

VIPASSANA AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS

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Abstract: Vipassana meditation is an integral component of the Buddhist philosophy. Vipassana is an insight into the nature of things; vipassana is seeing things as they are. The path that leads to this insight & realization is awareness & mindfulness. The way to develop mindfulness is based on a famous discourse given by Buddha. In this discourse, the Buddha explained how to develop and cultivate the mind. The name of this discourse is the "SatipatthanaSutta". In this sutta, the Buddha offers our objects of meditation for consideration: body, feelings, thoughts, and mental states. On the basis of SatipatthanaSutta, practice of vipassana meditation is to use these four objects for the development of concentration, mindfulness, and insight & understanding of our self and the world around us. SatipatthanaSutta offers the most simple, direct, and effective method for training the mind to meet daily task, problems, to achieve the highest aim and liberation. SatipatthanaSutta is safe for all characters, and a harmless way to train the mind. We can use this method anywhere at any time, in a busy office or in the peaceful place.

Keyword: Vipassana , Psychological , realization , Meditation.

INTRODUCTION:

Definition and Nature of Vipassana Meditation

Vipassana is a Pali word that literally means "to see things as they really are, in their true nature, in their true characteristics of impermanence" 1. The concept of vipassana has having two components, namely vi+passana. 'Vi' means minutely, perfectly, exactly, sincerely, etc. and 'passana' means looking, observing, analyzing, introspecting, investigating etc. It means observing oneself in a special way². There are several definitions of vipassana which has been giving on the different point of views. Some important and selective definitions are given onward. According to S.N. Goenka (2000), "Vipassana meditation a non-sectarian, scientific, result-oriented technique of self-observation and truth realization."³ Kishore Chandiramani et al (1998) point of view " Vipassana means promoters conscious life-style changes, enhances concentration of mind and facilitates deeper psychological introspection to bring about lasting behavioural changes⁴." William Hart also has given the definition of vipassana meditation, " Vipassana is an insight, seeing reality by experiencing the reality within oneself."⁵ As well as Ram Singh has given definition of vipassana meditation, "Vipassana meditation is a method of objective observation of mind-body phenomena, leading to purification of mind".⁶

On the basis of mentioned definitions reveals that vipassana is a scientific technique of self-purification through self-observation and psychological introspection. There is no visualization or verbalization of any Mantra & Japa. Neither is it an intellectual nor philosophical entertainment. It is technique that purifies the mind, eradicates the negativities of anger, hatred, greed, selfishness, etc., by self-observation and introspection.

Vipassana meditation technique is taught within the ten days basic residential course. There are three steps of the vipassana meditation course. The first is an observance of five basic precepts of morality, which in practice means abstention from violence, lying, theft, sexual misconduct and the use of alcohol and other intoxicants⁷. Whenever one violates these, one might be create impurities in one's mind. These impurities are the root causes of the stresses and strains from which one tries to gain release.

The next step is to achieve some mastery over our unruly mind by focusing attention on the natural and normal breath (Not controlled and regulated breath as in pranayama). This is called "ANAPANA-SATI", which means awareness of respiration⁸. There is just observation of natural and normal breath. This concentration helps to sharp the mind. This step helps to meditate for taking the next step of vipassana. Where have meditates require to observe the sensations which manifest in the entire body every moment, as a result of the constant and continuous interactions of mind and matter. Our mind are constantly reacting to pleasant and unpleasant whatever happening in the world outside. But a deep investigation of the mind through vipassana, reveal that when we react, we actually reacting to the body sensations that result from our contact with the outside world and our own thoughts. When thoughts arise, it manifests as a sensations on the body pleasant and an unpleasant, and one start to like & dislike it. This is the law of the nature. Soon those like and dislike began to consolidate to develop into negativities of craving and aversion. We create misery for ourselves by continuously reacting to sensations. In this technique we train the mind to observe all the sensations with detachment and equanimity that is without developing craving for pleasant sensations & aversion

toward unpleasant sensations. As one proceed on this path one experience that all sensations, whether pleasant & unpleasant are constantly changing. They are impermanent (Anicca) and essence less (Anatta) without any substance. This is inherent nature of everything that exist in the universe, whether animates & inanimate. One might be begin to understand experientially not merely on the intellectual level. If the vipassana practice proper way and proper understanding, one could be a better individual.

PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF VIPASSANA

We have well known, vipassana meditation is a scientific technique of purification of mind. In fact, health related benefits are by products of the purification process. Therefore, the psychological scales would be using for quantitative and qualitative measure the benefits of vipassana meditation before and after the vipassana course. Unfortunately, precise measurement could not be possible, because the lack of reliability and validity of psychological scales. Hence, the benefits of vipassana might not be measured satisfied. Although such type of assessment the investigators would use of two strategies. Firstly, to investigate the benefit that meditates felt them due to vipassana, and to what extent vipassana benefits them in various aspects of their personal and professional lives. This can be achieving by collecting information through specific questionnaires, anecdotal reports.

Secondly, to investigates the benefits through scientific and standard psychological tests. Therefore, a multi-method approach should adapt to the qualitative and quantitative measurements. There had been several pre and post experimental studies to assess the benefits of vipassana meditation, they are as giving ahead.

1. In the modern life every person has live in stress & anxiety. Hence, anybody have problem of maladjustment. Ahmand (1988) was conducted a study to find out the impact of vipassana meditation. In that study he was find out clearly a higher quality of life amongst vipassana meditates than who did not meditation. He had concluded that overall adjustment and personality organization was higher in which practiced meditation. 9

2. Many circumstances, large and small, can produce anxiety in our lives. Chaudhary (1999), has reported that both state anxiety and trait anxiety was reduced significantly in vipassana meditates. In her experimental study, she also stated that there was a decreased in aggression among the under trial prisoners and development of helpfulness, self-control, conformity and compassion due to vipassana meditation. 10

3. Today decision making and interpersonal relationship are sources of success within any fields. Singh (1997) has study in the Home Department of Government of Rajasthan, several key officers who attended vipassana courses showed that improvement in their decision making capacity and interpersonal relationship than non-meditates. 11

4. Police officers, depending on the complexities of their work, generally have to face a lot of stress and emotional instability. In the Rajasthan Police Academy of Jaipur, Sinhan & their colleagues were conducted the experimental

study. In that study found improvement in the attention span, alertness and emotional stability amongst who were attended the vipassana course. 12

5. Management of a medium scale industrial business requires organization, quality control, production, purchasing, marketing, fund flow, administration etc. Each of these operations requires clear thinking, planning, co-ordination, and execution, cost accounting, and profitability projections. Joshi S.S. (2002) was conducted the study to assess an impact of vipassana meditation on work environment. In this study concluded that, vipassana has very positive effect on productivity and the work environment. 13

6. Education should be concerned with the totality of life and not with immediate responses to immediate challenges. Kochargaonkar, S.H. (2005) also has study to evaluate the effect of vipassana meditation on the academic performance of students. In her study she explored that, the vipassana group shows significant improvement in academic performance and subjective well-being than control group. 14

7. Stress is very distinct characteristic of today's fast life. To face the stress is today's central problem. Stress has certain serious physical and psychological effects on human beings. Miller has reported efficacy of vipassana in managing anxiety, stress and related symptoms and other emotional problems. 15

8. Many case report studies have been recorded on the positive effects of vipassana in different psychosomatic disorders such as chronic pain, headaches, bronchial asthma, hypertension, peptic ulcer, psoriasis, etc., and so also in different disorders including alcoholism and drug addiction. Chokhani has an employed Anapana Meditation in neurotic and psychosomatic disorders as a supplementary form of treatment with good clinical response. 16

9. Jin has an observed the efficacy of 'Tai Chi Moving Meditation' in reducing mood disturbances caused by mental and emotional stressors. 17

10. Increased trust and cooperativeness have strengthened the attitude of teamwork which is essential for the success of the organization. Gupta has reported an enhanced industrial productivity and harmony through practice of vipassana meditation. 18

CONCLUSION

These are some of the practical benefits that come from doing meditation. Above all these conclusions had removed on the basis of experimental studies, not only on case studies & rational. According to above all conclusions, the investigator has reached concluded as the vipassana meditation is a unique technique of psychological improvement.

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