



Ahimsa Trust

Mindfulness * Community * Education
Initiatives



The 'Brahma Kamal' (Lotus), a flower that blooms rarely.

"Waking up this morning, I smile. Twenty-four brand new hours are before me. I vow to live fully in each moment and to look at all beings with eyes of compassion."

-Thich Nhat Hanh

13th February, 2022

Dear friends,

It has been a hard year gone by and as we move into 2022 we wish each of you a year full of peace and good health.

Last August the Chairman and Founding Trustee of Ahimsa Trust, Mr Premnath Seth passed away. (There is a tribute to him later in the newsletter) and then on January 22, our beloved teacher Thich Nhat Hanh, fondly known as Thay (for teacher) transitioned. Shantum mentioned how he feels that he had lost his two fathers in the span of 6 months, the one who gave him birth by blood and the other by breath.

Below is a letter written by Dharmacharya Shantum to the Indian sangha on the day of Thay's passing.

Dear Sangha Siblings,

Thay passed away peacefully at our root temple in Hue, Vietnam last night.

Thay is free as the Buddha was many centuries ago. There are not many who are able to transcend the constraints and concepts of birth and death. Thay has shown us the path of awakening as a human being, of being the white cloud in the blue sky, and he always carried the confidence in us, his students, that we have that potential too.

With great compassion, he taught us moment by moment for decades and built a global sangha. Thay dearly loved India, the home of his own teacher, the Buddha, and many of us were blessed by his presence and practice when he visited India in 1988, 1997 and 2008.



This morning, my heart is deeply pained with grief and yet I know that Thay is continuing to teach me. I feel him in every conscious breath and step and I see him in many forms.

Thay watching the sunset at the Vulture Peak, Rajgir

Another day has dawned and as I hear the rain outside in Noida, I am reminded again of Thay himself saying, 'I am a continuation, like the rain is the continuation of the cloud.'

With a prostrations of gratitude and deep respect to our beloved teacher,

Shantum/ Satya Marg (Ordination name)
Ahimsa Trust

Our teacher is now free as a cloud.

For more links to Thich Nhat Hanh's memorial and condolences please do visit <https://plumvillage.org/>

As we mourn collectively this deep loss, we know that Thay continues in us and in the beauty of the Kachnar trees blooming in the freezing cold of North India and the warmth of Goa. His teachings and practices will continue to inspire many of us around the world. We are sharing films that were made during Thich Nhat Hanh's visits to India in 1997 and 2008.

Steps of Mindfulness - A Journey with Thich Nhat Hanh. Directed by Thomas Luechinger based on Thich Nhat Hanh's visit to India in 1997.

<https://www.cultureunplugged.com/documentary/watch-online/play/13241/Steps-of-Mindfulness---a-Journey-with-Thich-Nhat-Hanh>

A Lotus for you...A Buddha to be. Directed by Aradhana Seth and produced by Rajiv Mehrotra/PSBT based on Thay's visit in 2008. It was shown on National TV in India.

<https://youtu.be/PAUF2nRMhUs>

Please do watch them. There are also available on our website at :

<https://ahimsatrust.org/thay-in-india/#thayInIndia>

Ahimsa has completed 25 years spreading the ethics of peace and sustainable development through alliances and programmes including retreats and teachings to bring mindfulness into education and the wider culture of society, artisanal livelihoods based on environmental and gender sensitivity, responsible tourism and supporting the poor in health and education.



So we gifted ourselves with a brand new website!

Do take a look at www.ahimsatrust.org This website has been put together by a team of volunteers from all across the world. We are thankful for their time, hard work and dedication in putting together the website and completing it in time to commemorate Ahimsa Trust's 25th Anniversary.

