INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

DIDACTIC REFERENCES - SECONDARY LEVEL I

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to …

1. explain Liberating Actions as a Buddhist method for attaining happiness.
2. understand the connection between a fulfilled life and one's own actions.
3. demonstrate the effect of Liberating Actions in everyday situations.

INTRODUCTION

The students receive **Worksheet 1** and work individually to sketch their own life story, which can have high and low points and also includes the future. In the further course, the personal life timelines are compared with points from the life of Mr. Schmitz, shown in a photo album on **Material 1**. Life plans and life courses are examined for aspects of a happy life. The students reflect on whether and to what extent happiness is attainable and discuss this topic in plenary.

NOTES

In general, we have the idea that a happy life is associated with possessions, career and status, i.e. with social recognition. At the same time, it is focused on social areas such as love or partnership and family.

These ideas of life take hold as long as one is in a state in which one can enjoy them, if one has achieved them at all. However, we tend to ignore difficult life situations such as old age, sickness and death. We also run after things that are constantly changing, may not necessarily make us happy, and from which we eventually have to turn away.

This is where the teacher's transition comes in handy: Buddhism assumes that happiness is attainable through the Six Liberating Actions.

EXERCISES

Worksheet 2 contains key statements about the Six Acts of Liberation as well as tasks to ensure understanding. The students work on the contents individually and discuss the tasks and possible ambiguities in plenary. On the **Answers to WS 2** replies are suggested.

DEEPENING 1 AND 2

The students apply the benefits of Liberating Actions to everyday life. The respective questions encourage personal reflection, which varies from person to person. For this reason, there is no general answer sheet.

Worksheet 3 A enables a more detailed understanding of the first four Liberating Actions by having the students answer questions about concrete everyday situations and make the connection to the respective Liberating Action.

Worksheet 3 B deepens the access to the Liberating Action **Meditation**, with specific instructions a short simple experiment of meditative concentration is carried out.
Worksheet 3 C offers a more in-depth examination of the Liberating Action **Wisdom**. Assignments guide the students to connect their own experiences with aspects of Buddhist wisdom in order to concretize them.

For the class, there is the possibility to work on the texts individually with the same or different contents **(WS 3 A, 3 B and 3 C)**. If desired, the experiences made, which are encouraged in the assignments, can be exchanged in class discussion. Because of the personal answers, solution sheets are not necessary.

NOTES

Meditation:
In meditation, the mind practices staying consciously in the here and now, without pursuing external or internal distractions - this is the root of a truly free choice. Not wandering to other places or times is difficult, however; as soon as you notice the digression, you return to the breath.

If we let ourselves be taken in by our feelings in an uncontrolled way and react accordingly, we are often not satisfied with the result afterwards, e.g.:

- An outburst of anger toward a friend or parent may hurt and offend the other person for a long time and work against meaningful discussion.
- Resentment toward the possessions, recognition, or happiness of others divides people and leads to bad feelings. When we are happy with others and for others, we are happy ourselves.
- When we are interested in others, we ourselves become interesting to others.

Wisdom:
Wisdom is intuitive and spontaneous understanding that subject, object and deed are not separate. Across places and time beings are in connection, which is why their impulses lead to each other, one meets or thinks and says the same. The danger in which a loved one finds himself is also grasped. What appears supersensible, the Buddhist explains by the space nature of the mind. From this also arises joy, which does not depend on conditions and their constant change and transience. Wisdom is also experiential knowledge connected with the desire to decide in such a way that benefit is achieved for as many beings as possible in as long a time as possible.

REFLECTING

Here, the core statement of the Six Liberating Actions should be repeated and secured once again.

The Six Liberating Actions are called this because every meaningful action for the good of all is based on the knowledge and experience that subject, object and action are not separate from each other.

Finally, the students turn once again to the question of happiness in life and connect it with the Buddhist knowledge they have acquired. In plenary, they take a stand and justify how the Six Liberating Actions contribute to happiness.

Optional tasks to conclude:
- What Liberating Action inspired you?
- Draw a cartoon of a situation that changes when you use a Liberating Action.