



Practices from the East and West Growing Together

My path towards balancing my clinical work began when I got very sick as a medical student in Germany. Having taken 7 months out from my studies, I was travelling in Sri Lanka in September 1980. Unexpectedly I met the wizened old Buddhist monk Damaloka. Sitting across from him I felt peace and a whiff of freedom for the first time. This experience sent me on a 40-year journey towards coalescing Buddhist and Western psychology.

My inspiration to become a therapist came first from my deep wish to heal myself, my family wounds and a complicated relationship, as a post-war German, with this world. Having been born to a single mother physician, whose family had been prosecuted by the Nazi regime, gave me a rich ground to grow and work on myself. This was fueled by a strong interest in healing, social activism and spiritual practice.

Over the years my training as a psychodynamic, Jungian and Gestalt therapist, has interacted well with mindfulness practice. When my mentor Jack Kornfield asked me in 2000 if I meditated with my clients, I was shy to do that. “Get over it, Radhule,” he said and set me free to follow my heart, intuition, and creativity when working with my clients.

Creatively and innovatively following my path as a healer/therapist has helped me to keep my work alive, to avoid burnout and compassion fatigue as well as moral distress symptoms. My own daily meditation practice, bi-yearly retreats and pilgrimages had helped me to care for myself and grow psychologically and spiritually. The 17 years of working at La Casa de Maria as meditation and retreat leader has helped me to refine my calling as a mindfulness teacher.

Mindfulness, compassion and psychotherapy practice keep each other alive and growing in their refinement. This allows my clients to follow a parallel and interwoven psychological and spiritual path, should they be interested to do so. Spreading out the ripples of service has given me meaning and aliveness and has counteracted the moral distress I often feel when I see the suffering and confusion in our world. During the last 3 years, our Solidarity and Compassion events have allowed me to connect social, psychological and spiritual responsibility. Free weekly meditation evenings at Yoga Soup and St. Michael's in Isla Vista has given me meaning by creating “Safe Spaces” around town. Our KindMind program, offering mindfulness in schools, teaches kids that there is an inner refuge besides what happens in the outside world. Working on this project helps me when I worry about the wellbeing of our grandchildren.

I believe that all is interdependent, all the parts of my work, and beyond that all people in this community who work together to make our world a better place. Seeing myself as an emergent phenomenon in the sea of life, allows me not to take myself too seriously, and to know that what I do emerges within a far bigger perspective.

If you are interested in these programs or want to contribute, please see
Mindfulheartprograms.org, Radhuleweiningerphd.com, KindMindSB.org, or write to me at
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