

Vipassana Newsletter

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin,

as taught by S. N. Goenka

Vol. 13, No. 10: 10 October 2003

Published every month

Vipassana Research Institute

Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri-422 403, Maharashtra

WORDS OF DHAMMA

*attānañce tathā kayirā,
yathāññāmanusāsati;
sudanto vata dametha,
attā hi kira duddamo.*

—Dhammapada 159

As he instructs others, so should he himself act.
Himself fully controlled,
He should control others;
For oneself, indeed, is difficult to control.

RELEVANCE OF VEDANĀ TO BHĀVANĀ-MAYĀ PAÑÑĀ

by Vipassana Research Institute

(The following is an extract from *The Importance of Vedanā and Sampajañña* published by Vipassana Research Institute.)

The Pali term *bhāvanā-mayā paññā* means experiential wisdom. *Bhāvanā*¹ is meditation through which wisdom (*paññā*) is cultivated. In order to understand the essence of the term *bhāvanā-mayā paññā* and its relevance to *vedanā* (sensation), we first need to understand the meaning of the term *paññā*. *Paññā* is derived from the root 'ñā' which means 'to know', prefixed by 'pa' meaning 'correctly'.² Thus, the literal English translation of the word *paññā* is 'to know correctly'. Commonly used equivalents are such words as 'insight', 'knowledge' or 'wisdom'. All these convey aspects of *paññā*, but, as with all Pali terms, no translation corresponds exactly.

In the ancient texts, *paññā* is defined more precisely as *yathā-bhūta-ñāṇa-dassanam*,³ seeing things as they are, not as they appear to be. That is, understanding the true nature of *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (suffering) and *anatta* (essencelessness) in all things. This realization leads to the ultimate truth of *nibbāna*. It may also be described as *pakārena jānāti*⁴ *paññā*—because it is understood through different angles.

The *Visuddhimagga* elaborates on this explaining that the characteristic of *paññā* is to penetrate the true nature of things. Its function is to dispel the darkness of ignorance, and prevent one from becoming bewildered by its manifestation. Its immediate cause is concentration (*samādhi*). Hence the words, 'He whose mind is concentrated knows and sees things according to reality'.⁴

The texts mention three types of *paññā*⁵—*suta-mayā paññā*, *cintā-mayā paññā*, and *bhāvanā-mayā paññā*.

Suta-mayā paññā is wisdom obtained from listening to others or receiving instructions from others about

impermanence, suffering and essencelessness (*parato sutvā paṭilabhati*).⁶ It may also develop from reading sacred texts.⁷ This type of *paññā* is clearly dependent on an external source. Thus, *suta-mayā paññā* is *parokkha* (inferred knowledge). This wisdom may inspire one to tread on the path of Dhamma, but, by itself, it cannot lead to the attainment of liberation.

Cintā-mayā paññā is the wisdom obtained from one's own thinking, not just from hearing others (*parato asutvā paṭilabhati*).⁸ It is gaining the understanding of impermanence, suffering and essencelessness through one's own intellect. It is the process of intellectually analyzing whether a particular teaching is logical and rational. Having gone through such a process, one can then accept it intellectually.

One may become knowledgeable about the theory of Dhamma and be able to explain it to others. One may even be able to help others realize the fact of *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anatta* but one still cannot obtain liberation for oneself. On the contrary, there is a danger that one may accumulate more mental defilements by developing ego since one lacks the direct experience of wisdom.

Sometimes, we find a change in the order of *suta-mayā paññā* and *cintā-mayā paññā* in the texts. At times, *cintā-mayā paññā* is mentioned first, followed by *suta-mayā paññā* and *bhāvanā-mayā paññā*. At times, *suta-mayā paññā* is followed by *cintā-mayā paññā* and *bhāvanā-mayā paññā*. But in both cases, *bhāvanā-mayā paññā* comes at the end and is of prime importance for the realization of truth. It does not make any difference in which order we find the first two.

