



## **Buddhist Psychology: Essential Skills For Transforming the Heart & Mind** **Course Syllabus – Jack Kornfield**

### **Module 1: Finding the Beauty and Goodness All Around Us**

#### **Module 1.1: Awakening to the Possibility of Dignity and Goodness**

Opening the course, Jack offers an overview of Buddhist Psychology as a practical and experiential science of the mind, helping us move from the judgment and anger of the small self, and into the open-hearted presence of mindful wisdom.

- An overview of Buddhist Psychology
- Buddhist Psychology as a practical and experiential science of the mind
- Moving from the small perspective to the possibility of full open presence and wisdom
- A story of overcoming judgment and anger with mindfulness

#### **Module 1.2: Beginning to Notice: Seeing Beauty and Goodness Everywhere**

In this second section, Jack compares Western Psychology's heavy focus on pathology, medication, and profit, with Eastern Psychology's empowering emphasis on bringing us past the concepts of the mind and into our fundamental goodness.

- Western Psychology's heavy focus on categorization, pathology, medication, and profit
- Eastern Psychology's empowering emphasis on taking us beyond "who we think we are" into our fundamental beauty and dignity
- Awakening to the radiance of those around you as well as your own being
- Mindfulness as the capacity to be here and see clearly

#### **Module 1.3: The Unfinished Business of the Heart**

In this third module, Jack shares how we can use the flexibility and spaciousness which mindfulness offers to move past our judging thoughts, overcome challenges, and cultivate a presence of loving awareness in our lives.

- Working with mindfulness meditation to move past our judging thoughts and settle into presence
- Using the breath as a mirror to notice what is going on inside the body and mind

- The resiliency, flexibility, spaciousness, and non-reactivity that loving awareness offers
- Moving past challenges, reducing depression, and creating presence through mindfulness training

### **Module 1.4: A Quick Exercise: Becoming Spacious and Gracious**

To close out the first full module, Jack offers a relaxing guided practice to calm the mind and quiet the body so we can begin to rest in spaciousness and graciousness.

- Resting our attention on how the body breathes itself
- Calming the mind and quieting the body
- Opening ourselves to the invitation of presence
- Learning to be with the sensations of the body and mind

## **Module 2: Unlocking the Full Potential of Mindfulness with Compassion**

### **Module 2.1: How Compassion Aids Our Healing**

Opening the second module, Jack highlights the importance of merging our mindfulness training with compassion and loving kindness. Through this lens, he suggests we be easy on ourselves, overcome self-hatred through self-compassion, and view meditation as a process rather than a goal-oriented endeavor.

- Merging the training of mindfulness with compassion and loving kindness
- Being easy on yourself and simply coming back to the moment with the breath
- Overcoming the Western mistake of self-hatred through learning self-compassion
- Meditation as a process rather than goal-orientated

### **Module 2.2: Is Mindfulness Impossible Without Compassion?**

In module 2.2, Jack explores how we can begin to touch into the vulnerability of ourselves and others with compassion. Outlining how we must match the world's outer development of technology with an inner-transformation of the heart of humanity, he reflects on how we need to overcome our own hatred, projections, and harming, in order to start to heal the pain within ourselves.

- Learning how to touch the vulnerability of ourselves and others
- Matching the world's outer-development of technology with an inner-transformation of the heart of humanity
- Overcoming our hatred and projections so we can begin to heal the pain within ourselves
- The importance dedicating ourselves to non-harming

### **Module 2.3: Learning to Hold the World in Compassion**

In this section, Jack offers a guided meditation to train the heart to extend our compassion to ourselves, others, and the world.

- Working with compassion practice to train our mind and heart
- A guided 'training of the heart' meditation practice
- Extending our compassion to ourselves, others, and the world

#### **Module 2.4: Compassion for a Year: Try It and See**

Closing out the second module, Jack reflects on how staying consistent in our practice can truly transform our lives and the lives of those around us.

