

SEVA TIMES

THE ART OF LIVING INTERNATIONAL CENTER, BENGALURU



Helpline for People Undergoing Withdrawal Symptoms

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Gurudev's 64th Birthday Celebrations

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JUNE 2020

SEVA SNIPPETS

2 Crore Worth of Medical Equipment for Naidu Hospital, Pune



Atlas Copco India, with IAHV as its implementing partner, has pledged to donate medical equipment worth rupees two crores to Naidu Hospital, Pune. The first batch of equipment including defibrillators and other medical instruments was handed over to Murlidhar Mohol, Mayor of Pune, in the presence of Shekhar Gaikwad, Pune Municipal Commissioner, and other officials on May 22, 2020.

Community Kitchen in Tawang to Feed School Children



The Art of Living has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Education Department, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, to set up and operate a community kitchen in Tawang to feed nutritious midday meals daily to 2500 school children.

Citation from Congressman



The Art of Living has donated protective equipment worth USD 150,000 to hospitals and nursing homes across US in support of healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Foundation has received a citation from Thomas R. Suozzi, an influential US Congressman, in acknowledgment of their efforts.

Latin Health Care Professionals Benefit From Meditation



More than 1750 health care professionals from Latin America participated in The Art of Living's Online Breath and Meditation Workshop as part of COVID-19 relief work. They are reported to have benefited tremendously from the meditation and breathing exercises.

Overcoming Unprecedented Challenges as Cyclone Amphan Hits Amidst the Global Pandemic

By Seva Times Correspondent

Kolkata, May 2020: Cyclone Amphan, which has been identified as the first super cyclonic storm to occur in the Bay of Bengal since the 1999 Odisha Cyclone, made landfall across Odisha and West Bengal in May 2020. The storm which garnered a peak speed of 240km/hr., caused widespread damage across Kolkata, Hooghly, Howrah, East Midnapur, North 24 Parganas and South 24 Parganas of West Bengal and also in several coastal areas of Odisha.

The Art of Living and International Association for Human Values (IAHV) volunteers, with a vast experience of disaster relief, immediately rose to action as people grappled with flooded streets, broken homes, no electricity and inability to access essential supplies. 19 families and about 60 people were provided shelter, food and medicine in Balichak, Paschim Midnapore. In a total of 6 districts the volunteers undertook the arduous task of crossing over flooded streets and submerged fields to reach out to people and distribute 5000 tarpaulins. 3 trucks of other relief material including tarpaulins and ration items like puffed rice, jaggery, milk was immediately distributed in the affected areas before further action. Another team of twenty volunteers attended to the needs of distressed people in Lalpur of Purulia district in West Bengal. A helpline too was immediately brought into action for people to be able to request help and for others who wanted to contribute.

What added to the challenge was the unprecedented circumstance of the



cyclone arriving in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The volunteers were not only required to reach out to the cyclone victims with relief at the earliest, they had to do so keeping in mind the risks of contagion and abiding by the required precautions for the pandemic. They wore face masks and maintained social

distancing while interacting with each other and with the victims.

The Art of Living and IAHV have an extensive experience of being early responders in the face of disasters and calamities, natural or man-made. Along with immediate aid, programs for long term rehabilitation and trauma relief

through yoga, meditation and other interventions as taught by Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar have benefitted millions globally. More than 1,65,000 stress relief workshops have been conducted so far across the globe, benefitting more than 56,00,000 people.

Learning from the EXPERTS

A New Intention for the New World



Shri. Prasana Prabhu has served at the forefront of bringing Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's wisdom to the world as the Chairman of Sri Sri Publications Trust for more than fourteen years. Prior to that he has worked extensively in TV serial production and marketing and has been a force behind successful shows like Dekh Bhai Dekh, Miss World and Miss Universe. A senior faculty with The Art of Living, he has led the management and execution of several mega events for the organization like the Silver Jubilee event in 2006 and World Culture Festival in 2016. He is currently positioned as the Chairman of Vyakti Vikas Kendra India (VVKI) Trust, The Art of Living's largest service project execution body.

Dr. Hampi Chakrabarti in conversation with Shri. Prasana Prabhu, Chairman, VVKI Trust

■ How do you define leadership for yourself while leading VVKI?

