

**Postgraduate Studies in Mindfulness MSc
Aberdeen University**

Mindfulness Assignment
Annick Nevejan

Amsterdam, 2011

Index:

Abstract

Keywords

Introduction

Part One

1.1 The Pause.....5
 The pause
 The Mindful Pause
 Hunger for entertainment
 To stop or refrain from acting reactively

1.2 The Observing Self.....7
 New ways of seeing
 Definition of the particular shift in consciousness
 More right than wrong with you

1.3 Judgement and Preference.....9
 Grasping and avoiding
 Turning towards difficulties
 Useful tool
 Attitudinal foundations of the observing self

1.4 Time Travel..... 11
 Monkey mind
 Running to the past
 Running to the future
 The uncertainty of the present
 Turn on the researcher
 Experience explained versus experience explored

1.5 Support..... 13
 Synchronising mind/body
 How to use the support
 Energy follows focus

1.6 Force Field Being Mindful..... 14

Part Two

2.1 Introduction..... 16

2.2 Meditation-in-Action..... 17
 Research summary
 Mindfulness teacher
 Guidelines
 Broader meaning of meditation-in-action

2.3 Abiding in Liminal Spaces..... 18
 Research summary
 Mindfulness teacher

2.4 Seeing Differently..... 19
 Research summary
 Mindfulness teacher
 Seeing the full dimensionality of humanness

2.5 Resting in Groundlessness.....20
 Research summary
 Mindfulness teacher

2.6 Force Field Teaching Mindfulness.....21

Conclusion.....22

Bibliography.....23

*Home is where one starts from. As we grow older
the world becomes stranger, the pattern more complicated
Of dead and living. Not the intense moment
Isolated, with no before and after,
But a lifetime burning in every moment
And not the lifetime of one man only
But of old stones that cannot be deciphered.
There is a time for the evening under starlight,
A time for the evening under lamplight
(The evening with the photograph album).
Love is most nearly itself
When here and now cease to matter.
Old men ought to be explorers
Here or there does not matter
We must be still and still moving
Into another intensity
For a further union, a deeper communion
Through the dark cold and the empty desolation,
The wave cry, the wind cry, the vast waters
Of the petrel and the porpoise. In my end is my beginning.*

(T.S. Eliot, 'East Coker' verse V)

Driving and Restraining Forces in Mindfulness

Annick Nevejan

annick@nevejan.net

ABSTRACT

The concept of Mindfulness can be described in a variety of ways: as a practice, a theory and a tool. This paper introduces the idea of force fields to provide better understanding of the driving and restraining forces in mindfulness as a practice.

Part One of this paper explores the practice and technique of mindfulness in relation to theory. To be mindful requires that one takes a pause, that one practices in observing the self and experience with all that it holds in a specific moment in time, and that one experiences the space beyond judgement and preference. Theoretically mindfulness is understood to be basic for human development, counteracting stress-related symptoms of modern life.

Part Two of this paper addresses teaching and applying mindfulness as a lived experience of being with one another in professional contexts. Teaching mindfulness requires the teacher to be courageous in being mindful while being involved in the act of performing. For professional practice, e.g. for caregivers in a hospice, mindfulness is a fundamental capacity that helps enable one to relate to situations and people when there is no hope. As a result both residents of caregivers and students of teachers are induced to enter the space of mindfulness to become aware of the life energy that nurtures sentient beings in all situations of life.

Keywords: mindfulness, force field, professional skills, meditation-in-action, system-centred training, mindful dialogue, resilience, presence, liminal spaces.

INTRODUCTION

‘We begin with the realisation that we can’t change the world, but we can change our mind, our own attitudes. If we do this, we begin to perceive the world in a more mature and understanding way. This brings us closer to ourselves, wherever we are’ (Akong Tulku Rinpoche, 2005, p. 20).

In Western culture and beyond, people tend to focus more on changing the outside world than changing their inner attitude towards it. For example when one feels unhappy one looks for changes that will improve one’s life, like a change of house, job, partner, clothes or even a remake of the face and so on. Somehow happiness seems to be related to collecting things that make one happy and to avoiding or getting rid of those things that make one unhappy. Not only does this cause a vulnerability to circumstance, in the sense that sometimes you can’t avoid things you dislike, but even when successful it usually transpires that this remedy is not sustainable. Life is constantly changing and sooner or later one loses what one cherishes and is confronted with what one dislikes or even fears. What then? How to be with life then? Where can one find the strength, the refuge, the comfort, the trust to deal with it. Where to look for true well-being and freedom?

In the autumn of 2010 I was faced with some painful changes in my life: my relationship of several years came to an end and my father had a severe stroke from which he nearly died. I realised that fighting against or fleeing from the truth of these events only made things worse. During this time I kept a daily journal of my meditation practice about what happened to me internally as I faced these difficulties. I discovered through direct experience how mindfulness helps one face reality in the here-and-now, strengthening the inner resilience to be with life as it is, and how facing pain opens the heart to self and others. Going through a deep transformation internally, this process also had a positive effect on my work as a professional mindfulness trainer.

PART ONE

In this section the practice and technique of mindfulness are explored. Both daily reflections and theoretical key principles of mindfulness are studied and understood in relation to one another. In this study the concept of force fields, developed by Kurt Lewin in 1951 (Agazarian 2001), is introduced in relation to mindfulness. As a result this section concludes with a mapping of driving and restraining forces in relation to being mindful.

1.1 THE PAUSE

“The pause is to interrupt a movement, to step out of the habitual rush forward. Pausing allows reflection, reconsideration, rest.” (Gregory Kramer, 2007, p. 109)

The Pause

When I was training and working as an artist fifteen years ago, I was interested in how I could interrupt the automatic behaviour patterns of people in daily life. At the time I was already a young meditation practitioner at Samye-Ling Tibetan Centre in Scotland. In my art practice I was longing to share the wonder and power of sitting together in silence and I developed the concept “temporary Silence-Room”. At the Central Railway Station in Amsterdam in 1995, I was granted the opportunity to create a temporary Silence-Room. This space for silence amidst the hectic dynamics of a railway station gave people the opportunity to stop running mindlessly from place A to place B and give themselves some space to rest on the spot. Both in and around this Silence-Room I collected stories about what makes people pause and what silence means to them nowadays. These stories were collected in a book afterwards, which was published by DasArts (1996). This whole project at the time made me realise how great the need is for pausing in our hyperactive Western society and for connecting with each other on a different level.

The Mindful Pause

When taking a pause in day to day life, this often means literally taking a break from whatever one is doing at that moment. This kind of pause can definitely help one step out of so-called “automatic pilot” behaviour, where one is mindlessly doing something as a habitual pattern.

What one often doesn't realise is that one can still be very mindless during the break in the sense of being distracted by thinking about all kinds of things that belong to the past or the future. If mindlessness refers to the experience of being present yet absent, then mindfulness is about being fully aware of what is happening in the present moment.

