



**Nalanda Institute**  
for CONTEMPLATIVE SCIENCE

## Contemplative Psychotherapy Program San Francisco

### Frequently Asked Questions for the Compassion Year, Fall 2021

I see that this is a two-year program with one year in “Mindfulness-Based Psychotherapy” and the other in “Compassion-Based Psychotherapy.” Enrollment is now beginning for the “Mindfulness Year.” Do I need to take both years?

*No, you do not have to take both years. Certificates are awarded each year, so participants are welcome to complete one or both years. Of course, we encourage you to take both years.*

Is it best to start with one year or another?

*The two years build complementary meditative and philosophical practices, and for some people the best entry is through compassion, for others it’s mindfulness. Entry into the program is determined on an individual basis, based on the applicant’s experience and exposure to meditative traditions. There are benefits to starting in either year.*

Are there ways that the years are differentiated other than the subject matter?

*The years are differentiated by subject matter, meditation practices, as well as faculty. The structure of the classes is the same in both years.*

You say the program is for “psychotherapists, health professionals, coaches, or educators.” That seems like a broad spectrum. Can you give some real examples of the types of students who have completed the program?

*Part of the richness of program is the remarkably broad range of professions represented—all are oriented toward integrating healing practices into their professional discipline. We have had marriage/family therapists, private-practice psychotherapists, graduate students, Yoga instructors, physicians, acupuncturists, as well as a Christian Reverend, a lawyer, a venture capitalist, and a hospital-institutional psychiatrist.*

I understand that participants watch weekly online video lectures. How are those made available? Will I have access to those recording after the year is over?

*Participants watch weekly online video lectures via our secure and private website. Most of the weekly reading assignments are also posted to the website. You will have access*

to the site prior to the Fall Retreat and this access continues for one year from the date of graduation from the course.

### **How are the faculty led bi-monthly meetings structured?**

*Twice a month we gather via video conference for 90 minutes, to discuss the material from the video lectures and the reading assignments. Participants will get time for case consultation and to share their experiences regarding their meditation practice.*

### **How are the student-run discussion groups structured?**

*Discussion groups are 2–3 participants who meet once a month either in-person or via video conference to discuss the program’s material. These groups, along with the bi-monthly faculty led meetings, help create community and time to process the assignments.*

### **Can you say something about the capstone projects?**

*Capstone projects are a vital component of the program allowing students to integrate their coursework in meaningful ways — personal or professional. Guidelines for the projects are deliberately open and students work on their projects throughout the year.*

*The projects reflect the diverse professional backgrounds of our students and take on many forms. They range from the academic to the creative.*

*Past projects have incorporated clinical applications such as anxiety and eating disorders or have focused on specific population groups such as incarcerated youth. Many projects integrate mindfulness and/or compassion practice. We’ve seen theoretical papers, personal integration papers, websites offering information and tools about meditation, recordings for patients, and a variety of creative/artistic presentations of the material.*

### **Is there homework? What would a typical homework assignment involve?**

*There are weekly readings—usually around 30 pages—assigned each week along with the weekly 2 hour online video lectures. Other assignments include: submitting a capstone proposal and final capstone project, 2 meditation teach-backs (in which you lead a meditation to a small group), as well as brief reflection papers on the teach-backs..*

### **How many hours outside of the classroom should I expect to put in?**

*That’s really up to you! Generally, participants watch the weekly 2 hour online lectures, spend about 1–2 hours with readings/material, as well as their daily meditation practice commitment—which is individually determined.*

### **Do I need to be an experienced meditator to be in the program?**

*Daily meditation practice is a cornerstone of the program that we encourage and support. We recommend that participants have a basic meditation practice upon entering into the*

*program, but one does not have to be highly experienced. The program offers support to those seeking to develop a daily practice.*

**Does it matter what meditation tradition that I follow?**

*Absolutely not. The diversity of our students' practices enriches us all. We have participants coming from many different meditation traditions, and strongly encourage students to maintain their practice and tradition while complementing it with the meditation practices of the program.*

**Are the retreats residential?**

*The retreats are non-residential and take place in San Francisco at the San Francisco Zen Center. Participants book their own accommodations. Hotel and food expenses are not included in the tuition.*

**Can I apply for a scholarship?**

*The program does not offer full scholarships. The program does offer some financial assistance and an installment plan.*

*Thank you for your interest in Nalanda Institute's Contemplative Psychotherapy Program.  
General information about the program may be found here:*

<https://nalandainstitute.org/contemplative-psychotherapy-program>