build up a

‘false self’ to be successful and emotionally strong in life (Deci, Ryan, 2000).

Contingent love and warmth is essential to understand the fluctuations in mood and unstable sense of self. If the reasons or feelings are not explained to the child, the parents are not authentic and empathic, the child’s spontaneous behaviors and thoughts are ignored, then the child begins to see his/her subjective world as worthless. For being worthy and gaining self-respect, the child begins to ‘introject’ the unformulated and inauthentic parts of others as to formulate a coherent sense of self. But he/she cannot succeed because the parts of the self tend to be changed depending on the external conditions and values of the others. In introjection, identification with the parts of the self cannot be achieved. The individual only swallows the approved emotions, values and beliefs belonging to the external world but accommodation process cannot be formed (Soenens, Vansteenkiste, 2010).

The introjection mechanism is not healthy because it is based on a conflict between desired but prevented thing and undesired but accepted thing. Socializing agents (the parents) using love-withdrawal run the risk of improving their child’s maladaptive defense mechanisms such as ‘avoidance’. The child has the inner tendency to develop an independent sense of self but has the risk of losing parental love. Thus, this process may cause the inner conflict and ambivalence in child’s inner world (Assor, Roth, Deci, 2004). The self-worth and self-esteem which are perceived as conditional and achievement based may cause vulnerability. Every interaction and relationship may diminish self-worth so that the person begins to focus on the details of interactions with the others and this may cause a rumination process. With respect to mindful awareness, the person who compulsively thinks about the words or phrases he/she has said in an interaction or a relationship may find it hard to concentrate on ‘present’ moment. Since

the 'here and now' is annihilated, self-worth is dependent on the perceived successes and failures by others and sense of self can be perceived only by excessive focus on self-worth, the person develops poor coping mechanisms. Anxiety and stress begin to develop because the person has a fear of losing self-worth depending on the changeable standards of others. Being anxious and stressful may bring out failure to proceed and being successful in life. Thus, this failure may cause to grow depressive feelings, guilt, shame, disappointment, worthlessness and hopelessness (Assor, Roth, Deci, 2004, Grolnick, Ryan, 1989).

In addition to all, parental control and conditional regard may cause to grow another maladaptive defense mechanism such as 'perfectionism'. Since the person has high standards to reach and these standards are not flexible due to misidentification with the self, the individual exerts too much effort to achieve so that this process may lead to self-harming. When these standards cannot be achieved, self-worth diminishes in a rapid way. The parental conditional regard based on performance may cause to grow maladaptive perfectionism which may then lead to depression due to the feeling of worthlessness (Soenens, Vansteenkiste, 2005).

## **2.5. The Possible Effects of Having Received Professional Psychological Help**

As mentioned in earlier sections, 'repetition compulsion' is an important phenomenon in a person's life while building relationships with others. It is assumed that if the environment in the developmental period was not 'secure' due to the attitudes of the parents, the child, as an adult in the future, may have a compulsion to repeat the 'unpleasure' in his/her relationship with the others (Ryan, Brown, 2003). In psychotherapy, especially in psychodynamic psychotherapy, the aim is to resolve the unresolved conflict related to past experiences with the parents. The therapist's role is

examining the conflictual parts and giving reasonable formulations to the patient so that the need for the other to sooth oneself or regulate the emotions is not experienced. Thus, the ones who could not built secure attachment with their parents in developmental period may resolve the conflictual relationships and find reasonable meanings for their ruminative thoughts and emotions by the help of the therapist through the sessions. The new form of attachment may be developed in a secure way so that the level of depression, anxiety and stress may be reduced. Also, by focusing on ‘here and now’ through the psychotherapy sessions, the patient may become aware of his/her momentary thoughts and emotions.

## **2.6. Conclusion**

Self Determination Theory states that autonomy, relatedness and competency are the basic needs that should be constructed in the developmental period by the parents. In an autonomous granting environment where the child’s needs are met and his/her volitions, initiations to act is supported, he/she can be aware of his/her abilities and properties so that the ‘sense of self’ can be built on realistic integration of supported parts. This volition to act may provide mindful awareness in the future. Being mindful provides a focus on momentary experiences and this awareness related to constructed autonomy enhances psychological well-being.

In light of the above mentioned studies and theories, this study analyzes the possible consequences of parenting styles on mindful awareness and psychological well-being based on SDT (Deci, Ryan, 1985, 2000). The purpose of this research is to analyze the retrospective perception of parenting styles, the level of mindfulness and the levels of stress, anxiety and depression of undergraduates in İstanbul Bilgi University and other convenient universities in İstanbul. This study also seeks to explore the

possible relations among perceived levels of mindfulness and psychological well-being by adding the type of parenting style as a predictor. In addition, having received professional psychological help is explored. The hypotheses that will be analyzed are;

1. Autonomy granting parenting style is positively related to the level of mindful awareness, i.e., as the level of perceived autonomy level increases, level of mindful awareness increases.
2. Autonomy granting parenting style and mindful awareness level are negatively related to the level of experienced stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, i.e., as the level of perceived autonomy increases, the level of experienced stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms decreases, as the level of mindful awareness increases, the level of experienced stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms decreases.
3. Having received professional psychological help contributes significantly to psychological well-being and mindful awareness level, i.e., people having received professional psychological help experience higher level of mindful awareness and lower levels of depression, anxiety and stress compared to the ones who did not receive professional psychological help.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Design

The hypotheses are tested using Pearson correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis and independent samples t-test. The variables in the correlation, multiple regression and t-test analyses are:

MA: Autonomy supported by the mother subscale score

FA: Autonomy supported by the father subscale score

ML: Mindful Awareness scale score

D: Depression subscale score

A: Anxiety subscale score

S: Stress subscale score

PH: Having Received Professional Psychological Help

A series of Pearson correlation analyses are applied in order to evaluate the association among the variables; maternal and paternal autonomy level, mindful awareness level and the levels of depression, anxiety and stress symptoms. The multiple regression model used is that of a linear regression. For, the regression analyses, first, it is of interest to evaluate how much of the variance is accounted for mindful awareness by the paternal and maternal autonomy support. Also, it is of interest to explore how much of the variance accounted for psychological well-being (stress, anxiety and depression symptoms) by the paternal and maternal autonomy support and/or mindfulness. Finally, professional psychological help is analyzed by using independent samples t-test. Its contribution to any changes regarding mindful awareness level and psychological well-being (depression, anxiety and stress symptoms) is explored.

