



# INDIAN CULTURE

Pinnacle of Human Civilization



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SHANTIKUNJ  
Haridwar - 249411  
Uttaranchal,  
Himalayas  
Bharat.

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# PREFACE



Indian culture happens to be the oldest culture prevailing on the globe and it has all those qualities which make a man divine being. Because of this it has also been named divine culture “Dev Sanskriti”.

It encompasses all tenets of human religion or spirituality. It is useful today too when we are leading to ascending decades of 21st century. Scientific discoveries have dazzled mankind like anything in last 50 years, specially development in IT, Medicine and electronics have totally transformed the life style of citizen of today now called netizens of a global village.

Youngsters of today have been influenced and benefited mostly by these developments of science. But science alone leads to stress and strains and instead of boons, we start getting lost in our journey of this birth due to being entangled in web of modern world. This is what is happening today to youth all over the globe. Our children who have been born in countries other than India and developed there or who reached there in schooling days are deeply impressed by modern scientific achievements in

western and eastern developed countries. The management system there, being soulless, does not incorporate values in life. At the cost of values they think of materialistic development and achievement at any cost.

Indian spirituality teaches us how to incorporate both science and spirituality in proper proportion and blend them with Indian culture, our age old value system and heritage. To appraise children youth of today in developed countries and in megapolis of India (they too are getting westernized) we, here in Gayatri Pariwar, thought of bringing age old wisdom in scientific perspective as envisioned by its Founder Poojya Sri Ram Sharma Acharyaji (1911-1990). He has written about 3000 books, around 500 being on the subjects we are talking about. Nobody can read that voluminous work alone in his life time. We thought we should provide as a curriculum, in nutshell, all those modules which leads to spiritual development of self. This model was to be presented in a format of teaching training language for our youngsters of 13-18 year age group which is the most sensitive period.

In present curriculum, which is still provisional, we have tried to present a

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profile of spirituality, our cultural heritage and profile of India as a leader of all countries in future and what should be done to inculcate spirituality in day to day life. Rituals are not everything. Today religion has become synonyms with rituals, while it is not so. Our younger generation gets away from something which they fail to understand. Nobody is explaining them in scientific terminology or with common sense added to it. An attempt has been made in this curriculum, which can be practiced in a 7 day camp or a month long weekend based teaching schedule, to present a practical outline of art of living, yoga, how to be fit physically as well as mentally and how to worship regularly. Language has been kept simple. A sensitization program has also been prepared for parents so that they understand the problems of children.

I am hopeful that lot of suggestion will come from our youngsters and their friends, their parents. Once we get them, we will publish this in a booklet form with photographs by the end of the year. We will like all to go through this work fully. Hard labour has been put forward by staff of our University Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya and many others. Special efforts have put forward by Ms Mamta Bhatnagar, who has collected all data and material and presented them in this format. I am obliged for her untiring work. I tender

my thanks to my Vice Chancellor Dr. S.P. Mishra, who has been leading the curriculum making committee. All our parijans abroad too need patting on their back, as they showed us the urgent necessity of presentation of such type. In the end, with anticipation of feedback from all of you at earliest, I seek blessings of our Gurusatta, without patronage of whom, this task would have not been possible. May almighty illuminate our intellect on righteous path.

**Dr. Pranav Pandya,**

*Chancellor*

*Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya*

*Head*

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Shantikunj, Haridwar 249411  
Uttaranchal, Himalayas  
Bharat.

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# INDIAN CULTURE

## Pinnacle of Human Civilization

The Indian culture is described as "*Sa Prathama Sanskrati Vishwavara*" the first and the supreme culture in the world. It is honored as a divine culture. Today, when the world is undergoing haywire transformations on cultural front and facing cultural diversion and adulteration the influence of occidental civilization and commercialization has over shadowed the way of life of even those who vaunt for the great cultural heritage of India...., it has become more important to review the original form and expansion of the Indian culture, analyze its foundation-principles in scientific light and present in detail its different aspects, which deal with the day to day life of people and which are useful for the righteous progress of the world.

The core of Indian culture, as shaped by the revered Rishis, revolves around the principle of "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" treating the entire world as our own family, which reflects universality of serene love, altruism, sharing of responsibilities and caring for all beings.....

The central theme of Indian cultural development has evolved from the Indian philosophy of continuity of life and realization of the soul as a manifestation of divine impulse. Successive refinement of human consciousness by elimination of animal instincts and evil tendencies of the mind and enlightenment of its inner cores was therefore given maximum importance by the Rishis. The system of shodas sanskars was devised by them for this purpose.

The shodas samskaras, performed at different stages of human life, aim at continuous refinement and escalation of the individual self. The methods of performing these samskaras and adoption of associated disciplines in personal and social life constitute an important component of Indian cultural system.

It is a culture of this type which produces true saints, altruist social reformers, martyrs, great personalities, intellectuals, scientists and spiritual masters of the kinds of the Rishis, who, like angels, bestow the world with divine grace through their noble deeds and ascetic characters. The purity of intrinsic faith and arousal of inner sentiments are regarded most important for the realization of divinity existing in the inner self. The methods of *upasana* prescribed under the Indian cultural principles lend excellent support in this direction. The source of aspirations and happiness and the ultimate core of sentiments the inner self too gets refined and charged by the devotional practices of *upasana* and it experiences absolute peace and blissfulness.

The principles pertaining to (i) ascetic control of mental tendencies; (ii) adoption of honesty, generosity, mutual trust, healthy cooperation, morality and integrity of character and deeds; (iii) altruist service; (iv) sincere fulfillment of responsibilities towards the family, society, nation and the world; (v) courageous attitude and endeavors to fight against injustice, immorality, exploitation, superstition,

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communalism, castism and similar kinds of negative tendencies and effects in the personal and social domains; and (vi) concrete efforts for healthy maintenance of the ecosystem and purification of the environment of life, etc are fundamental to the creative practices propagated under the banner of Indian culture.

How the above mentioned 'virtual idealism' could be naturally assimilated in the activities and behavioral transactions of daily life? This has been the focus of what constitutes the 'traditions' of the Indian culture.

The word "culture" is a literal translation of the word "*sanskriti*" in Sanskrit language. According to Sanskrit grammar, the word "*sanskriti*" means that action, method or system which has (or which pertains to) virtuous tendencies.... Restraining of the agile mind and cultivation of virtuous tendencies in it is emphasized in the *Bharteeya Sanskriti* (Indian Culture) because mind is the sole source of orientation of one's attitude, deeds and character. The subtle impulses of consciousness are expressed in the intellect, thoughts and sentiments via the medium of the four inner layers of mind namely, *mana*, *buddhi*, *citta* and *ahamkara*.

Because of its sound footing on the in-depth knowledge of human psychology and science of spirituality, the Indian philosophy adequately deals with unlimited expansion of different aspects of human life including those at the most personal to those at the global levels. Because, Nature and every form of existence has also been treated here as a manifestation of universal consciousness, the materialistic domain of the world and the nature, functions and activities of the gross body too fall within the consideration of this philosophy. The original structure and relevance of the Indian culture is therefore regarded as universal.

The systems of *varna* and ashram prescribed by the Rishis are often subjected to the criticism of rational thinkers and intellectuals of the modern age. This is because, the popular interpretations and the information available on these aspects of Indian culture indicates them as nurturing castism, social discrimination, evasion from responsibilities, etc. Param Poojya Gurudev Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya has paid special attention to these important issues. He has cited excerpts from the original scriptures and given authentic references and explanation of what is exactly meant by the terms Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra described as the four varnas. The fundamentalists, the orthodox scholars and the advocates of castism will not find any reasonable counter-argument to reject his interpretations and adept analysis.

Gayatri the origin of all Vedas, Guru spiritual mentor, Ganga the holy Ganges, Gau (cow) and Geeta are the five fundamental elements which lie at the core of the development and practices of the Indian culture. It is through these roots that the stout tree of divine Indian culture had blossomed in the ancient times of yore and has maintained its 'greenery' age after age despite turbulent fluctuations in people's faith, convictions, cultural values and modes of living.

This curriculum is designed to provide information on the life transforming aspects of Indian Culture and the constructive efforts inspired by the patron founders of Yug Nirman Mission, Shantikunj Haridwar for the revival of the divine Indian culture.

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# MODULE

# 1



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# **SPIRITUAL WAY OF LIFE**

- Importance of Spirituality
  - Role of Scientific Spirituality
  - Advantages of Spiritual Practice
  - Spirituality and Academics
  - Indian Value system
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# SPIRITUAL WAY OF LIFE

## Objectives

1. To discuss with the participants the Omnipresent power of the Divine.
2. To help them to understand the importance of spirituality for healthy development of the personality.
3. To make them aware about the scientific basis of spirituality.
4. To give an insight into the role of spirituality in achieving academic excellence.
5. To facilitate them to lead a spiritualistic way of life.

## Introduction

The human life is an invaluable Gift from God. He gave us those privileges, which are not available to any other being. As the Prince of God it is our foremost duty to nurture His garden, the Mother Earth. Spirituality is Realization of Immortal Real Self and considering this human body to be the instrument of God and leading a purposeful and righteous life. This can be achieved by the synthesis of virtuous deeds (*Karma Yoga*), Righteous knowledge(*Gyan Yoga*) and faith and devotion (*Bhakti Yoga*) in our day to day life. After knowing this great truth, our most important duty is to move ahead in the path of spiritualism.

### 1.1 Importance of Spirituality

#### 1.1.1. UNDERSTANDING OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD

There are two philosophical views that generally guide the course of life. One is man is born sinner and the other is :

each soul is potentially divine. In the western civilization the religious teachings propagate the first view but the entire Indian philosophy is based on the second view. Each and every one can realize the divinity within by righteous knowledge and virtuous deeds. God can not be perceived by limited power of senses but one can experience him in every situation. The only condition is that one does not make an effort to prove this wrong by rigidly or dogmatically trapping one self in a particular line of thought. God Supreme is present in the entire universe.

A spiritual outlook i.e. giving foremost importance to divinity and immortality of soul (*Atman*) and considering the body as its mere manifestation is extremely necessary for social and material well being. The meaning of spiritual life lies in putting into conduct the principle of 'simple living and high thinking'.

God according to the Vedas is *Sachchidananda* (*Sat+ Chit+Anand*). *Sat* stands for truth, *chit* for pulsating vitality as well as fountain head of

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knowledge and *Anand* is bliss. Combination all these, the all knowing, life giving eternally blissful and bliss giving God himself. Those who sincerely worship God have no fear from any kind and they never become slaves of material desires, lust, anger and attachment.

### 1.1.2 IDENTIFYING POWER OF SOUL

Righteous knowledge and virtuous deeds removes the ignorance (imposed by *maya*) leading to the development of '*atmic shakti*' (or the power of the soul). As a result the entry of wicked tendencies subside. This is a great power which brings freshness and luminosity, sharpening of facilities and creating them carrying out the biggest task.

*Atmabal* is called *asmavarma mayasi* meaning this is my Armour of stone. The power of Soul is unconquerable and free from all conflicts. It is a duty of an individual to recognize the profound power of soul. One should go on constantly introspecting and removing the faults so that life shines brightly with *atmaprakash* (the brightness of soul) and becomes bright and cheerful.

### 1.1.3 BENEFITTING FROM TRINITY OF WORSHIP

Spiritual endeavors helps an individual to attain a high adoration and discipline. The three fold path of Spirituality consists of

- *Upasana* (worship) by worshipping and contemplating on divine virtues one tries to imbibe the qualities of God. The divine principles should guide the *sadhaks* actions and the seekers gathers strength to remain stable and firm in the face of biggest temptations and attractions.
- *Sadhana* (self discipline) for one's own self through control of body, mind with austerity, celibacy and restraint.
- *Aradhana* (Selfless Service) for the betterment of society and awakening of the masses.

*A person who conducts himself according to the religious precepts always forges ahead, carves out a path of peace and happiness for all and creates a blissful atmosphere.*

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## Things to Do

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The purpose of the exercise is to assess the spiritual level of the participant.

*Write down the response of the following questions*

1. Amount of time spend in worship- none, five minutes, more than ten minutes
2. Name of the Scripture Read by the Participant.
3. Participation in any Religious Activity at home or in the Indian Community.

**Importance of God in daily life.**

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## 1.2 Role of Scientific Spirituality

Spirituality is defined as righteous way of living with full of ideals and virtues. Scientific spirituality is termed as spiritual disciplines studied and practiced with scientific outlook. In today's modern world, when scientific invention has changed the face of globe, we are lacking inner joy and mental peace. Stress and strains are adding to the agony which the society is facing today. Materialism & capitalism go hand in hand with the development of science and its invasion in daily life of human beings.

When Spirituality is looked from scientific perspective, it alleviates the sufferings of ailing humanity and imparts peace. It teaches all human beings, the method to invest in inner harvesting despite living materialistically. His Holiness, *Acharya Pt. Shriram Sharma* gave this philosophy to all as a "*Yug Darshan*". This has also been accepted by think tank of today as most practical philosophy.

## 1.3 Advantages of Spiritual Practice

### 1.3.1 PURITY OF THOUGHT AND ACTION

Purity is a spiritual quality. By nature, the soul is pure and beautiful therefore a *sadhaks* thought and conduct should always be clean.

Mental purity inspires the human being towards a disciplined life by which he becomes blessed with good health and long life. His senses become powerful and profound. With purity of thoughts and actions noble emotions like love devotion, purity, generosity and helpfulness are aroused and divinity develops.

### 1.3.2 DEVELOPMENT OF DIVINE QUALITIES

Spiritual endeavors develop positive qualities or *satogun* in an individual. The development and increase of *satogun* in a person makes him lively. This helps an individual to become -

- *Pranvaan* (full of vitality),
- *Ojasvi* (luminous with alertness in senses)
- *Tejasvi* (bright and intelligence)
- *Varchasvi* (power to inspire others due to strength of character).

### 1.3.3 SHARPENING OF THE INTELLECT

The power of brain is generally referred as intelligence. There are many levels of Intelligence and many names. *Buddhimata* (fullness of intelligence), *chaturai* (cleverness), *hoshiyari* (alertness), *sojhbhoj* (insight) and *tikshan buddi* (sharp intelligence).

The Sanskrit saying '*budhiryasya balum tasya*' means One who has intelligence has power. The practice of Gayatri Mantra and contemplation on its meanings has been accorded the supreme importance in the development of righteous intellect.

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With righteous intellect the mind becomes *nirmal* clean and pure and mental agonies like anger, fear, jealousy gets subdued by the *satavik* influence of *medhavi* intelligence.

### 1.3.4 SELF DEVELOPMENT

Self Development of an individual is a long drawn process. In this *Swadhyaya* plays an important role. There are two meanings of the word *swadhyaya*, first is the study of life transforming literature which uphold high values. The second meaning is *swa adhyaya* (*swa* means self and *adhyaya* means study observation of self).

The study of scriptures and good books is a basis of individual progress. Good books fulfill the need of good friends and through them one can find the road of spiritual and moral upliftment. With the study and contemplation of good books, the mind establishes a sentimental unity with that great man which enhances his character, personality and will power.

If one wants to reform others, then first thing one has to do is to bring a revolution in ones life. The power of magnetism should be developed so that brightness in the life of others can be spread. Through self introspection one should develop qualities of Pleasantness', gentleness and humility and work towards the welfare of others.

### 1.3.5 MOTIVATION TO EXCEL IN WORK

Firm will power is the principal means of achieving success in any endeavor. A

man with firm willpower rests only after the completion of the task. Firmness of mind is possible only when the senses remain controlled. Spiritual practices help an Individual to regulate the thinking patterns and direct its energies in the positive direction.

Demoniac tendencies are produced in those individuals who constantly think of material pleasures and sense gratification. As said in the holy book Gita:

*Those who are focused on the objects of the senses, become attached to those objects. From attachment comes desire; and from desire comes anger; from anger comes confusion of mind; from confusion of mind comes loss of memory; from loss of memory comes loss of intelligence; and from loss of intelligence comes destruction.*

*But those who can move in the world of the senses, and yet be free from both attachment and aversion, experience inner peace, in which there is no sorrow or sadness. This is wisdom, which arises from knowledge of the soul*

*Devote yourself to freeing the senses from attachment and aversion alike. In this way you will dispel the darkness of ignorance - which most people regard as day and awake to the light of truth.*

*Rivers flow into the sea, but cannot make the sea overflow. In the same way the streams of impressions from the world of senses will flow into your mind, but they will not make your passions overflow. On the contrary you will remain calm and tranquil.*

- *Bhagwat Gita*

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The calm and tranquil of mind attained through spiritual practice helps an individual to work with great motivation and achieve excellence.

Such a motivated person with a desire to excel never wavers from his path of progress. His involvement, engrossment and dedication give him tremendous success and he lives a blissful life.

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## Things to Do

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Prepare a Time Table for your Self for the coming Week. Do the following things and record them.

1. Start Up *asana* for minimum ten minutes daily. Identify the facilitating and hindering factors.
2. Select any simple book on religion. Read it carefully. Select any two important thoughts. Record them and share it in the next class.
3. Identify any two factors that cause wavering of mind in your personality. Suggest measures to check the. Share in the class.
4. How often do you Spend time with yourself. Observe your behavior for one week and record the findings.

Are you de motivated to study. If yes, then find out the reasons External or Internal. Discuss with the Instructor suitable strategies to deal with the situation.

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### 1.4 Spirituality and Academics

#### To Achieve Boundless Grace of God in Academic Excellence

1. Worship regularity and daily for minimum ten minutes
2. Always greet the elders in the home and Teachers in the School.
3. Develop a habit of labor and never think of any work as inferior.
4. To follow Vivekanand Principle of '*Uttishtha, jagrita prapya barannibodhata*' which means 'arise, awake and do not stop till you achieve your objectives'.
5. To do self study regularly. To read good literature which can

give the right direction to life for minimum half an hour daily or to listen to spiritual music.

6. To lead a life of simplicity. Thinking and habit pattern should be according to an average Indian living standard and one should feel dignity in that.
7. To harness one's capacity and talent for the spread of knowledge and good thinking.
8. To be alert about ones duty and responsibility to self and society and to performs ones duty with full capacity.
9. To carry out the deeds with without selfish motives and attachment.

To contribute enthusiastically in the collective efforts for improving good activities in the society.



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## Things to Do

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Follow any of the five rules regularly for one week. Record the change in the behavior. Share in the class.

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### 1.5 Spiritualist Way of Thinking-Indian Value System

Values are the basic principles that guide the human behavior. Indian Scriptures provide insight into the values to be practiced for spiritual upliftment. Some of the core values are discussed below.

#### **Truthfulness:**

Inner and outer integrity in thinking and behaviour is the foremost requirement for the development of healthy personality.

*"Satyameva jayate naanrutum"* i.e. truth always wins, while untruth never wins. This solemn is enshrined in our constitution. There fore one must observe and practice truth. A truthful person remains stable like a rock in adverse situations and does not carry any burden on mind.

#### **Righteousness:**

Means uprightness according to religious conduct. To respect religion in every field of life, to follow the injunctions of religion is called *dharm acharan* or religious conduct. It means carrying out one's responsibility for achieving excellence. The main qualities of the person pursuing righteousness are mental purity, truthfulness in conduct and empathy for public welfare. A religious person

does not advertise his belief. His good deeds and simplicity speaks for themselves.

#### **Short Story- A Rare Value**

When Lal Bahadur Shastri was the Prime Minister of India, His son said to him one day, Father, today I have received an appointment letter from this big company and they are offering me a handsome salary".

Lal Bahadur looked at the appointment letter, he smiled and said to his son, " You have not received this appointment letter on your own merit. Nobody would give you a job which would carry handsome salary. You have got this appointment letter only because you happen to be the son of the Prime Minister of India. I will not let you accept this job. If you do so, it will mean that I am accepting a bribe. I will not let you do it".

There spoke a truly great man.

#### **Love:**

The basis of love is to consider others sorrows and happiness as our own. We must experience happiness in the happiness of others and feel sorry in the sorrows of others. This sentiment raises us to the high level of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakama*' i. e. considering the whole world as family and loving all its members.

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The other important Values as mentioned in the *Yagurveda* are as follows-

- Freedom from anger
- Renunciation
- Serenity
- Aversion to fault-finding
- Sympathy for all beings
- Peace from greedy cravings
- Gentleness
- Modesty
- Steadiness
- Energy
- Forgiveness
- Fortitude
- Purity
- Good will
- Freedom from pride

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## Things to Do

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The Instructor can discuss the above values and then do this exercise.

Rate your self on these values on a three point scale

*1- Never 2- Sometimes 3 -Always*

1. Control over anger
2. Attitude of Renunciation,
3. Serenity
4. Aversion to fault-finding,
5. Sympathy for all beings,
6. Peace from greedy cravings,
7. Gentleness in Behavior
8. Modesty,
9. Steadiness in Work
10. Initiative and Energy level,
11. Forgiveness,
12. Fortitude,
13. Purity,
14. Good will,
15. Freedom from pride

Participant with a highest score indicates high moral values in life.

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# EVERYDAY LIFE - THE BEGINNING

- Early Rise
  - Benefits of Drinking Water
  - Role of Yoga
  - Importance of Breathing
  - *Pranayama*
  - Yoga in Daily Life
  - Foundation Pillars of Indian Culture
  - Daily Worship
  - Mantra-Yoga
  - Prayer
  - Meditation
  - Inner Voice
  - The Temple
  - Make Everyday A Thanks Giving Day
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# EVERYDAY LIFE

## - THE BEGINNING

### Objectives

1. To highlight among participants the importance of disciplined life
2. To help them to self introspect their life style.
3. To give them practical inputs to improve the life style.
4. To reinforce the concept with variety of example.

Discussion on the following topics among the participants and each member of the class shall share his views in the following areas-

- a. Time they get up and rituals they follow after getting up.
- b. *Usha Paan*/Morning Tea/Coffee/ Beverages/Breakfast
- c. Role of Newspaper
- d. Importance of Exercise and meditation.
- e. Time for Daily *Gayatri Sadhana*

### 2.1 Early Rise

- Getting up before Sunrise is very important. Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy and wise. The air at dawn is health giving and pollution free. It is also called '*Pran Vayu*' because it contributes to life and strength. Breathing this fresh air enhances vitality which reflects in glowing eyes and skin.
- The deity of Gayatri is *Savita*, the early morning rising sun. By meditating on the brilliance of early morning sun our intellect can be sharpened.
- Along with breath in of fresh air thinking about god must be carried out. This wonderful nature. Fruits, flowers, grains and water all this has been produced by the Supreme Father for our use. By meditating upon that God, we must express our thanks to Him.
- The beautiful and pleasant atmosphere of the dawn, the singing of birds and the play of animals has a sentimental and emotional impression on our subconscious which helps greatly in awakening our inner vitality.
- Regularity has great importance. Most people get up in the dawn just for few days do little exercise and put a full stop to it. One should cultivate the habit of getting up daily at a fixed time

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## Things to Do

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1. Give your views on the following
    - a. I fall asleep easily at bedtime.
    - b. If awakened, it is usually easy for me to go to sleep again.
    - c. I usually get a full night sleep.
    - d. I seldom feel tired and rundown.
    - e. I rarely take medications, including prescription drugs.
  2. Discuss the problems with the Instructor that you face which prohibits you to rise early.
  3. Try to get up early at least thrice in a week. Maintain a diary and record your experience.
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### 2.2 Benefits of Drinking Water

- Water has been described as life and nectar in the Vedas. Water has wonderful health giving medicinal properties and it can remove a number of diseases. Ayurved recognizes the importance of water for the treatment of diseases. The percentage of water in man's body is 70 percent, in the brain it is 90 percent and in the solid bones it is 25 percent.
- By drinking clean and cool water all the dirt of the body is flushed out. Ayurved mentions '*usha paan*', i.e. drinking of water on getting up the dawn.
- With drinking of water bowels move and with emptying of bowels the person develops good appetite and digestive system works efficiently.

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## Things to Do

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1. Is drinking water a part of your habit? How many glasses do you generally drink?
  2. Give suggestions to your classmate to increase water intake. What other alternative drinks can be sacrificed for the purpose of drinking water.
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## 2.3 Role of Yoga

- Health as described by WHO encompasses Physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. No work is possible without good health. The labor for money, learning, status and honor is not possible for an unhealthy man. A wholesome life is necessary to accomplish anything worthwhile
- Good health does not depend on medicines. It cannot be brought by money. The royal road to maintaining good health and increasing it is to live life in harmony with nature through daily routine and proper exercise.
- Doing regular yogic exercises along with the understanding of Patanjali Yoga not only increases the physical strength but mental alertness leading to emotional well being.

## 2.4 Importance of Breathing

Breathing is important for two reasons. It is the only means to supply our bodies and its various organs with the supply of oxygen which is vital for our survival. The second function of breathing is that it is one means to get rid of waste products and toxins from the body.

### 2.4.1 REASONS FOR FAST & SHALLOW BREATH

- We are in a hurry most of the time. Our movements and breathing follow this pattern.

- The increasing stress of modern living makes us breathe more quickly and less deeply.
- We get too emotional too easily. We get excited easily, angry easily, and most of the rest of the time we suffer from anxiety due to worry. These negative emotional states affect the rate of breathing, causing it to be fast and shallow.
- Modern technology and automation reduces our need for physical activity. So there is less need to breathe deeply, so we develop the shallow breathing habit.

We are working indoor more and more. This increases our exposure to pollution. As a result, the body instinctively inhales less air to protect itself from pollution. The body just takes in enough air to tick over.

### 2.4.2 THE EFFECTS OF SHALLOW BREATHING

- Reduced vitality, since oxygen is essential for the production of energy in the body.
- Reduced immunity. Our resistance to disease is reduced, since oxygen is essential for healthy cells. This means we catch more colds and develop other ailments more easily. Lack of sufficient oxygen to the cells is a major contributing factor in cancer, heart disease and strokes.

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### 2.4.3 BENEFITS OF DEEP BREATHING

1. Improvement in the quality of the blood due to its increased oxygenation in the lungs. This aids in the elimination of toxins from the system.
2. Increase in the digestion and assimilation of food. The digestive organs such as the stomach receive more oxygen, and hence operate more efficiently.
3. Improvement in the health of the nervous system, including the brain, spinal cord, nerve centers and nerves. This is due again to the increased oxygenation and hence nourishment of the nervous system. This improves the health of the whole body, since the nervous system communicates to all parts of the body.
4. Rejuvenation of the glands, especially the pituitary and pineal glands. The brain has a special affinity for oxygen, requiring three times more oxygen than does the rest of the body. This has far-reaching effects on our well-being.
5. Rejuvenation of the skin. The skin becomes smoother and a reduction of facial wrinkles occurs.
6. The movements of the diaphragm during the deep breathing exercise massage the abdominal organs - the stomach, small intestine, liver and pancreas. The upper movement of the diaphragm also massages the heart. This stimulates the blood circulation in these organs.
7. The lungs become healthy and powerful, a good insurance against respiratory problems.
8. Deep, slow, yoga breathing reduces the work load for the heart. The result is a more efficient, stronger heart that operates better and lasts longer. It also means reduced blood pressure and less heart disease.

The yoga breathing exercises reduce the work load on the heart in two ways. Firstly, deep breathing leads to more efficient lungs, which means more oxygen is brought into contact with blood sent to the lungs by the heart. So, the heart doesn't have to work as hard to deliver oxygen to the tissues. Secondly, deep breathing leads to a greater pressure differential in the lungs, which leads to an increase in the circulation, thus resting the heart a little.
9. Deep, slow breathing assists in weight control. If you are overweight, the extra oxygen burns up the excess fat more efficiently. If you are underweight, the extra oxygen feeds the starving tissues and glands. In other words, yoga tends to produce the ideal weight for you.
10. Relaxation of the mind and body. Slow, deep, rhythmic breathing causes a reflex stimulation of the parasympathetic nervous system,

which results in a reduction in the heart rate and relaxation of the muscles. These two factors cause a reflex relaxation of the mind, since the mind and body are very interdependent. In addition, oxygenation of the brain tends to normalize brain function, reducing excessive anxiety levels.

The breathing exercises cause an increase in the elasticity of the lungs and rib cage. This creates an increased breathing capacity all day, not just during the actual exercise period. This means all the above benefits also occur all day.

## 2.5 Pranayama

*Pranayamas* are well known breathing exercise for harmonizing the breath. '*Prana*' is the conscious power or the life element '*Aayam*' is to give dimension or to spread out life element.

### 2.5.1 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AIR AND PRANA

Air being one of the finest of five elements is sensory (*jad*) but '*prana*' is extra sensory (*chetan*)

- Air is related to the inhalation and exhalation of the lungs but the vital energy is related to the vitalization and development of various sections of body and mind
- Enhancement of the gross body through air and upliftment of the subtle & astral body is possible through *pranayam*

### 2.5.2 PROCEDURE

A simple *Prayanama Pranashakti Pranayama* is very important for spiritual development. The steps in performing the *Pranayama* are as follows-

- 1) For this, inhale slowly at a steady pace with the feeling of *Pran Shakti* of Gayatri inspissated around is drawn in with the breath.
- 2) Hold the breath for few seconds to absorb this *mahaprana* that is sparkling like immense glow of the rising sun.
- 3) Now exhale the breath at the same pace with a firm belief that the impurities and vile assimilation from outside are expelled forever.
- 4) Hold the breath out for few seconds with a feeling that the *mahaprana* is spreading out in the infinity after destroying the vices and sins inside.
- 5) Repeat this cycle three times. The duration of holding the breath is normally maintained as half that of inhalation/exhalation in each cycle.....

## 2.6 Yoga in Daily Life

- Fix a convenient time in the morning for yogic practices .
- Initially observer a very simple routine of *asana* known as *Pragya Yoga* which can be performed in about 7 to 10 minutes and is designed to balance the energies of

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the body and thereby contribute to mental poise. The postures should be performed two or three times daily. They should not be performed after eating.

- As one performs the *asanas*, concentration on feeling the energies within the nerve currents are important. One should not worry if they can't perform these perfectly. In time, the body becomes more flexible and

supple. This suppleness is a reflection of the mind's condition of flexibility and alertness, and a subconscious free of repressions.

- It is a universal fact that when the mind gets relaxed, secretion of stress-inducing hormones gets reduced. The *yogasanas* not only tone the body muscles but they affect our glands and subtle energy centers. When these dormant power centers get stimulated, one becomes more aware, agile, and composed.

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## Things to Do

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1. Start Practice of the *asanas*.
2. Maintain a daily. Identify the problems that come in the way of regular practice.
3. Share the problems in the class. Generate feasible solutions with the help of Instructor.

Select any convenient time of the day and try to do meditation. Record the response

- Duration of meditation
- Problems during the process
- Benefits perceived by you

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## 2.7 Foundation Pillars of Indian Culture

*Gayatri, Ganga, Gita, Guru* and *Gau* are the pillars of Indian culture. The relevance and importance of each is discussed below.

### 2.7.1 GAYATRI

Gayatri is the eternal source of the willpower that motivates the origin and all activities of the visible and invisible forms of nature. The force of life in all living beings originates from its presence. Its superior presence in

the human being is reflected in the intellect, which enables the progressive development of the world and ascent of human life. In extraordinary cases, this sublime is expressed as spiritually evolved, pure, discerning intelligence- *Ritam bhara Pragya*. This enlightened wisdom helps one to understand what is right and what is wrong and guides to choose the prudent path to higher goals of life. This divine power mostly remains canceled in the inner cores of our minds. The determined endeavor of its arousal is termed *sadhana*. The activation of this subliminal force of



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Gayatri in the soul links the human self with the divine light and power of thee.

#### A. Mode of Gayatri Upasana

Gayatri *upasana* can be performed mentally at any time in any circumstances. Nevertheless, performing it regularly and religiously has greater significance and deep impact. Any experiment or task if conducted systematically with due concentration and punctuality assures completion and comprehensive output. The rituals associated with the daily *upasana* of Gayatri are devised to help desired mental and emotional conditioning of the *sadhaka*. These are simple and routine and could be practiced by every one.

Early morning is the best time for regular *upasana*. One should commence it only after the routine cleansing of the body. In case of sickness or weather constraints, bathing could be replaced by partial cleaning or sponging.

#### B. Panca Karma Sadhana

Sit on a cloth or carpet in a comfortable posture preferably with cross folded legs with erect spinal cord.

Keep a small glass full of water and lit a *dipaka* in the *puja* place.

The rosary (preferably of basil or sandalwood beads) should be kept handy.

The upansana has four parts-

- a. *Panchakarma* or purification
- b. *Deva Avhahan* or invocation
- c. *Japa* and *Dhyan*
- d. *Suryardhya dana*

Each could be performed in 2 to 5 minutes except *japa* and *dhayan*. The latter should be performed in 15 minutes at least; the *sadhaka* could choose a longer duration as per his convenience

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## Things to Do

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Read the book 'Gayatri Sadhana- Why and How by Dr Pranav Pandya.

Go through each section carefully and discuss the doubts with the instructor.

Regularly practice *upasana* at a fixed time. Record the changes in behavior.

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## Inspiration

Study of inspiring books is like communion with living deities, it gives instant gifts of light and bliss.

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## 2.7.2 GANGA

The Ganges, the most sacred river of India stands for coolness, holiness and serenity. According to the mythological legend, Lord Shiva holds her on his head thereby preaching the devotees to give up anger, envy and disturbance that haunts the mind and achieve all kind of perfection and success. Most of the important pilgrimage centres in India are located on the banks of holy Ganges.

## 2.7.3 GAU

A cows considered the symbol of religion in Hinduism. Cows were very dear to Lord Krishan. The main ingredient to perform *Yagya* (sacrifice) also come from the cow such as: milk, and ghee.

## 2.7.4 GURU

*Guru* is an angelic reflection of the thy-glow that guide the righteous evolution of the devotees. Rev *Gurudev* Pt .Shriram Sharma Archarya and Vandniya Mataji Bhagavati Devi Sharma are our *Guru*. A *Guru* facilitates the *sadhak* in the spiritual upliftment process and provides necessary directions from time to time.

## 2.7.5 GITA

Bhagwat Gita is in a sense the Bible of Hindus. 'Bhagwat Gita means 'Divine Song. It is a portion of Mahabharta epic and is a collection of Lord Krishans answer to mans questions about life.

## 2.8 Daily Worship

### 2.8.1 TEMPLE AT HOME :Concept of Sacred Place

A small temple in one peaceful corner of house or a separate *puja* room is essential for the practice of spirituality. This is the sacred place where one can find solitude even in the most happening surroundings. A small temple in the house can be located on the side of the house where noise destructions are minimum. Few guidelines for maintaining this sacred place is given below-

- Idols or picture of *Maa Gayatri* and *Guruji* must be placed.
- Adequate arrangement for keeping Sacred Books must be maintained.
- Proper floral seating arrangement should be made with the use of cotton.

The place should be maintained Sacredly and undue visitors may not be given entry.

### 2.9 Mantra-Yoga

- Mantra-yoga is a tradition found in almost every spiritual path and religion in the world. It may involve the repetition or chanting of a prayer or mantra for one's own meditation, or it may involve the congregational singing of spiritually uplifting songs, prayers, or the sacred names of the Supreme Being.

- Mantra yoga helps a devotee to focus his/her mind on the Supreme, which helps spiritualize his/her consciousness.
  - *Man* means the mind,
  - *Tra* means deliverance.
- Therefore, a spiritual mantra is the pure sound vibration for delivering the mind from material to spiritual consciousness. This is the goal of any spiritual path.
- Mantra Yoga is said to be a gradual path to wisdom, on which the yogi can accumulate a host of *siddhis* (accomplishments).
- Recitation of mantras has internal as well external effect. The sounds of recitation creates vibrations like the water currents in the deep layers of ocean. This recitation affects various centres of power in human body and creates its own effect.

## 2.10 Prayer

"Prayer is the most fundamental, primordial, and important language humans speak. Prayer starts without words and often ends without them. It knows its own evasions, its own infinite variety of dodges. It works some of the time in signs and symbols, lurches when it must, leaps when it can, has several kinds of logic at its disposal.

The important prayers to be performed daily are given below

PRAYER	SEQUENCE	TIME
<i>Guru Vandana</i>	<i>Dev Avhahan</i> (Invocation)	Morning
<i>Shanti path</i>	End of <i>Gayatri Upasana</i>	Morning
<i>Gayatri Stuti</i>	After <i>Gayatri Upasana</i>	Morning
<i>Gayatri Chalisa</i>	After the Evening <i>Sadhana</i>	Evening

**SOURCE-**  
*Gayatri Sadhana Why and How ?* - Dr Pranav Pandya  
*Gayatri Chalisa* (English)  
*Audio Cassettess* - Gayatri Stuti and Gayatri Chalisa

## Things to Do

1. Is prayer a part of your life. If yes, share the benefits of prayer.
2. If no, discuss the reasons,

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## 2.11 Meditation

Meditation is a cleanser of our mental garbage. Implies giving a bath to your personality noble and ideal thoughts.

*Meditation is an unbroken uninterrupted or incessant flow of the idea of the object that is concentrated upon. Purify the mind first through the practice of right conduct and then take to the practice of concentration. Concentration without purity is of no use.*

- An Idol or any concrete form such as a *Pratima* is indispensable during meditation or *Japa*.
- At the initial stage of practice you can concentrate on the *tick-tick* sound of a watch, the flame of a candle or any other object which is pleasing to the mind. This is concrete concentration.

### 2.11.1 PROCEDURE

- Sit on *Padmasana* or *Siddhasana* in a solitary room. Close the eyes. Concentrate on the picture of *Maa Gayatri* in the heart. Mentally visualise the picture, from head to foot. Do mental *Puja* also. Offer flowers, *Arghya*, sandal paste, incense; burn camphor, etc., mentally.
- For beginners a sitting posture is necessary. Repeat *Gayatri Mantra* mentally. Associate the ideas of purity, infinity, eternity, immortality

### 2.11.2 BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

#### A. Physical Benefits:

- Deep rest-as measured by decreased metabolic rate, lower heart rate, and reduced work load of the heart.
- Lowered levels of cortisol and lactate-two chemicals associated with stress.
- Reduction of free radicals- unstable oxygen molecules that can cause tissue damage. They are now thought to be a major factor in aging and in many diseases.
- Decreased high blood pressure.
- Higher skin resistance. Low skin resistance is correlated with higher stress and anxiety levels.
- Drop in cholesterol levels. High cholesterol is associated with cardiovascular disease.

#### B. Psychological Benefits

- Increased brain wave coherence. Harmony of brain wave activity in different parts of the brain is associated with greater creativity, improved moral reasoning, and higher IQ.
- Decreased anxiety.
- Decreased depression.
- Decreased irritability and moodiness.
- Improved learning ability and memory.
- Increased self-actualization.

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### C. Psychological Benefits

- Increased brain wave coherence. Harmony of brain wave activity in different parts of the brain is associated with greater creativity, improved moral reasoning, and higher IQ.
- Improved learning ability and memory.
- Increased self-actualization.
- Increased feelings of vitality and rejuvenation.
- Increased happiness.
- Increased emotional stability.

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### Things to Do

Select any convenient time of the day and try to do meditation. Record the response

- Duration of meditation
  - Problems during the process
  - Benefits perceived by you
- 

### 2.12 Inner Voice

- When the different tendencies of the mind have been controlled by mental drill or gymnastics, when the conscious mind is not active, then one enters the realm of spirit life, the super conscious mind where *Buddhi* and pure reason and intuition, the faculty of direct cognition of Truth manifest.
- One pass into the kingdom of peace where there is none to speak and hear the voice of God which is very clear and pure and has an upward tendency. Listen to the voice with attention and interest. It will guide you. It is the voice of God.

