

“Inspirational words from Goenkaji”

My dear Dhamma sons and daughters,

You have undertaken a very delicate responsibility: the responsibility of training the new generation in Dhamma. The tiny plants, they need Dhamma irrigation, they need Dhamma nutrition, they need Dhamma fertilization. And this is what you are going to do – help them to grow in Dhamma.

There cannot be a better service than serving these youngsters in Dhamma, so that they live a very peaceful and harmonious Dhammic life, good for themselves and good for others.

The wonderful Dhamma has come back to its land of origin, after a long interval. It must get established here. And so also it must get established in all the countries of the world. Generation after generation, generation after generation, the wheel of Dhamma should keep on rotating for centuries together. People of the world should get best benefit of Dhamma.

And this is the proper way. Train this new-coming generation. Let them get established in Dhamma. When they grow they will live the life of Dhamma, and on their part they will start serving others. Like this, from generation to generation, may Dhamma remain strong and stable, may humanity get best benefit of Dhamma.

Your service is Dhamma service, without expecting anything in return. Expecting material gain is far away, but even expecting name and fame, etc., is also harmful. You are rewarded, you are rewarded by the parami, the merit that you gain. That is the biggest remuneration you get. The paramis that you accumulate by serving this younger generation, will help you reach the final goal and make your human life successful.

May all of you keep on growing in Dhamma, keep on serving others in Dhamma, keep on developing your paramis, your merits. And may all of you reach the final goal, come out of all your miseries. May all of you get liberated, liberated, liberated.

BHAVATU SABBA MANGALAM

(Source: CCT Workshop Closing Talk V.I.A. Dhammagiri May 5, 1993.)

I. GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN'S ANAPANA COURSES

1. Introduction

Guidelines for children's Anapana courses were issued in October 1993. Over the years it was discovered that there was no uniformity in conducting these courses. Therefore, with a view to standardize the format, a meeting of the Regional Coordinators, Children's courses from around the world was held at Dhammagiri under the aegis of Rev. Goenkaji from Dec 23 to 25, 2000. As a result of these deliberations, the existing guidelines were revised and updated. Included in this are: Code of Conduct for Children's Course Teachers and Duties & Responsibilities of Regional Coordinators, Children's Courses.

In May 2005, Goenkaji appointed an International Children's Courses Coordinating Committee to oversee the children's courses activity worldwide to ensure uniformity in presentation of the teaching.

Anapana courses conducted exclusively for children are a wonderful opportunity to make available the manifold benefits of this unique technique of meditation. Experiences of conducting these courses in the past have yielded substantial evidence of its great potential. Children's outlook, behavior and attitude undergo a positive influence; their ability to concentrate improves; their memory gets strengthened. Above all, children acquire something so precious, so valuable, which is of immense value for the rest of their lives.

Children are, by nature, active and enthusiastic with an eagerness to learn, to explore anything and everything they come across in their day-to-day life. At this age it is so appropriate to offer them an opportunity to explore themselves and their mind with all its hidden faculties, latent abilities and subtle complexities. This wholesome seed of Dhamma sown can, sooner or later, grow and open an entirely new dimension of life.

Since 1986, Anapana courses for children have been conducted. These courses have been offered to children of various ages and socio-cultural groups. They have been conducted in Vipassana centres, schools and other institutions, and have been both residential and non-residential.

Since 2012, a 70 mins condensed Anapana course has been introduced in Maharashtra, a state in India under PROJECT MITRA.. MITRA is an acronym for MIND IN TRAINING FOR RIGHT AWARENESS (See Appendix no.16)

www.globalpagoda.org/mitra, www.mitrapakram.org, www.vridhamma.org/ccmah
CCTs should be familiar with the project and support the same where possible.

2. Types of courses:

- One day - In Vipassana centers, schools, juvenile homes etc.
- Two day & Three day – In Vipassana centers, residential schools.
Note: In case of school groups, the accompanying staff member should be encouraged to sit through the sessions with the children.
- Refresher Course 2 hrs. – After a school has implemented the 6 hr module, RCCC can consider having refresher courses from the following year. (See Appendix no. 14)
- 70 mins Anapana - In all schools:-In order to introduce Anapana to maximum number of children a condensed course of 70 mins Anapana can be conducted (See Appendix no.16)

<http://www.vridhamma.org/AnapanaForChildren>

3. Essential requirements for schools/ institutions to hold courses (other than MITRA)

- Ideally, at least one person from the teaching staff/management should have done a ten-day Vipassana course. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the RCCC.
- The school or institution should be encouraged to provide facility for daily practice for at least ten minutes of Anapana by the children after the course is over. Wherever MITRA courses are held, the institute should agree to have at least one teacher sit a Vipassana course in a reasonable period of time (3-6 months) in order to ensure regular practise.

4. How to approach school authorities and institutional heads in order to create awareness amongst them about the usefulness of organizing such courses:

- In order to reach out to maximum number of school children, one may approach school authorities. It is better to go through a meditator, parent or teacher. In brief apprise them of the benefits of Anapana meditation for children.
- Alternately when a request is received, a response may be given by organizing a meeting with the teachers and staff, briefing them about children's courses and giving necessary information.
Mini Anapana session can be conducted with material downloaded from the internet.
Provide published material and literature pertaining to Anapana (and Vipassana).

All children course information is available on following websites & links:

<http://www.children.dhamma.org/>

<http://www.vridhamma.org/MiniAnapanaMeditation>

5. Size of Course, Age of Participants and Application forms:

- a. Courses of up to 40-50 children should be organized so that the conducting CCT can manage the course well. If the number of students is larger the help of an additional CCT should be taken.
 - b. Regarding age groups and mixing of genders of children and CCTs, the guidelines are as follows.
- 8-12 years : No restrictions
 - 13-18 years: On a one day mixed course, both male and female CCTs should be conducting. In case this is not possible, then small group interaction by the CCT should not be done. This can be replaced by an open house checking session.
Residential courses for boys and girls to be held separately. The CCT should strictly be of the same gender as the children. Servers of the opposite gender should not be allowed, as far as possible, to enter the Dhamma hall, including centre staff. (See Circular no.3)

c. Application form: Should be completed by each child on a residential course, before the course begins. (See Appendix no. 2)

6. Points to be covered in precourse talk

Outside the meditation hall: Brief welcome and introduction by someone other than the conducting CCT covering the following points –

- Welcome
- Why they have come to this course
- Overview of the schedule
- Introduction of Dhamma servers and guides and explanation of their roles
- Segregation of genders
- Placement of drinking water, toilet facilities etc.
- Importance of silence

7. Discipline on a course

- Silence in the meditation hall, as per instructions of CCT
- Observing silence at other times, as prescribed
- Segregation of genders

8. Use of teaching material on a course

Tapes have been discontinued. All material is now available as audio and video CDs and Tablets.

Hindi and English audio/video (**V-2000**) is the only material to be used.

For courses in languages other than Hindi and English, teaching materials are to be translated from the same and then recorded. This is to be done in accordance with the May 1999 guidelines in the AT kit for “tapes, transcripts, translations and recordings”.

- Teaching Material in English: This consists of video and audio CDs covering six sessions of approx. 30 minutes each for a one-day course. These can be played with suitable breaks of 5-10 minutes, apart from a one hour break for lunch and rest, and a one hour session for interaction with children. The course may run for about six hours. The time-table can be framed by the CCT who is conducting the course. Residential courses of longer duration can be held by replaying segments of the material with Goenkaji’s instructions.
- Teaching Material in Hindi: (See Appendix no. 8, 9, 10, 11)
(RCCC should ensure that back-up sets are available in case of any failure)
- Goenkaji’s teaching materials for children are available in two versions: with and without reference to Triple Gems. Material with Triple Gems is to be used only when participants are all Buddhists (Refer Circular No.1)
- Any other material that may be authorized for use by the ICCC.
- A course kit containing updated guidelines and important circulars, along with any other useful material will be given to CCTs soon after their appointment.

9. Guidelines concerning translations, transcripts, recording and copying of CC materials

- All CCTs may be please be aware that clear guidelines for the above have been laid down by VIA. D'Giri. This is to be done in accordance with the May 1999 guidelines in the AT kit for “tapes, transcripts, translations and recordings”. Please contact your Co-ordinator Area Teacher for the same.
- Note: Unauthorized copying of teaching material should not be done under any circumstance. RCCC should ensure that back-up sets are available in case of any failure.

10. Best way of teaching Triple Gem and Five Precepts:

On a course where material with Triple Gems is used, CCT should use examples given by Goenkaji to explain the Triple Gems viz. the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha and what is meant by taking refuge. We take refuge in the qualities of Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha.

The five precepts are to abstain from—killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, speaking lies, and intoxication.

11. Supplementary instructions by CCTs

No such instructions should be given; clarification should only be provided where some aspect of the technique is not clear to a student. As far as possible, such clarification may be given in the interaction sessions only, or in response to an individual question from a student.

12. Interaction sessions.

Interaction may be in small groups or as an open session. (See Appendix no. 20) The CCT conducting the course may take help of other CCTs present on the course, if numbers are large. Avoid having CCTs coming part time to help out. The aim of interaction is to help the participants discover their breath and learn to master their minds by repeatedly focusing on it as it wanders. This is not the time to go into extensive theory.

13. Giving satisfactory replies to children’s questions:

- A compilation of "frequently asked questions" by participants has been attached. (See Appendix no. 21). Please read VIII for correct answers.
- A recently formulated “Know your Tape Content” is a session-wise reference material that proves to be a useful guide for One Day Course in Hindi (See Appendix no. 17) and One-day Course in English (See Appendix no. 18).

14. Old students

Old students should be given special consideration which includes the following –

- They should be seated separately. (See Appendix no. 19)
- **If available Goenkaji's short address to OSs (approx. 6 mins) may be played.(presently in Hindi only)**
- They may be given the option to sit longer in meditation sessions.
- They may observe silence for longer periods.
- If small group interaction is done, they should be grouped appropriately.
- They may be given some service, or some small responsibilities (no counseling).
- Separate courses may be organized for old students with longer periods of meditation.(See Appendix no.15)

15. Experience writing:

This is optional. Children may be encouraged to write down their experiences at the end of the course.

16. Creative activities, sports and games:

Children can be asked to draw, paint or use any other medium to depict topics that have come up in the sessions. Games requiring little or no special equipment, which do not have a competitive spirit but emphasize relaxation, should be encouraged.

17. Course report:

At the end of the course, the CCT should prepare a report giving details of the course and send it to the RCCC by email or file it at the centre. (See Appendix no. 1)

18. Management of children's courses in general:

Management of courses is an important aspect in the organization of children's courses. Every member of the team has a significant role to play in the success of the course viz CCTs, Dhamma servers, centre staff. Participation by ATs is desirable.

- A good pre-course planning covering all aspects of the course (food, time-table, creative activities, etc.) should be done.
- Specific duties should be assigned to individual Dhamma servers.
Meditating together an hour before the children arrive will be helpful in teamwork.

19. Feedback from institutions:

Simple, easy-to-be-filled proforma (Appendix 3) should be given to schools and, periodically, the same may be collected, tabulated, conclusions drawn and used for motivating new groups.

20. Follow-up action:

CCTs should try to periodically visit those schools or institutions where courses have been held. Encourage the school authorities to implement a 10 mins practice session twice a day –once in the beginning and once at closing time.

A follow up two hour session may be implemented in schools holding regular 1 day courses. (See Appendix no.14)

21. Procedure to acquire materials related to Children courses:

In India: The distribution point is Dr. Pathak's office at VRI, Dhamma Giri.

- **CDs/DVDs:** RCCCs to fill requisition form (Appendix 4) and submit personally or send a scanned signed copy to Dr. Pathak, <vri_admin@dhamma.net.in> <info@giri.dhamma.org>.

Note: Teaching material with Triple Gem: RCCCs are requested to place their requests directly to Priti Dedhia <priti.dedhia@gmail.com>

- **Tablets:** RCCC to contact respective CAT.
- **CCT Kits/ Pamphlets:** RCCC and ATs active in children's courses should contact VRI office at Dhamma Giri.
Alternately download from CCT website <www.cct.dhamma.org>
- **Compass VCD/DVD/ Path of Joy/Anapana Pamphlets:** VRI Book Store, D'Giri.

Outside India- Please contact your RCCC

22. Resignation:

- In a situation where a CCT is unable to serve in this capacity, he should discuss with the concerned RCCC/ CAT/CT and step down. In case of breakage of sila, especially 3rd and 5th, the CCT is not to continue with this responsibility. (See Circular no. 4)

Updated CCT list will be maintained by Dr. (Mrs).Nirmala Ganla - Secretary ICCC. List will be updated every three months and will be made available on the CCT website. CCTs may please inform their respective RCCCs in case of change of address, phone number and e-mail id.

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II.RESPONSIBILITIES OF ICCC

- 1.The ICCC (International Children's Course Committee) will oversee the following responsibilities. The Secretary will be the overall coordinator.
- 2.Approval of appointments and resignations of RCCCs and CCTs in consultation with Co-ordinating Area Teachers(CATs); forwarding the information for the listing of new appointments and removal from the list of those who resign.
- 3.Ensuring availability of standardized teaching material in regional languages for CCTs to conduct courses; coordinating the approval of translation and recording teams, in consultation with CATs and RCCCs; coordinating the dissemination of transcripts with CATs and RCCCs, selecting appropriate candidate's voice samples for approval for recording children's course materials in consultation with teachers and concerned ATs in the area.
- 4.Ensuring that children's courses are conducted in adherence to established guidelines; further development and dissemination of guidelines for conducting courses, guidelines and Code of Conduct for CCTs; providing clarification, guidance, and support in dealing with various issues that may arise regarding deviation from the guidelines.
- 5.Developing and disseminating an international standardized CCT Course Kit, and a CCT training module with materials and timetable, and coordination of a system to ensure that newly appointed CCTs receive a CCT Course Kit and schedule of trainings within an appropriate period of their appointment. Appointing and monitoring a list of approved RCCCs who may conduct full CCT training programs in consultation with teachers in the area; coordinating training of RCCCs in use of the CCT training module; supporting RCCCs in providing regular scheduled trainings for CCTs locally and regionally.
- 6.Coordinating the development of additional standardized course materials. supervising the editing of English transcripts of Hindi course materials; supervising the recording of these materials in regional languages including English accents and other languages as appropriate; for use on children's courses using standard tape materials.
- 7.Monitoring the CCT International Listserv, providing guidance to listserv moderator as appropriate; coordinating the dissemination of materials via this medium.
- 8.Collecting and compiling data on International Children's Course activities; forwarding data to appropriate data managers in VRI.

9. Gathering of feedback on children's courses from CCTs, RCCCs, children, and adult observers (school teachers or parents), to provide a summary of such, with appropriate recommendations to VRI including: course length, format, content, materials, etc., non-center courses, center courses, and courses in schools.

10. Addressing non-standard requests for special courses to ensure appropriate guidance is given or arrangements are made, with consultation of CATs in such situations as requests for courses in juvenile detention facilities, requests for courses for developmentally delayed children, requests for courses for groups of disabled children.

11. Help in the formation and supervision of - Children's Course Teachers' Website Development Committee.

12. Coordination of memorandums and activities, such as an international children's course conference at a suitable interval of time; to ensure a unified vision of promoting Goenkaji's mission to provide children with the opportunity to experience their first taste of Dhamma through children's courses; promoting regular, consistent, moderated dialogue among RCCCs, and as appropriate, CCTs, in furthering our Teacher's mission.

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III.DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGIONAL COORDINATORS, CHILDREN’S COURSES

- 1.Maintain an up-to-date list of all children’s course teachers (CCTs) and assistant teachers (ATs) involved in conducting children’s courses in their region.
- 2.Remain in touch with all the CCTs of their region so that they know whether the CCTs are following their code of conduct, including the guideline for conducting at least two children’s courses per year.
- 3.Ensure that CCTs are following the children’s course guidelines while conducting courses and provide them with updates and changes in the guidelines.
- 4.Help organize children’s courses and provide approved teaching material for them.
- 5.RCCC should ensure that back-up sets are available in case of any failure.
- 6.Obtain reports from CCTs or ATs conducting children’s courses in their region. Submit compiled data to the Secretary-Co-ordinator International Children’s Course Committee (ICCC) in the form of an Annual report from Jan to Dec
- 7.Obtain feedback given by children at the end of their courses, select from these pieces worthy of publication and send them periodically to the Committee Member in charge of your area.
- 8.Communicate with the Member of the ICCC who is responsible for your area regarding any difficulties that need to be addressed.
- 9.In consultation with the ICCC, organize training seminars for CCTs as well as ATs conducting children’s courses.
- 10.Inform CAT when they wish to recommend a CCT appointment. The CAT will forward the recommendation to the Secretary-Co-Ordinator, ICCC for recording the details and further informing VIA to announce the same in the newsletter.
- 11.Be proactive in spread of Dhamma through active outreach in schools and institutions.
- 12.Help organize Teenagers’ Vipassana courses in their area.

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IV. CODE OF DISCIPLINE FOR CCTs

All CCTs are requested to read the following guidelines prior to conducting a course.

- A. Code of conduct
- B. Qualities of a CCT
- C. Points to be remembered while serving on a CC.
- D. Additional points to be noted by CCTs.

A. CODE OF CONDUCT

Every CCT should

- be fully committed to Vipassana meditation in the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin and maintain a daily practice of two hours;
- sincerely maintain the five precepts in daily life;
- feel fortunate for having been given the opportunity to selflessly sow the seeds of Dhamma in children;
- sit at least one ten-day course every year for his or her own spiritual growth in Dhamma;
- conduct at least two children's courses every year;
- volunteer, out of his or her own volition, to help other CCTs on their courses;
- conduct children's courses according to approved guidelines;
- participate in workshops organized for them by the RCCC.

B. Each CCT should have or cultivate the following qualities:

1. Be clear that we have had a positive change in ourselves; thereby we can share it with others.
2. Have love for children, like their company and be able to work with them.
3. Have sincere feelings of Metta, compassion, loving-kindness and sympathetic joy for children.
4. Proceed slowly, patiently, at a pace that is comfortable for the children.
5. Do not try to over-achieve by pushing the children to understand, or by teaching them things they aren't ready to learn.
6. Try to establish a close rapport with the children.
7. Joy of working with children should be evident; children are very sensitive and if they see you are joyful and calm, they will be more inclined to want to be like you. Actions speak louder than words, so we must embody the Dhamma as much as possible.
8. Effective and good communication skills are important.
9. To reach a group of children is quite different than reaching a child one on one, we should be comfortable working with groups of children.
10. Have compassion and empathy (an ability to take oneself out of being an adult and see it through a child's eyes), but be clear about not acting childish.
11. Professionalism. It is important to have appropriate boundaries between CCTs and children. Be friendly but firm.
12. Treat them with respect, and vice versa.
13. Avoid being judgmental.

C. Points to remember while serving on a CC:

1. The course is conducted by Goenkaji, we are helping him.
2. We are sharing the joy of learning the Dhamma with the children.
3. All children discover that they have a tool with them all the time to control their minds.
4. We give them inspiration and a way to avoid wrong actions and to perform right actions.
5. In this world of chaos and confusion the course gives them a tool to calm themselves down.
6. We make them aware that people are the same all over the world which is for the benefit of the whole world.
7. We give the children the opportunity to look into the mystery of what meditation is; facilitating them to be in contact with the seed of Dhamma. The seed is there; when the time ripens it will grow.
8. If at the end of the course they know how to observe the breath we have achieved our goal.
9. We need to have gratitude towards the children, if not for them we would not have the opportunity to serve

D. Additional Points to be noted by CCTs:

1. The seat occupied by a CCT while teaching a children's course is not synonymous with the Dhamma Seat occupied by an Assistant Teacher while teaching Vipassana courses. The elevated seat used by a CCT should not be covered with a white cloth.
2. CCTs are not authorized to give evening Metta to guides and other servers on the course.
3. CCTs are allowed to conduct only children's courses. They are strictly prohibited from teaching adults, and are not allowed to teach children outside the prescribed format for children's courses.
4. No material designed, devised or developed by CCTs or Regional Coordinators, Children's Courses should be used while conducting children's courses. Materials approved by the ICCCC should be used on courses.
5. Children's Course teachers are not authorized to give live instructions.
6. Children's Course teachers may reclaim travel expenses when they go to conduct a course.
7. Children's Course teachers should not be accommodated in the AT residences.

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V. HISTORY OF CHILDREN'S COURSES

- April 1986: The first children's course was held in Mumbai (India) which was a four-day course conducted by Rev. Goenkaji himself. 88 students participated. After this, regular courses came to be held in Dhammagiri, Hyderabad and Jaipur. Five to six courses were held per year at each of these centers catering, approximately, to 3,000 children.
- 1989: Rev. Goenkaji's audio-visual tapes were recorded for a three-day residential course in Hindi.
- 1993: More than fifty courses were held in various centers, schools and other sites with, approximately 5,000 children participating. Detailed guidelines for Children's Anapana Courses were issued in October 1993.
- 1994 : More than 100 courses covered 11,000 students. Goenkaji's discourse to teachers and parents was also made available in Hindi. By this time, reports of courses held in other countries also started pouring in.
- 1997: Goenkaji recorded special Anapana instructions for older children aged 12 to 15.
- 1998: Some material was prepared on a trial basis for facilitating counseling of students.
- 1999: Children's courses at Dhammagiri were discontinued because of heavy pressure of adult courses but the activity spread to many other places like Bada, Nashik, Pune, Raipur, etc.
- 2000: Goenkaji gave his first ever recording of a one-day children's course in English in five sessions. He also gave a fresh recording of Hindi Anapana and concluding discourse with Metta. He insisted that the format of children's courses around the world should be uniform. In order to achieve this, regional coordinators of children's courses were appointed the world over to oversee children's course activity and provide guidance wherever necessary.
- Feb 2001: New guidelines for organizing and conducting Anapana courses were issued. Children's course teachers are expected to follow these guidelines strictly. For this purpose, two or three days' intensive training is imparted to them at different centers.
- Between 2001 and 2007, children's course activity began in new regions like Africa, Latin America, Malaysia, Middle East, Thailand, Spain and Switzerland.
- April 2004: Goenkaji conducted a 7 day Vipassana course for Teenagers (age 15 to 19 years) at Dhammagiri. Since then such courses continue to be held in Hindi, Telugu and Burmese. They are conducted by assistant teachers.
- 2005: Goenkaji appointed an International Children's Course Committee

(ICCC) to coordinate and supervise the children's course activity worldwide. In the same year, Children's course Tapes/CDs without Triple gems were introduced. Further to this, in 2007 Goenkaji gave clear guidelines for use of Tapes with Triple Gems.

- 2006: Goenkaji allowed inclusion of 17 and 18 year olds, on children's courses. Courses for hearing and speech children began to be held in Myanmar and India.
- 2010: Chinese children began sitting in growing numbers every year.
- 2012 : The annual figures were 120,000 participants with 87,000 from India alone. Goenkaji gave his approval for introducing a 70 minute Anapana course format in schools. The state govt. of Maharashtra in India passed a resolution making it compulsory for all schools in the state to have this implemented. This is carried out under the name of MITRA project. MITRA is an acronym for Mind in Training for Right Awareness. Since then, other states have begun to take the initiative in introducing Anapana to larger numbers of students. These courses can be conducted by meditators trained for the same, not necessarily CCTs.
- 2013: Approximately 72 RCCCs and 1500 CCTs aided by countless Dhamma servers were involved in worldwide one day and residential children's courses.

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VI. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE CCT REPORT FORM

Children's Course Report

Date:	Location		Type of Course	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Old Student Short
School (Org.) Name							
Address							
Contact	Name				Tel:		
	E-mail				Mobile:		
Age Group (Std.)				Course Language			
	Boys			Girls			
CCT Conducting							
CCT for Interaction							
No. of Dhamma Sevaks							
Talk to Parents by							
Pre course talk by							
No of Students	Boys			Girls			Total
Old							
New							
Total							

Details of Session 3(Question - Answers) / Creative Activities / Games	
Remarks	
Names of CCTs	Signature

Dhamma Sevak

Sr No.	Name	Courses Done	Contact No.	Email Id

Dhamma Sevika

Sr No.	Name	Courses Done	Contact No.	Email Id

APPENDIX 2: APPLICATION FORM

(May be modified as per prevailing requirements)

Full Name Boy/Girl

Age Std. School

Are your parents Vipassana Meditators?

Residential address.....

Tel. No..... email id

Who/what inspired you to attend this course?

What do you hope to achieve by doing this course?

Any ailments / problems?

Write a few lines about yourself.

(For old students only)

First course: when & where.....

How many courses completed.....

Regularity of practice: Daily..... Weekly..... Nil.....

Any changes you see in yourself:

If you have completed 15 years would you like to sit Teenagers Vipassana Course?

APPENDIX 3: FEEDBACK FROM SCHOOLS/INSTITUTIONS

Name of school/institution.....

Address.....

Contact Person.....

Date(s) Course held.....

Ages and number of participants.....

Results and/or any changes observed in children:

Suggestions if any:

Signature:.....Designation:.....

Date:.....

APPENDIX 4: REQUISITION FORM FOR CHILDREN'S COURSE MATERIAL

Request to be submitted only by/through Regional Coordinator, Children's Course (RCCC)

Name of Applicant: _____ Date of Request: _____

For Area/Region/Centre: _____ Date Required: _____

Name of RCCC: _____ Signature of RCCC: _____

No	CD Description	Quantity

Note: Teaching material with Triple Gem-please write to Priti Dedhia.

<priti.dedhia@gmail.com> This is available in CDs only.

Approved in VRI office by _____

Receiver's Name:_____ Signature_____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 5: MAINTENANCE OF CDs, TABLETS

Please note that audio tapes have been discontinued . In India, material is now available on CDs and Tablets. It is worthwhile for CCTs to familiarize themselves with all the Teaching and related materials on a Children's course. One must be clear about the audio/video contents and learn the intricacies of handling the equipment. Try to be self sufficient in maintaining it and have sufficient backup provisions.

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR CARE AND HANDLING CDs AND VCDs

Do:

1. Handle discs by the outer edge or the center hole.
2. Use a non-solvent-based felt-tip permanent marker to mark the label of the disc.
3. Keep away dirt or other foreign matter from the disc.
4. Store discs upright (book style) in plastic cases specified for CD and DVDs.
5. Return discs to storage cases immediately after use.
6. Leave discs in their packaging to minimize the effects of environmental changes.
7. Store disc in a cool, dry, dark environment in which the air is clean.
8. Remove dirt, foreign material, fingerprints, smudges, and liquids by wiping with a clean cotton fabric in a straight line from the center of the disc toward the outer edge.
9. Use CD/DVD-cleaning detergent, isopropyl alcohol, or methanol to remove stubborn dirt
10. Check the disc surface before playing.

