

INNER PEACE ASSOCIATION

INNER PEACE

MEDITATE TO REGENERATE



The Inner Peace Project

Uniting two voluntary projects, aimed at awakening the desire in our younger generations for a world without conflict.

We are proud to present a project that is the result of the fusion of two international initiatives: **Inner Peace and Meditate to Regenerate**.

The two original projects were **complementary**, in that they shared a single desire: that of sowing the seeds of peace and understanding in upcoming generations, and cultivating the necessary foundations for a better world.

Inner Peace began as **Inner Peace Day, an international celebration of 21 March as the World Day for Inner Peace**. The idea behind it was to establish a day in schools dedicated to World Peace, where students could experience inner peace for themselves, through meditation.

The initiative was so successful that it was not long before the project was extended to cover the entire academic year (through the Inner Peace Class project) **in 51 countries, reaching millions of students everywhere, from nurseries through to universities**.

Every day is now a World Day for Inner Peace. Meanwhile, Meditate to Regenerate was set up to spread the message of peace in some of the most troubled areas around the world: refugee camps, occupied territories and places devastated by war.

The project involved the efforts of scores of volunteers and brought not only hope but also practical help to children growing up in highly challenging surroundings. Here, too, meditation was the key to turning the message of peace into a real experience, rather than just empty words.

By fusing these two projects, we are now potentially able to reach all the children and young people in the world, wherever they might be and in whatever circumstances they may be living. The resulting Inner Peace/Meditate to Regenerate project is ready to achieve the noblest of ideals: that of inspiring an entire generation to finally establish peace throughout the world.



Collaborations

The Inner Peace Project, combined with Meditate to Regenerate, is supported by a network of international collaborations with charities and NGOs. Below are some of the main ones:



Ⓜ From top to left:
 Save the Children - UNICEF - Global Networks for Rights and Development - Caritas - YMCA (Lebanon) - IRC - SOS Children's Village - CONI - AIESEC - Unesco Center for Peace.

Inner Peace Day

Inner Peace is an international project that, for many years, has involved hundreds of thousands of students around the world. The project's aim is to spread a universal message of peace through meditation.

Certain international figures from recent history, such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela, have always asserted a simple principle: to realise peace throughout the world, people first need to feel it within themselves. Although this path has been clearly displayed by their example, the absence of peace continues to leave its mark on our daily lives: violence, racism, religious intolerance and wars trouble our existence all the time. What our association is proposing is based on the consideration that peace is not simply a concept but an inner state that can be easily achieved.

Our experience has confirmed that **meditation is the simplest and most immediate way to attain inner peace.** The people who reach this state of peace become ever more aware of the deep connection that exists between all living things.

The sense of wellbeing generated by meditation can help young people to more easily face the difficulties and anxieties within modern society. It also helps to reinforce within them the values that are fundamental to developing a new, balanced and respectful relationship with the world around them.

We believe that our proposal satisfies two fundamental ideas on education of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, a person at the forefront of the quest for inner understanding. She always emphasised the importance of spreading the practice of meditation in schools, teaching it to children, the adults of tomorrow.

Our hope for world peace resides with young people, and their more conscious and enlightened decisions in the future – hence the need to make them aware of the importance of respect and cultural integration. To us, this seemed to be one of the most effective ways of putting into practice the message passed down by history's great leaders: to plant the seeds of peace and understanding between people, by giving them a practical experience of inner peace.

To develop our project internationally, we decided to unite with the NGO Meditate to Regenerate, which teaches meditation to children in places around the world with the greatest social problems. The two parallel projects thus merge into a single entity with a great ideal: to inspire a new generation so that they are finally able to bring peace to this world.



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Meditation is the simplest and most immediate way to attain inner peace

The Benefits of Inner Peace

The unique value of the project essentially lies in the meditation experience, which allows practitioners to reach a state of inner peace. Below are some of the main benefits of meditation, and the problems it can resolve, drawn from our experience in schools around the world.

