

# *Nachiketanjali*

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# Happy Birthday



*Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir children*

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# *Nachiketanjali*

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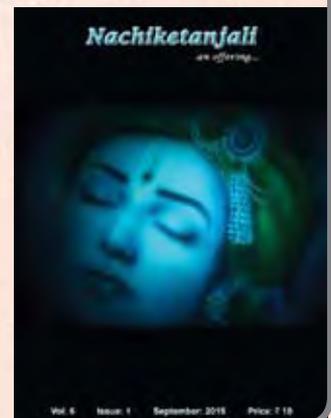
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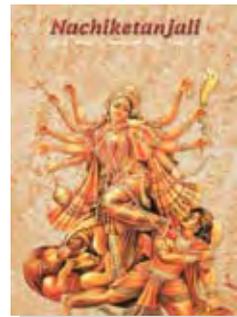
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## Cover Story

Revered Divine Mother! Let us invoke you with utmost sincerity, love and devotion during the nine nights of Navaratri. We envision and embrace you in your three different aspects of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati.



Come to us as Durga. The deep seated buffalo in us, our stubborn and bullish ego born out of ignorance needs to be destroyed, so we may be rid of our animal nature and return to your lap which is our true home.

Mother, we seek not earthly treasures and pleasures, but the abundant wealth of virtues that you embody as Lakshmi. Sri Adi Sankara himself, in Vivekachudamani, describes your six glorious forms of wealth (calmness of mind, self-control, self-withdrawal, forbearance, faith and single-pointedness). Our mind will then be tilled well to receive your Divine knowledge and wisdom.

Oh mother, grace us as Saraswati and shine the light of Atma Jnana upon us. We have learnt and gained much knowledge of our external world. All of which is futile. The darkness of our minds can be destroyed only by your illuminating knowledge of the Self.

In this way, dear mother, help us transcend our limitations and attain true victory over none other but our own lower selves. That will be a true Vijaya Dashami!

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# *A Life of Dependency*

All of us lead a life of dependency. We need the support of others to thrive and we as members of society are woven like threads in a fabric. That is the beauty of life. That is the principle of life.

The air we breathe is not anyone's sole property. We breathe the same air as the others do. We depend on teachers to gain knowledge. We depend on the farmers for our food. We depend on workers for constructing the house we live in. We depend on weavers for the clothes we wear. For that matter even organizations depend on charity to serve the needy. Everything is intertwined. Thus nature has provided the best opportunity of living in communion rather than leading independent lives. Just as a single thread can't make a fabric we need the support of others to lead a comfortable life. A zero has no value, only when numbers are added to it, its value increases.

One might build several houses for himself but God has created this entire universe for Himself. Then isn't it our responsibility to see that everyone is happy in this world? Should we not enhance the beauty of the Lord's creation for we all live in the universe that He has created. We clean our houses every day to get rid of the trash. Just imagine how wonderful this world would be if we can purify our minds and fill them with only positive thoughts. Then the whole universe will be filled with only love and happiness. Having used the earth that

He has provided for us, why can't we safeguard its sanctity and give back happiness to God in its purest form?

If we pluck the flowers and fruits from a tree, it is our duty to water and safeguard the plant or tree. We have used its produce so we owe them love and service in return. We utilize the air to live, then isn't it our duty to protect the air from pollution. When we use water to quench our thirst, in return we should maintain its freshness. This is the art of Giving back.

A doctor might not be capable of arguing a case in court. That is the job of a Lawyer. Similarly a Lawyer can't treat a patient. That is exclusively the job of a Doctor. But when the Doctor has a legal problem, he has to approach only a Lawyer and a Lawyer has to see the Doctor if he has health problems. They are dependent on each other. So are we. We lead our daily lives supporting each other in the society. That is the beauty of living in communion. If we are aware of this then where is the place for hatred? It is only joy and bliss!

As citizens of this country let us show gratitude to each other and lead our lives with awareness that we are all beings of the same creation – God's creation!

**- Subhadra K.**

*Gratitude is the key to  
fulfilment.*





## *Our journey*

*O*ur journey is a melodrama full of upheavals. Even though we go through a series of life threatening experiences, it always brings us closer to life than life itself..

The journey is all about encountering ourselves with life, and one who is more responsive to life than encounters, will know what truly life is. Encounter is just the finger that points towards the moon and not the moon. So what we do need is to experience something different, unique,

yet simple. But due to lack of awareness of that which is tangible and constant, we do tend to look at that which is temporary, complicated and keeps changing.

The more we look at life, it reveals its deeper meaning and makes an episode or a page or a word more meaningful and purposeful than ever before. It is as if we are looking at the screen and not at the pictures on the screen. It is as if we are looking at the vast sky and not the clouds.

Clouds come and go, sky remains untainted. Similarly, in life too, all such episodes or pages or even words are subject to our understanding of life and not the incidents that come and go like a cloud. Even if we see that an episode ends abruptly, it is a complete circle in itself for sure. No matter where life breaks, it is still complete. So, nothing is therefore unfulfilled or incomplete or inappropriate. It is in the mind. After all, whatever episode we face in life expresses everything that is vital, thereby making it a full circle. Once the flower blossoms, it is complete. Even if it is just a bud, it is complete on its own and expresses everything that is essential. Even if it is just a branch, it is still complete. Nothing is incomplete. Therefore, anything that we do or undo, or face or react is complete. Any action in that moment is an ultimate flowering and nothing else. Only thing is that to know it or to experience it, one should look at life and not the episodes or pages or words. But if one finds that more difficult, then one can go through an episode to look at life.

If one can develop a subtle understanding towards life and know how to look at life through such episodes, then one can get easily connected to life. It's after all just connecting the missing dots of life and nothing else. All episodes are nothing but independent dots that make a complete circle. What a wonder! Every dot is complete in itself and the collection of all dots also is complete. It is like this; even if we take out infinity from infinity it still remains infinity. Similarly, dots don't lose their identity of completeness. That's the reason great souls have been incessantly asking every seeker of divinity to contemplate on episodes of life if not on life, since everything is complete.

All those episodes are like a telescope to look beyond and look at. It is unfortunate that we get stuck in the telescope throughout life and never try to use it to look beyond. There are numerous incidences. In fact, life comes with a certain package. No matter how different it is from others, it is still complete on its own. Therefore, one should know what it is and what it is for. It really unfolds the mystery of life. But

unfortunately, whenever we look at episodes in life, we get completely destroyed. We never try ourselves out, to know what is left after everything gets destroyed.

Remember, life remains though our remains are left behind. Whenever we get blows, remember, they are perfect strokes by the best artist and not hammering by an unseen hand to destroy everything. One who looks at life moves in awareness, and one who looks at episode as a life, moves awareness away. What a tragedy... What a pain... What a trauma... What a life!!! If we decide to look at an episode, we would end up gaining nothing. Whereas, if we look at life we would gain mastery over everything... Such is the power of life and looking at life! If one decides to shift focusing from episode to life, I do not know why one would not know life in its pristine form. Life is not defective or inconsistent or imperfect... It is pristine, it is consistent, and it is perfect.

Our journey is in the life, for the life and by the life. If one knows nothing except life, he knows everything. Therefore, the journey can be challenging, yet simple if one gets driven by life rather than getting driven away by the episodes of life. Your journey is yours. Our journey is ours. It might be completely different, yet it is complete, it is fascinating, it is challenging, it is enchanting and above all encompassing. Only when we accept an episode as it is or life as it comes!



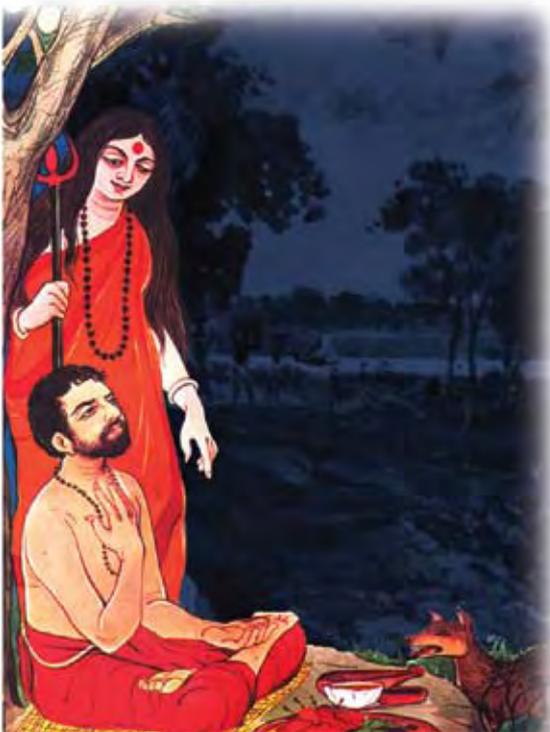
*- Swami Nachiketananda Puri*



## The Brahmani & Sri Ramakrishna

There came to Dakshineswar, a *brahmin* woman who was to play an important part in Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual unfoldment. Born in East Bengal, she was an adept in the *Tantrik* and *Vaishnava* methods of worship. She was slightly over fifty years of age, handsome, and garbed in the orange robe of a nun. Her sole possessions were a few books and two pieces of wearing-cloth.

Sri Ramakrishna welcomed the visitor with great respect; described to her his experiences and visions, and told her of people's belief that these were symptoms of madness. She listened to him attentively and said: "My son, everyone in this world is mad. Some are mad for money, some for creature comforts, some for name and fame;



and you are mad for God." She assured him that he was passing through the almost unknown spiritual experience described in the scriptures as *Maha-bhava*, the most exalted rapture of divine love. She told him that this extreme exaltation had been described as manifesting itself through nineteen physical symptoms, including the shedding of tears, a tremor of the body, horripilation, perspiration, and a burning sensation. The Bhakti scriptures, she declared, had recorded only two instances of the experience, namely, those of Sri Radha and Sri Chaitanya.

