



ahimsa

“Because suffering is impermanent, that is why we can transform it. Because happiness is impermanent, that is why we have to nourish it”

- *Thich Nhat Hanh*



Ahimsa Trust is a volunteer driven, non-profit organisation, geared towards educational, social and cultural work, aimed at creating peace and harmony within oneself, one's family and society. The Trust was established in 1996. The Trust also represents the Zen Master, Thich Nhat Hanh and his community in India.

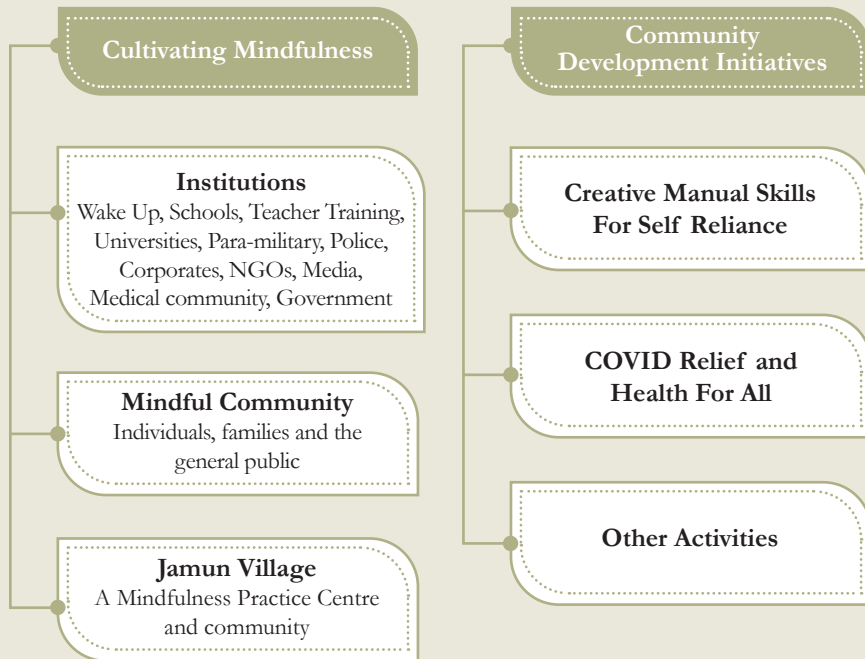


Thich Nhat Hanh leading walking meditation from the President's residence to India Gate on Rajpath, New Delhi

on Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary, 2008



# Initiatives



## 1. Cultivating Mindfulness

Ahimsa Trust promotes the practice of cultivating mindfulness - the energy of being aware and awake to the present moment. This practice enables the practitioner to touch life deeply in every living moment and be truly alive and present to themselves and to those around.

The Trust organises regular mindfulness meditation practice sessions, retreats, talks and events, inviting facilitators from India and across the world to lead sessions in India, primarily in and around Delhi and Dehradun.

### A. Institutions

The Trust collaborates with schools, colleges, the para-military and police force, government agencies, corporates, media and the medical community. The main focus has been working with educators in schools, colleges and more recently with the police force.



Plum Village monastics teaching at a retreat at Vasant Valley School, New Delhi, India



## Wake Up Schools

*Mindfulness and Applied Ethics in Education*

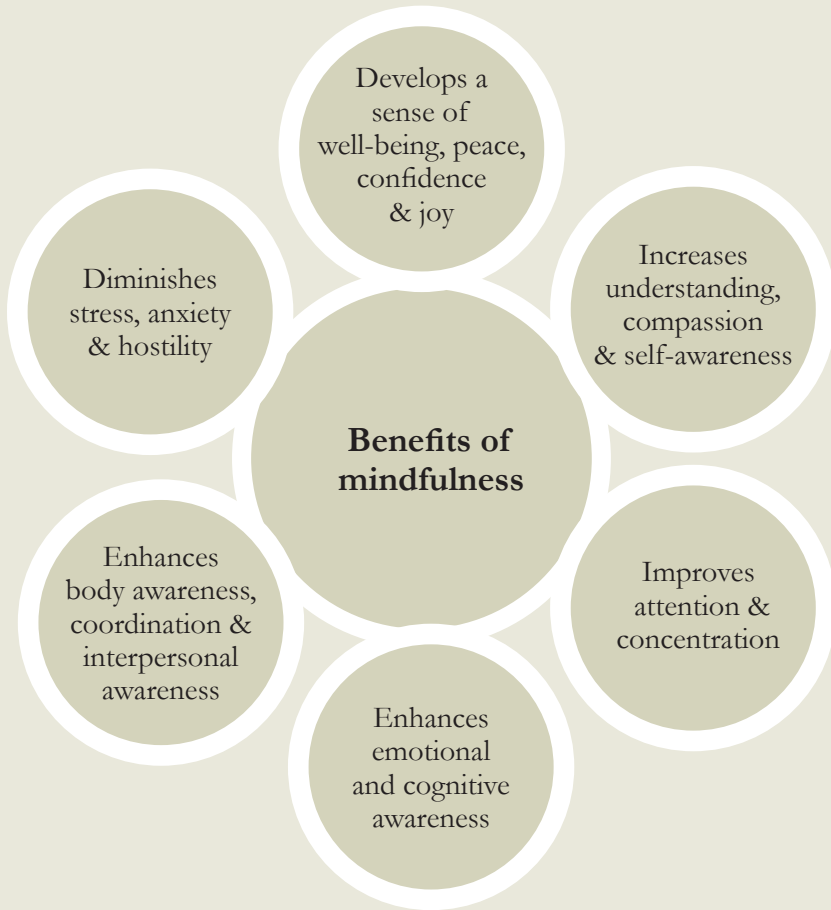
Ahimsa Trust is a part of an international movement of Wake Up schools, dedicated to bringing the benefits of mindfulness, social, emotional and ethical learning to education.

