

# Vipassana Newsletter

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, as taught by S. N. Goenka

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## WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Mātā yathā niyaṃ puttam,  
āyusā eka-puttamanurakkhe;  
evampi sabba bhūtesu,  
mānasam bhāvaye aparimāṇam.*

Just as a mother would risk her life  
to protect her only child;  
similarly, one should cultivate  
boundless love towards all beings.

—Sutta Nipāta 149 (Metta-sutta)

## The Practice of Mettā-Bhāvanā

### Vipassana Research Institute

The practice of *mettā-bhāvanā* (meditation of loving kindness) is the closing part of the technique of Vipassana meditation. We practice *mettā* by radiating loving kindness and goodwill towards all beings, deliberately charging the atmosphere around us with the calming, positive vibrations of pure and compassionate love. The Buddha instructed us to develop *mettā* so as to live more peaceful and harmonious lives and to help others to do so as well. The practice of *mettā* gives us a way to share with all others the peace and harmony that we are developing.

The commentaries state that *mettā* is the quality that inclines one to a friendly disposition—*Mijjati siniyhatī'ti mettā*. It is a sincere wish for the good and welfare of all, devoid of ill will. Non-aversion is *mettā—adoso'ti mettā*. The chief characteristic of *mettā* is a benevolent attitude. It culminates in the identification of oneself with all beings—a recognition of the fellowship of all life.

*Mettā* is not a prayer nor is it the hope that an outside agency will help. On the contrary, it is a dynamic process producing a supportive atmosphere where others can act to help themselves. *Mettā* can be directed towards all beings or towards a particular person. We must eliminate egotism and open our minds to practise *mettā*.

Intellectually, it is easy enough but it is far harder to develop such an attitude in oneself. To do so, some practice is needed, and so, we have the technique of *mettā-bhāvanā*, the systematic cultivation of goodwill towards others. To be really effective, though, *mettā-bhāvanā* must be practiced along with Vipassana meditation. So long as negativity such as aversion

dominates the mind, it is futile to formulate conscious thoughts of goodwill, and doing so becomes a ritual devoid of inner meaning. However, when negativity is removed by the practice of Vipassana, goodwill naturally wells up in the mind; and emerging from the prison of self-obsession, we begin to concern ourselves with the welfare of others.

For this reason, the technique of *mettā-bhāvanā* is introduced only at the end of a Vipassana course, after the participants have passed through the process of purification. At such a time, meditators often feel a deep wish for the well-being of others, making their practice of *mettā* truly effective. Though limited time is devoted to it in a course, *mettā* may be regarded as the culmination of the practice of Vipassana.

*Nibbāna* can be experienced only by those whose minds are filled with loving kindness and compassion for all beings. Simply wishing for this state is not enough; we must purify our minds to attain it.

By the practice of Vipassana, we become aware that the underlying reality of the world and of ourselves consists of arising and passing away every moment. We realize that the process of change continues without our control and regardless of our wishes. Gradually, we understand that any attachment to what is ephemeral and insubstantial produces suffering for us. We learn to be detached and to keep the balance of our minds in the face of any experience. Then we begin to experience what real happiness is: neither the satisfaction of craving nor the forestalling of fears but rather liberation from the cycles of craving and fear. As inner serenity develops, we clearly see how others are enmeshed in suffering, and naturally this wish

arises, “May they find what we have found: the way out of misery, the path of peace.” This is the proper volition for the practice of *mettā-bhāvanā*.

In order to practise *mettā*, the mind must be calm, balanced and free from negativity. This is the type of mind developed by the practice of Vipassana. A meditator knows by experience how anger, antipathy, or ill will destroys peace and frustrates any efforts to help others. Only when hatred is removed and equanimity is developed can we be happy and wish happiness for others. The words, “May all beings be happy” have great force only when uttered from a pure mind. Backed by this purity, they will certainly be effective in fostering the happiness of others.

We must, therefore, examine ourselves before practising *mettā-bhāvanā* to check whether we are really capable of practising *mettā*. If we find even a tinge of hatred or aversion in our minds, we should refrain at that time and relax or lie down until the impurity or unpleasantness goes away. However, if the mind and body are filled with serenity and well-being, it is natural and appropriate to share this happiness with others: “May you be happy, may you be liberated from the defilements that are the causes of suffering. May all beings be peaceful! May all beings be happy! May all beings come out of their misery!”

