

Imaginal Wisdom School: Getting Started



Welcome to the Imaginal Wisdom School with Cynthia Bourgeault. This eCourse includes 43 recorded sessions, more than 25 hours, filmed during a five-day Wisdom School at the Valle Crucis retreat center in North Carolina in August 2020. The materials provided in this course present each teaching and practice session in the precise order and flow as the original event.

It will become immediately obvious as you begin watching the videos that this was a very unique event in very particular circumstances. It was hosted at a time when COVID-19 pandemic conditions and protocols were in place, and therefore only a small number of participants (33 in total) were able to attend onsite. Mask-wearing, social distancing, and limited time indoors were implemented as precautionary measures. In addition to the onsite group, just over 125 people from around the world participated and interacted live from their homes, connected virtually through Zoom. This “hybrid” model of both on-the-ground and virtual Wisdom School has now expanded even further to include and reach all of those, like yourself, who desire to participate via this online eCourse. We’re so glad to have you join us!

Suggested Settings & Formats for Using the Course Materials

The course materials have been carefully designed to equip and empower you to receive the greatest benefit as you now participate in this Wisdom School as an online offering. The structure and content is very adaptable to use on your own, or to follow along with other registered participants. We encourage you to customize the experience to suit your own setting and circumstances.

Following are some options to consider.

Engage the eCourse on your own, replicating the 5-day format.

If your circumstance allow for you to arrange a full 5-day retreat-like immersion with the content, you can basically recreate the Wisdom School rhythm and engage with the material following the schedule and teachings as presented in the course sessions.

Engage the eCourse with a group, replicating the 5-day format.

If you're in touch with other registered participants we encourage you to establish a mutually agreeable schedule and structure to move through the course materials together in a coordinated and synchronized way. This could include gathering with other eCourse participants in-person, or coordinating a virtual group to move through the course content together (for example you can set up your own Zoom meetings to connect with each other as you work with the materials).

If possible you may choose to follow a typical 5-day Wisdom School schedule, which in this case unfolded like this:

- **First Evening.** Introduction and settling in time

- **Days 1-4.** Follow a general rhythm of:
 - Morning Sit/Practice
 - Breakfast Break
 - Morning Teaching
 - Conscious Work Period
 - Lunch Break and Free Time
 - Afternoon Sit/Practice
 - Afternoon Teaching
 - Dinner Break
 - Evening Teaching/Q&A (skipped on Day 1)

- **Day 5.** Half day:
 - Sit/Practice
 - Breakfast Bread
 - Final Teaching
 - Eucharist and Closing Words

Engage the eCourse over a longer time frame.

Whether following the sessions on your own, or arranging to participate in a group, you can opt to stretch the course over an extended time frame, such a few hours a day over a longer period, or on a regular weekly or monthly basis. Find a format that will provide both enough structure and flexibility to meet your particular situation.

Include conscious practical work periods.

Whatever structure or setting you choose, Cynthia strongly encourages you to plan for and include conscious work periods. As you'll discover, these are an integral part of the Wisdom School experience, a way of including your body in the process of "knowing with more of your whole being." Tasks for the work period can be as simple as tending to household tasks or outdoor chores.

Course Content		Expand All Collapse All
Sessions		Status
1	Getting Started	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	First Evening of the Wisdom School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Day 1 of Wisdom School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Day 2 of Wisdom School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Day 3 of Wisdom School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Day 4 of Wisdom School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Day 5 of Wisdom School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

As a suggestion for this specific Wisdom School Cynthia invites participants to work with a material called "pot warp," a type of colorful nautical rope used on fishing boats. As she explains in the first session, the act of unraveling and braiding this rope provides a unique opportunity to engage the moving center in a healing and revealing process. You can likely find some pot warp to work with at your local nautical supply or hardware store, or can order online.

Course Navigation Tips

Once you have logged in with your unique email/login and password, you will see your course 'Dashboard'. The full course outline is presented here with clickable links to access all sessions and resources.

Following Getting Started, there are six sessions each providing direct access to the course content videos, audios, and related materials, taking you through each day of Wisdom School in sequential order.