Do not:

1. Touch the surface of the disc.
2. Bend the disc.
3. Use adhesive labels.
4. Store discs horizontally for a long time (years).
5. Expose discs to extreme heat, high humidity, prolonged sunlight & ultraviolet light.
6. Expose discs to extremely rapid temperature or humidity changes.
7. Write or mark in the data area of the disc (the area the laser "reads").
8. Clean by wiping in a direction going around the disc.

For CDs especially do not:

1. Scratch the label side of the disc.
2. Use a pen, pencil, or fine-tip marker to write on the disc.
3. Write on the disc with markers that contain solvents.
4. Try to peel off or reposition a label.

TABLETS

These are extremely user friendly. Familiarize yourself with using them. Have appropriate connections for video sessions.

Note their contents –I day, 2 day and 3 day courses have been incorporated .Be familiar with options given especially for a particular session.eg. Q/A 1-5, Discourse 1 and 2.(in Hindi) 10mins meditation and closings for GSs.

In addition, Rev Goenkaji's talks to CCTs have been included –these can be played for the benefit of the team serving the course, before a course starts.

Morning chants have been included. Some of these would be helpful in a workshop.

CAUTION: The Tablets contain Dhamma material and should be treated with respect.

Please refrain from accessing the internet, checking emails and loading games on it.

APPENDIX 6: LIST OF ENGLISH CDs & THEIR CONTENTS

Tape Teaching Material -printed here for record-not available any longer		
Audio #1	A: Anapana B: Discourse + Metta	VIA Oct/99 VIA Oct/99
Audio #2	A: Session #1 [Disc + Instr] B: Session #2 [Disc + Instr]	VIA Sept/99 VIA Sept/99
Audio #3	A: Session #3 [Disc + Instr] B: Session #4 [13 Q&A + GS]	VIA Sept/99 VIA Dec/00 + Oct/99
Audio #4	Video Supplement* A: Session #1 & #2 [Instr. only] B: Session #3 [Instr. only]	VIA Sept/99 VIA Sept/99
Video: No video tapes available. Please use VCDs.		

OPEN DISTRIBUTION TAPES: (For old students and teachers/staff members of schools who are Vipassana meditators and responsible for holding follow-up sessions)

Audio:	A: Group Sitting x4 (Eng) B: Sila Rhymes	VIA-Oct/99 VIA-June/87
Audio:	A: Group Sitting 10m. x4 (Hindi) B: Group Sitting 10m. x4 (Eng.)	VIA-Oct/99 VIA-Oct/99

FOR RCCC - FOR CCT TRAINING

Audio #1	Talks + Q/A for CCTs A: 5 min. Talk B: CCT Q/A + Talk: 12 mins total	May/93 VIA CCT 4 Q/A CCT Meeting VIA Jan/98 3 Q/A CCT Meeting VIA Dec/00 Talk CCT Meeting VIA Jan/98
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ENGLISH CD TEACHING MATERIAL

V 2000 Video	Anapana: 34 mins Session 1 Discourse: 10 mins Session 2 Discourse: 7 mins Session 3 Discourse: 8 mins Final Discourse and Metta: 25 mins	
V2000 Audio CD	Session 1 Instruction: 20 mins Session 2 Instruction: 21 mins Session 3 Instruction: 21 mins Closing Group Sit Hindi: 3 mins Sabka Mangal Chanting/BSM: 3 mins G/Sit Starting which Nostril: 1:50 mins Touch of Breath: 1:55mins.	

ENGLISH CD MATERIAL – OPEN DISTRIBUTION

Audio	Group sitting for children English & Hindi Group sitting with Metta – 12 mins Dhamma Geet Hindi – 14 min.	
Video	Compass – 12 min	

APPENDIX 7.LIST OF HINDI CDs & THEIR CONTENTS

Tape Teaching Material printed here for record-not available any longer		
Audio #1	A: Anapana 29min B: Discourse + Metta 29min	VIA Oct/99 VIA Oct/99
Audio #2	A: Anapana 40 min B: Instr.11min. +Discourse + Metta 19min	Jamnabhai School Apr/97VIA Kirtan Kendra – Apr 26-27/97
Audio #3	A: Day-1 Morning Instr.+ Chanting 38min B: Day-2 Morning Instr.+ Chanting 25min	VIA May/89 VIA May/89
Audio #4	A: Instruction #1 23min B: Instruction #2 26min	VIA Feb/99 VIA Feb/99
Audio #5	A: Discourse #1 29min B: Discourse #2 30min	VIA Feb/99 VIA Feb/99
Audio #6	A: Day-1 Group Sitzings (1 st half) 24min B: Day-1 Group Sitzings (2 nd half) 25min	VIA May/88 VIA May/88
Audio #7	A: Day-2 Group Sitzings (1 st half) 30min B: Day-2 Group Sitzings (2 nd half) 24min	VIA May/88 VIA May/88
Audio #8	A: Sessions #1, #2, #3 (13+9+21min) B: Sessions #4, #5 (12+9min.)	VIA Feb/99 VIA Feb/99
Audio #9	A: Five Closings for Sitzings B: Sila Rhymes 31min	VIA May/89 VIA June/87
Video: No video tapes available. Please use VCDs.		

OPEN DISTRIBUTION TAPES: (For old students (Children), and teachers/staff members of schools who are Vipassana meditator and responsible for holding follow-up sessions)

Audio:	A: Group Sitting x4 (Hindi) B: Sila Rhymes	VIA-Oct/99 VIA-June/87
Video:	Video: Compass (Hindi) –12min.	

FOR CCTs—FOR CCT TRAINING

Audio #1	A: CCT Talk B: D.W. Q & Ans.42m	93, 98, 2000 VIA Bombay 4/97
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HINDI CD TEACHING MATERIAL

Video CD 1	V2000 Anapana: 29 min Closing Discourse and Metta:19 min	Kirtan Kendra, Mumbai April/97
Video CD 2	Day 1 Instruction and Chanting w/out Triple Gems: 38 mins Day 1 Discourse:29 mins	
Audio V2000	Instruction 1 Feb/99: 23.00 + Instruction 2 Feb/99: 26 mins + Closing Group Sit: 3 mins + Group Sit: 10 mins	
Audio V2000	Day I G/Sit 1 st half: 24 mins + Day 1 G/Sit 2 nd half: 25 mins G/Sit Hindi: 10 mins + G/Sit Eng: 10 mins	
Audio V2000	Day 2 G/Sit 1 st half: 30 mins + Day 2 G/Sit 2 nd half: 25 mins G/Sit Hindi: 10 mins, + G/Sit Eng: 10 mins	

Video CD	Day 2 Inst/Chanting: 23 mins Day 2 Discourse: 30 mins	
Audio	Q/A Part 1:13 mins, Part 2: 9 mins, Part 3: 21 mins, Part 4: 12 mins, Part 5: 9 mins Closing G/Sit: 3 mins, G/Sit: 10 mins	
Video CD V 2000	Anapana: 40 mins w/out Triple Gems Closing Discourse Metta Oct/99: 29 mins	Jamnabai School Mumbai April/97

HINDI CD MATERIAL – OPEN DISTRIBUTION

Audio	Group sitting for children English & Hindi Group sitting with Metta – 12 mins Dhamma Geet Hindi – 14 Min.	
Video	Compass – 12 min	

APPENDIX 8: TEACHING MATERIAL FOR RESIDENTIAL& 1 DAY COURSES – HINDI

a) RESIDENTIAL

DAY 0

Anapana	October 1999	Video & Audio
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DAY – 1

Morning Instructions & Chanting Day –1	1988/89	Audio & Video
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Group Sitting Day – 1, Part A & B	1988 / 89	Audio
Instructions # 1	Feb. 1999	Audio
Discourse 1	Feb. 1999	Video & Audio

DAY – 2

Morning Instructions & Chanting Day – 2	1988/89	Audio & Video
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Group Sitting Day – 2, Part A & B	1988/89	Audio
Instructions # 2	Feb. 1999	Audio
Discourse 2	Feb. 1999	Video & Audio

DAY – 3

Ending Talk & Metta	Oct. 1999	Video & Audio
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Other Tapes

For Day 1 & 2 Sila Rhymes		Audio
For Counselling Sessions, Day 1 & Q/A Parts 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5.	Feb. 1999	Audio
Q/A for CCTs and RCCCs	Dec. 2000	Audio
For Day 0, 1 & 2 Meditation Session Ending Tape by Guruji		Audio (Edited)

b) ONE-DAY COURSE

Anapana	Oct. 1999	Video & Audio
Morning Instructions & Chanting (Chanting not to be played) Day 1	1988/89	Audio
Instructions # 1	Feb. 1999	Audio
Instructions # 2	Feb. 1999	Audio
Ending Talk & Metta	Oct. 1999	Video & Audio

**APPENDIX 9: SAMPLE TIME TABLE AND TEACHING MATERIAL HINDI
3-DAY COURSE**

Timing	Session	Teaching Material
<i>DAY – 0</i>		
06.30 pm to 07.30 pm	Introduction & Anapana	Video – By Guruji – Anapana October 1999 Optional: Anapana (Jamnabai School) –
07.30 pm to 08.30	Dinner	
08.30 pm to 09.00 pm	Meditation (actual 15 minutes)	Self meditation that ends with BSM in Guruji's voice (ending inst.)
<i>DAY – 1</i>		
05.00 am to 05.45 am	Wake-up and Exercise	By Guides and other Servers
05.45 am to 06.30 am	Meditation & Morning Chanting	Audio – Morning Instructions and (Video) Chanting Day – 1, 1988/89
06.30 am to 08.30	Breakfast	Audio – Sila Rhymes to be played
08.30 am to 09.30 am	Meditation	Audio – Group Sitting Day – 1, Parts A & B (Short break between Parts A & B)
09.30 am to 11.00 am	Refreshment Personal interaction with children by CCT for 20 to 30 minutes Games & Creative Activity	
11.00 am to 11.30 am	Meditation	Audio – Morning Instructions (& Chanting) Day – 1, 1988/89
11.30 am to 01.30	Lunch	
01.30 pm to 02.00 pm	Meditation	Self meditation ending with BSM in Guruji's voice (ending inst.)
02.00 pm to 03.30 pm	Questions and Answers Games and Creative Activity	Audio – Q & A Feb. 1999 Parts 1 & 2
04.00 pm to 04.30 pm	Meditation	Audio – Group Sitting Day – 1 Part A 1988/89
04.30 pm to 06.30	Snacks and Sports	
06.30 pm to 07.00	Meditation	Audio – Instructions # 1, Feb. 1999
07.00 pm to 07.45 pm	Discourse	Video – Discourse 1, Feb. 1999
07.45 pm to 08.30	Dinner	
08.30 pm to 09.00 pm	Meditation (actual 15 minutes)	Self meditation that ends with BSM in Guruji's voice (ending inst.)

Timing	Session	Teaching Material
DAY – 2		
05.00 am to 05.45 am	Wake-up and Exercise	By Guides and other Servers
05.45 am to 06.30 am	Meditation and Morning Chanting	Audio – Morning Instructions & (Video) Chanting Day 2, 1988/89
06.30 am to 08.30 am	Breakfast	Audio – Sila Rhymes to be played
08.30 am to 09.30 am	Meditation	Audio – Group Sitting Day 2 Parts – A & B (Short break between Parts A & B)
09.30 am to 11.00 am	Refreshment Personal interaction with children by CCT for 20 to 30 minutes Games and Creative Activity	
11.00 am to 11.30 am	Meditation	Audio – Instructions # 2, Feb. 1999
11.30 am to 01.30 pm	Lunch	
01.30 pm to 02.00 pm	Meditation	Self meditation ending with BSM in Guruji's voice (ending inst.)
02.00 pm to 03.30 pm	Questions & Answers Games and Creative Meditation	Audio – Q & A February 1999 Parts 3 & 4. Also Q & A Dec. 2000 . Session 5, if required.
04.00 pm to 04.30 pm		Self meditation ending with BSM in Guruji's voice (ending inst.)
04.30 pm to 06.30 pm	Snacks and Sports	
06.30 pm to 07.00 pm	Meditation	Audio – Instructions # 2 Feb. 1999
07.00 pm to 07.45 pm	Discourse	Video – Discourse 2 February 1999
07.45 pm to 08.30 pm	Dinner	
08.30 pm to 09.00 pm	Meditation (actual 15 minutes)	Self meditation that ends with BSM in Guruji's voice (ending inst.)
DAY – 3		
05.00 am to 05.45 am	Wake-up & Exercise	By Guides and other Servers
05.45 am to 06.30 am	Meditation, Ending Talk + Metta	Video – Ending Discourse & Metta Oct. 1999 Optional: Instr + Discourse + Metta –

APPENDIX 10. SAMPLE TIME TABLE AND TEACHING MATERIAL HINDI
2-DAY COURSE

Timing	Session	Teaching Material
<i>DAY – 0</i>		
06.30 pm to 07.30 pm	Introduction & Anapana	Video – By Guruji – Anapana Oct. 1999 Optional: Anapana (Jamnabai School) – (for Older Children
07.30 pm to 08.30 pm	Dinner	
08.30 pm to 09.00 pm	Meditation (actual 15 minutes)	Self meditation ending with BSM in Guruji's voice
<i>DAY – 1</i>		
05.00 am to 05.45 am	Wake-up and Exercise	By Guides and other Servers
05.45 am to 06.30 am	Meditation & Morning Chanting	Audio – Morning Instructions – and (Video) Chanting Day – 1,
06.30 am to 08.30 am	Breakfast	Audio – Sila Rhymes to be played
08.30 am to 09.30 am	Meditation	Audio – Group Sitting Day – 1, Parts A & B. (Short break between Parts A & B)
09.30 am to 11.00 am	Refreshment Personal interaction with children by CCT for 20 to 30 minutes Games & Creative Activity	
11.00 am to 11.30 am	Meditation	Audio – Morning Instructions (& Chanting) Day – 1, 1988/89
11.30 am to 01.30 pm	Lunch	
01.30 pm to 02.00 pm	Meditation	Self meditation ending with BSM in Guruji's voice
02.00 pm to 03.30 pm	Questions and Answers Games and Creative Activity	Audio – Q & A Feb.1999 Parts 1 & 2
04.00 pm to 04.30 pm	Meditation	Audio – Group Sitting Day – 1 Part A 1988/89
04.30 pm to 06.30 pm	Snacks and Sports	
06.30 pm to 07.00 pm	Meditation	Audio – Instructions # 1, Feb. 1999
07.00 pm to 07.45 pm	Discourse	Video – Discourse 1, Feb. 1999
07.45 pm to 08.30 pm	Dinner	
08.30 pm to 09.00 pm	Meditation (actual 15 minutes)	Self meditation ending with BSM in Guruji's voice

Timing	Session	Teaching Material
<i>DAY – 2</i>		
05.00 am to 05.45 am	Wake-up and Exercise	By Guides and other Servers
05.45 am to 06.30 am	Meditation and Morning Chanting	Audio – Morning Instructions & (Video) Chanting Day 2, 1988/89
06.30 am to 08.30 am	Breakfast	Audio – Sila Rhymes to be played
08.30 am to 09.30 am	Meditation	Audio – Group Sitting Day 2, Parts - A & B (Short break between Parts A & B)
09.30 am to 11.00 am	Refreshment Personal interaction with children by CCT for 20 to 30 minutes Games and Creative Activity	
11.00 am to 11.30 am	Meditation	Audio – Instructions # 2, Feb. 1999
11.30 am to 01.30 pm	Lunch	
01.30 pm to 02.00 pm	Meditation	Self meditation ending with BSM in Guruji's voice
02.00 pm to 03.30 pm	Questions & Answers Games and Creative Activity	Audio – Q & A Feb. 1999 Parts 3 & 4. Also Q & A Dec. 2000. Session 5, if required
03.30 pm to 04.00 pm	Meditation	Audio – Instructions # 2 Feb. 1999
04.00 pm to 04.30 pm	Meditation, Ending Talk + Metta	Video – Ending Discourse & Metta Oct. 1999 Optional: Instr + Discourse + Metta – 30m – Kirtan Kendra, Bombay 4/97

**APPENDIX 11: SAMPLE TIME TABLE AND TEACHING MATERIAL HINDI
ONE-DAY COURSE**

(Duration: 6 hours; Meditation Sessions: 4)

Timing	Session	Teaching Material
09.00 am to 09.45 am	*Talk to OS-6 mins. Introduction & Anapana	Video By Guruji – Anapana Oct. 1999 Optional: Anapana(Jamnabai School) 4/97– (for Older Children 13-16 yrs)
09.45 am to 10.15 am	Meditation	Audio – Morning Instructions (& Chanting) – Day 1,1988/89 Do not play chanting
10.15 am to 11.15 am	Refreshment Personal interaction with children by CCT in small groups	
11.15 am to 11.45 am	Meditation	Audio – Instructions # 1, Feb. 1999
11.50 am to 12.20 pm	Questions and Answers Or Discourse 1 Or Open House	Audio – Q/A Parts 1, 2 and, if required, Part 3, Feb. 1999 Video – Discourse 1, Oct. 1999 By CCT
12.30 pm to 01.00 pm	Meditation	Audio – Instructions # 2, Feb. 1999 (“Touch” Instruction)
01.00 pm to 02.00 pm	Lunch & Games	
02.00 pm to 02.30 pm	Meditation	“10minute open house, then self meditation that ends with BSM in Guruji’s voice (ending inst.)
02.30 pm to 03.00 pm	Ending Talk + Metta	Video – Ending Discourse & Metta Oct. 1999 Optional: Instr + Discourse + Metta – 30m – Kirtan Kendra, Bombay 4/97

•Play Talk to OS if available. New students to come into the hall after this.

APPENDIX 12: SAMPLE TIME TABLE AND TEACHING MATERIAL ENGLISH
ONE-DAY COURSE
(Duration: 6 hours; Meditation Sessions: 4)

Timing	Session	Teaching Material
09.00 am to 09.45 am	Introduction & Anapana	Audio Tape: 34 mins Video CD: 34 mins No separate material for older children
09.45 am to 10.15 am	Meditation	Video Session 1 Discourse: 10:00 min Audio Session 1 Instruction: 20:00 min
10.15 am to 11.15 am	Refreshment Personal interaction with children by CCT in small groups	
11.15 am to 11.45 am	Meditation	Video Session 2 Discourse: 7 mins. Audio Session 2 Instruction: 21 mins
11.50 am to 12.20 pm	Or Open House	By CCT
12.30 pm to 01.00 pm	Meditation	Video CD 1 Session 3 Discourse: 8 mins CD 2 Session 3 Instruction: 21 mins
01.00 pm to 02.00 pm	Lunch & Games	
02.00 pm to 02.30 pm	Meditation	Q/A English Dec 2000, 10minute open house, then self meditation that ends with BSM in Guruji's voice (ending inst.)
02.30 pm to 03.00 pm	Ending Talk + Metta	Audio/Video/VCD 1: 25 mins Discourse + Metta No separate material for older children

APPENDIX 13. COMPARISON BETWEEN H & E 1 DAY COURSE

Timing	Session	Teaching Material: Hindi	Teaching Material: English
9 - 9:45 am	Introduction & Anapana	Talk to OS 6 mins Audio 1/ Video 1/ CD: 29 mins VIA Oct/99	Video CD: 34 mins
		Optional for Older Students; Audio 2/Video 1/ CD 8: 37 mins Jamnabai School April 97	No material for older students
9:45 - 10:15	Meditation 1	Audio 3: 37 mins – Morning Instructions/Chanting – Day 1, 1988/89 Do not play chanting	Video Session 1 Discourse: 10:00 min Audio Session 1 Instruction: 20:00 min
10:15- 11:15	Refreshment, interaction with children by CCT in small groups		
11:15 - 11:45	Meditation 2	Audio 4/ CD 3: 23 mins – Instructions 1, Feb. 1999	Video Session 2 Discourse: 7 mins. Audio Session 2 Instruction: 21 mins
11:50 - 12:20 pm	Q/A or Discourse or Open House	Audio 8 – Q/A Parts 1, 2 and, if required, Part 3, Feb. 1999 Video- Discourse 1 Oct.1999 By CCT	Open House by CCT
12:30 – 1pm	Meditation 3	Audio 4/CD 3: 26 mins – Instructions 2, Feb. 1999 (“Touch” Instruction)	Video CD 1 Session 3 Discourse: 8 mins CD 2 Session 3 Instruction: 21 mins
1- 2 pm	Lunch & Games		
2 - 2:30 pm	Meditation 4	“10minute open house, then self meditation that ends with BSM in Guruji’s voice Audio : 3 mins	Q/A Engsslish Dec 2000, CD 2 GS starting which Nostril: 1:50 mins Touch of Breath: 1:55 mins Closing GS Hindi:3min
2:30 – 3pm	Ending Talk + Metta	Audio 1/Video 2 : 29 mins - Ending Discourse & Metta Oct. 1999 Optional: Instr 11 mins + Discourse + Metta : 19 mins – Kirtan Kendra, Bombay, April/97	Audio/Video/VCD 1: 25 mins Discourse + Metta

APPENDIX 14. REFRESHER COURSE- 2 HRS.

(After completion of the 6 hr. Anapana course, schools having regular meditation can be offered a short revision from the following year)

Session	Teaching Material Hindi	Teaching Material English
Pre Course talk	10 mins	10 mins
Meditation 1	Instructions # 1, Feb. 1999 : 23 mins	Session 2 Discourse 7 mins Instruction: 21 mins
Open House		
Interaction	30 mins	30 mins
Meditation	10 mins	10 mins
Discourse+Metta	4 Options: 1. 1 day discourse + Metta 2. Day 1 of residential 3. Day 2 of residential 4. Q/A play 1-3 or 4-5 (depending upon age group.)	I day final Discourse+Metta

APPENDIX 15 1 DAY COURSE FOR OLD STUDENTS

The following option may be resorted to when all the students are OSs and belong to a uniform age group.

Session	Teaching Material Hindi	Teaching Material English
Meditation 1	Self Meditation ending with BSM in Guruji's voice 3 mins 20 mins.	Session 1 Instruction: 20 mins
Interaction		
Meditation2	G S Day – 1 Part A 24 mins May 88	Session 2 Instruction: 21 mins
Meditation 3	G S Day – 1 Part B 25 mins May 88	Session 3 Instruction: 21 mins
Questions and Answers	Q/A 1-2-3-4-5 Feb. 1999 at discretion of CCT 30 mins (13+9+21+12+9 mins)	Q/A 13 Dec 2000
Lunch		
Meditation 4	10 minute open house(optional) then self meditation that ends with BSM in Guruji's voice (ending inst.)	Self meditation with closing GS Hindi 3 mins : 30 mins
Ending Talk + Metta	3 Options: Video 1. 1 day discourse + Metta Oct 1999or 4/97 depending upon age of students 2. Day 1 of residential 3. Day 2 of residential	Discourse (In other languages substitute last discourse with translations of other discourses in Hindi)

APPENDIX16. MITRA SESSIONS& PROJECT INFORMATION

70MINS. ANAPANA SESSIONS:

Downloadable at :<http://www.vridhamma.org/AnapanaForChildren>
Available in Hindi, Marathi, English and Tamil

- Starting Anapana Session 16 mins
- Practice Session 1 12 -14 mins
- Practice Session 2 14 mins
- Ending Session 20 mins
- Daily Practice 10 Minutes

ABOUT MITRA UPAKRAM

MITRA Upakram is an initiative of the Government of Maharashtra to facilitate *wholesome mental growth* of school children. MITRA Upakram, which is the project name to inculcate Right Awareness aspires to cover over 25 million school children and 600,000 school teachers.

MITRA, which stands for *MIND IN TRAINING for RIGHT AWARENESS* also means FRIEND in Hindi Language.

Right Awareness, which is the essence of MITRA, is awareness of natural respiration, which means that participants learn to observe the incoming breath and outgoing breath by focusing their attention at the entrance of their nostrils. They simply observe their natural breath without trying to change or correct the flow of the breath. In this way, they experience the beginning steps of self-awareness. This technique being truly scientific, without any imagination or evaluation, leads to Right Awareness and hence Right Concentration. This technique is known as Anapana Sati, which means awareness of incoming and out going breath.

MITRA Upakram provides an education which liberates the mind from various barriers like anxiety, anger, hatred, lack of concentration, doubts, laziness, greed, restlessness etc. A simple format of delivery has been chosen with the support of Vipassana Research Institute (VRI) and Vipassana centers, where after an initial training of over an hour, the school children can practice this technique daily for 10 mins before starting of school and repeat the practice for 10 mins before leaving for home.

With regular practice of a few days, school children as well as their teachers achieve enhanced concentration, memory, self confidence, increased productivity, effectiveness and are also able to experience compassion and joy for one and all.

Vide Government circular no. Misc-2011/296/11/MS-3 Dated 5th Oct 2011 and circular no. MISC-2011/296/11/MS-3 dated 27th Jan 2012 directives are issued to all primary and secondary schools in the state. The directions for Implementation of MITRA Project in the schools are given in Government GR dated 11/12 July 2012.

Useful websites for more information:

MITRA Project: www.globalpagoda.org/mitra ;www.mitrapakram.org

Anapana in Schools: <http://www.vridhamma.org/ccmah>

Mini Anapana for All: <http://www.vridhamma.org/Mamfa>

Audio/Video DownLoad: <http://www.vridhamma.org/AnapanaForChildren>

Children's courses: <http://www.vridhamma.org/Courses-for-children>

APPENDIX 17 KNOW YOUR COURSE CONTENT: 1-DAY COURSE IN HINDI

Introduction

The following materials were developed to assist CCTs in identifying key points in the discourses and instructions so that they are well prepared to answer questions and guide the students in their care. They are intended for reference use after the training, when preparing questions and discussion points for a children's or teens' course.

1. Anapana Session
2. Morning Instructions and Chanting-Day-1
3. Instructions-I
4. Instructions-II
5. Morning Instructions and Chanting-Day-2
6. Discourse and Metta

1. ANAPANA (25 MINS)

Q. 1 With which words does Guruji begin the Anapana?

Guruji begins the Anapana with the words “Namo Tassa... and Guruwara teri oar se”

Q.2 Guruji asks, “What have you come to learn here?” How does he answer this?

Guruji says, “ We have come here to learn how to live a life of Dhamma.”

Q.3 What is a life of Dhamma?

Leading a peaceful life which is good for us and good for others is a life of Dhamma.

Q.4 We all want to lead a good life but we cannot. Why?

We cannot always lead a good life because our minds are not in our control. We often do what we should not and do not do what we should.

Q.5 What example does Guruji give of the mind not being in one's control?

The examples are ice cream, TV, cartoon and madari.

Q.6 What else must we do besides gaining control over the mind?

Make the mind pure.

Q.7 How will you make the mind pure?

Learn to focus the mind.

Q.8 What example does Guruji give?

The example of a child full of dirt, not sitting under the tap to clean himself.

Q.9 Who found out this technique of focusing and purifying the mind?

Gautama the Buddha discovered the technique (birth, childhood, ploughing of field by the king)

Q.10 How did Buddha find out a way to come out of suffering?

He remembered the incident of his childhood-observing breath to focus and purify the mind. He started to share his discovery in order to calm the mind.

