



The Science & Art of Happiness Advanced Training Series



Co-offered by the Greater Good Science Center, University of California, Berkeley &
Tsz Shan Institute, Tsz Shan Monastery

Supported by Centre of Buddhist Studies Alumni Association

Programme Overview

What if your emotions were not just reactions, but refined instruments for self-knowledge, discernment, and compassion?

How might your life shift if you could relate to your inner world—not with resistance or overwhelm—but with clarity, balance, and wisdom?

Emotions shape our experience of the reality and the quality of our relationships. Yet few of us have been taught to understand their nature, let alone how to navigate them with intelligence and care. We may find ourselves caught in habitual emotional patterns—clouded by frustration, overtaken by anxiety, or simply disconnected from our deeper experience—without fully understanding why.

The Cultivating Emotional Balance (CEB) training invites participants into a rigorous and contemplative investigation into the nature of the mind and emotions. It is a transformative training program designed to help you understand how emotions work—and how they can work *for* you.

Originally developed in response to a dialogue between senior Buddhist teachers and leading experts in psychology and neuroscience, this secular training was created to address destructive emotions by integrating cutting-edge psychological sciences with the wisdom of ancient Buddhist practices.

You will learn to observe and reflect on your emotional experiences—both uplifting and painful—gaining insight into the patterns and biases shaped by your past. This awareness helps challenge distorted thinking, foster emotional resilience, and improve relationships with yourself and others.

More than a coping strategy, CEB is an invitation to live with greater clarity, confidence, and care. It's about cultivating the emotional balance needed to meet life's challenges with an open heart, and to show up for yourself and the world with renewed purpose and possibility.

Research has shown that participation in the CEB training can (1) reduce anxiety, depression, rumination, and negative affects; (2) increase empathy, positive emotions, and resilience under stress; and (3) enhance relationship satisfaction—sometimes even when only one partner undertakes the training. Many of these improvements were sustained at follow-up, suggesting that enhanced awareness can have a lasting, positive impact.¹

¹ Kemeny, M. E., Foltz, C., Cavanagh, J. F., Cullen, M., Giese-Davis, J., Jennings, P., Rosenberg, E. L., Gillath,

For more information about the evolution of CEB: its origins and ongoing lineage, please visit: <https://cultivating-emotional-balance.org/lineage/>

Foundations Course

Course Outline

Course Description:

This course offers a comprehensive exploration of emotional balance through meditative practice and scientific insights. It begins with an introduction to Cultivating Emotional Balance (CEB), focusing on understanding emotions and practicing mindfulness of breath. Participants will delve into the history of CEB and contemplative science, reflecting on daily emotional experiences. The course covers the scientific definition of emotions, the science of attention, and includes practical exercises in mindfulness of breath.

In the next phase, participants will examine the unique characteristics of emotions, exploring their relationships with moods, personality traits, and mental health. The course encourages introspection, teaching participants to map emotions over time and practice mindfulness of thoughts through labeling.

The focus then shifts to well-being and embodied emotional awareness. Discussions will define well-being, identify its underlying causes, and introduce the practice of loving-kindness. The science of well-being and emotion regulation is reviewed, alongside practices like interoception and the 'handshake with emotion' technique.

O., Shaver, P. R., Wallace, B. A., & Ekman, P. (2012). Contemplative/emotion training reduces negative emotional behavior and promotes prosocial responses. *Emotion*, 12(2), 338–350.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0026118>

A dedicated segment addresses emotions such as anger, frustration, and annoyance. Participants will map recent experiences of anger, explore its unique characteristics, and reflect on constructive responses. The RAIN meditation—Recognize, Allow, Investigate, Nurture—is practiced to manage these emotions effectively.

Finally, the course explores contemporary cognitive science related to awareness and attention, delving into concepts like self-awareness and the minimal phenomenal self. On the experiential side, participants will explore mindfulness of phenomena and spacious open awareness practices, aiming to enhance emotional balance and self-understanding.

