

# Community Interviews Early 2018

## Questions:

### Community Experience

- Where are you at?
- Find out people's experience of Mindfulness for Change in last twelve months. What have they liked? What haven't they liked? What frustrations have they had, if any?
- What groups do they identify with within MfC? A project, working group, geographical location? (Can have a chat about the different projects and working groups that are forming, what a working group is, etc).
- Ask about online platforms - if were in a working group, would you use a central platform to help organise and do work together? E.g. loomio, Slack, <https://www.zoho.com/connect/features.html>, <https://www.veryconnect.com/>, <https://www.boonex.com/features>, others?
- Idea of moving towards more chaordic structure, based around small groups and advice process, more Teal self-managing style. Less emphasis on concentric circles, the kaitiakitanga will be done by people involved most in the community.

### Retreat / Festival / Rhythms

- To test idea of longer retreat / festival in winter 2018, that mixes personal practice with action in the world, whakawhanaungatanga, and collaboration.
  - Availability - could you and would you spare a week? What about a weekend plus two days?
  - What things would you like to have at the retreat? What could you offer? Float idea of more co-created retreat - design based on gifts, co-learning, facilitators more space-holding role. Mix of Open Space style and prepared content.
- Test idea of working groups - groups working on ideas emerging from the community - connected via Loomio or another platform
- Test idea of hui mahi rhythm - one day a month for community (in Wellington and maybe Auckland) to come together and do essentially what we were doing at hui, working together, fostering whanaungatanga, practicing, co-mentoring.
- Test idea of (bi-)monthly meetup rhythm - a showcase to feature projects, ideas, processes, etc.
- Ask about any other ideas/requests?

## Action in the World

- Find out what opportunities people are seeing, what things people are working on - may be able to make some connections, catalyse people.
- What has helped move them towards the change they want to see? What hasn't? What could help more?
- Have you got the support you need? Are there any blocks that community members might be able to help you with?
- Given what you can see happening in the world, what can we do as Mindfulness for Change to help support that? (Particularly for people who have a sense of the high level)

## People to be interviewed:

Put a call out on Facebook for the people who want to be interviewed.

People to be interviewed (including those who responded to the Facebook request):

- Ramsey Margolis
- Kerene Strochnetter (Nick)
- Sam O'Sullivan (Nick)
- Bop/Jodie
- Justin Connor
- Jess Stuart
- Martin Giles
- Heather Kean (Auckland - Nick)
- Nigel Taptiklis (Caroline - done)
- Andrew Gordon + Charlotte
- Alex Whitcombe (Auckland)
- Sue Dykes (Auckland)
- Grant & Tash Rix (Nick - done)
- Dickie (Auckland)
- Will Moore
- Kristina Cavitt (Auckland)
- Samara
- Skye Chadwick
- Phillip Barker (Caroline - done)
- Kate MacIntyre
- Rowan Brooks (Nick - done)
- Jan Rivers (Nick - done)
- Cheryl Strawbridge
- Jenny Young (Caroline - arranging)
- Geoff Mercer (Auckland)
- Kimbra Taylor (Caroline - done)
- Brigid O'Brien (Auckland - Tamsin - done)

Other people to do the interviews (please take notes, so we can harvest the gold from these conversations):

- Theta (Nick to message)
- Kate MacIntyre?
- Tamsin
- Kimbra (Caroline to email)