Q.11 What is unique about this technique?

The technique is non-sectarian.

Q.12 What is the technique called?

Anapana Sati.

Q.13 Explain the meaning of Anapana

Ana-apan incoming and outgoing breath; sati-awareness.

Q.14 What are the five precepts?

To abstain from i.Killing ii.Stealing iii. Impure speech iv. Sexual misconduct v. Intoxicants.

Q.15 What instructions does Guruji give before starting Anapana?

Sit cross legged, posture, relax, eyes closed.

Q.16 What instructions does Guruji give to begin Anapana Sati?

Observe natural breath, the way it comes in and goes out.

Q.17 With what words does Guruji end the meditation sitting?

Bhavatu Sabba Mangalam-May there be peace everywhere.

Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu.-May it be so.

2. MORNING INSTRUCTIONS AND CHANTING - DAY -1(Chanting not to be played)

Q.1 How does Guruji recapitulate the instructions for Anapana?

Sitting posture, eyes and mouth closed, attention on nostrils-at the entrance and inside. Awareness of incoming and outgoing breath, type of breath, long, short, which nostril does the breath go in and come out from.

Q.2 Who does Guruji compare the alert mind with?

He compares the alert mind with a gate-keeper.

Q.3 Where does the mind wander?

In the past and the future.

Q.4 Where should be the mind be?

The mind should remain in the present.

Q.5 How do the instructions end?

They end with a short maitri.

Q.6 What constitute the Dharam Ke Geet ?(*Not to be played*)

Mangal Prabhat, Dharam Ka Geet and Sheel Palan ka Geet.(Hatya nahin karenge, chori nahin karenge, jhoot nahin bolenge, brahmacharya ka palan karenge-brahmachari sadachari banenge)

3. INSTRUCTIONS-1 (23 MIN)

Q.1 With what words does Guruji begin ?

“To aao thodi der phir dhyani karen.”

Q.2 Who does Guruji compare the alert mind with?

He compares the alert mind to a watchman.

Q.3 What specific instructions does Guruji give regarding the area while observing the breath?

Guruji gives instructions to observe breath only at the entrance of the nostrils (not to follow it into the lungs inside or the air outside)

Q.4 What does Guruji say about observing the type of breath?

Long, short, heavy, light, just observe. Do not change it.

Q.5 What is the next point Guruji directs us to?

Guruji tells us to observe which nostril the breath goes in and comes out of.

Q.6 What is the next instruction?

Pure breath, no word, no mantra, no figure.

Q.7 What does Guruji say about the habit of the wandering mind?

Mind wanders while observing breath....bring it back to the breath.

Q.8 What does Guruji say about posture?

When necessary, change posture slowly..

4. INSTRUCTIONS-2 (26 MIN)

Q.1 With what words does Guruji begin ?

“To aao ek bar phir” ...sitting, posture.

Q.2 What are the instructions by Guruji?

Guruji gives instructions about area of observation and type of breath. This is followed by touch of breath

Q.3 When the breath becomes very slow (soft) what does Guruji instruct us to do?

Guruji tells us to take a few hard breaths, then return to normal breath.

Q.4 What does Guruji tell us about the wandering mind?

The mind wanders into the past or the future.

Q.5 If the mind wanders too often what does Guruji tell us to do?

Guruji tells us to make it a little fast for a short period...DOHA

5. MORNING INSTRUCTIONS AND CHANTING DAY-2 (23 MIN)

Q.1. With what words does Guruji begin?

The words are, “Saans hi saans ko jaante raho”.

Q.2. What are the other points Guruji stresses on?

Left or right nostril, type of breath- long or short, touch of breath

Q.3. After ‘BSM’ what does Guruji continue with?

Guruji continues with i) ‘Jago logon jagat ke’ Dharam ka path. ii) Sheel palan iii) Importance of keeping good company (eliminate bad qualities, imbibe good qualities) iv) Respect for elders v) Mangal ka path-Sabka mangal, mera mangal, tera mangal, jan jan mangal vi) BSM vii) Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu.

6. DISCOURSE & METTA (29 MIN)

Q.1. What aspects of the Anapana technique does Guruji stress on?

i) Incoming and outgoing breath. ii) Natural breath iii) Awareness of right or left nostril iv) Touch of breath.

Q.2. How will you maintain the practice at home?

By practicing in the morning and evening, regularly.

Q.3. What are the benefits of the technique?

The benefits are:

1. Strengthens memory
2. Improvement in studies- better concentration
3. Better performance in exams
4. Mind is more focused
5. Alert and strong mind
6. Stable mind-better understanding
7. Calm mind-better retaining power
8. Eliminates nervousness
9. Decreases fear
10. Confidence replaces diffidence
11. Ability to face adversity
12. Improves physical and mental strength
13. Improves decision- making ability (right and quick)
14. Choice of good company-friends
15. Mental strength helps to refrain from doing wrong
16. Good influence on others
17. Good mental exercise

Q.4. How does Guruji introduce Mangal maitri or loving kindness for others?

Only when your mind is at peace, will you be able to wish well for others. Hence after 10 mins of Anapana one must practice Maitri Bhavana for 2 minutes.

APPENDIX18. KNOW YOUR COURSE CONTENT: 1-DAY COURSE IN ENGLISH

Introduction

The following materials were developed to assist CCTs in identifying key points in the discourses and instructions so that they are well prepared to answer questions and guide the students in their care. They are intended for reference use after the training, when preparing questions and discussion points for a children's or teens' course.

1. Anapana and Opening formalities.
2. Session 1 Discourse and Instructions.
3. Session 2 Discourse and Instructions.
4. Session 3 Discourse and Instructions.
5. Group Sitting.
6. Closing Discourse and Metta.

1. ANAPANA AND OPENING FORMALITIES:

Q.1. In what order does Goenkaji give the different formalities?

He tells the students to take the five precept then they are guided to request for Anapana

Q.2. In what order are the five precepts given?

Abstain from killing, stealing, misconduct, speaking lies, back biting, harsh words and taking intoxicants

Q.3. How does Goenkaji explain the five precepts?

If followed, we can lead a peaceful and happy life doing wholesome deeds. But we sometimes do unwholesome actions. This is because we cannot control our mind.

Q.4. What does Goenkaji tell the children they need to follow the five precepts?

One needs a strong controlled mind to follow the precepts easily. Precepts help towards concentration of the mind, this in turn helps to lead a life with precepts; to have a happy, harmonious and wholesome life

Q.5. What does the Pali word "Anapana" mean? What does "Sati" mean?

Ana-apana – Incoming and outgoing breath, Sati – Awareness

Q.6. What are the points Goenkaji introduces before telling the children the area to practice Anapana in?

Natural and pure breath, posture, eyes closed

Q.7. In what area of the nose does Goenkaji instruct the children to practice Anapana in this first introduction?

Entrance of the nostrils

Q.8. What are the key points Goenkaji introduces during Anapana instruction?

Wandering mind - bring it back to the breath

Changing of the posture with awareness of breath

Q.9. How does Goenkaji explain “sadhu, sadhu, sadhu”?

“Sadhu” means well said, well done.

When someone performs a good action he expresses the wish that by his action may all be happy. Those who hear this, then say that they agree

2. SESSION 1- DISCOURSE (10 MIN) & INSTRUCTIONS (20 MIN):

FOCUS: WHY THE BREATH?

Q.1. With what topic does Goenkaji open the discourse?

Normal, natural breath

Q.2. What are the different adjectives Goenkaji uses to describe the mind in its different states?

The mind is wild, wandering all the time. A scattered mind is weak, concentration

makes it calm and strong, helps it to face problems, improves memory and understanding. It's capacity increases and one is happier

Q.3. What example does Goenkaji use to explain what a strong mind is?

A strong mind is like the scattered rays of the sun when passed through the lens of a magnifying glass.

Q.4. What are the reasons Goenkaji gives for why the Buddha chose the breath as the object of awareness?

1 It is always with us,

2 It is the truth and not imagination. One is with reality of truth.

3 One remains in the present.

4 It is strongly related to the mind; when the mind is disturbed, the breath is disturbed. When the mind is calm, the breath is calm.

Q.5. What guidance does Goenkaji provide on how to observe the natural breath?

Observe the normal, natural breath as it is. It is not a breathing exercise. Do not regulate it. Do not add any words or imagine any form or shape.

Instructions

Q.1. With what directions does Goenkaji begin the Anapana instructions?

Comfortable posture, eyes gently closed, mouth closed

Q.2. What is the area the students are instructed to observe?

Entrance of the nostrils

Q.3. What is the progression of the Anapana instructions during this session?

Observe the breath as it is – long/short, which nostril

Q.4. If the children need to change their position, how does Goenkaji instruct them to do it?

Change the posture gently, maintaining continuity of awareness

Q.5. When the mind wanders, how does Goenkaji guide them to deal with it?

Accept it. It is the old habit of the mind; bring it back to awareness of respiration. Work patiently, persistently, and continuously.

3. SESSION 2- DISCOURSE (7 MIN) & INSTRUCTIONS (21 MIN):

FOCUS: DIFFICULTIES

Q.1. With what topic does Goenkaji open the discourse? What are the adjectives, analogies and metaphors he uses?

One is training the mind, which is like a wild animal. A tamed mind is helpful, like a wild horse. A scattered mind is weak, unhealthy and unwholesome

Q.2. What are the practical, every day examples Goenkaji gives to explain why a strong mind is helpful?

A strong mind is helpful in student life. It is a friend in need to face any difficulty in life

Q.3. What are the difficulties Goenkaji says the students will encounter? How does he tell them to deal with each?

Wandering mind – continue to work patiently. Drowsiness – hard breathing. Agitation in body and mind. Chung effect

Instructions

Q.1. With what directions does Goenkaji begin the Anapana instructions?

Posture

Q.2. What is the area the students are instructed to observe? Does he add anything new?

Entrance of the nostrils. Awareness of the incoming and outgoing breath

Q.3. How does Goenkaji tell the students to deal with it when the mind wanders away from the object of awareness?

Accept the fact. It wanders because of its old habit pattern.

Q.4. What reminder and guidance does Goenkaji provide about posture?

If bent, straighten up

Q.5. When instructing the students to observe the breath, what are the pointers he provides?

Observe the breath as it is. Be aware, alert, attentive and vigilant; maintaining awareness while changing posture

4. SESSION 3- DISCOURSE (8 MIN) & INSTRUCTIONS (21 MIN):

FOCUS: RIGHT EFFORT

Q.1. With what topic does Goenkaji open the discourse? What is the goal Goenkaji refers to?

Understand why you are working. Work intelligently. Our goal is – awareness of the reality as it is, reality of your own breath

Q.2. What are the aspects of breath that he tells the students to be aware of ?

Which nostril and whether long/ short, deep/ shallow.

Q.3.What is the old habit of the mind Goenkaji refers to? How does he tell the students to deal with it?

The old habit is of wandering either in the past or the future. By observing the breath, the mind is brought back to the present moment.

Q.4.When the mind wanders too much, what does he tell the students to do? Identify the key aspects of this strategy and then what they should do when the mind calms down again.

Take a few harder, conscious, intentional breaths. When the mind calms down, return to normal, natural, soft breath

Q.5.What story does Goenkaji tell to illustrate how to make right and proper efforts?

Four friends, moonlit night, rowing

Q.6.How does Goenkaji guide the students to be in the present moment?

By being aware of the breath – long /short, shallow/deep, which nostril

Instructions

Q.1. With what directions does Goenkaji begin the Anapana instructions?

Sit comfortably, posture, eyes & mouth closed

Q.2.What is the area the students are instructed to observe?

Entrance of the nostrils.

Q.3.What is the analogy Goenkaji uses for the vigilance of the mind?

Alert watchman standing at the gate

Q.4.What guidance does Goenkaji provide to the students about changing their postures? Any additional reminders?

Allowed to change gently, maintaining awareness of respiration. Also maintain continuity of the awareness.

Q.5.What does Goenkaji advise the students to do if they feel drowsy? What does he remind them to keep coming back to?

Do slightly hard breathing, then come back to natural breath

Q.6How does he introduce touch of the breath? Identify the progression of these instructions. What is the specific location of this new aspect of observation?

Awareness of touch of breath, both incoming and outgoing, anywhere in the inner walls of nostrils, outer ring of nostrils, area of upper lips, below the nostrils. Mere awareness.

5. GROUP SITTING (10 min):

Q.1.How does Goenkaji open this sitting?

Now let us practice Anapana for a few minutes

Q.2.What does Goenkaji instruct the students to do before he begins Anapana instruction?

Posture, eyes, spectacles, mouth

Q.3.Where does Goenkaji have the students focus their area of awareness?

Entrance of the nostrils

Q.4. List the progression of instructions and points of awareness:

Natural, normal breath as it is, long/short, which nostril

Q.5.What is the analogy Goenkaji makes for keeping awareness steadfastly fixed at the nostrils?

Gate keeper

6. CLOSING DISCOURSE & METTA(25 min):

Q.1.How does Goenkaji open the discourse? List the review points:

My dear young ones. Awareness of breath, touch of breath.

Q.2.How does Goenkaji tell the students to practice at home?

10 minutes in the morning and evening

Q.3.What are the benefits that Goenkaji tells the students they will get if they continue to practice Anapana?

Sharp memory – helpful now, in college and in life.

Nervousness goes away

Inferiority complex goes away

One develops confidence on stage.

One stands up to bullying

One makes quick and right decisions

Capacity to learn increases

One keeps away from bad company

Sila will become strong

Anapana is always there like a friend

Metta Bhavana Practice:

Q.1. How does Goenkaji introduce Metta Bhavana? How long and when does he tell the students to practice this?

After Anapana one feels happy, peaceful and joyful. Metta Bhavana means **loving kindness and compassionate love**. We give good wishes to others.'May others also be happy, peaceful and joyful.' We should practice 2 minutes after 10 minutes of Anapana

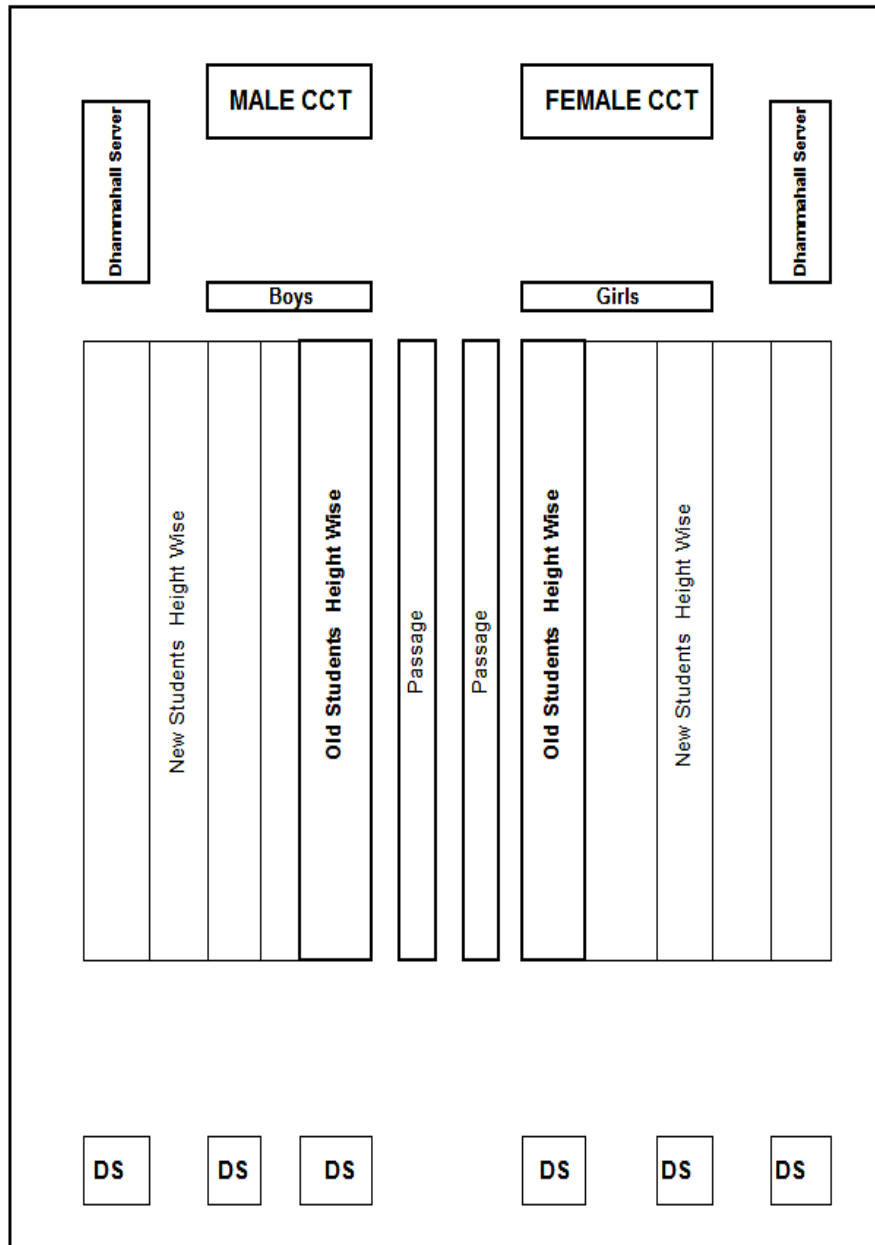
Q.2. What words does Goenkaji invite the students to chant along with him at the end of the tape? What language is it? What does it mean?

If you want to practice in Hindi language, all right. Lets recite. Lets recite for a few minutes. "Mera Mangal, Mera Mangal, Mera Mangal, Hoi Re, Tera Mangal, Tera Mangal, Tera Mangal, Hoi Re, Sabka Mangal Hoi Re"

This is in Hindi Language and it means wishing well for self and for all

APPENDIX 19. SEATING OF STUDENTS

Seating Arrangement for Children's Course



APPENDIX 20: INTERACTION WITH STUDENTS ON A ONE-DAY COURSE

(May be adapted for residential courses)

The following script format is for use on courses based on the English V. 2000 and Hindi V. 2000 materials. The script should not be memorized verbatim. It is a guide to define communication with the students in order to help CCTs avoid over-talking and over-instruction. At their discretion, CCTs may insert brief, relevant stories at various points as appropriate in the different sessions.

Welcome to the Course:

My name is (if there is another CCT introduce him or her) and on behalf of everyone here, we welcome all of you to this Anapana Meditation course. Today you are going to learn something very special – a meditation technique which will help you to live more happily and peacefully.

I/we will be conducting this course on behalf of our teacher, **Mr. S.N. Goenka** of Mumbai, India. We call him **Goenkaji**. Actually Goenkaji is teaching this course. All his instructions and talks have been recorded on audio or video tape, and this is what you will be listening to.

Listen carefully to what Goenkaji says, and if you don't understand something or you have any questions or difficulties during your meditation, please let us know and we will be happy to help you.

When we begin you will hear Goenkaji chanting, and he will chant from time to time during the course in Hindi or Pali language. Whenever he is chanting you just carry on meditating.

After that he will explain what you will do while you are here and ask you to take five vows (promises) or precepts. You are asked to keep these precepts carefully while you are here.

Then he will teach you how to practice Anapana meditation.

When he asks you to repeat what he says, please do so. There are periods of silence in the tape, keep meditating during these gaps, they are there to give you the opportunity to practice.

We hope all of you have a successful course. Now we will begin. **Play Anapana (turn off TV if using the DVD).**

After Anapana:

Brief inquiry and explanation:

Can anyone tell us what Bhavatu Sabba Mangalam means? (May all beings be happy.)

And what does Sadhu mean? (Well said, I also agree with you.)

Discuss the **three rules** of the hall:

1. **Punctuality** (come on time and stay for the whole session),
2. Sit on the **same cushion**, don't sit or run on others' cushions,
3. **Silence** in and around the **hall**, which also means walking softly and not running in the hall.

Session Interactions

From now on encourage the children to start meditating as soon as they sit down. They may need reminders to walk in and out quietly.

Session 1

Before:

Goenkaji will now explain why we observe the **breath** as the object of our meditation. He will also talk about the correct **posture**, or how to sit, while you are meditating. Listen carefully to what he says and then we will discuss it later. Play session 1.

After:

After session 1 you may ask:

1. What does **natural** breath or **pure** breath mean? (The breath AS IT IS without adding anything to it or changing it in any way.)
2. How should you change your **posture** if you feel discomfort? (Slowly, gently and being aware of the breath.)
3. How is the breath strongly **connected to the mind**? (When the mind becomes disturbed, the breath also becomes disturbed. When the mind is calm, the breath is calm.)

Small Group Checking and Interaction. Tell the students that they will now take turns working with you in small groups. Depending on the number of students, some may be sent out for a break while some wait their turn and meditate and you work with the first round.

Old and new students should be worked with separately whenever possible.

Take about **10 minutes** with each group. You may ask one question to the small group and after each student replies then ask the next question. You can give your answer to the whole group at the end but if anyone is having a particular problem such as not being aware of breath tell them what to do and after the meditation ask them about their difficulty. **Give more time for meditation.**

1. Have you practiced any **other** kind of **meditation**? (If they have then ask them to keep it aside for the duration of the course and practice only what is being taught here.)
2. Are you **aware** of the breath as it comes in and as it goes out? **Where** are you observing the breath? (At the entrance of the nostrils.)
3. When your **mind wandered** could you bring it back quickly or does it take a while? (Keep trying to bring it back as soon as you realize it has wandered.)
4. While you were trying to meditate did you have any **difficulties**? (Change your posture slowly, gently, without disturbing your neighbors, try to maintain your awareness of your breath as you move.)

After discussing the checking questions, meditate with the students for a few minutes. While meditating with the students:

- Avoid giving oral instructions.
- Observe the group
- Practice Anapana and Metta yourself. Observe if students open their eyes, bend over, breathe through their mouth, move fingers/body frequently or are too tense or too relaxed

- After finishing meditating, gently correct according to their difficulty, explaining the importance and reason of the desired behaviour

Session 2

Before:

We all have faced **difficulties** when meditating. Our teacher, Goenkaji, will now talk to us about the difficulties everyone has at one time or another during meditation and how we can practice to overcome them. Listen carefully and we will discuss it later. Play session 2.

After:

1. **What** are the **difficulties** that can come up while meditating? (Wandering mind, sleepiness, restlessness.)
2. What can you do to **overcome** the difficulties? (If the mind wanders for longer periods take a few intentional breaths. Once it settles down come back to natural breath. When you feel sleepy just accept it. Keep your back and neck straight and take a few intentional breaths. When sleep goes away come back to natural breath. If there are pains accept it and continue to stay with the breath. If you want to change your posture do it slowly, gently, without opening your eyes and without disturbing your neighbor, trying to maintain awareness of your breath as you move).

Session 3

Before:

Whenever we do anything, we have to use the right kind of effort, or proper effort, in order to get good results. Now, let's listen to what Goenka ji means by **right effort** when meditating and we will discuss it later. **Play session 3.**

After:

1. What is **right effort** when meditating? (It means the correct way to work, how to work properly to get good results. It means to be with natural breath as often as possible but to take slightly harder breaths when faced with difficulties and then to come back to natural breath when the difficulty passes away.)
2. How does the awareness of respiration help to change the old habit patterns of the mind? Bringing the awareness back to the breath coming in and going out brings it back to the reality of the present moment. The old habit is to roll in the past or the future.
3. A new instruction was added in this last session to observe **touch of the breath. Where** are you supposed to observe this? (Touching anywhere on the inner walls of the nostrils, the outer rings of the nostrils, or below the nostrils and above the upper lip.)
4. What should you do if you can't feel the touch of the breath? (Keep observing the natural breath.)

Review Discussions and Open Questions

(Extra Session to be inserted after Session 2 or Session 3)

This session should last about 30 minutes and **may** include a story or even brief meditation practice (play the Group Sitting CD if this session is given between Session 2 and 3, or Session 3 meditation instructions only [or Hindi Touch of the Breath Group Sitting] if after Session 3). In the earlier sessions, the students should be invited to submit written questions which they may drop in a question box or give to the CCT or group leaders. Any of the following questions **may** be asked during this session **to prompt discussion** with the students. CCTs should avoid “discoursing” to the students and choose questions that seem appropriate and relevant to the group. Relevant questions that the students submit or ask should be given priority over the ones provided below. (Courses in Hindi have two other options. CCTs may use Goenkaji’s Hindi Q/A CD or play Discourse 1 during this session.)

1. When we started the course we repeated **five vows** or precepts. What are they? (Abstain from killing; from stealing; from living a life of misconduct; from telling lies, backbiting, and using harsh words; and from taking intoxicants.)
2. How will following the **five precepts** help you in your life? (When we do things that harm others, we generate negativity, harm ourselves and become unhappy; if we do things that harm ourselves, we end up harming others; do unto others as you would have them do unto you.)
3. What does Anapana mean? What does **Sati** mean? (Incoming breath, outgoing breath; awareness.)
4. Why do we observe the **breath** as the object of our meditation? (Breath is strongly related to the **mind**. Breath is with us **all the time**, we can make use of it any time we like. While observing breath we are in the **present moment**. We are training our mind to remain in the present, as we cannot live in the past or the future. We have to live in the present. It helps us in developing the habit of living in the present moment. It is a **truth** about us. We are not imagining it.)
5. How does the practice of Anapana help us to **avoid doing wrong actions**? (The mind becomes stronger so it is easier to avoid doing wrong actions, helps us to develop mastery over our minds, and to follow the five precepts.)
6. How will avoiding wrong actions (by following the five precepts) help us in practicing Anapana? (When we perform wrong actions, our minds get agitated and it is more difficult to control an agitated mind, however if we avoid wrong actions, our minds are calmer so it is easier to practice Anapana.)

Final Session & Metta

Before:

(Optional meditation) When we learn something new, the only way to learn it really well and get the most benefit from it is to practice it. Now that you’ve all learned how to meditate, let’s practice again together for a few minutes.

Note: You may play session 3 instructions only again here if there is time and the children are not restless (or if a Hindi course, the Touch of the Breath Group Sitting CD), or you may meditate quietly with the students and end the session with BSM only.

After BSM/Before Discourse and Metta:

(CCTs may insert a story here.)

For our final session, Goenkaji will now explain when and how to **practice** Anapana regularly at home and what **benefits** you will get when you do. Then he will teach a new technique of meditation called **Metta Bhavana**, a meditation of loving kindness, compassionate love. He will explain how to end your meditation by practicing it to share your happiness with all the beings in the world.

After that the course ends, so you may then walk out silently and go to the dining hall where you can fill in your feedback forms and have some snacks. We hope you have had a good course. Our good wishes will always be with you. Play final discourse.

APPENDIX 21. FAQs

Below is a set of frequently asked questions devised for the CCTs to ponder. The answers to all these questions will be clear to one who carefully listens to the Children course recordings and thoroughly studies through this entire book.

