

BUDDHIST MIND SCIENCE Activating Your Potential



An FPMT Introductory Course

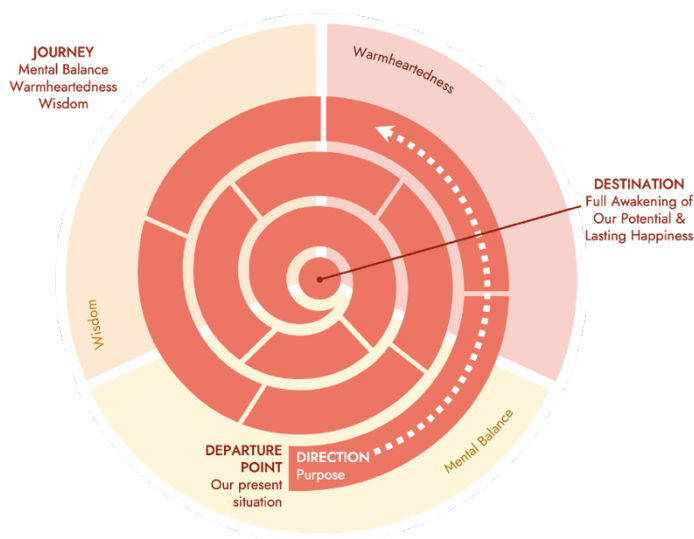
Discover the workings of the mind and the mechanisms of suffering and happiness.
Unlock your potential for mental balance, compassion and wisdom.

5. WISE PATHS TO THE HEART

Warmheartedness

Is warmheartedness a source of well-being? Are human beings kind by nature? How to activate a sense of connection with oneself and others? How to make it a source of true happiness? How far can our inner qualities of love, compassion, joy and so on go?

We will explore such questions from an experiential point of view, using both scientific and Buddhist knowledge of the mind and meditation, in a journey that may translate into increasing lasting happiness and a positive impact on oneself, others, and the world.



Introduction

The course “Wise paths to the heart” focuses on cultivating warmheartedness and prosocial attitudes, which are essential for human evolution, well-being, and flourishing. It presents the four immeasurable attitudes of loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity, as drawn from the Buddhist tradition, and explores the mind of awakening, which embraces all sentient beings. It is complemented by references to current scientific understanding on the nature and biological basis of altruism, empathy, compassion, and self-compassion.

This short course is a part of the FPMT “Buddhist Mind Science: Activating Your Potential” series, which introduces the Buddhist knowledge of the mind and meditation to provide practical techniques and insight on the mechanisms of suffering and happiness, finding purpose and mental balance, and how to discover and activate our inner potential for warmheartedness and wisdom, including a comparative modern scientific perspective and with the aim to contribute to the welfare in this world.

The Journey

“Wise paths to the heart” gradually unfolds as a journey along different topics:

1. **Warmheartedness as a source of well-being** explores whether warmheartedness is a source of well-being, with research on the nature of altruism and ethics, and on the biological basis of warmheartedness. We also explore whether it can be trained.

2. **To care for yourself to care for others** starts by seeing how to take care of oneself, and how taking care of oneself also entails taking care—or connecting—with others.
3. **The four immeasurables** works with specific aspects of warmheartedness and prosocial attitudes: the four immeasurable qualities of loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. It also presents how to move from empathy to compassion.
4. **Warm heart fitness** deepens into the four immeasurables, by exploring their relation with wisdom, and by finding ways to replace afflictions for the four immeasurables.
5. **The mind of awakening** goes further to explore the possibility of fully developing our potential of warmheartedness and wisdom with the mind of awakening, which aims to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all beings.
6. **Alchemy of the heart** presents unique and provoking approaches to cultivating such a mind with methods that allow us to gradually replace egoism and self-centeredness for altruism and awareness of others.

A Part of the Course:

“Buddhist Mind Science: Activating our Potential”

The course “Buddhist Mind Science: Activating Your Potential” follows a gradual approach, with a strong experiential component that invites everyone to reflect and check by themselves the different topics presented along the modules. With a strong emphasis on transforming daily life in meaningful ways, it provides both Buddhist and scientific perspectives.

It consists of seven modules:

1. **Cultivating lasting happiness: What Buddhism and Science have to say about it**, is an exploration of purpose in life and what leads to dissatisfaction and suffering, and what to happiness, for oneself and others. It also explores the value of warmheartedness and wisdom, and it lays out the general foundation for the following modules.
2. **Transforming the mind to cultivate lasting happiness**, focuses on meditation, mental balance, and emotions.
3. **Getting to know your mind**, focuses on the mind.
4. **Fundamental trainings to cultivate lasting happiness**, presents the foundations of the Buddhist paths.
5. **Wise paths to the heart**, focuses on warmheartedness.
6. **The nature of perception**, focuses on wisdom.
7. **Embodying warmheartedness and wisdom**, explores how to bring the values of warmheartedness and wisdom into the world.

Modules 1 to 3 have a broad approach that present meditation and the mind, Module 4 presents the foundations of the Buddhist paths with strong emphasis on what can help us in daily life, and Modules 5 to 6 further develop the concept and practice of warmheartedness and wisdom. There are multiple entry points to the course: all modules can be engaged as stand-alone courses, so that everyone can engage at any point, and conclude each one with a sense of completion. Each module consists of six units that can be done in 1.5-hour sessions (9 hours) approximately. Each unit includes readings, exercises, reflection, debate, and meditation.

May it be beneficial for as many sentient beings as possible.



Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition