

Mindfulness: the shift from self-improvement to organisational and social change

- The evolution of mindfulness
- The social dimension of mindfulness
- NHS hospital staff trial
- How does change happen?
- Putting 'social mindfulness' into practice
- Q&A

Mark Leonard, Mindfulness Connected

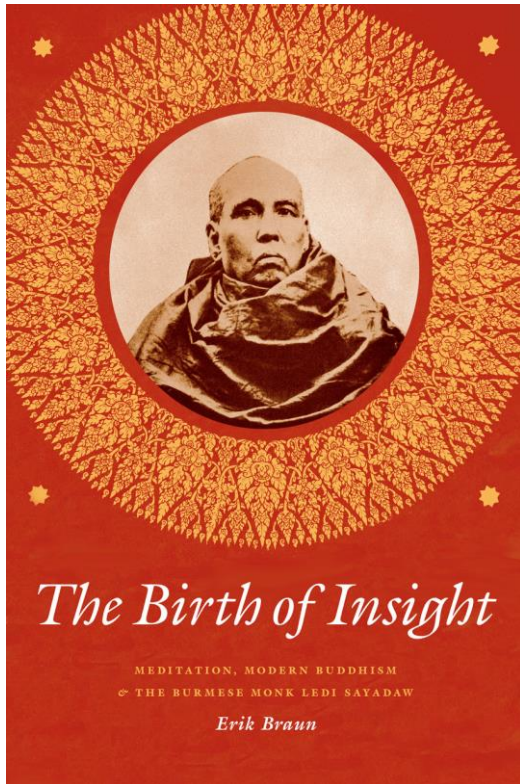
- **The evolution of mindfulness**
- The social dimension of mindfulness
- NHS hospital staff trial
- How does change happen?
- Putting 'social mindfulness' into practice
- Q&A

Mindfulness practice is a simple set of attentional routines, but what we do with something changes things...



- Contemplative practice
- Therapy
- Self-help
- Performance
- Organisational development
- Community building
- Social change

A Burmese monk reinvented mindfulness meditation as a 'shortcut' to make lay Burmese guardians of national identity



- Mindfulness meditation as observation of processes of experience i.e. metacognition
- Developed for political purposes
- Still positioned within a Buddhist culture and philosophical system
- Presents Buddhism as a rational religion
- Appealed to Westerners as a self-help strategy to help with the existential angst of modern life

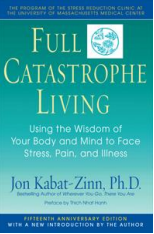
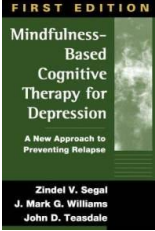
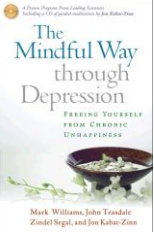
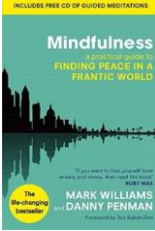
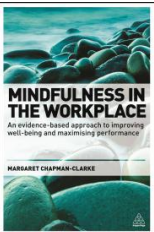
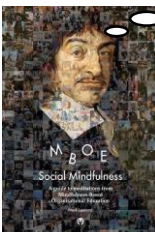
And then mindfulness was reduced to ‘present moment awareness’ as a self-help tool



“Lifted from its source, Dhamma [Buddhist teachings] had been reduced to the practice of a particular style of meditation, and the meditation itself had been reduced to the technique of present-moment mindfulness just to win purely “immanent” goals such as peace of mind and a more stable grounding in immediate experience.”

Bikkhu Bodhi

The development of evidence-based courses has made mindfulness mainstream

- 1 
 - First secular mindfulness meditation course
 - “Semi-intensive”
 - Assumes that effects produced by practice
 - To manage chronic pain
- 2 
 - Cognitive behaviourist version of MBSR
 - Reduces relapse of depression in clinical trials
 - NICE approved in 2004
- 3 
 - Self-help version of MBCT
 - Changes the way “dose” in MBCT is delivered
 - Explains the “why” before the “how”
- 4 
 - Self-help MBCT for stress
 - Clearer structure
 - “Reduced-dose” – short meditations
- 5 
 - Workplace context
 - Interdisciplinary model
 - Presentations
 - Group activities
 - Cabaret style
- 6 
 - Explicit intention to bring about change
 - Regards stress as a normal reaction
 - Understanding how we construct ‘self’
 - Applies mindfulness to relatedness
 - Exploits ‘group mindfulness’

I relate therefore I am!

