



News update October 2019



MINDFULNESS SELF-COMPASSION WORKSHOP

Sat & Sun 18-19 July 2020, Old Ship Hotel, Brighton



Kristin Neff and Christopher Germer are pioneers in the scientific development of self-compassion. They have brought their respective experience together in the empirically-supported Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) program. This Core Skills Workshop allows an opportunity for people to immerse themselves in some of the key practices and exercises of the full 8-week program in an intensive 2-day format.

Participants of this two-day workshop will learn the core skills of the 8-week Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) training, an empirically-supported program designed to cultivate self-compassion using meditation, daily life practices, lecture, group exercises and discussion. You will be provided with essential tools for treating yourself in a kind, compassionate way whenever you suffer, fail, or feel inadequate. This workshop is relevant for the general public as well as practicing mental health professionals. It is the only time Chris and Kristin are teaching together in the UK in 2020.

"Kristin and I are delighted to be teaching this program together in the UK, especially at the Sussex Partnership Trust, where mindfulness is so well-established and respected. Self-compassion supports mindfulness by making a safe space for our experience, no matter what we're going through, by being a good friend to ourselves. Research has clearly shown that self-compassion is good for us - it is strongly associated with happiness and wellbeing, coping with life challenges, lower levels of anxiety and depression, healthy habits such as diet and exercise, and more satisfying personal relationships. Fortunately, self-compassion can be learned by anyone. Participants at this program will experience the highlights of the 8-week Mindful Self-Compassion program and they'll learn how to keep self-compassion going in the hustle and bustle of daily life. Hope you can join us!" Chris Germer

Chris and Kristin also published a new book—Teaching the Mindful Self-Compassion Program. It contains a comprehensive review of the research on self-compassion as well as a detailed description of the pedagogy and curriculum of the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) program. The book took 6 years to write and was designed for professionals who want to integrate self-compassion into their work activities. It's also a reference book for trained MSC teachers.

To book your place: <https://sussexmindfulnesscentre.nhs.uk/events/compassion-oriented-events/>

MINDFUL SELF-COMPASSION

TEACHER TRAINING 2021

Train to teach Mindful

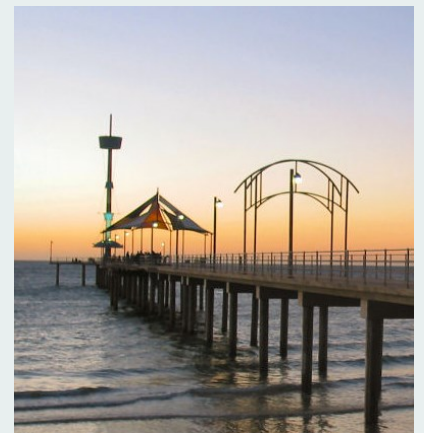
Self-compassion

15th -21st March 2021

At the beautiful Ammerdown retreat centre near Bath.

See more details on our website:

<https://sussexmindfulnesscentre.nhs.uk/train-to-teach-mindfulness/>



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Mindful Self-Compassion
- Interviews with our Mindfulness Advocates
- Teacher Training 2020
- Upcoming Masterclasses and Courses

RESEARCH UPDATE



Alison Roberts is looking at Mindfulness-based interventions for people diagnosed with 'Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder'. She is exploring the adaptations needed to standard mindfulness-based interventions to help people with this diagnosis.



We're looking at whether self-help mindfulness support is helpful for people with mild to moderate depression. Participants will be given one of two self-help books, along with six support sessions. One book is based on mindfulness-based cognitive therapy and the other is based on cognitive behavioural therapy.

For more information contact:

askaboutresearch@sussexpartnership.nhs.uk

OUR MINDFULNESS ADVOCATES

Mike Hales

Mike Hales has been a Mindfulness Advocate since the group's inception. Mike first completed his MBCT course around ten years ago, but at the time, the provision of mindfulness in the NHS was uncertain and Mike wanted to do something to help make mindfulness widely available to others. Fortunately, Mike can gladly say that the concerns he had in the past about mindfulness provision have now gone.



