



Training Empathy

How can we establish empathy, mindfulness, compassion and presence?

How can we create a good environment for learning and development?

How can we develop our own relational competence?

In an open and undogmatic setting, this course offers a wide range of practical tools for developing relational competence and presence. This includes the ability to be with oneself and in harmony with oneself, as well as empathy and compassion as qualities for working with people.

Relational competence, empathy and presence are the constant frame of reference for the training. It is based on combining the findings of modern psychology, neuroscience and pedagogy with the ancient knowledge and wisdom that underlie the meditation traditions.

We all have the opportunity to be in harmony with ourselves and to empathise with others. For us, being in harmony with ourselves means being in good contact with the core of our own being. This core of being is the place from which a person can connect deeply with other people and also with the complex world - a world that is in the midst of fundamental processes of transformation. Empathy and presence arise in the calm connection to oneself.

Our vision is to create an environment in which these competences can be developed and practised. None of this has to be learnt or developed from scratch.

Rather, it is about rediscovering and cultivating what we have within us.



Duration:

36 days over a period of 2 years



Target group

People who work with people, especially those in educational and social professions
Max. 24 people



Dates 2025–2027

- 1. Module** 11.-14.09.2025
- 2. Module** 27.-30.11.2025
- 3. Module** 08.-11.01.2026
- 4. Module** 19.-22.03.2026
- 5. Module** 02.-05.07.2026
- 6. Module** 17.-20.09.2026
- 7. Module** 26.-29.11.2026
- 8. Module** 07.-10.01.2027
- 9. Module** 20.-23.05.2027



Location

Villa Fohrde
August-Bebel-Str. 42
14798 Havelsee OT
Fohrde (Germany)

In training, we use access to the basic competences of human vitality: breathing, body, consciousness, heart (feelings like empathy, compassion and gratitude) and creativity to explore and strengthen contact with ourselves and others.

A particular focus is on working with children and young people, because it is important to us to maintain access to basic competences as they grow up. Children and young people today are exposed to a high level of stress and, as a result, many lose the opportunity to be present and in touch with themselves, to be aware, to feel and to empathise with others. The same applies to many adults who actually want to create a good setting and atmosphere. Being connected with oneself and with the outside world is the basic prerequisite for learning and for the development of every individual and society. In this respect, people from other professional fields are also very welcome.

Admission criteria

We would like you to practise times of pausing, coming to yourself, meditation or similar in your everyday life or be willing to do so. The training is aimed at teachers and pedagogues or people who work with people in other areas. If you are interested in this training and do not yet fulfil the requirements, we would like to talk to you personally to decide on your application.

For your application, please send us a CV and a letter of motivation explaining why you would like to take part in the training programme.

Between the modules, we would like you to practise meditation or training exercises on a daily basis and discuss them with other participants in small groups. The time frame should be approximately two times three hours.

We accept a maximum of 24 participants. The minimum number of participants is 19.

Accommodation and catering at Villa Fohrde

The Empathy training programme takes place at Villa Fohrde. The costs for accommodation and catering amount to € 336.15 per module. This price includes 3 overnight stays with a total of 4 meals per day. The first meal on the day of arrival is lunch, and the last meal on the day of departure is coffee and cake.

Accommodation and meals at Villa Fohrde are obligatory. In general, an overnight stay in a double room is provided.



Trainer

Katinka Gøtzsche

Lukas Herrmann

Rebecca Hinzmann

Peter Høeg

Helle Jensen



Participation fee

The participation fee amounts to 6.700,- €

There is no value-added tax, fee excludes catering, travel costs and accommodation.



Do you have any questions?

Franca Kriesel will be happy to help you.



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Contents and working methods

The training programme extends over two years and consists of nine 4-day workshop modules, covering a total of 36 days. The work alternates between input in the form of short lectures, impulses for mindfulness and presence, bodywork and relational competence and creative activities. Some of the work also takes place outdoors.

In our experience, it is necessary to create both a safe and dynamic atmosphere for a good learning environment. These qualities are important for the context of this training as well as for the groups that the participants work with in their daily work during and after this training. That is why we focus on group and team building throughout the course. Play and creativity help to create an open and warm atmosphere free of bias, which also makes the course a laboratory for personal growth and development.

The training has three phases: Immersion, Movement, and emergence. In the introduction phase (modules 1 - 3) we immerse ourselves in our approach to relationship skills and presence. In the movement phase (modules 4 - 7), we work with these approaches on ourselves and in relation to various situations and challenges. The emergence phase (modules 8 - 9) supports the application and transfer to the professional context.

Module 1 - Introduction

In the first module, we introduce the two main principles of our approach, namely relational competence and presence. This module focuses particularly on the participants' own experience and practice. We will introduce a model that depicts the natural human competences that we all share and are born with. This "pentagon" model describes the five natural resources: body, breath, heart, creativity and consciousness. Each participant works on becoming aware of their own connection to these resources through inner exercises, working with the body, dialogues and games.

