

Guide for Visiting Yogis

Nissarana Vanaya, Meetirigala

Updated 16/01/2018

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Timetable

4:00 am	Wake up
4:30 – 6:00 am	Walking and sitting meditation
Dawn* – 7:30 am	Breakfast (morning <i>dana</i>) and cleaning. (Samaneras' <i>dana</i> after 6:15)
7:30 – 9:45 am	Interviews / Dhamma talk / Dhamma discussion (see schedule below)
9:45 am	Start gathering for <i>piṇḍapata</i>
10:00 am	<i>Piṇḍapata</i> (leave from patra sala)**
10:30 – 11:15am	Volunteer Work**
11:30 – 11:55am	Lunch <i>dana</i>
12:30 – 1:30 pm	Walking meditation
1:30 – 3:00 pm	Group sitting meditation**
3:00 – 4:00 pm	Walking meditation
4:00 – 5:00 pm	Group sitting meditation**
5:30 – 6:00 pm	Cleaning and preparing for Chanting (<i>Vandana</i>)
6:00 pm	Buddha <i>Vandana</i> (vihara)**
7:30 pm	Tea break
8:00 – 10 pm	Walking and sitting meditation
10 pm	Sleep

* Dawn time is posted on a sign opposite the entrance to the dana sala, and is announced by the striking of the *gediya* (wooden gong).

** Compulsory to participate

Schedule for morning activities (when Bhante Dhammajīva is present at the monastery)

Monday	Sinhala Vinaya discussion at 7:30 am
Tuesday	Sinhala recorded Dhamma talk at 7:30 am; English Dhamma discussion at 8:30 am
Wednesday	Interviews from 7:30 am
Thursday	Sinhala Dhamma talk on meditation at 7:30 am
Friday	Interviews from 7:30 am
Saturday	Sinhala Dhamma discussion, 7:30 – 9:00 am
Sunday	Interviews from 7:30 am

Poya days (full moon and new moon) are announced by a sign across from the entrance in the dana sala.

Bhikkhus: Pātimokkha recitation at Kuti 16; 7:00 am.

Samañeras: Renew precepts at Kuti 16; 8:30 am.

Lay Yogis: Renew precepts at Kuti 16; 8:35 am.

Guiding rules for practicing meditators at Nissarana Vanaya

The following are the permanent guiding rules for meditators which were approved at the discussion of the venerable monks held on 1986.12.31 and those should be accepted and practiced by all residing at Nissarana Vanaya.

1. Writing letters:
Letters should be written to outsiders only for very special reasons.
2. Visits out of the aranya:
Outside visits should be for essential purposes only.
3. Evening vandanā at the vihāra:
Every monk should participate in the evening vandanā at the vihāra.
4. Speech should be limited and the sound of the voices very much lessened at the following places:
 - a. At the dāna sālā - Speaking should be limited at the dāna sālā to respect the silence of the practicing monks.
 - b. At the vihāra - Complete silence.
Our vihāra contains the sacred relics of the Lord Buddha and hence complete silence should be maintained as a mark of respect to the living Buddha at the vihāra. Speech should be restricted to a few words as occasion arises.
 - c. Putting on robes at the vihāra premises:
With the reverence and respect shown to a living Buddha, one should not put on robes at the upper section of the premises. In the lower section too it is better to go as far as possible from the vihāra for the purpose. From the moment one leaves one's kuṭi for the evening vandanā, one should maintain an awareness of the living Buddha.
 - d. At the bathing place:
Maintaining complete silence as far as possible at the bathing place helps others' practice as well as one's own.
 - e. Sound of voices:
In one's own kuṭi, and if one goes to another's kuṭi with the Ven. Nayaka Thero's permission, one should not allow one's voice to be carried beyond the compound of the kuṭi.
 - f. When passing another's kuṭi, one should reduce the sound of one's voice if speaking is necessary.
 - g. At the gilanhala and paṇḍu sālā too one should minimize one's speech.
5. Visits to another's kuṭi:
Going to another's kuṭi and speaking to a meditator is a great drawback to another's practice and to one's own. As such it is to be avoided. If necessary, one can go to another's kuṭi with the permission of the Ven. Nāyaka Thero. When another is sick one should go only to advise or help the patient.
6. Conversation with lay helpers (kepakaru) should be curtailed. If one comes to one's kuṭi, the purpose should be inquired and he should be sent away.
7. When one is sick:
One should get treatments by making use of the first aid box at one's kuṭi or the one at the dāna sālā, or going to the gilanhala or by informing the Ven. Nāyaka Thero.
8. Group meditation at the meditation hall:
There will be group meditation daily from 1:30 PM to 10:00 PM. All venerable monks should participate at least for one hour from 1:30 PM. (Revision of 2004.)
9. Feeding animals at the kutis:
One should never give food or food remnants to animals at the kuṭis. Not a banana skin or a grain of rice should be given to animals at the kuṭis, as it obstructs one's practice.
10. Pindapāta (alms round):
Alms round should be done without speaking and with continuous mindfulness.
11. On Thursdays only, to obtain the necessary requisites for the week from the stores, one should write the

