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**What Senior Administrators  
Say About Vipassana -II**



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## What Senior Administrators Say About Vipassana -II

### **Ramesh M. Ubale**

Senior I.A.S. Officer

Due to over work and stress I started getting chest pain in the year 1984-85. I consulted various doctors, Dr. Dhananjay Gunde from Kolhapur introduced me to the Art of Vipassana and I attended my first course at Igatpuri in 1985, under the guidance of Shri Satyanarayan Goenka. That was the turning point in my life. Initially I joined this course out of curiosity. After the completion of the course I realized that this is the only way of scientific meditation which will keep each and every one of us free from all complications of life and will bring harmony in our relations.

I am totally convinced that before going to any doctor for minor illness as well as psychosomatic disorders one should try this course which will definitely help to recover from such problems.

After 1985, I tried to convey this message to various groups of people. I was also practising Vipassana in my daily life, but due to my preoccupied engagements I could not repeat the course till November '96. I attended this course at Igatpuri in November '97. I can assure any individual that this way of life does not propagate and challenge or any false promises. It is based on purely natural science, which helps a human being to "know thyself". It also helps to keep away diseases like diabetes, hypertension and heart problems. The persons who are engaged in all the sedentary work are advised to do this course atleast once to find out the truth of the life. I can also assure that one can practice Vipassana and at the same time be Hindu, Muslim or Christian or for that matter of any religion.

Human life today is full of competition, stress and fatigue. Specially to cope up with this kind of life and to attain noble peace of mind one must attend this course and it does not interfere in the various religious life of the practising student.

### **S.N. Tandon**

Teacher of Vipassana

Former Dy. Home Secretary, Rajasthan.

From earliest childhood, I was always a very timid person. On my way to school I would purposely avoid any route that would bring me into contact with dogs or unruly fellow pupils. In my studies at school, I always came near the top of the class and in Sanskrit, my favourite subject, I gained full marks. Still, when my teachers and family, wanted to give proper recognition to these achievements, I always found some pretext or another to avoid the glare of publicity. For, deep inside, I felt as if some huge error was being

made by others when estimating my talents and that sooner or later this would be exposed.

This inferiority complex continued into my college and working life. Despite ample, and repeated, evidence of exceptional abilities, again and again I denied their existence, shrinking from the publicity I feared they would attract and thus failing to capitalize on them for my own and others' benefit. I have always been a natural student, who loves nothing better than to be surrounded by books. And so it was, during my married life in Delhi, when I was a junior civil servant. Any free time was always taken up in reading and further study. During this period I had the opportunity on several occasions to apply for a post in the Indian Administrative Service, the country's elite cadre. Despite the recommendations of those who knew me and my capacities well, I staunchly refused to apply, thinking that I was intellectually and personally inadequate to a task, which so many others could perform with ease. In this way, a golden career chance passed me by. Sometime later, I almost repeated the same pattern when posts in the State Administrative Service of Rajasthan were advertised.

Had it not been for the personal intervention of my wife and close friends, who knew my problem and coaxed and cajoled me, I would never have applied for a post, nor would I have taken the entrance examination, nor appeared for the personal interviews. With their understanding and support, I was successful. I was appointed to the State Service, where I worked for 23 years, undertaking a range of challenging assignments in different departments. However, even in my work, I found that this tendency to low self-esteem made me reluctant to accept major responsibilities involving contact with the public, which my colleagues and superiors felt I was competent to tackle.

As a newcomer to the Administrative Service in Rajasthan, I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Shri Ram Singh. This marked the beginning of a close professional and personal relationship, which has brought untold benefits to me. Naturally, when Shri Ram Singh, who was State Home Secretary at the time, with myself as his immediate subordinate, took a Vipassana course with Goenkaji in 1974 and immediately felt much benefited, I also became curious. I took my first course in that same year and continued to practice Vipassana as best I could. However, pressure of work often meant that I was unable to sit daily as regularly as I would like and finding time to take further ten-day courses was also difficult. For some years, I felt that my progress in Dhamma was inadequate.

After a few years I had the rare opportunity to sit a long course for serious old students at Dhamma Giri. After just a few days of meditation in this deep atmosphere the truth of my

inferiority complex, and how it had continuously dogged my life thus far, became clear in my mind. By the end of the course, through the practice of Vipassana, substantial layers of this profound *sañkhāra* had evaporated and I felt real progress had been made. And so it has proved, when applied in everyday life: not that this deep-rooted tendency has been completely eradicated, but certainly there is a major improvement which is good both for me and for others. This is evident from the fact that I have since then been able to address more than 30 audiences in India, USA, and U.K. with confidence. I have also conducted workshops for training assistant teachers in conducting Vipassana courses under instructions from Goenkaji, and have led one workshop to encourage study of the Pāli language among Vipassana students.

When a student takes a Vipassana course, there should never be any expectation of particular experiences or outcomes. Rightly, we are told, to practise correctly and to leave the result to Dhamma. However, it is my personal experience, that if someone really wants to go to the depths of the mind to take out the most stubborn complexes, then one or more long courses, when the proper opportunity arises, is a real priority.

