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Nachiketanjali

...an offering



A Journey Into The Spiritual Realm!



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MAKARA
SANKRANTI





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Two Birds

***Dva suparna sAyuja sAkhAya
samAnam vrksam parisavajate***

***Tayoranyah pippalam svAdvattya
nasnannanyo 'bhicakasiti***

“Two identical birds that are eternal companions, perch in the very same tree. One eats many fruits of various tastes. The other only witnesses without eating.”

***-Mundaka Upanishad 3.1.1;
translation by Swami Rama***

The whole of Vedanta philosophy is in this story from Mundaka Upanishad. The serene and majestic bird perched on the higher branch, immersed in its own glory represents the Immortal Self and the bird below, hopping from branch to branch, eating fruits is the Individual self. The sweet and bitter fruits are the elements of Maya that occupy an individual and keep him oblivious to the truth that he is but the reflection of the Higher Self; that he himself has been, in essence, the majestic bird all this time.

Let's march into another New Calendar Year reminding ourselves the truth that essentially we are as close to being united with the Immortal Self as much as we realize we are one with Him.

- Annapurna R

A SCULPTOR'S CHOICE

The sculptor was very busy at work. He was giving finishing touches to his creation. There was a look of pride on his face- the pride of having achieved and accomplished the task on hand exactly the way he wanted. He put aside his tools with a grin and showed us his finished product which was NACHIKETANJALI.

Yes, the sculptor is none other than our Swamiji and Nachiketanjali is His dream turned into reality. He made us a part of His dream and invited many more to make it a reality. It is now a couple of years since that sculpture took shape and more details have been added to its beauty in the form of articles from our writers. It was a treat to the eyes when Swamiji expressed His happiness at the blissful progress.

A mother is delighted to see her child take the first few steps. She allows the child to falter and learn through experience. But all the while the mother's protective hand is ready to hold the child in her arms if needed. So does our Swamiji. Apart from giving us the scope to learn, He also made us evolve along with His dream child, Nachiketanjali. He is always ready to guide us in our endeavor with His valuable advice.

We started with scribbling a few lines and were surprised to get feedback that the scribbling has indeed sent a message across. We understood that the scribbling has turned into poetry- poetry of the soul for it is only the soul which can bring out the hidden Divine messages. We hope to make these messages worth preserving and help in creating a life that will be cherished.

I owe my gratitude to Swamiji, whose grace has enabled talents to manifest and knowledge to flourish. I pray He should guide many a seeker on the path of spirituality.

I thank all our writers for expressing their views in every sphere of life and driving home the point through their simple yet beautiful, thought provoking articles and to our readers without whom the beauty of the sculpture would never have been complete. I am greatly indebted to them for making the sculptor's choice stand out as a monument.

- Subhadra K.

Kamadhenu

It is said that all deities dwell in the body of a cow. Therefore Kamadhenu, the holy cow is as holy as the deities. The cow symbolizes dharma itself. Kamadhenu, the sacred cow grants all wishes and desires and is an integral part of Hindu mythology. This Divine cow emerged from Ksheerasagara (the ocean of milk) at the time of the great churning of the ocean by the Gods and demons. It was presented to the seven sages by Gods and in the course of time came into the possession of Sage Vasishtha.

Every part of the cow's body has a religious significance. Its four legs symbolize the four Vedas and its teats the four Purusharthas. Its horns symbolize the Gods, its face the sun and moon, its shoulders Agni (Fire-God) and its legs the Himalayas.

Lord Krishna states in Srimad Bhagavad Gita chapter-10, verse 28

“dhEnunAm asmi kAmadhuk”

Meaning: “Among cows I am the wish fulfilling cow”.

“One who donates a cow (or bull) becomes free from sin and achieves liberation for himself and 14 generations of his family members.”

-The Mahabharata

“The cows are the mothers of all living beings and the givers of all earthly pleasures.” - Atharva Veda

Source: Spiritual India



Nachiketanjali ...an offering



Dear Readers!

For spiritual souls, the journey is always beautiful and inspiring, amazing and awakening... because for them journey is all about living in possibilities... living in happenings... living in this very moment...

They know exactly, the very purpose of life, the essence of life, the life beyond life, the song of life and with that wisdom they teach the song of unconditional love and simplicity to the mankind...

One such song of love and simplicity is sung by the unsung heroes and is resonating today in the form of Nachiketanjali... an offering! What a great poetry it is translating war into peace, hatred into love, chaos into cosmos! For me there is no better word than **'Phenomenal'** for their contribution to the mankind. And what to say about 'hearts' behind this phenomenal

work that has shaped, nurtured and transformed an ordinary newsletter into a monthly magazine with their spiritual aroma and professional touch!

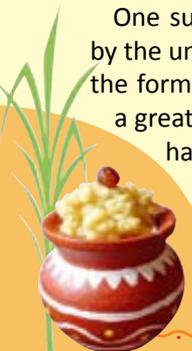
Their very breathing is for others, not for themselves... and this I experienced when it was time to breathe life into Nachiketanjali. Today if I see any great development and appreciation by people for Nachiketanjali it is all because of selfless souls like Subhadra Ma, Annapurna Ma and Harini Ma.

Dear readers! Contributors are many but consecrators are very few and these souls belong to consecrators' category. They are blessed,

Nachiketanjali is blessed... and because of their wisdom, society is blessed.

Many are on board and many are not. Some are seen and others are not. But whether they are on board or not, whether seen or not, they are working passionately to transform hundreds of lives with their motherly touch. My heart goes out to Rohini Ma, Anuradha Ma, Geetha Ma, Vandana Ma, Mamta Ma, Madhavi Vir and young Nachiketas like Neetika, Avinash, Purvvi and Ramya for their wonderful involvement and breathing fresh life into Nachiketanjali, like how a 'Mother breathes life into her child'. I am happy with Shyam for his wonderful layout and designing.

One thing I would love to share with readers is that whenever I am in need of technical help or moral support or when I am in financial crisis or for that matter any small help, I always seek guidance from Vijay Kumar Garu, P.S. Reddy





Garu, Ashok Vir, Gautham Vir, Prasad Garu, Muralidhar Garu, Rajasekhar and Ajit. For me they are true mentors under whose umbrella Nachiketa Tapovan family is marching towards Divinity.

And let me enlighten you on the financial issue; today, if we are able to celebrate the second birthday of Nachiketanjali then it is all because of the financial support of a selfless soul, Sri Vijay Kumar Garu and his KVK Energy team. His encouragement by sponsoring a new magazine that had no base or no subscriptions is something inspiring and touching. This gesture has moved me and I shall cherish this forever.



When I look at the printing work, size of the magazine and presenting magazine with subsidized price, one soul always comes to my mind and he is Sri Bappana Garu. I do not have words to express my deep gratitude to Sri Bappana Garu and his Kalajyoti Team who made Nachiketanjali happen...

Journey of Nachiketanjali is incomplete if I don't mention a couple of names who are the sculptors and strength behind Nachiketanjali. One is a mother with childlike attitude and the other is a child with mother like compassion. My deep love to Ma (Vasundhara Ma) and child Shiva (Swami Shivananda Puri) for making the journey of Nachiketanjali more beautiful and meaningful.

And last but not least, what to say about readers! For me they are the true pillars of every literary work. I strongly believe that without readers, Nachiketanjali is like a book without title or a letter without signature...

Dear Readers! Just as food is necessary for the body, oxygen for the brain, pure thought for the mind, true emotions for the heart and spirituality for the soul, so are readers to me; selfless souls, unsung heroes and mothers to Nachiketanjali...

Please accept my humble pranams!



- Swami Nachiketanda Puri



Srimad Bhagavad Gita

Bhagavad Gita is an immortal wisdom. It is a science of the universe and the self. Whoever discovers this eternal truth, he is beyond dualities.

In the first chapter, Arjuna is filled with grief and says to Lord Krishna “O’ Krishna, seeing all my friends and relatives assembled for the battle makes my limbs quiver and my mouth dry up. My whole body is quivering, my hair is standing on end, my bow Gandiva is slipping from my hand and my skin burns”.

When you buy a new car, you enjoy it thoroughly for a couple of years. But after a few years, it needs maintenance and servicing. In case it meets with some accident, it needs immediate repair. It is the same with the body. A man in his life, from first breath to last breath experiences different diseases. Even great souls have gone through these physical diseases. Example: Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ramana Maharshi, Swami Vivekananda etc. This is the law of nature.

Whatever the disease one suffers from, it is according to his own *Karmas* and *Samskaras*. Very often mental weakness always manifests in the physical body and you experience it in the form of various symptoms. Observe yourself when you are in dilemma and conflict, you feel you have lost all your energy and feel completely exhausted. Such is the effect of mental imbalance.

Today many are suffering from ailments of psychosomatic origin more than physical ailments. The imbalance in the mind is the cause for many unwanted happenings taking place. In this imbalanced state man commits mistakes. He is overpowered by negative energies, doesn't realize his true nature and he loses all his faculties completely. This is how one's true nature is hidden behind the curtain. As modern science works on one's physical ailments, it only helps cure physical disorders. However, it fails to cure all kinds of imbalances which are the root cause



for our unhappiness. What is the most dangerous of all diseases? You may think it is cancer! Or whatever the disease you have may seem the biggest. But everyone suffers from one common and dangerous disease. And what is that?

Right now in the battle field, Arjuna is suffering from this disease. If he would have been free from this disease, he would not have dropped his *Gandiva* nor would he have been filled with grief. Then what is this

disease? This is called *Bhava roga (disease of material existence)*. Having been the victim of this disease, Arjuna was filled with ignorance. How to get rid of this dangerous disease? Does the modern science have any medicine and technique to overcome this disease? When people are over-stressed, they consume alcohol and try to forget their worries, for a while. The night is spent peacefully. But the next day again you encounter the cloud of sorrow. Is there any end to sorrow and pain? Then what is the medicine for it? In which medical store can we get this medicine? Whoever gets this medicine can overcome any kind of disease. Physical disease did not bother the great seers like Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ramana Maharshi and Swami Vivekananda. All these great sages have realized the eternal happiness. This medicine is available with Lord Krishna.