We also teach how relational competence can be understood and developed in theory and practice - and what contribution natural resources can make for us here.

How can we improve mindfulness, empathy, presence and compassion in our daily lives?

How can we find our way back to the joy of play and reconnect with our natural desire to create, as we remember it from our childhood?

And how can this regained joy influence our everyday lives and our professional and personal development?

Katinka Gøtzsche &

Lukas Herrmann OR Rebecca Hinzmann

Module 2 - The connection between relational competence and natural competences

"We can only encounter other people as deeply as we have encountered ourselves" (P. Hoeg).

This means that a relationship is lively and conducive to development (not necessarily always harmonious!) when the people involved have a sense of themselves, their own thoughts, feelings, boundaries, yes's and no's - and of their counterpart. This is why the development of relational competence builds on the five competences - and goes even further.

How can everyone get in touch with their own personal authority and authenticity?

The second module consolidates the foundation for the entire training by making the natural resources, relational competence and their connection tangible. In addition, the participants set their own goals for their professional and personal development, i.e. what they want to learn during the training period.

After Module 2, we will start a continuous training to support the participants' own practice (virtual practice 1-hour meetings every fortnight). In this training we will deepen the practices introduced in the first two modules and learn new ones.

Katinka Gøtzsche &
Lukas Herrmann OR Rebecca Hinzmann

Module 3 - Dialogue and inspiration for working with the five competencies

In the third module, we work with various impulses that enable access to natural resources. Participants will experience different ways of working with these resources for themselves and can use them as a starting point for their own guidance.

We also provide an insight into different formats for working with groups on relationship competence and the five competencies, both structured, manualised programmes and through intuitive application in work situations.

The focus is on how each individual can incorporate the experiences and content from the training into their everyday professional life.

This includes the ability and willingness to engage in dialogue. Reflecting on what we do and how we do it. Participants are invited to bring in and work on examples from their everyday work with children, young people or adults.

Katinka Gøtzsche &
Lukas Herrmann OR Rebecca Hinzmann

Module 4 - The five competences, focus on meditation

The focus of this module is on the connection between natural competences and meditative practice. We look at meditation, contemplative traditions and the development of work with natural resources from these traditions. Together we will try out different approaches to meditative practice, attention and presence. We will introduce the various elements that a personal meditation practice can contain and what is helpful in developing it for yourself. The practical reference to the participants' everyday life is important to us and thus also the question of how meditative practice can be used individually for work and private life.

Helle Jensen & Peter Høeg

Module 5 - Challenging situations

Working with people can sometimes be very challenging. When dealing with troubled children and young people or people with special needs, for example, educators often get out of control - and make the situation worse. In these moments, it is particularly important to stay in touch with yourself and your own strength in order to help the other person to do the same. How can we use the exercises for this? How can play and creativity help to resolve conflicts between children, between adults or between adults and children?

And how can I put myself in the shoes of someone who "triggers" me? Where would I perhaps like to be challenged myself? In dialogues and exercises, we examine which sources of strength are available to us to act constructively in such situations.

Katinka Gøtzsche & Lukas Herrmann

Module 6 – Retreat

The focus of this module is on the personal development of each individual. There is ample opportunity for contemplation in silence, for collective bodywork and for individual supervision.

Helle Jensen &
Peter Høeg

Module 7 - Grief and loss

Relational competence and access to our natural competences are especially needed when we are with children and young people who have experienced grief and loss. How can we stay in touch with ourselves as well as with the child or children in such difficult circumstances?

Katinka Gøtzsche &
Lukas Herrmann OR Rebecca Hinzmann

Module 8 - Working with groups on the principles of Training Empathy

Participants develop their own individual way of communicating the impulses and values to professionals, colleagues, parents and children and offer individual sequences for the group. The principles of the training are reflected upon and the experiences from the modules are collected and organised.

Participants present their projects and use their own experiences as a starting point for giving and receiving feedback.

How do we explain why we are going down this path, what we are doing and how we understand the work?

How can we organise encounters between people, and especially between adults and children, in such a way that they become fruitful encounters?

And how can those involved in these encounters also be with themselves and enable deep mutual understanding?

In order to ensure the growth of these new impulses and "seedlings", we also examine our context of application: Which structures and processes in the work help the values and impulses to become effective? Which ones are more of a hindrance - and how do we relate to them?

Katinka Gøtzsche &
Lukas Herrmann OR Rebecca Hinzmann

Module 9 - Evaluation and conclusion

In the last module, we take time for a dialogue-based evaluation of the participants' personal and professional objectives.

Conclusion of the course and farewell.

Katinka Gøtzsche &
Lukas Herrmann OR Rebecca Hinzmann