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### Things to Do

Do you believe in intuition? If yes, then share your experience in the class.

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## *Inspiration*

*An aimless person is like the pendulum which merely swings to and fro without any forward movement.*

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## Short Story- Searching for the Real Thief

A party of young men and women, merry makers were dancing and singing in a grove outside a holy city. When the holiday makers got exhausted they fell down to a deep slumber. When they woke up they found all their worldly goods were gone. A thief had taken all there jewels and utensils.

The group set out in search of the thief. On the way they met a Sage whose face was shining like molten gold.

The young men and women prostrated themselves in the front of the Sage : “ Sir, we are in search of the thief who has robbed us of our goods. Can you give us some clue? they asked.

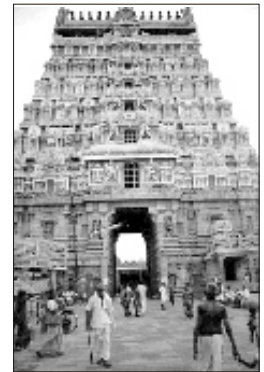
The Sage smiled and said, “ In search of the thief have you set out, my children? Were it not better that you went in search of yourselves”?

What was there in the world, the Sage spoke. They forgot the thief, they forgot their goods, they forgot the whole world. They answered !

“ Indeed it was far better that we went in search of ourselves”. And so they did. They became the disciplines of the Master, subdued their passions for the pleasures of the world. They gave up their lust and pride and became seekers of true knowledge instead of seeking fleeing thieves”.

## 2.13 The Temple

The temple is the focus for all aspects of everyday life of Indian community - religious, cultural, educational and social. The temple is also the place where one can transcend the world of man.



- Indians believe that their lives are merely stages in the progression to ultimate enlightenment. The temple is a place where God may be approached and where divine knowledge can be discovered.
- All aspects of the temple focus on the goal of enlightenment and liberation - the principles of design and construction, the forms of its architecture and decoration, and the rituals performed.
- The temple is designed to dissolve the boundaries between man and the divine. Not merely his abode, the temple 'is' God. God and therefore by implication the whole universe is identified with the temple's design and actual fabric. The ground plan is perhaps the best example.
- The Vastu Shastras describe it as a symbolic, miniature representation of the cosmos. It is based on a strict grid made up of squares and equilateral triangles which are imbued with deep religious significance. To the Indian priest-architect the square was an absolute and mystical form.

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## 2.14 Make Everyday A Thanks Giving Day

It's wonderful to dedicate a day to thank the Lord for all the blessings He has given us and we should share with the rest of the world in celebrating this day.

However, we should never forget that we must have everyday as a

Thanksgiving Day. Not a day passes without feeling the love and grace of our Savior upon us and for that we should be thankful everyday and every second.

Let us pray to the Lord on this day and instead of asking him for material things, let us thank him and tell him of how much we love him and appreciate his love for us.

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## Things to Do

1. Visit a temple once in a week. Sit for some time and mediate upon. Record your experience.
  2. Prepare a Plan for Temple Management for summer vacations. You may form groups of friends who may be involved in various temples activities such as organizing *Yagya, aarati* and other daily rituals.
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## *Inspiration*

*A noble person is humble like the poor in riches and prosperity and generous like the rich in adversity.*





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# SELF MANAGEMENT

- Emotional Intelligence
  - Doing Good to others- *Paropakar*
  - Time Management
  - Finance Management
  - Management of Routine Activities
  - Strategies to Solve Day to Day Problems
  - Learning To Like Ourselves
  - Taking Time To Do The Things We Enjoy
  - The Right Approach Towards Life
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# SELF MANAGEMENT

## Objectives

- To help the participants analyze the day-to-day activities.
- To discuss the common problems faced by the group
- To discuss the advantages of regulated way of life.
- To help them develop a healthy life style.

'Gyanmay Karma evam Karmamay gyan' is a proclaimed truth of Indian Philosophy which means our deeds should be backed by knowledge and our knowledge should be in action i.e. there is need for harmony in knowledge and deeds. When the proper Knowledge enlightens mind, then accordingly one's actions and behavior leads to happiness and enlighten. Constant practice is required to achieve this state of harmony.

## 3.1 Emotional Intelligence

### 3.1.1 UNITY IN BEHAVIOR

- Inner and outer unity i.e. there is unity in thinking and behavior, should be man's first and foremost quality. One should present one selves to others as one is .The speech should reflect what one has in mind do such deeds only.
- There should be unity '*Manasa Vacha Karmana*' i.e. in our thinking speech and behavior. The purity of inner self is maintained in this way and mind remains cheerful. Peace reigns in such a clean heart and the rays of divine light shine forth.

### 3.1.2 GOOD CONDUCT

- The Vedic religion lays stress on good conduct and morality. Our ancient sages have laid great stress

on '*vaasanaatmak pavitrataa*'. This means purity and freedom from additions.

- The main addictions are imbibing of liquor and other intoxicants, eating meat, fish, obscenity, adultery and gambling which becomes the cause for mans downfall.
- Among these additions sexual lust is the most dangerous and therefore keeping it under control is the most important '*sadachar*' (or good conduct).
- The man who decides to keep his eyes, ears, speech and mind in pure state will surely be saved from obscenity. To save oneself from bad thoughts reading of good books and company of morally pure men are important.

### 3.1.3 CONTROL OVER ANGER

- *Kama* (any desire or lust), *krodh* (anger) and *lobh* (greed) are three terrible anger. *Krodh* (anger) is the most terrible among the three. *Krodh* is like gun powder which before destroying others, destroys the place where it is kept. The fire of anger also before burning others burns the place of its origin.
- The face of the angry person becomes ugly. In anger eyes become blood shot and red face looks terrible and even ferocious. It 'burns' the body, affects the heart, causes fluctuations in blood circulation, increases mental agitation. Causes harshness in speech and makes a person give up religious conduct. *Krodh* destroys man. Patience, learning, knowledge, discretion and everything.
- Anger is produced through ego increases with foolishness and ends with repentance. It gives birth to bad thoughts and bad sentiments and as a result malice, hatred enmity, resistance, sorrow are produced. When in anger, the person insults his father, mother, friends and religious heads. The angry man burns himself within and with this terrible disease there is physical, mental and spiritual downfall.
- There are many ways of dispelling anger. By maintaining silence and reciting repeatedly the Gayatri mantra, our attention goes away from the matter which caused anger and mind becomes quiet.
- If anger attacks us when someone makes a mistake, one must also remember that we too can make similar mistakes. With this discrete thinking, the excitement of anger will reduced and with repeated practice it can be finally conquered. There practice of patience and forgiveness is the best solution for eradicating anger. Patience subdues it and forgiveness totally eradicates it.

#### SHORT STORY- A SLAVE OF A SLAVE

*Alexander the Great met an Indian yogi during his visit to India. The yogi's eyes shone with a strange mystic light. Reverently Alexander invited the yogi to come to Greece along with him, "I will give you everything you need . Please do come with me. My people would love to meet you". The yogi quietly answered, "I need nothing! I am happy where I am, in this jungle".*

*He unleashed his sword . " Do you know who I am ! I am Alexander the great king. If you do not listen to me, I shall cut you to pieces ! I shall kill you" The yogi smiled. " You can not kill me ! You can only kill my body. I am not the body. I am that which dwells in the body. O King ! you say you are a King. May I tell you who you are. You are a slave of my slave !"*

*Alexander was stunned. ' How did you say that I am a slave of your slave!' The yogi with compassion said, " I have Mastered anger. Anger is my slave. But you easily gave way to anger. You are a slave of anger. Therefore a slave of my slave". Alexander lowered his head in intense contemplation.*

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## Things to Do

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- Make a list of all negative habits that are pulling you down.
  - Identify two areas in your life where lack of discipline is hurting you. Estimate its cost to you.
  - How often do you get angry? Analyze the common reasons. Suggest strategies to deal with anger.
  - What is your definition of success? Discuss the attributes required to lead a successful life.
  - Define your goals in life.
  - Make a list of all positive habits you want to develop.
- 

### 3.1.4 TRUTHFULNESS

- A liar is always afraid because the original truth cannot be kept hidden and it comes to light. The influence of lie remains only for some time, but to conceal lies a thousand more lies have to be uttered and even then doubts remain. On the other hand, truth remains permanently stable like a rock and there is absolutely no burden in mind
- A man's personality shines with the halo of truth. The famous scripture story of '*Satyanarayan katha*'- extolling the virtue of truth and relationship of truth with God is not merely for hearing. It must be imbibed in the life.
- Use of odd bitter language results in harm only. A man is not hurt as much by piercing arrow as by piercing words. A wound produced by a weapon fills up and heals but a wound from bitter speech never heals. Harsh and sharp language pierces man's heart therefore bitter and harsh language should never be spoken.
- Pleasant speech is like '*kamadhenu*' (the legendary wish fulfilling cow in heaven). It fulfills all the desires and gives name and fame. The Hindi couplet says '*aisi vani boliye mana ka aapa khoya, auran ko sheetal kare, aap hoon sheetal hoye*'. It means 'dissolve your ego and speak such a sweet language that it pleasantly cools the listeners heart and cool the self also'.

### 3.1.5 PLEASANT SPEECH

- God has given divine gift of speech to man. Pleasant speech fascinates, attracts others and makes them cooperate like magic.
- It is said that man sees even a small blemish in another person but cannot see big blot on his own. He gets great joy in discussing others faults by discussing them and making them spicy.

- People slander others under the influence of ego and hypocrisy. The belief arises in them like, 'I am only high intelligent, valorous, responsible and rest are useless, ignorant and shirkers'. With this attitude he start considering others as petty and tries to find faults in the good points of others also. Many individuals themselves do not make efforts and after becoming disappointed with failures start seeking others faults without any reasons, Such a person slanders others and tries to show them inferior by trying to hide his own weakness. Malice and jealousy acts like fuel and contribute to increase in slander.
- One should always see the good qualities of others. By doing this the heart becomes clean and pure. Cleansing ourselves is possible if we save ourselves from indulging in slander.

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## Things to Do

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1. How often you use bitter language at home. Discuss its implications on your relations with the family members.
  2. How do you deal with people who are in the habit of lying? Suggest strategies to your classmates to effectively deal with such people.
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### 3.2 Doing Good to others- Paropkar

- The message of Indian Culture is 'Satyam Vada, Dharmum Chara, Swadhyaya Yanmaprmadaha' i.e. Speak the truth conduct yourself in religious manner and do not be lazy in the study of scriptures'.
- The word '*paropakar*' means doing good to others. The meaningfulness of human life lies in being useful to others. *Paropakar* can be done in three ways- advice, help in achievement and financial help. We should advise the people on the basis of personal worth, capacity and experience. Beneficial advise at the proper time works like a beam of light in man's life. Similarly, whenever possible , wherever possible one should help others in carrying out the work properly and should not hesitate in giving financial help.

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## Things to Do

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1. What is your attitude towards Charity?
  2. Have you ever participated in any charitable program?
  3. What are the different ways in which you can help people around you?
  4. Ask your parents, if they are member of any charitable Institution. If yes, collect the information and share in the next class.
-

### 3.3 Time Management

- Time is the most valuable wealth in human life. Every type of success can be achieved in the world by the proper use of time. Just as the sun is bright with the seven colors of light similarly time also shines. In the cycle of days and nights and seasons the world is constantly on the move. Time remains uniform and is extremely powerful.
- Time is more valuable than money. The secret of success in life is that prescribed works should be carried out at prescribed time.
- In day to day activities many people have a tendency to carry out work with the aim of 'passing the time'. People spend their time in laziness, sleeping gossiping and claim that they are very busy.

The Hindi proverb is '*Kal Kare So Aaj Kar Aaj Kare So Abhi*' which means 'whatever is to be done tomorrow, do it today and whatever is to be done today, do it right now'. We must adopt this view point. To-morrow never dawns. It is available very moment in the 'present time'. Therefore only that person who takes advantage of the present creates his own future and wins over the time.

Spirituality teaches one how to manage his time

*Mahakal* symbolizes the deity controlling the time. In Indian Culture it is taught since beginning that each morning is *new birth* and each night going to bed one has to feel like *new death*. This is the key for success of all great persons.

Meditation, contemplation on how to utilize our each and every moment of twenty four hour time should be an

#### Time Thieves

##### External Time Thieves

- Interruptions by Telephones
- Drop in Visitors
- Too much work
- Equipment Failure
- Conflicting Priorities
- Poor Communication
- Mistakes of others

##### Internal Time Thieves

- Indecision
- Procrastination
- Cluttered Desk
- Disorganization
- Unfinished Task
- Poor Prioritization
- Perfectionist Tendency
- Aversion to Delegation

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### 3.3.1 GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT

1. Commitment to Work-sincere and firm resolution to manage time.
2. Analysis of the Problem-identification of time required.
3. Proper Planning- 'Do it today list'
4. Follow up and re-analysis.

#### YOUNG ACHIEVERS

*Tathagat Tulsı is the youngest student at the prestigious Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. His achievements:*

- He holds the Guinness record as the youngest in history to obtain a masters degree. He got his M.Sc. in Physics at the age of 12.
- He received his B.Sc. degree at the age of 11, finishing the three year course in just one year.
- He is the youngest person to leave school, having finished school at the age of just nine.

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## Things to Do

1. What is the role of planning in your life?
2. Do you keep on Shifting Priorities, if yes, and then discuss its implications?

#### Questionnaire

3. Analyze yourself on a three point scale in the following areas

**Scale: 3- Never, 2- Sometimes, 1- Always**

1. Personal Disorganization
2. Absentmindedness
4. Indecision
5. Too much Socialization
6. Fatigue
7. Lack of Self Discipline
8. Leaving Tasks Unfinished
9. Cluttered Workspace
10. Unclear Personal Goals
11. Attempting too much
12. Failure to listen.

Compare your scores with the classmate. Discuss with the instructors and generate suggestions for effective Time Management.



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### 3.4 Finance Management

- No work can be carried out without money. To earn money for the personal expenses and to put the money in good use are both important.
- Money snatched from the poor, accumulated by exploiting others and earned through improper means is impure. Money earned through unjust means shines like the glow-worm, makes us happy for sometime and then darkness reigns.
- Economic purity of money is essential for the happiness and prosperity of the family. One should always pray to God "Agne Naya Supathaa Raaye" which means 'O God! Make us tread the good path for earning money'.
- Just as one should be alert and cautious about the purity of means of income, similarly one must also pay careful attention in putting income to good use. The diligence for maintaining purity of money is possible when the man has sufficient will power, the courage to ignore material temptations and there is unity of thinking in all members of the family.
- Religious books have beautifully described the good use of money as '*dharmaya yashasearthaaya aatmane swajanaayacha*'. The earned income should be divided into five parts. One part should be given for religion and one in donation for achieving fame. One part should be ploughed back to business and another to be kept in reserve for future. The remaining amount should be used for self and near ones.

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### Things to Do

1. What are the sources from which you receive money.
2. Are you satisfied with the money you receive. If no, identify the reasons.
3. Make a list of top ten items on which spend money.
4. Suggest measures to check your spending habits.
5. Analyze one recent purchase made by you.
  - Discuss with the class mate sitting next to you
  - The importance of the purchase
  - Amount of money spend
  - Attitude of parents
  - Relevance and needs
  - Alternatives Available with you
  - Ask his opinion on the purchase decision.
6. Many of your perceptions regarding price versus value are likely to be different from your parents or grand parents. Describe such instances in which they had disagreed or critiqued the purchases made by you. Discuss the person sitting next to you.
7. **For each of the product or services listed below**  
*Identify the core values most relevant for purchase and use*
  - Determine whether these values encourage or discourage ownership
  - Donating money to charity
  - Diet Soft Drinks
  - Interactive TV home shopping service
  - Donating blood
  - Products in recyclable packaging.

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## 3.5 Management of Routine Activities

### 3.5.1 THE BIGGEST HURDLE : LAZINESS

God has created man for doing labor by which he can perform austerity on the path of duty. Laziness is a great enemy of endeavor. It is a big obstacle in man's progress and causes maximum harm to life's values. A lazy person goes on avoiding work and this habit makes him gradually incapable and helpless.

Disappointment and frustration sets in and the person loses his daring to struggle against difficulties. Whatever capacity is developed earlier also diminishes and there is no enthusiasm to translate thought into actions.

Those who wish their own benefit and fame, they must pull out the evil of laziness by its roots, throw it away and go on diligently with faith.

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## Things to Do

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Analyze the various routines in your everyday life. Identify one activity that you procrastinate. What are the implications of this on your daily routine?

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### GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE PERSONAL MANAGEMENT

1. Adapt yourself to circumstances
2. Share what you have with others.
3. Be ever ready to serve. Lose no opportunity. Serve with *Atma bhava*.
4. Have great patience and perseverance. . Never postpone a thing for tomorrow if it is possible for you to do it today.
5. Do not boast or make a show of your abilities. Be simple and humble.
6. Be cheerful always. Give up worries.
7. Be indifferent to things that do not concern you.
8. Fly away from company and discussion.
9. Be alone for a few hours daily.
10. Give up greediness, jealousy and hoarding.
11. Control your emotions by discrimination and *Vairagya*.
12. Think twice before you speak and thrice before you act.
13. Give up backbiting, criticizing and faultfinding. Beware of reaction.
14. Find out your own faults and weaknesses. See only good in others.
15. Be moderate in everything. Extremes are always dangerous.
16. Everyday have self-analysis and introspection. Know the amount of your growth.

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### 3.5.2 BALANCING ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Obstacles invariably come in every work. There is no field where one gets easily the valuable gifts of success on the path of progress. Struggle is necessary for changing adversity into a favorable situation. Very hard work is necessary for changing poverty into prosperity. To develop an uneducated and uncultivated mind into that of learned one, one has to study regular with lot of will power and concentration. Those who do not develop the courage for such an endeavor and valor will always find the doors of success and prosperity closed for them.
- We are full of innumerable faults and wicked tendencies. If we allow them to remain as they are without the courage to pull them off our Character will definitely be deficient and have low level. A vicious cycle has been formed of immoral conduct and evil social

customs. If this vicious circle is not broken then we will have to go on spending lives in complaints and frustrations only.

- For spiritual progress new systems, new methods and policies have to be adopted. Courage and daring spiritual qualities are produced by the unlimited power of inner self. Those who struggle patiently against difficult situations and try to carve out a path by themselves also receive plenty of cooperation from others.

### 3.5.3 DEDICATION TO WORK

The corner stone of man's stability and progress is his dedication. If one ignores the responsibilities and prescribed duties then obstacles will be created and life will become difficult. Every achievement in life depends upon dedication to work. It is everybody's duty to perform maximum deeds for the welfare of people and create an atmosphere of peace, happiness and cheer everywhere.

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## Things to Do

1. Make a list of ALL your Strengths and Weakness.
  2. Come up with two suggestions to do you job more efficiently and effectively.
  3. Prepare a list of formal and informal groups you belong. In which groups you listed is the pressure to conform the greatest? Why?
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## 3.6 Strategies to Solve Day to Day Problems

We can look at the same event different ways. One is in the optimistic way and the other is pessimistically. It is the age-old debate of whether to look at the glass as half full or as half empty.

### 1. *Every Living Human Being Has Problems.*

Everyone has problems. A problem-free life is an illusion - a mirage in the desert. Accept the fact that everyone has problems. This will help you to move on with your life rather than sitting and feeling pity for yourself.

### 2. *Every Problem Has A Limited Life Span*

Every mountain has a peak and every valley has a low point. Similarly, life has its ups and downs. No one is up all the time or down all the time. Problems do get resolved in the long term. They don't last forever. History teaches that every problem has a limited life span. Your problems will not live forever; but you will! Storms are followed by sunshine. Winter is followed by spring. Your problems will get resolved given enough time.

### 3. *Every Problem Holds Positive Possibilities*

There are two sides to every coin. What may be a problem for one could be interesting opportunity to someone else. Hospitals are there because people get sick; garages are there because cars do break down; lawyers are there because people get in trouble with the law occasionally. Every cloud has a silver lining.

## 4 *Every Problem Will Change You*

When we meet problems head on in life, they leave their indelible mark on us. The experience could make you better or worse. It is up to you. What is certain is that problems never leave us the same way they found us. We will change.

## 3.7 Learning To Like Ourselves

Optimism and a positive attitude promote good health. Research shows that the optimistic persons have healthier immune system. Pessimistic expectations breed negative experiences.

1. **Be grateful.** No matter how bad things might appear, you can see a silver lining. There is someone who has worse problems. Misery loves companions. Reach out to such people. This will help both parties.

2. **Make a conscious effort towards finding good things.** As far as possible stay away from pessimistic people. Don't get drawn into other people's misery. Catch yourself if you are whining and stop. Your stress levels will benefit immediately.

We all can make a deliberate choice between being negative or positive, happy or unhappy. Say and believe in the following:

- *You are unique.*
- *There is no one like you in the whole world.*
- *Enjoy and cherish the feeling that you are special.*
- *Remember your successes when you are feeling defeated.*

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## 3.8 Taking Time To Do The Things We Enjoy

If you feel tired and jaded and have little enthusiasm for life, it is possible that you aren't making time for fun. We all get into a grinding routine of getting up, going to work, coming home, doing more work, going to bed. Leisure time is vital in order to keep enthusiasm for the other aspects of our lives. We have a right to this free time but often feel guilty about taking it. Work off tensions by gardening, pursuing a hobby, or joining a club.

Take time to be alone, doing nothing.

## 3.9 The Right Approach Towards Life (Guidelines for Pious Living)

### 1. Spiritual Attitude towards Work

After your prayers, start your work. Let your deeds and actions be for the glory of God. Remember that God sees spirit of obedience and humbleness. Repeat brief prayers while you are working. If your work is being accomplished with success, as your hearts desires- thank the Lord: if without success- then remember that this, too God allows, and He works everything for good.

### 2. Self Introspection

Keep a vigilant watch over your feelings, thoughts and motions of your heart and your passions. Give consideration to nothing trivial where your personal salvation is concerned. In everything ask yourselves. Be meek, quite and silent.

### 3. Thank Giving Attitude

Do not expect to acquire anyone virtue without any sorrow and pains of the soul. Beg God to give you grace to fulfill in the best way possible.

### 4. Effective Time Management

Do not dwell in idleness even for a short time, but always remain in labor and be occupied. Do everything in the name of God and in this way all your actions will be deeds of piety. Flee even the smallest of sins, because one, who does not commit the smallest, certainly will not fold into great and deep ones.

### 5. Control over Senses

Amidst temptations do not be troubled. He, who gives you the circumstance of a battle, will also give you strength for victory. Let your spirit be at rest, trust in God. Pray to God that He takes from you everything that feeds your self-love, even though it may be very bitter for you. Wish to live and die for God alone, and to belong to Him entirely.

### 6. Sincere Attitude

If be sincere and simple in heart; with love accept directions, admonitions, and being exposed by others, even though you may be wise. Do not detest or be envious or exceedingly stern in word and deeds. What you do not wish for yourselves do not do unto others and what you wish others to do to you, do it first unto them. Be gentle, modest, careful, wise, blind and deaf, according to the situation.

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### 7. Integrity in Communication

Remember that God is present among those with whom you are and among those with whom you speak. Say nothing without thought. Bear it firmly in mind, that time is short and that man must give an account of every idle word that he speak.

Listen more than speak; in verbosity you will not escape sin. Beg God to give you blessing to be silent and to speak at the right time. Do not be curious about news, it diverts the spirit.

### 8. Goodwill towards Others

Try to do good to every one any kind of good and at any time you can, not thinking whether it will be appreciated, with gratitude or without. If one does not obey you the first time, do not force him through debate.

### 9. Prayer

Before going to sleep, examine conscience, pray to be given light to recognize your sins: think of them, beg for forgiveness and promise to reform. Then give yourself up to God, as though to night you will have to appear before Him. Entrust yourself to the mother of God, your the saint whose name you bear. Picture your bed as your coffin and your blanket as your shroud and fall asleep under the protection of Divine power

During an illness first of all entrust yourself to God in order to strengthen your spirit in the midst of your misery.. Ceaselessly say all the prayers you know and can. Beg God to forgive you your sins and to give you patience while ill. In all ways possible abstain from complaining an irritation.

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## Things to Do

What sources influenced your attitude about this course before the classes started? How your initial attitude changed since the course started? If so, how?

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## *Inspiration*

*Not riches, but nobility of character and honesty are the true touchstones of greatness.*

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# SOCIAL NORMS

- Greeting Style
  - Basic Family Structure
  - Joint Family-The Sayukat Parivar System
  - Family Traditions : Naming Patterns
  - Communication Styles-Do's And Don'ts
  - Conversation To Be Avoided
  - Art Of Relating
  - Art Of Living: The Key To Success
-





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# SOCIAL NORMS

## Objectives

- To make the participants aware of Indian greeting norms.
- To help them to realize the importance of family in life.
- To make them aware of their duties and responsibilities towards the family members.
- To give them an understanding about the art of relating.

### INSTRUCTORS GUIDELINES

#### Discussion on the following topics

- How often do you greet your parents.
- What is the style of greeting.
- How do you greet your Indian Friends and relatives over phone.
- Give example of any of your family member whose greeting style is different. Share in the class.

## 4.1 Greeting Style

### *Namaste* or *Pranam* --How we greet each other in India.

To greet a friend or another Indian, We join our hands (palms together), bows down in front of the other person, and say *Namaste*, *Namaskar*, or *Pranam*.



The Lord dwells in the heart of every human being. This joining of hands symbolizes the meeting of two souls, our real self actually meets Itself. This signifies reverent Salutations and Unity of Souls.

Bowing down & joining hands symbolizes humility and also makes us humble. Thus when we joins our hands and say *Namaskar*, we actually see the

Lord in the other persons and believe, "I bow with deep respects to the all-loving, all-powerful and omnipresent (present everywhere) Lord in you."

## 4.2 Basic Family Structure

Hindu way of life attach foremost importance to spirituality. In each and every custom and ritual our *Rishis* accorded foremost importance to religious teachings. Higher ideals in the day to day life was the motto of the *Rishis* which formed the basis of daily life.

According to Hindu traditions, marriage is not a ritual for sensual gratification, rather it is the union of two souls who complement each other in the spiritual quest. The rituals performed during the performance of

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Hindu marriage are practical guidelines for a happy family life.

*Grihastha ek tapovan hai.* This *sadvakya* forms the solid basis on which the marriage institution in India is build up. Marriages of the daughter are traditionally arranged from the boys of same community. Normally, the parents of the prospective spouses get together and discuss each others background and work out the modalities of the bondage.

With the foreign invasions this pristine traditions slowly got distorted. Evil traditions like dowry pomp and show are now accepted as rituals. Now lot of money and resources are being wasted in the name of traditions.

Gayatri Pariwar, through promotion of ideal marriage not only revived the ancient traditions of our *Rishis* but also saved millions of rupees and prevented wastage of material and human energy.

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## Things to Do

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1. Teenager son was selected for a special program for gifted students that take place in a rather costly summer camp. The Teenager daughter wants to go to European summer vacations with friends, the parents cannot afford both.. Give a decision.
  2. Describe the role of young children in family purchase decisions. Analyze their role as influencers, deciders, buyers, users and maintainers. Analyse the role usually performed by you.
  3. Teenager son wants a TV set in his own room. The parents object because that believe he will give less attention to school work if he has his own TV.
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### 4.3 Joint Family-The Sayukat Parivar System

#### 4.3.1. CULTURAL UNIT

In India, people learn the essential themes of cultural life within the bosom of a family. In most of the country, the basic units of society are the patrilineal family unit and wider kinship groupings. Most young women expect to live with their husband's relatives after marriage, but they retain important bonds with their natal families.

#### 4.3.2 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

In the mental area, the family is supported intellectually by self-talk and by the stories one hear about how others have managed. Sitting around the kitchen table or on the front steps one learn strategies for interacting with the world or how to use resources. In passing on stories of our lives one pass on skills to Children.

The family instill the values of relationships, of getting by, of not needing and hard work for little return. Storytelling is perhaps the greatest teaching resource for communicating.

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Emotionally one learns a variety of ego defenses, which helps to deal with overwhelming odds. Mutual sharing, care for all, sometimes disassociation and projection are each useful in their own way as mechanisms for surviving oppression.

#### **Short Story**

Lord Ganesh was very popular among children. On one occasion there was a mango to be given to the child who would go around the world and complete the trip first. Kartikeya, Ganesha's younger brother was his competitor. While the young Kartikeya stated his journey around the world, Ganesha simply walked round his parents, Lord Shiva and Parvati who as Gods represent the whole universe, and claimed the prize.

#### **4.3.3 SPIRITUAL DIMENSION**

Spiritual influences in the family include positive practices. These practices are those learned from various spiritual disciplines or teachers: faith, prayer, meditation, healing and ceremonies. Most of the Indian families have their specific ritual and ceremonies performed at various occasions.

#### **4.3.4 SENSE OF BELONGINGS AMONG MEMBERS**

Loyalty to family is a deeply held ideal for almost everyone.

Numerous prominent Indian families, such as the Tatas, Birlas, and Sarabhais, retain joint family arrangements even as they work together to control some of the country's largest financial empires.

#### **4.3.5 CHANGING TRENDS**

As joint families grow ever larger, they inevitably divide into smaller units, passing through a predictable cycle over time.

Frequently, a large joint family divides after the demise of elderly parents, when there is no longer a single authority figure to hold the family factions together. After division, each new residential unit, in its turn, usually becomes joint when sons of the family marry and bring their wives to live in the family home.

#### **4.3.6 ADVANTAGES**

Family life has its own advantages and disadvantages. However, the main advantage of living life in this system is that the children get to learn a lot from their grandparents. Besides, if there are two brothers with their families living together, the cousins i.e. the children of the two brothers grow up together just as real siblings. The children grow up with a strong sense of security and stability.

The family system is given a lot of importance in India and has worked more often than not.

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## 4.4 Family Traditions : Naming Patterns

### 4.4.1 HINDU NAMING PATTERNS

- Generally, Indians have regular surnames, especially in North India. For example, Ashish Arora would be addressed as Mr. Arora or Ashish. Similarly, a woman's surname changes after marriage. The only exceptions are in the five southern states, where surnames are not used and the initials of the first name of the father, followed by a given name, are taken.
- Traditional Hindu female names follow the same pattern: father's initial plus personal name. When fully written out, "d/o" [for "daughter of"] is used instead of "s/o" [for "son of"] between the names. When an Indian woman marries, she usually ceases to use her father's initial; instead, she follows her husband's name.

### 4.4.2 Muslim Naming Patterns

- Muslim names are usually derived from Arabic. Generally, a Muslim is known by a given name followed by "bin" ["son of"], then his father's name.
- A Muslim woman is known by her given name plus "binti" ["daughter of"] plus her father's name. Note that in English, "binti" may also be spelled "binte."
- A Muslim male who has made his pilgrimage to Mecca is addressed as "Haji." A woman who has done so would be addressed as "Hajjah".

### 4.4.3 SIKH NAMING PATTERNS

- Indian Sikhs have a given name followed by either "Singh" [for men] or "Kaur" [for women]. Consequently, always address Indian Sikhs by a title and first name--it's not sufficient to address a Sikh male as "Mr. Singh."

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## Things to Do

1. Discuss with your parents the significance of Naming Pattern in your family.
  2. Try and collect some interesting information and share in the class.
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## *Inspiration*

*He alone is a true warrior who maintains his integrity, courage, and patience in adversity.*

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## 4.5 COMMUNICATION STYLES-DO'S AND DON'TS

- In India every one enjoys good conversation on a variety of topics. Even in business meetings, it is common and normal to start discussions with 'small talk' on other unrelated issues. In fact, this is seen as a way of building rapport and trust.
- In general, people are open and friendly, and compared to many countries in the West, have a lesser sense of privacy. It is not unusual for a stranger to start up a conversation with you on a flight or a train journey.
- Sometimes, in India people ask questions which can be seen as too personal and intrusive. However, one must remember that discussing one's family and personal life is normal among Indians. In fact, often enquiring about the other person's family is seen as a sign of friendliness.
- Conversation in India is as much an exchange of views as it is a mode of building and strengthening relationships. Consequently, complimenting and showing appreciation are quite normal among Indians.
- In India one seldom express their disagreement in a direct manner; open disagreement is likely to be interpreted as being hostile and aggressive [though expression of

disagreement by someone who is superior or elder is, by and large, acceptable]. Normally, disagreements are openly expressed only with those with whom one has built a trusting relationship. Otherwise, disagreements are expressed in an indirect manner. In most cases - unless, it is a crucial issue - it is advisable to avoid expressing direct disagreement.

## 4.6 CONVERSATION TO BE AVOIDED

- Normally, Indians are a tolerant people, and are accepting of religious differences. During the last decade, however, there has been a rise of strong religious sentiments in the society. It is, therefore, advisable to avoid discussing religious beliefs. On the other hand, religious practices and rituals play a major role in Indian life, and a genuine enquiry into a certain religious practice will normally be met with an enthusiastic response.

## 4.7 ART OF RELATING

Clusters of relatives live very near each other, easily available to respond to the give and take of kinship obligations. Even when relatives cannot actually live in close proximity, they typically maintain strong bonds of relationship and attempt to provide each other with economic help, emotional support, and other benefits.

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## GIFT GIVING

### General Guidelines

- Gifts are not opened in the presence of the giver. If you receive a wrapped gift, set it aside until the giver leaves.
- Don't wrap gifts in black or white, which are considered unlucky colors. Instead, use green, red, and yellow, since they are considered lucky colors like red or green.

### Appreciated Gifts

- When invited to in Indian home for dinner, bring a small gift of fruit, or flowers.
- If you are staying with a family, feel free to ask them what they would like. Spiritual books, Audio

cassettes on classical Indian Music etc are some of the favorite gifts.

- If you give money to an Indian, ensure that it is an odd number. Usually this is done by adding a single dollar--i.e., \$11 instead of \$10.

### Gifts to Avoid

- When selecting flowers, be aware that frangipanis are associated with funerals.
- Muslims believe that dogs are unclean. Images of dogs are also considered unacceptable, so never give toy dogs or gifts with pictures of dogs to Indian Muslims.
- Observant Hindus do not eat beef or use products that are made from cattle. Consequently, most leather products will be inappropriate gifts.

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## Things to Do

Does your lifestyle differ significantly from your parent's lifestyle? If so. How are the two lifestyles different? What factors cause these differences? Mention any five difference and Share in the class.

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## *Inspiration*

*Don't indulge in self-praise. Your good deeds will speak for themselves.*

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## 4.8 ART OF LIVING: THE KEY TO SUCCESS

### 4.8.1. The Art of Becoming

- Farsightedness
- Discriminatory Wisdom
- Life beyond the pity Self

### 4.8.2 The Art of Thinking

- *Swadhyaya* (Self-training through the teachings of elevated souls)
- Positive emotions all the time

### 4.8.3 Art of Working

- Time Scheduling and Stress free working
- Cheerful attitude
- Utilization of each and every opportunity

### 4.8.4 Art of Relating

- Affectionate and Loving relationship with family and society
- Memorizing God's compassion is unbounded
- Transfer of privilege

### 4.8.5 Art of Organizing

- *Sadhana* (Self-transformation through control over mind)
- True to self in all aspects of life

*Sadhana* encompasses, restraint and proper utilization of time, monetary resources, thinking process and sensual desires. This unique faculty is an integral part of living.”





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# INDIAN FOOD

- Food Importance And Significance
  - Importance Of Vegetarian Food
  - *Satvik Aahar* And Wholesome Development
  - Fasting
  - Festivals And Relevance Of Food
  - Food The Right Way
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# INDIAN FOOD

1. To make the participants realize the importance of food for health and its role in spiritual upliftment.
2. To critically assess the food habits of the participants.
3. To provide inputs on the dining styles and etiquettes in India.
4. To give information on the linkages between festivals and food.
5. To provide a guidelines for a healthy and balanced diet.

## Introduction

A vast multi cultural cuisine has evolved in India, which is influenced by the geographical regions, religion and preferences about food. There is no specific set of items as cuisine of India and no single dish might be termed typical of the whole land.

### Questionnaire

Options - Always, Sometimes, Never

1. I set aside worries, troubles and anger during mealtime.
2. I read and educate myself about nutrition.
3. I drink plenty of water in between my meals
4. I avoid commercially processed and packaged foods.
5. I understand fasting and practice it regularly.
6. I feel self conscious about how my body looks.
7. I get craving for sweets.
8. I got to sleep with full stomach.
9. I enjoy sharing meals with others.
10. I eat excessively when I am bored, depressed, anxious or upset.

Check the scores with the Instructor

**Discuss the findings and try to find out the reasons for lack of proper food.**

**The reasons can be related to any of the following**

- a. Personal neglect
- b. Life Style
- c. Family Problems
- d. Any other.

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## 5.1 Food Importance And Significance

- Food for Indians is not simply a means of bodily substance; it is a part of the cosmic cycle. The *Taittiriya Upanishad* states: 'From earth sprang herbs, from herbs food, from food seed, from seed man. Man thus consist of essence of food .... From food all the creatures are produced, by food they grow....The self consist of food, of breath. Of mind, of understanding, of bliss.
- The *Bhagwat Gita* also says . 'From food do all creatures come into being.
- Foodstuff such as alcohol, onions and garlic inhibit spiritual enlightenment by exciting the body and leading to acts, which may have karmic impact. Therefore they should be restricted or avoided.

## 5.2 Importance Of Vegetarian Food

- Nearly a billion people, including 10 million Americans and 6 million Britons, today practice vegetarianism. Most people become vegetarian by conscience. European geniuses--Leonardo Da Vinci, Isaac Newton and Albert

Einstein--were vegetarian by conscience.

- Our digestive system is not suitable for non vegetarian food digesting. The health and ecological sciences have recently discovered, vegetarianism is man's best and natural diet. The intestinal length of carnivores (meat-eating animals) is three times the body length to allow for quick removal of flesh wastes that putrefy in the intestines. Man's intestinal length, like other herbivores, is six times his body length and is designed for digesting vegetables, grains and fruits. Carnivores don't chew their food. Herbivores, including man, chew their food and have a similar pH value in their saliva. Therefore our digestive system is closest to fruit-eating primates.
- The noblest reason for vegetarianism is reverence for all beings. People who are spiritually inclined do not eat from animals. They also avoid food that may have caused pain to animals during manufacture. 'Karma ' is believed to be the spiritual load that one accumulates during a lifetime. Animals are believed to have spiritual awareness. If a person consumes animal flesh, they accumulate the karma of that act--which will need to be balance in the next life.

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## Things to Do

1. Identify the participants who are non-vegetarians.
2. How often they eat non-veg food. What are the effects of non-veg food on the digestive systems and emotions?

Do you cook non-veg food at home. Share with them members the negative impact of this food.

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### 5.3 Satvik Aahar And Wholesome Development

According to *Bhagwat Gita* Food foods is grouped into one of three categories, known by the Sanskrit words, *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva*. These are three basic qualities or rates of vibration, which in the ancient Hindu bases science of medicine.

