MATERIAL 2

# BUDDHIST MEDITATION

Among many other teachings the Buddha gave, he also taught about meditation: "All Buddhist meditation fundamentally means bringing the mind into a balanced state so that one can effortlessly dwell in what is. Happy moments in one's life happen mostly on the basis of a non-distracted mind resting in the here and now.

In Buddhism, meditation is done so that the mind can first come to rest and then, in the next step, recognize itself. Meditation doesn't have to be complicated, and you don't have to leave your usual life behind or sit in a cave to meditate. Just a few minutes of meditation a day can bring powerful results.

Basically, Buddhism distinguishes between two types of meditation: "meditation of tranquility of mind" and "insight meditation," where a tranquil mind is the prerequisite for insight.

## MEDITATION OF CALM ABIDING (SHINE MEDITATION)

To quiet ever-changing thoughts and feelings, one uses the "meditation of calmness of mind." The many forms of this meditation all have one thing in common: you focus your mind on one spot. This can be an object like a Buddha statue or a candle. But it can also be one's own breath or a form that one visualizes. If the mind is distracted, one lets it return again and again to this meditation object.

Thus, the ability to concentrate is increased and one can deal with a matter more persistently without being distracted. You become more aware of your own thoughts, feelings and reaction patterns, develop more distance to mood swings and disturbing feelings and can therefore deal with them more appropriately. At the same time, you become more mindful of what is happening around you. One becomes clearer and more aware in everyday life.

If one masters this meditation, this leads in the long run to liberation from everything that disturbs one: fears, disturbing emotional outbursts and confusion become less and less and finally disappear. This is the goal of the "meditation of calmness of mind" and is called "liberation".

## INSIGHT MEDITATION

When the mind has come to rest, it has the possibility to recognize itself more and more. The practicing Buddhist perceives more consciously how thoughts and feelings arise in the openness of the mind, how they play there and also dissolve again, like waves in the sea. The mind realizes more and more its timeless nature and all inherent abilities come to light. One experiences fearlessness in every situation, boundless joy that is not dependent on anything, and compassion and therefore can be useful to others. This state is called "enlightenment" and is the goal of "insight meditation".

## SITTING POSTURE

The sitting posture one chooses for meditation allows one to sit quietly, stably and comfortably for as long as possible. The traditional sitting posture is called the full lotus. Many prefer sitting in the half lotus, with the right leg in front of or on top of the left leg. However, one can also meditate sitting on a chair. It is important that the back is straight, but not stiff. This helps concentration. The eyes can be closed or open. The hands lie within each other.