

ANAPANA NEWS

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A Newsletter for children and young people interested in Anapana meditation as taught by S.N.Goenka

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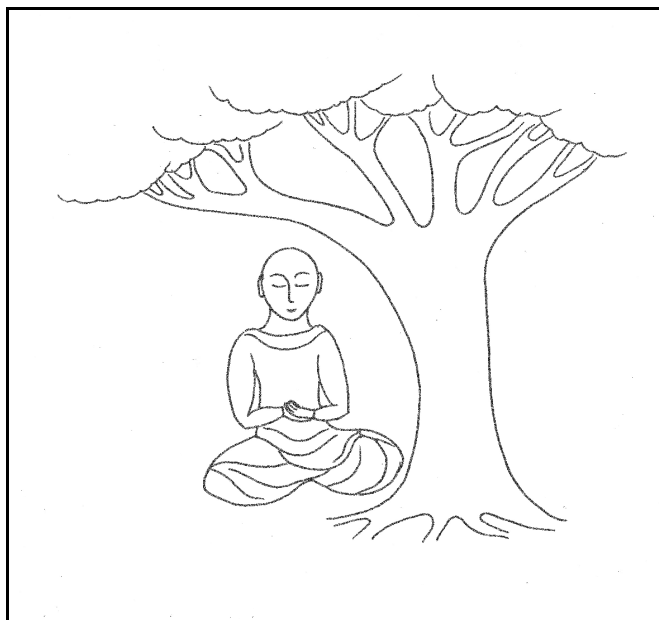
The Great Scientist

On the Children's Anapana course, our meditation teacher, Goenkaji, talks about the person who discovered this technique of meditation.

Siddhartha Gotama was his name although later he became known as the Buddha. Born in the beautiful land of Nepal, the land of the Himalaya mountains, he was a great human being who really existed and lived about 2,500 years ago. Even today you can visit the remains of places to do with his life.

Every great human, right from childhood starts showing signs of being great. Born into a rich family, his father ruled the kingdom of Sakya.

When he was about seven



years old there was an annual ploughing festival. The festival was held in the countryside. The idea was for different ploughing teams to see which could plough the field the best.

People came from all over the country to watch and cheer on the teams. The King came with Prince Siddhartha.

The young prince watched

for a while and then lost interest and became sleepy. His maid took him to rest under a tree and when he fell asleep she left so she could watch the festival.

When he awoke, he sat down crossed-legged, with eyes closed and began to feel his breath coming in and going out.

He found his mind becoming very concentrated, very calm, very tranquil, very peaceful. It was a wonderful experience for a child of seven.

This experience was to be very important later on in his life.

As he grew up, Siddhartha became well educated and married a beautiful princess. They lived happily together in great luxury.

But at the age of 29, the prince decided to leave the royal palace and go off by himself.

Why? Because out of compassion and love, he wanted to know why so many people seem so unhappy. What is the cause of all the suffering and unhappiness in the world? There must be some way out of all this misery.

He decided to make a search, a search for the truth.

This is one reason that Goenkaji calls him a great scien-

tist. Like a scientist he made an investigation into the real truth about things. Like a scientist he would reach his goals by observing carefully what was really happening inside as well as outside.

He suddenly remembered what he had done when he was a child.

For six years he kept trying different ways to discover the truth but was not successful.

At the end of six years, one eve-

ning when he was sitting under a big tree, called a bodhi tree, he suddenly remembered what he had done when he was a child.

He thought, "Oh, when I was a child, I started observing my breath, feeling my breath. And I felt so peaceful, so concentrated. Why don't I try this again?"

This was the first very important step for him on his journey. Later that night he would reach his goal of fully understanding the truth about the world. Why suffering comes about and how people can be free from it. How to live a happy and peaceful life.



