



WORDS OF DHAMMA

**Yato yato sammāsati, khandhānaṃ udayabbayaṃ;
Labhati, pītipāmojjaṃ, amataṃ taṃ vijānataṃ.**

—*Dhammapada 374, Bhikkhuvaggo*

Whenever one understands the arising and passing away of the mind-body processes with insight, one experiences bliss and joy (reflective of) the deathless experienced by the wise.

Impact of Equanimity on Disease - 2

A matured meditator Ratilal Mehta passed away at the ripe old age of 86 on 26th August 1987 with full awareness. Just as he lived an ideal meditator's life, so also he experienced an ideal death.

He found the path that he had long been searching for when he participated for the first time in a Vipassana course on 31st October 1971 in Bikaner, Rajasthan. From the very start the Dhamma feeling of 'ehi passiko' (come experience pure Dhamma) gripped him. He was overjoyed with the elixir of Dhamma and wanted all suffering beings to experience the same nectar—'May all find the way out of misery!'

On hearing of a meditation Centre being developed in Igatpuri, Maharashtra, he was delighted and immediately had the Dhamma volition that there should be a Centre in southern India, in Hyderabad, for the convenience of the people there.

These feelings of Dhamma suffused his mind and could not be contained; he donated two and a half acres of family land for a Centre, which later grew by another 4 acres enabling further development. *Dhamma Khetta Centre* was officially opened on 4th September 1976, just before the opening of *Dhammagiri* in Igatpuri. The land which had been cultivated for food to alleviate physical hunger then began catering to the spiritual hunger of humanity, and will continue for generations to come.

He also introduced all his family members to the Dhamma. As a meditator purifies oneself on one's Dhamma journey and releases old knots of mental impurities lying deep within, feelings of compassionate metta for all grow stronger. Ratibhai would occasionally come to *Dhammagiri*, Igatpuri to meditate, where he saw that those meditating under the pristine Pagoda's tranquil space of individual meditation cells were benefitting tremendously. Sure enough a strong Dhamma determination took root – those coming to *Dhamma Khetta* should have this benefit as well. Soon a three storey Pagoda was built which later grew to 74 meditation cells with the help of donations from others also.

Watching people grow in Dhamma would fill this meditator with pure joy. He knew his money could not be put to better use than to help people who have been suffering for so long to be able to purify their minds by bringing them to the path of Vipassana. There could not be a better service to humanity.

This Dhamma well wisher suffered from dire cancer in his last years of life. The cancer spread its insidious tentacles first affecting his large intestines, then liver and lungs. For

excretion the doctors attached a pouch to his stomach in which waste was collected. Ratilalbhai smiled through this unbearable condition. Whenever asked how the pain was, his one answer was, 'It's a result of some past negative kamma and I am watching it with equanimity.' Blessed is such a meditator!

Truly a terrible kamma that would have resulted in serious misery in future lives was manifesting itself in this way, and by observing with equanimity he was eradicating it with relatively less suffering.

Lord Buddha had said that if a fistful of salt is added to a small bowl of water, the water will not be drinkable, but if the same amount of salt is added to a flowing river then it will have no impact on the water. This is the Dhamma strength of a true meditator that he repays his kammic debt with smiling forbearance when facing much suffering.

A few hours before passing away, he changed into fresh clothes, drank some milk and then expressed a desire to sit in meditation. The body had grown very weak, yet with the support of those attending on him and his own will power he sat and soon was immersed in Vipassana. He was deeply fond of Dhamma dohās which always helped him go deep in sādhanā. He asked for dohās to be played. For about one and a half hours he meditated, and with the dohās playing on cassette tape, both played out their final symphony together. After the mettā dohās, 'bhavatu sabba maṅgalaṃ' was chanted three times. As soon as the chant ended the meditating sādhanā released his final breath moving onward to the devaloka.

Blessed is a true meditator! Blessed is Vipassana which is purifying!

(Translated from the Hindi book 'Jāge Pāvana Preraṇā')

Respected Goenkaji and Mataji gave metta to the parami enriched Ratilal Mehta in his last days. This inspirational message sent to him at that time is offered here for the benefit of all.