Leadership is to create an environment where once a work plan is created, the people who work in that space feel the freedom, confidence, and a sense of ownership to go out there and do their bit, without worrying about what somebody will think or say. Leadership is to ensure that your team members are not always looking over their shoulder. Second is the ability to continuously reinvent yourself. For any initiative you take, the possibility of it working out is 50-50, sometime your initiatives work, sometimes they don't. But when it doesn't work what do you do — do you drop your shoulders and sit at home or do you look into what went wrong and reinvent. If it worked, did you find out what went well and how to make it better? So, leadership is about reinventing and at the same time creating efficiency.

■ Within VVKI, which are the areas you see having significant potential for scalability?

Everything that is there in VVKI is scalable. As I see it right now, there is a beautiful interdependence between all the teams of VVKI, like for e.g., if we showcase our projects well, people will be more willing to participate and donate into Dharma Stambha Yojana so that more projects can be done. In the Corporate Team, when they see the activities of the Projects Team running so well, they will be confident to talk about CSR initiatives with the corporate bodies along with conducting the Corporate Programs. Our Government Executive Programs are attended by people like Secretaries, Joint Secretaries and other

highly placed officials. Once they are introduced to our work and see its impact on the field, they will be more interested in sanctioning funds to us and partner with us for their work areas. Therefore, the first and the most important thing to scale up is the synergy between our departments.

■ Are we taking any particular steps to bring in the synergy?

Yes, we have already started the process where every department is presenting their work to the other departments and to the APEX body members across India. This will enable each one of us to understand the gravity of the full extent of work that is being executed by VVKI and also help us to identify possible areas of collaboration in each other's work. With access to the knowledge of each other's expertise and experience, our teams will be better equipped to go out and speak for VVKI and get projects. There is advantage in interdependency and coexistence. The next layer of our engagement is with our APEX bodies, as at the end of the day, all the work that we are going to do is not going to happen from the Head Office but from all over India. These bodies comprise very senior and experienced people who have come along with us only because they want to contribute. We will update the APEX members on all the work that is happening within the VVKI fraternity. APEX bodies are going to be our biggest contributors in the work that we are doing. We are creating a process to reach out to more than a million people on the ground in the coming couple of years.

■ Are we looking at new and innovative ways to make project pitches?

First of all, what we have started doing is collating all that we have done over two and a half decades and bringing a whole new dimension through powerful presentations. Next, we are also introducing a research angle to it. We are going to study the CSR avenues that any particular company is interested in or the avenues in which Government department and PSUs have available funds. We will match them with the expertise and experience of our work and then make a specific, tailor made pitch in that particular

"Taking is a pre-COVID thing! This is exactly where The Art of Living comes in; we create that space and platform for people to give back to the world."

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Nature Heals Herself Rapidly - while Mankind is Quarantined

By Padma Koty

Seeing the positive in almost every situation is something Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar does naturally. And so it is with the Corona epidemic too. Interacting through webinars with a gamut of stakeholders and individuals from across the world, he has been saying that the lockdown and quarantine is enabling nature to recuperate and heal itself.

With industries and businesses closed and traffic on land and in the skies greatly reduced, Nature, world over, is indeed breathing easier: blue skies, cleaner rivers, and greener vegetation. Wild life is rejoicing too, being spotted in urban and semi-urban areas, reclaiming their former territories, as it were. Dolphins have been sighted off the Mumbai coastline, while big cats, elephants and peacocks and even bears have been photographed strolling in the streets of cities and towns, or on highways.

The biggest difference has been seen in reduction of aerial pollution to such an extent that in several places, as in Jalandhar, the residents were delighted to be able to see nearby majestic mountain ranges that had not been visible for decades due to air pollution. But these gains would prove temporary if governments and businesses and the populace everywhere don't swiftly adopt new and environmentally-responsible and sensitive ways of doing what they were doing before the lockdown.

One area where mankind needs to reinvent itself would be in serious strategies to reduce transport-related emissions. Wisdom seems to lie in not just exploring reduction in vehicular traffic, but also switching to non-polluting mass transit systems and individual transport by electrifying them—provided the electricity is produced in environment-friendly ways!

Interacting with participants of several recent webinars, Gurudev has said that though crores have been spent trying to clean up Ganga, it's the strict lockdown that has made this great river, held sacred by millions, cleaner than any multi-crore initiative to clean it.