Courses For 2009

20 Mar - 22 Mar

Teenagers' Course (Boys 12-18)

1 May - 3 May

Children's Course (mixed 8-11)

18 May

Schools' Course

12 Oct

School's Course

16 Oct - 18 Oct

Teenagers' Course (Girls 12-18)

27 Sep

1-day Course Ages 8-15 East Anglia

All Courses at Dhamma Dipa unless stated

Hello everyone! An important event this year was the completion of the Global Pagoda in Mumbai, India (*left*), - the biggest pillar-less stone dome on earth. It can hold 8,000 meditators!!!!!!!!!!!!!! The President of India made a speech at the opening and surprised many when she said she had done 2 Vipassana meditation courses herself.

Both the articles are about how being aware of the breath can help us, whether we are great people like a President or Buddha, or just ordinary people like us! Anapana meditation is a very helpful tool that can help us in our lives and really make a difference.

Contact: (to register for a course)

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Words from the teacher of Anapana, S.N.Goenka

'A mind that is not concentrated is a weak mind. If it is concentrated, the mind is strong. Like this one can face all the problems of life - because one is mentally strong.

If the mind is not strong, one can not face problems. Even learning at school becomes difficult, if the mind is unable to stick to one topic. Now, after focussing on your breath, you will realise that your capacity to concentrate is increasing. One starts to understand things better. Your capacity to work will increase and you will get better results.'



Beware of Bad Company

"Grrrrrrrrrrrr!"

"Yikes! It's a bear! Get out of here. It's everyone for himself. Run you fool!" shouted Sunil as he half pushed little Rohi out of the way to help propel himself forward.

The Patels and Guptas had set off from England five days before for a camping holiday in the Austrian Alps. Rohi Patel was nine and had been looking forward to the holiday mainly because he would have the company of his new neighbour, Sunil Gupta, who had only been at his school for a few weeks.

Sunil had made quite a splash in Year 5. He was big for his age and had dark hair that hung over his collar. He had a way of looking cool by turning his face and giving a knowing half smile. He knew all the latest cool phrases and just looked a pretty smooth operator.

Towards the end of the school term Rohi and his class had gone off to do an Anapana course at a nearby meditation centre. Sunil had refused to go saying he wasn't going to spend all day sitting around doing nothing. He had teased Rohi the next day asking if he could fly through the air or read people's minds.

For the first few days of the holiday Sunil carried on doing what he usually did at school—just ignoring Rohi. But somehow both sets of parents must have got together and as a result Sunil found himself off for a little 'friendly' walk through the woods with Rohi while their parents played cards in their log cabin. They took the camp owner's Alsatian dog, Bouncer, for company. As they walked along the thickly forested slopes of the mountain path, only the occasional bird song punctured the silence. Rohi attempted to

make conversation but Sunil only made short sulky replies.

It was Bouncer that showed the first signs of agitation. He started growling and his hair stood on end. The boys looked nervously around and then they saw a massive bear standing directly in front. The bear saw them and started to advance. The boys had turned on their heels and fled, Bouncer quickly lost to sight.

"I'm climbing this tree," screamed Sunil in panic, as he swung off the ground and slid up some lower branches.

"I'm too small," said Rohi. "Please help me."

"Sorry, I can't help you, the bear is nearly here."

Rohi didn't know what to do but as he heard a crashing noise coming close towards him he remembered the Anapana course he had recently done. He'd been practising 5-10 minutes on his own every day ever since so it came quite naturally to him. Since there was nothing else he could do, and escape was impossible, he just sat under the tree and closed his eyes and started to be aware of his breath.

The bear leapt up and placed his giant front paws against the trunk of the tree and roared up at Sunil who quaked with fear. Then Rohi could feel the warm breath of the bear as it began to examine him closely. The giant beast sniffed him all over, including his ears. Suddenly it turned and lumbered back into the forest.

When the boys were reunited on the ground, Sunil asked Rohi. "What did the bear say in your ears?"

"He told me to watch out for friends like you," replied Rohi with half a laugh, as they walked back down the cool green track.