

## **ECPP 1/2 DAY PRE-WORKSHOPS ON JUNE 24TH (12:00-15:00)**

### **Pre-conference Workshop 10<sup>th</sup> ECPP Reykjavik, 24<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

#### **Title:**

Making Mindfulness Relevant and Accessible in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to All Ages.

#### **Facilitator:**

Sarah Silverton

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

- Understand the intentions of mindfulness practice and explore how these fit today's world
- Explore the development of practice and style of delivery over recent years
- Be introduced to a way to introduce mindfulness to people of all ages who live busy 21<sup>st</sup> century lives
- Experience a range of mindful awareness practices that fit even a super-busy lifestyle

#### **Background:**

Sarah has been involved in mindfulness teaching and training since the late 1990s. Through her work with school populations over the last ten years she has been looking at how best to meet the people who express interest in mindfulness but who can't, or won't, practice formally for the long periods of time traditional eight-week courses require. Working with teachers and other school staff and the children they work with, as young as eighteen months, has developed her understanding and led to a new, fresh approach offering a different way into mindful awareness.

#### **Content:**

In this workshop Sarah will offer a chance to explore and discuss some of the questions that are current about the expanding field of mindfulness.

- Are apps or long meditation practices what is needed?
- Are we teaching people to become meditators or helping them to develop mindful awareness?
- Is mindfulness just about calming or is the value in being able to bring awareness to all our experience, learning to hold experience gently and respond from this awareness?
- How does the research evidence support what is currently on offer and how programmes have been developing over the last five years?

- If we believe mindful awareness is needed now more than ever in the world how do we engage people to practice in a meaningful way?

As mindfulness becomes more popular and available there are, of course, criticisms and concerns about the claims that mindfulness makes and the potential for mindfulness practice to do harm. How do we understand these concerns?

Many people describe the challenge of engaging with traditional eight-week courses (where long, formal practices are the source of learning) creating a sense of shame as they their problems with engaging as failure. Many people come to courses these days without a clear motivation and take some weeks to see the relevance of mindfulness in their lives, often too late in the course to gain what they might. Many people become skilled at meditating but struggle to apply what they discover “on their cushion” into daily life.

Developed as Sarah has engaged with these experiences and issues over many years, she will introduce an approach, called the Present, to introduce mindfulness in a way that responds to these issues.

The Present is:

- Relevant and engaging.
- About living well as a human being.
- Building attitudes such as friendliness, patience and acceptance to allow us to see clearly how things actually are – both the wonderful and the challenging.
- Responsive and tailored to individuals and their unique situations, building autonomy and motivation.
- Choosing from a range of styles of practice to meet us at different times of the day or our lives – eyes open and eyes closed practices.
- Learning to develop our ability to be mindfully aware rather than to solely meditate.
- Allowing us to live more mindfully inside and out, with our selves, others and the world we live in.

Bio:

Sarah’s professional training was as an Occupational Therapist, working in mental health services in the NHS and in Social Services for over twenty years. She also trained as a counsellor, receiving her MEd in 1999.

Sarah was introduced to mindfulness in 1996, by Mark Williams when she was a participant in Mark’s first eight-week course. She subsequently trained to teach others with Mark Williams and teachers at the Center for Mindfulness, Massachusetts, USA.

As a member of the Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice teaching/training team from when the centre was founded in 2001 until 2017

she was involved in teaching and training in MBSR and MBCT through the Masters' and CPD programmes. She developed courses within the CMRP team such as the MBSR Specialist training and Inquiry 2-day workshop.

Sarah was a teacher on MBCT research trials (treatment as usual groups in 1999 and Staying Well After Depression 2008- 2012).

Her particular teaching and training interests are enquiry and mindful movement. She is a supervisor with the Mindfulness Network.

She became involved in school-based mindfulness in 2010 working with teachers and children from Ysgol Pen y Bryn, Colwyn Bay. Sarah is co-author of Paws b (7-11years old) curriculum (Mindfulness in Schools Project). She subsequently developed 'The Present for Schools' with Dusana Dorjee and Tabitha Sawyer, a programme to support teachers to share mindfulness practice with children aged 3-14. Training began in March 2018 and has taken place in both the UK and abroad (Vietnam, Moldova, Iceland and China) The Present is now also translated into Welsh, Icelandic and Chinese.

[www.thepresentcourses.org](http://www.thepresentcourses.org)

Sarah has developed an adult version of The Present aimed for busy people such those in workplace settings who want to explore mindfulness but find it difficult to make time to practice formally. This course is being piloted at the moment.

She has published 'The Mindfulness Breakthrough', Watkins, 2012 (reprinted as 'The Mindfulness Key', 2016) and is co-author of 'Mindfulness and The Transformation of Despair', 'MBCT with People at Risk of Suicide' in paperback (2017), Williams, Fennell, Barnhofer, Crane and Silverton, Guilford, 2015.

Sarah practises living more mindfully in her own life and works with others to support them through their own mindfulness practice and teaching mindfulness to others. She lives in Penmaenmawr, North Wales, UK and loves Pilates, yoga and walking.