Dear Ratilal bhai,

Spend maximum time in Vipassana meditation with the awareness of impermanence. The awareness of *anicca* towards the body and mind will be very helpful in deepening the awareness of equanimity. As the equanimity deepens, the feelings of attachment towards the body and mind will weaken. The feeling of *anicca*, will further help to weaken craving and aversion. With this, the progress beyond the impermanence of mind and matter and towards that which is Permanent, Unchangeable, Ever Present and Absolute will speed up. Hence put your utmost effort in the awareness of *anicca* with Vipassana sadhana.

Intermittently, you may practice *Ānāpāna*. This will strengthen you within. Occasionally you may also dwell on your past *pāramīs* (good qualities); such as, 'In my past lives surely I have done some good kammās, that is why I received this beneficial human body, the vehicle for the journey towards the ultimate truth. After much wandering did I receive these teachings and the path of pure Dhamma applicable to all, that would lead me to the final goal of Nibbana.' Such wholesome contemplation will indeed help strengthen one within.

'*Sabba Pāpassa Akaraṇaṃ*' – To stay away from all those acts that are unwholesome is pure Dhamma applicable to all.

'*Kusalassa Upasampadā*' – To constantly perform acts of good kamma is pure Dhamma applicable to all.

'*Sacitta Pariyodapaṇaṃ*' – To continue to purify the mind, to keep it free of defilements like desires, animosity and delusions is pure Dhamma applicable to all and equally beneficial to all.

'Just as I, through the fruits of my past good kammās, received this beneficent Dhamma that is applicable to all and which leads one to the Absolute, so may my family members too taste this nectar of incomparable Dhamma. Not out of pride but with the wholesome intention of inspiring all beings towards pure Dhamma, I become a means for their well being. Remembering my paramīs and keeping my mind joyous and ever directed towards Dhamma, I contemplate the pure intention with which I and my progeny gave *dāna* of the land for *Dhamma Khetta*. Serving this Dhamma land in many ways, we also built a Dhamma stupa on this land. Truly this was a profoundly meritorious act.'

According to the Lord Buddha, such a meritorious act bears immense fruits. 'May this *pāramī* accumulate and lead me closer to Nibbana. May this act lead many, many people towards Nibbana.'

'Not only have all those who have meditated or are meditating on this sanctified land received the seed of pure Dhamma, but also who knows for how many years or indeed how many centuries this Dhamma land, the pagoda built on this Dhamma land and the meditation cells built in the pagoda will continue to serve innumerable people blessed to come here and ripen in Dhamma. Following the tenets of *sīla*, focusing on the natural point of focus of the breath, awakening wisdom through the awareness of *anicca*, becoming free of craving and aversion and getting established in equanimity, they will find the ultimate path to Nibbana. Truly it's a hugely meritorious deed. With this wholesome parami, may many people grow in Dhamma and become happy and peaceful.'

Remembering one's wholesome meritorious deeds is not for indulging in arrogant projections, but to fill one's heart and mind with Dhammic joy and bliss, quieting and calming the mind, leading it naturally towards Vipassana meditation.

Finally the fundamental effort is towards Vipassana suffused with awareness of *anicca*.

May the heart ever be filled with joy and equanimity. This will truly result in one's well being. The present as well as the future then will remain filled with light and well being.

May the awareness of Dhamma continue to ripen! May wisdom continue to ripen! May the awareness of *anicca* continue to ripen!

Be happy!

Your Well Wisher
Sayanarayana Goenka

My Journey on the Universal Path of Vipassana Meditation

I belong to a conservative Muslim family from Pakistan. My journey on this spiritual path of self purification began in 1998 when I was desperately searching for a way out from disturbing nightmares. Those were the days of crises. I didn't realize the answers to my questions were within me. Fortunately, one of my friends spoke about the path of Vipassana meditation in very high words. Since there was no centre in Pakistan I flew to Nepal in order to attend my first course.

People in my country are quite skeptical and cynical and unfortunately my misconception of this Vipassana technique belonging to a certain sect or religion cost me heavily, and due to my drowsiness during most of the course, and especially at the time of the very important evening video discourse where each and every single word of the discourse is absolutely important and is too costly to neglect. I missed those discourses. I missed a vital chance to understand the essence of this unique technique, and to be aware of the pitfalls and downside if not understood properly.

The first 3 days of the course were to sharpen the concentration of the mind and to make it one pointed, with the remaining 7 days to be used to purify the mind by eradicating the mental defilements and impurities. However, not having understood the proper way of meditation, the first 3 days were pure mental and physical torture. By the fourth day I could barely appreciate the concentration aspect. Encountering these difficulties I remember that on Day 6 I even thought for a moment, "this life is not worth living, it should be ended". I had no idea how I was going to suffer in this course, not being aware of the challenges of craving, aversion, drowsiness, agitation and doubt.