## Notes from Conversations

Name	Discussion
Nigel Taptiklis (Caroline)	Seeing energy in MfC/Mindful Leaders space. Keen to stay involved in public sector working group. Can meet evenings on Wednesday and maybe some Mondays and the occasional weekend. Open to using an online platform to connect working groups - suggested Loomio. Would like to come to a hui but challenging given his family.
Grant & Tash Rix (Nick)	<p>- Three reports from Mindful Aotearoa - can be helpful for Mindful Nation NZ.</p> <p>- Training - one day training model. Has reduced costs, reach more schools, can come to them more. Marketing slightly better. Few nibbles around workplace wellbeing, but not many willing to pay.</p> <p>- Funding and marketing main barriers.</p> <p>- With mental health review. Got feedback about best pathway forward. Tried to link it to current mental health priorities. Put forward good submissions to the mental health review - will determine budget for next year. So that's where there needs to be coordination. Get supporters. Tash knows process really well. Could have submission on mindfulness in education, but in support of the other working groups.</p> <p>- Had a meeting with Kristina Cavitt about collaboration on training pathway for high school teachers. Spoke with Jase Te Patu, he's keen to collaborate.</p> <p>- Strategy group - led to a great report, put on Loomio, nobody took it further. Nobody replied, a bit disappointing. Kerene replied, Jan posted. Generally very supportive community, a lot of open hearts, open minds. Down to earth kiwi vibe about it, similar to Wangapeka - that is a uniqueness that needs to stay. Lot of young people who are reaching out and looking for a pathway of practice and unfolding. Mentoring and guidance - no substitute for that. Comes back to guidelines for mindfulness trainers. Adapted from what has happened in US, UK, feedback from Tarchin and Stephen Archer. Twofold intention: creating a standard that was consistent enough with what was happening internationally to show we were taking it seriously and there is a rigour to the training (Michael Bunting raised this); walk line between opportunism and elitism (creep of</p>

	<p>sectarianism - this is the only way mindfulness should be taught) - community could put this out there, if enough people contribute to it then it takes on its own authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Started a blog - "mindfulness is more than a technique". Can support by sharing the blog.</li> <li>- Beware of cultural colonisation.</li> <li>- Te Ao Māori - all the resources are being translated into Te Reo by MHF. Two amazing women at MHF right now, steeped in Māori world, seeing value of Pause Breathe Smile for first time.</li> <li>- Accountability. Risk of burnout for MfC members. Waiheke island has become sanctuary for old environmental activists. What did they learn about accountability? Can create structures to make it work better than not, that are more likely to succeed. Grant would be happy to meet once a month or so for support. Proper dharma training - they can help me out.</li> <li>- Little snippets of work starting from conversations that started 5 years ago. That patience and willingness.</li> <li>- Hui/Retreat: Lots of people, not much opportunity to receive teachings or practice around mindfulness. Can point in direction. Finding a venue is difficult. Putting feelers out to see if you can cover costs - only need small numbers, don't need 30-40 people. 7 day hui/retreat: first weekend open, classes, teaching sessions, periods of practice, times for more collaborative workshopping - unconferencing builds collaborative community. Leading is more on practice side. Have that for first weekend. Whoever can stay on stays on. Then move into retreat, deepening and digesting. Can build on in retreat in experiential way, weaving into meeting with the heart of mindfulness. Tauhara, doc lodges, one round the corner from us Aongatete Lodge, two and a half hours drive from Auckland, hall, huts. Walking tracks. Holds more than you would get attending. Need to sort own food. For people who aren't willing to rough it there are places around it, Sapphire Springs. Community called Nourished Mothers there - people they know that do catering. One of the things that needs to be taught in this work is bodhicitta - the heart-mind of awakening, intent to be of benefit to others, have this motivate all your actions. Nourishing the Heart/Mind of... Service/ Mind.</li> <li>- Name: good name to draw people in. Relationship with the name can change. It's not just a name it's a story. Amazing text from Tarchin called "Sangha Work" - was a guiding work for Grant and Tash when did school of living dharma. Mindfulness revealing change is beginnings of beautiful story.</li> <li>- Zoom call about history of Mindful Aotearoa, record it, publicise it. Some of the people that contributed made very valuable contributions. Tarchin's definition of mindfulness (like a whakatauki) - linked to guidelines idea. Need a living description of mindfulness, but need to give it to people straight.</li> </ul>
Rowan Brooks (Nick)	Living in Chch. 10 hours a week leading community garden at Canterbury Uni