1. Kabat-Zinn (1990). Full Catastrophe Living.
2. Segal et al, (2002). Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression.
3. Williams et al, (2007). The Mindful Way through Depression.
4. Williams and Penman (2011). Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World.
5. Leonard (2016) Making Mindfulness Meditation accessible and meaningful, in Mindfulness in the Workplace, Chapman-Clarke ed.
6. Leonard (2019) Social Mindfulness: a guide to meditations from Mindfulness-Based Organisational Education.

- The evolution of mindfulness
- **The social dimension of mindfulness**
- NHS hospital staff trial
- How does change happen?
- Putting 'social mindfulness' into practice
- Q&A

Wellbeing is a social function

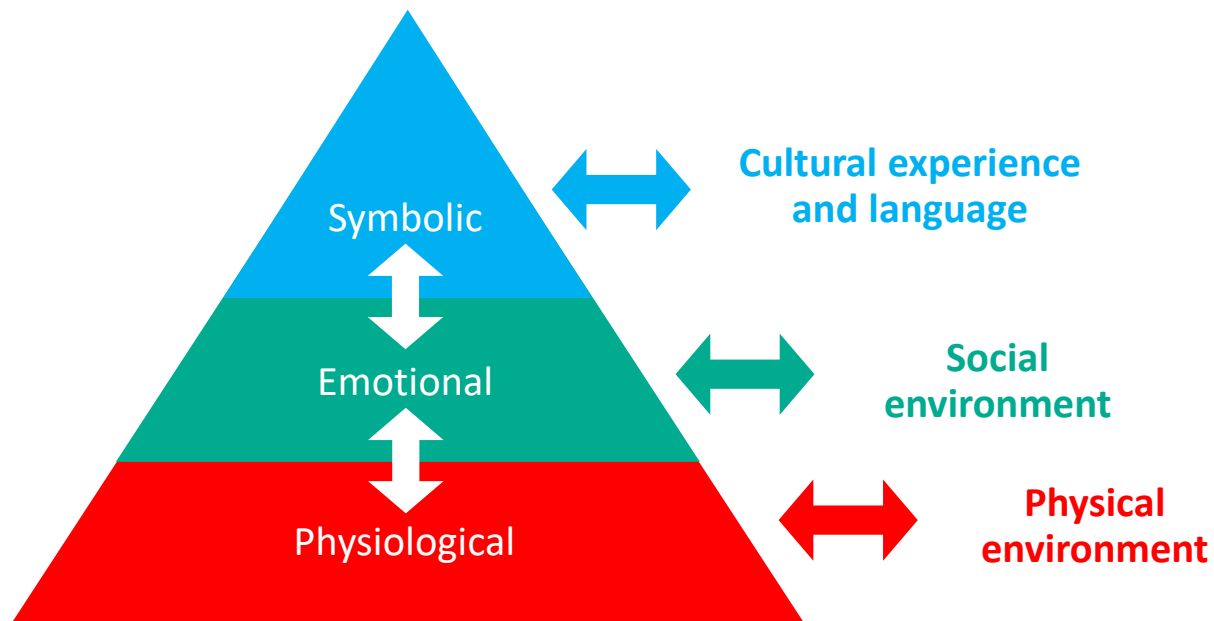


“You know, we had a lot of trouble with western mental health workers who came here immediately after the genocide and we had to ask some of them to leave.

“What was the problem?” I asked.