1. What is the distinction between ‘Anapana’ and ‘Vipassana’?
2. What are the benefits of Anapana meditation?
3. Does the habit pattern change by simply observing the breath?
4. Can we teach Anapana meditation to others?
5. How should you observe the breath?
6. How is Anapana the best base/foundation for Vipassana?
7. Is Anapana a breathing exercise?
8. What is the relation between Anapana and Pranayama?
9. Can Anapana and Pranayama be practiced simultaneously?
10. Can yoga be added to this technique of meditation because it helps remain seated for longer period of time and helps in gaining concentration?
11. Why do we take the help of pure breath in this technique of Anapana meditation?
12. How do we sharpen the mind?
13. When light starts appearing while one is sitting with closed eyes, what should be done?
14. What is the harm in wearing spectacles while meditating?
15. Are these instructions applicable while using contact lenses as well?
16. Due to hearing impairment, if one uses the hearing aid while meditating, is it wrong?
17. In what posture should one sit while practicing meditation?
18. Is it essential to sit in a particular posture for meditation?
19. During meditation, what is the benefit attained by keeping the back and neck straight?
- What precautions are to be taken to maintain this erect posture?
20. Even while I focus my attention at the entrance of the nostrils, I am unable to observe the natural, normal breath. In such a situation, what should I do?
21. Focusing the attention at the entrance of the nostrils, to what extent (how far) should one observe the incoming and outgoing breath?
22. Is it okay to observe all along, the breath passing through the nostrils, upto the navel?
23. I am able to know the incoming and outgoing breath. I am also able to know through which nostril the breath came in and through which nostril the breath went out. But the problem is that along with this observation, I am able to feel some movement in the lower parts of my body and the attention is diverted. What am I to do in such a situation?
24. Since the mind is wandering a lot, I am not able to observe the breath. What should I do?
25. While meditating, in order to calm the agitated mind, we are advised to work with intentional hard breathing. To what extent should we breathe hard intentionally and for how long?
26. As one keeps on observing the breath, great tension is felt on the body.
27. The breath is sometimes passing through the left nostril, sometimes through the right nostril and at times through both the nostrils simultaneously. Why is it so?

APPENDIX 22. STORIES FOR CHILDREN'S COURSES

1. Bharadwaj Brahmin has a Change of Heart

The old brahmin, Bharadwaj, recited his prayerseveryday, dutifully performing his religious rites and rituals. Meanwhile he watched as, one by one, his sons and daughters-in-law became followers of the Buddha's teachings and practiced Anapana and Vipassana instead.

The old man became angry. He cursed Buddha and said that because of him his household was getting ruined because no one but him was practicing the rites and rituals of his religion. He decided to go and confront Buddha saying, "I will break his head when I get there."

The old man took a stick and went to see Buddha, cursing and threatening all the way.

Buddha saw the old man approaching and said kindly, "Come, old man! You look upset. Please sit down."

The old man refused to sit and continued to shout insults and threats at the Buddha.

Buddha said, "Tell me something. Do you often get visitors to your house?"

The old man replied angrily, "Yes, of course! What is it to you?"

Buddha inquired again, "Tell me one more thing. Do some of these visitors bring gifts for you?"

The old man was annoyed and he retorted, "Yes. So what is it to you?"

Buddha inquired again, "Tell me one more thing. If you do not accept their gifts, with whom do the gifts remain?"

The old man replied, "What a foolish question! Of course, the gifts remain with them!"

Then Buddha explained, "That is what I am saying, old man! You came to me with the gifts of curses, insults and threats. I do not accept them, so they remain with you."

The old man was really an intelligent man at heart, with just a thin layer of ignorance clouded by his infatuation with rites and rituals. He became quiet upon hearing Buddha's wise words, and realizing his folly, asked Buddha to teach him Dhamma, accepting him as his teacher.

Conclusion: All the rites, rituals and religious practices of the world alone will not make us a good person. Learning to calm, concentrate and control your mind with the practice of Anapana will certainly help in the endeavour to be a good person. With a strong mind, you are able to control yourself and perform good and wholesome actions.

2. Swimmology

A highly learned professor was travelling on a ship at sea. An illiterate sailor was also on the same ship.

Mid-journey they had a discussion.

The professor asked, "Old man, have you studied geology, the science of the earth?"

The old man replied humbly, “Sir, I am illiterate so I cannot read. I have not studied geology.”

The professor then announced, “Old man, then you have wasted one-quarter of your life.” The old man became very sad at the thought that he had wasted one-quarter of his life.

The next day the professor asked him, “Old man, have you studied meteorology, the science of weather?”

The old man replied humbly, “Sir, I am illiterate so I cannot read. I have not studied meteorology.”

The professor then announced, “Old man, then you have wasted one-half of your life.” The old man became very sad at the thought that he had wasted one-half of his life.

The next day the professor asked him, “Old man, have you studied zoology, the science of animal life?”

The old man replied humbly, “Sir, I am illiterate so I cannot read. I have not studied zoology.”

The professor then announced, “Old man, then you have wasted three-quarters of your life.” The old man became very sad at the thought that he had wasted three-quarters of his life.

On the fourth day, it was the sailor’s turn to ask a question. He came running to the professor crying, “Professor sir, Professor sir, have you studied swimmology, the science of swimming?”

The professor looked surprised and said, “No, I don’t know how to swim.”

The old man replied, “Oh Professor sir, I am so sorry! You have wasted your whole life! This ship has struck a rock and is about to sink. Those who can swim can swim to that nearby island. All others will die.”

Conclusion: What is the purpose of studying all the “logies” of the world if you don’t know how to swim through the storms of life? Practising Anapana helps you to deal with many of life’s storms and difficulties because you learn to calm and control your mind and can face things more bravely.

3. Applying Dhamma in Life

There was a young woman named Visakha who was a devoted follower of Buddha from the time she was very young. After she got married, she lived with her husband in her father-in-law’s house.

One day, her father-in-law was eating a meal when a beggar came to the door asking for food. The father-in-law turned his head away, ignoring the beggar’s request.

Visakha saw her father-in-law ignore the beggar. She spoke to the beggar saying, “Go away, old man! My father-in-law is eating stale food.” And so, the beggar left.

The father-in-law became quite annoyed with her for saying this and asked, “I am eating such fresh, well-prepared food. Why did you say that the food I am eating is stale?”

Visakha replied very sweetly, “Respected father-in-law, you must have done some good deeds in some previous birth to have all this wealth now. But in this life you are not earning any new merits because you are not sharing your wealth with those in need. Whatever you have is based on old merits and so this is why I said that what you have is stale.”

The old man was an intelligent man and hearing these words of wisdom, he understood the truth of what she had said. He became very sombre and said to her, “You are right. But what can I do now to correct my mistakes?”

Visakha replied, “Come, meet my teacher. He will explain all.” And together they went to meet the Buddha.

Conclusion: When we share whatever we have with others, everyone benefits, the giver as well as the receiver. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts helps you to perform good actions that are good for everyone. Many good qualities, such as generosity, begin to develop as the natural by-product of a calm and collected mind.

4. Beware of Flatterers

A hungry fox had been searching for food all day without success.

He saw a crow with a piece of bread in his beak perched in a tree.

The fox thought he would have an easy meal if he could get the bread from the crow.

The fox began asking the crow questions, trying to make the crow open his beak to talk. But the shrewd crow replied only by shaking his head, holding tightly to the bread.

Finally, the fox started flattering the crow, “Uncle, you have a very sweet voice but I have not heard you sing for so long.”

The crow felt very pleased by this flattery and opened his beak to caw proudly. As he opened his beak the bread fell to the ground and the fox gobbled it in one swallow.

Conclusion: Very often people flatter us to get something from us, not because they genuinely believe what they say about us. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts helps us to speak the truth to others and also to know the truth about ourselves. Flattery only works on the vain. With the practice of Anapana you begin to realize your faults and try to improve them; you realize your good qualities and try to multiply them.

5. The Story of Gotami

There was a woman named Gotami who, though she had been married for several years, had remained childless.

She longed for a child and after many years she gave birth to a boy.

She loved her son and doted upon him, and felt that her status in her family had risen because she had finally had a child.

But sadly, when the child was about two years old, he became ill and suddenly died.

Gotami was beside herself with grief and she refused to accept that her child was dead. Instead, she wandered around the town carrying the body of her dead child. Her relatives asked her to hand over the body so that they could bury it.

But Gotami refused saying, “No. My child is not dead. He is sleeping, somebody please wake him. He is sick, somebody give me medicine to make him well.”

Finally someone told her, “Buddha is nearby at the ashram. If you go to see him, maybe he can help you.”

Gotami carried her dead child to Buddha. As she approached Buddha, she held her child’s body before him and said, “ Sir, my son has fallen asleep, he is ill. Please wake him up.”

Buddha looked compassionately at Gotami and said, “Go to town and get me a handful of mustard seeds from anyone’s house.”

Gotami turned quickly to do his bidding but he stopped her, saying, “Wait !” Listen to me carefully. You must get the mustard seeds from a household where there has been no death.”

Gotami replied, “Yes, I will do exactly as you say.”

She wandered from house to house, throughout the entire town but she could not find a single house where no death had taken place.

Tired and exhausted, she returned to Buddha and said, “Sir, I could not find a single house where no death has taken place.”

With compassion, Buddha explained, “Now you understand. This world is impermanent. Everything that is born, dies.”

She accepted that her son had died and gave the body for burial. Buddha taught her how to practice Anapana and Vipassana and she came out of her mental suffering.

6. Story of the Maid

There once was a queen who loved fresh cut flowers. Every day she would give her maid two rupees to purchase flowers in the market for her. And every day, unbeknownst to the queen, the maid would buy only one rupee’s worth of flowers and keep the other rupee for herself.

One day the maid heard the Buddha giving a discourse on the Five Precepts: not to kill, not to steal, not to lie, not to have sexual misconduct, and not to take intoxicants and how breaking the precepts harms others and harms oneself.

The maid felt sorry about her stealing after hearing the discourse. That day when she went to the market, she bought two rupees worth of flowers for the queen.

When she presented the flowers to her, the queen was surprised and exclaimed, “There are so many flowers today! Have you stolen them from somewhere?”

The maid replied with shame, “O Queen, everyday I used to cheat you and purchase only one rupee worth of flowers so I could keep one rupee for myself, but today I bought two rupees worth of flowers.”

The queen asked, “Why did you decide to buy two rupees worth of flowers today?”

The maid told her about hearing Buddha’s discourse on the Five Precepts and how it helped her to see the error of her ways.

The queen was very impressed by this transformation and said, “If you could be influenced to change your wrong actions by just listening to one discourse, then I must meet this great saint and hear his words of wisdom.

The maid and the queen went together to meet the Buddha and learned Anapana and Vipassana from him.

Conclusion: It is never too late to correct our mistakes. The first step is admitting to ourselves that we have done wrong. Then we can correct the mistake by doing what is right. Practising Anapana helps your mind to be strong and calm so that it is easier to do what is right. Naturally, you will want to follow the five precepts when you practice Anapana regularly.

7. Beware of Bad Company

Two friends were wandering in a jungle.

Suddenly they saw a bear approaching them. They both were afraid and asked each other, “What should we do now?”

One boy said, “I know how to climb trees, so I will climb one and escape.”

The other boy said, “But I don’t know how to climb trees. Please help me up the tree.”

The first boy replied, “I’m sorry, I can’t help you.” And he climbed up the tree to save himself.

The second boy didn’t know what to do, so he lay on the ground and pretended to be dead.

The bear came and sniffed the boy all over, including his ears, and assuming that the boy was dead, he went away.

The boy came down the tree and asked his friend, “What did the bear say in your ears?”

The second boy replied, “He told me to beware of friends like you.”

Conclusion: It is important to choose loyal friends who will support your good actions and protect you from bad influences. Practising Anapana helps your mind to be strong and calm so that it is easier to do what is right and it is easier to see the good and bad actions of others. Naturally, you will want to follow the five precepts when you practice Anapana regularly.

8. Speak Right, Act Right

One day, Dronacharya, a teacher in ancient India during the Mahabharata times, taught his students, “Speak right; Act right”.

The next day he asked his students, “Do you understand yesterday’s lesson?” Everyone raised this hand except the young prince, Yudhishtir.

Dronacharya reprimanded him saying, “Yudhishtir, tomorrow you better have learned the lesson and come ready to repeat it.”

The next day Dronacharya again asked the same question and again Yudhishtir remained silent. Dronacharya again warned Yudhishtir that he better come the next day with the lesson learned, ready to repeat it.

The next day, Dronacharya asked the same question and again Yudhishtir remained silent so Dronacharya slapped him.

Yudhishtir then answered, “Yes, teacher, now I understand the lesson.”

Dronacharya asked him to explain why he now understood.

Yudhishtir explained, “Before now, I would sometimes get angry. Today when you hit me, I did not get angry. And I did not lie, pretending that I had understood the lesson. So only now I can say that I understand the lesson. After all, to practice the lesson is to have understood it.”

Conclusion: One of the five precepts is “not to lie”. Sometimes, you may be tempted to lie to avoid criticism or punishment. It is better to remain silent until you can speak the truth. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts will help you to get stronger in speaking the truth and refraining from telling lies.

9. A Good Action is always Rewarded

A lion was sleeping when suddenly a small rat fell on him.

The lion woke up, caught the rat, and said to it, “How dare you jump on me? I will kill you!”

The rat pleaded for its life saying, “Please forgive me, I beg of you. Do not kill me. Maybe I can help you some day.”

The lion replied, “You small creature! How can you ever help me?”

The rat kept pleading and finally the lion let him go.

One day the lion got trapped in a net and panicked.

The rat heard that he was trapped and came to his rescue. He came to the lion and said, “Don’t worry, I will gnaw through the net and set you free.”

The rat quickly gnawed through the net and set the grateful lion free.

Conclusion: If you treat others with kindness and forgiveness, you will have loyal friends everywhere you go. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts helps you to treat others with kindness and forgiveness because you can think more clearly with a calm and balanced mind.

10. The Greedy Merchant

Once there was a merchant who lost his wallet.

The merchant put an advertisement in the paper offering a 100-rupee award to anyone who found the wallet and returned it to him.

A young boy found the wallet. He had read about the award in the paper and ran to return the wallet to the merchant.

The merchant was delighted to get the wallet back and removed a 100-rupee note from it and gave it to the boy.

The boy was headed home when suddenly the merchant called him back, saying, “You seem to have already removed a 100-rupee note from this wallet. Give me back my money.” So saying, he snatched the note from the boy.

The boy replied honestly, “But sir, I didn’t even open your wallet. I didn’t take your money.”

The merchant shouted, “You are lying! Go away.”

The boy left and went to the village headman and told him everything.

The headman summoned the merchant to come and bring his wallet.

The headman said to the merchant, “First give me your wallet. Now tell me how many notes were there in your wallet?”

The merchant told him, “There were ten 100-rupee notes in my wallet.”

The headman then inquired, “And how many notes are there in this wallet?”

The merchant replied, “There are nine 100-rupee notes in this wallet.”

The headman then explained, “Your wallet had ten notes in it, but this one has only nine. So this cannot be your wallet.”

So saying, the headman gave the wallet to the boy and said, “This is not the merchant’s wallet, since you found it, you may take this with you.”

Conclusion: Keeping your word and keeping your agreements is an important part of the five precepts. Sometimes, it is greed that makes someone break his or her agreements. Practising Anapana and the five precepts helps your mind to be strong and all your actions to be good ones.

11. What Happens when We Do Not Follow the Five Precepts

There was a man who did not follow any of the five precepts. His teacher advised him to do so for his own benefit. He agreed to follow all the precepts except the one regarding not to steal.

This man went to the palace to steal some precious jewels. As he was on his way, the king came in disguise and met him. The thief told him his plan to rob the palace.

The king joined him, standing guard while the thief went inside.

The thief found five jewels inside, but took only four so that he could divide them equally with his accomplice. When he came out, he gave two jewels to the disguised king and went home.

The next day the king called his minister and told him, “There has been a robbery in the palace. Find out what has been stolen and what is left.”

The minister found that four of the jewels had been stolen and then pocketed the remaining fifth jewel, telling the king that all five had been stolen.

The king called the thief to the palace and asked him what he knew about the robbery.

Having promised to keep four of the precepts, the thief told the truth and confessed, telling the king everything.

The king then had the minister searched, and the fifth jewel was found in his pocket.

The king punished the minister and made the thief his minister instead.

Conclusion: Of course, it is always better to keep all five precepts, but telling the truth when you’ve done something wrong is the first step in improving yourself and getting closer to keeping all five strong. Practising Anapana helps you to keep the five precepts, and helps you to be honest when you haven’t because your mind becomes calm, clear and strong.

12. The Parrot's Story

A baby parrot went to live in a forest ashram. The holy man living there took care of the parrot, feeding and teaching it.

One day the holy man warned, "Look, parrot, you must be careful! A hunter often comes to this jungle. He spreads grain and sets traps for birds. Oh parrot, be careful! The hunter will come, he will spread grain, if you get attracted to the grain, he will throw a net over you and take you away. Oh parrot, be careful!"

The parrot memorized the words of the holy man and repeated them over and over again as parrots do, "Oh parrot be careful! The hunter will come, he will spread grain, if you get attracted to the grain, he will throw a net over you and take you away. Oh parrot, be careful!"

One day, the hunter did come. As the holy man had warned, he set a trap and the parrot got captured.

As the parrot was carried away in the net he kept repeating what the holy man had taught him, "Oh parrot be careful! The hunter will come, he will spread grain, if you get attracted to the grain, he will throw a net over you and take you away. Oh parrot, be careful!"

The parrot was very good at repeating those words, but he had no understanding of the truth and wisdom in them!

Conclusion: Anyone can repeat the words of wisdom spoken by wise people, but unless we each develop wisdom within ourselves we are just like parrots, repeating words that have no meaning to us. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts helps you to develop strength and calmness of mind so that it becomes easier and easier to avoid bad situations in life.

13. The Monk's Determination

There was a monk who lived and meditated in a cave in the forest. Every morning he would walk in to town to beg for his food and then return to his cave to meditate for the rest of the day.

One day, he fell sick and could not go into town to beg for his food. The next day and the next, he was still sick and he grew weak and fainted from hunger. He realized that he would die if he did not go into town to beg for food.

Somehow, he managed to get himself up and started walking towards town. Before he reached town, he fainted from exhaustion at the foot of a huge mango tree, laden with ripe fruit.

When he regained consciousness, he saw that ripe mangoes were lying on the ground all around him. He thought about eating some of the mangoes but then remembered that the mango tree belonged to a local farmer. The mangoes did not belong to him, and had not been offered to him by the owner, so how could he eat them? It would be stealing. Of the many vows he had taken as a monk, one of them was not to steal.

He decided that it would be better to die than eat the mangoes that had not been given to him.

As he was lying there on the ground in his wretched condition, the farmer came upon him and said, "Reverend sir, you look starved and weak. You are not well, what is wrong?"

The monk explained his predicament and the farmer asked incredulously, “But why didn’t you eat any of these mangoes all around you on the ground?”

The monk explained that one of the many vows he had taken was not to steal, and since the mangoes had not been offered to him, he could not in good conscience partake of them.

The farmer was very impressed with this monk who would die rather than break his vows. He lifted the monk onto his back and began to carry him back to his cave. He told the monk that he would take care of him and bring him food until he became well again.

As the monk rode on the farmer’s back, he thought to himself, “Even my own mother could not have cared for me as selflessly as this farmer is doing. If I had broken my vow, I would have been satisfied momentarily but my purity would have been soiled by a wrong action. By scrupulously keeping my vow not to steal, I have benefited now as well as for the future.”

Conclusion: Many times in life, it seems easier to do something wrong to avoid an unpleasant situation. Many wrong actions are performed for this reason alone. But, even when it seems right to do the wrong thing, it is always best to do the right thing. So much good flows from a right action that seems hard to make. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts helps you to do what is right more and more because your mind is stronger and calmer and you can better see the truth of a situation.

14. You Reap What You Sow

A saintly man was living outside a town. Everyday he would set out to beg with his begging-bowl saying, “You reap what you sow”.

An old man became very irritated and angry with the saintly man. He became so irritated and angry that he decided to kill the saintly man.

He poisoned some sweets and offered them to the saintly man along with some other food.

The saintly man ate the food but kept the sweets aside and didn’t eat them.

Some time later, a young man, who was the son of the angry old man, came to the ashram to rest and told the saintly man, “I am very hungry and would like to eat something. Do you have anything you could spare to give me?”

With love the saintly man offered him the sweets to eat. The young man ate the sweets and died.

The townsfolk told the young man’s father that his son had died at the ashram. He rushed to the ashram and asked the saintly man what happened.

The saintly man replied sadly, “The poor young man! He was very hungry, so I offered him the sweets that you had given me. After he ate them, he died.”

The old man cursed himself and understood the truth of what the saintly man was always saying, “You reap what you sow.”

Conclusion: Very often we do not consider the results of our wrong actions, which always have a bad effect on others and ourselves. Practising Anapana and

following the five precepts helps to calm and strengthen the mind and this helps you to consider the results of your bad, as well as good, actions on yourself and others.

15. Think before You act or You May Regret It

A woman gave birth to a boy. On the same day, a mother mongoose also gave birth, but then she died.

The woman was very compassionate and felt sorry for the tiny baby mongoose. She decided that she would raise the mongoose along with her own child. Both grew up together, but the woman often worried whether some day the mongoose would harm her child.

One day, when the woman left to fetch water from the well, a poisonous snake entered the house and came perilously close to the little boy. The mongoose, the natural enemy of snakes, attacked it and tore it to bits. The little mongoose felt very happy that he saved the little boy's life. He went outside the house to wait for the woman with the snake's blood all over his face and paws.

The woman came home and saw the mongoose sitting outside the house. She saw the blood on his face and panicked, thinking that he had killed her child. In a fit of anger, she threw the heavy pot of water down on the mongoose's head, killing him instantly.

When the woman went inside she found her child playing happily, the torn body of the snake lying nearby. She realized her mistake and regretted her rash action, but by then it was too late.

Conclusion: It is easy to jump to conclusions without knowing all the facts, but this often causes harm to others and ourselves. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts helps us to keep calm and collected in difficult situations. Keeping a level head in times of stress helps us to look at any situation more clearly and get all the facts we need to take an appropriate action.

16. Silence is Better at Times

There once was a talkative tortoise living in a lake. This tortoise always had something to say about everything, and was always talking. There were some *saras* cranes that used to frequent the lake to drink its water and over time, they became friends with the talkative tortoise.

One day, the water of the lake started to dry up due to a drought.

The cranes told the tortoise, "We will have to search for a new lake. Tomorrow we will go."

The tortoise replied sadly, "All of you can fly, so you will escape but I cannot escape and will die here."

The cranes felt sorry for the tortoise and they thought of a solution. They told the tortoise, "If you can be silent for some time and not talk, we can take you with us and save you." The tortoise happily agreed.

Two cranes brought a stick and each grasped an end with their claws. The tortoise grabbed the centre of the stick with his beak and then they all flew away.

They reached a village and as they were flying over it some children playing below noticed the sight of the tortoise flying with the cranes and they started clapping and shouting in amazement.

The talkative tortoise could keep silent no more. He forgot himself and in his curiosity he asked, “What is all that noise below? What is going on?”

The moment he opened his beak and started talking he lost his grip on the stick and fell to his death.

Conclusion: Sometimes it is best to be silent and say nothing in different situations in our lives, and yet we cannot help ourselves and end up saying things we regret. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts helps us to know when silence is best. Practising Anapana calms and strengthens the mind and helps you to restrain yourself when necessary. The five precepts provide you with the guidance to say only good and wholesome words.

17. Helping Each Other

A pigeon was sitting on a branch of a tree near a lake.

Suddenly he saw an ant drowning in the lake below.

He plucked a leaf with his beak and threw it on the water. The ant climbed onto the leaf and was saved. They both become friends.

One day while the pigeon was sitting on a tree, the ant saw a hunter taking aim at the pigeon with his bow. He quickly went and bit the hunter on his foot. The hunter lost his aim and missed the target and the pigeon escaped.

Thus, they both helped each other and lived happily.

Conclusion: If you are a good friend to others, then you can be sure that others will be a good friend to you. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts helps you to perform actions that are good for you and good for others. With a strong mind that is calm and clear, you do not want to do anything to harm or hurt yourself or others.

18. Truth is Supreme

There once was a caravan travelling through the desert that was attacked by bandits. They searched each of the travelers and took all their valuables.

Traveling with the caravan was a boy, carrying an old cloth bag. When the bandits got to the boy they searched the old bag, but inside they found only pieces of old, useless cloth.

They asked the boy why he was carrying these pieces of old cloth.

The boy told them that money was stitched into the cloth pieces.

The bandits were surprised. They asked the boy, “If you aren’t trying to hide the money from us so that we won’t steal it, then why did you even bother to conceal it in the cloth?”

The boy replied, “My mother stitched the money in the cloth so that nobody would steal it. But at the same time she told me never to speak a lie. So I had to tell you the truth when you asked me about the cloth.”

The bandits felt ashamed of themselves in the face of the boy's honesty. They returned his money and all the valuables of the other travelers.

The boy grew up to become the king of the land.

Conclusion: Truth is so powerful! Even when it seems better to lie, it is always best to tell the truth. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts helps you to have the strength of mind to tell the truth, even when it is difficult to do so. Only good flows from telling the truth, especially when it seems easier to lie.

19. Practice what you preach

A boy had the bad habit of eating too much sugar. His mother was determined that he should get rid of this habit.

The mother went to a holy man who lived nearby and asked for his help in getting the boy to give up his bad habit. The holy man listened intently and when she finished, he told her to come back with her son after a week. He told her he would then help the boy to get rid of his bad habit.

One week later, the woman returned with her son.

The holy man looked at the boy with love and said, "My son, do not eat sugar. It is not healthy for you." Then he told them to return home.

As they were leaving, the mother asked the holy man, "If that is all you wanted to say to him, you could have done that last week. Why did we have to wait for a week?"

The holy man replied, "One week ago, I had the same bad habit of eating too much sugar, so how could I advise your son to stop? Only now that I have stopped my bad habit, could I advise your son to do the same."

Conclusion: Real wise people practice any advice they give. As you practice Anapana and follow the five precepts, you will develop your concentration, your mind will become stronger and calmer, and you will only perform helpful, positive actions that are good for you and good for others. In this way, any advice you give will be based on your own experience of being good.

20. The Mind is Like a Field

There was a farmer named Sung who lived in China. He had very little patience.

One day he planted seeds in his field. Everyday he would go out to the field and look to see if the plants had grown yet. He became impatient with their slow growth.

After a few weeks he could stand it no longer. He started pulling at each plant slowly to make it longer. He did this with a lot of hard work but to no use. The next day he found that all the plants had died because of his pulling.

Conclusion: It is easy to be impatient and difficult to be patient but practising Anapana helps you to develop patience. Your mind gets calm and concentrated and it gets strong and able to wait, whether you are in line at the post office or the grocery store or you are waiting for a friend. Practising Anapana helps you to control your mind and not react.

21. Two Archers

There were two expert archers but the personality of each was different.

