The four foundations of mindfulness


Theme of the retreat:

The Buddhist approach and contemporary perspectives to the practices.

The 4 foundations of mindfulness are a way of applying mindfulness to the totality of human experience. The Buddha taught them 2500 years ago as a direct way to free oneself completely from stress and suffering: his presentation comprises mindfulness of body, mindfulness of sensations (feelings), mindfulness of mind states, and mindfulness of mind objects. The simple but powerful techniques contained therein show how to cultivate tranquility and deep insight through awareness of breathing. Facing sensations and feelings, awareness is stabilized against habitual reactions. Examining mind states and mind we discover the nature of mind. Finally we come to see all phenomena as they are. We will also learn from the presentation of the Tibetan Master Chögyam Trungpa on the practice of the 4 foundations. We will practice Meditation in the 4 basic postures: sitting, walking, standing and lying down (body scan). Simple Yoga exercises will be led. The Retreat will be in silence.

The practices and contemplations offered are ways to integrate mindfulness into everyday life.

The team

The Teacher: Mathias Pongracz:

Born in Belgian Congo from Hungarian parents, Mathias Pongracz studied with the Tibetan Master Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche since 1983, following is teaching with this son Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche and the Sen Master Kobun Chino Roshi from the Soto lineage. Mathias is a senior teacher in the Shambhala International community. He made his first training in MBSR in 2004 in USA with Jon Kabat-Zinn and Saki Santorelli. He followed his training in France. He teaches Mindfulness since 1989.

Program staff:

Gaëtane Hermans

Gaëtane is Belgian. Trained as a photographer, she continued her training as art therapist finishing a master degree at the faculty of Medicine of the François Rabelais University in Tours (France) and a master at the „IATBA“ Institut de arteterapia de Barcelona. Simultaneously, she started her path of Mindfulness training with Andres Martín in Spain and followed her training with the CFM at UMASS.
She is accredited to teach MBSR by the Center for Mindfulness. At this moment she guides MBSR groups, teaches Mindfulness’s teachings and works as an Art therapist with individual patients. Since 5 years she works as a therapist with ABB Andalusia, a centre for prevention and treatment of anorexia and bulimia.
In the future she wants to further deepen her understanding of Mindfulness and Art therapy as complementary disciplines.
Gaëtane is also a Hatha Yoga teacher and practices Asthanga Yoga and Lu Jong.

**Thomas Demyttenaere**

Thomas is Belgian. Holding a master degree in Political sciences he works since 16 years as policy advisor and trainer for Sensoa, the Flemish expertise centre on sexual health. He specializes in intercultural communication and working with vulnerable migrants. He was involved in several projects in Rwanda, Burundi and Ukraine.
He practices meditation and is studying since 5 years in the Shambhala Buddhist tradition. He is co-founder and coordinator of the Brussels Shambhala Group. He is currently finishing his training as a Shambhala Meditation Instructor. He did the MBSR 8 weeks program with Fabienne Bauwens. Thomas practices Iyengar yoga and Qi Gong since more than 10 years.

**Stephan Dandrel**

Stephan is French. After working for 20 years in corporate business, he made a career switch and became a coach and trainer.
He works as teacher in the National School of „Ponts & Chaussée“ (engineering school) and in the Central School of Paris, teaching personal and professional development.
He practices meditation since 1998 and follows the teaching from the Tibetan Master Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche from the Shambhala tradition.
He is following the path to be teacher of MBSR by the Center for Mindfulness from the UMASS and teaches Mindfulness groups in Paris area.

**Schedule**

**Sunday October 18:** Arrival day.

5.00 pm – 6.30 pm: registration

6.30 pm – 7.30 pm: Dinner.

8.00 pm – 9.00 pm: Welcome and Introduction to the retreat program. Clarifying the rules (silence, helping in household activities, practice hours etc...)

**From Monday October 19 till Friday October 23, included**

7.00 am – 8.00 am: Sitting meditation (30 min) and 30 min body work (simple yoga)

8.00 am – 9.15am: Breakfast

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9.15 am - 12.30 pm: morning session: alternating sitting practice and walking meditation + guided body scan.

12.30 am - 2.30 pm: Lunch break and chores (mindful work tasks)

3.00 pm – 4.30 pm: sitting meditation - Yoga exercises - sitting meditation.

4.30 pm - 5.00 pm: Tea break.

5.00 pm – 5.30 pm: Short talk from the teacher.

5.30 pm - 6.00 pm: Outside walking meditation (weather permitting).

6.00 pm - 6.30 pm: Sitting meditation.

6:30 pm - 7:30 pm: Dinner.

8.00 pm – 9.00 pm: Evening meditation session.

Saturday October 24: departure day.

Schedule of the talks:

The talks about the foundations of mindfulness will be oriented towards practices:

Oct 19 and 20: Mindfulness of Body: breath and physical sensations.

Oct 21: mindfulness of feelings / sensations.


Oct 23: Mindfulness of objects of mind.

The retreat space:

The „Moulin de Beaufils“ is an old water mill situated in Basse Normandy in the small village of Hambye. The closest city is Caen. The house has been completely renovated and can host 20 guests.

By car, the „Moulin“ is situated at about 2h30 hours from Paris, 5 hours from Brussels and can be reached by train to Caen or the village of Villedieu les poeles.

For more information on the retreat please visit our website (in French):
www.mindfulnesssilence.wordpress.com
or contact Gaëtane Hermans: gh.mindfulness@gmail.com