



CMRP Friends of Bangor Alumni Group  
CYHYO Grŵp Alumni Cyfeillion Bangor  
NEWSLETTER

Time to Connect / Time to Transition / Amser / Gysylltu-Amser / Daensus / PINNUSU-DRAENUS

# Mindfulness

In connection with  
Hanes cywyddiadau gwyliau

FEB Newsletter Issue 3  
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# Welcome Croeso



**Dear Friends of Bangor Members**

Welcome to the Gairavir 2020 Newsletter! Seeing that so much has changed since the last edition (well, like an undoubtably!), while the past months have introduced great suffering, some good has also come through. As Leonard Cohen says there is a crack in everything, that's how the light gets in. And for Friends of Bangor, the light has been the *Ancient Gathering*. After organizing to meet in Bangor, when we realized that gathering in person would not be possible, the committee and the facilities rolled up their sleeves and moved all the events online; in total, we hosted nine online events, attended by more than 400 people from all over the world. It felt extremely meaningful to bring the warmth and strong pacifist community voice in the midst of this tumultuous period, and I am very grateful to all who contributed to make it such a memorable event. In particular, I would like to thank Euan Geddes, Rebecca Crane, Ali Lymba, Trish Bunting, Gemma Griffith, Sonja Horn, Helen Stephenson, Judy Martindale, Frances Vaughan and James Griffith for sharing their wisdom and their love (which goes generously); and Anna Blauch from the Mindfulness Network, Rebecca Macrae from Bangor University and the whole Friends of Bangor committee for their help in the organization.

While being a time for connections, Friends of Bangor is also in a period of transition. We announced at the AGM our intention to merge with the Merchants Network. We also give a warm welcome to Dorothy Dwyer, Gill Johnson, Ray Bruce, Melvinne Sarschikoff, Noreen Bannister and Suzanne Gazecki who are joining the committee. Alongside the arrival of new people, Gwenan Roberts, Helen Stephenson, Pen Horgan, and Vicki Wallack have decided to step down. With all of our members I am giving the departing committee members a strong box of appreciation, and especially to Peter who has dedicated so much time and energy to make Friends of Bangor what it is today.

Alongside all these changes, the new committee has been busy preparing for our meeting this autumn. To read about these alongside brilliant contributions from our members in the following pages.

### Writing workshop

Stephan

Stephan Schöning

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

# The Road Ahead

In response to Rebecca Grantham's vision of connecting the mindfulness practitioners with the Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice (CMRP), five years ago, Re, Niamh and the founder members launched Friends of Bangor. At the time CMRP ran from Bangor University. About two years ago, the University underwent fundamental restructuring, and the Teaching Training Pathway (TTP) was transferred to the Mindfulness Network along with the service support of Friends of Bangor.

The Mindfulness Network worked hard to scale up its operations to deliver the TTP, research and supervision network. In parallel, the identity of Friends of Bangor became unclear: now that the CMRP straddled both Bangor University and the Mindfulness Network, who was Friends of Bangor for? While originally for all CMRP alumni, Masters and TTP students, the association with Bangor University felt much closer, and we did not reach the people who attended retreats and supervision at the Mindfulness Network. Friends of Bangor started to look at how to address these issues when Alison Lewis and Karen Farn from the Mindfulness Network approached us. They wrote:



# The Road Ahead

As a Charity the Mindfulness Network wishes to contact more actively within its community of participants so that services to that community can grow in line with needs and expand further. A free membership model for all individuals who use the Charity's services has been in operation for some time, so the opportunity to work with Friends of Bangor to establish this in ways that build on the considerable strengths of both organisations is very welcome. In particular, we feel a strong membership model will help with developing our equality, diversity and inclusion aims, and help us offer wider and better services that are more affordable. We feel that the membership organisation should be member-led, and we look forward to putting together a joint proposal.

The Friends of Bangor committee welcomed this opportunity. We felt that this was the best way forward for our members and the mindfulness community as a whole. At the Annual General Meeting, 2020, the members voted to support this initiative. As we advance the joint proposal, we will continue to support our members with events and newsletters. We will post regular updates when material changes are made.

As you can see from our organisational chart, we have a strong team of volunteers behind Friends of Bangor, and we look forward to developing a flourishing relationship with the Mindfulness Network to serve you, our members, better.

**Wishing you well,**

**Stephan Schrempf** on behalf of the Friends of Bangor Committee



# The Mindfulness Network

It has been quite an extraordinary couple of months for us in the Mindfulness Network, as it has been for all. You read more detail about how we have been navigating these times in our newsletter updates from March, April and May here: <https://www.mindfulness-network.org/newsletters>. I notice that the titles of the newsletters begin with "Annoyedover?" to "Managing" to "Moving Forward". This seems to be where we are now, able to breathe again and make considered and creative decisions, in conjunction with our wider teams and network.

We operated for most of April with just one part-time member of staff, one part-time contractor and two volunteers. We will continue to operate with minimum staffing, bringing people out of furlough on a temporary basis as and when needed. This will allow us to continue to offer services, and to start to rebuild our future programme, while keeping financially viable.

Wherever possible we have been running events online. At the time of this going to press, we have run an online supervisor, inquiry and MBTAC training courses, plus Teacher Training Levels 1 and 2 have now moved online. We have also hosted online retreats, including a MSC weekend and a 5-day retreat with Marlene Bachelder.

There are further online training events and retreats open for bookings on our website – some of which are detailed at the end of this newsletter. Do take a look at the Mindfulness Network website for future training events and retreats – the calendar is constantly being updated as we respond to conditions to keep us all safe during the pandemic and the website itself is undergoing a deep refresh to make things more navigable in this brand new online world, so watch this space!

<https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/calendars/>

Huge gratitude is felt towards all our own staff who prepared so well for our people, to those who have continued to work, and to our trustees, trainers, supervisors and retreat leads. Appreciation also to our community of trainees, retreatants and supervisees for their patience, warm messages of support and understanding. We have valued the connection and conversations with the FoB committee during this time and look forward to ongoing relationships and collaboration.

I have found great value and comfort in the free online events that have been offered by our community of trainers, retreat leads and supervisors, and to see how many of you have been engaging that way. A new programme of free online guided sessions will begin in October 2020, offered via Zoom every Friday at 8.15am – 8.45am. More details will be posted on our website:

<https://www.mindfulness-network.org/free-online-practice-sessions/>

Please continue to check our website:

<https://www.mindfulness-network.org/coronavirus/>  
for the latest developments and for any questions you may have regarding our programme of events.

Warmest wishes to you all,

Alison Evans (Executive Director)



# What is the FoB all about?

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

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 like-minded people can meet and practice together, exchange ideas and network; to share Time to Connect.

## FoB Objectives:

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

## What are the benefits?

### The FoB membership benefits

- Practice day with Rebecca Crisp – held at Bangor or other event
- Annual Gathering and connection afternoon with Rebecca Crisp and senior teachers
- Forum on Facebook to connect with the community, ask questions, share and support
- Regular Online meditation events
- Networking events, practice classes and gatherings
  - Connect and practice with like-minded people
- Newsletter
- Opportunity to share your events with other FoB members
- Discounts for FoB members from connected organisations
- Opportunity to volunteer and get involved in FoB - if you have ideas and enthusiasm, contact us to participate and make the community grow

What are the costs? Membership fee for 2020/21 £25.

How do I register? via the foB website [www.friendsofbangor.org](http://www.friendsofbangor.org)

# Who is the FoB?

The FoB-committee now consists  
of the following volunteer members:



## Stephan Schaefer Chik

Stephan started his career as an IT professional and after having been diagnosed with a chronic health condition, was introduced to meditation as a tool to better handle life ups and downs. Inspired by the changes that meditation brought to his life, Stephan joined the Mindfulness programme at FoB and is now meditation teacher today. He teaches meditation to professionals.



## Carole Lucy

Carole worked for over twenty-five years in Mental Health, both as a Registered Mental Nurse and with a charity supporting working age people diagnosed with dementia and their carers. She is training to teach MBCT with the CBT-IU on the Teacher Training Pathway and has been teaching MBK to the general public in the West Midlands area since January 2018. Carole has had a meditation practice for most of her adult life.



## Victoria Dasey

Victoria's background is in Education, Teaching and Modern Foreign Language teaching. She is an Honorary Fellow at the same university where she worked as teacher/lecturer, Victoria is currently studying for the MSc in Mindfulness at Bangor University and is interested in exploring how MBCT links with the 'teaching' techniques.



## Catherine Pertejo

Catherine is a doctor and a mindfulness teacher in London and in life. She has completed the Oxford Foundation course in MBCT, tailored her training to Sather Anaya's Psychotherapy Hospital in Paris and attended residential and intensive modules in Bangor. She teaches MBCT and also has a background in General Practice, Mental Health and Public health both in the UK and in France.



## Peryal McMillan-Pelat

Peryal is currently undertaking a MBCT course and is about to start a CBT-IU. She works as an independent mindfulness teacher with both the general public and school communities in the Cheshire area. She has been practicing Vipassana meditation as taught by N.H. Satyananda since 2009.



## Sandrine Ossenkopp

Sandrine has been practicing meditation since 1994 under the guidance of her Buddhist teacher. She did the Teacher Training Pathway with the CMFT, Penzance with MBSF and completed the Mindfulness in the Workplace training at CMFT. Sandrine has been teaching MBK courses for the general public in West Sussex since 2014.



## Lill Johnson

Lill Johnson has been teaching MBK, MBCT, MBCT-I, and Mindfulness in the community and in non-clinical settings in West, Surrey, and Hounslow areas and counties in the south east, Healthcare and education in Surrey and London since 2009. Lill has trained with CMFT, Bangor and the Richard Lubomski Centre.



## Dorothy Green

Dorothy is currently working as a Civil Servant in the Department for Work and Pensions and alongside her duties delivers information sessions on Mindfulness within the Civil Service. Dorothy is currently undertaking a Masters Degree in Mindfulness Approaches at Bangor University.



## Kay Brink

Kay started her career as a teacher and trainer in languages for business and translation for 25 years for one company offering corporate training in communication for managers. This gave a Positive Psychology coach of course in Mindfulness through Mind Alive Coaches. Strengths Coach. After her first MBCT with Bangor in 2010, a growing connection with Mindfulness led her to set up practice based on the tools of Mindfulness, MBK with MBCT, specialising in educational technology, she is keen to share good practice in low stress teaching.



## Martenna Bothchers

Martenna, originally from South Africa and now living in the UK, has worked in schools as a teacher for 15 years and has spent most of her academic career studying psychology in some form or other. Her particular interests are in relationship dynamics and neurosciences. Having been introduced to mindfulness practice through yoga in her teens, she continues on a deeper exploration of mindfulness at Bangor University and is now holding through her Martenna.



## Malcolm Blamey

Malcolm lives in Cambridge and has backgrounds in language teaching and education. In 2005, he completed a Masters in Applied Linguistics, and since then, during which time he taught English as a second language and intercultural communication, he has trained to teach MBCT and MBCT with Bangor University, and is currently working towards accreditation as a Deathwise teacher. His practice is also informed by Trauma, Somatics, Mindfulness, focusing and insight. Diploma





# The CMRP

The CMRP sits within two organisations, Bangor University (BU) and the Mindfulness Network (MN) charity. The masters programme sits with the university structure, led by Gemma Griffith, and the teacher training pathway and continuing professional development sits within the MN, led by Siobhan Sareen. Becca Crane has overall leadership for the Centre for Mindfulness at the University and Alison Evans for the MN.

CMRP thrives within this collaborative structure which enables the work to benefit from both a university and a charitable context.



Gemma



Sophie



Becca



Alison

# Waking up in a time of covid

by **Rebecca Crane**



Words and phrases that were never previously in everyday use have become part of our daily vocabulary – ‘stay safe’, furlough, social distancing...

These words have been extraordinary for all of us. Across the world the fundamental way of life for the human part of our living systems has been dramatically disrupted. There has been a strong yearning for some time that human actions are causing enormous damage and disruption to the delicate balance of our world. This particular version of disruption though was not on most of our radars. The reality that we are always living in unpredictable, changing conditions has been vividly revealed to us.

This is the just and fair move – good to emerge from this time, a sense of a situation and directions of both a personal and a collective kind. Everyone has been thrown into different daily patterns, usual habits have been disrupted. It has forced us to learn how quickly other routines moved into the spaces freed by the lock down. Our living being able to both withstand such changes, while spreading into unperturbed areas. The air quality has improved leading to many lives saved across the world. Our policy makers have a deserved recognition of the importance of wellbeing in making society stronger. The challenge is how also how extraordinary to see how the direction of the seemingly unstoppable engine of our economy can be dramatically reduced when the stakes are high. The ecological call to change direction brought to bear is now realistic and possible in the state of the time.

However, this time has absolutely revealed the ever present fault lines in our systems. News today from the Biggs Fund said in May 2020, “people in the poorest neighbourhoods are over three times as likely to be killed by the virus as those in the most affluent areas. Unstable conditions including cardiology, air pollution and Type 2 diabetes are major risk factors for dying from Covid-19, and these disproportionately affect people living in disadvantaged areas and from ethnic minority backgrounds. The virus has underlined the deep inequalities and stark differences in life expectancy that exist between different population groups and areas of the country”. And so the weight of the pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement has roused us to respond to another form of aspect of social inequality – and importantly the movement is opening a new path and support across the world and across society. These times are disturbing and distressing but the potential for a collective waking up has never felt higher in my life time.