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. **Courses/Retreat:** A retreat and some other programs are scheduled in April, 2022 when we have the monastics from the Plum Village Tradition visiting India. The dates will be announced in February.
2. An **Evening of Mindfulness (includes talks, practices, meditations):** Every last Saturday of the month. Details will be sent by email.
3. **Sangha Gatherings on Mindfulness:** Gurgaon, Noida, Central Delhi, Dehradun, South Delhi. Led separately by each sangha on a fortnightly or monthly basis on Zoom. Please visit our website for details <https://ahimsatrust.org/events/> You may contact the coordinators directly or write to us at ahimsa.trust@gmail.com
4. Ahimsa Trust is also committing to the Shiv Nadar Schools in offering them our support to set up a Mindfulness sangha in their respective schools, with their teacher and parent community.

AHIMSA NEWS

Ahimsa was involved over the past months with many activities during the pandemic. It has been our endeavour to reach out and support people in need with our programmes. If you scroll down or click on the [Read More](#) link at the end of this box you can get details on some of our projects/programs, as well as links to our talks.

I. Covid Relief Programme

Thankfully, by September last year the Covid cases went on a decline and some kind of normalcy started to return. Ahimsa Trust continued to reach out to the villages near Shantiniketan and Dehradun in providing Covid relief supplies to the people and families who were affected. However by December, we had a resurgence due to the Omicron variant and have again been supporting people with tele-doctoring and medicines. We were able to carry out this work only because of the timely help and support of the generous contributions made to Ahimsa by our donors both in India and overseas. [Read More](#)

II. Sustainable Livelihoods

Community development initiatives which have been supported by Ahimsa over 20 years continue in the villages in the Shantiniketan area, West Bengal, India. [Read More](#)

III. Mindfulness

Dharmacharya Shantum on his visit to the US offered talks and teachings at a few places. Some online programmes were offered and continue to be offered. Please feel free to join any of them in future and click on Read More for details/ links to talks and programmes in the last few months.

A. **Rose Ceremony organised by Plum Village – A Celebration of our Parents** (8th August 2021) [Read More](#)

B. **A Morning of Mindfulness with the San Diego Sangha** (26th August 2021) [Read More](#)

C. **Dharmacharya Shantum in conversation with Dharmacharya Cynthia Jurs in Santa Fe** (30th October 2021) [Read More](#)

D. **A Morning of Mindfulness, including the recitation of the 14 Mindfulness Trainings** (15th January 2022) [Read More](#)

E. **Sitting and Sharing for Thay by the Indian sangha online** (23rd January to 29th January, 2022) [Read More](#)

F. Fortnightly and Monthly **Sangha gatherings** led separately by our Gurgaon, Noida, Central Delhi, Dehradun and South Delhi sanghas on Zoom.

G. **Translation** of Thich Nhat Hanh's books/practices in Hindi.

IV. Education Support

Ahimsa Trust, through its donors and well-wishers continues to support the school education of a number of economically disadvantaged children. Please contact us if you want to support a child's education. [Read More](#)

V. Jamun Village

The work on the land towards a Plum Village in India slowed down due to the lockdowns last year but now it is progressing. [Read More](#)

AN APPEAL

We are very thankful to our donors who supported us for our Covid Relief Programme in Shantiniketan and Dehradun. We continue to so appreciate any support to set up Jamun Village, a Mindfulness Practice Centre in India and would love for you to be part of this vision. The work on Jamun Village is progressing under phase 1 of completion. Please write to us if you are interested in knowing more about Jamun Village and we will send the proposal and Detailing of all the 3 Phases to you.



If you are located in the US please find the following link for donations through "Friends of Ahimsa Foundation' (FOA), a 501(c)(3) entity. [Donate](#)

If you are in India or anywhere else in the world please click on the Donate button below.

“My actions are my only true belongings.”

- Thich Nhat Hanh

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Ahimsa is a volunteer driven organisation. We are very thankful to the volunteers who have worked very hard on the new Ahimsa website. This whole website has been put together by a team of volunteers from all across the world. We are particularly thankful to Renate, Wit, Shameem, Anita, Chandana, Poonam, Amudha, Hemant, Jatin who helped us kickstart this project and to Raj, Prashant, Deepak, Deepshikha and Sandeep who guided us through its completion. A special thanks to Shalini who diligently and calmly persevered with this project from beginning to the end.

