



CMRP Friends of Bangor Alumni Group  
CYYYO Grŵp Alumni Cyfeillion Bangor  
**NEWSLETTER**



**Time To Connect  
Amser I Gysylltu**

Season Greetings  
from the Friends of Bangor  
Alumni Group

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year  
Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda**

**Mindfulness**

in connection with  
Mewn cyssylltiad gyda

FOB Newsletter Number 2  
December 2017



# Welcome Croeso



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice (CMRP) Friends of Bangor Alumni Group (FoB) and its second newsletter: Autumn/Winter 2017-2018.

I have the great honour and privilege to introduce the newsletter to you and the theme once again is, "Time to Connect". Time to connect with the many wonderful people that have had the pleasure and benefit of engaging with the CMRP. To set aside some time in our busy lives to connect and engage with a community of friends in mindfulness – Friends of Bangor. Welcome!

Reflecting on the past six months, the FoB group is getting established and we now are some 132 members, mostly in and around the UK but also as far away as the US and Australia.

We have established our website [www.friendsofbangor.co.uk](http://www.friendsofbangor.co.uk) where we have a "Members" page with a dynamic map of the world, where you can see a pin marking the position of each member. It is exciting to see the group grow and to have the opportunity to connect with people near you.

Our connection events, which are at the centre of the group activities, are being scheduled for 2018 after a great start in 2017. Gill Johnson is doing a wonderful job in organising and piloting the events and Gill is now looking forward to taking the events to the next level; working with our members to establish local connection groups around the UK as well as organising specialist events in London. As the events are scheduled, they are added to our website where you can see what is planned and register to attend. Gill's article in this newsletter gives an insight into these events and more information on how you can join a group. There is also information on how you can initiate a group in your area.

We are holding our first Annual Gathering for Members (AGM) and Connection Afternoon on May the 12th in Cwmcarn, where we invite all members to come along before lunch and let their voices be heard, helping to shape our community. There will be the opportunity to register your interest for working with the group in a more active role, helping to shape our future. After lunch there will be an afternoon of practice guided by Rebecca Crane. I look forward to seeing you there.

Our Facebook group is growing and we are encouraging our members to join in the discussions and feel free to use the group to connect with other members, list their events, post any articles they have seen or written, which could be of interest.

And last, but by no means the least, we have this newsletter. A great big thank you to all contributors and the many interesting articles and offerings from poems to research as well as a great big thanks to Vicky Walduck for her eagle-eyed proof reading and feedback. I hope you enjoy reading it and that you would like to be part of the next one.

A final thought: Christmas is around the corner and it is the time to be merry, but if possible, can we take a moment to think about connecting with our friends, relatives, and neighbours? The biggest gift we might give this Christmas could be that of a moment of our time. Giving a moment to someone we have not connected with for a long time, it might mean a lot to them to hear from you and of course, it is good for our wellbeing to give.

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous 2018 and hope to see you at the Annual Gathering if not before.

If you have any questions around the FoB, feel free to contact me directly - [per@inmindsight.com](mailto:per@inmindsight.com)  
Looking forward to connecting with you.

In peace  
**Per Norrgren** - Chair, CMRP Friends of Bangor Alumni Group

# What is the FoB all about?

The FoB is a membership body of current and past students of the CMRP. It is open to any person who has attended or is attending any of the CMRP courses and events. The group was formed with the overarching mission to 'act as a vehicle for FoB members and the CMRP to engage in two-way communication and to support mindfulness practitioners and advance field developments'.

It is a group run and managed by the members to support other members. Our vision is for the group to establish a mindfulness community with regular regional events and activities. To create a place where likeminded people can meet and practice together, exchange ideas and network. In short: Time to Connect.

## FoB Objectives:

- To represent the interests and views of mindfulness practitioners who engage with CMRP. Drawing on the wealth of experience, skills and capabilities represented by the mindfulness population for the benefit of the CMRP and for the benefit of its students
- To advise the CMRP of how it can best actively engage with the mindfulness 'grass roots' providing a vehicle for them to be an essential and knowledgeable resource to the CMRP
- To provide the membership with a clear voice and route to engage with CMRP
- To work in partnership with the CMRP to promote and support the strategy and objectives of building and developing an effective Alumni / Membership Group
- To expand and engage with the wider network of organisations involved in mindfulness practice and research
- To work with the CMRP to establish working groups co-produced by CMRP and FoB which can contribute to the strategy and objectives of CMRP

## What are the benefits?

### The FoB membership benefits

- Practice day with Rebecca Crane
- Annual Gathering and connection afternoon with Rebecca Crane
  - held in Crewe on Saturday 12th May 2018
- FoB discount at the CMRP conference
- Use of FoB logo on your website for the duration of your membership
- Forum on Facebook to connect with the community
- Networking day for past CMRP students
  - # Connect and practice with likeminded people in your area
- Discounts to FoB members from connected organisations
- Opportunity to volunteer and get involved in the FoB - if you have ideas and enthusiasm, contact us to participate and make the community grow

## What are the costs?

Membership fee for 2017-2018 is £24.99

## How do I register?

Via the FoB website  
[www.friendsofbangor.co.uk](http://www.friendsofbangor.co.uk)



# Who are the FoB?

The initial committee formed in 2016 to set up the FoB consists of the following volunteer members...



## Per Norrgren – Chair

Per Norrgren is the Director of Training and founder of inMindSight. Before establishing the Algarve Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice, he was a Visiting Tutor at Cranfield School of Management where he developed and taught Mindfulness for Higher Performance programme.



## Gill Johnson

Gill works as an independent mindfulness (MBSR/MBCT /MBCT-L/MSP) teacher, serving general public, schools, hospital and workplace groups in Goolamine and surrounding areas. She is currently a student on the Bangor Master's programme, having completed the equivalent of a Post Graduate Diploma (including assessment of teaching competence) and extensive elements of the CMPP Continuing Personal and Professional Development programme.



## Gwenan Roberts

Gwenan recently retired from the NHS where she has worked as an advanced specialist speech and language therapist working with adults with learning disabilities and complex needs for 36 years. Having gained her certificate of competence in teaching MBSR and MBCT she is currently completing her MA at Bangor University based on her experience adapting the 8 week MBSR programme into Welsh.



## Vicky Walduck

Vicky is a mindfulness teacher and trainer in Bournemouth and has completed an MSc in Mindfulness Based Approaches at Bangor University. Vicky's master's thesis investigated the effects of shortened mindfulness courses on self-compassion and attention. She has practiced meditation for over 20 years and is passionate about bringing the tools of mindfulness to others.



## Maureen O'Callaghan

Maureen first became interested in the mind body connection over 30 years ago when she was diagnosed with cancer and as part of a complementary approach to dealing with her illness she learned how to meditate. Now her meditation practice is an important aspect of a life she would describe as "engaged Buddhism".



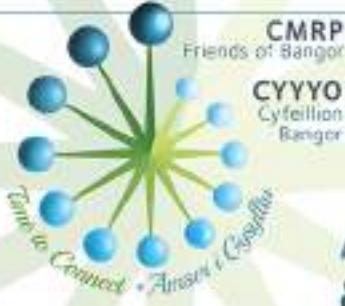
## Ken Dunn

Ken Dunn recently complete his Masters in Mindfulness Based Approaches at Bangor. After a long career in IT he has moved on to teaching MBAs in West Yorkshire. Over 20 years ago meditation was one of the things that helped him deal with bereavement and being a single parent to a young family, and later it helped him re-establish himself as an IT manager dealing with challenging and complex issues in the NHS.



## Heather Cayzer

Works as administrative support for Friends of Bangor. She is administrator for the Teacher Training Pathway and Course applications assessor at the CMPP. Heather is currently completing her Mindfulness teacher training with Bangor University, teaching the MBSR course to staff. She also volunteers with Barnardos delivering Mindfulness courses to Service user's at Rural Family Services Llangeitho on Anglesey.



# Friends of Bangor Annual General Meeting & Connection event

hosted by Rebecca Crane



Saturday 12 May 2018  
The YMCA, Crewe

Please join us for a day of Mindfulness,  
connection and help shaping our community

This event is open to both FoB members and non-members. FoB members are welcome to take part in the AGM offering ideas and suggestions.

Members fee - £15 Non-Members - £40

This is an all-inclusive event, a vegetarian buffet lunch, refreshments will be available on arrival and during breaks.

## Outline of the Day

09.30 Arrival

10.00 - 12.00 Review of activities of the past year and setting intentions for next year

12.00 - 13.00 Lunch

13.00 - 17.00 Connection event

## Afternoon 'Connection Event' hosted by Rebecca Crane

The work of Friends of Bangor is to support connection. This afternoon of practice will ground this work of connection in the immediacy of the arising of experience moment-by-moment.

We will come together as a community to draw on the supportive container that community offers to our practice. The guided practices will build our capacities to connect more intimately with ourselves, offering us the ground for our work of authentically connecting with each other. There will be time towards the end of the day to engage together in dialogue about our experiences of the day.

To register to attend follow this link ([www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/calendar.php.en](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/calendar.php.en))

Have a question about our event? Email us at [Info@friendsofbangor.co.uk](mailto:Info@friendsofbangor.co.uk)

# Reflections

## Beyond on the time we are within



Rebecca Crane  
CMRP  
Director

CMRP like many organisations is in transition as the economic and political climate are changing, and also as we are trying to maintain preserving valuable services in challenging times. This piece offers some insight into how this is unfolding and some reflections on the process. Rather than wait for partial information to leak out, I wanted to brief you on our current thinking.