Very soon a tender relationship sprang up between Sri Ramakrishna and the Brahmani, she looking upon him as the Baby Krishna, and he upon her as mother. Day after day, she watched his ecstasy during the *kirtan* and meditation, his *Samadhi*, his mad yearning; and she recognized in him a power to transmit spirituality to others. She came to the conclusion that such things were not possible for an ordinary devotee, not even for a highly developed soul. Only an Incarnation of God was capable of such spiritual manifestations. She proclaimed openly that Sri Ramakrishna, like Sri Chaitanya, was an Incarnation of God.

When Sri Ramakrishna told Mathur what the Brahmani had said about him, Mathur shook his head in doubt. He was reluctant to accept him as an Incarnation of God, an *Avatar* comparable to Rama, Krishna, Buddha, and Chaitanya, though he admitted Sri Ramakrishna's extraordinary spirituality. Whereupon the Brahmani asked Mathur to arrange a conference of scholars who should discuss the matter with her. He agreed to the proposal and the meeting was arranged. It was to be held in the Natmandir in front of the Kali temple.

Two famous pundits of the time were invited: Vaishnavcharan, the leader of the Vaishnava society, and Gauri. The first to arrive was Vaishnavcharan, with a distinguished company of scholars and devotees. The Brahmani, like a proud mother, proclaimed her view before him and supported it with quotations from the scriptures. As the pundits discussed the deep theological question, Sri Ramakrishna, perfectly indifferent to everything happening around him, sat in their midst like a child, immersed in his

own thoughts, sometimes smiling, sometimes chewing a pinch of spices from a pouch, or again saying to Vaishnavcharan with a nudge: "Look here. Sometimes I feel like this, too." Presently Vaishnavcharan arose to declare himself in total agreement with the view of the Brahmani. He declared that Sri Ramakrishna had undoubtedly experienced *Maha-bhava* and that this was the certain sign of the rare manifestation of God in a man. The people assembled there, especially the officers of the temple garden were struck dumb. Sri Ramakrishna said to Mathur, like a boy: "Just fancy, he too says so! Well, I am glad to learn that, after all, it is not a disease."

When, a few days later, Pundit Gauri arrived, another meeting was held, and he agreed with the view of the Brahmani and Vaishnavcharan. To Sri Ramakrishna's remark that Vaishnavcharan had declared him to be an *Avatar*, Gauri replied: "Is that all he has to say about you? Then he has said very little. I am fully convinced that you are that Mine of Spiritual Power, only a small fraction of which descends on earth, from time to time, in the form of an Incarnation."

"Ah!" said Sri Ramakrishna with a smile, "You seem to have quite outbid Vaishnavcharan in this matter. What have you found in me that makes you entertain such an idea?"

Gauri said: "I feel it in my heart and I have the scriptures on my side. I am ready to prove it to anyone who challenges me."

"Well," Sri Ramakrishna said, "it is you who say so; but, believe me, I know nothing about it."

Thus, the insane priest was, by verdict of the great scholars of the day, proclaimed a Divine Incarnation. His visions were not the result of an overheated brain; they had precedent in spiritual history. And how did the proclamation affect Sri Ramakrishna himself? He remained the simple child of the Mother that he had been since the first day of his life. Years later, when two of his householder disciples openly spoke of him as a Divine Incarnation and the matter was reported to him, he said with a touch of sarcasm: "Do they think they will enhance my glory that way? One of them is an actor on the stage and the other a physician. What do they know about Incarnations? Why years ago pundits like Gauri and Vaishnavcharan declared me to be an Avatar. They were great scholars and knew what they said. But that did not make any change in my mind."

Sri Ramakrishna was a learner all his life. He often used to quote a proverb to his disciples:

"Friend, the more I live the more I learn." When the excitement created by the Brahmani's declaration was over, he set himself to the task of practicing spiritual disciplines according to the traditional methods laid down in the *Tantra* and *Vaishnava* scriptures. Hitherto he had pursued his spiritual ideal according to the promptings of his own mind and heart. Now he accepted the Brahmani as his Guru and set foot on the traditional highways.

Source: Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna  
By Mahendranath Gupta



## Vivekanjali

"You have to grow from the inside out.  
None can teach you, none can make you spiritual.  
There is no other teacher but your own soul."

- Swami Vivekananda

# Sadhana in depth

I wonder sometimes, when people come to me and say, 'I have been doing *Sadhana* (one-hour meditation and *Asanas* etc.) from so many years, yet I don't get good experiences and I don't find any change in myself'. What is the reason? Where does the problem lie? Deep down, *Sadhakas* start questioning Guru, scriptures and organization etc., but not oneself. It is truly necessary to have a qualified Guru but if one becomes a qualified *Shishya*, then God takes the form of Guru and leads the *Sadhaka* from darkness to light.

Instead of thinking about results and getting depressed, one needs to intensify *Sadhana*. It is a prerequisite to ponder over few basic questions like 'What is the purpose of *Sadhana*'? 'Is it to have good visions'?

The purpose of *Sadhana* is not mere visions; it is rather to achieve a transformation of personality within and expression without. Here are a few fundamental facts about *Sadhana*:

## What is *Sadhana*? Where to find it?

### *Sadyate anena iti* Sadhana

Means, **that which needs to be achieved or discovered, is called *Sadhana*.**

*Sadhana* is nothing but taking up a **Spiritual path** which is an **anchor of life**. Spirituality is the science that helps in knowing human beings in depth.

***Sadhaka*** is the one who tries to achieve that which seems to be difficult.

*Sadhana* helps in realizing the potential of a human being. It is a process, which has been chosen to evolve oneself from one plane to another. Man thinks about success in the fields of career, relationships, name and fame but there will not be the same enthusiasm to achieve success in *Sadhana*, since a tangible change is not instant.

Numerous *Sadhanas* are given in various major spiritual scriptures in our *Sanatana Dharma*. But a realized soul, the one who has discovered himself or herself, would be able to guide one in taking up the right *Sadhana* according to one's own nature.



*Sadhana* is not closing eyes for hours together, not performing various rituals, not doing lot of *Parayanas* (chantings). Certainly all these actions have some benefits or credit us with *Punya*. You might have also come across many people who are involved in many religious activities, yet you might have seen them expressing unanticipated qualities like anger, jealousy and greed etc. Having installed Ganesha idol during Navaratri, instead of realizing the truth behind Ganesha Chaturthi, they start playing film songs and watch movies. Religion is often twisted according to one's own convenience because of one's selfishness. Therefore, religion is defined according to one's state of mind. Often many criticize religion for this reason and start developing a kind of hatred, stating that that they belonging to such religions makes them feel shameful. But this is a very false notion about *Sanatana Dharma* or Hinduism.

Give a pause and start questioning yourself - do I really know what religion is? Many might have read Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas, yet they will not be able to discover themselves or the meaning of religion. I know a person who does a lot of meditation for hours together, but whenever he sees a woman, he starts scanning her from top to bottom. Doing hours of meditation only satisfies the ego. Instead of taming the ego, if one starts boosting the ego, then the purpose of *Sadhana* is not fulfilled. What is the use of such meditation that is not helping one to overcome lustful thoughts? There are many people who go to prestigious spiritual institutions today just for

a name-tag which certainly will not help in the advancement of life's journey. As one evolves he loves to leave all the tags, spontaneously, which are nothing but a creation. Through *Sadhana*, a *Sadhaka* is not creating anything but trying to get rid of false identities and to peep within to discover the treasure of the divine, which exists very much within, in everybody.

Before commencement of *Sadhana*, a *Sadhaka* must examine his own *Samskaras* that are deep rooted thoughts, which are sometimes uncontrollable.

Example - Nobody wants to be angry. You may tell yourself that I must not be angry. But at times, even though one doesn't want to show his/her anger, yet it is expressed and exploded.

Through *Sadhana* one has to alter all the deep-rooted *Samskaras*, which are hindrances in the process of evolution. Without working on these limitations if one does *Sadhana*, it doesn't bring any great change in the *Sadhaka*, rather it creates many illusions. Purifying Mind and Ego is the initial goal of *Sadhana*. It might seem impossible to take up the purification process but it is very much possible. *Sadhana* can make that which seems to be impossible, possible. Unless mind and ego are not purified, it becomes a dream to know the hidden potential of life.

### How to begin *Sadhana*?

The journey of *Sadhana* must begin to grow from within and be expressed without.

1. **Taking up Practice:** Taking up the right *Sadhana* according to your nature is very important. Guru will guide in this or else you can choose. After high school, a child selects his or her branch of interest; similarly taking up an appropriate *Sadhana* helps you to travel within.

For example; these may be various branches of yoga like Meditation, *Japa* etc.

2. **Guru:** Guru is very important to tread a spiritual path which is nothing but knowing the mechanics about the self. Guru is the authority in guiding the disciple, since he is an expert. Guru gives you the right *Sadhana*.

3. **Acceptance:** Examine all your thoughts and the intensified ego. If a *Sadhaka* thinks he doesn't have ego then he is harming his own self, because everybody has ego but it differs in the degree of intensity. Once the *Sadhaka* accepts the nature of *Samskaras* and the extent of ego he has, then the journey becomes very easy and effortless. Advancement of *Sadhana* lies in acceptance.

4. **Sankalpa:** It is a very important factor of *Sadhana* as without *Sankalpa*, *Sadhana* is not complete. Taking a resolution to alter your *Samskaras* before commencement of *Sadhana* is called *Sankalpa*. The goal of a *Sadhaka* must be to evolve oneself from negativity to positivity.

**Note:** *Sankalpa* must be a positive resolution, which is going to be helpful in growing from within.

5. **Faith:** Need to have firm faith in yourself, Guru and in the *Shastras*. If you have any single doubt about one of these, it might take a little longer than desired.

