



# REFLECTIONS

- JUST BE -

*The Secrets of Mind & Consciousness*

*14 - 16 February 2025*



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S  
CONFERENCE



## *The Motif*

### *The Hibiscus flower*

The beautiful Hibiscus flower is synonymous to good health and has innumerable medicinal properties. It blossoms throughout the year - just being itself, no matter what the season.

## *The Theme*

*Just Be!*

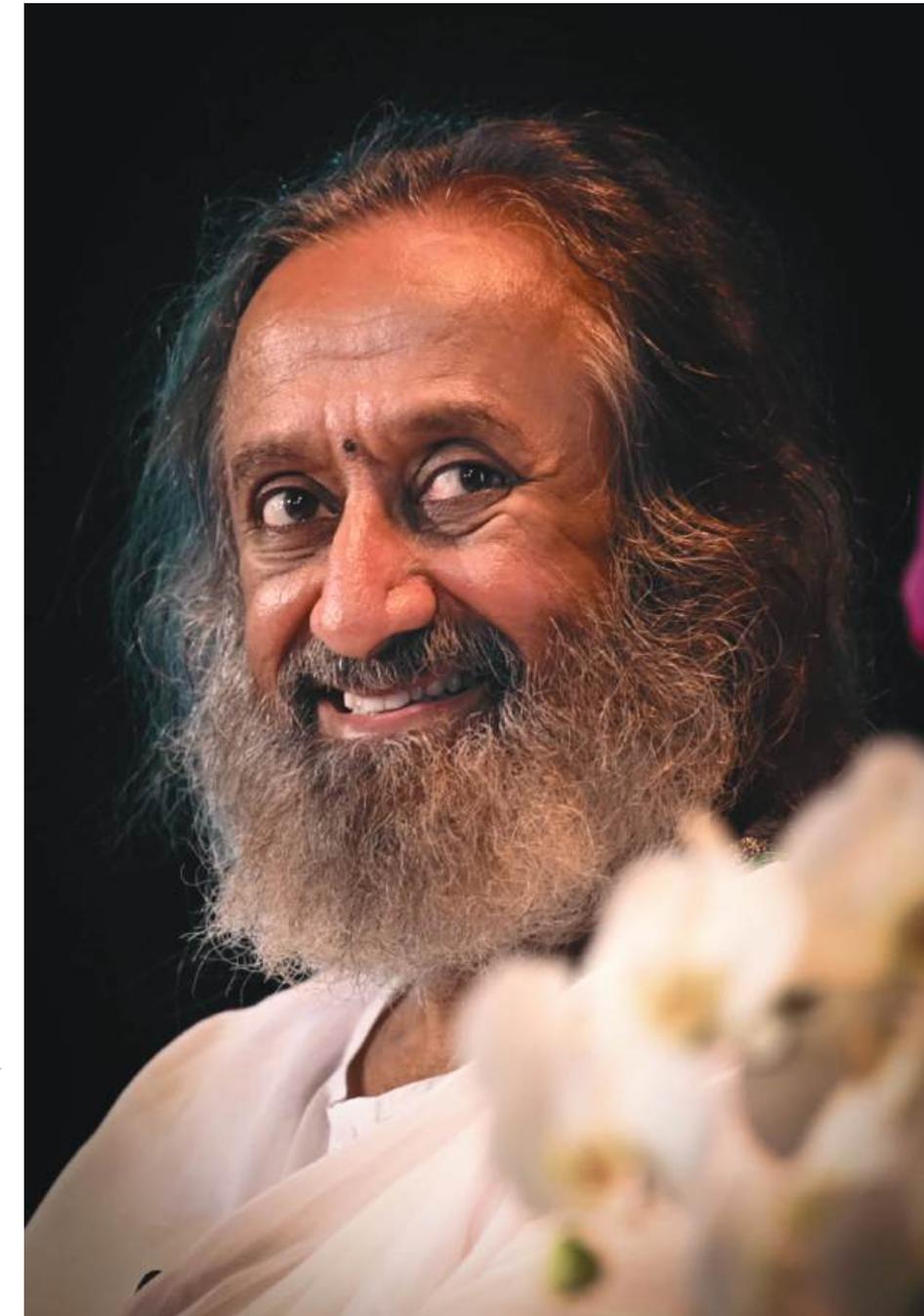
*True joy is going  
beyond your identity*

*Real rest is going  
beyond your desires*

*Mature love is feeling  
the oneness  
Relax and just be!*

*Events are transitory  
Pick up the wisdom and  
be free!*

*- Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar*





The essence of  
*'Just Be'*

*Hearts and flowers blossomed at the beautiful Art of Living International Centre as over 500 dynamic and joyful delegates converged at the 10th edition of the International Women's Conference (IWC). The conference was uniquely themed 'Just Be.'*

Smt. Bhanumathi Narasimhan, the Chairperson of IWC, affectionately welcomed all the delegates and set the tone for the conference theme – bringing out the complementary nature of dynamism and relaxation.

The Hon. President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, graced the inaugural session – she invited every woman to look within and find a treasure trove of virtues, talents, mental and spiritual strength to make a positive and long-lasting impact on society.

Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, global spiritual leader, humanitarian and founder of The Art of Living spoke with love, emphasizing that progress is born out of a positive environment and by a woman just being present, the space becomes happy and positive.

The three-day conference was packed with a variety of events designed to inspire, empower and foster connections among the attendees – the highlights were the experiential sessions of Sudarshan Kriya Yoga (SKY), Sahaj Samadhi Program and Yoga that transformed 'Just Be' from a tagline to an actual experience. Inspirational women from across the world shared their stories, and panel discussions were brimming with engaging conversations.

Extraordinary women and men were conferred with the Vishalakshi and Acharya Ratnananda awards to recognize the transformation they have brought to society.

Delegates also immersed in a cultural magnum opus – the 'Sita Charitam' – a magnificent danced drama. Fashion and social good joined hands as 'Stylish Inside Out: Fashion for a Cause' – funds were raised to support the Art of Living Free Schools.

*One of the most meaningful outcomes of this conference was its support to the Art of Living Free Schools. What began as three days of inspiration and dialogue now continues as a living legacy, contributing to the free education of over 120,000 children. The Free Schools remind us that when every child is given the chance to learn and grow, society too can blossom to its fullest potential.*





## *Welcome Address*

*by the Chairperson  
- Smt. Bhanumathi Narasimhan*

"We begin the 10th edition of our conference. This year, we have named this as 'Just Be - Secrets of Mind and Consciousness'.

