

TEN-DAY EXECUTIVE VIPASSANA MEDITATION COURSES

As taught by S.N. Goenka

28 September - 9 October, 2005: Pomona, Queensland, Australia.

12 – 23 October, 2005: Blackheath, New South Wales, Australia.

24 November – 5 December, 2004: Kaukapakapa, North Island, New Zealand.

Mr S.N.Goenka conducted the first residential 10-day course in Vipassana meditation especially for business executives and other leaders in the USA in 2002. Following the enormous success of that course, Executive Vipassana courses are being held worldwide in Australia, New Zealand, USA, Europe and India.

This year an Executive Course will be held at Vipassana Meditation centres in Pomona, north of Brisbane; Blackheath in the picturesque Blue Mountains, west of Sydney; and Kaukapakapa, on the North Island of New Zealand. All three centres provide comfortable facilities in secluded settings of scenic beauty and will be used exclusively for the Executive Courses during this period.

Mr.Goenka has travelled and taught widely in the world in the past thirty years. His background in business, before devoting himself to teaching Vipassana, has attracted many businessmen and women to participate in his courses. As he told the attendees at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in February, 2000:

I come from a business family and was an entrepreneur and businessman from a very early age. I built sugar mills, weaving mills and, blanket factories and established import-export firms with offices all over the world. In the process, I made a lot of money. However, I also vividly remember how I reacted to events in my business and my personal life during those years. Every night, if I had failed to be successful in a business transaction during the day, I would lie awake for hours and try to figure out what had gone wrong and what I should do next time. Even if I had accomplished a great success that day I would lie awake and relish my accomplishment. While I experienced great success, this was neither happiness nor peace of mind. I found that peace was very closely related to happiness and I frequently had neither, regardless of my money and status as a leader in the community.

I have a favourite poem related to this subject:

*It is easy enough to smile,
when life rolls along like a sweet song;
But the man worthwhile,
is the man with a smile,
when everything goes dead wrong.*

How each of us copes with these periods when things go "dead wrong" is a major component of the meaning of happiness, regardless of our money, power and prestige.

So long as one keeps generating negativities such as anger, hatred, ill-will, animosity, etc., the stock of unhappiness keeps on multiplying. As soon as one generates negativity, unhappiness arises simultaneously. It is impossible to feel happy and peaceful when one is generating negativity in the mind. Peace and negativity cannot coexist just as light and darkness cannot coexist. There is a systematic, scientific exercise that was developed by a great super-scientist of my ancient country by which one can explore the truth pertaining to the mind-body phenomenon at the experiential level. This technique is called Vipassana meditation, which means observing the reality objectively as it is. The technique helps one to develop the faculty of feeling and understanding the interaction of mind and matter within one's own physical structure.

The Technique

Vipassana is one of India's most ancient techniques of meditation. It was rediscovered by Gotama the Buddha more than 2500 years ago and was taught by him as a universal remedy for universal ills, i.e., an "art of living."

Vipassana is a way of self-transformation through self-observation. It focuses on the deep interconnection between mind and body, which can be experienced directly by concentrated attention to the physical sensations that form the life of the body, and that continuously interconnect and condition the life of the mind. It is this observation-based journey of self exploration to the root of mind and body that eradicates mental conditioning accumulated from past experiences. The result is a balanced mind full of love and compassion. The laws of nature by which

thoughts, feelings, judgments and sensations operate become clear. Through direct experience, the nature of how one grows or regresses, how one produces suffering or frees oneself from suffering is understood. Life becomes characterised by increased awareness, clarity, self-control and peace.

The Course

The technique is taught at ten-day residential courses during which participants follow a prescribed code of discipline, learn the basics of the method, and practice sufficiently to experience its beneficial results. During a ten-day course of Vipassana, participants observe silence by not talking to others or anyone outside the course. This practice of silence allows the mind to become sensitive and alert. Participants are free to talk with the teacher about any questions that arise or with the management about any personal requirements or problems they may encounter with the facilities. Otherwise, noble silence is observed.

The course requires hard, serious, continuous effort. There are three steps to the training. The first step is the fundamental ethical practice of abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual activity, speaking falsely, and intoxicants, for the full duration of the retreat. This simple code of moral conduct serves to calm the mind, which otherwise would remain too agitated to perform the task of self-observation.

The next step is concentration of the mind—to develop some mastery over the mind—by learning to fix the attention on the natural reality of the ever-changing flow of breath as it enters and leaves the nostrils.

By the fourth day the mind is calmer and more focussed, better able to undertake the practice of Vipassana itself: this is observing sensations throughout the body, understanding their nature, and developing equanimity by learning not to react to them. Finally, on the last full day participants learn the meditation of loving-kindness or goodwill towards all, in which the purity developed during the course is shared with all beings.

The entire practice is actually a mental training. Just as we use physical exercises to improve our bodily health, Vipassana can be used to develop a healthy mind.

Of course, the results come gradually through continued practice. It is unrealistic to expect all problems to be solved in ten days. Within that

time, however, the essentials of Vipassana can be learned so that it can be applied in daily life. The more the technique is practiced, the greater the freedom from one's ills, and the closer the approach to the ultimate goal of full liberation. Even ten days can provide results which are vivid and clearly beneficial in everyday life.

Vipassana as taught by S.N.Goenka is a practice that has been preserved in its original, authentic form, passed down faithfully from one generation of meditation teachers to the next. In this tradition there are no charges for the courses—not even to cover the cost of food and accommodation. Courses worldwide are offered freely. All expenses are met by donations from people who, having completed a course and experienced the benefits of Vipassana, wish to give others the opportunity to benefit from it also. In this way Vipassana is kept free from commercialisation. No person involved in its teaching receives any material remuneration.

To Apply for the Vipassana Course

Information and application forms for the 10-day Executive Vipassana courses are available on the website, or contact one of the Centres below:

www.executive.dhamma.org

Dhamma Rasmi – Pomona, Queensland, Australia.

Wednesday 1 – Sunday 12 September 2004.

e-mail: executive-info@rasmi.dhamma.org

Tel: (02) 9568 3277 Fax: (02) 9568 4755

Dhamma Bhumi – Blackheath, NSW, Australia.

Tuesday 12 – Saturday 23 October 2004

e-mail: executive-info@bhumi.dhamma.org

Tel: (02) 9568 3277 Fax: (02) 9568 4755

Dhamma Medini – Kaukapakapa, North Island, NZ.

Wednesday 24 November – Sunday 5 December 2004

e-mail: executive-info@medini.dhamma.org

Tel: (09) 420 5319 Fax: (09) 420 5320

Course Times: Participants should arrive between 4.30pm and 6.30pm on the first day. The course finishes around 8.00am on the last day.

Mini-Conference: A mini-conference titled "Vipassana for the Executive" will be held immediately following the Blackheath course on Saturday 23 October from 8.00am to 12 midday.