

# Retreat: Foundations of Mindfulness 2023

Sunday 17th Sept – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept 2023

Ammerdown Retreat Centre, Near Bath

Led by Kay Octigan, Robert Marx and Chris Barker



**What is involved in the retreat?** This retreat will support a deepening of participants' mindfulness practice using the framework of the four Foundations of Mindfulness (satipatthana) and the Four Divine Abidings (brahma vihara). Drawing on Buddhist conceptualisations of the nature of experience, suffering and the self, the retreat will offer a bridge into contemporary secular mindfulness practice, teaching and life. The retreat will use a traditional retreat structure which allows us to simplify our life in order to see more clearly how we relate to ourselves and the world, and to respond with kindness and compassion. There will be periods of teaching, guided and unguided practice, dialogue and unstructured time. Most of the week will be held in silence with opportunities to meet the trainers one to one and for peer sharing groups.

**Who is the retreat for?** The retreat is suitable for mindfulness teachers in training, qualified mindfulness teachers and those simply wanting to deepen their practice and bridge contemplative wisdom traditions and secular practice and teaching. The retreat will count as their retreat for those training in mindfulness-based approaches with SMC or in IAPT; and for those applying to, or renewing their membership on the BAMBA Register, this retreat meets the requirement for mindfulness teachers to do an annual, mostly silent retreat.

**What requirements are there to attend?** Completion of an 8-week MBSR/MBCT (or similar 8-week programme) and participation in at least a day of guided silent mindfulness practice. Please ensure you are able to attend the entire event. If this is not possible, please contact us to discuss before submitting an application.

**When:** Sunday 17th Sept – Friday 22<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2023. Arrival is 6-7pm on 17<sup>th</sup> and will finish by 1pm on the 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Where:** Ammerdown Retreat Centre, near Bath: <https://www.ammerdown.org/> - covid-permitting.

**Cost: Early bird (by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023): £800. From 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023 onwards: £900. This price is inclusive of accommodation, meals and guidance.**

**The cost is covered by HEE if you are on the MBCT in IAPT training**

#### How to apply:

1. Please complete the application form and send it to [smc@spft.nhs.uk](mailto:smc@spft.nhs.uk). The purpose of this is to understand what we need to know to support you properly. If we have any concerns about anything in your form, we will contact you.
2. On offering you a place we will issue a confirmation if you are on the current MBCT in IAPT training or an invoice for the full amount if not.
3. If you are paying, your place is confirmed once we receive full payment. Please note the terms below for refunds.

**Are bursaries available?** We are a not for profit enterprise within the NHS. We need to cover venue costs. If more than the financial break-even number of people join the retreat, we will put any additional money towards offering reductions to those who are paying and request them in their application form. However, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to offer this and we won't know whether and how much we can offer until fairly near the start of the retreat. If we cannot offer any bursary reductions, we will offer payment by up to 3 instalments.

**How should I prepare?** We will offer a short online orientation meeting a few weeks before the retreat to help you think about the optimal conditions to support you in the retreat. A zoom link will be sent nearer to the start date for this.

### What is the cancellation Policy?

You may withdraw your application up to three months prior to the event start date at which point you will be offered a full refund, minus £50 admin fee.

If you cancel your place less than three months before the event start date, no refund will be available. **If you received a HEE funded place and you cancel less than 3 months before the start, you will be liable for the full payment.**

In the unlikely event that the event has to be cancelled by us, we will offer an alternative retreat, either residential or online, or a refund. Our liability is limited to crediting only our event fees, and not any personal expenses you may have incurred.

### Biographies of the course leaders:

**Kay Octigan** has practiced meditation and yoga for over thirty years and works as a Research Therapist and MBCT Teacher, Trainer and Supervisor with the AcCEPT Clinic at the University of



Exeter and in private practice supervision through The Mindfulness Network. She also works as a trainer with the MBCT in IAPT Training Collaboration. Kay is inspired in teaching and personal practice by participants and supervisees, music and poetry as a “gateway” to non-instrumental knowing and developing mindfulness practice in the natural world in the service of deepening connection within and without.



**Robert Marx** is co-lead for the Sussex Mindfulness Centre, lead for the MBCT in IAPT training centres collaboration and chair of BAMBA. He is a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist and has been teaching mindfulness groups to patients and staff in the NHS for 16 years. He teaches Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) and Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC). He has been practising Buddhist meditation for over 30 years, initially in the Theravadan tradition and then in the Tibetan tradition. He is passionate about building compassionate culture in organisations and about integrating relational and mindful approaches to work.



**Chris Barker** is a registered mindfulness teacher who graduated from The University of Exeter in 2020. He leads mindfulness for the National Centre for Integrative Medicine, based in Bristol, as well as the BAMBA MBCT-Cancer Special Interest Group. His main mindfulness work is with those living with and beyond a cancer diagnosis.

Originally a PE teacher, Chris discovered in 2012 how transformative mindfulness can be when he was a stressed Head of Department in a large secondary school. Seeing how much it had changed his life he now teaches school children mindfulness and leads international training courses for other schoolteachers to do likewise.

**For further information please contact  
Sussex Mindfulness Centre:**

**E:** [SMC@spft.nhs.uk](mailto:SMC@spft.nhs.uk)

**T:** 0300 304 0689

**Web:** <https://sussexmindfulnesscentre.nhs.uk/events/retreats/>

**Twitter:** SMCMindful\_SPFT

**Facebook:** Sussex Mindfulness Centre