

MINDFUL RESILIENCE ENHANCEMENT & INTEGRATED MINDFULNESS: AN OVERVIEW OF THE APPROACH AND TEACHER-TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

We are being mindfully aware when we are really noticing, with friendly interest, whatever is going on right now. Mindful awareness enhances resilience as it is inherently de-stressing and it helps us respond more creatively and resourcefully to the situations we struggle with or find overwhelming. Importantly, mindful awareness also intensifies the enjoyment we get from the good times in life.

Mindful Resilience Enhancement (MRE) helps people cultivate mindful awareness through a set of simple and accessible mindfulness practices. MRE is a clearly defined mindfulness-based approach (MBA) designed as a brief intervention to be used in 1-2-1 work with clients or with groups.

MRE aims to meet the needs of those who want to use mindfulness-based approaches to enhance their resilience in the context of personal development, health education and wellbeing. It is also designed as an adjunct for professionals to offer to clients in the context of their established professional practice, e.g. psychotherapy, health and social care, education or a broad range of other professions with an established code of ethical practice. The practices learnt through MRE Teacher-Training (MRE-TT) can be used as single interventions or form the experiential core of the curriculum of a mindfulness course.

For those wishing to build on their experience of teaching MRE there is the opportunity for further training as an Integrated Mindfulness teacher. Integrated Mindfulness incorporates the principles of MRE but aims to deepen the experience of personal practice and understanding and expertise in teaching bespoke mindfulness-based approaches.

In the sections below the philosophical approach, structure of the teacher training and outlines of the main practices used in MRE are discussed in some detail: the detail necessary to impart a flavour of the specific approach MRE teaching and training aspires to embody.

PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

The overarching aim of MRE is that it seeks to enable people to approach their daily experience of life more mindfully and with more kindness.

MRE frames the cultivation of mindful awareness as a value. We have many opportunities in our daily experience of life when we can choose to move towards being more mindfully aware and the motivation to do so can, in time, become important to us in its own right. In this way being mindfully aware becomes more about how we are (a value) than about something that we do for a particular end (a goal).

MRE courses encourage regular reconnections to the value of being mindful through embedding many opportunities for tending towards mindful awareness in the routines of daily life. To fit with this, the approaches used in MRE are purposefully brief but they also have the capacity to develop into longer periods of practice should the wish to do so arise.

While being mindful in daily life may for some people be supported by the establishment of a regular daily practice of longer periods of 'formal' mindfulness practice, it is, quite explicitly, **not** the aim of MRE to promote this as an outcome of a MRE course. Rather than a commitment to a duration or the regularity of practice, MRE aims to foster a commitment to approaching daily life mindfully – reflecting the framing of mindful awareness as a value rather than as a goal.

If the heart of being mindful is as a way to be rather than a practice that we do then it is important to ensure that the 'doing' elements of a mindfulness curriculum, i.e. the practices, do not become placeholders for the way of 'being' that is being cultivated. It is profoundly validating to live according to a value of being mindful that can be reaffirmed through mindful moments in the midst of a hectic situation. There is a risk of enduring invalidation if a goal of regular, daily longer practice is taken as the indicator of being a mindful person, especially if this goal is not achieved, leading to a persistent and recurrent sense of failure every day a longer practice is not undertaken.

It is these perspectives that are an underpinning rationale for the focus of MRE being on weaving mindfulness into the routines of daily life.

It is also a key underpinning principle of MRE to match the intervention to the needs and capacities of the individual client or group. This is mirrored by the approach, fundamental to MRE, of teaching mindfulness in small, incremental steps starting with very brief and very simple approaches that are well within the capacity of each individual to practice with ease. The pace is set by each individual using the practices offered by MRE that fit with their needs.

It is by meeting individual needs and by fostering a learning process of small incremental steps that a context open to and congruent with the cultivation of self-compassion becomes more readily available. We consider that there is a fundamental incongruity between the cultivation of authentic self-compassion and the too rapid introduction of longer or more intense mindfulness practices.