**Tamasic food-** Food that is cold, stale and highly spiced, rendering the eater dull and slothful. Examples of such food are pork, non-scaly fish and strong brews. The *tamasic* tendency is descending, instinctive, and connotes inertia and stagnation. *Tamasic* foods, such as meat, fermented or stale foods and overripe fruits, imbue the astral and physical body with heaviness and inertia and arouse the instinctive nature. Overeating is also *tamasic*.

**Rajasic Food-** Food which is bitter, sour, salty. Dry and burning. They stimulate a person and makes him

restless. The *rajasic* tendency is expanding, intellectual, and connotes activity and restlessness. *Rajasic* foods, such as hot or spicy foods, strong herbs, onions, garlic, coffee and tea, fish, eggs and salt, invigorate the heat of the physical and astral bodies. Too much *rajasic* food will over-stimulate the body and excite the passions, making the mind restless and uncontrollable. Eating in a hurry also creates a *rajasic* vibration in the body and mind. *Sattvic* foods, such as natural fruits and vegetables, help refine the astral and physical bodies, allowing the super conscious forces to flow and permeate and invigorate the entire being.

**Sattvic foods-** These are savory, nutritive and conducive to serenity and spirituality. The *sattvic* tendency is ascending, super conscious, and connotes orderliness and sublimity. It is best to try to eat plenty of *sattvic* foods, to be moderate in the intake of *rajasic* foods and avoid the *tamasic* ones. The traditional *sattvic* diet naturally provides this important balance and is based on these Ayurvedic principles.

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### Things to Do

1. Analyze your food habits as per the above three categories. Which one is dominant in your lifestyle?
  2. Is food an 'emotionally charged' issue for you. If so in what way?
  3. What food do you fear? Why?
  4. Is food a problem for you? If so, how.
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### Inspiration

*He alone lives a worthwhile life, who has a cool head, warm blood, a loving heart, and zest for life.*

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## 5.4 Fasting

*Vrat* or fast are of five kinds. These are as follows

- a. *Vara* fasts on weekdays, the *Adityavaravrata* to Surya being an example.
- b. The *Tithivratas* occurs on certain days in the lunar months, Durgashtami and Janmashtmi being examples.
- c. *Nakshatra* fast occur on certain days of the lunar station.
- d. *Masavratas* are fasts that occur in certain months like *Kartika*.

- e. *Samvatsara* are fasts with restive eating's that could spread out from one ekadashi to the same one a whole year later

### 5.4.1 METHOD

- Fasts do not usually involve complete abstention from food, but only varying degree of restrictions
- 'Fruits only' is a common form of observance while others take the form of eating only before moon rise or after sunset
- Modern practices like missing one meal in a day of the week may tend to be dietetic in origin but do not have ritualistic origin.

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## Things to Do

1. Have you ever fasted? If yes, what was your experience.
2. Do any one of your family member fast. If yes, discuss with the member the reasons for fast and the experience of fasting. Share the information in the next class.
3. Mention any five Indian food items which are your favorite.
4. Which Indian Food item you would like to taste when you visit India.
5. Divide yourselves in subgroups and discuss special cuisines of your area.
6. Which Indian Restaurant you go for dining. How often do you go. Discuss in the class the special Indian dishes served in the restaurant.

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Prayer before meals is an important part of dining etiquettes. Recitation of three Gayatri mantra is an important tradition. This brings peace and tranquility in mind before the food is eaten.

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## Things to Do

1. How often do you dine with your family. What help do you provide to your mother/ father during dining.
2. Do you pray before dining. If yes, please share the prayer.
3. Have you ever eaten food in a traditional Indian style by sitting on the floor. If no,

Try this weekend. Share your experience in the class.

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## 5.5 Festivals And Relevance Of Food

Every religious festival, every wedding birthday or special occasion is impossible to celebrate without the preparation and serving of special food. There are hundreds of different religious festivals celebrated in India and each one of them have special food items.

Sr. No.	FESTIVAL	MONTH	SPECIAL ITEMS
1	Makar Sankranti Pongal(Tamil Nadu) Utrarayan (Gujarat) Lori (Punjab)	Magh	Till Ladoos, Moongphali Ladoos, Sengdana Chikki, Eliappe, Sakkarai Pongal, Maczhial, Adrakpak
2	Holi	Falgun Indicates coming of Spring	Sanjori, Gujia, Puran Poli, Sweet Mathris
3	Gudi Padva	Chaitra Drawn of new year	Panchras Goli, Sonth Panak, Cashew Almond Pista Paratha, Fluffy Dosa, Gharai Kheer
4	Baisakhi	Vaishaka Eleventh day of summer Month	Lohe ki Kadhi ke Chole, Bhatore, Sonth Chutney, Sarson da Saag
5	Ramzan Id	Holiest day in Muslim Calender	Nawab Hyderabad Biryani, Hyderabadi Khichda, Seviyan, Gulab Doodh
6	Janmashtami	Sharavan Birth of Lord Krishna	Aloo Shak and Puri, Dahi Undi, Bhog ki Kheer, Cashewnet Barfi, Moong Dal Payasam,
7	Onam	Celebration on annual return of Bali	Bannna Erucherry, Tamato Pachadi, Chana Dal Payasam, Aviyal
8	Ganesh Chaturthi	Ebd of Chaturmas Birth of Ganesha	Steamed Modak, Rava Ladoo, Karanjis, Rice Puris, Rishi Panchami Sabzi
9	Dussera or Durga Puja	Ashwin	Nariel ke laddu, Payash, Loochi, Bundi Sweet, Bhaja Tarkari
10	Diwali	Kartik	Besan ke Barfi, Mysore Pak, Sandesh, Badam Halwa, Chandrakala
11	Guru Nanak Jayanti	Full Moon night Birthday of Guru Govind Singh	Kada Prasad, Langar ki Dal, Alu Gobhi ki sabzi, Salad Dilkhush
12	Christmas and Easter	Church Festival and feasts	Kalkas, Marzipan Fruits, Bolo Gostos, Easter Biscuits, Christmas cakes

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## Things to Do

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1. Share in the group what special dishes you prepare during the festival.
  2. How many participants are good cooks. Discuss the recipes of some of your favorite food items.
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### 5.6 Food The Right Way

#### Mitahara

One should take wholesome, *sattvic* food half-stomach; fill the quarter-stomach with pure water; and allow the remaining quarter free for expansion of gas. This is the ideal for all who want to preserve health. This is quite hygienic and is in harmony with the dietetic principles of modern medical science.

#### Milk

Milk is a perfect food by itself, containing the different nutritive constituents, fats, proteins, carbohydrates, etc, in well-balanced proportions. It leaves very little residue in the bowels. Milk should be scalded or pasteurized but not boiled. The

process of scalding is that the milk should be immediately removed from the fire, as soon as the boiling point is reached. Too much boiling destroys the vitamins, the mysterious nutritive principles and renders milk quite useless as an article of diet.

#### Fruit Diet

A fruit diet exercises a benign, soothing influence on the constitution and is very desirable diet. This is a natural form of diet. Bananas, grapes, sweet oranges, apples, pomegranates are wholesome fruits. Bananas are very nutritious. Lemons possess anti-scorbutic properties and act as restoratives to blood. Fruit juice contains a form including milk, butter and yogurt are considered to enhance spiritual purity.

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## Things to Do

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1. Try at least one day in a week to follow the concept of *Mitahara*. See the difference and analyze on your own.
2. Inform your parents about the importance of *Mitahara*. Give them suggestions to improve their food habits.
3. Analyze the frequent health problems faced by you. Examples can be headaches, body aches, frequent fever etc. Prepare a Diet plan, which you feel is suitable to your body. Submit the plan to the Instructor for his review and suggestions.

#### PARTY TIME

4. Organize a party at a convenient location with all the participants. Design an innovative menu taking into consideration the information given. Interact with your parents and each one can bring one dish from the home.
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# INDIAN DRESS STYLE

- Dresses For Women
  - Accessories
  - Dresses For Indian Men
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# INDIAN DRESS STYLE

- To make the participants aware about the style of Dresses
- To encourage them to wear Indian Dresses
- To discuss interesting facts about textile patterns
- To make them understand the different waving patterns.

## INSTRUCTORS GUIDELINES

Discussion on the following topics

Dress worn by participants

- Every day
- On Special occasions
- Preference for Indian Dresses
- Favorite color
- Place to purchase Indian Dress
- Attitude of the Parents

India is a land of color and diverse cultures, so obvious in the varied dresses that adorn its people. Indian dressing styles are marked by many variations, both religious and regional with a wide choice of textures and styles. The many hued sari draped gracefully in different styles, brightly mirrored cholis, colorful lehengas and the traditional salwar-kameez have all fascinated the traveller to India.

## 6.1 Dresses For Women

One of the most commonly worn traditional dresses, it is essentially a rectangular cloth measuring about 6 yards. The sari comes in a profusion of colours, textures and designs, determined largely by the region. There are several ways of draping a sari, which is first wound around the waist, before being pleated seven or eight times at the centre and tucked into the waistband. These pleats are

called the patli. The remaining sari, called the pallu is then pleated again and draped across the left shoulder to fall gracefully behind.

The traditional dress for women in Rajasthan and Gujarat is the lehenga choli or ghagra choli. These cholis are brightly embroidered, waist-length bare-backed blouses. Ghagras or lehengas are gathered ankle-length skirts secured around the waist. The attire is completed by a veil-cloth called

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odhni or dupatta draped across the neck or over the head.

Indian dressing styles are marked by many variations, both religious and regional with a wide choice of textures and styles.

## 6.2 Accessories

In India, as elsewhere, accessories are an integral part of the ritual of dressing. The world over, Indian women are associated with the 'dot' in the middle of their forehead, called Kum Kum or bindi. Traditionally round, the bindi is now available in various colours, shapes and sizes. A bindi was traditionally a sign of marriage, or in some states, was worn as soon as a girl reached young adulthood. Today it is for the most part an adornment. Vermilion or sindoor applied at the parting of the hair indicates a married woman.

A traditional Indian woman is rarely seen without jewellery. A mangal-

sutra, a necklace made with black and gold beads is considered sacred, and in many areas is always worn by a married woman. Many women, particularly in the rural areas of Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Gujarat wear ornately crafted nose-rings. Gold, silver or colourful glass bangles are also popular among women

## 6.3 Dresses For Indian Men

Men are considerably less traditional when it comes to dressing. In urban areas, they have adapted to a western style of dressing. In villages men generally wear kurtas, a knee length shirt-styled tunic, with lungis, dhotis or pyjamas. In states like Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab and Maharashtra men wear a safa or turban on their heads. The Pathani suit is very similar to the salwar-kameez and is generally worn by men in north India. The Achkan is a long collarless jacket worn over a churidar for formal occasions.

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## Things to Do

1. You have worn how many dresses discussed in the class. Give details.
2. Share with your parents the information received. Ask them to give you inputs on the Dress style of your State. Collect Information and share in the class.

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## *Inspiration*

*There are two ways to be happy:  
minimize your needs and live in harmony  
with the circumstances.*

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# ART IN INDIAN CULTURE

- Indian Music
  - Music Elements
  - Stylistic Classification
  - Classification Of Musical Instruments
  - Music: A Unique Means for God-Realization (Rishi Narad Tradition)
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# ART IN INDIAN CULTURE

## Objectives

- To give an understanding about the rich tradition of Indian art.
- To highlight the salient features of Indian Music, Painting and Dance.
- To generate awareness and interest among the participants .

To establish linkages of art with spirituality.

## Introduction

Art is collaboration between God and Man, raising him to the exclusive band of creators and taking him deeply within and around his hard work. It is a unique result of a unique temperament with its beauty derived from mutable disconcert of his environment. When early man stenciled an impression of the dark of wall of the cave, he was deliberately, vision and creation.

Creation motivated by different desires resulted knowingly or unknowingly in chronicling his present for the future and preserving them for posterity. These instincts found their vent in

different forms and in fact they were the foundation of the birth of fine arts. Born thus, the arts improved from stage to stage and from age to age in different forms and styles, from the initial crude lines to the superfine form and movement.

In ancient India, fine arts of dance, painting and sculpture were developed and inspired by religion. All arts like all stages of life and embodied in religion. Indian art is life suffixed by religion and philosophy. Art was dedicated to providing objects of worship in a life ordered by faith. Indian art of all the periods has been close to life both divine and traditional.

## 7.1 Indian Music

### INSTRUCTORS GUIDELINES

#### Discussion on the following topic

Type of music generally listened

1. Time spend on listening
2. Time of listening- Driving, at home or with friends
3. Western Music- Albums and Singers
4. Indian Music- Albums and Singers

5. Effects of listening Indian Music
6. Number of Cassettes in house on Indian Music
7. Awareness level on Filmy music and classical Music
8. Favorite Indian Music Singers
9. Attitude of family members towards music

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## BACKGROUND

- Music in India has a old and long tradition. The birth of Indian Music lay in the religious activities of people. For years, chanting of scriptures and paying musical offering to Gods is a well-documented activity. Indian Music had its origin in the Vedas and as centuries rolled on it developed into an integrated and well-codified form.
  - The basic character of Indian music is its emphasis on melody. Music researchers have concluded that the sound produced from different parts of the human body- the abdomen, lungs, throat and the head made a system by itself. The ratios and proportions which sound pattern displayed developed into an order called *shruti* in Indian Music system.
  - The music scales were standardized gradually and laws were framed to regulate the practice of singing and instrument playing. This allowed the evolution of melodies and a system of musical notations (*Raag*) to come into being. In the Samveda one find the reference of *Raga* and it was chanted in a defending manner with full seven notes.
- Sound (*Swara*)- *Swara* is that sound which has some meaning and possesses a distinct identity. The spectrum of *Swaras* in Indian music is composed of seven bands known as *Saptak*.
  - Beet (*Taal*)- It is a process through which rhythm gets depicted in musical compositions. They are generally played through percussion instruments such as manjira, mridang, tabla etc.
  - Melody (*Raag*) The western music is famous for its harmony whereas Indian music is famous for its melody. The central manifestations of a *Raag* is delightfulness. In addition to this quality it should also be imbibed with sentiments

## 7.2 Music Elements

The three corner stones of Indian musical compositions are

1. *Swara* or sound
2. *Taal/Laya* or beat / tune
3. *Raag* or melody

## 7.3 Stylistic Classification

Music in India has found a clear description in old Sanskrit texts. Music has been stated as *Geetam, Vaadyam, Nrityam, Trayam, Sangeet, Muchyate*. Thus music is composed of three basic parts- the vocal, the instrument and the dance.

### Discussion Questions

1. Do you have any cassette at home on these music styles
2. Have you ever visited any music concert on Indian music held in your city.
3. Name any one musician of Hindustani and Carnatic music.
4. Give examples of popular desi music with reference to Ghazal Singers.



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## Things to Do

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1. Go home and check with your family or relatives about cassettes on Indian Classical Music
  2. Listen to them and share your experience in the next class
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### 7.4 Classification Of Musical Instruments

There is a traditional system for the classification of instruments. This system is based upon; non-membranous percussion (*Ghan*), membranous percussion (*avanaddh*), wind blown (*sushir*), plucked string (*tat*), bowed string (*vitat*). Here are the classes and representative instruments.

#### 7.4.1 NON-MEMBRANOUS PERCUSSIVE (*Ghan*)

This is one of the oldest classes of instruments in India. This class is based upon percussive instruments which do not have membranes, specifically those which have solid resonators. These may be either melodic instruments or instruments to keep *tal*.

- Jal Tarang
- Manjira
- Ghatam
- Ghungharu
- Kartal

#### 7.4.2 BLOWN AIR (*Sushir*)

This class of instrument is characterized by the use of air to excite the various resonators.

- Bansuri
- Shehnai
- Harmonium
- Ottu
- Mukhavina

#### 7.4.3 LUCKED STRINGED INSTRUMENTS (*Tat*)

This class of instruments is characterized by plucked strings. In ancient times virtually all instruments of this class were referred to as *vina*.

- Sitar
- Sarod
- Saraswati Vina (South Indian Vina)
- Surbahar
- Rudra Vina
- Ektar
- Tanpura
- Santur
- Getchu Vadyam (Gettuvadyam)

#### 7.4.4 BOWED - STRINGED INSTRUMENTS (*Vitat*)

This is a class of stringed instruments which are bowed. This class appears to be quite old, yet these instruments did not occupy a place in classical music until the last few centuries. The entire class of instruments has a certain stigma attached to it. Even today only the Western violin is free of this stigma.

- Sarangi
- Violin
- Esraj
- Mayuri Vina

#### 7.4.5 MEMBRANOUS PERCUSSIVE (*Avanaddh*)

This is a class of instruments which have struck membranes. These typically comprise the drums.

- Tabla
- Pakhawaj
- Mridangam
- Dholak
- Dholki (Nal)
- Daf (Duf, Daphu, Daffali)
- Damaru

We have given a brief overview of the Indian instruments. We mentioned that the instruments fall into five categories: *ghan* (non-membranous percussion), *sushir* (wind blown), *tat* (plucked stringed), *vitat* (bowed stringed) and *avanaddh* (membranous percussion). Within these five classes there are a large number of individual instruments.

## Things to Do

1. Surf the Internet and try and identify the instruments discussed
2. Select any one Instrument and collect information of about 100 words. Share the information in the next class.

### 7.5 Music: A Unique Means for God-Realization (Rishi Narad Tradition)

- Music gives enjoyment to the performer as well as to the listener. It gives a higher type of emotional enjoyment and infuses in all the ecstatic state of *Bhava Samadhi* or super consciousness through dissolution in pure feeling. Music can be universally enjoyed. If a Japanese sings in his own language or plays an instrument of his country, the Englishman can enjoy the music without understanding a word of it or without being familiar with that instrument. A German can likewise enjoy the Indian music. Such is not the case with literature. It has its linguistic limitation. Only the English knowing people can enjoy English literature; only the French-knowing people can enjoy French literature.
- Music is Divine. It draws one nearer to God. It is God Himself. We call it Nada Brahman or the Reality that is symbolized in music. As a means, it is called *Nada Upasana* or spiritual practice through singing. Sarasvati, the Goddess of Learning, inclusive of music and the other fine arts, is represented with a musical instrument, called Veena, in Her hands. Veena symbolizes Nada or music. The eternal song of Om emanates from it. Lord Krishna also holds a flute in His hands. It is also symbolic in the sense that it produces the music of the soul. Many saints like Mira, Gauranga, Surdas, Kabirdas, Ramdas, Tukaram, Tyagaraja and others attained God-realization through music.
- Music melts the hearts of all. It sets into motion the divine vibrations that gradually unite the individual soul with the Supreme Soul. This is the end and aim of all spiritual practices. The summum bonum of human existence is achieved through music very easily.

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## Things to Do

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1. Listen to any music cassette on Mantra or a meditation music for Fifteen Minutes. Do it three times in a week. Record you feeling.
  2. Learn one *Bhajan* or a Spiritual Song. Identify two participants from the class who are good singers. Next class, the singers will sing the song and others will join them.
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## *Inspiration*

*A family knit together, by bonds of loving cooperation and mutual understanding, is a living model of heaven on earth.*

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# INDIAN DANCE

- Indian Classical Dance Styles
  - Regional Dances
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# INDIAN DANCE

## INSTRUCTORS GUIDELINES

### Discussion on the following Topic

1. How many hour do you spend in dancing in a week
2. Do you prefer to dance alone or in a group
3. What is your time preference of dancing-late evening or late night
4. What is the attitude of parents towards your participation
5. Have you ever participated in any Indian Dance Program. If yes, share experience.

Have you ever watched any Indian Dance Performance on TV or on a live show.

## Introduction

- Dance has always been part of Indian people. Our religious literature recognized dance an important activity for the search of God. The most important and fundamental work is Natyashastra. composed by, a sage Bharat.
- Dance rituals Connect us to Spirit and empower us with abilities such as courage and compassion, as well as reveal insights into the future. Trance dance, an ancient shamanism practice, is a healing vehicle through which people can commune with their Spirit.

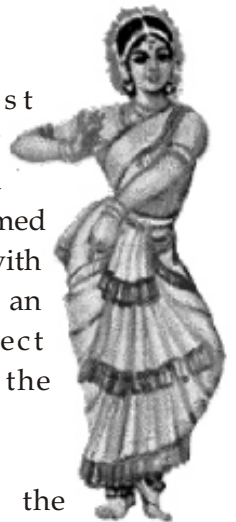
Dance could be seen as a moving prayer and a doorway to the soul or 'spirit within' and if you dance into the state of ecstatic trance you will connect completely to the healing powers of Holy Spirit.

*"To the universe belongs the dancer, who ever does not dance does not know what happens."*

## 8.1 Indian Classical Dance Styles

### BHARATNATYAM

- It is the oldest contemporary classical dance form of India .It is performed in the beginning with perfect repose and an attitude of perfect equilibrium in the standing posture
- In the next piece the performer wears several patterns in the music compositions. Here the dancer introduces full sequences of various types of dance cadence. In the piece that follows the dancer performs to the song



and introduces mime. After introducing all elements of the dance, the dancer proceeds to render the *varnam*, which provides fullest scope to improvise on a given theme.

- The costumes of the dance are in striking color. Indian traditional dress Sari is worn in a special style, The performance wears makeup as per the dance piece. Heavy ornamentation is also important part of the costume.

### KATHAK



- It is the most popular dance form of North India, The genesis of this dance is commonly traced from the word Kathak figuring in ancient Indian lexicons. The Jain literature also mentions a specific category of people-the entertainers through a word *kahag*. The dance is composed of three basic parts the dance parse, movement and the enactment. The dance is only rhythmic play of different parts of body.
- Movement is the depiction of *Krishan Leela* through facial expressions in consonance with different postures of hand and arms. The feet respond to the musical rhythm by thumping the ground. Enactment ( *abhinaya*) is the climax. Here the dancer enacts the story with different dance postures.

- Kathak has been promoted through three main gharanas- Lucknow, Jaipur and Banaras.
- The costumes used in Kathak is generally a bright sherwani (long coat), churidar pajama(tight breaches), a decorated cap and angarakha (fine tunic) etc.

### KATHAKALI



- The genesis of the word Kathkali is generally traced to a combination of *katha* and *keli*, in literal meaning dance drama. The dance is from southernmost state of India and its center has been Kerala and Malabar.
- This dance form is an exclusive domain of male dancers. Even female roles in the story lines are performed to perfection by male artists. In support to the performance of dance, a group of singers keep continuously reciting the poems and epics
- The artists who perform Kath kali do not sing the lines themselves. The actions are all executed in silence by the artists only through the poses and postures of body and face.
- The striking feature of the dance is the splendor of the costumes,



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ornaments and facial makeup which transforms the actor dancer into a particular character. A character can be identified by the

color it sports. For example a green painted face stands for nobility, honor, valor and high qualities.

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## Things to Do

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1. Watch a TV program on Indian classical dance.
  2. Any one a Good Dance Performer in the class? If Yes, request the friend to make presentation for five minutes.
  3. Check with your parents and other friends about the Indian Dance Styles. Share information in the next class.
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## 8.2 Regional Dances

India's diversity in culture and tradition can be seen in its folk art tradition too. The Folk dance has different faces in different regions, from the Himalayas of the north-west to the eastern hills of Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, the plains of Gujarat, Rajasthan, U.P. and Bengal, the plateau of Maharashtra, Chhota Nagpur, the areas of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and south-western regions of Orissa, the coasts of the Eastern and Western Ghats and the southern parts of India. This journey

into the heart of the folk dances of various regions bring you closer to the the life and spirit of the c o m m o n people.



- Garba, the leading dance of women in Gujarat, is associated with the fertility cult. For the nine nights of Navaratri, an autumn festival,

women come out into the open and with perforated earthen pots holding lighted lamps poised on the head sing, clap and dance a simple, circular dance, in honour of the goddess Amba.

- In the Kulu valley, the festival of Dussehra is celebrated with great pomp and show. Images of Raghunathji are brought from the different shrines to a central place, and then there is singing and dancing. Dances of the region are collectively known as Natio, though each may be meant for a different purpose. No festive occasion, including wedding and similar social ceremonies, is complete without dancing.
- At times men too dance, by singing and clapping, and the dance is known as Garbi. Traditionally the Garba is intended to be danced only at night and as a votive offering. In an evolved version, the dance can be performed for its own sake and at any time.

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The Bihu is the most widespread dance of Assam. The dance is the part of the Bihu festival when harvesting is done, and continues for about a month. The participants are young men and girls, who gather in the open, in daytime. They dance together, but there is no

mixing of the sexes. The dance is supported by drums and pipes. In between, the performers sometimes sing, usually of love. The most common formation is the circle or parallel rows. The Bihu demonstrates, through song and dance, the soul of the Assamese at its richest.

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## Things to Do

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1. Make a list of folk dances you are aware.
  2. Prepare a dance presentation of a folk song known to you. The group dance will be presented in the forthcoming religious festival.
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## *Inspiration*

*Scriptures and holy books are like teachers who impart life-transforming teachings without caning or admonition.*

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**MODULE**

**2**

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# ANCIENT INDIA

- Harappan Culture
- Vedic Culture

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# ANCIENT INDIA

## Introduction

“*Sa Prathma Sanskritiroishwavara*” , the first universal culture of this world has been the Indian culture. The home of this eternal wisdom and universal lifestyle is India. India's ancient name was Bharata, which means,

*bhàyàm ratah bhàratah*

**Being totally dedicated to a way of life based on divine knowledge.**

Even today, the official name of India is Bharata. This name has a great significance. Bharata is the name of a renowned Vedic King born in the Solar Dynasty. He observed the Vedic lifestyle precisely, achieved great wisdom, and eventually attained enlightenment.

The Civilization of India is of great significance in human history. Its extraordinary continuity for about five millennia is evidence of its vitality, its humanistic spirit and distinctive system of values which is a perennial source of mankind strength.

In this Module the ancient and alive civilization of India will be focused.

## 1.1 Harappan Culture

### OBJECTIVES

- To give an overview of the important features of Harappan Civilization.

- Excavations
- Important sites
- Special Features
- Relations with other Civilizations
- Decline

### 1.1.1 HARAPPAN/INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

Human inhabitation in the Indian subcontinent is traced to the Paleolithic and Neolithic period. Dated from about 2500 to 1500 BC, the Harappan civilization is considered to be at par with the other civilizations of the world.

### Features

- Harappan culture discovered in Indus valley in 1920s, named after site where it was first found.
- There was a writing system (syllabary), which cannot be deciphered till date.
- Harappan culture is very uniform in its physical culture. Objects are standardized in size and shape, and cities are laid out on similar regular pattern.
- Harappan cities are large and enclosed by walls. There appear to have been large public buildings in a citadel in the west of each city.

### 1.1.2 RELATIONS WITH OTHER CIVILIZATIONS

There is a large series of stone measurements of uniform proportions, which suggests a wide-spread trade for example one finds similar weights in Mesopotamia.

Thickly populated Harappan cities were supported by large agricultural areas. Cylinder seals, which presumably were used as documentation in commercial transactions, have been found in large numbers in Mesopotamia in late 2000s

### Decline

In the absence of any written material or historical records scholars have made speculations regarding the cause for the decline of the civilization. Change in the course of Indus river, natural calamities and progressive decay of land are some of the factors attributed to the decline of the culture.

#### AMAZING FACT

##### The Decimal System

In India a Decimal system was already in place during the Harappan period, as indicated by the analysis of Harappan weights and measures. Weights corresponding to ratios of 0.05,0.1,0.2,10,20,50, 100 ,200 and 500 have been identified as have scales with decimal divisions. A particularly notable characteristics of Harappan weights and measures is their remarkable accuracy. A bronze rod marked in units of 0.376 inches points to the degree of precision demanded in those times. Such scales were particularly important in ensuring proper implementation of town planning rules that required roads of fixed widths to run at right angles to each other and for homes to be constructed according to specified guidelines. The existence of a graded system of accurately marked weights points to the development of trade and commerce in Harappan society.

## Inspiration

*If the elders practice what they preach to their children, this world will become a heaven.*

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## 1.2 Vedic Culture

### OBJECTIVES

- To highlight the important of Vedic traditions
- To provide information on various aspects of Vedic life.
- To give an understanding of rationale for worshipping Vedic deities
- To discuss with the participants the relevance of Vedic Achievements in the present times

#### VEDIC Institutions in the Present Context

Social- *Varna Ashram*, Marriage, Caste System, Role of Women

Educational- *Guru Shishya Parampara*, Concept of *Gurukul*

Political- Kingship, Popular Assembly, Role of Sages

Religious- Deities, *Yagya*, *Sanskars*, Yoga, pilgrimages, Literature

Innovations- Achievements in the field of Science and Technology

### INTRODUCTION

According to modern researchers, in the third millennium B.C. the Aryans settled down in a region called Sapta-Sarasvati or the land of seven rivers. They were early settlers in this region, whose migration is speculated from Central Asia to North Pole. But according to the traditional sources, the Himalayas are considered as the place of origin of Vedic culture, in whose womb the Vedic Seers and sages realized the wisdom propagated as Vedas. The same culture still survived and practiced by followers of Indian culture till today.

#### 1.2.1 VEDIC AGE IMPORTANT FOR YOUTH

Vedas means knowledge. There are lots of hidden Scientific, Cultural and Spiritual values in the Vedas. Swami Vivekanand proclaimed in his famous

address at Chicago that the 'Vedas are without beginning and without end. It is accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times'.

The structure and growth of a country depends largely upon its youngsters. Today the youngsters consider present day education as a means for livelihood. The fundamental basis of a spiritual, moral and cultural life is forgotten. It is with the study of Vedic knowledge that a Value based life can be lead.

#### Vedas

The Vedas are the primary texts of the spiritual and religious records of the ancient culture and teachings of India. Their teachings are based upon recognition of the sacred nature of all life and self-realization as the true goal of human life. Hindus call the Vedas by several names, such as *apaurusheya*

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(meaning "not authored by *purusha*, or human being"), *anadi* ("without beginning in terms of time").

As a culture and way of life, the Vedas represent a tradition that accepts all valid approaches to truth and embodies the principles of universality and diversity. The Vedas prescribe rituals and meditations for attaining harmony in life. The rituals are intended to keep our daily actions in harmony with the Divine Will, and meditations are prescribed for realizing our real self. The ritualistic parts of the Vedas are called the *Karma Khanda* and the meditation portion of the Vedas is called the *Gyan Khanda*.

### **The Rig Veda**

Rig Veda, derived from the root word "rik," meaning "to praise," is divided into ten books (each book called *mandala*, meaning "the circle"), and further subdivided into chapters and sections. It includes 1,028 *suktas* (hymns), comprising 10,528 Sanskrit verses, and over 150,000 words. The Rig Vedic hymns of prayer and worship are addressed to Vedic deities, such as Indra (250 hymns), Agni (200 hymns), Soma (100 hymns), and numerous hymns addressed to Surya. Most doctrines of Hinduism have been, in one way or another, derived from the Rig Veda. One of the most profound and significant doctrines of the Rig Veda is, "Truth is one, the wise call It by various names." The Rig Vedic hymns possess mystic potency and richness. These hymns reflect a devotee's relationship to the deities as a friend, as a child to his parents, as a servant to his master, or as a lover to his beloved.

**The Sama Veda**, a collection of 1,540 verses, was set to music by the Vedic people for chanting during rituals. The use of music in the recital of the hymns eventually gave rise to the original classical music of India.

**The Yajur Veda**, containing 3,988 verses, is a compilation of mantras and methods for use by priests in performing Vedic rituals.

**The Atharva Veda**, a unique collection of 5,977 verses, considered as the sources of amazing scientific development of ancient India, including verses deemed necessary for success in agriculture, trade, progeny, health, and general welfare.

## **1.2.2 SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

### **Vran Ashram**

The life span of an individual in Vedic India was divided in Four parts, each of twenty five years. These were called *Ashrams*. For Hindus the whole life is a *Yagya* and that is what this denotes. These *Ashrams* were as follows

### **Brahmacharya Ashram**

The phase lasted for twenty years. The major portion of the *Ashram* was devoted to education.

During this period the student stayed with the teacher who provided guidance for his physical, mental and psychological development. The students had to lead a life of simplicity and chastity.



### ***Grihastha Ashram***

This phase lasted from twenty five years to fifty years of age. Marriage was an important social institution and during this period the householder was expected to perform various social duties. In this phase home was considered to be a place to practice Dharama.

### ***Vanaprastha Ashram***

The phase lasted from fifty one to seventy five years of age. During this period the individual was to leave his family & practice control over senses.

The individual was expected to lead a life of complete detachment and to utilize his time for the study of Religious Scriptures.

### ***Sanyasa Ashram***

This phase was last in the journey of life. It lasted from seventy six years onwards.

The individual who entered into this phase was not to possess anything and daily perform rituals

## **1.2.3 CASTE SYSTEM**

The Vedic society was based upon the concept of Varna System. Society was divided into four castes - the Brahmans, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Sudras.

***Brahmans-*** They enjoyed supremacy in the spiritual sphere and advised kings in secular matters. They performed complex religious ceremonies and also imparted education to children

***Kashitryas-*** They formed the ruling class of the society. It was the responsibility of this class to maintain peace and order and to protect the country from invasion.

***Vaishyas-*** They were engaged in various vocational tasks and did not enjoy any special privileges. They were the tax payers in the society.

***Sudras-*** They formed the lowest strata of society who did not enjoy the special facilities and were engaged in providing services to other classes.

### **Gurudev Vichar**

Our sages and knowledgeable people created the caste system on the basis of nature of work and from among four castes the maximum responsibility was given to the brahmins. It is a misfortune that today caste-system is being accepted not on the basis of work but on the basis of birth.

In reality a brahmin is one who is intelligent, knowledgeable, pure, restrained and disciplined. He is called a '*purohit*' (i.e. a priest) *agni rishini pavamanah panchajanya purohita*. His duty is to gather maximum knowledge, lead a disciplined and worshipful life of dedication.

A Brahmin's nature must be gentle, quiet, tolerant and restrained. His life should be perfect with physical and moral austerities. A constant effort should be made to increase '*sadgyan*' (knowledge of morality, goodness, spirituality, simplicity etc), '*sadgun*' (good qualities) and '*satpravritti*' (good, beneficent activities)

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## 1.2.4 EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

### Knowledge

Vedic scriptures recognize two types of knowledge: the lower knowledge and the higher knowledge. Knowledge of the rites and rituals and scholarly study of scriptures is considered to be lower knowledge, while higher knowledge is the knowledge of *Atman* and *Brahman* gained through personal experience or self-realization. Of the two, the Higher Knowledge was considered important, because it liberates the individuals from the cycle of births and deaths.

### Role of Guru

Central to the Vedic educational system is the concept *Guru* or the teacher. The *Vishnu Smriti* and *Manu Smriti* regards the *Acharya* (teacher), along with the mother and the father as the most venerable gurus of an individual.

A teacher in the vedic educational system was a God in human form. He was verily *Brahman* Himself. Without serving him and without his blessings a student cannot accomplish much in his life.

In matters of scriptural studies, the Guru would make the student understand all the scriptures and subject him to rigorous discipline.

In ancient India, the education of a student lasted for several years. When the student finished his education, he has to give *Gurudakshina*, pay back for whatever he learnt, in any form as desired by the Guru.

### Gurukul

Another important concept associated with pursuit of studies in ancient India was the *gurukul* system. A *gurukul* was a place where a teacher or a guru lived with his family and establishment and trained the students in various subjects.

The *gurukuls* usually existed in isolated places like forests. Admission into the *gurukul* was not an easy process. A student had to convince his guru that he had the desire; the determination and the required intelligence to pursue the studies. Students in the *gurukuls* were subjected to rigorous discipline.

### Subjects

A number of subjects other than religion were taught to students as a part of their occupational study or even general study. These included subjects such as mathematics, medicine, metallurgy, magic, music, art of warfare, sculpting, temple building, commerce, pottery, weaving and so on.

## 1.2.5 THE FOUNDATION PILLARS OF VEDIC CULTURE

### Gayatri

Vedas means supreme knowledge. Rig (spiritual well being and fulfillment), Yajur (valour), Sam (enjoyment) and Athrava (prosperity) are the four branches of Vedic knowledge.

These four kinds of knowledge are considered as offshoots of that creative consciousness of Brahma, which has been described, in the ancient scriptures by the name of Gayatri. Thus, Gayatri is the mother of the four

Vedas and is therefore called the *Vedmata*. Just as the water manifests in four different forms of ice, vapors, steam and liquid, so also Gayatri manifests in the form of four kinds of knowledge.

### Yagya

Gayatri and Yagya form an inseparable pair. Yagya is a Sanskrit word which has three meanings (1) divinity (2) organization and (3) Charity. The philosophy underlying the Yagya is to make a man great by adopting the philosophy of self sacrifice.

### Rishi Parampara

*The prominent sages of the period are as follows:*

- **Vashist** – Guidance on Polity Matters
- **Narad** – Spiritual Training
- **Yagyavalkya** – Importance of Yagya Procedure
- **Parashuram** – Promotion of Moral Values
- **Vyas** – Rituals and the performances
- **Bhagirath** – Worship of the Ganges
- **Charak** – Research on Ayurved

The Rishis experimented on various aspects of their respective fields by deep contemplation and using the inherent capability of the inner energy centers to reveal the secret of nature and had made lasting contribution in different aspects of spiritual and social life.

The All World Gayatri Pariwar, with its headquarters at Shantikunj Haridwar has successfully revived and propagated all these traditions in the light of modern day advances through an intense movement at global level.

### Sanskars

During Vedic times rituals were meant to inculcate feelings of devotion and to bring about the divine orientation of human life. As a part of his householders responsibilities, a devout follower was expected to perform certain rituals every day starting from morning till evening.

These rituals included: making offerings to the gods, to all beings and continuous remembrance of God through recitation of the Gayatri Mantra

## BAL BHAGAT IN THE VEDIC PERIOD

DHRUVA- A step Mother taunt led to an eternal blessing

King Uttanapadahad two wives- Suniti and his favorite Suruchi. Once when Suruchis son Uttama was sitting on his fathers lap, Sunitis son the five year old eagerly tried to climb up too. Suruchi felt her heart choke with jealousy and overflow with anger. She told Dhurva to practice penance

and please the Almighty Lord Vishnu so that by his blessing he would be born again through Suruchi. Only then, she tormented him, could he hope to receive any favor from the king. What strung the small child more than the whiplash of her words, was his fathers shamed silence.

His wise mother consoled him but told him that his step mother taunt

held for bitter truth. As fortune did not favour them, penance and devotion were their destiny.

The tiny boy immediately journey into the jungle to begin practice a life of penance, in the care of the sage Narad who led him to a safe spot and taught him to meditate. There he sat, steady, unmoving concentrating on the holy chant of Lord Vishnu 'Hail Blessed One, Lord of the Worlds. Hail!'. When Lord Vishnu appeared and told him to ask for a boon, the innocent child could not find words to speak. Lord Vishnu touched him with His Divine conch and in that instant Dhruv mind was illuminated with a timeless all pervading Knowledge. Lord Vishnu blessed him and gave him kingdom of earth. When his life span was over, he gave Dhruv an eternal and immovable place as the center of Universe, the constant points in the heavens around which all galaxies revolve. High above the silver stars spangling the ebony sky of night sparkles Dhruv- the Pole Star, unmoving, unwavering from eternity to eternity through all the countless Sages of man.