In Vipassana, no verbalization, visualization or imagination is allowed. But while practising *mettā-bhāvanā*, all of these are allowed.

We can use our imagination especially with those who are near and dear, we can visualize their faces and give *mettā*: “May you be happy, may you be happy.” As we experience the vibrations, which are characteristic of arising and passing, we can say to ourselves, “These vibrations are vibrations of *mettā*, of love, of compassion.” When one is alone, one can even verbalize, “May all be happy, may all be happy”. When we are in a group, we can recite mentally to ourselves, “May all be happy, may all be peaceful, may all come out of misery.”

This loving attitude enables us to deal far more skilfully with the vicissitudes of life. Suppose, for example, one encounters a person who is acting out of deliberate ill will to harm others. The common response—to react with fear and hatred—is self-centeredness, which does nothing to improve the situation and, in fact, magnifies the negativity. It would be far more helpful to remain calm and balanced, with a feeling of goodwill for the person who is acting wrongly. This must not be merely an intellectual stance, a veneer over unresolved negativity. *Mettā* works only when it overflows spontaneously from a purified mind.

The serenity gained in Vipassana meditation naturally gives rise to feelings of *mettā*, and throughout the day, this will continue to affect us and

our environment in a positive way. Thus, Vipassana ultimately has a dual function: to bring us happiness by purifying our minds, and to help us to foster the happiness of others by preparing us to practice *mettā*. What is the purpose of freeing ourselves of negativity and egotism unless we share these benefits with others? In a retreat, we cut ourselves off from the world temporarily in order to return and share with others what we gained in solitude. These two aspects of the practice of Vipassana are inseparable.

In these times of violent unrest and widespread suffering, the need for such a practice as *mettā-bhāvanā* is clear. If peace and harmony are to reign throughout the world, they must first be established in the minds of all the inhabitants of the world.

*May all beings be happy ! ☸*

### Mettā-Bhāvanā

*Ahaṃ avero homi, abyāpajjho homi. Anīgho homi, sukkhī attānaṃ paribarāmi.*

May I be free from animosity, free from suffering, free from trouble. May happiness be with me always.

*Mātā-pitu-ācariya-ñāti-samūhā, Averaṃ hontu, abyāpajjhā hontu. Anīghā hontu, sukkhī attānaṃ pariharantu.*

May my mother, father, teachers, and relatives be free from animosity, free from aversion, free from trouble. May happiness be with them always.

*Ārakkhadavatā bhūmatṭhadavatā rukkhattṭhadavatā, Ākāsaṭṭhadavatā, averā hontu, abyāpajjhā hontu. Anīghā hontu, sukkhī attānaṃ pariharantu.*

May all guardian deities, earth-bound deities, tree-bound deities, sky-bound deities be free from animosity, free from aversion, free from trouble. May happiness be with them always.

*Purattimāya disāya, purattimāya anudisāya. Dakkhiṇāya disāya, dakkhiṇāya anudisāya. Pacchimāya disāya, pacchimāya anudisāya. Uttarāya disāya, uttarāya anudisāya. Uparimāya disāya, betṭhimāya disāya.*

In the direction of the east, in the direction of the south-east, in the direction of the south, in the direction of the south-west, in the direction of the west, in the direction of the north-west, in the direction of the north, in the direction of the north-east, in the direction above, in the direction below.

*Sabbe sattā, sabbe pāṇā, sabbe bhūtā, sabbe puggalā, sabbe attabhāvapariyāpannā, sabbā itthiyo, sabbe purisā, sabbe ariyā, sabbe anariyā, sabbe manussā, sabbe amanussā, sabbe devā, sabbe vinipātikā- averā hontu, avyāpajjhā hontu, anīghā hontu, sukkhī attānaṃ pariharantu.*

May all beings, all living creatures, all creatures, all individuals, all forms of life, all women, all men, all those who have attained purity of mind, all those who have not yet attained purity of mind, all *devas*, all humans, all non-humans, all celestial beings, and all those in states of woe be free from animosity, free from aversion, free from trouble. May happiness be with them always. ☸

## Questions and Answers

**Question:** When I meditate at home, should I sit in *adhiṭṭhāna*, without changing the posture?

**Goenkaji:** You can change your posture. It is only during the courses that the one-hour *adhiṭṭhāna* is necessary. During meditation at home or at group sittings outside of courses if you feel after some time that there is lot of pain, you can change your posture. Change your posture slowly and with mindfulness. But try not to change your posture too often.