On missing his target, one archer would sit and think about his bow and what was wrong with it. The other archer would think not only about his bow but also about his mistake and what he might do to improve his skill.

One day, both archers took part in a competition and both missed their target in the first round.

The first archer kept blaming his bow, but the other archer thought about his aim and realized he needed to improve his concentration.

In the next round the second archer improved his concentration and hit the target but the first one missed again.

Conclusion: It is easy to blame outside factors when we make mistakes. But in order to improve ourselves the first step is in accepting that we have some weakness or fault. Only then can we start to improve ourselves. Practising Anapana and following the five precepts helps to calm and concentrate the mind and helps you to become more aware when you've made a mistake. Then it helps you keep the resolve to rectify the mistake and not repeat it again.

22. Story of Anathapindika

There was a very wealthy man who became a follower of the Buddha's teachings. He lived in the city of Savatthi and was known around the land for his generosity towards all in need. He was called Anathapindika, which means the one who provides for orphans.

Anathapindika decided that he wanted to found a meditation centre near the city of Savatthi where Buddha and the monks could come and reside during the rainy season, and where the local people could come in large number to meditate.

He searched for a suitable location for some time until he found a beautiful piece of forested land owned by Prince Jeta.

Anathapindika paid a visit to Prince Jeta to purchase the property from him. When Anathapindika told Prince Jeta he wanted to buy the property, Prince Jeta told him the land was not for sale at any price. Anathapindika persisted, explaining how the land was in the ideal location for a Dhamma centre and how so many people would benefit, but Prince Jeta could not be moved. Finally, to get rid of Anathapindika, he said, "Alright, if you want this land, you'll have to cover it from end to end with gold coins." Anathapindika smiled and said, "It will be done."

Anathapindika sent cartloads and cartloads of gold to the land and they laid the coins from end to end. Just as he was about to spread the last few cartloads, Prince Jeta came and said, "Are you mad? No land is worth this much gold!"

Anathapindika replied, "This land will serve so many people to help them come out of their suffering. They will come here to learn Dhamma. No value can be placed on Dhamma! Dhamma is priceless."

Anathapindika's devotion and generosity deeply touched Prince Jeta. He said that he would accept the gold that had been laid thus far and that there was no need to lay anymore. Then Prince Jeta promised to build a wall and gateway at

the entrance of the meditation centre to provide a buffer to the dust and noise of the city, which he did. Anathapindika took all the remaining gold, plus more and used it to build residences, a meditation hall, dining halls, individual cells and bathing facilities for the meditators, as well as lotus ponds and gardens for beauty. He also regularly provided the food for the centre and thousands of people benefited from his generosity over the years.

A time came briefly in Anathapindika's life when he lost all his wealth. So devoted was he to serving Buddha and the monks at Jeta Grove that he would never visit there without bringing some donation or another. During the short time that he was poor, he would carry handfuls of rich fertile soil from his garden and deposit them under the trees at Jeta Grove saying, "May this soil nourish this tree so that it may better provide shelter and shade for all those who come to meditate under it."

Conclusion: Anathapindika was so devoted to the Dhamma that in poverty and in wealth, his generosity goes unparalleled.

23. Story of the Children and the Crabs

One day, Buddha was walking past a rice paddy when he noticed a group of children laughing and playing.

As he got closer, he saw that they were catching crabs and torturing them.

While a number of children stood watching and laughing, a young boy held the crab on the ground and pulled off each leg, quickly throwing them, one by one, into the paddy.

After all six legs and two claws had been removed, he threw the body of the crab into the paddy while the other children scrambled to find another crab to suffer the same fate.

With great kindness, Buddha arrived at the group of the children and asked, "Children, if someone ripped off your arm or leg, would it hurt?"

The crab feels pain just like you do.

The crab eats and drinks just like you do.

The crab has parents and brothers and sisters just like you do.

Every living being deserves to enjoy a sense of security and well being

No being wants to die, no being likes to suffer

All living beings have a right to live

We should protect life and bring happiness to others

The children released the crab, understanding the wise words Buddha had spoken.

Then, Buddha taught them how to share their feelings of love and kindness toward the crabs that had suffered at their hands, and to all beings.

Conclusion: Our attachments to those we love and all that we have can cause us misery when we lose them unless we understand that nothing in life can be ours forever and that all things must pass. Practising Anapana helps to calm and concentrate the mind, even in times of great sorrow and loss. A calm and concentrated mind thinks clearly and is not blinded by grief.

24. Story of a Prince (in 3 parts)

(The following story can be told in a single session or spread over two/three sessions depending upon the duration of the course)

PART 1

Once upon a time there was a big kingdom. It was ruled by a good king. He used to help all his people and was impartial in his judgment. All his subjects were happy & satisfied. There was lots of prosperity in the kingdom.

However, there was a one problem - a big problem. The king had one son, who was then about twelve years of age. How old are you all? About ten or twelve years? So the prince was just like you. He was a naughty boy but he was also very arrogant. He used to shout at everybody & not treat others with respect. He would get angry for no reason and use foul language. So what was the result? Everybody in the kingdom hated him.

The king was very upset. He was also concerned. The prince was the future King. If he did not improve then; all the people of his kingdom would suffer. The King wanted the Prince to improve his nature. So he made a public announcement.

“I will give a big reward to anyone who will improve the Prince’s nature”

Many people came forward. They tried to explain to the prince the benefits of being a good person. He would not listen to anyone. They had to give up.

After sometime one saint came from a forest He told the King – “I will improve the Prince’s nature but on one condition”. The king said – “I will agree to all your conditions and hope you succeed. Please tell me, what is your condition?”

The saint’s condition was – “I will not stay in the palace to teach the Prince. He will have to come with me.” The King agreed.

So the next day morning the saint and the prince left for the saint’s place. They began walking towards the forest.

On the way the Raj Kumar started his mischief. He would pull plants, he would tease people crossing by, and he would step into water puddles so as to splash muddy water on the Saint. Normally any other teacher would have scolded him for this. However the saint did not tell him anything. He let the prince do whatever he liked. Naturally the prince started enjoying this.

They stayed at the saint’s hut in the forest. The prince would play & do mischief the whole day. As the saint did not tell him any thing, he started liking the saint.

One day the saint showed him a mango tree with ripe mangoes. The prince plucked some and ate them. He liked the sweet mangoes very much. The next day the Saint showed him a neem tree. The Prince plucked some leaves and put them into his mouth. The leaves were bitter which made him spit them out immediately.

This was the first time the Saint gave advice to the Prince. **(Discovering one’s nature; identifying its weaknesses)**

Let’s see – Can any one of you guess what the advice was?

After some answers ——

The Saint's advice was – If one's nature is sweet like the mangoes, then people will accept us and follow us. Everyone will like you. But if you are like the bitter neem leaves, then people will throw you away with a “Thu – Thu – Thu.....”

So what is the MORAL of the story?

After some answers ——

Yes – you all have understood very well.

PART 2 —Start Early

Now the Prince started admiring the saint. He started obeying him and helping him in his daily work.

One day the saint gave him 3 seeds, and told him to sow them in the backyard. The Prince did so. The Saint told him to water them every day; put some fertilizer and take good care of the seeds. The Prince did exactly as told.

Within a few days 3 saplings sprouted. The Prince ran to the Saint and told him about them. The saint told him to pull one sapling and bring it to him. This surprised the Prince but he went and did as was told. It was easy to pull it out and he brought it to the saint.

The saint said, “Water the other 2 and take good care of them”. Within a few days they grew into 2 plants. Now the saint told the Prince to go and bring the second plant. When he went and tried to pull it out, it did not come out easily. He had to pull really hard to succeed. He took it to the saint.

“OK “– said the saint. “Continue watering the third plant.” Within a few days this plant grew into a small tree with deep roots. After a month the saint told the Prince to bring him the plant.

The Prince pulled & pushed, but the tree did not come out easily. He applied all his strength and managed to uproot the tree after a lot of effort.

This is when the saint gave his second advice to the Prince.

Do you know what it was? (possibility of eliciting the correct answer from the audience)

Summarize as follows:-

The earlier you start removing negativities from yourself the easier will it be. Their roots are not deep and they can be pulled easily. Later on, when their roots will spread deeper within you, though it is possible, it will be difficult. So at this age of 10 to 12 to 14, form good habits. Identify one's weaknesses and work towards removing them early.

This is the MORAL of the story.

PART 3—Reinforcing practice

By now the Prince totally accepted the saint as his mentor. He worked from morning to night and he learnt many good lessons of life. The saint had improved his nature.

It was time for him to go back to the palace. He was to eventually be the King and had to rule the Kingdom.

At this time the saint gave him a final advice.

He gave him 2 seeds and told him to sow them in the backyard. As before, he told him to water them everyday, give fertilizer and take good care of them. Within a few days they grew into 2 small healthy plants.

Now the Saint told the Prince. “Stop watering one plant. Continue watering the other.” The Prince naturally did as he was told.

Can you guess what happened?

The correct answer is bound to come from the children.

To summarize, the plant which was not watered dried up and died while the other one, which was watered, became healthy, grew tall, and grew branches and leaves. It could give shelter to others. Today a seed has been sown in you. You have to continue watering it; else it will dry up. On the other hand, regular care will ensure that it will not die but will grow.

How will you water it? By regular practice! So now you all have understood very well. Today, after the last video session, Guruji will explain us how to do practice at home. We will all listen carefully and follow it.

25. Rahula About Telling Lies

Once upon a time, the Buddha was staying at Rajagaha, at the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels’ Feeding Ground.

At that time Ven. Rahula was staying at the Mango Stone. Then the Blessed One, arising from his meditation in the late afternoon, went to where Ven. Rahula was staying at the Mango Stone. Ven. Rahula saw him coming from afar and, on seeing him, set out a seat and water for washing the feet. The Buddha sat down on the seat set out and, washed his feet. Ven. Rahula, bowing down to the Buddha, sat down at one side.

Then the Blessed One, having left a little bit of the remaining water in the vessel, said to Ven. Rahula, “Rahula, do you see this little bit of water left in the vessel?”

“Yes, Venerable sir.”

“Even so little, Rahula, is the virtue in anyone who feels no shame at telling a deliberate lie.”

Then the Blessed One threw away the little bit of remaining water, and asked Ven. Rahula, “Rahula, do you see that little water that was thrown away?”

“Yes, Venerable sir.”

“Even so, Rahula, one who is not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie has thrown away his virtues ...

Then the Enlightened One turned the water vessel upside down, and asked Ven. Rahula, “Rahula, do you see how this water vessel turned upside down?”

“Yes, Venerable sir.”

“Even so, Rahula, one who is not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie, has turned his virtues upside down.”

Then the Blessed One turned the vessel right way up and asked Ven. Rahula, “Rahula, do you see how empty and hollow this water vessel is?”

“Yes, Venerable sir.”

“Even so hollow and empty Rahula, are the virtues of anyone who feels no shame at telling a deliberate lie ”.

Therefore, Rahula, you should train yourself, ‘I will not tell a deliberate lie even in jest.’

“What do you think, Rahula: What is a mirror for?”

“For reflection, Venerable Sir.”

“So too, Rahula, bodily acts, verbal acts, and mental acts should be done after repeated reflection.

“Rahula, whenever you want to perform any bodily act, verbal act or a mental act, you should reflect on it: ‘This act I want to perform — would it lead to my own affliction, to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unskillful act, with painful consequences, painful results?’ If, on reflection, you know: ‘This action would lead to my own affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it is an unskillful act with painful consequences, painful results’, then you definitely should not do such an action with the body, by the speech or by the mind.

But if on reflection you know that it would not cause any affliction... it would be a skillful action with pleasant consequences, pleasant results, then you may do such an action with the body, by the speech or by the mind.

“Similarly, Rahula, after having performed an act, you should reflect on it... If, on reflection, you know that it led to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it was an unskillful act with painful consequences, painful results, then you should confess it, reveal it, lay it open to the Teacher or to a wise companion. Having confessed it... you should exercise restraint in the future. But if on reflection you know that it did not lead to affliction... it was a skillful action with happy consequences, happy results, then you should abide happy and glad, training day and night in skillful mental qualities.

“Rahula, all those people who purify their bodily acts, verbal acts, and mental acts, do it through repeated reflection on these in just this way.

“Therefore, Rahula, you should train yourself: ‘I will purify my bodily acts through repeated reflection. I will purify my verbal acts through repeated reflection. I will purify my mental acts through repeated reflection.’ That is how you should train yourself.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Rahula delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

26. Experience is the best teacher

This is a story of a rich man and his only son. The young man was lazy and did no work. The father tried his best to do something about it but he failed. Finally, he got fed up and warned him saying, “If you do not earn anything today, you will not be served any food.” The boy got worried and went to his mother. She loved him very much and felt sorry for him. She gave him ten rupees and told him to tell his father that he had worked and earned them.

In the evening, the father asked him, “Have you earned anything today?”. The son gave him the ten rupees. The father said, “Throw away the money into the drain” The son quickly did as he was told. On the following days he gave

something or the other, that his mother had given him saying that he had earned it. The father gave him the same instruction; to throw it into the drain. This carried on for a few days.

One day, the mother went out for some work. Now who was going to give the boy any money? He was forced to go out of the house. He went to the bus stand and did some work. He earned ten rupees. In the evening he met his father as usual. However, when his father told him to throw the money into the drain, the boy was upset. He said, "Every day you tell me to throw the money into the drain. Do you know how difficult it is to earn this money? One has to work hard for it. I will not throw it!"

The father was happy. He said, "Now you know the value of hard work. You have learnt your lesson."

Moral: Experiential wisdom is true wisdom

27. Lose awareness-Invite mishap

Long long ago, there was once a famous gardener. People would come from far and wide to learn gardening from him. Once a young boy came to him.

The gardener would first subject the person to a test and only if he found that he was suitable, he would teach him. This boy thus had to appear for a test.

The gardener took him to a tall tree. He told him that he would have to climb up the tree. Further on his descent, he would have to cut three leaves from every branch. The boy climbed the tall tree carefully. He then started to climb down slowly, cutting the leaves as he had been instructed. Some people were watching the proceedings. They thought, "The gardener is so cruel. He has made the boy climb this tall tree. He could slip, lose his balance, fall and perhaps die. What has this got to do with being a good gardener?" Such thoughts came to their minds.

The boy was working his way down. When he was only two meters from the ground, the gardener called out to him. He said, "**Be alert, attentive and vigilant!**" The onlookers thought, 'The gardener is so foolish! When the boy was on the top of the tree and was at a greater risk of falling and hurting himself, he did not say anything and now, when he is so close to the ground, and the danger is passed, he is cautioning him!' They asked him why he had cautioned the boy at this time. What was his strategy?

Ask the children-

Q: What was the gardener's objective?

Ans: When one feels that there **is less** danger, one's attention slackens. The possibility of being careless increases. Consequently, the chances of a mishap are higher. Similarly, when one becomes aware of the breath for a period of time, do not slacken your efforts. Be diligent. Be aware!

28. The Roopak Story

It was to be Roopak's first day at a brand new school. He took extra time getting dressed and eating breakfast that morning. His little sister said it was because he was nervous, but he just shook his head and stirred his cereal with his

spoon. When it finally came time to leave, his mother kissed him on the cheek and told him not to worry.

"You'll make some new friends in no time," she said, waving goodbye

And so, Roopak climbed aboard the big yellow school bus and waved to his mother one last time from the window. He wasn't so sure about making new friends. In fact, he was a little scared of going to a new school.

At school, Roopak's new teacher, Mrs. Bevan, called him up to the front of the class. He felt like all the children could see that he was different. They all looked at him in a funny way when the teacher told them his name. He was so nervous that he could only look down at his shoes.

Just then, two older boys who were named Melvin and Ralph, pointed and said, "The new kid's got big ears like an elephant," and all the children started laughing. Mrs. Bevan scolded them. She warned Melvin and Ralph with her finger, and smilingly pushed Roopak towards his seat.

"I don't have big ears," Roopak thought to himself.

During recess, Roopak found a nice tree to sit under. A boy named Richard ran by with his arms out yelling "Brrrrrrr" like airplane, but Roopak wasn't bothered by him. A little while later those older boys, Melvin and Ralph, came over to see Roopak.

"What are you doing," they asked in mean voices.

"I'm meditating," said Roopak quietly.

"What is that?" they asked.

"I watch my breath, naturally," answered Roopak.

"Ha, ha," laughed Melvin and Ralph, "The new kid's a breath watcher," And they ran away yelling to every one that Roopak was a breath watcher.

Roopak was not upset though. He just smiled and kept on meditating.

One little girl, named Lucy, saw Melvin and Ralph teasing Roopak. She could not believe how calm Roopak was! She always got really angry when Melvin and Ralph teased her. Sometimes, she even cried.

Lucy went over and asked Roopak, "How come you don't fight back with those guys?"

"What good would that do?" asked Roopak, "When I fight with people, I just get angry and upset. I'd rather keep meditating."

"Will meditation help me to be happy when Melvin and Ralph tease me?" asked Lucy.

"Sure," Roopak replied, "when you learn to watch the breath as it comes in and goes out of the nose, naturally, you become more happy and peaceful, even when people tease you."

"Wow!" exclaimed Lucy. "Where can I learn to watch my breath like that?"

Roopak smiled. His mother was right. He had made a new friend. "There is a Meditation Centre nearby. Maybe, we could go together some time," he answered.

"I'd like that," said Lucy.

After Lucy went to Meditation Centre and learned to watch her breath like Roopak, they became great friends. Sometimes they would sit under a tree and meditate together, and Richard would run by yelling "Brrrrrrrr" like an airplane. Other times they would play games, or race each other across the playground. And when Melvin and Ralph teased them, they would just smile and watch their breath.

One day it rained so hard that none of the students were allowed to go out for recess. Some people were sad. They just stared out at the playground through the window. But no one was more upset than poor Richard. He was moving all around in his chair, first turning to one side, then to the other. He was moaning, "There's nowhere to run around like an airplane in here." After a while though, he noticed that Roopak and Lucy were laughing and playing. Richard decided to go and ask them how they could possibly be happy inside during recess.

Roopak and Lucy were finger painting when Richard came over to see them. "How can you be so happy when it's raining?" asked Richard.

"Easy," said Lucy, "You just have to learn that sometimes it's rainy outside and other times it's nice and sunny. No rain lasts forever."

"Yeah," exclaimed Roopak, "That way you're not upset when it rains because you know that it will be sunny again tomorrow."

Richard scratched his head and said, "I never thought of it like that before."

"And besides," said Lucy "if it never rained, then when would we ever get to finger paint?"

When Richard tried finger painting, he found it wasn't so bad. "How did you guys learn to do all this stuff," he asked Roopak and Lucy.

Lucy smiled and answered, "We just watch our breath, naturally."

"Yeah, if it comes in the left side of our nose, we observe," said Roopak.

"Or if it comes in the right side, we observe that too," Lucy said.

And then together at once Roopak and Lucy said, "And if it comes in through both sides at once, we just watch that too."

Richard asked them if they thought he could learn to watch his breath like them.

"Sure," said Roopak, "There is a Meditation Centre right nearby. We could all go there together some time."

Richard also went to the Meditation Centre. He learned to watch his breath just like Lucy and Roopak had. Richard still loved to run around the playground yelling "Brrrrrrr" like an airplane, but now he knew that if it rained, he shouldn't be sad because there would always be another sunny day, and another chance to run around and play.

There was a boy named Duane at Roopak's school who hated to eat vegetables. Every day at lunch he would have to sit for fifteen whole minutes after all the other kids had left, because he wouldn't eat his broccoli. "I hate broccoli," Duane

said to the teacher. "Don't you want to grow up big and strong?" asked Mrs. Bevan. And Duane replied, "Not if I have to eat broccoli!"

One time, Duane saw that Roopak, Richard, and Lucy were happy to eat their broccoli. He decided to ask them why. "Yuck! Don't you just hate broccoli?" said Duane.

"I don't know," said Richard, "I think that the hardest part about eating broccoli was that I was always that afraid to eat it."

Lucy agreed, "Yeah, once you get over the fear, Duane, you'll see that broccoli isn't all that bad."

"Most of the time when we don't like stuff," said Roopak, "it is all in our mind."

Duane was tired of staying fifteen whole minutes after all the kids left. "Maybe, I shouldn't be afraid," he thought looking down at the big green pile of broccoli. "How did you three learn to deal with your fears?" he asked.

"Simple," said Richard "we learned to meditate at the Meditation Centre."

"Could I go there too?" said Duane.

"Sure, everyone is welcome there," said Lucy proudly.

Soon Duane had also gone to the Meditation Centre and learnt to watch his breath. He saw that when he became afraid, his breath became very fast and hard like his Uncle Lou's tugboat. The more he watched his breath when it was fast and hard, the less his mind became afraid of doing things like eating broccoli. In no time at all, he was also eating his broccoli, and leaving to play at the same time as the other children. In fact, once Duane got over his fear, he realized that broccoli wasn't all that bad, especially if you put some ketchup on it.

Meanwhile, Melvin and Ralph had seen that the new kid was making a bunch of friends. They decided that they were going to teach him a lesson. One day, when Roopak, Richard, Lucy, and Duane were meditating under a tree, they stomped over towards them.

"We're gonna get you breath watchers," they yelled.

"Before that can I ask you one question?" Roopak said politely.

"What?" said Melvin in mean voice.

"Have you ever had a birthday party with presents?"

"Yeah, what's that got to do with anything," said Ralph

"Well I was just wondering," said Roopak "what would happen if some one brought a rotten present to your party?"

"What do you mean what would happen," said Melvin, "I wouldn't accept it if it was rotten. Whoever brought it would have to take it back with them."

Roopak smiled and said, "I want to tell you have also come to our party with rotten presents of anger and abuse. We won't accept them. We will still be happy, and you'll take your presents of anger away with you."

Melvin and Ralph thought about this for a minute before they realized that they were pretty upset. "Say. You're sorta right," said Melvin, "I'm always taking rotten presents from Ralph here."

"You're taking presents?" said Ralph. "You wouldn't believe how bad Melvin is sometimes."

Melvin knew that it was better to be happy, and not let other people make you so angry, but he couldn't figure out how to not accept rotten presents.

"How did you breath watchers learn so much, anyway," he asked. Roopak, Lucy, Richard, and Duane all laughed.

"That's easy," they said, "We just watch our breath."

It wasn't long before Melvin and Ralph had also gone to the Meditation Centre to learn how to be breath watchers. They now knew that they didn't have to take each other's rotten presents anymore. Being happy was easy as long as you know that other people couldn't make you happy or sad, only you could do that yourself. After that, Melvin and Ralph stopped teasing all the other children on the playground. They even sat and meditated with the other kids sometimes.

As more and more children went to the Meditation Centre, Mrs. Bevan began to see the changes in her students. They were much more happy and peaceful, and their lessons had also improved. Besides, Duane had started eating his broccoli like the other children. Sure there were still problems here and there, but Mrs. Bevan knew that something must have happened to change all the children like this. Even Melvin and Ralph had stopped fighting. She decided that it was time to find out just what was making them behave so well.

One morning Mrs. Bevan asked the class what they were always doing sitting under the tree at recess.

"We're meditating," said Richard.

"Yeah, we watch our breaths, naturally," said Roopak

"Really," said Mrs. Bevan, "and what have you learned from it?"

Lucy raised her hand and said, "I have learned to not let other people bother me."

"And I've learned that no matter how rainy it is, no bad weather lasts forever," said Richard.

Duane raised his hand, "I learned that my fears are all in my mind."

"And what about you two," Mrs. Bevan asked Melvin and Ralph, "What did you learn?"

"We learned that when we get angry at other people, we also hurt ourselves," said Melvin.

"Before we hurt others, we have to get upset and nobody likes that," said Ralph.

"I don't even hurt bugs anymore," said a little girl named Priti, and every one in the classroom laughed.

After that Mrs. Bevan decided that it might be a good idea to try a ten-day course for adults herself and then for the whole class to go together to the Meditation Centre. She realized that sometimes adults can learn from children, too. So one day, after she'd happily completed her first ten-day Vipassana

Meditation course, Mrs. Bevan and all her students climbed on the big yellow bus and drove to the Meditation Centre.

In the meditation hall the teacher told them to observe their breath naturally. Don't let one breath come in or go out without your knowing, like a good guard that stands watch at a doorway. When the mind starts thinking of something else, just bring it back to the breath that is coming in and going out of your nose," he said.

After they meditated for a while, they spoke to the teachers about their meditation. They all asked some questions and talked about watching their breath. Ralph told the teacher that his mind was always thinking about other things, and that made it hard for him to watch his breath.

The teacher smiled and said, "Don't worry Ralph, everyone has trouble watching the breath sometimes. You just have to keep trying, and after awhile you'll see it becomes easier and easier to watch your breath, naturally.'

Then they played some games, and drew about what they learned from watching their breath. Roopak drew a picture of him with all his new friends at school. Before they went back to school, they meditated one more time with the teacher in the hall. Everyone was happy to have come to the Meditation Centre instead of going to school. Even Mrs. Bevan said that she had learned so much.

After they all went to the Meditation Centre together, everything was great at school. Mrs. Bevan and all the students started meditating everyday before and after class. Everyone got along better than before. Roopak learned a very valuable lesson. He learned that he could face anything in the future. From now on he would try to smile at everything that happened. Even going to a new school wasn't that bad, as long as you had some peace in your mind.

"It's a good thing we always have our breath to watch," he said with a smile.

VII. CIRCULARS

CIRCULAR NO.1

Circular CC/ Compass Documentary

Date 26.6.2001

Regional Coordinators, Children's Courses

Children's Course Teachers

Cc: Karuna Films

Respected All,

Karuna Films has released a new version of its documentary "The Compass". The old version of "The Compass" remains restricted and should NOT be used for distribution or broadcast. It may still be used informally.

The new version, henceforth, is the only one permitted for distribution, sales, and broadcast. Every effort should be made to use and circulate this new version and not the old one. "The Compass" is considered INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL. It may be used to introduce people (teachers, parents, children, general public) to Children's Courses specifically, and to this tradition of meditation in general.

"The Compass" is NOT to be used in the Children's Courses as course material. This should be complied with strictly. The format of Children's Courses as found in "The Compass" does not completely conform to current Children's Course format. As you all are aware, the type of counseling sessions portrayed in "The Compass" have been discontinued, and the cartoons are no longer a part of the curriculum.

All RCCCs and CCTs should be clear about this point. "The Compass" does not reflect the current format of Children's Courses. However, it can serve well to introduce Children's Courses to the general public.

Wishing you all the best and with Metta,

(S.N.Tandon)

Chief Coordinator, Children's Courses

CIRCULAR NO.2

Concerning Anapana Tapes with Triple Gems

Date: 13.06.07

To, All RCCCs

Dear All,

Greetings.

Sub : Anapana tapes with TGs on Children courses

This is concerning the Teaching tapes currently in use on Anapana courses worldwide.

The tapes are of two types viz with Triple Gems and without Triple Gems. We requested Goenkaji for guidelines for the use of the same.