6. **Continuous and consistent:** *Sadhana* must be continuous without any interruption. Generally, *Sadhakas* try to search for excuses to skip *Sadhana*. When one keeps postponing his/her *Sadhana*, it will be difficult to see a tangible change. I come across many *Sadhakas* who perform *Sadhana* for one or two days or whenever they have any problem and they say *Sadhana* doesn't work for them. So the secret of *Sadhana* lies in continuous and constant practice.

For example: if one wants to master any sport or art one needs to have regular practice, similarly *Sadhana* is mastering the self, and therefore it too demands regularity and consistency.

All the above steps will help one to establish in *Sadhana*; which is a process of climbing the ladder of evolution in order to know the true nature of the Self. It is a process of transformation that helps in breaking the self-created boundaries and makes you realize the experience of limitlessness. Let us take up *Sadhana* to transform the self and the nation.

- *Swami Shivananda Puri*



## The story behind **NAVARATRI**

It is that time of the year where Hindus start preparations for celebrating Navaratri, the joyous festival of nine nights, which is dedicated to the Divine Mother Durga. Virtually every Hindu community in the world celebrates Navaratri.

The major story associated with Navaratri is the battle between the great Goddess Durga and the demon Mahishasura, who represents Egotism. To understand this story one must understand the Hindu view of life and society. Hinduism views the world drama as a battle between the forces of light and darkness. But the battle is not defined as a battle between different sections of human society on the basis of belief or disbelief in a particular dogma.

The struggle takes place between Divine Beings (*Devas*) and Demonic Beings (*Asuras*). The divine forces are those that lead to progress; to a grander, more divine society. The demonic are harmful forces that thwart progress, such as Greed, Lust, Envy, etc.

To us, it may be difficult to think of these forces as real beings, but in reality, forces such as Greed, Wrath, Courage and Love (of several types) are

more real and enduring than the human beings who come under their influence. Compared with them, humans are temporary and fleeting. *Devas* and *Asuras* are forces of consciousness that have existed since the beginning of our universe, and indeed in previous universes too.

In a heightened state of awareness, Hindu Rishis of ancient times saw and experienced the *Deva-Asura* struggle that underlies the world drama. We ourselves take part in this drama, by being the field through which the various forces act and project themselves. The human heart and mind is in fact a battlefield between these great forces. When *Asuric* tendencies dominate, animal appetites dominate society. When the *Devas* gain ascendancy in human nature, it enhances aspirations for a larger and deeper life dominated by truth and beauty.

The art, literature and great festivals and temples of India are all themed to portray this complex and perpetual *Deva-Asura* struggle. They vividly portray the inner world of the universe, which human beings can only become aware of in a heightened state of spiritual awareness achieved through inner purification. Festivals like Navaratri celebrate the ascendancy of the *Devas* in both our inner nature as well as in society.

### **The Story of Durga and Mahishasura**

The following is a brief adaptation of the story as appears in the *Devi-Mahatmya*. It is adapted in a way so as to lift the veil of the spiritual symbolism employed in the story:

The *Devas*, such as Self-discipline, Universal Love, Selfless Service and Courage were being routed by the most fearsome demon they had ever beheld, Mahishasura (Egotism). Ego disregards the promptings of the *Devas* and claims all he sees for his own, living only for sensual pleasure and self-glorification, aided by lesser demons like Greed, Lust, and Anger.

The divine beings ran to the greatest of all the Gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, to plead for help. But when the Big Three realize whom they are up against, they exchanged worried glances. "This job is too much for the Three of us," they agree. "In

a case like this, there is only one recourse.” And sitting down for meditation, the Gods concentrate their mental energy on her, the Supreme Goddess. Her response is instantaneous.

At that very moment as Greed and Lust are trampling the world, an extraordinarily beautiful woman rivets their attention seated quietly near a mountaintop. “She’s incredible!” they pant. “Ego must possess her!” And indeed, when Ego hears about her ravishing beauty, he sends his henchmen to her with a proposal.

“Submit to Ego and all the wealth of the world will be yours!” the demons announce to the mysterious woman. “Become his slave and we will serve you forever!”

Smiling shyly, she responds, “Oh my, that’s a very attractive offer. But – silly me – I took a foolish vow when I was a little girl that I would only marry the man who defeats me in battle. I’m afraid I cannot accept your master unless he conquers me.”

Mahishasura is enraged at this reply and sends his generals with their heavily armed divisions to take the mysterious beauty by force. As the demons reach out to grasp her, however, the delicate maiden begins to grow. An extra eye swells from her forehead, numerous arms sprout from her trunk, and fangs erupt from her howling mouth. Swords, spears, cudgels, and whirling discs with very sharp edges—every conceivable weapon appears in each of her numberless fists. The tawny rock on which she has been sitting unfurls into an enormous, razor-clawed, ravenous lion.

“I think we bit off more than we can chew,” Fear mutters under his breath as he leads the suicide charge against Durga, the Mother of the Universe.

The enemy, the Ego has unwittingly engaged, is the *Chit Shakti* herself—the purifying power of Supreme Consciousness. The Ego has finally confronted the Higher Self—and it is mighty!

The Divine Warriress thwarts her foes with powerful *mantras*, the sword of discrimination, the bow of determination, and the bludgeon of

persistent yogic practice. A fierce and grisly battle ensues in which Egotism expends every means at its disposal to overcome the spiritual force within as it reasserts its innate sovereignty.

The fighting is portrayed in detail, including Mother Durga’s famous battle with Rakta Bija (“Red Drop”): each time a drop of his blood, spilled in battle, touches the Earth, it leaps up as a new warrior. The Divine Mother transforms herself into the gruesome Goddess Kali, who swallows every drop of blood before it reaches the ground. To the casual reader this is a grotesque episode, but meditators will instantly recognize the analogy: in the struggle to control one’s thoughts and desires, they seem to replicate magically and maniacally. Only by catching them before they have the opportunity to take root can this endless cycle be stopped.

Eventually, the all-powerful demon Mahisha (Self-Delusion) lurches into battle, transforming himself from one shape into another as he attempts to elude the Universal Mother. Indeed many of us have experienced this shape shifting, as for example, brash egotism sublimates itself into spiritual pride. He is in the form of a half-man/half water buffalo when the Divine Force finally overcomes him. Indian religious art is replete with paintings and sculptures of the calm, benign Mother Durga slaying the buffalo demon Mahisha.

At one point the Universal Mother projects millions of Goddesses from herself, including Brahmani, the Goddess of Prudently Applied Intelligence, Vaishnavi, Goddess of Wisely Used Material Resources, and Varahi, the Goddess of Desire for Spiritual Perfection. Ego cries out, “This is not fair!” and the Goddess reabsorbs her emanations, leading to the climatic scene in which Ego and Pure Spiritual Awareness stride forth to battle each other—alone. In this final confrontation the great demon Mahishasura is slain.

**When the Ego perishes, order is restored to the universe and harmony returns to nature. Indra and the other Gods regain their place in heaven (i.e., the mind and senses, in service of the Divine, resume their functions).**

Source: The Hindu Perspective

# Values based Visionary

Just a few days back, I had the privilege of joining a few of the passionate volunteers of Nachiketa Tapovan for a meeting with Swamiji as he presented the project proposal for *Nachiketa Vidya Mandir*. He also shared the most awaited news that our school has finally been recognized by the State Government. The excitement was akin to that of a youth who just got his driving license after turning 18. Nachiketa Tapovan got this well-deserved recognition from the government after 18 years of its establishment. Eighteen long years of relentless, selfless, silent, dedicated efforts by passionate volunteers with shared values for a noble cause - to educate empower and enlighten the needy!

Come to think of it, for any non-profit organization to operate and sustain for so long and go strong, it would need a very strong intrinsic ideology, core values and visionary leadership, over and above a clear cut vision and mission. I guess that is how visionary organizations like Ramakrishna Mission and Chinmaya Mission were built to last as well ...

If I know Swamiji well enough, he would really not appreciate praising him for his visionary leadership. For, silent work has been his loudest value. But a visionary he is. I sometimes feel that he lives in the future and constantly challenges his gross body to catch up with him. What he visualized and drew on paper 10 years back is now a thriving spiritual center with rock solid temples of learning, meditation and yoga and ultimately a tremendous source of inspiration for spiritual transformation. Accomplishing all this while being steadfast to Nachiketa Tapovan's core values of relentless, selfless, and silent *seva* to society.

Talking about the importance of core values, I have seen many organizations that have the most effective vision and mission statements and do a wonderful job pursuing them, but somewhere down the line, they somehow end up relegating their core values as though they are "nice to have" and not "must have". Especially while making commercial decisions that impact their number. Such organizations that put "numbers" above

"values", may do well in the short term but would fall short of being visionary.

Just like *Dharma, Artha, Kama & Moksha* are the four human ends, the "*chaturvidha purushartha*" which are desired by all people, in the same way Vision, Mission, Purpose & Values are the four ends that all organizations need to pursue to the same degree. To draw a simple analogy, Vision of an organization can be compared to *Moksha* which is *Parama Purushartha* (the ultimate human end). Mission is similar to human ends of *Artha & Kama*. Organization's Purpose and Core Values are similar to the human end of *Dharma*.

It is widely instructed in our scriptures that while pursuing *Artha & Kama*, one needs to be mindful and follow the laws of *Dharma*. In the same way organizations while pursuing their vision and mission, need to follow their core values and be mindful of their purpose. But more often than not, *Dharma* (in case of humans) and core values (in case of organizations) are relegated as one of the optional means to follow and not an absolute end in itself.

Those organizations which have considered "Purpose and Core Values" on par with "Vision and Mission" have more probability to become visionary.

Nachiketa Tapovan is one such organization that has held its "core values and purpose" on par with its "Vision and Mission". If there is one soul that epitomizes all three and personifies the essence, it is Swami Nachiketanda himself, the one who has taken Yama's advice in *sloka 3.14* of *Katha Upanishad* so seriously that he made it his credo and lifetime mission - "Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached."