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ran hui on food sovereignty movement in Aotearoa.</li> <li>• Two hui are most striking things. Beautiful to have an intentionally held space to meet other people in. Reassurance about things I value and try and do in the world. Whakawhanaungatanga is something I've taken.</li> <li>• Schemes at hui -&gt; then what? Maybe the hui are more inspiration and connection than getting stuff done.</li> <li>• People involved are already doing lots of awesome things. How can we maintain connection and accountability with each other? Co-mentoring.</li> <li>• A space where positive requests are going to be heard? Tinder equivalent for those requests?</li> <li>• Online platforms: if there are active working groups, with accountability and deadlines, then the working groups will find a platform that's appropriate for them, whatever that is. There's a shared sense of values and purpose, is there a shared sense of "we are trying to do this thing together?" Don't think so, apart from disparate groups. "Hey I'd like to make this thing happen, who's with me?" then Zoom calls, etc.</li> <li>• Advice process idea. If I knew there was an advice process that I could engage in it then it would reduce the barrier.</li> <li>• Hui: If want to shift away from central kaitiaki, then something that consolidates existing community - gain skills, deepen, refine about what they want. Builds robustness of the bigger community. Hui are lovely but don't know if I would have time for another one of those with half new people, some old hands holding it, more whakawhanaungatanga and sharing of ideas and leaving. Playing with idea of residency. Using retreat processes with a group of people with a block of work - like an artist residency. Have a goal to produce something. Could work with regular meetup groups, as much as having a four-day/ weeklong gathering. With work weekend, invitation to do some prep beforehand. Have a project you're bringing to work on.</li> <li>• Specific focus hui. Structure and process, but invitation to come and create work. The invitation is to people who are interested in carrying this out in the world. It's possible to deepen people's intention by asking them to reflect on why they're coming.</li> <li>• Te Moata - could be a venue for a longer retreat. Venue in Coromandel. Tarchin has taught there in the past. Permaculture gardens, nature gardens. Inclusive with pricing etc.</li> <li>• What I've been reminded of is conversations around a website platform more intended to create visibility around the need for mindful change. Blog posts, responses to different things we're doing ourselves. Directory of the retreats and trainings coming up that bridge these spaces.</li> <li>• Would like to see a training collective where people are interested in this can learn how to do it and embody it. This could link in with</li> </ul>
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	Sam and Phoenix's idea, or the Living School for Change idea.
Jan Rivers (Nick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Management at MSD.</li> <li>• Events that have happened, increasing sense of secular ritual is so precious. Linked in with Not Church, have been reading about.</li> <li>• Making some links between the secular and the religious is a growing point for me. Not as much of a gap between people in organised religion and those "without faith". Not quite sure how to do anything about it.</li> <li>• Came along to Paekakariki - didn't feel added a lot of value. Wasn't understanding how things were unfolding, how to contribute. Felt a bit lost as to where my place is. Offered to help with Grant and Tash and then was just too busy to follow up the way that I'd promised. NZ Institute for Educational Research had nothing on mindfulness.</li> <li>• Was quite keen to do something around the political change aspect of mindfulness - e.g. mindful elections, compassionate voting. Might like to form a study group to inquire into what that might look like? Mindfulness could be part of adapting to big change, seeing other people as less of a threat, etc. Make large-scale social change more possible. Kennedy Graham - started an all-party climate change group "you have to be here even if we don't agree".</li> <li>• Would be interested to participate in a piece of work relating to Max's ideas, creating opportunities for people to work together on really difficult issues. E.g. Dialogue for Change (UK), Scoop's work on affordable housing, what to do about sugar? Agreed on some fundamental things, e.g. that the current approach wasn't working, some kind of financial intervention to reduce speculation was necessary. Link between people who can hold a mindfulness space and people who can allow deliberative democracy to happen.</li> <li>• Not a big Facebook user, more and more reluctant.</li> <li>• Change to advice process makes perfect sense, lightens load from the centre, allows the middle circle to flourish.</li> <li>• Facebook group has almost become a clearinghouse - good articles, testing ideas.</li> <li>• Longer hui / retreat. Week between xmas and new year or after the New Year. So many people in NZ spend second week with their passion - astronomers, folk musicians.</li> <li>• In my mind, things are informed by my connection to this community, even though its not on the public logo.</li> </ul>
Brigid O'Brien (Tamsin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extremely positive experience with group so far - huge resonance.</li> <li>• GP background, has done MBCT training, having had a huge personal healing journey through mindfulness (inc for chronic pain).</li> <li>• Enjoying potential of online technologies, plus concepts used in Auckland hui ('open space' 'collaborative decision making' etc which new to her). V much loved community aspect also.</li> <li>• Instigator of 'Healthcare working group' which began at Akl hui, and</li> </ul>