His instructions are: 'Use the tapes with Triple Gems only if all the students are Buddhists'.

With best wishes and Metta,

Nirmala Ganla

(Secretary ICCCC)

CC to: All Area Teachers, All Regional Teachers, SATs, ATs, CCT list serve

CIRCULAR NO. 3

Concerning Single Gender Residential courses

Date: 29.03.06

To

Dear Teachers, SATs, ATs, RCCC's and CCTs,
Greetings.

Our Principal Teacher Goenkaji has recently given permission to allow youngsters in the age group of 16 to 18 to participate in children's courses.

He has further given instructions that the courses for children between 16-18 years of age should be of single gender and must be conducted by CCTs / ATs of the same gender.

Please note that one day courses for children between 12-18 years of age could be for both boys and girls but the residential courses for this age group should be of single gender only. All courses in this age group must be conducted by CCTs / ATs of the same gender.

Any exceptions to this regulation should only be made with the permission of the area Teacher. Please inform me if any exception is made.

With Metta,

Nirmala Ganla
(Secretary ICCCC)

CIRCULAR NO. 4

Concerning resignation by CCT

Date: 17.07.08

Dear CCTs,

Attached herewith is a letter written by our Teacher, Goenkaji to the Assistant Teachers which is also applicable to Children Course Teachers.

We have been given this wonderful opportunity to serve and grow in Dhamma but for any reason if you feel you cannot serve in the capacity of a CCT then you can fill in the attached resignation letter and send it to your respective RCCC.

With lots of Metta,
Dr. Nirmala Ganla
(Secretary, International Children's Course Committee)

Letter to ATs concerning resignation
VIPASSANA INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri, India 422 403. Tel.: 91-2553-84076, 84086. Fax: 84176.
Website- www.dhamma.org

Date: 26.03.2000

My dear assistants,

I have been appointing assistant teachers to help me in the spread of Dhamma. It has come to my notice that some of the assistant teachers have not been conducting any courses. I understand that some of you may not have time for Dhamma service due to worldly responsibilities. If you think that you will not be able to conduct at least two courses in a year (minimum one ten-day course in extenuating circumstances) then it is proper that you step down from the responsibility of being an assistant teacher. In future when you have more free time, you will be again considered for this responsibility.

I tell people that there are 500 assistant teachers around the world who are giving Dhamma service. If some of you are not doing so, my claim becomes false.

It is important to understand that post of an assistant teacher (any post in the Dhamma organization for that matter) is not a post of decoration.

I am sure you will be able to take a conscientious decision and inform me at the earliest.

May you progress in Dhamma and help others on the path of Dhamma.

May you be happy, peaceful and liberated.

With all my Metta,

S. N. Goenka

NB: The teachers should also convey this information to the children's course teachers in their area who do not give any Dhamma service.

RESIGNATION LETTER

Date:

To
RCCC,

I am fortunate to have been given a chance by the organization to conduct Childrens' Courses. However, at present I am not in a position to execute the responsibility of CCT due to

Please accept my resignation. My name may please be removed from the list of CCTs.

(Signature)

Name:

Address:

Telephone No:

e-mail:

VIII. QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q/A ANNUAL MEETING (JANUARY 8, 1998)

(CCTs may listen to this on “English Audio)

Q 1. What are the guidelines regarding teaching sīla and the origins of the technique, while teaching Anapana in schools in the West? For example introducing Buddha without the school system’s thinking of it as a religion.

Well, first this person who is teaching must be fully convinced that this is not a religion. Buddha was not a religious teacher, he was not the founder of a religion. Buddha taught a way of life. If you are fully convinced of this, you can convince others. When you talk of the law of gravity you have to use the name of Newton. But you do not become a member of Newton’s sect. You must first understand what you are teaching; then it becomes very easy to explain it to people—whether children or adults.

Q 2. And what about sīla?

Well, you must explain sīla to them. Sīla is important. There is nothing wrong in this.

Q 3. Should the junior assistant teachers be responsible for conducting the Metta sessions at 9 p.m. with the servers in the same way as the AT conducts these sessions on a 10-day course?

No. How did that start? That is not a part of the children’s course. I have been getting information from many places that when we name somebody a junior assistant teacher the word “junior” gets lost, and the word “assistant” is also lost. They think, “Now I am a teacher, I must get all the respect and status that a teacher gets. I must have a high seat to sit on. I can now give Metta. Let all sit before me.” That is why we will now change this name of junior assistant teacher to children’s course teacher.

In some cases this person may have only taken one or two courses. Sometimes I make such a person a children’s course teacher because this person is capable of handling children. But such a person does not know anything about the details of Vipassana. Then they start behaving as if they are a big teacher and can give Metta in the evening. Was there any Metta session in the children’s course that we taught? No, there was not. It should not be done. I think you all must inform your children’s course teachers: Don’t act like an assistant teacher, you are a children’s course teacher. You should only do whatever is asked of you, never do more.

Q 4. How can children be encouraged to practice at home if their families do not meditate? Can they attend Vipassana group sittings?

The Vipassana adult group sitting? No. A child should never be brought to the adult group sitting. During the one-hour group sitting the child will get bored within 10 or 15 minutes. Then what will he or she do? The child will develop aversion towards meditation. No. A child should never be brought. If there is a group sitting for children only, then it is all right. That will be only for 10 or 15 minutes, or a maximum of 20 minutes.

Q/A CC VIA (FEBRUARY 1999)

(This is translated from Hindi Questions and Answers from Teaching Set)

Q. 1 What is the mind?

A. The mind is what thinks! The entire thought process is due to the mind. It is the mind that is constantly involved in the various actions of thinking, reading and pondering over what has been read, etc. During its course of thinking, the mind may act beneficially or harmfully. If it adopts the wrong habit pattern, then it will generate feelings of ill will and animosity for others. If instead, the mind reforms itself, then although it will still have thoughts they will now be thoughts for the well being of others. If someone has shortcomings, the mind will want that person to overcome his shortcomings because now the mind knows that due to his shortcomings, that person will perform wrong actions which will make him more miserable and unhappy. So the mind will harbour thoughts of goodwill towards that person. It will want the person to refrain from doing bad deeds and thus save himself from burning in the fires of suffering. We observe that it is the nature of the mind to generate thoughts all the time. Therefore, our most important duty is to guide the mind towards a healthy thought process and prevent it from taking the path of unhealthy thinking patterns. Our entire effort is aimed towards understanding this nature of the mind and correcting it if it goes on the wrong path.

Q. 2 Who reforms the mind?

A. It is the mind that reforms itself. A part of the mind is always observing its own functioning. If there are thoughts in the mind, it will analyse the nature of these thoughts. Whenever negativity or a feeling of animosity arises in the mind, this same part instantly issues a warning that such negative emotions are undesirable and should not occur in the mind. This part may be called intellect or the part of the mind which is always alert regarding the functioning of the mind and is trying to reform it. If the mind can develop the habit of observing the truth as it appears, then this fact will become clear- that the moment the mind is defiled, it is punished with suffering; and if it is purified, the suffering is removed. It is this observing part of the mind which will understand this process and thus change itself. Nobody wants to remain agitated. Everyone wants to lead a happy life without miseries. To attain this state, the observing part of the mind tries to change the nature of the remaining part of the mind.

Q. 3 The mind remains full of thoughts and is unable to keep focussed at one place.

A. We are here to meditate precisely for that reason. If the mind was already concentrated, then why would you have come here? It is an old habit of the mind to wander. Let it wander. The moment we realize that the mind has wandered, we bring it back to the breath. The mind is distracted because of these innumerable thoughts. The nature of the thoughts varies from time to time, but the important thing is how soon we become conscious of the fact that the mind has wandered. It is not good if the mind remains distracted for a long period of time.

Q. 4 I cannot feel the inflow and outflow of respiration.

A. This indicates that the breath must have slowed down and become very soft. When the respiration is very slow, you lose awareness of its incoming and outgoing flow. When this happens, breathe a little harder, but not very hard. Make a

conscious effort to breathe. Be aware that you are breathing deliberately. When you breathe hard, it will enable you to clearly feel the flow of respiration. Then again slow down the breathing. If again you do not feel the touch of the respiration, breathe a little faster and as soon as you can feel it, start breathing slowly.

Q. 5 I feel sleepy while meditating.

A. Get rid of this feeling of sleepiness. How can you expect to work if you fall asleep? You are engaged in the task of awakening the mind. Therefore you should remain alert, remain awake and remain vigilant. Time and again it is emphasized-remain alert, remain vigilant. If sleep overpowers the mind, then try some hard breathing. Sleepiness will go away. You must fight this enemy. Sleep is your enemy at the time of meditation. At any other appropriate time, it is welcome.

Q.6 What are we to understand by pure breath? What are we to understand by natural breath?

A. Good question. The plain, simple breath with nothing attached to it is called pure. The moment something is attached to the breath, it becomes impure. Something is pure if no foreign element is added to it. As long as the milk producer does not add water to the milk, it remains pure. The addition of water to milk makes it impure. Similarly, the breath is pure as long as nothing is added to it. The addition of any word or name with the breath makes it impure. We should not condemn any kind of meditation that gives importance to a particular name, form or image. But in this meditation, the moment you associate any word, name, form or image with the breath, it is no longer a pure breath. Something extra has been added to it. The breath is pure as long as nothing is mixed with it.

Now, what is natural breath? The flow of respiration taking place of its own nature is called natural. The natural breath is one which comes in and goes out on its own without any effort on our part. When we breathe hard, it takes some effort to do so and is therefore not natural. So the respiration which is done effortlessly and which flows in and flows out on its own is called natural.

Q .7 Why do you say “Bhavatu Sabba Mangalam” three times?

A. I say this because it makes me feel good. When we say “May all beings be happy”, it fills our mind with happiness. If we generate ill will for others and wish them unhappiness, we will be miserable from within. If instead of generating ill will, we generate goodwill for all, we will feel happy. With purity of mind, if you also say these words of well-being with the feeling that your meditation may benefit one and all, you will find that your mind is filled with happiness. On the contrary, if you abuse someone in a state of anger, your mind will be disturbed and agitated. Who likes having such a state of mind? Everyone wishes to remain calm and happy. So to attain serenity and happiness of mind, these words of well being for others are said.

Let me explain further. Now you have only learned the technique of Anapana. Later, when you advance on the path of Vipassana, you will see that when we want others to be happy and say “Bhavatu Sabba Mangalam”, these feelings of well being for others are effective only if generated from within the innermost depths of a pure mind. Wishes coming from a shallow mind do not have much influence. If anyone really wants happiness for others, he may start saying “Bhavatu Sabba Mangalam” from the surface level of the mind but gradually these words must be said from the depths of the mind as it becomes purer and purer. If these words are spoken from the depths of the mind, then they will be meaningful and effective. We

want these words to be effective, so saying them should not be made a mere ritual. It should be done in a manner that is beneficial for oneself as well as others.

Q. 8 You have asked us to live in the present. Does this imply that we should not plan for the future at all? Does it mean that we should not be ambitious?

A. These are two different questions, and quite relevant as well. It is certainly not wise to live in the present and not think about the future at all. While observing the breath, you are also gaining awareness of the workings of the mind. You have observed that it has become a permanent habit of the mind to always generate thoughts about the past or the future. The mind does not want to focus on its present task of observing the breath. When it is involved in thoughts of future, the mind's energy gets reduced and therefore it is unable to work with full potential on the task at hand. And, when the actual time for taking the right action comes, the mind has exhausted all its energy. So with the mind firmly rooted in the present, think and plan the immediate task at hand. Set your goal and keeping it in sight, walk step by step towards it. Once the goal is set, you should not think about it any more. This way, every step you take will be a step in the present. But remain aware of each and every step you take. This will eliminate all possibilities of making mistakes.

You may wonder how you will be able to lead your life if you do not plan for the future. We have a limited reservoir of energy and therefore it should be utilized with wisdom. We should only use as much as is required for planning the future. We tend to exhaust our energy by unnecessarily tormenting the mind with thoughts of the future. "This may happen or this may not happen. We may do this or we may not do this?" Oh! Indulge in all this thinking only when it is required. Right now, your job is to observe the breath so that you learn to remain in the present. If we adopt the habit of remaining firmly in the present, we will be able to take the next step properly. Thus, to establish this habit pattern of the mind, we emphasize staying with the present.

To be ambitious is not bad at all. We set a definite aim for our life. For instance, we study to fulfil a certain ambition, or we are doing meditation for a certain purpose. But if we get attached to our goal and constantly worry about it while making no efforts to attain it, then it is futile to have any ambition. What is the point in being ambitious about a thing which prevents you from taking the right course of action? Decide about your aim and then strive to achieve it. If you are thirsty, then go and get water. Merely crying for water and worrying about it will not quench your thirst. Make the desired effort to obtain water, drink it and satisfy your thirst. What is wrong with this? Similarly, there is no harm in having a good ambition and making efforts to attain it. But if you get obsessed with it and only worry about its fulfilment without making any efforts in that direction, then you will go off the track and fail- even a good ambition will not be successful. So have the right ambition and strive hard to attain it.

Q. 9 Why do we observe only the breath?

A. Because it will eventually pave the way for Vipassana. Breath is a true fact. It is the truth that is closely associated not only with our body but also with our mind. Like a scientist, we have to diligently discover the truth about ourselves, our body and mind. Moreover, this knowledge should be based at the experiential level and not on what we are told or study in books, etc. We have started this practice of observing the breath, so that we can learn the truth about ourselves. This will

enable us to get rid of our faults on the one hand and conserve and expand our virtues on the other. All this is possible only if we know our minds, and the mind can be known through the breath. We are observing the breath; and in the process, we begin to know our mind. While learning about the mind we can also reform it. Thus, the mind and respiration are closely linked. This will become more evident as you progress on the path of meditation. While observing the breath, some angry thoughts may occur in the mind. You will notice that the normal pace of the breath gets disturbed and it becomes fast and heavy. And the moment the mind gets rid of anger, the breath becomes normal. This shows how the disorders of the mind are related to our breathing process.

As you meditate further, you will understand all this better. But you will only understand this phenomenon clearly if you work with the pure breath. If you add anything to the breath, then you will fail to grasp all this. For these reasons, we work with the breath. Respiration is related not only to the body but to the mind as well. When we breathe in, the lungs get inflated with air and when we breathe out, the lungs are deflated. This is how the respiration is related to the body. And as it was just explained, if an impurity arises in the mind, the normal pace of the breath gets disturbed. This is how respiration is related to the mind.

Q.10 How can Anapana help to reform the mind? How can Anapana lead to purity of mind?

A. As long as the mind is engaged in doing Anapana, that is in the observation of the flow of respiration, it is without any thoughts, and as a result of this, it is without any defilements. It is our thoughts which defile the mind. Mostly while we are thinking, there is craving or aversion. Pleasant thoughts generate craving and unpleasant thoughts generate aversion. But when we are observing the incoming and outgoing breath, there is no reason for us to generate either of these emotions and so these are moments of purity in the mind. More and more of these moments of purity will reverse the habit pattern of the mind. The mind that was previously generating impurities will now become pure. This transformation which will initially take place at the surface level of the mind will gradually take deep roots as you progress on the path of Vipassana.

Q. 11 I suffer from physical discomfort such as agitation, headache, backache, nausea, etc. while meditating.

A. It is good if you feel such discomfort during meditation. Do not get disturbed by it. But understand the cause behind it. It is due to this meditation technique. You will observe that as long as your mind remains focused on the breath, it does not generate any craving or aversion. You are only absorbed in the task of observing the breath. There is no craving towards the incoming breath. There is no aversion towards the outgoing breath. So the mind reaches a level of purity without having an iota of craving or aversion, even though it may be for a short period of time. For innumerable births, we have collected a huge stock of defilements, which has corrupted the mind. The moment the mind becomes pure, there is an explosive reaction in the stock of impurities, which appears on the surface of the body in the form of various discomforts.

Let us understand this through a simile. Coals are burning in a fire and we sprinkle some water on them. What happens then? The water is cold and the coals are hot. The contact between the hot coals and the cold water will produce a loud hissing sound. The burning coals do not welcome the cold water and thus protest loudly. This reaction is the result of two things coming together with radically opposite characteristics. One has the trait of burning, the other that of cooling. If we

continue to sprinkle water on the burning coals, each time there will be a hissing sound but gradually the fire in the coals will be extinguished and they will cool down- now, no amount of water poured on them will produce any sound. Similarly, as the mind gets concentrated, it becomes pure and brings relief. These short moments of purity are like water being sprinkled on the burning coals of negativities. Their contact generates all these physical discomforts like headache, backache, restlessness, nausea, pain in the feet, etc. Do not be disturbed or discouraged by them. Slowly and gradually, these will disappear. Just as continued sprinkling of water on hot coals cools them down, similarly these discomforts will also be cured. You will not come to any harm. So do not get disturbed at all.

Q.12 What is the characteristic of a pure mind?

A. Purity is the characteristic of a pure mind. By purity we mean the state of mind which is without any defilements like anger, animosity, ill will, craving, clinging, etc. If there is any such negativity in the mind, how can it be called pure? In fact, it will lead to some negative act of the body or speech. An impure mind will lead to some impure action. This way you not only harm yourself but others as well. On the other hand, if the mind is pure, it cannot act in a wrong way. It will benefit itself and others as well. This is the basic characteristic of this technique- that we purify our mind so that we are saved from doing harmful deeds through our speech and body. We try to develop this quality of purity of mind so that all our acts are beneficial. A pure mind will never generate ill will against any one. Instead, it will generate good will, affection and compassion for one and all. These are the qualities by which the purity of the mind is assessed.

Q. 13 What is the significance of observing noble silence?

A. It has a great significance. All our efforts are towards quietening the mind. We have already experienced how talkative the mind is. Even though we want the mind to observe the breath, it hardly observes a couple of breaths before it indulges in its old habit of thinking and talking endlessly with itself. We want it to quieten down and become involved in the task of observing the breath, but despite all our efforts, it does not calm down. On top of this, if you talk with other meditators, then the mind will get more food for thought. It will think about this conversation while meditating, thus weakening your meditation. You have not only harmed yourself but also done a great deal of harm to the other meditator by talking to someone, who has also come to do Anapana like you. Now that person will also lose their concentration by thinking about the conversation with you and they cannot meditate properly either. We have a habit of wasting our energy by talking uselessly and unceasingly. Our conversation should always be purposeful. But for now, our task is to meditate, which we do while observing complete silence.

Q.14 How can the observation of breath assist in practicing the moral precepts (sila)?

A. This is indeed a good question. If the observation of breath does not help us to preserve morality and establish ourselves in Dhamma, then it is a futile exercise. This technique will be very beneficial in living a good life. If we continue to observe the natural flow of respiration, we will find that it helps us to gain control over our mind. Our mind will not be as weak and restless as before. Its ability to concentrate will improve. The more it concentrates, the stronger and wiser it gets. Its faculty of awareness improves. If anger arises in the mind, it will instantly become aware of it. Then all you have to do is to observe the respiration. A few

minutes of observing the breath will eliminate anger from the mind. Earlier, when we were in a bad mood, we used to either abuse the other person or we would lose control and hit him, thus breaking our sila. So Anapana has prevented us from doing a harmful deed. Any wrong act we perform defiles the mind, and the person practising Anapana immediately becomes aware of this. The only way to get rid of the impurity is to observe the breath for some time. If we continue to observe the breath, the impurity will be removed and we will be saved from breaking our sila.

Q. 15 How does the breath help in preserving our sila?

A. As already explained, the irregularity in the respiration gives us a warning signal when morality is not being observed. At that time, by focusing our attention on the respiration, we will become alert and vigilant and not perform an unwholesome action.

Q. 16 Why is it not right to break sila even as a joke?

A. Why indulge in a sense of humors which prompts you to break your sila? There can be numerous jokes that do not require you to behave immorally. If you break your sila once, even as a joke, you will be tempted to do it again and again. Today you are breaking it as a joke and tomorrow it will become a permanent habit for you. You will find justification in doing it. Immorality under all circumstances is wrong, and so try not to ever indulge in it, even jokingly.

Q. 17 Why shouldn't we kill mosquitoes when they bite us?

A. The question you ask yourself should be, "Why can't we drive away mosquitoes when they bite us? Why do you wish to kill mosquitoes?" If they bite you, then get rid of them without killing them. Mosquito coils and repellent can be used to send the mosquitoes away without harming them. Apply these when you meditate or at other times, and the mosquitoes will not come near you. Obviously you don't like it when somebody hurts you. A mosquito is a living being as you are, and it is born with the natural instinct of sucking blood for its food. If you do not wish your blood to be sucked, then adopt methods to keep the mosquitoes away. Do not kill them, only keep them away. You will be breaking a moral precept if you kill them, but not if you just drive them away.

Q. 18 If we lie for some good cause, will it still be an unwholesome action?

A. An unwholesome action is an unwholesome action under all circumstances. As I have said before, we get into the habit of justifying a lie even though it is not morally justifiable. First of all, how are you certain that the reason for which you lied is reasonable? Everyone has one's own limitations when it comes to analysing and understanding things, and so do you. It is difficult to become perfect in knowing clearly whether the lie is told for a reasonable cause. And even if you claim to be certain that you lied for a good reason, then you are bound to lie again for some other reason which also appears to be good. If you lie repeatedly, you will not only get into the habit of lying, but you will also justify your habit with the excuse that telling a small lie does not matter. Don't ever get into the habit of doing this. Do not be tempted to lie for any reason, however good it may appear to be. Speak only the truth.

Sometimes, you may feel reluctant to speak the truth because it may appear to harm someone. For example, your teacher asks you to tell the name of your classmate who has misbehaved. You know that your friend is the trouble-maker, but you hesitate to tell the truth because you know that your friend will get a punishment from the teacher and you do not want anybody to punish your friend. So in order to

save your friend from the punishment, you will tell a downright lie by saying that he is innocent. Understand what has happened because of this.

The teacher has not punished your friend, and you think that you have saved your friend. On the surface it appears that speaking a small lie has saved your friend from being punished. But in reality, a great harm has been done to him. You have in fact helped him to misbehave. Since he has not been corrected at the time he committed a mistake, he will feel encouraged to repeat the same mistake time and again. So your one lie has opened the doors of misbehaviour and misery for your friend. If the truth had come out, the teacher would have given him the appropriate punishment, thus preventing him from going astray in the future.

There is no harm in maintaining silence if at some stage you do not wish to make any comment. If you feel that your statement may be incorrect or misleading, then instead of saying something incorrect deliberately, with humility and firmness, you may refuse to give any reply. You have not done anything wrong in telling the truth, which is that you do not wish to speak. Otherwise, if you try to save someone by making a false statement, you may do him more harm than good. Not only can you harm your friend, but you may harm yourself too by acquiring the habit of telling lies due to one reason or another.

Q. 19 How can one protect oneself without breaking one's sila?

A. Just as you protect others by protecting your sila, similarly protect yourself without breaking your sila. On one hand, you may wish to protect yourself and on the other, you may speak of breaking your sila. By breaking sila, you act immorally, and your action will produce the fruit of misery for you in the future. So how can you claim to have protected yourself? How can you claim to have saved yourself? In fact, you have ruined your own security by not following the right code of conduct. You must strengthen your mind. If the mind is weak, it will give a hundred excuses for breaking any moral principle. It will say that a small lie is excusable if it saves me or someone else. If the mind is strong, it will not listen to such lame excuses and so it will protect the morality of the body and speech. This will be your real protection. Gradually, people will begin to know you as a truthful person and you will experience the sweet fruit of good behaviour.

Q. 20 If we happen to break our sila, how do we make amends for it?

A. If you happen to break your sila, then admit it before someone older. Do not hide your mistakes. If you conceal your mistake, then you are liable to repeat it. It will start an endless process. If you confess to someone older and respectable that you have made a mistake, and also promise not to repeat the same mistake under any circumstance, you will see that your mind will gain strength. When you don't conceal any of your bad actions, you are not tempted to repeat them. Moreover, if you are determined not to commit the same mistake again, you will start gaining strength of mind. This is the right way. There is no other way to make amends.

Q. 21 Why shouldn't we smoke cigarettes, or take alcohol or drugs?

A. Someone might entice you into smoking or taking drugs by arguing that a little bit is not harmful; that it gives pleasure; that only those who drink too much land into trouble and we won't consume too much; that there is no harm in sampling a small amount, etc. You might weaken and start with small quantities. Gradually, you may become addicted. It will be like an incurable disease. It will be impossible for you to come out of it. So why invite such a disease in the first place, which can only cause harm and nothing else? Do not agree even to a close friend who asks

you to drink, smoke or take drugs, etc. If you give in easily to his request so that you will make him happy or to maintain friendship with him, you will be the sufferer. You might ask how you can continue to be friends with those who drink if you don't drink.

If you are intelligent enough, then you will remain friends. Understand how this happens. First of all, why be friends with such people? And, if for some reason you have to be in their company while they are drinking, then use your intelligence and judgment. If you refuse to drink by saying that now you are a Dhamma person doing Anapana, then this will generate animosity towards you. So firmly decline the offer to drink by saying politely that it does not suit you. This will be a true statement for it can never suit a person to drink if he is walking on the path of Dhamma and is doing Anapana.

Consider an example. A man suffering from diabetes goes out with some friends one evening. The friends coax him to eat sweets arguing that one piece will do him no harm. If he eats the sweets, it will only make his condition worse, but if he is a sensible person, he will not yield to their persuasions and therefore not increase his own suffering. He will turn down their offer by politely saying that he has diabetes and therefore cannot eat sweets. He will say that it does not suit him to eat sweets, whereas the others are free to eat them. Similarly, exercise your willpower and firmly but politely decline any offer to smoke or drink, giving the simple but true reason that these do not suit you. You may feel that if you do not join your friends in smoking, drinking, etc., they will shun your company and make you feel like an outcaste. I have just explained to you that this will not happen. Firstly, what will you gain by unnecessarily being part of a group with such bad habits? It is better to stay away from such people. In case you are unable to avoid them, then act as advised above and protect yourself. You might feel that instead of leaving their company, you could try to reform them. Do not attempt to mend their ways. You are not qualified to do that till you have reformed yourself.

Suppose you have an injured leg, how can you hope to help another one-legged person? A lame person cannot afford to help another lame person. A blind man cannot show the path to another blind man. So you have to first reform yourself. On seeing the transformation in your conduct, your friends will be attracted to you. Seeking your example, they will follow the path of Dhamma and be benefited by it. Otherwise, what can you hope to reform? Yours is a vulnerable age. In correcting others, you may go on the wrong path yourself. Therefore, at your age, spend as much time as possible in strengthening yourself and establishing yourself in Dhamma. Leave the task of reforming others to someone else.

Q .22 What is the difference between Anapana and any other form of meditation?

