

**ART OF MEDITATION**

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will study the fundamental philosophy, form and practice of meditation. Each experiential class will primarily consist of guided or silent meditation practice, but will also include class discussion and lecture. Covering the basic principles of posture, breathing, attention, concentration and awareness, the intention of this course is to empower and inspire TCM students to continue a lifelong, rewarding relationship with "just sitting". Students will be studying the traditional Taoist images of yin organs, visualizing five channel depths pertaining to each of the six meridians, exploring the five element system, deepening our understanding of yin channels utilizing the ying qi cycle and its connection with spirit cultivation, and gaining exposure to human organs by studying pictorals. For those who are willing, the promise of this course and this art form is the cultivation of mind and heart. It is by way of such cultivation that a doctor may become what the ancients termed a "Superior Physician".

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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COURSE PREREQUISITIES

None

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REQUIRED TEXTS

Peace is Every Step by Thich Nhat Hahn; Class handouts; Powerpoint presentation notes

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RECOMMENDED TEXTS

A Path with Heart by Jack Kornfield; Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind by Shunryu Suzuki; What the Buddha Taught by Walpola Rahula; Insight Meditation by Joseph Goldstein; The Path To Enlightenment by The Dalai Lama; The Spiritual Teaching of Ramana Maharshi (Shambhala Dragon Edition) by Ramana Maharshi; Gandhi's Way: A Handbook of Conflict Resolution by Mark Juergensmeyer, The Garden by Geshe Michael Roche

A Manual of Acupuncture by Peter Deadman, Body Worlds: The Anatomical Exhibition of Real Human Bodies by Prof. Gunther von Hagens, The Five Organ Networks of Chinese Medicine by Heiner Fruehauf, PhD, LAc, Atlas of Human Anatomy by Frank H. Netter, MD, Hole's Human Anatomy & Physiology by Shier, Butler, and Lewis, Sacred Mirrors: The Visionary Art of Alex Grey by Alex Grey, The Power to Heal: Ancient Arts & Modern Medicine by Smolan, Moffitt, Naythons.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Develop a daily meditation practice at home  
30%: Participation in class discussions  
30%: Daily journaling to be checked for compliance, not content  
30%: 2 written papers, 1-2 pages each  
10%: Punctual attendance

GRADING SCALE: 100-90% A, 89-80% B, 79-70% C, 69% and below F

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SPECIAL NOTES

We will explore body, mind, and spirit:

1. relaxing stored tension by developing focus geared at letting go in the body,

2. releasing habitual thoughts and emotions rooted either in the past or future by generating single-pointed concentration on these patterns, and

3. cultivating insight through the practice of mindfulness breathing.

In practice, our commitment to the present moment is strong, our compassionate hearts open, and our dedication to the well-being of all beings yields peace.

**\*\*Please bring a zafu, mat, or pillow on which to sit for every class**

**Professionalism and Full and Prompt Attendance:** To pass any course (separate from academic performance) all students must meet requirements for professionalism in coursework. Professionalism includes full and prompt attendance: Students who miss more than 2 class meetings in a 10-week course will earn an F in that course. Additionally, students who arrive more than 15 minutes to class or leave class before it ends will be marked tardy. Two tardies equal one absence. NOTE: Students who leave and return to class late from a break or leave during the class (especially if this is repeated) or who disrupt the class in other ways may be referred to the Academic Dean for professionalism.

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CLASS ONE (The syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.)

Course introduction – Syllabus

Hand-outs: Literature about local sitting groups, centers, web links, stages of meditation.

Lecture A: Benefits/goal of meditation. How to meditate. Dedicating practice.

Lecture B: Body alignment. Breathing. Sounds. Thoughts. Emotions.

Class Discussion A: Meditation expectations

Class Discussion B: Challenges/difficulties

**\*\* Two 15 minute meditation practices \*\***

HOMEWORK:

1. Buy course book online/in store within 2 days after 1st class to be delivered by Week 2. Begin to read.
2. Create meditation space at home: set up cushion for daily sitting practice.
3. Meditate 15 minutes a day [journal 5 minutes after each practice]
4. Take ½ day in silence

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CLASS TWO

Lecture C: Meditation in TCM: Ying Qi Cycle, Understanding flow of Qi. Effects of breathing on body/mind.

Lecture D: Studying meditation: Chanting (Bhakti), Yoga (Raja), Philosophy (Jnana), Service (Karma).

**\*\* Two 20 minutes meditation practices \*\***

Class Discussion C: Becoming a better TCM healer being a meditation practitioner.

Class Discussion D: Seeking variety of spiritual experiences and choosing one type to practice. Sharing experience of practicing at home vs. experience of practice in group (challenges / difficulties).

\* For those interested in devotional (bhakti) chanting, email Girish and Virginia at [chantlosangeles@hotmail.com](mailto:chantlosangeles@hotmail.com) and request to be added to their mailing list. You will regularly receive free e-newsletters about upcoming chants in and around Los Angeles.

