9 BUDDHIST MEDITATION

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BUDDHIST MEDITATION

Meditation in Buddhism means an effortless abiding in what is. This goes far beyond mere contemplation, as is often taught in other traditions. It involves methods of realizing the nature of mind. It is the path to lasting happiness. But in Buddhism, meditation never stands alone as a method. Each practitioner should be explained and know exactly what each meditation is about and why it is structured accordingly. In addition, it means that meditation should meaningfully affect the daily life of the practitioner and thus benefit everyone else.

Meditations are very different. Their content and process initially depend entirely on the direct goal to be achieved through them (e.g., peace of mind, insight, compassion, wisdom, meaningful action). The long-term goal of Buddhist meditation is the full development of all inherent skills.

Buddhist meditations are practical exercises that bring about both calmness of mind and immediate realization of mind. Our mind is the basis of all experience and yet we do not really know it, comparable to an eye that sees the external world but cannot see itself until it looks in the mirror. From the state of stillness in meditation, it becomes possible to look at one's own mind. One sees how thoughts and feelings arise in the openness of the mind, how they play there and pass away again - comparable to the waves in the sea. As disturbances and fundamental confusions dissolve, liberating insights are experienced in the mind. At this level of direct insight, the mind reveals its timeless nature free from all dualistic notions.

Brief moments of this experience are known to many people. The moments in life when joy is experienced from within and everything makes sense just because it is happening, free from expectations and fears, are such moments of immediate insight.

This state of freedom and joy becomes more and more a stable experience through Buddhist meditation.

The goal in Buddhism is first of all liberation from everything that leads to suffering, such as fears, disturbing emotional outbursts, ignorance, and so on. To achieve this, Buddha first taught meditations that calm the mind (Tib.: Shine, sanskr.: Shamatha). By concentrating on the movement of the breath, on external objects such as images or Buddha statues, or on imagined objects such as Buddha forms made of light and energy, more space is created in the mind and awareness of one's thoughts and feelings increases. Concentrating on a meditation object is a tool to take the mind away from habitual wandering. As soon as a distraction is noticed, the concentration turns back to the meditation object, but without thinking about its specifics. One remains naturally in the here and now. It is not a matter of doing away with thoughts, but of not giving them unnecessary force, so that others do not endlessly attach themselves to that energy. This method of calm-abiding meditation and concentration is the basis for all other Buddhist meditations.

In the Way of the Elders (Theravada), the emphasis is placed on a calm and stable mind, as well as insight into the person's selflessness. These growing abilities are supported in daily life through mindfulness practices.

In the Great Way (Mahayana), the practitioner focuses on developing compassion and wisdom. That is, one overcomes self-centered attitudes to develop beyond-personal wisdom. Outside of meditation, one links these experiences to beneficial behavior for others.

In the Diamond Way (Vajrayana), the meditator, including both previous means, aims to develop enlightened qualities such as joy, fearlessness, love, wisdom, and energy that are already inherent in everyone. The meditator identifies with the particular qualities of a Buddha-aspect or enlightened teacher; he also uses a mantra that - given by Buddha himself and written down in the Buddhist tantras - expresses enlightened qualities on a vibrational level. Finally, at the end of the meditation, he dwells in oneness with enlightenment. This state of purity and perfection is maintained as continuously as possible outside of meditation. For this, one needs the guidance of a qualified teacher.

Both in the Great Way and in the Diamond Way, all the positive impressions that have been built up are

shared with all beings at the end of meditation.

Step by step, the illusion that a solid "I" actually exists, which has to defend itself constantly, dissolves first. This creates freedom in the mind. Subsequently, one increasingly experiences that all appearances are the free play of space. This process of insight, in exchange with a realized teacher and/or in meditation, is called insight (Tib.: Lhaktong, sanskr.: Vipassana). Deep insight into the nature of mind and phenomena brings about the full development of one's inherent potential.

Since Buddha's time, these meditations have been passed down and applied in unbroken tradition for over two and a half millennia. Their effect is undisputed, which has now also been scientifically proven.

Buddhist meditation does not have to be complicated or take place in long retreats. Even short periods during the day soon bring powerful results.