requirements in one's kuṭi book and place it in the designated place in the dāna sālā. If any essential items are required on another day, they may be obtained from the stores; but keep in mind that it is troublesome for the store-keeping monk to get requisites on other days.

12. Gilanpasa (medicinal drinks):
In order to help the lay helpers at the dāna sālā, one should go for gilanpasa only after 4:00 PM. If one is ill, it is permissible to go there at any time.
13. Washing and dyeing robes:
One may wash and dye robes on quarter-moon days and the day preceding the quarter-moon days. Only if there is strong necessity, bombu leaves and paṇḍu dye may be obtained on other days by informing the lay helpers.
14. Meeting relatives and friends (monks as well as laity) is to be avoided. When necessity occurs, a suitable course should be followed on the advice of the Ven. Nāyaka Thero.
15. Sounding the gong at the kuṭi in an emergency:
If one's sickness is so severe that one cannot go to the gilanhala, one should sound the gong at one's kuṭi. Hearing the sound of the gong, the monks residing at nearby kuṭis should be prepared to assist the sick monk.
16. For meditation instructions the teacher may be met between 7:30 AM and 9:00 AM.
17. The Dhamma discourse given after piṇḍpāta:
This is a very important obligation. Everyone should be prepared to give such a discourse.

2015.10.10

At the Dhamma discussion today the venerable monks agreed to reprint copies of these rules and post them in all kuṭis, with the following revisions:

7. When one is sick:

One may use the first aid boxes in the dāna sālā, the gilanhala, or in Kuṭi 10, or inform the Ven. Nāyaka Thero.

13. Washing and dyeing robes:

Bombu leaves and paṇḍu dye may be obtained at the gilanhala. (Revised 2016.02.16)

Additional rules

For the purpose of this visitor's guide, these additional points have been raised.

- If you are the last to leave the bhavana sala at night, please turn off the lights and close the gates. If you are the last to leave the outdoor walking meditation paths, please turn out those lights (it's the leftmost of the switches outside the entrance to the basement).
- Please do not dump garbage with plastic items in the forest within the monastery grounds. Use the recycling bins in the dana sala.
- Please take care not to leave any containers or plastic materials that may collect water outside so as to avoid breeding mosquitoes that can spread disease.
- Repairs should only be made with the permission of the authorized monk.
- If your kuti or yard requires any maintenance work, you may write a request in the "kuti book" kept in front of kuti 10.
- *Gilanpasa* (items, such as tea, allowed to be consumed after midday) is kept in the dana sala. If the "offered" sign is turned up on the central table, those items may be freely taken by bhikkhus. Samaneras may take from the central table as long as they either turn down the "offered" sign, or move the item they have used to the opposite side of the table from the "offered" sign. Items in the kitchen area have

not generally been offered. Unoffered items may be taken by a bhikkhu if there is a non-bhikkhu available who can offer it to the bhikkhu. Samaneras may use the items kept in the kitchen area.

