

Hello friends,

Below are the bios of the alumni who will be speaking at the Breaking In to Break Out session on Sunday, November 16 from 1 - 3 pm ET. This is going to be a wonderful session full of advice and information to help you navigate bringing your mindfulness offerings in different sectors you may be considering moving into. Panelists will give guidance and offer advice on the following as well as answer your questions.

- How they got started in this sector and their interest in this space. What was / is the need?
- Who did they need to connect with to get their foot in the door/ their first engagement? If they integrated our training with work they were already doing, whose support or approval was needed and how did they get it?
- How and what language from our training did they modify 1) to get that first opportunity and 2) to connect with their audience with specific examples of their sector.
- What was the biggest challenge/ challenges they face/faced
- What are the lessons learned?

Please review which sectors are represented so you can select which breakout room you want to participate in. You will self-select which breakout room you want to go to and have a chance to join two topics. It might also be easier to be on a laptop or desktop for this session so you can easily find the breakout rooms - this is often harder to do on tablets and phones.

Even if a sector you are interested is not specifically represented please see which one is adjacent - for example, one of our speakers works with incarcerated populations but that session is for you if you are interested in any aspect of the criminal justice system such as police/law enforcement, lawyers, corrections officers, child welfare, etc. Likewise with all the sessions.

Out of respect for the speakers and others in the breakout rooms we ask not to hop around.

Below is the list of the sectors followed by with detailed biographical information of each speaker

- Community and Wellness Spaces
- Government Organizations / Public Sector

- Legal
- Military / Veterans
- Corporate Sector
- Education
- Incarcerated Populations / Criminal Justice Systems
- Healthcare / Hospital Systems
- Coaching, Mentoring and Professional Development
- Financial Services /Financial Professionals



Community and Wellness Spaces

Led by Manizeh Mirza-Gruber, C'23

Dr. Manizeh Mirza-Gruber, M.D., is a licensed, board-certified psychiatrist (ABPN), Certified Mindfulness Meditation Teacher (MMTCP Class of 2023), Mindfulness Mentor (MMTP Class of 2024), Certified Yoga Teacher (National Alliance of Certified Yoga Teachers - NACYT), and Certified Mind-Body Medicine Skills Facilitator (Center for Mind-Body Medicine - CMBM).

After a long career in community mental health taking care of primarily the homeless and underserved population, Manizeh felt called to create a space where she could provide a more mindful and compassionate approach to clinical psychiatric practice. In May 2017, while still working in community mental health she founded Mindful in Practice, a clinical psychiatric practice with a holistic and integrative approach to care, and an educational practice focusing on mindfulness and mind-body medicine interventions for healing and wellness.

Manizeh has been facilitating Mind-Body Skills workshops and groups since January 2018 to bring healing to her Houston community in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, and nationally and internationally through the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Manizeh leads and teaches mind-body medicine skills groups, mindfulness meditation classes/ workshops, and provides mindfulness mentoring sessions to individuals and groups both locally and in her birthplace, Karachi, Pakistan.

For three years Manizeh was a co- lead morning circle-up volunteer for the Houston Chapter of Back on My Feet, a non-profit organization assisting the homeless and those

in substance use recovery to get back on their feet. She continues to volunteer with them weekly.

Manizeh follows a holistic approach to life. She believes in connecting heart, mind, body, and spirit for healing and wellness. Her daily practice of meditation, yoga, running/walking guide her to live mindfully with compassion, kindness, and an open heart. She is a “forever learner.”

Her first children’s picture book ***Mama, I Will Send You a Purple Flower*** launched on November 12th, 2024! Manizeh is donating 100% of the proceeds from the purchase of her book to animal welfare organizations.



Government Organizations / Public Sector

Led by Peggy Chan, C’25

Peggy Chan (she/her) is a lawyer, life coach, energy healer, and meditation teacher based in New York City.

Peggy has over 15 years of experience working in the government and public interest sector - as a litigator in the child welfare area, a legislative counsel and policymaker in juvenile justice, an administrative law judge in special education, and currently the chief of staff at the NYC Mayor’s Office of Equity and Racial Justice.

Over the years, Peggy has witnessed the high burnout amongst colleagues serving in the public sector. She is passionate about giving back to her professional community and making mindfulness tools accessible to all. She has taught meditation in various government offices, wellness retreats, employee resource groups, and more. She is excited to share her insights with those interested in teaching meditation in the government and public sector.



Legal

Led by Chrissy Watson, C'21

Chrissy Watson, JD, MBA, CMT-P, is a 2021 MMTCP graduate and attorney who currently works as an eating disorder educator and advocate. She has taught continuing education courses on mindfulness in the legal profession, installed weekly meditation sittings in organizational settings, and led meditations for office offsites.



Military / Veterans

Led by Bill Edmonds, C'23

(supported by Peggy Spencer)

Bill Edmonds is a veteran of 34 years in U.S. Army Special Operations and a Purple Heart and Bronze Star with Valor recipient whose career has spanned combat, leadership, and healing. After retiring, he turned his focus to trauma recovery, completing the Mindfulness Meditation Teacher Certification Program and becoming a clinical social worker. Bill works exclusively with veterans, first responders, and survivors of childhood sexual trauma, helping them confront and transform the deepest wounds of war and life.

His approach blends psychedelic-assisted therapy with guided interactive Vipassana—seven hours of customized meditation and dialogue rooted in the Dharma. This integration of altered states and sustained contemplative practice catalyzes what he calls “reveal-feel-heal,” enabling clients to hold, process, and ultimately transform trauma into freedom and resilience.