HOMEWORK:

1. Read Peace is Every Step
2. Meditate 15 minutes a day (journal 5 minutes/day)
3. Take ½ day in silence this week

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CLASS THREE

Lecture E: Explanation of Self, Dharma, Sangha / Inspiration, Truth, Support / Shen, Qi, Jing.  
Lecture F: Concentration on friend, diety, or someone most admired.

**\*\* Two 20 minutes meditation practices \*\***

Class Discussion E: Interpretation of the three jewels of meditation as it applies to TCM.  
Class Discussion F: Exploring how, where, and what we see.

**HOMEWORK:**

1. Finish reading Peace is Every Step.
2. Begin writing 1-2 page paper [Due three days after Week 4 by emailing to [armm@lotusew.com](mailto:armm@lotusew.com). Papers will be returned on Week 5]
3. Meditate 15 minutes a day (journal 5 minutes/day)
4. Take ½ day in silence this week

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**CLASS FOUR**

Meditation in Nature - Temescal Canyon [drive in about ¼ mile, park in last Temescal Canyon parking lot where trails begin, meet at picnic table across street from building with sign saying "Welcome to Temescal Canyon Conference and Retreat Center" before Temescal Camp Store, near the restrooms and water fountain] We will take a short hike to practice meditation in nature.

**\*\* ARRIVE: 9:45 AM \*\***

**BRING: \$7 EXACT CHANGE FOR PARKING, 1 TOWEL TO SIT ON, AND LAYERS**

**\*\*Be Mindful of STOP SIGN (Don't get a ticket for "California Roll")\*\* Or, park outside and walk in**

Lecture G: Single pointed concentration. Equinimity. Fear. Emptiness.  
Lecture H: Compassion. Suffering.

**\*\* One 20 minutes seated meditation practice. One 20 minute walking meditation practice. \*\***

Class Discussion G: Experiencing single pointed concentration and equinimity. Fear. Meaning of emptiness.  
Class Discussion H: Lessons of compassion. Understanding suffering of all beings.

**HOMEWORK:**

1. Finish writing 1-2 page paper
- \*\*\* Paper due three days after Week 4 by emailing to [armm@lotusew.com](mailto:armm@lotusew.com). Paper will be returned on Week 5 \*\*\***
2. Meditate 15 minutes a day (journal 5 minutes/day)
  3. Take ½ day in silence this week
  4. Finish Journals
- \*\*\* Journals due on Week 5 (will be checked for complience not content) \*\*\***

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**CLASS FIVE**

**\*\*\* Due: Papers. Journals. \*\*\***

**\*\*\* To Be Returned To Students: Papers. Journals. \*\*\***

Lecture I: Sound Therapy (using Tibetan Singing Bowls). Listening to our guides.  
Lecture J: Savasana. Chanting "AUM". Dedication. Conclusion.

Class Discussion I: Experience of Sound Therapy. Sharing experience of guides.  
Class Discussion J: Savasana. Chanting "AUM". Dedication. Conclusion.

**<ONGOING> HOMEWORK:**

1. Meditate 15 minutes a day (journal 5 minutes/day [not to be turned in])
2. Take ½ day in silence per week

CLASS SIX

1. Second half - course introduction:
    - 1.1. Teacher
    - 1.2. Students: gather feedback regarding student expectations, challenges, and difficulties
    - 1.3. Syllabus review
    - 1.4. Dedicating a meditation practice, The importance of
  2. Class presentation (possible PowerPoint): (length: 40 minutes)
    - 2.1. Traditional Taoist images of the yin organs
    - 2.2. Outline channels of the 6 yin organs [handout(s)]:
      - 2.2.1. Tendo-muscular meridians (TMM)
      - 2.2.2. Luo collateral meridians
      - 2.2.3. Primary meridians
      - 2.2.4. Divergent meridians
      - 2.2.5. Extraordinary vessels (8 EV), overview of
    - 2.3. Lecture/discussion: 5 element properties of 6 yin organs [handout(s)]
    - 2.4. Lecture/discussion: Ying Qi Cycle:
      - 2.4.1. Lu/Sp (1st circuit: Taiyin, self survival, body - postnatal essence, food + air): Samsara/cyclic suffering rebirth
      - 2.4.2. Ht/Kd (2nd circuit: Shaoyin, self awareness, expression, creativity, will power, courage, freedom from fear, self-esteem): Theravada Buddhism/nirvana
      - 2.4.3. Pc/Lv (3rd circuit: Jueyin, self realization, connecting/merging with the other, non-inherent existence, interdependent arising): Mahayana Buddhism/bodhisattva
  3. Break time (length: 10 minutes)
  4. Meditation practice:
    - 4.1. Topic #1: The 6 yin organs (Five Elements) – Generating Cycle (length: 20-30 minutes)
  5. Review of today's class
  6. Q/A session: opportunity to ask
  7. Homework assignment:
    - 7.1. Create meditation space at home: set up cushion for daily sitting practice
    - 7.2. Meditate 15 minutes a day [journal 5 minutes after each practice]
    - 7.3. Take ½ day in silence
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CLASS SEVEN

