

An Introduction to Meditation

Introductory courses in meditation are held by the Malaysia Vipassana Meditation Society.

Children's courses are offered for 8 to 12 year olds and teenager's courses are for young people aged 13 to 16 years old.

Courses are generally held over one day, although longer residential courses of two to three days duration are also offered to children and teenagers.

During the course, students learn the technique of Anapana meditation, which is the first step in the practice of Vipassana meditation.



Boys learning Anapana meditation

The aim of the course is to let young people experience the benefits of meditation. Regular practice of Anapana gives many benefits, including:

- Improved concentration and memory;
- Increased awareness and alertness of mind;
- More self-confidence;
- Greater capacity to work and study; and
- Increased goodwill for others.

As they learn to calm and concentrate their minds, students also develop awareness and gain mastery over their impulses and actions. Learning this meditation can therefore benefit them for life.

About the Practice

Anapana is the observation of natural, normal respiration, as it enters and exits the nostrils. It is a simple technique that helps develop concentration of the mind and is easy to learn, objective and scientific.

Observation of the breath is an ideal object for meditation because it is a natural function, is always present and is completely non-sectarian.

In addition to helping students calm and concentrate their minds, Anapana helps them to better understand themselves and how their minds work. They gain mastery over their impulses and actions and develop an inner strength that helps them to choose right and appropriate actions over wrong actions. This is a natural result of the technique.

Anapana provides children and teenagers with a tool to deal with agitation, fears, anxiety and stress. Due to the simplicity of the technique, they find it easy to practise and understand. They also appreciate its logical and universal nature.

Students begin learning and practising Anapana for short periods and this is gradually and naturally extended throughout the course.

They receive clear, simple and systematic instructions during the course, with support and guidance from experienced children's course teachers. Recorded discourses in English by Mr. Goenka explain the technique and reinforce the practical experience.

Anapana is a form of mental training that is the basis of the practice of Vipassana meditation – a simple, yet powerful process of mental purification through self-observation. Many come to Vipassana later in their lives, wishing they had found this technique sooner because it is so effective in helping them to learn the art of living peacefully and harmoniously. Childhood is therefore the ideal time to begin the first steps of this valuable mental training.

Course Finances

All courses are run solely on a donation basis. There are no charges for the courses, not even to cover the cost of food and tuition. All expenses are met by donations from those who, having completed a course and experienced the benefits of the meditation, wish to give others the same opportunity.

About S.N. Goenka

Today, Mr. S.N. Goenka is recognised as one of the world's foremost lay teachers of meditation. He began conducting Vipassana courses in India in 1969; after ten years, he began to teach in other countries. During the past three decades since he started teaching, he has conducted hundreds of ten-day Vipassana courses, and trained more than 700 assistant teachers who are conducting thousands of courses in over 100 countries.

There are now more than ninety centres around the world dedicated to the practice of Vipassana. Courses for children and teenagers are held regularly at many of these centres and also at non-centre locations.

Although highly esteemed, Mr. Goenka is a teacher without followers, always emphasising the importance of being one's own master, truly self-reliant. This he imparts to his students – both children and adults.



Children are inquisitive to learn meditation