- Milk powder may not be consumed after midday.
- Cell phones are not permitted. If you bring a cell phone, please check it in at the front office. If it is necessary for you to make or receive a phone call, please seek permission from the teacher, or in his absence from an authorized monk.
- The use of cameras and video recording at the monastery is strictly prohibited. Taking photographs using mobile phones or other equipment of the monastery, the monks or the yogis is not permitted. If you have brought a camera or a video recorder, please hand it over to the front office at the commencement of your stay.
- Smoking is not permitted.
- The Nissarana Vanaya forest is a forest reserve and the monastery supports an esteemed lineage of mendicant monks and meditation masters. During your stay, your behaviour and effort must reflect and show respect towards the forest tradition adopted by the monastery.

Basic guidelines for intensive meditation practice

1. Yogis should do 10-14 hours of formal sitting and walking meditation per day.
2. Yogis should stay alone and observe noble silence. Socialising is not encouraged.
3. Yogis must keep reading and writing to an absolute minimum.
4. Yogis must strictly adhere to the meditation teacher's instructions and should not practice according to other meditation methods.
5. Yogis should not discuss meditation or give meditation advice to other yogis.
6. Yogis must not get involved in any activities that are not related to intensive meditation (for example, listening to the radio, massage, photography, cooking food, learning languages, or work activities beyond the minimum necessary).
7. Yogis must restrain their senses. They should act like a blind, deaf, dumb, sick or dead person.
8. Yogis must perform all activities in slow motion.
9. Sleep should be limited to between four and five-and-a-half hours a day.
10. Yogis should practice with: respect and sincerity; diligence; honesty and straight forwardness; heroic effort; perseverance; patience; sustained, continuous, moment-to-moment mindfulness from the time of awakening to the time of falling asleep at night.
11. There is no space for thinking, reflection, speculation, analysing or interpretation during intensive practice.
12. Generally, meditation is for people with a normal and stable mind. If, however, a person is mentally not in shape to undertake intensive meditation practice, especially to conform to the strict discipline, that person may not be admitted as a yogi.

Guidelines for reporting

At Meetirigala Nissarana Vanaya, we have times allocated for interviews with the Meditation teacher. Although participation at interviews is optional, discussing one's meditation experience with an experienced meditation master has many benefits.

Reporting is also an aspect of meditation.

Please refer to these general guidelines, when reporting your meditation experience:

Align your awareness, so that your attention confronts the primary object directly (i.e. the in-breath and the out-breath or the rising or falling of the abdomen).

First, identify the object (i.e. what did you notice - was it an in-breath (inhalation) or an out-breath (exhalation). Or, in the alternative, it may be that you noted the rising or the falling of the abdomen.

Then, observe the process of the identified object. If it was an inhalation, how did you observe it? Was it an inward gush, coolness, or was it a short in-breath or a long in-breath? Observe the natural characteristics of the experience of the in-breath *versus* the out-breath. Similarly, what did you observe in the rising phase of the abdomen (*versus* the falling phase of the abdomen) - did you observe an expansion and/or a contraction, a stiffness or tension?

When the out-breath was observed, was your mind directly confronting it and what was your experience? Was it a long out-breath? Or, was it a heat or an outward gush? Or, was it an expansion or a contraction of the abdomen or a tension, a stiffness, hardness (etc.)?

Now communicate this experience to your teacher. What was it that you noted (in-breath or out-breath/ rising or falling of the abdomen); what was your experience (inward rush or gush/ coolness/short breath or long breath; or a contraction/ expansion, stiffness or tension in the rising and falling phase(s) of the abdomen). The interview should be about the identified primary object that you noted and the experience in noting it.

Describe your primary object in clear, simple, precise terms with all the accurate detail you have observed.

An example of correct reporting is as follows:

"I noted an in-breath and I observed that it was a short in-breath or as an inward rush of the inhalation; or a rubbing sensation; a warm sensation or coolness (whatever the observation/ experience). I then noted the out-breath to be longer than the in-breath; or that the exhalation was an outward gush; or that the movement of the exhalation was a warm sensation or an outward rubbing sensation.

"I noted that the in-breath was shorter than the out-breath or that the exhalation was warmer than the inhalation. My mind then wandered and I noted it as 'wandering, wandering' and the thoughts subsided. I returned to noting the in-breath and the out-breath.