He has an interesting proposal. Positing that the Corona epidemic might be nature's way to make us rejuvenate ourselves, he suggests we can cleanse nature too by locking ourselves in a well-planned manner for one week every year. He suggests the UN and the G-20 should work out some kind of an agreement or protocol for this, exempting medical and emergency services. This will benefit not just nature but human beings too as, among many other benefits, it will give an opportunity for people, especially families to come together. This should however be planned in such a manner that no section is adversely affected.

People are enjoying the remarkable changes in nature. Road accidents are almost nil and environment-related and some other health issues are decreasing. But the question is how this can be sustained after the epidemic. Will not human greed and exploitativeness pick up the reins again?

Speaking to noted environmentalist Vandana Shiva, Gurudev has said, "If you want to care for the environment, you have to be sensitive and sensible. The lack of these two qualities is the cause and reason for the greed of mankind and the assault on Nature." He elaborates: 'When you are greedy, you don't care for others or for the environment. When you are in the present moment, you will not be greedy. Meditation, service, serving the Planet Earth, enjoying Nature, all these are one path to evolution.'

Corona has given us a glimpse of how quickly nature recuperates when given a chance. The challenge ahead is mankind's ability to be wise and agile in accepting and adopting all the complex, brand-new normals mandated by the Corona epidemic. It is up to every section of society to remember the lessons it has so emphatically taught us, and to apply them as responsible and accountable residents of this beautiful planet.

Cont. from page 1

area of their interest. This process of the backend research to understand focus areas has already begun. We will also take a greater participation in the NGO conferences pertaining to the areas of our expertise like river, education and the others.

■ **Considering that most of our work is implemented by volunteers, who may or may not have the required skills of the job. Are we looking at ways to skill up this existing workforce?**

Most definitely. We are creating an advisory body for each of the areas we work in. Like we are working on water, now we need a pool of people who know that space and whom we can reach out to for knowledge. At the end of the day, knowledge is power. And on the ground, it is our YLTP youth who are implementing the projects and doing the ground work. This and the right skill sets coming together will create great impact.

■ **How are we going to respond to a post COVID-19 world?**

During this global pandemic people have been through a very uncertain time. The friends whom

I have heard from are like, 'kuch bhi ho sakta hai!' You never know what happens and when, and this is making people want to be more useful — both to themselves and to the society at large. A paradigm shift has happened in people's perspectives where they want to be givers, and not just takers. Taking is a pre-COVID thing now (laughs)! This is exactly where The Art of Living comes in; we create that space and platform for people to give back to the world. Other than this, our courses for rural India, Corporates, have already been launched online and participants are having phenomenal experiences in these courses.

■ **Where do you see the VVKI Trust three years from now?**

VVKI is going to be one of the biggest trusts of The Art of Living and I am not saying this because I am currently heading it. This is what I firmly believe in. The Art of Living is known for Gurudev's wisdom and the service he provides to the world. And this service angle is us, at VVKI. I personally feel that we have a great team in VVKI and across India and we can achieve the impossible.

Gnana Kshetra – “A Lighthouse for the Whole Community”

By Dr. Hampi Chakrabarti



The Art of Living Gnana Kshetras are created with the intention to develop that sacred space where diverse people can come together as a community, to be introduced to spirituality, nurture human values, inculcate self-discipline and learn The Art of Living interventions on health and wellbeing.

In Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's words a Gnana Kshetra is "the lighthouse for the whole community". The first Gnana Kshetra was inaugurated in 2007 at Kollam district in Kerala and as of today, there are more than 100 functional Gnana Kshetras across India both urban and rural, and around sixty more are in the pipeline to become functional shortly. Over the time the Gnana Kshetras have also stood up as the fulcrum for mobilizing the local people and organising relief and volunteering initiatives during crisis hours. They play a crucial role in Gurudev's vision of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam— one world family.

India, being a country of rich diversity, all Gnana Kshetras ensure to exude the cultural ethos of the region they are located in. Most of them had their genesis in the local community coming together and raising funds to create them. In some places, they are newly-built and in some they are established in the space donated in the spirit of service to humanity by the people.

The daily management of the Gnana Kshetra is undertaken by the respective state's APEX body in consultation with the central team at Bangalore ashram. The state APEX body further creates a Gnana Kshetra Committee in each state which looks after the entire operation and operates through a dedicated Managing Committee for each Gnana Kshetra.

Key features and available activities at a Gnana Kshetra:

- Peaceful meditation hall

- Regular courses of The Art of Living
- Free weekly follow-up sessions
- Yoga classes
- Vocational training programs
- Ayurvedic pulse diagnosis camps
- Service project activities
- Celebrations like satsang, homa, pooja and yagna during festivals.