The CDRF issuing a lead that the age to attend schools is now, and of course we are still in full on response to the circumstances. We had a discussion of the solidarity with Africa mentioned in every part of our society. However local and national parties, and addressing the climate crisis, there was a call for reducing suffering, and prioritising Black Lives for a healthy system. The ongoing P4G movement of suffering, are both suffering and care beings, and within the world and environmental systems we are prepared in a radical peace approach. We also recognise that we are in a learning journey individually and collectively. Those in leadership are used to us to have the role of assessment back to ourselves, so from our own lenses over the range of experiences, and to respond more fully. We find the potential now, when old ways of working has been disrupted, to accelerate our response.

There was continuity from our live gathering in London, where we had been investigating the need and development of Black and New Age work, and continue to do in a framework of going more practically. The other organisations, everything we naturally do has to become. We investigated this in multiple parts about how to do our work differently through this industry, as well as the longer term strands of continuing our approach. We think this conversation is a commitment for ensuring that across our training programme our embodied instruments, theory and skills in integrating equality, inclusion and diversity into ways of working, and lineage of the learning process to diverse audiences.

Barbara Roberts and I taught the 5 day MAFI specialist recently. We felt truly privileged the programme offers an essential container for investigating ourselves within and around us. Participants expressed gratitude and relief that we were so deeply involved in contextual issues throughout.

We will keep sharing the initiatives and processes we are engaged in around all this, and welcome feedback and engagement from you in these forums. More than ever, it is clear that we need each other. Together as教练practitioners and teachers we are a vehicle for change and transformation. We have an important role to play in each of a wider process of transformational changes in our world.

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I would like to close by extending a deep bow of gratitude to the friends of Banger committee for their ongoing work – and particularly for the beautiful holding of the recent annual gathering events. You are embodying just what is needed in our time. Thank you!

Rebecca Crane  
May 2020



## Reflection from an outgoing committee member

I now live in a village about 6 miles from Bangor, between the mountains and the sea. But I am not strictly local having been brought up south - 40 miles down the A5, and although I have lived here for over 30 years, many remember my accent when speaking Welsh as not local but Bangor University has always been part of my life - three of my siblings studied there as undergraduates, one brother worked at the International Office before his retirement and I worked as a speech and language therapist for the NHS in Dame Cadogan's University Health Board and had also previously completed an MSc at the School of Health Care Sciences at Bangor.

Before starting my Mindfulness Masters Journey at the CNPP I had already done an 8-week course with Rebecca Grove as my first introduction to Mindfulness and a 8-day Mindfulness course with Anne Griffiths, Hawkinge (see 1).

When I was writing the will of my MSc (now approaching 10), having started it 1980, when else would I go to find inspiration and support for times of change but the CNPP. I originally signed up for the teacher training route on the Masters programme and was immediately hooked; even arriving on my first day of the Foundation course, we were asked to stand in the room reflecting how far we had travelled to come to Bangor. I looked around. There were people who had driven, in fact there was no one from Wales. This was going to be an experience of stepping out of training new controllers.

My journey with the Mindfulness school and making very special connections had started. As the time requests were going out, to help establish the Friends of Bangor, my formal title at the university was changing to colour, and I conveniently left this out of connecting my involvement. This had a role to ensure that the language and culture of Bangor would be reflected in the connections.

As a university, Bangor has a reputation for making onwards, of sharing, of being innovative, yet maybe because of its status Welshness, it is comfortable to live the Friends of Bangor. It has become a privilege to have been part of that very special thing that has been co-created. Having made some very special connections and friendships through being on the committee, although you always be continuing to make friends, whilst staying friends all that time apart, this has for me been the greatest of gifts.

However, I feel my greatest contribution has been to create address labels and stuff the newsletter in envelopes!! I am now stepping down from the committee but am looking forward to staying connected as inevitable change takes place. I would like to wish all the committee members well and add my very best wishes for your new adventure.

Goodbye now - Thank You  
Gwynedd Roberts

The signs that welcome you all to Bangor is Gresyn  
- Welcome to Dinas Dyfrn a City of Learning  
and the University's Matodi a Gwyloddu Ddrai -  
The Best Gift is Understanding or Knowledge.  
And what a gift we have all been given when we  
become involved with CNPP and Friends of Bangor.





Helen  
Stephenson

My time with the Full committee was a lovely, rewarding and inspiring experience. I originally joined when they, at that point, approached me and could not resist being enthusiastic supporting Biogeo and its diverse networks. I am always full very appreciative of the work of the Chair at Biogeo. Having attended their webinars and events, the good work of GfR continued on, and I am still involved as a chair and it is with sadness that I am leaving Biogeo, whose members were such a pleasure to work with. It is time for me to pursue other voluntary activity, and my concentrations almost, and until this is sorted, will be with Lao Tzu "How knowings are often obscured as partial endings? I hope the new committee all the best for the future. Well, follow closely Biogeo's news, continue to meet & exchange ideas now & soon.

Helen

## Reflections from outgoing committee members



Per  
Norrgren

On summer evenings in the Alpine, I come to think and reflect on all things spiritual, and do it with life, like the quote by Aldo Leopold:

"I would love to live like a river flows,  
carried by the surprise of its own unfolding."

Learning the ways of membership was indeed a big surprise and it opened the door to my personal life in a way that twelve years ago I could never have comprehended. Long overdue it was of course, but so welcome that it finally arrived.

The creation of the Full and its development has been a big part of my past two years. It has brought me much joy, so much connection with wonderful people, so much insight and learning. But now there were obstacles, GfR's flaws, different opinions, etc., on the way but this is part of life and can be greatest with more welcome in the same ways as we meet a pleasant surprise. Stepping down from the committee is may the right thing for me, giving room and space to new creative steps, allowing the Full to flourish, serving it's members well.

I hereby bow in deepest gratitude to all.

In peace with love and light, Per

# "Essential Resources for Mindfulness Teachers"

A forthcoming book  
from the CMRP team

We are very pleased to announce that the CMRP team will be publishing a book called "Essential Resources for Mindfulness Teachers", which is the fruit of 20 years of collective experience of training mindfulness teachers at the CMRP. The book is edited by Rebecca Crisp, Kandaswami, and Gemma Griffith. We hope this will be available early 2021, and are currently aiming to hand in the first version of the book to the publishers at the end of June 2020.



## What is 'Essential Resources for Mindfulness Teachers' about?

The intention of this book is that it will serve as a core text for anyone training to be a mindfulness teacher, from the very first steps of coming up to those who are already mindfulness coaches and wish to deepen their teaching. Our aim is that it describes, in a clear and accessible way, the considerations of teaching mindfulness in order to help trainees develop and reflect upon their own skills as a mindfulness teacher.

The book will be presented in four parts:

### Part 1: The explicit curriculum

This is about the facts and tools of teaching, for example how to guide the various meditation practices, theory, and how to teach around the various themes.

### Part 2: The implicit curriculum

This is about those deeper skills that arise from cultivating your own mindfulness practice, such as embodiment, relational skills, holding the group, the use of poems and stories, and how the implicit and explicit curriculum are integrated (i.e. what does this look like in the classroom?). There are also chapters about how these factors have an orientate and assess participants on our courses, and how they can contribute to additional teaching considerations when teaching online.

### Part 3: Reflective practice for mindfulness teachers

Reflective practice is a vital process to becoming and developing as a mindfulness teacher – how do we hold those places of “malleable” as a mindfulness teacher and use them to grow? Here you introduce a new tool called Mindfulness-Based Approaches: Teaching and Learning Criteria (MBATLC) which aid the reflective practice of mindfulness teachers. We tend to call it the TLC!

### Part 4: Underpinning themes for teaching mindfulness-based programmes

This is the section where the CMRP team comes together and writes chapters on their particular interest or expertise. Under the umbrella of ‘underpinning themes’, what are the resources and knowledge systems we draw upon as teachers that facilitate our teaching practice? We have contributing chapters from Paola D’Adda, Howard Gold, Alison Fawcett, Bridget O’Neil, Bethany Robins and Roberta Costa, Gemma Griffith and her team, and Rebecca Crisp and Heidi Clegg. The subjects are vast, and include: mindfully, resilience, personal practice, theory and science, professional issues, movement and so on to name a few.

"Essential Resources for Mindfulness Teachers"  
A forthcoming book  
from the CMRP team



#### The writing process

The authors are Rebecca Dunn, Karen Dunn, and Emma Griffiths, and there are a number of chapters written by the wider CMRP team. The writing process has taken a long time to develop; the book was first discussed about 3 years ago, with Dennis writing and editing going on for the last year or so. We had a writing retreat together in Tregaron in November 2019 over a period of two days together. There were 10 people and I have learned that there is much to be gained by co-writing the book, about both writing techniques and how to write about it.

During the pandemic, we also had to switch our teacher training and the Bangor University modules entirely programme online at quite short notice. As a team, we learned a lot, and had an idea about a month after lockdown to add a section about online teaching to the book, as this seems like it may be a major delivery method of MBBs in the near future (and perhaps beyond). The editing team have agreed to switch to zoom meetings when working on the book (see page 4).

As I write this on a cloudy and wet day in North Wales (12th June 2020), I am aware of the looming deadline of the end of June 2020 where we have promised to get the book to the publisher. I forget just how much editing there is to do between now and the end of the month. We have already seen a copy of other modules for the book which just on a first impression seem well written. However, my preference just finished checking the final proofs for this book (about mentioned Welsh history) after having in the first version to the publisher about a year ago. I must stress that there is a long and detailed production and editing process to go before we have an actual book in our hands!

We hope to have the book ready for publication by July 2021 – we will be updating any developments on our CMRP Facebook and on the page to do look out them for news of the book, our aspiration is that it will serve the teacher training community for many years to come...

David Blackman

(Chair of Clinical Mindfulness programmes, Bangor University)

# This Breath

The breath of mine is a curious thing,  
Ebbing and flowing like the tide.

Sometimes it feels like a coiling serpent,  
Sometimes it turns somersaults,  
Sometimes it's like mercury in a thermometer,  
Climbing up, then sliding down  
Sometimes it feels like the billowing white sail of a tall ship,  
Or moves sideways like the bellows of an accordian,  
Or opens and closes like a flower.

This breath feels a little forced,  
This breath is soft and yielding.  
This breath is like a whisper, quiet and gentle.  
This breath feels hard and tough, shuddering as it struggles in and out.  
This breath arrives with sadness, and leaves with a sob.

This one comes with yearning and longing.  
This one is light and playful, and like a bubble wants to burst with joy!  
This breath goes unnoticed as I wonder, "What's for dinner tonight?"  
And this one, too, is lost forever, as my mind wanders off.  
Planning my homeward journey,  
Wondering if I might choose another route home,  
One that will keep me closer to the mountains for a little longer.

This breath is waiting patiently –  
Oh, so patiently –  
For my skittish attention and grasshopper mind  
To alight upon it for a moment.

This patient breath,  
This patient breath of mine.

# Trauma sensitivity in the MBP teaching space

Webinar with Eluned Gould

The Webinar by Eluned Gould was offered to those of us who teach in the public domain, not to those working as therapists or in hospitals and was delivered in two parts:



- Background, definitions and the effect of trauma on our organism
- How to adapt our teaching to be trauma sensitive

Throughout this session we were invited to check in with ourselves, and to take action in case the talk had triggered something. Eluned suggested ways of calming the nervous system and to enable the release of the bonding hormone oxytocin by engaging in small meaningful occasions of connection. A cup of tea, a walk in the garden, finding a fresh banana, a hug with your partner, looking at your sleeping child, stroking this cat.

## Her aim was

- Awareness of the prevalence and the degree of trauma within the general population we teach
- To increase understanding of trauma, its effects on the human organism, and how mindfulness practice can impact on these effects
- To offer succinct guidance and skills to enable the MBP teacher to approach such issues and participants with trauma sensitivity
- To sign post to further resources

Eluned stressed the importance of learning how to teach to avoid re-traumatizing our participants. As discussed, it doesn't happen very often, in fact it is rare, but it makes sense to know what to watch out for and to have tools to deal with those rare occasions skillfully.

We used the following "definitions":

- Trauma occurs when a person's natural defensive mechanism in an experience overwhelms the central nervous system and changes the way the experience is remembered. - Bessel van der Kolk
- "Loss of a loss of connection to body, our family, our world." - Peter Levine
- As a result of trauma "our ability to engage with others may thus be compromised as our patterns of connection are replaced with patterns of protection". - Stephen Porges

The invitation was to think of "trauma with a BIG T", to widen our definition of trauma, to take into consideration experiences of oppression, racism, and powerlessness, just because of who we are. This means that Trauma

- Can be a traumatic event like the fire in the Grenfell Tower
- It can be part of our lives, "**This never saw violence**"

Blurred re-introduced us to understanding trauma by using the model of the 'two brain', the 'hard modus' from Dan Siegel, and reminded us that the three parts of the brain are in close connection, with 'grey lines' of communication between them. When one part of the brain loses these connections, and the neo cortex is occupied with chronic formication, the septum brain and limbic system are activated and we struggle to access our reflective, clear thinking.

The parasympathetic nervous system, and how the ventral branch are a key factor in working with participants when we notice signs of overarousal and discomfort. The ventral branch, also called the 'smart vagus', is highly able to assess intuitively situation through tone, body language, facial expression and other cues through neural connection. Thus, stress, soft voice etc. can be used for manipulation and control. All this is readily done without thinking. When we feel safe and connected, the hormone oxytocin is released and we connect and be of use with ourselves and others.