"A pain then arose and I noted 'pain, pain'. It then increased in intensity and began to throb. I noted it as 'throbbing, throbbing', and it lessened in its intensity and finally, disappeared.

“I returned to noting the in-breath and the out-breath. A sound occurred and I noted it as ‘hearing, hearing’, but immediately observed an itch on the face. I noted, ‘itching, itching.’ After several moments, the itch subsided and I returned to the primary object.”

Please note that if your primary object is the rising and the falling of the abdomen, then you must explain in precise terms the object noted (rising and falling of the abdomen), and the experience (the expansion, the contraction, the stiffness or the tension experienced in the process of rising and falling along with any secondary objects that you noted as outlined above).

Those familiar with the Maha-Si style of reporting may adopt the following guidelines.

The three aspects of noting mind and body phenomena are:

1. **NOTICING** when the object arises (the mind must be turned towards the object)
2. **NOTING** it
3. **OBSERVING** what is there (its nature, attributes, characteristics). Yogis are asked to begin the interview by reporting on the primary object (the movement and the nature, the characteristics or the experience of the in-breath and the out-breath, or the rising and the falling of the abdomen.
 - 3.1. “I noticed the in-breath” or “the rising of the abdomen”
 - 3.2. “I noted it as a short in-breath or an inward rush or a coolness” or “I noticed it as a rising of the abdomen and observed the stretching, pressure (etc.)”
 - 3.3. “I noted the out-breath as long or as a warm sensation or an outward gush” or “I noted the falling of the abdomen and observed pressure, fading away (etc.).”

Only after that should you go on to report secondary objects.

Secondary objects:

1. Bodily sensations – pain/ itch
2. Thoughts – ideas, planning or remembering
3. Mental states / emotions – anger, pride, happiness

Please relate the following information for each object described:

1. The arising of the object (for example - pain arose in the knee)
2. What you did, how you noted it? (I noted it as “pain, pain”)
3. What you observed? (I observed stabbing pain)
4. What happened to the object?(The stabbing changed to hard pain)
5. What did you do next? (I noted it as “hard, hard”)

Then, return to:

1. What you observed? (I observed slow pulsating hardness)
2. What happened to the object? (It decreased)
3. What did you do next? (I went back to note the primary object)

When reporting thoughts such as ideas, opinions, memories, planning, imagining, reflecting, speculating, judging and so forth, do not report the content, but how you labelled it. For example, either describe with a general label

such as “thinking, thinking” or a more specific label such as planning, remembering, reflecting, etc. Then, report what happened after you noted it.

When reporting mental states such as emotions, do not report how you reflected about it, but just label which emotion it is (was).

For example, note anger, sadness or frustration. Then, report what happened after you noted it. A yogi must really put in a wholehearted effort when noting the sensations arising in the six sense doors (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching or thinking).

Please note:

1. Don't attempt to discern whether your inclination is as a *samatha yogi* or a *vipassanā yogi*. Instead, report the observation and experience of the primary object in precise terms, be it the length of the in-breath and the out-breath or the rising or the falling of the abdomen; the sensation (i.e. coolness, warm sensation or a rubbing sensation; the expansion, contraction, stiffness or tension felt in the abdomen). Depending on your experience and observation, the teacher will discern your characteristic as a *samatha yogi* or a *vipassanā yogi* or both.

2. Report your experience honestly and fully and keep your interview short and to the point.

Instructions for sitting meditation, walking meditation and establishing mindfulness in daily activities

(From the appendix to "In This Life Itself" by Bhante Dhammajīva)

Note: In addition to these instructions, it is recommended for new comers to listen to the teacher's recorded meditation instructions. Ask at the Kuti 10 computer room for assistance with this.

Sitting meditation

When undertaking *ānāpānasati bhāvanā*, a yogi practises both insight meditation and concentration meditation (*vipassanā* and *samatha bhāvanā*).

In the *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta*, *Ānāpānasati sutta* and the *Girimānanda sutta*, the Buddha discussed the suitable environment and the appropriate posture for the *ānāpānasati* practice.

