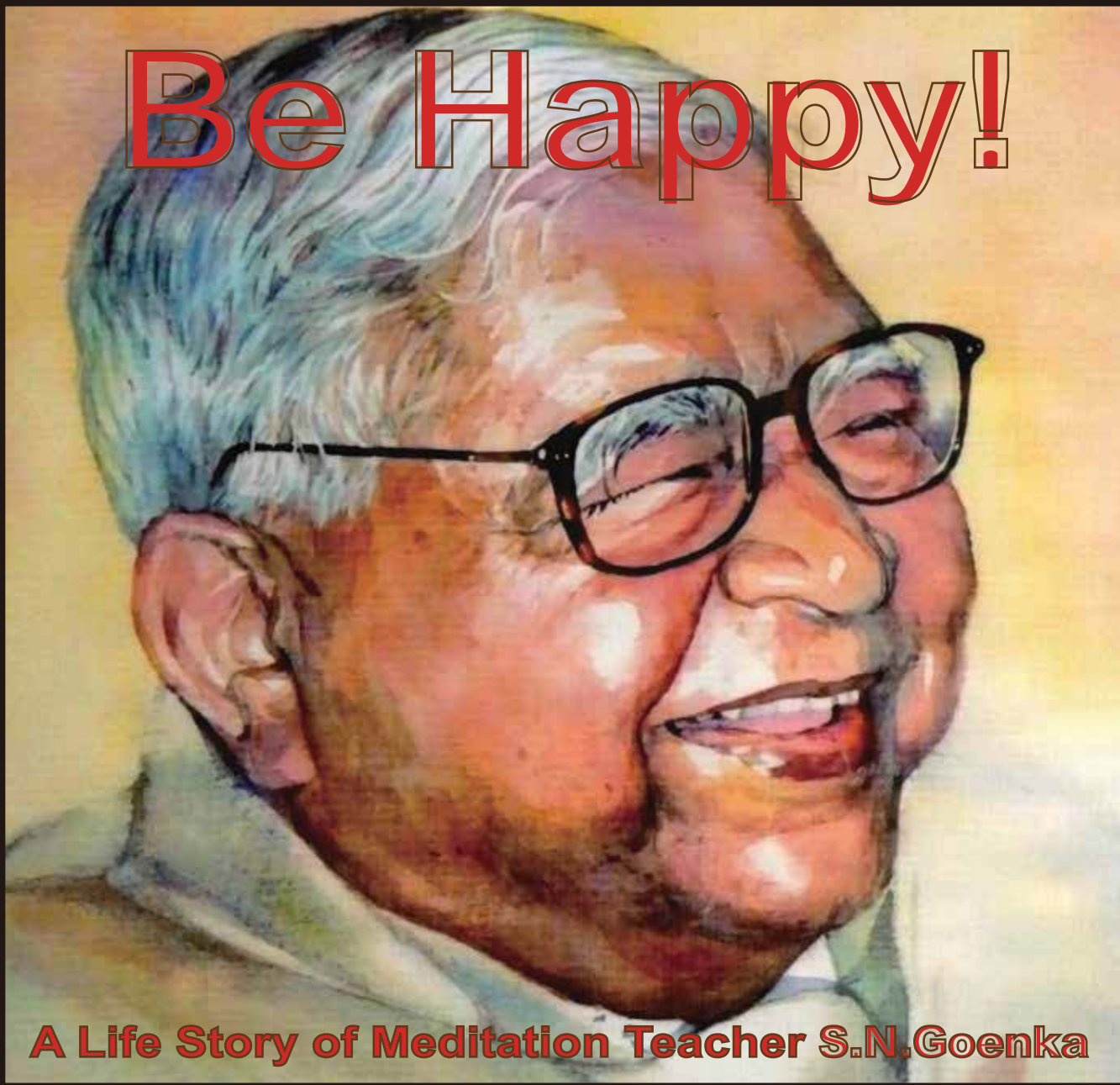


Be Happy!

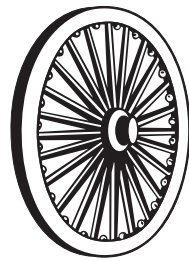


A Life Story of Meditation Teacher S.N.Goenka

Be Happy!

