

Vipassana Newsletter

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

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Vipassana Research Institute
Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri-422 403, Maharashtra

WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Aviruddham viruddhesu,
attadaṇḍesu nibbutaṃ;
sādānesu anādānaṃ,
tamahaṃ brūmi brāhmaṇaṃ.*

One who is friendly amongst the hostile,
Who is peaceful amongst the violent,
Who is unattached amongst the attached—
Him I call a *brāhmaṇa*.

—Dhammapada 406

FOUR TYPES OF PEOPLE

S. N. Goenka

(The following is a translation of an article by Goenkaji in the December 2005 issue of the *Vipaśyana Patrikā*. It has been adapted for the Newsletter.)

The Buddha said: “I see four types of people in this world. The first type is running from darkness towards darkness. The second is running from brightness towards darkness. The third is running from darkness towards brightness. And the fourth is running from brightness towards brightness.”

The Buddha did not speak in riddles. His teaching is clear and well-explained. *Svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo*. Whenever he said something that people might not understand properly, he explained it immediately. What is darkness? What is brightness? How does one keep on running from one to the other?

1. From darkness to darkness:

All around there is darkness, a life of darkness, a life of misery. One is suffering in different ways—physically, mentally, materially and because of problems in the family or society. There is no happiness at all. And yet, there is no trace of wisdom within. So every moment, this person is generating nothing but anger, hatred and ill will:

“I am suffering because of this person, because of this incident, because of this cause.” One generates aversion towards that person or cause. This misery is the result of past *kammas* of aversion, and now, one is planting more seeds of aversion. There is already so much darkness in one’s life and one is planting more seeds of darkness. These seeds of anger, hatred, ill will bring nothing but misery in the future. So the future will also be full of misery. The present is misery, the future is misery. The present is darkness, the future is

darkness. So such a person is running from darkness to darkness.

2. From brightness towards darkness:

There is brightness all around in one’s life. There is happiness today because of material wealth, good health and prestige in society. But there is no wisdom within. So one becomes arrogant because of all this wealth, power and status and feels contempt for others.

“These poor people are all useless. I am so smart; I have got so much money, position, power, status.”

Because of some good *kammas* of the past, there is brightness all around. Sooner or later, this will come to an end. But every moment, one is planting seeds of egotism, seeds of aversion, seeds of misery, seeds of darkness. These seeds of negativity will result in darkness in the future, misery in the future. Thus this person is running from brightness towards darkness.

3. From darkness towards brightness:

The third type of person is in exactly the same position as the one in the first group. There is hardship all around, darkness all around in the present but there is wisdom inside. One keeps on smiling.

“Oh, this hardship has come because of some past bad *kammas* of mine. Somebody seems to be the apparent cause of my misery. Certainly, this person is not the real cause of my misery. This person has just become a vehicle. May he or she not have to suffer because of these misdeeds! This hardship was bound to come through this person or through some other person because of my own past *kammas*. Now I will not plant new seeds of misery.”

So one generates only love and compassion towards such people. One is planting seeds of love, of

compassion. Now there is darkness, but the future is full of brightness. Sooner or later this darkness will go and then there will be only brightness. One is planting seeds of brightness, which will bring brightness in the future, happiness in the future.

4. From brightness towards brightness:

At present, one's life is filled with brightness, filled with happiness. One enjoys the happiness of material wealth, all worldly comforts, and prestige in society. But there is wisdom and one keeps on understanding:

“All this success is because of some good *kammas* of the past. And whatever good *kamma* I might have done, they are not eternal, their fruit is not eternal, sooner or later it will come to an end. So, I must make best use of all this money, position, power, status that I have now for the good of others. As a householder, it is my duty to use my wealth for the maintenance of my family and those who depend on me. Whatever remains, I must use for the good of others, for the benefit of others. May more and more people get pure Dhamma! May more and more people develop wisdom! May more and more people be liberated from their suffering!”

So one generates love, compassion, and goodwill all the time. All actions—vocal, physical, and mental—are for the good of others. One plants seeds of brightness. From happiness one is running towards happiness; from brightness, one is running towards brightness.