Since 1999, Ahimsa has offered numerous workshops to thousands of educators across India. The workshops are designed as retreats, with the goal of assisting teachers to imbibe the practice for their personal lives and then, to share it with their students.

Ahimsa Trust is committed to reviving the ancient Indian pedagogical practice of Mindfulness in Education.

**“We feel blessed to have been part of the retreat and it was your kind patience and guidance that enabled the community to experience the energy of mindfulness.”**

- Ms. Shashi Banerjee (Director of Education, Shiv Nadar Schools)



“A wonderful experience that has taught me the simplest way to relax and live in the moment. I thought that this session would be all about exerting control on mind and body, but the wonderful teachers showed me an easy path that just taught me to be aware of myself and be present in the moment. I hope to convert my lessons into a habit that would transform my life and help me let go of my anger.”

– Allu Pratheek (Central Reserve Police Force, India)



Dharmacharya Shantum Seth shares the practice of walking meditation with the Central Reserve Police officers, in Bihar, India.



## Peace in Oneself, Peace in the World

*Mindfulness with the Para-military and police forces:*

Ahimsa Trust was approached by the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to conduct trainings in mindfulness with their officers and personnel. These forces work under high pressure and stress having to treat other Indians as adversaries. There are high instances of suicide and fratricide among them.

Ahimsa teachers have offered a variety of mindfulness practices, talks and initiated group interactions through retreats and days of mindfulness for CRPF officers of various ranks.

They have now trained more than 6,000 personnel. Ahimsa has received requests to follow up such workshops with more paramilitary units and their families.

Ahimsa Trust considers bringing mindfulness to this community a high priority as part of its work on peace in oneself and peace in the world. Police and Forest officers in the northern Indian state of Uttarakhand have also been attending retreats and mindfulness sessions.



## B. Mindful Communities

*Individuals, families and society*

Ahimsa Trust works in many ways and offers the practice of mindfulness to the general public through its teachers and volunteers. The Trust offers:

- **Bi- public sessions monthly sessions** on mindfulness in Dehradun, different areas in and around Delhi and India, (including on-line). The groups come together at regular intervals to deepen their practice and strengthen the community.
- **Days on Mindfulness, full moon celebrations, lectures/talks and retreats** in India which are open to the public.
- **In house training** to develop a core group of trainers who will lead and share mindfulness practices.



Annual Vesak Full moon evening of mindfulness at the sapling of the original Bodhi Tree, Sanskriti Kendra, New Delhi

**“I learnt how to relax, control my stress, and untie the knot in my head, express and share”**

– Riya Misra, (Student, Vasant Valley School, New Delhi)

**“I learned how to enjoy a simple thing such as breathing. I learned how to deal with uncomfortable situations”**

– Pranati Kobli (Student, Vasant Valley School, New Delhi)

## C. Jamun Village

*A Community and Centre for Mindfulness*

Inspired by the example of the community of mindfulness practitioners led by Thich Nhat Hanh at Plum Village (located in the south of France) and other intentional communities around the world, Ahimsa Trust is setting up Jamun Village – a Mindfulness Practice Centre. Jamun is the Black Plum tree under which the Buddha first sat in meditation at the age of nine. The Centre is conceived as a living five fold community, of monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen and children. A retreat and mindful refuge for individuals and families for those who want to live in harmony with the ecology and society, in the area.