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

COURSE OF LESSON – SECONDARY LEVEL II

OBJECTIVES

The students will be able to:

- name the characteristics, effects and aims of Buddhist meditation and distinguish them from each other.
- place the effects of Buddhist meditation in the context of scientific research.
- relate their theoretical knowledge to the practical experience of Buddhist meditation.
- reflect on whether and to what extent Buddhist meditations can have a practical benefit in everyday life.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER	The benefits of Buddhist meditation in everyday life	**WS 2** **Answers to WS 2** Students discuss everyday situations and present results
APPLICATION	Meditation on the Buddha	**Material 3** Meditation (optional)
SECURING KNOWLEDGE	Effect of Meditation in scientific research	Students research scientific sources Students make posters, flipcharts
EXERCISE	What is Buddhist meditation? Differentiate by characteristics, effect, sitting posture, ways and goals.	**Material 2 A, B,C** **WS 1 A, B, C** **Answers to WS 1 A, B, C** Students identify technical terms and communicate them in a contextualized manner.
INTRO	What do you know about meditation?	**Material 1** Students discuss knowledge in groups

BASIS

The students encounter the term meditation in the media and in their surroundings and have different associations with it. In many ways, meditation is associated with a content and balanced life, without any well-founded knowledge underlying this topic.

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

DIDACTIC REFERENCES – SECONDARY LEVEL II

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to . . .

1. name and distinguish the characteristics, effects and goals of Buddhist meditation.
2. place the effects of Buddhist meditation in the context of scientific research.
3. relate their theoretical knowledge to the practical experience of Buddhist meditation.
4. reflect on whether and to what extent Buddhist meditations can have a practical benefit in everyday life.

INTRODUCTION

The teacher projects **Material 1** using a suitable medium, which motivates the students to express their prior knowledge and assumptions about meditation. A quotation from neuroscience offers a further incentive. In the class discussion, a first approach to the topic of meditation takes place.

EXERCISE

In the following, the knowledge about Buddhist meditation is worked out by the students in individual and group work on the basis of **Material 2**. According to the three Buddhist paths Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana there are the variants 2 A, 2 B, 2 C, whereby basic statements about meditation are identical, a last part differentiates according to the three paths. On the corresponding **Worksheet 1 A, 1 B, 1 C** the results are entered.

The students divide into several groups of four, each choosing one of the three topics. In each group, the students first work individually on the corresponding material and worksheet, followed by an exchange in the group of four:

- **Material 2 A and Worksheet 1 A:**
  Meditation on the Way of the Old Ones / Theravada
- **Material 2 B and Worksheet 1 B:**
  Meditation in the Great Way / Mahayana
- **Material 2 C and Worksheet 1 C:**
  Meditation in the Diamond Way / Vajrayana

In addition, each group receives another copy of the respective worksheet in preparation for the presentation, in order to record the cleaned-up results after the exchange process in the group. The results are presented orally in the plenary.

The **Answers to WS 1** (identical for A, B, C), which is handed out as a copy, is compared and saved so that all students now have an overview of the three paths.

RESEARCH

Note: If there is not much time, it is a good idea to skip this section and try a simple Buddhist meditation right away (see APPLICATION).

The students research the results of scientific studies on the effects of meditation on the Internet. They distinguish between physiological and psychological effects.

Note: In the Buddhist context the goals of meditation are liberation and enlightenment, in the scientific context it is mostly about stress management and processes in the brain.

Depending on the technical equipment of the school and the size of the course, internet research can be done individually or in small groups. It is also possible to have a research assignment in the form of homework.

Possible sources:

Englisch:

- *http://www.investigatinghealthyminds.org/*
- *http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2840837/*
- *http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1361002/*
- *http://www.hindawi.com/journals/ecam/2012/350674/*

SECURING KNOWLEDGE

Two large posters or flipchart papers are hung up. The headings for the posters are: "physiological effects" (related to the processes in the body) and "psychological effects". The students write their researched results in bullet points on the posters; relevant phenomena are pointed out and clarified in the class discussion, taking into account the findings from **Worksheet 1 A, B, C**.

The following results about possible effects of Buddhist meditation are only a selection.

PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS	PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS
• Decreasing blood pressure, slower breathing and heart activity, tone (tension) of skeletal muscles decreases. • Abnormalities in EEG (brain wave measurement) and MRI (brain structure imaging) in meditators. • Gamma (y) waves are stronger and more widely organized, testify to high mental activity, concentration and attention are increased, presumed connection to human consciousness. • Gray matter in the brain increases especially in the left anterior part of the cerebral cortex (orbitofrontal cortex) (situation-appropriate action control and regulation of emotional processes). • In general, the brain structure of the areas trained by the focus of meditation (e.g., on self-awareness, on compassion/love or attention) changes. • More density of brain structure in the hippocampus: these regions are responsible for learning and for storing memories, but also for the development of self-awareness and compassion. • Immune system: the activity of cells after weakening or illness normalizes through meditation.	• General well-being, relaxation, stress reduction. • Dealing with chronic pain and severe organ disease: Pain and suffering are perceived as less intense and less unpleasant. • Cognitive abilities (attention, concentration, clear thinking, learning) are improved, anxiety and restlessness are reduced. • Control of emotional processes (awareness and mindfulness): conscious awareness of bodily needs as well as feelings, thoughts, impulses and actions is improved (this involves only observing and then letting go, breaking chains of thoughts). A small gap is created between a stimulus and the reaction to it, one gets distance to one's feelings and understands that they are transient: thus, a (harmful) behavior pattern does not have to run automatically, but the reaction to a stimulus can be co-created. • One feels less like a victim of external circumstances and more like a shaper of one's life. • Not only is stress reduced, but a resistance to stress is developed (stress resistance). • Compassion, love and goodwill, feelings of gratitude and contentment are increased. • Likewise, the ability to empathize with other living beings (empathy) increases.

APPLICATION

The students are given the opportunity to have a hands-on experience with a Buddhist meditation. **Material 3** offers two variations, the first of which is a bit more difficult. When conducting meditations with students, the teacher's sensitivity and also his assessment of the class are required. As a general rule, participation in all meditation exercises is voluntary. If individual students do not wish to participate, they are given the opportunity to simply watch - as long as this does not disturb the students who wish to meditate - or to engage in other activities in another room.
Students sit on their chairs in meditation posture. It is important that their backs are as straight as possible. The teacher reads the meditation text aloud and the students simply follow what the teacher reads. It is advisable to take small breaks between the paragraphs so that the students can better visualize the text.

NOTES

Every experience is individual. The usual tendency is for students to vacillate in their minds between the past and the future, or to think of another place. The trick is to stay in the here and now. It is important not to judge a meditation and at the same time to let each thought pass instead of attaching another thought to the first, etc. Perhaps in conclusion there is a need to talk about the experience, but this should not get out of hand, it is simply about the experience.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Worksheet 2 builds on the positive effects of meditation that have already been developed. In group work, the students find concrete everyday situations and reflect on possible practical effects of meditation. They are asked to reflect to what extent difficult situations change when one meditates regularly and reacts differently. The effects on the environment should also be included. In the class discussion the results are introduced. **Answers to WS 2** offer possible solutions.

NOTES

In short form, results are presented here in case the students have not done the research on the Internet. Regardless of a particular spiritual path, meditation exercises have positive effects that show up in daily life. The experience of everyday life changes when one meditates regularly. Possible repercussions can be seen above all in increasing relaxation, which can also be seen in the increase of joy and compassion in the environment.

- The ability to concentrate is increased; one can persistently deal with a matter without being distracted.
- One gets distance from mood swings and disturbing feelings. One gets angry, jealous, etc., but can contemplate the feeling without immediately reacting with words and actions.
- One can relax in a very short time, relieve stress

and then be fit for new activities.

- Meditation can have a positive effect on numerous disorders such as nervousness, sleep disorders, anxiety, etc.
- Awareness and mindfulness develop, one becomes more aware of one's own feelings, thoughts and reaction patterns and can therefore deal with them more appropriately. At the same time, you become more mindful of what is going on around you. This can be very useful especially in interpersonal interactions.

MATERIAL 1

MEDITATION? WHAT FOR?