Rob Nairn (1997) defines mindfulness as “knowing what is happening while it is happening, no matter what, without judgement.” One can be mindful in any situation and in whatever activity one is doing. With mindfulness one trains two inner faculties; focusing one's attention consciously on the present moment, and observing direct experience with an open mind. To be aware of what is

happening, it is necessary first to learn simply to pause and not immediately to fill up the space by impulsively doing or thinking the same thing again and again.

Hunger for entertainment

In the MBSR programme of Kabat Zinn (2005) participants are asked to do one daily routine activity (like brushing teeth) mindfully, i.e. to be fully present in what one is doing at that particular moment. When I tried to do this myself for a couple of weeks I noticed how hard it is to break the habit of doing things mindlessly. For example I decided to eat my dinner more mindfully by really tasting the food and being aware of the sensations in my body. But everytime I forgot! I notice the same tendency in participants in the mindfulness courses I give. It seems there is a certain kind of attachment to being busy with all kinds of things except being with whatever is happening in the present moment. One can call it a hunger for entertainment, which I recognise in myself and others, and which has become a strong neurotic behaviour of our whole Western culture. Also Chödrön (2000) says that if we immediately entertain ourselves by talking, by acting, by thinking – if there's never any pause – we will never be able to relax. We will always be speeding through our lives.

Journal 29th August 2010

In meditation I can see the movements of my mind from a quiet place within me. By naming briefly the movements of my mind I get interested in the drive behind it. It seems like I all the time move away from something. Movements that have to do with reassuring myself, to confirm myself...my mind wants to be busy with something in order to feel that something is happening, that there is movement, because what happens if everything drops silent?!

To stop or refrain from acting reactively

To pause mindfully has to do with being able to stop or refrain from acting reactively to the reality of one's inner and outer landscape in the here and now. It is the moment when one steps out of habitual patterns of thinking or behaving and allows some space to be there. The mindful pause enables one to avoid becoming involved with everything that arises in the mind and/or with everything that is happening interpersonally. This kind of pause or gap makes it actually possible to start to see and recognise the complex web of conditioning arising in the moment. (Conditioning in this sense can be seen as thoughts, feelings and body sensations that automatically arise because of past experiences.)

I experience that life itself can also stop me from mindlessly rushing through the day. For example a beautiful sunny day can bring me to a standstill and allow me to enjoy the warmth on my face. Recent unhappy situations like the ending of my relationship and the stroke of my father bring me actually to a full stop in life.

Journal 30th August 2010

I feel silent and wounded inside. Yesterday unexpectedly my partner broke off our relationship after three years. When he told me the news in a kind of closed off manner I felt a fright around my heart. I couldn't move and was in shock. Today in meditation I can feel this enormous fear in me of being alone again, not knowing how to continue without him. I realise how much I have built my life around us being together. Suddenly the whole story collapses.....

Journal 18th November 2010

There is this amazing pain in me when I think of my parents. The most difficult part is that I can't do anything to take their suffering away. It is just how it is, so painful. My body aches all-over and I feel exhausted, checkmate. Nowhere to go, no escape from the fact that my father has maybe only a few days or weeks to live. (...) It feels like I come in my life to a full stop. I don't know what I can rely on, what to do or what will happen next. There are no images in me, no sense of direction. There is only a kind of silence, the silence of deep not knowing. I experience the immobility of pain. I can't move when I am in real pain. It is very strange but everything drops silent.

1.2 THE OBSERVING SELF

New ways of seeing

When one pauses mindfully one drops out of habitual patterns of thinking and doing into the openness of the present moment. This creates a huge potential for discovering new ways of seeing and dealing with reality. What actually happens when one stops being reactive to the inner and outer experiences? First of all one usually becomes aware of a sense of space, a space that feels open and fresh, like waking up and looking at the world with new eyes.

Journal 26th August 2010

This morning in meditation I experienced space around what I was aware of from moment to moment. It seemed to me like there was another screen underneath all the appearances and it gave me a liberating feeling. I was less drawn into what I perceived at that moment and experienced a kind of peace and tranquility within me. I love sitting in the morning, it really focusses me and makes me more centered and appreciative of life happening within and outside of me.

When we step out of our conditioned way of relating to reality by pausing we shift from being involved with what is happening to looking at what is happening, which in mindfulness is called the observing self (or observing consciousness). This shift in perspective has in itself a huge impact: without changing the content of what is happening one can actually experience that same reality in a total different way. Allowing a different perspective on reality changes one's relationship to what is happening. It is like when I clean my dirty windows at home; suddenly the view over my back garden is clear again and more sunlight shines into the house. It gives a whole different feeling to the same place.

Journal 1st October 2010

In meditation I am very aware today of contraction and relaxation. When I identify with thoughts, or am involved with them, the body stays in a kind of contraction. If I bring my awareness back to my breathing I feel the pain in the body. Just doing nothing opens my awareness and strangely enough the pain suddenly seems to have disappeared. Then I experience moments of a very clear, open mind and an incredible sense of potential in the air. It is challenging to be with this state of mind and not doing anything. This is where life starts, here and now, it is not somewhere else. I discover that just being aware of my own gravity actually already gives a sense of freedom. I realise I have the freedom of choice what to get engaged with, what to let go, where to put my focus, what to act upon etc. I remember an oneliner from the movie 'Invictus' (2009) in which Mandela says at some point 'I am the captain of my own soul'! This is how I feel now and it is a great feeling of freedom!

Chödrön (2000) describes adequately my own experience when she says that by waiting, we begin to connect with fundamental restlessness as well as fundamental spaciousness.

Definition of the particular shift in consciousness

How can one define in mindfulness this particular shift in relationship to self and experience?

In the practical guide for teaching mindfulness by McCown et al (2010) he says that in the descriptions of outcomes of mindfulness practice a major emphasis is placed on a particular shift in the practitioner's relationship to self and experience – “the awareness of an observing consciousness that is both *a part of* and *apart from* the experience” (p. 65). In the above example of my journal this means moving from a position where I am completely identified with my thoughts to a position in which the thoughts and their effect on the body become available for observation to me.

To define this particular shift McCown et al (2010) cites the work of Shapiro et al (2006) where they propose a meta-mechanism that they call re-perceiving and define as “a rotation in consciousness in which what was previously ‘subject’ becomes ‘object’”. They further suggest that “this meta-mechanism is basic to human development, and, therefore, that mindfulness practice simply

strengthens and accelerates the growth of this capacity” (p.65). In this same context McCown also cites the work of Safran and Segal (1990) and their contribution with “such terms as *deautomatization*, in which habitual modes of perception are suspended, and *decentering*, in which a capacity to view experience from ‘outside’ is cultivated” (p.65). I can clearly recognise my own experience in these definitions. Participants in my mindfulness classes often express this experience of decentering as a capacity to look at things from a “helicopter view”; it helps them to look at issues from the outside as well as to keep an overview. According to many participants this capacity improves during the mindfulness training.