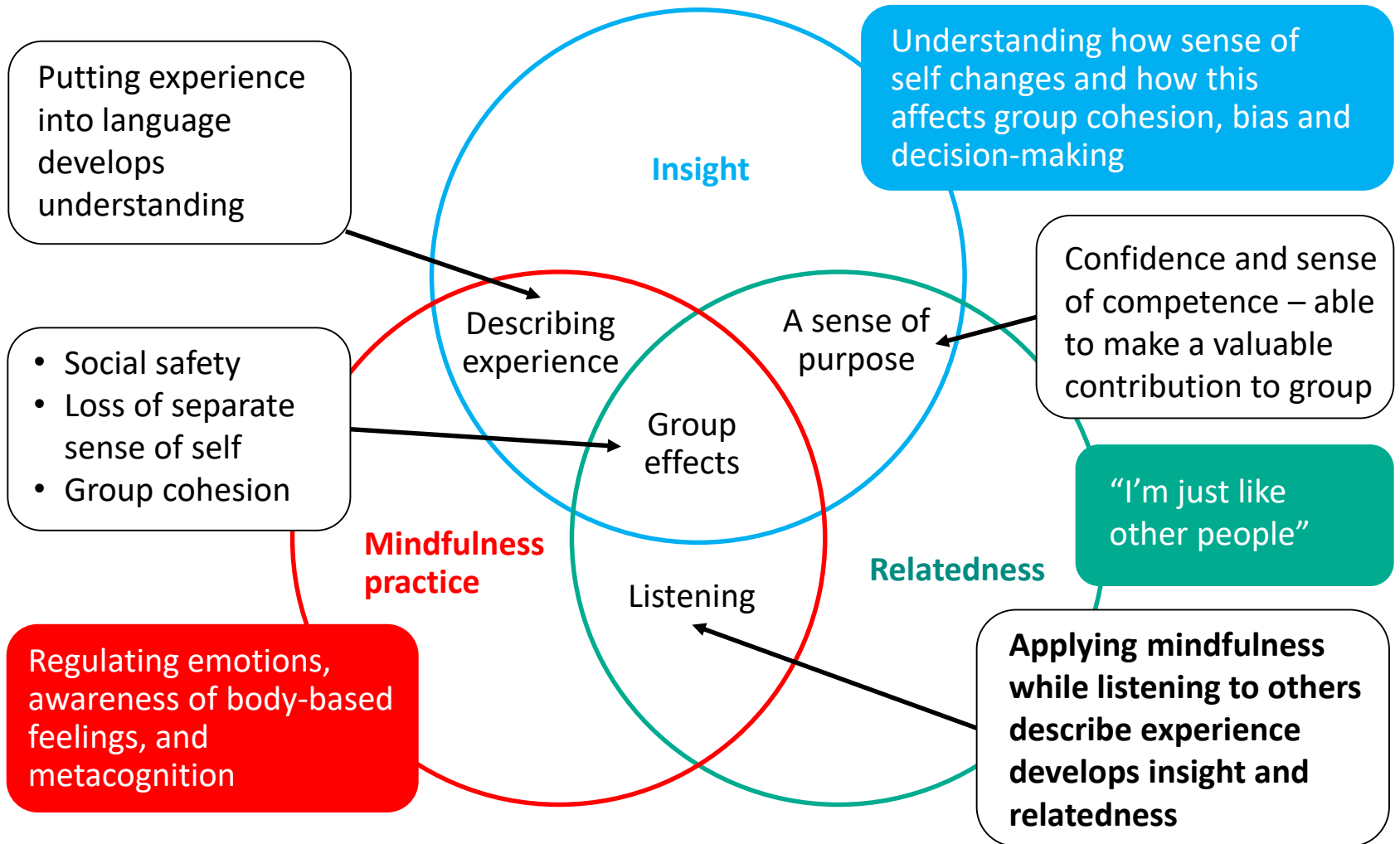
A Rwandan talking to author, Andrew Solomon

To understand the social dimension of mindfulness we need to have a social model of the human mind



Source: adapted from MacClean (1990) The Triune Brain

Social mindfulness also has three domains



- The evolution of mindfulness
- The social dimension of mindfulness
- **NHS hospital staff trial**
- How does change happen?
- Putting 'social mindfulness' into practice
- Q&A

The evidence-base: Mindfulness-Based Organisational Education for Royal Orthopaedic Hospital staff

Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale

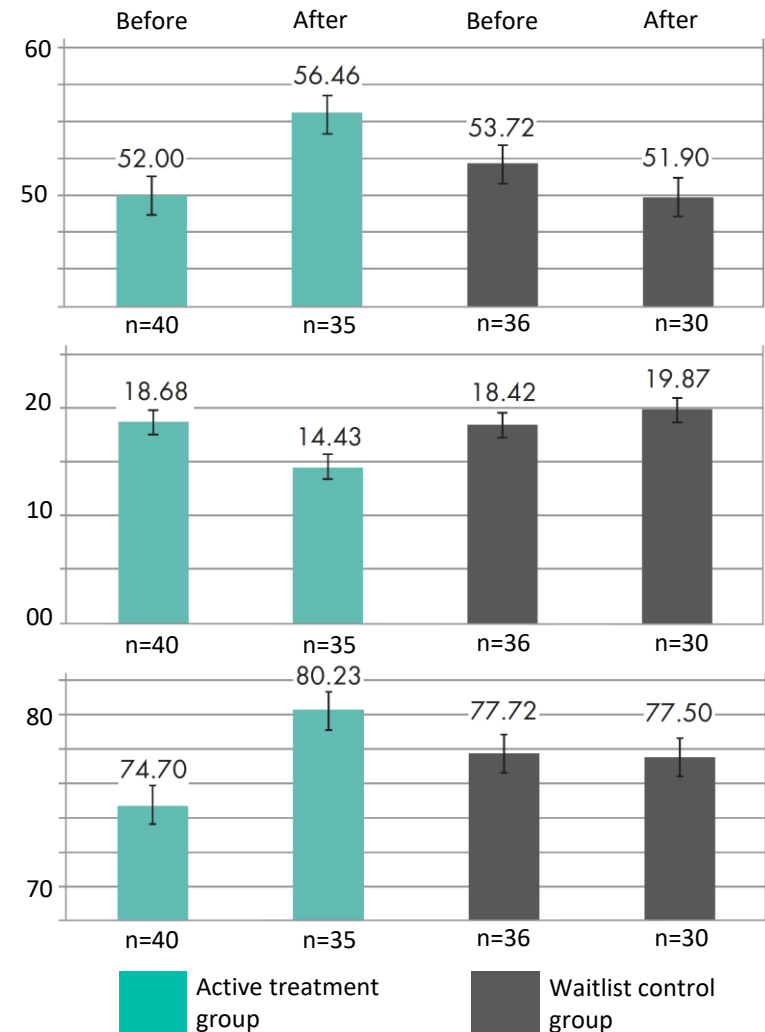
1. Autonomy
2. Competence
3. Relatedness

Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire

1. Observing senses
2. Describing experience
3. Being aware of actions
4. Being non-judgmental of inner experience
5. Not reacting to negative thoughts

Perceived Stress Scale

Extent to which experiences through one's life are distressing



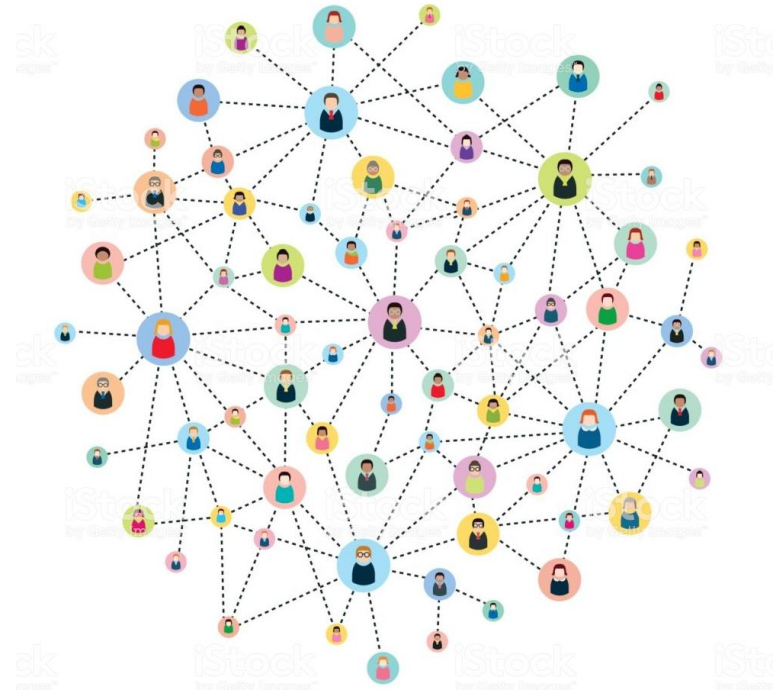
Source: Adapted from Krusche et al (2019) Mindfulness-Based Organisational Education: An Evaluation of a Mindfulness Course Delivered to Employees at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital.