Initially, a person may read or hear Dhamma from an outside source—*suta-mayā paññā* and then develop *cintā-mayā paññā* by trying to understand *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta* intellectually and thereby develop

yoniso manasikāra (right thinking). Or one may start with *cintā-mayā paññā*, one's own intellectual understanding, by reflecting on *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta* and then, by listening to others (*suta-mayā paññā*), confirm one's intellectual understanding. We should remember that whichever of the two comes first, neither of them is capable of giving liberation. Liberation results only from *bhāvanā-mayā paññā*.

Bhāvanā-mayā paññā is the wisdom obtained by meditation—the wisdom that comes from the direct experience of the truth. This development of insight is also called *vipassanā-bhāvanā* (Vipassana meditation). The meditator makes right effort and so realizes for himself that every thing in the world is transitory, a source of suffering, and essenceless. This insight is neither the mere acceptance of what someone else has said nor the product of deductive reasoning. It is, rather, the direct comprehension of the reality of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*.

To develop *bhāvanā-mayā paññā*, we must experience all phenomena and understand their true nature. And this is done through experiencing *vedanā* (bodily sensations), because it is through these sensations that the totality of our nature manifests itself as *pañcakkhandhā* (the five aggregates). The *Visuddhimagga* states—

*Yā vedayati ti vedanā, sā vedayita lakkaṇā, anubhavanarasā...*⁹

That which feels the objects is *vedanā*; its characteristic is to experience, its function is to realize the object...

It is through *vedanā* that we can directly experience our true nature of arising and passing away (*anicca*). Further, with every phenomenon, *vedanā* is present. As the Buddha said—

*Vedanā-samosaraṇā sabbe dhammā.*¹⁰

Everything that arises in the mind is accompanied by sensation.

Therefore, the specific tool that a Vipassana meditator uses to develop experiential wisdom is bodily sensation. By observing sensations objectively throughout the body, it is realized that they all have the same nature of arising and passing away (*uppāda-vaya dhammino*). Having experienced this fact, one realizes that not only unpleasant sensations but pleasant and neutral sensations are also a source of suffering. Further, by observing the ephemeral nature of all sensations, the meditator realizes that they are insubstantial; they are changing every moment. That which is changing cannot be a source of happiness because an arisen pleasant sensation will eventually pass away, resulting in suffering due to our attachment to it. Moreover, these sensations are beyond our control and arise regardless of what we wish (*anatta*).

Through *vedanā*, one can realize that all the other aggregates have the same nature of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*. By observing sensations throughout the body, the awareness becomes sharper and subtler and the entire process of mind can be observed. The observation

of *vedanā* is the most direct and tangible way to experience the reality of the entire mind-matter phenomenon. The comprehensive insight gained through *vedanā*, that is, by direct experience of *vedanā* (*paccanubhoti*), is *bhāvanā-mayā paññā*. Through this insight, one sees things as they really are (*yathā-bhūtaṃ pajānāti*) and with repeated practice, one is gradually freed from the past conditioning of *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (hatred) and *moha* (ignorance). This leads to liberation.

The teachings of a Buddha are not for mere intellectual entertainment but are to be directly experienced. This alone can free one from the ingrained habit pattern of reacting with craving and aversion. Freedom from this past habit pattern is possible when one works with the body sensations. When one experiences pleasant sensations, at that moment, the past mental habit of craving arises. If one observes this objectively with *anicca-bodha* (realization of impermanence), the force of craving will gradually diminish and be eradicated.

Similarly, when one experiences an unpleasant sensation, at that moment, the past mental habit pattern of aversion will arise. If one observes this objectively with *anicca-bodha*, then the force of aversion will gradually diminish and get eradicated. Similarly, when one experiences neutral sensations, at that moment, the past mental habit pattern of ignorance arises. If one observes this experience objectively with *anicca-bodha*, the force of ignorance will gradually diminish and be eradicated. Therefore, a Vipassana meditator specifically uses *vedanā* as a tool to change the habit pattern of the mind and to eradicate the deep-rooted latent tendencies (*anusaya*) to react with craving, aversion or ignorance.