### 3.2. Subjects

Participants in the study are 130 undergraduates aged between 18 and 25, of similar socio-educational level, who are either first, second, third or fourth year students in the universities. Overall, the sample consists of 94 women and 36 men and mean age of total sample is 22.01 ( $SD = 0,15$ ).

Sample selection rests on convenient sampling. Being between 18 and 25 years of age and being an undergraduate student were the two criteria for participating to the study. The validation and reliability testing was done with the sample of undergraduates so in this study, the same sample was used.

Seventy undergraduates from İstanbul Bilgi University participated in the study. Sixty participants (46 % of the sample) who completed the data online were also undergraduates from other programs and universities in İstanbul.

At first, the study was designed in paper and pencil format. Thus, the first sample (the students from İstanbul Bilgi University) completed the study in pencil and paper format. But, the number of subjects at İstanbul Bilgi University was not enough for the study. The data had to be much wider so the study is put online so that other students can be reached. The undergraduates from İstanbul Bilgi University participated voluntarily. One of the instructors decided to give the students extra credit for participation to the study so some of the sample had extra credit for participating this study. Eighty four of the total participants (65 % of the sample) were from Psychology Department, 27 (21 %) were from Engineering Department and the rest of the participants (14 %) were from other social sciences departments.

### 3.3. Instruments

The scales were administered in both paper -pencil form and online. Demographic Form, Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS), Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) were used.

#### 3.3.1. Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS)

The scale was designed to measure one's retrospective perceptions of the parents' autonomy support, involvement and warmth provided. POPS is a 42 items questionnaire including 21 items for mothers and 21 for fathers. From these items, 6 subscale scores are calculated: Mother Autonomy Support, Mother Involvement, and Mother Warmth, as well as Father Autonomy Support, Father Involvement, and Father Warmth (Robbins, 1994, Grolnick, Deci, & Ryan, 1997). The Autonomy Support subscales for both parents measure the parents' autonomy supporting attitudes towards their children (such as reinforcing volition to act and initiation by supporting an independent self development). Each question contains 7 grades (1 corresponds to not at all true, 4 corresponds to somewhat true, 7 corresponds to very true). The instrument was translated into Turkish by doing a reliability and validity study among undergraduates in 18 Mart University. The translation was done by two people, independent of one another, who had a high degree of familiarity with both English and Turkish. Then, the translation was again translated back to English by a bilingual supervisor. The differences that appeared were discussed and coherency was provided. The coefficient alpha values ( $\alpha$ ) were found as .91 for overall perception of mother items, .90 for mother autonomy support, .61 for mother involvement, .58 for mother warmth subscales. In addition, the internal consistency values ( $\alpha$ ) were found as .93 for total perception of father, .92 for father autonomy support, .69 for father involvement,

and .62 for father warmth subscales (Kocayörük, 2012). In this study, the coefficient alpha values ( $\alpha$ ) were found as .92 for overall perception of mother items, .84 for mother autonomy support, .86 for mother involvement, .71 for mother warmth subscales. In addition, the internal consistency values ( $\alpha$ ) were found as .95 for total perception of father, .86 for father autonomy Support, .93 for father involvement, and .80 for father warmth subscales.

### **3.3.2. Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)**

The scale was developed by Brown and Ryan (2003). The scale is designed to measure the tendency to be mindfully attended and aware of momentary experiences through life. MAAS is a 15-item self-report instrument yielding a single total score. Higher scores reflect higher levels of dispositional mindfulness. Each question contains 6 grades (almost always, very frequently, somewhat frequently, somewhat infrequently, very infrequently, almost never). The scale was translated into Turkish by Özyeşil, Arslan, Kesici, Deniz (2011). The translation of the original MAAS into Turkish was made by a professional translator who had a high degree of familiarity with both English and Turkish. Then, the translated version was modified by five professionals from psychological counseling and guidance departments and significant correlations of scores were found between English and Turkish versions. The reliability and validity of the scale was done on a total of 727 undergraduate students. The instrument was self-administered. Item total correlations showed the values above .40 about the relation for all items of the scale. The coefficient alpha and the internal consistency were found as .80 and test-retest correlation (reliability) was .86 (Özyeşil, Arslan, Kesici, Deniz, 2011). In this study, the coefficient alpha value was found as .83.

### **3.3.3. Depression Stress Anxiety Scale (DASS)**

The scale was designed to measure, define and understand the three related negative emotional states of depression, anxiety and stress (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). DASS is a 42-item self report instrument containing 14 items for each emotional states. The different emotional state items include the most commonly reported problems. The Depression scale assesses dysphoria, hopelessness, devaluation of life, self-deprecation, lack of interest/involvement, anhedonia, and inertia. The Anxiety scale evaluates autonomic arousal, skeletal muscle effects, situational anxiety, and subjective experience of anxious affect. The Stress scale assesses levels of chronic non-specific arousal. Each question contains 4 options (did not apply to me at all, applied to me to some degree, or some of the time, applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of time, applied to me very much, or most of the time). The scale was translated to Turkish by 5 people who had a high degree of familiarity with both languages. After the translation, the instrument was translated back to English and the incongruent sentences were corrected. Then, it was applied to 590 university students. The coefficient alpha value for the entire scale was .89, and for depression, anxiety and stress were .90, .92, and .92 respectively (Akin & Çetin, 2007). In this study, the coefficient alpha values were found as .92 for depression, .88 for anxiety, .92 for stress and .96 for entire scale.

