

MEDITATION CLASS INFORMATION SESSION

DESCRIPTION OF THE TECHNIQUE

Vipassana is a form of meditation that aims to help participants develop greater awareness, mental discipline, and insight. Many people experience a constant stream of thoughts that can make it difficult to focus, remain calm, or respond thoughtfully to life's challenges. **Vipassana** meditation helps participants observe these mental patterns and develop greater control over their attention.

According to this tradition, human experience includes six senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and the mind. During meditation practice, participants keep their eyes closed and sit in a quiet environment free from distractions. Participants avoid conversation, physical contact, and eye contact with others. By minimizing external stimulation, participants are encouraged to direct their attention inward and begin a process of self-exploration.

Throughout our lives, we are continuously exposed to external stimuli that shape both conscious and subconscious patterns of thinking and behavior. This meditation technique encourages participants to explore these patterns more deeply. According to Buddhist teachings, suffering arises from human desire that manifests in the form of craving and aversion. Through careful observation and self-awareness, participants may develop a greater understanding of these tendencies and learn to respond to them more skillfully.

THE THREE STAGES OF PRACTICE

1. **Anapana** (Awareness of Natural Breathing)

The course begins by helping participants develop concentration and mental focus through the practice of **Anapana**, which involves observing the natural breath.

Participants are encouraged to observe their experience without attempting to change it or evaluate it as good or bad. They simply observe:

- The air entering and leaving the nostrils
- The temperature of the air as it enters and exits
- Whether the breath flows more through one nostril or both
- Where the breath touches the inner walls of the nostrils

This practice helps participants strengthen concentration and sharpen awareness.

As concentration develops, participants narrow their focus to the small triangular area between the tip of their nose and the upper lip. They continue to simply observe:

- The air moving through this area
- Changes in temperature as the breath passes through
- Sensations created by the breath touching the area

Focusing on this smaller area further develops concentration and sensitivity to subtle experiences.

2. **Vipassana** (The process of carefully scanning the body while maintaining an attitude of observation and non-judgment)

Once participants become comfortable with **Anapana** practice, they are introduced to Vipassana. Participants begin by placing their attention on the crown of the head and observing any sensations. If no sensation is noticed, participants simply acknowledge this and continue.

Participants then systematically move their attention through the body, one area at a time, from the top of the head to the tips of the toes. At each location, they pause briefly to observe any sensations before continuing.

With consistent practice, participants may develop greater self-awareness, emotional balance, mental clarity, and insight into habitual patterns of thought and reaction.

3. **Metta** (Loving-Kindness Meditation)

During the second week of the course, participants are introduced to **Metta**, or loving-kindness meditation.

Metta is the practice of cultivating goodwill, compassion, forgiveness, and positive intentions toward oneself and others. Participants are encouraged to generate feelings of kindness and well-wishing for all beings, including themselves.

DETAILS OF THE TWO-WEEK COURSE

The program begins with two optional Informational Sessions – You may choose from either:

- **In person** on Sunday, June 28th at 11am at the ACLT office at the North Side Trailhead (676 Double Oak Rd, Prince Frederick).
- **Online** on Monday, June 29th – 7pm

For classes, participants attend one in-person session each weekend (either Saturday or Sunday) continuing the sessions online for the remaining six days.

Week One

Saturday **or** Sunday (In-Person Session) (see dates & times below)

- Introduction to **Anapana** meditation
- 20 minutes of guided **Anapana** practice
- Silent walk on an ACLT trail without conversation, eye contact, or physical contact with others
- Questions, discussion, and feedback

Remainder of the Week (Online Sessions)

- 20 minutes of instructor-led **Anapana** meditation for the first 3 days, then focusing on the triangular area between the tip of the nose and upper lip for the remainder of the week
- Questions, discussion and feedback

Week Two

Saturday **or** Sunday (In-Person Session) (see dates & times below)

- Introduction to **Vipassana** meditation
- 20 minutes of guided **Vipassana** practice
- Silent walk on an ACLT trail without conversation, eye contact, or physical contact with others
- 5 minutes of **Metta** meditation
- Questions, discussion, and feedback

Remainder of the Week (Online Sessions)

- 20 minutes of instructor-led **Vipassana** meditation
- 5 minutes of **Metta** meditation
- Questions, discussion, and feedback

SUMMER CLASS SCHEDULE*:

Informational Session(s):

- **In Person** on Sunday, June 28th – 11 am at the ACLT Office, 676 Double Oak Rd, Prince Frederick, MD
- **Online** on Monday, June 29th – 7pm

Meditation Classes Week One:

- **In Person** on Saturday **or** Sunday, July 11th or 12th – 8am at the Natural Play Space, ACLT North Side Trailhead.
- **Online** Weeknights – 7:30-7:50pm

Meditation Classes Week Two:

- **In Person** on Saturday **or** Sunday, July 18th or 19th – 8am at the Natural Play Space, ACLT North Side Trailhead.
- **Online** Weeknights – 7:30-7:50pm

***Please Note:** *This course requires a considerable time commitment, including both **in-person** weekend and **online** weeknight sessions. The weekend sessions are especially important for learning the technique, with the weekday session focusing on practice. **If you are unable to attend either of the weekend sessions, we recommend postponing your registration.** The course may be offered again in the future based on interest.*

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Participants who wish to explore a more intensive meditation experience may consider attending a traditional 10-day silent **Vipassana** retreat. Information about free courses offered worldwide is available at: www.dhamma.org.