

Mindful Meditation Summer Retreat, St. John's College, Oxford, August 30th – Sept 1st

Programme of Workshops and Activities

Mindful Meditation workshops with Jacci Bulman (Dip. d. Y. Th., CMT, B. A. (hons)).

Friday 30th August. (Arrival Day/Evening).

For those people staying in college, you will have access to your rooms from 2 PM.

4.30 PM – Option to be met by Jacci at the lodge and helped to find your way around college.

5.00 PM – Option to meet at college lodge gates and go together to Evensong at Christ Church College Cathedral (sung by the choir, as we listen). Possible easy meal together afterwards.

Saturday 31st August.

Full day of Workshops in the Larkin Room.

9.30 – 10.00 AM

Welcome to the course and each other.

Introduction to Mindfulness and its values.

What is mindfulness as a way of 'being' rather than 'doing'? What attitudes are helpful to mindfulness? Understanding how we can let go of worrying about the future, or remembering the past, and be more fully present in the experience of now. Discovering how we can praise ourselves for noticing when we are being distracted during meditation – as this noticing is mindfulness in action. The course will give us skills to develop and practice mindfulness, both formally in meditations and in our daily lives, and help us to find insight from our own awareness of being in the moment.

10.00 – 10.45 AM

Meditation – The 'Hourglass' Breathing Space.

The 'Hourglass' Breathing Space involves developing an awareness of our physical body sensations, thoughts, emotions, and then close focus on our breathing, followed by spreading out our awareness to sounds and the life and space around us. This useful practice teaches us about *grounding* ourselves in our body, *anchoring* deep within, and then *expanding* our connected awareness. We then learn how to protect our boundaries and contain our own energy inside, while being engaged in the world.

10.45 – 11.00 AM

Break.

Enjoy a cool drink in the room or on the lawn outside and relax together or have some quiet time.

11.00 AM – 12.00 PM

Mindfulness in Movement.

Learning the '10 Mindful Movements' of Thich Nhat Hanh, who was a great Buddhist monk and teacher. How can slow mindful movement with awareness of our breathing be of great value in our meditation practice and daily lives? We learn and practice these simple, gentle movements indoors.

This will be followed by mindful walking in the gardens of college, alone or in small groups.

12.00 – 1.30 PM

Lunch break and relaxation time.

1.30 – 2.15 PM

Meditation – The Mountain Meditation.

A guided visual meditation on imagining and 'becoming' a mountain within. Becoming aware of our deep inner strength, resilience, and stability, even when times on the 'surface' of our lives are full of turbulence and change. Being wakeful in stillness. Knowing our enduring inner resolve and connection to the earth.

2.15 – 2.30 PM

Break.

2.30 – 3.30 PM

Body Scan and the Light within us.

A guided deeply relaxing meditation, slowly and gently moving awareness through all parts of our body and mind, letting go of tensions, sinking down into inner peace, and then filling ourselves with healing light. An easy and valuable skill to learn and use throughout our lives.

3.30 – 3.45 PM

Break.

3.45 – 4.15 PM

Reflections, Insights, and Questions about the meditations so far.

4.15 – 4.45 PM

Silence together in 'choiceless awareness'.

Practising holding our awareness 'open' without focus on anything in particular, and allowing 'whatever comes along', like 'clouds in the sky' to be simply noticed and then let pass through us. We enjoy sharing our silence as a group, at the end of our day together.

Optional meal out and/or concert together in the evening, for those who wish to come along.

Sunday 1st September.

Half Day of Workshops in the Larkin Room.

9.30 – 9.45 AM

Introduction to the morning ahead.

9.45 – 10.05 AM

Mindful Movements Refresher.

A short refresher to help everyone remember the '10 Mindful Movements', and to stretch and vitalise us for the day ahead.

10.05 – 10.15 AM

Break

10.15 – 11.00 AM

Meditation – Lake Meditation.

A guided meditation into imagining a lake inside our self, beneath everything a strong 'basin' which can hold and accept us completely as we are, just as the earth holds a lake in a receptive basin of containment. Being held by the earth and by ourselves, completely.

11.00 – 11.10 AM

Break.

11.10 AM – 12.00 PM

Meditation – Opening the Heart to Kindness and Compassion, followed by Shared Silence together.

Gentle, tender connection to love, acceptance, kindness, and compassion inside our self, and then spreading this acceptance and kindness out to those in the world around us, both beloved and non-beloved. Understanding the essential role of such compassion in fully encompassing mindfulness as a way of being.

We shall move from this gently into a shared silence together, to bring our meditations to a close.

12.00 – 12.30 PM

Questions, Reflections, discussing moving on with our practice when we go home, followed by closure, and goodbyes.

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What to bring?

Please bring with you a yoga mat or other mat or blanket for some sessions which are ideally practised lying down, and perhaps a fleece or blanket to put over you in these sessions – although it will likely be sunny and warm! Please wear loose, comfortable, layered clothing. A journal and pen will also be useful. And perhaps an umbrella for if we want to practice mindful walking in the gardens and there is a surprise rain shower! You can bring packed lunches or go out to nearby shops to buy lunch. Water will be available in the room. We will have chairs to sit on but do bring a cushion if you prefer to sit on the floor. If it is very sunny we may have some practices outside, so perhaps bring a sunhat.