### **3.3.4. Demographical Information**

The Demographics Form consisted of structured questions to obtain information on four demographic variables, which are: the gender, the age, the department, the information about whether he/she ever received professional psychological help. Professional psychological help is assumed as including both psychotherapy sessions and psychiatric intervention. This information was collected because the contribution of

professional psychological help to mindful awareness level and psychological well-being was analyzed in this study (See Appendix A).

### **3.4. Procedure**

Data was collected by the researcher. The study was conducted in a series of sessions. In each session, the researcher gave detailed information of the study and asked if the participants had any question. Part of the study was done in paper-and-pencil format in İstanbul Bilgi University at psychology and engineering departments. Some students completed the study in pencil and paper format because the researcher could only reach this number of students in İstanbul Bilgi University. The data had to be much wider so the study was put online so that a wider sample could be reached.

In İstanbul Bilgi University, first and second sessions were completed in psychology department with 40 undergraduates and the third session was completed in engineering department with 30 undergraduates by the permission of the instructors during each lecture. A package of self-report measures, including demographic information, perceptions of parents questionnaire, mindful attention awareness questionnaire and depression anxiety stress scale was completed. The survey took 10-15 minutes to conclude. Before beginning the survey, all the students signed the written informed consent form in which this study was explained.

The other part of study was completed online. The same package of self-report measures was uploaded to a secured website by the permission of the supervisor of the study. Then, the link was shared with undergraduate groups via e-mail and other social sharing websites. The informed consent was uploaded, so only the subjects who were willing to participate in the study concluded the survey. Sixty subjects completed the full survey online. For the protection of the data of the paper-and-pencil format, except

informed consent form, the participants did not write their names on questionnaires. The informed consent was given apart from the survey package. Each participant had a specific code number and this number was written on t each page of the survey. The informed consent pages of the participants and survey packages were put in different boxes. For the protection of the data in online format, the file had a security code to avoid any unwanted access. Only the researcher and the advisors had a right to access the data. The study was approved by İstanbul Bilgi University Human Subjects Ethics Committee.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Description of the Sample

Table 1 presents the distribution of the sample according to gender, department, grade and having received professional psychological help.

**Table 1.**

*Distribution of sample depending on the demographic variables*

		Total Number	PH
	Female	94	50
	Male	36	14
	Psychology	84	59
Department	Engineering	27	19
	Other	19	6
Grade (Age)	1 (aged 18-19)	57	21
	2 (aged 20-21)	27	15
	3 (aged 22-23)	27	19
	4 (aged 24-25)	19	9

PH: Having received professional psychological help

## 4.2. Results related to the Hypotheses

In this section, results related to the relation between autonomy granting parenting, mindful awareness and psychological well-being (levels of depression, anxiety and stress symptoms) are presented.

Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 predicted significant relations between maternal autonomy, paternal autonomy, mindful awareness level and psychological well-being (stress, depression, anxiety symptoms). A series of Pearson correlations were conducted in order to determine the relation among these variables. Table 2 shows the correlations among maternal and paternal autonomy perception, mindful awareness level and level of experienced depression, anxiety and stress symptoms.

**Table 2.**

*Correlations Among Maternal and Paternal Autonomy Scores, Mindful Awareness Level, Levels of Depression, Anxiety and Stress*

	MA	FA	ML	D	A	S
MA	_____					
FA	,30**	_____				
ML	,26**	,19*	_____			
D	-,36**	-,15	-,34**	_____		
A	-,32**	-,13	-,38**	,76**	_____	
S	-,17	-,15	-,29**	,68**	,80**	_____

\*\*  $p < .01$  level.

\*  $p < .05$  level.

MA: Autonomy supported by the mother subscale score

FA: Autonomy supported by the father subscale score

ML: Mindful Awareness scale score

D: Depression subscale score

A: Anxiety subscale score

S: Stress subscale score

Hypothesis 1 predicted a positive relationship between perceived autonomy and mindful awareness level. The results of the regression analysis indicated that a linear combination of perceived maternal and paternal autonomy support was significantly related to mindful awareness level,  $F(2,127) = 5.44, p < .01$ . The multiple correlation coefficient was .28, indicating that approximately 8% of the variance of mindful awareness level can be accounted by the linear combination of perceived maternal and paternal autonomy support. Thus, the findings supported hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2 predicted a negative relationship between the combination of perceived autonomy and mindful awareness level and the level of depression, anxiety and stress symptoms. The results of the regression analysis showed that a linear combination of perceived maternal and paternal autonomy support and mindful awareness level was significantly related to depression level,  $F(3,126) = 10.25, p < .01$ . The multiple correlation coefficient was .44, indicating that approximately 20% of the variance of depression level can be accounted by the linear combination of perceived maternal and paternal autonomy support and mindful awareness level.

For anxiety, a linear combination of perceived maternal and paternal autonomy support and mindfulness level was significantly related to anxiety level,  $F(3,126) = 10.56, p < .01$ . The multiple correlation coefficient was .45, indicating that approximately 20% of the variance of anxiety level can be accounted by the linear combination of perceived maternal and paternal autonomy support and mindful awareness level.

