

THE MINDFUL PSYCHOTHERAPIST

A one-day seminar led by Franklyn Sills



Developing
embodied awareness,
felt-experience, and
affect regulation in
the psychotherapeutic
relationship

Saturday 26 March 2011

About this event

This one-day seminar is designed to support the psychotherapist's capacity for sustaining a state of presence in the therapeutic relationship, particularly when working with traumatised or challenging clients/patients. The day will combine psychoanalytic theory, attachment and neurobiological research with an exploration of the therapeutic value of mindful atunement. The seminar includes a workshop element to develop our capacity for 'witness consciousness' with the purpose of strengthening our capacity to be fully present.

We will explore:-

- An overview of the Buddhist concept of presence
- The generation of selfhood from pre-natal and early experience
- The nature of the wounded self
- The importance of the therapist's holding frame in the light of early experience
- The neurobiology of the mindfulness of sensation and feeling tone
- The neurobiology of presence, mindfulness and trauma
- The importance of present-time awareness in healing traumatisation
- How a mindful presence allows for a deeper inquiry into the patient's suffering
- Developing the capacity for 'witness consciousness' as a therapeutic tool

FRANKLYN SILLS

Having originally studied medical sciences, Franklyn Sills has a long history of training and clinical practice in both psychotherapy and craniosacral therapy. Co-founder in 1987 of the Karuna Institute, he lectures on Buddhist psychology, object relations, shock, trauma, pre-natal and birth psychology. His recent studies include the neurophysiology of stress and trauma.

Franklyn was a Buddhist monk under the most venerable Taungpulu Kaba Aye Sayadaw of Northern Burma, and also studied in the Zen and Taoist traditions, thus bringing a rich understanding of the Buddhist tradition to his innovative work in psychotherapy. His experience in the cranial field has convinced him that the body must be included in any form of therapy. His published books include *The Polarity Process*, *Craniosacral Biodynamics*, and most recently *Being and Becoming, Psychodynamics, Buddhism and the Origins of Selfhood*. Franklyn teaches internationally in America, Germany and Switzerland.

"Franklyn Sills is a true pioneer, working in fields that can seem so different and yet which yearn to come together in intelligent and comprehensible ways: psychotherapy, Buddhism, and prenatal psychology. (...) Sills wears his immense learning lightly and is an affable and empathic guide into some difficult and mysterious areas of human suffering..."

Professor Andrew Samuels

Programme

9.30 Registration begins

10.00

An overview of presence and mindfulness in psychotherapy

In this presentation, Franklyn Sills will give an overview of the role of presence, or sati (mindfulness) in Pali (the language of many of the earliest extant Buddhist scriptures) in relationship to the nature of being, early experience and attachment issues, the origins and generation of selfhood and the nature of healing the wounded self. He will contextualise this in more traditional psychodynamic and analytical understandings of the importance of the therapist's presence and holding field.

11.15 Coffee

11.45

The neurobiology of presence, traumatisation and mindfulness

In this presentation, Franklyn will look at some of the basic neurobiology of presence and trauma, and why a return to present-time awareness helps heal traumatisation and the cycling of the wounded self. He will look at how traditional Buddhist mindfulness practices helps down-regulate the stress response, allows an inquiry into the nature of suffering. He will also explore the neurobiology of the mindfulness of sensation and feeling tone, and how it helps down-regulate traumatic cycling and states of anxiety and depression.

13.15 Lunch

14.15

Mindful inquiry in session work

In this clinical exploration, Franklyn will present some basic practical interventions and clinical suggestions that orient clients to mindful inquiry. He will outline why it helps both in generating "witness consciousness" and in affect-regulation of stress states. Witness consciousness offers clients the opportunity to explore their process in an embodied way within which anxiety and depressive states and traumatic activation can be mediated and held in present-time awareness. Participants will form small triad groups where some basic inquires into mindful exploration of the arising process will be initiated. These will include suggestions that orient clients to an embodied awareness of sensation, feeling tone and felt-experience.

16.00 End