



WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY OF CONTEMPLATIVE EDUCATION?

Part of the core mission of MLE is an educative one, and it has also long been engaged in specific work on education, both through meetings such as ESRI where the work of educators is frequently showcased, and through other initiatives around education. Meanwhile for the last 10 years, activity and research on mindfulness in schools and universities has been growing, and a smaller body of work has developed on contemplative pedagogy in higher education. In 2012 His Holiness the Dalai Lama identified what he called 'education of the heart' as a key priority for his mission and for the work of M&L <https://www.dalailama.com/videos/ethics-educating-the-mind-and-heart> .

Work began in September 2017 to explore the feasibility of MLE attempting to catalyze and coordinate a 'Community of Contemplative Education'. This would not attempt to create a new educational programme but aim to uncover and build on existing work on contemplative and mindfulness based education in Europe, in schools and universities from a range of approaches and traditions.

The precise outcomes of this initiative are being arrived at through an iterative process with those engaged in CE in Europe. Currently the broad intentions are to:

- Create a **sustainable and vibrant community of the leading pioneers and experts** to enhance collective learning and implementation around contemplative education in Europe.
- Through working in cooperative partnerships which respect the distinctive expertise and cultural diversity of Europe, **for the CCE to become an authoritative guide and resource for educational leaders and professionals** to help them develop and advocate for effective contemplative and mindfulness-based education in schools, universities and surrounding families and communities.
- The role of MLE would be to provide strategic leadership from a small core team which will catalyze activities, work in partnerships including in seeking funding, build community, co-ordinate activities across the community, and ensure alignment with the mission, goals and values of MLE.

WORK SO FAR

Between October 2017 and July 2018 an **online and skype consultation** of 133 education experts helped to set direction for the CCE. The responses and reflections were summarized in a **report** which covered the following:

- Why we need CE – its role in meeting current challenges - in education, in society and in mental health and wellbeing.



- What CE means in practice - the concept, terminology/language, core elements, what it contributes to education, how it interfaces with adjacent areas such as social and emotional education, neuroscience, compassion, equity and sustainability, and the values it embodies.
- What is happening in CE across Europe- a sketch of the state of development within countries, identifying current expertise, networks, programmes and approaches.
- The role of MLE within this picture, and its potential role in helping to build a community of contemplative education.

The report ([see 'Consultation Report: Developing the CCE over Europe'](#)) was presented and discussed at a **meeting in Rotterdam** in September 2018 attended by over 45 experts (see 'Inaugural Meeting in Rotterdam'). The meeting endorsed the report as a broadly accurate picture of the field, and the attitudes, terminology, expertise, programmes, and challenges to be found across Europe. The meeting considered a draft of a model of CE and suggested some practical steps for realizing the vision for the CCE.

As of **January 2019** there is now a strategy ([see 'Strategy 2019'](#)). It is based on the consultation, the report, the current working model of 'what is contemplative education?' (below) and on the work of the groups and priorities identified during the Rotterdam meeting. As a working document, it is the subject of ongoing discussion and revision with those at the Rotterdam meeting and the wider community of those who have expressed an interest in working with this. Funding is being sought to support both the continuation of a small team within MLE and the various intended activities and outputs that are emerging.