



OUTLOOK OF BODHI MEDITATION COURSE

About the University:

Gautam Buddha University, established by the Uttar Pradesh Act (9) of 2002, commenced its first academic session at its 511 acres lush green campus at Greater Noida in August 2008. The University is fully funded by the New Okhla Industrial Development Authority (NOIDA) and the Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority (GNIDA), the undertakings of the Government of Uttar Pradesh.

About School of Buddhist Studies and Civilization:

School of Buddhist Studies and Civilization is a consequential nucleus for the academic research and discourses leading to the promotion of peace and harmony guided by the Buddhist ethics and human values. The very quintessence of Buddhist ethics and their practices in our world are torn apart by conflict, hatred and violence and thus have lost its due recognition. Therefore the research and practices carried out at the School reinforce respect for the Buddhist tradition and appreciation for its benevolent values and profound spiritual emancipation. The research and other courses offered in the School intertwine together the diverse theories in Buddhism and their expressions in our life, mediating a meaningful inclusion of Buddhist values in our cultural, social and intellectual assumptions. It stands out as an effort to revitalize the Buddhist ethics and practices which find immense significance in the modern context. The University encourages comparative studies of Buddhism vis-à-vis other major religions and philosophies of the world with an attempt to understand how the various Buddhist movements across the world have helped the societies in their emergence, for instance the Dalit Buddhist Movement in India. It also facilitates researches aimed at finding ways of resolving national and international conflicts and disputes through the implementation of Buddhist principles and values.

With a rich and magnificent literate collection in our library, a marvelous meditation centre, and a conducive and tranquil lush green campus, the School promises a very productive academic engagement and practice of Buddhist techniques of Vipassana meditation under qualified supervision. In addition to the above, the School provides an ideal forum for cross-cultural, interfaith and international dialogues of scholars through conventions, symposia, seminars, conferences, lecture series, etc. The School of Buddhist Studies and Civilization promotes academic collaborations, joint research programmes and faculty and student exchange programmes with academic institutions of repute dedicated to Buddhist Studies in the world.

At present, the School offers the following Programmes:
The School aims at striving for the following:

- ❖ Certificates and Diploma Programmes

- Certificate in language and literature
- Diploma in Pali language and literature
- Diploma in Buddhist Tourism and Heritage.
- ❖ Post Graduates Programmes
 - M.A. in Buddhist Studies & Civilization
- ❖ M. Phil. programme
 - Master of Philosophy programme (M. Phil.) in various areas of Buddhist Studies & Civilization for regular students and working professionals.
- ❖ Doctoral programme
 - Doctoral programme (Ph.D.) in various areas of Buddhist Studies & Civilization for regular students and working professionals.

Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Dhyana Kendra, GBU

In addition to curricular inputs the university is creating facilities to guide and shape Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Dhyana Kendra, inspired by stupa architecture is a learning and retreat centre to give an experience of the power of peace and inner silence. The centre is looking forward to organize seminars, lectures and experiential workshops in meditation, positive values, stress free living and self management. It aims to help the residents at campus in recognizing their own inherent qualities and recollect their inner most potential. The meditation centre facilitates the experience of the inner self through silence.

History of Bodhi Meditation Course (BMC):

The Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Dhyana Kendra aims to create a community around the pursuit of living a more mindful, reflective and skilful life. It focuses to develop the meditation skills of its members and foster discussion of matters of practical importance. Personality trait and mindfulness are associated with a way we understand ourselves and those around us and consequentially be able to demonstrate skills to react in society peacefully. These skills are, for example, working with others, solving problems, making decision, and adapting to change. At Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Dhyana Kendra, University offers a course on Bodhi Mindfulness Meditation, a kind of Vipassana Meditation, which is practical way to achieve peace of mind to lead a contented life.

The technique of Bodhi Meditation is part of *Vipassana* is a simple, practical way to achieve real peace of mind and to lead a happy, useful life. *Vipassana* means "to see things as they really are"; it is a logical process of mental purification through self-observation. *Bodhi* means Buddha-hood and Buddha-Nature, Supreme Enlightenment and Perfect Mindfulness. The *Bodhi* is not only in psychical Enlightenment but also in physical light. It is known as the "will" is psychology and as the "heart" in physiology. *Bodhi-citta* as symbolized by a Full moon, perfect & round & bright, eight inches in diameter, situated in his heart, and consisting of great compassion and deep wisdom.

