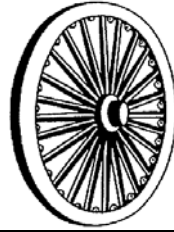


# Vipassana



# Newsletter

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, as

taught by S. N. Goenka

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## WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Mā pamādamanuyuñjetha,  
mā kāmaratisanthavaṃ;  
appamatto hi jhāyanto,  
pappoti vipulaṃ sukhaṃ.*

One should neither be negligent,  
nor addicted to sensual pleasures;  
Indeed, the mindful, meditative person  
experiences supreme happiness (Nibbāna).

—Dhammapada 27

## Questions and Answers with Goenkaji

*(The following is adapted from the question-and-answer session that followed Goenkaji's talk at Vancouver during his tour of North America in 2002. It was first published in the April 2011 International Vipassana Newsletter.)*

**Question:** You talk so much about suffering and mental defilements. Isn't your message pessimistic?

**Goenkaji:** How is it pessimistic? This is the most optimistic message! Misery exists, but if there is a way to come out of misery, the message is full of optimism. If somebody says, "There is misery and no way to come out of it, you have to suffer misery your whole life," that would be pessimistic. But here the message is, "You can come out of it!" Whatever the misery may be, there is a way to come out of all the miseries. It is the most optimistic message!

**Question:** Many prophets have said that the end of the world or a cleansing of the Earth is coming. Do you believe this is true? Why or why not?

**Goenkaji:** We are responsible for spoiling the purity of the Earth. We are generating so much pollution. We talk so much about chemical pollution, which is visible. It is harmful, but what about mental pollution? Everyone generates negativity, and the entire atmosphere gets polluted. We are responsible for that, and we are responsible to purify this atmosphere. Change the habit pattern of the mind and the Earth will become free from all the miseries.

**Question:** How can I practice Dharma and yet hold on to my hopes and aspirations to make the world a better place?

**Goenkaji:** You have aspirations, there is nothing wrong in that. But to attain your aspirations, if you keep on generating impurity in your mind, you are far away from your goal. You are losing the peace and harmony of your mind. With peace of mind, maintaining perfect balance of the mind, do whatever is necessary in human life, good for you and good for others.

**Question:** Do you believe in reincarnation?

**Goenkaji:** I am not interested in these beliefs. Beliefs are always blind beliefs. Why believe? Experience it. See what happens after death, whether you get reincarnated or not. Then only accept it!

**Question:** How can you be passionate about life but remain detached at the same time?

**Goenkaji:** Come to Vipassana and you will know how! It looks so difficult now because you don't know how to balance the mind at the deepest level. You try to impose this balance at the surface level. That itself is difficult. And even if you have made your mind balanced at the surface level, the lack of balance remains at the depths. You can't come out of it. Vipassana is for this purpose, so that you can work at the root level and become really happy.

**Question:** If craving and aversion are to be avoided, what are they replaced with?

**Goenkaji:** They are replaced with love, compassion, good will. Whenever the mind is impure, it becomes more and more impure as you start generating craving and aversion.

This is a habit pattern going back far into the past. Before, you kept on generating craving and aversion; and now again you generate craving and aversion. You are becoming more and more miserable.

By this technique, the habit pattern changes and the mind becomes purer and purer, free from craving, free from aversion. A pure mind by nature is full of love, full of compassion. You don't harm yourself, you don't harm others.

Just eradicate the impurities in the mind and love and compassion is a natural result.

**Question:** Can't I still have fun in life if I learn Vipassana?

**Goenkaji:** Have fun, but with equanimity! Don't lose your equanimity, and have fun. Nothing wrong in enjoying fun!

### **One-Day Course at Global Vipassana Pagoda**

A mega one-day Vipassana course will be conducted at the Global Vipassana Pagoda in presence of Goenkaji on Guru Purnima. Though Guru Purnima is on Friday, 15 July, the course will be held on Sunday, 17 July 2011 so that maximum meditators can attend the course.