#### **PRAHLADA- A child's devotion braved a demons wrath**

Hiranyakashipu, demon king of the nether regions, extracted a boon from Lord Brahma, one by which neither man nor beast could kill him either inside or outside his house without any weapon whatsoever.

Drunk with power, the fearless demon ravaged all the three worlds. When the Devas kidnapped the demon kings wife Kayadu, they intend to kill the child she was expecting. But they released her when the Narda assured

then that the child was not to be feared for he would grow to be a devotee of Lord Vishnu. Then Narad taught Kayadu the worship of Vishnu. So firmly imprinted was this devotion on the mind of the unborn Prahalad he become faithful follower of Vishnu from the moment of his birth.

Angered and insulted when the boy refused to stop worshipping Vishnu, the demon king ordered his soldiers to kill his own son. Though hundreds struck him, the child suffered no injury. When hissing, writhing serpents bit him, their poison proved powerless. Savage hordes of elephants seeking to trample the child to death found their tusks blunted against his breast. Prahalad was thrown into a raging fire, hurled down from a towering height, tossed into the anger sea...only to emerge unscathed each time. A deadly poison turned to sweetest ambrosia upon touching his lips as they uttered the Lords name. The child stoically endured torment until his father thundered : ' Show me this Lord of yours, where is HE? . He is every where replied the boy. ' Is He in this pillar ? taunted the demon king 'Yes' was the serene reply. ' He had wells even in this pillar'. Upon which Hiranyakashipu mockingly struck the pillar with a shattering blow. In that instant, the pillar burst open with a defending sound and Lord Vishnu himself arose from its ruins- in the incarnation of Lord Narashimha- half man and half lion. On the threshold of the house, his claws tore the demon king apart, thus nullifying the boon of Brahma. The demon king met with his terrible but just destiny. The fearless child was rewarded for his unwavering faith. For Prahalad was made king of all the realms beneath the earth.

## 1.2.6 CONTRIBUTION OF VEDIC PERIOD

### Ayurved

The vedic scriptures describe that *Ayurved* has emanated from Brahma. The *Atharvaved* contains early description of the use of herbal medicine. Thus the origin of *Ayurved* can be traced from the *Brahma* to *Indra* and later to *Charak*, *Sushurut* and *Dhanvantari* who all became masters of various branches of *Ayurved*.

This great *Rishi* tradition is aimed at complete mental, physical and spiritual health by combining various *Yogic* methods of which herbal healing is one of the most important part. The herbs (medicinal plants) containing

nature's subtle healing power delicately restore the balance of body chemicals and work in tandem with the body's immune system. The effectiveness of the herbs can be well understood from the fact that most of the herbs can be cultivated at particular places and during a particular season only. The greater *Himalayas* are very well known as a home to many magical herbs. Herbs contain, from structural point of view, in them protagonist as well antagonist elements thereby making them comprehensive healers. The protagonistic effect is therapeutically beneficial while antagonist effect is for any possible side-effects. Thus active principles in them are effective in all respects.

### AMAZING FACT SHASTRAKARMA-THE ART OF SURGERY

The practice of surgery has been recorded in India around 800 B.C. This need not come as a surprise because surgery (Shastrakarma) is one of the eight branches of Ayurveda the ancient Indian system of medicine. The oldest treatise dealing with surgery is the Shushruta-Samahita (Shushruta's compendium). Shushruta who lived in Kasi was one of the many Indian medical practitioners who included Charaka.

### Panch Karma

An extensive system of detoxification called Panch Karma. Panch Karma includes a system of oil massage, sweating therapy, and various internal cleansing processes to remove the *doshas* from the tissues, which can effectively eliminate disease-causing toxins from the body so that they can no longer promote the disease process.

### Vedic Astrology: Space Age Science

The traditional Vedic astrology includes astronomy and reflects a yogic or integrative approach to the universe that studies how the individual and the cosmos are related, and how biological forces and celestial phenomena mirror each other.

It is the basis of the Hindu calendar that is still followed throughout the country

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and used for determining the date of festivals.

Vedic astrology is used for determining the right timing of Vedic rituals and for the right timing of all. It is also used for

naming of children in India, using sounds that reflect the moon's constellation at the time of birth.

Vedic Astrology uses various remedial measures like gemstones, mantras and *Yagyas* (rituals).

## *Inspiration*

*The fragrance of flowers spreads only in the direction of the wind the reputation of a noble person spreads in all*

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# MEDIEVAL INDIA

- The Mauryan Empire (322 BC To 188 BC)
  - From Mauryans To Gupta Period
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# MEDIEVAL INDIA

## Objectives

- To give an overview of the two leading Empires of Ancient India
- To highlight the significant contribution of Emperor Ashoka.
- To give prominent features of Golden Age of India
- To highlight the contribution of Harsha Vardhan

## 2.1 The Mauryan Empire (322 BC To 188 BC)

The period of the Mauryan Empire marks a new epoch in the history of India. It was the world first secular state. In this period politics, art, trade and commerce of India was elevated to a glorious height. Moreover, Indian contact with the outside world was established effectively rule during these period.

### Sources

The nearest authoritative source which can give us an idea of the Mauryan State apparatus is the Arthashastra - a Sanskrit classic on the principles of politico-economic organisation authored by Chanakya who was the principal adviser to the first Mauryan Emperor, It gives us a picture of administration, society and the economy of the country.

Indica written by Megasthenes, a Chinese traveler, throw light on the people, government and institutions of India under Maurya Empire.

### Ashoka

Buddhist traditions gives us accounts of Ashoka's accession. It is said that his

claim to the throne was disputed and it is also a tale that Ashoka had massacred ninety nine of his brothers. Ashoka was transformed into a Dharmasoka as said by the monks.

### Kalinga War

The most important event of Ashoka's reign was the conquest of Kalinga was the country on the coast of the Bay of Bengal.

This was the 13th year of his reign. The rock edict XIII gives a clue that Kalinga was a country previously unconquered, thus Ashoka's declaration of war was that of unprovoked aggression.

The Kalinga war witnessed terrible manslaughter and destruction. The sufferings and atrocities of the battlefield lacerated the heart of Ashoka. He made the solemn resolve to never unsheath the sword to expand his empire. He was drawn to the teachings of Buddha and devoted his life to the conquest of men's heart by the law of duty or piety. He evolved a policy of Dharma Vijaya, 'conquest by Piety'.

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His love for the living kind extended to the animals and he abolished slaughter of animals for sacrifices and in the royal kitchen. He provided hospitals for treating ailing animals. Construction of reservoirs of water, planting trees and groves for the comfort of the travelers were also undertaken.

Indian National Emblem- the Asoka Lion Capital at Sarnath

The enormous Lion capital of the Ashokan stone pillar that commemorates the Turning of the Wheel (Chakrapavattana) or Buddha preaching the First Sermon at the Deer Park at Sarnath, has been accepted by Government of India as the National Seal or Emblem.

## 2.2 From Mauryans To Gupta

Ashoka was succeeded by his two grandsons whose reign were brief and devoid of any significant development.

With the fall of the Mauryans the political unity, which India had attained, ended and number of petty states cropped up in India and Afghanistan.

### The Gupta Period

In 319 AD, the king Chandragupta II (the second) managed to unite all of northern India into a great empire again. Even some of the south was brought under Guptan power.

### Chandra Gupta Vikramaditya

Thus Chandragupta ascended the throne of Patilaputra in about 375AD.

On assuming the throne of the Gupta empire he took to the title of Vikramaditya

### 2.2.1 GOLDEN AGE OF INDIAN HISTORY

The Gupta period has been described as the golden age of Indian history. It extended from the period of 320AD to 480AD. During this period literature, art and science flourished. Religious toleration and freedom of worship speaks greatly of the Guptas.

#### Fine Arts

Many of the finest paintings of ancient India were executed during Gupta period (320-600 AD), the best example being the murals at Ajanta caves. The colorful and vibrant murals at Ajanta are famous for the meticulously observed details of nature and for perceptive delineations of a variety of human characters, expressions and mood.

#### Panchatantra

It was during the Gupta period that the Panchatantra, a collection of fables, was written. It is said that these stories were written to teach statecraft to disinterested princes. In these stories, animals and birds play the part of king's ministers and common men. These animal stories were a help in instructing children in moral values. The famous work Hitopadesa is based on Panchatantra.

#### Universities

Gupta rulers encouraged higher learning by patronizing centers of higher education at Nalanda, Takshila, Ujjain, Vikramshila and Vallabhi. Each

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university specialized in a particular field of study. Takshshila specialized in the study of medicine, while Ujjain laid emphasis on astronomy. Nalanda, being the biggest centre, handled all branches of knowledge. It was a residential university where the staff and students had free board and lodging. No fees were charged and the students were admitted after a tough entrance test. During the Gupta period India became a centre for higher studies by attracting scholars from all parts of India and from several foreign countries.

### Other Achievements

- The Iron Pillar located at Meharulli, Delhi is another fine example of the great achievements of Gupta reign. In spite of being 1600 years old, this Iron Pillar is still standing without any rust.
- Celebrated astronomers Aryabhatta calculated the correct value of pi in AD 499 lived in this period. He also calculated the length of the solar year as 365.358 days and later postulated that the Earth was a sphere, rotating on its own axis and revolving around the Sun as well as the exact cause of eclipses.

## *Inspiration*

*The education that fosters ego, laziness and immoral behavior then it's better to remain uneducated.*



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# THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

- Expansion of Mughal Empire
  - Bhakti Movement
  - Modern India
  - British Colonial Period - Colonial Rule (1858-1918)
  - Independent India
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# THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

## Objectives

- To give an overview of the important achievements of the Mughal period.
- To discuss the synthesis of Indo Islamic tradition in India.
- To highlight the developments in the fields of architecture.
- To provide information on the Bhakti and Sufi movement.

## Introduction

With the rise of Islam and the unification of Arab tribes a new movement of expansion set in the World history. Muslim armies after conquering Syria and Persia conquered extensive territories in India. Number of Muslim Dynasties ruled over India during the medieval period. These were the Khilijis, Tuqhalqs, and Sayyid dynasties. A prominent dynasty, which made a deep impact on Indian Culture, was the Mughal Dynasty.

The Mughal Dynasty is a line of Muslim emperors who reigned in India from 1526 to 1858. Babur, the first Mughal emperor, was a descendant of the Turkish conqueror Timur Invaded India from Afghanistan and founded the Mughal Empire on the ruin of the Delhi Sultanate.

The Mughal Monarchs are 1) **Babur**, 2) **Humayun**, 3) **Akbar**, 4) **Jehangir**, 5) **Shah Jehan**, 6) **Aurangzeb**, each of them ruled with a unique distinctive style.

### Akbar

Humayun's son Akbar, who reigned from 1556 to 1605 firmly established

Mughal supremacy in northern India. He extended a sound administrative system, and won the loyalty of his Hindu subjects by abolishing the personal tax on them and by appointing them to high civil and military posts. Akbar was receptive to all creeds and doctrines, and he tried to found an eclectic religion.

## 3.1 Expansion of Mughal Empire

When Akbar ascended the throne, only a small portion of what had formerly been comprised within the Mughal empire owned his authority, and he devoted himself to the recovery of the revolted provinces. He expanded the Mughal empire to include the Gujarat (1572), Bengal (1574), Kabul (1581), and Kashmir (1586), among others. Over each of these, as it was restored, he placed a governor, whom he superintended over.

To win over the Rajputs,. Akbar followed a policy of reconciliation with the Rajputs and won their support by establishing matrimonial alliances. However, Akbar faced stiff opposition from one of the Rajput Rulers Maharana Pratap.

## A PATRIOTIC LEADER MAHARANA PRATAP

*Maharana Pratap* was a great Rajput King. The Rajputs are a brave and a chivalrous race who were feudal kings in ancient India before the Mughals came. They were the first to resist the Mughal invaders and many wars were fought between the Rajputs and the Mughals. Though the Mughals captured the north of India they were unsuccessful in capturing central India where they

faced tough opposition from the Rajput kings there.

Akbar wanted to control the whole of India and used a mix of tolerance, generosity, and force to overcome the Rajput kings. One of the most gallant Rajput kings was Rana Pratap who did not want to give up his kingdom to the Mughals.

Rana Pratap was the Grandson of Raja Udai Singh (Udaipur is named after him), the king of Chittod.

Rana Pratap led the Rajputs against the army of Akbar to preserve the independence of Mewar. Rana Pratap not only had to face the mighty Mughals but also had to fight against other Rajput kings (Raja Todar Mal and Raja Man Singh) who aligned with the Mughals.

In the Battle of Haldighati (1576) fought between Maharana Pratap and the Mughals; the Rajputs were not able to overcome the combined strength of the Mughals and the renegade Rajput princes who had played the role of traitors. Maharana Pratap was badly hurt in the battle and was saved by his wise horse Chetak, who took him in an unconscious state away from the battle scene.



Rana Pratap died in 1597 when his son Amar Singh took over the kingdom.

Although Maharana Pratap was not able to thwart the Muslims successfully, the saga of Rajput resistance to Muslim rule continued till the 17th century when the baton of the struggle for Indian Independence from Mughals was taken up by the upcoming power of the Marathas, who brought about an end to Muslim domination of India.

### *Gurudev's Vichar*

*'Pratap accepted the title of Maharana to mobilize the Rajputs against the Mughals and not for any personal gain. His entire life was devoted towards the cause of Independence in which he undertook personal hardships and fought with valor'.*



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## State and Religion

From a religious standpoint, Akbar's state was built on the principle *sulahkul*, or "universal tolerance." All religions were to be equally tolerated in the administration of the state. In Akbar's theory of government, the ruler's duty is to ensure justice (*'adale*) for all the people in his care no matter what their religion.

### Din-i Ilahi

Akbar realized that as an emperor he was a spiritual leader of his people and therefore devoted considerable amounts of time and resources to sorting out the common truth in the multiple religions he ruled over.

- From this concern he developed a new religion he called Din-i Ilahi, or "The Religion of God." The concept was based on the belief that every faith contained the essential truth that God is unified and one thing
- The concept of new religion, came up by a series of debates at his court between representatives of the various religions, which included Christianity (Catholic Jesuits), Hindus, Zoroastrians, and Janis.
- In addition to Islam, the Din-i Ilahi also contained aspects of Jainism, Zoroastrianism, and Hinduism. The Din-i Ilahi borrowed from Jainism a respect and care for all living things, and it derived from Zoroastrianism the idea of divine kingship.

## Fatehpur Sikri

During Akbar reign a completed new city, Fatehpur Sikri was established in Agra in 1578. The city contains a mosque, a palace, a lavish and huge garden, a worship hall for *Din-i Ilahi*, and a tomb of Saint Shaykh Salim Chishti. The city served for a while as Akbar's capital and lavish court.

### Literature and Emergence of Urdu Language

Akbar courtiers included some of the prominent literary figures such as Raja Birbal, Raja Man Singh and Pritiviraj Rathod. Most of the literature produced during this period was religious in character.

The Urdu language came into existence as a linguistic synthesis of the Hindus and the Muslims. Amir Khusrau is widely recognized as the father of the Urdu language was an important Personality in Mughal court. He took a keen interest in music and according to folklore is the man who popularized the sitar and the tabla in this period.

## Inspiration

Set your own goals so that one day you can reach there if you rely on someone to help you then you will meet

## SHORT STORY -AKBAR BIRBLE - The Three Questions

King Akbar was very fond of Birbal. This made one courtier very jealous. One day Akbar praised Birbal in front of the courtier. This made the courtier very angry and he said that the king praised Birbal unjustly and if Birbal could answer three of his questions, he would accept the fact that Birbal was intelligent. The three questions were

1. How many stars are there in the sky
2. Where is the centre of the Earth and
3. How many men and how many women are there in the world.

Immediately Akbar asked Birbal the three questions and informed him that if he could not answer them, he would have to resign as chief minister.

To answer the first question, Birbal brought a hairy sheep and said "There

are as many stars in the sky as there is hair on the sheep's body. My friend the courtier is welcome to count them if he likes."

To answer the second question, Birbal drew a couple of lines on the floor and bore an iron rod in it and said "this is the centre of the Earth, the courtier may measure it himself if he has any doubts."

In answer to the third question, Birbal said "Counting the exact number of men and women in the world would be a problem as there are some specimens like our courtier friend here who cannot easily be classified as either. Therefore if all people like him are killed, then and only then can one count the exact number."

### Shah Jahan

Shah Jahan ruled from 1628 to 1658. He was a great patrons of the arts, and Mughal painting and architecture, blending Persian and Indian traditions, reached their zenith at this time.

### The Taj Mahal

Taj Mahal or "the Crown Palace", is a beautifully crafted white marble monument of India, a memento of love that was built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in the memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal.

### Construction Of The Mausoleum - Taj Mahal

Work on Taj Mahal began in 1633 and 20,000 workers laboured for 17 years to build it. The most skilled architects, inlay craftsmen, calligraphers, stone-

carvers and masons came from all across Indian and lands as distant as Persia and Turkey. The master mason was from Baghdab, an expert in building the double dome from Persia, and an inlay specialist from Delhi.

The other structure built during this period are Shish Mahal which is located close to the royal apartments and has hundreds of small mirrors embedded in stucco decorations, in intricate floral and geometrical designs.

### Aurangzeb

Shah Jehan's son Aurangzeb was the last Great Mughal. Reigning from 1658 to 1707, he was a stern puritan and a religious bigot who sought to impose orthodox Islam on all of India. He

dismissed Hindus from public service, reimposed tax on them, and destroyed their temples.

The imposition of Jizya on the Hindus in 1679, which was an anti Hindu policy, resulted in the rise of the Rajput in a revolt in 1769.

Aurangzeb spent the latter half of the reign trying to conquer southern India. Although he brought the Mughal Empire to its greatest extent, his wars helped weld the Marathas into a powerful enemy and exhausted imperial resources

## A PATRIOTIC LEADER

### Chhatrapati Shivaji

Shivaji founded the Hindu kingdom in the Deccan against all odds, fighting against the mighty Mughals. He inspired and united the common man to fight against the tyranny of Mughal ruler Aurangzeb, by inculcating a sense of pride and nationality in them.

At the age of 16, he took a pledge to establish a sovereign Hindu state.. He clearly outstands all the rulers and generals of India by the exemplary life he lived and is thus respected by the entire cross section of Indians. Shivaji is to India what Napoleon was to Europe.

He raised a strong army and navy, constructed and repaired forts, used guerilla warfare tactics, developed a strong intelligence network, gave equal treatment to the people from all religions and castes based on merit, and functioned like a seasoned Statesman and General.

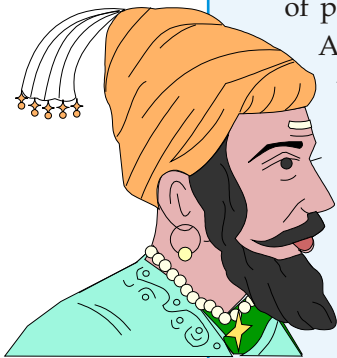
The tiny kingdom established by Chhatrapati Shivaji known as "Hindavi Swaraja" (Sovereign Hindu state) grew

and spread beyond Attock in Northwest India (now in Pakistan) and beyond Cuttack in East India in course of time, to become the strongest power in India. The Peshwas (Pune), Shindes Gwalior, Gaekwads (Baroda) & Holkars (Indore) contributed to its growth. The history of India is incomplete without the history of Marathas and Shivaji is the nucleus of Maratha history. Shivaji has been a source of inspiration and pride and will continue to inspire generations in future.

#### *Gurudev Vichar*

*'The success of Shivaji laid in his organizational ability, excellent leadership skills and patriotism.*

*He was an excellent administrator and an outstanding politician of the time Shivaji was not only the maker of the Maratha nation, but also the greatest constructive genius of medieval India. States fall, empires break up, dynasties become extinct, but the memory of a true 'hero as King' like Shivaji remains an imperishable historical legacy for an entire human race. His dazzling victories and ever-ready smile made him the idol of his soldiers.'*



## Decline of Mughals

Soon after Aurangzeb's death the empire broke up. The and last Mughal ruler, Bahadur Shah II was deposed by the British in 1858.

## 3.2 Bhakti Movement

### Introduction

To understand the many fascinating aspects of Indian culture and life, one must understand the role of devotion in India. Devotion is perhaps the only thing that binds the people of India, superceding such barriers as languages, caste of birth, religious beliefs, and racial diversity.

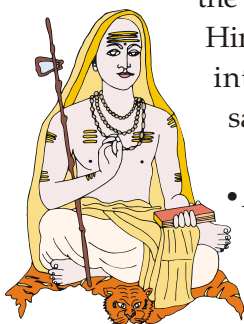
### The Concept

*Bhakti* (from bhaj into revere): Devotion stands for intense personal attachment to God; in Hindu philosophy and thought, Bhakti is one of the ways to reach God. It also the name of an important religious and social movement in medieval India that propagated Bhakti.

Political conquest of Muslims was taking root and the Indian society, ever divided over caste hierarchy was slowly forgetting its glorious past of universal brotherhood, transcendental knowledge and realization of God. Several saints appeared on the scene making people aware of age old values, especially when there was a challenge of Islamic supremacy.

### Adi Shankaracharya

- Shankaracharya is the first among the three acharyas who reformed Hindu religion by giving their own interpretation to the ancient sacred texts.



- At the time, the vedic texts which have come down to Indians through the ages and only orally studied

were the monopoly of a certain class. This knowledge was known as shruti, or learning by careful listening. The vedas were in very old esoteric language were beyond the reach of the common man.

- The tremendous task of interpreting the true catholic spirit of Hindu philosophy was yet to be undertaken, and the three acharyas, Shankaracharya (c 788 - 820 AD), Ramanujacharya (11th century AD), and Madhwacharya (13th century AD) -- all hailing from southern part of India are credited for the status of present day Hindu thought and philosophy.
- Shankara then took missionary work traveling the entire country
- He established four muthas (or monasteries) in the four corners of the Hindu land -- Kashmir in the North, Dwaraka in the West, Puri in the East and in Kanchi in the South.
- Shankaracharya was only thirty-two years old at the time of his death. But his life's mission was complete. Revival and reformation of original Vedic religion, which is considered intellectual Hinduism is alive to this day.

### Saint Kabir

(15th century: 1440-1518 A.D.)

- Kabir is the most known disciple of Ramananda. Tradition says that he was a adopted son of a poor Muslim weaver couple who were earlier Hindus. They belonged to lower strata in the eyes of both

Hindus and Muslims, and hence not bound by strict rituals and religious discipline.

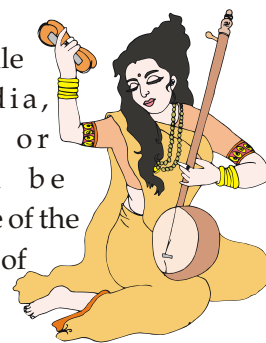
- This made Kabir an unconventional poet and mystic. He had no regular schooling and took to weaving, his family vocation and went on singing poems.

#### THE ROLE OF GURU

Kabir could not serve or claim anybody as guru because of his humble birth but was drawn to Ramanand's teachings. He thought of winning Guru's blessings in its own way. Ramananda went to the river Ganga, everyday for bath very early in the morning. One day when he was returning from Ghat, his foot touched a human body in the darkness. Startled he exclaimed, "Ram, Ram!" Immediately Kabir got up and with folded hands and appealed to the saint. "Master, you have given me the Ram mantra and made me your Sishya, even though I am only a poor Muslim weaver" and told about his yearnings to reach God. Ramananda was touched deeply by Kabir's devotion and humility and accepted him as a disciple.

- Kabir preached the masses in the most unconventional way. He stressed on manual labor, equality of man and simple life. People liked the moral message in his songs which poured out from his heart and

#### Saint Mirabai (1547-1614 AD)



- Among the female saints of India, Bhakti Mira or Mirabai can be considered as one of the foremost mystics of the world.
- From childhood she exhibited spiritual traits. She was passionately attached to the idol of Giridhar Gopal, a form of Lord Krishna.
- She was married to crown prince of Chittore. But shortly after, her husband Bhojraj and father-in-law Rana Sangh died.
- She spent all her time in praying, meditation, singing and dancing before her beloved idol, installed in the palace premises. The place started attracting many devotees, wandering saints and spiritual seekers
- More than 400 songs ascribed to Mira known as Padas (lyrics) have been collected.

#### Tulsi Das

Tulsidas wrote the story of Rama, the virtuous Prince of Ayodhya, in vernacular as a moral discourse to instill ethical values in private and public life.

His narrative poem Ramcharitmanas soon acquired the status of a sacred book and continues to be regarded by many Hindus in the countryside as a



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most useful encapsulation of traditional wisdom.

#### **Baba Goraknath : Immortal Master**

- Of all the Masters through the ages, there is one acknowledged Master who has been referred to in the ancient scriptures, in legends and mystic tales, in passing mention by many renowned masters. Mentioned in the Puranas and other scriptures, he is known as Guru Gorakhnath.
- There are innumerable legends about Guru Gorakhnath, though there are no records of when he was born, where he hails from, or any historical facts associated with events in his life. He is mentioned in reference to Adi Shankaracharya who lived in the eighth century. He is also associated with Kabir in the fifteenth century.
- It is widely believed that Guru Gorakh Nath has been alive for thousands of years, watching over the welfare of mankind from behind the scenes and occasionally appearing to accomplish a specific goal.
- Guru Gorakh Nath is a legend in the world of everyday reality where logic prevails, where the senses determine the truth of existence and where reality is limited by the measurable. In the world of man he is spoken of in tones that vary from wonder and incredulity to sheer disbelief.

### **3.3 Modern India**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- To highlight the important historical events of the period.
- To discuss the oppressive policies of the Britishers.
- To provide information on the contribution of freedom fighters of India.
- To discuss the role of spiritual leaders in Indians freedom struggle.

#### **The Beginning**

The East India Company chartered by the British Crown and ultimately responsible to the parliament, launched the British rule in India.

#### **Expansion**

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the company succeeded in establishing power in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and the east coast. After the battle of Plassey, in 1757, they secured permission from the Mughals to collect land revenue from these provinces in return for an annual tribute for maintaining law and order.

The many changes that Britain had brought about in the administration and the ways of life created considerable discontent among the masses.

#### **3.3.1 THE FIRST WAR OF INDEPENDENCE**

This culminated in the Revolt of 1857, which shook the very foundation of the Company's rule in India.

In March 1857, the Indian army at Barrackpore mutinied and this rebellion spread to the other areas to become a bid for Indian independence. It was the first serious attempt of a large section of the country to throw off the

British yoke. The uprising was expression of widespread discontent with and anger towards the British rule. Despite the failure the revolt proved a turning point in India's history.



#### Did you know

The British had offered a reward of Rs. 20,000 for the capture of the rani.

#### Rani Laxmi Bai

Rani Laxmibai was born in 1830 at Banaras in a wealthy family and was named Manukarnika at birth. She learned to read, write, use weapons at an early age.

She accepted the name Lakshmi Bai when she married Gangadhar Rao, the Maharajah of Jhansi and became the Rani of Jhansi at the tender age of 14. Gangadhar Rao's grandfather had signed a treaty with the British which granted him and his heirs and successors title to rule Jhansi.

Gangadhar Rao did not have any children and he adopted one of his relatives Damodar Rao as his heir. After Gangadhar Rao's death in 1853 the British (who had colonized most of India by then) refused to accept Damodar Rao as the legal heir of Jhansi and wanted to annex the kingdom into their rule.

According to Hindu law Damodar was the legal heir. Rani Laxmibai appealed to the British rulers in London to accept Damodar as the legal heir to the throne of Jhansi and not annex the kingdom but the British refused. Despite her appeal the British took over.

In 1857 there was a mutiny in the British Army at Meerut. In Jhansi also the army rebelled and killed the British Army Officers. This led to a state where the Rani was left to defend herself and her

kingdom from a coup. She took over the administration of the kingdom once again.

In 1858 the British army once again marched towards Jhansi. Not willing to let the British takeover her kingdom the Rani built an army of 14,000 volunteers to fight the British. The soldiers of Jhansi fought very bravely for 2 weeks and the Rani led the forces in this battle. However after 2 weeks of fighting the British took control of Jhansi. The queen escaped on horseback to the fortress of Kalpi.

Here she organized a few other kingdoms to rebel against the British. These rebel forces captured Gwalior from the British. The British were determined to win back Gwalior and lay siege there in 1858. It is during this battle that the Rani lost her life.

She became a symbol of courage and freedom for the people of India.

#### Popular Song in praise of the courage of the Rani.

How valiantly like a man fought she,  
The Rani of Jhansi  
On every parapet a gun she set  
Raining fire of hell,  
How well like a man fought the Rani of  
Jhansi  
How valiantly and well

#### Transfer of Power

After the revolt the British parliament took over the entire responsibility of governing India.

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### 3.4 British Colonial Period - Colonial Rule (1858 August 1918)

After 1858, India became officially a British colony as British crown took control of India from East India Company. The British crown put a Secretary of State for India in charge of India.

A combination of administrative failures and natural factors resulted in large number of famines in India that killed millions of people  
1866 Famine in Bengal and Orissa 1 million perished  
1869 Intense famine in Rajasthan 1.5 million perished  
1876/78 Famine in Bombay, Madras and Mysore 5 million perished.

#### Economic Destruction

India was predominately an agricultural country. British administrative laws ruined the traditional agriculture system. Peasants were forced to pay high revenue under various agricultural settlements and no efforts were made to improve the productivity of land.

Indian handicrafts completely collapsed and the craftsmen were impoverished. India became a market place for finished goods from England. Poverty increased and the discontent among the masses motivated the Indians to join the revolt in large numbers. Thus, the British drained India of her wealth and all her natural resources.

#### Formation of Indian National Congress:

Indian National Congress was established under in December 1885 in Bombay. **WC Banerjee** became the first president of Indian National Congress. It met every year in December in different parts of the country. In the early years, the congress used only Petition and appeal to draw the attention of British government.

#### Important Events Of National Movement

- 1878 Discriminative Vernacular Press act promulgated to restrict the power of Indian Press
- 1905 First Partition of Bengal.
- 1919 Rowlatt Act intended to perpetuate the extraordinary powers enjoyed by the Government during the war provokes country-wide protests. Massacre at Jalianwala Bagh.
- 1920 Congress okays non-cooperation movement.. Students leave colleges, lawyers leave practice. Bonfire of British clothes, etc. to show popular dissatisfaction with the reforms.
- 1922 Civil disobedience movement. Congress makes Gandhiji sole leader of the Masses
- 1928 Simon Commission comes to India. Boycott by all parties.
- 1929 Lo Lahore session of the Congress asks for independence. On the midnight of Dec. 31, Jawaharlal Nehru hoists National Flag at Lahore.



- 1930 January 26 observed as Independence day all over India.
- 1942 Congress adopts Quit India resolution on Aug 8.
- 1947 Lord Mountbattan takes charge of the ruins of British India. India partitioned into two parts. India attains independence (Aug. 15).

Partition of Bengal created a massive outburst of public anger against British rule. Intellectual people as well as common man took part in mass agitation. Poet Rabindranath Tagore actively supported the movement. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's '*Bande Matram*' was taken up as the soul-stirring slogan. Several groups of revolutionaries started operating in Bengal. Aurobindo Ghosh ,Rasbihari Bose and Jatindranath Mukherjee (Bagha Jatin) were some of the important leaders of these revolutionary groups.

**First Partition Of Bengal -**

Following the '**Divide and Rule**' policy Bengal was divided by the British, on October 16, 1905, into Hindu and Muslim areas.

**Rabindranath Tagore**

**Rabindranath Tagore** (May 6, 1861 - August 7, 1941) an Indian poet, Hindu philosopher and nationalist who was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913.



Among his literary work is included, though poetry ,novels, essays, short stories, drama, and no less notably, over 2000 songs .

The importance of Tagore as a figure in literary history is perhaps aptly illustrated by the fact that two countries, (India and Bangladesh), adopted as national anthems songs authored by him. He won the Nobel Prize in literature in 1913, the first non-westerner to receive this honour, for his English translation of his powerful work *Gitanjali*. W.B.Yeats, and Wilfred Owen.

Tagore was also instrumental in the early stages of the nationalistic movement in India, He was the first to reject the knighthood given by the British crown.

*Inspiration*

*Do not treat the people, the way you would not like people to treat you.*

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## **Jalianwala Bagh Massacre 1919**

British responded to the Indian help in World War I by enacting in 1919, The **Rowlatt Act**. This allowed the government to imprison anyone without a trial or a conviction. There were widespread protests to this law. On April 13, 1919, thousands of people gathered peacefully in protest against this law in Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar Punjab.

British troops marched to the park accompanied by an armored vehicle on which machine guns were mounted. The vehicle was unable to enter the park compound due to the narrow entrance. The troops were under the command of General Reginald Edward Harry Dyer. He ordered his men to open fire on the peaceful gathering. Since there was no other exit but the one already manned by the troops. Some people also jumped into a well to escape the bullets. More than a thousands people including women and children were massacred.

## **Non Cooperation Movement**

'Jalianwala Bagh Massacre' catalyzed the militant movement against British rule and paved the way for Gandhi's *Non-Cooperation Movement* against the British in 1920.. The **Civil Disobedience or Non-cooperation movement** was started. The ensuing movement was the first countrywide popular movement.

Foreign clothes were burned and Khadi (home woven cloth) became a symbol of freedom. By the end of 1921, all of the important leaders, except Gandhi were in jail. In February 1922, at Chaurichaura, Uttar Pradesh, violence erupted and Gandhi called off the movement. He was then arrested and the movement ended.

## **Revolutionary Movement in India during 1920s and 1930s**

The revolutionaries in northern India founded the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) to organize armed revolution to overthrow colonial rule and establish in its place a Federal Republic of the United States of India.

Prominent Revolutionaries during this period were Ashfaqullah Khan, Ramprasad Bismil, Roshan Singh, Rajendra Lahiri and others.

*Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt* threw a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly on 8 April 1929 protesting against the passage of the Public Safety Bill and the Trade Disputes Bill that would reduce the civil liberties of citizens.

The aim was not to kill, for the bombs were relatively harmless but as the leaflet they threw into the Assembly hall "If the deaf are to hear, the sound has to be very loud'. The objective was to get arrested and to use trial court as a forum for propaganda so that people would become familiar with their movement and ideology.

## Bhagat Singh



At the age of 23, if anyone was smiling just before he was being hanged to death, it was *Shaheed* Bhagat Singh. The massacre at Jallianwala Bagh on April 13, 1919 drove him to go to Amritsar, where he kissed the earth sanctified by the martyrs' blood and brought back home a little of the soaked soil.

In search of revolutionary groups and ideas, he met Sukhdev and Rosing and together they rooted the British empire. He along with the help of Chandrashekhar Azad, formed the Hindustan Socialist Republican Army (HSRA). The aim of this Indian revolutionary movement was now defined as not only to make India independent, but also to create "a socialist India."

During the Simon Commission, Sher-e-Punjab Lala Lajpat Rai was wounded and died later. To avenge his death, Bhagat Singh and Rajguru killed Mr. Saunders (one of the deputy officers in connection with the Simon Commission).

When the British government promulgated the two bills "Trade

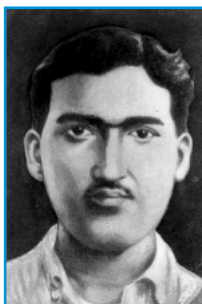
Union Dispute Bill" and "Public Safety Bill" which Bhagat Singh and his party thought were Black Laws aimed at curbing citizens' freedom and civil liberties, they decided to oppose these bills by throwing a bomb in the Central Assembly Hall (which is now Lok Sabha). However, things changed, and the Britishers arrested Bhagat Singh and his friends on April 8, 1929.

He and his friends wanted to be shot dead, since they were termed as prisoners of war. Their request was not fulfilled, and on March 23, 1931, Bhagat Singh, Shivram Rajguru, and Sukhdev were hanged to death.

This man's only mission in life was to see his country free from British rule. He did his best and when he was being led to the gallows, he was satisfied that he had lived up to his principles, irrespective of the consequences. The only thing that made him sad was that he couldn't do more for his country.

### *Gurudev Vichar*

*"This man's only mission in life was to see his country free from British rule. He did his best and when he was being led to the gallows, he was satisfied that he had*



### **Ashfaqualla Khan, Freedom Fighter**

He was the young pathan patriot who kissed his hangman's noose and gave up his soul with the name of Allah on his lips. A courageous young man endowed with a will of steel, he dedicated everything to the service of India and her struggle for freedom.

## Resolution on Complete Independence or "Poorna Sawarj

In the Lahore session of Congress in 1929, the resolution of "Poorna

Swaraj", Complete Independence, was adopted. On December 21, 1929, the Trianga (tricolor) flag was unfurled. On January 26, 1930, the first Independence Day was celebrated.

### FATHER OF THE NATION -Mahatma Gandhi

Gandhiji's life was dedicated to the ideals of Truth, Non-violence and Love. 'The Bhagavad Gita is my mother,' he once said; and the name of Sri Rama was his shield. He was the architect of India's freedom and one of the greatest men of this century.

#### Gandhiji -The Leader of India

The Indian National Congress carried all the major struggles for freedom, during three decades, under the leadership of Gandhiji.

#### Gandhiji's Legacy

The Swaraj or Freedom that Gandhiji dreamed was not merely of a political character.. He called it the new social order 'Ramraj' - 'the Kingdom of God on Earth'. Love would be the sole law there. All would be dutiful. There would be no distinction of caste, religion and community.

All would be equal in the eyes of religion, Gandhi called such a state of society 'Sarvodaya (The Prosperity of All).

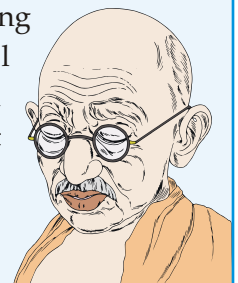
To realize Sarvodaya, man has to live with fellow men, with other living beings and nature in understanding and harmony.

Single-minded devotion to the God of Truth and prayer are lights that Gandhiji has bequeathed to us. He could not remain without prayer even for a single day. 'Silent prayer is my greatest strength' - he used to say.

*Raghupathi Raghava Rajaram, Pathitha Pavana Seetharam.'*

It is significant that, when the assassin shot at him and he bodyslumped to find eternal rest in the lap of Mother Earth, the last words he uttered were 'Rama', 'Rama'.

Mahatma Gandhiji, called 'Bapu' by his loving countrymen, will ever be remembered as a saint and a great leader of men.



## Dandi March

On March 12, 1930, Gandhi marched from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi, to protest against 'state monopoly on salt' often called the Dandi march. In every village he went, he made stirring speeches, rousing the people to join the march to Dandi. The Government swooped down and arrested him while he was in the village of Ras.

## Rise of Subhash Chandra Bose in Indian freedom movement -

Subhash Chandra Bose was born in 1897. He was selected for Indian civil services but resigned from it and returned to India in 1921.



In 1938 he was elected as the President of Indian Congress. Subhash brought new ideas to the Congress and wanted a quick move towards launching a freedom struggle so he resigned from congress and formed the new organization Forward Block. Subhash later became President of Indian National Army, which played a crucial role during last part of Indian freedom movement.

Subhash army known as Azad Hind Fauz (Free India Army) Subhash Chandra Bose was popularly called 'Netaji' by his followers. His call of '*Tum mujhe Khun dou mai tumhe Azadi dunga*' (I promise you freedom, if you are ready to spill your blood) encouraged thousands youths to join the freedom movement.