Ānāpānasati bhāvanā must be practised in a relaxed environment, with a little breeze and a medium amount of light. The yogi must be in solitude and consider a comfortable and conducive posture. It is recommended that the yogi sit firmly on the ground in the full lotus posture. Alternatively, the yogis can sit in a half-lotus or quarter-lotus posture. Yogis with disabilities or weak health conditions that preclude them from sitting on the ground can use a meditation bench or a straight-backed chair. It is important that the yogi sits in a symmetrical and relaxed manner, keeping the upper part of the body erect. An erect posture facilitates the movement of air through the body and energizes the meditation practice.

Close your eyes and sit in a comfortable, relaxed, symmetrical and erect manner and become mindful of the sitting posture. Do a mental scan of the posture, bringing your mind to the present. Do not think about the past or the future, the person sitting in front of you or those around you. Sitting in solitude with the least amount of distractions is recommended.

If you customarily sit in a particular place, you will become accustomed to it and it will be conducive for your practice. Early sittings of course will be a trial and error process. Through experience, you will identify the most conducive posture for you. Once you know your alignment and the posture that works best, you can commence *ānāpānasati bhāvanā*. Bring your attention to the present, to the "here and now". Sitting in this manner in itself is a meditative experience. Remain in the present to avoid chain thoughts, irritating sounds or bodily pains that may disturb you.

Focus your attention on the primary object. Then your attention will converge to one part of the body - your nostrils, the top of the lip, the throat or the diaphragm. Do not do forced breathing to locate the in-breath and the out-breath, or to gain a prominent experience. Let the breath become prominent at its own pace.

Gradually, the in-breath and the out-breath will become prominent. The breathing must be natural and not forced. Becoming aware of the in-breath and the out-breath continuously, the breathing process will become prominent at a particular point. Your attention should be refined to this point.

According to the *Satipaṭṭhāna sutta*, you should focus on the object in front of you (*parimukhaṃ satim uppatthapetvā*). Classically, the attention of the in-breath and the out-breath is referred to as being at the tip of the nose or at the top of the lip (as an object in front of you). But some may find the most prominent point of touch to be in the middle of the skull, the throat, the chest or in the navel. Wherever it may be, your attention should be confined to one place and you should not allow the mind to move from one place to another. As you progress with meditation, your focus will become refined and calmness will set in.

Observe the in-breath as a separate unit from the out-breath. Observe the in-breath and its touch. Be fully aware of the out-breath as it occurs. Gradually the noting mind will move closer to the breath and you will experience the in-breath and the out-breath in a contrasting and different manner. The air draught of the in-breath may appear cooler than the out breath or the out-breath may appear warmer. Or else, you will observe that the in-breath as longer than the out-breath or vice versa. Do not manipulate what is occurring. Just observe the transaction of air.

Owing to continuous mindfulness, irritating sounds, bodily pains, day dreaming or fantasizing will not distract you. If distractions come and go without any interference, you can continue to observe the in-breath and the out-breath. By making a mental note of the in-breath as "in" and the out-breath as "out", you can keep casual thinking, bodily sensations or sounds at bay.

With continuous mindfulness, the breathing will become subtle. With a refined observation and a calming down of the body, the breath will become less prominent. Mindfully, you must observe the difference between continuing in-breaths and continuing out-breaths. Earlier you observed the difference between the in-breath and the out-breath. Now you must observe the in-breaths and the out-breaths in their totality, from the beginning, through the middle to the end. Observe the difference between one in-breath to the next and one out-breath to the next.

Distractions such as thoughts, sounds or bodily pains will occur. Do not react to them. If you are a habitual thinker or day-dream, make a mental note that you are "thinking", bringing your attention back to the breath. Or else, you should note it as "thinking-thinking-thinking", "day-dreaming - day-dreaming - day-dreaming" or "fantasizing-fantasizing-fantasizing".

Noting thinking as "thinking", you don't digest the contents of the thought. Simply become aware that "thinking" has occurred. Don't be concerned about the content of the thought. Similarly, if a sound irritates you, just note it as "hearing-hearing-hearing". When pain arises, note it as "pain-pain-pain". When they recede, come back to the breath and note the in-breath as "in" and the out-breath as "out". The noting mind and the object of meditation must be aligned, straightened. That is the purpose of meditation.