Although I much value the clear definitions by Shapiro and Segal there is also something left out for me in these more psychological descriptions of this shift in perspective. One could think we are talking about the capacity to reflect here, but one of the differences in mindfulness is that one also puts emphasis on how one relates to what is there. For example Kasamatsu and Hirai (1973) cited by McCown et al (2010) noted a *de-habituation* to stimuli in Zen Masters that they describe as a “constant refreshing of perception of the moment”(p.65). There is the real flavour of practice in this description I think, yet it requires some practice to experience this. Still after twenty years of practice in mindfulness I realise how quickly my observing consciousness comes under the sway once more of my habitual conditioned mindset.

The definition of Jon Kabat-Zinn (2005), cited also by McCown et al (2010), I find most adequate in describing this particular shift in the practitioner’s relationship to self and experience; “a rotation in consciousness into another ‘dimension’ orthogonal to conventional reality”, in which the conventional and new “dimensions” co-exist, and “everything old looks different because it is now being seen in a new light – an awareness that is no longer confined by the conventional dimensionality and mindset” (p.65).

To me the crucial point that Kabat Zinn highlights here has to do with my experience that the observing self as practiced in mindfulness gives access to another “dimension” that is free from the conditional mind. How do I experience this?

Journal 7th October 2010

What I notice again is how my body wants something else than my conditioned mind. A part of me wants to hide away, roll up in bed and stay away from all the pains and so on. But my body tells me that it wants to sit up straight and be with these pains. The body wants to get space to breathe, it wants to be present and awake. The body helps me to get out of the drama in my mind.

Then a strong sensation in my spine, I have the feeling I can sit for hours like this. I enjoy the peaceful moments in meditation after a difficult day with a lot of turmoil inside of me. I feel grateful for having a practice to quieten the mind. Having peace of mind is so beautiful and soothing. It is like a big stretch in the sky, feeling supported by a subtle all-encompassing energy that is limitless, a sacred flow of life that takes me from moment to moment....

Journal 24th October 2010

Blissful meditation; a peaceful, tender and loving feeling arises spontaneously. The body itself fine tunes subtle energies. I feel more and more grounded, fresh and clear, a full sense of potential in the here and now, pregnant with possibilities. It feels free and open, a warm and lovely energy I experience. I feel very good in my belly. Strong, easy and available for life happening; being present for it without effort. I feel centered, easy and natural.

More right than wrong with you

By simply being aware of what is happening from moment to moment, without judgement, I get in touch with a kind of wholeness in myself. This experience is the opposite of my daily neurotic self that always thinks poorly of itself like something is lacking inside of me, that I am not okay as I am. In the definition of Kabat-Zinn I sense our common background in Buddhism, where the emphasis is more on what is right with us, our ability to connect with the clarity and health of mind itself, than to focus on what’s wrong with us, which tends to be a fixation of Western psychology. In Buddhist philosophy mindfulness practice is the stepping stone to experience our natural

unconditional awareness, which has limitless wisdom and compassion. One also calls it “true nature” which is beyond any concepts and described as unimaginable, indescribable and indestructable. Yet one can authentically experience and realise this inner potential. This view in itself, from which mindfulness originates, implies that fundamentally all of us are okay, because we have this fundamental goodness or true nature at the core of our being. Personally I can’t see how I can practice or teach mindfulness if I don’t have this view as the ground underneath all the practices in the mindfulness training.

1.3 JUDGEMENT AND PREFERENCE

Grasping and avoiding

The problem with the observing self is that one very quickly loses an open attitude and tends to judge one’s experiences again. By dividing the world in good/bad, beautiful/ugly, pleasurable/unpleasurable and so on, preference also arises in our minds. And preference makes us grasp for things we like and avoid the things we don’t like. This dynamic prevents us from being present in the here-and-now and truly seeing reality as it is. It causes a lot of suffering, because sooner or later we are bound to lose what we want to hold on to and encounter the things we want to avoid.

Journal 9th September 2010

I am doing a retreat with Florence Meleo-Meyer from the USA on mindful dialogue and inquiry. I am still very sad about the break up of the relationship, it all feels very fresh. I can see how much I am attached to him and our life together, how I still resist this change, how I can’t yet accept the situation. It all happened too quickly. Like something is not right, what have I missed or did I not see along the way? What did I do wrong or where did I fail in our relationship?

I realise how much I judge myself and how judgements evolve out of wanting to avoid pain. There is often the pain in me about how things are not the way I would like them to be. Judgements are a disguise, a fixation, a way to separate myself and others; it creates distance and prevents connection with myself and others...

When I manage to embrace how it is I experience more friendliness towards myself. Less judgement. This warm care and attention towards how I feel at this moment makes me also more grounded.

Turning towards difficulties

One of the most valuable and liberating aspects I learned from my mindfulness practice is to not turn away from things that I experience as difficult, painful or uncomfortable. When I am able to let go of my preference attitude I feel less suffering, because fighting against or fleeing from the truth only creates more conflict in me. It doesn’t solve the problem and it is exhausting. Because it is a counterintuitive movement, it is not easy to do. But by letting go of my resistance to pain or any other uncomfortable experience, I actually get access to a much deeper sense of myself and my own basic humanness.

Journal 26th September 2010

I go and sit and feel terribly tired and exhausted. My body feels painful and tensed all over. There is a strong impulse of wanting to get out of this pain but nothing seems to help. I feel I’m holding on to something.

I decide to get a bit more interested in the tension, I breath into it and give it some space. Then suddenly underneath this tension this big wave of emotion comes up in me. By letting this wave roll on it releases my whole body. Just breathing with it I feel like I allow life to run through me, a kind of surrender to how it is from moment to moment.

Useful tool

During the second Mindfulness Module (Aberdeen University, 2010) Choden gave us the RAIN exercise that helps one relate to difficult emotions or experiences that arise during mindfulness

practice. RAIN is an acronym for “recognizing, accepting, investigating and non-identification” (hand-out mindfulness module two, p. 12). For me it has been an incredibly useful set of tools for staying present with whatever is there, especially with difficult emotions like anger, and learning to explore present reality from moment to moment.

Journal 18th September 2010

RAIN exercise, step 2; By welcoming this feeling of anger in me, allowing it and even embracing it I can get closer to my anger and at the same time experience much more space around it. So if I don't resist or fight with what is there, my view is not narrowing but broadening. Amazing that I can experience space and at the same time be very intimate with my anger.

RAIN exercise, step 4; The last step is where I take off my conditional framing. Can I allow the anger to be while resting in not knowing? By not doing anything spontaneously a true curiosity comes up around the question ‘what is the nature of anger actually?’ The following moment I experience a pure powerful energy which feels precise, clear and beautiful. I realise this transformative quality is liberated within the anger the moment I let go of the storyline or any conditional framing of the anger. Through the spaciousness and gradual process of dis-identification with my anger the feeling could unravel in me and changed me as well.