Mike sees his main role as an advocate as being "an expert by experience". Initially, he represented service users in the Clinical Governance Group, the first person in this role, at a time when clinical governance for newly developed Mindfulness Based Interventions was being developed. Previously Mike was an Organisational Sociologist, so he was able to contribute during discussions of the management of the NHS. Like Helen, Mike then also went on to present the benefits to mindfulness to a parliamentary group - at a time when mindfulness was growing on the national stage. Mike also taught sessions to MBCT trainees. Mike thinks it is important to involve advocates in the MBCT training, because he believes that the relationship between service users and MBCT teachers is different to other kinds of therapeutic relationships. Mike said, "there is kind of parity or peer relationship, not typical of clinical practice".

Being an advocate has been a satisfying experience for Mike. He has noticed that when people come together during the MBCT training or the SMC's annual conference, there is a sense of Sangha (or, a community of people who practice). These spaces have become opportunities to "get a body of people who care about mindfulness and want to communicate it, as well as discover more about it", and this sense of Sangha is pleasing to Mike.

Similarly to Helen, Mike hopes that the advocates will do more for community outreach, so that those who engage with mindfulness in the service better represent the population of Brighton and Hove. Mike is keen to see new people become advocates too, and he encourages young people to join them. He also hopes that steps forward in outreach will assist in people accessing mindfulness earlier in their life.

When I asked Mike how he keeps his own personal practice going, he said, "I wouldn't live my life without it. It's just merged into the way I conduct my life. But what I do now is not what I did 10 years ago. I don't sit very often now, but mindfulness breathing is something I do any number of times during the day." Mike advised that one needs to find practices that are grounded in their own particular experiences, difficulties and temperament, and what they have time for.

Mike finds that the Dharma tradition (the 100 generations-old tradition of teaching and practice out of which MBIs have developed) helps him with his practice. As someone who is analytical, he finds that it is highly a developed theory of mind, and it is what he chooses to live his life through. He can guarantee there will be some trouble or discomfort in his life, but he can acknowledge it and turn towards it with love and kindness, and this is part of the Dharma tradition. He said, "I knew I needed to find something that was going to have a feeling with it, in the body and not just mind". For Mike, mindfulness is brilliant as a therapy for helping people turn towards experiences in the body and there is a choice in how one can respond to these experiences, both pleasant and unpleasant. He also said, "when I was at a point in my life when I faced a lot of difficulty, I wanted to find something I could do, and not just be treated. Something I could do as the person who lives this life, live it better, and mindfulness was my way into this. Thank you, NHS."

Interviewed by Kathryn Gjorgjiev

OUR MINDFULNESS ADVOCATES

Helen Leigh-Phippard



Helen has now been a Mindfulness Advocate at Sussex Mindfulness Centre for a number of years, and she was one of the first advocates. For Helen, there are various responsibilities of an advocate, but the most important is to represent and bring the voice of service users in the Mindfulness Practice Governance Network (the body that governs mindfulness therapy at the Trust). Helen also meets the other advocates throughout the year to discuss issues and projects.

One project stands out for Helen - which was also how the group of Mindfulness Advocates was created – and that was when she and four other advocates provided evidence on the benefits to mindfulness in a parliamentary group in the House of Commons. After that, the advocates were featured as experts in a parliamentary report on mindfulness and the Mindfulness Initiative was set up. Helen also took part in a film about mindfulness, which can be viewed on the SMC website.

For her regular activities as an advocate, Helen co-teaches a session on an MBCT teaching course each year, she represents service users in the Mindfulness Practice Network, and she has co-presented a workshop for the SMC's annual conference. Through her teaching responsibilities, Helen gets to speak honestly about the challenges faced by service users during mindfulness practice. She recognises that the language used in practices can be inaccessible for some, and certain practices (such as the body scan) can be difficult for those with physical health conditions. Helen said, “these things are opened up rather than ignored even before mindfulness teachers finish their training, which is really helpful”.

Helen believes it is important that advocates raise questions and issues so that mindfulness courses are adapted for different service users, to make them accessible and inclusive. Helen also said, “my worry about mindfulness is that it is very white and middle class. I really want to see more people for who it might help, because I have been hugely helped by it and I just worry about the perception of mindfulness.” Helen describes mindfulness as being

her “anchor” and said that, “even when my mental health has been up and down, I know that I can use mindfulness during a difficult period, and it will be fine.”