Corporate Sector

Led by Heather Gwaltney, C'21

Located just outside of Santa Fe, NM, Heather Gwaltney is Founder of the Center of Mindful Business. She has over 25 years of experience in the private, non-profit, and public sectors in Marketing-Communications and Organizational Development. She has taught Marketing-Communications and Mindful Leadership courses at George Mason University and has extensive experience managing programs, clients, vendors, and teams. Heather holds a Masters in Organizational Development and is Certified both as a Mindfulness Meditation Teacher and in Permaculture Design. With a 25-year practice in Mindfulness Meditation, she brings her love for mindfulness and connects it with sustainability and business -- in order to serve companies and communities worldwide.

My work focuses on and helps people align mindfulness meditation with sustainability, key performance indicators, and organizational success.

Website: <https://www.centerformindfulbusiness.com/>

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Education

Led by Ranjeeta Basu, C'21

Dr. Ranjeeta Basu is a 2021 MMTCP graduate and 2025 MMT graduate. She is a Professor of Economics and Director of the Center for Contemplative Practices at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM). She has published articles and presented her work at conferences both nationally and internationally. She is currently researching the impact of mindfulness practices on the wellbeing and stress levels of students from historically underrepresented communities in NIH funded programs.



Incarcerated Populations / Criminal Justice Systems

Led by Sunil Joseph, C'21

I am a certified GRIP facilitator with six years of experience in prison work, teaching a restorative justice and mindfulness-based healing and accountability program within California's prison system. I also develop remote learning courses for incarcerated people through Buddhist Prison Ministry and teach Nonviolent Communication (NVC) to diverse groups, including incarcerated individuals at San Quentin State Prison.

My formal training includes certification as a Mindfulness Meditation Teacher through the 2-year program offered by Jack Kornfield and Tara Brach (2021), and completion of BayNVC's 1-year NVC Leadership Program (2008). I have been actively engaged in psycho-spiritual development as a student of the Ridhwan School for over ten years.

I consider myself fortunate to have studied with transformative teachers who have enriched my life in countless ways. I welcome opportunities to share these gifts with others by supporting them on their personal paths to healing, fulfillment, and wellbeing.

<https://myempathycoach.com>



Healthcare /Hospital Systems

Led by Jane Lodato, C'21

Jane Lodato currently serves as the Chief Wellness Officer for the Mount Sinai Hospital System Department of Surgery in New York City. She is a mindfulness teacher, mentor, and consultant to clients throughout the U.S.

Ms. Lodato's focus is working with individuals. She created the "Surgeon's Six" mindfulness series which is required training for Mount Sinai surgical residents and

fellows. Ms. Lodato consults with other hospitals, speaks at Grand Rounds as well as to external organizations and has a podcast.

Previously Ms. Lodato was an executive in high profile global corporations. As a result of her background working with CEO's and Board Directors, coupled with her experience in leadership and coaching, she chose to develop mindfulness training designed to provide tools for individuals in high performance, demanding environments.



Coaching, Mentoring and Professional Development
Led by Susan Beckman Reagan, C'21

Susan has maintained a dedicated meditation practice for more than 30 years, experiencing how mindfulness cultivates greater calm, clarity, and openness through life's joys and challenges. Her early career in corporate America eventually led her to the field of health and wellness, where she deepened her exploration of the connections between physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

Today, she weaves these experiences together through mindfulness-based mentoring and coaching. Susan is a Board-Certified Health and Wellness Coach (NBC-HWC), a Certified Mindfulness Meditation Teacher (CMT-P), as well as Co-Creator and Lead Mentor for the *A Course in Mindful Living Professional Teacher Training Program*. She is also the founder of *Carry Your Vision Forward®*. Learn more at susanbeckmanreagan.com



Financial Services /Financial Professionals

Led by Jonathan DeYoe, C'25

Jonathan DeYoe is a former Lutheran seminarian turned Buddhist academic turned financial advisor turned financial educator — and now a bridge between mindfulness practice and the world of wealth. Raised with very little money, Jonathan has spent his life exploring the intersection of money, meaning, and human flourishing. He studied philosophy and religion in college and Buddhist philosophy in graduate school before an unlikely detour took him to Wall Street as a broker.

After leaving the brokerage world, Jonathan built a successful independent wealth management firm and community over two decades, serving hundreds of families — helping them make better financial decisions aligned with their deepest values. In 2021, the sudden death of his younger brother prompted a profound reexamination of purpose. Jonathan sold his firm, becoming “wealthy” himself in the process, and returned to the teachings that first inspired him — dedicating himself to bringing mindfulness into the heart of the financial world.

Today, as the founder of *Mindful Money*, a partner at EP Wealth Advisors, the author of *Mindful Money* and *Mindful Investing*, host of the *Mindful Money Podcast*, and a graduate of the two-year Mindfulness Meditation Teacher Certification Program led by Jack Kornfield and Tara Brach, Jonathan works at the intersection of money and mindfulness. He believes mindfulness is the ultimate hack in wealth creation and stewardship — and that financial advisors who cultivate presence, patience, and awareness not only live more fulfilling lives but also do far better work for their clients.

Jonathan now teaches advisory firms, financial professionals, and groups of wealthy clients how to integrate mindfulness into life while putting money & wealth into a holistic context — transforming both the experience of wealth and the quality of financial advice.