This course has been started from August, 2013 initiation of School of Buddhist Studies & Civilization (SoBSC) the part of practical approach of Buddhist education. In first 2013-14 batch 150 students, in second 2014-15 batch 165, in third 2015-16 batch 300 students, in fourth year 2016-17 batch 120 students and fifth year 2017-18 batch 135 was enrolled in this course from all schools. It would be

increase number of students to get benefits of mindfulness meditation techniques through this course. *(Total Beneficiary GBU Students from all schools: 950+ during 2013-14 up to 2017-18)*

Vision & Mission:

The Bodhi-Mindfulness Meditation Course vision to create a community around the pursuit of living a more mindful, reflective, and skillful life. BMC hopes to develop the meditation skills of its members and foster discussion of matters of practical importance. In short, BMC is dedicated to creating a community which promotes human flourishing and the art of living well. It is clear vision of awareness of Buddhist Meditation among the students of GBU. This course will be very helpful to personality development through mindfulness meditation technique in the student's careers. Personality trait and mindfulness are associated with a way we understand ourselves and those around us and consequentially be able to demonstrate skills to react in society peacefully. These skills are, for example, working with others, solving problems, making decisions, and adapting to change. Bodhi Mindfulness Meditation is the only course on campus that provides an opportunity to learn about, discuss, reflect on, and practices various forms of meditations and mindfulness and loving-kindness.

The course provides, at a minimum, an hour each week for students to come and learn about not only what various types of meditation and mindfulness are, but especially why they're important and how to apply them to daily life. Everyone is welcome to share insight, stories, thoughts, etc. as the group is a learning experience for everyone. Each meeting is a chance for students relax for an hour at the beginning of the week - to center themselves and walk away with a new perspective, a sense of connectedness, and maybe a bit of wisdom.

What is meditation?

There are many things in life that are beyond our control. However, it is possible to take responsibility for our own states of mind - and to change them for the better. According to Buddhism this is the most important thing we can do, and Buddhism teaches that it is the only real antidote to our own personal sorrows, and to the anxieties, fears, hatreds, and general confusions that beset the human condition.

Meditation is a means of transforming the mind. Buddhist meditation practices are techniques that encourage and develop concentration, clarity, emotional positivity, and a calm seeing of the true nature of things. By engaging with a particular meditation practice you learn the patterns and habits of your mind, and the practice offers a means to cultivate new, more positive ways of being. With regular work and patience these nourishing, focused states of mind can deepen into profoundly peaceful and energised states of mind. Such experiences can have a transformative effect and can lead to a new understanding of life.

Over the millennia countless meditation practices have been developed in the Buddhist tradition. All of them may be described as 'mind-trainings', but they take many different approaches. The foundation of all of them, however, is the cultivation of a calm and positive state of mind.

Methods of Buddhist Meditation Techniques:

01. Mindfulness Meditation (*anapanasati*–Mindfulness of Breathing)

Mindfulness is noticing what is happening in the present moment. Mindfulness can help us learn to pay close attention to many things. It can also help us calm down when we are angry, sad, frustrated, or have any difficult emotion. Mindfulness can help us notice when we are happy or grateful too. It can also help us focus and in school, sports or music. Mindfulness is a particular way of paying attention. It is the mental faculty of purposefully bringing awareness to one's experience. Mindfulness can be applied to sensory experience, thoughts, and emotions by using sustained attention and noticing our experience without reacting.

How to do the mindfulness of breathing Meditation?

As its name implies, the 'Mindfulness of Breathing' uses the breath as an object of concentration. By focusing on the breath you become aware of the mind's tendency to jump from one thing to another. The simple discipline of concentration brings us back to the present moment and all the richness of experience that it contains. It is a way to develop mindfulness, the faculty of alert and sensitive awareness. And it is an excellent method for cultivating the states of intense meditative absorption known as *dhyana*. As well as this, the mindfulness of breathing is a good antidote to restlessness and anxiety, and a good way to relax: concentration on the breath has a positive effect on your entire physical and mental state.