Each Zoom session includes cutting-edge sciences, personal reflection, and practical tools for working with emotions. The foundations course covers the fundamental principles of Cultivating Emotional Balance in which students:

- Explore an in-depth scientific definition of emotion
- Learn how to recognize and learn from the emotions in our everyday lives
- Map specific episodes of emotion on a timeline
- Investigate the unique triggers, and impacts of anger
- Develop specific practices to refine attention, develop awareness, and embodied emotional awareness

Introducing CEB, Defining Emotions and Mindfulness of Breath

- History and background of Cultivating Emotional Balance and the field of contemplative science
- Personal reflection on experiences of daily emotions
- Unpacking the scientific definition of emotion
- Reviewing the science of attention
- Practicing mindfulness of breath

Deeper Dive to Defining Emotions

- Learning the unique characteristics of emotions
- Exploring the relationship between moods, emotions, personality traits, and mental illness
- Becoming a scientist of our experience of emotions, developing introspection
- Learning how to map our emotions on a timeline
- Practicing mindfulness of thoughts, labeling

Wellbeing and Embodied Emotion Awareness

- Defining wellbeing, identifying the underlying causes and conditions
- Practice of loving-kindness
- Overview of the science of wellbeing and emotion regulation
- The science and practice of embodied emotion awareness, interoception
- Practice of handshake with emotion

Unpacking the Emotions of Anger, Frustration, Annoyance

- Mapping a recent episode of an anger experience
- Exploring the unique characteristics of anger and related emotions
- Reflecting on constructive responses to anger
- Practicing RAIN meditation with anger, recognize, allow, investigate, nurture

Exploring Awareness

- Contemporary cognitive science of awareness and attention
- Exploring awareness of self and minimal phenomenal self
- Practicing mindfulness of phenomenon
- Practice of spacious open awareness

Instructors:

Eve Ekman, Ph.D., MSW

Greater Good Science Center, UC Berkeley

Eve creates dynamic trainings adapted specifically for the needs of her participants, drawing upon her deep scientific knowledge, direct clinical work, and experiences in a range of institutional and organizational settings. She worked for years as a social worker in health care, criminal justice, and social welfare systems, which inspired her to earn her master's and Ph.D. at UC Berkeley and complete her postdoctoral training at UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Medicine.

Eve is known for her work to bridge scientific research, emotional skills training, and contemplative wisdom. As a second-generation emotion researcher, she has had meaningful collaborations with her father, renowned emotion researcher Dr. Paul Ekman, including on the *Cultivating Emotional Balance (CEB)* programme and the *Atlas of Emotions*, a highly-regarded online visual tool teaching emotional awareness. Eve is one of the senior lead teachers of the *CEB* programme, who taught *CEB* when it was first

offered publicly, and since then has been teaching *CEB* and training *CEB* Teachers for 15 years. The *CEB* training invites participants to investigate their driving motivations, as well as the roots of their destructive emotional episodes through tools of meditative practice and in-depth analysis of emotional events.

Eve's research has focused on helping professional care providers prevent burnout by giving them easier access to practices of attention, insight, and resilience. Building on her research, she developed trainings to address burnout in national and international organizations and has delivered keynotes and workshops for a wide range of organisations and conferences, including Airbnb, Salesforce, and the World Economic Forum.

Eve's writing on empathy, burnout, and compassion has appeared in peer-reviewed journals, magazines, and books, including the *Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology* and *Oxford Handbook of Compassion Science*. She's a Fellow of the Mind & Life Institute, the former Director of Training—and now a Senior Fellow—at UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center. She's also a contemplative curriculum specialist at UC Berkeley's Center for the Science of Psychedelics, where she designed and led their contemplative science curriculum. She was the Wellbeing Lead in the Health team at Apple from 2020 to 2024, where she helped develop innovative wellness apps such as *Fitness+*, *Breathe*, and *Reflect*, as well as explore how emerging technologies like VR could support mindfulness and emotional wellbeing. Eve is also a regular practitioner of meditation, yoga, and cold-water surfing, and brings her enthusiasm for living a rich emotional life into her teaching.

Walter Ngai, JP

Tsz Shan Institute, Tsz Shan Monastery

Walter Ngai is currently the Secretary General of Tsz Shan Monastery. He also serves as a consultant for the Thomas Jing Centre for Mindfulness Research and Training of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He used to be a media person. In 2004, he studied for a Master's programme in Buddhism at the University of Hong Kong and started his spiritual exploration. From orphanages in Africa, holy places in India, to monasteries in the Himalayas, he has left his presence. He actively devotes himself to Buddhist spiritual education, strives to bring Buddhism closer to daily life, and strives to enable modern people, especially the younger generation, to follow in the footsteps of enlightened people and live soberly and comfortably in a troubled world.

Luke Shang, M.Phil.