CMRP sits within a university which is facing financial challenges associated with government funding, Brexit effects and multiple other factors. Alongside other parts of the university, CMRP is under scrutiny as the university seeks to establish a secure future. The university sits within a wider social/political context which is facing its own deep systemic challenges. Ultimately, I have come to see that each of these contexts are running in ways that are not sustainable in the longer term. As a society we are moving through a transitional time. Inevitably, we are often operating along the lines of the old order whilst a new order is coming into being, though it is sometimes uncertain how that new order will emerge.

The challenge for all of us is to discover what might be needed of us in order to create structures and organisations at all levels in society that are financially, environmentally and humanly sustainable. It is incumbent on us to do what we can at the level of CMRP to create an organisational context that is as much in this direction as possible, within the constraints that exist because the organisational conditions around us are struggling with their own transitional issues. We need to do this to preserve the immense value that CMRP provides to the mindfulness community and wider society. If the world order is changing we cannot wholly rely on learning from how we have done things in the past. We have to stretch our minds to envision an emerging future and live into that new reality.

## Reflections

on the time we are writing  
continued

On a pragmatic level, the likely direction that we are travelling in is for elements of our Continuing Personal and Professional Development (CPPD) programme (including the Teacher Training Pathway), to be licensed by the university to an external operator in ways that preserve its value, quality, and ongoing development, in service of the wider community. We are thus currently exploring the potential for the programme to be delivered through the Mindfulness Network CIC. This would enable continuity for the programme, continuity of the Bangor University/CMPR link, and freedom to deliver the programme in ways that are more responsive and flexible to conditions around us. Our Teacher Training Retreats and workshops would thus be delivered within the context of Mindfulness Network CIC whilst receiving certification and quality assurance from Bangor University. This would not be a simple transfer, and it is asking the Mindfulness Network CIC to examine its own operations and remit in some considerable detail. Meanwhile, the Masters programme and our research will continue to be situated within the university, with links to the CPPD arm as there are strong interconnections. A clear message that has come to CMPR from the university is the immense value it places in our activity, and its keenness to preserve the wider services that CMPR currently offers, even if that means exploring new ways of delivery. Using transition to refresh ourselves.

Our aspiration is to use this transitional time to recalibrate, to take a fresh look at our intentionality, our aspirations and how these translate into the practical necessities of everyday business. One of the key assets of CMPR is that our staff group are trained to look internally at their own process. We are excited about the possibility in this challenging time of using this asset to enable us to really honestly look at our blind spots, and through this to create deeper understanding of the systemic issues within the organisation which could hinder or enable us to flourish going forward. Maybe one of the challenges of our time more generally is to bend our habituated beam of attending judgementally to the flaws of the structures and systems we are part of, and turn it back on ourselves individually and collectively and see how we are creating and contributing to our own organisational realities. Out of that reflection, insights should follow – a bit like mindfulness in the organisational field.

A significant part of our aspiration going forward is to continue to connect, to support and be part of a global network of mindfulness practitioners. A key way through which our collective work can influence the world is for each one of us to do our local work while sensing the connectivity to the wider contexts within which we sit. Friends of Bangor are doing wonderful work in enabling this connectivity between us. We are immensely grateful for this important contribution and for the heartfelt support as we move through the inevitable pains which accompany transitional changing times.

Thank you for the work each of you is offering into the world. I recognise that this piece will probably raise as many questions for you as it answers! As our situation unfolds we will provide you with more information as it becomes available. If you have views that may help us navigate this transition, please share them with us.

**Rebecca Crane**  
CMPR Director  
October 2017



# On Retirement from CMRP



Dear Friends,

I am delighted to be in contact with you via this Friends of Bangor newsletter. This is a great opportunity for me to pause and reflect on some of the early implications of what has been a challenging decision. I have been connected with and have worked for CMRP since its early development in 2001. For the past 8 years my role in CMRP has been as Director of Continuing Professional Development, based within the University. Working with CMRP in the University has been so much more than just a job. I consider myself very fortunate to have been in a position to bring together heart-work which feeds my soul and pays the bills.

One of the many important aspects and joys of my work with CMRP and of these years at the University has been the influence, on me, of the skills and heart held within the CMRP training team. This is not to be boastful, but rather to acknowledge the immense pride and awe I feel at working with such a skilful and dedicated bunch of professionals with heart.

As I look back on this time, there are many things that I'm to have been part proud of; the quality of our training, the innovations made in mindfulness teacher training; the connection we make with our students; the integrity we instil in 'Bangor' teachers. The teacher training pathway is very popular and seems to fulfil a need for rigorous but flexible mindfulness teacher training. It has been challenging and rewarding to develop this, and the connection with so many teachers and trainee teachers out there has been a most enjoyable aspect of the role.

Of course, there have also been those heart-sink moments when things did not turn out as I have wished. Many times, I've wished for more energy, better skills and most often, more administrative staff!

Although I have let go of this particular role I still feel profoundly connected with the Mindfulness community in the UK and across the world, and indeed with my CMRP colleagues. I plan to develop my work in offering Mindful Parenting and will continue to supervise, teach and train mindfulness.

So, it's not really goodbye, more see you around with my different hat on.

**Eluned Gold**



## Connection Events:

Godalming (June 2017) and London (September 2017)

*Thank you for connecting with us  
and sharing your experiences and enthusiasm!*

**Gill Johnson**  
FoB Events  
Co-ordinator

It was with some trepidation that I waited for each of these Connections Events to start. The room was ready... attendance lists, session outlines and flipcharts were all prepared. All we needed now were a few people...? But would anyone turn up? It struck me that this vulnerability was very similar to the beginning of every course I have ever taught. Whilst we can be meticulous in our preparation as facilitators, whether or not we will have a group to engage with is largely *not up to us*. I need not have worried. Many of you travelled long distances to attend the London event from as far north as Manchester, and south as Toulouse. Others travelled shorter physical distances, as they were more local to either London or Godalming, but had to rearrange their personal lives to be there. Whilst I knew Friends of Bangor would be happy to see such support, I was personally grateful for the enormous enthusiasm and effort that each person brought to this new venture. (continues...)

(continued...)

Despite the different locations and composition of the two groups, the message was the same: there are many mindfulness teachers and practitioners trying to live out a professional, ethical mindfulness practice and they relish the opportunity to connect with like-minded people. Both events had similar formats with formal practice, reflection and networking sessions co-creating an environment for non-judgmental exploration of current themes for those present. I was struck by the universal desire for connection and simple sharing of ideas and experience. The interest for learning, developing practice and opening to new approaches was heartening. All observations and suggestions have been noted and will be given careful consideration by both FoB and CMRP.

Both groups requested Day Events on Specialist topics so that more time could be devoted to deeper consideration of smaller topic areas. In view of this, I have taken the initiative to offer **9 March 2018 in London** as a FoB Specialist Day. It will focus on **Deepening our Mindfulness Practice**, and we are fortunate to have the gentle guidance of Cieran Saunders for that day. Cieran is Module Organiser for the 'Buddhist Background to Mindfulness-Based Courses' module and a tutor for the "Teaching 2" module of CMRP Bangor's Masters programme. We look forward to exploring themes that are live for you in relation to your mindfulness practice and any questions that you may have around the Buddhist underpinnings of MB-approaches.

There will also be another **Connection Event on 13 April 2018 in London**. This will run from 10am – 4pm. In response to observations that opportunities for teachers to experience practice with 'live' guidance are rare, I have added an optional extended practice period for the afternoon session for those who are interested in this particular opportunity.

Both Events will be in The Barn at Greencoat Place, London. Refreshments (tea/coffee) will be provided. Please feel free to bring your own packed lunch or explore some of the lovely cafes etc. in the surrounding area. We look forward to seeing you at either or both of these events. Please see the CMRP Calendar of Events to book.

## Regional Events

I am delighted to announce that we have some regional events lined up for 2018:

**Per Norrgren** has kindly opened his home to the FoB community for a connection event in the Algarve, Portugal. A three day event Friday – Sunday 27-29 April 2018.

**Vicky Waldock** is holding a Connection Event in the Poole, Dorset area on **Friday 20 April 2018**.

**Jean Nash and Sonia Eastwood** have a Connection Event on **Friday 15 June 2018 in Malvern**.

Please see the CMRP Calendar of Events to book.

If there are any other experienced (Bangor's Assessed Teaching Practic/certificate of competence/Masters/TTP or equivalent) teachers who would be happy to volunteer to run similar events in their local areas, please do get in touch either via [info@friendsofbangor.website](mailto:info@friendsofbangor.website) or [gill@mindfulelephant.com](mailto:gill@mindfulelephant.com). Let us know why you have been drawn to be involved in this way, whether you have access to a local venue and possible dates. Note there is no cash remuneration associated with this role. We would love to hear from you.

# Learning more about our Mindfulness Teachers

By Singhshri Gazmuri, 2017-2018 UK Network Convenor

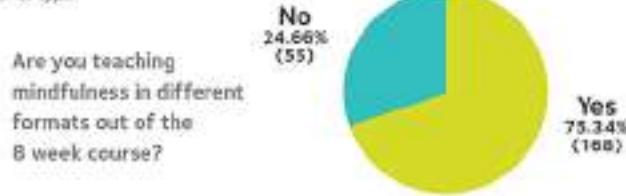
UK Network for  
Mindfulness-Based Teacher  
Training Organisations

Between November 2016 and March 2017 the UK Network of Mindfulness Teacher Training Organisations engaged in strategic planning. Part of our process involved seeking to learn more about the needs of the field through a series of data gathering activities. These activities included interviews, a members' survey, and a survey of mindfulness teachers across the UK. 424 mindfulness teachers responded to the survey. Some of the more interesting things we learned included:

- 30% of respondents are currently working in the NHS. The other 70% are working as free-lance teachers putting on public courses and working with client groups (i.e. charities). A majority is working with people with physical and mental health conditions, in schools, and in the workplace. Far fewer are offering mindfulness to high-risk populations, such as those in recovery or on probation.
- When asked if they are able to make a living from teaching mindfulness, of the 218 who responded to the question, only 30% answered yes. For some, this is because it isn't their main source of income. But for many others, the main reasons cited were an oversaturated market, cost prohibitive overheads (i.e. marketing, CPD requirements, venue hire), and funding cuts in the NHS.