**R.S. Gupta**

Deputy Commissioner, Indore.

The program on reducing tensions and for self improvement was very good. It is my good fortune that I got an opportunity to take part in the program, for this I am grateful to my department. This program will help me a lot in the future in improving myself. It will definitely help me progress on the path to good. It will also help me to be a better official.

The tensions which arise during executing our daily official duties will get reduced by this program and we can perform those duties in a better way. Initially for the first 3 days I was a bit upset and tense but as the course progressed, I found some inner strength. Now after doing the course I feel grateful for being sent here against my wishes. I hope I will get a chance to do a refresher course at least once a year. I am very grateful to my department for the apparent benefits I have got from this course.

I am sure I will derive many more benefits in future from this course.

**Shri Kishan Singh Rathor**

Company Commandant, Armed Forces, Bhopal

By attending this Vipassana Course I got to learn this valuable Dharma knowledge of Vipassana. Through Vipassana I got to know myself and have found a new way to live my life. I have found the

path of self improvement and in future I can realize my mistakes and work towards rectifying them.

**Uttam Singh Thakur.**

Deputy Commandant, 16th Special Armed brigade, Sagar.

I was quite surprised when on reaching the Academy I was told that I would have to remain silent for 10 days and live within a limited area. I followed the instructions of the academy having decided to undergo the course and observe all the rules. I liked the Vipassana course very much, I feel it will change a person's nature. However it should not be restricted to a few persons but should be conducted on a large scale. It should especially be conducted for those in high posts and important officials so that those below them will be inspired to join the course and improve their thoughts.

**R.L. Vora,**

Jail Superintendent, Probander.

Many Vipassana Meditation courses were conducted in Baroda Central Jail. As a result, relationship between the prisoners and the jail staff improved. The attitude of the prisoners to take revenge has changed. This technique has ignited creativity among the prisoners. They were able to realize the mistakes/crime they have done in the past. Many newspapers have reported the favourable impact of Vipassana meditation. May more and more courses be conducted for the benefit of inmates in particular.

**Srilata Swaminadhan**

Rajasthan State Party Spokesperson of C.P.I. (M-L) and National President of the All India Progressive Women's Association (AIPWA)

I did my first ten-day course of Vipassana in 1995. Since then I have done two more ten-day courses and one Satipaṭṭhāna course. I realize that that makes me a beginner with a very long way to go but even then the benefits and potential of Vipassana are apparent.

What I find most appealing about this technique is its simple, pure scientific rationality - no religiosity of any kind, no gods, no mumbo-jumbo, no false promises of a great here-after, no form of escapism into some blissful never-never-land! Buddha's emphasis on practice and an ethical life and not just theorizing or intellectualizing make the whole method intensely practical and keeps one's feet solidly on the ground. In fact, Buddha's definition of Dharma, or religion, is the understanding of the laws of nature, understanding the world of mind and matter and then living according to those laws. Vipassana helps you to do just that.

Vipassana is a form of meditation which, more than anything else I have ever known or tried, helps you to understand yourself. As

you go deeper and deeper into the practice, the more you understand and see how your mind and matter function, how they interact and influence each other, you are gradually able to observe the patterns of your own behaviour, your own reactions, your aversions and cravings- in other words you can see how you tick. It is a very good way of learning self-awareness and gaining self-knowledge, even of the deepest levels of one's sub-conscious mind.

You also learn how to re-programme yourself with total awareness and understanding. There is neither suppression or rejection of one's deepest and, often, ugliest drives. I had come across the word "sākṣi" in the Gita and in many Upanishads as the way to come out of suffering but it is only Vipassana which teaches you, step by step, how you can actually achieve that, how to achieve the equanimity to become a "sākṣi".

The other things which appeal to me are that you are constantly aware and in the present, in possession of all your faculties and not asked to surrender yourself or your mind to some great guru or teacher who will do your thinking for you. Instead, the technique constantly emphasizes how one is responsible for one's own life, one's own actions and their consequences. As one's present actions and behaviour will determine what one becomes in the future, I find it tremendously attractive that I can be in control and responsible for my own future. What more can one ask for!

The whole concept of Karma is shorn of all the superstition and rubbish that some religious sect has smothered it with and one is able to experience it and understand it as mere cause and effect, action and reaction. The universality of the method, its total lack of any kind of sectarianism makes it truly scientific and acceptable to any human being irrespective of caste, colour, creed or sex.

One anxiety that I did have for quite some time was would Vipassana make me want to leave the problems, tensions and frustrations of daily life and work and make me want to escape to a more peaceful and secluded world, would it make me go more and more inwards at the expense of my work? But what I am discovering is that the inward journey complements the outward life and, in fact, is helping my work.

Nothing has given me the hope and confidence that this technique has given me. To know that I can understand myself and then be able to change myself and that I do not have to rely on anything or anyone else except myself to achieve this, is at once the greatest gift and the greatest responsibility that I have been given. I am the scientist, I am the laboratory and I am the specimen! A whole new universe, that I was totally oblivious of, has opened up to me and I am on a new and meaningful journey.