**Question:** If I continue the practice after the course, will the mental operation continue even at home?

**Goenkaji:** Yes it will. But for a deeper operation, you have to come to a course, or have your own self-course. Continuous practice for a long time takes you to the deeper level. But if you practise daily, morning and evening, you will be clearing whatever defilements you have accumulated during that period.

### First Prison Course in Myanmar

The first ten-day Vipassana course was successfully organized at the Insein Central Prison, Yangon, Myanmar from 16 to 27 July 2008. Fifty-five male inmates as well as three members of the prison staff joined the course and three other staff members were Dhamma servers. The second course is scheduled to be held from 7 August 2008.

In addition, an Anapana course was conducted for the first time at the same Insein Central Prison on 27 July 2008 for 169 young male inmates. Most of the teenaged inmates reported very positive benefits after attending the course. They expressed gratitude for the teaching and resolved to meditate daily.

### Children's courses in Myanmar

The Irrawaddy and Yangon regions of Myanmar was severely damaged by Cyclone Nargis on 2 and 3 May 2008. There was wide-spread destruction in the whole area and thousands of people were killed.

People from all corners of the world rushed to give help and supply relief goods to the survivors. A team of children's course teachers also gave a helping hand in these areas by coordinating with local old students of Vipassana. They also organized children's meditation courses to boost the morale of the children and to alleviate their deep fear and anxiety.

These courses were conducted at Mawlamyain gyun, Kanyin Village, Maulamyain gyun, Asugyi Village and Myaungmya. A total of more than thousand children participated in the six children's courses held in June and July.

### Online Vipassana Newsletters and Archives

For online editions of the VRI Newsletter in English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil and Gujarati, visit: [www.vri.dhamma.org/newsletters](http://www.vri.dhamma.org/newsletters). Archives of earlier editions are also available at this website.

## Children's Courses in Mumbai

To serve children's courses in Mumbai, call 98200-22990.

Date	Venue	Age	Registration
7-9	South Mumbai	9- 15 yrs	5 & 6-9
21-9	Ulhasnagar	10-12 yrs	19 & 20-9
21-9	Ghatkopar	13-16 yrs	19 & 20-9
5-10	South Mumbai	9- 15 yrs	3 & 4-10
12-10	Ulhasnagar	13-16 yrs	10 & 11-10
19-10	Ghatkopar	10-12 yrs	17 & 18-10
2-11	South Mumbai	9- 15 yrs	1 & 2-11
9-11	Ulhasnagar	10-12 yrs	7 & 8-11
16-11	Ghatkopar	13-16 yrs	14 & 15-11
23-11	Matunga	13-16 yrs	21 & 22-11
7-12	South Mumbai	9- 15 yrs	29 & 30-11
7-12	Matunga	13-16 yrs	29 & 30-11
21-12	Ulhasnagar	13-16 yrs	6 & 7-12
21-12	Ghatkopar	10-12 yrs	6 & 7-12

**Course Timings:** 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. **Registration:** 11 am to 1 pm

**Course Venues:** **Ghatkopar (W):** SNTD School, New Bldg., Cama Lane, Opp. Vidyut Soc. Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505. **Matunga:** Amulakh Amirchand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Rd, New SNTD College, King's Circle, Matunga, Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505. **South Mumbai:** Times of India Building, Tel: 2308-1622. **Ulhasnagar:** Guru Nanak School, Kurla Camp, Ulhasnagar-4. Tel: (0251) 252-2693. NB Please: \*bring cushion, \*register on specified phone numbers, \*inform in advance if unable to attend after registration, \*arrive on time for the course.

### Donations through Core Banking and SWIFT Transfer

Donations to Sayagi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust (Vipassana International Academy, *Dhamma Giri*, Igatpuri) and Vipassana Research Institute can now be remitted from anywhere in India through any branch of the State Bank of India (SBI) under **core banking system**.