- Roughly 75% of free-lance teachers and 60% of those working in the NHS, reported teaching mindfulness outside of the format of an eight-week course. Although this included activities such as drop-in sessions and tasters, some also reported new adaptations. These included both longer and shorter courses, depending on client need, and the use of innovations, such as apps.



The data gathered by the UK Network unearthed important information about the growing demands on the Network, such as a need for:

- More **formal recognition** of teachers, courses and training programmes.
- Initiatives that address issues of **equality, diversity and inclusion** across the mindfulness field.
- Clever **information and sign-posting** for the public about teachers, courses and training and CPD programmes.
- Opportunities for teachers, trainers, and researchers to **network** with one another, **share best practice** and seed partnerships.
- Support for innovations** in the field, to ensure that as mindfulness is adapted to meet the needs of diverse audiences, it continues to maintain a strong evidence-base and adherence to good practice.
- Even closer **collaboration and partnership** between field leaders to continue to meet the growing needs.

To receive a full report on the findings of the Mindfulness Teachers Survey, please write to [convenor@mindfulnessteachersuk.org.uk](mailto:convenor@mindfulnessteachersuk.org.uk)

For more information about the UK Network of Mindfulness Teacher Training organisations, go to [www.mindfulnessteachersuk.org.uk/](http://www.mindfulnessteachersuk.org.uk/)

# Monthly Mindfulness Practice Support Groups

Once people have taken an 8-week mindfulness training what happens to them? How does this impact their lives? Do they continue to practice mindfulness? If so, how often and which practices? Do they practice with others, go on retreats, do further courses, or perhaps leave mindfulness behind and have the course experience as just a (hopefully) warm memory?

These sorts of questions and others prompted me to really consider the question of how as mindfulness teachers we might best support participants once they've completed an 8-week course in the hope we can help them build on any benefits gained.

I'd been teaching groups regularly for a couple of years and also offering monthly drop in evenings and occasional practice days when a particular group of participants asked whether I might start a regular monthly group that they could commit to once they'd finished their 8 weeks. And so my first 'committed monthly mindfulness practice support group' began. It's been running now for four years on a Monday morning once a month and has been joined by a Wednesday evening group and also a 'committed monthly mindful self-compassion practice support group' on a different Monday morning (for those who've taken an 8-week Mindful Self-Compassion training).

Informal feedback from participants led me to believe that this model of post-course support really enabled people to embed the training in their lives over the longer term. But if this was so, how did it work, what did they value, how did it play out in their wider lives? And so I decided to research participants' experiences and write it up as the thesis for my MSc in Teaching Mindfulness-Based Courses with CMPP.

Before I describe the research process let me just say a little about the groups and how they work. People make a commitment to the group for a period (initially this was for six months, but so many people wanted to continue after each six month block that now it's simply ongoing membership, payment by monthly standing order). People leave from time to time for various reasons and new members join periodically too. I started with a group of nine four years ago and currently have three groups which are all full at 16 members each.

The meetings start with an informal period of time to talk with others over a warm drink before starting more formally after 15 minutes or so. The following 2 hours consist of time for each person to 'check in' briefly following a settling practice, then 2 or 3 guided practices, introduction of a theme and a guided exercise around this in pairs or small groups. The theme for each meeting might, for example be one of the 'attitudinal foundations' of mindfulness, models such as RAIN or UU, or often whatever feels current to me in terms of practitioner development. There are also poems or short readings that complement the monthly theme.

My research took the form of qualitative interviews with participants who were invited (by a colleague) to talk about their experience of the monthly group and its role in their lives. After transcription I then analysed the interview data using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (or IPA). This involved multiple readings of each interview, identification of emerging themes clustered around conceptual similarities and note-taking of my own reflections on what the participants had shared. This analysis in turn led to the writing up of a narrative account of the research followed by discussion and ideas for further exploration.

In brief the research found that those participants interviewed experienced the monthly group as a welcome and valued place to practice together, to consolidate and deepen understanding, to support their formal and informal mindfulness practice, and to help them in responding more skilfully to all that life brought. It particularly highlighted the value of regular connection with the same people over time - other familiar people who had also made mindfulness part of their lives.

If you're curious to know more you can find my thesis on the CMPP website:

[www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/mastersresearch.php.en](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/mastersresearch.php.en)

Or do feel free to contact me direct: [allambie@btinternet.com](mailto:allambie@btinternet.com)

[www.mindfulnesshampshire.co.uk](http://www.mindfulnesshampshire.co.uk)



Ali Lambie



# Mindful Parenting in North Wales

## Nurturing Parents; Mindfulness-based Parent Well-Being (NP)

Nurturing Parents is a mindfulness programme adapted for parents in situations of high stress. Often parents in these situations are not able to engage with or see the relevance of a standard mindfulness course. The NP programme is adapted from the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Programme, but is made accessible and relevant to all parents. NP Programme begins with the basic tenet that caring needs to start with the self; hence the title. It is not a programme which aims to teach how to parent. Rather it aims to support parents to nurture themselves - whatever their situation. From self-nurture arises an increased capacity to nurture those around us.

The programme includes short mindfulness practices and a gentle introduction to self-kindness and explicitly seeks to explore barriers to self-kindness.

Home practice is offered in manageable audio downloads, and there is an emphasis on integrating mindfulness into everyday life.

The programme includes:

- Experiential mindfulness practice and theory
- Basic developmental neuroscience, including attachment
- Physiological and psychological mechanisms of stress
- Explorations of stress and some strategies for working with stress
- Mindful communication

NP retains the 8-session format and sessions are 2 hours (usually including a break). The written materials provided use visual imagery and are shortened and simplified. There is an emphasis on group support and connecting with self and others. Eluned Gold from CNRP has been developing this programme for some years and has worked with other family support professionals. In particular she has trained a number of family support staff from Barnardos in North Wales. Barnardos is a charity which works specifically to support children and families in the community and takes referrals from statutory bodies. Working with the staff from Barnardos in this way has been one of the most successful developments of the programme. They have fully engaged with mindfulness and have developed their own practice. They are now in a position to offer the course to North Wales families and it has been extremely popular and seems to be very effective (research data is being collected).

Some feedback from parents who have taken the NP course with Barnardos.

### Parents report:

*Being more able to recognise stress or what pushes their buttons, before it takes hold and having a healthier more balanced view on things. More calmness, feeling less compulsive and continuing to learn how to 'unhook' from negative, unhelpful thoughts.*

*Being less anxious and more receptive to their children and other family members.*

Barnardos have commissioned a social return on investment report on the impact of training their staff and delivering this programme in North Wales. See the report here: [mantelgwyndd.com/downloads/barnardos\\_cymru\\_nurturing\\_parents\\_sroi.pdf](http://mantelgwyndd.com/downloads/barnardos_cymru_nurturing_parents_sroi.pdf)

Publications on early developments of this programme:

Eames, C., Crane, R., Gold, E., & Pratt, S. (2015). Mindfulness-based wellbeing for socio-economically disadvantaged parents: a pre-post pilot study. *Journal of Children's Services*, 10(1), 17-28.

Jones, L., Gold, E., Jonska, V., Hastings, R., Jones, M., Griffiths, A., & Silverton, S. (2017).

A mindfulness parent well-being course: Evaluation of outcomes for parents of children with autism and related disabilities recruited through special schools.

*European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 1-15.



# DOES MINDFULNESS TEACHER TRAINING MATTER? PROCESS AND FINDINGS OF A RESEARCH THESIS AND ARTICLE

"The quality of MBSR as an intervention is only as good as the MBSR instructor and his or her understanding of what is required to deliver a truly mindfulness-based program", thus states Jon Kabat-Zinn in his article reflecting on the origins of MBSR (p. 281, 2011). This view is echoed in most of the training literature for teachers of mindfulness-based programs, emphasising how important it is for teachers to receive adequate training. Coming towards the end of my master's studies at the Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice (CMRP), I thought this would be an interesting subject for a research literature review assignment. The trouble was, I couldn't find any research in this area, never mind any empirical evidence to underpin the wide-spread assumption that teachers of Mindfulness-Based Programs (MBPs) need proper training in order to teach effectively. And so the topic for my master's thesis was conceived.

In practical terms, I wanted to investigate whether the outcomes of MBSR course participants were indeed in any way related to the level of training their teacher had followed. Witnessing the surge of teachers with little training (or no training at all) appropriating the benefits achieved when MBPs are delivered with integrity of training and intention, I was curious to see if there was a ground in the assumed importance of teacher training, and if so, to support the emerging profession and authority of MBP teaching. I planned to do this by recruiting a number of MBP teachers with different levels of teacher training, and measuring and comparing the outcomes of their course participants.

In my naivete this plan seemed simple enough. Little did I know this would turn into a 3.5-year-long journey, leading eventually to the publication of an article earlier this month in the journal *Mindfulness*: "Impact of Mindfulness-Based Teacher Training on MBSR Participant Well-Being Outcomes and Course Satisfaction", co-authored with my thesis supervisors, Dusana Dorjee and Rebecca Crane. And in the hunt for answers to my question "does mindfulness teacher training matter?" I also learnt a great deal about the process of creating a thesis and a scientific article.

