INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

DIDACTIC REFERENCES - SECONDARY LEVEL II

OBJECTIVES

The students will be able to . . .
1. explain the terms "liberation" and "enlightenment" from a Buddhist perspective.
2. comprehend the developmental path to enlightenment from a Buddhist perspective.
3. reflect on habitual perception and judgment.
4. understand the relationship between lasting happiness and enlightenment.

INTRODUCTION

Material 1 above shows a woman, the sentence "In the pursuit of happiness we are very inventive" stimulates a class discussion in which the students contribute their experience and associations. The pupils bring examples of happiness through success, consumption, love, etc.

Material 1 below shows the possible downfall, because happiness, which depends on external conditions, is never permanent. It cannot be relied upon.

INSIGHT

"Is there lasting happiness - beyond crises, old age, illness and death?"

Worksheet 1 provides information about Buddha's life, his decision to give up the comfortable palace life and embark on a quest for lasting happiness.

Assignments and critical core questions, worked on in partners, encourage reflection. The **Answers to WS 1** give possible suggestions.

NOTES

From the Buddhist point of view, lasting happiness is only possible if, firstly, one overcomes the ego illusion so that one no longer experiences oneself as a target of suffering, which is called "liberation" and, secondly, one recognizes at every moment that the external world is also an "illusion". One gives up conceptual notions and constricting judgments step by step and develops wisdom. In enlightenment, one experiences lasting happiness, independent of all conditions. Unwavering and fearless, joyful and full of love, one acts for the benefit of beings. Meditation is a method to develop more clarity, stability, joy and other enlightened qualities.

EXERCISE 1

Worksheet 2 shows the core questions for overcoming the ego illusion. In partner work, the students reflect on the fact that the ego is not a fixed entity, but is in a constant state of change. The questions encourage them to become aware of feelings and when they become too restrictive and hinder happiness. In the Buddhist context one speaks of "disturbing feelings".

Answers to WS 2 give possible answers to the questions.
If desired, a short exchange takes place in the plenary.

DEEPENING 1, OPTIONAL

This is about becoming aware of habitual perception and judgment.

Due to our cultural background, upbringing, personal history and sensory perception, the world is experienced and evaluated differently. These conceptual ideas can be questioned by the students with the help of **Worksheet 3**. This can be done in group work. The teacher gives background information on **Answers to WS 3**.

If desired, a short exchange takes place in the plenary.

NOTES

In Buddhism, we speak of fundamental ignorance because we do not perceive how things really are through the veils of concepts. In order to achieve liberation, it is necessary to overcome the limitations of ego-based experience in the form of experience - and not only through intellectual knowledge. To realize enlightenment, one needs to deepen meditation and experience the space nature of mind. Enlightenment means that all conceptual veils of ignorance are dissolved.

DEEPENING KNOWLEDGE 2

In plenary, the Vajra Song of the enlightened Yogi

Milarepa in **Material 2** is read. The students allow the impression to sink in. The poem form serves as inspiration and shows the joyful and free mind after overcoming all concepts. Completely fearless, he rides the waves of the sea.

EXERCISE 2

Material 3: The Buddha image can be projected as a background during the elaboration phase of **Worksheet 4** to convey a classical representation on a thangka.

In **Worksheet 4,** the students learn that enlightenment is expressed in fearlessness, joy, and love. The combination of energetic compassion and beyond-personal wisdom produces activity for the benefit of beings.

Working individually, they comment on these qualities and answer whether they are also relevant to themselves and whether they can imagine people today following this path to enlightenment. **Answers to WS 4** give hints to possible replies.

TRANSFER KNOWLEDGE

Material 4 shows a funny cartoon. It is about the inner step of leaving limitations behind and venturing into unknown new territory, analogous to Buddha when he left the palace.

The students spontaneously ask themselves if they know this experience of liberating “aha”-moments. Every path begins with the first step.