These perspectives underlie the focus of MRE on using simple and short mindfulness practices.

MRE also seeks to explicitly teach ways of enhancing self-compassion just as it seeks to explicitly teach ways to enhance mindful awareness. The centrality of the cultivation of self-compassion to MRE is supported by research that indicates that when self-compassion is explicitly cultivated alongside mindfulness then the enhancement to well-being and the increases in mindful awareness are greater and longer-lasting.

The default narrative framework for the psycho-educative aspect of MRE is primarily neuro-psychological and draws particularly on the work of Paul Gilbert, Stephen Porges, Jan Pansepp and Robert Maurer. This neuro-psychological narrative is relatively culture-neutral and, with appropriate attention to language use, generally easily understood and it promotes a self-forgiving attitude. This default narrative is then modified to meet the specific needs of the individual or group.

Mindful awareness and self-compassion are considered within MRE to be innate human capacities that may emerge spontaneously (as has occurred across human history and culture) but that typically require developmental learning in a supportive social context for these capacities to be more fully realised. To reflect the culture-neutral nature of mindful awareness the language used by MRE to support experiential learning is purposefully low-key and as non-technical as possible.

Overall, a guiding principle throughout MRE is to ask 'Is this kind?' with respect to any intervention and, if necessary, to adapt whatever approach is being taken towards greater kindness both to the MRE teacher and to those they are teaching.

MRE TEACHER TRAINING (MRE-TT)

Building a mindfulness-based approach around simple and well defined practices enables the approach to be easily taught to clients, assuming the teacher has an embodied mindfulness practice themselves. It also enables professionals to train to deliver the approach over a shorter period than a more extensive mindfulness teacher-training programme.

MRE-TT has developed from our experience of offering Integrated Mindfulness teacher-training for over 6 years and this in turn emerged out of a much longer experience of teaching mindful approaches to professionals, clients and groups. Having reviewed the curriculum and mode of delivery of the Integrated Mindfulness teacher-training, we have undertaken a major restructuring and now will be offering mindfulness-teacher training in 3 levels.

Levels 1 & 2 focus on learning to deliver MRE and offer a Competency Certificate on completion of each level. Level 3 focuses on further developing mindfulness teaching skills – particularly adapting teaching curricula to meet individual needs and integrating different mindfulness-based and compassion focused interventions. The Level 3 training leads to a competency certificate as an Integrated Mindfulness teacher.

We are progressively rolling out the training at the different levels. Dates for the Level 1 training workshops are available through the www.mre.re website and will run in the 2013-2014 academic year. We are planning to deliver the Level 2 training from 2015 onwards and the Level 3 training would be available from 2016.

As Competency Certificates are available after each Level it means that trainees can develop at their own pace.

The broad aim of MRE-TT is to make mindfulness approaches and teacher-training accessible in a wide range of situations. In keeping with this, we are also committed to developing pathways for those who want to train more MRE teachers, so that MRE teacher-training can be delivered by a wide range of trainers in many different contexts. While the initial MRE training offers a more structured process-based curriculum to use with clients and groups, the Level 2 and 3 training encourage further creativity and adaptation. Our expectation is that this creativity will feedback into the MRE curriculum, enriching and further developing the approaches used within MRE.

MRE-TT initially aims to enable professionals to establish a personal mindfulness practice that enhances their own resilience and cultivates the potential to practice their professional work mindfully. It is from an authentic personal and embodied experience of mindfulness that teaching mindfulness to clients becomes an increasingly intuitive, creative and inspiring experience.

Building on this established personal practice, MRE-TT provides a thorough training in how to teach mindfulness to meet the specific needs of individuals or groups. MRE teacher-training has a greater focus on the process of helping clients cultivate mindfulness than learning a specific curriculum. In order to facilitate this tailored approach, the practices used in MRE are generally short, simple and easily adapted to meet the needs of each individual's situation and experience.