Your observations during meditation must be discussed with an advanced yogi every two to three days. By doing this, you can receive guidance on how to advance in your practice. The distractions encountered in the practice will be specific to your personality traits.

By reporting to an advanced yogi, you will receive the appropriate instructions. With practice, you can determine whether your natural inclination is towards concentration or insight meditation. It is very difficult to predict this beforehand. Both the meditation and the reporting will lead to the proper path. Your observations must be clear and your reporting should be to the point.

Generally, a beginner yogi must do at least an hour of sitting meditation daily.

Walking Meditation

After a meal or a sleep, it is recommended that you do walking meditation before sitting meditation.

A period of walking meditation before sitting serves to focus the mind.

In traditional meditation centres there are open-air and internal walking meditation paths. Internal meditation paths are covered to avoid adverse weather conditions.

Before commencing walking meditation, stand at the end of the walking meditation path and contemplate the body. Bring your attention to the present moment. During walking meditation, you establish mindfulness amidst activity as

your eyes are open and you will hear the sounds of birds and the external environment. The mindfulness established can be carried forward to day to day activities.

The yogi must first walk up and down the path to activate blood circulation (especially after a long session of sitting meditation). Walk at a normal pace to ensure that the path is suitable and that there are no obstructions. Become aware of the movement of the feet. Your arms must be as if tied in front of you or behind you. Your attention must be on the movement of the feet. When the right foot moves, observe the experience of the movement and the sensations of the foot. Experience and note the sensation of the sole touching the ground. Observe whether the sensation is coarse or soft. Then shift your focus to the left foot, its movement and the sensation as it touches the ground. Your attention could also be kept on the movement of the joints, the ankle and so forth.

Your eyes should be cast down and you must look about five feet ahead of you. The eyes should be focused on the walking path. Just as during sitting meditation, your attention may be carried away by thoughts and sounds, but your attention should remain with the right foot and the left foot as much as possible. Continuous attention on the right foot and the left foot allows you to keep distractions at bay and to proceed without any interference.

During walking meditation, you exert energy to maintain the focus on the steps and to note the movement of the feet. Accordingly, the energy that is exerted must be double. Warming up in this manner is conducive for sitting meditation. During intensive retreats it is usual to alternate periods of sitting meditation with periods of walking meditation, one after another throughout the day.

Establishing Mindfulness in Daily Activities

Doing a task simply for the purpose of establishing mindfulness is difficult in our daily activities. Generally we do things for a purpose or to fulfil responsibilities. But to control the speed of our daily activities, we must find some time to establish mindfulness.

Try to bring your attention to the present moment as much as you can so that you are accountable for your experiences and actions. You will no longer attend to daily activities mechanically, like a puppet or a robot. With mindfulness, the experience is live and vivid.

Unless you are experienced in maintaining continuous mindfulness, it is rather difficult to be mindful when you are socializing or attend to numerous tasks. To establish mindfulness in daily activities, become mindful of personal activities such as washing, showering or going to the toilet. You can start doing things *Silently*, *Mindfully* and *Slowly*. This is the "SMS" that you should apply when establishing mindfulness in daily affairs. In this way, the mindfulness established during sitting meditation could be extended to day to day activities.

Establishing mindfulness during sitting meditation is an intensive method of meditation. Walking meditation is a semi-intensive method and establishing mindfulness in day to day affairs is an extensive method. Mastering the art of establishing mindfulness in day to day activities, you become more organized and will experience an appealing change in your life.

Mindfulness cultivated during sitting meditation can diminish after you get up. But, the mindfulness established in day to day activities is durable. Both sitting meditation and wakefulness to day to day activities must complement each other to ensure continuous application of mindfulness.

Although instructions for sitting meditation (being the intensive method) are given first, you should not underestimate the benefits of walking meditation or establishing mindfulness in day to day activities. One can observe very profound aspects of the *dharmma* during walking meditation, and even become enlightened.

Pali recitation for paying respects

This is recited at the end of the evening Buddha *vandana*, or on any occasion when formally paying respects to a more senior monk.