I recalled Goenkaji's account regarding 'doubt' on the Day 5 discourse. How all kinds of doubt come in the mind, "What is this technique, what will I gain by observing the respiration?" Then observing the heat, observing the perspiration, "What am I doing, what kind of meditation is this?" Another doubt that came was about the teacher, "What kind of teacher is this?" I was expecting a great Guru from India. He didn't have long matted hair or a beard, no bunches of rosaries around his neck, no mark on his forehead, no paraphernalia of a teacher. "What kind of Guru is he?" In addition, he had no supernatural powers! This is an absolutely accurate narration of how my mind responded at the time.

Throughout the course, I clearly remember, I had a countdown timer on my watch showing how many hours were left. Every passing day, I was drawing hope from my watch's countdown. So, when the course ended it was liberation from pure misery. I returned disappointed and empty handed from the course. I felt disappointment and resentment towards the Vipassana technique for the next 3 years.

Later in the year 2000 I kept revisiting Goenkaji's explanation on the characteristic of phenomena. I realized that what he said was in fact a universal truth. We constantly come across these phenomena of impermanence, egolessness, suffering, etc. As a result of this my thirst for the truth intensified. In order to know more about the cause of suffering and the way out of suffering, I started listening more intently to Goenkaji's audio discourses again, and I remember very clearly that his account was so interesting that I started writing down his each and every word, sentence by sentence. In fact I managed to listen to and transcribe the entire 11 days of discourses. Only later on I came to know that these discourses had already been made available in a booklet.

This study inspired me to sit a course in Indonesia and give Vipassana one more try. Unfortunately, right before the course my sleep/wake timings were 180 degree opposite what was required in the course. I was sleeping at 4 am and waking up very late and suddenly on the first day of the course I had to wake up at 4am. This was a perfect 'jet lag' without even crossing time zones, and a big mistake on my part as I had to go through a very unfavorable ride. Due to very severe drowsiness I quit on Day 3. I discovered that my strong determination was nowhere near the required resolve. The lesson learned was to make sure to calibrate the sleep/wake timings before the course and avoid filling the stomach, and reducing sugary food so that I would not succumb to drowsiness. I continued the mundane life but with more consistent reflection.

By 2003 I had decided to sit another course at Dhamma Dhara Massachusetts and finally made up my mind that quitting was not an option. Therefore, on my third try I didn't quit but the course was very tough because as yet I didn't understand the mind and body phenomena properly.

In 2006, I took my eldest sister with me to attend a 10 days course at Dhammagiri, Igatpuri, India. On Day 6 while I was meditating alone in a cell I had a surprising meditation session, and the impurities of the mind started manifesting on the body with severe jerks and jolts in the neck and arms, resulting in me jumping 2 inches off the floor. However I kept observing sensations with an equanimous mind. After an hour of this session, when I came out of the cell, to my surprise I realized that the cervical pain for which I had been taking pain killers and physiotherapy and other treatments for 2 years, was gone. This experience gave me quite an insight into this technique. After returning from India, I sat another course in Thailand where I explored further the deeper aspect of this meditation where in spite of severe muscular pain in the legs and back, the mind was absolutely tranquil, serene and calm.

Later on, I attended a number of 10 day and long courses in Singapore, England, and the USA and recently I just returned from a long course in Sri Lanka. These days, I am practicing 3 to 4 hours daily. I have a strict rule – no meditation, no breakfast! (I even posted this on the wall for a few months). So food is not taken unless I meditate at the beginning of the day and after honoring this rule, I reward myself with my favorite chocolate. A reward for self improvement!

The attraction of the Vipassana technique for me is the fact that it relies on the universal law of cause and effect. It does not encourage 'escape' from the challenges of the life. This meditation starts with the gross reality of pains and discomforts and helps us penetrate and transcend misery and experience the ultimate reality which is the ever changing and impermanent phenomenon of mind and matter.

Another appeal of Vipassana that I appreciate is its compatibility with my Religion. This technique helps us become established in morality, concentration of the mind, and experiential wisdom, all of which facilitate my faith. The phenomenon of equanimity especially is well-matched and well suited with Islam. 'Equanimity' is the message of our fasting month of Ramzan.

