WORKSHEET 3

THE PATH OF A BODHISATTVA - THE SIX LIBERATING ACTIONS - MEDITATION

MEDITATION

All people desire happiness and want to avoid suffering. Although this is a universal fact, an outside observer would sometimes have to assume the opposite based on our behavior. Neither schools nor parents can teach their children complete and lasting happiness.

Any strong experience of happiness, no matter what the circumstances, takes place within. One is undistracted in the here and now, not mourning the past, not hoping for the future, and not wishing to be in any other place.

Buddhist meditation is a method to make exactly this state permanent, to stay completely relaxed in the here and now beyond the constantly changing feelings, thoughts and events. This creates more space and joy in the mind. One becomes free and can act meaningfully and consciously. The more often one practices meditation, the more stable the mind becomes and one becomes able to avoid what leads to suffering and instead do what benefits others and oneself.

THE ONE MINUTE MEDITATION

Instructions: In this meditation you will be given the task of counting your breaths for one minute. Inhalation and exhalation are counted as one breath. This exercise is not about the number of breaths, but about one-pointedness and calming the mind. Attention is gently drawn to the breath.

We sit upright and relaxed, close our eyes and feel the formless stream of air coming and going at the tip of our nose.

(pause)

While doing this, we count our breaths and let thoughts and sounds pass by without judging them.

Buddhist meditation is not about having no thoughts or achieving better thoughts. When thoughts arise, you recognize them as such and let them move on. When one is distracted by thoughts, one returns to the breath.

EXERCISES

- Were you able to stay focused on the airflow and counting?
- What were you thinking about? Something in the future, something in the past, other places, this moment?
- Do you think you have just as many thoughts in everyday life, but you don't notice them? Could there be a connection between your thoughts and actions?

Now try not to think of anything, but just rest in awareness.

- Did that work?
- When not, what does that mean for everyday life?
- Are there situations in which you wish you had more distance from thoughts and feelings?
- If yes, which ones and how could you achieve this?

Conclusion:

Only with enough space in the mind do you have enough distance and clarity. For this, one needs mind training (meditation) and awareness in life. Happiness is a choice: through right view, recognizing how everything is interconnected (wisdom), the positive actions become truly liberating. At the same time, one becomes more and more effective in compassionate action because one sees what is really beneficial.