**Registration for the course is compulsory.**

Contact for registration:

Mobile: 98928-55692, 98928-55945;

Tel: (022) 2845-1170, 3374-7543, 3374-7544

Email registration: [oneday@globalpagoda.org](mailto:oneday@globalpagoda.org)

Online registration: [www.vridhamma.org](http://www.vridhamma.org)

### **Vipassana in Japan—the earthquake and its aftermath**

*The following is a message from Chris and Sachiko Weeden, acariyas living in Japan near Tokyo.*

Friday, March 11 was a beautiful day, with clear blue skies and a feeling that spring would soon be with us. The first plum blossoms were already in bloom and the cherry blossoms would shortly follow.

At 2:46 p.m., when the first tremor of the earthquake began, 50 students plus Dhamma servers and the teacher were seated in the meditation hall at *Dhammadicca*. It was Day 9 of a 10-day course; and with the opening instructions for the group sitting finished, the hall was silent.

Two Vipassana centers serve Japan: *Dhamma Bhanu* (Kyoto) in the southwest, and *Dhammadicca* (Chiba) in the east. *Dhammadicca*, located less than two hours from central Tokyo, primarily serves the residents of the capital and eastern cities and was much closer to the epicenter of the quake. Fortunately neither center was damaged and all students are safe and well. Despite two emergency evacuations from the meditation hall and numerous aftershocks, the course at *Dhammadicca* completed successfully and most students left on Day 11.

In rapid succession following the initial quake, Japan faced a crisis on multiple fronts: a 10-meter tsunami tidal wave had struck along the eastern coast, causing severe damage; six nuclear reactors were damaged, four of them seriously; and workers were struggling to control a radiation leak.

At first, teachers and trust members considered throwing open *Dhamma Bhanu*, the Kyoto center, as a halfway house for meditators and their families who might have been made homeless in the regions hardest hit by the tsunami. But after further consideration, we agreed that the best service we could offer would be to make available the invaluable Dhamma vibrations at the Vipassana centers—the islands of Dhamma where meditators could take refuge from the fears and anxieties pervading the country.

With this spirit in mind, a message was sent out to all old students, welcoming them to come to either center and participate in a series of special group sittings.

In addition to the regular three group sittings that would be held each day, there would be the opportunity to meditate with other old students for up to three days or, if preferred, join in with the various service projects taking place at the center.

Two weeks have now passed since the initial quakes and still aftershocks continue in Chiba and elsewhere almost daily. There have been shortages of daily

necessities here and there, and everyone is deeply saddened to see such heartbreaking images of those who have suddenly lost everything, including many who have lost their loved ones. Still, it is heartening to observe the society behaving with such dignity and composure.

The nuclear crisis continues despite the heroic efforts of the Samurai 50—the technicians battling against the odds to regain control of the damaged reactors. There is periodically some good news and we all think we have now turned a corner, but it is then followed by more bad news.

Numerous messages of support and encouragement have flowed in from Dhamma friends and well-wishers around the world, and have been gratefully received. We are reminded how fortunate we are that we have the strong international Dhamma community thinking of us, and that we have the words and teaching of the Buddha that have come down to us through the ages:

“Make an island of yourself, make yourself your refuge, there is no other refuge. Make Dhamma your island, make Dhamma your refuge, there is no other refuge.”

May all beings be happy!

### **First course in Yekaterinburg, Russia**

The first ten-day course was held near Yekaterinburg (formerly Sverdlovsk) in March 2011. This is Russia's third-largest city. About two hours by plane from Moscow, it is located in the province of Sverdlovsk, east of the Ural Mountains dividing Europe from Asia.

A group of some 30 meditators living in Yekaterinburg had requested the course and organized it. The site was a camp not far from the city. Ninety-one students finished the course and there were 17 full-time servers. The course ran very smoothly, and students are enthusiastically talking of holding more courses and eventually looking for land for a center.