All the time, we are in a hurry to do things and this is a time to just be, relax and that is when you can achieve more things.

'Just Be' was inspired by Gurudev's poem. He said events are transitory, pick up the wisdom and just be.

Meditation is the best tool and this is the best place to learn it. Apart from that, we have many great thinkers and thought leaders here who will inspire us with their life experiences. This is a platform for both urban and rural women to come together and discuss things that concern us.

*We can learn a lot from rural women - team spirit, resilience, perseverance and from urban women, we can learn how to be a go-getter.*

We are very happy that in 20 years, this is the 10th conference and we have reached over 6,000 women delegates from 115 countries. As Romila said, people from 50 countries are here right now, sitting with us.

*Life has two essential aspects - dynamism and relaxation - they're not opposites but complementary. Just like an arrow - when it has to go forward, it has to go back, right?*

We have to get connected to the inner source of energy - which is the space of creativity and dynamism. From this inner stillness, when we step into action, our efforts are more fruitful and impactful.

There is a profound difference between relaxation after giving our 100% and an inertia born out of laziness. Inaction is not relaxation - there is an ocean of difference between doing nothing and just being.

Your mind is always running between past and future thoughts. It's never in the present moment. The present moment is where you find relaxation - that is where meditation is the greatest tool for us to be in the present moment.

This is a time for us to know who we are, understand a little bit about our own mind and consciousness - that is why we called it secrets of mind and consciousness. The next 3 days, we will deliberate upon this wonderful subject and also have experiential sessions.

Once again, I am very happy to welcome you all. Just enjoy and Just be!"



## *The President's Address*

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*The Honorable  
President of India,  
Mrs. Draupadi  
Murmu inspired  
the audience at the  
10th International  
Womens Conference  
with her conviction  
and authentic  
expression.  
Her talk has been  
translated into  
English from Hindi  
below.*

*“Let every woman gather the  
courage to dream beyond borders,  
for mental wellness is not a luxury  
but the foundation of true strength.  
With education lighting the path  
and breaking cycles of silence and  
struggle, each step taken becomes  
part of a greater journey—a dream  
not limited to the self, but one that  
can shape a nation and transform the  
world.”*

The theme of this conference, 'Just Be', encourages people to reflect and look deep within. Within us, is a treasure of virtues, talents and immense strength. Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji and the Art of Living have inspired and helped people around the world to find inner peace through meditation and humanitarian service.

We are in the age of technological disruption. The advances in technology have given us a better quality of life in some ways. In such a competitive world, we must ensure that our human values remain intact. In fact, every human being needs to put in extra effort – consciously - to promote human values of compassion, love and unity.

Women have a special ability to lead through compassion. They hold the ability to look beyond the individual and work for the wellbeing of families, communities and even relationships at

the global level.

In today's world, mental health has become one of the most crucial issues facing people of all age groups. Women in particular are at the crossroads of multiple challenges—including competing professionally, meeting societal expectations and fulfilling personal aspirations.

Sometimes, the cultural norms of a society make it difficult for women to speak openly about their emotional well-being. You all can help break the silence that surrounds mental health issues by creating safe spaces for dialogue and providing support systems.

It is not possible to break barriers and challenge stereotypes without mental strength. I urge every woman to gather courage, dream big and utilize all her strength and potential to achieve her dreams.

I am happy to know that the Art of Living is undertaking several initiatives in the field of education, that are benefiting children not just in urban, but also in remote tribal areas of our country. Education has the power to break cycles of poverty and inequality.

*I would also urge you all to  
deliberate upon issues related to  
environmental conservation. Our  
Mother Earth nurtures us all—let us  
take such steps which take care of our  
Mother Earth.”*



## *Pearls of Wisdom from Gurudev*

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*“India has shown the way how women empowerment is needed - it is very productive and very progressive. Here, the mythology says the main ministries are given to women - the Defense ministry to Durga, Finance ministry to Lakshmi, Education ministry to Saraswati - all this is governed by women.”*



*We need to unite the world with this mission of one human family away from conflicts and pain and suffering. We can dream of a beautiful world all together.*

A few minutes of taking time for yourself is absolutely essential for your own mind. Today mental health is a big issue around the world - every 40 seconds, one person is taking his or her life. In this situation, we all have to work towards better mental health, better education. Silence is the mother of invention.

When you want to create something new—write an article, start a project, or do anything meaningful—you don't seek out a marketplace. You look for a quiet place, a corner where you can sit in peace. Only in silence can you think deeply and create something beautiful.

Our bodies, emotions, and thoughts constantly change. Nothing is permanent. But there is something constant—something unchanging within you. Anchoring yourself in that brings enormous strength.

Another important point is to see life from a bigger perspective. Whenever you're worried, remember—this isn't the first time you've felt this way. Worry has become a pattern. Remind yourself: 'All will be okay.' That reassurance will awaken your inner strength to manage any crisis.

Criticism is often difficult—especially for women. Emotions flood like a waterfall - there's nothing wrong with that. But don't let others' comments live rent-free in your mind. It's not worth your peace.

People say things that don't make sense and constantly change their opinions. So, why give their comments power over your peace?

Take feedback from those who care, but not to heart. If someone speaks with love or compassion, you can reflect and improve. But if criticism comes from negativity, don't absorb it. We need to teach this to our youth. As mothers, your role is not just to fill your children with information, but to build their character.

So, I'll leave you with these thoughts: You already have commitment and compassion. What's needed is context—seeing life from a grander perspective of time and space, the temporary and the eternal.