There are 3 main forms of mindfulness and self-compassion practices used in MRE: Connection Practice, Planned Practice and Soothing Steps. Each of these 3 main forms has a number of associated specific practices or variants that aim to develop specific capacities. While most of these practices can be used as single interventions that can complement a wide range of other approaches used in different professional contexts, they also form the 'components' of a MRE course curriculum.

MRE courses have 2 distinct phases in the curriculum each with their own set of associated practices:

Phase 1: *Pausing, Noticing, Soothing, Allowing.* The first phase centres on enabling participants to discover and enhance ways of befriending what they are experiencing with an increased capability to offer kindness to themselves. This opens up ways to begin to approach what is being experienced with openness, warmth and curiosity and to start to respond to what is being experienced more resourcefully and creatively. Much of the focus of this first phase is on helping participants establish their own ways of weaving mindfulness into their lives and, having done so, to have the time to integrate and consolidate the new ways of meeting their daily experience that emerge.

Phase 1 maps on to Part 1 of MRE-TT. It also approximately maps on to the objectives of weeks 1-4 of a typical 8-week mindfulness course such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR).

Phase 2: *Moving Towards Difficulty.* This second phase requires consolidation of the learning in Phase 1 as a foundation for a process of engaging with and moving towards difficult experience. The capacity to mindfully engage with unpleasant experience over longer periods and with kindness is essential for this process and developing this capacity and learning to do so and to trust it takes time.

Phase 2 maps on to Part 2 of MRE-TT. It also approximately maps on to the objectives of weeks 5-8 of a typical 8-week mindfulness course such as MBSR.

In our experience it is very helpful to allow time for consolidation and integration between Phases 1 and 2. Importantly, it is often unnecessary to teach Phase 2 as Phase 1 is often sufficient in itself. When time is given for the learning from Phase 1 to ripple through the different parts of people's sense of themselves and their lives much of the intense struggle that Phase 2 would aim to engage with has dissipated. In addition, many people after completing Phase 1 spontaneously develop ways of engaging with their experience as would be explored in Phase 2.

We have purposefully introduced a significant gap in MRE-TT between Parts 1 and 2 so that the potency of the practices used in Phase 1 can be experientially observed both personally and through the experiences of clients. If there is not sufficient time given for integration and consolidation after Phase 1 before engaging with Phase 2 it is very easy for both mindfulness teachers and participants to come to the belief that it was the approaches used in Phase 2 that were essential for any change and transformation experienced. This may partly be because it often takes a month or so for significant changes to start to emerge and this is coincidental with the later parts of an 8 week programme.

LEVEL 1 MRE TRAINING

This focuses on the skills required to safely and effectively teach the mindfulness approaches that develop attention stabilisation and control that underpins Phase 1 of MRE training as discussed above. There is also an emphasis on developing a personal mindfulness practice, if one has not already been established, so that mindfulness is taught from an authentic embodied experience.

For those familiar with approaches such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR); Level 1 can be considered to be a more accessible version of weeks 1-4 of the MBSR curriculum.

Level 1 training is delivered over 3 workshops:

MRE Workshop 1 - Personal MRE Practice. This workshop offers a thorough theoretical and experiential foundation in the MRE approach and enables you to start to practice the specific MRE approaches yourself (essential for authentically teaching these approaches to others). This workshop is open to anyone.

MRE Workshop 2 - Teaching MRE to Individual Clients. This workshop offers training in teaching MRE to clients in 1-2-1 professional work. This training workshop is normally only open to people who can clearly set out how MRE can be ethically and safely integrated into their existing work with their standard client population.

MRE Workshop 3 - Teaching MRE to Groups. This workshop offers training in delivering MRE to groups, as well as further developing skills in matching the MRE curriculum to the needs of individual clients or groups. MRE group teaching can be offered as a single day workshop or a series of workshops (typically 3-4) tailored to the needs of a particular group. A competency certificate for using MRE with clients and/or groups is available after completion of a period of supervised practice following Workshops 2 & 3.