Tsz Shan Institute, Tsz Shan Monastery

Luke Shang serves as a programme consultant for the Tsz Shan Institute and has been a guiding force behind the *Science & Art of Happiness* programme since its inception in 2020, contributing to its vision, design, and pedagogy. Luke's spiritual journey has been marked by a deep openness to multiple wisdom traditions and teachers. He has found profound insight and moments of awakening through diverse sources, with Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh and the Plum Village communities having had the most transformative influence. Over the years, he has led and facilitated mindfulness practices in Hong Kong, mainland China, and Australia, aspiring to help others rediscover their innate freedom, peace, and true love amid the turbulence of modern life. Just as his spiritual path is broad and integrative, so too is his intellectual background. Holding master's degrees in philosophy, social sciences, and health sciences from the University of Chicago, HKU, and the University of Melbourne, Luke speaks the language of the academically inclined, welcoming critical inquiry while illuminating traditional wisdom with analytical clarity — seeking to make these teachings not only accessible but also a wellspring of insight and presence in daily living.

Dates & Time:

Zoom Online Sessions:

Jul 26; Aug 2, 16, 23; Sep 13, 20 (Saturdays) | 10:00am – 12:50pm

* Zoom recording will remain accessible for a period of 60 days following the class. As our classes are highly interactive, we encourage your active participation in real-time to make the most out of your learning experience.

Experiential Learning Sessions at Tsz Shan Monastery:

Session I: **Sep 7 (Sunday) | 9 am – 12 pm (English) OR 2 – 5pm (Cantonese)**

Session II: **Sep 28 (Sunday) | 9 am – 12 pm (English) OR 2 – 5pm (Cantonese)**

* To enhance the learning experience, the class will be divided into two groups for the in-person Experiential Learning Sessions. You will have the opportunity to indicate your availability and preferred group, and we will do our best to accommodate your request within the capacity of the venue.

* For overseas students unable to attend the in-person sessions, we understand your situation. These sessions are designed to deepen mindfulness and meditation practices. If you visit Hong Kong in the future, we welcome you to reach out in advance, and we will explore the possibility of offering you a similar session with our compliments.

Prerequisites:

There is no prerequisite for this Foundations Course, but you need to be able to follow intensive teaching delivered in English.

Admission priority will be given to applicants who have:

- (a) successfully completed course(s) in the *Science & Art of Happiness* main programme, demonstrating the potential and commitment to continue their learning;
- (b) experiences in meditation/mindfulness, or taken mindfulness or other related courses, e.g., MBSR, MBCT, Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC), or Nonviolent Communication (NVC);
- (c) been working in teaching, counselling, coaching, healthcare, or other caretaking professions;
- (d) studied psychology, mental health, health sciences or other relevant subjects; and/or
- (e) a strong academic background.

Assessment:

You will be assigned some home practice exercises and short reflective writings. Details to be announced in the class.

Award of Certificate:

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, you will be awarded a Certificate of Completion, jointly issued by the Greater Good Science Center, University of California, Berkeley and Tsz Shan Institute, Tsz Shan Monastery.

Course Fee:

The fee for this course is HK\$5,000.

How to Apply:

Apply here: <https://forms.gle/HR8MaTW2TqJY3acZ9>

Pathways for Continued Study after Course Completion:

1. Community of Practice

The teaching team is committed to supporting you on your journey of transformation and growth beyond the duration of the course. Dedicated students can deepen their practice through a **Community of Practice** programme after they have completed the course.

The Community will meet periodically (about biweekly) on Zoom on Saturdays 10:00 – 11:00am for **8 sessions** in total. Dates to be confirmed. The meetings will refresh the learning and practices, invigorating and supporting you on your journey of growth and transformation. **Eve** will play a key role in facilitating the meetings, helping the group to go deeper.

* The Community of Practice is an extended part of the course. Fee applies: HK\$500.

2. CEB Advanced Courses (available in the coming years)

Cultivating Emotional Balance: Working with Fear, Anxiety, and Worry

Building upon the foundational principles of Cultivating Emotional Balance (CEB), this course delves deeper into the complexities of our emotional landscape. Participants will revisit core CEB concepts, focusing on defining emotions and mapping their timelines to uncover underlying patterns.

A significant portion of the course is dedicated to unpacking emotions such as fear, anxiety, and worry. Through reflective exercises, participants will map recent experiences, explore the unique characteristics of these emotions, and develop constructive responses. Practical techniques include embodied emotional awareness practices and identifying healthy distractions to manage fear effectively.

The course also addresses the interconnectedness of fear, stress, and burnout, offering strategies to mitigate their impact on personal and professional life. To foster positive emotional states, participants will engage in practices that cultivate empathetic joy, enhancing their ability to rejoice in others' happiness and successes.

An integral component of the program introduces the Four Mental Balances: attention, aspiration, conation, and emotion. Through theoretical insights and practical applications,

participants will learn how to integrate these balances into daily life, promoting overall mental equilibrium and resilience.