### ***Gurudev Vichar***

*"The life of Subhas Bose was governed by the Principles of Karma yoga. He had deep faith in Spirituality and Gita was the main source of his inspiration. Netaji had played a major role in mobilizing the financial resources from Indians settled abroad and imbibed in them the spirit of nationalism".*

## Quit India Movement 1942

We shall either free India or die in the attempt; We shall not live to see the

perpetuation of our slavery" - Mahatma Gandhi ( Quit India Movement) The Congress passed the famous Quit India resolution at a session in Bombay. The movement called for non-violent but wide spread struggle for India's freedom. But before the Congress could start the movement, the government arrested all the major leaders and the Congress was declared illegal. Spontaneous popular revolts broke out through out the country with the battle cry of 'British Quit India'.

### 3.5.1 THE SPRITUAL LEADERS

#### **Ram Mohan Roy**

Ram Mohan Roy (May 22, 1772- September 27, 1833) was the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, one of the first Hindu reform movements. His remarkable influence was apparent in the fields of politics, public administration and education as well as religion.

In the social, legal and religious reforms that he advocated, Roy was moved primarily by considerations of humanity. He insisted on the authority of the Vedas, Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras.. He stated that according to the Hindu scriptures, the best means of achieving bliss was through pure spiritual contemplation on and worship of the Supreme Being, and that sacrificial rites were intended only for persons of less subtle intellect.



### Sage Dayanand Saraswati



The life and mission of Dayaanand Sarawati was the reformtion of Hindu Religion in 19 th Century. He founded the Arya Samaj and reaminded the countrymen about the value of Vedas. Dayanand was primarily responsible for reviving the ancient educational system of Gurukul in India.

### Ramakrishna Paramahamsa

Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa (February 18, 1836 - August 16, 1886) was a religious leader. While a worshipper of Kali, he preached that all religions lead to the same goal, and taught spiritual religion against ritualism. The Hindu renaissance that India experienced in the 19th century can be said to have really begun with his life and work.



The four key concepts in Ramakrishna's teachings were the following:

- the oneness of existence
- the divinity of human beings
- the unity of God
- the harmony of religions

### Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda (January 12, 1863 - July 4, 1902) is considered one of the most famous and influential spiritual leaders of the Hindu religion. He is considered by many as an icon for his fearless courage, his positive exhortations to the youth.

Born Narendranath Dutta, in Kolkata in India he became famous as Swami

Vivekananda, when he became the chief disciple of Shri Ramakrishna. One important lesson he claimed to receive from Ramakrishna was that "*Jiva is Shiva* " (each individual is divinity itself). This became his Mantra, and he coined the concept of *daridra narayana seva* - the service of God in and through (poor)human beings.

His books (compiled from lectures given around the world) on the four Yogas are very influential and still seen as fundamental texts for anyone interested in the Hindu practice of Yoga.



Vivekananda is best remembered as the man who "stole the show" at the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, where he earned wild applause for beginning his address with the famous words, "Brothers and sisters of America." This event marks the beginning of western interest in Hinduism.

Within a few years of the Parliament, he had started Vedantic centres in New York and London, lectured at major universities and generally kindled western interest in Hinduism. After this, he returned to India, where he died. He was only 39 years old.

### Aurobindo

Sri Aurobindo (August 15, 1872 - December 5, 1950) was an Indian nationalist, scholar and Hindu mystic philosopher and guru.

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At the age of seven Aurobindo was sent to St. Paul's school in London, England where he was taught Latin, Greek and all the classical western school subjects. While at St. Paul's he received the Butterworth Prize for literature, the Bedford Prize for history and a scholarship to Cambridge University. He returned to India in 1893



In his youth he was the editor of a Bengali newspaper *Vande Mataram* and wrote extensively on Indian nationalism movement.

His final conversion from an angry nationalist into a profound Hindu mystic occurred while incarcerated for a year in the jail in Kolkata. While incarcerated he was inspired by his meditating on the famed Hindu scripture of the Bhagavad Gita.

The trial for which he was incarcerated was one of the important trials in Indian nationalism movement. There were 49 accused and 206 witnesses. 400 documents were filed and 5000 exhibits were produced including bombs, revolvers and acid. The English judge, C.B. Beechcroft, had been a student with Sri Aurobindo at Cambridge. The trial lasted for one full year. Aurobindo was acquitted.

Sought again by the Indian police he was guided to the French settlements and on April 4, 1910 he finally found refuge with other nationalists in the French colony of Pondicherry. He established his ashram there and did most of his writing and teaching from Pondicherry until 1950.

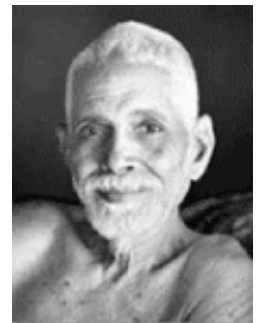
Sri Aurobindo, throughout the later period of his life and until his death dedicated himself to the spiritual transformation of the human race. It was his sincere wish to take humankind out of duality, division, falsehood, and death. He wanted to bring all human beings to a new positive existence that he qualified as "Light, Knowledge, Wisdom."

The birthday of Sri Aurobindo, August 15 which Aurobindo also pointed out was the Feast of the Assumption of Mary in the Catholic Christian religion is celebrated each year by Indians it is the Independence Day of India.

**Maharshi Ramana :**  
*The Sage of Arunachala*  
30th Dec. 1879 to 14th April 1950

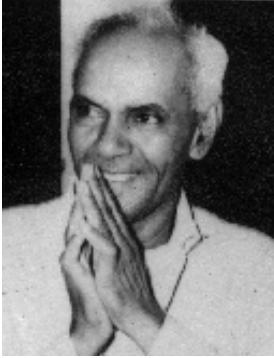
Known as the Sage of Arunachala, He spoke very little and wrote even less. He preferred to communicate through the power of Silence.

The Maharshi's teaching of 'Self-enquiry' (Pure *Advaita*) is simplicity itself, requiring no outward formalities, no outer change of life, only a simple change in 'point of view' and a sustained effort on the part of the seeker. The goal is to remove the ignorance that prevents us from knowing that we are eternally One with our Source, the Supreme Self, or God.



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## Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya



A pioneer of spiritual renaissance, Acharyaji was born on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1911 in Anwalkeheda, Agra district of Uttar Pradesh. He scrupulously carried out the biddings of his Guru, a great Himalayan Yogi when he was fifteen years old.

### *Nationalist Experience*

Gurudev actively participated in the Satyagraha launched by the Congress. He came in contact with several eminent persons involved in the National Movement. Gurudev was always worked a volunteer in the freedom movement. He got the opportunity of living with Gandhiji in Sabarmati Ashram and with Vinoba Bhave in Pavnar Ashram.

In 1933 the annual session of Indian National Congress was held in Calcutta. In those days Congress was considered an anti government organization. People were arrested and police firing was resorted. Gurudev was arrested along with eminent persons like Madan Mohan Malviyaji, Devdas Gandhi, Swarooprani Nehru (mother of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru), Rafi Ahmed Kidwai and Chandrabhanu Gupta.

Gurudev had an opportunity to interact with Malviyaji in the jail where strategies were made to spread the message of National Movement among the masses.

Gurudev has written in his work *My life Legacy and Message-* 'Like Gayatri and Gangotri, Congress had been the fount of my life's course. My Gurudev in his divine voice had given me the

guideline for participating in the freedom struggle. Yuga Dharma (duty to participate in the National Movement) has its own importance. It should be considered as the need of the times and one should rush to fulfill it leaving aside all other work

### *Revival Of Indian Culture*

Ever since the beginning of the Vedic era chanting of Gayatri Mantra, Gayatri Sadhana and Yagya have been considered as the potent means of invoking divine energies. However, with the passage of time, especially during the dark medieval ages of feudalism and foreign domination, there came about a general all round decline of ethical, moral and social values. As a result, Vedic rituals, mode of worship and prayer underwent gross distortions at the hands of the priestly class. Orthodoxy, pomp, self and ostentation were introduced into the modes of worship that led to the undermining the faith in Vedic Dharma.

It was against this backdrop that Yugrishi Pandit Shri Ram Sharma accelerated the process of transformation through his writing and other spiritual endeavors such as collective worship, Yagya, establishment of Shakti peeth and organization of Ashva Medh Yagyas.

Today, all the members of Global Gayatri Pariwar are committed to promote Indian cultural values and ethics all over the world. Some of the virtues held by the members are Tap and Tyag (Hard work and renunciation), Dhyan (Meditation), Sanskars. Through these values India is emerging as the spiritual leader of the world.



**MODULE**

**3**

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# SANATAN DHARMA

- Distinct Features
  - Goals Of Human Life
  - Duties/Dharma In Hinduism
  - Indian Scriptures
  - The Gayatri Mantra
  - Yagya Is Indian Religion
  - Recitation And Meditation
  - Spiritual Training- *Pragya Yog*
  - *Jevan Devta Ki Aradhana*
  - Hindu God And Goddesses
  - Prayer In *Sanatan Dharma*
  - Hindu *Sanskars*
  - Hindu Rituals
  - Symbols In Hinduism
  - Nature And Hinduism
  - Hindu Festivals
  - Interesting Facts About Hindu Way Of Life
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# SANATAN DHARMA

## Objectives

1. To give an understanding about the basic principles of Hinduism.
2. To highlight the importance of Yagna and Gayatri in daily life.
3. To give an overview of the Hindu Sanskars and Rituals.
4. To provide information on the various Hindu Festivals.
5. To give interesting facts about Hindu way of life.

## Introduction

Indian Culture or Hinduism, as it is popularly known, is like a huge tree with its branches representing various systems of religious thought. Gayatri Mantra, from which the Vedas are said to be originated is the foundation of this Divine Culture. The Vedas represent the religious tradition and their extension. Upanishads represent the philosophy upon which that tradition is based. Indian Culture essentially preaches: peaceful coexistence, potential divinity of an individual, freedom of thought, Cosmic Unity, non-violence in word, deed, and thought, reverence for all forms of life, and the law of karma: As you sow so shall you reap and rebirth. Unlike other religions of the world, Hinduism does not date from a particular point in time, and has no particular founder. It is based upon the insight and experiences of a large number of sages, saints, and seers. It is essentially a way of life, known in Sanskrit as **Sanatan Dharma** (Sanatan means eternal and Dharma means righteousness or religion).

## 1.1 Distinct Features

### 1.1.1 EXISTENCE OF A SUPREME REALITY

Hindus believe in the Existence of Supreme Reality which manifests itself as transcendent (impersonal) and immanent (personal). In its transcendent aspect, the Supreme Reality is called by various names, such as Supreme Self, Ultimate Reality, and Brahman. In this impersonal aspect, the Supreme Reality is considered formless, attributeless, unchangeable, indeterminate, and beyond the perception of mind and intellect.

If Brahman is compared to an infinite ocean, then Atman is a wave in it. The ocean is never different from its waves, and the waves are never different from the ocean. They are one and the same. Thus, Brahman and Atman are one and the same. It is Atman, which has become the manifold universe. "If I hurt anyone, I actually hurt myself. Therefore, I must not hurt anyone." This realization is the basis of Hindu ethics.

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### 1.1.2 IMMORTALITY OF THE ATMAN

The Sanskrit word atman, meaning God within, is usually translated as soul, self, or spirit. An individual being, according to Hindu view, is the atman living in a human body. According to the Scriptures atman is immortal and divine. The physical body perishes following death, atman cannot. This doctrine is based upon the spiritual experiences of Rishis (sages and seers). From the perfect human being to the lowest worm resides the same omnipresent and omniscient atman. The difference is not in the atman, but in the degree of its manifestation. Just as electricity accomplishes various functions in different electrical appliances, depending upon the design of the appliance, atman manifests itself in different ways in physical bodies, depending upon the type and construction of the body. The degree of manifestation of atman is highest in the human body. In its liberated state of bliss and original purity, the atman is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. However, when it is associated with a particular human body, it gives rise to mind, intellect, and ego. Owing to the existence of maya, the original ignorance, the atman mistakenly identifies itself with the body, mind, and intellect. This false identity is the cause of the soul's bondage to material existence and the consequent pain and suffering in the world. According to Indian Culture freedom (moksha or salvation) from this earthly bondage is the ultimate aim of human life.

### 1.1.3 MOKSHA (FREEDOM OR SALVATION)

The ultimate aim of life is to attain freedom from the cycle of birth and death, or union with God. This union can be achieved through true knowledge (*gyan*), devotion (*bhakti*), or righteous action (*karma*). Purity, self-control, truthfulness, non-violence, and faith are the necessary prerequisites for self-realization. The Indian Culture emphasizes the importance of a true guru (spiritual master) for the attainment of true knowledge of the soul and God.

### 1.1.4 TRUE GURU

A true guru is an enlightened master who guides his or her disciple on the spiritual path. The function of a true guru is two-fold: first, he or she explains the scriptures and guides the disciple on the spiritual path; second, the guru teaches by setting an example with the daily acts of his or her own life. Sometimes by words and sometimes in silence, a true guru purifies the spirit of the disciple. According to Hindu view, a disciple who obeys his or her guru in humility and in reverence attains the highest knowledge by the grace of God. In Hinduism a guru-disciple relationship is the most sacred relationship in life.

### 1.1.5 UNITY OF EXISTENCE

Hinduism believes that the universe is a manifestation of the Universal Spirit, known as Brahman in the Upanishads. Brahman has become all the things and beings of the world. Thus there is perfect unity behind the diversity of the

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world phenomena. The differences appear only when the universe is observed through the mind and the senses alone. However, when the mind is transcended by the wise through spiritual experiences, the Universal Spirit is seen as the sole essence of all things and beings with names and forms.

### 1.1.6 FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Hinduism offers a number of ways to seek union with God. Hindus believe that all true religions are but different paths to God. This doctrine is included in the following verse (Rig Veda 1.164.46)':

*"Ekam sat vipraha, bahudha vadanti. "*  
*"Truth is one, the wise call it by various names."*

Because of its belief in the omnipresence of the Supreme God in every individual, Hinduism teaches tolerance and universal harmony. Hinduism does not look with contempt even upon an atheist. A characteristic of Hinduism is its receptivity and all-comprehensiveness. It is the religion of humanity, of human nature, of the entire world. It cares not to oppose the progress of any other system. Therefore it has no difficulty in including all other religions within its all-embracing arms and ever-widening fold."

### 1.1.7 INCARNATION

Hinduism believes that God incarnates Himself on earth to uphold righteousness, whenever there is a decline of virtue. Thus declares Sri

Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita (BG 4.6, 4.7):

"Whenever there is decline of righteousness and predominance of unjust, I embody Myself. For the protection of the good and for the destruction of evil and for the reestablishment of dharma (righteousness) I am born from age to age."

### 1.1.8 THE LAW OF KARMA

Hinduism believes that God, who is pure bliss and merciful, does not punish or reward anyone. He molds our destinies based upon our own thoughts and deeds. Every action of a person, in thought or deed, brings results, either good or bad, depending upon the moral quality of the action, in accordance with the adage, As you sow, so shall you reap. Human actions do not occur without consequences. Moral consequences of all actions are conserved by Nature. "God keeps an accurate record of all things good and bad. There is no better accountant on earth," says Mahatma Gandhi. If a person performs righteous deeds, he or she will be born into a better life in the next incarnation. For example, a sinner who leads an immoral life will be born as a poor human or as an animal in the next incarnation. A person is born again and again to reap the fruits of his or her own actions. This cycle of birth and rebirth continues until the person attains *moksha*, or freedom from the cycle of birth and death.

#### *Gurudev Vichar*

Karmas in the spiritual parlance are categorized into three categories-

(i) *Sanchit Karmas*-(Past Karmas)- Unknown to the conscious mind of the individual, association of good and bad company leaves some impressions on the psyche . The karmas, which are produced in the process, are known as Sanchit Karmas. These remain stored in some odd corner of inner consciousness and remain in a dormant state in the psyche for thousands of years through successive births. They remain generally inactive, but if a suitable stimulant is provided to them by deliberate, strong conscious repetition of similar deeds, they become active.

(ii) *Prarabdha Karmas*- (Mental karmas), which are voluntarily, deliberately performed under strong emotional stimulus, are known as the Prarabdha Karma. As they are motivated by intense emotions such Karmas produce powerful sanskars. Reactions of violent acts like murder, robbery, betrayal or immoral passionate acts like adultery are very strongly felt by the inner conscience.

(iii) *Kriyaman Karmas*- (Physical Karmas) Physical action falls in the category of Kriyaman Karmas. These produce co current results. Consumption of drugs is followed by intoxication. Death follows consumption of poison. Laws of nature govern interactions between natural elements. Defiance of these laws invites almost constant punishment by nature.

It has already been mentioned that our inner consciousness keeps a constant watch over each of our karma and determines punishment for each offense according to the nature of the act.

In Indian spirituality, karma stands for any physical, verbal, mental or social activity. It means each karma produces an imprint (*Rekha*), which cannot be erased before creating a reaction (*karamaphal*). There is a belief that the Creator (Lord Brahma) inscribes the destiny on the forehead of the human being and this Divine inscription cannot be erased by anyone (*Vidhi ke Likhe ko metanhara*).

Let us examine the concept from a scientific point of view. Microscopic examination shows innumerable furrows in the gray matter all over the brain. Medical science has not so far come to know the biological implication of these indentations. Microscopic research studies have shown the density of these crenulations in the gray matter of highly evolved persons is much more, than in the case of common masses. It shows that these microscopic lines in the grey matter of the brain are nothing but compact subtle impressions created by external activities, which we take as imprints of mental, vocal and physical actions. This record of activities (good or evil deeds) on the neurons of gray matter proves the existence of an intelligent mechanism, which Hindu Mythology refers to as the deity Chitragupta.

In Sanskrit language too, the word Chitragupta means a 'hidden picture'. It shows that there exists in the human

mind a hidden chamber, an inner sentiment mechanism (*Antaha Chetana*) or a subtle state of consciousness (*Sookksham mana*). One may compare it with a back up file of executable programmes in computer parlance.

It is an established fact that the Subtle body (*Sookshma Sharir*) has *Chitta*- which stores traits, habits, inclinations

and temperament. It is also established that '*Chitta*' carries forward its record of good and bad impressions after dissolution of the body. After the physical death, the lines of fate drawn by the *Chitragupta* determines souls new incarnations.

Source- The Absolute Law of Karma

### Strategies To Deal With The Karma

#### *Welcome The Sufferings*

*Do not be afraid of misfortunes which create unhappiness. Do not loose your mental equilibrium. Face misfortunes boldly. Instead of getting worried or uneasy, be prepared to sail through them. Like a brave soldier, face misfortunes defiantly and say "I am not a coward. I am a Spark of That Absolute Truth, Absolute Benefaction and Absolute Virtue. Come ugly products of my ignorant Karmas. Come ! I have courage to accommodate you in my life. I am prepared to face you*

*Source- The Absolute Law of Karma*

### Young Achievers

#### *Kriyaman Karmas can change ones life*

Generally, handicapped children are objects of sympathy. But there are instances to prove that they are not weaklings. M. Sridar, is a Seventeen year youth. Both the legs of Sridar are disabled on account of the polio attack. Still he has proved himself an enviable swimmer by recording his feet in the sea by covering a distance of Eighteen Kms from Golden Beach to Marina Beach in Chennai in four hours, 58 mts, a record in the handicapped category.

Sridhars aim is to better his own performance. Everyday he practices for 2 hrs in the morning and evening. Before competition he used to practice for 6 hrs along with his studies. Sridhars message is " With what you have, you can do a lot'.

## 1.1.9 THE DOCTRINE OF AHIMSA

Ahimsa means non-violence, non-injury. Hinduism teaches that all forms of life are manifestations of the Supreme Being. We must not be indifferent to the sufferings of others. We must extend love and compassion to all living beings. Violence and self-centeredness are the causes of evil in the world.



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## Things to Do

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1. Identify two positive and two negative Karmas performed by you in the last week.
  2. Develop a suitable plan of action to avoid the negative Mental and Physical Karmas. Discuss in the class.
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### 1.2. Goals Of Human Life

The four aims of man (*Purushartha*) is an important concept underlying the Hindu attitude to life and daily conduct. These are as follows

1. **Kama** - Satisfying the desire for sense pleasure.
2. **Artha** - Acquisition of worldly possessions such as money and property.
3. **Dharma** - Observance of religious duties and providing service.
4. **Moksha** - Liberation achieved through realization of God. When you achieve *moksha*, your soul is liberated from the endless birth and death cycle of reincarnation.

### 1.3 Duties/Dharma In Hinduism

The indisputable aim of all human beings, whether aware of this or not, is to obtain absolute peace and freedom, infinite knowledge and spiritual beatitude.

In the day-to-day practice of morality and ethics, there are different types of dharma or duties an individual must follow.

#### Vyakti-dharma

These are observance of moral and ethical principles that sustain an individual's mind. Some of the examples of *vyakti dharmas* are control of the external organs, straightforwardness at all times, absence of anger etc.

#### Parivarika-dharma or Family-dharma

These are the codes of conduct to be observed by individuals to prevent the disintegration of the family. Example is mutual self-sacrifice and respect, obedience to the parents.

#### Samaja-dharma or Society-dharma

Individuals must observe codes of conduct to maintain a well-integrated society. This is called *samaja-dharma* or society-dharma. Examples are the practice of nonviolence, non-stealing, truthfulness etc.

#### Rashtra-dharma or National-dharma

The self-sacrifice made by the individuals for their country is called *rashtra-dharma* or national-dharma.

#### Manava-dharma

Individuals have to act in a manner conducive to the sustenance of mankind. This is called *manava-dharma*.



## 1.4 Indian Scriptures

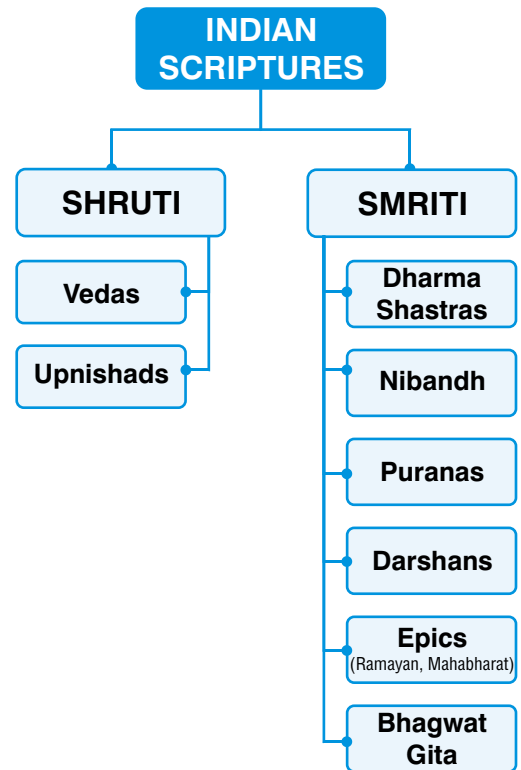
Hindu scriptures are the most ancient and extensive religious writings in the world. It is difficult to correctly classify and date them because of the large number of authors involved over a period of thousands of years. In addition, an old tradition by early authors to remove their own names from their works further complicates the matter.

Two types of sacred writings constitute the Hindu scriptures: heard (*shruti*) and memorized (*smriti*).

### 1.4.1 SHRUTI

*Shruti* scriptures include the primary scriptures of Hinduism known as the Vedas. The Vedas teach the highest truths ever known to man, and form the supreme authority of Hinduism. The word Veda is derived from the root word "Vid," meaning "to know."

*Shruti* in Sanskrit means "that which is heard." Thus the Vedas are the eternal truths that the Vedic seers, called *Rishis*, are said to have heard during their deep meditations. The Vedas are not considered the works of the human mind, but an expression of what has been realized through intuitive perception by Vedic *Rishis*. As such, Vedas are considered of divine origin. The Vedic truths were orally inherited by the *Rishis* to their disciples over thousands of years. Finally, these were compiled by Sage Krishna Dweepayan Vyas, popularly known as Ved Vyas, for the benefit of future generations. *Shruti* literature refers to the habit of



ancient Hindu saints who led a solitary life in the woods, where they developed a consciousness that enabled them to 'hear' or cognize the truths of the universe.

*Shruti* literatures are of two parts: the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*.

#### *Vedas*

There are four *Vedas*:

- *The Rigved*
- *The Samved*
- *The Yajurved*
- *The Atharvaved*

#### *Upanishads*

There are 108 extant *Upanishads*, of which 10 are most important: *Isa, Kena, Katha, Prashna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Taitiriya, Aitareya, Chandogya, Brihadaranyaka*.

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## 1.4.2 SMRITI

*Smriti* means "that which is remembered." *Smriti* scriptures are derived from the Vedas and are considered to be of human origin and not of divine origin. They were written to explain and elaborate the Vedas, making them understandable and more meaningful to the general population. All authoritative writings outside the Vedas are collectively referred to as *Smriti*.

**The EPICS :** The two great epics (*itihasas*) of Hinduism are the **Ramayana** and the **Mahabharata**. These are the most popular books among Hindus. The Ramayana was originally written by Sage Valmiki. The story describes how Lord Vishnu appeared on earth as Lord Rama and killed King Ravana, who had oppressed his kingdom through his lust for power. The epic illustrates the ideals of personal, social, and public life. It also illustrates the ideals of brotherhood, friendship, and chastity for both men and women.

Sage Vyas is the author of the Mahabharata. It is a story of the great war that took place between the Kauravas and the Pandavas for the ownership of the ancient kingdom of Kurukshetra. On one side were the five Pandava brothers and on the other were their cousins, one-hundred Kaurava brothers. In the battlefield Lord Krishna was the charioteer of Arjuna, one of the Pandava brothers. Upon seeing his friends and relatives gathered on the other side of the battlefield, Arjuna told Krishna that he was not prepared to kill his own people

for the sake of a kingdom. Then the immortal dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna took place, known as the Bhagwat Gita.

**The Bhagwat Gita** - The most well known of the Hindu scriptures, called the "Song of the Adorable One", written about the 2nd century BC and forms the sixth part of Mahabharata. It contains some of the most brilliant theological lessons about the nature of God and of life ever written.

## 1.5 The Gayatri Mantra

### Gayatri Mantra

*Aum Bhoorbhuvah Swaha Tat Saviturvarenyam Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi Dhiyo Yo Nah Prachodayat*

### 1.5.1 EXPLORE THE POWER OF GAYATRI

We all want to increase our intelligence, concentration, memory and capacity for information. This the key to strength and success in information age. The Gayatri Mantra encourages creative thinking, not as mere human invention but as our portion of cosmic intelligence. The best way to do this is to harness the power of "inner Sun", which is to connect with cosmic intelligence through mantra and meditation. Each one of us possesses a portion of the "Light of Consciousness", a ray of universal consciousness, that endow us with understanding. This faculty is called "*dhi*" in Vedic thought and refers to the meditative aspect of the mind (*dhyana manas*) and "*buddhi*" referring to awakened intelligence.

**The best mantra for awakening the higher mind is the Gayatri Mantra,** which is a mantra to the "Solar light of Consciousness" (*Savita*), to awaken our meditative mind (*dhi*). It brings us the Divine Solar power of Consciousness, Love and *Prana* the supreme light of truth. Gayatri Mantra exhorts us to attune ourselves to the cosmic mind and its laws of Dharma. This chant is as valuable and appropriate in the modern world as it was in ancient times. We can use it whenever we wish to gain new insight and inspiration or to increase memory and concentration, even for mundane tasks.

### 1.5.2 HISTORY

Vedas Worship Sun (*Surya*), as the source of light for the entire world. But for Vedic people, light is not a material force but a "power of life, love and intelligence". They regard Sun (*Surya*) as principle of light and consciousness on universal level (*Savita*), of which the Sun is our local representative.

Humanity must remember the "Divine Self" in the Sun, the "*Prana*" that is universal energy, and our role is the cosmos to bring the "Divine Light of Knowledge" into the darkness of the physical matter.

Gayatri Mantra is a gift to the world of the great Rishi Vishwamitra, the seer of third book of the RigVeda. Vedas are the manifestation of solar intelligence, the light of consciousness on Earth. The Vedic mantras carry light and power both for the body and the mind.

In contemporary times, Yug-rishi, Vedmurti, Taponishtha Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya, has unfolded the power of Gayatri to the

humanity by his unparalleled "Gayatri Sadhana", since the Vedic age. He has poured his insight and experiences of Gayatri Mantra in his book titled "*Gayatri Maha-Vigyan*" (The great science of Gayatri).

In his words, "*The Gayatri Mantra does not belong to any particular sect of worship, or it is not restricted to any certain community. It is universal, for the whole world. It contains in it the culture not of any particular society, but the culture of humanity. The Gayatri Mantra is a treasure and heritage that belongs to the whole of humanity without exclusion.*"

### Meaning

"O Lord, Thou are the protector of life and of breath, dispeller of miseries and bestower of happiness. Thou are the creator and the most acceptable intelligence, possessing eternal qualities. May Thine qualities and Thy inspiration pass to us."

1 **AUM**, the Super Soul is prevailing in "*bhoo*" (earth), "*bhuwah*" (abode below Earth) and "*swaha*" (abode above Earth). This existing universe is the physical form of the Super Soul. In each and every particle, God is existing. By seeing every where the presence of the omnipresent Super Soul, I should remain far away from bad thoughts and bad *Karma*. Also I should do true worship of God by cooperating for increasing Happiness, Peace and Beauty of this Universe."

2 "**Tat**" (That Super Soul) is "*Savituhu*" (Brilliant), "*Varenyam*" (The Best), "*Bhargo*" (Without sin)

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and "Devasya" (Divine). I "Dheemahi" (hold that Super Soul in my consciousness). O God of these qualities! after entering in my consciousness make me also brilliant, the best, divine, and without sin. I for every moment get endowed with these qualities and the amount of these qualities increase in my brain and in each and every bit of my body"

- 3 That Super Soul, "Naha" (Ours), "Dhiyo" (The Intellect), "Prachodayat" (Inspire us towards a righteous path). Let the intellect of ours, of our near and dear ones, and of our family members become that of the righteous path. Let us enjoy the heavenly joy in this life by obtaining the Righteous Intellect, which is the greatest of all the powers of this world and also the Primordial Mother of Happiness.

By doing deep thinking and contemplating on this meaning of Gayatri Mantra, we find the growth of those elements in our consciousness, which lead human beings towards divinity. They are giving a great deal of energy, giving enthusiasm, inspiring righteous qualities as well as increasing spiritual power. Regularly we should deeply contemplate for certain period of time these thoughts and feelings.

We should slowly and deeply contemplate above mentioned three thoughts commitments. We should stop for few moments at each word and we should develop the picture of each word mentally. The three morals

given in Gayatri are the symbols of *Gyan Yoga* (Uniting with God through Knowledge), *Bhakti Yoga* (Uniting with God through Devotion) and *Karma Yoga* (Uniting with God through Karma) respectively. These three morals are expanded further and have become the basis of Yoga namely *Gyan* (Knowledge), *Bhakti* (Devotion) and *Karma*. The deep contemplation of the meaning of Gayatri is basically same as bathing our Souls in the trio of the three Yoga streams.

*Rishis* selected the words of various Mantras and arranged them so that they not only convey meaning but also create specific power through their utterance. Gayatri Mantra inspires wisdom. All the problems of a person are solved if he/she is endowed with the gift of righteous wisdom. Once endowed with far-sighted wisdom, a man is neither entangled in calamity nor does he tread the wrong path. A wise man finds solution to all outstanding problems. Only those persons who do not think correctly find difficulty and take wrong steps due to foolishness. Chanting of Gayatri Mantra removes this deficiency. The teachings and powers incorporated in the Gayatri Mantra fulfill this purpose. Righteous wisdom starts emerging soon after Jap(recitation) of this Mantra is performed.

## *Inspiration*

*Prosperity is not attained by earning money, but by building good character and clean thinking.*

### 1.5.3 EFFECT OF GAYATRI MANTRA ON THE BODY

The above picture shows the relation of the sounds of the Gayatri Mantra to the specific centers of the body. As shown above, particular letters of the Mantra are related to different parts of the body. The details are in the table below.

No.	Letter	Gland	Involved Energy
1	Tat	Tapini	Success
2	Sa	Saphalta	Bravery
3	Vi	Vishwa	Maintenance
4	Tur	Tushti	Well-being
5	Va	Varda	Yoga
6	Re	Revati	Love
7	Ni	Sookshma	Money
8	Yam	Gyana	Brilliance
9	Bhar	Bharga	Defense
10	Go	Gomati	Intellect
11	De	Devika	Suppression
12	Va	Varahi	Devotion
13	Sya	Sinhani	Power of Retention
14	Dhee	Dhyan	Life-Breath
15	Ma	Maryada	Self-restraint
16	Hi	Sfuta	Penance
17	Dhi	Medha	Farsightedness
18	Yo	Yogmaya	Awakening
19	Yo	Yogini	Production
20	Naha	Dharini	Sweetness
21	Pra	Prabhava	Ideal
22	Cho	Ooshma	Courage
23	Da	Drashya	Wisdom
24	Yat	Niranjan	Service

Gayatri activates the above mentioned twenty-four divine qualities in the devotee. With their growth, varied accomplishments and prosperity start manifesting in the life of the devotee. Gayatri Sadhana is the well-organized scientific process of spiritual growth and it has a solid scientific basis.

### 1.5.4 EXALTATIONS OF GAYATRI BY DIGNIFIED PERSONALITIES

**Rabindranath Tagore:** *It is the Gayatri Mantra which has awakened India and which is so simple as can be chanted in one breath, There can be no scope for any logical discussion, difference of opinion or any dispute in the study of this holy Mantra.*

**Maharshi Vyas:** *Just as honey is the essence of flowers, Ghee is the essence of milk, so Gayatri is also the essence of Vedas. Gayatri is a Kamdhenu (celestial cow) to him who has accomplished it in full.*

**Mahatma Gandhi:** *Constant chanting of Gayatri Mantra is very useful in healing the diseased and elevating the soul. Gayatri Japa is practised with a steady mind and pure heart is capable of removing obstacles and calamities during bad times.*

**Shri Madanmohan Malavia:** *Of all the valuables jewels bequeathed to us by our ancient sages, Gayatri Mantra holds an incomparable place. Gayatri purifies intellect and attracts divine light. It has saved several souls from worldly bondage, It removes materials wants.*

**Swami Vivekanand:** *Only that thing should be asked for from a king which befits his dignity. The only thing fit to pray from God is wisdom. God grants wisdom only to those with whom he is pleased. Wisdom makes a man go on the right path. Man gets all sorts of happiness by Sat karmas. Gayatri Mantra is a Mantra for wisdom and hence it is called the crown of all Mantra.*



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## 1.6 Yagya Is Indian Religion

### 1.6.1 YAGNA PERFORMANCE IS SERVICE TO HUMANITY.

GAYATRI is the source of all knowledge of Indian culture and Yagya (Fire-sacrifice) is believed to be the father and progenitor of the Aryan religion. Gayatri is considered to be a sign of good thoughts and Yagya is sign of good deeds. Good thoughts and good deeds fuse to constitute a way to universal peace and human welfare.

When a community of people perform the Gayatri Yagya, it creates a power atmosphere leading to the well-being of all living organisms. The heat and vapor generated during a Yagya prints a divine impression on people's hearts just as the fire of welding joins two pieces of iron. The fire of Yagya joins the soul to the Absolute.

Yagya is to be performed in accordance with methods laid down scientifically in our scripture. It cures mental disorder, curbs vices and develops virtues. People taking part in Yagyas get divine light which removes the darkness of illusion around their soul. Yagya protects not only human beings, beasts, birds and insects but also trees and other vegetation which keep us healthy and strong.

We see that all these phenomena of nature are the corollary of the instinct to perform Yagya. It is this urge for sacrifice that sustains the world and the universe. The Upanishads emphasize that the Principal axis of this living

world is Yagya and Yagya alone. If this axis cracks up the life and progress of the world, it will be impossible and will become extinct.

"*Idam na mama*" (This is not mine, it belongs to whole society). Through the progressive development of this ideology, our immortal spiritual socialism has stood the test of time and endured through the ages. The ideal behind a Yagya teaches that one should make best use of one's own self but more for the betterment of society at large. Performing Yagyas with such noble thoughts makes society happy and contented.

**YAGYA denotes three things:-**

- (1) Worships of Deities (*Devapoojan*),
- (2) Distribution of alms (*Daan*) and
- (3) Unity and co-operation (*Sangatikaran*)

Yagyas are of different types, meant for fulfilling different kinds of wants and wishes in different ways.

According to "Rigveda" the fire of Yagya is "Purohit". As the "Purohit" imparts religious education of fire of Yagya also offers us some education as under:- (1) Share with others, (2) Avoid disparity, (3) Face vicious forces with courage, (4) Work in the right way all our life, (5) Make best use of life, and (6) Be selfless.

Since 1940, thousands of Gayatri Yagyas have been performed by Gayatri Pariwar volunteers throughout the world. The spiritual energy generated by "Yagyas" everywhere is gradually eradicating undesirable elements and has begun to

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create and atmosphere for a happy and bright future. Shantikunj, India is the witness to this change.

### 1.6.2 SCIENTIFIC ASPECT OF YAGYA

#### *Purification of Environment by Yagya:*

The huge industrial complexes, rapid urbanization, deforestation, air and water pollution, ozone-depletion, radioactive wastes etc., have disturbed and destabilized the natural harmony of human, animal and plant life cycles. The ecological imbalance caused by these criminal acts of the so called 'civilized man' has resulted in a disastrous threat, not only to the human survival but, also to life as a whole on our planet.

Experimental studies show that the incidences of physical ailments, sickness or diseases become less in the houses where the *yagya* or *agnihotrais* regularly performed because it creates a pure, hygienic, nutritional and healing atmosphere. It renews the brain cells, revitalizes the skin, purifies the blood and prevents growth of pathogenic bacteria. *Agnihotra* is basically a healing process.

The medicinal fumes emanating from the process of *agnihotra* have been observed by researchers in the field of microbiology to be clearly bacteria static in nature, which eradicate bacteria and micro-organisms, the root causes of illness and diseases. This must be the reason why the incidence of physical ailments, sickness and diseases becomes less in the households where *agnihotra* is regularly performed.

#### **Innovative Aspect: Deep Yagya**

A mass movement was launched under the guidance of Param Poojya Gurudev Pt. Shri Ram Sharma Archarya on the solid foundation of Gayatri and Yagya, the two pillars of divine Indian heritage. The movement has spread with lighting speed throughout the worlds. Keeping in view, the need of the hour, various steps have been taken to simplify the ritualistic procedures of Yagya with the view to making it universally appealing and acceptable. This has been achieved by adoption of Dip Yagya.

#### *Performance*

Deep Yagya can be performed within a family, with a few lamps and at regional level, on a large scale with thousand lamps. Participants may also bring with them the essential items like *dipaka*, incense sticks, stands along with *akshat* (grains of rice), *roli* and flowers in a plate. *Deepakas*, incense sticks etc should be arranged on platforms or tables in such a manner that every one can have a clear view of the glittering lamps.

In order to make the occasion solemn and spiritually charged the program may begin with devotion songs and Kirtan before formally starting the Yagya ceremonies.

Deep Yagya can be completed within much shorter period of about one and a half hours and all the participants can collectively enjoy the delightful and enchanting view of the twinkling lamps.