Thus, *bhāvanā-mayā paññā* changes the habit pattern of the mind through the development of insight into one's nature with the help of *vedanā*. The deeper and more constant his insight, the closer he approaches the Ultimate Truth and the closer he comes to freedom from suffering. This is the relevance of *vedanā* in the development of *bhāvanā-mayā paññā*, the one and only way for liberation (*ekāyano maggo*). ❧

Notes: (All references VRI edition)

1. *A Dictionary of the Pali Language*, Ed. R. C. Childers, Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1909, p. 330
2. *Pali-English Dictionary*, Ed. T. W. Rhys Davids, Pali Text Society, London, 1925, p. 392
3. *Paṭisambhidāmagga* 2.30
4. *Visuddhimagga*, *Dhammasabhāva-pāṭi-vedhakkhaṇā paññā, dhammānam-sabhāva-pāṭi-cchādakamohandhakāra-vidham-sanarasā; assammohapaccupaṭṭhānā; samāhito yathābhūtaṃ jānāti passati-ti vacanato pana samādhi tassā padaṭṭhānaṃ.*
5. *Dīgha Nikāya* 3.305; *Vibhaṅga* 753
6. *Vibhaṅga*, loc. cit
7. Rhys Davids, op. cit., p. 718
8. Loc. cit
9. *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*, Hindi translation and commentary by Venerable Dr. U. Rewata Dhamma, Vārāṇasīya Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, Varanasi, Vol. 1, p. 101; *Dhammasaṅgani Atthakathā, 1, Phassapañcamakarāsivāṇamaṃ*
10. *Āṅguttara Nikāya* 3.10.58

RESEARCH REPORT ON VIPASSANA

A Research Report *Impact of Vipassana in Government* has been submitted to the Government of Maharashtra and Vipassana Research Institute on 15th September 2003. The main objective of this multi-method study was to investigate the impact of Vipassana on the personal and professional lives of government officials.

The researcher, Mr D. R. Parihar, is a government servant (Indian Forest Service, 1987 batch, Maharashtra cadre) and has been practicing Vipassana since 1994. A large number of personnel from the government sector had been attending Vipassana courses. In addition, some State Governments, Public Sector Undertakings and Local Bodies have been encouraging their officials and other staff to attend Vipassana courses, by granting leave, etc. Therefore, he developed a keen interest to assess the impact of Vipassana on government officials in an objective manner and applied for study leave. The government found that the proposed study would be a definite advantage from the point of view of public interest and granted the leave, as a special case.

The main focus of the study was on Central and State Government officials. However, executives, managers, etc. in Public Sector Undertakings and professors, lecturers, etc. in Government Institutes of Higher & Technical Education have also been included to make the study more comprehensive. A wide coverage of these subjects was undertaken throughout the country and an attempt was made to investigate the changes that the subjects felt within themselves and the benefits of Vipassana in their personal and professional lives.

The following four studies were conducted in 2001 and 2002 on randomly-selected officers of the above-mentioned categories from a wide spectrum of ages, educational backgrounds, length of service and nature of duties.

Study I: Comparison of Vipassana Group with Non-Vipassana Group

Study II: Pre-course and Post-course Feedback

Study III: Anecdotal Evidences

Study IV: Analysis of Vipassana course forms of Government officials

Quantitative and qualitative data was gathered and analyzed. For the first two studies, 'Control Group' and 'Before and After' experimental designs were used. Data was gathered and analyzed from two scientifically valid psychological instruments: the Subjective Well Being Inventory (Nagpal and Sell, 1985) and the Occupational Stress Index (Shrivastava and Singh, 1984). In addition, the Impact of Vipassana Meditation Index (V.R.I., 2001) was used to examine the benefits of Vipassana. Student's "t" Test, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r) and One Way Anova statistical methods were used to analyze the information. Personal experiences (anecdotes) and old students' feedback forms were also used to assess the impact of Vipassana.