So Sri Krishna does not try to motivate Arjuna to fight against Kauravas. Lord Krishna begins to remove his layers of ignorance. Lord Krishna, is not trying to subside mental conflicts, He uproots Arjuna's ignorance and makes him see and realize the truth as it is.

Bhagavad Gita is just not a philosophy; it is a way of living. It is an eternal truth of the universe. It is the finest and most precious mirror which renders the clearest image of your “self”.



- *Swami Shivananda Puri*



Yoga for your health

Makarasana for back ailments

Makara means crocodile and **Asana** means posture. Makarasana is one of the relaxation postures.

Instructions:



1. Lie down on the stomach, with hands stretched forward and palms facing the floor.
2. Keep legs more than a feet apart with heels facing each other.
3. Bend your hands at the elbow.



4. Place your right palm on the left shoulder and left palm on the right shoulder.
5. Place chin on the cross of the hands.
6. Now gently close your eyes and relax the entire body.

Benefits: This asana gives you a great amount of relaxation. This asana is mostly beneficial for people suffering from back ailments like slipped disc, lower back pain, sciatica and muscle cramps. As pressure is there on lower belly, it helps in increasing the capacity of lungs.

- *Swami Shivananda Puri*



Kalpatharu Day

The 1st of January heralds the New Year for everyone in the world but it has a special place in the hearts of the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. The day is celebrated as Kalpataru day. Kalpataru as all of us know is the wish fulfilling tree. Sri Ramakrishna on 1st January 1886 revealed His Divinity to the world. The devotees had no doubt that from then on all sinners and sufferers included, would find shelter at His feet.

The Master was moved to Cossipore garden and was under the care of the householder devotees and His direct disciples. On 1st

January He felt a little better and wanted to take a walk in the garden at 3pm. There were several devotees inside the house and also in the garden. He proceeded slowly southward to the gate. When He reached the midpoint of the path between the house and the gate, the Master saw Girish, Ram, Atul, and a few others under a tree on the west side of the path. Master addressed Girish, asking him: "Girish, what have you seen and understood (about me) that makes you say all these things (that I am an *Avatar*, and so on) to everyone, wherever



you go?" Unperturbed, Girish knelt down at the Master's feet and responded in a voice choked with emotion: "What more can I say of Him? Even the sages Vyasa and Valmiki could find no words to measure His glory!" Girish's sincere faith expressed in those words so moved the Master that He said to the devotees, while looking at Girish: "What more need I tell you? I bless you all. May you all be illumined!" He became overwhelmed by love and compassion for His devotees, and went into an ecstasy after uttering those few words.

The selfless and profound blessing touched the devotees and they became mad with joy. They forgot that their Master was sick and they vowed not to touch His feet till He recovered and all fell at His feet. Some went and offered flowers from the garden at His feet chanting mantras, some danced around Him amidst cries of 'Victory to Sri Ramakrishna.' He touched all the devotees present and blessed them and was in a semi ecstatic state. There was such religious and spiritual fervor amongst them. Once the Master's ecstasy came to an end the devotees calmed down.

Ramachandra and others said that on that day Sri Ramakrishna became a Kalpataru, the wish fulfilling tree. It is believed that the Kalpataru gives people whatever they ask for, good or bad. But the Master did not do that, by this event He let it be known clearly that He was a Godman and that He offered shelter from fear to all without discrimination.

The blessings received by Haran Chandra Das is worthy of being mentioned amongst those who were blessed by the Master. When He

bowed down to the Master, the Master placed His foot on Haran's head. Ramlal Chattopadhyay, a nephew of the Master received His grace. In his case he could never view his chosen deity in full form while meditating and never in a live form. After Master's blessing he could see his chosen deity as a living presence in his heart.

Vaikuntha, another devotee was initiated by the Master earlier. He tried to get the vision of his chosen deity since then but did not succeed. He would often pester the Master to grant his wish as he knew that without the Master's grace he would not succeed. When on that day Master touched his chest Vaikuntha described thus: "Consequently, a wonderful change came across

"What more need I tell you? I bless you all. May you all be illumined!"

my mind. I began to see the Master's gracious, smiling and luminous form in the sky, the houses, the trees, all human beings, and in everything else I saw in all directions. That spiritual mood and vision continued for some days, even

in the waking state. My work suffered because I couldn't concentrate on my regular duties. At last I prayed to the Master fearfully: 'O Lord, I'm not able to contain this spiritual fervour. Please release me from this state'. Now I think: 'Why did I pray that way? Why didn't I have faith in him and wait to see what the ultimate result would be?' Soon after my prayer my vision and spiritual mood abruptly came to an end."

May one and all of us on this Kalpataru day be blessed by Sri Ramakrishna for spiritual awakening and be able to unconditionally love the Lord of the Universe.

- Compiled by Geetha K.

Source: The Divine Play by
Swami Chetanananda



SOUL OF THE NATION

There is an old saying that water becomes *Theertha* (holy water) once poured through a conch. The water was Swami Vivekananda and the conch was of course Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. The flowing water loses its identity when it merges with an ocean, but the current called Swamiji propels the hearts of people of this nation even today. Narendranath Datta, erstwhile name of Swami Vivekananda was born on 12-Jan-1863 to Viswanatha Datta and Bhuvaneshwari in Calcutta (then) now Kolkata.

Life holds something for every one, and the mystery unfolds when the time comes and further takes us to new levels of enlightenment and awareness. The first meeting of Narendranath Datta with Sri Ramakrishna is the starting point of that great revelation and the impact was such that it became the strength of the whole nation. It is a plain truth that every patriot or, for that matter every freedom fighter owes his inspiration to the preaching of Swami Vivekananda. It is said that character is what you know about yourself and reputation is what others think about you. Swamiji's life is a rare combination of these both. He has just touched the chord of the masses and became their voice. The uniqueness of Swamiji lays in His personality, a couplet of greatest depths of spirituality and highest levels of patriotism. The quote about Swamiji that, "if you want to know India read Swami Vivekananda, in Him everything is positive and nothing is negative", speaks volumes of the tremendous work done by Him. People find refuge in the teachings of Swamiji.

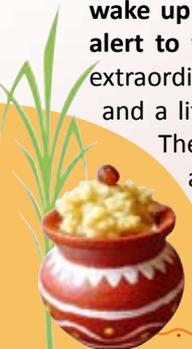
The present world is greatly indebted to this Master for His phenomenal works. **It is a wake up call to the ignorant and an alarm of alert to the misguided.** An ordinary becomes extraordinary by His heart-touching preaching and a little soul-searching will work wonders.

The power lies in every page of His works; all we need is a bit of an open mind and broader heart. Just let the current touch you in entirety and you realize a sea change in you. The world ranks

Him as one of the greatest personalities. Indeed He was a great personality. The greatness of such people does not lie in how long they live on this earth but how long they live in the hearts of the people. If you want to understand the soul of this great nation, the only source is His life and teachings. He brought back the lost identity of this nation. Though He lived for just 39 years, the work done by Him is enough for the world for at least 200 more years to come. In this short period He moved the world. His historic speech at Chicago Parliament of Religions is the turning point of the idiosyncrasies of the people.

The powerhouse of spirituality with patriotic fervor makes Swami Vivekananda the soul mate of every individual who strives hard to leave His own indelible mark in the history of time. Swamiji left His mortal body on 4th July, 1902 and became immortal through His works. To make it simple, He is the panacea for all the difficulties. Let the spirit of Swamiji guide us in times of disparity and act as a beacon light in times of hardships.

- *M. Koti Rajasekhar*



Why do we do Aarati?

Towards the end of every ritualistic worship (pooja or bhajan) of the Lord or to welcome an honored guest or saint, we perform the *Aarati*. This is always accompanied by the ringing of the bell and sometimes by singing, playing of musical instruments and clapping.



It is one of the sixteen steps (shodashaupachaara) of the pooja ritual. It is referred to as the auspicious light (mangala niraaanam). Holding the lighted lamp in the right hand, we wave in a clockwise circling movement to light the entire form of the Lord.

Each part is revealed individually and also the entire form of the Lord. As the light is waved we either do mental or loud chanting of prayers or simply behold the beautiful form of the Lord, illumined by the lamp. At the end of the *Aarati* we place our hands over the flame and then gently touch our eyes and the top of the head.

We have seen and participated in this ritual from our childhood. Let us find out why we do the *Aarati*?

Aarati is often performed with camphor. This holds a telling spiritual significance. Camphor when lit burns itself out completely without leaving a trace of it. It represents our inherent tendencies (*Vaasanas*). When lit by the fire of knowledge which illumines the Lord (Truth), our *Vaasanas* thereafter burn themselves out completely, not leaving a trace of ego which creates in us a sense of individuality that keeps us separate from the Lord.

Also while camphor burns to reveal the glory of the Lord, it emits a pleasant perfume even while it sacrifices itself. In our spiritual progress, even as we serve the guru and society, we should willingly sacrifice ourselves and all we have, to spread the “perfume” of love to all. We often wait a long while to see the illumined Lord but when the *Aarati* is actually performed, our eyes close automatically as if to look within. This is to signify that each of us is a temple of the Lord.

Just as the priest reveals the form of the Lord clearly with the *Aarati* flame, so too, the guru reveals to us the divinity within each of us with the help of the “flame” of knowledge (or the light of spiritual knowledge). At the end of the *Aarati*, we place our hands over the flame and then touch our eyes and the top of the head. It means - may the light that illumined the Lord light up my vision; may my vision be divine and my thoughts noble and beautiful.

The philosophical meaning of *Aarati* extends further. The sun, moon, stars, lightning and fire are the natural sources of light. The Lord is the source of this wondrous phenomenon of the universe. It is due to Him alone that all else exist and shine. As we light up the Lord with the flame of the *Aarati*, we turn our attention to the very source of all light, which symbolizes knowledge and life.