I struck lucky straight away: Both Dr Dusana Dorjee, Research Lead at the CMRP, and Dr Rebecca Crane, Centre Director, were keen to act as thesis supervisors, bringing their wealth of expertise and experience in their respective fields of research and MBP teacher training development. When it became clear I would need to process a large amount of data, Centre Manager Sharon Hadley very graciously allowed me to make use of the bespoke on-line questionnaire system which had been devised for her PhD work, and then a IT Support Officer Gary Smith was a stalwart support in fine-tuning the system for my project. Administrative Officer Lisa Buckley offered invaluable assistance in the recruitment of potential volunteer MBP teachers from the CMRP alumni database. And last but not least, Research Teaching Assistant Rebekah Gauntlett showed endless patience trying to explain the intricacies of statistical analyses to me. So I had every resource and support I could possibly wish for to make this project a success, and got down to work.

This meant first of all designing the research project in minute detail and obtaining approval from the University's Ethics and Research Committee for every single document involving recruitment of teachers and MBSR course participants, consent forms, information sheets, debriefing, and questionnaires. It was instructive to carefully think through each step, giving me a deeper understanding of the care researchers need to take to safeguard the study participants in their projects. Once the Ethics approval was secured, we could get on with the job of recruiting volunteer MBP teachers for the study. Nearly 30 teachers responded to our appeal for volunteers, but in practice only 11 could take part within the strict data collection window allowed for by the thesis deadline. These teachers had all followed one, two, or three years of teacher training within the Bongi Mueller's program, and were teaching an MBSR course for the general public. It was now up to them to invite their course participants to take part in the study, resulting in a total number of course participants for the study of 52.

So on to the next stage: data collection. Our highly sophisticated system for on-line questionnaires was a saving grace in collecting a large quantity of data (more than 150 questions for each course participant to process). Course participants needed to answer a series of questionnaires, on wellbeing, perceived stress, self-compassion, and mindfulness, as well as course satisfaction, both before starting their course and as soon as they had finished their course. When the last of the questionnaires had been completed, it was a joy to see how easily all these data were transferred to the statistical software, and the real number crunching could begin.

Extensive analyses, with on-going support from Dusana and her research assistant Rebekah, eventually delivered informative results from the wealth of collected data. Unfortunately this also meant having to exclude the two teachers with 1 year of teacher training, since they only had one course participant each in the study, and excluding several course participants for a variety of reasons, reducing the final sample to 39 teachers with 2 or 3 years of teacher training, and 31 of their course participants. With the results finally in the bag, I could now approach the task of actually writing it all down as a master's thesis, including a detailed account of the methods, covering the participants, measures, design, ethical considerations, procedures, and data preparation, before reporting the results, and most importantly, discussing the findings and conclusions.

Apart from a few angst-ridden weeks drowning in statistical analyses, the whole process of creating and conducting the study and writing about the findings was tremendously creative and enjoyable. First and foremost there was the attempt to begin to unravel the question "does mindfulness teacher training matter", gaining many new insights into the research process along the way. A greatly enriching bonus was the sense of team work on this project, which could not have been possible without the support of my supervisors and other CMRP staff, as well as the participating teachers and MBSR course participants. An unexpected pleasure was the opportunity to present a poster about the study at a series of conferences. The CMRP conference in Chester allowed me to introduce the project to a large number of MBP teachers, who were eager to have more evidence supporting the importance of their qualifications. Presenting the poster at the *Mind and Life Europe* summer institute, co-founded by the Dalai Lama, in the idyllic setting of the Fraueninsel (women's island) in the Bavarian Chiemsee, I was fortunate to be able to discuss the study with Professor Paul Grossman, a leading light in mindfulness research. As well as explaining the importance of effect sizes to me, he gave me a tip for recruiting study participants: money! Yes, it seems everyone has their price, even mindfulness teachers.

## DOES MINDFULNESS TEACHER TRAINING MATTER?

PROCESS AND FINDINGS OF A RESEARCH THEME AND ARTICLE

(CONTINUED)

And so at last I got to that momentous point of completing the thesis and pressing the Submit button. And with that push of a button I was no longer a master's student at CMMH; and in an era, but not the end of the project. Both my supervisors and one or two others had encouraged me to try and get the results of the study published, and that ending also introduced a new chapter: preparing for publication.

My supervisors Robina Crane and Dusana Dorjee were to be my obvious co-authors and, having both published extensively, were able to give important guidance. First, we needed to decide which scientific journal to target, as each journal has very specific requirements in terms of style and presentation. We opted for *Mindfulness*, which has gained significant impact in the field of MBPs since its inception in 2010. A rigorous editing and re-writing process ensued with continuous to and fro between the now three co-authors, before eventually submitting our first version for peer review. Both the journal editor and three peer reviewers responded with a wide range of comments and questions, which needed to be addressed in detail. This was a very useful process, helping us to refine the article and clarify the significance of our findings. After re-submitting our revised manuscript and some final tweaks, the paper was accepted and on 6th June went live on-line.

And so you might ask, what did we find? Well, we found some welcome results, and some unexpected ones. Our hypothesis was that participant outcomes and course satisfaction would relate both to MBP teachers' training levels and to their mindfulness-based teaching and meditation experience. In fact, we found statistically significantly better outcomes for well-being and reductions in perceived stress for those course participants who had been taught by a teacher with three years teacher training, compared with the course participants whose teachers had two years training. The course participants with higher trained teachers also had significantly higher course satisfaction scores. But surprisingly we didn't find any significant connection between teacher training levels and the participant outcomes for mindfulness or self-compassion.

We were puzzled about these results: why would participants with a higher trained teacher score significantly better on well-being and perceived stress, but not significantly on mindfulness and self-compassion? Possible explanations might be that most MBP teachers with a basic training will know how to convey the concepts of mindfulness and self-compassion, but that more highly trained teachers might be better equipped to instill a sense of well-being for their course participants. Also, the specific questionnaires which we used for scoring participants' mindfulness and self-compassion (the widely adopted Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire and Self-Compassion Scale) might not be optimal for measuring a difference in outcome.

Even more surprising, neither did we find a correlation between participant outcomes and the amount of teaching or meditation experience their teachers had, which is what we would have expected. Apart from the years of teacher training, we looked at a wide range of aspects where the teachers differed, such as age, amount of teaching and meditation experience, amount of time on retreat, and other professional background, and only the teacher training level showed a significant correlation with the difference in outcomes for their course participants. So our findings strongly suggest that mindfulness-based teacher training has a significant impact on the well-being benefits that participants receive from an 8-week mindfulness course. This could be very helpful information not just for MBP teachers and teacher training programs, but also to protect the integrity of mainstream mindfulness, ensuring that participants within the NHS and amongst the general public receive the full benefits from MBPs, taught by well-trained teachers.

It appears that this is one of the first times that any connection between course participant outcomes and MBP teacher training levels has been investigated, something which had been called for in various other studies. It's important to bear in mind that we were only able to include two levels of teacher training, and that this pilot study was carried out with a small sample. So a word of caution is required in extrapolating the conclusions of this study, and a great deal more research needs to be done in this area. Nevertheless, we hope our findings will contribute to the debate on the importance of quality teachers and inspire other researchers to investigate this important aspect of implementing MBPs.

For the full details you can read the article here, please feel free to pass it on:  
[link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12671-017-0750-x](http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12671-017-0750-x)

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Eva Ruijgrok-Lupton

# Finding “Mindfulness, Insight and Liberation” in mid-Wales

“The enchantment of Buckland Hall...  
The fascination of a historic estate...  
the opulence of a country mansion...  
relaxation guaranteed...”

This is how the venue for the Mindfulness, Insight and Liberation retreat is described on its website. Grand claims indeed! And... “relaxation”?! Did this really have a place in the week that I had signed up for? I was joining a group of mindfulness practitioners for a week-long silent retreat led by Christina Feldman and John Peacock, and past experience has taught me that “relaxation” is not guaranteed during such weeks.

Nevertheless, I boarded the train to mid-Wales with much enthusiasm and anticipation. Buckland Hall is enchanting as were Christina (Feldman), John (Peacock) and all my fellow retreatants. The title of the retreat was a little intimidating to me; insight and liberation seemed grand ideas to someone seeking a little ‘ordinary’ mindfulness! However, the board that greeted us on arrival was the source of some amusement... and served to make us all feel welcome. The same discreet service continues throughout the week with all practicalities quietly engineered by a team of efficient but almost invisible staff of Buckland Hall (elegantly orchestrated by our own Ken Lund). It was the perfect back-drop to turning our attention to the inner work of meeting ourselves with kindness once more.

To Christina’s delight (and ours), her room was the Bridal Suite... a little different from the austerity of home! And so it was for all of us... displaced from home into a luxurious environment which was some distance from our ‘normal habitat’. Nevertheless, we soon got accustomed to the space, clean air, kindness of strangers and delicious food.

The ability of the human mind-body to adapt to new environments (especially pleasant ones) is always a source of delight.

As with all retreats, there were moments of intense joy, peace, and delight as well as pain, discomfort and sleepiness, but we could sit “in the midst of all that life gave us” under the gentle guidance of Christina Feldman and John Peacock. It was a real privilege to explore the territory of being human with such an engaged group of curious fellow explorers. It was interesting to experience the ease of walking meditation in such beautiful surroundings, and the joy of sitting in utter stillness and peace. Each will have discovered their own insights as they explored their lived experience. For me, returning to the simplicity of each moment allowed me to find liberation without going to look for it. Perhaps the ‘grand claims’ were really quite ordinary after all. Perception is a curious thing. I returned joyfully with renewed vigour and energy for my work as a mindfulness teacher, and I thank all who made this possible.



**Gill Johnson**

Retreat participant

## Acknowledging Diversity: reflections on meditation-related difficulties

At the CMPP Conference 2017, Professor of Psychiatry Willoughby Britton presented on the subject of Meditation-Related Difficulties. In my personal view it is a very important area of study in relation to mindfulness but currently not much is known or reported. With kind permission by Willoughby, we include a paper from her project on this subject and I hope you find it thought provoking and useful. - Editors note.