In the last couple of months, when as a measure to combat the global pandemic and in line with government regulations for the lockdown, the Gnana Kshetras were required to close down for their regular activities, they opened up to make relief material available to the needy. Extensive COVID-19 relief work was undertaken from the 25th of March onwards across the Gnana Kshetras in Barnala of Punjab, Banamalipur in Agartala, Chigeli in Kollam district of Kerala along with Cheruvayoor in Malappuram district, Vazhapally in Kottayam district, Chengannur and Alapuzha city in Alappuzha district, Karbi Anglong in Assam, Thane, Satara and Jalna in Maharashtra, Gulbarga in Karnataka and several other places. The relief materials included dry ration, cooked food from kitchens that have been set up on a temporary basis, PPE kits for the front-line workers and sanitization chemicals and equipment. Over one lakh and forty-one thousand people have been reached so far with the efforts of our volunteers using Gnana Kshetra as the base for relief work.

For more information about The Art of Living Gnana Kshetras log on to <https://www.artofliving.org/in-en/gnana-kshetra>

Helpline for People Undergoing Withdrawal Symptoms



**The Art of Living's
Helpline for Addictions**



080 676 12325
24x7

Available in 9 regional languages

A P.R.A.N. Initiative
Program for Release from Addictions Naturally

second line of support. Trained volunteers called 'Sahayagees' are assigned as mentors for ongoing support and hand-holding to the path of complete recovery. 97 Art of Living teachers are working in various capacities in the project and are offering assistance in 9 regional languages (Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam.)

The Art of Living's PRAN (Program For Release From Addictions Naturally) programs offer effective support for those affected by addictions to substances like alcohol, drugs, gutkha, tobacco, cigarettes, and other substances.

Anil (name changed), a resident of Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, was having difficulty getting out of his addiction to gutka. Responding to

an advertisement in the local newspaper, Anil called the helpline number. He says the counselors have been very helpful, educating and motivating him over lengthy telephone conversations. The counselors had a positive impact on him and Anil is confident that with their help, he will now be able to get over his addiction completely.

Mohan (not his real name) from Ahmadabad, Gujarat, was suffering from withdrawal symptoms when he came across the Helpline number. He says talking to the counselors has helped him immensely. He has been following their advice and has noticed a positive change.

The addiction helpline is a long term initiative and will continue to offer support to those in need even after the lockdown is over. The addiction helpline number is 080 676 12325.

Bengaluru, Karnataka: With the nationwide lockdown in place and liquor shops being shut, many addicts deprived of alcohol and other intoxicants started developing severe mental distress and physiological symptoms. There were increasing newspaper reports of suicides and cases of domestic violence related to substance use. To help those struggling with such issues, The Art of Living has launched a helpline.

Vikram Manikya, who heads this project, says the helpline will facilitate treatment to those who are willing and will enhance the motivation of those who are undecided to give up substance use. Ongoing telephonic support will be available for the next 3 months while those undergoing withdrawal symptoms continue to get medical treatment under the care of a psychiatrist.

Sixty Art of Living teachers who have been trained in counseling act as 'First Responders' and take addiction-related calls. They then assess the level of help required based on standard tools and offer the

Online Meditation and Breath Workshop for Doctors and Medical Professionals

As part of the national COVID-19 response team, our doctors, paramedics, nurses and medical professionals have been working round the clock, drenched in heavy protective gear, working for 6-8 hours straight, to treat patients and provide them much needed medical attention, sometimes at the cost of risking their own lives. To ease the daunting stress of handling the huge number of patients and help medical professionals find a reservoir of peace within them even for a few minutes, in yet another COVID initiative, The Art of Living launched an Online Meditation and Breath Workshop for Doctors and Medical professionals, the first batch from 13th to 16th May.

The workshop provides practical and powerful tools, using breathing techniques and spiritual knowledge to deal with anxiety, stress, sleeplessness, and trauma that doctors may experience in the course of their work -- particularly during the pandemic. The workshop

aims to restore the smile on their faces and help them experience deep experiential peace, giving them a calm and clear mind, happier emotions that will boost their energy, stay healthy, mentally fit, and be more productive.

This workshop is the first in the series of similar workshops that will be organized for the medicos across the country.