(Source--Yug Yagya Paddhati)

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## Things to Do

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Select a class mate whose Birthday falls on this month. Organize a small Deep Yagya at the friend's residence on Sunday. You may use the audio cassettes of Gayatri Pariwar for the performance of Yagya. With the help of friends make the entire arrangement.

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### **1.7 Recitation And Meditation** **- The two stages of worship**

#### **1.7.1 RECITATION**

Recitation of mantras have an internal as well as an external effect. Fire not only warms up the site of burning but also radiates heat waves in the surrounding areas. The sound of recitation creates vibrations like the water currents in the deeper layers of ocean and the air in outer atmosphere. This recitation affects various centers of power in the human body and mind, which creates its own effect. Vibrations of a definite wavelength create mysterious forces and wonderful effects.

Recitation done in a certain organized pattern and its results can be illustrated scientifically in a laboratory. Recitation of mantras, in methodical order, creates wonderful results. The different organs and various centers of power are affected by recitation and the resulting vibrations sharpen the intellectual. One feel elevated, awakened and supremely confident. This exercise has a direct impact on one's psyche.

#### **1.7.2 MEDITATION**

Meditation enables the realization of one's inherent abilities and talents. It sharpens the intellect and acutely enhances the determination to achieve the desired goals.

Concentration produces unique power, which can be utilized in physical as well as spiritual spheres. Concentration is nothing but the monitoring of thought waves produced in the mind, controlling their direction, focusing them to achieve a definite objective.

In the field of worship, meditation is used while concentrating on God in the form of human figure as well as on a point of light, which has no definite form. This focus should be accompanied by total absorption.

In meditation the worshipper surrenders the gross, subtle and causal forms of his body with his deeds, feelings and devotion to God and consolidates his determination to involve himself for divine purposes only. The complete surrender of the devotee or the worshipper is rewarded with the blessings of the Gurudev

*SOURCE BOOK -Recitation and meditation- The Two Stages of Worship*



### *Childhood of Great People*

One of the favorite games of little Naren was to sit in meditative posture and mediate with other friends. One day when the play was in progress, there appeared a cobra nearby. All the boys ran away from the room the moment they saw the cobra. But Naren was in deep meditation, he neither heard his friends cries nor felt the crawling cobra on his body. His meditation continued with great concentration. This incident in the life of Swami Vivekananda reveals him to be as a born yogi.

## **1.8 Spiritual Training- Pragya Yog**

*Pragya Yog* is a devise for developing spiritual prudence, insight and intuition. In ordinary conversation it is known as spiritual training of life. It comprises of repeating sacred Vedic hymns (*mantras*) known as jap, meditation (*dhyana*), *pranayam* (yogic exercise to control vital breath, mind etc) and self restraint (*sanyam*). It includes all aspects which stimulate human glory and remove obstacles. Physical restraint (*sanyam*) and proper and best utilization of money and thoughts are its inseparable constituents

Progress of a nation and its people is not confined to its material wealth, education and efficiency. The source and basis of all kinds of progress are personalities rich in culture and gentleness. The spiritual training of life in accordance with *Pragya-yog* fulfills this great object.

## **1.9 Jevan Devta Ki Aradhana (worshipping deity of life )**

An ascetic once asked Gurudev -'for whom should we worship'. The

empathic answer is ,we should worship for the God within us (*Atma-Dev*). The real criterion of cent percent perfection of a person can be judged only on the basis of genuineness of his thoughts, character and behavior. Fruits, flowers do not fall on the tree from the sky. Trees grow and bear fruits and flowers when their roots suck juice from the earth. Roots are within us which influences the entire personality. It ultimately leads to magnificence and attainment of super natural powers on the basis of which dual advantage of spiritual greatness and material advancements can be attained.

Soul, Physical body and matter are the three constituents of human life. Overall form of spiritual training of life (*Jivan sadhana*) consists in proper coordination of these three phases of life to maintain progress and peace.

The coordinated form of *upasana* (worship), *sadhana* (spiritual training) and *aradhana* (adoration) leads to success.

One gets nothing by begging and entreating. God helps those who help themselves. Spiritual training of life is nothing but practicing self-refinement

and self-purification. This is the greatest and ultimate object of human pursuit. Those who have understood this ultimate truth have realized the secret behind spiritual knowledge.

*SOURCE- Spiritual training and absorption of life deity*

### Young Achievers

Karaikkudhi Mani the mridangam master, stated with vocal music when he was 6 years old. T.N Vinayak Ram the world famous Ghattam player, who won a Grammy Award, started playing professional music at 13. Flute wizard N.Ramani gave the first concert at 7.

M. Chandershaker , a sightless violinist initiated into music at the age of seven. he used to get up at 3 am for four hours for practice when he was only a boy.

## 1.10 Hindu God And Goddesses

### 1.10.1 HINDU BELIEF IN GOD

A Hindu can be a polytheistic (believes in more than one god), monotheistic (believes in one god), pantheistic (believes that god and the universe are one)

Hindus accommodates a wide range of beliefs and salvation processes. Some of the popular Gods and the special reason for the Worship are presented below.

### Short Story- God is One, the Wise call him by many names

Akbar the Muslim king used to discuss many religious topics with Birbal, a Hindu.

On one occasion, Akbar asked , O Birbal, we worship Allah. The Christians pray to Jesus. The Buddhists revere Bodhisattva. But Why do you Hindus have so many Gods and Goddesses ?

Birbal quoted the Veda and said, 'Sir, God is One. It is we who call him by many names'. 'You should prove it. Otherwise I won't accept your argument'. Akbar said decisively.

"I shall do so presently", said Birbal. He clapped his hands and called a palace servant. Pointing to the cloth wound around his head, he asked the servant, 'What is this'?

The servant replied head gear Sir! Birbal sent him away. He then removed the head cloth , unfolded it and covered himself with it. He called another bearer of the court and asked him 'What is this?' The bearer said, 'It is a shawl, Sir'.

Birbal sent him away too. he then removed the cloth and wound it around his waist. He called a watchman and asked him, 'What is this'? He replied , 'This is a dhoti, Sir'.

Birbal turned to the ruler and said, 'You have seen Sir, how the same piece of cloth was called head gear by one man, shawl by the second and dhoti by the third. The name of the article changes according to its place and application. Similarly water is called a cloud, water, steam or ice depending upon its external appearance, its material content being the same!

*God , similarly is one ! His names are many, changing with location and use"!* Akbar was satisfied with the Courtiers sage counsel and wise reply.

## 1.10.2 GOD AND GODDESSES

### Form of God or Goddess Characteristic

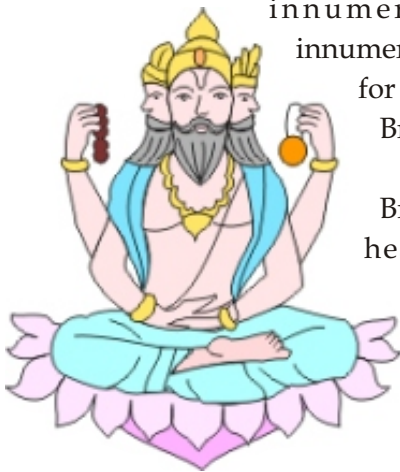
<b>Brahma</b>	<i>Creator</i>
<b>Vishnu</b>	<i>Sustainer</i>
<b>Shiva</b>	<i>Destroyer</i>
<b>Saraswati</b>	<i>Knowledge</i>
<b>Lakshmi</b>	<i>Prosperity</i>
<b>Durga/Parvati</b>	<i>Shakti/Family</i>
<b>Rama</b>	<i>Ideal king, Man</i>
<b>Krishna</b>	<i>Love, destruction of evil</i>
<b>Ganesh</b>	<i>Knowledge, Remove obstacles</i>
<b>Kartikeya</b>	<i>Perfection</i>
<b>Hanuman</b>	<i>Courage</i>

### **BRAHMA - Lord of Creation**

with his consort

### **SARASWATI - Goddess of wisdom**

God who keeps an account of the innumerable deeds of those innumerable creatures and arrange for their incarnations is called Brahma.



Brahmaji is shown with four heads, Besides being the creator of the universe, Brahmaji is a deponent of the deeds of all the creatures as well, allotting the creatures various incarnations as per their deed .Hence to look around in all the directions. Vedas teach us that everything is destructible, only the truth can not be destroyed. every other thing in the world is bound to be destroyed one day.

The great grandfather of all the

creatures Lord Brahma teaches by his appearance that the human incarnation is not just for the mundane jobs. Human being must keep on remembering the almighty Paramatma in day to day life. Hence, by the rosary in hand Brahmaji teaches that, always keep on telling the name of almighty God, for your welfare.

### **VISHNU - The Lord of maintenance**

with his consort

### **LAKSHMI Goddess of wealth**

Worship of Lord Vishnu is extremely essential for those who wish to receive the supreme salvation. A common rule of worship is that the worshipper must essentially have the virtues of the worshiped.

### **Scientific Depiction Of Vishnu's Appearance**



The first virtue of Lord Vishnu is his peaceful appearance. Hence his worshipper must also acquire peaceful appearance.

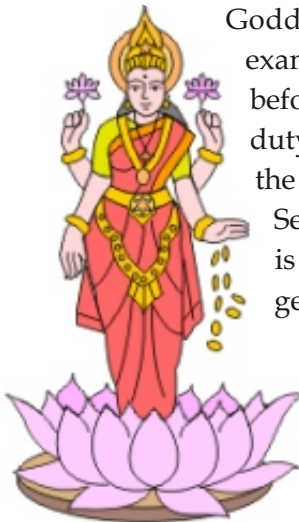
The second virtue (resting on the Sheshanaga) a highly poisonous snake. Lord Vishnu is resting on him without fear or worries. It teaches us not to lose patience even while facing the kala itself, instead one must strive to ride on it, only then can one remain in peaceful appearance.

The famous Sudarshana Chakra

(wheel) is whirling on the finger of Lord Vishnu. Through this wheel, God teaches the human kind that the cycle of the universe is whirling at his will. If anybody tries to go against his will (i.e. wheel) or gives up religion and begins to behave irreligiously, I will whirl him like the wheel or punish him with the wheel. Garuda (eagle) the vehicle of Vishnu. It is the fearest of bird. Thus God is assuring his devotees to be fearless, because if any calamity befell them, he will reach them in no time.



### ***Goddess Lakshmi***



Goddess Lakshmi presents an example of an ideal spouse before the world. The supreme duty of a woman is described in the service of her husband. Second aspect of the message is for the people who want to get rich, that if they want the wealth, they must develop a devotion for the feet of Narayana, for Lakshmi (Goddess of wealth) is to be found there and no where else.

left side, because, he himself remains in a state of *Tapasya* (meditation).

The Ganges, the most sacred river in India, shows coolness, holiness and serenity. Lord Shiva holds her on his head, thus preaching the devotees that if they bear coolness, holiness and serenity in their head i.e. if they must give up anger, envy and disturbance that haunts their mind Lord Shiva wears moon on his forehead, thus preaching for peaceful mind and farsightedness Holding the poison in the neck, Lord Shiva preaches one should not even wish ill for the others, leave apart doing.

### ***SHIVA - Lord of Destruction***

with his consort

### ***PARVATHI - SAKTHI - Goddess of disintegration***

#### ***Depiction Of Lord Shiva's Appearance***

Lord Shiva is reckoned among the Tridevas (trinity). Brahma is the creator, Lord Vishnu is the preserver and Lord Shiva is the destroyer.

Jagdamba Parvati is the form of power. Lord Shiva always keeps her on to his

### **LORD GANESHA**

Lord Ganesha is the most widely worshipped Hindu God. He is worshipped at the start of any action or venture, for he is considered to be the Lord who removes obstacles (*vighnam*) and hence is also called Vigneshwara.

#### ***Scientific Depiction Of Ganesha Appearance***

Lord Ganesh has an elephant head. All





the animals on earth can see the things in right perspective. Elephant is the only animal that lacks this capacity, it can't see the things in right perspective.

It sees all the things bigger than itself. All this implies that never take the opponent for granted. Don't go on his size, but regard everyone bigger, better and more virtuous than yourself.

One of many names for Lord Ganesha is Surpakarna, the one with big, flappy ears. This world is full of every kind of people, who take to back-biting and confuse other people by their skill. Hence we should always be alert so as not to change our conduct for the people related to us.

Every part of the Lord Ganesha is a lesson. The lower part of Ganesha's body is human like, whereas only the head is elephant-like. It is universally accepted that all the other animals than humans have emotionless heart. Only the humans have such a heart that beats with emotion. Human heart is the only organ on earth that generates good or bad feelings for others. To teach this lesson, Ganeshaji is shown with a human torso, and an elephant's head.

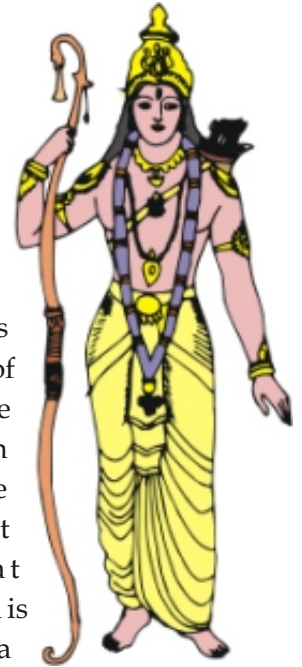
Of the many names for Ganesha one is Lambodra, that means one with large or big belly. Literally it means that one who can easily digest every secret is Lambodara, while one who can't digest even a little gossip is short bellied. Thus, Ganeshaji has large belly as well as big ears, Hence he is capable of

hearing every kind of talk and also to digest them as well. Thus besides having an acute hearing, one must have the capacity to digest the secrets also. He should not indulge in cross-talking and back-biting.

Mouse (Mooshaka) is the vehicle of Lord Ganesha.

## LORD RAMA

In this scriptural description of Lord Shri Rama, Sita is present on his left side. It thus preaches that the better half of the society i.e. the women, must be given their appropriate honor and position. It also implies that without woman a man is incomplete. Hence, if a man wishes to become complete, he must give the women her proper place.



Bow and arrow are the traditional weapon. The bow of Shri Rama was infallible i.e. it never missed its target.

Apparently the bow and arrow of Shri Rama depict strictness. With his bow and arrow, Maryada Purushottama preaches that the people longing to abide by the morals, will have to take hard decisions despite having soft corners and have to follow these decisions.

## LORD HANUMAN

### *Description Of Hanuman*

The inseparable devotee of Lord Rama. Hanuman is an incarnation of a Rudra among the eleven Rudras. In other words he is thus none other than Lord Shiva himself.

Hanuman is referred as *Manojavam* which means one who can move rapidly. He is also known as *Buddhimatama Varsishtham* which means excellent among the geniuses.

Hanumanji has a monkey face. It is associated with the incarnation of Lord Vishnu as Rama. When Vishnu was about to take incarnation at that time Lord Brahman gave directions to all the gods to appear on the earth in the form of monkeys and bears. One of these

### *Short Story*

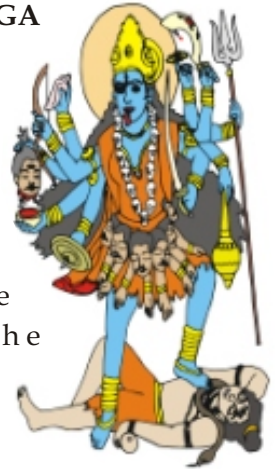
As a child Hanuman was a very ambitious, inquisitive and valorous hero. Once he thought that the Sun with its reddish splendor was a kind of fruit, which a monkey could eat.

He sought it and when Indra's white elephant came in the way, Hanuman did not even spare the beast either. Indra, to protect his mount Iravata, hurled his weapon on Hanuman, breaking the lad's jaw. As a compensation for the injury, the Sun god and Indra bestowed boons on Hanuman.

Hanuman greatness lies in the wonderful fact that he used all his gifts, talents and boons, not for his own glory but for the good of others.

## GODDESS DURGA

Godess Parvati is the appearance of Prakriti (Nature) also besides being shakti and the mother of the universe. All the organisms have arisen out of the Nature, hence She is called as Jagadamba. Mother Parvati is also known by other names viz : Durga, Kaali etc Despite having so many names she is one in appearance.



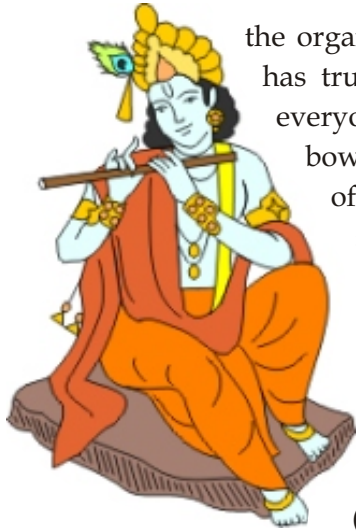
Goddess had exterminated many formidable demons like Mahishasura that symbolized darkness with the weapons,. Thus she hints that no one must take women for granted, and never take them as powerless, dependent, and meant for fulfillment of their lust.

The beautiful Goddess Mother Bhagwati or Durga, who represents the combined powers of all the gods, holds divine weapons in all of her eight arms that guard the eight directions. This is the main appearance of Shakti.

## LORD SHRI KRISHNA

Lord Shri Krishna is regarded as complete incarnation of God., full of sixteen Kalas.

In this scriptural appearance Lord Krishna holds nothing but only a seemingly ordinary flute. It implies that one must learn from it that one must have unconditional love for all



the organisms in the world. If one has true, unconditional love for everyone, the world will one day bow before him. Thus that tune of Lord Krishna's flute was a symbol of love. And love has no limits, no bindings.

One of Lord Krishna's names is Giridhar. Giridhar means the one who lifts the mountain (Giri). Mountain symbolizes virtues like immovable, complex, hard etc. Yet Lord Krishna lifted a mountain named Govardhana on his finger for the well being of the people. There were other reasons also. First of all, he preaches that don't take anything alive or lifeless - for granted. May be that seemingly useless thing proves beneficial for you one day. Even it could save your life.

In his entire life Lord Krishna only once raised a weapon which signifies that he was a symbol of love and affection.



## 1.11 Prayer In Sanatan Dharma

### 1.11.1 THE ESSENCE OF POOJA - PRAYER

Prayer can be defined as a psychoanalytic exercise that directs the diverted and disorganized human psyche towards one single object i.e. God. Prayer is a means of concentrating all the feeling, sentiments and vibrations of the psyche towards one single target.

#### *Gurudev Vichar*

The fundamental objective of prayer is to establish a friendly relationship with the DIVINE Power; the ultimate cause of the universe, the God the Para atman- and to become one with them

### 1.11.2 PRINCIPLE OF SCIENTIFIC PRAYER

*Faith-* The essence of Prayer is sound belief of the highest degree in His powers and his existence. Prayer offered with deep faith and belief in him proves fruitful.

*Concentration-* Prayer is a psychological exercise. It works on the foundation of concentration and contemplation. Concentration is that silent power that brings together diverted forces of the mind and makes them flow towards one single center. The secret of prayer lies in the ability to concentrate.

*Creative Contemplation-* Contemplative meditation-dhyan is a psychoanalytic process It leads to a continuous uninterrupted flow of consciousness towards the desired goals

**Confession-** Confess yourselves openly in the court of the Omniscient. Let every thing be clearly expressed in front of him. Thus surrendering at His feet, confessing with Him is the best way of prayer.

### 1.11.3 TYPES OF PRAYERS

**Receptive / Attractive prayer** It is a spiritual experiment based on scientific grounds. This type of prayer is very effective for attracting universal powers. OJAS- i.e. the vital energy force exists in the natural environment around us. This Divine Power Force is like an unending storehouse of power. One can, by means of attractive/receptive prayer, attract as much power as is needed from this reservoir of Divine force.

**Deployative/ Outflowing Prayer-**The outflow type prayer uses the first type of Divine Magnetic force, OJAS gained through receptive prayer for specific purposes. This type of prayer is useful in healing patients even without seeing or touching him from a distance of thousand miles

The receptive and outflow types of prayers are mutually interdependent. First one has to learn how to attract celestial divine magnetic forces and the second step is to deploy the same

#### **Significance of collective prayer**

*“Arousal of Righteous Intellect in All and bright Future for All” is the focus of the unique experiment of collective prayer sadhanas initiated under the auspices of the Gayatri Pariwar. The Gayatri mantra indeed implies the same prayer and educes divine illumination of mind. In view of the*

*definite impact of prayer, the mahapurascarana experiment of collective Gayatri japa and meditation is expected to be effective towards global welfare and universal enlightenment in the years to come.*

SOURCE- *Miracles of charismatic prayer*

## 1.12 Hindu Sanskars

### 1.12.1 INTRODUCTION

The Hindu Sanskars are sacraments or processes of refinement meant to bring out an excellent residing in the body of human beings. Most of them are performed through the medium of fire. They are visible signs of spiritual grace.

The Sanskars derive their authority from the Vedas, Upnishads, Smritis and Puranas and old age customs and traditions. Forty Sanskars are mentioned in the Scriptures. Out of these Sixteen are common to all.

### 1.12.2 THE CONSTITUENTS OF SANSKARS

Sanskars are a complex combination of various elements. The important constituents are as follows-

1. **Fire-** Agni is considered as a guardian of morality. It is an excellent witness around which the various Sanskars are performed.
2. **Prayer-** During the performance of the Sanskars prayers are offered for protection and prosperity.
3. **Symbolism-** It is a material object to convey mental and spiritual significance.



4. **Divination**- It is a science that seeks to discover that will of supernatural power. Astrology plays an important role in the Samskars
5. **Cultural Elements**- The Samskars also contain social customs, ceremonies and ethics. The Social status of a person plays a very important role in the Samskars

### 1.12.3 SOLAH SANSKARS (SACRAMENTS)

1. **Grabhaadhan**: Conception
2. **Punsavana**: Fetus protection
3. **Seemanta**: Satisfying wishes of the pregnant Mother
4. **Jaat-Karmaa**: Child Birth
5. **Naamkarna**: Naming Child
6. **Nishkramana**: Taking the child outdoors
7. **Annaprashana**: Giving the child solid food.
8. **Mundan or Choula**: Hair cutting.
9. **Karnavedh**: Ear piercing
10. **Yagyopaveet**: Sacred thread
11. **Vedarambh**: Study of Vedas and Scriptures
12. **Samaavartana**: Completing education
13. **Vivaah**: Marriage
14. **Sarvasanskaar**: Preparing for Renouncing
15. **Sanyas (Awasthadhyan)**: Renouncing
16. **Antyeshti**: Last rite, or funeral rites

A brief description of the some of the Samskar are as follows :

#### 1) **Punsavana**

This second Samskar is performed

during the third or the fourth month of pregnancy. The word Punsavana occurs in Atharvaveda, where it is used in the literal sense of "giving birth to a male child". The word "male" means soul. The Punsavana is used for welcoming the great soul.

The significance of this Samskar is to invoke divine and good qualities in the child.

#### 2) **Namakarana**

This Samskar is performed on the tenth, eleventh or twelfth day with recitation of Mantras. The baby child gets name on completion of this Samskar. An appropriate name is given to the child according to the star of birth, and the first letter of the name is taken from the Shatra.

#### 3) **Annaprashana**

This Samskar is performed on sixth month, when the child gets solid food for the first time. Mantras recited and oblations are offered to the various deities.

#### 4) **Upanayana**

The word Upanayana means bringing near. This is the most important Samskar which marks the beginning of the next stage of life Youth. The child is brought near to the Guru. This Samskar is second birth for child A spiritual birth. This Samskar is performed during six to nine years of child.

#### 5) **Vedarambha**

This Samskar is done along with Upanayana. The setting up with the Sacred thread entitles the child to study the Vedas and participate in Vedic functions.

The child commences his journey on the road to spiritual life. This is contrasted with a life of eating, sleeping and procreating, which kinds of life animals also live.

The child is sent to Gurukul for academic and spiritual upliftment.

#### 6) *Vivaha*

This sanskar is entry into the second Ashram. The life as individual family begins. Entering this stage of life, man has to take on his duties and has to pay spiritual debts by sacrifice, by procreating children and study. The bride and groom walk around Agni hand in hand. The bride sacrifices grains in the fire and chants mantras.

#### *Gurudev Vichar*

*'Marriage is not only a union of two bodies but a union of two souls also. The husband and wife may have lacunas, vices or imperfections normally found in human being at large but if a sense of mutual understanding sacrifice and selflessness is developed than the marriage life can be a happy sweet journey. Indm-na-mama-This is not mine should be the Maxim. Whatever I have, I have for my companions should be the guiding principle.'*

Source- *The Melody of Married life.*

#### *Interesting Aspects Of Yagyopaveet (Sacred Thread) Sanskar*

The sacred thread ceremony is very significant in the life of a Hindu. This ceremony initiates the child into an intellectual and spiritual journey. The mother gives birth to the child; this is

natural birth. However, when the Guru initiates him by giving Gayatri mantra, this prayer for Buddhi is considered a second birth of the child. This ceremony is known also as Upnayan, 'the sacred vision' or 'new vision', the vision to see things in a proper way and to know 'wrong' and 'right'. Therefore, Upnayan is essential to handle household life.

'Yagyopaveet' (sacred thread) indicates that the child is qualified to perform all the traditional Vedic rites including Pitra Kriya and Tarpan for his forefathers.

Yagyopaveet symbolizes three forms of one Supreme Being, Satoguna Brahma (the creator), Rajoguna Vishnu (the sustained) and Rajoguna Shiva (the destroyer). The knot is called Brahma-Knot, the Lord who controls these three faces of nature.

Gayatri Mantra is given to the child who promises to lead a good human life as per the rules of *Dharmashastra*.

## **1.13 Hindu Rituals**

### **1.13.1 SIGNIFICANCE**

Rituals broadly stand for symbolic actions. In the past, ritual was a "sacred art". It was called Yagya in the Vedas. The Philosophical inquiry into the nature of ritual action was called Karma Mimosa

### **1.13.2 SOME COMMON RITUALS**

*Birthday* - In the Hindu tradition, one has to celebrate one's Birthday i.e. Only

on the day of his or her birthday star, Janma Nakshtra, and not on the date of English calendar. On the day Ayushya Home can be performed for getting a long life. One can go to the temple and perform archana to the Ishta Devata. Now a day we are celebrating this by cutting the cake and blowing off the candle. This is a western tradition. In our tradition, lighting of lamp is symbolic of anything good or auspicious.

**Rangoli** - The significance of putting Kolam or Rangoli with rice floor is to feed the small insects like ants etc. Putting Kolam is a small act of charity. It is also an auspicious symbol.

**Naivedya** - Every household should daily put a handful of rice in a pot just before the regular cooking starts. This collection of rice is used for feeding poor people. After the Rice is cooked it is offered to God by Naivedya and chant any mantra relating to the offering to the God.

The Vedas affirm that food is life animating the inner energy. Anna Dana is a great act of charity.

**Grihapravesam** - In the present days, this ritual i.e. household warming ceremony is being observed by cutting a Ribbon as westerns do. There is no ritualistic approach in this method. As per the Hindu Shastras, one is supposed to perform Ganapati homa, Vastu pooja and Navagraha Home etc.

## 1.14 Symbols In Hinduism

### OM

Pranav or OM is the universally accepted symbol of Hinduism. Literally the word 'Pranav' means, 'That by which God is effectively praised. It also means "That which is ever new". It represents the undifferentiated Brahman.

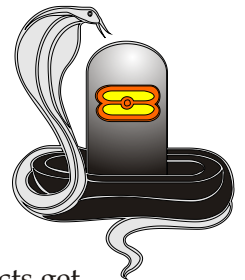


AUM comprises of three independent letters A,U, and M, each of which has its own meaning and significance. The letter "A" represents the beginning (Adimatwa), 'U' represents progress (Utkarsha) and 'M' represents limit or dissolution (Mitti)

The Aum sound is vibrating throughout the cosmos and it has three manifestations; those of creations, preservations and destruction. Every time a person utters any letter or word, he puts into operation any of these three virtues of AUM. This invisible power flows through the human body and controls its actions when uttered properly with reverence and concentration.

### SIVALINGA

Literarily Shiva means One in whom the whole creation sleeps after dissolution and Linga means a sign or symbol. Linga also means a place where created objects get dissolved during disintegration of the created universe. According to Hinduism, it is the same God that



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creates, sustains and withdraws the Universe; the Shivalinga represents symbolically God himself.

### SWASTIK



The Swastika is a symbol of auspiciousness. The root of SWASTIK is SU+US; SU means benefic and US means existence.

It has been used as a symbol of Sun or Vishnu. It also represents the world wheel, the externally changing world, round a fixed and unchanging center, God. Swastika marks depicted on doors or walls of buildings or on animals are believed to protect them from the wrath of evil spirits or furies of nature.

### TILAK OR DOT OR BINDI

The starting point of all shapes and forms is a point. Geometry describes the point as one, which has no dimensions, but it still exists.



A dot or point is the abode of Shiva and Shakti. Ancient Indian had an indomitable urge to communicate his thoughts and so symbols were developed. Similar group of men and women adopted different types of Tilak or linear symbols, which were further, segregated for man and woman to wear on their body to denote their sect and ideology.

A deep study of human anatomy reveals that the forehead is the best place for applying Tilak. Rishis declared that the junction of the nose-root and the meeting point of the eyebrows is the most sensitive part of the body. The Agya- chakra, or Wheel

of wisdom, is located here and so is a vulnerable spot, which must be kept, warm and protected.

### CIRCULAR BINDI WORN BY INDIAN WOMEN



The most popular forms used are a dot, or a "U" shape or a trident shape or three horizontal lines with a dot at the center called Tripund on the forehead and forearms.

The bindi is declared to be very helpful for the good health of the brain, eyes, ears and the nose because these applications maintain a fine pull on the veins and nerves underneath the forehead and forearm's skin to monitor proper flow of blood. The forebrain controls the decision making part of the brain. In acupuncture methods it is considered to be the most sensitive part of the body responsible for alertness and hence the use of Bindi for the forehead is justified.

### RUDRAKSHA MALA



It is a common sight in India, to see saints and Rishis wearing small ball-like seeds in a string around their neck. These are called Rudraksha Mala.

Rudraksha is the seed of a fruit of a rare species of a tree found in It is roundish with a cellular demarcation and has a central bore. It has a beneficial property of attracting healthy vibrations and so saints and rishis wear them as necklaces. The Lord Shiva is also found to wear one such thing in his neck. A real rudraksha seed shall sink in water and so fake ones can be differentiated easily.

## KALASH (Sacred Pot)



According to Indian mythology, The mouth of the Kalash represents Vishnu, the throat - Lord shiva, Lord Brahma adores the base and at the belly all Goddesses are established and thus in a small pot they established the presence of all gods and goddesses.

In India, on most of the ceremonial occasions, a pot filled with clean water, with fresh mango or betel leaves placed at the mouth and a coconut placed on top is kept near the entrance..



### Ringling of bells

For worship, blowing of conch, a type of shell, bells of different dimensions, the beating of metallic-alloy plates, Jhang, Majira, etc are very common in India.

Research has proved that the sound of a standard bell can cure physical as well as mental diseases. Loud sounds of the bell or the blowing of the conch, gets 27 cubic feet of air in an area of 1220 sq.ft, purified and it is taken to be the most economical way of purifying the environment.

## 1.15 Nature And Hinduism

### TREE WORSHIP

Trees are considered to be friends of man as they provide him shelter, food, fuel, and oxygen for good living. In the Rigveda and the Atharveda some trees are deified, as "Vriksha Devta" which

are considered to be holy and the people ought to worship them. The Pipal, Banyan, Goolar, Amla, Vilva, Sandal, Neem, Mango, and Babool are the trees that are worshiped in India.

It is said that Gods and the souls of pious ancestors rest on the branches of the Pipal tree and so it is not a domestic tree, instead it is grown in temples and inns where people come to worship. The Pineal gland's secretions of humans make their brains alert and alive. The chemical found in this secretion is also found in the Pipals' juice according to scientists and hence it is called the Bodhi Vriksha.

The Banyan tree is of specialty because it sends sap from above to the earth. This resembles the functioning of the world, as it also needs sap or energy for its survival from above, God. Married Hindu ladies worship the Banyan tree for a long and happy married life.

Another tree is the Asoka tree which is known to relieve the worries of the persons sitting under its shade. Sita is said to have been seated under an Asoka tree in Lanka during her captivity.

The Hindus also worship the Kadam tree, because Shree Krishna used to sit and play under this tree.

### TULSI WORSHIP

In India, the Tulsi is regarded as the most sacred plant. It is a much-branched erect bushy plant of about 4 feet height. Its leaves are aromatic and they have minute glands.

According to scientists the place

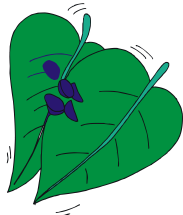


containing tulsi plant becomes pollution free. The oil of the leaves is capable of destroying bacteria and insects. The leaves have mercury traces and are hence nowadays used in cancer curing Ayurvedic medicines. The juice of the leaves cures bronchitis and stomach upsets. The leaves' paste cure all skin diseases and the decoction of the leaves cures common cold.



### BETEL LEAF (PAAN)

During worship or rituals, leaves from some select trees are used as essential accessories, but among them all the Betel Leaf enjoys a place of pride in India. In Hindu weddings, a betel leaf is tucked into the headgear of the bride and the groom. Paan has rich herbal properties. It is invigorating and energizing, a killer of germs and bacteria and an eliminator of cold. Before eating a paan, the stalk has to be cut, the edges have to be trimmed and the veins have to be scrapped because they may damage the brain.



### COCONUT (NARIYAL) IN RITUALS

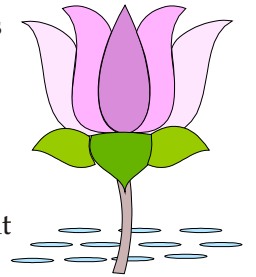
In India, for success and prosperity on all occasions, the beginning is done with the breaking of a sanctified coconut. All religious functions and rituals start with the worship of the coconut since it is regarded as the symbolic Ganesh, the deity who helps in the successful completion of any work undertaken.



People get strength and improved eyesight by eating the kernel. The sick and the elderly find its water nourishing and ladies apply its oil for luxurious hair. It has glucose, phosphorous and carbohydrates in good measures and so it is good for Diabetics. Germs can't penetrate its hard kernel so it remains intact for months together.

### LOTUS FLOWER

Lotus is a very important symbol of Indian cultural heritage. It is mentioned in all the Hindu scriptures because it is very sacred to the Gods. God Brahma and Buddha are depicted as seated on a Lotus flower. Lord Vishnu holds a lotus in one of his hands and Goddess Lakshmi also holds a Lotus flower. The Lotus is an appropriate symbol of detachment from the surroundings, be it good or bad.



## 1.16 Hindu Festivals

Hinduism takes many forms from serene private prayers to public festivals. There are festivals and ceremonies associated not only with Gods and Goddesses but also with the sun, moon, planets, rivers, trees, animals etc. The innumerable festive occasions lend Hinduism its amazing popular appeal and the Indian tradition rich and colourful.

*As mentioned by Param Pujya Gurudev in his work that the two aspects about festivals*

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are that they are occasions for rejoicing, and that they are social in character.

### VASANT PANCHAMI

**Place:** North India

**Time:** January-February

**Significance:** Spring festival

Vasant Panchami is the 'Spring Festival' in North India falling on the 5th day of Phalguna. This day is specially dedicated to Saraswati the goddess of learning, wisdom, fine arts and refinement.

On this day, people colorfully attired, especially in bright shades of yellow colour which signifies maturity and ripeness. A grand puja is held for goddess Saraswati, the goddess of creativity and knowledge.

The day is celebrated as the *Adhyatmic Janam Devas* or 'Day of Spiritual Enlightenment Members of the Gayatriwar Pariwar take resolutions to implement the programs of the mission

### SHIVRATRI

**Place:** All over India

**Month:** March

**Significance:** Worship of Lord Shiva

All over the country, Shivratri is observed on the 13th night of the new moon during the dark half of the month of Phalguna. This is the night, when Lord Shiva danced the 'Tandava'- his cosmic dance.

Devotees of Shiva observe a strict fast on this day and maintain a long vigil during the night.

### HOLI

**Place:** North India

**Month:** March

**Significance:** Spring festival

Holi is the most lively of all Hindu festivals, observed all over North India, which falls on the full moon day in the month of Phalgun (March) according to the Hindu calendar. It heralds the end of the winter and the beginning of the spring. It is a festival of joy when all differences are forgiven.

During the celebrations People throw colored powders at each other and make merry. Children, young and old are drenched with colors being poured from top the houses, bursting balloons, or long pistons, Singing and dancing and adding to the gaiety of the occasion.

### RAMNAVAMI

**Place:** All over India

**Time:** March

**Significance:** Birth day of Sri Rama, seventh incarnation of Vishnu

The birthday of Lord Rama, the celebrated hero of the famous epic, 'Ramayana', is enthusiastically celebrated all over India. Lord Vishnu is worshipped in his human incarnation as Rama, the divine ruler of Ayodhya.

### AKSHAYA TRITIYA

**Place:** All over India

**Month:** May

**Significance:** Auspicious Day



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It is well known that Indians believe passionately in the theory of *muhurts* or auspicious times to perform sacraments, to make major purchases or to begin new ventures. In spite of modern technology and changing lifeviews, this dedication to auspicious time is a prominent feature of Indian life. Akshaya Tritiya, the third day of the bright half of Vaishakh, is considered one of the four most sacred days of the year.

### **GANGA DUSSEHRA/GAYATRI JAYANTI**

**Place:** All over India

**Month:** *June*

**Significance:** River Of Life

The river Ganga holds a uniquely significant place in Indian life and consciousness. It rises at Gangotri, high in the snow-clad Himalayas. Cascading down mighty boulders, it flows into the hot plains of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and finally meets the waters of the sea in the Bay of Bengal. At Allahabad, the Ganga merges with the river Yamuna and the mythical river Saraswati.

The day is also remembered as the *Mahaprayan Divas* of Pujya Gurudev . Gayatri Jyanti is celebrated by the members of the Pariwar at different Shaktipeeths.

### **GURU PURNIMA**

**Place:** All over India

**Month:** July

**Significance:** Veneration of the Guru (teacher)

Guru Purnima or Asadh Purnima is a special day celebrated on the full moon (purnima) day of the month of Ashadh, to pay homage to all teachers (Guru's). It is also known as Vyas Purnima in remembrance of the great sage Ved Vyas, the guru who wrote the great epic, 'Mahabharatha', the 18 'Puranas' and other important literary works.

All the members of Gayatri Pariwar celebrate the day with the commitment to sever the mission and follow the path shown by Gurdev.

### **RAKSHA BANDHAN**

**Place:** North India

**Month:** August

**Significance:** Sisters day

Raksha Bandhan or Rakhi the more popular is a Hindu sister's day when brothers and sisters reaffirm their bonds of affections. Sisters tie colourful threads or rakhis on their brother's wrists. The brothers in turn promise to protect their sisters and give them gifts. If a girl who is a total stranger ties this chord on the wrist of a young man, from then onwards the two regard each other as brother and sister.

### **JANMASHTAMI**

**Place:** All over India

**Time:** August

**Significance:** Birth Anniversary of Lord Krishna

The birth anniversary of Lord Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu is celebrated on the Ashtami of Krishna Paksh or the 8th day of the dark fortnight in the

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month of Bhadon, with great fervour especially at Mathura and Brindavan where Lord Krishna spent his childhood.