Back in the 1990s I was quite a religious person, punctually offering my daily prayer. But due to an ever worsening agitated mind, I gave up my prayers for almost a decade. But thanks to this technique not only have I restarted these prayers, but now there is a quality in them which is improving gradually step by step. I used to attain intellectual, analytical wisdom by following my faith and religion, but the wisdom based on direct personal experience which I have

gained came only by exploring this unique technique. This technique has also helped in establishing strong determination, selfless love, compassion and sympathetic joy which is very supportive for social management in daily life as well.

When I consider the other benefits of this scientific, non sectarian and rational technique, regardless of the miserable mundane world there is more hope now to live moment by moment with a base of insight and mindfulness. I have a more positive and optimistic perspective on life. All of my challenges are not solved yet. First, I can fairly say that, if I was heading for a collision at 1,000 mph, now it is 100 mph. Applied from time to time, the momentary break of awareness with equanimity is decreasing the velocity, and the high speed manufacturing factory of making defilements and negativities is slowing down.

Interestingly it took some time for me to understand that the purpose of this technique is to change and train the behavior pattern of the subconscious mind, not to blindly react towards what is unwanted or undesirable with 'aversion', and not to blindly react towards what is wanted or desirable with 'craving'. But to observe the changing and impermanent phenomenon of mind and body through the help of respiration and sensations, and come out of 'attachment' to this ever changing phenomenon, because attachment and suffering are two sides of the same coin. Anything that we are attached to, sooner or later will end or pass away, and when it ends we are going to miss it and this separation will bring nothing but misery. This is how we keep reacting day and night, throughout the life.

Last but not least, the strict discipline and timetable, especially 'noble silence', was enormously helpful to calm down the chattering mind. In the course we learn how to free the mind of the tensions and prejudices that disturb the flow of daily life.

A course in Vipassana meditation is an opportunity to take concrete steps toward one's liberation. To others who happen to read this, it is hoped that this article will provide encouragement to participate in a Vipassana course and to taste real peace, real harmony and true happiness.

Finally, I cannot be thankful enough to the chain of Teachers, Goenkaji, all the Assistant Teachers and Dhamma workers who devoted selflessly their precious time and energy and worked hard to serve me with the feelings of pure compassion and loving kindness and to help me sit the courses and become more established in Vipassana.

May all beings be liberated from all of their suffering and be happy.

Khalid K. Khan



ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES	NEW RESPONSIBILITIES
1. Mr. Jairam Dass Bhardwaj, To serve as centre teacher for Dhamma Hitkari, Rohtak	Senior Assistant Teachers
2. Mr. Kaushal Kumar Bhardwaj, To serve as centre teacher for Dhamma Sudha, Meerut	1. Mr. Rajesh Patel, To assist centre teacher in serving Dhamma Kota, Rajkot
3. Dr. Ranbir Khasa, To assist centre teacher in serving Dhamma Hitkari, Rohtak	2. Mrs. Jyoti Deshmukha, Nagpur
4. Mr. Norm & Mrs Colleen Schmitz, To serve as Coordinating area teacher for Cambodia	3. Mr. Brian Wagner, South Africa
5. Mrs Naron Ear, To assist CAT for Cambodia in serving Dhamma Kamboja	NEW APPOINTMENT Assistant Teachers
	1-2. Mr. D P Mandal & Mrs Mala Mandal, Kolkata
	New appointment Children course teachers
	1. Mrs Denka Thendup Bhutia Sikkim
	2. Ms. Nadia Coirier France
	3. Mr. Cyrille Brun France

Children's Meditation Courses in Mumbai

Date: 23-8, 20-9, 18-10, 15-11, 20-12.
Place: Goregaon
 (Age 10 to 16 Only)
 Registration before Course Thursday and Friday

Date	Course site	Age (years)	Registration
First Sunday	Dombivili	10-16	2 days before Course
First Sunday	Ulhasnagar	10-16	2 days before Course
Second Sunday	Sanpada	10-16	2 days before Course
Second Sunday	Andheri	10-16	2 days before Course
Third Sunday	Ghatkopar	10-16	2 days before Course
Fourth Sunday	Airoli	10-16	2 days before Course

“Please call or send a text sms message with the name & age of the child two days in advance for registration”