Helen believes that the role of an advocate can be developed, but is a question of resources and time. She suggested that advocates could do more community outreach, to increase the uptake of mindfulness courses. Helen suggested that advocates could reach out to health professionals (like GPs) and educate them on mindfulness, which could encourage more health professionals to recommend mindfulness, and people are generally more likely to listen to the advice of health professionals.

In terms of her personal mindfulness practice, Helen tries to fit mindfulness practices in her schedule each day, whenever she can, rather than sticking to the same times each day. She does lots of short practices (usually for 10 minutes) and does these often when she walks her dog, or when she is at her work desk, or before a meeting. She does longer practices at night (around 20 minutes) with the help of playlists saved on her phone and SoundCloud.

Interviewed by Kathryn Gjorgjiev

“... even when my mental health has been up and down, I know that I can use mindfulness during a difficult period, and it will be fine”



I Go Among Trees and Sit Still

I go among trees and sit still.
All my stirring becomes quiet
Around me like circles on water.
My tasks lie in their places
Where I left them, asleep like cattle

Then what I am afraid of comes.
I live for a while in its sight.
What I fear in it leaves it,
And the fear of it leaves me.
It sings, and I hear its song.

Wendell Berry

TEACHER TRAINING 2020

We are running two courses in 2020 for people who would like to learn to teach mindfulness:

Foundation training in mindfulness-based approaches (MBCT/MBSR)

And

Our training programme in Adapted Mindfulness Based Interventions.

Closing date for applications is 15th November

Please see our website for more information:

<https://sussexmindfulnesscentre.nhs.uk/train-to-teach-mindfulness/>

For more information about any event, masterclasses or training, visit the SMC website.: www.sussexmindfulnesscentre.nhs.uk

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Sussex Mindfulness Centre



MINDFULNESS AND COMPASSION WITH INTEGRITY

UPCOMING MASTERCLASSES AND COURSES

Mindful movement practice

Led by Taravajra and Ruth Sequeira

9.30am – 4.30pm, Friday 15th November 2019

Sussex Education Centre, Mill View Hospital, Hove

Mindfulness Day Retreat

Led by Robert Marx, Catherine Cameron, Liz Stapleton and Lee Jones

9.30am – 4.30pm, Saturday 16th November 2019

Day retreats are held on Saturdays from 10am to 4pm at Sussex Education Centre on the Mill View Hospital site. If you have attended an 8-week MBCT / MBSR course and are a current or previous Sussex Partnership service user, current staff member or current Sussex Mindfulness Centre trainee, please just turn up - no booking or payment is required.

Inquiry Masterclass

Led by Taravajra

9.30am – 4.30pm, Friday 28th February 2020

Buddhist Foundation of Mindfulness

Led by John Peacock

9.30am – 4.30pm, Friday 4th September 2020

Mindfulness Trauma and Dissociation

Led by Dr Alistair Wilson

9.30am – 4.30pm, Friday 4th October 2020

Mindfulness: the evolving story

Led by Rebecca Crane and Clara Strauss

9.30am – 4.30pm, Friday 6th November 2020

Drop Ins For Staff & Service Users

Drop-ins at Sussex Education Centre are held on the first working Monday of the month, from 5pm to 6pm, on the Mill View Hospital site in Hove. They are free of charge and open to anyone who has both completed an 8-week MBCT or MBSR, and who is either a current or ex-service user.

There is another drop in at Southdown, 18 Preston Park Avenue, Brighton BN1 6HL. Drop-ins are held on the third Tuesday of the month from 6pm to 7pm. With Nicky Mouat, Abbie Mead and Tamsin Bishton. Tel: 01273565049

Drop Ins For Staff

Our mindfulness teachers also run drop ins at Arun House, Swandean, Mill View, Cavendish House and Brighton General Hospital. These are for Sussex Partnership staff only and do not require previous mindfulness experience. Please bring your own mat, cushion / stool and blanket if possible.

**SMC Annual
Conference
2020**

Hold the date:

**Friday 18th
September
2020**