**Uttishthata Jagrata Prapya Varan Nibodhata !!!**

Please don't, even for a moment, think that I am praising Swamiji for he is a *Jivanmukta* (liberated one) and he does not expect praise from others. The only purpose of writing this is to inspire other spiritual seekers.

But here is the caveat, I said “become one” and not “be one”. “Be one” emphasizes on the vision aspect of your spiritual journey, whereas “become one” emphasizes on the mission-values-purpose aspect of your spiritual journey. By directly jumping to vision state without pursuing the mission-values-purpose, you may risk tying yourself down with internal conflicts between mind and intellect, creating virtual walls making yourself a prisoner of your vision.

I call this state **the Vision-Prison** state. you are free only when there is a complete harmony between what you think, what you say and what you do. In Vision-Prison state you are merely imitating your role model externally, i.e. only saying and doing like your role model but your thinking is still in a lower plane. Let not the vision become your prison. For example, as per *Advaita Vedanta*, *Jivanmukta* is not bothered by disrespect and endures cruel words, treats others with respect regardless of how others treat him. Now, a spiritual seeker may get really inspired by this quality (which is actually that of the vision) and hastily start preaching and performing outwardly without first purifying and harmonizing the inner equipment of mind and intellect - *Antahkarana Shuddhi* (which is actually pertaining to the mission). Such a person is considered to be in a Vision-Prison state.

By *Antahkarana Shuddhi*, the mission here is not to renounce everything and perform 24x7 *Japa* under a banyan tree. It simply means that you acknowledge the existence and the real need of *Artha* and *Kama* in your life and reasonably fulfil them with full awareness of your *Dharma* so as to move towards freedom from them, thereby not perpetuating a vicious cycle of fulfilling and accumulation.

Becoming a *Jivanmukta* doesn't just happen overnight. It takes a lifetime of intense *Sadhana* and so Yama doesn't mince any words when he completes the *sloka* by saying - Sharp it is, and cutting, as the edge of a razor, and hard to cross.

***“kshurasya dhaaraa nishitaam duratyayaa. Durgm pathastatkavayo vadanti”***

It is something like growing a beautiful miniature banyan tree using the art of Bonsai. It takes a multi-



year **mission** (*artha-kama*) of potting, pruning, wiring and training, before you can actually start the next phase of shaping and styling, that ultimately leads to the **vision** (*moksha*) of a bonsai. All along respecting the fundamental laws (**values**) of nature (*Dharma*) - providing water, nutrients and sunlight in right proportions at the right time. The tree is cut and pruned with sharp instruments time after time, its branches and roots restrained with wires for the longest of durations ... but at the end, the sight of a banyan tree bonsai is something to cherish!

There are no short-cuts to realizing the vision, be it the human end of *moksha* or organizational vision. By merely imitating the vision state you will end up in the so called Vision-Prison. Relentlessly following the mission and core values / *Dharma*, however arduous, will lead you to the path of liberation and ultimately realization of the Vision.

Let's have a small quiz. Here is another set of attributes of a liberated one - humble, high spirited, of clear and steady mind, straightforward, compassionate, patient, indifferent, courageous, speaks firmly and with sweet words. Guess who has these qualities amongst us?

Happy Birthday, Swamiji!!

Sorry, no prizes for guessing! Let's celebrate 18 years of relentless selfless silent work of Nachiketa Tapovan – an organization guided by a Value based Visionary!

Uttishthata Jagrata Prapya Varan Nibodhata !!!

**- Ajith Nallari**

# Mother



*I* was busy with my work when Vasundhara Ma called me up and said, “Sorry to disturb you. One of our school’s kids wants to pursue graduation in B.Com (Hons.) and has secured a good rank in the related entrance exam, but I am unaware of good colleges in the city. Can you help me?” There was genuine concern in her voice, the kind of concern that only a mother who wishes to provide the best for her child can have. After some research, I called her up and said, “Ma, why not an alternative course which is equally good and where the fee is less?” I do not know what Ma thought about my suggestion! But, she explained me that the child had worked hard and we should do the best we can to facilitate his education in the field of his interest. That is Ma, loved by everyone who comes in touch with her.

I fondly recall my first few days with her, when I attended a residential camp organized by Nachiketa Tapovan way back in 2003. It was the first time I was going to stay away from my biological mother. Both she and I were very worried, and she requested Ma to take care of me. I was a whining child then and troubled Ma and Swamiji for three days (in the seven-day camp!) to send me home. Both of them were very patient with me. Be it Swamiji’s firmness or Ma’s warmth, I was there for the entire duration of the camp. And thanks to lessons from that camp, I could happily stay in a hostel later for graduation.

Subsequent interactions with Ma helped me understand her better. She is passionate about her work and dedicated towards the over 270 kids who study peacefully under her warm guidance. Every conversation with her will ultimately lead to

thinking about how a particular problem should be solved or how things could be improved for the children. She is as simple and beautiful as the soft cottons that she wears. Her smile can melt the toughest of hearts. And, top it all with her innocence. She is the quintessential Indian mother.

Another thing that I observed is, when an idea or suggestion is placed before Ma, she never rules it out outright. Instead, she encourages the proponent to act on it and see if it can be worked out. Autonomy in action is something that a leader needs to permit, and Ma does it with ease. She sees the larger picture and is not bogged down by any situation. For instance, when a number of water cans were being fetched for an event, she said her immediate concern is to have a proper water treatment plant in the school itself, so that the problem is conclusively resolved. When I was worried about the arrival of a guest for an event at school, she was cool and said irrespective of the person, the event will go on well and the kids would certainly enjoy.

So, when during the Annual Day this year, the children presented her with a memento and thanked her for all that she had done for them, there was not a dry eye among the audience. It is my good fortune that I have the chance to know Ma, work with her at times and learn from her always. As one of her many children, I thank her for her selfless love and compassion, which drive us all to be good human beings.

– *Neetika Gogula*

An advocate and has passion  
for writing on social issues

# SECRETS OF SUCCESS

**Become a winner,  
discover the exciting life of success and  
achievement**

*Think* big, work hard and have the courage to dream. Concentrate on achieving that dream. Make the impossible your goal. Success begins to happen when you change your 'I can't' philosophy to 'I can'.

Common sense is indeed an important key to success. People may have number of university degrees behind their names, but if they lack common sense, they remain academic robots all through life. Common sense helps us to solve simple problems in life easily. In the process we progress and eventually attain success. Positive thinking is the vision to success. Success is most enjoyable when it has been won against odds.

It is always important to do sound planning. Strong and organised purposefulness towards a definite objective will focus your powers into strong motivation to attain your goal. We should plan every day, since we live only once and life is short; it behoves us to see that we attain maximum possible success in whatever we do. Time is one of our most precious resources and once lost, can never be retrieved. Roughly we spend one third of a lifetime in sleep, a tenth in eating and drinking, another tenth in bathing and tidying ourselves. We spend at least a sixth of our lives in chatting with friends and relatives. Thus 70% of life's time has vanished and only 30% remains for work. With a little judicious time-management, we could achieve more, attain greater prosperity and make life more pleasant for ourselves.



“Look not mournfully into the past  
It returns not again  
Wisely improve the present  
Go forth into a shadowy future  
Without fear and a manly heart”  
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Effective communication (“speech is the index of the mind”) is of great value. An individual's whole experience is built upon language and expression. In my opinion, the most fruitful and natural play of the mind is conversation. One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men but no machine can do the work of one extraordinary man.

A school in one's life never ends. The things taught in schools and colleges are not education but the means of education. Life is one endless school session.

A little commonsense, a little tolerance, a little good humour and you don't know how comfortable you can make yourself on this planet. Small courtesies sweeten our life.

“Happiness, I have discovered, is nearly always a rebound from hard work”.

Broadly there are three kinds of people

- 1) Those who are equipped with knowledge in their heads;
- 2) Those who do not have knowledge stored in their heads but know exactly where and how to find it; and
- 3) Those who have neither knowledge in their heads nor know where and how to find it.

The most important thing in Olympics is not to win, but to take part. So also in life, it is not the triumph but the struggle. It is the challenge of impossible that gets life out of its rut and onto a highway that leads us to our goal.

So, remember friends, it is always better to climb a staircase, one step at a time rather than attempt to reach the top in one leap.

**- Mrudula**



Drawing by **G. Vasanthi**, Class X, Nachiketa Vidya Mandir

### *Our precious Nachiketa Tapovan Teachers*

*Teachers are treated as GURUS in Nachiketa Tapovan.*

*“Guru Devo Bhava” has been the basis of our system of learning and our society has always looked up to our teachers to guide in both words and deeds. Teachers strive in educating younger generation, moulding their character and nurturing good values. A good teacher can only give and give. Teachers are considered as sculptors, as they can shape the society from being a good one to a great one.*

**- Sreelatha**



# Holy Sringeri...

## on the banks of River Tunga



Sringeri, in Chikkamagaluru district, in the state of Karnataka is a holy pilgrim centre and is situated on the banks of River Tungabhadra. It is at a distance of 110 km from Mangalore. It is said that the place derived its name after Sage Rishyashringa who sanctified this place with his birth. Sringeri is also one of the four *Mathas* established by Sri Adi Shankaracharya. Nature is at its best at Sringeri. The Coconut, Plantain and Oak trees compliment the serenity of the place. Sringeri is bounded by the Western Ghats.

Here goes a story related to the place. Once, while Sri Adi Shankaracharya was wandering on the banks of the Tunga River at Sringeri, he saw a snake spreading its hood and sheltering a pregnant frog who was about to spawn, from the hot sun. On seeing this, Sri Adi Shankaracharya felt that there was something holy and unique about this place as the snake was revealing something which was in contrast to its nature. Frogs were prey to snakes. But here the snake was protecting the frog. Impressed with the place where natural enemies had gone beyond their instincts, Sri Adishankaracharya established a Mutt in Sringeri in the South. This is the first and foremost of the four Mutts established by Sri Adi Shankaracharya. The other Mutts are Jyotir Mutt near Badrinath in the North, Govardhan Mutt near Puri in the East, and Kalika Mutt in Dwaraka in the West.