*Why spirituality? Because it gives you so much inner strength that no comment, incident, or crisis can shake your peace or take away your smile.”*



-JUST BE-

## Day One



INAUGURAL PLENARY SESSION



**The Honourable Smt. Annapurna Devi**  
– Union Minister of Women and Child Development, India

*“In every corner of our nation, women carry the strength of tradition and the fire of transformation—guiding not just families, but the future of India. A woman’s identity is not confined to a single role—she is a mother, a leader, a teacher, and a builder of dreams, all at once.”*



**The Honourable Ms. Patricia Scotland KC:**  
Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations, UK

*“Every ceiling I shattered was not broken by force, but by faith. From a tiny island to global halls of power, I’ve seen what belief can do. The answers we seek are already within us—in our courage, in our community, and in the power of just being.”*



**The Honourable Smt. Hema Malini**  
– Member of Parliament, India

*“We don’t plan to become role models — we simply live, guided by our inner truth. That is the essence of ‘just be’. From stage to screen, from Parliament to motherhood — each role was not a shift but an evolution of the same self.”*

## SESSION: ARE YOU BOUND TO BE FREE?



**The Honourable Ms. Maria-Georgiana Teodorescu**  
– Member of the European Parliament, Romania

*“Politics was never meant for someone like me, or so they said. But being a woman, a mother, and a fighter for justice makes me more than qualified — it makes me necessary. We, as women, carry an inexhaustible resource: love. When we lead with it, we don’t just change laws — we heal nations.”*



**The Honourable Smt. Shobha Karandlaje**  
– Minister of State for Ministry of Labour & Employment,  
Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, India

*“India moves from women’s development to women-led development— where women not only participate, but lead the way forward. From launching satellites to shaping policy, our daughters are the heartbeat of a rising nation.”*



**Meenakshi Lekhi**  
- Former Minister of State for External Affairs & Culture, India

*“Define yourself — not by the roles others assign, but by the truth you live and the voice you honor. Your consciousness is your sovereignty. Don’t surrender your thoughts to anyone. Be the architect of your own essence. Just create the space — and let us be.”*



*Panel Session Moderated by Dr. Somya Ramrakhyani, Pediatrician, USA*



**Ms. Anthea Indira Ong,**  
Former Nominated Member of Parliament, Singapore

*“Leadership is not a title; it’s a responsibility to serve with love. To lead is to influence not just results, but the well-being of those we touch. Wellness at the top ripples through families, communities, and cultures. You cannot give peace if you are not rooted in it.”*



**Ms. Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari,  
Film Director and Writer, India**

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*"My job is to notice—to be present to the unseen magic in people's lives. Curiosity isn't a flaw; it's my bridge to human truth. Through film, I don't just tell stories—I live them with you. And in doing so, I hope to remind you of your own."*



**Ms. Radhika Gupta,  
MD & CEO, Edelweiss Mutual Fund, India**

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*"The path to our best self is through service. We learn not just from those who support us, but from those we support in return. Being of service is not about sacrifice— It's about being in alignment with our purpose."*



**Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj,  
Former Permanent Representative to the UN, US**

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*"Confidence is not about volume—it's about presence. And presence begins when you believe, not in the illusion of perfection, but in the truth of your inner voice and the fire of your convictions."*





## *Sartorial Delights*

STYLISH INSIDE OUT WITH AMI PATEL

A confluence of fashion and philanthropy, this unique showcase brought together India's top designers, whose creations were presented for a bigger purpose.

Each ensemble was not just a testament to India's rich textile heritage, but also a beacon of hope, as the designs were auctioned to support the Art of Living's 'Gift A Smile' initiative.



JUST BE-

## Day Two



### SESSION: CIRCLE OF WISDOM - A CONVERSATION ACROSS TIME

*Panel Session moderated by Ms. Srividya Varchaswi, Director WFAC, India*



**Ms. Hema Malini, Actor, India**

*"Being a mother and grandmother taught me humility—I realized that there's always something new to learn, even from my daughters. My generation saw things differently, but today, openness and adaptation define relationships. Learning from the younger generation is my greatest joy."*



**Ms. Esha Deol, Actor, India**

*"Today's world pressures us into constant comparison, especially with platforms like social media. But real growth is about embracing your individuality, not chasing validation from people you may never even meet."*

## SESSION: THE ETERNAL GAME – DO I PLAY TO WIN?



Panel Session moderated by Ms. Deepa Menon, Partner, Eversheds Sutherland, USA



**Dr. Claire A Nelson,**  
-Leading Futurist and Founder-The Futures Forum, USA

*"Success for me is living up to the vision I have of myself as a change-maker—living by purpose, perseverance, and passion. I learned to see people fully as human, looking beyond stereotypes and labels. Sometimes being called a troublemaker means you're changing something worth changing."*



**Mrs. Jagi Mangat Panda**  
-Co-Founder and MD, Odisha Television Network, India

*"Life should be treated like a game, only then can you truly enjoy the process. Leadership demands embracing both sides of your personality, the aggression you learn and the compassion inherent within. Keep celebrating milestones along the way, because success is an ongoing journey, not a final destination."*



**Ms. Kavita Khanna, Chairperson,**  
- IIIT Sonipat and IIIT Bhopal, India

*"True resilience isn't about avoiding storms; it's about standing steady through them, emerging stronger. Success and winning are about showing up every day with clarity and purpose. It's discipline over despair, effort over inertia, and inner stability over external validation."*



**Ms. Lovlina Borgohain,**  
Professional Boxer, India

*"Real success is not just in medals or championships; it is knowing you've given your 100%. My true fulfillment came from inspiring others, from the love and connection with people, even my opponents. My greatest victory is being a beacon of hope and positivity to the next generation."*



**Ms. Preeti Bhardwaj Dalal, Member,**  
-National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, India

*"Success becomes a habit, but every habit needs breaks to redefine itself. Life is embrace joy and suffering equally. Leadership is about standing above and seeing your team clearly, guiding them with perspective, not control."*

## SESSION: INFLUENCER- THE NEW LEADER?



Panel Session moderated by Ms. Aticka Dhandia, Art of Living trainer, India



**Ms. Kanika Tekriwal,**  
- Founder and CEO, JetSetGo, India

*"You never know who's watching, who's listening or who's hurting. A simple message, a shared truth, can reach someone on the edge. Influence is not about being known—it's about being real. Use your platform not for noise, but for healing."*



**Hon. Judge María Eugenia Chaperó,**  
- President of RED MUJERES PARA LA JUSTICIA, Argentina

*"Just be' is not in conflict with the fight—it fuels it. From that inner stillness, we rise to change flawed systems. Life is a jungle, not a garden—progress is imperfect. But small people in small places still move the world."*



**Ms. Priti Rathi Gupta,**  
- Founder Lxme and Ishka Films, India

*"Influence is now everywhere—from kitchens to couture. But true leadership begins when we stop being the center. When our story becomes someone else's lesson, we rise. Influence inspires, leadership uplifts—it's a powerful convergence."*