Attitudinal foundations of the observing self

Again it is not only important to stop being reactive to experiences (“de-habituation to stimuli”), it is also important how one looks at one's experiences. The observing self somehow continuously needs to refresh its perception of the moment in order to stay free from the conditional way of looking at things that is limiting and confining oneself. Kabat Zinn (2005) describes seven attitudinal foundations of the observing self that enable one to look more openly and freely at one's experiences: non-judging, patience, beginner's mind, trust, non-striving, acceptance and letting go. These qualities arise spontaneously when one rests in unconditional awareness; they are already present within oneself, yet these qualities are often covered up by the conditioned mindset like clouds before the sun. With mindfulness we learn to cultivate this seed of potential in us in order to deal more freely with our conditioning.

Journal 10th October 2010

Such a heavy feeling stays with me. I am aware that I am fighting my sadness, I don't want to be sad and have again all those tears and despair, but I know that suppressing it will only cause more tension in me. When I finally sit to meditate my chest aches with tension. I do a little prayer from my buddhist practise and then this huge strong wish to be free comes up in me. I want to be free from this suffering.(..) Learning ‘not to do’ arouses this fear in me of ‘what then?’ Is it enough to just let life happen?

How to stay open while I feel unfulfilled desires, loneliness, the loss of a partner and people I love in my life. How to be with all this? Can I bear this ‘raw reality’ and stay with feelings of loss and emptiness?

Doing metta practise is easier for me when I feel good and fortunate. To wish others well and happiness while feeling myself very unhappy also gives rise to feelings of jealousy. I try not to judge this negative emotion and decide to explore it a bit. Underneath the jealousy I get in touch with the pain of having such a limited image about my own life and in a way leaving myself by thinking I should be different and lead another kind of life.

The next realisation in my heart is that the practice of ‘letting go’ is important in learning to live life truly. I need to let go of images, ideas, expectations of myself and others. Can I be in the world, but not of the world? Can I stay compassionate with my small-minded gestures of grasping and avoiding?

The body is a bit more at rest now. Facing the truth relaxes, fighting it makes it worse. Breathing is soothing, the rythm, the pace of it, it is always there. And yet one day I will also have to let go of my body. There is nowhere else to go other than being here. If I am not here how can the world be there for me? Patience and discipline are what is needed now. And gentleness, loving kindness.

1.4 TIME TRAVEL

Monkey mind

Pausing and observing the present moment reveals how much one's mind moves away from the here-and-now of the present into the past or the future. Often one is not aware of this "time travel" (a term used by Agazarian, 2001) within oneself, where the mind is like a monkey jumping around but never staying here with its focus on the present moment. In the mindfulness training one of the first steps is recognising how easily one's mind gets distracted, even if one doesn't want to. It is often quite a shock for people in the mindfulness training when they realise how little control they have over their mind; one often has become a slave of the monkey mind. Mindfulness is a way to tame the mind like a wild horse, gently and with patience, in order to use its potential in a more free and beneficial way.

Running to the past

When sudden change happens in life I notice how much I start to time travel and start to have ruminating thoughts. This happened to me with the break up of my relationship a few months ago, when I kept thinking of all the good things we had together and wishing things could go back to the way they were. The same happened when my father almost died when he had a severe stroke in November 2010. During this most painful and upsetting time I became aware of how my thoughts were running back to the past, and how I suddenly felt small again and afraid.

Journal 4th December 2010

During my daily meditation an overwhelming pain of loss in me comes up. I feel how much I love my father and how attached I am to him in this life. The thought of losing him triggers this small child in me that all the time wants to be in the warmth of her father, in his protection, feeling admired and loved by him. His presence gives her the trust to explore the big world around her, knowing he is there to catch her when she falls or when she gets lost. It is an unbearable thought to her to lose her father forever, to never see him again, to never feel his familiar warm hands over her face, to never see his eyes look at her. She wants him to be there forever.

What seems like an unbearable pain for the child in me becomes bearable for me now as an adult by holding this pain in my awareness through mindfulness and feeling less overwhelmed. Being able to discriminate between the past and present perspective was very helpful to me in dealing with this stressful situation. Yet I also realise how easily I become reactive with my family during this difficult time. I notice a defence against facing the old pain of family roles driven by the endless hunger to be seen or valued by each other. I am challenged in my mindfulness practice not to take personal experiences too personally, as I tend to be aware only of myself as the context and not to see the larger picture.

Running to the future

The whole family dynamic also has a strong effect on my body; I often feel physically upset and notice a very raw wounded feeling from the front chest to my belly. My mind flees from this present reality by worrying about the future:

Journal 5th December 2010

I feel a cloud in my head, my eyes hurt from the crying still from yesterday. The last few days I have had this pain in my lower back. When I inquire into it there is a longing there for support. Also I detect some fear: can I carry all this that is happening? In the body is also a contraction that has to do with holding myself together, like I am preparing myself for even worse times ahead. Now my father is still there, what will he and all of us still have to go through before he can let go? And will he die peacefully? And how will I handle his death? It is all thinking about the future, I see it and can let go of it. Again nailing myself to the present moment by following my breath I feel I let go of wanting to know how things will go, a kind of surrender to the unknown and that things have their own timing, I can't do anything about that.

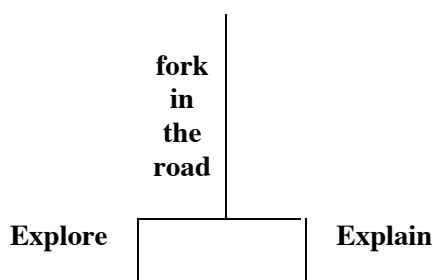
The uncertainty of the present

Agazarian (2001) states that the major restraining force to being aware of the present is that it is, in reality, uncertain. Living in the present means living at the edge of the unknown. This is also very much my own experience and the habit of defending against this experience of not knowing or against uncertainty is huge in myself.

For a few years I have studied and practised System Centered Training (Agazarian, 2001), a highly theory-based method for developing living human systems (SCT is also mentioned in the practical guide for teaching mindfulness by McCown et al (2010) p. 85-87). To me SCT is specifically interesting in the context of mindfulness where they have developed a method to deliberately direct and focus one's energy "across boundaries" into the here-and-now. "SCT members learn that there are psychological boundaries that structure the space and time of mental reality, just as there are real boundaries in space and time. Coming to recognize mental time and space boundaries makes it possible for members to notice how they 'go' and 'where they go'" (Agazarian, 2001, p.105). As in mindfulness, becoming aware of one's distractions gives one the freedom to choose which time dimension one wishes to live in. In both SCT and mindfulness, the main focus is to learn to distinguish one's experience from past and future associations, and to be open to one's internal experience in the context of one's 'here-and-now' self in the present.

