The development of mindfulness as a specific type of awareness or a meditation technique took inspiration from all major Buddhist traditions. However, mindfulness' Buddhist roots were deliberately obscured when it was first introduced into the Western clinical context in the late 1970s. It was not until the early 2000s that the connection between mindfulness and Buddhism became known to the general public. Since then, an intensified exchange between science and the Buddhist traditions has begun to take shape with an increasing number of comparative and collaborative research [Krägeloh 2019]. Now that the "adverse effects" of mindfulness have become increasingly noticeable in our current academic discussions, one of the proposed remedies is to secure the quality of its teachers (Van Gordon et al. 2017). How to go about this? Will the Buddhist traditions again provide us with new source of inspirations?

The discourse of mindfulness has been increasingly interdisciplinary in nature. The teaching of mindfulness has become an important theme in the mindfulness discourse. The voices of the Asian Buddhist (meditation) masters have been underrepresented. To bring the voice from the “East” (the perspectives of Asian Buddhist masters) into the current rather “western-dominated” discussion.

(a) How do Asian Buddhist masters view the current development of the mindfulness discourse? (b) How do they teach (mindfulness) meditation? (c) Or, how has meditation been transmitted in the (traditional) Buddhist context? How is the teacher-student relationship there?

To investigate how well these Buddhist masters are informed of mindfulness' current state of development both in- and outside academia, what kind of language and terminology they use, and what kind of framework or perspectives they employ to interpret the current developments of mindfulness in the West, I will ask these Buddhist masters which components they would deem to be misleading and what they view to be missing, which should be brought into the dialogue.

References