Some participants might be in a chronic state of great vigilance, or it might only arise in a situation, such as attending a course. Some might feel overwhelmed, and instead of connection, patterns of protection might be in place.

To demonstrate, Blurred used here Dan Siegel's 'window of tolerance', a model I find very helpful too, and whilst I use it when the stress response is introduced, I'd be able to sum up we need to be in our 'optimum arousal zone', with it being processed and integrated, self-regulation is possible and we are better able to take in the new situation we are finding ourselves in.

This is different to the 'window of hyperarousal', where our fight/fight response might be triggered, or the 'window of hypoarousal' when we are in the freeze/fold response, when we are numbing out or zoning out.

#### Based on this, what are the implications for us teachers?

Firstly, we need to have a robust assessment process, but prospective participants might not mention, or might not be aware about pre-existing trauma, as it is 'the writer they own it'.

Secondly, we have to consider the prevalence of trauma in our society. David Patrikauer claims that 80-90% of the US population has some kind of trauma and we can assume the numbers in the UK are not much different.

By increasing the awareness for the potential harm MBP can cause.

Blurred introduced us to the model of 5 Rs.

**Realize** the prevalence of trauma

**Recognize** the symptoms

**Respond** with sensitivity and kindness

**Refrain** from re-traumatizing

**Refer** to a health professional, here in the UK this would be the participants GP

We asked teachers to consider **Choices and Connections in teaching**. It requires us as teachers to be authentic, it is okay to flatten our priority to reduce a sense of autonomy for our participants. We are not experts, we have more resources, we convey what is possible, and we convey a deep interest for their well-being. It is the most vulgar service when pick up on our voice from our system, ready to and tell if we are safe or not. It is also important to develop our relational skills, body language and to be aware of our facial expression, and not to forget the power of acceptance.

Under the heading of **Invitations and options** she reminded us:

- Using relational language, offering autonomy through options
- Managing the group environment by holding the boundaries and establishing the ground rules, allowing the anxious system to calm down and learn
- Options for posture are key; there is no right or wrong, personal preferences are very important
- Options for anchors; attention can be on the feet, hands, the breath but this is not always a comfortable space; being a reader approach is much appreciated
- Options for movement such as walking, marching and dancing. Plenty of short intervals of movement practice can be used, as movement is a natural way to integrate the body after a stressful encounter
- Theoretical concepts can help and it is good to introduce them early on so can refer back to them
- Two here to keep the S.F.s in mind
- Attending to our own trauma history

I thoroughly enjoyed this session. Although most of the models were known to me through my psychology work and my training in body-oriented therapy, I thought that Linda had managed to bring together all those different models and angles. She provided a beautiful example of a brief, caring and knowledgeably brief but, as such, providing a place of safety and calm, enabling further learning.

Helen Stephenson



# The Developing Field of Mindfulness

Webinar with Rebecca Crane,  
2nd June 2020



A large international audience gathered online to share in Rebecca's talk about how the field of mindfulness has, and continues to develop. Using her own personal journey, her wide engagement in the world, and some beautiful poetry, Rebecca described the evolution of mindfulness in the UK. She encouraged us to ask the following questions of ourselves: Who am I? What choices do I make? How do I engage with the world? and to set them against the more outward-looking questions: Who am we? What choices do we make? How do we engage with the world?

After giving us a fascinating glimpse of her early life including living in a Buddhist community in Thailand, training to be an Occupational Therapist and then a mindfulness teacher at UMass, Rebecca drew our attention to the lack of infrastructure, training and funding in the UK and Europe when Mark Williams brought the first Mindfulness-Based Programmes to Berger from the USA.

At the beginning, CMPP at Berger was the only centre for mindfulness studies in Europe. A tremendous amount of hard work had to be done to create and validate the Mindfulness Masters. The work to embed it within the University was challenging and delicate. For example, how to keep autonomy and hold on to the vision. Rebecca showed this constant re-working and re-structuring to the kind of flowing, slacking and holding the years in Aikido.

Gradually this work has passed, through the training of teachers within CMPP; through research, publication; inclusion of MBCT in NICE guidelines and involvement in projects such as the 2015 All Party Parliamentary Group in Westminster, the subsequent Mindfulness UK report, the Developing Mindfulness in Wales Conference, 2019 of opening up a potential for doing politics differently.

Rebecca brought her talk to a close by asking us again how this work can be taken forward; how to widen the scope of training and research to include, for example, social justice and climate change. And how this can be done by flowing between honouring the original programmes and principles whilst building on the expanding knowledge and experience to allow MBP adaptation to emerge. In other words, she asked us, how do we keep the radical vision alive, so that it is not just about individual well-being, but well-being on a wider, systemic level?

We then had time in breakout rooms to reflect together on the issues raised, and then came back together for a very interesting 30 minute Q & A session...

Thank you, Rebecca – it was a wonderful session.

By Victoria Dror

# A challenge

The challenge is launched, the gauntlet thrown,  
To share how it is  
To be locked down, not locked in and not locked up,  
With time unlimited and space, the sky!  
A treat, a real retreat.  
The timing was perfect – who thought of that? –  
Early spring and the natural world was filling my senses  
To overflowing  
Focus on growth, colour, warmth, fragrance, song,  
Time and inner space unlimited.  
And further afield  
The sky in Beijing and New Delhi was blue  
The waters of Venice reflected only her beauty!  
Wild animals everywhere venturing onto concrete streets  
The wild, the earth, nature,  
Was this a last call?  
To shoot us down and make us find sense  
In how we live  
And how we will open up.  
Who thought of that?

Kay Bruce

22 April 2020

[kay.bruce@gmail.com](mailto:kay.bruce@gmail.com)



I offer Mindfulness practices online and face-to-face  
here in Dordogne Provencal, in French and English

## A few lines

As you sense your inner world  
As mindlessness unfurled  
Behold your flow of thought  
With all that mindfulness has taught

Michael Carter

# Mindful Movement



Whenever I speak or supervise Mindfulness teachers, I hear that a lot of them don't feel confident in teaching mindful movement. This doesn't surprise me, because even after more than 40 years of having my own movement, I always can find new ways of moving, feeling even as I age. It takes freedom and ease. It comes easily to me as, for more than 40 years I have known and sensed my body.

It can feel quite daunting to be asked to teach MMT when we don't have a regular movement practice ourselves. There are also concerns about the issues our participants might bring and how to accommodate them. I don't think it is good enough to say "just do what you are comfortable with". Most participants want to participate and would like to have more guidance on how to move safely and within their abilities and limitations.

MMT, when taught confidently, is a powerful tool for staying present. It involves both awareness and acceptance of present experiences, stepping into the deep capacity to meet difficult and pleasurable sensations, thoughts and emotions. It is a process during which we feel the body that is moving and at the same time we are mindful of the body as a living entity that is breathing, that is moving, and of the movements of the mind. MMT is helping us to engage in a continuous process of mind and embodied presence.

It is like a way of healing our deep yearning to feel connected to ourselves and others. By being invited to turn to our bodies, we notice how often we have compromised our relationship with our bodies, and how we tend to withdraw from them or distract our attention and move it elsewhere. But by turning away from our bodies we are driving a wedge between us and our bodies, between us and others.

The invitation to turn to the body is not always an easy one. We might have been brought up to fight the body. We were made to believe that this body needs fixing, eating more or eating less. We were told it is working hard to protect it in aesthetic ways, and possibly many of us were engaged in negative self-talk. In Buddhist teachings, as well as in yoga, the body represents the whole universe. The earth, water, air and fire. We are made of star matter. In us is the water of the oceans, the fire of the stars and suns, the movement of the air, the solidity of the earth.

# Mindful Movement

By beginning to look within, to listen and to see with fresh eyes, we can begin to feel a sense of coming home. The movement becomes more than the body and its movements; it is that kind of goal-oriented knowing of what I would like to feel/become for my body. To see means being a witness of what is experienced in a direct and embodied way in the body. This can be felt more directly within, every tissue and part is involved. By practicing MMT, we learn to experience all of ourselves, all the sensations and feelings. We stay mindful and in step out of our habits of thought, finding the directness of our practice.

Here are seven pointers on how you can bring a MMT attitude to your movement practice:

- **Moving with attention:** by noticing and experiencing and being guided by the sensations that you are experiencing while moving, you develop present moment awareness. Often this can be tricky for practitioners as we cannot always know what our experience will be like.
- **Slow movements with discovery:** by slowing down, we make time to get familiar with what is happening right now. This does not equate with dullness, but means that we are giving importance to this present moment. Fast movements tend to fall back into our automatic movement patterns.
- **Variations:** there is more than one way to stand and walk and lie down. Like a future possibilities and variations. New ways of doing provide us with new information. When we change how we move, we practice creativity and open ourselves.
- **Subtleties:** develop the skill to make fine distinctions so that we can move even finely. It requires us to listen and focus to our bodies. Rather than moving in a straight line we discover new ways of moving with ease and comfort.
- **Molding your goals lightly:** to have goals in our movement practice and then holding on to them too tightly can be counterproductive. There is no goal just the intention to connect with the inner experience that we are having right now. The reality of here and now is the guide. By being less rigid about controlling the outcome of our movement practice we diminish other possibilities.
- **Joy is different to the excitement that we can experience based on the keep-outcome of an event:** The experience of joy is the experience of an inner delicious inner vibrancy, like bubbling champagne. As we are focusing on our own experience as it unfolds, this experience of inner joy can get fully completed and integrated.

Helen Stephenson is a Senior Yoga Teacher/ Pilates teacher, trainer and supervisor of MMT. She will be leading a practice of mindful movement on Tuesday 15th of September. She is also offering a CPD workshop for mindful movement at the TA/TC Teachers' Hub website [mindfullbewerk.com](http://mindfullbewerk.com).

The ups and downs of normal times.  
Waking up and feeling fine.  
We just need to do daily rituals.  
Not we're staying in under strict confines.

We politely queue  
Our welfare are free.  
The planet enjoys the respite  
As we join in this global flight.

A health related mystery  
Covid-19 Attacking the many.  
We wash our hands for much longer than ever  
2 metres apart wearing face masks with fervour.

With and without our families and friends.  
We stay in our homes wondering, when will it end?  
Offices much closer, more connected than ever.  
Reminding ourselves, we're all in it together.

We clap for our carers  
Look out for our neighbours.  
We pull, test and assess  
Embracing the new.

We argue, we shout, we're angry and sad.  
We resolve, we're sorry, we feel slightly bad.

There's no one invincible  
To poor mental health  
It's him, her and they  
and even yourself!

We feel disconnected,  
no pain, joy or bliss.  
But thoughts are not facts.  
Please take away this

These moments, these minutes.  
These days, weeks and months.  
Many of us have known  
So you need not feel alone.

There is always hope  
Please do ask for help.  
Feeling better will come  
And those moments, unsure.

Take notice of one small thing  
What joy can it bring?  
A smile from a passerby,  
A bird flying high.

There is always hope  
Believe and please ask  
Let the kindness of another  
show it's really so brother.

It's a wonderful gift  
To let someone talk.  
It's the start of unblocking  
So please, let's get talking.

Wear your PPE on down days  
On fair days, in all ways.  
And when staying at home  
Know you're never alone.

Michelle Morgan

If you need someone to talk you can always call  
The Samaritans on 116 123

If you'd rather not speak you can text Shout to 85258

# Mindful Meditation and the Alexander Approach: A day of practice November 15th



Victoria Dore

Friends of Bangor offer an opportunity to find out about the Alexander Approach and its potential in meditation with a day of meditative practice using meditation and the Alexander Approach as brought together in exploring the theme of 'Familiarity'.

"Sensation, drawing upon past associations, not only organizes our world of experience, but also serves to make that world familiar to us" (Peterson, 2011 p.139). Oleskevitch makes the point that, whereas mindfulness, we tend to interpret the world in such a way that creates familiarity. Much of mindfulness practice is acknowledging the pull of familiarity and coming to see how it is bio-activating to see things about. The search of perceptual interpretation, the internal control and protection of body positioning, have been referred to previously as the "sense of radically incomplete and insufficient control over one's body" (Dobson, 2011b, p.17). The sense of our body as it is now, our control and confidence, can become "familiar" - after all, we've been learning to move the body since we were babies. The urge to self-sustain we have, whether walking, sitting, using a phone, or simply standing, can become so familiar that "we feel it instinctively, or approach it intuitively to our conventional view of the world and other less mobile ways are repulsive".

Body control is very new for us, almost accidentally, to learn to do things with the body, by which is meant, without much or no physical effort. We can read in "Breathe" as "this" reader has done (Kirk & Lester, 2011) that all sorts of situations with more muscle activity than is needed at any particular time, for any particular action. The extra effort becomes counterproductive – in brief it gives into the strong parts of our structure and this makes us less flexible, but this sense of effort itself has become familiar, and this becomes one of "what we think we are".

The Alexander Approach can be used in three these interrelated places:

- 1. **Resisting** but we have a learned sense of familiarity may be weighty, too mass, and that we categorize as "not what I want".
- 2. **Allowing** that the sense of familiarity is largely what we have learned by choice and therefore brings us pleasure.
- 3. **Understanding** how to respond to gravity in a way that is kinder to the body, instead of the tendency to quickly and safely disengaging the familiar sense of "self" or the "fixed will always be right".  
*What does Book 8, Volume 2, 2011, p.293*

The Alexander Approach offers a way of being in the world with Beginner's Mind, by returning sensitivity to our proprioceptive needs. It involves learning to perceive our ever changing postural responses to gravity in different and unexpected ways, recognizing the dimensions of familiarity and having a very practical means to move beyond it.