Turn on the researcher

In SCT they introduce a very helpful tool in how to stay present with difficult experiences like uncertainty. It is what they call the fork in the road; we can either choose to explain or to explore our experience. Explaining is about what we already know while exploring is about what we don't know. With exploring we turn on our so called "researcher" and this curiosity is also helpful in dealing with the inevitable anxiety that is raised when one is at the edge of the unknown.



Journal 26th September 2010

I am resting at the edge of the unknown and slowly my body calms down, feeling more at ease. I also noticed during meditation thoughts that are negative predictions about the future, tempting me to feel even worse. The moment I am aware of it I realise I don't know how the future will go and that there is no point in going there. What a relief this realisation! A nice and fruitful shift of focus I could make here. It is better to be with the unknown than to allow negative predictions to overflow me.

"We shall not cease from exploration. And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time." T. S. Eliot

Experience explained versus experience explored

Below is a map by Agazarian (2001) that shows the difference between experience explained versus experience explored in past, present and future time. Explaining experience is seen as a constructed reality, while with exploring experience one enters primary reality where reality testing can take place, both internal and external. This is most interesting for mindfulness since one of the main

pillars of the practice is learning to explore your experience and to be with the naked reality in the here-and-now, instead of living in your head and how you think it is or imagine it to be.

Map of the boundaries in space, time and reality (adapted from Lewin 1951 by Yvonne M. Agazarian)			
Past, present and future – Experience explained vs experience explored			
	Past	Present	Future
Explaining experience	Interpretations of memory War stories and romances Blaming and complaining	Interpretations based on wishes and fears Thoughts-generated self-consciousness Criticism of self or other Mind-reading	Negative and positive predictions Anxiety-provoking thoughts Ruminations and worrying Pessimism and optimism about the future
Exploring experience	Past experience Apprehensive memory Emotional intelligence and intuition	Present experience, common sense and reality testing Experience-generated consciousness of self Verbal and emotional intelligence	Plans and goals Curiosity about the unknown Formulating hypotheses Contingency planning

Living in our thoughts and interpretations without questioning or testing their reality makes one live in a constructed reality. As a result one is less connected with one's own full dimensionality of being human and loses touch with reality as it is. Therefore exploring experiences by turning on one's curious researcher is a vital tool for being fully present with the ever changing reality of the here-and-now.

1.5 SUPPORT

Synchronising mind/body

Since the mind is often distracted by time travelling, it is necessary to use a support to bring the mind home again, i.e. where mind/body become synchronised. It is like saddling a horse in order to ride it. In mindfulness practice the most commonly used support is breathing. It is a kind of neutral inner object, that continuously happens as a natural flow in the present. By being aware of one's breathing one helps the mind to stay focused on the present moment. One can use different inner and outer objects as a support like body sensations, the senses or resting one's attention on a pebble in front of oneself.

How to use the support

Most important is how one uses the support. When one brings one's attention to the breathing in order to become present it is not meant as a way to shut out the rest of the world. Only a part of our attention rests with the support, the rest of our awareness is open and panoramic, knowing what is

happening while it is happening. Here the attitude of curiosity and exploring experiences also becomes a big support in staying present with whatever arises.

Journal 4th October 2010

Working with sound as a support. I slowly come home in my body during sitting meditation. I recognise distractions and I have less thoughts about that than before (I could judge myself for being distracted). I just gently bring back my awareness to the support. Maybe I finally accept distractions a bit more? Again a lot of soothing body sensations are happening and I wish it continues forever. Hard not to grasp for it, hold on to it. By acknowledging this feeling of attachment to pleasurable body sensations I can relax again and just allow to happen what happens. Curiosity is a big help in staying present with whatever is happening. It enables me also to explore what is happening. Yet I find the whole process of navigating the inner landscape a big mystery and often still get lost in it.

Beginners to meditation tend to use the support too tightly or too loosely. Recently a participant in one of my mindfulness courses struggled with using the support. He either focused completely on the support like a concentration exercise or he was involved with his thoughts and thus distracted. To clarify how to use the support I suggested that the whole group look around at each other in the room, noticing whatever comes to mind while being aware of one's own breathing rhythm. Somehow this simple instruction made clear that one is not trying to stop anything from happening, and at the same time one is also not getting too involved with what is happening by keeping some of one's attention with the support.

Energy follows focus

An important principle in using the support is that "energy follows focus". For example if I withdraw my energy from my negative predictions by shifting my focus to my breathing, less energy goes to the anxiety-provoking thoughts. The effect is that I feel more grounded in the here-and-now and more open to explore the present reality instead of living only in my thoughts. By shifting my focus to the support I don't have to suppress or change anything that arises in my mind, I just don't get involved with it.

A common mistake people make who are new to meditation is that they think they have to stop their thoughts. The nature of conditioning in the mind (like thoughts, feelings and sensations) is self-arising, self-displaying and self-dissolving if one doesn't interfere with it. Like waves that come up in the ocean and also go back into the ocean. Realising this I learn more and more to be with the ever-changing reality from a free and spacious awareness within myself.

1.6 FORCE FIELD BEING MINDFUL

In SCT Agazarian (2001) uses the model of force fields as developed by Kurt Lewin (1951) to show the driving and restraining forces in attaining a certain goal. What interests me in the use of force fields in SCT is the underlying principle that if one reduces the restraining forces that lie along the path to the determined goal, the driving forces will automatically be released to move in the direction of the goal.

What are the driving and restraining forces in relation to being mindful? And if the driving forces are automatically released to move in the direction of being mindful by reducing restraining forces, it implies that one already has the qualities of the driving forces within oneself to become mindful. In that sense one doesn't need to create curiosity or a beginner's mind, as these are already there. One need only reduce the restraining forces that prevent one from relaxing into this dimensionality. By reducing restraining forces like being distracted or reactive it is inevitable that one becomes more authentically present.

Below I attempt to make a force field in relation to being mindful. It is not meant to be a complete list, but a first exploration of the field forces involved with this goal. I have collected mainly the data from personal experience and what I have written about being mindful in this paper.

Force field of driving and restraining forces in relation to being mindful (by Nevejan, 2011)	
<i>Driving forces</i>	<i>Restraining forces</i>
To pause	Automatic pilot
De-habituation to stimuli	Being reactive
Rotation in consciousness in which what was previously 'subject' becomes 'object'. (observing self)	Identification with thoughts, feelings and sensations (no observing self)
Beginner's mind	Habitual mind
Patience	Impatience
Exploring	Explaining
Being curious	Being uncurious
Non-judging	Judging
Impartiality	Preferences
Letting go	Grasping
Accepting reality as it is, whatever it is	Fight/flight
Testing reality by checking it out as a researcher	Interpretations /projections (mind readings)
Non-attachment	Attachment
Body awareness (breath, sensations, senses)	Lost in thought
Personal experience	Personalising (self-centred)
Discriminating between the here-and-now perspective (adult) and the past perspective (child)	Failing to discriminate between present and past perspectives
Discriminating between present-based reality and the future	Positive and negative predictions
Being with the unknown	Being certain
Kindness	(Self-)Criticism
Response-ability	Lack of response-ability

PART TWO

This section addresses how mindfulness viewed from the perspective of force fields can help human beings to reach their potential in professional contexts like education and health care. As a result a first mapping of the driving and restraining forces in a professional context is presented.