"We would like to thank Dr. Srinivas, Dean of the ESIC Hospital and College, Hyderabad, who had the vision to think out of the box and facilitate this workshop," said Mrs. Neeru Singh, IAS. "We have 65 doctors in the first workshop. The Institute is planning on conducting research on the impact of the practices taught during the workshop on participants."

The workshop was inaugurated by Kishan Reddy, Minister of State for Home, in the presence of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

Online Satsang, Blood Donation, Feeding the Needy, and other Seva Activities Mark Gurudev's 64th Birthday Celebrations

The Art of Living family the world over came together as one, uniting in spirit despite the physical distance imposed by the worldwide lockdown to celebrate the 64th birthday of their beloved Gurudev. Over 2.5 million people joined the satsang from The Art of Living International Center in Bangalore. Srinivas, Shalini Srinivas, Sahil Jagtiani and Dr Manikantan Menon with their soulful renditions set the ambience for the worldwide meditation led by Gurudev on the evening of May 13, 2020.

In a strange way, the pandemic has drawn all the devotees together with the senior faculty members who have been with Gurudev for many years sharing their experiences online, motivating and inspiring everyone. For the first time, online breath and meditation workshops are being offered with thousands the world over learning Sudarshan Kriya in the comfort of their homes.

To express their love for their Master, devotees the world over were involved in some form of service or other to the extent allowed under the circumstances. Here is a glimpse of how some of them celebrated Gurudev's birthday.

Blood Donation Camps



At the government hospital in Parbhani District, Maharashtra, which has been facing an acute shortage of blood, 75 volunteers came forth to donate. 54 volunteers donated blood in Tirthpuri village, Ghansawangi Tehsil, Jalna District, Maharashtra. 30 volunteers donated blood at the Jankalyan Blood Bank at Jalna.

At a blood donation camp organized in Kandi, Murshidabad, West Bengal, 31 units of blood was collected.

24 people donated blood at the camp organized by the Chatra Chapter in Jharkhand. Hygiene and social distancing were strictly maintained. Volunteers took this opportunity to felicitate some cleaners of the municipal corporation and frontline workers at the District Sadar Hospital. They presented them with shawls and bestowed upon them the title of "COVID Warrior." The Sri Sri Self-Help Group had a major role to play in organizing this event.

At a camp organized in Bansa, Chandil District, Jharkhand, 29 volunteers donated blood including Satyavir, in-charge of the Chowka Police Station.

Like every year on May 13th, this year also a blood donation camp was organized at Savitri Hospital in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh. 15 units of blood was collected.

101 Birdbaths Installed in Molela on Gurudev's Birthday

As we approach the peak of summer, rising temperatures and lack of water and shade claim the lives of many birds, especially



in the northern states where temperatures rise well above 40 degrees Celsius.

On the occasion of Gurudev's birthday on May 13, 2020, The Art of Living family in Molela, Rajasthan, installed 101 clay water pots on trees across Molela, a village in Rajsamand District, Rajasthan, to provide water for birds in the summer months. Praveen Sanadhya, The Art of Living faculty, stated that installing clay birdbaths in summer is a tradition they have been following for the last 8 years. This year, due to the lockdown and social distancing, volunteers installed birdbaths outside their homes or on trees nearby. Volunteers make sure that the birdbaths are always filled with water.



Feeding the Needy in West Bengal

The Art of Living family in Purba Bardhaman, West Bengal, distributed food packets in a village nearby that has been facing difficulties due to the lockdown on account of COVID-19.



Asha Bhosle Makes Her YouTube Debut with a Song dedicated to Gurudev

Veteran singer Asha Bhosle made her YouTube debut recently and released her first song, *Main Hoon*, dedicated to Gurudev on his 64th birthday, on May 13. The soulful song features Gurudev interacting with his followers and giving motivational speeches.

About the song, Asha Bhosle said, "This song is the need of the hour. It conveys hope and love and brings out the feeling of positivity. Our country and the world is going through unprecedented times and I hope that this song can help put peace and serenity in the hearts of those who hear it."

Fodder for Cows



When The Art of Living family in Anegundi, Gangavathi Taluk, Koppal District in Karnataka, learnt that the goshala run by the Adishakti Durgadevi Temple in Anegundi was facing acute shortage of funds, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, to procure feed for the 450 odd cows housed in the goshala, they immediately sent out messages on their WhatsApp groups to their friends and associates, requesting them to come forward and help the temple trust in their hour of need. On the occasion of Gurudev's 64th birthday, they presented a cheque of Rs. 64,000 and three tractor loads of fodder to the trustees of the temple.