Todd, C. (2012). *The Mindless Heart: Shambhala*.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (2011). *The Healing Power of Mindfulness*. Boston:

Shambhala.

# FoB lunchtime connection event



Catherine Fertin

Our alternate Tuesday online meditation session is an interesting combination of practice and sharing. During the pandemic it has given the participants the opportunity to experiment with online practice. I personally found this experience of great value when the time came to get back to online meditation groups with the lockdown.

This is a very friendly place. All participants are welcome to guide meditation in a very supportive environment. Time is usually divided in three parts; two meditations with time for reflection and discussion in between.

Thank you Per Hargre for providing support and participants for all the richness you bring to the group.

Notes from Per:

The lunchtime group is growing and going from strength to strength. More members have become active, taking advantage of the supportive environment to try new actions, share ideas of each other and generally find that connection with like-minded is good being brought together over the internet.

Thank you Catherine for your enthusiasm and ongoing support of this group.

To all the readers, come and join us. Find the details on our website: [www.friendsofbonger.org](http://www.friendsofbonger.org).

In peace with gratitude and love.

Per Hargre



# The pitfalls and pleasures of using



Carole Lucy

Whatever could have predicted just a few brief months ago, how the word 'Zoom' would become part of our everyday vocabulary?

Since Lockdown, many of us have been forced to choose between pausing half-completed MO courses for the duration or taking the bullet and moving online. We may have had to deal with both our own resistance as well as that of our participants. It has certainly been an all something to work with!

For me it has been a journey through an undulating landscape of steep inclines in learning followed by downward slopes and a sense of mass and confidence.

This is usually swiftly replaced by another steep upward learning curve – and so it continues.

I've collected together some of my own experiences on this journey as well as those of others who have generously shared them with me.

So, first things first. There are certain essential requirements for anyone starting to teach or participate in an online course. These include:

## A suitable device.

Yes, you can join a Zoom call using a mobile phone but the experience is limited for a group meeting. For example, you will only be able to see 4 faces at a time compared to 25 on a laptop. As a participant the experience is limited but as a teacher it really is non-existent.

I had a participant who had a laptop with an audio facility but no camera. He managed to successfully join the group using his laptop and his smart phone camera until I put them into breakout rooms then – oops, his voice went missing! I witnessed the face swap into room 2. There had to be a bit of swift manoeuvring to sort that one out! Where did I feel it in my body? – I shall leave that to your imagination!

Ideally a laptop or desktop computer is best although some participants have successfully joined from tablets such as iPads. With the latter one has to swipe across the screen to view other participants so it's not great to touch mice.

## Internet connection

It's important to have a decent internet connection. The place at the heart where this works best is as close to the modems as possible. The further you go from that place, particularly if there are walls or other obstacles in between, the more likely the risk of disconnection. There's a useful app you can use to find out where the connection is lost, at <https://checkmyinternet.org.uk/broadband-test>. The bandwidth available can vary with the time of day. Whether there are other devices elsewhere in the home that are using bandwidth such as Smart TVs, other computers, neighbours doing downloads or using our mobile phones – best to turn off WiFi on them. If like me you have confined phone lines, they can cause an instant loss of disconnection.

The severe gales in England this spring landed on my first day of Practice. During the *Cooking Kitchen* meditation, I looked up to check the scores to find all my rated participants missing we can't hear you and pointing at their ears. Although a brief pause in connectivity may not be noticed when using the computer audio, you can see a Plantronics headset disengaged and reverberating on this later. When the internet connection dropped off, I discovered that the beeper had been inaccurately interconnected otherwise I couldn't be heard – would anyone like to buy a second I am still doing, as now?

Interestingly, on a recent *Barriers Sensitive Mindfulness* session, David Bremner was asked why he had his eyes open whilst leading a meditation? He said he'd been caught out in this same way and now keeps his eyes open to monitor the internet connection. He went on to say that when teaching online we must always be prepared for the 'unpredicted'.

Also, check to make sure that yours and the participants devices are charged or plugged in. This may seem obvious but believe me ...

# The pitfalls and pleasures of using ZOOM

## The teaching environment

When teaching an in-person group, we can control the environment to a large extent. This is harder in a virtual space. For example, do we, or the other participants, feel confident that there are no other people within earshot of what is being shared? Also, external distractions can arise for participants that we may not know about. For example, parcel deliveries, rain flooding into open windows, pets needing a pee, children arguing or wanting to play. For participants and teachers, the experience may not be as fruitful when surrounded by our everyday lives as it is when attending a course in a neutral room elsewhere.

## Sound

Your computer mic and speaker will most likely be sufficient when guiding sitting practices from close by. The situation is different when we lead mindful movement. For a start, we need to be further away than the computer camera in order for our participants to follow as we demonstrate the moves. It's especially important that the guidance be very specific so that, if possible, participants can follow us without constantly checking their screens. The problems arise when the computer mic doesn't pick up our vocalisations that far away.

We've been advised that we should buy a blue tooth headset, thus allowing us to move away from the computer without restricting movement. I bought one of these. Then was told the sound was terrible and crackly. So I quit sooner and a couple later, this seemed to improve but the (asymmetrical) place I live played havoc again and the bluetooth connection kept dropping and tended to be manually reconnected. A wise teacher told me that they no longer use a blue tooth device, preferring a separate camera set up at a distance and keeping the laptop ready to pick up the sound. I've now discovered that if I present my voice more than I might normally, my laptop picks it up fine. And so I thought, it's worth alerting your participants to the need to have their computer off桌 within earshot of the movement practices. If participants have to move their computer around, fiddle about with plugging in elsewhere before settling down it can really affect the flow.

## Avoiding being 'Zoomed Out'

One of the criticisms we hear about teaching online is how, especially if people have been working from home all day on the computer, they can quickly get 'Zoomed out'. A couple of suggestions I've picked up here to first, to turn down the screen brightness (go to computer settings to do this). The other is to reduce eye strain by the 10/10/10 approach in every ten minutes focus your attention ten feet away for ten seconds.

## Lighting

Have your face lit so as to eliminate shadow as far as possible. If you're a specs user like me, it's important to try to reduce the reflective glare on your lenses as much as possible. Play around with the lighting. There are lots of YouTube offerings that can suggest ways of doing this. Having the lights in front of and above your head (bright for example) and perhaps closing curtains can vastly improve how you are seen.

## Breakout rooms

Breakout rooms are often used during MBI courses. Breakout rooms offer us the chance to continue to do this. There is something about being in a breakout room with a complete stranger that can be quite令人着迷. During an in-person course, as batches, we can easily monitor from a distance if something is not going well. In breakout rooms, we can't. Although we can drop in to see how things are going, this seems a bit intrusive. Making sure that participants know that they can call for help or leave a breakout room at any time may help alleviate concerns. And, in the early sessions using moderation tools, this helps reduce initial anxiety until the group get to know each other better and have also been somewhat desensitised to the whole Zoom experience.

## Pleasures and pitfalls

For many of us, the Covid-19 pandemic has challenged us in ways we could never have anticipated. Moving courses online comes with both pleasures and pitfalls. No longer lugging white boards, mats, and cushions is one of the pluses. For me, as well as no travelling or having to worry about. Granted, the learning is slower and we are certain to make mistakes and things can definitely go a little pear-shaped.

Being upfront with participants from the outset and acknowledging that, just as in life, change will inevitably come along to give us unwilling to work with it can help bring a light touch on those occasions. Our own mindfulness practice can help us retain all sorts of humour, mindful awareness and help model this way of working with difficulties for our participants.

Come to think of it, how old am I not manage without it?

# The Power of Poetry

'Poetry is an empathy machine.'

Peter Hobson, 15 December 2019.



Lockdown! Such ladder-changer restriction,  
fear, panic about food, elders, money. On  
reading Brother Hendrik's poem (it's the right)  
that a wave of remembrance and warmth is  
recognition and appreciation of the human  
ability to meet today's unprecedented  
difficulties caused by Covid-19. The words and  
sentiments come back to me time and time  
again as yet another change is announced.  
Further restrictions in specific areas, death tolls  
creep up, friends are afflicted and work  
continues the service yet another time.

## Lockdown

No there is fear:  
No there is isolation  
No there is panic, buying,  
No there is sickness,  
No there is even death:  
But:  
They say that in *Moscow* after so many years of now  
You can hear the jets again.  
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet  
the sky is no longer thick with fumes.  
But like a grey and clear  
They say that in the streets of *Aveiro*  
People are smiling to each other  
across the empty squares,  
keeping their distances apart  
so that those who are alone  
may hear the sounds of family around them.  
They say that a small island *Isla de la Palma*  
is offering free trials and delivery to the hospitalised.  
Today a young woman *Hannah*  
is being separated from her mother  
through the vinyl glass wall  
so that the elderly may have no need to call on  
Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples  
are preparing to welcome  
and share the homesickness, the sick, the weary.  
All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting  
All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a new way  
All over the world people are waking up to a new reality  
To have big we really have  
To have little we really have.  
To what really matters  
To love.  
So we pray at our sunrise that  
no there is fear,  
but there does not have to be fear;  
No there is isolation  
but there does not have to be loneliness;  
No there is panic, buying,  
but there does not have to be sickness,  
No there is sickness,  
but there does not have to be disease of the soul.  
No there is even death,  
but there can always be a rebirth of love.  
Waking to the choices you make as to how to live now  
Today, tomorrow.  
Lives, behind the factory names of your past.  
The backs are moving again.  
The sky is clearing.  
Sowing is coming.  
And we are always accompanied by love.  
Open the windows of your soul  
and though you may not be able  
to touch across the empty square  
lives.

Richard Hendrik (Brother Richard), Ireland  
March 19th 2020

As an NHS psychiatrist it has been clear to me that the power of poetry is an engaging opportunity to offer therapy to so many. Since training to become a mindfulness teacher at Exeter University with teachers Christina Feldman, Willem Kuyken and Alison Evans I have of had a combination of Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) and Mindfully Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, MBMS (also training with Sarah Milverton and David Gold at Douglas) courses to West Dorset patients with anxiety and depression symptoms. MBMS with large numbers of people referring themselves into primary care psychological therapies, services and especially appeals to those with long term conditions such as arthritic pain or fibromyalgia, musculoskeletal problems.

Poetry is a fundamental aspect of health programmes. The piece of writing I commonly introduced with the approach of being the facilitator is Rumi's *The Guest House*. This poem offers a new way of relating to ourselves, although perhaps a complicated, mysterious, the path will lead you to a place that is continually joyful if only you are willing to open to it from a different part of the world. Recitative, and a different way to move, the 11th Century speaks so clearly to ordinary people, holding the processed emotions of depression, resistance and sorrow as things to be welcomed. So different from our normal and often habitual reactions to avoid, protect, solve or withdraw.

## The Guest House

by Rumi

This being human is a guest house...  
 Every morning a new arrival.  
 A joy, a depression, a meanness,  
 an momentary awareness comes  
 as an unexpected visitor.  
 Welcome and entertain them all!  
 Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,  
 who violently sweep your house  
 empty of its furniture.  
 Still, treat each guest honorably.  
 He may be clearing you out  
 for some new delight.  
 The dark thought, the shame, the malice,  
 meet them at the door laughing,  
 and invite them in.  
 Be grateful for whoever comes,  
 because each has been sent  
 as a guide from beyond.

Rumi's *The Guest House* is also frequently used and loved by many mindfulness teachers. This is one that people often look for and appreciate and the emotional experiences caused by loss and grief she suffered from her own father & other participants the possibility of achievement, a gift of this most human animal. The poem itself serves providing people an ability to accept the natural feelings that come and have moved, yell, stress or share what they relate to themselves.

At the same time as running MESP courses I was suffering a severe bout of writers' block and gave up my own poetry writing, enjoying instead finding more poems written by 'proper' writers which suited the individual needs of participants by 'Chemotherapy' by Julia Darling, who offers the use of her work to be freely used. In her book 'The Poetry Cure', with increasing numbers of people with acute and long term conditions her work speaks truly and validly to us.

## Chemotherapy by Julia Darling

I did not imagine being bald  
activity, for I didn't have a plan.  
Perhaps a tear or two from growing old,  
lost fluids, Ed at fluctuating a fair.  
But I am bald, and hardly ever walk  
by day, 'tis the result of these sores,  
stomach sores, nausea in the half dark,  
not answering the phone when it rings.  
I never thought that life could get this small,  
that I would care so much about a mug,  
the taste of tea, the texture of a bed,  
and whether or not I should get up.  
I'm not unhappy I have learnt to drift  
and up. The smallest things are gifts.

When reading a poem in each class, I notice that people often sit with their eyes closed, evidently taken too soon after the reading, the words long and settle in. I am often asked who wrote it and which book is it in? One woman came over week after week, took down the details of the poem and at about session five told me that her daughter, who had always been bright, struggled socially at school and had become severely anxious, was trying then small by small as well. The now adult daughter was currently on an in-patient ward in London. Her mother had told her about the course and each week read her the poems we had shared; she had found support, inspiration, healing or comfort from them and read them to fellow patients. Before the end of our course she had set up a small reading group on the ward. Patients in her group linked out for other poems and wrote their own, shared them when they met. Her mother said it was inconceivable that she would have done such a thing in the past.

Having more informed an understanding more about the power of poetry to create a space where people can feel good to participate. There are the findings from 100 participants. The results are interesting. In total of 100, amongst other things, the words of mostly unmeasured 2016. To this programme, Roger McGough's poetry was inspiring me too.



## What did the poems do for you?

I have over 1000 titles on shelves of books and the publications of Wilfrid Sheed's excellent 500 million called "The Poetry Pharmacy", and also had Anthologies edited by Sheed such as "Sleeping Beauty" and "Shaving Silver". These collections are comprehensive enough for me to now suggest on a book in German from the library or buy. The Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners in the service are now offering poetry on their excellent Silver website "Overcoming Stress, Anxiety and Low Mood" programme. I hope that one can make the power of poetry into many of our individual treatments and add to the evidence base of their trip through the culture.

Peter Rubin, who teaches students to write poetry in psychology at the Weill Medical College writing poetry to a book he is having published on the subject. The book very quickly declined upon release to the poor (online), Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy. Dr Rubin said he is an American doctor and poet who uses the power of poetry to develop compassion for doctors he teaches at his university hospital in America.

What poems have helped you or your participants, offering humour, inspiration or resonance at terms such as these? Please send me details ([kate.stearns@btconnect.com](mailto:kate.stearns@btconnect.com)) I issue you with one of my freebies.

## Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy

by Richard Reilly

I'm running a left ventriculography  
From a man with chest pain. It's ruled out.  
He walks dead for a post-crash bust.  
The scan shows his cardiac apex  
bulging with each beat, shaped  
like a talentsaku, an octopus trap.  
A Japanese cardiologist recalled  
how his childhood fishing village,  
the sea just another broken heart's  
broken down story of futility and resilience.  
I will say "I am sorry for your loss,"  
explain the tragic, welcome him  
his heart muscle will recover in a week,  
all the time wishing I could hug him  
with eight strong arms instead of two.

I am grateful for permission to share poems and especially to the estate of John Donne and to Dr Richard Reilly's 5000+ written poems used poetry to benefit people delivering health care for those with ill health. I thank Kate Stearns.



# Living with uncertainty



Uncertainty has with uncertainty but sometimes it is straightforward to know I am diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. A pattern of physical shock, confusion and fear. Other days of being deeply unwell are caused by the brain's support that turns towards me from family, friends and colleagues.

Look after my diagnosis, I want to do my scheduled inputting long before it hits the news. I used to mark the transition of my youngest child from childhood and the beginning of a new life phase for me. However, it has not been that the answer has changed place and the return because one of having more sleep, and the current reality of myself, and the ways of emotional response to think we are in control of giving you to grief – A "soft and slow" pace used to give grace to what was true.

And then Covid happened and landed in my digital direct at the beginning of the retreat and was totally interrupted in exploring connection to those in immediate proximity. However, from car to a point where the events of the world were pressing in too strongly became too sense of practice. We had three weeks of practice deep down below. Once necessary to make our way home by land, short.

And now, we all find ourselves living in the midst of continuing uncertainty concern for loved ones, and concern for those we don't know who are being profoundly affected in multiple ways by the disruption caused by this invisible virus. Our day-to-day lives are terribly different for all of us. We are learning about our profound interconnectedness of life and all living systems. I find myself living and working from home with my husband and two of my three children. A different sort of close in love that has its challenges, and also for us as a family many gifts and blessings. Continually each day of how privilege and lack we share can with a huge cushion that encompasses love, beauty, intention, food and warmth.

As a continue to digest my diagnosis within the new context, I feel more in touch with compassion for myself and for the many who live with chronic illness – particularly those whose treatments have been interrupted by the pandemic. In the UK, over 350,000 people are diagnosed each year with Parkinson's. As far as my studies will carry me, their dependency with the multitude of people living terribly in ways with the reality of our human vulnerability – and there is a growing sense to a sense of connectedness in the realm of sickness.

May we all know ease in the ride of uncertainty, unpredictability and difficulty.

Re: 0001, China

# Our Baggage Comes with Us

Maybe we call them 'the horrible umps of childhood',  
or maybe worse, much worse—

But like a trailer, heavy with life's junk  
we are polluted, forced to drag it all behind.

Only until we can join with others  
through the listening and speaking,  
the heart felt knowing and connecting,  
can we stop and release some of that history,  
upcycling pieces into something better,  
something kinder.

Like producing an orchestra  
out of a slag heap  
full of the world's rubbish,  
thoughtlessly cast off by some  
transformed,  
valued  
and made quite wondrous by others.

Let us pause and see  
Let us include and hope,  
lest we pass through one another like blowing snow.

Trish Bartley  
June 2022



## Mindfulness in Arabic:

The decades long evolution in creating a culturally adapted, trauma informed and sensitive Mindfulness program for Arabic speaking refugees.

Mindfulness in Arabic (MiA), the unique project bringing Trauma-sensitive informed and culturally adapted Mindfulness to Arabic speaking refugees, is the brainchild of Jutta Röhr-Graud, MA MFT, clinical body-centered psychotherapist, specializing in Trauma and resilience, and senior Mindfulness teacher trained in DharmaNet, facilitated in Tassana and accredited at Bongen's teacher training course.

"Mindfulness in Arabic is really a dream come true. It is a vision sprouted from a seed planted some 20 years back, a sprouting that tells us something about impermanence, kindness, right effort and patience. This vision led to the creation of a practice of hearing and responding between neighbors. One I personally discovered as a source of resilience in dealing with the trauma migration carried. Growing up in various parts of the world, trust and superstition a rich variety of cultures, languages, forms and world views, while at the same time --from the age of perhaps 5 years old--carrying a frustration and confusion from meetings with oppression, power and the blind taking of power over others. As a granddaughter to people that lost many family members to oppressors and/or racists/aggressors, I carried a sensitivity to such wrongdoings and I could see that even people I thought were had very little place in their hearts for the weak and the broken; witnessed how trauma can often be a collective poison, one that needs a practice of awareness and courage to be stopped."

My journey to the Mindfulness Practice, therefore, was a personal and yet a collective one, with a hope for a culture of Kindness and Flexibility to find ways to stop negativity first of all. Asking the question: How do we turn bonds to these places which we have left with despair. How do we find ways to relate to the experience of, as Farahabadi-Zadeh claimed, "the full catastrophe of living."

To follow that, Jutta chose to live in a region which is multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-faith. One that has gone through many traumas and which sadly continues... Yet there exists here a definite convenience to foster friendly relationships, honor different cultures and create life affirming non-violent dialogues between villages, as much as we can in this often divided area. And in this region the seed was planted.

Using an Iaid meditation and Awareness and Connecting instruction, at the practice within herself of trauma and Mindfulness, as an antidote that leads to the adaptation on the side and as an accomplished clinician and trauma therapist, Jutta is grateful to the practices that support her.

"all of those moments of peace in the chaos, of that small simplicity of pause, lowering the hair back, observing my facial muscles, offering me points of choice, that possibility of the moving of attention, of tracking the senses, activation discrimination; creating more space and improving my communications at relating. Basic acts of resilience, of coming back home, I supposed many of us here came here that experience is the passion of teaching or inquiring about the subject. I wanted to share this with my fellow neighbours and then in the language. Language holds a lot of histories across generations and in communities. And so we know trauma can be handed down intergenerationally. A language can also hold history or a sense of belonging. Language of the son's time can be a tool of overprotecting and then a window to independence. It is a memory of our first relationships, our first language."

# Mindfulness In Arabic

In a funny turn of events it was first tried and tested in another land, South Africa, with Zulu women—a journey in itself which will not be told yet— but there we found that in-cross-cultural work and humanitarian aid we need to listen deeply not only for the need but also for the will. Doing my self with yours is an art; at times even the best practices can be stored and resisted if the power dynamic is not equal or reciprocal.

So I waited for the right turn of wind, and the right amount of time. After travels to teach in Africa, India, we were invited to Turkey to assist with curators of Syrian Arab and Kurdish refugees and to support humanitarian aid workers there and in Germany. These meetings raised the need for trauma informed Mindfulness practice—first for the curators and then for the refugees themselves. Still it took more than this week and the city of a Palestinian man in a newsletter where he called for Mindfulness materials in his tongue, to bring about the turning of the wheel. With him the support needed was found: a handful of international Arabic speaking volunteers (some of whom secretly studied Mindfulness for many years already, some new to the idea) gathered— and serious Mindfulness teachers like Jack Kornfield and Taso Drach,ination Zina, Christopher Titmuss, and Patricia Geroud-Jeldjian, were keen on the idea and the refugee centers were calling. To us this was a sign that we are mature enough to follow through, and we are. We are now in the midst of designing the full 8 week course, which is offered freely online and already there are people that are enjoying our meditations and documents. It is built in a cross-cultural group and the very act itself is already an act of deep listening, a learning of mutualism, of agreement, disagreement, paradoxes, different negotiations and of times—event conflict resolution through our mutual presence. This is what we have in mind to share on, like was stated with us, how to develop these capacities to relate to experience. The scratches can take time.

**MA offerings fill two gaps in current Mindfulness instruction:** first, despite being translated to hundreds of languages around the world, there are almost zero Mindfulness material available in Arabic, one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, nor training for speakers in their native tongue;

second is the dedication he brings to Mindfulness that is truly informed and trauma sensitive to the bone, in action and reverence.

Top that with the understanding of the needs of culture to have their own colour and sensitivity respected in the process of exporting and offering a new technique, soon it benefits. The act of joining rather than power over is a thread in our design.

Given the rise in the scientific understanding of trauma, the sense of its high prevalence in society and the soaring popularity of Mindfulness, this has become a time to be truly curious about. It is likely that in any group you come across there is at least one individual that is struggling with trauma; maybe one or two that have worked their way out. These till now have not taken into consideration and so might be potentially buried in the ratio of people teaching Mindfulness.

In the old days, meditation was not recommended for people with depression. With the rise of MBSR and other Mindfulness based schools and techniques and the convincing research pertaining to their health and cognitive benefits, the population that is arriving to retreats and Mindfulness classes has shifted in many ways. In these parameters, we need to take some time to adjust the old ways to the new terrain. We need to join a discussion on the nuts and bolts of this practice, we discuss some use of techniques below. In addition to attending to trauma of the general public, Achita has also had the chutzpah to suggest bringing Mindfulness smack into crisis mode, a conceivable yet worthwhile venture.



# Mindfulness In Arabic



Our course uses a variety of techniques including short, manageable micro-tolerance exercises, multiple instruction options per session for **choice and self-regulation** and weekly documents on **Trauma & Resiliency for Self-Evaluation** on trauma, stress and their effects on us. Our approach is gradual processing toward increased awareness of body sensations with patience and attention to corporal memories and resistance. We oscillate between safety and not knowing, lowering levels of apprehensiveness, vigilance and instilling flexibility. We pull in trauma knowledge from Somatic Experiencing (SE), integrating **Titrations**, working with a very small chunk of the discomfort, and inviting in the reflective quality of Mindfulness within the **Window of Tolerance**. For our **anxieties**, rather than beginning by noticing the threat, which could trigger thoughts, memory, and mind, we learn to re-connect with something stable as a positive resource and safety net, and emphasize **grounding and self-compassion** at home.

The process of developing our materials has been quite gratifying in itself, from developing our approach to translation and discovering the many words in Arabic to describe compassion, to developing our own relevant metaphors like, the Olive meditation, and our multi-stage peer review process. We're of course thrilled to report that we have received positive feedback from Arabic speakers across the world and across professions. Some of our most exciting feedback has come from Cyprus, and Arabic speaking psychotherapist, Tina Majdal, a Jordanian who now resides with refugees on the island. She says, "I used the guided meditation with my group today, and it really helped them. His smiles and areas of distress have in their eyes, when they came back from their internal space, was beauty for me and them to experience... I have been with this group for 8 months, so they already very comfortable with going inward... but I have struggled to find guided meditations in Arabic..."

We are excited to be teaching about these techniques and more in our first training in Trauma Sensitive Mindfulness for existing Mindfulness teachers in the UK in the fall of 2020.

You can hear some of our meditations in Arabic on our website here. Our meditations and documents are offered in English as well. And we've attached an English translation of two of our meditations: Living-Kinross and our Olive Meditation as a companion to this article.

Please do reach out if you'd like to get involved; we're always happy to have more hands on deck!

[www.mindfulnessinarabic.org](http://www.mindfulnessinarabic.org)  
[info@mindfulnessinarabic.org](mailto:info@mindfulnessinarabic.org)



## Saturday September 26, 2020 London 1pm to 4pm

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that we will have Judith Ben David, founder and director of Mindfulness in exile to talk to us. She offers trauma informed and culturally sensitive mindfulness training to Arab-speaking refugees offering their tools for easing the trauma of facing and living violence.

<https://www.mindfulnessinexile.org/>

Judith is a Psychotherapist and international lecturer in the field of Mindfulness based treatment of trauma and resilience building. MSc, CQA, CQI, MSc, MSc. Educator and advanced supervisor of mindfulness and compassion practices. MBEP, MSC, and more.

She has volunteered with Syrian and Kurdish refugees and their children since 2014.

Judith is the TOWB-B, Msc instructor and senior trainer, and a critical cultural group facilitator (now professional) Europe, Africa, and the Middle East since 2006. She is also a singer and an authentic movement facilitator.