> From the density of grey matter to neurotransmitters:
> meditation changes the brain. Emotions, attention and introspection,
> even compassion can be trained with its help, just like long jump or cycling.

Dr. Lenzen, Manuela: Die Neurowissenschaft der Meditation, Internetpublikation unter:
https://www.dasgehirn.info/handeln/meditation/die-neurowissenschaft-der-meditation

MATERIAL 2A

MEDITATIONEN IN THERAVADA (WAY OF THE OLD ONES)

Among the other teachings the Buddha gave, he also taught a lot about meditation: Meditation 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.

Basically, Buddhism distinguishes between two types of meditation: the "meditation of tranquility of mind" and the "insight meditation". The meditation of calmness of mind is included as a basic principle in all Buddhist meditations and enables deep insight (insight meditation).

As an example, imagine a glass of clay water: Only when the glass is left standing do all the clay particles come to rest and eventually sink to the bottom. Here, one learns to observe the mind mindfully and to hold it in one place (meditation of stillness of mind). When all the clay pieces have sunk to the bottom (the mind has come to rest), the water appears unclouded and clear, and there are no more obstacles to deep insight (insight meditation). In the long run, the goal of the meditation of tranquility of mind is the liberation from everything that disturbs (the clay parts in the water): Fears, emotional outbursts and confusion decrease more and more and eventually disappear.

Through the application of insight meditation, the mind shows more and more its timeless nature (one recognizes the quality of clear water), for which no intellectual understanding is necessary. All the skills of the mind come out and one experiences unshakable fearlessness in every situation, boundless joy that is not dependent on anything, and compassion for all beings. This state is called "enlightenment" and is the goal of insight meditation.

Insight can only happen on the basis of a calm mind. Meditation does not have to be complicated and you do not 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. According to Buddhist teachers and scientific studies, meditation increases the ability to concentrate and devote to something without being distracted. At the same time, one also becomes mindful of what is happening around one. One becomes more aware and relaxed in everyday life. Finally, one becomes aware of one's own thoughts, feelings, and reaction patterns, gets more distance from mood swings and disturbing feelings, and experiences more freedom of mind.

The sitting posture one chooses for meditation allows one to sit quietly, stably and comfortably for as long as possible. The traditional sitting posture for meditation is full lotus. Many prefer half lotus sitting, 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 are either closed or slightly open.

MEDITATION IM THERAVADA (WAY OF THE OLD ONES)

Buddha gave many different teachings because people are different. This gave rise to three major Buddhist schools/paths (Theravada, Great Way, Diamond Way) in which different meditations are used.

In Theravada, one finds the meditation of calm abiding (shine meditation) as the central means. One focuses on an external object (such as a candle), one's own breath, or a Buddha form that one visualizes. This helps to quiet the mind. As soon as one notices a distraction, one consciously returns to the meditation object again and again. In doing so, the goal is "liberation." Anxieties, disturbing feelings, and confusion diminish and eventually disappear. The mind becomes clear. Part of this is that a lot of emphasis is placed on practicing mindfulness, so that one even notices how one acts with body and speech, and what feelings, thoughts, and habitual patterns are present in the mind (from which one also acts and judges).

The most common meditation is on the breath, focusing on inhalation and exhalation, letting thoughts and feelings pass like clouds in the sky without holding onto them, and returning again and again to the tip of the nose where the breath comes and goes.

Although many positive feelings can arise from the first practice, regular continuity is needed. The same principle applies to meditation for calming the mind as to any exercise: start slowly and steadily increase the intensity. A good start is five to ten minutes of sitting quietly, or just as long as it feels good. Once the mind stops drifting for the entire duration of the meditation, you can increase to 15-30 minutes. Regular short meditations are in any case more useful than infrequent, hour-long meditation marathons.

MATERIAL 2B

MEDITATION IN MAHAYANA (THE GREAT WAY)

Among the other teachings the Buddha gave, he also taught a lot about meditation: meditation means bringing the mind into a balanced state so that one can effortlessly dwell in what is. Happy moments in one's life usually appear when the mind is not distracted and one is in the here and now.

Basically, Buddhism distinguishes between two types of meditation: the "calm-abiding meditation" and the "insight meditation". Calm-abiding meditation is included as a basic principle in all Buddhist meditations and enables deep insight (insight meditation).