Gurudev Answers Some Pertinent Questions about Yoga

The word yoga means different things to different people. Some say it is asanas, some believe it is the spiritual path and some talk about the health benefits. So what according to you is yoga?

Gurudev : Yoga is not just a physical exercise or asanas. Yoga is a complete science. It unites the body, mind, spirit and the universe. Yoga brings that much needed peace in every individual. It also makes a big difference in one's behavior, thought pattern and attitude. I would say yoga is almost indispensable. If you want to be sane, sensitive, sensible, strong and intuitive you have to follow yoga.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna has said 'Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam'. What does that mean?

Gurudev : This means 'yoga is skill in action'. Yoga and skill are synonymous; if you are skillful it means somewhere you have followed the principle of yoga. And if you are doing yoga, pranayama, meditation, and following all the yamas and niyamas, you will definitely acquire skill in your action.

What is that skill that makes a person a yogi?

Gurudev : The skill is to see how you keep your spirit uplifted, your energy not drained and yet get your job done. This comes only by yoga. Usually when you do some work, you tend to drain yourself. And by the time the fruit of action comes, you are so exhausted that you are unable to enjoy it. So yoga is that skill which keeps your spirit alive, your energy high and yet brings you achievement.

You say yoga is not about exercise. This is a contrasting picture of yoga, as the world knows it. So what is it all about?

Gurudev : No doubt, postures and exercises are part of yoga. But it should not be limited or misunderstood as just exercise. It is a holistic development, expression and connection of human life. Every baby is a yogi. A baby exhibits all the qualities of a yogi - its postures, breathing pattern, perceptual ability, sharpness and the ability to stay in the present moment.

You say every child is a yogi. So what is it that we lose when we grow up that stops us from being a yogi?

Gurudev : We lose our naturalness and intuitive ability. Animals and children have more intuition than adults do. This is because we make things so complicated in our mind when in reality it may not be so. There is a

Words of Wisdom



Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

tendency of the mind to latch on to something negative. If ten compliments are given to you and one insult, what does the mind latch on to? The insult! This tendency of latching on to the negative is not there in a baby. Somehow, we acquire this tendency as we grow up. With yoga, we get back to our original nature where we look at the positive aspects in life and see how the things can be done. This is needed in every field of activity. When things appear gloomy everywhere, it is yoga that brings the much needed enthusiasm, energy and intuitive ability.

Yoga also talks about an element of wonder, what is that?

Gurudev : Wonder is a preface to yoga. The ancient rishis have said '*Vismaya Yoga Bhumika*', which means 'a sense of wonder is the preface for yoga'. When your observation of yourself and of nature creates a wonder within, then a mysticism dawns in your life. That connection to something ethereal, something so beautiful, concrete yet very abstract, comes up in our life. If you do not wonder then you are not a yogi.

Is meditation enough? Do we really need asanas? If yes, why?

Gurudev : If one is aged, sick, or not used to exercising, then one does not need to do physical postures. They can do some breathing exercises and meditation. Meditation is the real substance. It is like a soul and everything else is like dressing on it. You can't have a body without a soul and you can't have a soul without a body. Patanjali has spoken about the eight limbs of yoga. And limbs develop simultaneously, not one after another. In the womb, a baby does not develop the legs first and then develop the arms or head. All the limbs are developed simultaneously. So all the eight limbs of yoga go together.

Seva Highlights

Food for Migrant Workers as They Make Their Way Home

Maharashtra: Over the last few days, Shirpur which lies on the Mumbai-Agra National Highway has been a mute witness to thousands of migrant laborers from Mumbai making their way home in any which way they can. An Art of Living team led by Resha and Janak Patel is stationed here to provide rations such as oil, spices, rice, and pulses supplied by IAHV and The Art of Living to bring some respite to the weary laborers on their arduous journey home.



Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh: Similarly, hundreds of migrant workers travelling by bus and trucks to their hometowns via Linga Road Bypass, Chhindwara, were given food packets and drinking water pouches by The Art of Living volunteer team from Chhindwara who were at the job from 7 in the morning to 10 at night for five days starting from May 13. Around 100 kilos of Chivda, 700 water pouches, and 1500 kilos of muskmelon were distributed. Food packets were also distributed in the migrant workers' transit camps and district quarantine centers. 200 migrant students stationed temporarily at Maharshi Vidya Mandir on May 24 were served breakfast in the morning and more than 500 students were served meals in the evening. Volunteers wore masks and gloves and maintained social distancing during the seva.



