

Mindfulness-based Therapy and Research Interest Group (MTRIG)



mtrig@mindfulness.net.au

NEWSLETTER

4th February 2009

AGENDA

**Meeting at the Psychology Annexe
School of Psychology
University of Tasmania**
(See map on last page)

This meeting will include the following:

Review of a research article

“Interoceptive awareness in experienced meditators”

By Sahib S. Khalsa,^a David Rudrauf,^a Antonio R. Damasio,^b Richard J. Davidson,^c Antoine Lutz,^c and Daniel Tranel^a
^aDepartment of Neurology and Neuroscience Program, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, USA

^bBrain and Creativity Institute, Department of Psychology and Neurology, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, USA
^cW. M. Keck Laboratory for Functional Brain Imaging and Behavior, Waisman Center, and Laboratory for Affective Neuroscience, Department of Psychology, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, USA.

Published in *Psychophysiology*, Vol. 45, 2008.

This article contributes to our understanding of the effects of mindfulness meditation on our ability to feel and accept bodily sensations. It demonstrates once again that remaining aware on our experience with

acceptance increases one’s ability for equanimity; which is considered to be a central mechanism in emotional regulation. We may take into account in reviewing it that the study used “Tibetan Buddhist” and “Kundalini” meditations to evaluate mindfulness components. It is not clear whether the results would be maintained when using mindfulness methods which primarily emphasise body-scanning. For example, mindfulness meditation in the Vipassana tradition (used in MiCBT), makes use of very advanced body-scanning methods. This study is an important platform for further investigations of these differences.

Peer review session / Case discussion

“Results with complex clients from the first MiCBT client group at Carers Tasmania”, presented by Clare Voss.

Proposed discussion topic

Competencies for MiCBT accreditation: a review of the “levels” system.

APS PD points and meetings

Members of the Australian Psychological Society who attend these meetings can claim **1.5 specialist (CCLIN, CCOUN) or generalist PD points**. You may also wish to be a contact person to create your own MTRIG meetings in your area.

NEWS

The MiCBT Institute has a building

The Mindfulness-integrated Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Institute has found a home in a 150-year old heritage-listed building in central Hobart. The address is 277 Macquarie Street, Hobart 7000 Tasmania, Australia.



Front of building



Back of building

Only minimum renovations are required on ground and first floors. Lower ground floor has very good potential for a group room and a meeting room, but the renovations are

substantial and will take some time. The premises will be fully equipped and operational from 1st March 2009. This is a great development towards the grounding and establishment of a registered training organisation.

MiCBT Research

Under the principal supervision of Professor Jeff Summers and the clinical supervision of Dr Bruno Cayoun, the School of Psychology at the University of Tasmania will be undertaking a randomised control trial to examine the effects of Stages 1 and 4 of MiCBT (the principle mindfulness aspects) in older adults' cognitive abilities.

This will be an extension of a larger study investigating the effects of a multidimensional active cognitive enhancement program on measures of memory performance, cognitive functions, and quality of life in 200 adults aged 60 to 80 years. The main aim is to assess whether cognitive stimulation delays cognitive decline and the probability of Alzheimer's disease.

An NHMRC grant application is being prepared. People in Tasmania aged 60 to 80 years who may be interested in attending a 10-week mindfulness training group conducted by Dr Bruno Cayoun are encouraged to contact Bruno directly on (mobile) 0422 685 008, or by email: bruno.cayoun@mindfulness.net.au.

New MiCBT client handouts

Dr Kathryn Elbourne (University of Sydney) and Dr Bruno Cayoun (University of Tasmania) are producing weekly client handouts for the entire MiCBT program, as structured and delivered in the MiCBT manual. This will be of assistance to clients in consolidating the concepts and remembering the homework exercises discussed by the therapist in each session. The completed handouts will be posted on the MiCBT web site at the bottom of the list of forms as soon as they are available. <http://www.mindfulness.net.au/practicetools.html>

Opportunity for Vipassana (mindfulness) meditation retreats

From Astrid deRuiter, Maleny QLD, Australia

Insight Meditation Retreats

I'd like to share what I think is a valuable resource for anyone who is using MiCBT and who would like to do a mindfulness meditation retreat or learn more about mindfulness. Please have a look at the website www.dharma.org.au, the website of a network of Australian Insight Meditation teachers. Insight Meditation is the English translation of Vipassana, and includes various forms of mindfulness meditation.