Also the sun is the presiding deity of the intellect, the moon, that of the mind, and fire, that of speech. The Lord is the Supreme Consciousness that illumines all of them. Without Him, the intellect cannot think, nor can the mind feel, nor does the tongue speak. The Lord is beyond the mind, intellect and speech. How can this finite equipment illumine the Lord? Therefore, as we perform the *Aarati* we chant;

Na tatrasuryobhaatinachandrataararkam

Nemaavidyutobhaantikutoyamagnib

Tamevabhaantamanubhaatisarvam

Tasyabhasasarvamidamvibhaati

Meaning: He is there where the sun does not shine, Nor the moon, stars and lightning.

Then what to talk of this small flame (in my hand), Everything (in the universe) shines only after the Lord,

And by His light alone are we all illumined.

- Swami Chinmayananda



Fresh Fish

The Japanese love fresh fish.

This was a small town in Japan, where all the people loved fresh fish just like everywhere else. As a result, the fishing business thrived until one day, the inevitable happened. There were no more fish.

The fishermen rummaged through the seas frantically- but there was not a single fish to be found. They went farther out to sea than they had

It was then that a young fisherman had a brainwave. "How about putting a shark in the tank, along with the fish?" he said. The other fishermen laughed at his ridiculous idea. "You want to feed all the fish to the shark? What will you sell then? The shark?!"

"Trust me. It will work," insisted the young fisherman. None of the others were convinced, but the young man put his plan into action. The next time he went to fish, he carried a large fish tank and a small shark in it. He put the whole lot of fish into the shark tank and sailed back home.

When he went to the market- there were lesser fish in the tank (obviously!) but the remaining fish were sold out in no time! The other fishermen clamored around him and asked him, "What did you do different? How did the shark plan work?"

The young man smiled to himself and said, "By keeping the fish in a tank, you were only keeping them alive. But when I put a shark inside, they were swimming for their lives. The blood was running through their veins and they had a will to live- every day. Agreed, the shark did eat some of my fish. But the ones that were alive are truly, really fresh. It was simply because they were living every moment in that fish tank,

fully aware of the danger of death!"

MORAL of the story-

You know it!

We are in a fish tank. We know that there is a shark called 'death' that will eat us up someday. It's our choice now- to swim about lazily like we're already dead. OR cherish our mortality. After all, the most beautiful part about life is that it's short. And we live it only once.

- Avinash Agarwal

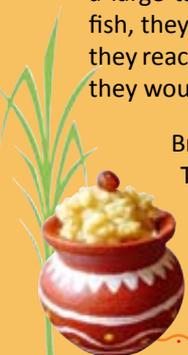
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He is a Writer by profession and passion.
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ever gone before, and managed to catch a decent lot of fish. But by the time they came back to shore, the fish were stale and no one wanted to buy them. They were in a fix.

One of the fishermen had an idea- why not take a large tank along with them? After catching the fish, they could keep the fish alive in the tank until they reached shore- and then kill them. Technically, they would still be fresh. Problem solved!

Brilliant though the plan was, it didn't work. The townsfolk still rejected the fish- saying that it didn't quite taste the same. The 'freshness' was lost. Once again, the fishermen were in a tough spot.



Place truth prior to your beliefs

There was a healthy discussion going on amongst a few friends about national politics. I found myself being taken a prisoner by my own beliefs that such and such institution or person is unblemished, to the extent that I tended to ignore the proven facts before me. My training as a lawyer demands that I be uninfluenced by my emotions. But, I am a human being first and then a lawyer (or rather, a lawyer-to-be)! Nevertheless, I constantly guard myself against this tendency.

This is the sorry state of mind for many of us. It pains me to no extent when I see people leave behind their productive work to go and support a leader who has amassed enormous wealth which we all know cannot be done from his/her known sources of income. All this when we do not have the time to talk to the domestic help when she comes to us with a genuine problem, or even to talk to members of our own family! Well, people here are being influenced by their own beliefs, just like I was in our informal discussion.

The most dangerous thing that can corrode an institution is ignorance or rather persistent and purposive avoidance of facts. By facts, I do not mean allegations. I do understand that in a system like ours it is immensely difficult to trust the veracity of anything that is said to be proved because of conflicting versions always coming up. However what can be of colossal help is the willingness to look into the reality of a situation of conflict with an open mind and a dispassionate heart. Be it politics or any other aspect of life, truth has to ultimately triumph. This depends to a great extent on whether we are dynamically pursuing the truth or are characterized by inertia and paralysis of action.



I can only urge all our readers to place the truth before their own beliefs; or at least make an effort to know the truth. We need not be a Bhagat Singh or an Arvind Kejriwal. But our simple honesty, uprightness, will to pursue the truth, selflessness and pure love for our nation and its people can move mountains and change the destiny of many!



Neetika Gogula, 4th year Student of Law has passion for writing articles on social issues.

WISDOM SPROUTS FROM INNOCENCE

A little girl was lighting a flowerpot on the street outside her house. When the flowerpot started spreading light in the surroundings the child clapped her hands in glee. Her face lit up competing with the glow of the fireworks. A *Jnani* was passing by and happened to witness this scene. Once the flowerpot was burnt, the surroundings became dark again. The *Jnani* approached the little girl and asked her: "My dear child, where has the light gone?"

The little girl looked at him and answered, "It went back to the place from where it came. But you can get back the light if you want." So saying she went and brought another flowerpot and lit it, enjoying the light. The *Jnani* was very happy and told the girl. "You are my Guru. By a simple act you have shown me the Reality of the Self. You have given me a great *Upadesha*." He bowed down to the girl in reverence.



Correction: We apologize for the printing mistake on page 17 in our December 2011 issue. The source is: Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi by **Swami Gambhirananda**.



The Journey through Consciousness

Immanent yet transcendent Atman



V*Ayur yatha eko bhuvanam pravisto,
Rupam rupam pratirupo babhuva;
Ekas tatha sarva-bhuta antarAtma,
Rupam rupam pratirupo bahis-ca.*

(Katha Upanishad, Chaturthi Valli, 10th stanza)

Meaning: As the one Air, after it has entered the world, though one takes different forms, according to whatever it enters, so the internal Atman of all living beings, though one, assumes forms, according to whatever He enters, and is outside all forms (too).



One of the preliminary questions I had, when I started to go deeper into the inner life is this: “If everything that I perceive with my mind and senses feels SO REAL to me, why is it said that the world is an illusion or is unreal?” Every emotion we feel, every grief we encounter, every anxiety we go through cannot be dubbed as an illusion! They might be subjective experiences but nevertheless we all go through similar ups and downs in the span of a lifetime.

While conversing with a friend, it came clear to me that a thing is real only as long as it exists. This explains why nothing in this world is really “real” including our feelings and perspectives as they too are fleeting and are ever-changing. This is one of the keys to get out of the miseries in daily living. It’s

easier said than done but constant remembrance and application will probably help grasp this Truth.

The *Rishis* have also analyzed that our sense perception itself is flawed and not absolute. What we see, hear, feel or taste itself may be purely subjective.

The weight of a person is different on earth and moon; showing that the weight we feel is not fixed. What feels solid to touch, if observed under a microscope is just a vast collection of atoms with empty space between them and empty space within each one of them. Thus, solid by our definition, is not all that “fixed”!

So then what is it that is everlasting and eternal? The *Rishis* declare; the *Atman* which is a witness to the ever-changing phenomena in us is the only permanent and hence real thing.

Asariram sariresu, Anvastesva avasthitam;

Mahantam vibhum Atmanam Matva dheero na socati.

(Katha Upanishad, Chaturthi Valli, 4th stanza)

Meaning: When the wise realize the *Atman*, Formless in the midst of forms, changeless in the midst of change, omnipresent and supreme, they go beyond sorrow.

Yama, details Nachiketa upon the greatest significance and the practical application in life of the Knowledge of the *Atman*. He says that if only we rediscover ourselves as the *Atman* within, the impermanence of our previous identifications, its “un-reality” is exposed. But here we are so caught up with our identification with the body-mind-intellect-emotions. No matter how well we understand this intellectually, if we test ourselves during immense grief, we still fall short.

One wonders; why is it then we have this whole baggage of impermanence – body, mind etc. As Swami Chinmayananda puts it – A telescope itself cannot see the celestial planets. An observer needs to use the telescope in order to observe the planets. So it seems that the baggage was given to us to be used as tools to achieve our ultimate goal.

- Harini N.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

My brother and I had a long conversation that evening. We spoke about several things and exchanged each other's viewpoints on life, and finally dwelt on 'faith' and this got really interesting. During the course of conversation we discussed Hindu faith and he asked, "What do you think is our religion?" I quickly answered, "*Hinduthva* or *Haindava Dharma*". To which he responded, "Hindu faith never existed for heaven's sake. You and I never had a religion." Well, I never was keen on 'religion', however, I have always believed in 'faith'. In my mind, I distinguish between faith and religion. Then, what am I truly bound to? He said, "*Sanathana Dharma*," and everything else followed.

Born in the beautiful country where the huge river Sindhu flows, we came to be called as Hindus. The word Hindu is derived from river Sindhu and so is Hindusthan, which simply is the other word for the sub-continent in which the mighty river flows. *Sanathana Dharma*, the Eternal Law, has always laid the guiding principles for its people to teach them the right way of life. Then, where did the God concept come from? Are we then atheists? "Well, God is in everything we see," he said. "As Hindus, whom do we worship? *Aditya*, the Sun God, *Ganga* the river Goddess and *Brahma* who we believe is the creator. Creator should exist. If we see nature, there definitely is a creator for such beauty. The artist/creator is the giant being and nature is his creation, a part of him. In that case, who are we individually?" I went blank for a few moments. Well, I believe that God is in every individual around. You and I are Gods too. "God has always been one. You and I were never individuals. You and I are just a part of the only individual. Then, why name Individuals?" I had no answer to his question. I thought this is mere philosophy and has no meaning whatsoever. However, after reflecting on his words I realized

that what he said was true indeed. True! Hinduism is just a religion whose roots are in *Vedic Dharma*, a religion formulated by people, a string that ties us all together. In that case, as my brother explained, there is just one creator, one individual who we are all part of. The creator is called by different names. In reality people are not fighting for what they call religion, they are fighting for a simple name and haven't been able to come to a consensus on that.