BULLYING

Bullying is a scourge that has always plagued school life and often causes psychological wounds that are more difficult to heal than physical ones. The Inner Peace project nips this bad behaviour in the bud because it does not limit itself to advocating peace and respect: it immerses students in a very real dimension of relaxation and peace. Numerous testimonies from school heads and teachers bear witness to the eradication of bullying in schools that have joined the project.

ATTENTION DISORDERS

Attention disorders (ADD, ADHD) are a widespread problem of our times and have a seriously detrimental effect on many children's development and integration. A number of studies, as shown below, have demonstrated the positive effects of Sahaja Yoga meditation on children and young people affected by these disorders. The extensive field experience of the Inner Peace Association has confirmed these results, as have the great numbers of special needs teachers collaborating in the association's work in hundreds of schools around the world.

INTEGRATION

At a time of considerable international tension, the message (and experience) of Inner Peace is an effective and timely answer to the worldwide problems of intolerance and racism. Integration through meditation is a spontaneous process that does not pass through the mind or our conditioned behaviour. As students experience the beauty of inner peace together, they discover the illusory nature of differences in skin colour, ethnicity, religion and gender, and are able to rejoice together in the wealth that diversity brings.

PERFORMANCE

In addition to its noble ideals of peace and integration, the Inner Peace project also has a direct positive effect on a school's success rates. As students learn to relax their minds, calm their thoughts and focus their attention, their memory and concentration automatically improve. This plays no small part in the success of the initiative, and explains why many schools have chosen to extend the experience throughout the whole school year and to integrate it into their teaching curricula.



The World Day for Inner Peace

March 21 is the spring equinox, the season when nature is reborn in all its splendour. A better date for the global celebration of World Day for Inner Peace could not have been chosen.

On this day, millions of students worldwide unite to express, in the inner silence of meditation, the purest of all desires: world peace.

It is a universal message that breaks down all the barriers of nationality, culture, religious background or social class that are created by human minds.

A peaceful celebration shared in thousands of schools around

the world, inspired by the example of great enlightened figures such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi and Nelson Mandela. The unique value of the experience is to put into practice the most important of their teachings: we cannot change the world if we do not first change ourselves.

The day's schedule is as follows:

- **presentation of the project;**
- **the enlightened message of the greats: slides and videos;**
- **meditation: an instrument for knowing and connecting with our inner world;**
- **practical experience;**
- **conclusions and feedback.**

Possibility to continue, with the project **"Inner Peace Class"**.

Inner Peace Class

Our school course consists of four lessons:

1 THE SUBTLE SYSTEM AND THE ENERGY WITHIN US

Introduction and presentation of the project. Introduction to the subtle system. Attention exercises. Practical experience of meditation.

⌚ DURATION: 60 MINUTES

2 SUBTLE ENERGY CHANNELS

Feedback from the previous session. The characteristics of the energy channels. Emotions, actions and thoughts. The central channel and opposites in balance. The techniques for bringing the channels back into balance. Practical experience of meditation.

⌚ DURATION: 60 MINUTES

3 THE SEVEN ENERGY CENTRES

Feedback from the previous session. Location and characteristics of the energy centres/chakras. Correspondence of energy centres on the hands. Self correction. Practical experience of meditation and balancing techniques.

⌚ DURATION: 60 MINUTES

4 MEDITATION. RESPECT FOR ONESELF, FOR OTHERS, FOR NATURE

Activity. Application of the techniques learnt in the previous sessions. Practical experience of meditation. Production of material related to the experience enjoyed during the sessions.

⌚ DURATION: 60 MINUTES



Meditate to Regenerate

In a global society with increasing social and economic disparity the biggest challenge is not to change the world around us, but to change ourselves. In partnership with the Inner Peace Association, it is the mission and purpose of the international youth-led NGO Meditate to Regenerate to promote social integration, community and youth development around the world by encouraging skills of personal improvement and lifelong learning.

All our members come from different countries, cultures and professions. **The one thing that connects us is the positive role that meditation has played in our lives**, and the understanding of the incredible impact it could have for others. If we cannot experience peace within, how can we expect to create a peaceful world?

The discussion around international development is rapidly changing. The basis for a healthy society is not isolated to economic development, but encompasses all the elements that affect an individual's and a community's wellbeing and quality of life. The greatest indicator of success for a nation or society is the strengths and capabilities of its people, and especially of its youth.