MRE LEVEL 1 COMPETENCY CERTIFICATE. THIS CAN BE IN TEACHING 1-2-1 AND/OR GROUPS.

Attendance Certificates are issued after each workshop. Competency Certificates are issued when the trainee can show evidence that they fulfil the criteria for the Good Practice Guidelines for Mindfulness Teachers (GPGs).

Requirements for Level 1 MRE Competence Certificate

(As an itemised list the requirements may seem a little daunting – please note that only one reflective commentary is submitted, structured to address the individual elements listed below. It is not the intention that these requirements be overly onerous or an unnecessary barrier. Rather, they are intended as opportunities to deepen reflection and to enrich engagement with supervised practice)

1. At least 18 months of sustained regular daily mindfulness practice of a total 20-30 minutes – this typically comprises a number of shorter practices integrated into daily routines. [Demonstrated through reflective commentary based on personal practice journal.]
2. Attendance at two mindfulness practice days / day retreats. [Demonstrated by attendance certificate.]

3. At least 12 months of teaching MRE approaches to clients in 1-2-1 and/or group contexts. [Demonstrated through reflective commentary on teaching practice journal.]
4. Confidence and competence to teach Level 1 MRE to individual clients and/or groups. [Demonstrated through reflection on regular 3 monthly mindfulness supervision and a supervisor's report. Note that there needs to be at least one supervision session to explore personal practice between Workshop 1 and 2.]
5. Design of a Level 1 MRE curriculum that meets the needs of a particular client and/or a particular group. [Demonstrated through submission of curriculum.]
6. Submission of a video and reflective commentary of delivery of an MRE course to a client and/or a group. [Demonstrated through submission and review of video files and commentary.] Note, if there are specific issues that make videoing difficult then submission of other forms of evidence can be discussed.
7. Evidence of how MRE can be used safely and ethically within the trainee's professional work context. [Demonstrated through reflective commentary and availability of insurance and/or statement from manager/professional supervisor that MRE can be used in the trainee's professional work.]

The fees associated with undertaking the Competency Certificate are mainly supervision fees (typically £35-45 per hour with a requirement of an hour of supervision every 3 months and the final portfolio and video review fee of £150. The requirement for 2 days of mindfulness practice can be met through the regular Saturday practice days we run in Eccles, Manchester at £10 for the day or through other mindfulness practice days, retreats and workshops increasingly available throughout the UK.

MRE LEVEL 1 MINDFULNESS AND SELF-COMPASSION PRACTICES

The main practices used in MRE and taught in MRE-TT are outlined below. These are however indicative practices – a selection of these rather than all of them would be found in a typical MRE course as determined by the needs of the individual or group. If a MRE teacher prefers to use a different practice that they find helps develop the same capacities as one of the ones below and their practice is congruent with the underpinning principles of MRE then such adaptations are actively encouraged and hopefully will be shared with other MRE teachers. It is in this way that MRE can evolve to meet the needs of different teachers and participants.

1. *THE CONNECTION PRACTICE*

In this practice mindfulness is woven into daily routines such as having a shower, walking a daily route or sipping a drink. Rather than being on autopilot or off in mental loops or fantasies this practice encourages us to **connect** to what we are physically experiencing right now. Later on, by using less pleasant but still routine experiences, such as being mindful while doing boring chores or getting caught in the rain, we can further enhance our resilience and foster insight into the habitual behaviours that can hijack our responses. The Connection Practice is the core practice of MRE. This ensures that even the busiest people can have daily experience of mindfulness, even in their most hectic times. A key underpinning philosophy for this practice is that 'less is more' so that ease and effortlessness are central attributes of the Connection Practice. This helps slip this practice under the radar of our resistance and habitual reactions to any form of change.

There are 4 main phases of developing the Connection Practice outlined below. These overlapping practices are explored at the pace of each individual in 1-2-1 work or within a flexible curriculum for groups. The aim is to slowly and kindly develop the capacity to bring mindfulness into daily experiences including those less pleasant experiences that we innately may tend to disconnect from while they are happening.