**Prof. Rajita Kulkarni,**  
-President, Sri Sri University & WFEB, India

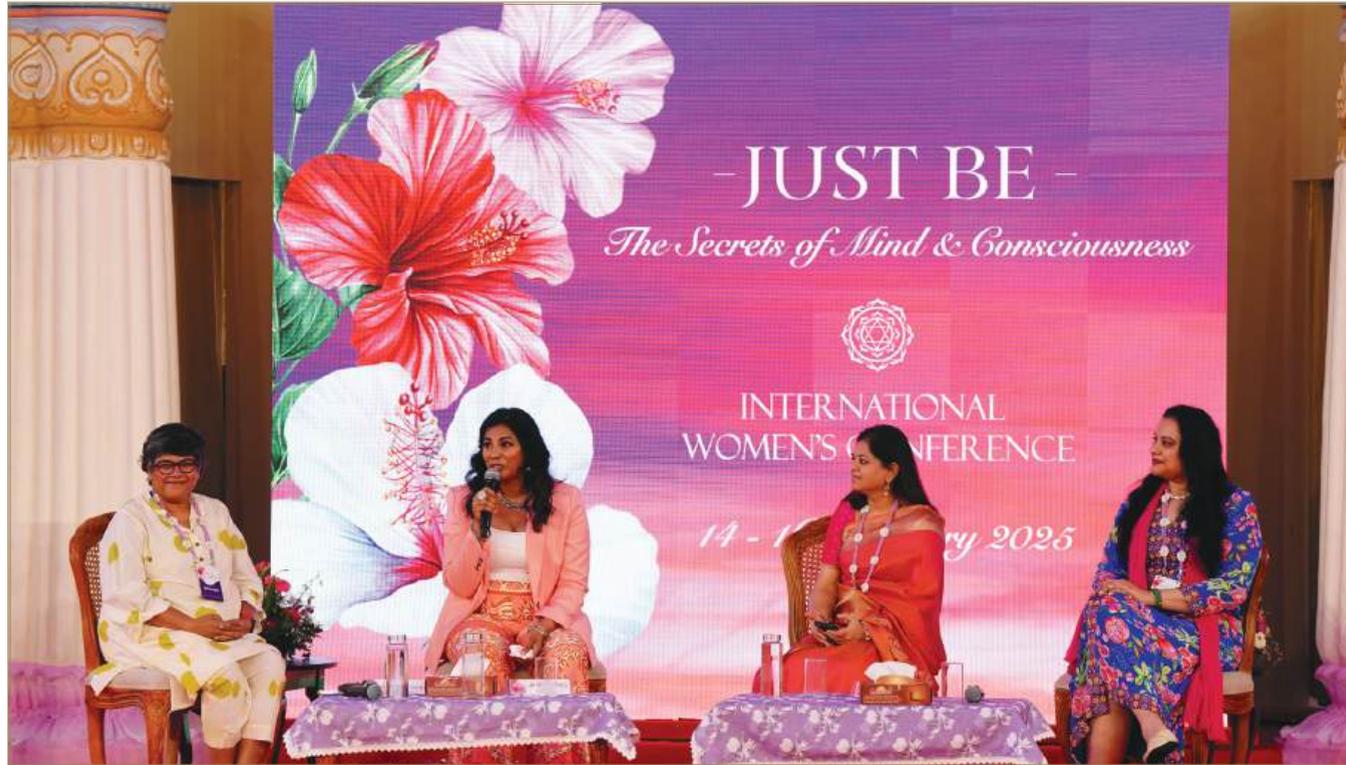
*"Leadership begins when you choose to show up, even when you don't have all the answers yet. From managing billions in banking to learning acronyms in education— I rebuilt my world from scratch because service asked it of me. Influence doesn't always come from expertise; it comes from the courage to start over and still lead with love."*



**Ms. Sakshi Batra,**  
-Senior Associate Editor and Anchor, India Today, India

*"Influence without intention is just noise. But when we align with our truth, our voice becomes a force that uplifts— not just others, but our own evolution. To lead is not to stand above, but to stand rooted—in your purpose, your path. Real leadership is quiet strength, shaped by clarity, not clamor."*

## SESSION: FOOD MATTERS



Panel Session moderated by Ms. Darshana Mathur, Artist & Designer, USA



**Ms. Preeta Sinha, Founder,  
One Green Planet, US**

*"Activism isn't only protest signs and loud voices. It's in what we eat, what we support, what we allow. Conscious living means making every choice with heart. When you eat with compassion, you live with purpose."*



**Chef Ritu Dalmia,  
Chef, Restaurateur & Culinary Author, India**

*"Cooking was my therapy long before I knew what therapy was. At nine, I didn't know about life, but I knew flavors. And those flavors filled the spaces in me that words never could. I cook because it heals me, and maybe, it heals others too."*



**Ms. Lavanya Mahate,  
- Founder & CEO, Saffron Valley Restaurants, US**

*"Food carried me from silence to success, From a dependent spouse to a leader with voice and vision. Now I feed others not just meals, but hope. Because the right meal can nourish more than hunger—it can ignite dreams."*

## SESSION: ARTH - MEANINGFUL WEALTH



Panel Session moderated by Ms. Ruchika Lal, Chairperson Art of Living Foundation, US & Founding Partner, Elephant Venture Partners, USA



**Ms. Amisha Vora, Chairperson and MD,  
Prabhudas Lilladher, India**

*"Wealth creation is not just about earning money; it's about creating independence and finding your own voice. True wealth is Vaibhav Lakshmi—wealth that brings happiness, peace, and the habit of giving. Contentment doesn't depend on money; it depends on your attitude towards life and gratitude for what you have."*



**Ms. Elena Naroznikova, VP Human Resources,  
Tetra Laval International, Switzerland**

*"Women often doubt themselves and hesitate to ask for what they deserve. Be courageous, speak up, and clearly express your aspirations and expectations. If you don't voice your needs, chances are nobody else will know or fulfill them. Confidence and clarity are keys to success."*



**Ms. Simi Sabhaney,  
Chief Growth Officer, Dentsu, India**

*"Power is not about authority; it's about influence and navigating others gently towards shared success. As women, we must articulate our stories authentically, with honesty and grace, because we never know who's listening and drawing courage from our journey."*



**Ms. Suparna Bhasin,  
Philanthropist, Australia**

*"Philanthropy doesn't require enormous wealth; it involves giving your time, energy, and passion to causes close to your heart. Don't wait for 'later' to give back—start now, wherever you are. True happiness and fulfillment often come from meaningful contribution, not just accumulating money."*

*A mesmerizing ode to feminine strength:*

*Sita Charitam*

Sita Charitam offered a fresh and inclusive retelling of the timeless epic Ramayana. The performance was distinguished by its unique script and resonated deeply with the audience, highlighting the universality of Sita's journey. This grand musical ballet, brought together over 500 artists, weaving together 30 distinct dance, music, and art forms from across India.