The various meditation teachers of this circle run meditation retreats on various locations in Australia all through the year, and also conduct workshops, some of which are specifically focussed on using mindfulness in a therapeutic context (some of the teachers in this network are also psychotherapists).

I recently attended the yearly week-long Dharma Gathering of this network of very experienced and skilful meditation teachers (20-38 years experience).

It seems to me that the retreats run by this network of insight meditation teachers are less 'strict', less intense and more interactive (there is time for daily discussions and questions) than the 10-day Vipassana retreats in the tradition of S.N. Goenka, probably making them more suitable for MiCBT clients as well.

I also found it quite refreshing to learn a wider range of mindfulness meditation techniques, to be able to ask questions, and to hear dharma talks that were very much geared towards applying Vipassana in 21st century western life.

Greetings, Astrid.



SNAPSHOT

Sheri Van Dijk, MSW, RSW
Southlake Regional Health Centre
and Private Practice, Ontario, Canada



It was only about five years ago that I really started to learn about mindfulness, through my involvement with dialectical behavior therapy. I had been working in the mental health field for about four years, and was

doing my master's degree in social work at the time. I had just spent 15 years working in a pharmacy and was deeply entrenched in a "western medicine" frame of mind, and so I had a very difficult time understanding how this abstract idea of mindfulness could be helpful for the people I was working with who had severe mental health problems. As luck would have it, I have a wonderful mentor who strongly believes in mindfulness, and who has taught me much about how mindfulness can help people with even these severe problems (thank you Mara!).

A lot has happened in those five years. I began my own mindfulness practice, partly out of necessity – teaching it to others is difficult if you're not doing it yourself – but also to help myself deal with physical pain, leftovers from a car accident that results in regular flare-ups of back, neck and hip problems. I began learning yoga about two years ago, and am grateful for the relief it has brought me. When the yoga doesn't bring relief, I practice mindfulness to help me cope with the pain, so that it interferes with my life as little as possible.

I have been working part-time in private practice for three years, and have been working at Southlake Regional Health Centre, a hospital in Newmarket, Ontario, Canada, for almost five years. With a Master's Degree in social work, I work with a wonderful team in a small clinic, where we provide psychotherapy (including mindfulness) to adults with severe mental health problems.

Almost two years ago I developed a group for bipolar disorder based on dialectical behavior therapy skills, with a heavy emphasis on mindfulness. The feedback from clients was very positive, which led to my decision to conduct a randomized controlled trial of the group to determine how effective it actually was. I am currently in the process of writing up the positive results of this trial, in partnership with two colleagues, and will be happy to share the results of the study with you when complete (and thanks to Bruno for the MSES, which I used as a pre- and post-measure, and find an invaluable tool!).

The idea of writing an article about the bipolar group led to the bigger idea of writing a book. Over the past year, I have written my first book, to be released by New Harbinger Publications in July, 2009. Titled *The Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Workbook for Bipolar Disorder: Using DBT to Regain Control of Your Emotions and Your Life*, this book aims to bring to a wider population the skills I have been teaching in the bipolar disorder group. As well as teaching the DBT skills, the workbook emphasizes the use of mindfulness to help people with bipolar disorder cope with emotions, make healthier choices in their lives, and prevent relapse of affective episodes.

Currently, I am also working on a second book, *The Bipolar Workbook for Teens: DBT Skills to Help You Control Mood Swings*. To be released in September, 2009, I am co-authoring this book with my colleague, Karma Guindon. A third book, a clinician's guide for using DBT to treat bipolar disorder, will be in the works at a later date.

Recently, I have begun expanding my skills into the realm of hypnotherapy, which (surprisingly to me) seems to fit quite nicely with my mindfulness training, in terms of helping people to tune into themselves, and to become more aware and accepting of their emotions and other internal experiences.