The meditation has four progressive stages leading to a highly enjoyable level of concentration. To start with five minutes per stage is a good period of practice.

- **In the first** stage you use counting to stay focused on the breath. After the out-breath you count one, then you breathe in and out and count two, and so on up to ten, and then you start again at one.
- **In the second** stage you subtly shift where you breathe, counting before the in-breath, anticipating the breath that is coming, but still counting from one to ten, and then starting again at one.
- **In the third stage** you drop the counting and just watch the breath as it comes in and goes out.
- **In the final stage** the focus of concentration narrows and sharpens, so you pay attention to the subtle sensation on the tip of the nose where the breath first enters and last leaves the body.

02. Heart fullness Meditation (Metta Bhavana: Loving-Kindness Development)

Loving-kindness is a central virtue of Buddhism, and loving-kindness meditation (*metta bhavana*) is a way of developing this virtue. It is a practice that is seen as supplemental or complementary to other forms of meditation. The purpose of loving-kindness meditation is to develop the mental habit of altruistic love for the self and others.

The original name of this practice is *metta bhavana*, which comes from the Pali language. *Metta* means 'love' (in a non-romantic sense), friendliness, or kindness: hence 'loving-kindness' for short. It is an emotion, something you feel in your heart. *Bhavana* means development or cultivation.

The commonest form of the practice is in five stages, each of which should last about five minutes for a beginner.

- In the first stage, you feel metta for yourself. You start by becoming aware of yourself, and focusing on feelings of peace, calm, and tranquillity. Then you let these grow in to feelings of strength and confidence, and then develop into love within your heart. You can use an image, like golden light flooding your body, or a phrase such as 'may I be well and happy', which you can repeat to yourself. These are ways of stimulating the feeling of metta for yourself.
- In the second stage think of a good friend. Bring them to mind as vividly as you can, and think of their good qualities. Feel your connection with your friend, and your liking for them, and encourage these to grow by repeating 'may they be well; may they be happy' quietly to yourself. You can also use an image, such as shining light from your heart into theirs. You can use these techniques — a phrase or an image — in the next two stages as well.
- In the third stage think of someone you do not particularly like or dislike. Your feelings are 'neutral'. This may be someone you do not know well but see around. You reflect on their humanity, and include them in your feelings of metta.
- In the fourth stage think of someone you actually dislike — an "enemy", traditionally— someone you are having difficulty with. Trying not to get caught up in any feelings of hatred, think of them positively and send your metta to them as well.
- In the final and fifth stage, first of all you think of all four people together — yourself, the friend, the neutral person, and the enemy. Then extend your feelings further — to everyone around you, to everyone in your neighbourhood; in your

town, your country, and so on throughout the world. Have a sense of waves of loving-kindness spreading from your heart to everyone, to all beings everywhere. Then gradually relax out of meditation, and bring the practice to an end.

Three Purposes of Mindfulness Meditation as a Buddhist Practice

➤ *Knowing the Mind*

This part of mindfulness practice is a simple process of discovery; it is not judging something as good or bad. Meditative discovery is supported by stillness. Whatever our degree of stillness, it acts as a backdrop to highlight what is going on. It doesn't take much stillness to notice a racing, agitated mind. Discovery means becoming familiar with what a racing mind is like instead of being critical of it. What is the mind itself like, and what is its effect on the body? What emotions are present? What thoughts and beliefs?

The knowing aspect of mindfulness is deliberate and conscious. When you know something this way, not only do you know it, but also a presence of mind grows in which you clearly know that you know

➤ *Training the Mind*

The mind is not static. It is a process or, more accurately, a series of interacting processes. As such, the mind is malleable and pliable: it can be trained and shaped in new ways. An important part of Buddhist practice is taking responsibility for the dispositions and activities of our own mind so that it can operate in ways that are beneficial. When we don't take responsibility for our own mind, external forces will do the shaping: media, advertisements, companions, and other parts of society.

