

LOVE

This course follows the **WISDOM WITHIN** and **HAPPINESS** courses. We will consider love in the same way that we considered wisdom and happiness by considering if love is part of our nature. Whether we feel love at any one time or not, is it innate? Is it part of who we really are? These are some of the fundamental questions we shall consider.

10 weekly
90 minute meetings

SESSION 1

THE NATURE OF LOVE

Three forms of love: are passion, friendship and love of humanity all forms of love? Can love be completely untainted by selfishness, or unrestricted by any sense of limit?

SESSION 2

THE EXPRESSION OF LOVE

In what ways does love find expression? What is the relationship between love and the objects of love? We also consider experience of love described by Thomas à Kempis.

SESSION 3

LOVE IS THE NATURAL IN-BETWEEN

Love and constancy. Would we like to receive constancy in love from others? Would we like to be constant in our love for others? Boethius on love holding everything together.

SESSION 4

THE BELOVED

What is it that we love in different people and/or things? The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad offers a teaching which goes beyond the surface appearance, as does the work of Viktor Frankl who was interned in a concentration camp in World War II.

SESSION 5

CAUSES OF CONFLICT

Given the great power of love, why is there so much hatred and division in the world? Can the general cause of conflict be overcome by love? If so, how has this shown itself in history?

SESSION 6

GRATITUDE

What is the relationship between love and gratitude? The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius. Do gratitude and generosity encourage each other?

SESSION 7

THE SUFIS: MYSTICAL ASPECTS OF LOVE

The Sufi tradition has produced some of the world's greatest writings on the nature of love. We consider several poems of Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi, better known in the West as Rumi, and Mikhail Naimy, a close associate of Khalil Gibran.

SESSION 8

STOICISM – EPICTETUS

One question that arises in daily life is whether it is possible to retain love and happiness in the face of adversity and hardship. The philosophy of Stoicism throws light on how to choose the emotional ground on which to take a stand.

SESSION 9

LOVE AND WORK

Sometimes people regard work as drudgery, something to be escaped from. In this session, we consider three forms of work – work as love; work as duty; and work as the hunt for reward.

SESSION 10

GIVING LOVE

What happens when we demand or require love? Does that work? What is our response when someone close to us is needy for love? How may love be given fully whilst measured to meet the need?