## Day Three



### SESSION: 'CULTIVABLES' – NURTURING THE SEEDS OF HUMAN VALUES

Panel Session moderated by Ms. Divya Kanchibhotla,  
Head of Higher Education, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Vidya Mandir Trust, India



**Ms. Katherine Winter-Sellery,  
Founder, Conscious Parenting Revolution, US**

*"When we use rewards and punishments to manage behavior, we are teaching children that their worth is determined by external forces, not their own sense of self. True empowerment comes from within, and it's our job as parents and educators to help them discover their internal locus of causality."*



**Ms. Anita Sharma Manning,  
Founder and Principal, Come Together Future, US**

*"In today's world, keeping an open mind and showing compassion for others, even when they don't share our values, is more important than ever. It's not always easy, but it's through understanding and acceptance that we build bridges, not walls. As parents and educators, we must live the values we want to instill in our children, because actions speak louder than words."*



**Dr. Jan Owen AM,  
Social Entrepreneur & Author, Australia**

*"Our young people are not only facing personal challenges but are also burdened by the world's problems, from eco-anxiety to injustice and insecurity about the future. They need a sense of community, belonging, and purpose to navigate this complex world. That's why spirituality, in its truest sense, is essential."*



**Ms. Janine de Ridder,  
Director, KiKiD, Netherlands**

*"In our work, we use creative methods like theater to engage students in real, honest conversations about mental health, relationships, and self-worth. By giving them a safe space to talk openly, we can help them find strength and resilience to navigate life's difficulties with confidence."*

-JUST BE-

## SESSION: NEVER MIND, IT'S NEVER THE MIND!



Panel Session moderated by Mrs. Bharthy Harish, Director, Madhurya, Art of Living International Center, India



**Ms. Awhitia Mihaere, Chairperson,  
ACC Rongoā Māori Advisory panel, New Zealand**

*"The umbilical cord connects us to the cosmos. Every child who enters the womb chooses to heal ancestral trauma. Our role is to ensure mothers carry no trauma, returning all pain back to zero energy."*



**Ms. Carol Innes AM,  
Director and Noongar Tribal Elder, Australia**

*"We are the longest-living Indigenous peoples, yet we still fight to belong. Our spirituality connects us deeply to the land, guiding us through past pain toward reconciliation. Recognition means healing, knowing who we are and where we truly belong."*



**Ms. Marike Stassar,  
Peace Advocate & Visionary Leadership Coach, Norway**

*"I transformed from a life in pieces to a life at peace. Our mind can imprison us or set us free; discipline your mind, connect to the big mind, and let your suffering become a powerful tool for awakening and service."*



**Ms. Nathalie Daoust, Director, Government Relations, Strategy and Performance, Montréal, Canada**

*"The mind is a chatterbox; consciousness is silence. When both align, we become instruments of the divine. Amid confusion and change, spiritual flexibility leads us to clarity, enabling us to move gracefully through any storm."*



**Ms. Yoshie Kaneko,  
Chief Priestess of Kanemine Shrine, Japan**

*"The human mind is like clouds, always changing and temporary. Consciousness is like the sun, eternally shining beyond all clouds. Women, as pillars of light, have the power to purify past suffering, bringing lasting peace and healing."*

## SESSION: THE CREATIVE IMPULSE



Panel Session moderated by Ms. Jennifer Stevenson, Art of Living Trainer, US



**Ms. Sonakshi Sinha,**  
Actor, India

*"When I create, I just become. Creativity for me is a space of freedom, where I can let go of all the labels, daughter, actor, wife, and just be myself. Art was always my escape, a quiet place where I found balance and peace. The power to create something beautiful out of nothing, that's a gift from the divine."*



**Ms. Noora Abdullah, Head of Following and Coordinator, General Sport Authority, Bahrain**

*"Before Art of Living, I only followed orders, there was no room for creativity. But I found a safe space to express my true voice and discovered the courage to lead change. Creativity is not just for you, it must uplift your community. I learned that strength is being different, even when the world tells you to stay the same."*



**Dr. Nabat Garakhanova,**  
CEO - Mezo Digital Ltd., Turkey

*"A decade ago, I believed face-to-face was the only way. Today, I say, without digital, there is no future. We must welcome innovation, not fear it, AI is our partner, not our enemy. Women can lead in tech, create in art, and redefine the future because we are creators by nature."*



**Ms. Jaina Desai,**  
Trustee, Sri Sri RaviShankar Vidya Mandir, India

*"Each of us carries a treasure trove of creativity within. The journey inward, through silence, meditation, and presence, awakens that creative impulse. I've seen people transform, create new lives, just by tapping into that stillness. The greatest art we can create is a life of purpose, joy, and service."*

## SESSION: ANCIENT SECRETS TO HOLISTIC HEALTH



Panel Session moderated by Ms. Kamlesh Barwal, Senior Art of Living trainer, India



**Dr. Ankita Dehlia,**  
Osteopathy and Functional Medicine practitioner, India

*"True wellness is a harmonious balance between mind, body, and spirit. Osteopathy and functional medicine teach us to view health as an integrated system, where the physical body, emotional health, and the spirit must all be nurtured together for holistic healing."*



**Dr. Balaji Lalitha,**  
Diabetologist and Wellness expert, Oman

*"The key to reversing chronic conditions like diabetes lies in understanding that health is not just about treating the symptoms but about addressing the root causes. By integrating ancient wisdom such as Ayurveda with modern medical practices, we can create a balanced and sustainable path to wellness."*



**Ms. Christina Michael,**  
Founder & CEO, St.Moritz Longevity, Forum

*"Longevity is not about simply living longer; it's about living better. By combining ancient practices of wellness with the latest scientific advancements, we can create a healthier, more vibrant life that spans across generations."*