- **Simply Savouring:** Pleasant experiences are savoured, with a focus on returning to the embodied experience when the attention shifts away. Eating or drinking favourite items, the refreshing feeling of the water when showering, the feel of sunlight on the skin could all be used as the focus for the Simply Savouring practice. The focus is on briefly savouring for just as long as doing so is, in itself, an engaging and enjoyable experience.
- **Slow Coaching:** A period of a routine activity is chosen to practice mindfulness with the intention to slow down the darting attention and bring just one element of what we are experiencing into the foreground of our awareness. For the duration of the Slow Coaching practice we are putting down all the spinning plates our mind usually has going and encouraging the attention to linger on one aspect of what we are physically sensing. The type of routine activity that we use for Slow Coaching is one where there is a body sensation or something we can sense in our surroundings that is pleasant or neutral, familiar and predictable and that we can easily 'find' again when the attention inevitably shifts away. There is considerable overlap with Simply Savouring, the main differences are that the chosen focus for the practice may be neutral rather than intrinsically pleasant and that the duration and/or frequency of the practice tends, in time, to increase more than with Simply Savouring. Examples of a chosen focus for the attention during Slow Coaching activities include: the feeling of the floor under the feet when we are queuing, walking a familiar route or rushing to a meeting; the sound of the kettle boiling as we make a hot drink; the red of a traffic light as we wait in a traffic queue.
- **Chores & Bores:** Mindfulness is practiced during the everyday routines that we might consider tedious or boring. Examples include queuing, waiting for something or someone or doing housework. These tend to be situations where we might want what is happening now to be over and where there is a tendency to go into autopilot mode – drifting off into our inner world of thoughts, memories, images or daydreams. Again the focus is on returning to the embodied experience of the routine activity and exploring how it is to be with any reactivity that arises.
- **Urge Surfing:** Adapting Alan Marlatt's approach, situations where stronger aversive impulses or urges arise are gently explored and befriended with mindfulness; initially just briefly. The focus is on physically unpleasant but familiar experiences that could easily be relieved. Examples include hunger, thirst, a mild craving for something, the need to urinate or bracing against cold winds.

2. THE PLANNED PRACTICE

This practice is a simple mindfulness practice where we alternate periods of returning the attention when it drifts back to a Focusing Anchor (a chosen sensation such as the sensation of the feet on the floor, a sound or the breath) and periods of open awareness, where there is no agenda. The Planned Practice is undertaken between routine activities and requires us to set aside a period of time to specifically develop our mindfulness skills. The Planned Practice builds on a variation of a 3 minute breathing space to develop longer periods of practice according to the needs of each individual. The Planned Practice helps to develop the skills being cultivated by the Connection Practice with a particular focus on cultivating a kinder and friendlier attitude to ourselves.

There are 4 main phases of the Planned Practice. These aim initially to develop the capacity to be with and have insight into the reactive and impulsive aspects of our nature.

- **Breathing Space:** This is similar to the 3 minute breathing space developed in Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy but is framed to allow any physical sensation to be the focusing anchor, not just the breath. As a brief practice this can be used throughout the day.
- **Friendly Focusing:** The Friendly Focusing practice essentially comprises a series of Breathing Space practices that cycle around, enabling the practice to be continued for as long as desired, as mindfulness experience grows. There are 2 phases (generalised from Chade-Meng Tan's *Search Inside Yourself* programme) that are cycled around at will:
 - The **Easy Practice** involves returning the attention to a chosen Focusing Anchor when it drifts, with an emphasis on bringing kindly awareness into the cycle of drift and return.
 - The **Even Easier Practice** involves sitting for a while with no agenda; gently introducing open awareness practice.
- **Soft-Belly Breathing:** This is a short form body scan that chunks the body into larger areas. It mindfully explores muscles either softening and releasing tension or holding on to tightness with a particular focus on the belly area. This also sets up a home practice to track belly and/or body tightness/softness in everyday situations.
- **Hot-Spotting:** This is introduced when there is an established Friendly Focusing practice and Urge Surfing can be met with friendly curiosity. Hot-Spotting brings our awareness of embodied reactivity to what is unpleasant or distressing into the Friendly Focusing practice. When the attention shifts into distressing thoughts, images, memories or emotions; we offer momentary friendly curiosity to what is being experienced before choosing to direct the attention towards, around and/or into the embodied reactions to our distress. After exploring and perhaps breathing with these embodied reactive sensations we escort the attention to our chosen focusing anchor: perhaps the breath or the feet. This cycle is repeated each time the attention is shifted into distressing mental content.