All will be well!

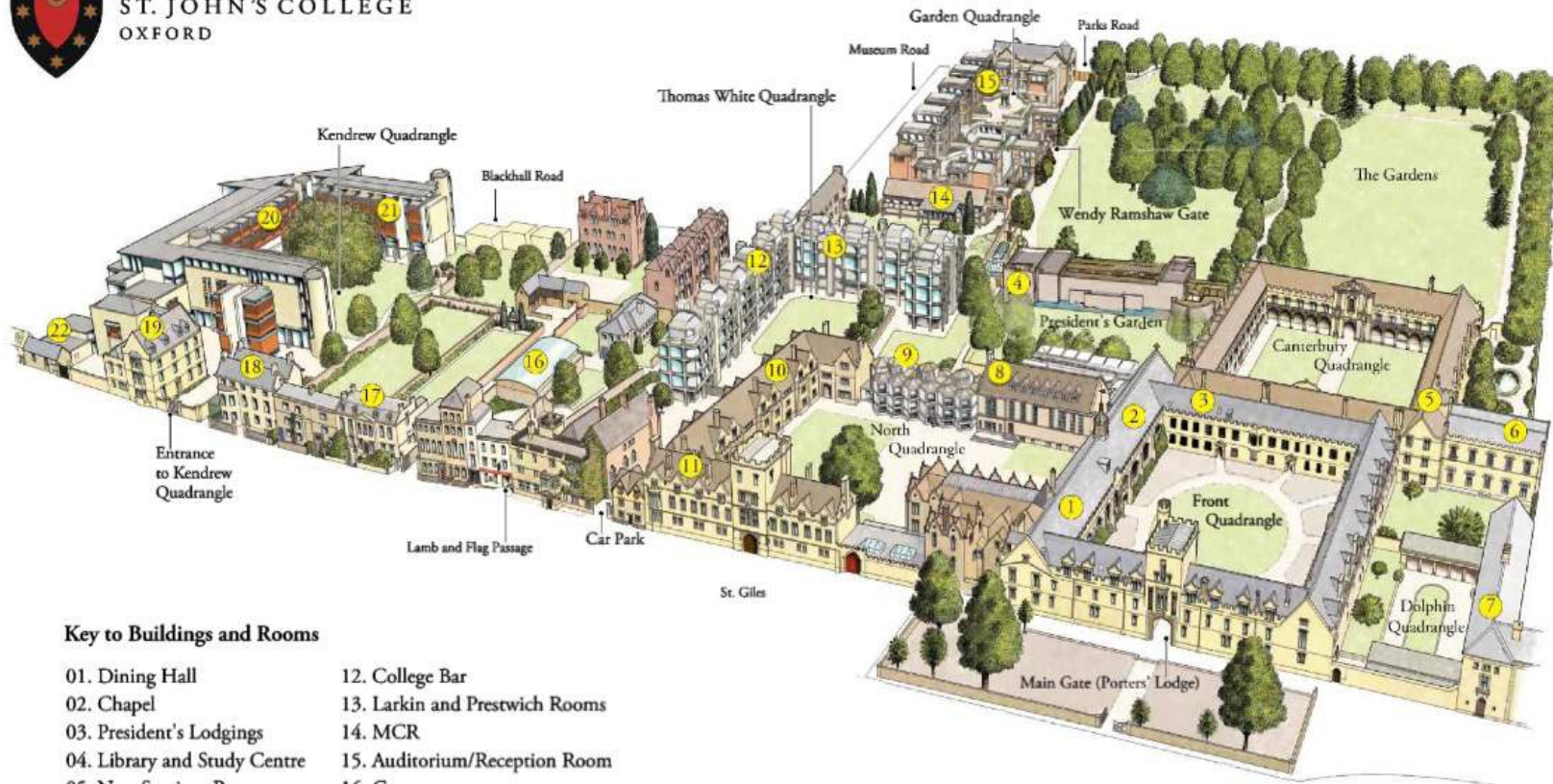
Precaution.

Because of the slower wavelengths which your brain may move into during meditation or deep relaxation, this retreat is **not suitable for persons with epilepsy or brain injury, (without written medical recommendation), or for people with serious or psychotic mental illness**, (a course of mindful movement classes could be more beneficial for your well-being). For questions please contact Jacci on info@thelovethatweare.org

A map of the venue is on the next page.



ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
OXFORD



Key to Buildings and Rooms

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 01. Dining Hall | 12. College Bar |
| 02. Chapel | 13. Larkin and Prestwich Rooms |
| 03. President's Lodgings | 14. MCR |
| 04. Library and Study Centre | 15. Auditorium/Reception Room |
| 05. New Seminar Room | 16. Gym |
| 06. Holmes Building | 17. St Giles House |
| 07. Dolphin Lecture Room | 18. Alumni Office and Guest Rooms |
| 08. SCR | 19. 21 St Giles |
| 09. Beehive | 20. Kendrew Café/Gym/Events Room |
| 10. Bursary | 21. Law Library |
| 11. North Lecture Room | 22. The Barn/Artist's Studio |