'Allah' is the name by which Muslims want to call their God, Christians call Him 'The Father' And Hindus might call Him '*Bhagavan*'. In reality the name is what people are trying to identify the creator with. Is the name then really important? Yes, but only till you latch on to it! Once you realize Him, name is of no need, absolutely.

Therefore, the mighty creation of God above, in reality is the real wonder which we are all a part of. There is no difference between you and I, we form the different parts of the giant creator like organs of a body form the organism. Hand is no more important than a leg. Every organ in the body is equally important to the organism and so are we to the creator. The creator is within and without and the names are given only to simplify concepts. Giving names, I always thought was important in identifying but if it becomes the identity, it creates differences, distinctions and leads to separations, and ceases to serve the purpose anymore. In fact it can destroy the organism as a whole. So it is important to understand that behind all these diverse names there is only one Almighty. Let the world be in peace and let us all live in harmony with this thought.

Sarvejanaasukhinobhavanthu!
Samasthalokaasukhinobhavanthu!



Ramya Manasa Kandala
2nd Year Undergraduate Student,
University of Alberta Edmonton,
Alberta, Canada.



Icon of Indian Painting

No other Indian artist blazed as many trails as Raja Ravi Varma. He was the first Indian to master perspective, the first to use human models to depict Hindu Gods and Goddesses, the first to make his work available not just to the rich but to ordinary people too. The immense popularity of his work also made this deeply pious aristocrat the first Indian artist to become well known — before him painters were largely anonymous.

Raja Ravi Varma was born in 1848 into the royal house of Kilimanoor, 25 miles from Trivandrum, the capital of Kerala state. The Kilimanoor princes were renowned for their cultural accomplishments, and Ravi Varma's artistic talents blossomed early: by the time he was 14, he had secured the patronage of the Maharaja of Travancore. The Maharaja, an avid art lover, got Ravi Varma to move to Trivandrum, set up a studio for him, and supplied him with books on European art. Here, in the capital, he could also mingle with court painters, including at least one artist who visited from Europe.



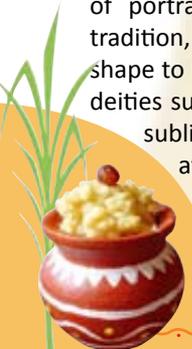
In his paintings, Ravi Varma idealized women, often making his subjects more stately and graceful than they actually were. Indeed, at one time, telling an Indian woman that she looked like a Ravi Varma painting was the ultimate compliment. Though he painted women of many communities and classes, Ravi Varma had a special fondness for depicting the sari-clad women of Bombay where he lived for many years. He found the sari — then not worn in Kerala and many other parts of India — with its striking colours and graceful folds especially appealing, and it's often said that the popularity of Ravi Varma's paintings helped make the sari the national dress for all Indian women.

A workaholic, Ravi Varma rose at 4 every morning. After bathing and performing his elaborate religious rituals, he would begin painting at first light. He laboured long hours and often got up at night to sketch his dreams. Ravi Varma's professionalism, in fact, was only one aspect of a thoroughly modern outlook. For instance, when he became head of the Kilimanoor clan, he encouraged his kinsmen to work for a living — something the nobility didn't have to do — and to disregard conventions that prohibited them from mingling freely with people of lower castes.

The subjects for which Ravi Varma is best known — Hindu Gods and Goddesses and scenes from India's great epics — were natural themes for a profoundly religious man who was also a master of portraiture. In a radical break with Indian tradition, Ravi Varma used human models to give shape to his vision of the Gods. And by portraying deities such as Krishna, Lakshmi and Saraswati as sublimely beautiful human beings in everyday attire, he made the Gods seem divine yet approachable. So popular were these paintings that, ever since, Hindus have visualized their Gods very much the way Ravi Varma depicted them.

The Calendar-Art brought-forth by Ravi Varma has been the origin of lakhs of gaudy God-pictures by ultramodern litho presses for decades. Raja Ravi Varma died of diabetes on October 2, 1906, at the age of 58, in his Kilimanoor Palace home. Yet, the rich heritage of the fragrance of his paintings continues to charm and influence the art of India. The masses loved his art, especially his Gods and Goddesses. They were — and still are — widely copied and re-copied by commercial artists. At the time of his death, Ravi Varma was indisputably India's best known and most honoured artist.

Source: Om Shivam



THAIPUSAM

Thaipusam, a Hindu festival which falls in the month of Thai (January - February) is celebrated with intense devotion by a very large section of the people throughout not only India but also Malaysia, Singapore and Maldives. It is celebrated on the full moon when the constellation Pusam is on the ascend. Lord Skanda is the spiritual son of Lord Siva. On this day the Lance (vel) was given to him by His mother Parvati.

Kavadi Attam is a dance performed by the devotees during the ceremonial worship of Murugan, the Tamil God of War. It is often performed during the festival of Thaipusam and emphasizes debt bondage. The *Kavadi* itself is a physical burden through which the devotees implore for help from the God Murugan. Generally people take a vow to offer a Kavadi to the Lord for the purpose of tiding over or averting a great calamity. For instance, if the devotee's only son is laid up with a fatal disease, he would pray to Shanmukha to grant the boy a lease of life in return for which the devotee would take a vow to dedicate a Kavadi to Him.

Though this might, on the face of it, appear materialistic, a moment's reflection will reveal that it contains in it the seed for the Supreme God-Love. The worldly object is achieved; and the devotee offers the Kavadi. After the ceremony, he gets so much intoxicated with the love of God that his spiritual, inner chamber is opened now. This too, ultimately leads to Para Bhakti.

The Kavadi consists of two semicircular pieces of wood or steel which are bent and attached to a cross structure that can be balanced on the shoulders of the devotee. It is often decorated with flowers, peacock feathers (the vehicle of God Murugan) among other things. Some of the Kavadis can weigh up to 30 kgs.

The Glory of Kavadi: As a *Sadhana*, *Kavadi* is a beautiful synthesis of Bhakti-Hatha-Raja Yogas. The devotee, especially if he is not already a *Bhikshu* or monk, is made to beg from door to door often in known and also in unknown villages. Sincere *Bhaktas* readily offer the *Bhiksha*; there are those



who would drive him away also. The devotee thus gets the chance of crushing and powdering his ego and developing mental power of endurance. For this sake he is prepared to undergo any privation and humiliation. The wandering *Parivrajaka* life gives him an inkling of the magnitude of human suffering and steels his heart to resist the allurements of the flesh. Pure *Sattvic* diet adds to the *Sattvic* content of his mind. Celibacy strengthens his will and clarifies his understanding. The not-very-good appearance in which he roams about convinces him that appearances are deceptive and kindles *Viveka* in him. The aspirant learns the glory of *Mauna* also. Above all, constant remembrance of the Lord intensifies his devotion to Him every minute.

Those who offer the Kavadi to the Lord for spiritual progress soon attain Him. Those who do so for the purpose of achieving some earthly things soon acquire Shanmukha-Bhakti which in time flowers into *Maha Bhava* leading to *Sayujya* (union) with Lord Shanmukha.

- from "**Significance of Thaipusam**"
by Swami Shivananda,
Divine Life Society



A Spiritual Dynamo who stirred the Nation



EDUCATION

The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion – is it worth the name? Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making, assimilation of ideas.



HOUSEHOLDER

The life of the married man is quite as great as that of the celibate who has devoted himself to religious work... It is useless to say that the man who lives out of the world is a greater man than he who lives in the world; it is much more difficult to live in the world and worship God than to give it up and live a free and easy life.

WOMEN

“The soul has neither sex, nor caste nor imperfection.”

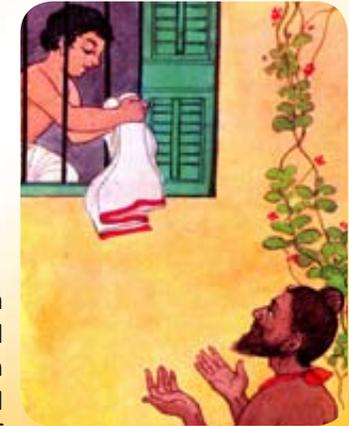
You always criticize the women, but say what have you done for their uplift? Writing down *Smritis* etc., and binding them by hard rules, the men have turned the women into manufacturing machines!

If you do not raise the women, who are living embodiment of the Divine Mother, don't think that you have any other way to rise.



Celebrating Swami Vivekananda Jayanthi on 12th January (National Youth Day)

Anything said in His praise is like holding a lamp to the Sun.
However on this momentous occasion let us have a glimpse of the many sparks that He kindled



PUTTING OTHERS FIRST

Renunciation is the very basis upon which ethics stands. There never was an ethical code preached which had not renunciation for its basis. You have to put yourself last, and others before you. The senses say, “Myself first.” Ethics says, “I must hold myself last.” Thus, all codes of ethics are based upon this renunciation; destruction, not construction, of the individual on the material plane.



ASPIRANTS

Seek only after one thing, and that, God!

MESSAGE TO THE YOUTH

And tell the world--

Awake, arise, and dream no more!

This is the land of dreams, where Karma
Weaves unthreaded garlands with our thoughts
Of flowers sweet or noxious, and none
Has root or stem, being born in naught, which
The softest breath of Truth drives back to
Primal nothingness. Be bold, and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease,
Or if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.