With respect to stress, a linear combination of perceived maternal and paternal autonomy support and mindful awareness level were significantly related to stress level,

$F(3,126) = 4,79, p < .01$ . The multiple correlation coefficient was .32, indicating that approximately 10% of the variance of stress level can be accounted by the linear combination of perceived maternal and paternal autonomy support and mindful awareness level.

The examination of maternal and paternal autonomy support and mindful awareness level separately showed different results summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3.**

*Directional Relationship Found between Maternal and Paternal Support for Autonomy, Mindful Awareness Level and Levels of Depression, Anxiety and Stress*

	Mindful Awareness Level	Level of Depression	Level of Anxiety	Level of Stress
Maternal Support for Autonomy	$\beta = .17^{**}$	$\beta = -2.52^{**}$	$\beta = -1.86^{**}$	$\beta = -.79$
Paternal Support for Autonomy	$\beta = .08$	$\beta = -.14$	$\beta = .00$	$\beta = -.59$
Mindful Awareness Level	_____	$\beta = -2.84^{**}$	$\beta = -3.09^{**}$	$\beta = -3.16^{**}$

In hypothesis 3, having received professional psychological help was analyzed by conducting an independent groups t-test. An independent groups t-test compared the mean mindful awareness, stress, depression and anxiety scores for the subjects who have received professional psychological help with that of the subjects who did not receive professional psychological help.

Table 4 shows the frequencies, t scores and alpha values for the subjects who received and did not receive professional psychological help. As shown below, the subjects who received professional psychological help reported significantly lower levels of stress symptoms compared to the subjects who did not receive professional

psychological help. But, the subjects who received and did not receive professional psychological help did not differ significantly on levels of mindful awareness, anxiety and depression symptoms.

**Table 4.**

*Frequencies and t-test values for the subjects who received and did not receive professional psychological help*

	Professional Psychological Help	N	Mean (SD)	T
mindfulness	yes	64	3.89 (.86)	.58
	no	66	3.98 (.86)	
depression	yes	64	10.44 (7.94)	1.36
	no	66	12.69 (10.68)	
anxiety	yes	64	11.09 (7.96)	1.30
	no	66	12.98 (8.63)	
stress	yes	64	14.17 (9.04)	2.96**
	no	66	19.44 (11.11)	

\*\*  $p < .01$  level

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. On the Relationship between Autonomous Parenting and Mindful Awareness

The results of this study confirmed the predicted positive relation between autonomous parenting and mindfulness level. To be mindful as adults, the likelihood of the children who grew up with parents supporting autonomy is greater compared to those who were not autonomously supported. The retrospective perception of undergraduates about their parents confirmed the related hypothesis. This finding is in line with the claims of SDT (Self-Determination Theory) that, autonomous behavior supported by the parents favorably affects an individual's motivation, volition to activities and initiations (Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007).

The results may be related to theories indicating the importance of self-regulating and soothing capacity for developing autonomy. In relation with the parenting styles and constructed attachment types early in life, children surrounded with a secure, autonomy granting environment have learned regulating their emotions/feelings. Thus, they may have developed internal awareness and autonomy because their needs, as children, were met and understood (Ryan, Deci, 1985). Guay, Ratelle, Chanal (2008) in a study, found a significant relation between adolescents' perceptions of autonomy supported by their parents and their self-regulation capacities. Results of this study are both compatible with the claims of the theory and the findings of the above mentioned study. Thus, the premise that autonomy supported by parents in early ages of life enhances self regulating and self soothing capacities later in life is affirmed.

## **5.2. On the Relationship between Mindful Awareness and Psychological Well-Being**

Mindfulness level is related to the regulation capacity and supported autonomy in developmental period. Since in a mindful condition, the person has the capacity to overview and regulate his/her thoughts, emotions and impulses, he/she is also aware of the 'sense of self'. Autonomy enhances the construction of, 'the sense of self' in a realistic way such that negative past experiences and thoughts do not intervene into the perceptions of external reality (Brown, Ryan, Creswell, 2007). The results of this study, in support of the last paragraph, showed a significant relation between higher mindfulness level and lower levels of stress, anxiety and depression.

Based on the findings of some foreign studies (Gurland, Grolnick, 2005, Ryan, Brown, Creswell, 2007), children who were raised in lower socioeconomic families, were brought up experiencing more perceived threat, hence as adults experiencing less autonomy.

Researcher speculates that, if the above mentioned result is applicable to a Turkish sample, then the nature of the sample in this study, i.e., belongingness to higher socioeconomic families, may support the interpretation that the students experience high levels of autonomy due to the level of satisfaction they experienced as they grew up.

## **5.3. On the Difference in the Findings between Maternal and Paternal Support for Autonomy**

One interesting finding is observed when autonomy is separately analyzed as supported by the mother and as supported by the father. The findings demonstrate that autonomy supported by the mother predicts higher mindfulness level but autonomy supported by the father does not.

Recent studies may have explained differentiated properties of maternal and paternal support but only a few studies analyzed the effects of these. Although in many studies, researchers have used the scales that separately measure maternal and paternal support, in analyzing the results the scores were clustered into a total autonomy support variable. It was assumed that the mother and the father had similar parenting styles due to the correlation between the ratings of the parents.

Some studies have revealed that mothers and fathers don't share same activities with the children or/and adolescents. Especially in adolescence period, the mothers may provide higher care-giving and engage in a multitude of activities compared to fathers. Fathers may provide support and warmth only in their leisure time. Also, the emotional support and empathy about the adolescents' problems is not supported by the fathers due to focus on instrumental activities (Holmbeck, Paikoff, Brooks-Gunn, 1998). Also, even if the relationship with both parents were similar in childhood, during adolescence, the transformation level of the relationship with the mother may be higher compared to the one with the father. This may be attributed to the closeness between the child and the mother. The child may think that, he/she has much flexible borders in the maternal relationship. Thus as an adolescent he/she may have more conflicts with the mother compared with the father. However, the symbiotic relationship and the feeling of closeness may not disappear; even if the individual experiences conflicts with the mother (Collins & Russell, 1991).