The prime deity in the Sringeri temple is Goddess Sharada and Adishankaracharya consecrated a Srichakra at this temple. Since then the temple and the Mutt were named as Sringeri Sharadapeeth.

The temple's Vijayanagar style of architecture is a marvel. On every Friday, Goddess Sharada gives special *darshan* to her devotees by adorning the *Veena*. Devotees turn ecstatic seeing her magnificent beauty. Towards the right of Mother Sharada's temple is another old temple of Sri Vidya Shankara. It is said that this temple was sculpted by the famous sculptor Amarashilpi Jakkanna.

Towards the south of the temple flows the River Tunga in all its magnificent glory. This river amalgamates with River Bhadra at a place called Harihar near Davangere in Karnataka and hence derived its name Tungabhadra. There is a bridge over this river which leads to Narayanavanam on the other bank. Narayanavanam houses Sringeri Peethadhipathi's quarters, Dhyana Mandir, Kalabhairava temple, Veda pathashala, a Research Centre on Vedas, Goshala and a Deer park.

Sharad Navaratri is the major festival in Sringeripeeth and is celebrated with great zeal and show. The *kshetra* has an aesthetic ambience and is a must visit for any pilgrim or spiritual seeker.

- Nitya

# Nachiketa's Paryavaran

On 3rd July 2017, there was a Green Print Drive with our philanthropic partner NTT DATA at Nachiketa Tapovan, Kodgal.



# NACHIKETA TAPOVAN

## Kodgal

### Annadhata Sukhibhava!

We thank our sponsors for their Annadanam to our Vidya Mandir children at Nachiketa Tapovan, Kodgal. The children are greatly benefited by your contribution.

Date	Name of the Sponsor
July 1	Smt. Tusharika (Seva in the name of her child Atri)
July 5	Sri Srihari Raju (Birthday: Medha Datla)
July 7, 9	Smt. Geetha (Birthday: Sri K.V. Subba Reddy)
July 9	Smt. Subhadra (Gurupournima)
July 15	NTTDATA
July 21	Smt. Swathi Kumar (In the memory of P. Padmavathamma) Smt. Sharada (In the memory of Smt. Kamala Kumari)
July 22	GSPANN Technologies
July 26	Sri Dhruv (Birthday: Smt. Neha)

## Bonalu celebrations

On 16th July 2017  
at Nachiketa Tapovan, Kodgal

Swamiji and residents participate in Bonalu celebrations



Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, festivals, or special occasions with children of Nachiketa Tapovan, Kodgal by contributing ₹5000

We need Annadanam every month!

You can reserve date/s. Thank you for your wonderful support and gesture!

### Bank Details

Name : Nachiketa Tapovan  
A/c No. : 62082979281  
Bank : State Bank of India  
Branch : Badepally (20193)  
IFSC Code : SBHY0020193  
Please send transfer details & address to  
Swamiji 99 08 23 45 45  
nachiketananda@gmail.com

### Contact for further assistance

Ashram: 800882828 Tapovan: 9849168937

SMS to Swamiji: 9908234545

nachiketananda@gmail.com admin@nachiketatapovan.org

Website: www.nachiketatapovan.org

# Golden Child

*I* watched as my mother placed yet another bronze-tinted trophy on the shelf. It stood in line with all the other ones, glistening in the afternoon light. There were thirteen in all, one for each year.

My mother smiled at me, her dark eyes gleaming with pride. It was the same smile she gave me every year after Prize Day at school. The same smile for thirteen years, as I walked up on stage to receive my “Best Student” award. The same smile that filled my blood with warmth, like melted light flowing through my veins. The same smile that made my stomach drop and my lips tremble as I imagined it disappearing.

Golden child. The child that always won. That was what my teacher had called me today. But my teacher didn't know. She didn't know that behind the row of polished trophies were the dark bands that circled my eyes. That if she peeled away the golden exterior she would see that I was chained. Chained to expectations and to fear, to success and to failure. Chained to the trophies that lined my shelf.

My mother leaned back on the cream coloured sofa and closed her eyes. “I knew you would win. I just knew”, she said, smiling. “The academic talent search is next week”, she said, “You'll win again won't you? You always do.” She pressed my hand and smiled at me. I smiled back but all I could think about was failure. My grandfather had once said that in order to succeed one must first taste failure. I tried to imagine what failure would taste like. I didn't know.

That night, I dreamt of the sofa, of dissolving into its cream heart. I dreamt of the trophies on my wall shattering into pieces, scattering bronze fragments over the floor. I dreamt of my mom's smile stretching across pink skies, her face glowing, her words echoing in my mind. Her smile was the last thing I saw when I woke up.

All week I poured over my books, memorizing each word, analysing each problem. The figures and numbers were all familiar to me, as familiar as the weight of expectations pressing upon my shoulders. Sometimes the weight came down on me like a wall, it clenched my bones and compressed my lungs and I felt as though I could not breathe. But it was fear that kept me alive, that breathed strength into me. The fear of failure.

On Saturday, we drove to the competition. I clasped my hands nervously. I tried to focus on the song playing on the radio, on my mother's jasmine-scented perfume - anything that would distract me. But I could not. I could not avoid feeling the growing ball of fire in my belly. I could not pretend that this feeling was just the nervousness that I always felt - it was different. It was a longing. I longed to break free from the chains that shackled me, to see the wall on my shoulders crumble to nothingness. The car screeched to a halt. We had arrived. I shook myself, waiting for fear to come back to me, to hold me and breathe into me. It did not come.

The competition went on as they all usually did. Questions were asked, answers were given and applauded by parents. As the day progressed, the number of children remaining dwindled,



until there were only two of us. I waited in silence as the judge asked his final question. I knew the answer. I took a deep breath, knowing that answering would mean one more trophy, one more smile from my mother. At this thought, I searched my heart for relief. But all I could feel was the fire of my longing, burning in my throat. I realised that I wanted to be free from the expectations that burdened me. That

I wanted to be allowed to fail, allowed to make mistakes, allowed to take a break. That I did not want to be the golden child.

I watched as the judge awarded the other contestant. For the first time in thirteen years, I hadn't won. Part of me longed to search the audience for my mother's face, looking to see if she was still smiling. But instead, I looked at the ground. I felt the taste of failure in my mouth. I smiled. Now I knew.

*By Ria Thimmaiahgari*



## “Our Mataji”

Swami Shivananda Puri, whom we sweetly call “Mataji”, is an embodiment of Mother Nature. Like Nature-

- She is selfless (she doesn't expect anything in return for what she's doing). It's like a tree- you cut a branch, or you water it, it will still provide you with fruits and shade. Similarly, you pour love or hate; she will still care the same way.
- She gives her love equally and unconditionally, just as a flower would bloom and spread fragrance without discrimination. A lot to explain here- irrespective of age, gender, class she will love you without a reason.
- She is determined in the same way a plant is, that grows on a rock! She won't look for appreciation, praise or encouragement. To grow, her determination is enough! She can sprout anywhere, transforming the ambience.
- She will utter the most humble words even in the most challenging situation. To face strong winds, you need not be a wall, be a humble blade of grass and you will be up again.
- She can keep your darkest of secrets or brightest of dreams buried deep within her, only to be recovered as diamonds (precious stones) later. That's the transformation one can attain with her.
- She believes in science, spirituality, service and above all in YOU! Because She will help you attain divinity through what you believe, be it science, spirituality or service.

Spending time with nature, (be it a walk in the garden or a day amidst the trees in the woods), makes us feel rejuvenated and more alive. It is the same with “Our Mataji”. She will not make you what she thinks you should be. She will only make you a better version of what you already are!

*- Sushma Gupta*



## AMAZING WOMEN OF INDIA

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### *Nurturing The Roots*

*How* many of us would have the courage to give up a well-paying career and plunge full-time into something where success is completely uncertain? There will be only a few who, after getting educated from one of the best institutions of the country, will courageously take the path less trodden. Meet Chhavi Rajawat, Masters in Business Administration and the Sarpanch of her village Soda in Rajasthan.

Born in 1980, she graduated from the Lady Shri Ram College for Women and did her MBA from Pune. She worked with the Times of India, Carlson Group of Hotels and Airtel before getting down to work at the grassroots. Inspired by her paternal grandfather, who retired as a Brigadier in the Indian Army and was the Sarpanch of their village 20 years ago, she set out to transform her village. Chhavi got elected as the Sarpanch in February 2010, which in her own words, was only because of the reservation of seats for women. She is touted as the youngest woman and the first MBA to hold the office of Sarpanch (at the age of 30).



In the three-tier system of governance in our country, the lower-most and most challenging tier is the village (panchayat) level. It is here that the leaders come face to face with basic problems and are challenged to improve development indicators which are, more often than not, poorer than the average in the country. Add to this, the patriarchal mindset and the extra efforts required to convince people to embrace change. It must certainly have been a challenge for Ms. Chhavi to take up work in her village.

But she began in right earnest. Even with little support available, she addressed the issue of water scarcity in her drought-stricken village in her first term as the Sarpanch. Her grandfather had got electricity, roads, schools and hospitals to the village and she now takes his work forward. Even before the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was initiated, she got toilets constructed in most of the houses in her village. Undeterred by physical attacks on her, she got an IT Center constructed under a Central Government Scheme. She describes herself as a facilitator in the interaction amongst the village, the government and the corporate sector.

She emphasizes that India cannot be a super-power by developing only the urban areas. While lamenting about the lack of awareness among the people of the country about the situation at the ground level, she underlines the importance of sensitizing people within and outside the government about Panchayats and seeking their suggestions for better functioning of Panchayats. She also looks forward to support from the private sector and public-spirited individuals for improving the conditions at the grassroots.