### The Varieties of Contemplative Experience Study - Willoughby Britton, J. Lindahl, et al.

Though it has gained popularity in the West as medically and psychologically beneficial, meditation can produce a much wider variety of outcomes, not all of them calm and relaxing, according to a new study that analyzes meditation-related challenges. The study, published here in PLOS ONE, purposely sought out "challenging" experiences because they are underrepresented in the scientific literature, the authors said. With that goal, the study therefore was not designed to estimate how common those experiences are among all meditators. Instead the purpose of the Varieties of Contemplative Experience study was to provide detailed descriptions of experiences and to start to understand the multiple ways they are interpreted, why they might happen and what meditators and teachers do to deal with them. Though rare in the scientific literature, the broader range of effects including meditation-related difficulties have been documented in Buddhist traditions, the researchers wrote. For example, Tibetans refer to a wide range of experiences — some blissful but some painful or disturbing — as "injars." Zen Buddhists use the term "mukya" to refer to certain perceptual disturbances.

"While the positive effects have made the transition from Buddhist texts and traditions to contemporary clinical applications, the use of meditation for health and well-being has obscured the wider range of experiences and purposes traditionally associated with Buddhist meditation," Lindahl said.

To understand the range of experiences encountered among Western Buddhists practicing meditation, Britton, Lindahl and their co-authors interviewed nearly 100 meditators and meditation teachers from each of three main traditions: Theravada, Zen and Tibetan. Each interview told a story, which the researchers meticulously coded and analyzed using qualitative research methodology. The researchers also employed standardized causality assessment methods that are used by agencies like the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to ensure that medication likely played a causal role in the experiences they documented.

#### Experiences and influences.

Based upon their interviews, the researchers developed a taxonomy of 58 experiences organized into seven types, or "domains": cognitive, perceptual, affective (i.e. emotions and moods), somatic (relating to the body), cognitive (i.e. motivation or will), sense of self and social. They also identified another 26 categories of "influencing factors" or conditions that may impact the intensity, duration or associated distress or impairment.

All meditators reported multiple unexpected experiences from across the seven domains of experience. For example, a commonly reported challenging experience in the perceptual domain was hyperperception to light or sound, while somatic changes such as insomnia or involuntary body movements were also reported. Challenging emotional experiences could include fear, anxiety, panic or a loss of emotions altogether. Britton noted that the duration of the effects people described in their interviews also varied widely, ranging from a few days to months to more than a decade.

Sometimes experiences were ostensibly desirable, such as feelings of unity or openness with others, but some meditators reported them going too far, lasting too long or feeling violated, exposed or disoriented. Others who had meditation experiences that felt positive during retreats reported that the persistence of these experiences interfered with their ability to function or work when they left the retreat and returned to normal life. "This is a good example of how a contextual factor can affect associated distress and functioning," Lindahl said. "An experience that is positive and desirable in one situation may become a burden in another."

Moreover, in some cases, an experience that some meditators reported as challenging, others reported as positive. To understand why this was the case, the researchers also aimed to determine the "influencing factors" that affect the desirability, intensity, duration and impact of a given experience.

The researchers documented four main domains of influencing factors: practitioner-related (i.e. the meditator's personal attributes), practice-related (such as how they meditated), relationships (interpersonal factors) and health behaviors (such as diet, sleep or exercise). For example, a mediator's relationship with the instructor was for some people a source of support and for others a source of distress. While many teachers cited the mediator's practice intensity, psychiatric history or trauma history, and quality of supervision as important, these factors appeared to play a role only for some meditators. The researchers wrote in PLOS ONE that, in many cases, challenging experiences could not be attributed to just these factors.

"The results also challenge other common causal attributions, such as the assumption that meditation-related difficulties only happen to individuals with a pre-existing condition (psychiatric or trauma history), who are on long or intensive retreats, who are poorly supervised, who are practicing incorrectly, or who have inadequate preparation."

#### Support:

Britton and Lindahl have been offering trainings based on this research to Mindfulness Centers and MBI providers worldwide in hopes that greater awareness will lead to better support.

"Our long-term hope is that this research, and the research that follows, can be used by the meditation community to create support systems for the full range of meditation-related experiences," Britton said. "Really, the first step is acknowledging the diversity of experiences that different people can have."

Willoughby Britton is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and the Director of the Clinical and Affective Neuroscience Laboratory at Brown University Medical School, which investigates the psychophysiological (EEG, EMG, fMRI) and neurocognitive effects of cognitive training and mindfulness-based interventions for mood and anxiety disorders.

As a clinician, she has been trained as an instructor in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), and has taught mindfulness to both clinical and non-clinical populations, and in federally-funded clinical trials.

As a researcher, she has been studying the effects of contemplative practices on the brain and body for more than a decade, with a special emphasis on practice-specific effects, or in other words "which practices are best or worst suited for which types of people or conditions and why?" For the last 6 years, she has been conducting a study called "The Varieties of Contemplative Experience" which investigates the full range of experiences that can arise as a result of contemplative practice, including experiences that could be considered difficult, challenging or adverse.



Willoughby  
Britton

# The Ten Bulls



A dear friend and former Zen monk (Mark Stratton) very kindly introduced me to The Ten Bulls. It is a series of short poems and accompanying pictures used in the Zen tradition to illustrate the stages of a practitioner's progression towards the purification of the mind and enlightenment. And it also includes his or her subsequent return into the world while acting out of wisdom.

My experience and entry into mindfulness can be likened to unexpectedly finding myself face to face with "the bull". Not knowing much about mindfulness, meditation or the mind, I found the Ten Bulls story both helpful and comforting in showing what can happen or what is expected to happen (in some traditions) if you practice diligently. Perhaps it also links very well to the article by Willoughby Britton elsewhere in this newsletter, on the variety of experiences felt during contemplative practices.

In peace - Per Norrgren



Per  
Norrgren

Verses by Austin Brynja (12th century), translation by Seppo Heponiemi (1971-1998) and Paul Pepe (1999-2006).  
graphics traditionally attributed to Tenmei Shikaku (749-1000). [Source of pictures and Verses is Allgood]

## 1. In Search of the Bull

In the pasture of the woods,  
I endlessly push aside the tall  
grasses in search of the Ox.  
Following untraced rivers,  
lost upon the inpenetrable  
paths of distant mountains,  
My strength failing and my vitality  
exhausted, I cannot find the Ox



## 2. Discovery of the Footprints

Along the riverbank under the trees,  
I discover footprints.  
Even under the fragrant grass,  
I see his prints.  
Deep in remote mountains they are found:  
These traces can no more be hidden  
than one's nose, looking heavenward



## 3. Perceiving the Bull

I hear the song of the nightingale.  
The sun is warm, the wind is mild;  
willows are green along the shore -  
Here no Ox can hide.  
What artist can draw that massive head,  
those majestic horns?



## 4. Catching the Bull

I seize him with a terrific struggle.  
His great will and power  
are insurmountable.  
He charges to the high plateau:  
far above the cloud-mists,  
Or in an impenetrable ravine he stands



## 5. Taming the Bull

The whip and rope are necessary.  
Else he might stray off down  
some dusty road.  
Being well-trained, he becomes  
naturally gentle.  
Then, unfettered, he obeys his master



## 6. Riding the Bull Home

I seize him with a terrific struggle.  
His great will and power  
are insurmountable.  
He charges to the high plateau:  
far above the cloud-mists,  
Or in an impenetrable ravine he stands



## 7. The Bull Transcended

At stride the Ox, I reach home.  
I am serene. The Ox too can rest.  
The dawn has come. In peaceful repose,  
Within my thatched dwelling  
I have abandoned the whip and ropes.



## 8. Both Bull and Self Transcended

Whip, rope, person, and Ox -  
all merge in No Thing.  
This however is so vast,  
no message can stanch it.  
How may a knowable exist  
in a raging fire.  
Here are the footprints of  
the Ancestors



## 9. Reaching the Source

Too many steps have been taken  
returning to the root and the source.  
Better to have been blind and deaf  
from the beginning!  
Dwelling in one's true abode,  
unconcerned with and without -  
The river flows tranquilly on  
and the flowers are red



## 10. Return to Society

Barefooted and naked of breast,  
I mingle with the people of the world.  
My clothes are ragged and dust-laden,  
and I am ever blissful.  
I use no magic to extend my life;  
Now, before me, the dead trees  
become alive.



# The 'S' of MBSR: STRESS – What exactly is it?



Vicky  
Walduck

Stress is a physiologic experience of the body largely involving the hypothalamus and the pituitary in the brain, sympathetic nerve pathways and the effect on the adrenal glands (cortex and medulla of the adrenal). The resulting effect of increased stress on the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system is a release of raised adrenaline and corticoids including cortisol and other steroid hormones. It is a nervous system and glandular response to the environment but not only the actual reality of the physical environment but also the perceived experience of the individual. And this is where the study of stress can get interesting as the subjective world of the individual varies so hugely from person to person.

Low level chronic stress in human beings has been cited as synonymous with modern living in the developed world but it is a response that has evolved with all organisms. The characteristic of human stress which makes it complex is the affect our large, complicated and abstract thinking brain has on this otherwise automatic system. The Pali term dukkha (Sorrows) - dukkha which is generally translated as 'suffering' has also been translated as stress (Thichanuri Bhikkhu) to the extent that a several tenet of Buddhism, the four noble truths would read that:

1. There is stress (stress is a phenomena of being born to this world)
2. Stress has a source (it is from desirous/demand of wanting and not wanting)
3. Stress can be ended
4. The eightfold path is a way to end stress

The first two truths indicate that stress is a natural part of life and it comes initially from a desire to be safe (alive) and well; homeostasis is what the nervous system is primarily concerned with. But it also comes from what the 'self' thinks it wants or needs (also I say 'ego'). Step three says that we do not have to suffer stress indefinitely and step four gives the Buddha's path to cessation of stress leading to enlightenment. The Buddha's eightfold path is generally in harmony with Patanjali's eight limbs of yoga with both including similar personal and social code's of behaviour followed by instruction in concentration and meditation/mindfulness practice.