- The evolution of mindfulness
- The social dimension of mindfulness
- NHS hospital staff trial
- **How does change happen?**
- Putting 'social mindfulness' into practice
- Q&A

Social mindfulness as a critical mass brings about change

Social mindfulness creates a culture where:

- it's recognized that people have difficult feelings
- It's recognised that it's important that people can share these feelings
- people have the skills to express difficult feelings
- people have the skills to listen to others without judgement
- difficult feelings can be socially processed
- decisions can be made free from bias produced by unprocessed feelings



Tipping point reached with a critical mass of 25% actively committed to change

What people say about the impact of our social mindfulness programme

Collective intent from Inquiry calls (heard from multiple people)

- More trusting relationships
- More conscious of others' styles
- Empathise with others' difficult feelings e.g., interpersonal, despair, eco-grief
- Being able to reduce personal stress levels
- More team cohesiveness
- Greater feeling of 'safety' at work

Key pedagogical objectives of our Social Mindfulness programme

- **Developing conversational skills to talk about experience**
- Experience difficult feelings dissipating when approached with curiosity
- Experience the wandering mind wandering less when approached with curiosity
- Understand it's all about 'being kind'

Survey outcomes

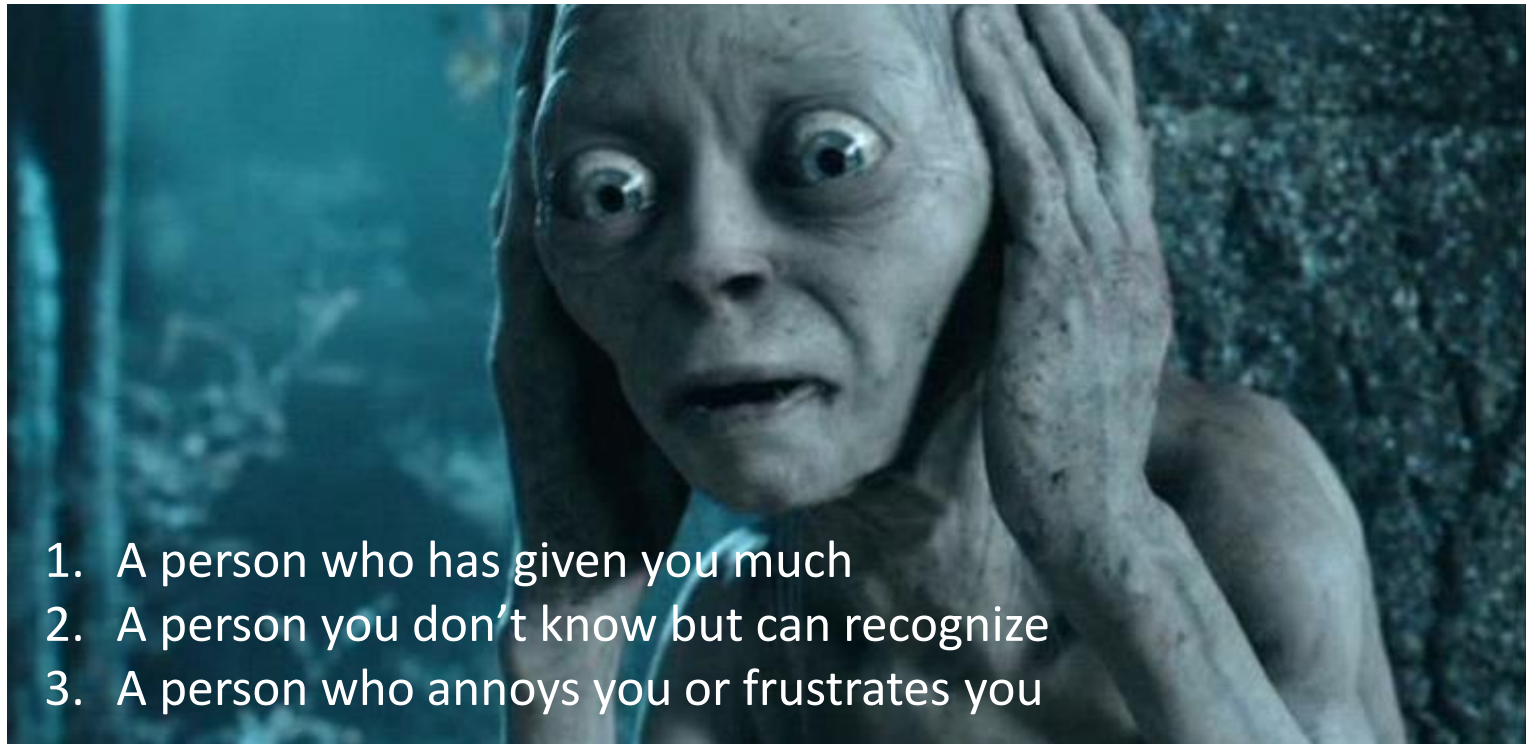
- All these Intents were mentioned as Outcomes by multiple survey respondents
- 'Nut and bolts' of theory explained
- Experience gained through guided mindfulness practice
- **Conversations built a sense of connection and understanding between colleagues**
- The whole team (25 people) engaged with the programme

