



**Oxford
Mindfulness
Centre**



OMC SUMMER SCHOOL 2019

26TH – 30TH AUGUST 2019
ST HUGH'S COLLEGE – OXFORD



MINDFULNESS:

**PRACTICAL WISDOM IN
TURBULENT TIMES**

With Ruth Baer, Chris Cullen,
Sharon Hadley, Liz Lord,
Mark Williams and further
speakers to be announced





ABOUT OXFORD MINDFULNESS CENTRE

The Oxford Mindfulness Centre, within the Department of Psychiatry, University of Oxford, has been at the forefront of mindfulness research, training and advocacy since 2008.

● OUR VISION

A world where mindfulness enables greater awareness, understanding, compassion, wisdom and responsiveness.

● OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Our broad mission is to reduce suffering, promote resilience and realise human potential across the lifespan, through combining the ancient wisdom of mindfulness with rigorous contemporary science.

We work actively to make the benefits of mindfulness attainable for all who might benefit. Science and research expand knowledge by innovating, testing and investigating new ideas.

Our research is focused on preventing depression and realising human potential across the lifespan.

● OUR VALUES AND ETHOS

To embody mindfulness and compassion in all that we do, internally and externally; practising the change we would like to see.

Committed to making mindfulness and mindfulness-based cognitive therapy inclusive and accessible to all (with consideration for ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, gender, socio-economic status, religion, age and ability).

We contribute more by building collaborations, partnerships and networks.

Our mission is achieved through research, innovation, training and education. Unique strengths are our world-leading scientific research and innovation, the quality of our research and training teams and our partnerships/ collaborations.

WELCOME TO THE OMC SUMMER SCHOOL

Oxford University is the oldest university in the English-speaking world. For centuries, scholars from all over the world have been coming to Oxford to learn, to teach, to research and to share the results of their scholarship. What better place to set up an annual summer school, so that anyone from across the world can come and hear what scholars in the field of mindfulness are discovering, to meet others who also wish to update their skills, knowledge and practice and to make new friendships.

What is special about a summer school? Unlike conferences, where the programme is forged from speakers presenting papers, and there are often large numbers of parallel sessions, so that most participants necessarily miss more sessions than they attend, a summer school has a theme and a curriculum, that takes all participants on the same journey of learning. This allows discussion over the week to focus on several key themes, and the exploration of these themes to deepen day by day.

At our summer school we have people from all over the world, practicing together, learning together and discussing the key issues. Academic discussion and reflection are supported and contextualised by personal and collective practice. There is a real sense of 'walking the talk' – engaging in practices that reflect, enrich, inform and embody our explorations of the larger themes.

This is the fifth such summer school that the Oxford Mindfulness Centre has hosted in Oxford, exploring these connections between practice, theory, teaching and research. This year, facing the multiple challenges of our times, we will be exploring and considering how programmes such as Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy provide trustworthy ways

of resourcing oneself in the midst of personal, familial, social, cultural and political turbulence and upheaval. A growing body of research evidence suggests that practising mindfulness quietens reactivity, builds resilience, enables clearer seeing and supports wiser and more compassionate responding. We will consider how mindfulness offers a practical wisdom that can be both personal and collective, particular to situations and universal.

We will explore this from the perspective of psychological science, Buddhist psychology, the field-learning that is taking place as mindfulness is offered in diverse settings, and from our own experience as mindfulness practitioners, researchers and teachers.

Whether you are new to mindfulness practice or have been engaging with it for many years, your participation and contribution will be very welcome. The Oxford Mindfulness Centre is a not-for-profit charitable organisation and the Summer School is a central part of our work, developing educational themes and building a community of scientists, students and practitioners. We welcome you warmly and hope you will find it a rich and rewarding experience.

Warm best wishes

Ruth Baer, Chris Cullen, Sharon Hadley,
Liz Lord and Mark Williams



MINDFULNESS:

PRACTICAL WISDOM IN TURBULENT TIMES

OUTLINE

The last few years have seen an extraordinary groundswell of interest in mindfulness-based programmes. In his foreword to the 2015 Mindful Nation Report, Professor Jon Kabat-Zinn wrote “Interest in mindfulness within the mainstream of society and its institutions is rapidly becoming a global phenomenon, supported by increasingly rigorous scientific research, and driven by a longing for new models and practices that might help us individually and collectively to apprehend and solve the challenges facing our health as societies and as a species, optimizing the preconditions for happiness and well-being, and minimizing the causes and preconditions for unhappiness and suffering” (Mindfulness All Party Parliamentary Group, 2015).

There seems to be growing recognition across many domains of social policy and human activity, that mindfulness practice might potentially have a very valuable role to play in helping to address some of the multiple

challenges of our times, whether at personal, community or societal levels. As a cultivation of steadiness, resilience, clarity, compassion and well-being, mindfulness would seem to provide an appropriately practical resource and antidote to the volatility, uncertainties and complexities of our age. It offers a perennially-relevant wisdom in turbulent times.

Our 2019 Summer School will explore this theme from the perspectives of cognitive science, philosophical wisdom from western and eastern traditions, and the contemporary experience of mindfulness teachers, practitioners and innovators in a range of contexts and fields. In lectures and workshops, in practice and dialogue, we will explore the relevance of mindfulness for our times. There will be opportunities through poster presentations, networking and a day of small group dialogue for sharing best practice and learning.