1. Class discussion:
    - 1.1. Students: experiences practicing at home
    - 1.2. Students: compare with experiences practicing in group
    - 1.3. Students: share challenges and difficulties
  2. Class presentation: (length: 40 minutes)
    - 2.1. Powerpoint Presentation – viewing anatomical 6 Yin organs
      - 2.1.1. View 6 yin organs
  3. Break time (length: 10 minutes)
  4. Meditation practices:
    - 4.1. Topics #1-6: 6 practices, 1 on each of the 6 yin organs (length: 5-10 minutes each)
  5. Review of today's class
  6. Q/A session: opportunity to ask
  7. Homework assignment:
    - 7.1. Meditate 15 minutes a day [journal 5 minutes after each practice]
    - 7.2. Take ½ day in silence
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CLASS EIGHT

1. Class discussion:
  - 1.1. Students: experiences practicing at home
  - 1.2. Students: compare with experiences practicing in group

- 1.3. Students: share challenges and difficulties
2. Class presentation: (length: 40 minutes)
  - 2.1. Exploration of Lung
  - 2.2. Exploration of Spleen
3. Break time (length: 10 minutes)
4. Meditation practices:
  - 4.1. Topic # 1: Lung (length: 20 minutes)
  - 4.2. Topic # 2: Spleen (length: 20 minutes)
5. Class workshop: draw connections between the Lung and Spleen (Taiyin)
6. Review of today's class
7. Q/A session: opportunity to ask
8. Homework assignment:
  - 8.1. Meditate 15 minutes a day [journal 5 minutes after each practice]
  - 8.2. Take ½ day in silence
  - 8.3. Begin writing second 1-2 page paper [Due three days after Week 9 by emailing to [armm@lotusew.com](mailto:armm@lotusew.com). Papers will be returned on Week 10]

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CLASS NINE

1. Class discussion:
  - 1.1. Students: experiences practicing at home
  - 1.2. Students: compare with experiences practicing in group
  - 1.3. Students: share challenges and difficulties
2. Class presentation: (length: 40 minutes)
  - 2.1. Exploration of Heart
  - 2.2. Exploration of Kidney
3. Break time (length: 10 minutes)
4. Meditation practices:
  - 4.1. Topic # 1: Heart (length: 20 minutes)
  - 4.2. Topic # 2: Kidney (length: 20 minutes)
5. Class workshop: draw connections between the Heart and Kidney (Shaoyin)
6. Review of today's class
7. Q/A session: opportunity to ask
8. Homework assignment:
  - 8.1. Meditate 15 minutes a day [journal 5 minutes after each practice]
  - 8.2. Take ½ day in silence
  - 8.3. Finish writing 1-2 page paper
    - \*\*\* Paper due three days after Week 9 by emailing to [armm@lotusew.com](mailto:armm@lotusew.com).
    - \*\*\* Paper will be returned on Week 10
- 8.4. Finish Journals
  - \*\*\* Journals due on Week 10 (will be checked for compliance not content)

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CLASS TEN

1. Class discussion:
  - 1.1. Students: experiences practicing at home
  - 1.2. Students: compare with experiences practicing in group
  - 1.3. Students: share challenges and difficulties
2. Class presentation: (length: 30 minutes)
  - 2.1. Exploration/Class conversations of Pericardium
  - 2.2. Exploration of Liver
3. Break time (length: 10 minutes)
4. Meditation practices:
  - 4.1. Topic # 1: Pericardium (length: 20 minutes)
  - 4.2. Topic # 2: Liver (length: 20 minutes)
5. Class workshop: draw connections between the Pericardium and Liver (Jueyin)

**ART OF MEDITATION**

6. Review of:
  - 6.1. Today's class
  - 6.2. Course
7. Q/A session: opportunity to ask
8. \*\*\* Due \*\*\*:
  - 8.1. Paper (was due three days after Week 9)
  - 8.2. Journals (will be checked for compliance not content)
9. To be returned to students:
  - 9.1. Paper
  - 9.2. Journals
10. <Ongoing> Homework:
  - 10.1. Meditate 15 minutes a day (journal 5 minutes/day [not to be turned in])
  - 10.2. Take ½ day in silence per week
11. In closing: (length: 10 minutes)
  - 11.1. Tibetan singing bowls
  - 11.2. Savasana
  - 11.3. Chanting "AUM"
  - 11.4. Dedications
12. Concluding remarks
13. References

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CLASS ELEVEN

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REFERENCE MATERIAL

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FACULTY INFO

Armm, Brendan  
Please check with instructor during class to get updated contact info.  
310.804.5315  
armm@lotusew.com

Brendan Armm has long had an interest in meditation and has studied it in India and elsewhere for years. He teaches Meditation as part of the MTOM curriculum and is graduate of Emperor's College DAOM Program.