INTRODUCTION

In this part, research is used to reflect on how mindfulness practice affects the professional role of the mindfulness teacher. Over the last four years I have given regular mindfulness courses in different organisations and privately, based on the MBSR program of Kabat-Zinn (2005) and the mindfulness training by Rob Nairn (Samye College 2009/2010).

For this exploration I will use the Qualitative Health Research by Anne Bruce and Betty Davies (2005) on *Mindfulness in Hospice Care: Practicing Meditation-in-Action*. In this research the authors explore via the method of narrative inquiry the spiritual practice of mindfulness among hospice caregivers who regularly practice mindfulness and are engaged in mindful end-of-life care at a Zen hospice. For her study Bruce uses Buddhist interpretive perspectives since most participants in her research are long-time practitioners in Buddhist meditation. There are several reasons why this research is inspiring to me:

Firstly, with my father having spent two months this winter in a hospice (and the last weeks in a nursing home) the findings in this report are a vital support for my own mindful practice of being with him in these difficult times and taking care of him.

Secondly, in her research Bruce (2005) examines the lived experience of mindfulness and its meaning for those who practice it, an area that has to date been subject to little scientific investigation. The lived experience of mindfulness is an ability that requires a regular daily practice over a longer period of time. Usually mindfulness teachers are also long-time practitioners such that they embody mindfulness in teaching others.

Thirdly, her research expresses profoundly how mindfulness can contribute to the relational space between people (in this case caregiver – residents), which is of great value for reflecting on the role of the mindfulness teacher that only functions in the context of his or her relationship with participants or students.

And lastly, I also share Bruce's concern when she argues that although a review of medical and social science literature shows promising results concerning the effectiveness of mindfulness-based clinical intervention (Bruce refers here to Baer, 2003; Bishop, 2002), there is a risk that meditation becomes another "tool" for relieving personal health concerns. The spiritual aspect of mindfulness is still underexplored. With my own mindfulness practice rooted in twenty years of Tibetan Buddhist meditation I question, just as Bruce does, whether one can separate mindfulness from its roots, where the practice is held in a larger view of interdependence of self and others.

Kabat-Zinn (McCown et al, 2010, p. xi) argues, "for mindfulness is not just one more method or technique, akin to other familiar techniques and strategies we may find instrumental and effective in one field or another. It is a way of being, of seeing, of tapping into the full dimensionality of our humanity, and this way has a critical non-instrumental essence inherent in it."

Following Bruce's research, four themes emerged that form an interpretation of the lived experience of mindfulness, or "the experience of repeatedly bringing one's awareness partially or fully to the moment in end-of-life care" (Bruce, 2005, p.1335). Those four themes are: meditation-in-action, abiding in liminal spaces, seeing differently, and resting with groundlessness. I will use these themes as a guideline to reflect on the professional field of the mindfulness teacher.

MEDITATION-IN-ACTION

Summary of the research

One could simply say that with mindfulness one practises being in the moment. The regular practice of mindfulness of the caregivers in the hospice makes it easier over time to bring their attention back to the present moment. In order to do this, they don't hold on to the past, the future, or "nowness", but relax into the immediacy of what is happening while it is happening. This relates to the chapter on "time traveling" and the use of the support in part one.

Meditation-in-Action is described in the article as paying attention by anchoring one's awareness to everyday tasks like washing, feeding, and cooking for the residents. In performing these activities mindfully it was not so much about what the caregivers did, but how they did it. To the participants in the research this also meant setting an intention of being mindfully open and present; "the practice is not only examining one's mind but also cultivating motivation to benefit others" (p.1336). Being aware of intention and motivation in mindfulness counteracts the practice becoming a technique alone. It prevents self-awareness from leading to self-absorption, which is limiting for further growth.

Mindfulness teacher

One can't teach mindfulness if one isn't present as a teacher. The mindfulness teacher needs to embody mindfulness in order to resonate with the participants. Therefore teaching mindfulness has to be rooted in the personal practice of the teacher. This means not only doing formal meditation practice, but also learning to be mindful within the complex dynamic and interaction between people.

What does meditation-in-action imply in the relational space between teacher and participants? In being mindful interpersonally the emphasis is on "being with" rather than "doing with". Everything starts with presence, which is not something that one adds to the situation or one has to create; it is an already existing dimension one can wake up for or tap into.

The first step in letting presence unfold is when one gently synchronises the mind with the body. Paying attention by anchoring one's awareness to activities, like preparing the space before the mindfulness class starts, becomes a valuable ritual for the teacher in embodying mindfulness. Secondly, the intention to be open and present for what is arising moment by moment in oneself, within participants, and the group as a whole is a vital support in developing the courage to do this. Often sitting in front of a group causes anxiety which activates the survival system, because one feels somehow under threat. In human behaviour this causes a defensive attitude where one tries to protect oneself from any danger. If the teacher can't hold these feelings of anxiety mindfully in his or her own awareness he or she will become reactive in responding to the group and lose the connection with the students. Because one is only human and not perfect, the intention and motivation of both teacher and the group can be a big support in staying mindfully together. At the beginning of a new mindfulness course the teacher therefore explores in a co-creative style with the group which intentions and agreements are helpful in establishing an open learning climate together, where one at least tries not to harm each other.

Guidelines

Kramer (2007) offers a rich set of guidelines as a support to remain mindfully awake amid the rich challenges of interpersonal encounter. The guidelines are Pause-Relax-Open, Trust Emergence, and Listen Deeply- Speak the Truth. By pausing and meeting the moment afresh one is invited to relax with reality as it is and to open up to others and the world around oneself by keeping a sense of spaciousness. This allows one to listen deeply to what is called for in that moment, and to respond with honesty. Kramer gives insight into how mindful dialogue opens the door to mutuality and how it can't be separated from values like integrity and care for others. In a way this corresponds with

the caregivers in Bruce's research when they underline that meditation-in-action is not divorced from the intention to be open and the motivation to benefit others.

Broader meaning of meditation-in-action

Bruce (2005) acknowledges in her research that meditation-in-action has a broader meaning in Buddhism than is referred to in her research. Trungpa (1996) explains how meditation-in-action in Tibetan Buddhism has to do with attaining real wisdom through direct experience. By cultivating the activity of generosity, discipline, patience, energy, clarity, and wisdom one develops the ability to see clearly into situations and deal with them skilfully, without the self-consciousness being connected with ego. Here one enters into the spiritual dimension of mindfulness where meditation-in-action is also placed in a reality beyond the dualism of subject and object. I think scientifically this transpersonal consciousness is still unproven, yet for some realised Buddhists it is a direct lived experience.