The 2019 Summer School will follow the format that has proven so popular in previous years: setting the scene in terms of cognitive psychology and the western philosophical tradition (day 1), an in-depth exploration of adaptations and applications of mindfulness programmes for health, education and political settings (day 2), a consideration of how psychological theory and Buddhist psychology underpin this work (day 3), a day of supported silent mindfulness practice (day 4) and small group dialogue and plenary (day 5). Across the days there will be a mixture of teaching, mindfulness practice and dialogue.

The 2019 Summer School will again be held in the delightful surroundings of St Hugh's College, in the historic and beautiful city of Oxford, and there will again be encouragement to explore some of the treasures of the city in the evenings during the week.

Our Summer Schools aim to support participants' learning, deepen their mindfulness practice and support new connections between like-minded people from all over the world. People attend the Summer School for a host of reasons, including professional and personal development, for connection and community, to hear about the field's latest developments, and to deepen or refresh their own mindfulness practice amidst a supportive community in a wonderful setting. The Summer School's theme and curriculum takes all participants on a journey of learning. This allows discussion over the week to focus on several key themes, and the exploration of these themes to deepen day by day.

We look forward to welcoming you for a rich week of exploration and learning together.

TUESDAY DAY 2

with updates from the field

Innovation and Engagement: offering Mindfulness in response to personal, social and cultural challenges

Since the foundational work on Mindfulness as a treatment for recurrent depression, Mindfulness programmes have been adapted for diverse social settings as a way both of responding to suffering and building resilience midst challenging times.

This day will provide an opportunity to learn from and engage with pioneers introducing mindfulness into four particular fields. We'll have a chance to hear about how programmes are being received at grassroots levels, and the practical learning that is taking place about the need for innovation and adaptation. Developing research in some of these areas will also be presented.

Mark Williams & Chris Cullen will chair updates on:

- 1** Mindfulness in schools and the MYRIAD project
- 2** Mindfulness in Politics & Policy making
- 3** Mindfulness Based Childbirth & Parenting

MONDAY DAY 1

with Mark Williams and Ruth Baer

Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy: seeing the larger context

The roots of mindfulness in Buddhist philosophy and practice are widely acknowledged, but the way different cultures have welcomed mindfulness in contemporary societies suggests that it resonates with universal themes and many wisdom and cultural traditions.

The talks and discussion on Day 1 will explore mindfulness from the perspective of both philosophy (ancient and modern) and psychological science. We will see different ways in which the pursuit of wisdom has been approached: through our understanding of how we learn, and how we are conditioned by what happens to us, whether we recognise it or not; the effect of implicit ethics on our day-to-day decisions, and how we respond to the danger of harm in meditation. Finally, we see how 'standing back from thinking' has been explored in philosophy and has led to a number of key findings in psychology, with important implications for the field of mindfulness.

The day will conclude with a plenary discussion of issues involved in adapting MBCT for new contexts and settings.

WEDNESDAY DAY 3

with Chris Cullen

Embodiment and Insight:
pathways of liberating wisdom
in early Buddhist psychology and
contemporary mindfulness-based
approaches

Buddhist teachings suggest that the alleviation of dissatisfaction, reactivity and distress most effectively arises from a gradual re-grounding of our experience in mindfulness of the body, a friendly responsiveness to what we find there, and the cultivation of liberating understandings. In particular, the Buddha encouraged embodied investigation into the ways in which the worlds of self and of suffering are fabricated, and may be unfabricated, moment by moment. This understanding also pervades contemporary mindfulness-based approaches such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, and can powerfully enhance effective practice and teaching of these programmes.

During this day, we will explore intentions and orientations that can be helpful when cultivating mindfulness of the body, and we'll also experiment with some particular pathways of liberating insight, considering how these understandings can be cultivated in practice and progressively embodied.

THURSDAY DAY 4

with Mark Williams and Chris Cullen
– Day of silent practice

A day of silent practice exploring the Summer School's themes through mindfulness practice.

FRIDAY DAY 5

with Ruth Baer, Liz Lord and Mark Williams

**Mindfulness: Practical Wisdom
in Turbulent Times.** Small group
dialogue and plenary

The fifth day will provide a chance for delegates to work in small groups, exploring themes in greater depth. The Summer School format is intended to develop an arc of learning over the 5 days, and on this day delegates will be supported in drawing together their learning from the teaching, networking and mindfulness practice.

Conversation, participation and dialogue are the key processes.

The day will begin with a research update from Ruth Baer which will take us up to the morning break.

Small group conversation and dialogue will then follow which will be integral to this day, you are invited to participate as fully as you would like. There will be opportunities in larger plenary sessions to explore some of the emergent themes, and Mark Williams will draw the themes together in the last session of the day, reflecting on what we have been learning about skilful responses in turbulent times, whether personal, social, cultural or political.

TO REGISTER AND FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION

PLEASE VISIT THE OMC WEBSITE

<http://oxfordmindfulness.org/about-us/courses/summer-schools/>

OR CONTACT THE OFFICE VIA

+44 (0)1865 613157

THE FEE FOR THE 2019 SUMMER SCHOOL:

Early bird **£590.00**
until 31st May 2019

£615.00 thereafter



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