The event will be both theory and practice and will include:

- Background/Intro to TMB (Trauma Sensitive Mindfulness)
- Issues around working with Mindfulness for trauma in general, specific issues that come up when working with refugee trauma. What teachers/therapists/clinicians should be careful of
- Adapting Mindfulness to different cultures
- Diversity in Mindfulness

To Register for this event:  
[www.friendsofbangor.org](http://www.friendsofbangor.org)

# Discipline Is Love

by Rosalie Doves  
on 11th April 2016



Two days ago, I was in the work of Jungian analyst, James Hollis. I was greatly inspired by an excellent podcast interview with James and his teacher, that I listened to on Spotify. You might have seen my recent post about book, 'Living an Enchanted Life'.

James writes, 'discipline is love'. This phrase stuck me, and I have been reflecting on it ever since. It refers very to me, in the light of my own experience. How that phrase, 'in the light of my own experience', How experience gives 'body' to concepts and ideas and makes them 'real'. So it is with discipline. One might have aspiration, to meditate, exercise, eat healthy, pursue a hobby, give up a bad habit, all great aspirations, but without acting on them, they mean just that: aspirations.

Discipline gets bad press. When I hear people speak about it, there is often a sense of resistance. This is understandable, given the common understanding is that discipline involves force and resistance, images of harsh army recruits and strict school girls in uniform. Back into my mind.

The word discipline takes its root from the Latin discipline; refining, refinement; knowledge. Discipline, then, is the act of putting something *known* into practice. It is simple as that. It means working with all of the feelings of resistance, capitulation and procrastination. Like to think about it terms of short-term and long-term benefit, it really helps.

On a cold morning, the last thing I want to do, is get out of bed and meditate, lie the cosy under the warm duvet, and feel the sting of cold air against my face. There is nowhere I would rather be than in bed. However, I know, that the short-term pleasure of lying in bed, will not serve me in the long-term. I also know that the short-term discomfort of getting out of bed, will serve the long-term benefits of my meditation practice.

Two years ago, about finding myself with a 25 year yoga and meditation practice under my belt. This happened one day at a time. At the beginning, I had thought about practicing meditation for 25 years, I would have stayed in bed. It would have felt too much. One day at a time, it was manageable and before I knew it, it was 25 years.

"Discipline involves organising each day around activities that have meaning and value to oneself and that therefore support a series of personal worth." Kathleen Speeth

Accumulation application of effort, will get accumulation results. It's simple. If we want positive changes to occur in our lives, we need to apply ourselves. This is not an opportunity for self-flagellation. It's an opportunity to cultivate self-care and self-love. It's because we love ourselves, that we turn into resistance and discomfort, that we make the effort to do what is for our ultimate benefit.

Discipline is love.

The most authentic thing about us  
is our capacity to create, to overcome,  
to endure, to transform, to love.  
And to be greater than our suffering.  
We are best defined by the mystery  
that we are still here, and can still rise  
upwards."

Rosie Oki

I am sitting down to write this piece on Father's Day in June. Which seems fitting for someone who will become a dad later.



Claire Griffin

When Per Hørgren kindly invited me to contribute a story to this newsletter about my personal journey I experienced a mix of pleasure and doubt – where to start? I came to Mindfulness later in life so there were many experiences that went before that contributed to bring me to the place I am now. But the final “push factor”, the event that propelled me through the door of discovery and ultimately to my position as a teacher, was the death of my parents within 6 months of each other in 2012. The heartache of that year and the strain of helping to take care of them during their respective diets, coupled with many preceding years of poorly regulated stress, the “yin-yang” response, and some fairly unhealthy coping strategies, all meant that I had reached a point where my stress and anxiety was bordering on depression. I clearly remember waking up one morning and a voice in my head (my voice) saying “you are going to get physically sick if you don’t get some help”. So I made an effortless and clear idea of where or how I was going to get that help I started to explore.

Fortunately for me my yoga teacher at the time was a member of the Toronto Buddhist community in Kipling and had started to introduce some short meditation practice at the end of the yoga sessions. I noticed a sense of calm and sometimes spontaneous happiness during these short sessions and started to practice at home using some short practice I found online. Then in early 2013 I took a break from my work as a self-employed recruitment consultant and started to explore more ways of helping myself. I had come across a meditation website called “Mindfulness” and went to one of Ed Holland’s Mindfulness Teacher Training in Sutton, “knowing” that I wouldn’t be able to attend a whole 8 week course as I had no way of getting to the location as the train classes ran. Until someone at the “latter session” said she/he “I’d make away from the car and offered to give me a lift for the whole 8 weeks (commuting in a car). So I agreed to. And half-way through Session 1 I realised that the course was being held in my father’s old village school. That I was learning about Mindfulness in the place – possibly the very room – where he had come to learn as a young boy. It seemed so very fitting that I should be there for this learning journey and I had no sense of having come to exactly the place I needed to be at that moment.



And I was completely blown away by the changes I noticed in myself and in my co-participants over the 8 weeks. “What – I can choose whether I get on the thought train or stay on the platform...?” I clearly remember a practice where I experienced a profound sense of gratitude for the teachings and a real sense of joy in my body – quickly followed by the thought: “How come no-one told me about this earlier?” just at the point when I’d mentioned “new-a-pupil” and I easily laughed out loud as I realised that wasn’t the right of gratitude, the judging mind just goes... keep judging...!

But that thought, “How come no-one told me about this earlier?” did stay with me. I had been lucky enough to find the course and this teacher exactly at the point when I needed it – but what about all the people suffering who had not been as fortunate? How would they discover that through this practice there was the possibility that they could largely unlock their own ability to re-connect with happiness and calm which still buried or lost? Or better still how could people know about this before they reached the point that I had?

So my intention was set. I wanted to continue spreading the teaching that I had received, to others. The way forward was unclear – I wasn't working in a health care setting. I had no counselling or psychology training. And I wasn't a practicing Buddhist – although some basic classes at the Buddhist teachers through this journey, I looked at the Masters' course of the Open – it looked wonderful but seemed inaccessible in terms of the time I would need to take away from my existing business and that it wasn't the right option for me at that point in time. Then one day, after a year of my own daily practice and having attended some short retreats I discussed the Mindful Academy at the Sotarama Retreat Centre in Spain. I had lived for 5 years in the mountains of Spain. I was inspired by "wherever you go there you are" – it was a humbling and formative experience, but I had my business to run (work and my partnerships with friends) and the location

in the mountains near Valencia seemed to combine the love of the open with my desire to deepen my Mindfulness practice. And they posted Machikawa's teaching, so I stepped on the next stepping stone of the path and signed up for TT1. And suddenly the meditation centre became the first destination since again I found myself in exactly the place I needed to be.

Since then my journey as a Mindfulness teacher hasn't always been an easy one but with the mentorship of Rodin (Phil Woodward, Course Director at the Mindful Academy) and the support of teaching colleagues, friends, family and from the Mindfulness community at large (particularly the Mindfulness network), I have stayed with that intention to engage with the work of Mindfulness and to bring it to as many people as I can.

So as I write this during the global pandemic, at a time of what feels like a seismic change in the world, sitting with a sense of gratitude for all the wonderful teachers who have inspired me to stay with that original intention to pass on the gift of Mindfulness and being with a continued sense of not knowing where my own teaching journey will eventually take me (and living in with that), this quote by Martha Scotterewski comes to mind:

Do not try to save  
the whole world  
or do anything grandiose  
Instead, create  
A clearing  
in the dense forest  
of your life  
and wait there  
patiently  
until the song  
that is your life  
falls into your own cupped hands.  
Only then will you know  
How to give yourself to this world  
So worthy of rescue.

Once home over the break on the 1st class by bus in France and teach the MAFH 8 week course via Zoom to a literate group. For more information please visit [www.alanreginaldfoster.com](http://www.alanreginaldfoster.com) or email [alanreginaldfoster@btconnect.com](mailto:alanreginaldfoster@btconnect.com)

# Reflections on Mindfulness, Wellbeing & Students



Nichola Smith

In my work as a mindfulness teacher – and also as a CBT therapist in a university student support team – wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do. Likewise, interest in wellbeing has become increasingly important in public life and a consideration in public policy agendas nationally and globally.

Ideas have been proposed by various UK political leaders about the need to measure wellbeing, as opposed to purely economic measures, to track our growth as a nation. The Office for National Statistics now collects this data covering 'Social and personal wellbeing' in the UK, looking beyond what we produce, to areas such as health and relationships.

Jacinda Ardern, prime minister of New Zealand proposed a 'wellbeing budget' as critical to rebuilding voters' trust in institutions. New Zealand is one of the first countries to design its entire budget based on wellbeing priorities and to instruct its ministries to design policies to improve wellbeing. The focus has been to spend considerably more on mental health and reducing child poverty, for example.

"Goals that are widely accepted as important to sustaining wellbeing include emotional resilience, mindfulness, social skills and health habits."

— Global Happiness and Wellbeing policy report, 2019

'The Mindfulness Initiative' is a UK charity working with hospitals around the world who practice mindfulness, and who investigate the benefits and challenges in implementing mindfulness training in many sectors of society and public life.

September 2018 saw the launch of the Mindfulness Initiative document 'Health, Wellbeing & Mindfulness'. Researcher and writer, Jenny Edwards, CEO. It documents the value of mindfulness in helping people become increasingly proactive about their health, whether with anxiety, recurrent depression or long-term conditions such as diabetes, chronic pain and it lists many more.



## Reflections on Mindfulness Wellbeing & Students

It's interesting to consider the benefits of mindfulness on wellbeing not just as individuals but also as organisations, such as universities, and seems more relevant than ever before.

As we know, many people across society and I am aware that many students at my university will have experienced wellbeing inequalities<sup>4</sup>, and so mindfulness can offer them an opportunity to be more in tune with their mind/body needs and thus help support a proactive approach to their health and wellbeing.

Many of our students go on to work in the public sector and Mental ill health is particularly prevalent in the sector, with 22% of public sector employees reporting an increase in the last year.<sup>5</sup> This, along with a high turnover of staff in medical, caring and teaching professions, means students and those already employed in the sector could be vulnerable to stress-related problems during their placements and within their future careers. Our current global crisis really magnifies the problem. The Chief Medical Officer has cited Mindfulness-based treatment as an evidence-based option to help prevent mental ill health.

A number of studies have focused on the potential benefits of mindfulness which could be significant for both now (especially now) and in increasing future resilience – increased focus and concentration, reduced anxiety & trauma, improved art in the demands of the workplace, enhanced compassion for self and others, reduced stress, for example, precipitating stress within healthcare training contexts.

Our biggest challenge, as always, is to find the most effective way for people to access mindfulness...

I meet a lot of people who are really curious about mindfulness and can access it in myriad ways: through books, smartphone apps, workshops, drop-in sessions and 3-week group or 1-2-1 courses. I believe there is a great benefit from having all these options and the flexibility for people to choose the right way for them, especially as much of this is out of present day. But often individuals struggle to prioritise their own wellbeing & mindfulness practice on a regular and consistent basis.

I have been struck by comments from those attending my courses who state how much they benefit from the opportunity to explore mindfulness as a group compared with the 'lonely' experience of using an app or book. There is something wonderful about exploring and developing mindfulness together, the sharing of the experience and progress, encouraging each other through all the ups and downs.

Clearly mindfulness is not for everyone but I think this report encourages us to keep an open mind and continue to explore how we can make mindfulness training accessible for more and more people – and organisations – given the growing evidence base that it helps people thrive and enhances their wellbeing, even in the challenging phase we are all experiencing in our world today.

For more information and references see the full document:

<https://www.thecentralhonestinitiative.org/briefing-paper-on-health-wellbeing-and-mindfulness>

<sup>4</sup>The Mindfulness Initiative: Health, Wellbeing & Mindfulness: Research and action by Lucy Edwards, CMC September 2010.

# The Prison of Resentment

In the prison of resentment,  
I knew all the inmates well.  
We had built the place together,  
We'd created our own hell.

We roamed the well-worn corridors  
Of ancient fear and pain.  
And shared our tales of hurt and loss,  
Belied it all again.

We talked about the ones who left,  
The ones that turned away.  
The ones that never had the time  
To love, or laugh, or play.

The ones that couldn't see us,  
And the ones that let us down;  
The ones that threw us in the air,  
And left us there to drown.

The ones that tried to cheat us,  
And the ones that tried to lie,  
And the ones that mocked and beat us,  
And the ones that made us cry.

In that prison of resentment,  
There was not a single gate:  
No guards, no locks, no iron bars;  
What kept us there was hate.

And fear, and hurt, and shame and guilt:  
Those feelings held us fast.  
They bound us to like-preserved cords,  
And chained us to the past.

But then, one day, a visitor  
Who didn't give his name,  
Assembled us, and talked to us,  
Of anger, hurt and shame.

He said, "You set yourselves with knives,  
And hope that others bleed.  
You give away your precious life,  
To grow this bitter seed."

You've suffered, hurt and lost so much,  
Your wounds are clear to see;  
But counting all the blows you took  
Will never set you free.

Resentment is like a tumor  
That needles you for fun,  
But severs with the clest plane.  
There's a wound that's red and raw.

And if you want to leave this hell,  
That wound will need to heal.  
If not you'll stay here, in your cell,  
Entombed in rusting steel.

So seek that place within you  
Which no knife can ever reach;  
That source of deepest healing,  
Of which all the prophets speak.

And find that well of kindness,  
(Which has been there all along)  
And from it, gently bitter year round,  
And heal; and then grow strong."

In the prison of resentment,  
I thought all my love had died.  
But I listened to that visitor,  
Sought out that place inside,

And I found that well of kindness,  
And I put it to the test,  
And I bathed my wound, and healed it;  
And I laid the past to rest.