3. SOOTHING STEPS

Soothing Steps comprise a set of practices that mindfully cultivate self-soothing. These are all simple very brief practices that interconnect and allow the individual to construct approaches to self-soothing that meet their needs in different situations.

- **Standing (or Sitting) Strong.** This practice focuses on cultivating a posture that helps us feel more resilient in the midst of difficult situations.
- **Soothing Paws.** This practice uses hands placed on comforting areas of the body (commonly the chest and/or belly) to offer an attitude of kindness to ourselves.
- **Soothing Breath.** This practice encourages a gently lengthened breathing pattern that is inherently soothing.
- **Sense Cycles.** This practice directs the attention to specific things we can sense right now – typically something we can see, hear and touch/feel – for about 3 breaths for each thing we are sensing. We can keep cycling around these senses, returning to the same things or choosing new ones.
- **Headspace.** This practice works with thoughts (as well as images and emotions) that are really bothering us or that we seemingly endlessly struggling with. It involves inwardly saying the specific thought that is bothering us and then framing this in a series of statements that help us hold the thought more spaciously.
- **Soothing Anchor.** This is simply mindfulness practice using what the individual finds is a strong focusing anchor that is easy to rest the attention on and return to in the midst of strong feelings. Examples include warmth (e.g. a hot water bottle or heat pack), movement (e.g. moving fingers or toes to the rhythm of the breath) or multiple sensory anchors (e.g. holding an object in a hand and looking at the object as the fingers explore it).
- **Fellow Feeling Breathing.** Our emotional systems are powerfully influenced by mental imagery. This practice reduces the sense of social isolation by imagining breathing in a supportive feeling and then imagining breathing this feeling out to others who are in the same situation as ourselves and would find the supportive feeling helpful. This practice helps induce a sense of interconnectedness in the midst of isolation.
- **Soothing Space.** This practice cultivates kindness to ourselves in the midst of difficult situations and also helps reduce the sense of social isolation. In a series of steps we briefly *Pause* in that difficult situation, *Acknowledge* that this is a difficult moment, that we are finding this hard and we are struggling, *Connect* to a sense of other people who also struggle with similar difficulties, and then offer some *Kindness* to yourself.
- **Counting and Commentating.** This can be woven into many of the above practices and into the Connection and Planned practices. Some people find it helps to partially occupy the mind when it is in a more agitated state and that this brings more attention to the focusing anchor of a practice and also brings the focusing anchor 'closer'. Other people find this approach seems to make the mind more 'full' and creates 'distance' from the focusing anchor. **Counting** involves introducing a count in the back of the mind to rhythmic elements of what is being experienced up to a maximum number and then restarting (e.g. counting

breaths or steps). **Commentating** involves using a repetitive statement in the back of the mind while doing a practice (e.g. 'I'm breathing in' on the in-breath and 'I'm breathing out' on the out-breath).