Temples and homes are beautifully decorated and lit. People fast all day and eat only after the midnight birth ceremony. Night long prayers are offered and religious hymns are sung in temples.

### **GANESH CHATURTHI**

**Place:** South India

**Time:** September

**Significance:** Birthday of Lord Ganesh

Ganesh or Vinayaka Chaturthi is dedicated to Lord Ganesh (son of Shiva), the elephant-headed god of all good beginnings and success. The festival celebrated as the birth day of Lord Ganesh, held annually in especially with great fervour in Maharashtra, is a ten day long event. It falls on the fourth day of bright fortnight in the month of August-September.

On the occasion of the Ganapati festival, a large number of images are made of clay or metal in all possible sizes sometimes even up to twenty feet. People buy them and install them in their houses and worship for ten days (Ananda Chaturdashi), after which the images are taken out ceremoniously, carried in a procession through the streets of the town (especially in Maharashtra) and thrown into the river, sea or well for immersion or 'Visarjan'.

### **NAVARATRI**

**Place:** All over India

**Month:** October

**Significance:** Celebrating the victory of good over evil

Navaratri is the longest Hindu festival celebrated all over India for nine consecutive nights in praise of Lord Rama (and Goddess Durga from September end to early October. Continuous chanting from the great epic 'Ramayana', along with evening performances from the episodes of his life are held for nine days. On the 10th day falls Vijayadashami or Dussehra is celebrated.

Navaratri is a combination of many concepts, with the common theme of the victory of good over evil. One concept is that Vijayadashami or Dussehra is celebrated on the day Ram kills Ravana in the Ram-Ravana war.

Another concept is that, Durga, goddesses of power and vitality who is believed to have nine forms called Navadurga, takes a new form on each of the nine days (celebrated as Durga Puja) with the arsenal of weapons to ride a lion and fight the demon Mahishasura. The 10th day on which the goddess kills Mahishasura, is celebrated as Dussehra or Vijayadashami as the victory of good over evil. Lord Rama is said to have worshipped the goddesses, seeking her blessing in order to overpower the evil force of Ravana, the abductor of his beloved Sita.

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## VIJAY DASHMI/ DUSSEHRA

**Place:** All over India

**Month:** October

**Significance:** Celebrating good over evil

Dussehra falling on the last day of Navaratri or Durga puja arrives in the month of October. Dussehra literally means that which takes away ten sins. This Hindu festival is celebrated all over India to mark the defeat of Ravana by Lord Rama. Dussehra symbolises the triumph of good over evil. The 'Ramlila' - an enactment of the life of Lord Rama, is held during the nine days preceding Dussehra. On the tenth day, larger than life effigies of Ravana, his son and brother -Meghnath and Kumbhakarna, are set alight.

## DIWALI (DEEPAVALI)

**Place:** All over India

**Time:** October

**Significance:** Festival of Lights

Deepavali or Diwali (Festival Of Lights) is a beautiful festival of Hindus. Celebrated 21 days after Dussehra, it marks the return of Lord Rama to Ayodhya after his 14 years exile. Thousands of traditional clay lamps are lit in houses all over the country. Lakshmi -the goddess of wealth and prosperity is worshipped. The houses are cleaned and decorated with designs drawn on the floor (kolams). People wear new apparel, consume a rich and sumptuous feast and burst crackers.

## BHAI DOOJ

**Place:** All Over India

**Time -** October

**Significance-** Affection towards Brothers

After the high voltage celebrations of the festival of lights and fire-crackers, sisters all over India get ready for 'Bhai Dooj' - when sisters sermonize their love by putting an auspicious *tilak* or a vermilion mark on the forehead of their brothers and perform an *aarti* of him by showing him the light of the holy flame as a mark of love and protection from evil forces. Sisters are lavished with gifts, goodies and blessings from their brothers.

## GITA JAYANTI

**Celebration :** The Birth of Bhagwat Gita

**In the month of :** December - January

**Significance:** The Sacred Scripture

The Gita Jayanti, or the birthday of the *Bhagawat Gita*, is celebrated throughout India by all the admirers and lovers of this most sacred scripture on the eleventh day (*Ekadashi*) of the bright half of the month of Margaseersha (December-January), according to the Hindu almanac. It was on this day that Sanjaya narrated to King Dhritarashtra the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, and thus made the glorious teachings of the Lord available to us, and to people of the world, for all time. The Gita is the most beautiful and the only truly philosophical song. It contains sublime lessons on wisdom and philosophy. It is the "Song

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Celestial". It is the universal gospel. It contains the message of life that appeals to all, irrespective of race, creed, age or religion.

Devotional Songs and Recitation of hymns are carried out by the devotees throughout the day.

## 1.17 Interesting Facts About Hindu Way Of Life

### NAMASTE

In Sanskrit *namah* + *te* = *namaste*. It means - I bow to you - my greetings, salutations or prostration to you. *Namaha* can also be literally interpreted as "na ma" (not mine). It has a spiritual significance of negating or reducing one's ego in the presence of another.

The real meeting between people is the meeting of their minds. When we greet another, we do so with *namaste*, which means, "may our minds meet," indicated by the folded palms placed before the chest.

The bowing down of the head is a gracious form of extending friendship in love and humility. The spiritual meaning is even deeper. The life force, the divinity, the Self or the Lord in me is the same in all. Recognizing this oneness with the meeting of the palms, we salute with head bowed the Divinity in the person we meet.

### PROSTRATE BEFORE PARENTS AND ELDERS

When we prostrate with humility and respect, we invoke the good wishes and blessings of elders which flow in the

form of positive energy to envelop us. This is why the posture assumed whether it is in the standing or prone position, enables the entire body to receive the energy thus received. It symbolizes our recognition of their selfless love for us and the sacrifices that they have done for our welfare

### RELEVANCE OF PRADAKSHINA (CIRCUMAMBULATE)

We cannot draw a circle without a centre point. The Lord is the centre, source and essence of our lives. Recognising Him as the focal point in our lives, we go about doing our daily chores. This is the significance of *pradakshina*. Also every point on the circumference of a circle is equidistant from the centre. This means that wherever or whoever we may be, we are equally close to the Lord.

### APPLICATION OF HOLY ASH ON THE FOREHEAD

The ash of any burnt object is not regarded as holy ash. *Bhasma* (the holy ash) is the ash from the *homa* (sacrificial fire) where special wood along with ghee and other herbs is offered as worship of the Lord. *Bhasma* is generally applied on the forehead.

The word *bhasma* means "that by which our sins are destroyed and the Lord is remembered". *Bha* implied *bhartsanam* ("to destroy") and *sma* implies *smaranam* ("to remember"). The application of *bhasma* therefore signifies destruction of the evil and remembrance of the divine.

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## LIGHTING OF LAMP

Light symbolizes knowledge. The Lord is the source and the illuminator of all knowledge. Hence light is worshiped as the Lord himself. Knowledge removes ignorance just as light removes darkness. Hence we light the lamp to bow down to knowledge as the greatest of all forms of wealth. The flame of a lamp always burns upwards. Similarly we should acquire such knowledge as to take us towards higher ideals.

## RELEVANCE OF AARATI

We perform the *aarati* towards the end of every ritualistic worship (*pooja* or *bhajan*) of the Lord. This is always accompanied by the ringing of the bell and sometimes by singing, playing of musical instruments and clapping.

*Aarati* is often performed with camphor. This holds a telling spiritual significance. Camphor when lit, burns itself out completely without leaving a trace of it. It represents our inherent tendencies. When lit by the fire of knowledge which illumines the Lord (Truth), our *vaasanas* or lust and greed, thereafter burn themselves out completely.

At the end of the *aarati*, we place our hands over the flame and then touch our eyes and the top of the head. It means - may the light that illuminated the Lord light up my vision; may my vision be divine and my thoughts noble and beautiful.

## RELEVANCE OF CHANTING SHANTI THRICE

*Shanti*, meaning "peace", is a natural state of being. We chant *shanti* thrice to emphasize our intense desire for peace.

It is believed that *trivaram satyam* - that which is said thrice comes true. For emphasizing a point we repeat a thing thrice. In the court of law also, one who takes the witness stands says, "I shall speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth".

It is chanted aloud the first time, addressing the unseen forces. It is chanted softer the second time, directed to our immediate surroundings and those around, and softest the last time as it is addressed to oneself.

## ONE SHOULD NOT TOUCH PAPERS, BOOKS AND PEOPLE WITH THE FEET

Knowledge is sacred and divine. So it must be given respect at all times. Nowadays we separate subjects as sacred and secular.

The custom of not stepping on educational tools is a frequent reminder of the high position accorded to knowledge in Indian culture. From an early age, this wisdom fosters in us a deep reverence for books and education. This is also the reason why we worship books, vehicles and instruments once a year on Saraswati Pooja



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## HINDUS FACE EAST WHEN PRAYING

The Sun rises from the East and since Sun is worshipped by the Hindus, East is considered an auspicious direction. All sacred ceremonies are conducted facing east.

## COWS CONSIDERED SACRED

A cow is considered the symbol of religion in Hinduism. Cows are sacred because they are very dear to Lord Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Also cow gives us an important food i.e. milk. Because of this, the cow is considered one of mankind's mothers.

The main ingredients to perform a Yagya come from a cow such as : milk, yoghurt, butter and ghee (clarified butter). Ghee is offered into the fire at all Yagyas

## OFFERING WATER TO SUN

When a devotee takes water in his hand, while standing in front of or facing the sun and drops water on the ground, the rising direct sun rays fall, from head to feet of the devotee, in a uniform flow. This way water, heated by sun rays and its colours every part of the body. This is the reason why the **Vedas** direct the devotee to offer water (while standing and facing east) to the sun in the morning when the sun rises in the east and sets body.

## PANCHANG

For the people of India, time has always been measured in a spiritual and scientific calendar called the Panchang. Chronicling five thousand years of Indian civilization, the Panchang lists festivals that honour and celebrate the gods and legends of India. It evokes the universe through mathematical calculations that predict weather, events, epidemics and personal fortune.

The panchang measures time in lunar months whose names reveal the secret path of stars and constellations. The face of the new moon (*Aamvasya*) ushers in a new month.

The first fortnight of the full moon is known as Shuklapaksha, ' *the bright half*', as the moon waxes. Full moon, Poornima marks the end of Shuklapaksha.

## Significance of Days in a week

According to the Hindus each day has it's own significance. The importance of each day is signified for each God. It is considered auspicious to fast on a particular day to please that God. The Hindus have followed the Panchang for about five thousand years.

## *Inspiration*

*Man is the master of his own destiny. If one can change his thinking process, he or she can control the circumstances.*

Days	Planet	Dedication	Significance
Monday ( <i>Somwar</i> )	Moon (Chandra)	Shiva	Blessings for a good Husband.
Tuesday ( <i>Mangalwar</i> )	Mars (Mangal)	Ganapati	To ward off the unlucky influence of Mangal.
Wednesday ( <i>Budhwar</i> )	Mercury (Budha)	Krishna	For warding of adversity and bringing peace and Prosperity
Thursday ( <i>Guruwar</i> )	Jupiter (Guru)	Dattaguru	To obtain good knowledge and wisdom.
Friday ( <i>Shukrawar</i> )	Venus (Shukra)	Lakshmi	For long life and abundant wealth
Saturday ( <i>Shaniwar</i> )	Saturn (Shani)	Hanuman	To ward off the sinister influence of Saturn.
Sunday ( <i>Raviwar</i> )	Sun (Surya)	Surya	Good health & Liberation from Worldly materials

There are seven days in a week and all the seven days are dedicated to each God. The God if praised by the devotion and love of the devotee is expected to usher the devotee's wish.

## Things to Do

Celebrate the Festivals Vasant Panchmi, Gayatri Jayanti and Guru at home by organizing a small Gayatri *Pooja* Ceremony.

## Inspiration

Keep your viewpoint always pure. Before thinking ill of others, one has to incur sin oneself.



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# SIKHISM

- Definition of a Sikh
  - Background of the Sikh Religion
  - Every Day Conduct
  - The Divine Light (Guru)
  - Sikh Gurus
  - Gurbani
  - Gurudwara
  - Sikh Practices
  - Sikh Baptism
  - Sikh Symbols
  - Sikh Code Of Discipline
  - Ceremonies
  - Sikh Festivals
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# SIKHISM

## Objectives

1. To study the prominent features of the Religions practiced in India.
2. To understand the spiritual practices of each religion
3. To assess the relevance of the principle teaching in the day-to-day life.
4. To highlight the Festivals celebrated in these religions



*God is love and love is God. As God cannot be confined, restricted or limited to any particular creed, cult, race, similarly Religion of love cannot be restricted or confined in geographical limits and boundaries. Sri Guru Nanak Sahib's Religion of Love is cosmic and universal in its appeal, holy folds and dimensions.*

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## Introduction

Guru Nanak founded Sikhism is the youngest and the fifth largest world religion . It emphasizes the belief in One Supreme Being, the Creator and offers a simple straight path to eternal bliss.

### 2.1 Definition of a Sikh

Any human being who faithfully believes in

1. One Immortal Being,
2. Ten Gurus, from Guru Nanak Dev to Guru Gobind Singh,
3. The Guru Granth Sahib,
4. The utterances and teachings of the ten Gurus and
5. The baptism bequeathed by the tenth Guru, and who does not owe allegiance to any other religion, is a Sikh

### 2.2 Background of the Sikh Religion

#### ADVENT OF SHRI GURU NANAK DEV

It was during the time when the world was plunged into the dark world of ignorance, feudal tyranny and oppression, religious and cultural strife, that Shri Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikhism, was born in 1469 . Some of the key areas stressed by him are

- Each individual is unique and can progress through the process of self discipline.

- These disciplines were three-fold: physical, moral and spiritual. The physical discipline included acts of service and charity, while leading a householder's life; the moral discipline included righteous living and rising above selfish desires; the spiritual discipline included the belief in only the One Supreme Being, (the Timeless Almighty) and the exclusion of the Pantheon of gods and goddesses, in whom they had formerly believed.
- The Guru emphasized the dignity of the individual and his right to oppose injustice and oppression. His main task, however, was to turn men's minds to God. Guru Nanak opposed mere ceremony and ritualism as dead wood. True religion is purposeful and conscientious living, and not the treadmill of ritual.

### 2.3 Every Day Conduct

Guru Nanak Dev established three main features of every day conduct:

1. **Nam Japo:** Constant remembrance of God (meditation).
2. **Kirat Karo:** Earn your living by honest means.
3. **Vand Chhako:** In His Name, share the fruits of your labor with others as an expression of love and compassion.

### 2.4 The Divine Light (Guru)

The Guru in Sikhism is a perfect Prophet or Messenger of God in whom

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the Light of God shines fully, visibly and completely. Guru is in union with Divine. Thus he ushers the devotees, the seekers of Truth into a spiritual birth. Through him the Glory of the Lord is transmitted to humanity. On account of his Divine prerogatives, the Guru, though human in form, is Divine in Spirit.

## 2.5 Sikh Gurus

1. Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji
2. Shri Guru Angad Dev Ji
3. Shri Guru Amardas Ji
4. Shri Guru Ramdas Ji
5. Shri Guru Arjan Dev Ji
6. Shri Guru Har Gobind Ji
7. Shri Guru Har Rai Ji
8. Shri Guru Har Krishan Ji
9. Shri Guru Teg Bhadur Ji
10. Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji
11. Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji

## 2.6 Gurbani

The sacred literature of Sikhism is called Gurbani which means the Guru's word - A Song message - as enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib. The bani is the Guru and the Guru is the bani.

## 2.7 Gurudwara

Generally a *Sikh Temple - Gurudwara* - remains open throughout the day, so that worshippers can offer prayers at any time convenient to them.

### Gurudwara Protocol

Sikhs generally bathe in mornings before going to the Gurudwara. They

take off their shoes at the gate then wash their hands and feet if suitable arrangements exist. When they enter the main hall, they kneel down and bow before the Guru Granth Sahib. Any non-Sikhs must cover their heads with a cap or a handkerchief. They are not allowed to take any form of tobacco, alcohol or narcotics inside the temple.

## 2.8 Sikh Practices

### 2.8.1 PATH IN SIKHISM

Every Sikh should, as far as possible, maintain a separate and exclusive place for the installation of Guru Granth Sahib, in his home. Every member of the Sikh family should learn Gurmukhi to be able to read the Guru Granth Sahib.

### 2.8.2 MEDITATING ON NAAM

A Sikh should wake up in the ambrosial hours (three hours before the dawn), take bath and, concentrating his/her thoughts on One Immortal Being, repeat the name Waheguru (Wondrous Destroyer of darkness).

### 2.8.3 KIRTAN

**Sacred music, Kirtan**, means "singing the praises of God". It is devotional music. Generally in the Gurudwara, musicians either sing alone or request the Sangat to repeat after them the lines of the hymn in chorus.

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## 2.9 Sikh Baptism

**Baptism** is necessary before joining the Khalsa Panth. Guru Gobind Singh initiated the practice with the establishment of the order of the Khalsa in 1699.

The **Amrit ceremony (baptism)** is held in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib. Five baptized Sikhs known for their piety are called Panj Piyaras. They explain the principles of Sikhism to those who want to be baptized.

## 2.10 Sikh Symbols

Every Sikh baptized vows to wear the Five "K's", and they are

1. **The Kanga** is a wooden comb which is kept in a Sikh's hair. The Kanga seeks to reflect a Sikh's purity, the Sikh's orderliness.
2. **The Kachha (specially made cotton underwear as a reminder of the commitment to purity)** is the pair of 'shorts' that a Sikh is to wear. The Kachha seeks to remind the Sikh of his/her vow of not committing adultery, further to remind the Sikh of their obligations towards one - that being the husband or wife.
3. **The Kara (a steel bracelet, signifying bondage to Truth and freedom from every other entanglement)** is a metal bangle worn on a Sikh's wrist.

This seeks to deter the Sikh from committing any type of sin.

4. **The Kirpan (the sword, with which the Khalsa is committed to righteously defend the fine line of the Truth)** is the dagger that a Sikh wears. The Kirpan seeks to remind the Sikh of his or her constant battle against sin. Sikhs have historically been looked upon as defenders of the innocent.
5. The Five K's, along with the turban, constitute the *Khalsa* uniform, which distinguishes a Sikh from any other person in the world, and is essential for preserving the life of the community and fostering the *Khalsa* brotherhood.

The Five K's are not supposed to foster exclusiveness or superiority. They are meant to keep the Sikhs united in the pursuit of the aims and ideals of the Gurus. They enable them to keep their vows made at the time of baptism.

## 2.11 Sikh Code Of Discipline

Along with the maintenance of the Five K's, the *Khalsa* is required to refrain from committing the four taboos or *Kurehats*. These are:

1. Trimming, shaving or removing hair from the body.
2. Using tobacco or intoxicants in any form.

3. Eating of kosher or halal meat.
4. Committing adultery.

### **The Sikh Flag**

The Sikh flag is a saffron-coloured triangular-shaped cloth, usually reinforced in the middle with Sikh insignia in blue. It is usually mounted on a long steel pole (which is also covered with saffron-coloured cloth) headed with a *Khanda*. The Sikh flag is often seen near the entrance to the *Gurdwara*, standing firmly on the platform, overlooking the whole building. Sikhs show great respect to their flag.

### **Ek Onkar**

**EK Onkar** The most significant word used in the Sikh teachings. EK Onkar are the first two words of Siri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and also Mool Mantar.

Literally, Ek means 'ONE' emphasizing the oneness of God, which is the basics of Sikhism. Onkar means The Onkar is derived from the Sanskrit word Om which consists of three syllable sounds representing the trinity of Bramha, Vishnu and Shiva. Onkar therefore means GOD in His entirety.

### **Sikh Salutation .**

#### ***Institution of Sangat and Pangat***

Guru Nanak established the institution of Sangat and Pangat:

*Sangat* means the Holy gathering not only on Sundays but every morning and evening for God's remembrance.

*Pangat* means Free Kitchen called Guru ka Langar. The rules of Langar require that all should sit in the same row and partake of the same food

without any discrimination of being rich or poor, high or low and prince or the peasant.

## **2.12 Ceremonies**

### **Naming of a Child (Nam Karan)**

In a Sikh's household, as soon after the birth of a child as the mother becomes capable of moving about the family and relatives should go to a *gurdwara* with *karhah prashad* (sacred pudding) or in the *Gurdwara* and recite in the holy presence of the *Guru Granth Sahib* such hymns.

A name starting with the first letter of the hymn of the *Hukam* (command) should be proposed by the *granthi* (man in attendance of the holy book) and, after its acceptance by the congregation, the name should be announced by him. The boy's name must have the suffix "Singh" and the girl's, the suffix "Kaur".

### **The Sikh Marriage**

The **Sikh marriage** is not merely a physical and legal contract but is a sacrament a holy union between two souls where physically they appear as two individual bodies but in fact are united as one. The Sikh marriage ceremony which is also known as *Anand Karaj* meaning 'blissful union'. The gift to the Sikh is the *Siri Guru Granth Sahib*. Why does the couple circle the *Siri Guru Granth Sahib* as they commit to each round? It is not just a ritual. You are making a commitment with the *Guru* as witness. And as you circle the *Siri Guru Granth Sahib* you are reminded that the *Guru* is the center of your life from which



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springs your life and the understanding of the journey of the soul crossing this world ocean. The Siri Guru Granth Sahib represents the core of you. The Sadh Sangat is your support system.

## 2.13 Sikh Festivals

There are a number of Sikh festivals, for example general festivals like the birthdays, the accession anniversaries of the Gurus, the death anniversaries of the Gurus.

Some of the important festivals which are celebrated by the Sikhs all over the world are discussed below. These festivals are not meant for solely entertainment, pleasure of food and frolic, but are occasions for the revitalization of faith and rededication to the principles and practices of Sikhism. During the celebration throughout Kirtan (hymnal singing), Katha (discourse or lecture) and Ardas (supplication), Karah Parsad (consecrated food) and Langar (free food in the community kitchen) are performed

### 1) Guru Nanak's Birthday:

Guru Nanak is the Founder of Sikh religion. He was born on 20th October 1469 at Talwandi, now in Pakistan. The actual birthday-anniversary varies, according to the dates of the Bikrami Sambat. The celebrations generally last for three days,

Two days before the birthday, an Akhand Path is held in the Gurdwara (Sikh Temple). One day before the birthday, a procession is organized

through the town, led by Panj Piyaras (Five Khalsas) and the Palki (palanquin) of Sri Guru Granth Sahib followed by teams of singers and brass-band players.

On the actual birthday a religious session begins early in the morning at about four O'clock, with the singing of the morning prayer followed by the hymns from the Scripture.

### (2) Baisakhi:

This is the Birthday of the Khalsa (the pure ones). Guru Gobind Singh Ji started the **Khalsa** brotherhood with his 'baptism of steel' on 30th March 1699. This one-day celebration is held in Gurdwaras with Kirtan, Katha, lecture and Karah-Parsad, Ardas and Langar. In addition, the Amrit ceremony is held and Amrit is given to those who offer themselves for baptism. Sikhs after taking Amrit, are called Khalsa. In some Gurdwaras, an Akhand Path is read as a part of the celebration.

### (3) Diwali:

The Sikhs celebrate Diwali - generally regarded as a Hindu festival - because Guru Hargobind came back to Amritsar on this day in 1620, after his release from Gwalior jail. The one-day celebration is held with Kirtan, Katha, lectures, Karah-Parsad, Ardas and langar in the Gurdwara. Diwali means festival of lights. So in the evening, illuminations are lit and fire-work displays are held, both in Gurdwaras and in the homes of Sikhs to express their joy at the return of the Sikhs' Guru to Sri Akal Takht (The Throne of

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# **BUDDHISM**

- Principal Teachings
- Buddhist Pilgrimages In India



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# BUDDHISM

## Introduction

The Buddha was born Siddhartha Gautama, a prince of the Shakya tribe of Nepal, in approximately 566 BC. When he was twenty nine years old, he left the comforts of his home to seek the meaning of the suffering he saw around him. After six years of arduous yogic training, he abandoned the way of self-mortification and instead sat in mindful meditation beneath a bodhi tree.



### **Buddha: whose swan it is?**

The royal princes of Kapilvastu were playing in a garden near a large and beautiful lake. The joyous running and noises suddenly came to a stand still as a group of beautiful swans flew past the sky above the lake. At the next moment a sharp shaft whirled past the heads of the young people and shot down a swan, its body bleeding. Devadatta, one of the princes had brought the delicate little creature by his arrow. He went to the shore of the lake to take custody of the victim. But what he saw astonished him. Siddharth, his brother, has taken the swan to the lake, washed its wound and had applied his finest cloth as bandage to the wound.

The love of Siddhartha made the swan to trust him and accept the touch and it rested delightedly in his arms. Now the quarrel began for the ownership of the swan. Devadatta argued that it was he who brought the bird down and he had full right to have it. But Siddhartha

argued that he saved and attended to it and so he had the right to retain the swan.

The matter went to the court of elders. The court decided in the favour of the absolute love of Siddhartha. He later became Buddha, whom the whole world look upon as the symbol of pure love for all living beings.

On the full moon of May, with the rising of the morning star, Siddhartha Gautama became the Buddha, the enlightened one.

The Buddha wandered the plains of northeastern India for 45 years more teaching the path or Dharma he had realized in that moment. Around him developed a community or Sangha of monks and, later, nuns, drawn from every tribe and caste, devoted to practicing this path.

### ***Gurudev Vichar***

*The Buddha through tremendous efforts, transformed himself. Buddhists see him as an ideal and a guide who can lead one to Enlightenment oneself.*

*Buddhism teaches practical methods (such as meditation) which enable people to realize and utilize its teachings in order to transform their experience, to be fully responsible for their lives and to develop the qualities of Wisdom and Compassion.*

## **3.1 Principal Teachings**

### **THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS**

#### **1. Life means suffering.**

To live means to suffer, because the human nature is not perfect and neither is the world we live in. During our lifetime, we inevitably have to endure physical suffering such as pain, sickness, injury, tiredness, old age, and eventually death; and we have to endure psychological suffering like sadness, fear, frustration, disappointment, and depression. Thus the world is full of sorrows and pains

#### **2. The origin of suffering is attachment.**

The origin of suffering is attachment to desires, passion, ardor wealth and prestige, striving for fame and popularity, or in short: *craving* and *clinging*. As the objects of our attachment are transient, their loss is inevitable, thus suffering will necessarily follow.

#### **3. The cessation of suffering is attainable.**

The cessation of suffering can be attained through Nirvana. The third noble truth expresses the idea that suffering can be ended by attaining dispassion. This means that suffering can be overcome through human activity, simply by removing the cause of suffering. Nirvana means freedom from all worries, troubles, complexes, fabrications and ideas.

#### **4. The path to the cessation of suffering.**

There is a path to the end of suffering - a gradual path of self-improvement, which is described more detailed in the Eightfold Path.

It is the middle way between the two extremes of excessive self-indulgence (hedonism) and excessive self-mortification (asceticism)

1. Right View
2. Right Intention
3. Right Speech
5. Right Livelihood
6. Right Effort
7. Right Mindfulness
8. Right Concentration

The Noble Eightfold Path describes the way to the end of suffering, as it was laid out by Siddhartha Gautama. It is a practical guideline to ethical and mental development with the goal of freeing the individual from attachments and delusions

#### ***Right View***

Right view is the beginning and the end of the path, it simply means to see and to understand things as they really are and to realize the Four Noble Truth.

### ***Right Intention***

Right intention refers to the volitional aspect, i.e. the kind of mental energy that controls our actions. Right intention can be described best as *commitment* to ethical and mental self-improvement.

### ***Right Speech***

The importance of speech in the context of Buddhist ethics is obvious: words can break or save lives, make enemies or friends, start war or create peace. Buddha explained right speech as to abstain from false speech, slanderous speech harsh words that offend or hurt others, and to abstain from idle chatter that lacks purpose or depth.

### ***Right Action***

The principle is explained in terms of abstinence: right action means

- to abstain from harming sentient beings, from taking what is not given, which includes stealing, robbery, fraud, deceitfulness, and dishonesty, and
- to abstain from sexual misconduct.

### ***Right Livelihood***

Right livelihood means that one should earn one's living in a righteous way and that wealth should be gained legally and peacefully.

### ***Right Effort***

Right effort can be seen as a prerequisite for the other principles of the path. Without effort, which is in itself an act of will, nothing can be achieved

### ***Right Mindfulness***

Right mindfulness is the controlled and perfected faculty of cognition. It is the

mental ability to see things as they are, with clear consciousness.

### ***Right Concentration***

Right concentration for the purpose of the eightfold path means *wholesome concentration*, i.e. concentration on wholesome thoughts and actions.

The Buddhist method of choice to develop right concentration is through the practice of meditation

## **3.2 Buddhist Pilgrimages In India**

### **BODHGAYA**

*Place: Bihar*

*Best time to Visit:*

*Throughout the year*

*Significance : The place where Budha got enlightenment*



The village of Bodhgaya situated near in the state of Bihar is the most important Buddhist pilgrimage centre and attracts Buddhists from all over the world. It is the place where Lord Sakyamuni (Gautam Buddha) entered into meditation after being moved by the sufferings of mankind and attained enlightenment.

The magnificent Maha Bodhi temple in Bodhgaya is an architectural amalgamation of many cultures. Originally believed to be small shrine erected by Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century B.C., temple was later restored in the 11th and 18th centuries. The temple bears the stamp of the architecture of the Gupta Dynasty and subsequent ages.

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## SARNATH

*Place: Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh*

*Significance : Place where Lord Buddha gave his first sermon*

*Best time to visit: May/June*

Sarnath, also known, situated 10 kms north east of Varanasi, is one of the holiest places of the Buddhists. It is here that Buddha came, after attaining enlightenment at Bodhgaya and gave his first sermon or preached. The main shrine (vihara) called the Mulagandakuti dating from the sixth

century, is the hut where Buddha used to stay during his visits to Sarnath. There is a carved sandstone railing inside. Then there is the Buddha walk made with blue stones and a small lake at the edge of the park bordered by the zoo.

Sarnath's annual festival is Buddha Purnima, which commemorates Buddha's birth with a colourful fair and procession of his relics held on the full moon of May/June every year.

## *Inspiration*

*Difficulties come to awaken man's efforts & warn him to advance further more carefully.*



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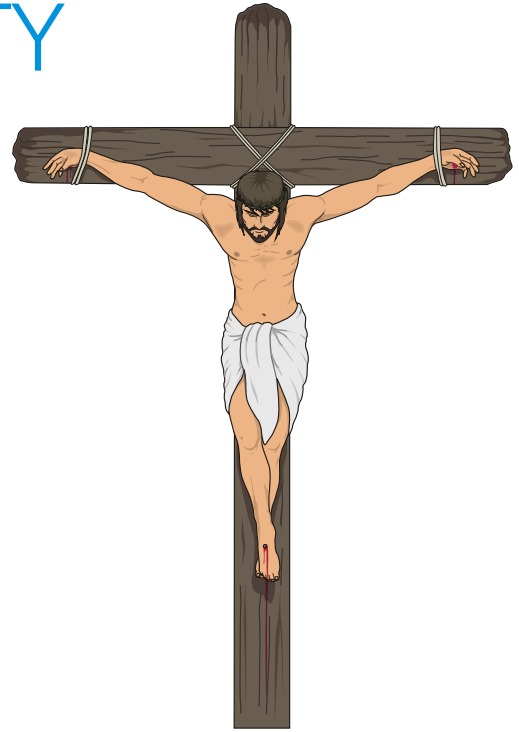
# CHRISTIANITY

- Jesus Christ
  - Holy Texts
  - Basic Christian Beliefs
  - Organisation
  - Followers in India
-



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# CHRISTIANITY



## Introduction

Christianity is the largest religion of the world followed by approximately It has over 2 billion followers all areas of the world.

A religion practiced by so many people naturally encompasses a wide variety of beliefs and practices. In general Christians share a common belief in the uniqueness of Jesus of Nazareth as a truly divine and truly human incarnate Son of God

## 4.1 Jesus Christ

### EARLY CHILDHOOD

Jesus believed he was sent by God and accepted Peter's description of him as "the Christ" (Messiah). The basic teaching of Jesus was the love of God and the love of man. The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man is the essence of his gospel.

Jesus emphasized the worth of human personality. Evil was to be opposed with vigor but persons must be loved unendingly.

Through his life and teachings he achieved a new synthesis of religious insights which has attracted people of all religions and has resulted in more books being written about him than about any person who has ever lived on our planet .

### *Gurudev Vichar*

"Throughout his life Jesus passed on this wisdom to others, encouraging them to give up the pointless pursuit of treasures on earth. He taught that a loving, healthy relationship with God, and with our fellow human beings, would produce a much more fruitful and useful life.

*His compassion for others has been unrivalled by anyone who has ever lived before or since. His life is a testimony to the sincere love that he had for those around him."*

## 4.2 Holy Texts

**The Bible**, made up of the Old Testament and the New Testament, is the scripture of Christianity. The New Testament began in the early Christian Church as a series of papers and letters written by numerous people.

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The New Testament is made up of the following the Gospel, letter and Revelations.

### 4.3 Basic Christian Beliefs

The beliefs of Christians are summed up in the Creeds which comes from a Latin word meaning 'belief'. The two most important creeds are the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed.

- Christians believe that there is only one God, but the nature of God is one of relationship and love. This is expressed in the belief in the Trinity (for most Christians) being three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in the one being of God.
- Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Incarnate), who came to earth as a man to restore the relationship between mankind and God. He was seen and known to be alive (the resurrection) after he had died on the cross, executed as a criminal by the Romans.
- The essential Christian duty is to live life according to the example of Jesus Christ to love God and to share the Christian message.
- The fruits of the Holy Spirit are Love, Patience, Kindness, Faithfulness Goodness, Humility, Self-control and Peace

### 4.4 Organisation

Church split up into different branches and a formal division opened up in 1054 between Western Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. In the middle ages the Protestant Reformation further divided the groups within Western Christianity, the main denominations (groups) today are:

- Roman Catholics
- Orthodox
- Protestant
- Anglican
- The Free Churches
- Pentecostal

### 4.5 Followers in India

India has within itself embraced the religion of Christianity. India has around 22 million Christians. There have been Christian communities in Kerala since the coming of Christianity to Europe (St. Thomas the Apostle is said to have arrived here in 54 AD). The Portuguese and the English left large Christian communities in the states of Goa, Mizoram, Nagaland and Kerala. Indians celebrate both 'Good Friday' as well as Christmas Day.

## *Inspiration*

*Make your thoughts sublime and auspicious. Refine & purify them. They will take you to the supreme bliss of*

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# ISLAM

- Basic Beliefs Of Islam
  - The Five Pillars Of Faith
  - Festivals
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# ISLAM

## Introduction

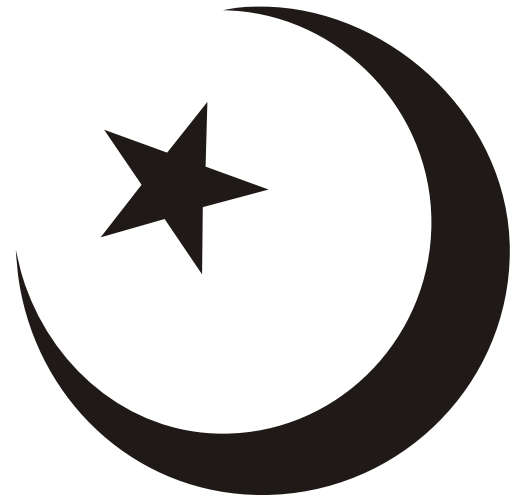
The history of Islam centers around one divine personality, Mohammed. He was born around 570 A.D. and was raised by his extended family after the death of his parents. As he grew, he became dissatisfied with polytheism and came to believe in one God, **Allah**. He began to have religious visions around age 40. During these visions, Muhammad would receive "messages" or "revelations" from God. He would memorize them and teach them to his followers. These visions are now recorded in the **Qur'an** (or **Koran**). Muhammad continued to receive these visions until his death in 632 A.D.

### 5.1 Basic Beliefs Of Islam

#### Five Articles of Faith

The five articles of faith are the main doctrines of Islam. All Muslims are expected to believe the following:

1. **God.** There is one true God and his name is **Allah**.
2. **Angels.** Angels exist and interact with human lives. They are comprised of light, and each have different purposes or messages to bring to earth. Each man or woman has two angels who record his actions; one records good deeds, the other bad deeds.



3. **Scripture.** There are four inspired books, the Torah of Moses, the Psalms (Zabur) of David, the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Injil) and the Qur'an.
4. **Prophets.** God has spoken through numerous prophets throughout time.
5. **Last Days.** On the last day there will be a time of resurrection and judgment. Those who follow Allah and Muhammad will go to Islamic heaven, or Paradise. Those who do not will go to hell.

### 5.2 The Five Pillars Of Faith

The five pillars of faith are observances in Islam which are duties each Muslim must perform.

1. **Creed (Kalima)-** One must state, "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah." publicly to become a Muslim.



2. **Almsgiving (Zakat)**- Muslims are legally required to give one-fortieth of their income to the needy. Since those whom alms are given are helping the giver achieve salvation, there is no sense of shame in receiving charity.
3. **Prayer (Salat)**- Prayer must be done five times a day (upon rising, at noon, in mid-afternoon, after sunset, and before going to sleep) towards the direction of **Mecca**
4. **Fasting (Ramadan)**- During the holy month of Ramadan, faithful Muslims fast from sunup to sundown each day. This develops self-control, devotion to God, and identity with the needy.
5. **Pilgrimage (Hajj)**- Each Muslim is expected to make the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetime if they have the means to do it and are physically capable of the trip. It is an essential part of gaining salvation, so the old or infirm may send someone in their place. It involves a set of rituals and ceremonies.

calendar year. It coincides with the months of October-November. Ramzan is a holy month for Muslims. They fast during the day throughout that month. They do not even drink water. Pious men among them spend the day during the month in prayer and reading their holy book 'Quran'. They have their meal only at night.

#### **EID**

Coming with the new moon, the festival marks the end of 'Ramadan' - a month when Muslims fast throughout the day and eat only at night. Prayers, feasts and family get-together are the major highlights of the celebrations. It was during this month that the holy Koran was revealed. Eid means recurring happiness or festivity.

Eid is celebrated in India with much enthusiasm and fervor and Muslims from all strata of life can be seen adorned in beautiful new clothes, visiting the mosques to attend Salatul Eid (Eid prayers). Greetings of "Eid-Mubarak" or "a blessed Eid" are exchanged. A very important aspect of eid is the charity, which all the Muslims are expected to extend to the needy.

## **5.3 Festivals**

### **RAMZAN**

This would be a festival day called Ramzan-Id. Muslims are followers of the religion preached by the Prophet Mohammed. Ramzan is the name of one of the twelve months of the Muslim

## *Inspiration*

*If wealth is lost, nothing is lost. If health is lost, something is lost. If character is lost, everything is lost.*

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**MODULE**

**4**

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# INDIA TODAY

- Interesting Facts About India
  - National Symbols
  - The Unique Aspect
  - The Political Structure
  - Media
  - Defense
  - Economic and Technical Cooperation
-

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# INDIA TODAY

## Introduction

India, best described as the country where unity in diversity is part of the cultural life. People with diverse culture and background live in peaceful co-existence with one another.

