

Dear Dharma Friends,

If you wish to apply for the course there are two processes:

1. Studying the pre-requisites and assessing for yourself if this course is a good fit for you
2. The application.

Please allow yourself plenty of time for both of these processes.

To help you assess if this course is a good fit for you, and to consider if you might want to apply, please consider the 8 criteria below.

### **The prerequisite experience for this course is the following:**

1. 4 weeks of residential, teacher-led, silent Insight Meditation retreats (or equivalent experience).
  2. Familiarity with Energy Body practice.
  3. Self-knowledge.
4. Some understanding of and an affinity with emptiness and 'ways of looking' as presented by Rob Burbea.
  5. Familiarity with Metta practice.
  6. Interest in the key ideas of Soulmaking Dharma.
  7. An open mind.
8. A keen interest in restoring, opening and expanding senses of sacredness.

This is an intensive, rigorous, and demanding course. It asks that the practitioner has developed a number of specific meditative skills, understandings and interests before participating. Some of you may already have these well established. **If not, some of them can be met by listening to the talks listed below each prerequisite.**

Prerequisites number 2 and 3 below are a longer-term development and if these are not already established in your practice, then this course will not be suitable for you. If this is the case and you want to develop these and any of the other of the Soulmaking Dharma foundations, there are several pathways for development linked below the prerequisites.

1. Insight Meditation residential retreat experience: minimum 4 weeks silent, teacher-led, residential Insight Meditation retreats. (If you are very well developed in the other 7 prerequisites and have close to four weeks of silent Insight Meditation retreat experience, or if you have developed a thorough knowledge of the Insight Meditation frameworks and know deeply the territory of spending time in silence with your own heart and mind, please write in detail on your application the ways in which you have gained equivalent experience, and we will be interested to read and consider this.)
2. Facility with energy body practice, including the following:
  - capacity and confidence to abide in and with an awareness of the whole body
  - familiarity working with clinging as it shows up in the energetic patternings of your body and some skill with loosening these in the direction of more ease.

This prerequisite will be sufficiently well established if you **can** access and sustain 'energy body awareness' (with or without the methods given in these instructions), and understand the ideas presented here:

- [A guided meditation on energy body and working with the breath](#)
- [Another guided meditation on energy body and working with the breath](#)
- [The Energy Body \(A Little Bit of What, Why, and How\)](#)

3. Skill with emotions and self-knowledge. Soulmaking Dharma asks a lot of the practitioner. This includes the capacity to work in different ways with beautiful and difficult emotions. It also includes the knowledge of one's individual psychological patterns and the capacity to work with both of these with the whole body as a basis.

- [Emotions and Freedom](#).

4. Familiarity with the approach to emptiness, dependent origination and ways of looking as outlined by Rob Burbea. Please listen to the talks below. You do not need to know or have worked with everything in the talks below but you need to have an affinity with the idea of the 'flexibility of perception' and possibilities that come from experimenting with different 'ways of looking'.

- [Approaching the Dharma: Part 1 - Unbinding the World](#)
- [Approaching the Dharma: Part 2 - Liberating Ways of Looking](#)
- [Emptiness Clinic](#) minutes 13:22-46:51

5. Familiarity with Metta practice and the Brahma Viharas.

6. Interest in and an affinity for the orientations and key ideas of Soulmaking Dharma. If you haven't already, **please listen to the following talks** to gauge your interest:

- [Soulmaking \(Part 1\)](#)
- [Soulmaking \(Part 2\)](#)
- [Key Ideas of a Soulmaking Dharma \(Part 1 - The Why and What\)](#)

7. An open mind. The path of Soulmaking Dharma requires a willingness to allow the loosening of dominant or unquestioned frameworks through which we tend to view experience and practice. The following three-part series gives a good sense of the ways in which this course will ask for an open mind:

- [Questioning Awakening](#)
- [Buddhism Beyond Modernism](#)
- [In Praise of Restlessness](#)

8. A keen interest in restoring, opening, and expanding senses of sacredness, and a desire to know beauty more widely and to explore more resonances, richnesses and meaningfulness with regard to self, other and world.

### Pathways for development

If you do not feel well-established in the prerequisites detailed above but want to develop them in your practice in order to be able to take the course in the future, here are some possible pathways:

[Please click here for a list of materials](#)