In the present study, the sample consisted mostly of young adults. Although the range of age was between 18 and 25, the sample included mostly freshmen. Based on the above mentioned results about adolescents, it may be assumed that these first year students may have perceived paternal autonomy different from the maternal one.

Results showed that the paternal support for autonomy does not predict mindful awareness and attention. This may be due to the fact that they may not have felt mutuality and closeness with their fathers. Maybe, they have the volition and initiation for their actions but these experiences are not based on and surrounded by the strong emotional bond. So, the lack of emotional basis and closeness felt may have caused the suspect, thus the rumination about their volition for activities and awareness of the ‘here and now’ experiences.

Based on the findings of the present study, researcher suggests that maternal support for autonomy may be a protector factor for problems and symptoms of anxiety and depression but the perceived paternal support for autonomy may not. Mother’s support may create a different environment due to a symbiotic relationship with the child or adolescent. This symbiotic relationship and mutuality may provide the relatedness feeling. Based on SDT, theorists have suggested that relatedness (with autonomy and competency) is a basic need that should be met during the developmental period. If the mother offers warmth and meets the child’s needs in early life, the child may develop relatedness to his/her caregiver. By combining the warmth and involvement with unbiased reactions and authenticity, the child may internalize realistic ‘sense of self’ that is protected and does not fluctuate depending on external threats (Ryan, Brown, 2003). This internalization of authenticity and relatedness may be related to self-worth. As mentioned in other sections, autonomy support and relatedness may elicit the development of sympathy, self-worth and/or ability to respond and apprehend anxiety arousing stimuli. All these abilities are mostly created in authentic family environment where the socialization and competence can be built by fostering self-worth (Garber et al., 1997, Zahn-Waxler, Radke-Yarrow, 1990). In a secure

environment created by the parents and external world, the child may easily develop empathy and feelings of self-worth (Laible et al., 2000). Recent research has demonstrated that the differentiated ratings about the parents' support can be due to the perception of mothers being more involved and close in the relationship with their child (Laible, Carlo, 2004). Although in this study, the subjects' ratings about their fathers and mothers does not much different, it is found that the high ratings of father supported autonomy does not predict levels of mindfulness, depression and anxiety. This finding can be due to the perceptions of paternal support. Returning back to the self-worth and self-esteem phenomena, the studies have assumed that provided unconditional love and warmth can help the child to create 'noncontingent' self-esteem and self-worth (Kernis, Brown, Brody, 2000). As mentioned above, the fathers mostly share instrumental activities with the children and adolescents. Even if the father supports autonomous being, thus, volition to act independently, he can do it mostly in leisure time (restricted time) and by the instrument. So, the child may perceive autonomy and self-worth/esteem depending on the instrument so that the direct emotional bond cannot be built. This may lead the child think that his/her self-esteem is dependent on the conditional activities. Thus, 'contingent' self-esteem may develop (Kernis et al., 2000). As discussed earlier sections, integrated self and noncontingent self-esteem may act as a protector against the external and also internalized threats in people's lives. Evaluating others' judgments and perspectives coming from the external world may not be provided if the self-worth is dependent on the activities approved by the others. The individual may feel confused and disintegrated, also, lost and depressed if she/he is not aware of the abilities and properties of the self. Feeling of being adequate and inadequate may change through the reactions of others so that the person may feel

anxiety about doing appropriate things in life for being worthy and related (Ryan, Brown, 2003).

The fact that a higher correlation is found between high levels of maternal support for autonomy and low levels of anxiety and depression compared to that of the paternal may be explained due to the claimed difference in the nature of the relationship mothers and fathers develop with their children (Holmbeck, Paikoff, Brooks-Gunn, 1998, Collins, Russell, 1991).

On the other hand, paternal support may act as a protector mechanism when different measures are applied. The anxiety and depression symptoms can be protected by the maternal support. However, the previous studies have suggested that paternal support may prevent antisocial behavior and likelihood of being imprisoned (Furstenberg, Harris, 1983). Through the findings of present study and earlier research, it seems that maternal support predicts the protection of the 'internal world' where the paternal support predicts the protection against the 'external world', thus, prevents disruptively expressed behaviors.

In addition, the sample included mostly woman subjects. The numbers of women and men were not equal or close due to limitations while collecting the sample. However, earlier research has demonstrated the differential effect of the adolescent's or child's gender on the relationship with the parents. In a study, the findings have showed that the father-son relationship can be much closer and good-natured compared to father-daughter relationship, especially in adolescence period. But it was also found that the emotional distance does not change depending on the gender of the adolescents (Larson, Richards, 1994). As discussed earlier, it seems that the emotional understanding, sympathy and relatedness generating emotional bond cannot be

developed by the paternal support, or, maybe, the fathers are not in need of creating the bond.

It may be argued that significant results were only found in relation to noncontingent emotional experience and concrete statements measuring the issue at hand.