Sant Kabir Nagar, Uttar Pradesh: Volunteers served meals to around 800 migrant workers as they journeyed through the bypass adjoining Sant Kabir Nagar in Uttar Pradesh.

Bengaluru, Karnataka: On May 21, 2020, IAHV volunteers, with the support of Bengaluru City Police, distributed food packets to nearly 4000 migrant workers who were waiting at the Bengaluru Railway Station since two days to board trains that would take them home.

Volunteers Create and Install Sanitizing Machine in Jalna

Like most Art of Living volunteers, those in Jalna, Maharashtra, wanted to undertake something that would benefit a maximum number of people during the COVID-10 pandemic. This desire led to the creation of an automatic sanitization machine which was put together in just 2 days with the help of Sachin who works as a CC TV camera technician. Currently two such sanitizing machines have been installed in the main market of Mama Chowk. Health care workers and other visitors to the market are using the machine to sanitize themselves.



Buses To Take Daily Wagers Back Home



The Art of Living family in Mohali and Chandigarh, Punjab, assisted by the government authorities, arranged for 16 buses to help 600 daily wagers to travel back to their homes in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Akash Sharma, speaking on behalf of The Art of Living, said "Ever since the Corona crisis started, volunteers of the organization have been coming forward to support the people. Before they undertook the journey back home, all the daily wagers underwent screening by the Health Department. All instructions issued by the government were strictly adhered to. Jagdeep Sehgal, SDM Mohali, and Aman, ASI, did everything possible to help us in this task."

In May 2020 Gurudev tells the World: Jaago, Uttho, Kaam Karo



By Padma Koty

Queried on his hobbies by an invitee to a recent live webcast on social media, Gurudev said "My hobby - and my job - is talking to people." And talk he did - indefatigably, highly cogently, and to a very diverse spectrum of people from across the world. In the month of May 2020, through well-attended online interactions, sometimes as many as three a day, he addressed educationists, businessmen and industrialists, public personalities, members of the film world and popular singers, and sports personalities, among others. His message for those who eagerly sought his pragmatic advice for the global pandemic and its adverse effects was: Jaago, Uttho, Kaam Karo (Wake Up, Arise, and Get to Work)! He also conversed with mothers and others who asked him a range of questions on parenting and present-day youth.

Gurudev's interactions with the eminent personalities were accompanied by guided meditations in Hindi and English, at 12:00 noon and 7:30pm daily. Around 2 million people, from across the globe joined in to participate in the meditations every day.

Distinguished Medical Professionals:

Gurudev conferred with eminent doctors and healthcare professionals from across India, in a conclave "Health and its Spiritual Dimensions." 1300 healthcare professionals also joined in this seminar and participated in the live meditation conducted by Gurudev after the event.

He told the attendees that though they experienced stress in not knowing anything about the pandemic, they need to be strong

and reassure themselves that we will get over this pandemic. He also said the pandemic is nothing short of a war and in a war we can't afford to be anxious. Also, though people are more grateful than ever to the medical community, the animosity of even educated people towards this community is unbelievable. The uncertainty that comes with not knowing about the pandemic makes us humble. Giving the doctors some simple techniques to manage their pandemic-related stress and anxiety and the role of adrenalin in stress-management, Gurudev said they have to be strong for their patients'sake. He addressed doctors and medical professionals on the occasion of the launch of the highly-appreciated "Online Meditation and Breath Workshop for Frontline Workers." He spoke to prominent heads of organizations of chemists and druggists and also discussed the implications of Covid on mental health with an international panel.

Interaction with Eminent Businessmen and Industrialists, and Management and International Bodies:

Gurudev hosted industrialist couple Sangita and Sajjan Jindal; Ajay Piramal, entrepreneur; eminent members of AIMA (All India Management Association), and of the Institute of Directors. He presided over a discussion with prominent industrialists in a seminar with CII which is observing its 125th anniversary. On 24th May he interacted with eminent members of the Indian textile industry and discussed a road map for sustainable growth. Motilal Oswal and Puneet Yadu Dalmia joined Gurudev for a heart-to heart chat on "Equanimous Leadership." Well-known diamond merchants shared their concerns about the

effects of the pandemic on the diamond industry. "The Mind is not a monkey. It is King," Gurudev reminded. He dwelt on seva and on the need to create awareness about mental health (especially the mindset of kids), yoga, meditation, proper food and exercise, which can help people a lot. Interestingly, Gurudev opined that a well-planned lockdown of one week every year, which did not adversely affect anyone, would give both Nature and mankind a well-deserved break!