As an example, imagine a glass of clay water: Only when the glass is left standing do all the clay particles come to rest and eventually sink to the bottom. Here, one learns to observe the mind attentively and to hold it in one place (meditation of stillness of mind). When all the clay particles have sunk to the bottom (the mind has come to rest), the water appears unclouded and clear and there are no more obstacles to deep insight (insight meditation). In the long run, the goal of calm-abiding meditation is the liberation from everything that disturbs (the clay parts in the water): Fears, emotional outbursts and confusion decrease more and more and eventually disappear.

Through the application of insight meditation, the mind reveals more and more its timeless nature (one recognizes the quality of clear water), for which no intellectual understanding is necessary. All the skills of the mind come out and one experiences unshakable fearlessness in every situation, boundless joy that is not dependent on anything, and compassion for all beings. This state is called "enlightenment" and is the goal of insight meditation.

Insight can only happen on the basis of a calm mind. Meditation does not have to be complicated and you do not 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. According to Buddhist teachers and scientific studies, meditation increases the ability to concentrate and to concentrate on something without being distracted. At the same time, one also becomes mindful of what is happening around one. One becomes more aware and relaxed in everyday life. Finally, one becomes aware of one's own thoughts, feelings, and reaction patterns, gets more distance from mood swings and disturbing feelings, and experiences more freedom of mind.

The sitting posture one chooses for meditation allows one to sit quietly, stably and comfortably for as long as possible. The traditional sitting posture for meditation is full lotus. Many prefer half lotus sitting, 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 are either closed or slightly open.

MEDITATION IN MAHAYANA (THE GREAT WAY)

Buddha gave many different teachings because people are different. This resulted in three major Buddhist schools/paths (Theravada, Great Way, Diamond Way), in which different meditations are used.

In the Great Way (sanskr.: Mahayana), insight meditation is used in addition to calm abiding. Here the aim is not only to free oneself from difficulties, but also to do something for others. Therefore, meditation aims at both calming the mind and the development of deep insight. In meditation, love and compassion are developed on the one hand, and wisdom on the other.

The wisdom developed in meditation leads to the certainty that suffering is ultimately not real. Through the compassion developed, one wishes that all living beings may be happy and free from suffering, and therefore one behaves compassionately and lovingly towards others. Thus, one develops both love and compassion as well as wisdom. One experiences these two principles as inseparable from one's own mind and thus attains deep insight, which leads to enlightenment.

An important exercise in the Great Way is the "meditation of giving and receiving" (Tibetan: tonglen). In this, one first makes a strong wish to free all the people one likes from all difficulties. Gradually, one expands this wish and finally wishes all beings, including people one does not like or know and finally all sentient beings, well. With each inhalation, one takes away all problems - presented as black clouds - from all beings and, while exhaling, sends all happiness and any kind of joy to them in the form of clear light.

At the end of the meditation, one imagines that the beings are joyful and freed from all constrictions.

"Everything we do for ourselves, we do for others, and everything we do for others, we do for ourselves."
(Thich Nhat Hanh)

MATERIAL 2C

MEDITATION IN VAJRAYANA (DIAMOND WAY)

Among the other teachings the Buddha gave, he also taught a lot about meditation: meditation means bringing the mind into a balanced state so that one can effortlessly dwell in what is. Happy moments in one's life are mostly based on a non-distracted mind that is in the here and now.

Basically, Buddhism distinguishes between two types of meditation: "calm-abiding meditation" and "insight meditation". Calm-abiding meditation is included as a basic principle in all Buddhist meditations and enables deep insight (insight meditation).

As an example, imagine a glass of clay water: Only when the glass is left standing do all the clay particles come to rest and eventually sink to the bottom. Here, one learns to observe the mind mindfully and to hold it in one place (meditation of stillness of mind). When all the clay pieces have sunk to the bottom (the mind has come to rest), the water appears unclouded and clear and there are no more obstacles to deep insight (insight meditation). In the long run, the goal of the meditation of tranquility of mind is the liberation from everything that disturbs (the clay parts in the water): Fears, disturbing emotional outbursts and confusion become less and less and eventually disappear.