After all, a tree survives only when the roots are nurtured! Our best wishes to Ms. Rajawat.

# Swamiji

I came to Nachiketa Tapovan as a result of looking up service organizations in Justdial. It wasn't out of anyone's recommendation or reference. Just a google search. Those days, Swamiji lived in the premises of Nachiketa Vidya Mandir at Hyderabad. He, along with Mataji and Vasu ma welcomed me very warmly on the very first day. I was apprehensive of course to interact with someone in saffron robes, but soon fell at ease.

In the days that followed, my husband and kids also had a chance to interact with him. What I observed was that he was able to connect with every human being, no matter how diverse their age, interests or preferences, with equal ease. Normally, 'Swamijis' are perceived to be of 'advising' or the 'instructive' sorts. Swami Nachiketananda, is a friend first, a sincere and non-judgmental one.

I never perceived myself as a writer but he goaded that I should try. I was surprised to see that I could actually put an article together when I made an attempt. Eventually, he wanted me to be a part of the Editorial Board. Being an IT professional by background and qualifications, this was a new angle in me I discovered with his help. He has the ability to help others manifest their potential which they aren't even aware of. That's a mark of a great leader in itself.

I loved taking part in the consecration on the temple in the *Ashram*. A privilege we would never have gotten anywhere else. Each one of us are divine and have the ability to bring it out in ourselves and each other. That is what I learnt from him and from Nachiketa Tapovan. Another thing that I learnt by observing him is that spiritual growth is dynamic and happens with embracing different roles at different times. Shedding self-definitions and doing things outside one's comfort zone is what he teaches in subtle ways.



I don't make the effort to be in touch regularly with him due to being occupied with my family, children and career in Bangalore. But he never makes me feel the distance. I feel Nachiketa Tapovan is a part of me and I feel grateful for that.

**Happy Birthday Swamiji!**

**- Harini Nandakuru**



*Interested writers can send articles based on spirituality or addressing social issues to [nachiketanjali@gmail.com](mailto:nachiketanjali@gmail.com)*

*Word limit is 300 words for one column, 500 words for full page and 1000 words for 2 pages. The best articles would be published in the forthcoming issues of **Nachiketanjali**.*

## Follow the law of moderation

It is good to be eager to reach the goal quickly, but one should not break his limbs in the attempt. One must have a stout heart and in the period of *Sadhana*, one should have depth and firmness. "Slow and steady wins the race."

"Avoid extremes in all matters", say the elders. Lord Krishna therefore commands the seekers to follow the law of moderation. "Do not eat too much; do not give up food altogether; do not sleep too much; do not give up sleep altogether; be moderate in food, sleep and in all other activities. Moderation leads to success in *Yoga* and the elimination of pain and sorrow." Lord Krishna teaches this golden rule to all aspirants. Every object in the world works longer and more efficiently if we use it carefully. So also, the human body, the sense-organs and the mind should be kept fit, and used carefully to cross the world of *Samsara*.

The human organism is the gift of God. It is the ship that takes us over the stormy sea of earthly life. If the ship is overburdened it sinks in mid-ocean or it is otherwise damaged and

becomes unfit for further voyage. All diseases of the body result from excess and excessive strain in *yoga* results in damage to the delicate physical organism. Many seekers are carried away by excessive zeal in the early stages of *Sadhana*, and consequently they either fast too much or practice too hard and long, with the result that they become unfit both for spiritual realization and efficient worldly life. Knowing this, the teacher of the Gita insists in moderation as the golden rule of spiritual practice. The practice should be slow and gradually progressive. The bodily mechanism has been accustomed by long usage to a particular mode of behavior. To change it and give it a new functional mode takes long time. It cannot be done overnight. Slow and steady practice is necessary. Even so, the mind is habituated to run in certain channels, predetermined by past thoughts and experiences. This should be changed gradually and slowly.

So Lord Krishna wants every seeker to follow the law of moderation from first to last till the goal is attained finally and firmly.

Source: Gita Makarandam  
By Swami Vidyapraakashananda



# Teachers' Day

*We* celebrate "Teachers' Day" on 5th of September every year in the memory of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishna (1888-1975). He was into teaching (which was his passion) before he entered into politics and became the second President of India. He was a zealous advocate of education and one of the greatest scholars. As a mark of respect, his birthday is celebrated as Teachers' day.

An ideal teacher is the real nation-builder. Our teachers at Nachiketa Tapovan live simply and teach us to live simply. A teacher is a source of light in the encircling gloom. They inspire their students to rise to greater and greater heights in attainment of knowledge. Our teachers lay a strong foundation to our life from our childhood. Mothers bring us into this beautiful world but it is the teacher who explains the beauty of the world.

A teacher is like a torch; they show us the light when it is dark. She opens the door for us, it is for us to choose the right path. They act like a compass and direct us to a better future. Every child is gifted with a hidden talent. It is the teacher who discovers this talent and encourages us.



Our school, we feel, is a garden and our teachers look after the garden with care and love and we students bloom colourfully as fresh as the flowers with fragrance. A teacher puts her maximum efforts in creating the future of the student; our teachers improve our work habits, social skills and academic performance. They co-operate with us and help us to reach the top. No doubt, they have to be harsh now and then, but then it is like a parent to a child.

At our Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir, we students on this special day celebrate with great vigour. We dress up and act like them. We have so much fun. We perform various programmes to entertain our dear teachers. The student who acts the best is rewarded. We always look forward to this day with great enthusiasm.

We respect and love our teachers and will be ever grateful to them, no doubt however successful we are in future.

This is a small token by us, to our lovely teachers of Nachiketa Tapovan.

**10th class students**  
Nachiketa Vidya Mandir

The best teachers teach from heart. I am lucky to have the best teachers who teach from their hearts, not from the books.

Teachers take a hand, open a mind and touch a heart.

A good teacher is like a candle, it consumes itself to light the way to others.

My teacher is terrific with talent, highly energetic and well educated. My teacher is enthusiastic to teach and she is an efficient role model. Last but not the least my teacher has a remarkable relationship with her students. Thanks to her for being my teacher.

- M. Ankitha  
7th Class,  
Nachiketa Vidya Mandir



# The Message of VIVEKACHUDAMANI

## The Four-fold Spiritual Discipline



*Saadhanaayatra catvaari kathitaani manisibhih;*

*Yesu satsveva sannisthaa yadabhaave na sidhyati – 18*

Sages have spoken of four means of attainment, which alone being present, the devotion to Brahman succeeds, and in the absence of which, it fails.

In all the books on Vedanta, especially in Shankara's commentary on the Brahmasutras, we find the mention of the four-fold discipline (*sadhana-catustaya*) necessary for one in quest of spiritual knowledge. Shankara says here that sages have spoken of four means of attaining spiritual knowledge (*Saadhanaayatra catvaari kathitaani manisibhih*).

When these virtues are present, the devotion to Brahman succeeds, and in their absence, it fails (*Yesu satsveva sannisthaa yadabhaave*

*na sidhyati*). If we possess these means in our hands, we shall be able to establish ourselves in Brahman, and without these, it is not possible at all. It is just like any scientific researcher whose success depends on certain minimal qualifications and conditions. If an average high-school student is put in the post-graduate research course, he will prove to be a failure there. Certain minimum qualifications are needed to come up to that particular level. Similarly, in this wonderful search for Brahman, our infinite nature as pure consciousness, we need to be qualified by practicing the four-fold discipline.

**- Swami Ranganathananda**



On 22nd July 2017,  
GSPANN Technologies visited  
Nachiketa Tapovan, Kodgal

# Nachiketa Vidya Mandir Hyderabad Newsletter

## A peek into the classrooms –

Kindergarteners have settled and are independent...they started following the instructions, walking in the line, holding the railing and climbing the stairs, attending Assemblies, enjoying Rhymes, Audio visuals, Art and Craft.

**LKG:** Taking pre-writing skills further, the students learned the slanting lines through practicing in the sand, water, air and on the slates. Orally they have done numbers till 5. They have started with phonic sounds and are introduced to Letter 'A'. We introduced Circle and Half Circle pattern this month. The Children have been introduced to the concept of Fat and Thin, Up and Down, Close and Open, Big and Small.

**UKG:** Students have learnt making 'at, an' family words. They are ready to read words they come across. In the number work they have learnt number names till four.

Students started speaking in English and are trying to speak fluently. The little ones have celebrated RED COLOUR DAY; the teachers decorated their classrooms with red balloons and red objects. The day started with Red colour song. Children were happy doing various related activities, sorted Red flowers, played aiming game with Red balls and tasted special Red drink as part of sensory activity. Children enjoyed dancing to the music.

**Grade 1:** A leap from Upper Kindergarten to First grade is quite big, but good news is that from where we started a month back, first graders have picked up fast.

First Graders are being able to read simple poems/stories on a daily basis with some help. They have been asked to frame answers for simple questions from the story and also identifying Nouns and putting them into different categories.

On the Grammar side, Rhyming words/ Antonyms/ Nouns/Punctuation marks in sentences using capital letters and periods have been introduced with reference to the lessons. Activities have been conducted in class for introducing new set of antonyms. Children form groups and prepare Rhyming word charts. New words introduced from the lessons are being used as sight words for the Classroom Boards. On an everyday basis, children are being asked to read these sight words. Further, children are being encouraged to converse in English with their Teachers and fellow students. Even proper Pronunciation of the words is being stressed upon during these conversations/reading times.



Students were taken on a school tour and were introduced to school community. They interviewed Head mistress Mrs. Jyothi and our Cook Mrs. Ratnamma. Students were surprised to know that Mrs. Ratnamma cooks food for 300 people.

Students interacted with Fire fighters and fire engine.