ABIDING IN LIMINAL SPACES

Summary of the research

For the caregivers in the hospice, to be mindful in end-of-life care also means opening up to spaces where a sense of separation with residents dissolves; dualities of self/other or work/life vanish. One refers here to an in-between space that exists both beyond and within dualities and conceptually is called "liminal" space; a space where opposites meet in-between like living yet dying or one is present yet absent. These liminal spaces provide "an appreciation that opposing tensions of living while dying or being joyful while saddened can be held simultaneously without contradiction" (p.1336). Experiencing the liminal space of self and other gives rise to tenderness, empathy and compassion like "your suffering is my suffering, or you're dying and I am going to die" (p.1337). One doesn't presume one is independent from the other and in that sense benefitting others also benefits oneself.

Mindfulness teacher

In some mindfulness practices one is specifically asked to see one's personal experience as being part of the human condition. This encourages one to widen one's perspective and to realise one is less alone or separate from others than one may think. Although each person is respected in his or her uniqueness, mindfulness also cultivates a feeling for the human commonality and the sense that somehow we're all in the same boat. Being a mindfulness teacher one holds this liminal space of self and other for the group until the group itself can recognise and own this experience themselves. In the theatre world there is an interesting saying when performing a piece; "one can create the condition for the angel to fly, but one can't force it". This process is known as synergy, where new meaning and connection emerges in a group that is not the doing of one person in particular. As a mindfulness teacher one experiences these moments of magic in groups, where the process of synergy also enables people to experience the liminal space where a solid separation of self and others dissolves.

In November 2010 I was asked to give a workshop on mindfulness in the context of reducing work stress for a group of fourteen people who work at the human resource department of the Amsterdam municipal services. I started the workshop by asking each participant; "what did you give a moment's thought to lately?" With this question I was referring to moments in which we pause and allow time for reflection and reconsideration.

What happened was that people shared some very personal stories about what moves them deeply at this moment in their life, such as supporting a dear friend who has terminal cancer, the grief about the recent loss of a husband, the physical discomfort and struggle with a chronic backpain, or the gratitude for having a beautiful daughter who also is autistic. After we finished the sharing we dropped spontaneously into a silence in which a moving resonance of warmhearted openness and

interconnectedness in the group as a whole was experienced. Suddenly the whole issue of reducing work stress through mindfulness was placed in a more enriching perspective by remembering what is important to us, which people or personal situations make us pause and ask for our attention right now, because we want to be there for them with our whole being.

Abiding in liminal space enriches the role of the mindfulness teacher. For example a teacher might feel very sad because of personal life circumstances, such as the loss of a dear one, yet also have to teach at the same time. If the teacher can hold these opposing tensions in kind awareness, the soft heartedness of personal pain makes one feel connected with oneself and others. Because the mindfulness practice itself helps the teacher to stay present and open, there is also room for feelings like joy or gratitude while being saddened at the same time.

Journal 8th November 2010

In preparing for the mindfulness course this afternoon I felt very insecure. A lot of emotion and pain from my father's brain infarct is still very fresh in me. I got worried that I might be too emotional or too heavy in my presence for the group. The only possible way is to really be with my feelings mindfully and use it as a way to be present. Am I willing to be empty-handed, nothing to hold onto, allow life to take over and just go with the flow. In doing this I became centred and warm inside. The pain warms my heart and makes it also very tender and open. I noticed I had a lot of contact with people on my way to the group, feeling surprised by the sudden little conversations I had with some. It was very nice and I felt connected without effort. With the mindfulness group I felt at ease, open and without any pressure to achieve something. My head was clear and I could work in resonance with the group.

SEEING DIFFERENTLY

Summary of the research

Through the mindfulness practice the caregivers noticed a shift in their perception. They started to see things differently like simply seeing the familiar as if for the first time or noticing things they had not seen before. Being mindfully aware of details created opportunities to “see” and “feel” for example the flower-ness of a flower in the space. Meditation increases the receptivity for seeing wholeheartedly both material and immaterial space. This cultivates the ability for the caregivers to see what needs to get done and also to see what is called for in supporting the residents, like creating an expansive environment that can accommodate suffering and peace.

The open attitude that is trained through mindfulness seems to soften hard opinions about how things are or are expected to be. When the caregivers can relax into the immediacy of what is happening, without fixed judgements or expectations, they experience kindness and availability with residents and one another. This kind of “presence” they describe as “the capacity to engage and to be engaged without an agenda” (p.1338). Here one is challenged to come from a place of not knowing, which increases the capacity to connect authentically with others. In the research they conceptualised being without a predetermined agenda as the “un/knowning” caregivers. Entering a situation un/knowningly, without a predetermined script, is seen as acting wholeheartedly by trusting one's direct experience in the moment. So trust is not based on convictions of certainty but rather trusting the authenticity of one's intention and skills, which allows new possibilities for responding to others' needs.

Mindfulness teacher

Paying attention to details in the material or physical environment makes a difference in teaching mindfulness. For example if one asks the group to come and sit in a circle it is possible that one or two people do not take up a position with their chair or cushion that is fully or adequately in the circle. By kindly paying attention to this and exploring with the group if this is the kind of circle in which people can see one another sometimes leads to a small shift of chair position that can

suddenly create much more connection and presence in the group as a whole. The same is true for immaterial space, where both teacher and participants try to be aware of how one's own doing or not doing affects others and the group as a whole. For example a participant that shows up again after having missed one or two classes sometimes feels surprised to hear how she or he has been missed by the group. One is often not aware of how one's actions influence others.

For the un/knowing mindfulness teacher to be without an agenda in front of a group (this refers to an open attitude, not to be confused with content) is a hot spot to be in. One often has a lot of expectations and judgements towards oneself as a teacher and will also project these on the group. Because conditioning keeps arising in oneself while teaching the mindfulness teacher needs to be able to hold it in awareness in order not to become reactive. Resting in the so called being-mode instead of the doing-mode is a continuous challenge in teaching, not filling up the gaps with a hunger for certainty or entertainment.

Seeing the full dimensionality of humanness

The big shift in perception in the role of the mindfulness teacher is that one doesn't try to fix or solve problems. In fact one is not trying to change anything for that matter. The mindfulness teacher focusses on how one relates to one's experiences and cultivates an attitude of openness and curiosity without agenda. His/her role is non-hierarchical and non-pathologising. The mindfulness teacher sees and values the full dimensionality of humanness with a trust in people's fundamental goodness and potential. Here, with seeing differently, one touches rather more on the spiritual side of mindfulness where one sees from the start the basic wholeness in each and everyone. This influences deeply how one looks at people. The process of mindfulness has more to do with transformation, realising one's inner potential, than with having to change oneself.