Course Timing: 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. **Registration Timing:** 11 am to 1 pm on the specified numbers and dates for each location. **Course Venues:** **Goregaon:** Vipassana Counselling and Research Centre, Siddharth Municipal General Hospital, Goregaon (W), Mob. 98924-15803, Tel: 2624-2025. **Dombivili:** K B Vira HighSchool, Near Municipal Office, Dombivili (E) Mob. 9930301594. **Ulhasnagar:** 703-A Block /1405, Gokul Nagar, Behind Netaji School, Near Mahesh Granite, Tel. 9970755130, **Sanpada:** Navi Mumbai Mahanagar Palika School, Sector 5, Sanpada. Tel: 7738649821, 9699862322, 9223300575, **Andheri:** Mayfair Meridian Meditation Hall, Ceaser Road, Off S.V. Road, Amboli, Near St. Blaise **Ghatkopar:** SNTD School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar (W), Opp Vidyut Society, Mumbai 400086. Tel: 25011096, 25162505. **Airoli:** Saraswati School, Sector 5, Airoli, Mob. 9892565765. Church Andheri, Mob. 99674-80865, 99306-78532.

Please call two days in advance for registration.

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

V.R.I. Academic Schedule - 2015, Global Pagoda Campus, Mumbai.

1. Research Methodology Workshop (15th Nov to 19th Nov) (Open to non-meditators also) please find Eligibility Criteria for these courses on the website:

<http://www.vridhamma.org/Theory-And-Practice-Courses>

2. Diploma Course on the teachings of the Buddha, Vipassana theory and practice.

Vipassana Research Institute (VRI) and Mumbai University jointly conduct this Diploma course on theoretical and practical aspects of the Buddha's teachings, and practical application of Vipassana in various fields. **Application forms** are available from **6th July to 17th July 2015** from Mon to Fri between 11.30 am to 2.30 pm at Philosophy Department, Jnaneshwar Bhavan, Mumbai University, Kalina, Santacruz (E).Mumbai - 400098. Tel 022-26527337. Duration of course is from 18th July, 2015, till March end 2016. Classes- every Saturday 2:30 to 6:30 pm. **Eligibility:** Min. 12th pass. It will be compulsory to sit a Vipassana course during the Diwali vacation. **For more information contact:** 1) VRI office 022-33747560, 2) Mrs. Baljit Lamba - 09833518979, 3) Miss Rajshree - 09004698648

One Day Mega courses on the auspicious occasions of Āśādh and Sharada Pūrṇimā and on the death anniversary of Respected Guruji

On Sunday **August 2, 2015** and Sunday **27th September 2015**, one-day mega courses will be conducted at the Global Vipassana Pagoda in the presence of Respected Mātāji. Course hours: 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Non-meditators can participate in the discourse at 3:00 PM. Please contact the following numbers for registration. Please only come with registration and **'samaggānaṃ tapo sukho'** – take advantage of the happiness of practicing meditation with such a large group. (Contact: 022-28451170, 022-337475-01/43/44-ext 9. Phone booking hours: 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM every day. Online Registration: www.oneday.globalpagoda.org.)

DHAMMA DOHAS

*Apāne sañcita karma kī , jaba udīrṇā hoyā;
 Taba samatā se dekhate, sahaja nirjarā hoyā.*

Whenever accumulated past karmas come to the surface, watch them with equanimity, and they will get dissolved.

*Cita samatā men sthira rahe, maranāsanna subodha;
 To hove bhavacakra kā, svayaṃ sahaja avarodha.*

If the mind is equanimous and silent, then the wheel of ever becoming stops rotating automatically.

Samatā cita kā dharma hai, sthira svadharmā ho jāya;

To jīvana sukhaśānti se, maṅgala se bhara jāya.

Equanimity is the dhamma of the mind, and if one becomes firmly established in one's own dhamma; then the life gets filled with serenity, peace and well being.

*Dharma na hindū bauddha hai, dharma na muslima jain;
 Dharma citta ki suddhatā, dharma śānti sukha caina.*

True dhamma is being neither Hindu nor Buddhist, Muslim or Jain. True dhamma is the purity of mind, it is tranquility, bliss and joy.

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Vipassana Research Institute

Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri 422 403

Dist. Nashik, Maharashtra, India

Fax: [91] (02553) 244176

Tel: (02553) 244076, 244086, 243712, 243238

Email: info@giri.dhamma.org;

Website: www.vridhamma.org