

Cultivating the Mind

A day of Mindfulness at Heritage GCE campus 13th March, 2024

Mrs Kirandeep Kaur, Principal Heritage GCE campus, having experienced Ahimsa Trust's 2-day retreat at Heritage Rohini in January 2023, was very keen to bring Plum Village practices to Heritage GCE campus, which she now leads.

There was a total of 105 participants for the day of Mindfulness. All teaching faculty and administrative staff from the GCE, and 5 participants each from all the other Heritage campuses participated in the day's practices. They all offered beautiful presence and very little or no distractions through the day. The time management of each practice, flow of sessions and movement through the day was well planned and well executed.

- Sitting meditation was led by Sr Tue Nghiem
- Dharma talk was led by Br Bao Tich
- Walking meditation & songs were led by Br Pham Hanh
- Deep relaxation was led by Br Dinh Tuc

In Sangha's view and in their impression of interacting with some participants & with Vaishali, it is felt that the day of mindfulness has touched the participants deeply.

Br Bao Tich started his Dharma Talk with some exploratory questions and built very well on the issues that impact the participants. The talk was engaging and was received very well!

Loving & joyful Plum Village songs were loved by the school's teachers, and they saw how to use these in their work with the children and even with parents.

The walking meditation, 'silence' during the guided meditation, enjoying a meal in peace and calm, the stability and clarity of monastics touched the hearts of the participants.

The deep relaxation did not go as well as one would have liked, and that was because the sound was echoing and when volume was lowered, the voice was too soft to follow the brother's words.

In family rooms, most monastics started with an interesting light activity to connect participants with themselves / the next person. This helped participants ease into the

group and they shared how they had never noticed the beauty of flowers, birds, walking in peace, thinking about myself, ... before. They also shared how they felt constrained by the expectations of their jobs & lives and did not know how to make time for mindfulness after this day. These concerns were addressed in individual conversations, family rooms. However, this is also our insight into what people need after a day of mindfulness .. **how to continue?** Some groups had very deep sharing from their vulnerable space as well!

What Heritage did really well:

- Freeze the date and timings quickly
- Invite 5 participants each from other campuses
- Ambience creation
- Planning of spaces for all the events very meticulously

In hindsight,

- I would visit the school a day before and check all systems – sound / spaces /...
- Align the team / monastics on a zoom call a day before. I learnt this from Shubhra's prep call for corporate event. It brings a lot more clarity on what each sangha member could do more / better on the day, and to the monastics that may lead the practices.
- Ahimsa can plan to sell calligraphies through the book stall. These were very popular at MAX event
- We can plan to introduce the books that may be more relevant to the participants during / at the end of Dharma talk

Follow up: I would like to suggest meeting with Vaishali and Kiran online to explore how can we help them take the practice forward. E.g... would they like to form Heritage GCE sangha, where one or two Ahimsa members could periodically post Thay's content / PV songs / public events like Budh Poornima etc.

Annexure 1: Schedule

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Day of Mindfulness @ HXLS-GCE Campus

13th March, 2024

Schedule

8:00 am	Seated in the Meditation Hall
8:00 – 9:00	Introductions Plum Village Songs Guided Sitting Meditation
9:00 – 9:15	Mindful Movements
9:15 – 10:30	Dharma Talk
10:30 – 10:40	Bio break
10:45	Assemble at the steps of the school foyer
10:45 – 11:30	Singing & Walking Meditation
11:30 – 12:30	Mindful Lunch
12:40	Assemble for Deep Relaxation
12:40 – 1:20	Deep Relaxation
	Move to Family Rooms
1:30 – 2:50	Circle Sharing
3:00	Assemble in the Meditation Hall
3:00 - 3:30 pm	Closing

Annexure 2: Pictures