Account Numbers of State Bank of India, Igatpuri branch:

- 1 Sayagi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust: 11542160342
- 2 Vipassana Research Institute: 11542165646.

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**NB Please inform Accounts Department, *Dhamma Giri*, Igatpuri 422 403, Email: [info@giri.dhamma.org](mailto:info@giri.dhamma.org) about your donation with all relevant details so that the receipt of your donation can be sent to you.**

### Goenkaji's Discourses on Television

**Aastha:** Daily, 9:40 to 10 am

**Hungama:** and **Bindass:** Daily, 4.30 to 6.00 am

**Zee: *Urja*,** Daily, 4:30 am

**USA: Aastha TV** at 6 pm EST (Monday to Friday) on WORLDDIRECT platform of DIRECTV on channel no. 2005. (Please confirm exact telecast timings.)

**ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES****Ācaryas:**

Mrs. Ladachat Saingam, *Thailand*  
To serve *Dhamma Simanta, Thailand*

**Senior Assistant Teachers:**

1. Mr. Murari Sharma, *Haryana*  
To assist centre teachers in serving *Dhamma Salila, Dehradun* in addition to *Dhamma Kāruṇika, Karnal*
2. Mr. Deepak Pagare, *Manmad*  
To serve *Dhamma Sāketā, Ulhasnagar* in addition to *Dhamma Manamoda, Manmad*
3. Mr. Martin Haig, *Australia*  
To assist the area teacher in serving *Dhamma Āloka, Australia*

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To assist the area teachers in serving *Dhamma Dhānī, Thailand*
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1. Mr. Motilal Khanal, *Nepal*
2. Mr. Baburaja Maharjan, *Nepal*
3. & 4. Mr. Daniel & Mrs. Patricia Matthias, *Australia*
5. & 6. Mr. Mirko Amon & Mrs. Alexandra Burguera, *Venezuela*
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**Children's Course Teachers:**

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**Vipassana Websites****Vipassana introduction: [www.dhamma.org](http://www.dhamma.org)**

Contains course schedules of Vipassana centres worldwide, application form for ten-day courses, etc.

**Dhamma Giri: [www.vri.dhamma.org](http://www.vri.dhamma.org)**

Contains Indian Vipassana centres and schedule of courses, VRI Newsletters, research papers, publications, etc.

**Pali Tipiṭaka Website: [www.tipitaka.org](http://www.tipitaka.org)**

Contains the *Chatttha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka* with commentaries, subcommentaries and related Pali texts in Roman, Devanagari, Cyrillic, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Myanmar, and Sinhala scripts. Bengali and Telugu scripts have also been added recently. More scripts will be added in future.

**Prison Courses Website: [www.prison.dhamma.org](http://www.prison.dhamma.org)**

Contains information about Vipassana courses in prisons.

**Global Vipassana Pagoda Website: [www.globalpagoda.org](http://www.globalpagoda.org)**

Contains updated information about Global Vipassana Pagoda.

**DHAMMA DOHAS**

*Mere sukha mein, sānti mein, bhāga sabhī kā hoyā;  
Isa maṅgalamaya dharma kā, lābha sabhī ko hoyā!*  
May my happiness and peace be shared by everyone;  
May this benevolent Dhamma benefit one and all!

*Vyāpe viśva Vipashyanā, bahujana hitasukha hoyā;  
Jana-jana kā kalyāna ho, jana-jana mangala hoyā.*  
May Vipassana spread for the happiness of many!  
May all beings be happy and peaceful!

*With much mettā,  
A Vipassana meditator*

*Dūra rahe durbhavanā, dvesha hoyā saba dūra;  
Nirmala nirmala citta se, pyaar bhare bharapūra.*  
May all animosity and aversion be dispelled;  
May the purified heart overflow with love for all.

*Mana-mānasa mein pyaar hī, tarala tarangita hoyā;  
Roma-roma se dvani ute, sabakā mangala hoyā.*  
May the mind be filled with the rapture of love  
May every fibre vibrate with feelings of goodwill.

*With best compliments from*

**MOTILAL BANARSIDASS**

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