Our volunteers continue to help in translating practices and texts into Hindi. Many friends have offered their time, energy, and resources.

Tech support is always welcome to guide us on social media, mail chimp and other online platforms.

For our Mindfulness Practice Centre, Jamun Village, we are looking for landscape architects, enthusiastic gardeners, designers who can share their insights and inputs. Please feel free to offer whatever little time or energy you can afford.

Do join our wonderful volunteer team !

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MEDIA & OUTREACH

Inspiring articles in Newspapers

Ahimsa Trust's Communications Team continues to supply articles online by Thich Nhat Hanh to the Economic Times and Speaking Tree, a supplement on wellness by The Times of India national daily. Do watch out for the articles.

<https://www.speakingtree.in/article/take-care-of-the-apple-tree-in-your-yard>

In this 4 part article, Thich Nhat Hanh tells us how to draw happiness from the beauty around.



SUGGESTIONS

New Years Eve Dharma Talk, by Br. Phap Huu on 31st December, 2021

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpLI6uKQHCC>

Br. Phap Huu is the Abbot of Upper Hamlet, Plum Village, France. This talk was offered live from Upper Hamlet and begins with chanting by the monks and nuns.

Book Recommendation:

Breathe ! You are Alive by Thich Nhat Hanh

Published by: Parallax Press and Full Circle (in India)

'Breathing brings the secret joy of meditation to you. You become joyful, fresh and tolerant and everyone around you will benefit.'

TRIBUTE TO MR. PREMNATH SETH, THE CHAIRMAN AND FOUNDING TRUSTEE OF AHIMSA

Premnath Seth, the Chairman and Founding Trustee of Ahimsa passed away peacefully on the 5th of August at his home in Noida, India. He was in his 98th year.

What a wonderful life he led, from being involved in India's liberation movement, consequently being expelled from College for five years for pulling down the British flag and hoisting India's freedom flag and later going back to University (St Stephen's college) to study English Honours.

He took up the unorthodox career to be a shoemaker and later in life used to be called the 'Shoe guru' or Mr Shoe! He worked 24 years at the Bata Shoe Company where among other jobs, he recruited and trained thousands of managers who now lead the footwear industry in India. He then helped companies, like Tata, Shaw Wallace and Bally to set up their shoe manufacturing units. He helped the Government of India develop the leather and footwear industry through the State Trading Corporation, and then was appointed the Chairman of the Handicrafts and Handlooms Export Corporation of India. Later he set up the Footwear Design and Development Institute for the Ministry of Commerce and Industry that still



ensures employment to thousands each year.

When Ahimsa Trust was being set up in 1996, he was invited and readily agreed to be the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. His experience both with the Government and the private sector, and his close association with the artisan sector made him a perfect choice.

He was a result oriented man, always keeping a list of 'Things to do, Today', that had to be ticked off by the evening. He always offered eminently practical and sage like advice on the running and direction of Ahimsa. He lived a wonderful life with a twinkle in his eyes, full of warmth, kindness, helpfulness, elegance and energy.

When he was asked what his religion was he said 'To be good, to do good'. He was a Karma Yogi, helping to provide jobs and livelihoods to many thousands. It was in helping others and being generous, hospitable and caring that he got great joy.

He shared his boundless love as a father and grandfather, something he had not experienced, being orphaned at 2 years of age. He was a wonderful and supportive husband, always encouraging his wife, the late Justice Leila Seth in her career.

He was Dharmacharya Shantum's father and he and his siblings say, 'they chose their parents well!'

Premnath Seth continues in so many whose lives he touched and contributed to and he continues in everything we as Ahimsa Trust do. May his energy continue to bless us.

Wishing you all well.

With maitri and a deep bow,

Ahimsa Trust

ahimsa.trust@gmail.com

If you have any questions, please feel free to speak with Shalini at 8860694315 (10 am to 3 pm) or you can check our website www.ahimsatrust.org

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