#### **5.4. On the Relationship between Autonomous Parenting and Levels of Stress**

Another interesting finding is that neither the paternal nor the maternal support for autonomy predicts lower levels of stress. The researcher chooses to discuss this finding at the content level of the instruments administered. The statements of the instrument measuring stress are more abstract compared to those measuring anxiety and depression (See Appendix 4). It may be hypothesized that the participants could relate more to statements measuring concrete phenomena. For example one of the statements measuring anxiety was “I was aware of dryness of my mouth” and the participant’s task was to rate himself/herself on a scale of 4 with respect to how much his/her mouth went dry. Whereas, one of the statements measuring stress was “I found myself getting upset by quite trivial things ” and the participants’ task was to rate himself/herself on a scale of 4 how much he/she got upset by trivial things (See Appendix D). It is acceptable to hypothesize that one may relate oneself more easily to some concrete phenomena rather than to some abstract ones. This may explain the fact that while maternal support for autonomy correlated negatively with anxiety and depression, paternal support for autonomy revealed no correlation with neither anxiety nor depression. In addition, neither maternal nor paternal support for autonomy revealed any significant correlation with stress.

As mentioned above, the mothers develop a direct emotional bond with their children. Researcher speculates that this concrete direct emotional bond may help the child to develop lower levels of concrete anxiety and depression symptoms. However, this may not help the child to protect himself/herself from getting upset about trivial things. Since, the fathers mostly do not develop a direct emotional bond; the child may not soothe himself/herself in general. Thus, the child experiences, as adults in the future, higher levels of anxiety, depression and stress due to lack of concrete emotional bond.

### **5.5. On the Relationship between Professional Psychological Help and Levels of Stress**

With respect to the effect of professional psychological help on psychological wellbeing, significant high correlation between professional psychological help and stress is found. Thus, it may be inferred that stress symptoms, i.e., chronic arousal due to non-specific stimuli, may be decreased by psychotherapy or psychiatric intervention. Demographic information reveals that majority of the students who took professional psychological help continued long-term psychotherapy sessions. It may be possible that long-term psychotherapy, through enhancing awareness of the internal world, helps the students to become more aware of their ‘sense of self’, abilities and properties so that they may handle general problems.

The participants, in answering the demographic questions, shared that they have been involved in some psychotherapy and /or psychiatric experience, and that this has come to an end. It may be hypothesized that the amount of professional help received may have alleviated stress symptoms, but may not have been equally effective in alleviating depression and anxiety.

Overall the findings give insight to understand the relation between the dynamics of parental relationships with children in the developmental period, mindful awareness and psychological well-being.

Psychotherapeutic methods are mostly dependent on the here-and-now relationship with the therapist in the sessions. For recognizing and acknowledging the role of ruminative thoughts, maladaptive defenses and fluctuations in self-worth in therapy and analyzing them related to mindfulness and awareness may be beneficial for therapeutic approaches and treatment period. Also, results revealed the significant relation between autonomy support and psychological well-being. In psychotherapy sessions, while exploring the patients' family dynamics, parental support for autonomy may be explored in more detail. As the therapeutic relationship develops between the patient and the therapist, the patient may feel anxious and depressed due to claimed lack of autonomy support by his/her parents. Then, the therapist's role should be creating a new parent-child relationship with the patient by supporting autonomy and relatedness.

#### **5.6. Limitations and Implications for Further Research**

Firstly, the sample of the present study is relatively small and limited with university students. Thus, the results may not be generalized. In addition because the age range is limited to 18-25, the results may not be generalized to a wider age range.

With respect to gender, majority of the participants were female. Gender can be an important determinant in analyzing autonomous behavior so number of female and male subject should be compatible in further research.

In addition, the sample mostly included psychology students. The reason why the predictions were mostly supported may be the department they study. Although the sample has involved first year students largely, they may have the motivation to

understand psychology. Thus, they may have answered the questions with this motivation. If the students from other departments were involved in the study, the results might have been varied.

Also, it seems that the sample falls short in representing the overall properties of the Turkish society. Most of the students belong to high socio-educational background. Lower socioeconomic conditions may act as important factors in developmental period. So, future work should include people from a diverse socio-educational background.

Further research may also include manipulation of mindfulness in a longitudinal way. Since in this study, data was collected in a relatively short time, manipulation could not be made. There are several ways to measure the direct effect of mindfulness methods.

If more measures related to the subject studied were used, the results may have been more credible and generalizable. For example, measures that have been tested with respect to their correlation with mindful awareness and psychological well-being may render this study more comprehensive. Also, the amount of time the person received professional psychological help is an important issue. Future research should group the professional psychological help depending on the amount of psychotherapy or psychiatric intervention.

Finally, future work may involve the perceptions of parents about their own parenting style. The comparisons may give meaningful results about the autonomous parenting and the predictions.

## **5.7. Conclusion**

The results of this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between autonomous parenting style, levels of mindfulness and levels of depression and anxiety.

Autonomous parenting correlated with levels of mindfulness positively and with levels of anxiety and depression negatively. More explicitly, results also revealed that people who grew up in autonomy granting environment develop higher levels of mindfulness and lower levels of anxiety and depression. However, no statistical predictions of autonomous parenting may be made about the lower levels of stress. It is also found that having received professional psychological help significantly correlates with lower levels of stress. The findings of this study point to the fact that parenting style is closely related to the development of mindfulness and well being, More specifically, providing autonomy granting environment in the developmental period may ensure better outcomes in life with respect to the capacity to experience the moment, including and transcending the emotions and thoughts experienced, whatever they may be. Also, considering mindfulness as a ground for psychological well-being, including mindfulness exercises to the therapeutic relationship may be claimed to positively affect any therapeutic outcome.

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**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A. Demographics Form****A- DEMOGRAFİK BİLGİ FORMU**

1. Cinsiyetiniz :  Kadın  Erkek
2. Yaşınız :.....
3. Üniversitede hangi bölümde okumaktasınız? : .....
4. Hayatınızda yaşadığınız sorunlar için profesyonel yardım aldınız mı ?  
(Psikoloğa,  
psikiyatra gitmek gibi )  Evet  Hayır  
Evet ise lütfen ne kadar süreyle nasıl bir yardım aldığınızı belirtiniz:

.....  
.....