A. Every meditation technique has its own unique features; and, for this reason, one meditation technique differs from the other. In Anapana, the emphasis is on the natural flow of respiration as it comes in and as it goes out. There is a form of meditation where one is asked to take long deliberate breaths, stop for a while and then release the breath. This technique is different from Anapana. In Anapana, the breath has to be kept pure, meaning that nothing extra should be added to the breath; whereas there are techniques which give importance to the use of name, form, or image for meditation. Thus, different techniques have distinctive qualities. Anapana has its own characteristics, which should be protected and maintained.

Q.23 How does one keep up the practice of Anapana simultaneously with yoga?

A. Yoga is a beneficial practice. But there is no need to do Anapana simultaneously with it. Make a gap between the two. Yoga and Anapana do not interfere with each

other but there is a basic difference between Pranayama (yoga of breathing) and Anapana, which must be understood clearly. In Pranayama, the breathing is done deliberately and consciously. It is an exercise of the breath where you breathe deeply, then hold the breath for a while and then release it. It is a good technique. But in Anapana, the breathing process is natural and effortless. So, if you mingle the two techniques and try to do one immediately after the other, then you are bound to get confused and create problems for yourself. Therefore, do only one thing at a time. After having done Pranayama, wait for some time and then do Anapana.

Q. 24 How can we succeed in this competitive world without being dishonest?

A. The essence of leading a virtuous life is that one does not look for excuses to act wrongly. Now, you may have found a reason to justify your wrong actions. You think that you must adopt dishonest methods to succeed in this world because everybody around you is doing so, and progressing at a very fast pace. And, if we who practice Anapana or Vipassana do not do the same, we will lag behind.

Understand that such thinking is the result of weakness of the mind. This meditation will make your mind so strong that you will not even remotely consider doing any sinful act, or breaking your sila, or adopting any wrong ways; and you will find success at your doorstep. On the contrary, if you fear failure because you are not adopting underhand methods to succeed, then this fear will become the cause of your failure, whereas the strength of the mind will bring you success. So you must strengthen the mind and not weaken it on some pretext or the other.

As you grow, you will understand further that those people who have acquired name, fame, position and wealth through dishonest means, and are apparently leading very successful lives, remain agitated and full of misery. When you progress on this path, then you will realize that such a person neither sleeps restfully at night nor is his mind at peace during the day. What has he gained by becoming a successful person? The wealth, position, fame and name are all futile if these cannot generate happiness and peace.

On the other hand, a person who is not so wealthy or famous but who has a contented and compassionate heart is a real noble soul and leads a truly happy life. Thus, in order to compete in the world and attain worldly success, we should not take the wrong path. This is why you are learning to meditate at this young age, so that you do not take a wrong path at any cost. Even for the sake of the right goal, do not walk on the wrong path. Always take the right course for a righteous aim.

Q. 25 What are the characteristics of a good student?

A. You have asked a very good question. All of you wish to excel as students. Then you should know the traits of a good student. In ancient India the qualities of a good student were recorded in Sanskrit:

Kakacheshtha, bakadhyanam, shwananidra tathaiva cha;

Alpahari, brahmachari, vidyarthinah panch lakshanam.

These are the five essential qualities that a student must possess:

Kakacheshtha (kaka means crow) - You will find that a crow always remains alert and strives with full effort to do its task. You will never find it lazing around. Acquire this quality from a crow to fulfil one's assigned task ardently and enthusiastically.

Bakadhyanam (baka means crane) - While studying, focus entirely on your books. Similarly, while doing Anapana, do it with full concentration. In developing this

quality of concentration, make a crane your inspiration. You may have noticed how a crane stands absolutely still on one leg without moving a single feather as if deep in meditation- with its mind fully concentrated on catching its prey. You should also learn how to meditate with concentration like that of a crane.

Shwananidra (shwana means a dog) - Sleep is essential for everyone. But to fall off into a deep slumber snoring loudly, oblivious of one's surroundings is not the right way of sleeping. The art of sleeping is mastered by a dog who, even though apparently fast asleep, will open his eyes and be wide-awake at the slightest sound. A student should also abandon laziness and unawareness and sleep with inner wakefulness like a dog. With the practice of Anapana and later Vipassana, you will attain the state of complete alertness even while being asleep. Like a dog, you will wake at the slightest movement.

Alpahari (one who eats less) - Eat according to your hunger. After having a satisfying meal, we tend to stuff ourselves with more food even though our stomach is full, We pamper our tongues even on a full stomach. This will lead to lethargy and laziness. How can you hope to succeed when you will be wasting time sleeping, when you should be studying. A student should always remain alert and sleep only as much as is required; he should not get overpowered by sloth and torpor. For this, it is necessary to eat less.

Brahmachari (one who leads a life of celibacy) - A student who does not practice celibacy cannot afford to study. His or her mind will always remain absorbed in such harmful thoughts and thus will be unable to concentrate in studies. Therefore, as a student, one must observe celibacy. So work with this determination.

These are the five traits of an ideal student.

Q. 26 How do we know that we are progressing on the path of Dhamma?

A. We know this by seeing whether a transformation is coming in our life or not. If our mind is still generating as much negativity as before, then there is no progress at all. The only criterion is to observe if there is a gradual decrease in our stock of defilements, and if we are developing the virtues that were missing before. If we continue to measure our success by this yardstick, then we will overcome the habit of committing wrong deeds. On the contrary, we will act virtuously. Others will also acknowledge us to be Dhamma people, for Dhamma will become an integral part of our lives.

May all beings be happy. May all beings prosper. May all beings be blessed.

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Q/A ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT (FEBRUARY 1999)

Q.1 Why should we not chant any hymn while doing Anapana?

A. There is no aversion towards any hymn. It can have its own significance, but it is not desirable to mix it with this meditation. Some hymns are very inspiring and illuminate the path. We do not demean their importance at all. But we have chosen pure breath to attain concentration of mind. So nothing should be mixed with it, neither any word nor any hymn. As you progress, you will realize that only by working on pure, natural breath can you practice Vipassana. Any addition to the breath will create difficulties in practicing Vipassana. The chanting of any word or hymn produces unnatural vibrations, which create hindrances in the path of Vipassana. This will become very evident when you start doing Vipassana. Hence no external input is desirable. There is nothing wrong in separately reading or understanding a particular hymn but do not mix it with Anapana.

Q. 2 What is the harm in playing cards or watching TV?

A. These things lead to harm. Initially, we are lured towards playing cards on the insistence of our friends. We also make the excuse that no harm can possibly come from playing for a short time. Similarly, we feel that there is no harm in watching television for recreation for a short while. But gradually, it becomes harmful. As you watch T.V., suddenly an episode comes which you are very keen to watch. It is followed by another episode of your interest, and this is then followed by another story or songs, etc. You become so much addicted to various programs that you are unable to withdraw yourself from the T.V. And there is so much work for you to do. You have come from school, so there is homework to be done and lessons to be learnt, but your mind is engrossed in watching T.V. Studies are neglected, the homework is forgotten and hours are wasted watching television. So this habit, which only started as a harmless time pass, has now become your enemy. It will not allow you to devote time to doing your assigned duties and you will end up as a failure. Thus watching T.V. is dangerous because it can turn into an addiction. Watching television can be dangerous for another reason too. There are certain programs which are detrimental even to the minds of adults. These can be even more harmful for children because children will believe them readily and emulate them without thinking rationally.

Recently, we heard that a programs was shown on television where a man jumped off a cliff, but was caught by someone and again brought up. Seeing this, a small child also jumped off from a height hoping to be saved by his hero and hurt himself seriously in the process. Therefore, if watching T.V. becomes an obsession, it can be very harmful. If you feel the necessity to watch T.V. for entertainment, then do it for a very short period only. The same is true for playing cards. You will begin by playing a little for amusement with your friends and end up getting addicted to it. Just as the obsession of watching television makes you neglect all your other duties, the passion for cards will also consume all your valuable time. The story of your downfall will not end here. People who encouraged you to play cards as a time pass will now lure you into gambling. You will start wasting your pocket money. When that money is exhausted, the addiction will force you to steal and if you lose

everything, in frustration, you might end up hitting somebody. All these are the consequences of playing cards. It will lead to gambling in the future. As a student, refrain from indulging in any such activity. The more you stay away from these activities, the more successful you will be in life.

Q. 3 Why abstain from eating meat? How can we stay away from it when it is cooked in our homes?

A. What you say is right. But you will observe that in all the Dhamma camps that you attend, now Anapana and later Vipassana, no meat is ever served. You will only be given vegetarian food. This is because a pure vegetarian diet is essential for your progress in meditation. Now you return home after attending a camp and you find that meat is cooked there. If you use the argument that having done Anapana or Vipassana, you do not feel like eating meat, then your family may not be convinced. But when your family members will observe that Anapana and later Vipassana have brought a radical transformation in your behaviour, they too will begin to appreciate Dhamma. Your brothers, sisters, and later parents, uncles and aunts, will also start coming for Dhamma courses. And after they undertake a course, they themselves will realize the detrimental effects of a non-vegetarian diet because of their progress in meditation. They will understand why you were insistent about not partaking of meat. Gradually, Dhamma will take its own course and things will change for the better. But till this happens, do not show be aggressive or displeased with your family, as it will only turn them against meditation.

Q. 4 Vegetables also have life in them. Are we not committing an act of killing when we eat or cut vegetables, etc.?

A. Try to avoid going to extremes while on the path of Dhamma. Right now, your mind is not even reformed to the extent that you can refrain from killing visible living beings, let alone invisible beings. Firstly, it is debatable whether plants or trees have life in them. Even if they do, then the main consideration is whether you are cutting a plant with the intention of killing it or only for your food. Your mind should avoid thoughts of killing anything. But do not indulge in thinking about these things now. Do not go to such extremes, otherwise you will land into trouble. Your mind will reach a stage of utter confusion, whether it is proper to breathe or not because when you are breathing in and breathing out, you may be killing many bacteria, germs, etc. Such thoughts should be avoided.

Remember only one thing: If you kill a visible living being whose sense organs are functioning, then you have broken your sila. So remain vigilant all the time and do not break your sila by killing a visible living being. If thoughts of killing something enter your mind, then remember that all living beings have the same life force in them and they all feel pain when they are being hurt, just as we do. If you think like this, and refrain from killing that being then you have protected your sila. For the time being, it is enough if you do not allow any intention of killing a living being to arise in your mind. Do not go to extremes, otherwise you will be creating dilemmas in your mind. Today you stop eating meat, then vegetables, and tomorrow you will stop breathing air as well because when you breathe air, you might be killing living organisms too. When will it end?

Q.5 Shall we say prayers at home and in school?

A. Surely, why not? You must say your prayers at home and in school. It will not seem proper if you refuse to pray with your parents and with your schoolmates, saying that now you have started doing Anapana and so you cannot pray. You must not separate yourself from the activities in school and at home. But every meditator on this path must clearly understand one thing, now and in the future also. Prayer is of two types. One is done to propitiate the gods for the fulfilment of one's desires. Another is not done to beg for something, but to remember the good qualities of one's idol and imbibe them in one's life. If you ever need to ask anything of your idol, it should be to assimilate his qualities in your life, because to lead a life of Dhamma is to lead a life of virtues. Instead, we commit immoral acts and think that just because we pray a lot, our deity will not punish us for our misdeeds. This does not happen. Wickedness and vice are always punished. Therefore, we must endeavour to get rid of our vices to save ourselves from sin and develop virtues to do good deeds.

Q. 6 What is "Lokachakra" and what is "Dharma chakra"?

A. As you gradually progress on this path and go into the depths, you will grasp the deeper workings of the mind and also understand the mysteries of the universe, its existence and evolution. Every living being passes through the cycle of birth, growth, sickness, old age and eventually death. Is there no escape from this? Every human being remains miserable on account of something or the other. Again, is there no way out of this suffering? By doing Vipassana, gradually you will understand the reason why we are caught in this vicious cycle of birth and death. We are carrying a stock of defilements within ourselves. At the time of death, these impurities appear on the surface of the mind, and give rise to a new birth. Thus the impurities are the reason due to which a new birth takes place. The practice of Vipassana will gradually dissolve this pile of impurities, thus terminating the cause for rebirth. These negativities give rise to "Lokachakra", which means the ever-rotating wheel of birth and death. This meditation technique of Anapana and later Vipassana will reverse the course of this wheel, and turn it into "Dharmachakra"; that is, the process by which we remove our impurities. When we are trying to get rid of our defilements, we are actually moving out of "Lokachakra", the cycle of life and death and stepping into "Dharmachakra". It is this "Lokachakra" that keeps us entangled in miseries by giving us new births, whereas "Dharmachakra" liberates us from the bonds of suffering. Right now, your work is to do Anapana. So establish yourself firmly in Anapana. Later, when you do Vipassana, you will understand all this in depth.

May all beings be happy. May all beings prosper. May all beings be blessed.

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CCT WORKSHOP Q/A (DECEMBER 2000)

(Available as Audio in English and Hindi)

Q. 1. Our parents send us to these courses forcefully. We don't like it. How to tell them?

A. Well, the parents who send their children forcefully are parents who have practiced Vipassana. And because they got benefit from Vipassana, they would like that their children also get some benefit by this technique. So your parents always want you to get something very valuable, good for you, for the whole life. So if they press you, at present you may feel — Oh look! We are pressed and we are sent here. But just see, after the end of your course you will be so happy. And then later on you will find that this has been so helpful to you. So your parents are always your benefactors. So whenever they ask you to do something, they ask you to do something which is good for you. Take it that way.

Q.2. We sometimes find ourselves in a situation where our parents are fighting with strong emotions. In such times, what do we do?

A. Keep yourself away. Don't get involved in that. And later on, when they calm down, then meet each of them, mother and father, and tell them that – Look! When you both fight like this, I feel so pained, I am so painful. So for my sake, please don't do that. That is very harmful to me, that is very painful to me. And like that in a very peaceful way, with all the respect for the parents say that.

Q.3. Can I tell my friends, parents, siblings and relatives, to watch their breath whenever their mind is restless?

A. Very good. This is what you should do. Tell them, watch your breath. Otherwise they will start fighting and quarelling and different things will happen which will be harmful to them. Nothing wrong in asking them, but respectfully.

Q .4. Can I make my friends meditate along with me even if they have not done a course?

A. No, never do that. Otherwise you will feel that I am now a teacher and I can teach my friends – “Come, sit. I will teach you. Sit with me. Do like this, do like that.” You tell them, “Take a course”. And once they take a course, then say,” Yes, now we are both meditators. Let us sit together and meditate.”

Q. 5. Some situations make me lie and/or steal. How do I cope with these?

A. Don't do that. Never do. Any situation. This is the age for you how to control your mind. See that you are master of your mind. You understand this is wrong. If this is wrong, I won't do it, I won't do it. Otherwise you once succumb to this situation, then you will continue to do wrong things and you won't be the master of your own mind.

Q. 6. We adolescents/teenagers develop affairs with co-students and friends. Is it breaking sīla? How do we avoid these situations?

A. It is certainly breaking sīla. What else is breaking sīla? It is breaking sīla. Natural attraction is there. I understand. And at this age there is more attraction. See that you control yourself. Now this is the age for you where you have to educate yourself, you have to learn so many things in school, in college, and if your attention goes to things like that, you won't be successful in your studies. Afterwards when you become old, grow and you will remember this I should have learnt in my young age. I didn't do. You will just repent. So give all attention to your studies now and have friendship with the people. Even friendship with the other sex, nothing wrong. But not the affairs. Keep yourself away. Moreover, this gives you an opportunity how to control the mind. Say, the mind yearning to do something and although the attraction is there, you control it. You control it, you are learning to control in spite of all the attraction. So you are becoming your own master.

Another important thing, nowadays so many kinds of bad diseases are there. Out of ignorance, you may get caught in this AID or something like this and then you will repent for the whole life. So it is very important for you that at this age specially, you have to maintain your sīla.

Q .7. Sometimes I know I am right, the others are wrong. How do I handle this, specially if they are my parents or teachers?

A. Tell them with all the respect. Well, I feel this way. I think that this is right. But you are elders. If you think that is whatever you are doing is right, well, what can I say? But for me, I feel that this is right and that is wrong. Tell them with all the respect, don't hesitate.

Q. 8. What Siddhattha Gotama experienced at the age of four/five was a key to help him towards becoming a Buddha, why not four/five year olds be given an opportunity to meditate?

A. Well, Siddhartha was Siddhartha. Every child cannot be Siddhartha. He has got his own background for so many lives. Those who have this kind of ability from the past, they can learn. But we can't call people of this age, children of this age and give them. If they don't like it, which they won't like it because they don't understand what is being taught and they will have aversion towards this, then they will never learn in their life. So we can't teach to children of this age.

Q. 9. Why do you repeat Bhavatu Sabba Maṅgalaṃ thrice?

A. Oh, why I repeat three times? Three times? Just to give good impact on you. This is blessing, blessing from the elder. The more blessing you get, the better for you. And the first blessing, it might not have that impact. Second will have more impact,

third will have best impact on you. So it is good for you. Somebody gives you present three times, you are happy, you are happier, you are happiest. So you get three times blessings.

Q. 10. What is the importance of silence?

A. You are training your mind to get concentrated and come out of the old habit of chattering, chattering, chattering. If you start chattering outside and you want to control your mind, it will become difficult. That is why, the situation where you have come to learn to control your mind, remain silent, so that you don't give any input which will disturb your mind much more. So in silence, you will learn this technique much better.

Q. 11. How will observing respiration help in observing precepts, sīla?

A. Well, while you observe respiration, you are controlling your mind. You are becoming master of your mind. So any situation arises where you are breaking your sīla, just observe your breath and you get the strength and you can control yourself. This is how it will help.

Q. 12. One of my classmates stole my pen. When I spotted it with him and asked for it, he not only refused but he even beat me up. What should I have done in such a situation?

A. Don't allow him to beat. Why he wants to beat you? Be strong. Vipassana does not, this technique does not allow you to become a coward, to become a weak person. At first, very politely you say, this is my article, you have to give me back. If he doesn't, then go and report to the elders, doesn't matter. But if you are afraid that he will beat me up, then you will never become a strong person. Be strong. Don't allow anybody to exploit. Otherwise you are encouraging this person to become more and more, exploiting more and more in future. So for your interest and also in the interest of that person be strong.

Q. 13. Some children older to me bully me. I have three alternatives. Just to tolerate it, to fight with them, to complain against them. What should I do?

A. Again, you don't become a coward. Somebody tries to bully you, be strong, atleast mentally be strong. If bodily you feel that you are weak, mentally be strong. I can't accept this, how can you bully me? And if you feel that you are not able to protect yourself, go and tell elders, nothing wrong in that.

Q. 14. Now there are some other questions. What are your expectations from Children Course Teachers and Regional Co-ordinators of Children Courses?

A. My expectation is to get good results. Let them bring good results. I will be happy to see the next generation coming up in Dhamma.

Q .15. What do you mean to convey by standardisation of Children's Course activity around the world?

A. Well, standardisation is always good because if something is taught in one way in this part of the country, something else in another part of the country; something is taught in this way in this country, something else in another country; that will create so much of confusion. Quite possible, a student from this part goes to the other part and there he finds something else is being taught. A child from some other country comes to this country... That will create confusion. If it is uniform, same thing being taught, it will be good.

Q. 16. May we experiment at a few places by exposing teenagers, 17-19 years of age to the technique of Anapana, using the existing teaching material?

A. Well, if you experiment, nothing wrong. But don't have larger number of them. Otherwise, it will be difficult for the people who are teaching. There will be lack of discipline and they might create some difficulty for others also. But a few of them, you can just experiment and see what happens. Actually for this age, we are thinking of having a separate course for them, full with Anapana and Vipassana, which might perhaps be little shorter. I can't say that. We are discussing now and we might make some arrangements for them because they need it. I know.

We are so grateful to you.

Bhavatu Sabba Mañgalam, Bhavatu Sabba Mañgalam, Bhavatu Sabba Mañgalam.

Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu.

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QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS

(CCT Workshop May 1993)

(This is available in Hindi Audio only.)

Q. 1. At what age could I start to teach my child to meditate?

A. Before birth. Meditation should be taught when the child is growing in the womb. The child needs good vibrations while in the womb, so practice Vipassana. Every pregnant mother should practice more Vipassana because then you are helping two beings simultaneously. You are helping yourself, and you are helping the being which has not come out. Help them.

After that, when the child grows to five or six you can start teaching Anapana. Just be aware of the respiration for a few minutes — two, three, five minutes - enough. Don't push too much. A few minutes of awareness of respiration, and then say: "All right, play." After that, again a few minutes of respiration. So it will become like playing for a child. Later on, as he or she grows, increase the time. In this way you start giving the seed of Dhamma, and the child develops in an atmosphere of Dhamma.

Q.2.You have started giving training in Anapana in some schools. How will this training benefit children?

A. Actually the entire teaching has only one purpose: one should live peacefully and harmoniously in accordance with the law of nature — not harming oneself or others. Now this art of living is difficult to learn in old age, so training should start at a young age. In the schools children should learn the art of living a healthy life. Their entire life is ahead of them.

You start by teaching them how to control their minds. Along with awareness of respiration it is explained that you have to live a moral life, so they understand, "I must not kill, I must not steal, etc. But how can I abstain from that? I must have control over my mind. And look, this helps." The object that is given is universal so a student from any caste, any community, any religion can work on this.

You also tell them that they can develop in this awareness of respiration and they will live a good life. At further stages they can purify their minds to an extent that they will live a perfect life, so there is a goal. In school, for example, when they learn the alphabet the goal is that they will become very learned people later on. Now they have started with this base of sila and respiration.

Q. 3. Do you think that by this training , children can become good citizens?

A. What is a good citizen? A good citizen is one who does not harm himself or herself and also does not harm other members of society. The whole teaching shows how to live a life of morality. If children start learning this in childhood, when they become adults they will naturally live healthy, good lives. This is how they will become good citizens.

Q. 4. Can an assistant teacher add anything to the instructions or discourses on a ten-day course or children's course?

A. Why would a teacher want to add something or correct something? Is there any defect in the teaching? The teaching has been accepted by the whole world and there have been no comments that there is something wrong with it.

There is a tendency for subtle ego to arise in a teacher sitting on the Dhamma seat and for him or her to think, "I am not here just to handle this equipment. Guruji has

spoken a lot, so I should say something now.” And as soon as one teacher adds something, another teacher will feel he or she must add even more. Deviation will start, and within a few generations, or maybe even within a few years, the whole teaching will be spoiled.

The Buddha’s teaching which is given here is kevalam paripunnam - complete, with nothing to be added; kevalam parisuddham — so pure that nothing has to be taken out of it. No teacher, assistant teacher, or children’s course teacher should make the mistake of adding to or subtracting from this teaching. Work as you are asked.

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IX.MISCELLANEOUS

Children's Course Experiences

Meditation is the best way to have a calm mind. Many adults go to office and come back very tense. They will not be able to handle things properly. If your mind is calm and in control, you will never lose your temper and you will be able to make wise decisions.

We are having meditation in school every day. I think this is very good as many children do not meditate at home. It will help us to start our day with a calm mind. Many people have different views about meditation. They think it is a waste of time. But if you do it sincerely, you will always be good-natured, honest and trustworthy and you will become a favourite among everyone.

—Akshay Chowdhri (Class VI)

Yes, I do like meditation. Meditation is just concentrating on your breath. It helps us to concentrate on our breath and it also makes our mind clear. I like to meditate in school twice a day because it feels real good. I would also like my friends and adults around me to practice meditation. Just imagine if you get very bad marks in the examination and want to get better marks in the next term, just do a little meditation before you start studying for your examination. If you don't agree with me, just meditate for a few minutes and you will find a lot of difference.

—C. Apoorva Reddy (Class VII)

After one month of Anapana experience

Experiencing is believing. With faith, born of experience, I can honestly say that not only have I felt calmer, but people around me also felt the same. A month is a long time and I have been through the usual ups and downs, but daily practice of Anapana has helped me to quickly regain my balance.

—Lakshmi Naik

After four months of Anapana

Meditation is a type of medicine, after practicing which we receive a dose of tonic. It also keeps our mind under our control and it only benefits us if we practice it. It helped me a lot in studies and made me remember what I had learnt at home. It also helped me in the examination hall. In one exam when I did not remember one 'fill in the blank', I did meditation for about 2 or 3 minutes. I remembered it. It not only makes us remember what we learn but also keeps us attentive in the class. In meditation we have to keep observing our breath. The breath is the only thing which is with us all the time. No father or mother will be with us all the time nor will the teachers. Meditation cleans our mind. During meditation we should not think of the past nor of the future, we should be only in the present. Meditation cleans the mind of the bad things which we have done. If we have our mind under control, we do not do bad things.

—Tasleem Banu (Class VI)

Yes, as a matter of fact, I do like meditation. I feel that I have improved my concentration. I practice it at home in the mornings and at night. I feel that we should practice it every day. If we can do it every day, I think we will all grow up to be good citizens of our country and we will earn good names.

—Devangana Pande (Class VI)

Meditation helps us to concentrate better on what we want to do. It is difficult at first but after a little practice, it becomes easy. All you have to do is to sit straight and with your legs folded, neck and head straight and eyes and mouth closed, concentrate on your breathing and on nothing else. Do it for 15 to 30 minutes every day and the mind becomes purified. By meditating, there are many advantages. If you meditate every night before sleeping, you will wake up refreshed. With meditation it becomes easy to concentrate. Meditation purifies our mind and we learn to control our anger, selfishness and greed. Thus, by meditating, we have peace of mind but an important thing is that we should meditate every day.

—Prasanna (Class VII)

Firstly when I did Anapana, it was boring. But when I found difference in me, I started loving it. Anapana is very nice and interesting. It is very hard but not impossible. At first some pains are there, but as we practice more the pains become less and we feel comfortable afterwards. We can increase our self-confidence and we can also reduce anger, talking lie, etc. Lastly I tell that everyone should learn Anapana and live happily.

—Pooja Mantri (Class VIII)

Although it is no fun to meditate, I want to try anyway. When I start sitting, I have painful back and neck, then numbness in both legs. I want to walk out from the meditation hall. But I stay, fight and my mind gets calmer. I am happy to go on sitting. I continue to meditate at home so that I will be able to decrease my anger and be more successful in my study.

—a student from Thailand

We came here to learn a very good method of making our mind sharp, calm and alert. Before I came here my mind was not so calm. I was not able to concentrate hard on anything, but after coming here my concentration became very good and I became very calm too. If I would get another chance to come here I would not hesitate. I have not been to camps but I think there are no better camps than this.

—Abhishek Sharma (Class VI)

Thank you for everything. I had had a wonderful time. Earlier I knew that I should not get affected by unpleasant things. Sometimes I would be able to snap out of a negative mood and at other times there was no use getting affected by negative things. Thanks to this course, now everything is clear. I'm sure I'll be able to control my moods with practice.

—Annapurna Akkineni (Class XII)

The service, the main concept (Anapana), the environment, the simple yet tasty and healthy food, the discourses, and mainly the teachings were excellent.

I feel that I have gained a lot during these two days. I feel my mind becoming lighter after every session. I am confident that now I can control my mind and my feelings of anger, fear, anxiety and many more.