**Life skill:** Keep yourself and your surroundings clean is what our students are implementing these days.

- Sreelatha



# Paradox in Education System

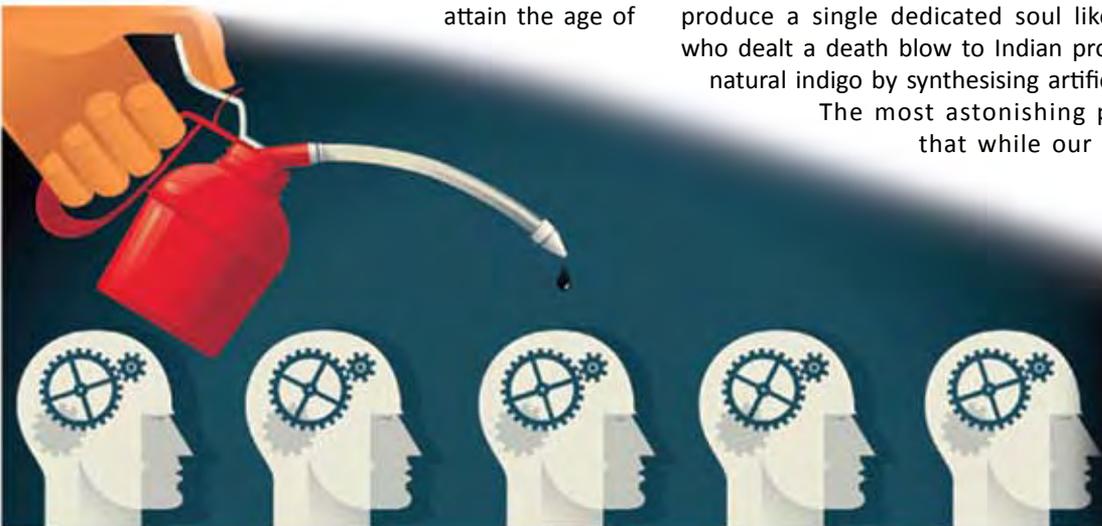
*B*uffer's experiments conclusively established that physical and mental growth of a man continues until he attains the age of 25. So after 25 only, he can have intensity and austerity of feeling and depth of spirit. The surprising paradox in our system of education is that we turn out boy-teachers, boy-engineers and boy-doctors but not mature teachers, engineers and doctors. To give a concrete example, a boy passing the Class X examination, when he is 15 years old seeks admission into a polytechnic and we have a boy-engineer of 18 years, when his mental faculties have not been fully developed. When he enters into public life, he finds himself at bay where he is confronted by intriguing situations, and to cover up for his deficiencies he adopts devious methods.

The aim of education must be training of the mind. This factor, we are slowly relegating to the background and we are turning out of our universities, boys and girls having learning but who are not really educated. One who can estimate the values of things with reference to an ideal and one who has a correct concept of values, is the real man of education. He is then civilised in the sense that he recognises the first rate and he respects it and honours it. It is most perplexing that turning a blind eye to this fundamental requisite, we plan vocational courses from the elementary stage. It is highly essential that our young boys and girls are given general education till they attain the age of

18. The curriculum must include in addition to language, mathematics and sciences, literature (works of Aurobindo, Tagore, Harindranath Chattopadhyaya), history (literature of personality that brings out the meaning of life), philosophy (which gives insight into the life perception of great thinkers), and economics (which is the life experiences of Europe and America after the industrial revolution). However we must pause a little before applying them to the life of modern India. When once this general education is complete, the energies of our youth can be channelized into diverse activities like teaching, engineering, medicine and law. Otherwise, we will have only pygmies standing on giant shoulders seeing further than the giant but no giant heart beating in them.

Our Indian universities lack the congenial atmosphere for research. They have become dens of politics and intrigues. The spirit of study and fellowship that brings earnest like-minded students together to work for a common cause of understanding is conspicuously lacking in our universities. Have we any work comparable to the analytical and descriptive catalogue on three lakh stars prepared by the combined work of mathematicians, astronomers and physicists of the Astronomical Society of Berlin nearly a century ago, to boast of? How many of our universities are linked to industry? Could our universities produce a single dedicated soul like Hoffman who dealt a death blow to Indian production of natural indigo by synthesising artificial indigo?

The most astonishing paradox is that while our politicians



declare that politicians must keep off the universities, they poke their nose in each and every trivial matter pertaining to education. So, unless our attitude towards life changes, we can't make a mark and stand as a nation.

I have another question to pose. Why should our obstreperous political leaders encourage student unions having affiliations to different political parties and leaders? Is it not to corrupt their minds and to put them on wrong track to serve their own selfish ends? All this is happening because the public conscience is fast asleep. Our morbid indifference to the most serious problems of social life is terrifying. We are in a moribund from this stupor. We are doomed.

I do not believe in compulsory or mass education; it will be good if the whole nation is educated. Instead of attempting the impossible, getting disappointed with the results and seeking reasons for our failure, let us be satisfied with those who are fit for education. When we have well-educated hundreds, millions can be well taken care of.

In a society in which vanity is the ruling sentiment, we cannot groom our young only with a proper education. Lust, gambling, drunkenness stultifies people and brutalises them. Unless we take a pledge to close a bar, a gambling den or a trade centre for every school that is opened, the school is useless.

**- K.V. Ramakrishna Sastry**

*If any subscriber is not receiving the magazine, please check if your subscription has ended or check with your local postman. As a final option you can send a mail to nachiketanjali@gmail.com*

## Only Because of YOU...

**Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, festivals and special occasions with children at Tapovan by sponsoring:**

### Donations towards operation costs

Vidya Daanam (Education)	₹ 7000/year/child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 6000/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 1200/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	₹ 900/2 pairs
Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)	₹ 5000/term
Medicines (For needy people)	₹ 5000/month
Festival at Ma Yogashakti Peetham	₹ 20000

### Donations within India- Details

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. PAN No. AAATN2406K

Donations can be also directed through bank account as below:

#### Bank Information

Bank Name	: Bank of Baroda
Branch Name	: Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad
A/c Name	: Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	: 18090100004093
IFSC Code	: BARBOJUBILE

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**(Exclusively for Foreign currency only)**

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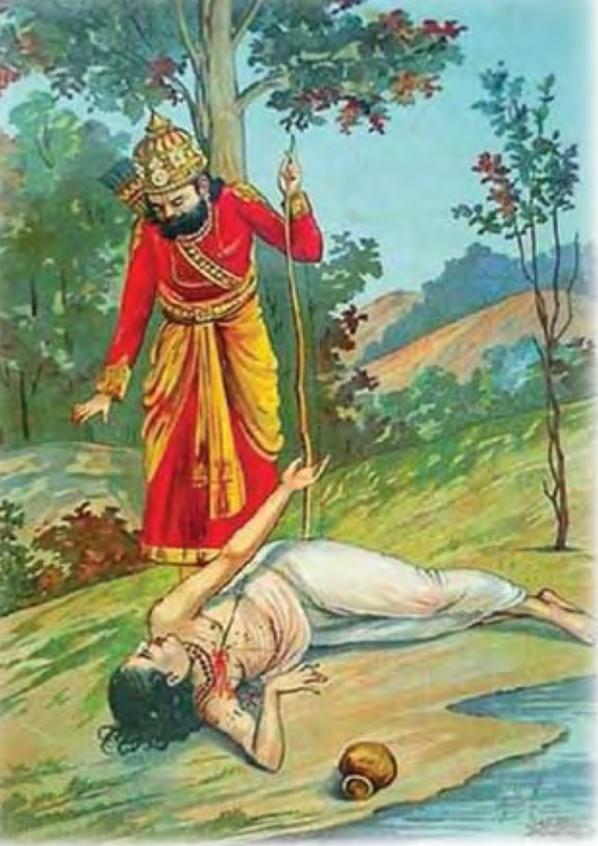
#### Bank Information

Bank Name	: State Bank of India
Branch Name & Code	: Kavuri Hills-12655
A/c Name	: Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	: 30953215793
IFSC Code	: SBIN0012655
SWIFT Code	: SBININBB214

(Note: IFSC code contains the number "zeros" not letters "O")

### For further details please contact:

Nachiketa Tapovan, Kodgal: 8008882828,  
 Nachiketa Tapovan, Hyderabad: 9849168937  
 SMS to Swamiji: 9908234545  
 nachiketananda@gmail.com; admin@nachiketatapovan.org  
 Website: www.nachiketatapovan.org



## Shri Ram - Quiz

1. Why did Shrivankumar tell that king Dasaratha will not get '*brahmahatya-patakam*' for killing him?
2. Hearing the words of Angadha who had come as a messenger to him, what did Ravana order his ministers to do?
3. What was the *Sumuhurut* that king Dasaratha planned for the coronation of Sri Rama?
4. What was the punishment given by Sagara to his son Asamanjasa who was harming the people?

5. What was the city ruled by Naraka? On which mountain top was it situated?
6. Who ruled the kingdom of Kosala after king Dileepa?
7. At the time of churning of *ksheerasagara* (milky ocean) a sacred horse and a gem emerged. What are those called?
8. What did Trishank determine to do?
9. After the death of king Dasaratha, sage Vasistha sent messengers to bring back Bharatha and Shatrughna from their maternal uncle's house. What did he tell the messengers while sending them there?
10. After the marriage of Sita and Sri Rama, who was the great sage that king Dasaratha met?

By Dr. Kalluri Venkateshwar Rao, MA Ph.D  
Translated by Manjula

1. As he was not a *Brahmin* boy and was born to a *Vysya* man and a *Sudra* woman Sravan Kumar said that king Dasaratha would not get '*brahmahatya-patakam*' for killing him.
2. Ravana ordered his ministers to behold Angada and kill him.
3. In the month of '*Chaitra*' '*pushyam*' '*nakshatrayukth sumhurch*'.
4. Sagara banished him from the kingdom.
5. '*Pragjyotishapuram*' and it is situated on '*Varaha*' mountain.
6. King Bhageeratha
7. Horse: '*Uchhaishrava*'  
Gem: '*Kausthubham*'
8. By performing great and huge *Yagnas*, he wanted to reach '*Swarg*' with his physical body.
9. Sage Vasistha asked the messengers not to reveal the death of king Dasaratha and the exile of Sri Rama and asked to tell them that there is an urgent work with them and bring back Bharata and Shatrughna.
10. '*Parasurama*'.

