

About the Introduction to Buddhism Course

Overview of the course

Introduction to Buddhism is a six week course, which gives you an introduction to the main ideas, practices, attitudes and symbols of Buddhism.

Each session runs from 7.15pm – 9.45pm on a Monday evening. There is a break during the evening for tea or coffee and biscuits.

The sessions usually consist of semi-formal presentations by the leader(s); discussion time for participants to relate the material to their own experience; short meditations; experiential workshop aspects.

This course is for anyone who is interested in exploring what Buddhism is about.

Aims

By the end of the course, you should have:

- An understanding of the main Buddhist teachings and how they are relevant to daily life;
- Experienced various Buddhist practices, for example, ethics, meditation, friendship, study;
- Had an overview of the history of Buddhism and discussed how Buddhism can be practised in the modern West;
- Shared experiences and ideas with other participants, in order to support practice and stimulate understanding.

Course Outline

An outline of the course is given below. The actual content may vary slightly according to the judgement of the leader.

An overview of Buddhism and how it is practised. You are encouraged to explore your own experience and to discover to what extent the Buddha's teachings are relevant to your life.

Buddhism and how to approach it

The life of the Buddha

The history of Buddhism

The teachings of the Buddha, including the four noble truths

Buddhist ethics

The Buddhist spiritual community

Symbolism