We should not be like the people in the first or the second group. We must be like the people in the third or the fourth group. Whether third or fourth, this is not in our control. Sometimes, life may be full of darkness, full of suffering because of the past *kammas*. At other times, life may be full of brightness because of the past *kammas*. There is happiness or unhappiness in life because of the results of past good and bad *kammas*. Irrespective of whether there is happiness or sorrow, brightness or darkness, we will develop brightness within. We will not make any new *saṅkhāras* that will produce suffering in the future, darkness in the future. This is what we learn from Vipassana.

The Buddha said:

Attā hi attano nātho, attā hi attano gati.

One is one's own master;

One is the master of one's own future.

The present is nothing but the child of the past. Whatever you have done in the past is done. But you are the master of the present. Try not to generate a single *saṅkhāra* that will bring misery for you. The future is the child of the present. Be master of the present. Let your present be full of Dhamma. Then, the future will automatically be full of happiness. There will be no darkness in the future.

Develop this mastery of the present moment. This is Vipassana. Understand the technique properly and get established in the technique. You have to be aware

of the sensations and be equanimous to the sensation. Leave the rest to Dhamma. The results are bound to be good. Keep growing in Dhamma, keep growing in Dhamma. Dhamma is so great, so wonderful.

May you all get the best fruits of Dhamma! May you all enjoy real happiness, real peace, real harmony!

Bhavatu sabba maṅgalaṃ—May all beings be happy! ☸

SAYINGS OF SAYAGYI U BA KHIN

☸ The world is facing serious problems. It is just the right time for everyone to take to Vipassana meditation and learn how to find a deep pool of quiet in the midst of all that is happening today.

☸ Just as the light of a candle has the power to dispel darkness in a room, so also the light developed in one man can help dispel darkness in several others.

☸ What is happiness? For all that science has achieved in the field of materialism, are the peoples of the world happy? They may find sensual pleasures off and on, but in their hearts of hearts, they are not happy when they realise what has happened, and what may happen next. Why? This is because, while man has mastery over matter, he is still lacking in mastery over his mind.

☸ A balanced mind is necessary to balance the unbalanced minds of others.

☸ To imagine that good can be done by the means of evil is an illusion, a nightmare.

☸ For progress in Vipassana meditation, a student must keep knowing *anicca* as continuously as possible. ...Continuous awareness of *anicca*, and so of *dukkha* and *anattā*, is the secret of success. The last words of the Buddha just before he breathed his last and passed away into *mahāparinibbāna* were: “Decay (or *anicca*) is inherent in all component things. Work out your own salvation with diligence.” This is, in fact, the essence of all his teachings during the forty-five years of his ministry. If you will keep up the awareness of the *anicca* that is inherent in all component things, you are sure to reach the goal in the course of time.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(22 March 1998, *Dhamma Sikhara*, India)

Question: How should a Dhamma server deal with conflicts that arise with other servers?

Goenkaji: In a Dhamma way! If there is conflict and you start quarrelling and creating a negative atmosphere in the Dhamma centre, it is unwholesome. If there is any difference of opinion between servers, resolve it with *mettā* towards each other, don't quarrel about it. If you can't sort it out, go to your elders (whoever is available) and discuss the situation with them. They will give you some guidance.

It is unwholesome to stay at a Dhamma centre and

generate negativity. If you generate negativity at your home it is harmful enough, but there the harm is limited to your family members. At a centre *mettā* vibrations create a positive atmosphere and if you pollute it with any kind of negativity you will harm so many people who come here to take advantage of Dhamma.

If you find you are becoming negative it is better to retire for some time. Meditate, come out of negativity, and then start serving once again.

Question: What should I do if neither my body nor my mind is ready to practise *mettā* at the end of my daily sitting, even after relaxing?

Goenkaji: Well, if you are not in a state to practise *mettā*, then it is better not to do *mettā*. But at least at the surface level of your mind you can think, “May all beings be happy.” It won’t be very powerful, but you can try to work like that. However, if the mind is very agitated it is better not to practice *mettā*.