So now, outside that prison,  
I am living, I am free;  
And I know that nameless visitor  
Was really part of me.

And all those other inmates  
Who shared my time in hell,  
I know that every one of them  
Was part of me as well.

And in the prison of resentment,  
There's still a cell that bears my name,  
And at times I get drawn back there,  
Pulled by anger, hurt and shame.

But now I know the way to leave  
That dark and brooding place  
With kindness, tend the bleeding wound,  
And show the world your face.

Russ Harris

# My move

Sinem Acksay



My move to UK in 2012 has been a traumatic experience. It has affected me personally at many ways; family dynamics, money issues, work issues. Had my support network was not built throughout my life in Turkey, they were no longer available to me. Everything was taken and they never had to settle and they wanted a lot of insurance and often from one friend. My practice has faced a tremendous fight to me, as I needed to build my family, at other times I have been my friends, or just other people therapy and my other ones is just the friend of longer time.



Especially that past I had woken up at night with fear in my heart. I feel like a very public trembling body in nature's arm of the forest with feeling of isolation, negative self-judgmental thoughts accompanied by panic attacks with self-judgmental thoughts, our last day might have been one of the lowest points in my consciousness.

I had seemed an odd bunch in meditation circles; however, I might need the connections. We such believe in being open and had a connection. It is a good platform to learn about new topics and get opportunity to practice leading a class. That day the Buddha had shown a valuable practice of *meditation*. Together with gratitude, it would be cultured but there is story of crossing the carpet under my feet at home and feeling grateful for the softness over my head. You might think it is every other day exercise for me.

## My move

That day is still etched in my mind. I had decided to gratitude to me. This was a shock knowing my relationship with it. At that moment I understood how difficult it had been for me. I said "Sorry this is tough, you have been through a lot of difficulty" and the realization that deep knowing is that you've been raised things for me profoundly. It was wonderful to be able to hold him in his grief and then it was supported me. Looking back, I realize that it was enough on its own that I gave it a place where could share my practice and be with like-minded people. That day after that session, my mind shifted radically as I went on to my business meeting which gave wonderful fruits during the years to come.

Now I don't have to be a confidence builder who has closed  
ourselves to need a community such as FOB. Being a  
confidence teacher is a lonely business. We have strived to  
be with like-minded people, we have strived to share the  
affection and share the wonderful knowledge we might  
have learned in a book, in a lecture course or a seminar.  
And recently, pondering what I could do to serve by FOB  
other than my personal removal upon one of family here,  
I wanted to reach out, say hello, tell what they have done up  
to. And FOB is where I noticed that this is a community how  
sharing love and concern of R. for someone who has  
died, this is tremendous but I am sure it means a lot for  
others too. I know this for a fact from the messages type me  
my wife's friends, who said they were happy to see me  
there for the FOB coffee meet. After three years, financially,  
had that I am serving, I feel gratified again, and surely the  
confidence community has a place in that.



# Life-rebuild REFLECTIONS-FROM GROUND ZERO: Death and sprinting



Rosie Bell

Running along Upper Street, I forgot that I was late for my meeting until a familiar wall of wet remastered past, with its competitive flicker, (accelerated) fingers carving the air, the pavement charged beneath the sole of my foot. A intense, powerful sensation. The same surprisingly rippy spirit that, as my New Reporters Big selected a gruff compliment from a boy I fancied that still haunts me over twenty years later. The spirit about which, much like my singing voice, I have always been somewhat vain despite having done precisely nothing to deserve it – least of all practice.

I dress issued with the has two steps down and puffed unashed, holding up everyone's journey as I rummaged for a card. Settling into a seat I watched the privately Native stretch of pavement fade into the distance and thought "well, that's probably it then" and it was. The last time I would ever run. A few days later I walked into St Mary's Hospital and "walked" out again the night after that, minus a huge nerve cluster – and with the crutches that I'd need forever.

I don't report this to be awful though. I did spend an appropriate amount of time feeling sorry for myself – particularly my foot, which was slingshot from my recalcitrant leg like a big giddy waggon. I'm bringing it up because of the curious and profound effect it had to mark such a significant last time ever. I look back now, and marvel. That was running. It was glorious. Then it was over.

Youth is peppered with composite firsts. Your first step, wood, day at school. First kiss. First real kiss. First time performing other acts across which we shall draw a veil still ecstactically remember my first pizza. First "proper" drink. Constantly, yeah. My first day at work. The first time I heard Nirvana, and really fell in love (technically, all over exposed).

Unless we're really trying, however, the last can tend to snak, pass, unnoticed. Your last cigarette may have snaked some continuity but what about the last song you'll ever sing? The last pose you'll eat? The last time you'll watch Terry Gilliam with any real enthusiasm? Few of these last will take place consciously unless when watching out for them, one day they last too will come and go, but will you recognise it for what it is? What about the last time you read your favourite book? How fragile will your past just seem?

Most often take a hierarchical approach to love and memory – From this inner to the outer order of the heart, also taking significance to our experiences accordingly. Yet when I imagine seeing the man who repopulated my body for the very last time, what parts the occasion takes on, I might feel a shiver, just her velvety nose and shoulder off – but what if I knew she was the last? how? (I mean?) There's something in memory just inspiring it. Perhaps proximity to death affords us an important glimpse of how unashamedly mortal what it is to be doing or seeing anything of all. Conscious completion allows us to look back upon the history of moments and realise that each one is significant to the other – that is to say, absolutely, fundamentally significant. These are the dies of our lives; a very clear case never-said. Ray did he really, really know what he was talking about. We adaptively goal-oriented humans aren't typically in the business of noticing life, while it's happening. It is, simultaneously our superpower and the greatest tragedy of our existence.

## Re-read REFLECTIONS FROM A CONSULTANT **Death and sprinting**

When I was little, my Dad worked in forests, and I often spent my school holidays piping in them. I particularly remember a fantastic house I once made out of sticks. I was so absorbed in construction that by the time it was perfect, it was also time to get in the car and go home. I have never lost it. I would like to say that back then I was simply in flow and in nature, enjoying the journey with no thought for the destination. But I suspect that even by age 6 I had acquired precisely the opposite habit – becoming so lost in a plan for the future that I forgot to crawl into the beautiful, imperfect present and make the most of it.

Periodically you will read a blog written by or about a young stranger who is dying or dead, urging you to learn from their experience and live life to the fullest, holding your darling close and appreciating every last morsel of tea for the exquisite mystery that it really is. The piece will be viral and you will be among millions to read it, feel momentarily moved, and then take no notice. If you are lucky enough to survive a deadly illness, your own path may yield similar insights. In my experience, these lessons will fade all too quickly. If you live long enough, people you love – perhaps people who are too young to die – will die. When this happens, the intense precursors of mortality, normal old life will become so painful to recall that you know you will never forget again.

And you might not.

But actually, you will right.

Seeing something isn't the same as learning it. Anything we want to learn, we are obliged to practice. Consciousness traditions are very clear on this. The insight we gain through past life experiences doesn't suffice itself. That's why the practical purpose of meditation isn't to turn our permanently witness but to actually release the insights you gained when you were in that absent emotional or cognitive state. Fortunately, we aren't obliged to sit with our eyes closed in order to practice our love of life for intentionally small the occasions when we won't then let us attack by the conviction of having a conscious entity, partaking around us a planet and all the other energy levels and going to 2020 in it if we say dead life we are free to take note of the great miracle we're living in as often as we want. The more we do so, the closer we ensure the fabric of an achievement that is our most precious inheritance. Through practice alone, the road less travelled becomes the way we meet the world, and then life is sacred, even when you are employing the doomsayer, or the cat has been sick on the reg.

(In case of all people know that practice makes perfect, but living from job to job seems often the worst culprit of all, ignoring over the next addition backlog on the contract of our lives. Only the decisive loss of that whole beloved project to come can big enough to shift my thinking. And yeah I could really think it – but practically, will you practice? Will practice yourself. But hopefully not just for the sake of getting the next job. The day you'll put your castle back in its case and that will be that – and in single time you played it well have been the absolute deterioration of your efforts. The periods of your career is a fiction. Great or small, none of our accomplishments are ultimately going anywhere. We are to us to notice their own play preoccupation factors they are going.)

Every test is a small death, and death itself little more than the last test of all. The more steadily we are able to honor both, the better our chances of truly knowing life as it is happening. One day all the souls we will say goodbye to each other and to life for the very last time. But hopefully it won't be the first time we have really noticed how amazingly magical it used to be live together, ever at all.

Nicole Bell, Copywriter

Copybell is a writer and teacher mindfulness teacher. A regular contributor to HeadSpace, Thrive Global, the Harvard Business Review, and numerous health and wellness associations including Mindfulness at Work, HSYC, and HeadSpace.com.

# NUTRITION IS THE ATTITUDE WE FEED OURSELVES

I enter the kitchen.  
Someone has made a meal.  
They have left the kitchen.  
You must return.

Sensations arise in my body.  
Do I eat the meal or do I walk around it?  
Judgements occupy my thoughts.

I step into the garden.  
Selecting the food for peace.  
I mechanically select tomatoes, and herbs.  
Judgement still occupies my thoughts.

Back in the kitchen.  
The meal provides endless mental chatter.  
I answer the meal quickly, curiously.  
In the back of my mind I catch myself saying 'this is a nutritious meal'.

I move to a spot away from the meal, to sit.  
Loading forth lots of food into my mouth.  
I am aware of taste, texture, sound.  
As follows my mind toward anything which appears on my phone.

I read a news article book about health and wellness.  
I called myself saying,  
'I am eating a nutritious meal.'

My plate is empty.  
My belly is empty.  
My being is unsettled.  
Sensations arise in my body.  
Sensations calling to be filled.  
I reach for sweet treats.  
1 piece, 2 pieces, 3 pieces...

I feel ill.  
I feel noisy.  
I feel uncomfortable.  
I feel disturbed.

I concentrate on what I ate.  
I feel disgusted.

I enter the kitchen.  
Someone has made a meal.  
They have left the kitchen.

Zeffy Brixen

**continued...**

## NUTRITION IS THE ATTITUDE WE FEED OURSELVES

I sensations arise in my body

I am aware of the sensations

I ground myself having my feet on the floor

I feel my breath

I accept the sensations, breathing with them

I move outside feeling every step I take on the path to the garden

The yellow of the tomato flowers captures my attention

I breath in their beauty

I kindly pick some of the ripened fruit

Dipping one in my mouth savoring the freshness and acidity

as it explodes with my taste

Back in the kitchen the mess is still present

I clean the bounty from the garden in my hands

I feel my feet on the floor

I decide this lovely down meal I've earned to now add into a meal

I clean the mess

Feeling the clothes in my hands

Knowing layers of salad - watercress,不断增加,

Watching the carrots become clear rhythmic movement of the cloth

try finding between inspiration and creative thoughts for my meal

My mind is sculptured

Layers of colors popping with shades of red, green, yellow, white, purple...

Hearts of life tasting me setting me

I find a quiet place to eat

I check my phone

My body tells me through sensation to put it away

I do

I consciously select different items with my fork,

looking at each food, smelling it before placing it in my mouth

Finally I chose taking in the variety of textures, flavors, sounds

I reflect

Many years ago I used to watch a friend eat this way.

The judgments which rose and fled me back then

I now smile to myself and feel gratitude for the lessons I've learned and learning

I acknowledge my self growth

My plate is empty

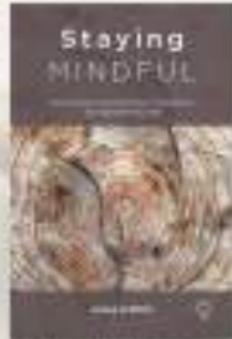
My body is neither empty nor full

I feel satisfied

I feel resurrected

Jody Mardula, Frances Vaughan  
and Anne Griffiths

## Book Launch



My book will be published in June and I am looking forward to hearing it in my headphones via video call. For many years Jody and I were colleagues at the CMRII and taught together on retreats. Over the last six years we have shared thoughts around the process of writing and have been fortunate to have the same publisher. Frances is also a dear friend and colleague, and it is my privilege to accompany them in this event.

My book, "Staying Mindful: How to Deepen Your Experience of Mindfulness and Appreciate Your Life" is a book for our time. Like Jody's and Frances' book, it witnesses the power of mindfulness practice towards living with acceptance of our life just as it is. Never has it been more relevant to continue a meditation practice, the intention of the book is twofold. Firstly, it encourages people towards a regular and consistent practice by exploring motivation and obstacles. Secondly, it is designed to inject new life into meditation practice by meeting with the foundational attitudes, including self-compassion, openness, and gratitude. There are chapters of working with anxiety and difficulty and also interpretation considerations that are particularly valuable at this present and precious time.

Many thanks to all NRM and MRCI members of inspiration, the book is exactly the people who have done an eight week course and have some grounding in mindfulness, although people new to mindfulness will benefit also. I was inspired by the deepest work that students did on the foundation module of the Mindfulness-Based Approach at Bangalore, and by the many students I have taught over the years. The inclusion of stories and quotes from students and myself illustrating aspects of mindfulness practice give the book its unique flavour.

I am happy to answer questions and will send a draft preface for you to read here about the book. From the publisher or their website. A Kindle version will be available at the time when the book is due to be published. Anne Griffiths



### mindfulness and stroke

A Practical Guide  
to Managing Brain Injury



Frances Vaughan

The book, "Mindfulness and Stroke: A personal story of managing brain injury" was published last year and went into印版. What are some of the occupied with staying safe and protecting the people that care for us. We are looking forward to talking about our book for the first time, and sharing this significant event with our dear friend and colleague, Karen Griffiths.

