



Landelijk
Mindfulness Symposium
2020

Symposium 2.5 | Debate: Mindfulness research ethics

Proposed timeslot	15.00 – 16.00
Language	English
Speakers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marieke van Vught
Convenor	Anne Speckens
Abstracts	see following page

How can the mindfulness tradition provide an ethics for working as a mindfulness researcher?

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As mindfulness research is becoming more popular, it is also more likely to fall prey to the tendencies of hype and overselling of results. How can we counter this tendency and build a more robust science of mindfulness and meditation? And how does the ethics of Buddhism inform how we are conducting our research?

In this debate we use the framework of the four Brahmaviharas of joy, love, compassion and equanimity as a framework for developing such an ethics.

We propose that what is critical for an ethical mindfulness and meditation research community, we need a compassionate open science. Rather than being lured by a desire to gain fame and “prove” that the practices we so value are beneficial, we should aim to develop a critical and honest approach to our research. Rather than keeping our favourite tasks, measurements and data to ourselves, we should share them openly. We should strive towards a power structure in which decision making is shared between all scientists, not only the most senior and prestigious. We should also seek to do the research that where possible can reduce suffering.

While these proposals for ethics are fairly self-evident, it is not always easy to follow these ideals in a system that values prestige, positive results and money. Moreover, as we are humans, we too are subject to greed (status), hatred, and delusion (bias). We will discuss how we can move forward in this precarious balance