Thich Nhat Hanh planting a Banyan tree and blessing the land of Jamun Village, Dehradun

It will be a home for those who want to live in the beauty and the magic of mindful awareness and engage in bringing joy and happiness to people’s lives, our wider community and nature.

**The Centre plans to serve the community by:**

- a) Setting up a Mindfulness Practice Centre which will offer a daily practice for those living there, evenings and days of mindfulness for the public, weekend retreats, and programmes for children and families.

- b) Conducting retreats & workshops on mindfulness and outdoor learning with educators, the police and para-military and the wider public.
- c) Developing a cultural space where people can share, experiment and develop their creativity in the areas of theatre, film, dance, music, art, literature etc.
- d) Developing a holistic and interactive library/audio visual centre and a play area for children.
- e) Offering naturopathy training to the local community & setting up a Naturopathy Centre.
- f) Setting up a 10 mile restaurant which will organise fund raisers for the Trust by offering an organic brunch and high tea, once a week.
- g) Organising Sustainable Tourism Workshops.
- h) Designing craft products and services based on non-violent economics.

Besides the above activities, the Centre will be focusing on best practices related to water and waste management, alternative sustainable energy, organic farming and eco-building designs.

The Centre plans to be self-sustaining and economically independent using the means of right livelihood.



Core Group meeting at Jamun Village, Rajpur, Dehradun

**“To me, mindfulness means being calm, peaceful and happy. Seeing things with greater clarity, with more understanding including seeing the other point of view; being less reactive, seeing things with the required distance and freshness; more joy, patience, and simply love and a deep openness of heart; feel kinder towards others and myself too.”**

*- Indira Unninayar, Supreme Court Lawyer, Core group member*

## 2. Community Development Initiatives

The volunteers and Trustees of Ahimsa Trust have been involved in community development and the promotion of artisan skills and mode of living, before the inception of Ahimsa Trust in 1996.

### A. Creative Manual Skills for Self-Reliance

Since inception, Ahimsa Trust has supported a community development programme in eight villages of West Bengal, two of which are predominantly Muslim, three Hindu, and three of Santhal tribals.



The aim of this project was to enhance existing skills and technology making people more self-reliant; work with farmers who are trying to return to multi-cropping from a single crop of paddy; support women's groups who cultivate vegetables and medicinal herbs organically

through kitchen gardens; provide education to pre-school children; institute micro-credit schemes especially for women; encourage youth groups, while enhancing environmental awareness and gender sensitisation; support artisans who make functional and decorative crafts and pickles with sustainable livelihoods; develop an outreach and income-generating responsible tourism project.

### B. COVID Relief

Ahimsa Trust was engaged in supporting villages around Shantiniketan, as well as communities and organisations in Dehradun, during the crisis.

The work in the villages of Shantiniketan was multifaceted as we were simultaneously working towards spreading awareness about Covid and supplying Covid care items, arranging timely medical assistance, tele-doctoring etc. We trained our Ahimsa volunteers to generate awareness about symptoms, use oximeters and oxygen



concentrators and share that with villagers, especially mothers. We offered masks, soaps and dry rations to around 800 adults and 300 children.

In the Dehradun area, we provided local organisations and people including the police and hospitals with essential Covid supplies including masks, soaps, Covid protocol instructions, Oximeters, PPE kits, sanitizers, and oxygen concentrators. Loss of livelihood and employment had been enormous due to Covid and as a result 160 families were supported with dry food rations for over four months in Rajpur, Ammasari and Kairwaan villages.

As the village homes are congested, Ahimsa set up an isolation Covid Relief room in Jamun Village, that was easily accessible to villagers.

With Covid, there was a lot of mental anguish and fear, which was alleviated by mindfulness meditative practices that were continually offered for over 2 years.

For our detailed Covid reports please visit our website.



Distribution of food in Rajpur Village

## Health For All

The Health for All (HFA) programme is an offshoot of the Covid Home Care Project. Ahimsa Facilitators spend a lot of time in the villages, specifically with the 100 kitchen gardeners and the 70 youth group members. This allows Ahimsa to formulate awareness programmes on both health and climate change, since frequently these two areas merge. The HFA has decided to work on four common illnesses in the four quarters: Diabetes, Anemia, Tuberculosis and Kidney health. Diet is crucial to all four.

We support all-year kitchen gardens, as we feel that balanced diets are a cornerstone to good health. Locally produced, organically grown food with multi-cropping is an integral part of the struggle against changes brought on by the climate crisis.

We work with youth groups to plant and protect trees, grow turmeric and ginger and build an understanding about climate change and about their own role in saving the planet.

