



THE WISDOM OF THE BUDDHA IN PSYCHOLOGY AND BRAIN RESEARCH

Friday 5 & Saturday 6 november 2010

The latest brain research has begun to confirm the central insights of the Buddha. And it's suggesting ways you can help your brain to enter deeper states of mindfulness, quiet, and concentration. Suffering, joy, and freedom all depend on what happens within your nervous system. Skillful practice thus means being skillful with your own brain.

This experiential workshops - led by neuropsychologist and meditation teacher **Rick Hanson** - will offer user-friendly information about your brain and lots of practical methods. There will be time for questions and discussion, no background with meditation or neuroscience is needed.

During the practical workshops we'll cover:

DAY 1

Morning workshop 9.30 till 13.00

Weaving Positive Emotions, Optimism, and Resilience into the Brain and Self

Developmental psychology, psychodynamic theory, and positive psychology all stress the importance of acquiring internal resources such as basic trust, optimism, and a positive mood. In our clients, we want to encourage self-soothing, emotional regulation, and resilience; we want the learning from their steps toward growth to “stick to their ribs.”

The question is: How to actually do this? Particularly given the challenge of the brain's negativity bias, which preferentially scans for, reacts to, stores, and recalls negative information about oneself and one's world. The brain is like Velcro for negative experiences and Teflon for positive ones; the natural result is a growing – and unfair – residue of emotional pain, pessimism, and numbing inhibition in implicit memory.

In this clinically focused and practical workshop, Rick Hanson shows how to use the brain's machinery of memory to get at the essence of beneficial change in psychotherapy and any other process of personal growth: the internalization of positive experiences.

Drawing on recent discoveries about neuroplasticity, he will present a simple, **four step process** that weaves positive experiences into the structure of the brain and the fabric of the self. Participants will practice this method, and there will be plenty of time for questions and discussion. No background with neuroscience is needed.



Afternoon workshop 14.15 till 18.00

Equanimity

Equanimity means not reacting to your reactions... and that is both a wonderful relief from upsets and traumas, and a profound resource for spiritual growth.

In Buddhism, equanimity is one of the four Brahmaviharas (“Divine Abodes”), and it’s sometimes considered the foundation of the other three: compassion, lovingkindness, and sympathetic joy. Equanimity breaks the chain of suffering by helping you not react to the pleasant/unpleasant feeling tones of experience with craving and clinging.

Your equanimity, a state of mind, is based on underlying states of your brain. Modern neuroscience is revealing new ways to cultivate those brain states – a potent combination with time-tested Buddhist practices.

This **experiential workshop** will offer user-friendly information with lots of practical methods. We’ll cover:

- The Buddha’s teachings on equanimity
- The neurological machinery of emotional reactivity
- How equanimity works in your brain to prevent, cool, and heal destructive emotions
- Strengthening “top-down,” frontal lobe influences
- **Training “bottom-up,” limbic system reactions to be less fearful and angry, and more peaceful, connecting, and constructive**

Putting more of the theory into practice:

A practice session with Rick

From 19h15 till 21h00



DAY 2

Morning workshop 9.30 till 13.00

Transcending the Sense of Threat

We evolved to be extremely reactive to feeling the least bit threatened; this has helped our species survive, but it leads to much suffering and harm. This **workshop** will explore the evolutionary and neuropsychological roots of threat perception and response within the framework of the Buddhist analysis of the feeling tone (pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral) and the actual interdependence of all beings.

We will also look closely at how people feel threatened in intimate, family, and work **relationships**, as well as at diversity issues and how we tend to feel threatened by “them” distinct from “us.” The emphasis will be on **practical tools** and perspectives for reducing and transcending the sense of threat in everyday life.

Afternoon workshop 14.15 till 18.00

The Neurodharma of Love

On the whole, we experience our greatest joys and sorrows in our relationships. Supported by both Buddhism and Western psychology, the keys to healthy relationships include empathy, compassion, kindness, equanimity, and appropriate assertiveness. These states of mind are based on underlying states of your brain. The emerging integration of modern neuroscience and ancient contemplative wisdom offers increasingly skillful means for activating those brain states – and thus for cultivating an open and caring heart, effective communication, balance during upsets, and more fulfilling relationships. This **experiential** workshop will offer user-friendly information with lots of **practical methods**. We'll cover:

- The Buddha's teachings on relationships
- The deep neurological circuits of empathy and caring – the foundation of healthy relationships – and how to strengthen those
- Moving beyond “us and them” to extend lovingkindness to the whole wide world

THE TEACHER

Rick Hanson, Ph.D. began meditating in 1974 and has practiced in several traditions. Christina Feldman has been his principal teacher in vipassana, with a focus on concentration and steadying the mind. He sat on the Board of Spirit Rock Meditation Center for nine years, and has completed its Community Dharma Leader training program. A neuropsychologist, husband, and parent of two young adults, he founded the Wellspring Institute for Neuroscience and Contemplative Wisdom edits the Wise Brain Bulletin, and leads a regular meditation group.

His book – Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love, and Wisdom – is available November, 2009."



LOCATION AND ACCOMODATION

Centre Rustpunt
Grote zaal
Burgstraat 46
9000 Gent
BELGIUM

*It's possible to spend the night in the centre, mail bea.geysen@rustpunt.net for booking a room.
Fee for the night with breakfast varies from 35€ to 45€*

FEE FOR THE CONFERENCE

Day 1 € 90,00 pp.

Practical evening session on 5/11/2010 from 19h15 till 21h00
Total fee included evening session day 1: €110,00 pp.

Day 2 € 90,00 pp.

Day 1 + Day 2* € 195,00 pp. – included evening session 05/11/2010
€ 175,00 pp. – excluded evening session 05/11/2010

Included: Lunch, tea and parking space.

Cost: 20 euro

REGISTRATION

You can registrate by transferring the complete amount. **Please mention the date and the name** of the participant. Confirm your registration by e-mail a@aandacht.be with indication of your phone number.

As soon as we received your payment, we'll send an affirmation of your registration.

Account number: "David Dewulf- Mindfulness 001-3976880-53"
IBAN en BIC: BE53 0013 9768 8053

!! If you need an invoice for your accountancy:

Please transfer on this account number:
VZW Mindfulness 001-5169299-51

For foreign payments:
I AM-Steenstraat 25-9070 Heusden-Belgie
BIC GEBABEBB

IBAN: BE 75 0015 1692 9951

Please send your correct invoice data to a@aandacht.be



ANNULATION

- **More than 3 months in advance:** full refund
- **More than 3 weeks in advance:** refund minus 15 euro for each cancelled day
- **Less than 3 weeks in advance:** no refund