My belief in mindfulness has grown strong over these past five years, as I have seen people commit themselves to practicing it, and the positive outcomes this can result in. I plan to continue to develop my own skills in this area, learning more about how to

incorporate mindfulness into psychotherapy in different ways, such as through ACT. My goal is to continue to teach these skills to the people I work with, and to help spread the word about the healing properties of mindfulness.

If you'd like to communicate about something I've mentioned, please feel free to contact me at SVandijk@southlakeregional.org

NEW MTRIG MEMBERS

- **Jill Barrett** is a social worker working for Queensland Health as the Older Persons Mental Health Clinician. Jill has experience in face to face counselling, delivery of suicide intervention training to community members both lay and professional in how to identify and help people at risk. She has worked extensively with people with injuries disabilities and illness to manage them at a tertiary level and has provided consultation, liaison and case management models of work for the past 10 years. Jill is very interested in mindfulness-based therapies and has been researching this area for the past few years. She lives on the Atherton Tableland in Ravenshoe, in North Queensland, Australia. Jill does not currently accept referrals.

Contact: barrett_jill37@hotmail.com

- **Vhoyt Losberg** is a Psychologist who worked for Queensland Corrections until early this year. He is now in private practice with a local consultancy called Potential Self (www.potentialself.com.au) in Townsville, North Queensland, Australia. Vhoyt's main professional activity is one-on-one psychotherapy using clinical psychology principles. He received a Master in Behavioural Health Science from the University of Sydney in 1997. He has been a Buddhist for over 22 years and has practiced Vipassana for approximately 10 years. Vhoyt sees MiCBT as an ideal vehicle to marry his professional interests in CBT with his Theravada spiritual practices. Vhoyt accepts referrals. Email: samjak@exemail.com.au .

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- **Dr Paul Atkins, PhD**, is Associate Professor in Psychology at the Australian National University and a registered psychologist working in private practice as an Executive Coach in Canberra, Australia. The emphasis of his coaching work is on wellbeing mostly in a work context. Paul teaches Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction and uses mindfulness approaches in his coaching. Paul's coaching includes conflict management, mediation, stress management, management skills and leadership development. He keeps a personal practice of mindfulness meditation and takes regular retreats including an 8-week course in MiCBT in Sydney this year. He is hoping to attend a 10-day residential Vipassana retreat this year. Paul accepts referrals for work-related interventions.

[paul.atkins@anu.edu.au](mailto:paul.atkins@anu.edu.au)

- **Geoff Divall** is a Counsellor at Carers Tasmania, Hobart, Australia. Geoff is currently receiving supervision in MiCBT to further develop his clinical efficacy and has experienced very positive changes in both personal and professional contexts.

- **Dr Karen Hancock, PhD**, is a Research Psychologist in the Department of Psychological Medicine at Westmead Children's Hospital, Sydney, Australia. Karen has had training in ACT this year. Her current interest is in the application of mindfulness in children. Karen and her colleagues are planning to conduct research investigating the efficacy of MiCBT next year using group therapy for children aged 7-12 years with anxiety disorders. They will accept referrals for participation.

Email: [Karenh1@chw.edu.au](mailto:Karenh1@chw.edu.au)

***All welcome to the MTRIG!***

## **MiCBT COURSES UPDATE**

The 2009 MiCBT workshops and courses listed below will be facilitated by Dr Bruno Cayoun. For details, please see the

Professional Workshops page on the MiCBT website:

<http://www.mindfulness.net.au/workshops2009.html>

### **2009**

**February 14-15 & May 2-3:** A 4-day course in MiCBT for the Depression Institute Australia, Fountainhead, Maleny, QLD, Australia. The course will be divided into two 2-day sessions separated by a 2-month gap for personal and professional practice. The peculiarity of this course is that the first part (2-day in February) of the course will primarily focus on traditional Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), providing a solid and more satisfying basis for learning how (and why) to integrate CBT with mindfulness in the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the course (2-day in May). This course is ideal and highly recommended for professionals with little to moderate understanding and practice of behaviour modification strategies and cognitive restructuring methods.