**Ms. Fatema Mansoori,**  
Yoga Instructor, Bahrain

*"Yoga gave me a second chance at life when traditional medicine couldn't. True healing comes from within, by changing our mindset and lifestyle. Integrating yoga into modern medicine is essential for healing both the body and the mind."*



**Dr. Nedelya Shtonova,**  
TV Host, Neurologist, Author, Bulgaria

*"Modern medicine can treat the symptoms, but only by addressing the whole person, mind, body, and soul, can we achieve true healing. Education is the foundation of change, and it empowers individuals to take control of their health through ancient and modern practices."*



Panel Session moderated by Ms. Shruti Dhawan



**H.E. Ms. Ivete Ângela dos Anjos Ferrão Alane,  
Minister of Labour, Gender and Social Action, Mozambique**

*"Yoga opened me to peace I had never known. And reminded me: before we change the world, we must first return to ourselves. This is not just inspiration—it is transformation."*



**H.E. Mrs. Akie Abe,  
Former First Lady, Japan**

*"A man took my husband's life. But I ask myself: can I choose compassion instead of hate? Can I turn personal pain into public healing? True peace comes when we treat even those who harm us as humans in need of help. That's not weakness—it is the greatest strength we can embody."*



**Mrs. Amruta Devendra Fadnavis,  
Philanthropist and Social Activist, India**

*"To be yourself in a world that constantly demands you to fit into molds is one of the bravest things you can do. It begins with honoring your inner voice, even when it shakes, and choosing authenticity over approval. Every small act of defiance adds up to a life fully owned, fully lived."*



**Hon. Smt. Smriti Irani,  
Former Minister of Information & Broadcasting, India**

*"We spend so much time trying to be seen—by society, by our parents, by ourselves. But the most liberating moment is when you stop chasing approval and simply allow yourself to be. No pretense. No act. Just you, raw and whole. That's when the healing begins—and that's when the world sees you most clearly."*



ST BE -  
Mind & Consciousness

- JUST BE -  
*The Secrets of Mind & Consciousness*

# Awards & Honours

(List of Vishalakshi and Acharya Ratnananda award winners in the order they were given)

## VISHALAKSHI AWARDS



### Smt. Annapurna Devi Yadav

*In recognition of her public service in the sphere of women empowerment and child welfare.*



### Smt. Hema Malini

*For her tremendous contribution towards Indian cinema, performing arts and public service*



### Rt. Hon. Patricia Scotland

*In recognition of her ground-breaking leadership and advocacy for justice and equality*



### Mrs. Amla A. Ruia

*For her remarkable contribution to sustainable rural development*



### Dr. Bhagyashree Prasad Patil

*In recognition of her dynamic leadership in the sphere of education and bio-technology*



### Ms. Katherine Winter-Sellery

*In recognition of her transformative leadership in the sphere of conscious parenting.*



### Mrs. R. Padmavathi

*For her contribution towards preserving Indian heritage as a sculptor for over 200 temples in India*



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**Ms. Sangita Jindal**

*For her remarkable commitment towards preserving India's cultural heritage and sustainable rural development.*



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**Ms. Smita Prajash**

*For excellence in journalism and media entrepreneurship*



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**Ms. Sumalatha Ambareesh**

*For her tremendous contribution to Indian cinema and public service*



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**Ms. Ritu Dalmia**

*For her contribution to the culinary world and in shaping India's evolving food culture.*



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**Ms. Palki Sharma**

*In recognition of her groundbreaking approach to news coverage and commitment to factual, unbiased journalism*



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**Ms. Ivete Ângela dos Anjos Ferrão Alane**

*for her remarkable contribution to Public Service and Social Development*



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**Ms. Akie Abe**

*As an influential voice for positive social change in Japan*



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**Ms. Awhitia Mihaere**

*For her dedication to the resurgence and integration of traditional Maori healing practices*



**Ms. Carol Innes**

*For her advocacy of community cultural development*



**Ms. Yoshie Kaneko**

*For being instrumental in reviving the ancient Kanemine Shrine and commitment to social and environmental issues*



**Ms. Nathalie Daoust**

*In recognition of her remarkable contribution in the sphere of environment and sustainable development*



**Ms. Amruta Fadnavis**

*For your contribution towards women empowerment, child welfare and environmental conservation*



**Ms. Smriti Irani**

*For exceptional leadership in shaping India's social and media landscape*

#### ACHARYA RATNANANDA AWARDS



**Lt. Col. Aneesh Mohan**

*In recognition of his public service and exceptional courage and dedication in the face of adversity*



**Arnab Ranjan Goswami**

*For excellence in journalism and media entrepreneurship*

# Media Highlights

A FEW GLIMPSSES

responsibility as the... Vajpai was arrested... witness and complainant in... this government was have... to pay a huge price... whatever he goes, it could... also a result of this price... be focused on education

## President Murmu inaugurates the Art of Living's 10th International Women's Conference

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
BENGALURU, 14 FEBRUARY

The President of India Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the inaugural session of the 10th Edition of the International Women's Conference at Bengaluru on Friday. She inspired over 500 delegates from 50 countries by writing every woman to look within and find a treasure trove of virtues, talents, moral and spiritual strength to make a positive and long-lasting impact on the society.

"Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and the Art of Living have inspired and helped people around the world to find inner peace through meditation and humanitarian



services," President Droupadi Murmu said. "We are at the edge of technological disruption. In such a competitive world we should ensure our human values remain intact. This is where the role of women becomes important because they lead with compassion and kindness." Honorable President, while speaking about the need to work on mental health shared, "You can break silence by creating safe spaces and support systems for everyone to share and express... It is not possible to break barriers and stereotypes without mental strength."

"Uniquely themed 'Just Be', the conference called for a conscious pause, balance,

women's empowerment is needed, and it is very progressive. Here the mythology assigns the main ministries to women: the Defense Ministry—Durga, Finance Ministry—Lakshmi, Education Ministry—Saraswati."

Balancing leadership roles and self-discovery with inner strength, self-love, and self-awareness was the resounding message at the inaugural session of the 10th International Women's Conference (IWC) that brought together a constellation of the finest women leaders from the echelons of power to diplomacy and arts.