## The Subjective Nature of Stress

Stress can be defined as "the pervasive and subjective experiences which can be produced in people under conditions where change and conflict are implicated" (from Denner, G. & Jones, L. 1998 book entitled 'Anatomy and Stress'). Furthermore, stress can be experienced as exciting or threatening, something that is sought after or avoided according to a myriad of personal cognitive decisions whether we are aware of it or not. Although the word stress tends to have negative connotations it can literally be a life saver (and was of course evolved for this reason). It is an integral part of life and the continuous functioning of the nervous system. Hans Selye who is thought to have initially defined stress in his book, "The Stress Of Life" coined the terms "distress" to describe negative stress and "eustress" to describe positive stress. These terms did not progress into everyday language which is unfortunate as improved descriptive language around our understanding of stress would be helpful for us to recognise and be aware of our stress aggratates.

Stress in humans is inextricably linked to perception and many other factors. A person can find an identical situation pleasurable at one point in time and then frightening at another time. A person's sensitivity can vary greatly from day to day, even moment to moment. Hence why greater stressful environments is generally beneficial. Physiological factors such as being hungry, cold, hot or in severe discomfort exert an effect as well as mental factors such as negative thinking, worrying thoughts. For example, one could be on a beautiful beach with a favourite person but because they are thinking negative thoughts they could feel awful and conversely one could be in a hellish prison cell but be thinking beautiful thoughts and so feel rather good! Stress is inherently and directly affected by the mind and not just the environment. This why learning practices involving the mind such as insight and other meditation are so important.

The physiologic stress response has a vital role in keeping us aware, alert and prepared to others. The trouble with stress occurs when our thinking out weighs the reality of our situation and experience. This is a largely subjective area and as such can be difficult to study but we know that when the sympathetic nervous system is more active than necessary (out of balance with the parasympathetic nervous system, sometimes termed 'over-active') then it can lead to other problems in the body. One of the reasons for this is that chronic release of stress hormones which we are not physically 'burnt off' in the body leads to generalised inflammation which affects every organ, every cell of the body over time. In Sapolski's book 'Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers' (1994) he gives an analogy of the zebra head grazing on the plains of Africa near a pride of lions. The zebra are unbothered that the lion will at some point become hungry and see them as prey. They "do not see me not has their lions with forethought of grief" as Wendell Berry says in his poem 'The Peace of Wild Things'.

The 'zestful' stress response kicks in at the precise moment when they are being attacked and the resulting cortisol and adrenaline surge is used in a fight for life. We frequently don't 'turn up' our stress hormones as our stress comes from our thinking instead a fight for survival. Worrying about bills or something someone said about us does produce a stress response, perhaps mild but over years it is this chronic low level stress which tends to lead to disease. Any sub-optimal aspect of living influences the stress response and this includes diet, lack of little nutrition and non-whole foods and poor sleep.

Stress is often implicated in health problems such as anxiety and depression, diabetes, some cancers, asthma, headaches, obesity, Alzheimer's and gastrointestinal disorders such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). The stress response affects the whole body including the immune system and the other endocrine glands i.e. the function of all the other hormones. It is now clear that stress plays a role in diseases of the cardiovascular system including heart disease (the leading cause of death in the developed world), stroke and other vascular disease. The stress response involves an inflammatory immune response which directly leads to hardening of the arteries and atherosclerosis.

As noted earlier, there are ways to reduce and alleviate stress and the activation of the parasympathetic branch of the nervous system is the 'soothing' antidote. It is the corresponding, calming part of the nervous system which works in opposition to the sympathetic branch. Meditation and other yoga practices including asana and yoga nidra can go a long way to rebalancing the balance as can other nourishing activities. As well as releasing stress-hormones the blood pressure is lowered and there is a general calming effect on the nervous system. With repetition this becomes easier to invoke and research has shown that not only can meditation and yoga asana reduce stress it can also help the symptomatology of conditions such as ADHD.

This activation of the parasympathetic nervous system has been termed the relaxation response (Benson, 1975). In his pioneering work which has been reprinted several times Benson recommends just ten to twenty minutes of practice daily to invoke the relaxation response and mitigate the effects of chronic stress in our society. The practice Benson recommends is concentration meditation (Bhavana in Sanskrit) involving the repetition of a word, sound, phrase or word gone or an object.

(continues..)

## The 'S' of MBSR:

STRESS - What exactly is it?

continued...

The flowering of mindfulness practice in recent years is a new wave of this ancient wisdom coming to the west. Mindfulness practices are rooted in *Vipassana* (insight) in Buddhist and insight meditation in the west and are therefore most concerned with practising a kind of open equanimity awareness as well as developing the attention and concentration. Mindfulness is being extensively studied and there is now a large evidence base that mindfulness practice changes the brain in positive ways in as little as a few weeks. It is largely thanks to the technology of functional MRI (multiple resonance imaging) that mindfulness practice has become popularised and of concern to researchers. The fMRI results in large randomised controlled studies (RCTs) show significant differences in the brains of participants who have done an eight week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction course (MBSR) than those on a wait list. This includes reduced amygdala size and blood flow in the fear centre of the brain and a right hemisphere shift associated with more positive 'go-towards' caring parts of the brain. The link between practising mindfulness and stress reduction is established but it is complex. The practice of sitting quietly and practising any meditation is likely to invoke the relaxation response but what, if any, is the extra magic involved in the practised awareness of body and breath and course like MBSR.

This is a question which is being investigated and teased apart but we are still very much in the early stages of clarifying 'which parts of MBSR are most effective' and 'what do we mean by "most effective"? I conclude with a favourite quote from Larry Rosenberg that beautifully takes us back to basics:

1. Sit with a relaxed, yet dignified posture.
2. Bring attention to your breathing, noticing the in breath and the out breath and the space in between breaths.
3. When your mind wanders, just gently and without self-judgement note it and return your attention to your breath.
4. Repeat step 3 several billion times!

# Mindfulness and relationships

We all love a relationship happy ending. As time goes by, this involves mindful effort and persistence. I set out below the most important aspects, in my opinion, of mindful living.

### Good, open, mindful communication

Mindfulness is an especially invaluable tool in the area of couple communication, where it's so easy to hear what we think is being said, through our personal filters, and then to overreact to it – strongly. More often than not, this is down to not only poor communication – but also our deeply personal, historical 'stuff'.

Achieving and maintaining good communication is ongoing work. This is where practising mindful communication can be so helpful. When you put it into operation, you become increasingly able to please, 'mind the gap', and clarify what's actually being said.

Poor communication will rapidly become a mental weed, clogging up and perhaps even strangling your precious relationship.

### Interdependency versus co-dependency

Katrin Gebben advises, 'Let there be spaces in your togetherness'. This doesn't mean either of you should abandon the other, but that it's healthy for you to spend time apart as well as together, which is vastly different from clinging togetherness. Your long term relationship is actually enhanced by separate activity and even enhances it. Co-dependency sucks the very life out of your relationship. Interdependency enhances it.

### Ongoing mindful renegotiation about miscellaneous boundaries

Relationships don't remain static, because they're a living entity with a life force of their very own. This is why you need to keep revising and renegotiating your boundaries, as time goes on.

### Mindfully respecting differences and appreciating and expanding on the similarities

Accept the things you can't change about your partner and keep the spotlight on yourself. And when you do change, then the whole dynamic of your relationship shifts. Keep the focus and your energy on loving yourself.

### Being first and foremost friends

Your partner should be your best friend – not your only one – but the person who's clearly one hundred percent in your corner, come what may. Best friends do argue, of course, but ultimately the bond that binds them together overcomes all the difficulties that may threaten to separate them. Treat your partner like you'd treat any best friend, with love, patience and compassion. Before you have something today to say, ask yourself if it really has to be said, does it have to be said now, and what's the kindest way of saying it – and breathe, before you say it.

### Being able to say sorry

Unlike what you may have seen in the film 'Love Story' – love is having to say you're sorry – even when strictly, you're not. The pain of discipline versus the pain that stems from the regret of not apologising is infinitely better. I'm not saying you should be a scapegoat and take the blame for everything. It's about achieving a happy medium, and focusing on what's good in the relationship.

### Showing continuing appreciation of and gratitude for the other

There's magic in the ordinary, in gestures of tenderness especially under stress. Demonstrating thoughtfulness doesn't have to involve spending money or displays of ostentation. Write a gratitude list of each other's positive traits. Go through pictures and mementos of your early days and also your special ones. Never forget anniversaries, birthdays and significant days. Show each other consideration, express your appreciation to each other for what you CAN do.

### Learning to grow through adversity

Nobody is exempt from suffering. Continue to share your wishes, hopes and dreams with one another, as this will enable you to visualise better times, which will surely come, because nothing lasts forever.

### Leaving the past behind

You're here NOW, so don't measure yourself against your partner's past. They are with you now and their past belongs exactly there, not in the present.

An immature relationship is your greatest teacher – so learn your lessons well and don't quit! It's always way too early in a committed relationship to throw in the towel, unless something totally unacceptable happens, such as violence or an addiction for which your partner refuses to seek help. A great relationship can heal and nurture you in a much healthier way than your birth parent did – it's like a mirror – reflecting the good, the bad, and the ugly in both of you.