In brief, the research findings indicated that:

1. A majority of the subjects benefited immensely by practicing Vipassana.
2. The Subjective Well Being of the subjects increased significantly and Occupational Stress of the subjects

reduced significantly by practicing Vipassana.

3. An average of 94% of all Study I and II subjects felt that Vipassana has a direct role to play in improving public administration and should be used as a Human Resource Development tool.
4. They further stated that it would be in the best interest of government organizations if the employees take Vipassana courses at regular intervals.

VIPASSANA FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

The Government of Maharashtra has been a pioneer in introducing Vipassana to State Government officials since 1996. Initially, only officials of the rank equivalent to or above Deputy Secretary over the age of 45 years were granted commuted leave for 14 days to attend a Vipassana course. Such leave is granted once in three years and maximum six times in one's entire service period. In 1998, this opportunity was extended to all gazetted officers.

This year, the government has decided to allow all employees of the state government to avail of this leave. (Finance Department G. R. No. 2402/27/SER-8 dated 27th June 2003).

VIPASSANA FOR MSEB EMPLOYEES

In 1997, Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB) had issued an order sanctioning commuted leave for 14 days to senior executive engineers above the age of 45 years (G.R. 146 - SER dated 19th June 1997). In August 2003, MSEB decided to extend this leave to all employees. (Amendment 1, G.R. 146 - SER dated 3rd August 2003).

SOUTH INDIA VIPASSANA CONFERENCE

A regional Vipassana conference was organised at *Dhamma Setu*, Chennai Vipassana centre from 12 to 14 July 2003, which was attended by Vipassana teachers, assistant teachers, trustees and Dhamma servers from South India.

Progress reports by the Vipassana centres in Chennai, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala were presented. The delegates deliberated on various issues including the spread of awareness of Vipassana in South India, preservation of purity of Dhamma, centre and course management, prison courses and translation and recording of teaching material.

VIPASSANA NEWSLETTER ON THE WEBSITE

Current and past issues of the Hindi Vipassana Patrika and English Vipassana Newsletter can be downloaded from the VRI website:

<http://www.vri.dhamma.org/NewslettersHindi/index.html>
<http://www.vri.dhamma.org/newsletters/index.html>

Note: The subscription charges for the Vipassana Patrika and Newsletter have been increased because of the increased expenses of publication and dispatch.

ANNUAL: RS 30.00

LIFE SUBSCRIPTION: RS 500.00

Meditators who wish to subscribe to the Vipassana Newsletter or Patrika are requested to send payment only by crossed bank draft payable at Igatpuri to Vipassana Research Institute. **Payment by cheque will not be accepted.**

NB DONATIONS TO VIPASSANA RESEARCH INSTITUTE HAVE 125% INCOME TAX EXEMPTION.

VIPASSANA AUDIO CDS, VIDEO CDS, DVDS

Audio CDs

Morning Chanting (5 CDs)
Morning Dohas (10 CDs)
Group sitting (Dubai) - Hindi/English
Group sitting (Chennai) - Hindi/English
Group sitting (Mumbai) - Hindi
Tika Patthana (Pali): Sayagyi U Ba Khin
Baba Dohas (2 CDs)
Sutta Chantings (5 CDs)

Video CDs

Guruji's 10 day-course Hindi discourses (22 CDs)
Myanmar Yatra - Guruji's pilgrimage in 2000
Doing Time, Doing Vipassana
(Vipassana courses in Tihar Jail)
Changing from Inside
(Documentary on jail courses in the USA)
Islands of Dhamma
(Vipassana Centres around the World)
English Talk and Q/A (Harvard Business Club)
Inner peace for World peace
a) Discourse by Guruji at the U.N.
b) Q/A at Davos, Switzerland

DVDs

Guruji's 10-day course Hindi discourses (11 DVDs)
Guruji's 10 day course English discourses (11 DVDs)
Satipatthana course Hindi discourses (8 DVDs)
Satipatthana course English discourses (8 DVDs)
Doing time, Doing Vipassana (Vipassana courses in Tihar Jail)
Inner peace for World peace -
a) Discourse by Guruji at the U.N.
b) Q/A at Davos, Switzerland.