We invite Mindfulness and Stroke for people who have had a stroke or other brain injury themselves, their families and other caregivers. In the first half of the book, Jody's powerful narrative describes the experience of living a brain injury from the inside. She explains how her daily yoga practice helped her to cope with and manage the difficulties it caused, and to develop a new way of living with them - her new normal. In the second part, Frances' neurologist colleague explores the difficulties with memory, concentration, organisation and problem solving that often characterise and the complex emotional challenges that survivors and their families encounter as they strive to accept and come to terms with a brain injury. We will both speak about our own reflections about how the book project developed, led by questions from our hosts, Helen Chapman (Clinical Occupational Therapist) and Oliver Kurniadi (Clinical Psychologist) and the Vice-Chancellor at Bangalore University. We hope to read a couple of passages from the book that reflect such ideas - Jody's description of her a particular experience, followed by Frances's memory of a typical session of what was happening.

Finally we lead on through one of the short practices that she wrote for people with a brain injury. These have been recorded and can be used with the book. Questions from the audience at the end of the session would be very welcome.

You can read more about the book on the publisher website:

It is also possible to look inside the first few chapters of the Kindle version at Amazon  
by Kindle and Frances Vaughan

# Friends of Bangor EVENTS

## 15th September Helen Stephenson - Mindful Movements



zoom



This event will be conducted online using Zoom.

Please join me for a one-hour mindful movement class. I hope you will find it inspiring and will open your body and mind. Based on 45 years of movement experience, I will bring together the best of yoga, Feldenkrais, Tai Chi, Alexander Technique, and Pilates. I will also include some movement patterns from my own personal discovery of natural movement patterns to assist you in your own movement practice. Based on an old study of respect, connection, and pleasure for self and body, depth is included in postures, and focus on unassisted movement. The unique aspect of this class, the body and breath in movement and stillness, is suitable for all ages and abilities.

Helen is the owner of Myoga, who has taken an 8-week MBSR MAICT supervision course.

Note that this event has no limit to number of participants, and you will receive confirmation of your place together with joining instructions.

## 26th September Juddita Ben David - Trauma Sensitive Mindfulness

Vera Juddita Ben David from Mindfulness in Action has offered us a session on Saturday 26th September from 1 to 4 pm.

The event will be both theory and practice and will include:

- Background intro on MSA (Trauma Sensitive Mindfulness).
- You are invited working with Mindfulness for Trauma in general and specific issues that come up when working with refugee trauma what techniques/therapeutic tools we have should be careful of.
- Adapting Mindfulness to different cultures.
- Diversity in Mindfulness.

The Faculty were working well with refugees after living in certain living situations (war, discrimination and persecution).

You can find out more on their website

<https://www.mindfulnessinaction.org/>

This event is open to anyone who has taken an 8-week Mindfulness course.

MCA - Mindfulness in Action is a non-profit organization established by former social worker Helen Ben David, who has a library collection and library of current Mindfulness books, documentaries, and resources available. These are sourced and curated by Helen and are available for those interested in deepening all their skills and lenses to gain increased social awareness. We're delighted that Helen, who is the Project Leader and Director of MCA, has offered us a session on Saturday 26th September from 1 to 4 pm.



20201000  
Ciaran Saunders  
Sunday 18th October  
10.30 - 4.00

A Friends of Bangor Special Interest Group Course  
Session 1: Basics & kinds of talking and writing down  
Mindfulness with others practice

Note that this event has no limit to number of participants, and you will receive confirmation of your place together with joining instructions.

## Sunday 15th November 10.30-4.00

A one day workshop on Mindfulness and the Alexander Technique with Nickola Dower.

Fascia of fascia offer an opportunity to find out about the Alexander Technique and its potential in mindfuless work. In a day of mindfuless practice exploring the theme of 'Similarity'.



Note that this event has no limit to number of participants, and you will receive confirmation of your place together with joining instructions.

See the Mindfulness Network website for training events and reports. In 2020 and 2021 – the calendar is constantly being updated as we respond to availability to keep us all safe during the pandemic. <https://www.mindfulnessnetwork.org/training/>

<p><b>Training: Inquiry Workshop</b> 20 Sept 2020 – 21 Sept 2020 <b>Where:</b> Online Event <b>Teacher:</b> Gillian Evans <b>Level:</b> <a href="https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-759">https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-759</a></p>	<p><b>Retreat: Deepening and Extending the Foundations of Mindfulness</b> 14 Oct 2020 – 25 Oct 2020 <b>Where:</b> Online Event <b>Teacher:</b> Jaye Ralston, Julie Willard <b>Level:</b> <a href="https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-758">https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-758</a></p>
<p><b>Learning to use the MBCTAC</b> 20 Oct 2020 – 17 Nov 2020 <b>Where:</b> Online Event <b>Teacher:</b> Gillian Evans <b>Level:</b> <a href="https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-784">https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-784</a></p>	<p><b>Retreat: Mindfulness and Self-Compassion</b> 25 Mar 2021 – 24 Oct 2020 <b>Where:</b> Online Event <b>Teacher:</b> Gillian Evans, Sarah Millard <b>Level:</b> <a href="https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-784">https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-784</a></p>
<p><b>Teacher Training Online Level 2</b> 19 Oct 2020 – 29 Nov 2020 <b>Where:</b> Online Event <b>Teacher:</b> Gillian Evans, Gillie Hopkins <b>Level:</b> <a href="https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-790">https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-790</a></p>	<p><b>Training: MBCT Specialist</b> 18 Nov 2020 – 13 Nov 2020 <b>Where:</b> Online Event <b>Teacher:</b> Gillian Evans, Gillie Hopkins <b>Level:</b> <a href="https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-796">https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-796</a></p>
<p><b>Teacher Training Online Level 1</b> 12 Jan 2021 – 16 Feb 2021 <b>Where:</b> Online Event <b>Teacher:</b> Gillian Evans, David Nuttall <b>Level:</b> <a href="https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-785">https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-785</a></p>	<p><b>Training: MBCT Specialist</b> 14 Apr 2021 – 23 Apr 2021 <b>Where:</b> Online Event <b>Teacher:</b> Gillian Evans, Gillie Hopkins, Gillie Hall <b>Level:</b> <a href="https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-796">https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-796</a></p>
<p><b>Training: Groupwork Workshop</b> 17 May 2021 – 28 May 2021 <b>Where:</b> Online Event <b>Teacher:</b> Gillian Evans <b>Level:</b> <a href="https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-799">https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-799</a></p>	<p><b>Supervision Training</b> 19 Jul 2021 – 29 Jul 2021 <b>Where:</b> Online Event <b>Teacher:</b> Alison Evans <b>Level:</b> <a href="https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-793">https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/course-information/765-793</a></p>



PRIFFYSOG  
BANGOR  
UNIVERSITY

## Teacher Training Routes relating to Bangor University

There are a number of ways that you can take to become a Mindfulness Teacher.  
Below is an outline of the ways you can take in relation to Bangor University.  
Please refer to Bangor University prospectus and the teacher training pathway  
website for full details.

**Masters in Mindfulness** There are two Masters routes:

**Route 1. MA in Teaching Mindfulness-Based Courses**

This route is for those who wish to train as a mindfulness teacher and gain a Masters at the same time. It is a full training to teach the established-based courses of MBBS and/or MBCT. You gain a Masters of Arts (M.A.) and the Certificate of Mindfulness Teacher Competence.

**Route 2. MA/MSc in Mindfulness-Based Approaches**

This route gives an overall training in integrating mindfulness into professional work, just in working with mindfulness-based approaches with groups, and individuals. You can take teaching modules as part of this route. You gain a Masters degree.

**Route 1. MA in Teaching Mindfulness-Based Courses**

This MA is designed to give you complete training as a MBBS or an MBCT teacher. This route means you will gain the academic qualification of a **Masters of Arts Degree** and also gain the **Certificate of Mindfulness Teacher Competence**.

This route involves taking four teacher training modules sequentially plus an additional module – and takes **four to five years** to complete.

### TRAIN TO BE A MINDFULNESS TEACHER: MA IN TEACHING MINDFULNESS-BASED COURSES

**Route 2. MA or MSc in Mindfulness-Based Approaches**

This route is suitable for those who wish to study mindfulness-based approaches without necessarily training to become a mindfulness teacher (although you can take teaching modules if you wish to do). This culminates in a research-based thesis in your final year.

You gain the academic qualification of a **Masters degree**. There are three compulsory modules (Foundation, Research, and Thesis) and you can choose any two other modules.

This route takes **three to five years** to complete, depending on how quickly you want to progress.

**Three years:** You take **two** modules in the first year, **two** modules in the second, and your **thesis** in the final third year.

**Five years:** You take one module each year for five years.

#### Masters in MINDFULNESS-BASED APPROACHES

Three compulsory modules plus two modules of your choice



## Teacher Training Routes relating to Bangor University

I am taking Route 2 to qualify for the student loan, and I'm really interested in training as a mindfulness teacher – what can I do?

It is possible to start your teacher training on our Masters programme by taking Foundation and Teaching 1 modules, and then you can continue your training and work towards the Certificate of Competence in MScR and/or MBCT outside the masters programme on what is called the **Teacher Training Pathway (TTP)**.

The Masters and TTP overlap, and you can start teacher training within the Masters programme and then complete it on the TTP. Both pathways are a very thoughtful training programme.

Below is a quick guide letting you know how you could continue your Teacher Training on the TTP from the Masters. Essentially, you can do some training on the Masters, and then step off into the TTP.

**You have completed the Foundation module:** This will tell you that the pre-requisites for the TTP but does not contribute otherwise to the TTP pathway as Foundation is not a teacher training module.

**You have completed Teaching 1:** If you pass Teaching 1, this is equivalent to passing 'Part 1' on the TTP, this means you can enter the TTP at Level 2, and complete Part 2 a year later to gain the Certificate of Competence.

**You have completed Teaching 2:** If you pass Teaching 2, this is almost equivalent to passing 'Part 2a' on the TTP, this means you can enter the TTP at Level 2b, and complete Part 2b to gain the Certificate of Competence.

You apply for the TTP through The Mindfulness Network, visit their site here:  
<https://www.teach-mindfulness.org/>

### Teacher Training Pathway (TTP) Outline

The Teacher Training Pathway offers a flexible and supportive route to becoming a competency-assessed Mindfulness Teacher in Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) and Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy for Cancer (MBCT-C).

Guided by a mentor and supported by a community of peers, your TTP journey involves a series of training events and retreats as you start to reach full supervision. As you progress, you are required to keep a journal of your experience that shows your reflective writing submissions. When you and your supervisor agree that you are ready, you can submit your portfolio for assessment and certification as a CMAP Trained Teacher. At this point you can choose to register with Bangor University to have video of your teaching assessed with the Mindfulness-based Intervention-Teaching Assessment Criteria (MBITAC). If successful you will then be certified as a CMAP Competency-assessed Teacher and your Pathway will come to an end.



## Teacher Training Routes relating to Bangor University

If you decide to leave the Pathway before fulfilling all the requirements of a Trained Teacher, you can submit your portfolio early and receive certification as a **Practising Teacher**. Although you will not then be eligible to submit videos for assessment, this level of certification will show that you meet the requirements to be added to the UK Listing of MicroSubject-based Teachers held by the UK Network. You can always re-join the Pathway later if you choose to do so.

We have provided a short summary of the three certification points, but we highly recommend that you read the TTP Handbook, which provides greater detail.

### Certification as a Practising Teacher

The training, research, supervised teaching and reflective writing required to join The Pathway as a Practising Teacher involve the skills, attitudes and knowledge required to begin to teach MBSU/MBCT. Ideally, you will have just completed your first course or an equivalent to a more experienced teacher; however, this will always provide. For the first two or three courses you teach, we recommend that you have weekly supervision. Supervision should begin before your chosen start so that you can have some guidance with the participant assessment process, development of your teaching materials and recordings as well as weekly seek guidance throughout the course(s). Following this, supervision should be as much as you need, but at least in line with the UK MicroSubject Teachers Good Practice Guidance.

On achieving certification as a Practising Teacher you will be eligible to apply for the UK Listing of MicroSubject Teachers held by the UK Network.

### Certification as Trained Teacher

Certification as Trained Teacher provides an opportunity to develop experience and confidence in MBSU/MBCT teaching through further training, supervised teaching, attendance on retreats, continuing personal practice and engagement with your supervisor. You and your supervisor will reflect on your readiness for MicroSubject-based intervention – Teaching Assessment Criteria (MB-TAC) assessment.

### Certification as Competency-assessed Teacher

Once you have successfully submitted your portfolio and become a UKMFT **Trained Teacher** you will receive a registration link to enable you to sign up for this module within Bangor University's. Registration takes place in two time periods each year – September or January. Those registered in September must submit by January, those registered in January must submit by May. If it is not possible to either time a course already recorded prior to registration, or certainty that it is achievable set for this time slot, module registration fees cannot be refunded if you are unable to attend at time.

The module will involve:

- Attending online teaching on professional and ethical issues in microsubject-based teaching.
- Submission of a portfolio for MB-TAC assessment, which includes audio-visual recordings of an entire 3-week MBCT, MBSU or MBCT-E course with an accompanying written reflective analysis.