## Appendix B. Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS)

### ANA- BABA ALGISI ÖLÇEĞİ

**AÇIKLAMA:** Yaşamınızda önemli yere sahip olan anne ve babanızla ilişkilerinize yönelik aşağıda bir takım ifadeler verilmiştir. I. Bölümde annenizle ilgili, II. Bölümde babanızla ilgili ifadeler bulunmaktadır. Lütfen her bir bölümü dikkatle okuyarak cevaplayınız.

Yaş:

Cinsiyet:

#### ANNENİZ İLE İLİŞKİNİZ

Bölüm I							
	Tamamen Yanlış	Sıklıkla Yanlış	Nadiren Yanlış	Ne Doğru Ne Yanlış	Nadiren Doğru	Sıklıkla Doğru	Tamamen Doğru
01. Annem herhangi bir konuda benim neler hissettiğimi anlar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
02. Annem bana sürekli nasıl bir yaşam sürdürmem gerektiğini söyler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
03. Annem benimle konuşmak için zaman ayırır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
04. Annem beni olduğum gibi kabul eder ve sever.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
05. Annem mümkün oldukça kendi seçimlerimi yapmama izin verir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
06. Annemin beni çok fazla düşünmediği kanısındayım	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
07. Annem bana olan sevgisini açıkça ifade eder.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
08. Herhangi bir sorun yaşadığımda annem benim düşüncelerimi ve görüşlerimi dinler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
09. Annem benimle birlikte olmak için yeterince zaman ayırır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Annem bana kendimi özel hissettirir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Annem kendim için kararlar almama izin verir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Annem genellikle benimle ilgilenmeyecek kadar meşguldür.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Annem, genellikle benim düşüncelerimi kabul etmez ve onaylamaz.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Annem bir şeyi onun istediği şekilde yapmam konusunda ısrarcı davranır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Annem yaşadığım sorunlarla pek ilgili	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

değildir.							
16. Annem genellikle beni gördüğünde mutlu olur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Annem genellikle benim bakış açımdan olaylara bakmaya çalışır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Annem bana yardımcı olmak için zaman ve enerji harcar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Annem kendi kararlarımı almamda bana yardımcı olur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Annemin benimle ilgili hayal kırıklığı yaşadığını düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Annem benim birçok ihtiyacıma yeterince duyarlı değildir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### BABANIZ İLE İLİŞKİNİZ

<b>Bölüm I</b>							
	<b>Tamamen Yanlış</b>	<b>Sıklıkla Yanlış</b>	<b>Nadiren Yanlış</b>	<b>Ne Doğru Ne Yanlış</b>	<b>Nadiren doğru</b>	<b>Sıklıkla Doğru</b>	<b>Tamamen Doğru</b>
01. Babam herhangi bir konuda benim neler hissettiğimi anlar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
02. Babam bana sürekli nasıl bir yaşam sürdürmem gerektiğini söyler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
03. Babam benimle konuşmak için zaman ayırır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
04. Babam beni olduğum gibi kabul eder ve sever.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
05. Babam mümkün oldukça kendi seçimlerimi yapmama izin verir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
06. Babamın beni çok fazla düşünmediği kanısındayım.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
07. Babam bana olan sevgisini açıkça ifade eder.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
08. Herhangi bir sorun yaşadığımda babam benim düşüncelerimi ve görüşlerimi dinler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
09. Babam benimle birlikte olmak için yeterince zaman ayırır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Babam bana kendimi özel hissettirir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Babam kendim için kararlar almama izin verir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12. Babam genellikle benimle ilgilenmeyecek kadar meşguldür.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Babam genellikle benim düşüncelerimi kabul etmez ve onaylamaz.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Babam bir şeyi onun istediği şekilde yapmam konusunda ısrarcı davranır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Babam yaşadığım sorunlarla pek ilgili değildir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Babam genellikle beni gördüğünde mutlu olur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Babam genellikle benim bakış açımdan olaylara bakmaya çalışır	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Babam bana yardımcı olmak için zaman ve enerji harcar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Babam, kendi kararlarımı almamda bana yardımcı olur.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Babamın benimle ilgili hayal kırıklığı yaşadığını düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Babam benim birçok ihtiyacıma yeterince duyarlı değildir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## Appendix C. Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)

### BİLİÇLİ FARKINDALIK ÖLÇEĞİ

#### Günlük Deneyimler

**Açıklama: Günlük deneyimlerinizle ilgili olan bir takım ifadeler aşağıda verilmiştir. Her deneyimi size ne kadar uygun olduğunu göre işaretleyiniz. Lütfen, deneyimin ne olması gerektiğine göre değil, sizin deneyiminize gerçekten ne ölçüde uygun olduğuna göre cevap veriniz. Her ifadenin karşısında bulunan, 1 hemen hemen her zaman, 2 çoğu zaman, 3 bazen, 4 nadiren, 5 oldukça seyrek ve 6 hemen hemen hiçbir zaman anlamına gelmektedir.**