RESTING IN GROUNDLESSNESS

Summary of the research

In meditation one slowly becomes aware of the unceasing movement of shifting thoughts, sensations and feelings that come and go like clouds in the sky. Intellectually impermanence is a known fact of life, but to experience directly the truth of change, to understand one is change, has a whole different impact. By realising phenomena are not as fixed or solid as one presumed, a lot of illusionary ground drops away. With mindfulness one learns to open up to this ever-changing reality and discovers that one can rest in groundlessness. For the caregivers in the hospice this ability slowly changes their relationship with death. It becomes less of a tragedy. However this realisation also brings fear with it. Fear manifests on many levels, including subtle ways of closing down or turning away from situations or residents. With mindfulness one is not trying to become fearless, but rather one learns to become intimate with fear through direct experience and this provides meeting places for others who are afraid.

The caregivers in the hospice discovered that entering a room with the hope the resident would get better was actually linked with fear and created a veil between the caregiver and the resident. "To be without hope, in this sense, was to let go of wishing things were otherwise and fearing what might be" (p.1339). Being mindful of hope/fear allows one to open more fully to whatever is happening in the moment. Recognising their own inner fear, struggle and resistance in opening up to the suffering of another helped them stay present in a space of mutual vulnerability. It's the courage of staying open in the face of not knowing what to do or of turning away.

Mindfulness teacher

Being mindful of hope/fear in teaching mindfulness is important, since the habit is to look for a preferred outcome and fear one might fail in this.

Journal 5th November 2010

I got interested in how I deal with stress in my work as a trainer. There is often an image of how I should be and feel when I teach a group. The stress of anxiety if I do well. Stress of fear from failure (negative prediction). Stress of group dynamics. Stress that I need to do more. Tonight it went so well because I went with the flow. I sensed what I needed and what the group needed to become present. I let go of the original structure though the richness of preparation was still there.

Rob Nairn reminds his students over and over again that being mindful is not about being perfect. The human condition is imperfect and with mindfulness one learns to be compassionate with it. For the mindfulness teacher this implies being kind with his or her own fallibility and not taking things too personally. To rest in groundlessness can feel sometimes like dying on the spot, because it drops the armour of certainty and explaining things. But by practicing in opening up continuously to the experiences of self and other, and with a willingness to be changed in the process, a real authentic presence can emerge that fosters mutuality on a profound level.

FORCE FIELD TEACHING MINDFULNESS

It is said by Kabat-Zinn and others who have followed (Crane et al, 2010) that the quality of mindfulness teaching (and therefore the training of the teacher) is a key ingredient associated with the delivery of successful outcomes for participants. In this perspective the balance of driving and restraining forces within the teacher determines how much energy is available in embodying mindfulness while teaching. The force field model is not only useful for one's own professional attitude but can also be explored with participants in mindfulness courses. A force field made by the group as a whole will not only show how much information is available to be mindful, but will also help to release the drive to move towards the goal of being mindful by reducing the restraining forces.

Force field of the driving and restraining forces in relation to teaching mindfulness (by Nevejan 2011)	
<i>Driving forces</i>	<i>Restraining forces</i>
Being mindful of hope/fear	Looking for a preferred outcome
Being with	Doing with
Intention to be open and present	Being self-absorbed
Motivation to benefit others	Self-centredness
Synchronising mind/body	Drifting away
Paying attention to details	Unaware of details
Holding opposing tensions simultaneously	Unable to hold opposing tensions simultaneously
Dissolving duality of self-other	Solid separation of self-other
Interdependency	Independent of others
Being with pain	Resisting pain
Seeing wholeheartedly	Not seeing what is there or what is called for

Kindness and availability	Fixed judgements and expectations
Trusting personal intention	Unaware of personal intention
Confidence in personal skills	Doubting personal skills
Non-pathologising/basic wholeness	Pathologising/therapeutic approach
Co-creation	Hierarchical relationship
Appreciating full dimensionality of humanness	Devaluing parts of humanness
Open to ever-changing reality	Making reality solid or fixed
Being intimate with fear	Trying to be fearless
Being compassionate	Insensitive to suffering
Accepting imperfection	Trying to be perfect
Resting in groundlessness	Looking for certainty or clinging to things

CONCLUSION

It seems possible to identify the driving and restraining forces in mindfulness on the basis of practice, theory and tools. Force fields can contribute to a better insight and understanding of mindfulness. Through the perspective of driving and restraining forces the dynamic and development of the full potential of mindfulness in both personal experience and professional contexts become visible. Force fields can be understood simply through common sense. By reducing restraining forces the driving forces emerge naturally to move in the direction of the goal. This is not only important for the personal practice of mindfulness but also for the development of professional attitude.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AGAZARIAN, Y.M., (2001). *Systems-Centered Approach to Inpatient Group Psychotherapy*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

AKONG, C., (2005). *Restoring the Balance. Sharing Tibetan wisdom*. Eskdalemuir: Dzalendara Publishing.

BRUCE, A. and DAVIES, B. (2005). *Mindfulness in Hospice Care: Practicing Meditation-in-Action*. Qualitative Health Research. Sage publication.

The online version of this article can be found at: <http://qhr.sagepub.com/content/15/10/1329>

CHÖDRÖN, P., (2000). *When Things Fall Apart. Heart advice for difficult times*. Boston & London: Shambhala.

CRANE, R.S., KUYKEN, W., HASTINGS, R.P., ROTHWELL, N., WILLIAMS, J.M.G., (2010). *Training Teachers to Deliver Mindfulness-Based Interventions: Learning from the UK Experience*. Published online 27 April 2010: Springer Science+Business Media, LLC

ELIOT, T.S., *Four Quartets. Quartet No.2: East Coker*. Tristan Fecit June 2000 AMGD. Available <http://www.tristan.icom43.net/quartets/> (Date accessed 21/03/2011)

KABAT-ZINN, J., (2005). *Handboek Meditatief Ontspannen. (Full Catastrophe Living)*. Haarlem: Altamira-Becht.

KRAMER, G., (2007). *Insight Dialogue. The Interpersonal Path to Freedom*. Boston & London: Shambhala.

MCCOWN, D., REIBEL, D. and MICOZZI, M.S., (2010). *Teaching Mindfulness. A Practical Guide for Clinicians and Educators*. New York Dordrecht Heidelberg London: Springer.

MINDFULNESS ASSOCIATION, (2009-2010). *Mindfulness Module, Hand-outs Weekend One and Two. Postgraduate Studies in Mindfulness MSc, Aberdeen University*. Eskdalemuir: Mindfulness Association Ltd

NAIRN, R., (1997). *Tranquil Mind. An introduction to Buddhism & meditation*. Kalk Bay, South Africa: Kairon Press CC.

NEVEJAN, A., (1996) *Waar heeft u voor het laatst bij stil gestaan? (Collected stories from the temporary Silence-Room at the Central Railway Station in Amsterdam)* Amsterdam: DasArts

TRUNGPA, C., (1996) *Meditation in Action*. Boston & London: Shambhala.

Note Chapter 1

Film 'Invictus' (2009) directed by Clint Eastwood. With Morgan Freeman, Matt Damon, Julian Lewis Jones.