Once the mind experiences some ease in meditation, it is easier to train it in other ways. We can develop concentration or mental stability. We can foster the growth of generosity, ethical virtue, courage, discernment, and the capacity to release clinging. Often a Buddhist practitioner will choose one particular quality to cultivate for a period of time.

➤ *Freeing the Mind*

Central to Buddhist practice is training the capacity to let go of clinging. Sooner or later, the first aspect of Buddhist meditation, knowing the mind, will reveal how and where clinging is present. Some of the more painful forms of grasping are clinging to such things as pleasure, desire, self-image and judgments, opinions and ideals, people, and possessions. All clinging limits the mind's freedom and peace.

Knowing, training, and freeing the mind develop together. The more we know ourselves, the easier it is both to train ourselves and to know what needs to be released. The more our minds are trained, the easier it is to know ourselves and the more strength and wisdom we have to let go. And the more we let go, the fewer the obstructions to understanding ourselves and the easier it will be to train the mind.

Basic Principal of Preparation for effective meditation

Meditation is the great antidote to ignorance. It allows us to see ourselves plainly as we are, as if standing before a large clear mirror. Nothing is hidden. If the movements of the body and mental processes are observed intelligently and with an open mind, one soon becomes aware of the mystery in life.

- **Awareness in everyday life**

Be aware of: actions, intentions, emotional states, mental and physical reactions.

Make an effort to remember to be aware. Let the body be aware of itself. Let things go—passing thoughts, opinions and emotional states.

- **Find a Quiet Place**

Find a quiet place where you can be totally free of interruptions—a room, if possible, or a small corner of the house. Make it very clear to husband, wife, children or anyone else living in the house, 'This is a time I am not to be disturbed. Questions, telephone messages and miscellaneous bits of information can wait until I've finished.' Be very clear and firm, otherwise your meditation will be tense and anxious as you sit in wait for the door to open and a voice calling your name.

- **Sitting posture meditation**

Now a sitting posture is to be adopted. There are several to choose from. Find the one which is most suitable for you.



The traditional lotus posture is very difficult for adults to adopt without a great deal of practice and effort, but this is the ideal position.



Then there is the half lotus, which is almost as good, but for most people probably just as difficult to adopt.



And finally, there are simple cross-legged postures which many people find possible without too much difficulty.



You may find it better to kneel. This can be done with the aid of a cushion: or with the aid of a specially designed stool with a sloping top

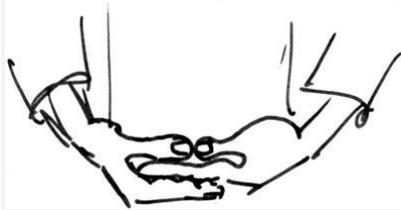


Or sit on a chair.

A certain amount of experimentation may be needed in order to find the right position, one which can be held without too much difficulty for about twenty minutes. You may, of course, want to practise a posture at other times, one which you would like to be able to adopt, but cannot manage at the moment.

- **Hands and eyes**

Open your eyes enough to be looking down at the floor a foot or so in front of you, without focusing on anything.



The hands can be held palms upwards, one on top of the other, loosely in the lap.

- **Duration**

It is important to decide beforehand how long a session is to last, otherwise you will be thinking about it all the while and wondering, 'Shall I stop now?' Ten minutes is probably enough initially and can be increased to fifteen or twenty after a few days or weeks.

At the end of some weeks of regular sitting, thirty minutes would probably be more appropriate. Following on from that, forty-five or sixty minutes may be a possibility. Practised meditators tend not to sit for more than this length of time in any one sitting. You must judge for yourself what feels right.

- **When?**

When is the best time of day to meditate? Some say first thing in the morning, others say last thing at night. You must find out for yourself. The deciding factor may not be the state of your mind, but a busy schedule, or the busy life of your family. The best time may, therefore, be in the middle of the afternoon when everyone is out, or at dawn when they are all still

sleeping and the air is clear, or at ten o'clock at night when the kids are in bed and silence reigns.



You may like to sit more than once a day. Many people sit twice. Meditate when you can, when the time is right.