Through the application of insight meditation, the mind reveals more and more its timeless nature (one recognizes the quality of clear water), for which no intellectual understanding is necessary. All the skills of the mind come out and one experiences unshakable fearlessness in every situation, boundless joy that is not dependent on anything, and compassion for all beings. This state is called "enlightenment" and is the goal of insight meditation.

Insight can only happen on the basis of a calm mind. Meditation does not have to be complicated and you do not 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. According to Buddhist teachers and scientific studies, meditation increases the ability to concentrate and to concentrate on something without being distracted. At the same time, one also becomes mindful of what is happening around one. One becomes more aware and relaxed in everyday life. Finally, one becomes aware of one's own thoughts, feelings, and reaction patterns, gets more distance from mood swings and disturbing feelings, and experiences more freedom of mind.

The sitting posture one chooses for meditation allows one to sit quietly, stably and comfortably for as long as possible. The traditional sitting posture for meditation is full lotus. Many prefer half lotus sitting, 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 are either closed or slightly open.

MEDITATION IN VAJRAYANA (DIAMOND WAY)

Buddha gave many different teachings because people are different. This gave rise to three great Buddhist schools/paths (Theravada, Great Way, Diamond Way), in which different meditations are used.

The central goal of meditation in the Diamond Way is to experience that one is actually already a Buddha, but has just not yet recognized and internalized it. Therefore, the meditator here identifies with the enlightened qualities of mind by attuning to a Buddha form or a realized Buddhist teacher.

In the Diamond Way, both the principle of calm abiding and that of deep insight are utilized. In addition, the means of identification builds on this as a fundamental principle. If one has a role model and identifies with it, one can develop very quickly by imitating one's role model. For example, children learn in this way from their parents and adopt their attitudes and expressions; the adolescent dresses and behaves similarly to his great idol. It is therefore particularly easy to learn from examples and role models. In the same way, the Diamond Way uses this principle: one identifies with the enlightened qualities, the transmission for this is given by the Buddhist teacher, preferably a realized master.

The method of identification is also used in meditation. It consists of two phases. In the first phase, the meditator visualizes a Buddha form like a hologram of light and energy. Then he speaks the mantra of the corresponding Buddha aspect. A mantra expresses an enlightened quality at the vibrational level and was given by Buddha himself. For example, the mantra "OM MANI PEME HUNG" invokes the qualities of love and compassion in the mind.

In the second phase of meditation, the Buddha-form dissolves into light, which flows into the meditator. He is now completely one with the Buddha he previously imagined. Through this merging, one can gradually experience all the enlightened qualities of mind, such as steadfastness, lasting joy, and love for all beings, in every situation of life. "When one understands that in merging nothing thingly unites, but that awareness from within and without meet, one can dwell in the space - joy of mind beyond all attachment and conception, and then effortlessly bring this into the world as love and surplus." (Lama Ole Nydahl: How Things Are, p. 156)

WORKSHEET 1A

BUDDHIST MEDITATION

EXERCISES

Fill in your knowledge of meditation in general and Theravada meditation in particular in the bubbles.

What is generally understood by meditation?

What is calm abiding meditation ?

What is insight meditation?



What is the sitting posture?

What are the effects of meditation?

Meditation in Theravada

CHARACTERISTICS	OBJECTIVES

WORKSHEET 1B

BUDDHIST MEDITATION

EXERCISES

Fill in your knowledge of meditation in general and Mahayana meditation in particular in the bubbles.

What is generally understood by meditation?

What is calm abiding meditation ?

What is insight meditation?



What is the sitting posture?

What are the effects of meditation?

Meditation in Mahayana

CHARACTERISTICS	OBJECTIVES

WORKSHEET 1C

BUDDHIST MEDITATION

EXERCISES

Fill in your knowledge of meditation in general and Vajrayana meditation in particular in the bubbles.

What is generally understood by meditation?

What is calm abiding meditation ?

What is insight meditation?



What is the sitting posture?

What are the effects of meditation?

Meditation in Vajrayana/Diamondway

CHARACTERISTICS	OBJECTIVES

ANSWERS TO WS 1 A+B+C

BUDDHIST MEDITATION

What is generally understood by meditation?