**February 26-27 & April 23-24:** A 4-day intensive MiCBT course for the Hunter Institute of Mental Health, James Fletcher Hospital, Newcastle, NSW, Australia. The course will be divided into two 2-day sessions separated by a 2-month gap for personal and professional practice.

**March 6-7:** A 2-day advanced MiCBT workshop organised by the New Zealand Psychological Society at the marvellous Mana Retreat Centre, Coromandel, New Zealand (see Mana Retreat Centre web site: [www.manaretreat.com](http://www.manaretreat.com)).

**April 6 to June 11:** An 8-week applied MiCBT course at the Risdon Prison, Southern Tasmania, Australia. This will be the first formal mindfulness-based training ever offered at the Tasmanian prison. Thanks to the acting Programs Manager and Course Coordinator Jonathon Field, custodial, clinical and support Staff will improve self-care and learn to implement MiCBT with inmates.

**May 16 to August 22:** An 8-week applied MiCBT course for the Tablelands Drug & Alcohol Counselling Centre, Atherton, North

QLD, Australia. Given the logistics for this course (long distance between Hobart and Atherton) the classes will take place fortnightly over 4 months.

**August 29-30:** A 2-day MiCBT workshop in Adelaide (Venue to be announced). This will be the first MiCBT workshop in Adelaide. The aim of the workshop is to introduce and demonstrate effective skills to facilitate the treatment of acute and chronic conditions using specific principles of mindfulness meditation and their sophisticated integration with CBT.

**September 3-4 & October 1-2:** A second 4-day intensive MiCBT course for the Hunter Institute of Mental Health will be offered at the James Fletcher Hospital, Newcastle, NSW, Australia. As for the course in first semester, this course will be divided into two 2-day sessions but separated by only a 1-month gap for personal and professional practice.

**September 8, 9, 10:** A 3-day intensive introductory course (focusing on addictions) for the Centre for Experiential Training, Singapore.

**September 12, 13, 14:** A 3-day intensive introductory course centred on gambling addiction for the Hong Kong Shue Yan University and the Asian Professional Counselling Association.

8-week courses may take place in Adelaide, Brisbane and Sydney in 2010. Please email your interest ASAP for such a course (or shorter workshops) [info@mindfulness.net.au](mailto:info@mindfulness.net.au)

### MiCBT groups for clients

If you are interested in having a client group conducted in your service, either as a pilot trial or as part of your clinical program and/or professional training program, please contact: [info@mindfulness.net.au](mailto:info@mindfulness.net.au). It may be possible for a MiCBT-accredited clinician in your area to conduct such a group.

## FREE MINDFULNESS MEDITATION GROUP

A weekly practice group is taking place every on Thursday in Hobart, Tasmania (Australia), at the Newdegate Street Health Centre, from 6:15 to 7:00pm (last room, top floor). The address is: 107 Newdegate Street, but we use the Mellifont Street (side) entrance. Attendees arrive from 6:00pm. It is free (courtesy of Dr Janeil Hall) and all are welcome to attend. Although brief practice instructions are given at the start of practice, note that this is not a therapy group or teaching group and everyone attending is assumed to have had some prior training or exposure to mindfulness meditation. Therapists who implement a mindfulness-based therapy are particularly encouraged to attend these weekly practice groups to keep in touch with their own practice skills.



## MTRIG Meeting

### This meeting date, time and place

**Date:** Wednesday 04/02/09

**Time:** 6:00 to 7:30pm

**Place:** Psychology Annexe  
University of Tasmania – Hobart, Tasmania

*How to get to the Psychology Annexe:*

The Psychology Annexe is located above the new Psychology Research Centre building [http://www.utas.edu.au/campus/Sandy\\_Bay\\_Building\\_Map.pdf](http://www.utas.edu.au/campus/Sandy_Bay_Building_Map.pdf)

**Next Meeting:** **Wednesday 01/04/09**

See also map below

## Psychology Annexe at the University of Tasmania