Survey outcomes

- A 'critical mass expressed having had these experiences
- Some noticed how they lead to greater choice
- Words like "compassion" and "empathy" were introduced by you participants during the programme

- The evolution of mindfulness
- The social dimension of mindfulness
- NHS hospital staff trial
- How does change happen?
- **Putting 'social mindfulness' into practice**
- Q&A

Preparing for the Mindfulness of feelings meditation – think of three people



1. A person who has given you much
2. A person you don't know but can recognize
3. A person who annoys you or frustrates you

Describing sequences of thoughts, feelings, sensations and listening – being aware of the desire to sense-make and staying on-task

In pairs/trios, describe what you noticed and then listen in turn – noticing the **desire to sense-make**.

Describing experience

Describe sequences of things you can remember from the guided meditation:

- sensations in the body
- feelings
- images in the mind
- things you hear
- thoughts that arise in the mind

Notice the tendency to want to **make sense** of what you remember as you describe what took place during the guided meditation. See if you can resist this urge and keep on task

Listening

Notice what you experience while listening to your partner:

- sensations in the body
- feelings
- images in the mind
- things you hear
- thoughts that arise in the mind
- the desire to **makes sense of** what the other person is saying
- the desire to say something

Breakout:

- **Make sure you're in gallery view when you return**



The path to impact...

MBOE programme (face-to-face or via Zoom):

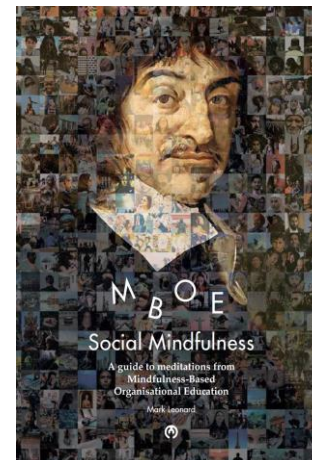
- 6 group sessions of 1.5hours
- Support between classes:
 - recordings of 10-minute guided mindfulness meditations
 - The book: 'Social Mindfulness: A guide to meditations from Mindfulness-Based Organisational Education
 - activities to apply mindfulness to life

Full OD intervention:

- one-to-one appreciative inquiry for each participant before start of programme
- drop-in groups between classes
- session '7 of 6' action planning for change
- follow-up evaluation

Embedding mindfulness in your organization

- training 'guides' to lead mindfulness meditations for colleagues
- training 'practitioners' to carry out 'inquiry'
- teaching practice



- The evolution of mindfulness
- The social dimension of mindfulness
- NHS hospital staff trial
- How does change happen?
- Putting 'social mindfulness' into practice
- **Q&A**

Q&A

Email: mark@mindfulnessconnected.com

Website: <https://www.mindfulnessconnected.com>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mark-leonard-a0997816/>