Over nearly two decades and across 10 editions, the IWC has united many eminent speakers and 6,000 delegates from 115 countries. This year's conference, with 60+ speakers and over 500 delegates from more than 50 countries, is a sanctuary for women to reflect, inspire, have meaningful dialogue and share their journey, while also diving deep within through meditation, breath work, and yoga amidst the serene environment of the Art of Living International Center.

IWC was born out of the vision and branchchild of Smt. Bhanumathi Narasimhan, Chairperson, of the International Women's Conference and the venerable sister of Gurudev. Sharing his vision of a stress-free and violence-free world, she has been working tirelessly for the last 4 decades to make holistic and value-based education available to all, from remote and rural communities. She has also introduced them to the path of meditation and happiness in the footsteps of Gurudev.

Highlighting the essence of the conference, she said, "Just Be" encourages a pause, connect with inner source, and find a respite between the dynamic and relaxation. Meditation helps us stay present, clearing clarity and creating this conference is a space to learn, share, and grow together, embracing kindness, resilience, and inner peace."

## Compassion gives women edge to lead in competitive world: Murmu

**TIMES NEWS NETWORK**

Bengaluru: President Droupadi Murmu Friday stressed the need to uphold compassion and kindness in an increasingly competitive world.

Inaugurating the 10th edition of International Women's Conference, she spoke about how we are at the edge of technological disruption. "In such a competitive world, we should ensure our human values remain intact. This is where the role of women becomes important because they lead with compassion and kindness. You can break silence by creating safe spaces and support systems for everyone to express... It is not possible to break barriers and stereotypes without mental strength," she said.

The conference, themed 'Just Be', being held at Art of Living campus here, called for a conscious pause, balance, acceptance of oneself and resilience as avenues for navigating life's challenges and driving meaningful change in the world.

The global spiritual master and humanitarian Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the inspiration behind the IWC movement, beautifully shared, "We cannot let a single war fall from the eyes of a woman." He said, that progress is born out of a positive environment, and by a woman just being present it becomes happy and positive.

"Her emotions are a blessing because it is with this emotional strength that she blinds people together," He added. "Perhaps if women take on leadership roles in the world's major nations, the conflicts, disputes, wars, and various societal distortions we see today might diminish or even cease. India has shown the way how



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## मार्ग आर्ट ऑफ लिविंग द्वारा आयोजित अंतरराष्ट्रीय महिला सम्मेलन में शामिल होंगी राष्ट्रपति द्रौपदी मुर्मू

**संवाददाता**

भारत की राष्ट्रपति द्रौपदी मुर्मू ने 14 से 16 फरवरी तक आयोजित होने वाले अंतरराष्ट्रीय महिला सम्मेलन में शामिल होने का ऐलान किया है। यह सम्मेलन 'आर्ट ऑफ लिविंग' द्वारा आयोजित किया जा रहा है।

मुर्मू ने कहा कि महिलाओं को अपने शक्ति और ताकत को पहचानना और उनका उपयोग करना चाहिए। उन्होंने कहा कि महिलाओं को अपने जीवन में सकारात्मक परिवर्तन लाने चाहिए।

सम्मेलन में 60 से अधिक देशों के 6,000 से अधिक प्रतिभागियों का शामिल होना अपेक्षित है।

**झारखंड**

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## कन्नड़ದಲ್ಲಿ ಪದಕಗಳನ್ನು ಗೆಲ್ಲುವುದೇ ನಿಜವಾದ ಯಶಸ್ಸು ಅಂದ್ಲೂಂಡಿದ್ದು: ಲವ್ಲೀನಾ ಬೊಗೋಡ್ಕಾವ್

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯದ ಅಧ್ಯಾಪಕಿ ಲವ್ಲೀನಾ ಬೊಗೋಡ್ಕಾವ್ ಅವರು ಇತ್ತೀಚೆಗೆ ಕನ್ನಡ ಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉತ್ತಮ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನ ನೀಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅವರು ತಮ್ಮ ಕೌಶಲ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಿಕ ಕೌಶಲ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಗೆಲ್ಲುವುದೇ ನಿಜವಾದ ಯಶಸ್ಸು ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

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## If women are unhappy, society will stay impoverished, says Sri Sri

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
@Bengaluru

A COUNTRY or a society where women are unhappy will always remain impoverished, said the Art of Living Foundation founder and global peace leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar in his inaugural address at the 10th International Women's Conference here on Sunday.

Over three days, voices from different walks of life will build a powerful dialogue on breaking barriers, rediscovering the self, and embracing well-being, a press release said.

In a special session on the 'Role of Creativity in the Mind and Consciousness', actress Sonak-



Actress Sonakshi Sinha, Head of General Sport Authority, Bahrain Noorah Abdullah and others at the 10th International Women's Conference on Sunday | EXPRESS

ator; General Sport Authority, Bahrain, shared her transformation. "In the military, creativity had no place—we simply followed orders. With the Art of Living, I found the freedom

achieve more and get more done. This is the time to relax and just be. When you are relaxed, then you can achieve more."

Hon Akie Abe, former first lady of Japan, echoed Sri Sri's

## ಶ್ರೀ ಆಫ್ ಲಿವಿಂಗ್ ಅಂತರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಮಹಿಳಾ ಸದಸ್ಯತ್ವ ಹೊಜರುಕಾನುನ್ನು ಭಾರತ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರಪತಿ

ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ದ್ರೌಪದಿ ಮುರ್ಮು ಅವರು ಭಾರತ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರಪತಿಗಳಾಗಿ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಆಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅವರು ಭಾರತದ ಮೊದಲ ಮಹಿಳಾ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರಪತಿಗಳಾಗಿ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಆಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ.



ಅಂತರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಸ್ತರದಲ್ಲಿ 10ನೇ ಸ್ವರೂಪದ ಭಾರತ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರಪತಿಗಳಾಗಿ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಆಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅವರು ಭಾರತದ ಮೊದಲ ಮಹಿಳಾ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರಪತಿಗಳಾಗಿ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಆಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

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## *Special feature:*

### KEEPSAKES OF HOPE: ART, EDUCATION, AND TRANSFORMATION

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In a touching session, every attendee of the conference received a truly special gift, a handkerchief. Drawings created by the children from the Art of Living free schools were transformed by the skilled hands of Madhubani artisans into hand-embroidered keepsakes.