	<p>working on submission for Mental Health Review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Also interested in education, early childhood (esp 'the first 1000 days'), community. Need a 'whole systems approach to all the above fields, with holistic wellbeing as overall goal.</li> <li>• Mindfulness through the life course needs to be integrated. Ie good courses exist in schools, businesses, healthcare etc, but how can we link these, &amp; individuals working in different fields, into a coherent 'program for life' approach - &amp; link to 'Mindful Nation.' Found sometimes ppl reluctant to link in with others in different fields; &amp; a reluctance to share info/techniques from within the business/profitmaking side of things. How can we encourage ppl to drop this for the greater good??</li> <li>• Mindfulness courses need to include: psychology, neuroscience, practical techniques and trauma informedness to be ethical, and more effective. She did an excellent parenting course which combined these techniques. Ie we need more APPLIED mindfulness. And tools to address people's unconscious flawed thought processes.</li> <li>• Re: online platforms - can be overwhelming .. Is there any way to simplify or combine them? Or nominate one as main one for MFC in general, with others for specific working groups, (so we don't have to check everything all the time).</li> <li>• <i>Future huis</i> - we need to be mindful of our own wellbeing and that many of us have busy, very 'mental' lives; &amp; try to get balance between practise and action planning within the huis. Loved last one but felt it would have been useful to have more 'downtime' and space within it. One idea: have mornings for meditation etc, and planning in afternoons. Or have a separate space available at all times for meditation for those who want to focus more on that side. Could we have eg massage therapist/bodyworker/cranio sacral therapist offering treatments at huis to enhance wellbeing aspect.</li> <li>• Also as we live in a 'head' culture, we need to explore and use specific techniques that help us access better our intuition and higher knowledge. Eg: heart-brain connection techniques, and/or Contemplation technique (where one meditates on a specific question - used by Gawler Cancer Foundation in Oz). Could use at start of a planning session. Feeling into rather than thinking.</li> <li>• Wondering if it would be appropriate to bring her kids to a huis? Could we do family retreats where we did some kind of mindfulness work with children also (where they are open to it)?</li> <li>• Need to explore more the idea of community and collective consciousness - how we can capitalise on and foster this.</li> <li>• Spiritual vs secular approach - for her its spiritual but for those new to mindfulness some aspects of huis might seem a bit out there? how can we explore/address this - Maori approach has lots of potential as seen as 'acceptable'.</li> <li>• <i>Big picture</i>: - wellbeing is a huge emerging space nationally; linking</li> </ul>
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	mindfulness to this allows massive opportunities for change in the political space (thru Mindful Nation, Mental Health review etc).
Phillip Barker (Caroline)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Experiences with MfC</i>: over last year connected with MfC through a Wellington hui, get togethers at Havana and facebook group</li> <li>• Came to MfC through Justin Connor - complemented Nick on the space he had created - journey in through the relationship</li> <li>• <i>Likes</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Supportive community to reconnect with mindfulness practice - loved space in yurt for dedicated practice - could follow own needs - lives mindfulness daily but didn't have regular practice - hui helped revitalise it</li> <li>○ Relationships - most important aspect of MfC for Phillip - got to know Ming, Loo and me (Caroline) better, met Clare and Nicola. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ when he knows people are part of the network that immediately gives the relationship a different context eg group who are going to yoga on Wednesdays in Newtown are going to the Ramen Shop after class - did a quick check-in - really nice moments - pre knowledge of the space is there - know its shared - not need to create it - enjoys being a participant.</li> <li>■ MfC is a place where he's found people who've gone deep eg 3 hour conversation with Leila at the hui. Other connections: warmth and interest - Will, Peter etc</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Opportunity to question practices we believe and stand in - mindfulness a limiting box - social practice lens. He still remembers his check-in from the hui "I'm still trying to figure out if I believe what comes out of my mouth." What do I hold or stand in?</li> <li>○ Sees two purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Shared community of interest and purpose of deep wellbeing</li> <li>■ Active incubator space. More powerful for not trying to run like a standard incubator - eg not prototyping processes, crystallising journalling. Rich deep connection so people find a moral motivation - tapping into deep current or river of purpose - fits with Phill's interest in deeper cultural innovation.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Not like</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Not sure where to look for what's going on eg confusion around Easter retreat - communication not clear so not sure what was going on. Delayed decision about Easter plans as keeping free for possible retreat.</li> <li>○ Competing different forces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Incubate/prototyping things (not direct interest for</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>