A Doctor for those who cannot afford one

'The Hindu', a reputed national newspaper, called her the village doctor. She is kind, ever-smiling, busy and easily approachable. Meet Dr. Meera Krishna, working as the Project Coordinator in CORD Siruvani (a branch of CORD – Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development – an all-India NGO).

❖ Could you tell us about your childhood and upbringing?

I was brought up in Goa where I finished my MBBS and MD in Gynecology. I always used to get good marks, read a lot of story books, played games and mingled with a lot of people. I used to attend Balavihar and Bhagavad Gita classes as a child. Even as a student, I was more interested in helping the poor people I came in contact with, than in getting the highest marks or in doing more surgeries. My friend and myself used to buy ointments for burns patients from our money and be diligent in our work like recording BP of the pregnant patients in the middle of the night.

❖ What is the work that you do with CORD?

At present, we are working in about 20 to 30 villages and some small town Panchayats. Our staff of 8 people and a few volunteers we are working for comprehensive, integrated, sustainable and participatory development which means empowering these people. In the mornings, I run clinics in four villages, where there are no doctors, by rotation. We also coax and cajole the people to get themselves



vaccinated against Hepatitis B at a nominal cost of Rs 40 per dose. All the medicines we provide in the clinics are at a very nominal price or even free to the rank poor. We also educate the people about the regular and proper brushing of teeth, hand-washing, avoiding open defecation, avoiding tobacco and alcohol in all forms. We form Mahila Mandals in the various villages consisting of girls and women 18 yrs and above. This Mandal is registered with Nehru Yuva Kendra and the State Govt. They meet regularly once a month, initially with our guidance, collect chanda (doantions), interact with one another, discuss domestic and local problems and try to solve them. They conduct small programmes like plastic eradication and tree plantation drives, competition for children and women, attend programmes organized by CORD Siruvani and other organizations. They also get empowered by listening to resource persons in various fields brought to their village by us.



We also gather the youth in every village into organized groups to do activities like the above and blood donation, health awareness, sports activities and good living habits. We tell them about educational and job opportunities that we know.

For the children, we have Balavihar classes in all the villages that we work in. These are most often every Saturday or Sunday. Here they learn Bhajans, Slokas, about our Culture & Heritage and other general knowledge topics.

❖ **When did you first think of serving the people? Who inspired you?**

My grandmother was a very practical, ever-helpful and knowledgeable lady. She never wasted anything—electricity, water, broomsticks or newspaper. She was self-educated and had a lot of faith in God and human nature. She inspired me to do the right things. I learnt that the straight and narrow path and the unbeaten track is the best in the long run. Several poems I learnt in school like Tagore’s “Where the Mind is without Fear”, our National Pledge and “Little drops of water...” inspired me to be what I am. My parents especially my mother encouraged me to be different. My husband Dr Krishna, has been all-supportive in the last 23 years and appreciated my efforts though many may be apparently unsuccessful. He comes with me every Sunday and helps me with village work. My daughter who is a Horticulture student has put up with my all-consuming job and also helped me in the villages. Having a ready-made organization and a free hand makes the work easy. Dr Kshama Metre, the National Director of CORD and a Padmashree awardee, has also inspired me. Great leaders like Swami Chinmayananda and Swami Vivekananda have greatly inspired me.

❖ **How do you strike the balance between family life and work?**

I don’t strike a balance. I overdo the office work and under-do the family life, but my family is very understanding, forgiving and helpful.

❖ **What are your views about rising cost of medical care, medical education and slow pace of Govt. schemes to benefit the poor?**

The increasing addictions, fast pace of life, lack of knowledge of the working of the human body and how precious each part is—all are responsible for so many preventable illnesses. If the media and textbooks could put things more interestingly, for example —“Our kidney can be compared to a tea-strainer; in Diabetes and Hypertension, the tea-strainer develops big holes or gets blocked unless the disease is under control. This diseased tea-strainer has to be replaced at an early age”. A hundred new models of TV, computer or car cannot replace an eye or the kidneys. The beauty of God’s creations must be appreciated whole-heartedly or the heart will fail too soon. Regular check-up—dental and others—should be made compulsory like in Canada. This will reduce untimely illness and death and financial burden for the Govt. Oral and other cancers are all detected too late.

❖ **What is your message to the youth?**

The ability to serve is God’s gift to mankind, specially the youth. It helps purify our mind and achieve our goals faster. Even a few hours of selfless service every month will reap rich rewards. As Shakespeare says about rain in the ‘Merchant of Venice’: “It is Twice Blessed—It Blesses him that gives and him that receives.”

Nachiketa Tapovan salutes Dr. Meera, her family and many volunteers for their selfless service. It is people like them who are building India!

Dr. Meera can be contacted at: CORD Siruvani Office, 4/109, Boluvampatti Main Road, Thennamanallur Post, Coimbatore - 64110. Email - cordsiruvani@gmail.com



Neetika Gogula, 4th year Student of Law has passion for writing articles on social issues.





Happy Republic Day

If there is any land on this earth that can lay claim to be the blessed Punya Bhumi... the land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all, the land of introspection and of spirituality- it is India.

- Swami Vivekananda





Creation

In the beginning, there was nothing in the universe. The *Brahman* (the Divine Essence) alone was everywhere. The *Brahman* had neither colour nor scent; it could not be felt or touched. It had no origin, no beginning or no end. The *Brahman* was constant and it was the origin of everything that was destined to be in the universe and the universe was shrouded in darkness.

When it was time for creation to begin, the *Brahman* divided itself into three. The first part became Brahma, the creator of the universe. The second part was Vishnu, the preserver of the universe. And the third part was Shiva, the destroyer.

At the time of creation, water appeared in the universe and the water was everywhere. In the water was created a golden (*Hiranya*) egg (*Anda*) that floated like a gigantic bubble. Brahma was born inside the egg. Since *Garbha* means womb, Brahma came to be known as *Hiranyagarbha*. Since He effectively created (*bhu*) Himself (*svayam*), He is also referred to as *Svayambhu*.

Brahma had four faces.

Also inside the egg were all the worlds (*Lokas*) that would be created, in embryonic form. The earth was there, with its land, mountains, oceans and rivers. The moon, the sun, the stars and the planets were there. Also present were Gods, demons, humans and other living beings that would be created.

This was the original creation of the universe (*Sarga*).

But at the end of one of Brahma's days, a minor destruction takes place. The universe is once again flooded with water during Brahma's night. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are not however destroyed. Each of Brahma's days is known as a *Kalpa* (cycle). Thus, a minor destruction takes place at the end of every *Kalpa*. When a new day dawns for Brahma, creation begins afresh. This periodical process of destruction (*Pralaya*) and re-creation is known as *Pratisarga*.

Source: **Vayu Purana**





LIFE AT THIRTEEN

It finally came and went, my thirteenth year. The skies didn't rumble, there were no blinding flashes from the heavens, no voices from above telling me that I'm no longer a child but a TEENAGER. Just a long list of fun things that I could no longer do and a longer list of things that I should now do because I was older.

Let me illustrate my point here. I am now,

- Too young to ignore my mom when she tells me to study, but too old to coax her into doing my homework.
- Too young to stay up late on a school night, but old enough to burn the midnight oil during exams.
- Too old to watch cartoons, but old enough to give in and watch cartoons when my younger sister wants to.
- Too young to drive but old enough to walk to the neighbourhood store and run errands for my mother.
- Too young to get a job, but old enough to do many chores around the house.
- Too young to browse the internet unsupervised, but old enough to do online searches for school projects.
- Too young to give up drinking milk, but old enough to give up eating candy.

Well, you get the picture. All said and done, 13 is the beginning of a difficult phase of a person's life. There are too many temptations and too many fun things to do, yet this is the time that most of us have to work hard and think about what we want to do when we grow up. This is a character-building time. A time when we get to try out new things, make mistakes, dust ourselves off and try something new again. A time to give up some of our short term pleasures for the greater good of our future.

All this is easier said than done. Sometimes we have to fail many times to figure what we want to do. It is said that a person should do what he is passionate about. This is true only if you already know what it is you love doing. So what do you do if you don't really love to do anything? Well, pick an activity and stick to it till you can do it fairly well. Sometimes sheer persistence gets rewards, which later creates passion.

Let's take the example of basketball. I was never really crazy about the sport, but have played it since I was 5. What I love is cricket (and Rahul Dravid, but that's a whole different story!) I tried cricket for a year but soon realized that although I played well, there was no scope for me to get into even the school team because of the vast number of cricket-crazed boys there are to choose from. But those years of basketball paid off. And my height helped too. My basketball coach summoned me and asked me why I wasn't playing basketball. He put me in the school team and I later got chosen for the district team. This resurrected my love for basketball. You could say that basketball chose me! I would never have found out how much I loved basketball if I hadn't stuck with it all these years.



I realized what this in-between period between childhood and adulthood is- a time to discover myself. If I spend too many hours watching television and playing video games and doing only fun things, time would pass and I'd get too old to try new things. I might never know the real me and what I'm capable of. So, all you fellow teenagers, stop moaning and groaning about everything that you have to do, and do all you can to be the best you.