When there are subtle vibrations and you feel peaceful and harmonious the *mettā* that you generate is very powerful; it helps the atmosphere around you, making it very positive.

Question: I know that Dhamma servers should treat new students and visitors with *mettā*. How can one do this?

Goenkaji: By practising Dhamma more and more. When your mind becomes purer naturally you will have more *mettā*. In an earlier question you asked why it is important to practise daily. Understand, if you don’t practise daily you will not have any *mettā*, and if you have no *mettā* you can’t serve. So practise daily, make yourself strong in Dhamma, and naturally your *mettā* will become strong and have a great impact on the students who visit.

As I said, those who come to a course always look at the Dhamma servers, the teacher and all those who manage the centre. If they find these people are not practising what is being taught here, they will think that this is a sham. They will say to themselves, “Look, Vipassana has not helped those who practise here, why should I waste my time?”

Be very careful: Make yourself strong in Dhamma so that you can give more *mettā*. Keep the atmosphere full of *mettā*, full of *mettā*. If you do that you will be

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: Vipassana Newsletter or Patrika is being sent to all new students in India free of charge as a special privilege. If you wish to continue receiving privilege copies of the Newsletter in 2005, please cut this portion and send it, along with the pasted label on the reverse, to VRI, Patrika Section, Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri 422 403. Otherwise, it will be assumed that you do not wish to receive the Newsletter and further copies will not be sent. You can also choose to become a lifetime or annual subscriber of the Vipassana Newsletter. (Meditators who have already paid the subscription need not send any response.) **Subscribers who are not receiving a copy or have changed their address should also contact VRI Patrika section.** Annual Subscription: 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. Please tick one of the following options:
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successful and the centre will be successful; more and more people will be benefited.

Question: If our senior in Dhamma takes an independent decision which goes against the guidelines you have formulated, what should we as Dhamma servers do?

Goenkaji: Very humbly and politely place your view before this person, saying, “Well, according to my understanding of the guidelines, this is an incorrect decision. I believe the guidelines suggest another course of action.” Then your senior can explain the reasons for his or her decision. If you still find there is a difference of opinion you can say, “Since we do not agree on this matter I will write to a senior teacher or to Goenkaji. Let us explain the situation to a senior and let him or her decide.” But never write to a senior without first discussing your difference of opinion with this person, otherwise it would be backbiting, a breakage of *sīla*. Be careful not to break your vocal *sīla*.

Often people write letters to me saying, “So-and-so is behaving like this. So-and-so is doing this.” Then I ask whether they have discussed the matter with the person they are complaining about and they reply that they have not. In such a situation why write to me?

It is very important that you talk over the problem with the person concerned first. Most of your difficulties will be settled when you discuss the matter directly — not with a negative attitude but with a positive attitude, making an effort to understand the other person’s view. Maybe your view is wrong or maybe the elder’s view is wrong, and when you discuss with them things will become clearer. If you find that the situation is not becoming clearer, then there is nothing wrong in informing other elders.

(from *For the Benefit of Many*, a VRI publication)

GOENKAJI’S DISCOURSES ON TELEVISION

India: A new series of Hindi discourses by Goenkaji is being telecast daily at about 9:40 am on Aastha TV channel.

USA: Aastha will be telecasting Goenkaji’s discourses at 6 pm EST (Monday to Friday) on the WORLDDIRECT platform of DIRECTV on channel no. 2005.

Zee TV: Daily, 4:30 am (IST). Please confirm exact timings.