- bring the mind into a balanced state
- effortlessly rest in the way things are
- let the mind rest in the here and now

What is calm abiding meditation ?

One learns here to observe the mind attentively and to keep it focused.

The aim is to free oneself from everything that disturbs one (e.g. fears, disturbing emotional outbursts, confusion).

What is insight meditation?

The mind shows more and more its timeless nature. The goal is enlightenment: the mind recognizes itself and all the abilities of the mind come to light. One experiences boundless joy in every situation, which is not dependent on anything.



What is the sitting posture?

Full or half lotus position (right leg on or in front of the left leg) or also sitting on a chair. The most important thing is that the back is straight, but not stiff. The hands lie one inside the other.

What are the effects of meditation?

- the ability to concentrate is increased and one comes to rest
- one gets distance to difficult or disturbing emotional states (like e.g. anger)
- one is more attentive and aware
- one is clearer in the mind

Welche Arten von buddhistischer Meditation gibt es? Welche Ziele haben sie?

	MEDITATION IN THERAVADA (WAY OF THE OLD ONES)	MEDITATION IN MAHAYANA (GREAT WAY)	MEDITATION IN VAJRAYANA (DIAMOND WAY)
CHARACTERISTICS	- Calm abiding Meditation One focuses the mind on one spot: on an object (such as a candle), on the breath, or on a Buddha statue form that one visualizes.	- Calm abiding and Insight Meditation - One additionally develops the wish that all beings may be happy and free from suffering. - Meditation of sending and receiving (tonglen)	- Calm abiding and Insight Meditation - Principle path of identification - Meditation on a Buddha form (as a light and energy form) and use of its mantra - At the end of the meditation, one becomes completely one with the Buddha form.
GOALS	- Freeing oneself from everything that disturbs one, even in everyday life (calm abiding). - Practicing mindfulness so that one notices what feelings, thoughts, habit patterns are present in the mind. - "Liberation"	On the one hand, one develops love and compassion, and on the other hand, one deepens the experience that suffering is ultimately not real (wisdom). Through this, one attains deep insight, which leads to enlightenment.	- One identifies with a Buddha form or with a realized Buddhist teacher until one becomes a Buddha oneself. - One realizes all the inherent qualities of the mind, such as steadfastness, lasting inner joy, and love for all living beings. - „enlightenment“

MATERIAL 3

MEDITATION ON THE BUDDHA

In this meditation, one opens oneself to the enlightenment represented by Buddha Shakyamuni in order to strengthen one's own enlightened qualities.

It is important to note that one does not "worship" Buddha as a human being or any kind of higher being, but rather identifies with all the abilities inherent within oneself.

BUDDHA-MEDITATION

We sit as straight as possible and feel the formless stream of air coming and going at the tip of our nose. We let thoughts and feelings pass without evaluation.

For the good of all we now want to meditate. Therefore we open up to the Buddha, who expresses the inherent enlightenment of all beings.

Now, out of space in front of us, condenses the golden, transparent form of a Buddha, a radiant field of energy and light. His face is golden and mild. He sees us, knows us and wishes us everything good.

His essence is here whether a clear image is perceived or not.

We understand that Buddha is not a limited being but the expression of the truth and joy of space. He represents the full realization of body, speech and mind and we strongly wish to accomplish his enlighten qualities for the benefit of all.

As he feels our wish, Buddha smiles and comes ever closer through space until he remains at a pleasant distance in front of us.

We wish:

»Dearest Buddha, please show us the power which removes the ignorance and obscurations of all beings and ourselves. Let mind's timeless light be recognized inside us.«

Now a strong, clear light radiates from between Buddha's eyebrows and enters the same place in our forehead. Our head is filled with powerful, clear light.

It dissolves all disturbing impressions in brain, nerves and senses. All causes and imprints of harmful actions now disappear, and our body relaxes. It becomes a conscious tool for protecting and helping others.

We retain the clear light for as long as we wish and experience the syllable **OM**.

(hold light and vibration)

Emanating from Buddha's throat, a radiant beam of red light streams out. It enters our mouth and throat.