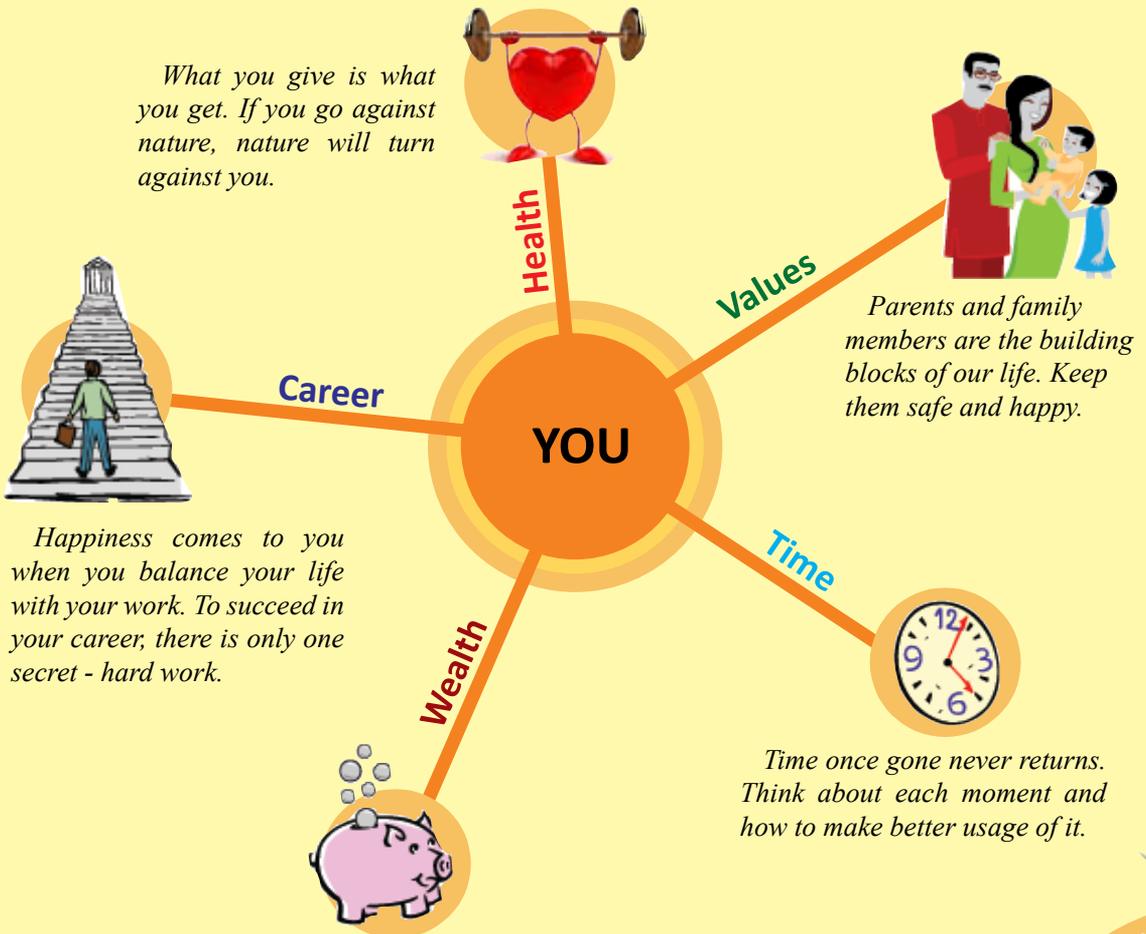
Arnav Garg is a 13-year old student of Delhi Public School. Along with his studies, he participates in the Ranga Reddy District Basketball Team. He also writes a blog and is developing a website.



WHAT YOU SOW IS WHAT YOU REAP

Nature has the power

- **W**e are attracted easily by good looking and good feeling things in the world, but are we prepared to work hard for achieving what we desire? The best things in life require sacrifice and dedication.
- Dedication and commitment are very important qualities to have to succeed in our lives and careers.
- Nothing great can be built in a day. Great monuments like Taj Mahal, Great Wall of china etc. were built brick by brick. If you want to achieve something big, make it block by block, in small steps.
- Give your best, and the best will come to you. Guaranteed.



Protect your wealth. Saving is more important and difficult than earning. Drops of water make the ocean. Value each drop.

- Sreedhar Karri
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WHEN PARENTS DISAGREE

Q: My spouse and I differ in our parenting styles. How do I make sure that my children are only absorbing the essence behind his ways of discipline and not be susceptible to the harshness of it? At the same time, I don't want to interfere or mediate between him and the children as it may confuse the latter.

A: It is no doubt that perfect parenting is that in which the parents are calm, patient, respecting, understanding etc. The most ideal thing is positive parenting. But we were not brought up that way so it won't just come to us from the skies. You and your husband are two different persons, products of two different homes and brought up. How we are brought up usually reflects in how we bring up. It is interesting to note here that people grow up in two different ways- some tend to pass on what they received while some try to fix it 180 degrees especially if they don't like what they got in their share- "I will never let this happen to my kids". It is a different thing that we can ALL make changes to the way we carry over our past by conscious and persistent efforts. Until then, first let the kids understand those differences between you two. Because you are grown-ups and you might change very little as persons; though as parents, you will mellow down a lot in years to come. Don't intervene in your husband's interaction in their presence.

Moreover, how a child hears it from their dad is always different from how a wife hears it from her husband. This is how they will know the value of your softness and they will appreciate the value of his

firmness/harshness. Let them know that you have expectations which could become the foundation for their aspirations. But be reasonable in your expectations.

From your side, you try not to lose temper in the first place. But if you lose your calm for a reason, don't go back on that with apologies. Reserve that for very rare occasions. I am not asking you to be egotistic but only stick to one thing with kids. These little people before you realize grow up to be smart young children who might take advantage of our weak spots. They learn too fast and too well while you are lost in love.

You can tell kids some stories how some parents seem tough, but actually it is their way of showing how much faith they have in their potential and to bring out their best. Your goal is to get them immune to parents' harshness and then ultimately understand that it is anxiety but not lack of love or respect. This better happen before they become adolescents. You can find more such examples from our Puranas where Gurus were also very tough with their disciples. Meanwhile, recommend some readings and stories to your husband which might make him think over. Let him understand that if we hurt the kids repeatedly, there are chances that they might grow apart from us emotionally and that loss will be ours as much as theirs.

There is no one recipe here. Whatever you do, learn not to carry the baggage. Nothing goes wrong as long as you love them. While driving a car on a clear road, if you keep staring at the dashboard it feels jerky and crooked. But you look a few feet ahead at the road; the car seems to go smooth and straight. Know that parenting is a great learning experience for you too. Happy Parenting!

- *Annapurna R.*



Food for thought

It's not often that you meet a bunch of optimistic eight-year-olds, who are convinced that the word impossible does not exist. Meet the Class 5 students of Chettinad Harishree Vidyalam, who managed to collect funds to support the meal scheme of a school for underprivileged students. It all started with a YouTube video on the plight of malnourished children in Somalia, says nine-year-old Dev Nanda Kurup. Deeply moved, she and her friends decided to help the kids in Chettinad Sigapi Ramaswamy Primary School and revamp their meal scheme so that they had a nutritious diet. "We found the students in that school did not have money for breakfast," asserts K Sanjana, who sold home-made lemonade in her apartment to raise funds. The project, that was kick-started in August, witnessed the primary class students engage their seniors in selling handicrafts, and convince corporate big-wigs to raise a sum of `19,870 in just three months.

"Now, they have egg masala and rice every day," smiles R. Aruna, another student.

Source: www.ibnlive.in.com



इकलइकरोटि दिइइतन = त्वन्तु त्वत्

Krupalu Ogeti, Secretary, Samskrit Bharati, Hyderabad.
email:okrupalu@sanskritam.net

(Contd from previous issue)

Kati Santhi

Now let us turn to neutral gender words.

कूकटपल्ली भाग्यनगरे अस्ति।

अर्चकः मन्दिरे पूजयाति।

For akArAnta-neutral words, we remove अम् at the end and add ए in its place as in:

भाग्यनगरम् – भाग्यनगरे

मन्दिरम् – मन्दिरे

भारतम् – भारते

पुस्तकम् – पुस्तके

गृहम् – गृहे

भारते मम प्रीतिः।

पुस्तके बहूनि चित्राणि सन्ति।

मम गृहे वयं पञ्च जनाः स्मः।

अक्षरं श्लोकपादे अस्ति। श्लोकपादः श्लोके अस्ति। श्लोकः अध्याये अस्ति। अध्यायः भगवद्गीतायाम् अस्ति। भगवद्गीता प्रस्थानत्रये अस्ति। प्रस्थानत्रयं संस्कृतभाषायां विरचितम्।

In the above series of sentences, this is the embedding sequence: अक्षरम् – श्लोकपादः – श्लोकः – अध्यायः – भगवद्गीता – प्रस्थानत्रयम् – संस्कृतभाषा

For the following sequences, write simple Samskrit sentences.

१) माधवपुरम् – भाग्यनगरम् – आन्ध्रप्रदेशः – भारतम् – आसिया-खाण्डः – पृथिवी – विश्वम् – आकाशः

२) दलम् – पुष्पम् – लता – वृक्षः – वाटिका – नगरम्

३) लिङ्गम् – विश्वनाथस्य मन्दिरम् – काशी – उत्तरप्रदेशः – भारतम्

Look at things around you. Write simple sentences using this vibhakti. Note that for both 'in' and 'on' we use the same vibhakti.





NACHIKETA's Go Green Club



The Paper Issue!

WHY be paper efficient

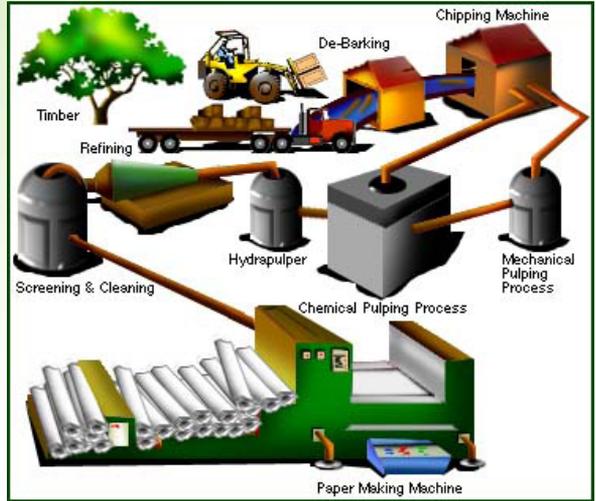
Almost half of all the trees cut down are used up in the paper manufacturing business. Excessive build-up of paper wastes dumped in landfills (about 40-50%). Printing and writing paper dumped into a landfill could have been recycled up to a dozen more times, saving trees, water and energy and reducing pollution each time.

