

***Mindfulness* at the University of Exeter**

March 2016

Dear all,

We hope you are having some time and space to take in the beginnings of spring and that you are enjoying some drier weather. We have some exciting changes and developments here at the University.

A new member of staff joins our CEDAR training team, partly to help with the development and delivery of a new two year training to deliver MBSR/MBCT within IAPT services. This sits alongside our existing post-graduate programme, which is now open to applicants for the autumn 2016 intake, and our supervised pathway.

In January we brought our associates, graduates and trainees together to share good practice and keep in touch. Julia Wallond, one of our graduates and associate teachers has written a summary of the day for the newsletter.

The AccEPT clinic has successfully secured funding for a further 12 months which includes the delivery of MBCT. Our associate teachers continue to be involved in exciting projects, a couple of which are detailed in the newsletter.



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Staffing

We are very pleased to welcome Kay Octigan to our CEDAR training team. Kay has been delivering mindfulness-based courses within the IAPT team in East and Mid Devon after completing a supervised pathway of training with us. Kay joins us part time across the three training programmes with a particular emphasis on the new IAPT extension programme as well as being an associate therapist in the AccePT clinic.

Post Graduate Training

Students from our cohort 4 are in their diploma year, currently out on placement and planning their MBSR/MBCT courses ready for their assessed teaching.

We are now accepting applications for the 5th cohort of our postgraduate certificate/diploma/MSc in mindfulness-based cognitive therapies and approaches course. For further details of the course please visit: <http://cedar.exeter.ac.uk/programmes/pgcertptmcbt/>. The closing date for applications has been changed to the end of April with interviews in March and June.

IAPT Extension Programme

We are very excited to be launching a new IAPT extension programme in mindfulness. Health Education South West has funded this two year programme for therapists and practitioners working in IAPT services in the South West. The selection and recruitment process has nearly finished, with 21 trainees embarking on the training. The first year will be delivered through taught days at the University of Exeter with trainees taking what has been learned in year 1 to their IAPT teams and delivering MBCT/MBSR courses. In 2012 we ran a similar course for 13 trainees in IAPT services in the South West. Many of those graduates have been championing services in their area and this training will enable the development of new mindfulness-based practitioners to expand the mindfulness provision. In other teams the IAPT extension training will open up new provision of mindfulness.

Supervised Pathway

We have been interviewing during January and February and recruiting to our supervised pathway. We are currently full however some of the associate workshops and residential training places are still available.

Other workshops/training

Please see <http://cedar.exeter.ac.uk/mindfulness/training/> for further information about workshops including level 1 and level 2 residential trainings in 2016. We will be holding a level 1 and a level 2 training in 2017 – dates to be arranged.

Keeping in Touch Day

On the 20th January, Exeter University hosted its first "Keeping in Touch Day" for the growing community of mindfulness students, trainees, graduates, associates and researchers connected with the University. It was organised and facilitated by Alison Evans, Domenica Lopane and Mark Bowden with the support of many members of the community and proved a rich day of meeting old friends and new and sharing examples of innovative practice and research. We were introduced to some fascinating studies exploring mechanisms of change in MBCT, including Grace Fisher's research into the role of positive emotion and Dr Anke Karl's presentation of Hans Kirchner's work looking at how self-compassion may exert protective effects through physiological and psychological changes. Modie Alsubai introduced us to the HeLM project that has developed an adapted form of MBCT for those who are depressed having suffered from a heart attack, stroke, or other vascular disorders, and a feasibility study which has shown promising results. Emily Hammond's fascinating qualitative research was an in-depth exploration of one participant's experience of sadness after MBCT.

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Another theme of the day was working with young people. Professor Katherine Weare gave an enlivening presentation about two contrasting projects promoting mindfulness in education, the 'Wake up Schools' project from Plum village (Thich Naht Han's community) and the 'Mindfulness in Schools' project. Jerry Fox shared a feasibility study he had developed with Dr Daniel Racey that offered MBCT to young people with depression alongside a parallel group for parents. The results were very encouraging for many who had taken part, and the project is developing the intervention further.

An important strand of the day was also sharing our practice and experience together. Penny Nicholas reflected on her initiative to provide support for participants beyond the 8 week course, and I was invited to facilitate some movement practice at the beginning and end of the day with the aim of helping us arrive and tune into our bodies through the day.

All in all it was a rich day that has underlined the variety of practice and experience that is growing in the Exeter University mindfulness community. Hopefully it will be the first of many "Keeping in touch" days. **Julia Wallond** (graduate and associate teacher)

AccEPT clinic

The AccEPT clinic, an NHS psychological therapies service hosted at the Mood Disorders Centre, University of Exeter - has had its contract renewed by NEW Devon clinical commissioning group for a further year (April 2016-April 2017). This will allow AccEPT to continue to deliver its core Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy service focusing on relapse prevention in depression and to support a range of research projects evaluating novel adaptations of mindfulness based approaches.

Mindfulness with Young People

Jerry Fox, Dr Daniel Racey (Devon Integrated Children Services & University of Exeter) and Jess Richardson (South London & Maudsley) were invited to present at the Mindfulness in Schools Project Conference 2016. The presentation entitled, '*Using mindfulness with young people who are at serious risk of mental illness: the promises, perils and pearls*', explored the findings from their feasibility and acceptability pilot studies, the future direction of the research and development in the specialty and the need to remain cautious, working gradually from the evidence base.

The presentation was very well attended and generated a great deal of interest. The Conference speakers included: Mark Williams, Willem Kuyken, Katherine Weare and Richard Burnett.

News and resources

A new edition has just been published of the well-respected reader "The Psychology of Meditation: Research and Practice", edited by Michael West and published by Oxford University Press. The book aims to place mindfulness in a longer term perspective of a range of meditative traditions, and takes a broad overview of the field. It includes accounts of meditation from different religious and philosophical perspectives, provides practical advice on the use of meditation for treating anxiety, addiction, and other clinical conditions, and now includes more chapters on the applications of meditation, and particularly mindfulness, in mainstream arenas. It includes chapters by authors who will be familiar to readers of this newsletter, such as Martine Batchelor and Vidyamala Burch, as well as others who may shift horizons a little and provide both a broader and longer view. In the light of recent developments it now includes a chapter on mindfulness in schools, written by Katherine Weare (Exeter University), which gives an outline of current activity, summarises the evidence base and suggests a long term vision of mindfulness as at the heart of effective and caring schools. It can be found at <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-psychology-of-meditation-9780199688906?cc=gb&lang=en&>