A Life Story of Meditation Teacher

S.N.Goenka



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Preface

The aim of this book is to give a short outline of the life story of meditation teacher S.N. Goenka. During his long life Goenkaji was always keen to promote the Dhamma (Universal Truth) and not himself. However, his life story is an inspiring testament to Dhamma itself, and for this reason I asked permission from him to write this book in the year before his death. I am grateful permission was given. I have drawn heavily on Goenkaji's own writing, published in Vipassana Newsletters through the decades, where elements of autobiographical descriptions have been given in the course of illustrating various Dhamma points. This material I have selected and adapted, and then I have linked it chronologically with additional written material to fill any gaps. Any errors will certainly be mine. Originally intended for teenagers I hope the book will also inspire the general reader with an appreciation of how a life can be transformed by practising Anapana and Vipassana meditation.

As Goenkaji's teacher, Sayagyi U Ba Khin said, "Just as the light of a candle has the power to dispel darkness in a room, so also the light developed in one man can help dispel darkness in several others." Goenkaji's life work has been to spread Vipassana, an art of living, helping hundreds of thousands of people to find real peace and happiness. It is a story that illustrates what profound things can be accomplished in one life-time.

May more and more people get the chance to find this technique and.....Be Happy!

- Kirk Brown

*People of the world, awake!
The dark night is over.
The light of Dhamma has come,
The dawn of happiness.*

- S.N.Goenka

Introduction

There is an old prediction that comes from an ancient land, the land of Burma. It is about the teachings of the Buddha (enlightened one) who lived and taught in India many centuries ago. It was believed that 2,500 years after passing away, his teaching would rise again in Burma and from there be taken back to India, from where it would spread round the world. This is the story of S.N.Goenka (full name Satya Narayan Goenka, known as Goenkaji to his students) and how it fell to him to play a major part in making this happen.

Destiny Fulfilled

To date (2014), there are about 160 Vipassana centres around the world and over 1000 assistant teachers, senior assistant teachers and teachers appointed by Goenkaji. Since he started teaching, over a million people have attended courses. For 44 years, until the very end of his life, he worked tirelessly to continue the mission of his teacher, Sayagyi U Ba Khin, and by his example he inspired countless other people to join in the work. By his force of character, background, and talents, Goenkaji was uniquely suited to realize the dream of his own Dhamma father, to bring Vipassana back to India and from there to spread it round the world. In the process he brought real happiness and peace to many.

Goenkaji died peacefully at his home in Mumbai on 29 September 2013. His ashes were taken to the land of his birth and immersed into the Irrawaddy River.



Some Quotes from Goenkaji

'A Hindu who learns Vipassana may continue to call himself a Hindu; a Muslim a Muslim, and so on for a Jain, a Christian, a Buddhist. The important point is to become a good person, living a happy and harmonious life. Dhamma helps everyone to become a good human being.'

'Remember that an empty vessel has nothing to offer others. Therefore fill yourself with the Dhamma. Discover real peace and harmony within yourself, and naturally these will overflow to benefit others.'

'The teaching is extraordinary in its simplicity: A certain cause will produce a certain effect; to remove the effect, eliminate the cause.'

'If children start learning this in childhood, when they become adults they will naturally live healthy, good lives.'

'Only when you go deeper can you realise that every vocal or physical action that breaks the law of nature, at the same time causes harm to yourself.'

'When you want to change society you have to change the individual.'





Finding real, meaningful happiness in life is not easy. From an early age, S.N.Goenka's mind was filled with high spiritual ideals. On the other hand his achievement of worldly success at a very young age filled his mind with tremendous ego. A mental conflict resulted, leading to great stress and mental tension. It also led to him learning Vipassana meditation, which changed the course of his life. For 14 years he studied meditation in Burma with his teacher, Sayagyi U Ba Khin. When he went to India to teach Vipassana to his mother, he took with him the belief of his teacher, that the 'Time Clock of Vipassana had struck.' Vipassana would once again revive in the land of its origin, and from there spread round the world.

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