- Staying consistent with our practice to see what happens
- Inviting the capacity for compassion to grow in, and transform, our lives
- Caring for oneself so we can truly care for each other
- Opening the channel of love to our own worthiness and the worthiness of others

#### **Module 3: The Three Pillars of Mindfulness and Why Each is Key for Transformation**

##### **Module 3.1: Mindfulness of the Body: You Are a Fiesta**

Opening up the third module, Jack explores how we can use the body as a mirror to learn about our conscious states of being. Through reflecting on mindfulness of the body, he illuminates how the body is not a sin, machine, or business, but instead it is a fiesta.

- Aging and the neural benefit of spiritual practice
- Bringing loving awareness and kind attention to the present moment
- The first foundation of mindfulness: mindfulness of the body
- Using the body as a mirror for our emotions, thoughts, and consciousness
- The body as a fiesta; rather than a sin, machine, or business

##### **Module 3.2: Cultivating a Wise Relationship with our Embodied Lives**

In module 3.2, Jack explores the training of presence in the body as a ground for resilience in our lives. Illuminating on the importance of our direct experience, he shares how the practices of body-scanning and walking meditation can help us cultivate a wise relationship to an embodied life.

- The training of presence in the body as a ground for resilience
- The importance of our direct experience, not the story we tell about it
- Systematically scanning the body as a tool for mindfulness based stress reduction
- Cultivating a wise relationship to an embodied life
- The practice of walking meditation

### **Module 3.3: Fishing in the Ever-Changing River of Feelings**

In this section Jack highlights the Buddha's view that our human experience is made up of ever-changing rivers of sensations, thoughts, feelings, etc. Through this lens, he offers insight on how mindfulness and compassion can help foster emotional resilience, and shares how the practice of naming/noting can help us gain wise relationship to our river of feelings.

- The Buddha's view that our human existence is made up of ever-changing rivers—sensations, feelings, breath, thoughts, perceptions, consciousness
- How mindfulness and compassion bring a spacious attention to our dynamic river of feelings and help foster emotional resilience
- The practice of naming/noting an experience to gain power as a witness to it, rather than being completely caught in it
- Acceptance, attention, acknowledgement, and wise relationship to our feelings as doorways to freedom

### **Module 3.4: The Briefness of Feelings: Noticing Small Changes**

In this section, Jack leads a guided meditation practice on naming/noting our feelings, which so fluidly arise and pass away.

- A guided practice on naming/noting arising feelings
- Watching the arising and passing of our various feelings states

### **Module 3.5: The Variety of Thoughts: Judgments, Plans, and Reruns**

In module 3.5, Jack helps us bring loving awareness to our constant repetitive inner dialogue so we can become the witness to our thoughts; responding mindfully to them, rather than losing ourselves in habitual reaction.

- Bringing loving awareness to our river of thoughts
- Working with our constant repetitive inner dialogue
- Becoming with witness of thoughts, rather than losing ourselves in them
- Becoming mindfully responsive rather than habitually reactive

### **Module 3.6: A Little Experiment: Counting Our Many Thoughts**

Jack leads a guided experiment in counting our many thoughts, and then reflects on the ways thoughts manifest in the mind.

- A guided experiment in counting our own thoughts
- Our direct experience versus the mental overlay we place on top of it

### **Module 3.7: The Quality of Acceptance: How to Admit Vulnerability**

In this section, Jack outlines the R.A.I.N. technique of recognizing, accepting, investigating, and not taking personally. Through this technique, he offers mindfulness and loving awareness as a practice of intimacy to help deepen our capacity to regulate and live wisely in this world.

- R.A.I.N. – Recognize, Accept, Investigate, Not take personally
- Mindfulness and loving awareness as a practice of intimacy
- Deepening our capacity to regulate and live wisely
- Wisdom from Father Greg Boyle of Homeboy Industries

### **Module 3.8: Meeting the Hardest Experiences with a Wise Heart**

Closing out module three, Jack explores how the self-reflective method of investigation can help lead us to the miracle of release and liberation. Through this lens, he shares how when we realize we are more than our identities, we can step into the capacity to not take things so personally.

- The method of investigation and looking deeply
- How self-reflection can help lead to release
- The miracle of mindfulness and liberation: the capacity to not take things personally
- Ram Dass and how we are more than the identity of our incarnation

## **Module 4: Redefining Mental Health: How Mindfulness Can Lead to Healing, Joy, and Clarity**

### **Module 4.1: Building the Foundations for Mental Health**

To begin module four, Jack outlines the ‘map of mental health’ which stems from wisdom of Buddhist Psychology—offering insight into understanding how both our health and well-being, as well as disease and difficulty, connect to our mental states and consciousness..