Courses have been held in Russia since 1993 and the demand is very strong. Since 2001 there have been six to eight courses a year, with participants averaging 120 to 180. In the Moscow area, courses fill up within half an hour after registration opens. Land was bought for a center last December, 100 kilometers east of Moscow. More courses are being held in other cities, with children's courses planned. For more information, visit: [www.ru.dhamma.org](http://www.ru.dhamma.org)

### **Southern California Vipassana Center**

Goenkaji approved plans for the center in Southern California in 2002, when he visited the region. When local students purchased a site, he named it *Dhamma Vaddhana* “Growth of Dhamma.” The first ten-day course was conducted from 4 to 15 May, 2011.

The center is located just north of Joshua Tree National Park, approximately two and a half hours by car from Los Angeles and San Diego. The property consists of 154 acres of desert landscape. From it can be seen Mount San Gorgonio, at 11,500 feet the highest peak in southern California.

The center has been built specifically to meet the needs of participants in a Vipassana course. Meditators will have comfortable accommodations and facilities. Most will stay in private rooms with attached baths.

The center will initially have facilities for 70 students. The plan is eventually to expand to accommodate 150 as funds become available. For more information, go to: [www.vaddhana.dhamma.org](http://www.vaddhana.dhamma.org)

### **A new edition of the Newsletter for prison inmates**

The first issue of the *Vipassana Prison Newsletter* was printed for distribution to the 150 meditators who are inmates at the Donaldson Correctional Facility in the US state of Alabama in March 2011.

Donaldson was the setting for the 2008 documentary film *The Dhamma Brothers*. It is currently the only correctional institution in the West hosting a regular course program. The North American Prison Trust has organized courses there since 2002 and in that year Goenkaji visited the prison to meet with meditators when he toured North America.

The administration is interested in expanding the course program to serve more inmates, as well as providing more support for those who have sat courses. The Prison Newsletter is a part of that initiative.

The newsletter reprints Goenkaji's inspiring message from the first issue of the *Vipassana Newsletter* back in 1974 (see [www.dhamma.org/en/os/words.htm](http://www.dhamma.org/en/os/words.htm), username: oldstudent; password: behappy). It reports on the 13th course held at Donaldson, this past January. It contains questions and answers, explains some Pali terms, and tells about showings of *Dhamma Brothers* around the world. One feature focuses on a participant in a 2005 prison course in Israel. Another describes the last days of Omar Rahman, one of the original Dhamma brothers. Most important, the newsletter lists group sittings and future courses at Donaldson.

Another issue is now in preparation. It's hoped that the Prison Newsletter will appear regularly to help meditators in this very challenging environment.

### **Freedom for a Dhamma brother**

*The following article appeared in the first issue of the Vipassana Prison Newsletter in March 2011.*

Omar Rahman was one of the original Dhamma Brothers. He participated in all the Vipassana courses at Donaldson and helped out in different ways. Outside Donaldson, people got to know about Omar particularly by reading Letters from the Dhamma Brothers.

When the April 2009 course took place, Omar was staying in the prison infirmary. He was suffering from advanced liver cancer. More than half a year before, doctors had told him that he had six months to live.

Despite this, Omar was happy to know that another course was happening at Donaldson. Even though he was very weak, he resolved to be there.

For the first six days, leaning on a cane, Omar walked from the infirmary to meditate for a few hours in the interview room in the gym. He would sometimes be dizzy and shaking with weakness, but he was determined.

During this time, one of the inmates helping on the course was going through difficulties. Although Omar could barely hold a spoon to eat, he talked to this man each day and helped him deal with the problems. To his last, Omar was guiding and inspiring others.

During his months in the infirmary, Omar used to say that he was not going to die in prison. In fact, a new

Alabama state law allows for the release of certain prisoners with a terminal illness. This provision had yet to be used. But on the seventh day of the course, Omar was taken in a wheelchair to his sister's car, and drove out with her from the gates of Donaldson.