## C. Other Activities

- Sponsoring education of children, especially girls
- Peace Education
- Spreading environmental awareness
- Distributing books
- Improving livelihoods and the habitat
- Supporting artisans
- Providing medical assistance
- Organising talks and retreats by different teachers like Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh and the monastics of the Order of Interbeing, Prof. Robert Thurman, Ajahn Sumedho, Stephen Batchelor, and Sharon Salzberg.



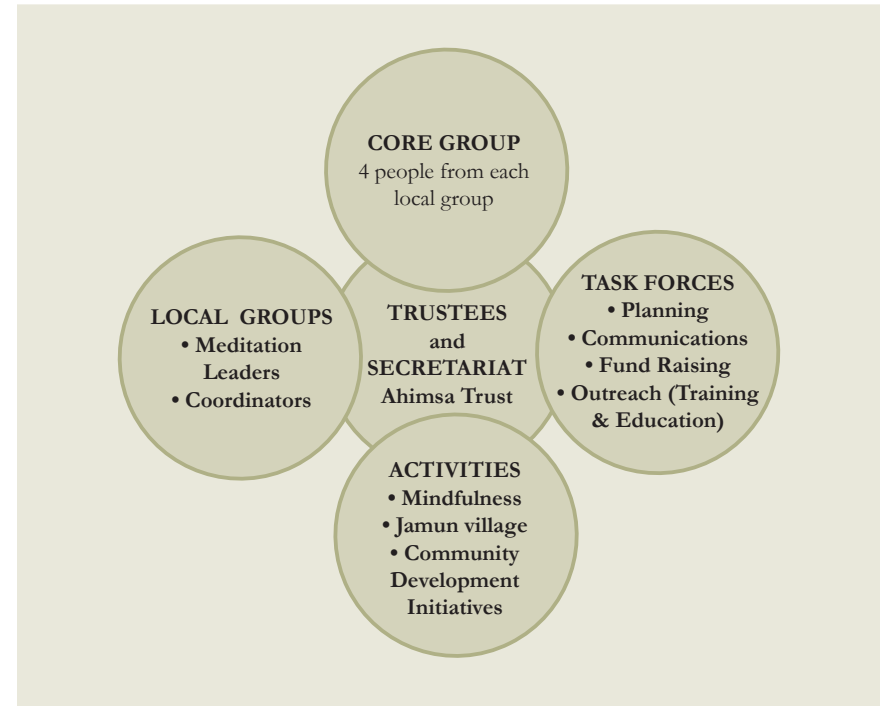
Ahimsa team member training villager on Covid Hygiene

“Compassion is a verb” – *Thich Nhat Hanh*



## Structure of The Trust

Ahimsa Trust is a lean operation. Its management and activities are carried out nearly wholly by volunteers



## Supporters

Ahimsa Trust has been supported by multi-lateral and bi-lateral development aid agencies, such as the Friends of Ahimsa Foundation, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Volunteers, Australian Aid, Irish Aid and various agencies of the Government of India and the Government of Delhi. Companies like Seth Consultants Pvt Ltd., Hero FinCorp and Max India. Private foundations like Bani Jagtiani Trust, Spice Foundation, AQUA PEARLS and Planet Blue foundation. Hundreds of volunteers, donors and patrons like Thich Nhat Hanh, Ashok and Suvarna Desai, Gitanjali and Shantum Seth, Anuradha and Tarun Bakshi, Suvitra and Prabhu Mahapatra, Annie and Paul Mahon, Prem Nath Seth, Aman Nath, Krishno Dey, Malvika Rajkotia, Rodney Kazuma, Grace Tam and Hong Kong sangha, Enid Sanford, Will Stephens, Jacalyn Bennett, Simran Lal and Raul Rai.