- The ‘map of mental health’ which stems from Buddhist Psychology
- Overcoming depression and stress through movement and exercise
- Understanding health and well-being, as well as disease and difficulty, through our various senses (including the mind as the sixth sense organ).
- The roots of our mental states and how they connect with consciousness

### **Module 4.2: Finding Refuge with Mindfulness**

In this next section, Jack illuminates how we can begin to skillfully approach and release our trauma from a stable base by truly understanding its multidimensional architecture and meeting it with a grounded compassion.

- Learning how to skillfully approach our trauma
- The social and emotional aspects of releasing trauma
- Understanding the multi-dimensional architecture of trauma
- Creating a base of stability for trauma work

### **Module 4.3: 10,000 Joys and Sorrows: Mindfully Holding Everyday Life**

In module 4.3, Jack sheds light on cultivating stability and resilience so we can mindfully and wisely navigate our life outside of the body of fear. Reflecting on using presence to expand our ability to truly be with our emotions, he notes the importance of balance and equanimity in helping us take a stable seat amidst the waves of life.

- Cultivating stability, resilience, and presence in order to wisely navigate life
- Overcoming the story of fear in the body and mind
- Using presence to expand our capacity for tolerance so we can truly be with our emotions
- Working with and understanding desire so we have the ability to make mindful choices
- The importance of finding balance and equanimity—the capacity to take our seat in the middle of the waves of humanity with graciousness and ease

### **Module 4.4: Moving Through the World with a Peaceful Heart**

In this section, Jack explores how we can use equanimity practice as a doorway to moving through the world with a peaceful heart. Reflecting on the values of living with this balance, he offers insight around impermanence and acceptance, and shares how we can start to let go and surrender into peace.

- Equanimity practice as a doorway to moving through the world with a peaceful heart
- Reflecting on the values and virtues of a peaceful heart
- How impermanence and acceptance connect with equanimity and balance
- Letting go so we can see the difficulties in others and the world through the lens of a peaceful heart

### **Module 4.5: Visualizing Presence and Care: A Transformative Exercise**

In module 4.5, Jack leads a guided visualization practice to help give us a sense of the direct reality of our Buddha Nature and how we can use that for healing difficult situations.

- A visualization practice to help us experience the direct reality of our Buddha Nature
- An outline of how visualization practices work and how the experience is different for everyone
- Using visualization meditation for healing and fixing difficult situations

### **Module 4.6: Questioning Ourselves: Who Arrived When You Called?**

To close out module four, Jack offers reflections on the alchemy and power of visualization practice, highlighting how the Great Beings of love, healing, and wisdom live inside of us and are always accessible.

- Reflections on the alchemy and power of visualization practice
- Accessing the Great Beings of love, healing, and wisdom who live within us

## **Module 5: Forgiveness: The Key to Escaping the Chains of the Past**

### **Module 5.1: Forgiveness: The Key to Letting Go**

To begin module five, Jack outlines how working with the liberating tool of forgiveness is a fundamental of self care. Sharing how forgiveness is necessary to help unchain us from the past, both personally and collectively, he reflects on how forgiveness allows us to release our heart from pain and hatred.

- Working with the liberating tool of forgiveness as a fundamental of self-care
- Forgiveness as a necessity to help unchain us from the past, personally and collectively
- The critical elements of having a wise understanding of forgiveness
- How forgiveness is for ourselves, to release our own heart from the pain and hatred of the past

### **Module 5.2: Three Stories of Forgiveness**

In this next section, Jack shares three stories of forgiveness which remind us that forgiveness is not weak or naive, but a powerful act of courage. Through this lens, he explores how letting go of hatred heads our bodies and minds, and opens our eyes to how forgiveness truly frees us.

- Forgiveness not as weak or naive; but as a truly courageous and powerful act.
- Letting go of hatred in order to heal our bodies and minds
- The freedom offered through forgiving ourselves and others

### **Module 5.3: Undertaking the Practice of Forgiveness**

In module 5.3, Jack offers a guided meditation practice on forgiveness—helping us forgive ourselves, others, and the world.