- 1 tree is used up to make approximately 8000 sheets of paper
- 6 trees are cut down to make 10 cartons of paper
- 12 trees make 1 ton of newsprint paper

HOW to be paper efficient

- ◆ Be conscious when printing- Print only when absolutely necessary. Even while printing, use the various options and print four pages into one and on both sides
- ◆ Increase usage of e-mail and digital storage of documents

Every paper that comes your way means cutting green trees every day!



- ◆ Re-use sheets of paper on both sides- for rough work, making bills, lists and drafts
- ◆ It is noteworthy that even the Indian Railways is encouraging carrying of tickets in the e-form in an effort to save paper. It is time we rise to the occasion
- ◆ Instead of sending a printed greeting card, you may send an e-card
- ◆ Use a white board in the place of sticky notes and note pads to remind your things-to-do
- ◆ Write only when you have planned what to pen down. Do not waste paper unnecessarily trying to make your 'brain-wave' come alive
- ◆ Hand over every piece of paper for recycling to the scraps collector
- ◆ Add a small line after your signature in a mail or a letter encouraging your friends to save paper

Nachiketa's Go Green club...

Taking baby steps towards a cleaner Earth,

Wishes you all a Greener New Year!

Our thanks to the organizations and individuals who contributed about 10,090 kgs of **Waste** that earned us a **Wealth** of Rs. 40,359 from July-December 2011.

**We only have one Earth....
Let's keep it clean!**

So USE every piece of paper wisely. Then REUSE it. Then RECYCLE it.

OUR ZOO PARK TOUR



We, the students of third class in Nachiketa Tapovan's Vidya Mandir were told that we were going to zoo park on 22nd October and we all felt very happy because we were going for the first time. We were 30 children and five of our teachers also joined us. We all gathered at Nachiketa and started at about 8' o clock by the bus arranged by our volunteer Mani Amma.

We reached zoo park about 9' o clock. It is called Nehru Zoological Park. The driver parked the bus outside the gate and our teachers went and got the tickets for all of us. We went in and started our tour. First we saw so many monkeys running on the trees, baby tortoises, baby crocodiles, and fishes in a pond.

It was 11 a.m. and our teachers gave us some snacks. Afterwards, we started walking and saw peacocks, also one white tiger, cranes, pigeons, parrots, deers, bears, leopards, and also one white tiger swimming in the lake. It was 2 p.m. We all sat on the lawn. Our teachers served us tasty tomato rice and curd rice. We all enjoyed

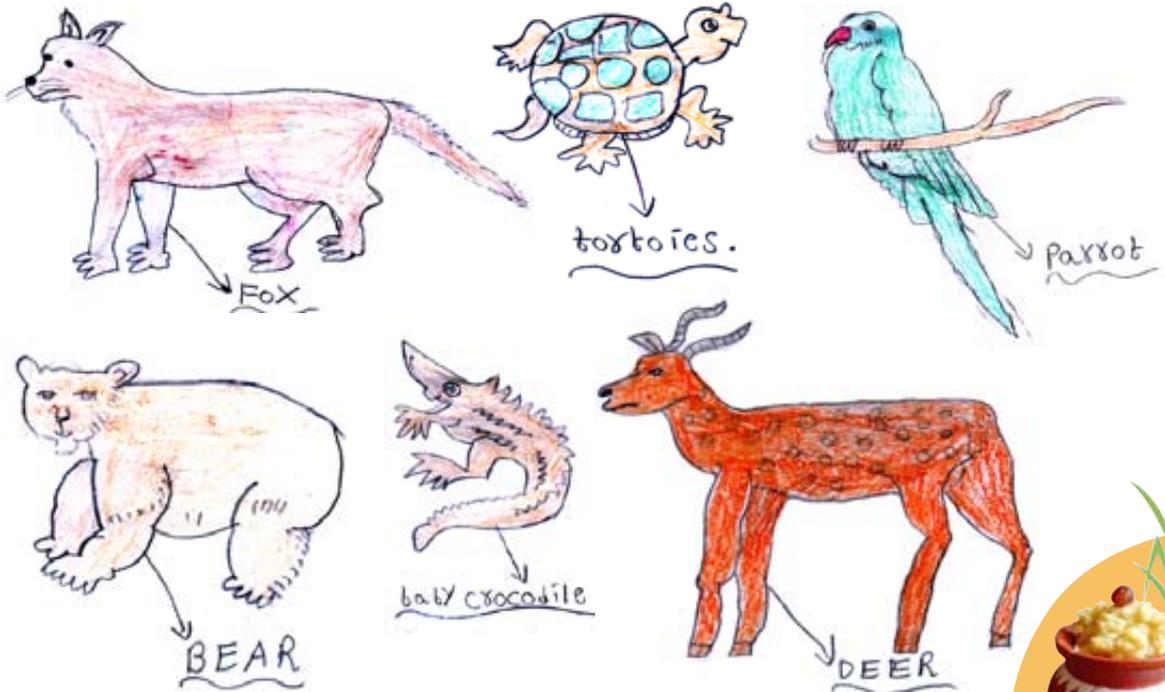
it very much. Afterwards, we played hide and seek and other games in the lawn for some time.

Then, we went around the zoo in a train. It was only a short ride, but we enjoyed it very much. We also saw different kinds of cats, foxes, elephants, giraffe, ostrich, and also emu. We never saw emu before. Afterwards, we went into a cave. There we saw so many kinds of snakes in the tanks.

It is a wonderful zoo and we enjoyed the whole day very much. It is an educational tour for us. We were not tired, but we had to come back. We started back at 5 p.m. and reached Nachiketa at 6 p.m. and we all went to our homes happily.

We thank Mani Amma for arranging this and our teachers for taking and bringing us back safely.

Aruna, Bhavani, Nandini, Hemanth, Sindhu Kumar, Hemalatha, Naresh, Priyanka, Malleshwari and Gouri of Class III





Celebrations at Tapovan

CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS:

The highlight of the celebration was a trip to the Ashrama at Jadcherla for the children from class VI to Class X. Thanks to Sri Piyush Sultania of 24/7 Translines for sponsoring the transportation. The children had great fun and games with Swamiji to which they didn't want to see an end.

Games for teachers were also organized for children's day in Vidya Mandir. Children played against teachers in tug of war and other fun games. Prizes were distributed to the winners of various competitions conducted prior to the event. Thanks to the principal of our friendly neighbor, Orchids

International School, who spoke to the children briefly about treasuring their childhood and enjoying it. Thanks to them for also sending some sweet treats for children that day.



Ms. Mona, Principal of Orchid International School



Children's Day out at Ashram



In a 'tug of war' with teachers



Mingling with Delhi Public School Children

On November 15th, a magic show was enjoyed by the Vidya Mandir children in the Dhyana Mandir. The children from all ages were enthralled by the amazing tricks performed with a sleight of hand! Thanks to Harshit Agarwal who sponsored the program and gave the children much joy.

On October 31st children from Delhi Public School, Gacchibowli visited our children in Vidya Mandir. It was a nice experience for both to be in each other's company.

Thanks to the staff and children of DPS for giving out lots of dals, pulses and wheat. Our children went home taking many ingredients that went into nutritious meals for their family!



Children enjoying the magic show



A KIND GESTURE

We thank Esperenza school and staff for visiting us on Nov 16th and Nov 17th and spending time with our pre-primary children. Children had fun playing games and jiving to music along with the kids from Esperenza school. Thanks to them for also donating many useful things to the school and the children.



Children of Esperenza School



Plantation of saplings by Intelli Group

PLANTATION AT ASHRAM BY INTELLI GROUP

The upcoming Nachiketa Ashrama in Mahboobnagar District is getting a greener look. Thanks to the CSR group of Intelli Group from Hi-tech City; who made a visit to Swamiji in the Ashram on November 17th and participated in tree plantation. We thank their noble gesture and selfless efforts.

WORKSHOP ON EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING FOR MOTHERS

An International organization, SOS children's villages is an initiative to support childcare, education, children's rights, children's health etc. SOS "mothers" are at the heart of SOS's model of family-based care for children who can no longer grow up with their biological parents. They are local women around the world whom SOS trains to provide warm, loving homes to children in need—form eternal bonds with the children they raise. As part of their annual capacity building workshop conducted in the St.John's Regional Seminary, Ramanthapur, Hyderabad from 24-28th November, Swami Shivananda Puri spoke about "Emotional well-being for Mothers" to around 200 of the SOS mothers from all of South India.



YOGA WORKSHOP

On November 24th Swami Shivananda Puri conducted a Yoga workshop in Intelli Group for their senior employees. The workshop included practical tips on stress management and tips to lead a well balanced life.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

*Anna daanam maha daanam; vidya daanam mahattaram.
Annena kshanika trupthihi yaavajjeevanthu vidyaya.*

Vidya Mandir at Nachiketa Tapovan is currently able to accommodate a family of about 205 children who receive all-round nourishment from man-making education to milk-n-meals and basic health-aid in an atmosphere of genuine love. Kind-hearted Well wishers have been the unseen force behind this offering to God. We thank you for your continued support.

Donations towards operation costs

Sponsor a Teacher (Dance & Music)	₹ 5,000/Month
Vidya Daanam (Education)	₹ 5200/year/child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 4200/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 700/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	₹ 800/2 pairs
Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)	₹ 5000/term
Medicines (For needy people)	₹ 5000/month

*Corpus Fund Options

Sponsor a child	₹ 1 Lakh
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 50,000/-
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 10,000/-

* With the accrued annual interest the following will be achieved every year, respectively.

- One child's education annually.
- Mid-day Meals for the whole school for one day annually.
- Snacks for the whole school for one day annually.