**ANSWERS:**



## Volunteers Meet

On 10th July 2017, our volunteers met teachers and discussed about exam policy and they made subject wise groups and elected the head of the department.



## WOW Program

On 18th July in collaboration with GMCH, ITC had a session with many schools and launched WOW Clubs which made our children aware of keeping our surroundings clean.



## Thank you Donors!

We are extremely thankful to



**Yap Trading Pvt. Ltd.**

**₹1,50,000/-**

towards Higher Education  
Nachiketa Tapovan, Hyderabad

**Sri D.V. Subba Rao**

**₹50,116/-** (part payment)

towards Corpus Fund -  
Sponsor a Child Education  
Nachiketa Vidya Mandir, Kodgal



**An Appeal for Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund**

**For ₹ 1 Lakh**

**Your donation will last a lifetime, Turn around their future!**

**VIDYA MANDIR, HYDERABAD**

*A free Home School for underprivileged children*

- ✎ Nachiketa Tapovan aims at imparting a value-based education along with Yoga, Arts & Crafts, Vocational Training, Music, Dance, Samskrit and Computer classes as a part of the curriculum
- ✎ Education is received by 270 children at Vidya Mandir Hyderabad from levels 1 - 10
- ✎ Interest accruing from your donation is only used without touching the principal itself
- ✎ At present, we only have 115 corpus sponsorships. Help us reach all of our 270 children
- ✎ Donors receive annual report card
- ✎ We express our thanks to Corpus Donors by permanently inscribing their names on the recognition board at Nachiketa Tapovan

All Donations are exempted from I.T. Under 80-G & accorded permission under FCRA

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### For further details please contact:

Nachiketa Tapovan, Hyderabad: 9849168937  
admin@nachiketatapovan.org  
Website: www.nachiketatapovan.org



## Father of Botany

# SAGE PARASARA

Varahamihira in his book *Bhrhat-samhita* had discussed four important plant diseases.

Since Vedic times, India had the in-depth knowledge about plant kingdom and its varieties.

Every classical Indian text, starting from Upanishads, The Ramayana, The Mahabharata and The Srimad Bhagavata deal with science of plants as plants as a passing reference in many instances.

Indians considered plants as the gift of Nature. Plants had been used very extensively and intimately by our elders in the fields of medicine, art, agriculture, food (fruits & vegetables) and in the daily rituals and worship.

“*Vrikshu Rakshati Rakshitaha*” “Protect the plants, plants in turn protect you”, was the philosophy that guided our ancestors who lived in tune with nature.

Atharva Veda had classified plants into eight categories based on their growth.

“Charaka Samhita” describes four categories of plants based on fruits and flowers.

“Sushruta Samhita” classifies plants into ten categories based on the plant utility.

Parasara had classified the seeds into two varieties namely *Eka-dala-beeja* (mono cotyledons) and *dwi-dala-beeja* (di-coryledons). He had classified flowers into various categories. His classification resembles the modern classification in many ways.

“*Upa-vana-vinodhi*” is a classical text that deals with Horticulture.

Another text “*Pridhivi Niraaparyuam*” describes various responses of plants, including sleeping, happiness, sorrow, etc. In modern times, the great Indian scientist JC Bose had proved about the various plant responses through his experiments and instruments.

Source: Eternally Talented India 108 Facts

In the year 1665 AD, Robert Hook, a botanist with the help of his microscope, explained to the world about the Plant cell and its structure. One thousand and six hundred years ago prior to that date, sage Parasara in 1st century A.D had clearly explained the structure of a Plant cell in the Sanskrit work “*Vriksha Ayurveda*”.

Parasara had even explained the phenomenon of the Photosynthesis (process of self-nourishment in the plants) in the fourth chapter (*Vriksha sharira Dharma sastram*) of the same book.

In the year 1894 A.D, a scientist called Dixon had proved that plants take food and water through their roots. Ancient Indians were aware of this fact. In the Indian epic Mahabharata, plants had been described as “*padapa*” which take water through their roots. (Ref: Shanti parva, chapter 184, sloka 18)

In the text *Vriksha Ayurveda*, Parasara clearly explains that plants prepare food through their leaves, for which they take water from their roots. He called this process as “*syandhana*”.

He had categorized plants according to the various types of fruits, flowers, leaves and roots. Many other ancient Indian scientists like Varahamihira, Charaka, and Sushruta had also classified the plant kingdom.

# Rakhi Exhibition

I started volunteering at Nachiketa Tapovan and taught the current 7th graders how to make bracelets, rakhis, etc. to sell for Nachiketa's projects and school maintenance. We had a total of 66 rakhi- bracelets, including many I had made on my own, at the end of 3-4 months. When I heard of the Rakhi exhibitions, I wanted to help too and see the end product of our work as they were being sold.

I was part of the first sales of the rakhis on the 6th and 7th of July, where there were products made by the students of Nachiketa, from Chennai and Kolkata. I reached in the morning and spent the day with Navitha aunty, Mani amma, Vandana aunty, and Vasundhara amma. The whole house was ready for the sale, and there was a lot of arranging and effort that had gone into organizing this sale. There was so much to do: organizing, arranging, packaging, pricing, and more! This was a whole new experience, quite different from the regular classes at Nachiketa as I found myself interacting with different people. We spent the day talking to customers and helping them. We had to cope

up with the sudden surges of customers and felt the satisfaction after every purchase. I stayed till around 4pm and found myself billing with Mani amma. We were pressed for time, as we had to ensure we had accounted for the huge sales efficiently enough, with no errors.

Later on, I also volunteered at the Deep Mela on 16th with Mani amma and Madhavi, a student of Nachiketa. Our stall was in the food court, and since I reached the venue earlier I got to organizing and arranging the stall. This had a different set up from the sale before, since it was more like a "mela", and so we had to convince customers and make things look appealing by arranging everything well and explaining the products and Nachiketa Tapovan's work to customers.

This couldn't have been possible without the hard work and commitment of Nachiketa's dedicated students and volunteers like Mani amma, Navitha aunty, Vandana amma, and others who I didn't have the pleasure of meeting, and the enthusiasm of those volunteers and customers who contributed by buying. Looking forward to more of such enriching experiences with Nachiketa!

*- Anika Gupta*





# Invitation



We cordially invite you to attend our celebrations



## TEACHERS' DAY

5<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 10 am  
Nachiketa Tapovan, Kavuri Hills, Hyderabad.  
&  
Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram,  
Kodgal Village, Jadcherla.



## NAVARATRI

21<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017  
Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram,  
Kodgal Village, Jadcherla.



## SWAMIJI & MATAJI BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

19<sup>th</sup> September 2017  
Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram,  
Kodgal Village, Jadcherla.

## Festivals & Events of SEPTEMBER 2017

2



Bakrid

3



Vamana Jayanti

4



Onam

19



Mahalaya Amavasya

21-30



Navaratri

# Nachiketa Vidya

## An Appeal for Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund

### For ₹ 1 Lakh

Your donation will last a lifetime, Turn around their future!

#### NACHIKETA VIDYA MANDIR

Kodgal

#### A free Home School for Tribal and rural children

- ✎ Value-based education, Yoga, Arts & Crafts, Vocational Training, Music, Dance, Samskrit and Computer classes
- ✎ 170 children from LKG - Grade 5
- ✎ With the accrued annual interest, one child's education will be supported annually without touching the principal itself
- ✎ At present, we only have 11 corpus sponsorships. Help us reach all of our 170 children
- ✎ Donors receive annual report card
- ✎ We express our thanks to Corpus Donors by permanently inscribing their names on the recognition board

#### Insight

Education is one of the most essential and immediate need of the hour in this district. Even after 69 years of independence, education is an unfulfilled dream of rural Indian children. Hence, Nachiketa Tapovan is set to adopt various educational projects to bring smiles in the lives of many children who are deprived of education.

## Vidyadaanam

an offering for School Education

Vidyadaanam (Education) One Year

One child ₹ 7000/-



- ❖ Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan" and also can be transferred through online.
- ❖ All Donations are exempted from I.T. Under 80-G & accorded permission under FCRA.

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**Nachiketa Tapovan**, Nachiketa Adhyatmapuri, Survey No. 229 to 233, Kodgal (V), Jadcherla (M),  
Mahaboobnagar Dist. Ashram: 800 888 28 28 SMS to Swamiji: 99 08 23 45 45

Email: nachiketananda@gmail.com admin@nachiketatapovan.org Website: www.nachiketatapovan.org

Today you have a choice, tomorrow may be too late...

By the year 2025, 2.8 billion people, one third of the world's population will experience water scarcity. About 25 to 30% of the population in Gujarat, Rajasthan, the Gangetic Plains, West Bengal and the North Eastern Areas will have practically no water.

Consequently the water crisis will dwarf the oil crisis.

Ignore the crisis and be a part of the problem, evaluate your option and be a part of the solution. The choice is simple, so is our contribution, a **Dual Flush**.

Flush the **Superflo** way, use the **Dual Flush**.

It's small, it's smart, it's a start.



*Water is the very core of life, It is life's mother (source) and medium. There is no life without water. It is high time we realize this fact and do something sensible about it.*

*– Gautam Vir*

PATENTED



\*Superflo Dual Flush Valve  
Indian Patent Nos.196441 & 200284

A Dual Flush is a valve, which gives you the flexibility to discharge varying amounts of water depending on the usage.

It can be adjusted to discharge less quantity of water say 3 liters (half flush) or 6 liters (full flush).

All the leading Sanitaryware Manufacturers have chosen the **Superflo Dual Flush**.\*

Use a dual flush; be a part of the drive – a drive to save the most precious resource of our planet...  
**water!**