Meditate to Regenerate started in 2010, with the idea that inner peace should be brought to every corner of the world, whether it be in schools in

Lebanon, hospitals in Japan or refugee camps in Jordan. In order to realise this vision, we offer free-of-charge self-development workshops as well as multicultural concerts to children, youth, students and adults around the globe.

We have hosted from two-week to month-long projects in various countries around the world such as Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, India, Turkey, England, Japan and more. We primarily conduct our projects in collaboration with local or international NGOs and youth organisations such as **Save the Children, UNESCO, UNICEF, SOS Children's Village, International Relief Committee, YMCA and Boys & Girls Clubs**.

The workshops and concerts are primarily conducted in various refugee camps, youth prisons, orphanages, kindergartens, national and private schools as well as universities and other NGOs and human rights organisations.



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Meditate to Regenerate tour

Two or three times a year our Meditate to Regenerate volunteers conduct a project in a selected country for around two weeks, sharing multicultural music and dance, team games and most importantly meditation with children, adolescents, teachers and staff.



EGYPT

This was the first Meditate to Regenerate project on the African continent where workshops and cultural concerts were organised in collaboration with local organisations in Cairo and Alexandria. In addition, an arts exhibition on the theme of 'Inner Peace' was organised, showing pieces from artists around the world.



JORDAN

A new self-development format was created in 2012, allowing participants to experience how meditation can be integrated into and benefit our day to-day lives. Through three projects in Jordan we worked with 34 organisations, reaching 6000 people, ranging from child refugees in Za'atari Camp to lawyers in Amman.



JAPAN

During the Spring of 2014, 22 volunteers travelled to Japanese regions such as Hachioji, Tokyo, Yokohama and Kyoto. They engaged with all sectors of society, from kindergarten children to monks in Zen temples, as well as children with disabilities.



LEBANON

During this project in 2011, the 21 volunteers offered meditation workshops and multicultural music and dance performances to orphanages, schools, youth prisons, Palestinian refugee camps and NGOs.



TURKEY

It started in 2010 with ten volunteers attending the World Youth Congress in Istanbul to share Sahaja Yoga meditation with the 1500 youth delegates that were present. Meditate to Regenerate then continued to travel around Turkey, teaching meditation and sharing the message of peace and cultural diversity through dance and music.

Workshop and Activities



At the core of our activities is the experience of meditation, designed to empower individuals with the ability to enhance their physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. We teach practical techniques that enable participants to increase psychological resilience, selfreflection and inner peace. We also do a variety of personal development activities, team-building games, and art that enable individuals to understand how meditation can be incorporated into their everyday life, increasing social integration and making them more collective personalities.



Self-development workshops for children/ adolescents, staff and adults



Team building activities



Meditation workshops



Multicultural music and dance performances



Music and meditation workshops



Meditation and art therapy exercises



Art exhibitions

The enlightened message of the greats

The twentieth century saw the arrival of a number of universal figures who did not simply talk of peace but who actually brought about changes in society that had previously seemed like impossible utopias.

A shining example is Mahatma Gandhi, the modern instigator of the principle of non-violence, and a statesman able to lead his people to freedom. Indeed, he overturned the power of an empire without firing a single shot, purely with the power of love and truth.

