

Mindfulness, Religion and Spirituality

Professor Mark Williams

A One-day Workshop Jointly Organized By

CUHK Thomas Jing Centre for Mindfulness Research and Training

Hong Kong Center for Mindfulness

9:30am-5pm 28 April 2019(Sun)

**Kai Chong Tong, G/F The Jockey Club School of Public Health and Primary Care,
Prince of Wales Hospital**

-
- ✧ *This day's workshop will include talks, discussion, practice and enquiry on*
 - ✧ *Religion vs spirituality*
 - ✧ *Whether Buddhism is a religion*
 - ✧ *The history of silence in the Christian tradition*
 - ✧ *How mindfulness got its name*
 - ✧ *The relationship between mindfulness and Christianity*
 - ✧ *What questions can come up from colleagues, ministers, friends and class participants*
 - ✧ *How to respond skillfully to these important and heartfelt issues when they arise.*
-

Outline

The contemporary world has greeted the arrival of mindfulness with an enthusiasm that has often been in danger of running ahead of the evidence. Yet the explosion of interest in mindfulness in recent years has raised many questions. Amongst these is the issue of whether mindfulness is "Buddhism by the back door". Some participants in mindfulness classes have been warned by family, friends or Christian ministers that they should not attend at all - because meditation is un-Christian.

This debate is not new, nor is only it a disagreement between two cultures or two faith philosophies. In fact, the Judeo-Christian tradition has itself been ambivalent about (or even hostile to) the cultivation of silence within their faith and worship. The fact that the monastic tradition within Christianity was influenced by ideas and practices that already existed within Greek philosophy adds further twists to the story.

Speaker

Mark Williams is Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Oxford, an ordained Anglican priest, and an honorary Canon of Christchurch cathedral, Oxford.

The main focus of his research and clinical work has been to understand how best to prevent serious clinical depression and suicide. With colleagues John Teasdale (Cambridge) and Zindel Segal (Toronto) he developed Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) for prevention of relapse and recurrence in depression, an approach that markedly reduces the rate of future depression in those who have suffered the most serious types of depression and is as effective as antidepressants. In Great Britain, the UK National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), working on behalf the National Health Service, has recommended MBCT as a primary treatment for relapse prevention in depression. As a non-stipendiary priest, he has worked in parishes in the Dioceses of Ely, Bangor and Oxford.



His books include *The Psychology of Religious Knowing* (with F. Watts, Cambridge University Press, 1988), *Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World* (London, Piatkus, 2011, co-authored with Danny Penman), and *Cry of Pain: understanding suicide and the suicidal mind* (Third Edition Piatkus, 2014).

Now retired, Professor Williams continues to teach mindfulness and train health and care professionals. He also gives talks and retreats exploring the interface of mindfulness and prayer. Recent talks include "*Water into Wine: Mindfulness, Stephen Verney, and the transformation of daily living*" (Sutton Courtney Abbey, June 2015); and "*Silence and Mindfulness in the Judeo-Christian tradition*" (Oxford Mindfulness Summer School, 2016). Recent retreats include *Mindfulness, Spiritual Practice and the Christian Tradition* (with Sr Renate Düllmann; St Beuno's Ignatian Spirituality Centre, North Wales, UK; June 2016).

Enrollment

Please complete online application form ([link here](#)) by 7th April, 2019. Confirmation email will be sent to your email address. If you do not receive it by 14th April, 2019, please contact Ms. Vicky Ngan at cuhkcmrt@cuhk.edu.hk or 2252 8753.

First come first served. If, after you get a confirmation from us that your application is successful, you find that you will not be able to attend the workshop, please let us know as soon as possible, so that we can offer your place to someone on the waiting list.

Free Admission

Professor Williams is offering this workshop for free.

To pass on this spirit of generosity, we would like to invite you to make a donation to Xavier House, an Ignatian Spirituality Centre, or a registered charitable organization of your choice. If you produce a receipt for the donation at admission, we would be most delighted to offer you a small souvenir. If you choose not to make any donation, you are still most welcome to attend the workshop as long as you have a confirmation from us that a place has been reserved for you.

