Community for Contemplative Education (CCE)
Starting points
The (deceptively) simple heart of the process

Mind Full, or Mindful?
Context – some relevant key trends

- Concerns about employability and the future of work
- Mental Health Crisis & Social media
- A growing need for sustainability & inclusive policies and lifestyles
- A quest for meaning and compassion in our education
Mental health crisis

Everyday I think why am I still here?
Positive wellbeing – meaning, joy, kindness and compassion
Busy lives

c’mon, inner peace.
I don’t have all day.
WARNING!
no wifi zone
Please talk to each other!
Thank you

I HATE
U!!!!
I HATE
U!!!!
I HATE

THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK
Cyber-bullying is a leading cause of youth suicide.
Mainstream education is not responding well at the moment to any of this.
There are signs of real change happening in education, that Mind and Life Europe is keen to help lead, support, cultivate and promote, and that CE has a core role. Hence the launch of CCE in this whole context.
Consultation/survey
January – July 2018

Survey and skypes to find out:

• Who is where and what they are doing
• What language, concepts, frameworks people are using
• What is happening in countries
• The aims, scope, age range, language this community should use
• Role of MLE
• Who wants what involvement

To inform the guidance and the initial meeting
130 respondents

- UK: 25
- Germany: 10
- France, Switzerland: 9 each
- Italy, Netherlands, Denmark: 7 each
- Austria, Portugal, Norway, Israel: 6 each
- Czech, Spain: 5 each
- Belgium, Ireland, Sweden: 3 each
- Croatia, Estonia: 2 each
- Iceland, Finland, Poland: 1 each
In countries with more mindfulness and contemplative activity

- Awareness of the social and emotional role of the school and university
- Cultural interest in holism
- Adult mindfulness well established
- University involvement
- Formal networks emerging
- Global interchange
- Contemplative centres involved in mindfulness
Some current European programmes and approaches

Youth Mindfulness

Plum Village

MINDwithHEART

MiSP

Mindfulness in Schools Project

Happy teachers will change the world
But...

• Some countries hardly developed at all

• Not yet mainstream anywhere

• Not much published research
Barriers?

• Traditional ‘instrumentalist’ view of education
• Mindfulness fashionable but not well understood
• Mindfulness and contemplative pedagogy separate fields, not linked
• Seen as ‘religious’ /’buddhism by stealth’ in some places
• Lack of government support
• Lack of funding for training – dilute authentic CE
Mindfulness can be seen as Barriers?
So what are we offering?
What is authentic CE?
The way out is in...change starts with ourselves
The ability to sustain present moment attention and call it up at will.....has to be cultivated
Our mission as teachers is not just to transmit knowledge, but to form human beings, to construct a worthy, beautiful human race, in order to take care of our precious planet.

Thich Nhat Hanh
The elements of CE

Holism

Mindfulness
Meditation
Cont. Pedagogy
Compassion
Body
Neuroscience

Wellbeing

Mental health difficulties

SEL

Ethics, values, equity, sustainability

Social transformation
Its what makes everything else work better
And maybe a a ‘trojan mole?’
What we are really trying to do is to make a school become a second family where the teacher, the students, and the whole school—the parents as well—see it as a joint effort—a joint effort to create a place where it's not just about the future, about your career, job, position, or your money, but a place where you actually enjoy living and enjoy learning, and enjoy exploring, right now.
Next steps
Into what specific activities should Mind & Life Europe most usefully put its effort?
Safe ‘selling points’ for mindfulness in schools

“A toolkit of practices.. a valuable life skill... to feel calmer and more fulfilled; to get on better with others; to concentrate and learn; to manage stress and anxiety; to perform well. “

Mindfulness in schools website
Mindfulness as an ‘intervention’
Right mindfulness is, first of all, not a tool or an instrument, but a path. Right mindfulness is not a means that can be used to arrive at an end. True mindfulness is not only a path leading to happiness, it is a path of happiness.

Thich Nhat Hanh
• Create a sustainable and vibrant community and network of the leading pioneers and experts to enhance collective learning and implementation.

• Become a resource for education professionals to equip them to design and facilitate and evaluate effective education initiative and programs, that include mindfulness and contemplation and...

• ....that produce compassionate and resilient people who contribute to flourishing and caring societies.
Possible model for a ‘learning platform’

1. Content
   - Mind & Life
   - Science, Experts, Methods, Case studies

2. Online Learning Platform
   - Digital Information
     - Best practices (Open Source)

3. Communication
   - PR, Events, Film (Awareness)

4. Application
   - Training, Consulting
     - Pilot projects (Schools)

Partners

A possible model for a ‘learning platform’ includes a content section, an online learning platform, communication, and an application section. Partners are linked to each section, illustrating how they can be integrated into the platform.
“We need a centralised, reliable and authoritative 'go to' point for advice and support for educators across Europe who are thinking of bringing mindfulness into the school/educational institution”.

We're waiting for you to lead the way for the numerous groups working towards and living in line with a common goal.

Build a European research project or an European research institution, partnership with institutions such as UNESCO (through a professorship for instance).
Types of Research Methods

- Basic
- Quantitative
- Qualitative
- Experimental
- Correlational
- Applied
Involvement?

Partner

Keep me informed

Come to meetings
Some core principles

• Uncover and build on existing strengths, networks, programmes, wisdom etc
• Respect cultural diversity of Europe
• Build consensus, partnerships, community
• Concrete outcomes/products that are practical and useful for schools and universities
• Based on evidence – of many kinds
• Sustainable process
If you had a magic wand what would you do to develop the field of contemplative-mindfulness based education in Europe?

(Within this, what practical things can the CCE best do in the next year?)
Thank you!