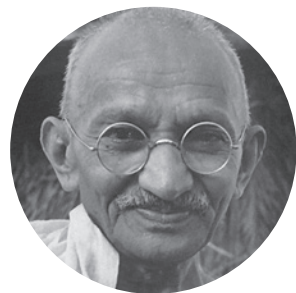
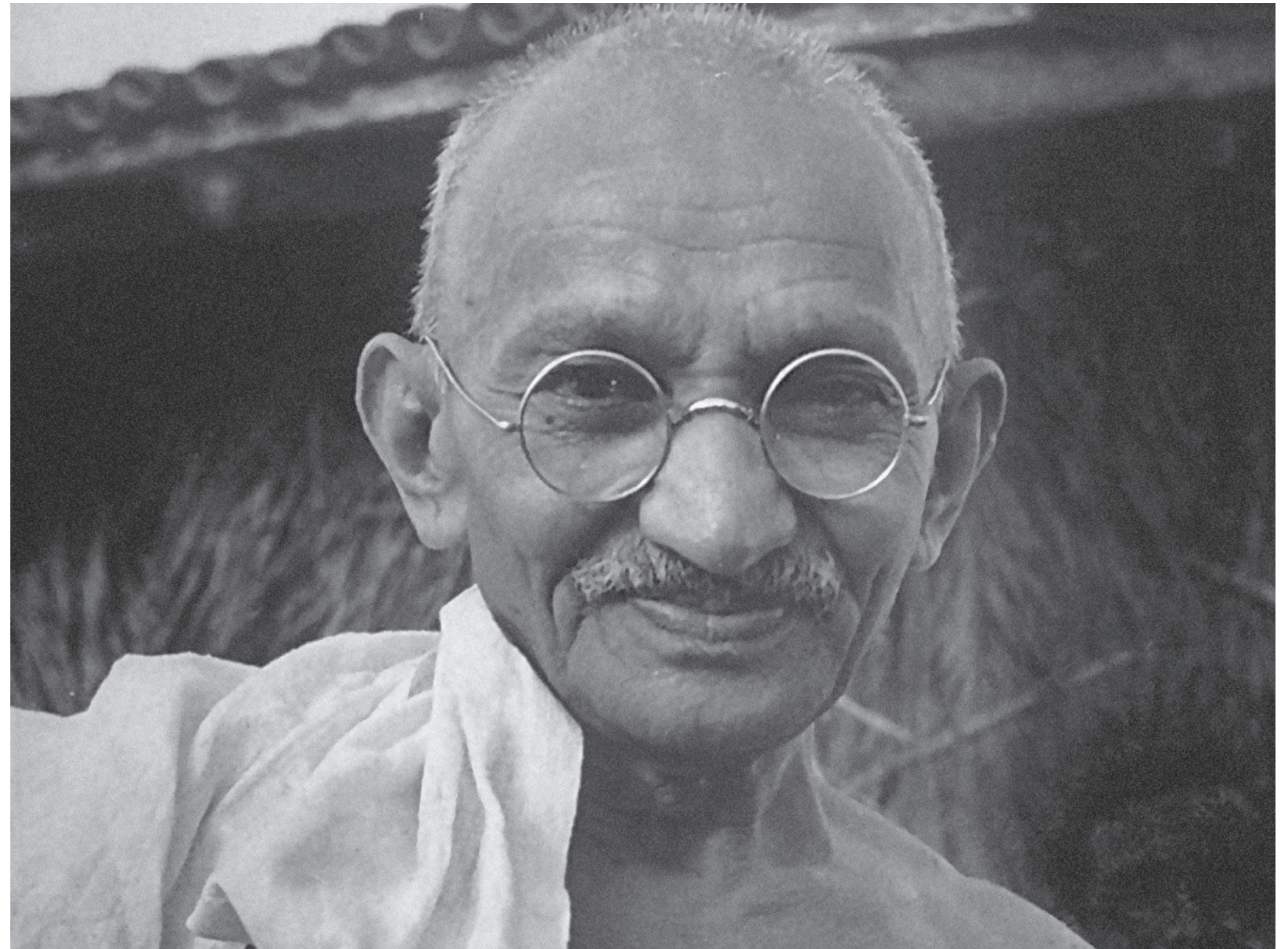
Another was **Martin Luther King Jr.**, a martyr in the fight against racism, whose mission helped sweep away the terrible prejudice towards black people. His sublime **“I have a dream”** speech, remains an unforgettable source of inspiration for anyone fighting for a fairer world.

We believe the contribution of **Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi** to be incalculable in this regard, too. The founder of the meditation method known as Sahaja Yoga, Shri Mataji grew up in **Gandhi’s** ashram and later dedicated her

life to spreading Sahaja Yoga, without charge, throughout the world. In this way she was able, with absolute grace, to realise the Mahatma’s greatest desire, to change the world with kindness.