The red light dissolves all difficulties in our speech. All impressions of harmful and confused words disappear, and we become conscious of our speech. It is now compassion and wisdom, a powerful tool for benefiting others.

Along with the red light, we experience the syllable **AH.**

(hold light and vibration)

From the heart level in the center of Buddha's transparent body, an intense, blue light shines out. It fills the middle of our chest.

Everything harmful now leaves our mind. Disturbing feelings and stiff ideas dissolve, and our mind becomes spontaneous joy: It is space and bliss inseparable.

Together with the blue light, we experience the syllable **HUNG**.

(hold light and vibration)

Now, all three lights enter us at the same time. Clear light fills our head, red light our throat and blue light our heart center. We rest effortlessly in this state and feel complete.

(hold the three lights together)

We may now use a vibration which lets the activity of all Buddhas work through us:

Karmapa Chenno

(Repeat this mantra for a few minutes).

MATERIAL 3

MEDITATION ON THE BUDDHA

Then Buddha dissolves in front of us and becomes rainbow light. He promises to be there when we need him and returns back into space.

Whatever may appear is the free play of space.

(rest in the nature of mind)

From this open vastness, this world and all worlds appear, perfect and pure. Every atom vibrates with joy and is kept together by love.

All is fresh and meaningful, radiant with unlimited potential.

All beings have Buddha-nature, whether they know it and act meaningfully or not

At the end we wish that all the good that just appeared becomes limitless and leads all beings to the only lasting joy, that of knowing mind.

WORKSHEET 2

PRACTICAL USE OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION IN EVERYDAY LIFE

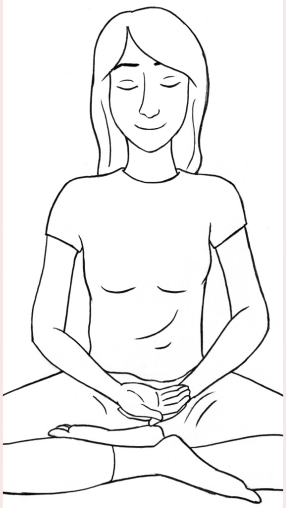
One effect of meditation practice is that the practitioner is no longer so easily carried away by disturbing feelings (e.g. anger, fear, etc.) in difficult life situations.

EXERCISES

1. In which difficult everyday situation could the mentioned effects of Buddhist meditation be of practical use?
2. Does everyday life change when one meditates regularly? Consider possible repercussions of meditation on everyday life. Also consider the effects on the environment.

Difficult every day situations

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-
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Meditation effects

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Positive effects on those around you in everyday life

ANSWERS TO WS 2

PRACTICAL USE OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION IN EVERYDAY LIFE

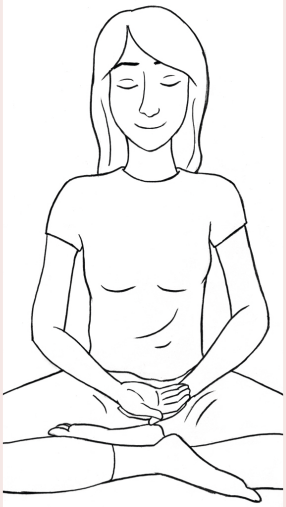
One effect of meditation practice is that the practitioner is no longer so easily carried away by disturbing feelings (e.g. anger, fear, etc.) in difficult life situations.

EXERCISE

1. In which difficult everyday situation could the mentioned effects of Buddhist meditation be of practical use?
2. Does everyday life change when you meditate regularly? Consider possible effects of meditation on everyday life. Also consider the effects on those around you.

Difficult everyday situations

- studying for a class test ...
- arguing with a boyfriend/ girlfriend ...
- listening to others in a conversation ...
- problems in making a decision ...
- dejection, depression, feeling of futility ...



Meditation's effects

- the ability to concentrate is increased and one comes to rest
- one creates distance to difficult or disturbing emotional states (like e.g. anger)
- one is more attentive and conscious
- one is clearer in the mind
- one experiences more joy and compassion

Positive effects on those around you in everyday life

As long as one is confused or suffering oneself, one can be of little use to others.
The clearer and more mindful one is, the more one sees what is at hand and can help.
Your good mood also rubs off on others.