- A guided meditation practice on forgiveness
- Forgiving yourself for harming others
- Forgiving yourself for harming yourself
- Forgiving others for harming you, others, and the world

### **Module 5.4: Turning Forgiveness into a Way of Life**

To close out module five, Jack shares reflections on the practice of forgiveness and how we can turn forgiveness into a way of life.

- Reflections on practicing forgiveness
- Complimentary trainings to practices of forgiveness
- Loving and accepting yourself just as you are
- Wishing well for those around you so you can fall in love with the world

## **Module 6: Becoming Your Own Unique Self for the Good of the World**

### **Module 6.1: Becoming Free from the Small Sense of Self**

Opening module 6, Jack reflects on the vast possibilities we have as humans to move from our small self and into our infinite loving nature. Touching on how we can open to the great mystery of being human, he shares how we can live in the paradox of remembering both our Buddha Nature and our zip code.

- The vast possibilities for us to move from the small self into our loving infinite nature
- Opening to the bizarre and great mystery of being human
- Living the paradox of remembering your Buddha Nature and your zip code

### **Module 6.2: Learning to Be A Child of the Universe**

In this next section, Jack explores where the self-inquiry question of, “Who am I?” leads. Noting how we manufacture our identity through self-identifying with our thoughts and feelings, he sheds light on how mindfulness, compassion, and imbibing the witness helps lead us to a more expanded reality and capacity to trust.

- Where the self-inquiry question of “Who am I?” leads
- How we manufacture our identity through our thoughts and feelings
- The way mindfulness, compassion, and witnessing opens us to a more expanded reality
- Listening to the vast silence and mystery behind it all
- Learning the wisdom of uncertainty and the capacity to trust

### **Module 6.3: A Short Practice in Joy: Seeing the Beautiful Possibilities**

In module 6.3, Jack leads a practice in seeing the world through the eyes of joy, reflects on how the Dalai Lama’s ability to be joyful through tragedy holds a transformative power, and teaches us how to find the spirit of well-being and joy no matter the outside circumstance.

- A quick practice in seeing the possibilities offered through joy
- The Dalai Lama and being truly joyful despite tragedy
- Finding the spirit of well-being and joy even amidst difficulty

#### **Module 6.4: Finding the Highest Intention: How To Make Mindfulness Fruitful**

In this next module, Jack shares how the power of intention is critical to the way our karma unfolds. Touching on the nuances of 'short-term intention' and 'long-term intention,' Jack explores what the Bodhisattva vow means, and how we can fine-tune the compass of our heart.

- How the power of intention is critical in how our karma unfolds
- 'Short-term intention' and the wisdom-pause of checking in with your best intention
- 'Long-term intention' and the guidance we use in our lives for how we respond
- The Bodhisattva vow and setting the compass of our heart

#### **Module 6.5: How the Rightness of Intention Creates Agents of Peace**

In module 6.5, Jack illuminates the process of setting our intention and focusing on the value and truth of that intention rather than the results. Through this lens, he reflects on how our intentions and small acts of kindness can transform the world, and shares how connecting with a higher power can open us to infinite possibility.

- Setting our intention, dealing with setbacks, and focusing on the truth and value of the intention rather than the results
- How our intentions can help guide us and transform the world
- The way our small gestures of care and kindness can have major impacts on other's lives and the world at large
- Connecting with a supporting force bigger than our limited life, that opens us to the realm of infinite possibility

#### **Module 6.6: The Power of Holding the Highest Intention**

To close out the Buddhist Psychology course, Jack offers a guided exercise on intention so we can allow our highest good to empower our lives. Summating this transformative course, he shines light on the possibility of the human heart within this incarnation, and offers us our birthright of living with balance, compassion, wisdom, resiliency, well-being, clarity, and understanding.

- A guided exercise on using intention to help our heart guide and empower our lives
- The great possibilities of the human heart in this incarnation
- How these teachings offer us our birthright of balance, wisdom, compassion, resiliency, well-being, clarity, and understanding
- Being your own unique self