Junior: *Okāsa vandāmi bhante*

(Permit me to pay respects to you, Venerable Sir)

Senior: *Sukhī hontu*

(May you be happy)

Junior: *Mayā kataṃ puññaṃ sāminā anumoditabbam*

(May the Venerable partake of the merits acquired by me)

Senior: *Sādhu, sādhu, anumodāmi*

(Sadhu, Sadhu! I partake of it)

Junior: *Sāminā kataṃ puññaṃ mayhaṃ dātabbam*

(May I partake of the merits acquired by the Venerable)

Senior: *Sādhu, Sādhu, anumoditabbam*

(Sadhu! Sadhu! May you partake of it)

This section may be omitted if the full chant has been recited earlier.

Junior: *Sādhu, Sādhu, anumodāmi*

(Sadhu! Sadhu! I partake of it)

Okāsa dvārattayena kataṃ sabbaṃ accayaṃ khamatha me bhante

(Permit me to seek forgiveness for all wrong actions done through the three doors Venerable Sir)

Senior: *Khamāmi khamitabbam*

(I forgive all wrong actions. May you forgive me [also])

Junior: *Sādhu, okāsa khamāmi bhante*

(Sadhu! Venerable Sir, I forgive you)

Senior: *Sukhī hontu*

(May you be happy)

Ordaining at Nissarana Vanaya

The following is an excerpt from the **Regulations for the Yogi-Hermitages (Yogāshramīya Katikāvata)** to which Meetirigala Nissarana Vanaya belongs to.

1. Since it is said: When conferring the pabbajjā-ordination, one should do so only after having examined [the ordinand], the pabbajjā-ordinands should be examined carefully, in order to gain a good idea about them. The successful ordinands should then be established in ten precepts; be placed as lay-renunciants (*paṇḍupalāsa*) in a suitable hermitage; be taught the dhamma textbooks, and duties etc. for *sāmaṇeras* (novices): and only those are successful in their examination should be ordained.
2. Those [lay-renunciants] who turn out to be unfit for pabbajjā-ordination, are possessed of [e.g.] the disqualifications for the going-forth (*pabbajjā-dosā*), or are unfortunate in lacking merit, virtue, intelligence, or faith, or in being lazy etc., should be expelled from the classes for lay-renunciants.

Respecting the above rules is a must and the following additional points also matter:

1. The *Saṅgha* at Meetirigala has unanimously agreed on 17th December 2017 to maintain an age limit for candidates. Accordingly, the prospective member should be less than 50 years.
2. When a candidate requests ordination, first he may spend considerable time period as a lay *upāsaka* helping the *Saṅgha*.
3. He then be uplifted to lay-renunciants (*paṇḍupalāsa*) status and will be closely examined.
4. When one is entering to lay-renunciants (*paṇḍupalāsa*) status, he may refrain from using money and needs to relinquish money.
5. A prospective candidate may ordain as a *Sāmaṇera* (novice monk) within one year.
6. From recent past strict VISA regulations are enacted in the country and hence the following procedure is taken for foreign ordination candidates.
 - a. When a foreigner is interested in ordination, he first has to come on Tourist VISA.
 - b. Then after evaluation, if the candidate is suitable, he may be supported to apply for entry VISA.
 - c. He may have to leave the country to India/Malaysia/Burma till the VISA get processed as now the VISA proceedings may take about two months.
 - d. Once VISA is ready, he will arrive on Entry VISA and later it is converted to Residence VISA.
 - e. When one is on Residence VISA, it is possible to extend it yearly with the sponsorship of the monastery and the candidate has to strictly stay at the monastery.
7. The novice monk is needed to spend at least one year in novice status as per the *Regulations for the Yogi-Hermitages*.
8. The novice monk is required to learn Buddhist Monastic Code (*vinaya*) and has to sit for an exam conducted on April 20th each year among all the Yogi-Hermitages through out the country.
9. The novice who has successfully passed the examination will get the higher ordination (*upasampadā*) at the Main Center of the Yogi-Hermitages located at Galduva, Ambalangoda on mid June each year.
10. Before entering full ordination (*upasampadā*), he may have to close his bank accounts, surrender credit cards and other properties.
11. Newly ordained Bhikkhu (*navaka*) is expected to spend at least five years under a teacher.

Map