And how could we not mention the recently departed **Nelson Mandela**? This shining example of courage and constancy embodied the message of forgiveness through his actions as a political leader, even towards his own prison guards and oppressors.

These great people, capable not only of rousing speeches but also of effective, historic transformations in society, have all always emphasised one point in particular: it is impossible to achieve peace in the world if we do not first find it within ourselves.



'40

M. Gandhi

Leader of the mass nonviolent civil disobedience movement that helped bring independence to India

“if we are to reach real peace in the world, we shall have to begin with the children”



'60

M. L. King

Important and charismatic civil rights leader and activist in the United States of America

“Be the peace you wish to see in the world!”



'70

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

Founder of Sahaja Yoga, dedicated to the emancipation of humanity through her technique of Self-Realisation

“There will never be peace in the world until we have peace within ourselves”



'80

N. Mandela

South African antiapartheid revolutionary, politician and philanthropist. Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize

“Peace is not a dream: it can become reality; but you have to be able to dream if you want to keep it”

6 million
people reached
through the media

60
NGOs

51
Nations

3.2 million
People involved

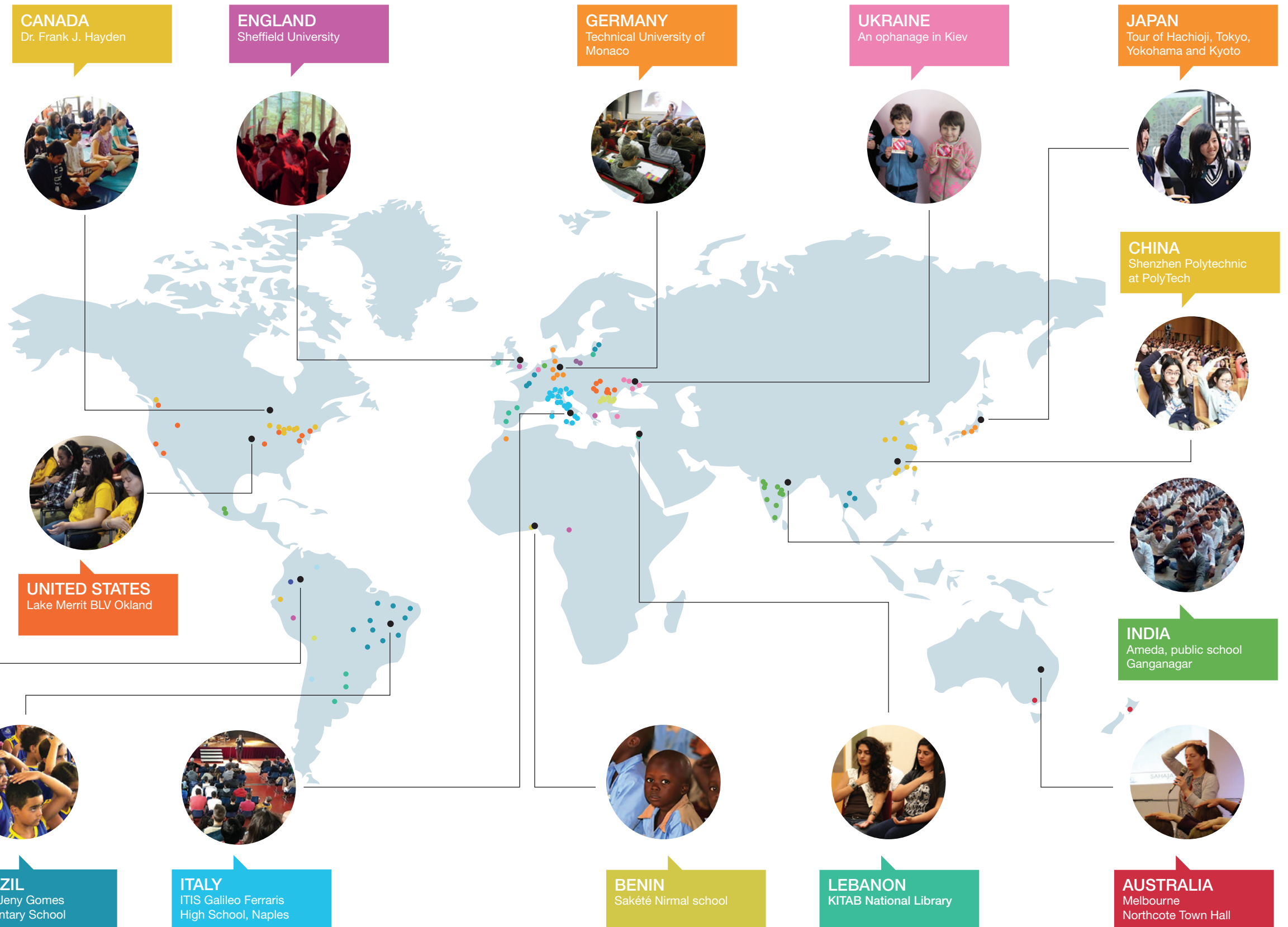


5350
Volunteers



Inner peace in the world

The fusion of the two projects, Inner Peace and Meditate to Regenerate, has allowed us to reach children and young people around the world with the offer of learning meditation, free of charge. The common ground between the two associations is not just a joint dissemination of meditation among the younger generations: the two projects are parallel and complementary. Their fusion means that we can reach young people of all religions and at all levels, from the most prestigious educational institutions through to orphanages and refugee camps. In countries as diverse as the United States and China, New Zealand and Lebanon, Great Britain and Jordan, Benin and India, millions of children and young people, from nurseries to universities, have experienced inner peace. **With no official funding or sponsors, the project has reached 51 countries around the world purely through the enthusiasm of a team of volunteers** and by word of mouth.