At any place in the course you can easily navigate through the various components using the links indicated to "**Mark Complete & Move Ahead**" or to select "**←Previous Session**" or "**Next Teaching→**."

Course Navigation

- ▶ Getting Started
- ▼ First Evening of the Wisdom School
 - First Evening Part 1 of 2: Working with the Imaginal in Challenging Times
 - First Evening Part 2 of 2: Introducing the Imaginal
- ▶ Day 1 of Wisdom School
- ▶ Day 2 of Wisdom School
- ▶ Day 3 of Wisdom School
- ▶ Day 4 of Wisdom School
- ▶ Day 5 of Wisdom School

Course Progress

Additionally there is a quick access "Course Navigation" menu with clickable titles that you can use to easily advance or return to any session, expanding the session titles for direct content links. This menu also provides a bar showing your "Course Progress" according to the sessions you have marked as complete.



List of Course Materials & Resources

- **Course Videos.** As you watch Cynthia on session videos, you'll see that her presence and transmission are powerful, luminous, and engaging. The videos follow the precise order and flow of the live Wisdom School event. **Tip:** When playing the videos we suggest clicking the "full screen" icon in the lower right-hand corner of the screen to get the full visual effect.
- **Audio (MP3) Recordings.** An audio (MP3) of every session is also provided. These can be downloaded to save and use on portable devices so you can listen anywhere, anytime.
- **Additional Resources.** For some sessions we have included references and supplemental content that support the teaching.

Connecting via Facebook and Zoom Opportunities

Private Facebook group for Imaginal Wisdom School participants.

We have provided this private Facebook group as a conversation and reflection space for those registered in the Imaginal Wisdom School eCourse. We encourage you to share your comments, contributions, and questions to whatever degree that you are interested in participating. This group was initiated at the time of the original August 2020 event, and now welcomes all those joining the eCourse, as well. [Click this link and request to join the Facebook group.](#)

Monthly hosted Zoom gatherings for course participants.

You will be invited to meet virtually with others in the Imaginal Wisdom School, as an opportunity to share your experience, to deepen your understanding, and to get to know other participants.

This will be a monthly scheduled Zoom call, open to those registered in the eCourse. As we have seen consistently, the experience with Wisdom School teachings are greatly enhanced through the collective encounter and interactions with fellow students.

Feedback, Comments, and Questions

If you have feedback, comments, questions, or need any additional guidance, email Robbin Brent at Robbin@WisdomWayofKnowing.org and she'll assist you, or connect you with someone who can provide assistance.

Other Ways to Stay Connected

Here are some additional ways to stay informed and connected in the Wisdom community:

- Sign up to the Wisdom Way of Knowing email list for periodic notifications of new courses, reflections from Cynthia and other Wisdom leaders, as well as upcoming events and new resources.
- Visit the Wisdom Community websites at:
 - [Wisdom Way of Knowing](#)
 - [Cynthia Bourgeault](#)
 - [Northeast Wisdom / Wisdom Waypoints](#)
 - [The Contemplative Society](#)

Video Credits

Filmed live at an Imaginal Wisdom School with Cynthia Bourgeault, August 2020

- Teacher: Cynthia Bourgeault
- Piano: Andrew Breitenberg
- Movements: Heather Ruce, Karla Oakley, and others
- Morning Yoga: Benjamin Thomas
- Producer and Director: Robbin Brent
- Videographer: Robbin Brent
- Editor: Steve Nathans-Kelly
- Audio Visual Technical Assistance: Jeff McGinnis
- Project Support: Bob Sabath, Eilen deVerteuil
- Photography: Thomas Telhiard, Jonathan Steele, Harrison Taylor, and Robbin Brent



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providing experiential teachings and resources to deepen the understanding and practice of the Christian Wisdom tradition as taught by Cynthia Bourgeault and other Wisdom teachers. We support a world-wide Wisdom Community Network by providing trusted online resources, a master archive of Cynthia's teachings, ongoing eCourses, and by hosting circles of connection and conversation for self-paced study, reflection, and practice.