

WC02463Y The Freedom to Love:  
An Online Training Course to Liberate Your Genuine Heart

**Introduction: How to Use This Course**

Welcome to *The Freedom to Love* online course. Our course is taught by Pema Chödrön, Tibetan Buddhist nun, bestselling author, and respected meditation teacher. This course is designed to help you explore and experience the qualities of lovingkindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. These qualities are innate in every human being, and Pema Chödrön presents the ideas and practices to help us “uncover” our own basic goodness and connect with these qualities for ourselves and others.

These four qualities, traditionally known as the Four Limitless Qualities or the Four Immeasurables, are summed up in this key text, which Pema returns to throughout the course:

May all sentient being enjoy happiness and the root of happiness.  
May they be free from suffering and the root of suffering.  
May they not be separated from the great happiness, devoid of suffering.  
May they dwell in the great equanimity, free from passion, aggression and prejudice.

This six-week course includes two live question-and-answer sessions held by Pema Chödrön via video. During these live sessions, you may submit your questions live by writing in or by calling using the directions provided.

Before and during the course, you are also encouraged to submit your questions to Pema via your course home page. We will then share these questions with all course participants, at which time you will be able to vote on the questions you would most like Pema to address.

Additionally, you will have access to a discussion forum where you may interact with other students, sharing your experiences and asking and answering questions. We recommend that you visit the forum frequently and engage in meaningful dialogue with your fellow participants. Many students report tremendous benefit in being able to connect with others who are exploring these teachings and working with this material in their daily lives.

Finally, the teachings on *The Freedom to Love* are best understood and ultimately realized from within the perspective and experience of a regular contemplative practice, such as sitting meditation. You will be guided by Pema Chödrön throughout this course in simple meditation techniques as you explore the qualities of lovingkindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. If you have a personal meditation practice, we recommend that you engage with it as often as possible during your participation in this course. If you are new to meditation or would like to deepen your experience of the practice of meditation, with Pema as your guide, you may as an additional resource

purchase and download the audio program *How to Meditate with Pema Chödrön*, which can be purchased through [soundstrue.com](http://soundstrue.com).

In addition, Pema refers to several texts that you may wish to explore to deepen your understanding of the Four Limitless Qualities. These recommended readings are:

*Awakening Through Love* by John Makransky

*Wake Up To Your Life* by Ken McCloud

*Real Happiness* by Sharon Salzberg

*The Places that Scare You* by Pema Chödrön

Finally, each week's course material will provide places for you to journal and complete written exercises, and you'll be able to save and print these responses. However, you may wish to use a physical journal to record your experiences.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** This online course was adapted from a retreat given by Pema Chödrön at the Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, New York, in May 2011. The retreat took place over a long weekend, with talks by Pema on Friday evening, Saturday morning, Saturday evening, and Sunday morning. During our course, you will hear references to these days of the week as well as to current events happening at the time. While such references point toward a particular historical context, the themes and teachings offered are universal and don't tie to any specific moment.