The benefits of meditation

Modern life has placed greater stresses on the attention than ever before in history. Information is constantly presented to us through many different mediums during our day, through our various electronic devices, advertising, in our professional lives and our means of entertainment.

The attention is constantly pulled in several directions to keep pace with and process all the information. For children this can be a particularly difficult task, and their attention can become exhausted, compromising their ability to focus. In youth, overloading the attention is compounded by societal and personal pressures, such as competition at school, unsettled family lives, peer pressure and a constant need to



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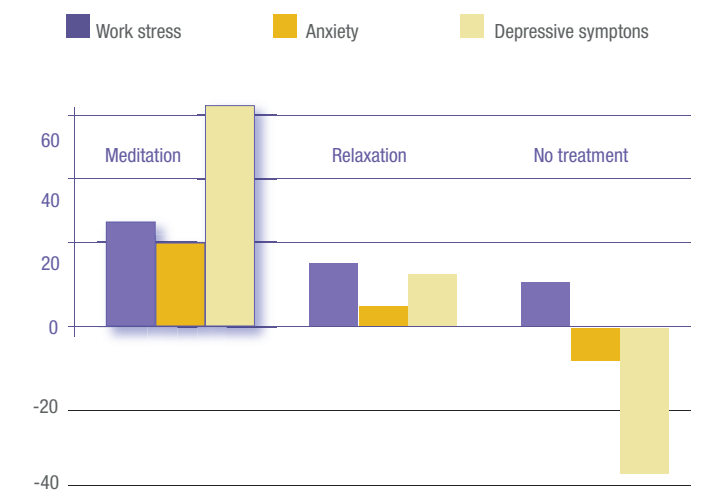
Meditation is effective for stress reduction and has the potential to improve physical and mental health

express themselves amid all of these influences. These factors lead to early burn-out syndromes, depression, anxiety and stress. Studies have shown that meditation can help adolescents the symptoms mentioned above.

Meditation is effective for stress reduction and has the potential to improve physical and mental health [1-3] as well as quality of life. [4] During meditation, the over activity of the brain is calmed [5] through an increased parasympathetic activity. [6] This state is called 'Thoughtless Awareness', it allows the practitioner to experience a state of deep awareness, where their attention is alert, yet relaxed. [7] Electroencephalogram studies have shown that the limbic system in the left frontal lobe, the key area of the brain in creating positive emotions, is activated during the state of thoughtless awareness. [7] Once this state is achieved, the practitioner begins feeling sensations akin to joy or bliss. [7] This sustained feeling, combined with the ability to concentrate without creating stress [5], is a significant factor in fighting depression and anxiety [1,2,4], thus contributing to a higher quality of life, as well as better performance in school and social life [2, 3].