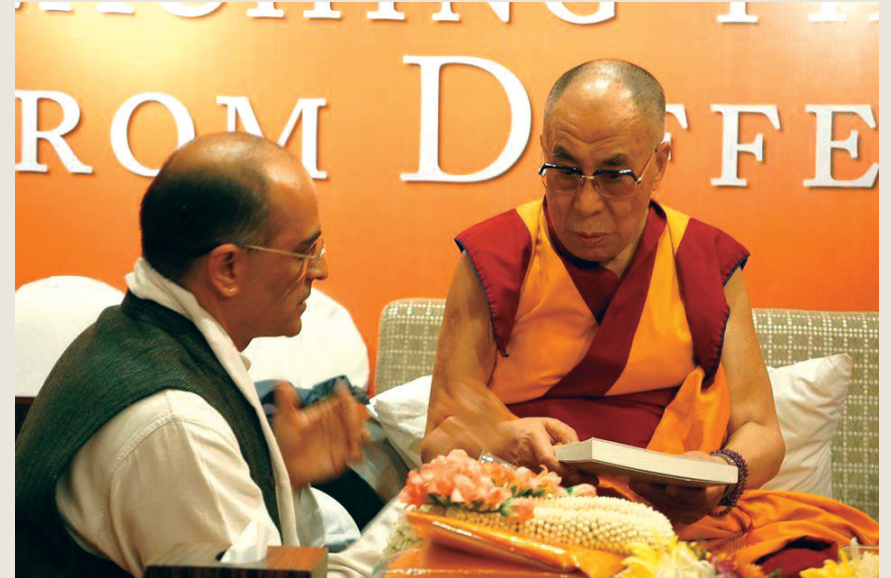
## How You Can Be Involved

At Ahimsa Trust we firmly believe that the perennial messages and practices of manifesting peace and love are even more relevant today than ever before. This is both in the inner and outer dimensions of our lives.

We feel privileged to be able to draw on the support of our trustees, advisors and volunteers from diverse fields such as education, social development, local habitat regeneration, creative arts, cultural heritage, law, tourism and contemplative practices. We would like to widen that circle of friends and supporters both within India and across the world.

There are many ways you could be involved with the activities of Ahimsa Trust by contributing:

- **Human Resources:** Depute/support human-power (even a few hours a week) to help the:
  - Secretariat: Skills in administration, communication, accounting, social media, outreach
  - Jamun Village: Skills in the areas of eco-building, organic farming, water and waste management or sustainable energy. We are seeking contractors, architects, landscape architects, electricians, plumbers, naturopath-doctors, gardeners, engineers etc.
- **Funds:** for building our corpus or any of the activities.
- **Time:** by being part of the volunteer team:
  - Support the Secretariat, the communications and outreach team, fundraising team or help organise mindfulness retreats and workshops
  - Help us by identifying ecologically sustainable ways of building and managing the land in areas such as, architecture, landscaping and building materials, water, energy and waste management. We would appreciate your expertise in the above areas in terms of: -
    - Research via the internet, books, experience of people in the field
    - Identification of and introduction to best practices in these area
    - Introduction to experts in any of the above areas



Offering His Holiness the Dalai Lama a copy of *Planting Seeds: Practicing Mindfulness with Children* by Thich Nhat Hanh



“Ahimsa is the highest duty. Even if we cannot practice it in full, we must try to understand its spirit and refrain as far as is humanly possible from violence.”

– Gandhi



Pilgrims at Bodhi Gaya on Plum Village journey.



The printing of this brochure is supported by Seth Consultants/Buddha Path that organises transformative pilgrimage journeys. It offers a percentage of its proceeds as donations to Ahimsa, through which the work and corpus of Ahimsa has been built up since 1996.

## Financial Support

### For contributions by Indian nationals

Please make a draft/cheque payable to : AHIMSA  
and mail to 309-B, Sector 15A, Noida - 201301

or

### For Bank transfers :

Beneficiary Name : **AHIMSA**  
Account Number : **524-1-004636-8**  
Bank Details : Standard Chartered Bank, 13 Malcha Marg,  
Chanakyapuri, New Delhi – 110 021 (INDIA)  
IFSC CODE : **SCBL0036031**

By **Credit Card/Debit Card/Net Banking/UPI** (For Indian nationals only) :  
<https://ahimsatrust.org/contribute/>

All contributions made to the Trust are eligible for exemption under  
Section 80-G of the Income Tax Act 1961.

### For contributions by Non-Indian nationals

#### 1. By bank transfer or net banking

Account Name : **AHIMSA**  
Account Number : **40045982554** (FCRA SAVINGS ACCOUNT)  
Bank Details : STATE BANK OF INDIA, Branch Code : 00691  
Bank Address : FCRA Cell, 4th Floor, State Bank of India, New Delhi  
Main Branch, 11, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001  
**IFSC** : **SBIN0000691**  
**SWIFT** : **SBININBB104**

#### 2. For US Tax payers who would like to avail of the 501(c)(3) tax exemption

Cheque in the name of : **Friends of Ahimsa Foundation Inc**  
Address: Friends of Ahimsa Foundation Inc  
PO Box 494  
The Plains  
VA 20198-0494  
USA





If interested, please contact:

**AHIMSA TRUST**

309-B, Sector 15 A, Noida 201301, India

Mobile number +91 8860694315

Email: [ahimsa.trust@gmail.com](mailto:ahimsa.trust@gmail.com)

[www.ahimsatrust.org](http://www.ahimsatrust.org)