Donations within India- Details	Overseas Donations- Details
<p>Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan". The donations in India are exempt under the U/s 80G of IT Act, 1961.</p> <p>Donations can be also directed through bank account as below</p> <p>Bank Name:Bank of Baroda Branch Name: Jubilee Hill-Hyderabad A/c Name:Nachiketa Tapovan A/c No:18090100004093 IFSC Code:BARBOJUBILE (Note: IFSC code contains the number "zero" not letter "O")</p>	<p>Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan". Nachiketa Tapovan has permission to receive donations from abroad under FCRA act</p> <p>Bank Information: Bank Name:SBI A/c Name:Nachiketa Tapovan A/c No:30953215793 SWIFT Code:SBININBB214</p>

*"We believe that every being is divine, is God.
Every soul is a Sun covered over with clouds of ignorance..."*

- Swami Vivekananda

Griha Constructions, Chennai





Turn around their future!

For ₹ 1 Lakh

Your donation will last a lifetime



"My father helps in cooking in the temple and my mother is a housemaid. I came to Nachiketa Tapovan when I was in 10th grade. I want to become a software engineer and serve my family and country"

- Shiva, Xth grade

"My father is a stone cutter and my mother is a housemaid. If not for our school, my sister and I would be working as maids too. I want to study hard and become a police officer"

- Shailaja, VIIIth grade



Appeal for Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund

Nachiketa Tapovan runs a free school for 205 children from poor families. They receive all-round, holistic academic education in English medium (LKG to 10th Std.), including, arts, crafts, spiritual and culture lessons.

Sponsoring a child is a great opportunity to help protect a child in need whilst seeing in return the real effect that your support has. Make a difference in a child's life- the chance to form a lasting, meaningful relationship with a child. All your kindness will add up to a bright future.

- ✓ Nachiketa Tapovan is working hard to build a CORPUS fund to meet the ongoing expenses and expansion needs at a consistent pace. Donating to a Corpus Fund is a great way to sustain our efforts.
- ✓ Interest accruing from the investment made out of the Corpus donations, is only used without touching the principal itself. This way your DONATION remains forever, strengthening the cause and the organization.

- ✓ Being a charitable institution, we earn an interest of 9.25% annually from a Govt Bank. The annual interest on 1Lakh will fully support one child's education for one year.
- ✓ Your donation will come a long way by meeting our expenses that include Teacher's Salaries, Uniforms, Educational material, Building Maintenance and Housekeeping, Salaries for support and administration staff, Field trips and Excursions, Celebrations and Extra Curricular activities.
- ✓ At present, we only have 5 corpus sponsorships...help us reach all of our 205 children!
- ✓ Bring hope and light into their lives – as a group or individual or in the name of a loved one.
- ✓ Donors receive annual report card and are welcome to interact with our children.
- ✓ **We express our thanks to Corpus Donors by permanently inscribing their names on our recognition board in the school.**

A request to the readers of Nachiketanjali

Dear Readers,

Thank you all for supporting our Magazine.

Did you know...

- You can gift a subscription to a friend
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- Your feedback is most welcome
- You can inform us if you are receiving double copies

Write to us at : nachiketanjali1@gmail.com

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Inside Strip	4cm x 15cm	N. A.	₹ 2,500



AN APPEAL TO PATRONS & SPONSORS



Ashraydatas are encouraged to become patrons of the magazine by joining Nachiketanjali's Patron's Scheme. Your donation will be deposited in the magazine's corpus fund. We express our thanks by announcing their names in the following issue of the Magazine. Donations received ₹ 5000/- and over will receive a 5 year subscription of the magazine.

Nachiketanjali ...an offering. Yes, I would like to

Subscribe / Renew _____ subscriptions to Nachiketanjali for 1 year/3 years/5years

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Donate ₹ _____ to Nachiketanjali corpus fund as patron

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Nachiketa Tapovan Ashrama

“The poor, the illiterate, the ignorant, the afflicted- let these be your God. Know that service to these alone is the highest religion.”

– Swami Vivekananda

An Appeal

Dear Patron,

Mahboobnagar District, the second largest district in Andhra Pradesh, is situated within a 2 hr drive from Hyderabad. It is known to be one of the most backward areas in education and health in the state. In an effort to change the lives of the rural population, largely comprising of tribal communities in this region, Nachiketa Ashrama project in Kodgal village has been undertaken.

Our efforts are towards making the rural people self-reliant.

- ❖ We want to realize this by providing
 - ✓ Free vocational training
 - ✓ Free basic education
 - ✓ Free medical dispensaries
- ❖ The ashram will also be home to spiritual activities
- ❖ It will also serve as a retreat to all those who seek spiritual rejuvenation

To work towards our endeavor, we need your help in the form of generous donations towards the following projects:

- ❖ Drip irrigation
- ❖ Solar Power project
- ❖ Laying of roads
- ❖ Rain-water harvesting
- ❖ Construction of the compound wall
- ❖ Herbal garden
- ❖ Construction of Vidya Mandir-Free School

We look forward to your generous and valuable support and contribution.

Yours in the service of Motherland

Swami Shivananda Puri



Nachiketa Bala Vahini

It's a Learning for Life!

We provide children tools for a joyous living and help them blossom to their full potential. Bala Vahini provides value education, awareness and appreciation of our ancient Indian culture and heritage. We also teach yoga and pranayam to energize their mind and body.



Character Development



Indian Culture



Story Telling



Energizing Yoga

For Ages 5-15 yrs
Every Sunday starting July 10th 2011
Timings: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

THIS IS A FREE SERVICE

Nachiketa Tapovan

Plot # 70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur,
Guttalabegumpet, R.R.District. A.P. 500 081
Ph: 9849168937, website:www.nachiketatapovan.org



Fun and Games

Invitation

We cordially invite you to attend our



**Swami Vivekananda
Birthday Celebrations**
12th January 2012
at 10 am



Annual Day and Republic Day Celebrations
26th January 2012
at 9 am

Venue:

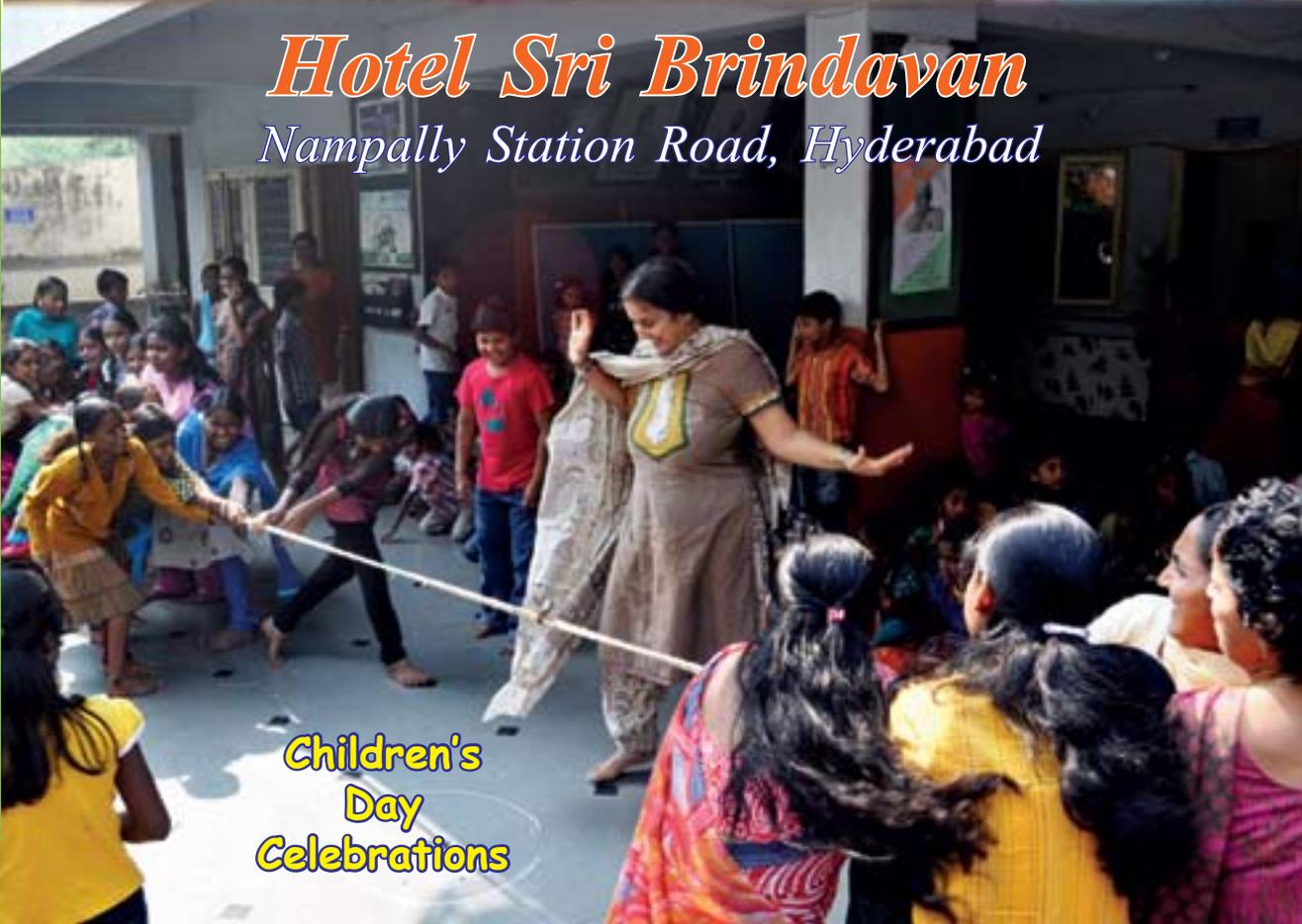
Nachiketa Tapovan,

Plot No. 70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Hyderabad.





Hotel Sri Brindavan
Nampally Station Road, Hyderabad



**Children's
Day
Celebrations**



*“Seekers of Truth, aspirants on the path of Yoga,
devotees of God, lovers of mankind, all these have to pay tribute to
the supreme father of energy, vital, which is Surya...”*

- Swami Krishnananda



www.kvkenery.com