The following graph shows the level of improvement in practitioners of mental silence meditation. They experience significantly lower levels of stress and enhanced mental and physical well-being compared to best available practices.

Degree of improvement in Work Related Stress, Anxiety and Depression for Mental Silence vs Non-mental Silence forms of meditation vs Non-treatment



1. Rai, Umesh (1993) Medical science enlightened: new insight into vibratory awareness for holistic health care.
2. Manocha R, Black D, Sarris J, Stough C, Evid Based Complement Alternat Med. 2011.
3. Harrison H, Manocha R, Rubia K. Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 2004; 9(4): 479-497.
4. Chung SC, Brooks MM, Rai M, et al. J Altern Complement Med. 2012 Jun;18(6): 589-96.
5. Aftanas LI, Golocheikine SA. Neurosci Lett. 2002 Sep 20;330(2): 143-6.
6. Pavlov SV, Reva NV, Loktev KV et al. Int J Psychophysiol. 2015 Mar; 95(3):363-71.
7. Hernández SE1, Suero J, Rubia K, et al. J Altern Complement Med. 2015 Mar;21(3):175-9.

How to achieve inner peace

The importance of meditation is rooted in ancient wisdom but, as we shall see, its validity is confirmed by a body of medical and scientific evidence. Far from being something strange or exotic, a meditative state is actually a universal experience, witnessed and celebrated across all cultures and times.



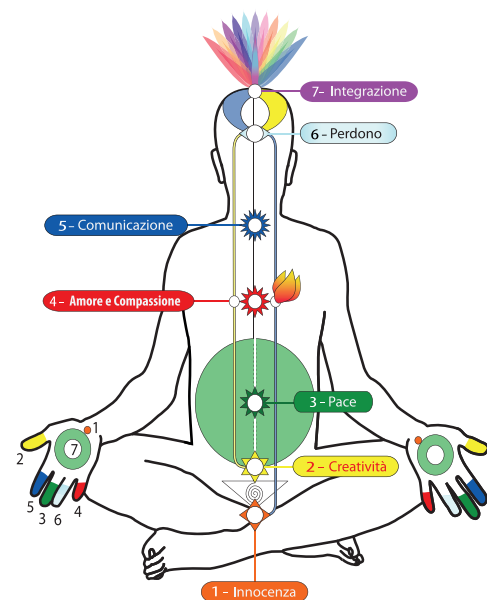
Inner peace spread on a mass level

For thousands of years, this elevated state of wellbeing and mental stillness was achieved by only a few who had dedicated themselves to a life of asceticism, far from society, in order to attain it. Today, finally, humanity has arrived at the stage where it is possible to reach this innate state of peace on a mass scale. Here are a few accounts of collective meditation in different parts of the world: at the **Olympic Stadium in Rome**; at the **Eiffel Tower**.



From 29 November to 3 December 2015, as part of the 1Heart1Tree project, Paris was the setting for an unprecedented event: a meditation on the Eiffel Tower. The famous monument featured as a backdrop onto which the keywords of a guided meditation for World Peace were projected with a vivid display of lights.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZKtrllq90Y>



Map of the human subtle system

If we can disregard all the clichés / myths and labels, we can agree that **meditation represents what we all unconsciously aspire to: a moment of peaceful serenity, of mental silence, in which a subtle inner joy can emerge**. In an instant, the thoughts thronging through our heads die away and all that remains is a calm awareness: the recognition of existence's beauty.

It is a state that we have all touched, if only briefly, at the sight of a beautiful landscape, the perfume of a flower or the splendour of a glorious dawn. It is the grace that inspired Mozart's wonderful melodies, the harmony and power of Michelangelo's sculptures, and the masterly, lyrical verses of Dante and Shakespeare.