- **Labelling.** Some people find this helpful when there is an intense thought, emotion or physical feeling. A generic label is used to acknowledge what is being experienced but without getting caught up in a mental story about what is being experienced. Examples include: 'That's a planning thought...', 'Hello anxious feeling.' or 'Pain in back.'
- **TITCHY Questions.** TITCHY stands for a **T**iny, **T**rivial **C**hange that you can effortlessly say **Y**es to. At the end of one of the Soothing Steps practices (or any of the other practices) we can ask ourselves a 'TITCHY' question such as: 'In what tiny and trivial / easy and effortless way can I be a bit easier on myself?' or 'In what easy and effortless way can I be kind to myself right now?' or 'In what tiny and trivial way can I have a bit of fun?'. The aim here is to explore making a change but to do so in such an easy and effortless way that there is no struggle or resistance involved. If there is resistance or reluctance to do what the question brings up then back up, aim lower and explore what would seem even easier. Little by little, tiny step at a time we can notice that we are being so much easier on and kinder to ourselves.

These MRE practices are supported by a range of freely downloadable audio-tracks and information sheets available through the www.mre.re website. We are committed to providing the core supportive materials for free, to ensure that clients do not face additional costs when being taught MRE.

MRE teachers also have access to password protected areas of the website where the most recent versions of teaching resources are available for download.

LEVEL 2 MRE TRAINING

This focuses on the skills required to teach clients to compassionately and mindfully approach difficulty. This maps on to the curriculum of key elements of weeks 5-8 of the MBSR course but with a more explicit focus on self-compassion.

The approaches learnt at Level 1 are revisited to incorporate more teaching around self-compassion and practices that involve a more active engagement with unpleasant experience are explored.

The Level 2 competency certificate is awarded mainly through the ongoing supervision process. The Level 2 workshops can be undertaken as standalone workshops for those who have completed the 3 Level 1 workshops.

MRE Workshop 3 – *Compassion-Focused Approaches.*

MRE Workshop 4 – *Exploring the Enquiry Process & Tailoring Curricula.*

MRE Workshop 5 – *Approaching Difficulty with Compassion.*

LEVEL 3 INTEGRATED MINDFULNESS TRAINING

This explores in more depth both how mindfulness-approaches can be integrated into different professional contexts and how curricula can be developed to match the needs of specific individual or group requirements.

Level 3 training is delivered through more intensive individual and peer supervision alongside co-teaching. The MBI-TAC, a set of competency criteria developed by the Bangor, Oxford & Exeter are used as a specific focus for reflection and in supervision.

There is also a focus on deepening personal practice through longer periods of daily meditation and regular participation in longer mindfulness retreats.

NOTES ON THE COMPETENCY CERTIFICATES

The Competency Certificates are time limited. It is re-issued every three years on submission of evidence of ongoing regular mindfulness supervision (including supervision using videoed sessions), CPD and personal practice. This ensures that MRE teachers continue to meet the Good Practice Guidelines for Mindfulness Teachers (see www.mindfulnesssteachersuk.org.uk). Note that the requirements for receiving a Competency Certificate are likely to alter if the Good Practice Guidelines are revised.

The Competency Certificates are valid for work within the trainee's professional area of competence – they do not validate work with groups outside the trainee's normal client population, especially more vulnerable populations.

An annual fee of £50 is required as part of the licence associated with the Competency Certificates to use the specific MRE teaching materials (as opposed to the freely accessible client materials) and to gain access to updates of these teaching materials. This fee also covers the administration costs of the three-yearly assessment and re-issue of the Competency Certificate.

ACCELERATED TRAINING ROUTE

This is for those with established experience of teaching mindfulness to individuals and/or groups; have evidence of having completed a teacher-training programme (typically in MBSR, MBCT or Breathworks MBPM); have a regular personal mindfulness practice, can evidence attendance at mindfulness retreats and who are receiving regular supervision of their mindfulness teaching. Overall, Fast Track candidates need to be able to demonstrate that they meet the Good Practice Guidelines for Mindfulness Teachers.

If these criteria are met then a tailored pathway leading to a Level 1 Competence Certificate can be developed that will mainly require evidence of supervised teaching of MRE and submission of video recordings or other relevant forms of equivalent evidence.

The Level 2 and 3 trainings are more open to demonstration of equivalency from other previous training.

For updates on these teacher-training pathways please see the **www.mre.re** website.

Tim Duerden and Annette Dunn, August 2013