—G. Shambhavi (Inter Ist year)

PATH OF JOY

It is the path of joy
Coming here you won't get annoy.
So silent, so nice
I'm sure you will come here twice.
Your concentration on your breath
Is just what you need
Just continuous meditate
Must not make you irritate.
Listen to the instructions
Forget your mind's distractions.
If you have no peace
Your problems here will cease.
You will not tell any lies
And you will be very wise.
If you do this
The result is
Your Future will be bright.

—Mary Thomas (Class VII)

MEDITATION

Meditation is the first step to success,
The beauty of Nature you will accept.
The five sheels if you follow,
You will never feel sorrow.
Never steal in your life,
And never say a lie.
Neither ever kill a person,
Nor you fall in drug addiction.
All people are my brothers and sisters,
Everyone has to be breath's minister.
Anybody from anywhere can come any time
Whether they are seven, eight or nine.
Therefore I say-
Meditation is the first step to success.

—Riddhima Jain (Class IX)

This is a very good course which helps each and every person to improve the talents in him. This was the course which has helped me to stand 2nd in my class in the 9th standard.

—Akil Kumar (Class XI)

These two days have been some of the most beneficial days I have known. When I first saw the time-table and ten sessions in just two days, I wondered how I would ever sit for all of them. But then I found myself actually coming around fifteen minutes earlier to the hall and just quietly meditating.

—Ammu (Class XI)

I have liked all the courses as they have really changed my way of analyzing things and thinking. And I feel they really improved my life-style.

—S. Samana (an old student) (Class X)

I will now be able to increase my tolerance and will be patient and I promise that I would practice my meditation.

—Sahithya (Class VIII)

I have attended a course previously. I have become more confident and determined to face any sort of nervousness. I have become patient and tolerant.

—D. Vishal (Class XII)

Now I have a feeling that I'll be able to be more concentrated while studying and even if I get distracted I'll be able to bring back my attention to my books as quickly as possible.

—Gauthami (Class X)

This is for the first time I've attended a bal-shivir and I have found it very interesting. Moreover, it is for the first time that we have been introduced to such an inspirational students' camp of meditation.

In the beginning, I found it quite harder but now I am feeling much lighter through 'Anapana', and I'll continue it throughout my life.

This is a wonderful technique of concentration and I hope to increase my learning powers. Besides, I found that a bal-shivir session has many important messages like leading disciplined life, focusing on one's mind, maintaining silence, concentration, being with Sangha and the noble idea of 'Panchsheel'

—Tsering Wangchuk Bhutia (Class IX)

I feel I have done a great job by attending this camp. I had never expected that attending this camp could change my thoughts. After attending this camp now I can differentiate between good and bad and even I have learnt to control my mind and I am even interested to attend a ten days' course.

—Chodup Tenzing (Class IX)

The technique of Anapana has taught me to concentrate and to control my mind. I have really liked the bal-shivir as this has made me think that in order to become a

good man in life the foundation must be very strong. I will always keep myself in the right path and will always remember the 'Panch sheel'.

—Tsewang Norhu (Class IX)

I feel this is a wonderful technique because boys of my age could be easily harmed and influenced by bad company. Anapana will always be a guiding force in my life and I will always try to keep myself in the right path.

—Suspendra Subba (Class IX)

Frankly speaking, I laughed at the idea of a meditation course before attending it. I thought it to be a painful course and it would be simply a wastage of time and energy. But when the course started, I began to realize that I was wrong. This meditation course was absolutely new to me and I had no idea about its essence before. It is not at all a wastage of time and energy. Rather it is a means through which one can boost one's energy and mind. It not only gives mental but physical strength too. It is most necessary for us too. As we are students, our minds are always crowded with worry, tension and nervousness regarding our academics and our future. Being teen-agers, we are always excited. So we should meditate for at least 15 to 20 minutes twice a day. This will help us to concentrate on our studies and thereby help us to fulfil our goals and aims in life.

Anapana is a technique, I feel, very helpful in guiding the young minds in the right direction.

—Nazia Abedin (Class XI)

At first, it was difficult to acclimatize our mind and adapt ourselves to the different techniques used for meditating, but during the course of the training it gradually became easier to concentrate and develop the thought-free mental frame. The regular practice of Anapana meditation has particularly helped me in gaining peace of mind through relaxation and also to combat situations arising out of stress, strain and tension. Previously I had heard about meditation but now that I have been able to experience it, I find it to be even more 'refreshing' than the cool southern winds blowing during the hot and humid summers. Thus I express my heartfelt gratitude to my school and also the organizers of the programme for enlightening us about the art of meditation.

—Swagata Mukherjee (Class XI)

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ANAPANA COURSES FOR CHILDREN

Shanti Shah

“The next generation must learn Vipassana at a young age, so that they can live a very healthy life, a harmonious life. When children are taught Vipassana in schools, colleges, there are very good results.”

S.N.Goenka

Scientific meditation is a powerful tool in helping children to mature and discover the deeper values of life, thereby leading to better overall personal development and happiness.

Anapana meditation as taught by Gotama the Buddha is the first preparatory step for learning Vipassana. It is a simple technique where one observes the natural breath - as it is. In the Pali language, Ana means breathing in, apana means breathing out. By developing awareness of this natural function of breath children increase their ability to concentrate. This eliminates nervousness, sharpens memory, and develops a more balanced personality. In Anapana courses, children find a technique that is simple, easy to learn, always available, objective and scientific. Children can easily understand the scientific and universal nature of the technique.

ANAPANA COURSES IN SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

There has to be a way, in which mental training can become an integral part of school education. By nature, children are active and enthusiastic. At this age, it is appropriate to offer them an opportunity to explore the mind with all its hidden faculties, latent abilities, and subtle complexities.

This wholesome seed sown now will sooner or later grow and open up a new dimension of life for them.

The first children's course began on April 17, 1986. Under the auspices of Vipassana International Academy, Igatpuri, in co-operation with the management of Jamnabai Narsee School, Mumbai, a residential four-day course was organized. Eighty-eight children participated. Goenkaji conducted the course. The results were remarkable and encouraging. Since then, the Wheel of Dhamma continues to rotate. The educational value of such courses became quickly apparent.

Guidelines were prepared to facilitate the organization of such courses. In the same year, during the Diwali Vacation, three-day courses were very successfully held at Vipassana centres in Igatpuri and in Hyderabad.

In 1987 and 1988, invitations to hold courses came from schools from various parts of India. The initial two courses which were held in Jodhpur, Rajasthan - (a) in Balniketan, an experimental school, and (b) in a residential school for blind

children, provided the experience and insight necessary for organizing and conducting the courses amidst ongoing school routines. In addition, invaluable experience in a specialized field resulted from the blind school course. In these first few steps seeds were sown, which have grown into full trees with fruit and blossoms, so much so, that now courses are held not just in regular schools but also at remand-homes, leprosy homes, and even for street children.

Demand continues to increase. Already thousands of children have benefited. Records from 1996 show that the number of students who participated in courses throughout India was in excess of 10,000.

Usually courses are held in schools by invitation. The courses held are either residential or non-residential, for three days, two days, one and a half days or even for a day. At Vipassana centres all over India three-day residential courses are held during school holidays. The age-group ranges from 8 to 15 years old.

INNER EDUCATION

It is quite clear that the modern educational system sidesteps the emotional and spiritual aspects of the human personality. Parents and schools realize that something is lacking in our educational system, but most of them do not know how to help children grow at the inner level.

Anapana meditation is a solution to this. It is a simple technique that consists of awareness of respiration, hence children from any part of the world, from any background, can successfully learn and benefit from it.

In actual practice, the children are taught to watch the incoming breath and outgoing breath by focusing their attention at the entrance of their nostrils. They simply observe their natural breath without trying to change or correct the flow of breath. In this way, they experience the first few steps of self-awareness.

Once the technique is learnt, the process of self-awareness naturally arises and continues to flow on. As they observe, they learn to be in the present moment. This ability to live in the present, with a balanced mind, fosters the development of a positive attitude and outlook.

They learn through their own direct experience, a simple, straight-forward, and logical message that by not harming others through their mental, vocal or bodily actions, they actually help themselves and those around them.

GIVE AND TAKE

GIVE: Children who come to Anapana courses follow a schedule of meditation interspersed with other activities. The aim is to make the meditation an appealing activity which will predispose the children to “graduate” to Vipassana when they are older.

Communication is a means to satisfy their natural inquisitiveness. Small groups of ten to twelve children are guided by a childrens course teacher, who is a Vipassana meditator. Constant interaction with the children ensures that they grasp the essence of the technique..

Meditation periods last for half an hour, punctuated by group discussions, games, creative activities, all of which aim at encouraging the expression of originality. Hence, along with the actual practice of meditation, the children experience its practical value while participating in various activities.

TAKE: The child learns an art of developing mastery over the mind, understands clearly that the breath is a bridge between the body and mind, and that the rhythm of the breath is closely related to the state of mind. Over time, the awareness of natural, normal breath helps the child to come out of mental states such as nervousness, fear, anger etc. The change in mental attitude is reflected in day-to-day behavior. Any educationist can tangibly see that preaching does not work, practice works. For continued progress, regular daily practice is the first and foremost requirement.

SO FAR

There are some schools where Anapana meditation has been introduced as part of the curriculum providing one practice period of half an hour daily.

In some places, the entire school practices daily for five to ten minutes. Each year refresher courses are held there.

The Principals and teachers, who were sceptical are surprised to discover the tremendous improvement in children’s behavior.

From the response to questionnaires, it can be concluded that 70% of the children first improve in their social behavior. Negative qualities like quarrelsomeness, use of harsh words, disruptiveness in class and various other complexes, decrease. Simultaneously, positive qualities such as helpfulness, and self- confidence, increase. Memory and concentration improve to a remarkable degree, which reflects on their studies and results.

A REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE FROM GITANJALI SCHOOL Hyderabad

Within a span of fifteen days everyone at the senior school in Gitanjali including all the students, the Principal, the teaching and non-teaching staff, attended the course.

PRINCIPAL MS. GITA KARAN'S IMPRESSIONS:

In this age of jet-set pressure and tension, where morals are declining, where children are confused because of too much exposure, when one begins to think that something is wrong with our social system, it is imperative to develop some inner discipline and strength of character. When we were approached to introduce this Anapana meditation to children in our school, I agreed with a little reluctance, not knowing how our children would benefit; it also meant, taking time out of our regular routine. Now that we are doing it (our children meditate for 7 to 10 minutes everyday at the assembly), I am very grateful to the team who conducted this programme so devotedly. Many of our children have benefited. We know this from the feedback we have received. For some, concentration has improved, thus improving their academic performance, some don't get upset easily and are more tolerant, and one or two have even gotten over their headaches.

TEACHERS' VIEWS:

The meditation course was definitely a very positive step towards self-betterment. As adults we have also learnt a lot and I already feel the change in me to tackle life with a more positive approach and this can only improve with regular meditation. It also has brought peace of mind and I earnestly feel that it should be a part of the school curriculum. -Ms Manju Rajan

The course is very enlightening. Meditation has taught us how to control our mind which under normal conditions is not possible. Now I feel that I will be able to overcome any difficult situation with meditation. —Ms Vanita Rao

CHILDREN'S VIEWS IMMEDIATELY AFTER CONDUCTING THE COURSE

I like to meditate because it helps me a lot in two days only. I am going to practice it and not give up. I was very happy hearing that every morning we will meditate in school. —Mohd.Qadeer Std-IX

With meditation it becomes easy to concentrate. Meditation purifies our mind and we learn to control our anger, selfishness and greed. Thus by meditating, we have peace of mind but an important thing is that we should meditate every day. —Prasanna Std-VIII

AFTER ONE MONTH OF THE ANAPANA EXPERIENCE

Experiencing is believing. With faith, born of experience, I can honestly say that not only have I felt calmer, but people around me also felt the same. A month is a long time and I have been through the usual ups and downs, but daily practice of

Anapana has helped me to quickly regain my balance. —Ms Lakshmi Naik, Headmistress

AFTER FOUR MONTHS OF ANAPANA

Meditation is a type of medicine, after practicing which we receive a dose of tonic. It helped me a lot in studies. It also helped me in the examination hall. It not only makes us remember what we learn but also keeps us attentive in the class. Tasleem Banu Std-VI

I feel that I have improved my concentration. I practice it at home in the mornings and at night. If we can do it everyday, I think we will all grow up to be good citizens of our country. Devangana Pande Std-VI

I felt as though I could never be successful in my life. This meditation has benefited me. In what way? I will tell you. I have been controlling my anger and have stopped telling lies and I am peaceful at night. —Manisha std-VI

Many people have different views about meditation. They think it is a waste of time. But if you do it sincerely you will always be good-natured, honest and trustworthy and you will become a favorite with everyone. —Akshay std-VI

SOME MORE EXPERIENCES

“I have gained by controlling my anger, which was an enemy of me and my entire family.”

“It is challenging and tough at first but enjoyable later on. It is good to look at oneself.”

AND FURTHER....

It is the wish of our Teacher, Goenkaji, to organize more and more courses so that this beneficial technique spreads throughout the world to the younger generation.

Goenkaji has appointed more than a hundred ‘children’s course teachers’ around India, who conduct such courses.

There is felt to be a need to have a centre basically for children. A plan is under discussion to establish it somewhere in Maharashtra.

May more and more young people walk on this path and enjoy real happiness!

CHILDREN'S COURSES IN THE WEST

- Kirk and Reinette Brown

'I don't know about you, but I feel much better after that!' Such was one boy's comment as he fastened his shoes after his first experience of meditation on a children's course.

We have seen in recent years how large numbers of children have taken to meditation in India, and heard about the benefits they have gained. But also in the West, the programme of courses is beginning to expand and, although in its infancy, we see very encouraging results beginning to emerge. Children's courses are now a regular feature at the centres in Australia, New Zealand, North America, U.K., France and Germany. Usually there are three courses per year, and to date the numbers of children attending range from 20 to 55. Periods of Anapana meditation and counselling are alternated with physical activities and creative activities on Dhamma themes. Courses are held for different age groups.

Initial contacts have been made with schools in Australia, North America and the U.K., as a result of which a number of children have started practicing Anapana. Following an article published in an educational magazine in North America, there has been a large response from schools eager to find out more about Anapana courses for their children. In Germany one school sent a whole class to the centre for a residential three-day course. Because meditation is not a mainstream activity in the West, it is not as easy as in India to set up links with schools. However, with the increase in the number of behavioral problems and attention deficiency disorders amongst children, it is very much in the forefront of the minds of educationalists to find ways of dealing with these problems. Clearly *sāla* and *samadhi* have enormous potential and as the benefits for children become more widely known, interest is bound to spread.

On a superficial level the children benefit purely by coming to the centres. They can see where it is that their parents periodically disappear to and feel that it is also somewhere for them. 'At first I was frightened but it's not like school because everything here is calm and everyone is kind.'

Feedback about the benefits of Anapana has been collected from parents and the responses have shown positive results, especially in coping with problems, better behavior, less aggression and less T.V. watching. Children themselves report that they use Anapana at school before examinations and in stressful situations. One parent reported that her teenage son's attitude to her had completely changed after he had attended a course. Alienation that had existed before was replaced by a respect and closeness, brought about by an understanding of what his mother was doing at the centre. But, more than that, the boy himself experienced 'huge' changes for the better in his own character as a result of his own practice, changes

which he himself found difficult to describe. It is these profound benefits that make courses for young people so important.

Children come with many of the same aims and hopes as their parents. One boy hoped 'to be nicer to be around.' Another wished to be able 'to deal with stressful situations.' A girl looked forward to 'gaining in self-confidence and being able to centre myself.'

They experience the same difficulties as adults. One seven year old boy, becoming aware of the wandering mind, found it 'funny having a head that moves and not knowing where it's going.' A girl said: 'Meditation was difficult at the beginning because you had to stay still and only think of one thing and I wanted to think of other things, but I made the efforts to come back to the respiration.' A counsellor, congratulating a young meditator for working hard was told, 'Yes, but if you only knew how much I was sweating.....!' The children certainly go through mini-courses of their own, encountering difficulties and coming through them successfully. One young boy described his experiences by drawing a 'demon' and telling the counselor that the demon had gone out of him because of meditation. A girl said, 'I realize I've got a lot of work to do. I should come here more often because it makes things easier for me.'

Children readily see the need to meditate and they work with great enthusiasm. When so much that is offered to them in society is based on materialism and the quest for instant gratification it provides a much-needed method of getting in touch with their inner selves and a way to deal with the very real fears and anxieties of childhood and adolescence. They rise to the challenge very naturally. We should not underestimate the depth of their understanding. A 13 year old boy reflecting on his experience wrote: 'Meditation is a privileged moment that a person passes in calm far away from noise, far from everything! Particularly this tranquility, which one finds so rarely in life. Life is a river which one purifies so little except in the course of meditation. It is sometimes peaceful, sometimes agitated, sometimes cloudy, sometimes dark. The mind is always overloaded with all sorts of thoughts. Meditation is an excellent way of taming the wandering mind. It is also a remedy for anger and melancholy.'

Another great benefit for children in the West is to have morality presented to them. And that too, not in any doctrinaire way, but as part and parcel of a way of life that leads to their own happiness and the happiness of others. A way of life that gives them a vision to set their course by. A simple path that, as they progress almost effortlessly from Children's Day to three-day course, to full ten-day course, gives them the possibility of avoiding some of the pitfalls of early adulthood. It is found that Western children react unfavorably to simply being told 'you must not do this or that'. However they do respond to an invitation to look inside and

discover for themselves the reality of how, by generating defilements of the mind, they make themselves and others unhappy.

‘I am looking forward to coming back to another course and maybe when I’m older a ten-day course, but I’m no way ready for that yet,’ was how one 13 year old assessed the situation. Another girl whose parents were not meditators thought that she should ‘practice this technique at home with my mother and sister and then when I feel ready I would like to come.....for a ten-day course.’

Another encouraging feature is seen when children return for a second course. Courses are held with such regularity that some children have now attended 10 or 12 courses. They or their parents report positive improvements. One boy showed a girl at school who was unhappy how to observe her respiration. Others have used it before a test to overcome nerves. Another felt angry but went upstairs to meditate instead. One teacher received a surprise when she sent one 6 year old over to the corner to ‘meditate,’ using the term loosely to mean ‘calm down’. He went and sat cross-legged on the floor. The baffled teacher asked what he was doing. He replied, ‘I’m observing my respiration.’ After school she enquired and found out about Anapana from the boy’s parents.

At the end of a course for children it is striking how keen and positive they are about meditation. A whole new world opens up for them as it does for adults. On one course a teenager told the counselor, ‘I just can’t tell you how wonderful it is here. I wish my older sister could have come.’ Other typical comments include: ‘I learnt how to control my mind.’ - ‘I would have liked it if it had been longer.’ - ‘Challenging at first, nevertheless enjoyable and good to think about ourselves.’ - ‘I got lots of calmness out of the weekend.’ - ‘I feel I have gained a lot.’ - ‘Brilliant!’

GOENKAJI'S DEPARTURE FROM MYANMAR

Our Revered Teacher Goenkaji was born in Myanmar but his ancestors were from India. He learnt Anapana and Vipassana from Sayagi U Ba Khin's, a respected Teacher of Vipassana.

It was Sayagi U Ba Khin's wish to travel to India and teach Anapana and Vipassana. He wanted to bring the Dhamma, back to the country that lost it 2000 years ago.

In spite of repeated efforts, he was unable to travel to India because of the strict restrictions imposed by the government of Myanmar on its citizens, which prevented them from going abroad.

Goenkaji practiced Vipassana meditation with Sayagi for 14 years. His mother in India was diagnosed with a mental ailment that could benefit by the technique of Anapana & Vipassana. He wished to help her by teaching her. The government of Myanmar was considerate in giving him a passport and the government of India granted him a visa.

During those days, persons traveling abroad from Myanmar had restrictions on the amount of money that they could carry. Besides this, they were forbidden from carrying ornaments and precious gems.

At the airport, the custom officials asked Goenkaji to put his bags on the counter and declare if he was carrying anything precious out of the country. "Yes he said." "I am carrying a precious gem back to its place of origin" The official was stupefied. Here was an individual who in spite of knowing the rules was admitting that he was carrying something and not hiding the fact! Goenkaji then explained "I am carrying the three gems-*Sila*, *Samadhi* and *Panna* to India. I shall be teaching Dhamma there. I am taking them back to their place of origin." The officer was impressed with Goenkaji's explanation and he wished him success in his efforts saying "I wish you well. May Dhamma spread in the whole of India"

So, this is how Goenkaji left Myanmar to re establish Dhamma in India. He organized a 10 day Vipassana course for his mother, in which few others also participated. At the end of the course, not only his mother but the other participants also benefited. They requested him to hold one more course. They invited their parents, brothers, sisters, other relatives and friends to sit and gain from Dhamma. After this, another course was held and another, two, four, fifty, hundred. Since then thousand of courses have been held worldwide by Goenkaji and his assistant teachers.

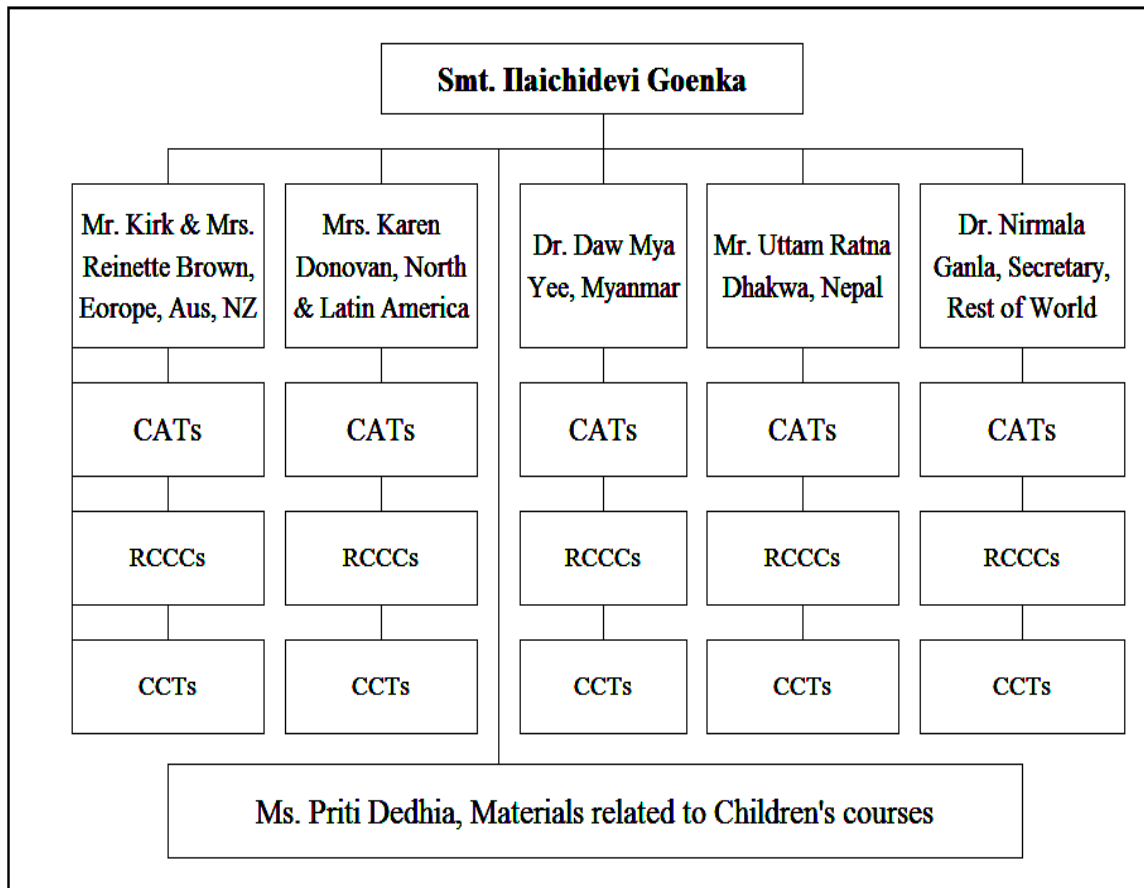
Goenkaji passed away on 29th September 2013 in Mumbai in his 90th year. His work continues. Anapana courses for children are being held in increasing numbers worldwide and more and more people are coming in contact with Dhamma through Vipassana courses in 172 centers in more than 35 countries.

“May more and more people of all ages find this technique of pure Dhamma and use their lives to walk towards full liberation. May the coming generation bloom with high human values and be a harbinger of hope for the future”.

- S. N. Goenka

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

International Children's Course Committee



For updated list see www.cct.dhamma.org

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MESSAGE FROM PUJYA GURUJI - ANNUAL MEETING JAN 8TH. 1998

These children's courses are very important because this is the time when you can give them proper guidance to help them live a good Dhamma life. One thing should be very clear in the mind of the children's course teachers: we are not at all interested in converting somebody from one organized religion to another. We are, of course, against any kind of sectarian grouping because that is so harmful to society. This is very evident.

We are giving a seed that helps you to understand that instead of living a life of sectarianism, well look, you can live a life of Dhamma which is so pure. Living a life of morality, a life where you control your mind, a life where you purify your mind- nobody can object to that.

So whoever is teaching must be fully convinced that what they teach will not convert people to any religion. The most unwholesome action of any Vipassana teacher, either junior or senior, would be to try to bring people to a particular sect. That would mean that we have totally lost our goal. Our aim is to take people out of communalism, sectarianism, all the narrow-mindedness where people start fighting with one another-take them out of that and give them this broad truth of Dhamma which is for everybody, which is universal.

If the one who is teaching does not understand this, then this person should not start teaching. Take more courses, come and discuss with me, with other senior teachers, and get rid of this wrong view.

Your thinking should be, "I am here to help people so that they live a better life, good for them, good for the society." Then you can easily answer any question that comes from their parents or teachers. However, it is important to mention Buddha because in Dhamma gratitude is an important aspect of development.

We give the seed of pure Dhamma to these boys and girls and after 15 or 20 years the new generation that comes up will have responsibility towards their family, towards society, the country, the world, towards humanity. They should grow up to be ideal human beings. This is our only aim.

If one who is teaching is very firm and is convinced that what he or she is teaching is perfectly good for everyone, then it becomes easy to explain to others. If one is not sure whether the whole mission is to convert people to Buddhism or something else, then better not be a teacher. Don't take that responsibility.

People practice yogaasanas or pranayama; this does not mean they get converted to this religion or that religion. They are practicing it to be healthy. Now here is a technique which helps one to live a healthy mental life. It is a mental exercise to make the mind healthy.

This should be very clear to everybody. See that more and more children's courses are given, and more and more children get the seed of Dhamma, so that the next generation grows up to be an ideal generation. This is going to happen.

You should feel very fortunate that you are able to take part in this mission and develop your own paramis. The Dhamma is bound to spread whether or not we join. Join in this good cause, which is good for others and for oneself. May there be more and more children's courses. May the next generation grow up an ideal generation around the whole world.

Bhavatu Sabba Mangalam