The evening was filled with stories that lit up every heart. Stories of courage, transformation, and the power of education. From classrooms that became runways for dreams, where curiosity first found its wings, shining examples of what this sacred space can inspire. Priyanka, once a shy student, broke generations of barriers to become the first woman in her family to graduate — and went on to drive Bengaluru's metro, guiding thousands each day with quiet pride. From a small village nestled in Meghalaya, Ridalin's dream took flight through this initiative, carrying her all the way to a degree in architecture from

SRI SRI UNIVERSITY.

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And perhaps the most touching of all — a young girl once orphaned by Naxalite violence, her life shadowed by loss, found light again through learning. With resilience as her compass, she rose to become a chartered accountant — a testament to what compassion and opportunity can awaken in a young life.

### TAPPING INTO THE POWER OF INTUITION

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In a captivating demonstration, children trained in the Art of Living's Intuition Process showcased extraordinary abilities—solving Rubik's cubes blindfolded, identifying objects and people without sight and reading text with their eyes covered.

The Art of Living Intuition Program gently helps children connect with their own intuition.





## MUSICAL TREATS

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Popular Indian singer, Hema Sardesai, often referred to as the 'Voice of Goa', captivated the audience with her powerful vocals and emotive renditions. Her performance seamlessly blended classical Indian melodies with contemporary rhythms, creating an atmosphere that was both uplifting and introspective.

## A SOULFUL EVENING UNDER THE STARS

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The serene ambience of the Yoga school lawns was elevated by the enchanting performance of the acclaimed musical duo, Sourendro Mullick and Soumyojit Das. Their music transcended linguistic and cultural barriers, resonating deeply with the diverse audience present. Attendees were treated to a repertoire that spanned classical ragas, soulful ghazals and contemporary compositions, each piece meticulously curated to evoke introspection and serenity.

## HEALING VIBRATIONS

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Miss Mio Yasuda, a renowned healing singer, graced the stage with a soul-stirring performance of a Koto Dama song, an ancient Japanese tradition that embodies the "Spirit of Language" or "Sacred Sound." Beyond its lyrical depth, the Koto Dama song is believed to activate the human pineal gland, a center of spiritual awareness.

## A CELEBRATION OF PLURALITY - *The Mystique of the Grand Mosque*

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The event featured the launch of "The Making of Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque" by Mrs. Shaila Merchant — a captivating chronicle of the vision, challenges, and cultural collaboration behind the creation of Oman's iconic architectural marvel. The book highlights the deep India-Oman connection, the spirit of cross-cultural exchange and the power of faith and perseverance. Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and Bhanu Didi graciously received the first copies, marking a moment of pride and celebration.



Theme Song

## *Just Be*

What does it take  
to know the world is your own  
You're not alone  
Come home

*Just Be...*

What does it take  
To know the sun lights your way  
don't be afraid  
Come home

*Just Be...*

Let go, ride the wave  
Let go, soar high  
Let go, dive deep inside

Let go, don't hide  
Let go, shine bright  
Let go, let love decide

What does it take  
To know the stars watch your life  
Every step, every stride  
Come Home

*Just Be...*

What does it take  
To know the earth holds your weight  
head held high, you walk straight  
Come home

*Just Be...*

Let go, scale the height  
Let go, sail the tide  
Let go, close your eyes and smile

Let go, dance with joy  
Let go, free your mind  
Let go, let love decide  
Let go, let love decide

What does it take  
To know the moon holds your mind  
Through the tears and the smiles  
Come Home

*Just Be...*

What does it take  
To know you're beautiful inside  
In your nature you're divine  
Come Home

*Just Be...*

Let go, you can fly  
Let go, you're the light  
Let go, you are glorious inside

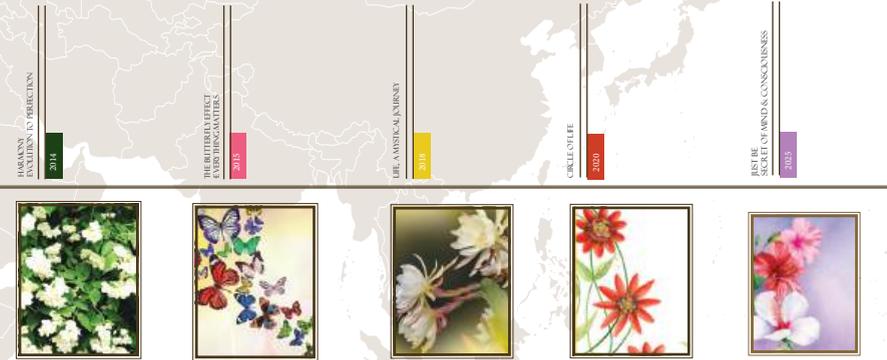
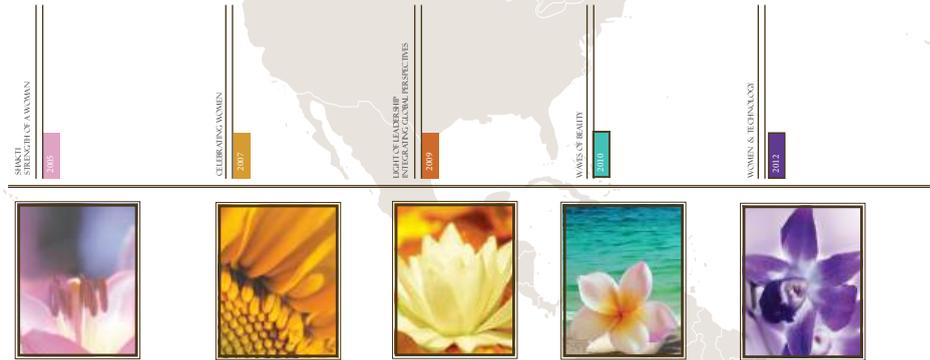
Let go, hear your soul  
Let go, you're the goal  
Let go, let love decide  
Let go, let love decide

10th



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

yatra naaryastu pujiyante tasmante tatra devatah  
*Where women are worshipped, divinity rejoices.*



EDUCATED

OVER 120000 STUDENTS

1356 SCHOOLS (IN INDIA)

ACROSS 22 STATES

\*Started in 2014: Exclusive girls school in the state of Rajasthan with 100 girls

1 VISION

20 YEARS | 10 CONFERENCES  
 475 EMINENT SPEAKERS | OVER 7500 DELEGATES  
 100 COUNTRIES  
 INNUMERABLE DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS



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