1. Belli bir süre farkında olmadan bazı duyguları yaşayabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Eşyaları özensizlik, dikkat etmeme veya başka bir şeyleri düşündüğüm için kırma veya dökerim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Şu anda olana odaklanmakta zorlanırım.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Gideceğim yere, yolda olup bitenlere dikkat etmeksizin hızlıca yürüyerek gitme tercih ederim.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Fiziksel gerginlik ya da rahatsızlık içeren duyguları, gerçekten dikkatimi çekene kadar fark etmeme eğilimim vardır.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Bir kişinin ismini, bana söylendikten hemen sonra unuturum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Yaptığım şeyin farkında olmaksızın otomatikçe bağlanmış gibi yapıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Aktiviteleri gerçekte ne olduklarına dikkat etmeden acele ile yerine getiririm.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Başarmak istediğim hedeflere öyle çok odaklanırım ki o hedeflere ulaşmak için an ne yapıyor olduğumun farkında olmam.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. İşleri veya görevleri ne yaptığımın farkında olmaksızın otomatik olarak yaparım.	1	2	3	4	5	6

11. Kendimi bir kulağımla birini dinlerken aynı zamanda başka bir şeyi de yaparken bulurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Gideceğim yerlere farkında olmadan gidiyor, sonra da oraya neden gittiğime şaşırıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Kendimi gelecek veya geçmişle meşgul bulurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Kendimi yaptığım işlere dikkatimi vermemiş bulurum.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Ne yediğimin farkında olmaksızın atıştırıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5	6

## Appendix D. Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS)

### DEPRESYON ANKSİYETE STRES ÖLÇEĞİ

**Açıklama: Lütfen her bir ifadeyi bugün dâhil son bir haftayı dikkate alarak size ne kadar uygun olduğuna göre işaretleyiniz. Her sorunun karşısında bulunan; 0 bana hiç uygun değil, 1 bana biraz uygun, 2 bana genellikle uygun ve 3 bana tamamen uygun anlamına gelmektedir.**

1	Oldukça önemsiz şeylerden dolayı keyfim kaçtı.	0	1	2	3
2	Ağzımın kuruduğunu fark ettim.	0	1	2	3
3	Hiç olumlu duygu yaşamadım.	0	1	2	3
4	Nefes alıp vermede güçlük yaşadım (örneğin; fiziksel egzersiz yapmamama rağmen çok hızlı nefes alma veya nefes alamama)	0	1	2	3
5	Hiçbir işime başlayamadım.	0	1	2	3
6	Olaylara gereğinden fazla tepki gösterdim.	0	1	2	3
7	Kendimi takatsiz hissettim (örneğin; bacakların tutmaması)	0	1	2	3
8	Rahatlamakta güçlük yaşadım.	0	1	2	3
9	Beni sıkıntıya sokan öyle zamanlar oldu ki, onlar bitince kendimi rahat hissettim.	0	1	2	3
10	Beklediğim veya umduğum hiçbir şey olmadığını hissettim.	0	1	2	3
11	Keyfimin çok kolay kaçtığını hissettim.	0	1	2	3
12	Çok fazla sinirsel enerji kullandığımı hissettim.	0	1	2	3
13	Kendimi üzgün ve karamsar hissettim.	0	1	2	3
14	Herhangi bir nedenden (örneğin; asansör veya trafik ışığında bekletilme) dolayı geciktirildiğimde sabırsızlandığımı hissettim.	0	1	2	3
15	Kendimi yorgun ve zayıf hissettim.	0	1	2	3
16	Neredeyse her şeye olan ilgimin kaybettiğimi hissettim.	0	1	2	3
17	Bir insan olarak değerli olmadığımı hissettim.	0	1	2	3
18	Oldukça hassas ve alıngan olduğumu hissettim.	0	1	2	3
19	Herhangi bir fiziksel çaba harcamama veya fazla sıcak olmamasına rağmen yoğun biçimde terledim (örneğin; ellerin terlemesi)	0	1	2	3
20	Herhangi bir neden olmamasına rağmen korktuğumu hissettim.	0	1	2	3
21	Hayatın değerli olmadığını hissettim.	0	1	2	3
22	Gevşemekte zorlandım.	0	1	2	3
23	Yutkunmakta güçlük yaşadım.	0	1	2	3
24	Yaptığım hiçbir şeyden zevk almadığımı fark ettim.	0	1	2	3
25	Herhangi bir fiziksel çaba harcamadığım halde kalbimin hareketlerini fark ettim (örneğin; kalp atışlarının hızlanması veya düzensizleşmesi)	0	1	2	3
26	Kendimi perişan ve kederli hissettim.	0	1	2	3
27	Çabuk hırçınlaştığımı fark ettim.	0	1	2	3
28	Kolayca paniğe kapıldığımı hissettim.	0	1	2	3
29	Beni gerginleştiren herhangi bir şeyden sonra rahatlamakta güçlük yaşadığımı fark ettim.	0	1	2	3
30	Basit fakat alışılmadık şeylerin üstesinden gelemeyeceğim diye kaygılandım.	0	1	2	3
31	Herhangi bir şeyi yapmak için heyecanlı ve coşkulu olamadım	0	1	2	3
32	Yaptığım işin bölünmesine tahammül edemediğimi fark ettim.	0	1	2	3
33	Gergin bir durumdaydım.	0	1	2	3
34	Oldukça değersiz olduğumu hissettim.	0	1	2	3
35	Yaptığım işe engel olan hiçbir şeye tolerans gösteremedim.	0	1	2	3
36	Dehşete kapıldığımı hissettim.	0	1	2	3

37	Gelecekte ümit verici hiçbir şey göremedim.	0	1	2	3
38	Yaşamın anlamsız olduğu hissine kapıldım.	0	1	2	3
39	Kısıktılmaya uygun olduğumu hissettim.	0	1	2	3
40	Gölünç duruma düşme ve paniğe kapılma riski olan durumlardan dolayı endişelendim.	0	1	2	3
41	Vücudumun titrediğini hissettim (örneğin; ellerimin titremesi)	0	1	2	3
42	Yapacağım şeylere başlamakta güçlük yaşadım.	0	1	2	3