By combining contemplative practices with contemporary psychological insights, this course offers practical tools for participants to navigate their emotional experiences with greater awareness, fostering well-being and meaningful connections with others.

Cultivating Emotional Balance: Sadness, Empathy, Equanimity

Building upon the foundational principles of Cultivating Emotional Balance (CEB), this course offers an in-depth exploration of complex emotions such as sadness, loneliness, disappointment, grief, apathy, and lack of motivation. Participants will engage in reflective exercises to map recent emotional experiences, identify unique characteristics of these feelings, and develop constructive responses. The course emphasizes embodied emotional awareness practices to enhance understanding and management of these states.

A significant focus is placed on the science of empathy, distinguishing between empathic distress and empathic concern, to foster healthier interpersonal relationships. Additionally, the course delves into the science and practice of equanimity, aiming to cultivate a balanced mental state that allows for calm and impartial engagement with life's challenges. Through a blend of theoretical insights and practical applications, participants will deepen their emotional intelligence, promoting genuine happiness and well-being.

Cultivating Emotional Balance: Shame, Compassion, and the Immeasurables

As the culminating module in the *Cultivating Emotional Balance* (CEB) series, this course delves into complex emotions such as disgust, contempt, shame, and guilt. Participants will engage in reflective exercises to map recent experiences, identifying the unique characteristics and triggers of these emotions to develop more skillful and constructive responses.

Building upon the foundations laid in earlier modules, the course emphasizes the application of the Four Immeasurables—loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity—in daily life, to foster positive mental states and enhance interpersonal

relationships. Participants will also explore methods to connect with a deeper sense of purpose, integrating meditation and mindfulness into a lifelong journey of personal growth.

The journey concludes with a return to spacious awareness as a pathway to equanimity, equipping participants with the skills to maintain emotional balance amidst life's challenges. Through this integrated and comprehensive approach—combining contemplative practices with psychological insights—this final course in the series further supports participants in navigating the complexities of human emotion, fostering lasting well-being and meaningful connection.

3. The main programme of the *Science & Art of Happiness*

The CEB courses are part of the *Science & Art of Happiness Advanced Training Series*, an extension of the *Science & Art of Happiness* main programme. For your information, here is a brief overview of the main programme:

The Science & Art of Happiness: A Certificate Programme on Positive Psychology & Evidence-Based Transformative Practice

We all seek happiness, yet it often feels just out of reach. Many of us chase ever-higher goals or hold ourselves to impossible standards, only to find that the pursuit itself pulls us further away from the very happiness we desire.

But what *is* happiness? How can we cultivate a deep and lasting sense of well-being? What mental habits foster true happiness, and what practical exercises can help develop them? How can we better manage stress, build resilience, and nurture authentic, compassionate relationships?

This programme approaches these questions from two complementary perspectives. On one hand, it offers science-based answers from psychology, neuroscience, and transdisciplinary studies of well-being, presenting cutting-edge research and practical tools for everyday life. On the other, it introduces insights from ancient wisdom traditions, not as abstract concepts, but as *living practices* — practices that can be seamlessly woven into every moment of your life.

The main programme consists of two courses, '**Scientific Foundations Course**' and '**Practical Intensive Course**'. Both courses teach you scientifically supported techniques for daily practice, as well as a series of deep, transformative practices. Together, they

cultivate greater awareness of our habitual patterns and transform them into patterns conducive to our well-being, productivity, happiness, kindness, compassion, and quality of life.

Scientific Foundations Course (available in the early months of 2027)

In this course, you will explore key discoveries from the transdisciplinary science of happiness to gain basic knowledge about what happiness is, why it matters, and how people can enhance it within themselves and in their communities. Skilled at making science fun and personal, UC Berkeley's instructors will help you discover how cutting-edge research can be applied to your own lives. Experienced in coaching mindfulness and meditation, Tsz Shan Institute's instructors will offer you direct, step-by-step guidance in the core practice of the course—the mindfulness and meditation exercises.

Practical Intensive Course (available in the early months of 2026)

This course focuses on learning a number of science-based practices of enduring happiness and well-being and applying them to your everyday life and professional context. Through an engaging and interactive format, you will develop skills to increase resilience and well-being in both yourself and others. You will walk away with knowledge and tools to cultivate a more meaningful, joyful, compassionate and connected life for yourself and the people around you. These insights and resources are also useful for coaches, counsellors, teachers, healthcare professionals, social workers, and team leaders to support a wider audience beyond the course.

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