The next day his wish came true. Omar died peacefully in his sleep at his sister's home, a free man.

At the course graduation ceremony, many of the students spoke about how much Omar had meant to them. He had really touched and moved many people in Donaldson, and many others beyond.

In a 2006 letter, Omar described the impact of Vipassana on his life.

"As an Imam and having taken the Vipassana course, I began to emphasize the importance of being observant and attentive," he wrote. "For instance, the Quran constantly mentions the importance of being mindful and observant of what is in the heart. Prior to the Vipassana course, these were words of wisdom. After Vipassana these words became a practice."

### **Diploma in Vipassana, University of Mumbai**

**Course:** One-Year Diploma: Teaching of the Buddha, Vipassana Theory and Practice (2011–2012) (Joint collaboration of VRI, Igatpuri and Department of Philosophy, University of Mumbai)

**Syllabus:** Introduction to Pali, Pali literature, related art and architecture, life and teaching of the Buddha, principles and technique of Vipassana, practical application of Vipassana in health, education, social development, etc. and other topics.

**Medium of Instruction:** English.

**Venue:** Philosophy Dept, Jnaneshwar Bhavan, Mumbai University, Vidya Nagari Campus, Kalina, Santacruz (E), Mumbai 400 098

**Application Forms:** available from 20 June to 10 July 2011 at Philosophy Dept (11.00 am to 2 pm, Monday to Friday).

**Course Duration:** 16 July 2011 to 31 March 2012

**Timings:** Every Saturday, (2:30 to 6:30 pm)

**Eligibility:** Old SSC or New HSC (12th Std.).

**Requirement:** Only those who can do a ten-day Vipassana course during Diwali vacation are eligible to appear in the exam. **Contact:** 1. Dr. Sharda Sanghvi – 92234-62805; 2. Shashikant Sanghvi – 92244-53182; 3. Mrs. Baljit Lamba – 09321950067 / 26237150; 4. Dept. of Philosophy (022) 2652-7337.

### **Dhamma Service at Global Vipassana Pagoda**

The Vipassana Global Pagoda is implementing various infrastructure and beautification projects and requires the service of committed Vipassana meditators:

**Fitters** – ITI Fitter with 10 to 15 years of experience in civil construction equipment maintenance, fabrication and other assembly work.

**Plumbing & AC Mechanic** – ITI Plumber with 10 to 15 years experience in large, multipurpose complexes and in repairing servicing & installing AC units.

**Benefits** - Opportunity to contribute to this unique project, regular meditation practice, right livelihood, good remuneration package, food for all, and accommodation for deserving candidates.

**Contact:** General Manager, GVF, Global Vipassana Pagoda, Next to Esselworld, Gorai, Borivali (W) Mumbai 400 091. Tel: (022) 3374-7501, 2845-1204.

Email: [hr@globalpagoda.org](mailto:hr@globalpagoda.org),

Website: [www.globalpagoda.org](http://www.globalpagoda.org)

**Children's Meditation Courses in Mumbai**

Date	Course site	Age (years)	Registration
19-6	Residential course (boys and girls)	10-16	9 to 15-5
19-6	Ghatkopar	10-16	16 & 17-6
3-7	Matunga	10-16	30-6 and 1-7
17-7	Ghatkopar	10-16	14 & 15-7
7-8	Matunga	10-16	4 and 5-8
21-8	Ghatkopar	10-16	18 and 19-8

**Course Timing:** 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. **Registration Timings:** 11 am to 1 pm on the specified numbers and dates for each location.

**Course Venues: Ghatkopar:** SNTD School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar West, Opp Vidyut Society, Mumbai 400086. Tel: 25011096, 25162505. **Goregaon:** Siddharth Hospital, Goregaon (W). Registration will be done on specified dates only. Tel: 2624-2025 (or sms to 98690-23884).

