

Pre-conference workshop
International Conference on Mindfulness (ICM) 2018
Tuesday, 10th July 2018
Amsterdam, the Netherlands



Mindfulness-Based Compassionate Living - Living with Heart

A follow-up programme to deepen mindfulness with heartfulness

FRITS KOSTER AND ERIK VAN DEN BRINK

Frits Koster is a vipassana meditation teacher and qualified mindfulness teacher. He has also trained and worked as a psychiatric nurse. He has taught mindfulness in mental health settings, including clinics and hospitals for many years. He has been practicing Theravada Buddhism for almost 40 years and was a Buddhist monk for six years in the 1980s, studying Buddhist psychology at various monasteries in Southeast Asia. He has been leading vipassana retreats and courses since then. Together with Erik van den Brink, he developed the Mindfulness-Based Compassionate Living programme. He has also written several books on Buddhist meditation, mindfulness and compassion.

Erik van den Brink, MD, is a psychiatrist, psychotherapist and qualified mindfulness teacher. He was co-founder of the Center for Integrative Psychiatry in Groningen (NL). He currently works in private practice and psycho-oncology. He has been practising meditation (vipassana and Zen) for over 20 years, trained in several mindfulness-based interventions including Compassion Focussed Therapy. He co-founded the Mindfulness-Based Compassionate Living programme together with Frits Koster. He has specialised in methods that enhance people's self-healing capacity, and has lectured and written about these approaches.



“Mindfulness-Based Compassionate Living – Living with Heart”

‘Compassion’ is a sensitivity towards our own and others’ pain and suffering, as well as a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it. This requires empathy, courage and wisdom. Like mindfulness, it is a universal human capacity, which is for many reasons often not fully developed but can be cultivated by training.

Many people with chronic or recurring mental or physical health problems suffer from low self-esteem, shame and self-criticism. Compassion training nourishes an inner helper rather than an inner critic and offers exercises to experience more warmth, safeness, acceptance, understanding and connectedness, with oneself and others.

Frits Koster and Erik van den Brink have developed a follow-up programme for participants of standard mindfulness courses (MBSR, MBCT, Breathworks or equivalent) who find it difficult to carry on the practice alone and who tend to be overly harsh to themselves. In the eight session Mindfulness-Based Compassionate Living or MBCL training explicit attention is paid to developing a kind and compassionate attitude towards oneself and others whilst being mindful. MBCL integrates elements from Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT), evolutionary and positive psychology and neuroscientific findings with mindfulness-based methods. It is inspired by the work of Paul Gilbert, Kristin Neff, Christopher Germer, Tara Brach, Barbara Fredrickson and Rick Hanson among others.

For more information see www.icm2018amsterdam.org

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The programme was developed in the mental health care setting but is widely applicable to other fields, such as coaching, burn-out prevention, education, pastoral care, management and the workplace. Many healthcare professionals and mindfulness teachers are attracted to MBCL as it helps them deepening their practice and embodying kindness and compassion while caring for their clients and themselves in a balanced way.

Learning objectives:

- Participants receive a concise overview of relevant background theory of the MBCL-programme.
- Participants will experience some of the key exercises of the MBCL-programme through personal practice and interactive inquiry.
- At the end of the workshop participants will have a basic understanding of what MBCL has to offer clients and professionals, including themselves, and how it deepens the practice started with MBSR/MBCT.