In the true tradition of Yoga, the process is very simple, even if the mechanism that is activated is wondrously complex: in every sentient being there is an energy located in the sacrum (the large, triangular bone at the base of the spine) known in Sanskrit as Kundalini – literally “coiled” – because it is curled up in three and a half spirals.

It is no coincidence that the name given by the Ancient Greek physicians to this bone – translated by the Romans as os sacrum – means holy bone, given the historical evidence for the influence of Indian culture on that of the Ancient Greeks. When the energy residing in this bone is awakened, it rises up the spine, passing through the main nerve plexuses, or centres (called “chakras” in Sanskrit), and comes out through the frontal fontanelle area. This name, too, which derives from the Old French for “little fountain”, no longer seems a coincidence in the light of this experience: when the Kundalini passes through the limbic area it can be perceived as a cool breeze, as if it were pouring out of a fountain. The effects of the Kundalini can be felt on the “subtle body” shown in the illustration on the left.

Awakening this Kundalini energy is the goal of all the traditional Yoga techniques; once awakened, it can place our minds in a state of thoughtless awareness by profoundly relaxing and rebalancing our nervous plexuses. The effect is an extremely positive one, influencing both our health and our inner serenity.



On 10 October 2015, the Meditiama Roma event brought Sahaja Yoga to the Olympic Stadium in Rome. The event had the support of Francesco Totti and Seydou Keita, footballers from each of the city's teams.



Feedback

As we are taught, a tree is known by its fruit. We believe that the best comment on the value of Inner Peace is the students' powerful testimonies, collected immediately after the meditation experience. The simplicity of their words is touching, but at the same time they are inspired by a profound and illuminating wisdom

YOGA

This course was wonderful! I feel like I have found something very special that was buried deep inside of me; a great power that is hidden inside all of us.

Lorenzo, Italy

MEDITATION

This program has made me aware that the mess and ugliness of life can be prevented through meditation, which I shall start to practise.

Laila Hussain, Jordan

YOGA IS...

Yoga is peace, the ability to fly. It let's us love and helps us find hidden things, but use them with our heart and not to cause pain. Yoga is being able to arrive as far as the sea So we can hug.

Maria, Greece

YOGA MAKES ME DREAM

When I saw the drawing I didn't know how to colour it, but then I calmed down and entered into the yoga and I opened my wings of imagination, of fantasy and inspiration and at that point I understood everything.

Akira, Japan

FINDING ONESELF

I think meditation is a great thing. It gets your mind off things people usually worry about. It helps you find yourself when you're lost.

Bronx, America

WE'LL MISS YOU

We all miss you. We have been talking about your amazing activities, kindness and generosity and your wisdom. Many of our staff members keep asking me if we can have you for more than just once a year. You have really brought calmness to our minds, taught us how to enjoy the beauty of the soul's silence and the importance feeling of being part of a team.

Ruben, Belgium



I FEEL CALM

My body feels so light and my hands too. When I put my hand over my head I can feel my inner power. I feel calm.

Piero, Italy

INFINITE THANKS

Infinite thanks, also for the things that you have shown me and the excitement that I have felt. I thank my wonderful teachers, who, with much sweetness, guided me through this.

Chang, China

PEACE IN MY HEART

I felt peace in my heart. This experience is really fantastic. There are no words to describe it. Right now I feel peace inside me, and just silence. Buddha!

Daan, Holland

YOU SHOULD TRY IT

I think it's an experience that everyone should try; everyone should be given this opportunity, because it helps us to understand ourselves with enthusiasm and peace.

Aino, Finland

AMAZING EXPERIENCE

Yoga has been an amazing experience! It was really relaxing. I hope to live this experience again next year.

Andrij, Ukraine

I LOVE YOGA

To me Yoga is... peace, relaxation, something that makes all the sad thoughts go away!!! I love Yoga!!!

Vanessa, France

THANK YOU YOGA!

Thank you yoga! You have taught me many things: for example to relax and know myself better, to like myself and find love....

Hassan, Lebanon

A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE

I felt really at ease with all of you; it's been a wonderful experience: it's lovely to feel your own energy and that of the others.

Giorgia, Spain



Inner Peace Day

innerpeaceday.org



meditatetoregenerate.org