- **Start**

You have found a suitable place in which to meditate, and you have sorted out a nice posture in which to sit. The back is straight. The eyes are half closed. The hands are resting loosely one on top of the other, palms upward, in the lap. The physical side of things is all set. But what is happening in the mind? Is it calm and peaceful? Is it full of expectation? Is it chattering away to itself—imagining, wondering, worrying, planning?

- **Nonattachment**

Be aware of the breathing and be aware of whatever else passes by—a sense, a feeling, a thought, a smell, a sound. Let the mind open. Observe, but not as someone watching. Try not to become involved in thoughts. Let them fulfil their function and then let them pass on, otherwise you will not be free. Nonattachment to all sensations—pleasant or unpleasant—is the route to happiness.

Significance of Mindfulness Meditation in Modern World

Developments in the fields of science and technology, in transportation, communications, agriculture and medicine, have revolutionized human life at the material level. But, in actuality, this progress is only superficial: underneath, modern men and women are living in conditions of great mental and emotional stress, even in developed and affluent countries.

The problems and conflicts arising out of racial, ethnic, sectarian and caste prejudices affect the citizens of every country. Poverty, warfare, weapons of mass destruction, disease, drug addiction, the threat of terrorism, epidemic, environmental devastation and the general decline of moral values—all cast a dark shadow on the future of civilization. One need only glance at the front page of a daily newspaper to be reminded of the acute suffering and deep despair which afflict the inhabitants of our planet.

Is there a way out of these seemingly insolvable problems? The answer is unequivocally, yes. All over the world today, the winds of change are readily apparent. People everywhere are eager to find a method which can bring peace and harmony; restore confidence in the efficacy of

wholesome human qualities; and create an environment of freedom and security from all types of exploitation—social, religious and economic. Vipassana can be such a method.

The Movement of Mindfulness Technique in modern world

The concept of mindfulness is originated from Buddhism for 2,600 years; but the number of published studies on mindfulness has been steadily increased over the few decades. It has gained attention in both scientific research and practitioner's community as a mean to deal with a large variety of physical and psychological disorders (Keng et al. 2011).

According to Kabat-Zinn (1994), "mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally." Giluk (2010) lists several positive effects that already proved in research in healthcare and social science. The effects are shown in mental health and psychological well-being (e.g., depression, anxiety, stress), physical health (e.g., pain, physical impairment), and quality of intimate relationships –recorded in Baer (2003); Brown and Ryan (2003); Brown, Ryan, and Cresswell (2007); and Grossman et al. (2004). Specially, mindfulness also shows positive effects in workplace in reducing stress and exhaustion, having more positive relationships at work, and increasing adaptability (Hunter & McCormick, 2008). Hooker and Fodor (2008) summarize benefits of mindfulness into four categories: cognitive change, self management, relaxation, and acceptance.

What is Mindfulness?

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Mindfulness is a particular way of paying attention. It is the mental faculty of purposefully bringing awareness to one's experience. Mindfulness can be applied to sensory experience, thoughts, and emotions by using sustained attention and noticing our experience without reacting.

Mindfulness creates space, changing impulsive reactions to thoughtful responses.



We help to grow this space, enabling new, wiser responses that improve attention, learning, emotional regulation, empathy, and conflict resolution.

Introduced into medicine thirty years ago by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn, Professor of Medicine Emeritus at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, mindfulness has become a successful mainstream influence in medicine, psychology, corporate environments, and now education.

Thirty years of research and, more recently, brain science, offer compelling evidence to support the use of mindfulness in education. The application of mindfulness by students and educators has the potential to improve academic achievement, mental health, and inter- and intra-personal relationships.

Mindfulness Studies

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) has been used for over 30 years, pioneered in 1979 by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn and others at the Centre for Mindfulness (CFM) at the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMass).

Mindfulness-based treatments are practiced as a form of complementary medicine in over 250 hospitals and Universities around the world, and are currently the focus of numerous research studies funded by the National Centre for Complementary and Alternative Medicine and the National Institute of Health (NIH), just to name a few. The mindfulness movement is rapidly gaining momentum, with an increasing number of articles on its benefits appearing in the mainstream media.