Public Sector Enterprises, Economists and Government Bodies:

Gurudev interacted with Chief Executives of Public Sector Enterprises (PSE) in an online interaction interestingly titled "Leading through Uncharted Waters." Another web event was Gurudev's online meet with Sarpanch Parishad of Mumbai on the 25th of May.

Noted Educationists, Students and Youth:

In an event with the National Project Implementation Unit, eminent educationists interacted with Gurudev. Participants spoke of the mental well-being of students during and after Covid. In another interaction on mental health and well-being in universities, the attendees discussed how the practice of meditation helped students regulate their emotions and the importance of inculcating compassion. In "Africa Innovates", participants shared views on the role of meditation in driving innovation in education, health and commerce. In an online interaction with the Directors of NIT, Gurudev said that the pride of a teacher is when the student excels. A panel from Netherlands held a dialogue on "21st Century Skills for the

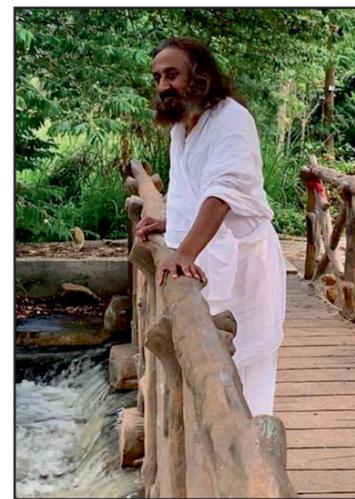
Youth." Yet another education-related interaction was "Reshaping Higher Education," with several Vice-Chancellors sharing their views and concerns. "I Meditate Africa" and "Africa Unites" were two other panel discussions that Gurudev presided over.

Prominent Sports Persons and Sports Association:

South African sport scientist and performance coach, Shyamal Vallabhjee asked Gurudev about spirituality and got this succinct reply: "When you step into spirituality, the whole universe becomes a comfort zone to you. There is nothing beyond that. When your comfort zone extends to infinity, only then you are really in the center." Gurudev also interacted with Hon. Minister Nathi Mthethwa, Minister of Sports, Art and Culture, South Africa, and with Pullela Gopichand, Chief National Coach for the Indian Badminton team. International panels interacted with Gurudev on "Reimagining Sports in Covid-19 Times," and on "Agility in Body and Mind." Young sports professionals also joined Gurudev in "Celebrating the Spirit of Sports."

Eminent Public Personalities:

Kapil Sharma, comedian; writer-orator Chakravarti Sulibele; Gurinder Chadha, Lord Karan Bilimoria, and Dr. Karan Singh, were some of the eminent public figures Gurudev interacted with. In their interaction, Gurudev opined: "When you lose sight of your magnanimity, your normal happy blissful self, that is bondage. We have to gain freedom from the mind and that comes through meditation." Discussing with Nicolas Hulot, eminent environmentalist, Gurudev said the right freedom is the one that does not take away others' freedom.



Accomplished Musicians and Performers:

Eminent musicians Vijay Prakash and Mumbai Jayashree, Gurudas Maan, playback singers Mica Singh and K.S. Chitra, Monali Thakur, Shaan and music composer Salim Merchant chatted with Gurudev. He also conversed with classical singers the Gundecha Brothers, and with U Rajesh, well-known mandolin player. Gurudev emphasized that it is essential to keep up the mental strength of people so that they do not give in to negative feelings, and suggested that music should be inspiring to its listeners.

Popular Personalities from the Film and Television Industry:

In a series "Heart to Heart", Gurudev interacted with prominent personalities from the film and television industry namely Rajkumar Hirani, Sonakshi Sinha, Ekta Kapoor, Sanjay Dutt, and also renowned actor Nitish Bharadwaj who had essayed the iconic role of Lord Krishna in the epic serial Mahabharata. Gurudev told Sonakshi, "When we don't attach too much value to success or failure in a film, then we can take it we have become a success in life."

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