For more information, contact VRI or local Vipassana distributors.

EXECUTIVE COURSES AT DHAMMA TAPOVANA

The following ten-day courses have been arranged in Dhamma Tapovana, Igatpuri for high-ranking government officials and business executives.

- 8 to 19 November 2003: (Hindi/English)
- 23 November to 4 December 2003: (Hindi/English)
- 7 to 18 December 2003. (Hindi/English)
- 28-12 to 8-1-2004 (English only)

Mainly for executives from the West.

Registration for all the executive courses will be done at: Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri 422 403. Tel. [91] (02553) 244076; Fax: (02553) 244176; Email: info@giri.dhamma.org

NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

Ācāryas:

Dr. Hamir & Dr. (Mrs.) Nirmala Ganla, Pune
To assist Mrs. Usba Modak

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Teachers

1. Mrs. Saroja Ramachandran, Chennai
2. & 3. Mr. Sunil & Mrs. Vidya Bagde, Nagpur
4. Ms. Fumiko Hidaka, Japan
5. Mr. Kazuhiko Ueda, Japan
6. Ms. Kerrin O'Brien, USA

Children Course Teachers

1. Mrs. Sarita Sharma, Delhi
2. Mr. Rajmal Jain, Ratlam
3. Daw Soe Soe Tint, Myanmar
4. Daw Soe Phyint, Myanmar
5. Mrs. Lise Rodien, France

CHILDREN'S COURSES IN MUMBAI

Date	Place	Eligibility	Registration
2-11	Matunga	13-16 yrs	30 & 31-10
9-11	Andheri	13-16 yrs	6 & 7-11
7-12	Matunga	Std. 5 to 7	4 & 5-12
14-12	Andheri	Std. 5 to 7	11 & 12-12

Course Timing: 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Registration Phone No. (4 to 7 p.m.): Tel: (022) 2683-4820

Course Addresses: **Matunga:** Amulakh Amichand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, Near S.N.D.T. College, King's Circle, Matunga (C.R.). **Andheri:** Dada Saheb Gaikwad Sansthan, Babasaheb Ambedkar Marg, RTO Corner, Four Bungalows, Andheri (W).

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

GOENKAJI'S INTERVIEW ON ZEE TV

Zee TV is broadcasting a program called *Urja* featuring Goenkaji every Sunday at 9:00 a.m. In this program, Goenkaji answers questions about the different aspects of Dhamma (Dharma). Meditators may inform their family and friends about the opportunity to hear Goenkaji expound on the universal Dhamma.

Questions for Goenkaji may be sent to: *Urja*, Zee TV, Post Box No. 1, Andheri (W), Mumbai 400 099.

Email: response@zeenetwork.com

(Please put 'Urja' in the subject line.)

SUBSCRIPTION TO ENGLISH/HINDI MONTHLY NEWSLETTER: ANNUAL: RS 30 (U.S. \$10 OUTSIDE INDIA); LIFE SUBSCRIPTION: RS 500 (U.S. \$100 OUTSIDE INDIA) BY BANK DRAFT, PAYABLE AT IGATPURI IN FAVOUR OF VRI.

Edited and published by R. P. Yadav for VRI, Igatpuri 422 403 and printed at Akshar Chitra Press, 69B-Road, Satpur, Nashik 422007.

10 October 2003

Posted at Igatpuri, Dist. Nashik

Posting Day: *Purnima* of every month

POSTAL CLAUSE NO. 232 REG. NO. 49916/90
LICENSED TO POST WITHOUT PREPAYMENT OF POSTAGE - LICENCE NUMBER - AR/NSK/WP-13
POSTAL REG. NO. AR/NSK 39/2003-2005

PRINTED MATTER

If undelivered, please return to:

Vipassana Research Institute

Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri-422 403,

Dist. Nashik, Maharashtra, India.

Tel: [91] (02553) 244076, 244086; Fax: 244176

Email: info@giri.dhamma.org

Website: www.vri.dhamma.org