Cynthia  
Spillman

Cynthia Spillman is author of 'From Dinner Date to Soulmate - Cynthia Spillman's Guide to Mature Dating', available on Amazon. She is a Foundation Year student.

# An Easier Sunset Walk

By Celia Kozlowski

Jon Kabat-Zinn writes that he started his first Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program in a hospital because "hospitals...function as 'dharma magnets' in our society," with "schools, prisons, and the military" skewed towards us "like a magnet for suffering." For me the most conspicuous "dharma magnets" isn't a place or an institution, but a stage of life—old age. So it is that my early 60s find me in the OMRI master's program exploring how mindfulness might help older adults.

My sisters and I had a preview of some of the challenges of aging with my parents. My Mom—a naturally mindful person—lived a contained 83 years. The last decade of her life followed a stroke, which took away her superpowers of organization and multitasking, yet somehow left her even more spiritual than before.



After Mom's death, my Dad, "solitarily grumpy" (according to my English husband), continued living on his own for four years, but as he approached age 90, painful osteoarthritis in a knee made him unsteady and barely able to manage stairs. Memory loss left him making illogical tasks, and struggling to do words in his head—something that a few years before was easy. He fell in the street while walking, and burned his hand absent-mindedly picking up a hot pan. While traveling on his own, he fell on a moving walkway in an airport and got cascade off to a hospital in a city where he knew no one.

At that point, my sisters and I drew the line. We agreed to take turns caring for Dad, who refused all other accommodation options. During my month-caring for Dad, I witnessed his challenges with sleep, appetite, exercise, and other activities of living—dressing, bathing, remembering medications, even remembering my name. A few months later, his third bout of pneumonia pushed him down an even steeper slope of decline to his death at age 91. Compared to some people's experiences, my Dad's last years were "Tokioh-lee," but highlighted for me the complex, interconnected challenges of aging.

My reading of the research so far suggests that mindfulness might take some of the suffering out of aging—more like my Mom's rather than my Dad's experience. Imaging studies show long-term meditators maintain more youthful brain structure and connectivity than non-meditators<sup>1</sup>. And a study of frat mindfusness found that older adults with mindful dispositions sustained greater mental health and well-being than less mindful people with similar levels of life stress.<sup>2</sup>

The jury is still out on the extent of benefits that can be realized by people starting mindfulness practices in later life. In my thesis research, I am reviewing literature to see if mindfulness interventions might help elders move more easily and confidently. Other meditative movement practices like Tai Chi can steady balance and reduce falls.<sup>3</sup> Based on personal experience, I suspect mindfulness might, too.

## References:

1. Kabat-Zinn, J. (2011). Some reflections on the origins of MBSR, skillful means, and the trouble with trees. *Contemporary Buddhism*, 12(3), 381–396. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14673867.2011.564844>
2. Luedtke, E., Cheshire, N., & Gaser, C. (2016). Estimating brain age using high-resolution pattern recognition: Younger brains in long-term meditators vs. nonmeditators. *NeuroImage*, 134, 509–512. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2016.01.057>
3. deFazio, C. M., & Myrha, E. (2015). Stress on health-related quality of life in older adults: the protective nature of mindfulness. *Aging & Mental Health*, 19(3), 200.
4. Gorley, M. F., Terregino, M., Hardman, S., & Burke, E. (2017). Using Tai Chi to reduce Fall Risk Factors Among Older Adults: An Evaluation of a Community-Based Implementation. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 37(346–4817703004. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0733464017703004>



Celia  
Kozlowski

# Nurturing Parent Course

I volunteer at Barnardo's Rural family service on Anglesey hoping to deliver Mindfulness courses to the service users in the area.

I really enjoy sharing the Nurturing parent course with parents, it's a real privilege engaging with them during this learning experience, witnessing the deeper connections they make with their children and the relief they begin to feel from approaching their difficulties in new way.

During the course Parents often ask how can they practice Mindfulness with their children.

One of the suggestions we made was the Glitter jar project. Creating this small tool can help their children turn to the breath at any time and when they start to feel overwhelmed.

We give instructions on how to make the jar and guidance to help them to explain how they can use jar with their children.

It's a lovely project, it creates space for the parents to interact with their children and helps to introduce Mindful practice to the home and the rest of the family.

Wishing you all a lovely holiday

Best wishes

Heather



**Heather  
Cayzer**

## How to make your Glitter Jar...

### What you need

Jar and lid (large jam jar will do)

Clear pasting glue

Hot water (from the tap)

Glitter

Food colouring

Whisk, to mix everything

### Instructions

1. Into the jar mix the glue and hot water (adding the glue gives texture to the liquid allowing the swirls to last longer)
2. Add some glitter (you can mix colours for different effect)
3. Add a few drops of food colouring
4. When you have added everything, and the mixture has cooled, add a ring of superglue to the inside of the lid and tightly seal the jar.

## The Glitter Jar



When you've built the jar explain why you have made it.

Shake it up and tell your child that sometimes our minds are full of thoughts, swirling around like the glitter in the jar.

Sometimes we have angry thoughts, sometimes sad thoughts.

Tell them that it's okay to have strong feelings but that we can calm those thoughts and our bodies.

One way to do this is to let your thoughts settle like the glitter in the jar. When our minds are calm it's easier to work out problems and to talk about whatever is making us upset.

Shake the jar until the glitter is really swirling round. Then put on the table or floor and calmly watch it with your child until the glitter and your minds have settled down.

# Teaching and Being....



One of the most interesting things for me personally in developing my mindfulness practice is the awareness, over time, of my particular habits and responses I have in certain situations.

There are obviously those I have in everyday life, but there are also some particular ones that I have now become aware of when I am teaching the 8 week Mindfulness Courses.

The one habit/response that may resonate with other teachers (and not just in the mindfulness field but in any teacher/learner capacity) is a particular pattern I have noticed of mine that is triggered when a student decides to drop out of the course without prior discussion with me.

The story line that gets played in my head instantly is:

'I am not a good enough teacher otherwise they would have stayed'

'If I was a better, more gentle person they would have felt supported to stay'

'Other teachers don't get drop-out'

Whilst this narrative may not resonate with all teachers (and actually I do hope it doesn't) there will be triggers around for each and every one of us whom we teach.

Through the many years now of practicing mindfulness, I am aware of the thoughts. I have also learnt to feel and know and acknowledge how those thoughts resonate in the body. As is so often the way with my students, when they are exploring difficulty for the first time, I still notice my automatic response which is one of resistance.

My mind can begin to spiral and like a big black hole I find myself being sucked into the vortex of my story line of 'not a good enough teacher' and I can fully observe my mood sinking deeper and deeper. I can feel the reactivity dialogue which reads something like: 'I should give up teaching.'

It is in these spiraling moments (and it is moments) I have learnt to gently turn towards those difficult thoughts and the accompanying physical sensations and just explore what's there to be felt and known.

It is neither easy nor comfortable. I can honestly say I don't much like it. But I have stopped fighting it and denying its strong presence. I have also watched it change too.

It reminds me of the poem via read to students Autobiography in 5 Chapters by Portia Nelson.

I am still only at chapter 3 in this dialogue. I am still falling down the same hole but I do know what I am doing.

I have come to recognise that change can be slow and not always easy; it does take time.

The thoughts that get triggered by a student deciding not to complete a course may actually be true, but as I don't know for sure I now add the following to the story line... 'how do I know I am not good enough, I am doing the best I can. I am being as authentic as I can be, and I am ok'. I always take time to let those words be received by my body too.

I read this Roosevelt quote recently:

'These will be failures and mistakes and criticisms, if we want to move through the difficult disappointments, the hurt feelings and the heartbreaks that are inevitable in a fully lived life, we can't equate defeat with being unworthy of being loved, belonging and joy. If we do, we'll never show up and try again.'

This quote reminds me that we need to keep showing up/opening up and being brave to meet ourselves where we are.

It is my practice together with wise words such as those, and the ever supportive words of encouragement and non-judgment from my supervisor, that keep me stepping back into the arena in spite of those moments of self doubt and challenge.

It is also the knowing awareness that everything is constantly changing, even my thoughts and responses.

I have also come to trust that if these thoughts are once again triggered, I can now gently hold them and myself differently, and with that, each time I am increasing a greater sense of steadiness and resilience.

I often share with students at the beginning of the course that I am both teacher and student but the truth is I always feel more like a student. The reason for that I think is quite simply this is a lifelong practice and getting to know ones true self is a life times work.

I also recognise, that being both teacher and student, I get to go on this wonderful journey of life's rich flow and unfolding.



Amber  
Skyring



# Lle i enaid gael llonydd

## A place for the soul to be still

Just beyond the modern buildings of Parc Menai Business Park you will find Glynfaen - a walled woodland where you can explore the paths through the trees.

From the carpark and the picnic area the swooping grassland reminds you that this was once a place for gentry with the grand house of Plas Newydd in front of you as you look over the Menai Straits. On turning around you feel that you are amongst the mountains of Eryr. Today the sheep graze freely, greeting you with suspicious stares as you walk across their turf to the kissing gate leading to the trees.

Autumn brings the warm hues of red, yellow, orange and brown as the leaves change colour, with bursts of sun shining through the canopy above. You may take time to listen to the squelch of mud on your boots, the rustle of leaves and fed droplets of rain cool your skin as they drip from above, serenaded by nature's chorus.

Along the paths there are several viewing points where there are newly crafted high benches and bird hides, allowing you to look over the imposing wall that surrounds the estate. A place to take out your flask and binoculars to see how many of the wide variety of seabirds you can spot or marvel at the precision of flight as they land perfectly on water.

You may even see a shy local seal swimming past. See if you can find the slate carvings of local wildlife in the walls.