Courses are also held regularly at the following areas of Mumbai.

Venue	Day	Registration Nos.
Sanpada	First Sundays	98694-05600
Dombivili	First Sundays	98202-71594
Anushaktinagar	Fourth Sundays	98690-16885
Airoli	Fourth Sundays	98923-29410

Please call on the respective numbers two days in advance to confirm the course and for registration.

[NB \*Please bring cushion. \*Please register on the specified phone numbers. If you are unable to attend after registration, please inform in advance. \*Please arrive on time for the course.]

**ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Ācaryas:**

Mr. Rammiklal Mehta, *Bhuj* - To serve Baroda region and to assist centre teachers in serving Dhamma Sindhu

**Senior Assistant Teachers:**

1. Mr. Mahendra Kolte, *Dhamma Giri*
2. Ms. Nuntiya Abhabhirama, *Thailand*  
*Training and co-ordination of Dhamma servers*
3. Ms. Pawinee Boonkasemsanti, *Thailand*  
*To assist the teacher in charge of Dhamma Kamala*
4. Ms. Puangpaka Bunnag, *Thailand*  
*Production of all course materials*
5. Mr. Vitcha Klinpratoom, *Thailand*  
*To assist the area teachers in planning and construction*
6. Mr. Somnuk Sattayanon, *Thailand*  
*To assist the teacher in charge of Dhamma Simanta*

**NEW APPOINTMENTS**

**Assistant Teachers:**

1. Mr. Toa Sunaga, *Japan*
2. Mr. Eric Sedlacek, *USA*

**Children's Course Teachers:**

1. Mrs. Uma Mansinghani, *Anand, Gujarat*
2. Ms. Mukundbala Vadvala, *Ahmedabad*
3. Mrs. Urvashi Patel, *Ahmedabad*
4. U Tan Win Tint, *Myanmar*
5. U Nan Nwe, *Myanmar*
6. U Win Myint Aung, *Myanmar*
7. Daw Ohnmar Thin, *Myanmar*
8. Daw Ei Yadanar Myint Oo, *Myanmar*
9. Daw Wai Htike Htike Soe, *Myanmar*
10. Daw Ngwe Kyi, *Myanmar*
11. Daw HLA PO, *Myanmar*
12. U Cho Win, *Myanmar*
13. U Aung Lwin Htoo, *Myanmar*
14. U Aung Myo Kyaw, *Myanmar*
15. Mrs Kittima Cluaywong, *Thailand*
16. Mr. Urvis Vanzara, *USA*
17. Mr. Sean Michael Kerr, *USA*
18. Mr. Jon Tom Woon, *USA*

**DHAMMA DOHAS**

*Kāyika karama sudhāra le, vācika karama sudhāra;  
manasā karama sudhāra le, yahī dharama kā sāra.*

Correct your deeds of body, correct your deeds of speech,  
correct your mental deeds—this is the essence of Dhamma.

*Para sevā hī puṇya hai, para piḍana hī pāpa;  
puṇya kiye sukha hī mileṇ, pāpa kiye dukha tāpa.*

Serving others is virtue, harming others is sin;  
Virtue brings happiness, sin causes torment.

*With much mettā,  
A Vipassana meditator*

*Sampradāya nahīn dharama hai, dharama na bane divāra;  
dharama sikhāye ekatā, dharama sikhāye pyāra.*

Sectarianism is not Dhamma; Dhamma raises no walls;  
Dhamma teaches oneness, Dhamma teaches love.

*Jāta pānta nahīn dharama hai, dharama na baneṇ dīvāra;  
dharama sikhāye ekatā, manuḷa manuḷa meṇ pyāra.*

Caste or rank is not Dhamma, Dhamma raises no walls;  
Dhamma teaches oneness, love for one and all.

*With best compliments from  
MOTILAL BANARSIDASS*

41 U.A. Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 110 007  
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