	<p>Phill - happy to be part of the supportive ecosystem)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ interrogate or discuss mindfulness (interest for Phill)</li> <li>■ Community of practice, depth, friends, warmth, building connections, soup of relatedness - hui had it - so did Havana meetup (interest for Phill)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mindfulness emphasis too narrow - everyone has their own gig - many families of awareness based/social practice/psychology traditions of mindfulness (non-secular mental health box) - intention of community is bigger but not necessarily see it reflected or acknowledged</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Requests/what works:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hui/retreat - maybe once a year - 3 full days at least or late morning until late afternoon - give enough time for depth - Waihoanga or spaces like it</li> <li>○ Havana get togethers - really liked these last year - informality was great - met people in community - value the space - people can make it what they want - socialise or deeper question possible too - really value community spaces - can't see these opportunities at the moment so informally creating it eg Ramen noodles after Newtown yoga - would like Havana type get togethers every 2-3 months - rare enough for an interest to go</li> <li>○ Better communications - important things in email inbox - eg not see Nick's medium post</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <i>Future possibility:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ rangatahi/palms space - MSD E Tu Whanau for rangatahi - values/peaceful action leaders - healthy values to rebuild community ie aroha, whakapapa, korero awhi (speak kindly) - imagine they can bring this into their world - could be as simple as say something nice to brother over dishes - totally fits with mindful change - Phill not use "mindfulness" with rangatahi - likely to connect people/relationships - connect people to the people or the purpose not the brand</li> <li>○ an edge for Glen and Phillip - traditions/practices in Maori world and global social practice lineages (ie Theory U, Peter Block, anthroposophy, ABCD etc - eg anthroposophy/Theory U (head, heart,hands) - Maori where is the gut - something about coming mindfully in contact with each other - connecting Phillip into the te Ao Maori and mindfulness space</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Kimbra Taylor (Caroline)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Experiences with MfC:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Came to Mindful Leaders Conference and the follow-up meet-up at EDA - friend told her about Conference - she was given a ticket and loved it - bought books from keynote speakers</li> <li>○ Came to meet up before she was wanting to build on the</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>Conference - really enjoyed meetup</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Grew up in a buddhist family - has her own mindfulness practice - been on Stephen Archer retreats</li> <li>○ Coffee catch ups with Nick and me (Caroline)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Future possibility:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Grow connections in the mindful change space - keen to meet others with similar interest in mindful change</li> <li>○ Loves this space - wants to get more involved eg do some interviews</li> <li>○ Fascinated by transforming business - she wants to offer transformative art workshops where she helps people connect with their heart - she has a design/art background - she's run a workshop in Auckland with senior business lecturers from Massey - and it was transformative/amazing/exceeded her expectations - has courses/website ready to go - starting to reach out - interested in connecting with others/opportunities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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