You can listen to the oystercatchers and the lapping of the waves on the shore, with the distant hum of traffic rushing over Britannia Bridge from the mainland to Ynys Môn (Anglesey) in the background.

In spring you can smell bluebells, wild garlic and the burst of fresh growth as nature provides you with all you need to be present. If you are very quiet and still you may just be lucky enough to meet one of the forest's newest residents ... a red squirrel!



### How to get there:

By car:

Leave the A55 at junction 9. Take the Parc Menai turning at the roundabout.

Go straight over the mini-roundabout and take the first left (Ffordd y Plas) and follow Glynfaen signs to the picnic area.

By bus:

Take SC 6 or 43 bus from Llangoed town centre to Parc Menai. Alight at the stop after the Premier Inn and walk down the road until you see Ffordd y Plas on your left. Take this turning and follow Glynfaen signs to the picnic area.

For more information: glynfaenrefugee.org.uk SH512698



Mindfulness teacher in North Wales currently completing MA at Bangor and Friends of Bangor Committee Member



# Come Sit With Me

You watch and do not see  
You listen and do not hear and you speak without meaning.  
Come sit!  
Come sit with me my friend  
Let's see, let's hear, let us speak with meaning  
For I am you and you are me.

You eat and do not taste  
You drink without thirst and you sing without a tune  
Come sit!  
Come sit with me my friend  
Let's eat, let's drink, let us sing with meaning  
For I am you and you are me.

You touch without a feeling  
You are without being and you love without your heart.  
Come sit!  
Come sit with me my friend  
Let's feel, let's live, let us love with meaning  
For I am you and you are me.

Per Norrgren Jan 2013, - some words that came when meeting me.



painting by Min Jie Hong



Original woodburning  
by Min Norrgren



Per  
Norrgren

# CMRP News

## Congratulations to the CMRP graduates from summer 2017

Here are some of the work produced by the graduating students:

- Capturing the carers perspective: Mindfulness for anger and aggression with learning disability.
- A review of Good Practice Guidelines for mindfulness teachers in the workplace
- Mindful Decentring and its potential role in OCD
- Bowled over by Mindfulness: Can a brief mindfulness intervention improve performance and well-being in Cricketers?
- Mindfulness practice and self-care decisions: a qualitative investigation of healthcare professionals

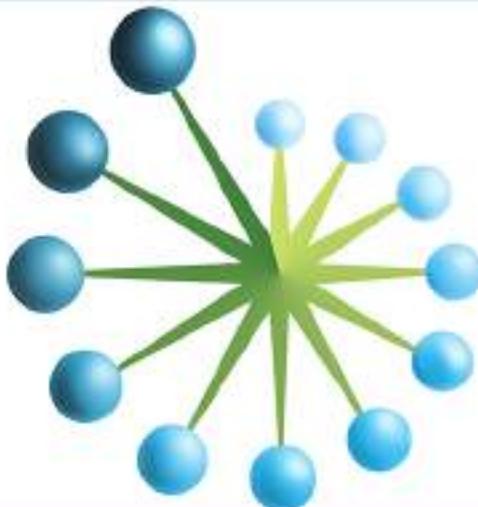


For more information about their amazing theses they have written, go here:  
[www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/mastersthesis.php.en](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/mastersthesis.php.en)

### CMRP 2018 Students due to graduate in the summer 2018;

19 students who will be graduating with a Masters  
4 with a post-graduate Diploma  
3 with a Postgraduate Certificate

The FoB wishes them the very best of luck in their endeavours.



# CMRP Events

## Specialist Masterclass in Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP) for addictive behaviours

with Devin Ashwood

12th January 2018 Crowne Plaza Hotel, Chester

This course offers participants an opportunity to appreciate the intentions and practices of the MBRP programme and how it draws upon scientifically tested approaches to addiction as well as ancient wisdom and meditation techniques to develop the skills and qualities needed to become free of the cravings that drive addictive behaviours. CMRP Masters students get a discounted rate of £80 for the day.

## Mental Health First Aid for Mindfulness Teachers

with Bethan Roberts

22nd - 23rd January 2018, Bangor University

This training is limited to 14 places and is a new opportunity to take the established course which has been tailored to the needs of mindfulness teachers, intended for mindfulness-based teachers who do not have an existing training in mental health issues, to support them to be more equipped to respond skilfully to participants in their group, or those who apply to join the group, who are vulnerable.

The idea of MHFA is that people should be taught how to perform basic 'first aid' for those exhibiting signs of mental health distress, just as they are commonly taught first aid for physical problems. MHFA aims to increase knowledge, reduce stigma and increase supportive reactions in terms of mental health.

Mental health problems are common, especially depression, anxiety and misuse of alcohol and other drugs. One person in four will experience some form of problem with their mental health in the course of a year. Many people are interested in learning about mindfulness because they are experiencing a mental health problem, or have done so in the past. There is a stigma associated with mental health problems which may hinder people from seeking help, many people are not well informed and help is not always on hand, especially when the problem first arises.

MHFA is a 12 hour course which will teach you:

- How to recognise when a person might need help and the best way to approach them;
- How to save a life by learning basic suicide intervention skills;
- What protects your own and other people's mental health;
- New skills that are useful in every part of your life.

For more information about these events, and other offerings from the CMRP go to:

[www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/calendar.php.en](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/calendar.php.en)

## CMRP courses 2018

**12th Jan** Devin Ashwood's Masterclass - Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP) for addictive behaviours

**22nd Jan** Bethan Roberts' Mental Health First Aid for Mindfulness Teachers

**2nd Feb** Sarah Silverton's Masterclass - Mindfulness for adults working with children aged 3-11 : introducing 'The Present' curriculum

**19th Mar** Alison Evans' Supervision Theory & Practice Day

**1st June** Graham Music's Masterclass - Attaching or non-attaching: the meeting of mindfulness, emotional development, the brain and attachment theory

**8th June** Alison Evans' 3 Day Supervision Training

**16th June** Rebecca Crane & Trish Barley's Advanced Teacher Development Retreat

# CMRP News

## CMRP Research

Rebecca Crane has recently co-authored a review about home-practice in Mindfulness-Based Group Interventions. Gemma Griffith was involved in a study which delivered compassion focused therapy to a group of adults with learning disabilities, people who went on the course reported feeling better about themselves. To find out more about both studies, the references are below.



Rebecca Crane

Lloyd, A., Crane, R.S., Eames, C., White, R. (2017)  
The Utility of Home-Practice in Mindfulness-Based Group Interventions:  
A Systematic Review. *Mindfulness*. DOI 10.1007/s12671-017-0813-z

Clapton, N. E., Williams, J., Griffith, G. M., & Jones, R. S. (2017).  
'Finding the person you really are... on the inside'  
Compassion focused therapy for adults with intellectual disabilities.  
*Journal of Intellectual Disabilities*, 1744629516688581.

## 'Come and Meet Us' online!

The CMRP have just launched monthly 'come and meet us' sessions online. This is an opportunity to find out more about the Masters or Teacher Training Pathway and to ask any questions you may have. The sessions are either at lunch time or at 4pm so you can join us from your workplace. It is very easy to join in and the details of how to join are on our website. The first few dates for 2018 are:

**Thursday 11th January at 12.30**

**Tuesday 27th February at 4pm**

**Monday 26th March at 12.30**

**Tuesday 24th April at 4pm**

Have a look at our website to see when other sessions will be!  
[www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/open-days.php.en](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/open-days.php.en)

## Mindfulness Network CiC

The CMRP are now listing retreats on the CiC website as well. You can see the retreats listed here  
[www.mindfulness-network.org/retreats.php](http://www.mindfulness-network.org/retreats.php)

# Useful Links...



[www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/)

Bangor University Mindfulness Centre

[oxfordmindfulness.org/](http://oxfordmindfulness.org/)

Oxford University Mindfulness Centre

[cedar.exeter.ac.uk/mindfulness/](http://cedar.exeter.ac.uk/mindfulness/)

Exeter University Mindfulness Centre

[www.breathworks-mindfulness.org.uk/](http://www.breathworks-mindfulness.org.uk/)

Breathworks

[www.mindfulnessassociation.org/](http://www.mindfulnessassociation.org/)

Mindfulness Association

[www.cmrpconference.com/](http://www.cmrpconference.com/)

CMRP Conference

[www.mindfulnessteachersuk.org.uk/](http://www.mindfulnessteachersuk.org.uk/)

UK Mindfulness Teacher Network

[bemindful.co.uk/](http://bemindful.co.uk/)

BeMindful

[www.themindfulnessinitiative.org.uk/](http://www.themindfulnessinitiative.org.uk/)

The Mindfulness Initiative

## Research Links

[meditation-research.org.uk/](http://meditation-research.org.uk/)

Meditation Research UK

[goamra.org/](http://goamra.org/)

American Mindful Research Association

[www.mindful.org/research-roundup/](http://www.mindful.org/research-roundup/)

Mindful.org

## Retreats

[www.trigonos.org/](http://www.trigonos.org/)

Trigonos

[gaiahouse.co.uk/](http://gaiahouse.co.uk/)

Gaiam House

[www.mindfulness-network.org/retreats.php](http://www.mindfulness-network.org/retreats.php)

Mindfulness Network retreat offerings

[www.amaravati.org](http://www.amaravati.org)

Amaravati

## Bangor University Links

[www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/calendar.php.en](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/calendar.php.en)

calendar of courses/events

[www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/cmrpnewsletter.php.en](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/cmrpnewsletter.php.en)

past newsletters

[www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/cmrp-blog-intro.php.en](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/cmrp-blog-intro.php.en)

CMRP blog

[www.mindfulness-network.org/cui-supervisors.php](http://www.mindfulness-network.org/cui-supervisors.php)

Supervision

[www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/fobsurvey.php.en](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/fobsurvey.php.en)

FoB Survey