VIPASSANA NEWSLETTER ON THE WEBSITE

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

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

CHILDREN'S COURSES IN MUMBAI

Date	Venue	Age	Registration
22 Jan	JNPT	13-16 years	19 & 20 Jan
29 Jan	Matunga	10-12 years	26 & 27 Jan
05 Feb	South Mumbai	10-12 years	2 & 3 Feb
12 Feb	Ulhasnagar	13-16 years	9 & 10 Feb
12 Feb	Andheri	13-16 years	9 & 10 Feb
19 Feb	Ghatkopar	10-12 years	16 & 17 Feb
05 Mar	South Mumbai	13-16 years	2 & 3 March
19 Mar	Ghatkopar	13-16 years	16 & 17 March
26 Mar	JNPT	10-12 years	23 & 24 March

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

Course Venues: **Andheri:** Dada Saheb Gaikwad Sansthan, Babasaheb Ambedkar Marg, RTO Corner, Four Bungalows, Andheri (W), Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505 **Matunga:** Amulakh Amirchand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, New SNTD College, King's Circle, Matunga (CR), Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505. **Ulhasnagar:** Guru Nanak High School, Kurla Camp, Ulhasnagar-4. Tel: (0251) 252-2693. **JNPT Vipassana Center:** JNPT Township, Trainee Hostel Bldg, Sector 3, Sheva Taluka, Uran, Navi Mumbai. 98923-87145, 98218-08488, 2747-2554. **South Mumbai:** Times of India Bldg., Opp CST Station. For registration and information call Tel 23081622 **Ghatkopar:** SNTD School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar West, opp Vidyut Society, Mumbai 400086, Tel: 25101096, 25162505 **Dhamma Saritā:** Jivan Sandhya Mangal Sansthan, near Khadavli station -Tel: 25101096, 25162505 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. To serve children's courses in Mumbai, call 98200-22990.

CO-ORDINATION OF TEENAGERS' COURSES

Prof. Pyare Lal Dhar

Co-ordinator of Teenagers' courses in India and Nepal

Dr. Rohi Shetty, Dr. (Mrs.) Nirmala Ganla and Mr. Sudesh Leal will assist him in this work.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Children's Course Teachers

1. Mrs. Hema Chaugule, *Sangli*
2. Mr. Kapilnath Sahu, *Raipur*
3. Mr. Om Prakash Sahu, *Gotama, Orissa*
4. Mr. Sailesi Lusias, *Zimbabwe*

VIPASSANA WEBSITES

Dhamma Giri: www.vri.dhamma.org

Contains information about Indian Vipassana centres and Schedule of Courses, VRI Newsletters, VRI publications, research papers about Vipassana, etc.

Vipassana introduction: www.dhamma.org

Contains information about Goenkaji, Course Schedules of Vipassana centres worldwide, Code of Discipline, Application Form for ten-day courses, etc.

Vipassana (old students only): <www.dhamma.org/os>

Contains information for old students of Vipassana including International Vipassana Newsletters and reference material. (username: oldstudent; password: behappy)

Pali Tipiṭaka Website: www.tipitaka.org

Contains the Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka in Roman script with commentaries, sub-commentaries and related Pali texts.

DHAMMA DOHAS

*Mata kara mata kara bāvale! Mata kara buddhi-vilāsa;
Buddhi-vilāsoṅ se bhalā, kisakī bujhatī pyāsa?*

Don't do it, fool, don't do it!
Don't play intellectual games;
By intellectual games whose thirst has been quenched?

*Caracā hī caracā kare, dhāraṇa kare na koya;
Dharma bicāra kyā kare? Dhāre hī sukha hoyā.*

They only talk and talk of it, but nobody applies it.
Poor Dhamma! What can it do?
Its practice alone brings happiness.

*With much metta,
A Vipassana meditator*

*Dhāraṇa kare to Dharma hai, varanā korī bāta;
Sūraja uge prabhāta hai, varanā kālī rāta.*

If you apply it, it is Dhamma; otherwise it is empty talk;
When the sun rises, dawn comes; otherwise, blackest night.

*Āte jāte sāṅsa para, rahe nirantara dhyāna;
Karmoṅ ke bandhana kateṅ, hoyā parama kalyāṇa.*

In-breath, out-breath—if you keep unbroken awareness;
The knots of *kamma* are sundered,
Leading to the highest welfare.

With best compliments from

MOTILAL BANARSIDASS

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