India, being such a vast country is subject to different climatic variations as well. This has a large influence on the lifestyle and work culture in each city. Most of the metropolitan cities are largely cosmopolitan due to the different job and business opportunities offered by each of them. For example, Mumbai (or Bombay) is the financial capital of the country, while Delhi is the political hub. Kolkata (erstwhile Calcutta) is considered the art and cultural lifeline of the country. Likewise each city is marked by its own uniqueness.

The seventh largest and second most populous country in the world, India has long been considered a country of unrealized potential. A new spirit of economic freedom is now stirring in the country, bringing with it sweeping changes. A series of ambitious economic reforms aimed at deregulating the country and stimulating foreign investment has moved India to the top ranks of the rapidly growing Asia Pacific region and unleashed the latent strengths of a complex and rapidly changing nation.

## Interesting Facts About India

- Official Sanskrit name for India is Bharat.
- INDIA has been called Bharat even in Satya yuga (Golden Age)
- The name 'India' is derived from the River Indus, the valleys around which were the home of the early settlers. The Aryan worshippers referred to the river Indus as the Sindhu.
- The number system was invented by India. Aryabhata was the scientist who invented the digit zero.
- Sanskrit is considered as the mother of all higher languages. This is because it is the most precise, and therefore suitable
- Chess was invented in India.
- Algebra, Trigonometry and Calculus are studies which originated in India.
- The 'place value system' and the 'decimal system' were developed in 100 BC in India.
- The World's First Granite Temple is the Brihadeswara temple at Tanjavur in Tamil Nadu. The shikhara is made from a single '80-tonne' piece of granite. Also, this magnificent temple was built in just five years, (between 1004 AD and 1009 AD) during the reign of Rajaraja Chola

- India is the Largest democracy in the world, the 6th largest country in the world AND one of the most ancient and living civilizations (at least 10,000 years old).
- The game of snakes & ladders was created by the 13th century poet saint Gyandev. It was originally called 'Mokshapat.' The ladders in the game represented virtues and the snakes indicated vices. The game was played with cowrie shells and dices. Later through time, the game underwent several modifications but the meaning is the same i.e. good deeds take us to heaven and evil to a cycle of re-births.
- The world's highest cricket ground is in Chail, Himachal Pradesh. Built in 1893 after levelling a hilltop, this cricket pitch is 2444 meters above sea level.
- India has the most post offices in the world!
- The largest employer in the world is the Indian railway system, employing over a million people!.
- The World's first university was established in Takshila in 700 BC. More than 10,500 students from all over the world studied more than 60 subjects. The University of Nalanda built in the 4th century was one of the greatest achievements of ancient India in the field of education.
- Ayurveda is the earliest school of medicine known to mankind. The father of medicine, Charaka, consolidated Ayurveda 2500 years ago.
- The art of Navigation & Navigating was born in the river Sindh 6000 over years ago. The very word 'Navigation' is derived from the Sanskrit word NAVGATI. The word navy is also derived from the Sanskrit word 'Nou'.
- Bhaskaracharya rightly calculated the time taken by the earth to orbit the sun hundreds of years before the astronomer Smart. His calculations was - Time taken by earth to orbit the sun: (5th century) 365.258756484 days.
- The value of "pi" was first calculated by the Indian Mathematician Budhayana, and he explained the concept of what is known as the Pythagorean Theorem. He discovered this in the 6th century, which was long before the European mathematicians.
- Algebra, trigonometry and calculus also originated from India. Quadratic equations were used by Sridharacharya in the 11th century. The largest numbers the Greeks and the Romans used were 10<sup>6</sup> whereas Hindus used numbers as big as 10<sup>53</sup> ( i.e 10 to the power of 53 ) with specific names as early as 5000 B.C. during the Vedic period. Even today, the largest used number is Tera: 10<sup>12</sup>( 10 to the power of 12).
- Until 1896, India was the only source for diamonds to the world. ( Source . Gemological Institute of America )
- The Baily Bridge is the highest bridge in the world. It is located in the Ladakh valley between the Dras and Suru rivers in the

Himalayan mountains. It was built by the Indian Army in August 1982.

- Sushruta is regarded as the father of surgery. Over 2600 years ago Sushruta & his team conducted complicated surgeries like cataract, artificial limbs, cesareans, fractures, urinary stones and also

plastic surgery and brain surgeries.

- Usage of anesthesia was well known in ancient India medicine. Detailed knowledge of anatomy, embryology, digestion, metabolism, physiology, etiology, genetics and immunity is also found in many ancient Indian texts.

## Things to Do

Go home and collect information from the parents on the following topics-

- a. State to which they belong
- b. Name of the District and the village.
- c. Special Attractions of the area with
  - Reference to food products, destinations and
  - Cultural life.

Record all your findings. Share it in the next class.

## 1.1 National Symbols

### 1.1.1 NATIONAL FLAG



The National flag is a horizontal tricolour of deep saffron (kesari) at the top, white in the middle and dark green at the bottom in equal proportion. The colour saffron stands for courage, sacrifice and the spirit of renunciation; the white, for purity and truth; the green for faith and fertility.

The ratio of width of the flag to its length is two to three. In the center of the white band is a navy blue wheel which represents the chakra. Its design is that of the wheel which appears on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital

of Ashoka. Its diameter approximates to the width of the white band and it has 24 spokes.

### 1.1.2 NATIONAL ANTHEM

The song Jana-gana-mana, composed originally in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore, was adopted in its Hindi version by the Constituent Assembly as the national anthem of India on 24 January 1950. It was first sung on 27 December 1911 at the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress. The complete song consists of five stanzas. The first stanza contains the full version of the National Anthem



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### 1.1.3 NATIONAL EMBLEM

The State emblem is an adaptation from the Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka. Carved out of a single block of polished sandstone, the capital is crowned by the Wheel of the Law (Dharma Chakra).

The words Satyameva Jayate from Mundaka Upanishad, meaning 'Truth Alone Triumphs'.

### 1.1.4 NATIONAL SONG

The song Vande Mataram, composed in Sanskrit by Bankimchandra Chatterji, was a source of inspiration to the people in their struggle for freedom. It has an equal status with Jana-gana-mana. The first political occasion when it was sung was the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress. The song was later adopted as the National Song.

### 1.1.5 NATIONAL CALENDAR

The national calendar based on the Saka Era with Chaitra as its first month and a normal year of 365 days was adopted from 22 March 1957 along with the Gregorian calendar for the following official purposes: (i) Gazette of India, (ii) news broadcast by All India Radio, (iii) calendars issued by the Government of India and (iv) Government communications addressed to the members of the public.

### 1.1.6 NATIONAL ANIMAL

The magnificent tiger, *Panthera tigris* (Linnaeus), is a striped animal. It has a

thick yellow coat of fur with dark stripes. The combination of grace, strength, agility and enormous power has earned the tiger its pride of place as the national animal of India. Out of eight races of the species known, the Indian race, the Royal Bengal Tiger, is found throughout the country

### 1.1.7 NATIONAL BIRD

The Indian peacock, *Pavo cristatus* (Linnaeus), the national bird of India, is a colourful, swan-sized bird, with a fan-shaped crest of feathers, a white patch under the eye and a long, slender neck. The male of the species is more colourful than the female, with a glistening blue breast and neck and a spectacular bronze-green train of around 200 elongated feathers.

### 1.1.8 NATIONAL FLOWER

Lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) is the National Flower of India. It is a sacred flower and occupies a unique position in the art and mythology of ancient India and has been an auspicious symbol of Indian culture since time immemorial.

### 1.1.9 NATIONAL TREE BANYAN

Indian fig tree, *Ficus bengalensis*, whose branches root themselves like new trees over a large area. The roots then give rise to more trunks and branches. Because of this characteristic and its longevity, this tree is considered immortal and is an integral part of the myths and legends of India. Even today, the banyan tree is the focal point of village life and the village council meets under the shade of this tree.



### 1.1.10 NATIONAL FRUIT MANGO

A fleshy fruit, eaten ripe or used green for pickles etc., of the tree *Mangifera indica*, the mango is one of the most important and widely cultivated fruits of the tropical world. Its juicy fruit is a rich source of Vitamins A, C and D. In India there are over 100 varieties of mangoes, in different sizes, shapes and colours. Mangoes, have been cultivated in India from time immemorial. The poet Kalidasa sang its praises. Alexander savoured its taste, as did the Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang. Akbar planted 100,000 mango trees in Darbhanga, known as Lakh Bagh.

## 1.2 The Unique Aspect

### 1.2.1 HUMAN RESOURCES

India has a unique strength of being a country with maximum number of youngsters in the nation. The Human Resource Potential is the key strength of India. Details about the population and age structure is as follows

**Population:**

1,065,070,607 (July 2004 est.)

**Age structure:**

0-14 years: 31.7% (male 173,869,856; female 164,003,915)

15-64 years: 63.5% (male 349,785,804; female 326,289,402)

65 years and over: 4.8% (male 25,885,725; female 25,235,905) (2004 est.)

### 1.2.2 LANGUAGES OF INDIA

There are around 18 languages recognized by the Indian Constitution. Hindi is the official and main link language of India. Its homeland is mainly in the north of India, but it is

spoken and widely understood in all urban centers of India. It is written in the Devanagiri script, which is phonetic and, unlike English, is pronounced as it is written.

### 1.2.3 THE GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECT

**Physical Features**

India, with an area of 3.3 million sq. km, is a subcontinent. The peninsula is separated from mainland Asia by the Himalayas. The country lies between 8deg.4' and 37deg.6' north of the Equator and is surrounded by the Bay of Bengal in the east, the Arabian Sea in the west and the Indian Ocean to the south.

The Himalayas form the highest mountain range in the world, extending 2,500 km over northern India. Bounded by the Indus river in the west and the Brahmaputra in the east, the three parallel ranges, the Himadri, Himachal and Shivaliks have deep canyons gorged by the rivers flowing into the Gangetic plain.

No other country in the world is surrounded by oceans from three sides and mountain ranges on the top that stands for spirituality.

### 1.2.4 RIVER SYSTEMS

The rivers may be classified as follows: (a) the Himalayan, (b) the Deccan, (c) the coastal and (d) the rivers of the inland drainage basin. The Himalayan rivers are generally snow-fed and flow throughout the year.

The Ganges is the most sacred river of India.

## 1.2.5 CLIMATE

The Himalayan range in the north acts as the perfect meteorological barrier for the whole country. Despite the country's size and its varied relief, the seasonal rhythm of the monsoon is apparent throughout. Although much of northern India lies beyond the tropical zone, the entire country has a tropical climate marked by relatively high temperatures and dry winters.

### Seasonal Divisions

*India experiences three main seasons, but the year is locally divided into six seasons.*

1. Grishma (Summer), Baisakha and Jyeshtha (mid-April to mid-June)
2. Varsha (Rainy season), Ashadha and Sravana (mid-June to mid-August)
3. Sharad (Autumn), Bhadra and Aswina (mid- August to mid-October)
4. Hemanta (Winter), Kartika and Margasira (mid-October to mid-December)
5. Shishira (Winter), Pausa and Magha (mid-December to mid-February)
6. Basant (Spring), Falguna and Chaitra (mid-Feb to mid-April)

*These six local seasons are grouped into three main seasons:*

- Basant and Grishma (Summer)
- Varsha and Sharad (Rainy season)
- Hemant and Shishira (Winter)

## 1.3 The Political Structure

In less than three years of attaining freedom, India had framed a constitution and declared itself a

Republic on January 26, 1950. The constitution was given shape by some of the finest minds of the country who ensured the trinity of justice, liberty and equality, for the citizens of India.

### Democracy

India is a constitutional democracy with a parliamentary system of government, and at the heart of the system is a commitment to hold regular, free and fair elections. These elections determine the composition of the government, the membership of the two houses of parliament, the state and union territory legislative assemblies, and the Presidency and vice-presidency.

### Indian Union

India is a Union of 28 States and seven centrally administered Union Territories.

### Constitution

The country attained freedom on 15 August 1947. The Constitution of the Republic came into effect on 26 January 1950.

The Constitution provides for single and uniform citizenship for the whole nation and confers the right to vote on every person who is a citizen of India and 18 years of age or older.

### Fundamental Rights

The Fundamental Rights of every Indian citizen include the freedom of speech, expression, belief, assembly and association, migration, and choice of occupation or trade. These rights also protect every Indian from discrimination on grounds of race, religion, creed or sex, and are enforceable in courts of law.

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## Government

- **The Legislature:** India has a parliamentary form of government based on universal adult franchise. The executive authority is responsible to the elected representatives of the people in the Parliament for all its decisions and actions. Sovereignty rests ultimately with the people.
- **Rajya Sabha (Council of States):** The Council of States consists of not more than 250 members, of whom 12 are nominated by the President of India and the rest elected. The Rajya Sabha is presided over by the Vice-President of India.
- **Lok Sabha (House of the People):** The House of the People consists of 545 members. Of these, 530 are directly elected from the States and others from the seven Union Territories. Two members are nominated by the President to represent the Anglo-Indian community.
- Unless dissolved sooner, the term of the House is five years from the date appointed for its first meeting. The Lok Sabha elects its own presiding officer, the Speaker.
- **The Executive:** The President of India is the Head of the State and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He is elected by an electoral college composed of members of both the Houses of Parliament (Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha) and the legislatures of the constituent States. The President holds office for five years and can be re-elected.
- The Vice-President is elected jointly by the members of both the Houses of Parliament. The person enjoying majority support in the Lok Sabha is appointed Prime Minister by the President. He then appoints other ministers on the advice of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister can remain in office only as long as he or she enjoys majority support in the Parliament.
- **The Judiciary:** The judiciary is independent of the executive. It is the guardian and interpreter of the Constitution. The Supreme Court is the highest judicial tribunal, standing at the apex of a single unified system for the whole country. Each State has its own High Court. A uniform code of civil and criminal laws applies to the whole country.
- **The States:** The States have their own Legislative Assemblies and in certain cases a second Chamber. All members of the Legislative Assemblies are elected by universal adult franchise. The Heads of the States are called Governors. As in the Central Government, each State has a Cabinet headed by the Chief Minister responsible to the elected State Legislature.

## 1.4 Media

India's magazines and newspapers are largely privately owned. About 150 major publications in English and 350 in Indian languages form an independent press. A number of

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specialized periodicals on science, finance, commerce, sports, culture and arts are also published. Altogether, about 2500 newspapers are published daily in nearly 100 languages and dialects.

Radio and television play a vital role in a country of India's dimensions. They are State-owned. While they provide entertainment to millions of Indians, they also aid the spread of literacy and development.

## **1.5 Defense**

India believes in a policy that promotes peace and international cooperation. However, the country has a land frontier of 15,200 km, a coastline of 7,516.6 km and an exclusive economic zone of 2.2 million sq. km, island territories, vital offshore installations and airspace. The armed forces, therefore, have to be kept prepared and well equipped to repel any external threat.

## **1.6 Economic and Technical Cooperation**

The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Program provides Indian expertise and consultancy services to a number of developing countries for feasibility and detailed technical evaluation studies.

India provides facilities to students from Asia and Africa for university education, especially in professional areas such as medicine, engineering, architecture, etc. In addition, thousands

have been trained in Indian institutions in diverse fields such as railways, mass media, industrial consultancy, business management, education, agricultural research, shipping and water resources management.

### **New International Economic Order**

As a responsible and progressive member of the international community, India is convinced that the establishment of an equitable International Economic Order involving structural and other changes is the only answer to the various economic ills and problems of development confronting the world today.

### **The Economic Aspect**

India's economy encompasses traditional village farming, modern agriculture, handicrafts, a wide range of modern industries, and a multitude of support services. Government controls have been reduced on foreign trade and investment, and privatization of domestic output has proceeded slowly. The economy has posted an excellent average growth rate of 6% since 1990, reducing poverty by about 10 percentage points. India is capitalizing on its large numbers of well-educated people skilled in the English language to become a major exporter of software services and software workers.

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# PLACES OF IMPORTANCE

- Four Dhaams
  - The Twelve Main Jyotjir Linga Of Lord Shiva
  - The Spiritual Experience Of The Himalayas
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# PLACES OF IMPORTANCE

India - A land of intense spirituality and religious faith reflected in the profusion of temples present in this subcontinent. Temples are found every where in India from large monumental structures to small stone buildings, each having a certain significance and greatly influencing the lives of the people who regard the temple as a place where they could be close to god.

## *Gurudev Vichar*

The primary intention of a pilgrim's visit to a pilgrimage site is to receive the darshan of the deity resident in the temple's inner sanctum or open-air shrine. The word darshan means the pilgrim's having a sight and/or experience of the deity. The pilgrims believe that the deity is actually manifest in the image, statue, or icon of the temple. To receive the darshan of the deity is to have a spiritual communion with it. The more the communion is the higher is the development of satogun in a person.

## 2.1 Four Dhaams

There are four Dhaams of greatest importance for pilgrimage. In the four directions of India viz

1. **Kedaranath - Badrinath** in the North,
2. **Rameswaram** in the South,
3. **Jaganath Puri** in the East and
4. **Dwarika** in the West.

## **BADRINATH**

**Place :** Badrinath, Uttarakhand

**Significance:** Shrine of Vishnu

**Best time to visit :** May to October

Badrinath, a citadel to Lord Vishnu, situated at a height of 3,155 m is the place where Vishnu, Ganga, Saraswathi and



Alaknanda confluence. Built in early ninth century AD, Badrinath is one of the most revered Hindu shrines of India dedicated to Lord Vishnu.

Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu loved Badri trees that were found in plenty in the area, hence the name Badrinath. It is also known as 'Tapobhumi', the land of meditation and penance and 'Bhubaikunth' (heaven on earth).

Sri Badrinathji temple is located between the two mountain ranges of Nar and Narayan. In the 8th century AD Adi Sankaracharya came to Badri and restored the ancient Badrinath idol from the Narad Kund and established in the Ganesh cave near Taptkund. Taptkund, the hot water spring with natural curative properties believed to be the abode of Lord Agni faces the shrine. The pilgrims take a holy dip in the Taptakund before entering the temple. The temple remains closed from October to April due to the winter snow, when temperatures fall to sub-zero degrees.



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## KEDARNATH

**Place:** Uttaranchal

**Significance:** Shrine of Shiva

**Best time to visit:** May to October



Kedarnath, situated in the Garhwal Himalayas at a height of 10,500 ft. above sea level, is in the Uttar Kashi district of the northern state of Uttaranchal. Kedarnath with one of the 12 jyothir lingas of Shiva, is amongst the premier pilgrimages in India. It is at the base of

Mandakini river, in a valley two and half km, surrounded by high snow covered mountains. Besides its religious significance, it is also visited by those who love to conquer the rough terrain of Garhwal.

The shrine is covered by snow for 6 months in a year (closed from Oct-Nov up to Apr-May). The statue is carried to Ukhimath, and is reinstated in Kedarnath in the month of May.

The Bhairavnath temple, situated to the south of the main temple of Kedarnath, is dedicated to Lord Bhairav, the deity who guards the main temple in winter when it is closed.



## PURI (East India)

**Location:** 60-km from Bhubaneswar, Orissa

**Reigning Deity:** Lord Jagannatha

**Main Attractions:** Lord Jagannatha Temple, Puri Beach & Gundicha Mandir

**Significance:** One of the four holiest points of pilgrimage for Hindus

Puri is the holiest place in Orissa and one of the biggest pilgrimage centres in India situated on the shoreline of the Bay of Bengal. Here, the city's activities generally revolve around the Jagannath Temple where devotees visit from far and near.

Puri is washed by the sea fringed beaches is the hallowed seat of Lord Jagannath (Lord of the Universe), Subhadra and Balabhadra. One of the four holy dhams of Hinduism, Puri is possibly one of the very few religious sites which combines the outdoor pleasures of sea and divine beaches with the religious sentiments of 'darshan'.

### Pilgrimage Attractions of Puri

- Puri Jagannath Temple
- The temple of Lord Jagannath ('Lord of the Universe') at Puri is one of the most sacred pilgrimage spots in India, one of the four abodes (dhams) of the divine that lie on the four directions of the compass. The present temple structure was built in

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the twelfth century by the Ganga king, Chodagangadeva, replacing an earlier structure which probably dated to the tenth century.

- \* The huge temple compound, each side of which measures 650 feet (some 200 meters), is surmounted with a 20 foot (6 meters) wall. Within the compound is a city, or, more accurately, a universe unto itself. With 6000 direct temple servitors, a temple kitchen which feeds 10,000 people daily (and some 25,000 on festival days), and a central deity who has become the focus of religious life throughout Orissa, the Jagannath temple is truly an institution unique in the world.

### *Rath Yatra*

Symbolically, the Rath Yatra (chariot festival) is a journey to light from the dark and begins on the second day of the bright fortnight in the month of Asaadh (June-July). It commemorates the journey of Krishna from Gokul to Mathura. This festival is celebrated at Puri with great pomp and ceremony. In this religious journey, Jagannath, Subhadra and Balbhadra are taken out in procession in three raths (chariots). The main rath is 43 ft high, 33 ft wide and has 16 wheels. The ropes of the chariots are pulled by millions of devotees.

### DWARKA

**Location :** West Coast of Gujarat

**Population :** 52,000

**Best Time to Visit :** October to March



Dwarka, on the west coast of Gujarat on the shore of the Arabian Sea, features in most of the legends surrounding Lord Krishna. It is from here that the grown Lord Krishna is supposed to have ruled his kingdom. Dwarka is a significant pilgrimage site for the Hindus.

Dwarka is sanctified as the place where Lord Vishnu slew the demon Shankhasura. The Puranas mention the 12 Jyotirlingas or columns of light representing Lord Shiva which manifested in different parts of the country. One of these is located in Dwarka and is known as the Nageshwar Mahadev. The Jagat Mandir or Nij Mandir forms the sanctum of the Dwarkadish temple and dates back to 2500 years. Jagat Mandir has its own hall of audience and a conical spire. The roof of the hall is supported by 60 columns and the main temple rises five storeys high.

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### Pilgrimage Attractions

- Dwarkadheesh Temple
- The temple of Dwarkadheesh, also known as Jagat Mandir, is built on the north bank of the Gomti Creek. The temple dates back to 2,500 years.

In addition to its temples and legends, Dwarka is also sanctified as the seat of Adi Shankaracharya, who established four seats (maths) in four different directions in the country. Research work in Sanskrit is carried on at the Shankaracharya's seat known as Sharad Peetha.

- **Gomati Ghat Temples**  
Gomati, the descended Ganges, meets the sea at Chakra-tirtha Ghat. To take bath where the Gomati meets the ocean is said to offer liberation. If you go out the back entrance of the Dwarkadish Temple, you can see the Gomati River. The temple is located almost at the spot where the Gomati meets the ocean.



### Rameshwaram

**Location :** Island Of Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu

**Deity Worshipped:** Linga Of Sri Ranganatha

**Famous Tradition:** A Pilgrimage To Kashi Is Not Considered Complete Without A Pilgrimage To Rameshwaram

**Significance:** One Of The 12 Jyotirlingas Of India

Rameshwaram is an island situated in the gulf of manner at the very tip of the Indian peninsula. A very important pilgrim centre of the Indians. Rameshwaram is the place from where Lord Rama, built a bridge across the sea to rescue his consort Sita, from her abductor, Ravana. This is also the place where Rama worshipped Lord Shiva to cleanse away the sin of killing Ravana. Both the Vaishnavites and Shaivites visit this pilgrimage which is known as the Varanasi the south.

#### Location and Area

The religious island is spread in an area of 61.8 square kilometers and happens to be in the shape of a conch. The Ramanatha Swamy Temple occupies major area of Rameshwaram. The masterpiece of Dravidian architecture boasts of the largest temple corridor in

India. Different rulers built the Ramanatha Swamy Temple over a period of time starting from the 12th century. The temple comprises of twenty-two wells where the taste of the water of each well is different from the other.

## Pilgrimage Attractions

- Ramanathaswamy Temple
- Ramnathswamy temple was built in the 17th century. Situated close to the sea on the eastern side of the island, this temple is famous for its 1200 gigantic granite columns. The 54 metre tall gopuram (gate-tower), 1220 metres of magnificent corridors and the flamboyant columns embellish and render fame to the temple. The water in each of the 22 sacred wells in the temple tastes different.

## 2.2 The Twelve Main Jyotjir Linga Of Lord Shiva

Important centres of pilgrimage, for the followers of Shiva are the twelve most sacred Lingas known as the Lingas of Light (Jyothir Linga). These twelve are also called Dwadash Jyothirlingas and some of these are Kedarath, Baidynath, Sri Omkareshwar and Somnath.

There are 12 main Jyothirlingas of Lord Siva in India. Most of them are located in Northern parts of India.

1. **Sri Soma Naath-** in Saurashtra, located in Prabhas Patan, veraval.
2. **Sri Mallikaarjuna** This is in Srisailam on the banks of the Krishna River.
3. **Sri Mahakaaleshwara** This is in Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh.

4. **Sri Omkareshwara** This is in Malwa on the banks of the river Narmada. M.P.
5. **Sri Vaidhyanaatha-** in Santhaal Paragna. This place is also known as Chinta Bhoomi.
6. **Sri Bheemsankara-** It is east of Mumbai and North of Pune on the banks of the river Bheema. It is located 120 kms from Nasik.
7. **Sri Rameshwaram** located in Ram Naath district of Tamil Nadu.
8. **Sri Naageshwara-** located in Dwarka near the Gomati River.
9. **Sri Vishwanaatha-** in Varanasi "also known as Kaashi"
10. **Sri Trayambakeshwara-** in Nasik district on the banks of the river Goutami in Maharashtra.
11. **Sri Kedareshwara-** in Himalayas on the banks of the river Mandaakini in BADRINATH.
12. **Sri Ghusameshwara-** near Berut village which is 12 km away from Daulatabad station in Nizmaabad

## Inspiration

*The test of anybody's greatness is what he thinks and does for one who is lower than him.*

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## 2.3 The Spiritual Experience Of The Himalayas

### GANGOTRI

**Location:** Uttar Pradesh

**Altitude:** 3042 mts.

**Climate :** Summer - Cool during the day and cold at night.

Winter - Snow-bound.  
Touching sub-zero

**Best Season :** April to November

Be it man's urge to placate the Gods above or to quench his desire for adventure, Gangotri is an ideal location. Gangotri, the origin of the sacred river Ganges, attracts devotees in large numbers every year.

#### Location

Couched in the magnificent Garhwal hills, Gangotri is at an altitude of 3048 meters above sea level. It is on the northernmost part of the state of Uttar Pradesh and is very near the Indo-Tibetan border. It is approximately 300 km from Dehradun, 250 km from Rishikesh and 105 km from Uttarkashi. The summers are relatively cool and winters are freezing cold, with rains in the months of May and June. For the devotees and tourists, the gates of the temple are open only in the months of May to November.

#### Mythological Legend

According to an old legend, Lord Shiva rewarded King Bhagirath after his penance and Ganga came down to earth. However, due to her pride, and the fact that the earth would be devastated if Ganga came down in her

full force, Lord Shiva caught her in his locks. It was then proclaimed that Goddess Uma or Parvati, Shiva's consort, would bathe in the Ganges daily and only then would she descend on the earth. The sacred stone near the temple denotes the place where Ganga first came down to earth. This is why Ganga is also called by the name of Bhagirathi.

#### Unique Pilgrimage Attraction

**Submerged Shivling** - The natural rock Shivling, submerged in the river, is an amazing sight reinforcing the power of the divine. According to mythology, Lord Shiva sat at this spot to receive the Ganga in his matted locks.

#### Prime Pilgrimage Attraction

**Gangotri Temple**- The 18th century's temple dedicated to Goddess Ganga is located near a sacred stone where King Bhagirath worshipped Lord Shiva. Ganga is believed to have touched earth at this spot.

**Nandanvan Tapovan** - An arduous trek along the Gangotri Glacier leads to scenic Nandanvan - the base camp for the Bhagirathi peaks, that offers a panoramic view of the surrounding Shivling peak. A trek across the snout of the Gangotri Glacier leads to Tapovan known for its beautiful meadows that encircle the base of the Shivling Peak.

**Uttarkashi (99 kms.)** - An important pilgrimage centre, situated at an elevation of 1,150 mts. above sea level on the bank of river Bhagirathi.

**Gaumukh( 18 kms.)** - The snout of the Gangotri Glacier and the source of the Bhagirathi river. Pilgrims trek upto the sacred spot on foot or on ponies to take a holy dip in the ice-cold water.



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## YAMUNOTRI

**Altitude :** 3165 mts

**Climate :** Summer-Cool during the day and cold at night.

Winter - Snow bound.  
Touching sub-zero.

**Clothing :** April to July-Lightwoollens

**Language :** Hindi, Garhwali & English

### The Sacred Origin Of the Yamuna



The Garhwal Himalayas have been blessed with some of the holiest Hindu pilgrimage sites and Yamunotri is one such.

One of the Char Dhams according to Hindu mythology, Yamunotri is the origin of the sacred river Yamuna.

Among the major attractions of Yamunotri are hot water springs nearby. Devotees prepare rice and potatoes to offer at the shrine, by dipping them in these hot water springs, tied in muslin cloth.

The trek to Yamunotri is spectacular, dominated by a panorama of rugged peaks and dense forests.

From Rishikesh, a 213 kms. journey by road takes one to Hanumanchatti. From here, the remaining 13 kms. trek is covered on foot or on ponies. Palanquins and Porters are also available on hire.

## AMARNATH YATRA

**Place :** Jammu & Kashmir

**Significance :** A Pilgrimage of Lord Shiva

**Best time to Visit :** July to August

It is celebrated in the month of Shravan (July -August) each year and lasts for approximately 40 days. Thousands of pilgrims make an arduous trek up to the Amarnath cave,

located at a height of 3,888 m in the Kashmir Himalayas through rocky terrains, snowy mountains under unpredictable weather conditions. They come to worship the sacred ice 'lingam' -a phallic symbol of Lord Shiva, which is a natural phenomenon and considered a miracle.

Amarnath yatra started in the year 1850 AD. Devotees believe that one can get salvation by witnessing 'Shiv lingam'. There are several legends behind its origin.

### How to get there

Amarnath is situated 145-km from Srinagar. There are two routes to Amarnath, 1) via Pahalgam, Sheshnag and Panchtarni (48 kms long) takes 4 days to reach 2)the steeper route Via Baltal (15kms) takes two days. Ponies and Palanquins are available for pilgrims who are unable to climb.



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## Things to Do

### Read the following Books of Pujya Gurudev (English Edition)

- Hamari Vasiyat or Virachat
- Chetana ki Shikar Yatra





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# **FAIRS & FESTIVALS OF INDIA**

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# FAIRS & FESTIVALS OF INDIA

## **Introduction**

There is perhaps not a single day in the Indian calendar when in some part of the vast country a festival is not celebrated or a fair held - some so big that almost the entire country participates, and some so small that it is confined to a little community in a remote village.

## **PONGAL (TAMIL NADU)**

A celebration of the harvest - Pongal is observed for three days in January, in Tamil Nadu. Bhogi Pongal - the first day, is an occasion for festivities at home. Flavoured rice is offered to the Sun God on the second day. Mattu Pongal, the next day, is celebrated in a more boisterous fashion. Village cattle are bathed and decorated and cattle races enliven village festivities.

## **INTERNATIONAL KITE FESTIVAL (AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT)**

On Makara Sankranti, Ahmedabad is at its colourful best as kites of all colours, patterns and dimensions soar into the sky. Special kites with little paper lamps fill the night sky with a myriad flickering lights. Special Gujarati cuisine, exhibitions of handicrafts and folk art enhance the festive spirit.

## **REPUBLIC DAY (DELHI AND STATE CAPITALS)**

Commemorating the day India became a republic (26th January), the Republic Day is celebrated in Delhi with a splendid parade - a colourful affair with soldiers marching in unison, followed by folk dancers, school children and floats from various states. The Beating Retreat which marks the end of the celebrations on 29th January, is a moving ceremony with massed military bands playing at Vijay Chowk.

## **BIKANER FESTIVAL (BIKANER, RAJASTHAN)**

Dedicated to the indispensable 'ship of the desert', the festival starts off with a magnificent procession of bedecked camels. There are displays and competitions together with all the colour, music and rhythm unique to a fair in Rajasthan.

## **SURAJKUND CRAFTS MELA (SURAJKUND, NEAR DELHI)**

A delightful handloom and handicrafts fair is held annually at Surajkund. Skilled artisans from all over the country display the rich crafts tradition of India in the typical setting of a rural Indian marketplace. Cultural programmes and rural cuisine are also a part of this colourful fair.

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### **DESERT FESTIVAL (JAISALMER, RAJASTHAN)**

A three day long extravaganza of colour, music and festivity at the golden city of Jaisalmer. Gair and fire dancers swaying to traditional tunes, a turban-tying competition and a Mr. Desert contest are part of the fun of the occasion. Camel rides and folk dances at the sand dunes at Sam are an added attraction.

### **TAJ MAHOTSAV (AGRA, UTTAR PRADESH)**

A ten day event that starts on 18th February each year in Shilpgram, the Taj Mahotsav is a much awaited event. India's extensive arts, crafts and culture are on display. Folk music, shayari and classical dance performances along with elephant and camel rides, games and a food festival, all add to the excitement of the occasion..

### **GOA CARNIVAL (GOA)**

Goa's 100 km coastline has some of the world's most beautiful beaches. The exuberant Goa Carnival is an annual feature here. Held in mid - February, just before Lent, the week-long event is a time for lively processions, floats, the strumming of guitars and graceful dances.

### **INDEPENDENCE DAY (ALL OVER INDIA)**

Commemorating the day India attained freedom (15th August), Independence Day is celebrated with flag hoisting ceremonies and cultural programmes in the state capitals. The

Prime Minister's speech at the Red Fort in Delhi is the major highlight.

### **ONAM (KERALA)**

Kerala's most important festival is celebrated in the honour of the ancient asura king Mahabali. The occasion also heralds the harvest season. The decorating of houses with carpets of flowers, a sumptuous lunch and songs in praise of the golden reign of Mahabali, mark the ten day long festivities. A major attraction of the Onam celebrations are the famed snake boat races along the backwaters at Champakulam, Aranmula and Kottayam.

### **GANDHI JAYANTI (ALL OVER INDIA)**

The birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi - the 'Father of the nation'(2nd October). The President and Prime Minister, along with other eminent political leaders, pay home at Raj Ghat - the samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi. All the offices and schools, throughout the country, remain closed on this day.

### **PUSHKAR MELA (PUSHKAR, RAJASTHAN)**

Tranquil Pushkar is transformed into a spectacular fair ground for twelve days in the month of Kartik. Trading of cattle, camel races and dazzling displays of bangles, brassware, clothes, camel saddles and halters are the major attractions of this colourful event. Devotees come in their thousands to take a ritual dip in the lake on the day of the Kartik Purnima and to worship at the Brahma temple.

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# **PRAVASI BHARTIYA - NON RESIDENT INDIANS**

- Distribution
  - Indians In USA
  - Indian Government Initiatives
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# PRAVASI BHARTIYA

## - NON RESIDENT INDIANS

### Introduction

For them India is home away from home. Though they reside and work in distant lands, they contribute the world to their motherland. The diaspora is very special to India. The non-resident Indians have succeeded spectacularly in their chosen professions through their dedication and hard work. And further, they still retain an emotional, cultural and spiritual attachment toward India. There are lots of Indians who have made it big in distant regions. India and its people hold them in high esteem. Each one is important. We take a look at some of the most prominent Indians who have made it big beyond the boundaries.

### 4.1 Distribution

According to the latest report by Government of India, there is a 20 million strong Indian Diaspora spread out in 110 countries and 6 continents.

These people are scattered all over the world from Surinam and British Guyana to East and South Africa, remote islands such as Fiji, Mauritius and Reunion.

### 4.2 Indians In USA

Indians in the USA are one of the largest among the groups of Indian diaspora, numbering about 1.7 million, and probably the most well off - their median income is 1.5 times that of the host country. They are well represented in all walks of life, but

particularly so in **academia**, **information technology** and **medicine**. There were over 4000 PIO professors and 33,000 Indian-born students in American universities in 1997-98. The American Association of the Physicians of Indian Origin boasts a membership of 35,000. In 2000, **Fortune magazine** estimated the wealth generated by Indian **Silicon Valley** entrepreneurs at around \$250 billion.

- There are 3.22 million Indian in America
- 38 per cent of doctors in America are Indians
- 12 per cent of scientists in America are Indians
- 36 per cent of NASA employees are Indians
- 34 per cent of Microsoft employees are Indians
- 28 per cent of IBM employees are Indians
- 17 per cent of Intel employees are Indians
- 13 per cent of Xerox employees are Indians
- An Indian has been appointed as chief of Bell laboratories, New Jersey

### 4.3 Indian Government Initiatives

To attract more NRI TO visit India, the government spelt out the new initiatives it has taken to preserve,



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restore and improve the ambience of Places in India.

The cultural and tourism hubs are being developed all over the country to provide glimpses of rich cultural heritage to the NRI Visiting India.

The Government is working towards creating a tourist-friendly environment in the country by providing better airports, clean railways, better connectivity to tourism destinations through air and road and introducing more tourist facilities at highways and documentations, interpretation and

information centres at all tourism destinations

He said the recent efforts have paid off with a 22 per cent increase in tourist arrival by December 2003 and more than Rs 17000 crores foreign exchange earning through the arrivals.

The government urges the NRIs to visit India to see its changing face and contribute in the development of economy thus getting their new generations acquainted with their cultural roots and the great Indian heritage.

## *Inspiration*

*The only test of the development of intellect is whether one has started controlling uncontrolled desires.*

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# ALL WORLD GAYATRI PARIWAR

- Our Manifesto, Mission and Vision
  - Aims and Objective
  - Establishments
  - Mission Highlights
  - Rev. Gurudev Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya
  - Rev. Mata Bhagwati Devi Sharma
  - Brahmvarchas Research Institute
  - University's Mission
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# ALL WORLD GAYATRI PARIWAR



## 4.1 Our Manifesto- Solemn Pledge (Yug Nirman Satsankalp)

The foundation of Yug - Nirman movement of Gayatri Pariwar is the 'Solemn Pledge' [*Satsankalp*] on which rests the emergence of all-round peace, happiness and bright future. This is our manifesto, declaration on which all the ideologies, planning and activities of Gayatri Pariwar are based. These declarations incorporate the formulas for changing and reforming individual, the family and the society. These precepts promote unity & equality and materialize the concept of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*'. Immense and limitless is our power of determination. Let us read, understand and digest these concepts [pledge] daily. They motivate us to concentrate on self-reformation rather than on giving advice to others. A change in every individual is bound to lead to the formation of a better society. The incarnation which needed for *Yug Parivartan* [Change of the Era] will initially be in the form of aspiration & determination. The subtle form of this incarnation is this *Yug Nirman Satsankalpa*.

1. Firmly believing in the Omnipresence of God and His Unfailing justice, we pledge to abide by basic Divine principles (*Dharma*).
2. Considering the body as the Temple of God, we will be ever watchful to keep it healthy and full of vitality by adopting the principles of self-control, order and harmony in our lives.
3. With a view to keeping our minds free from the inrush of negative thoughts and emotions.
4. We will adopt a regular programme of study of ennobling and inspiring literature (*Swadhyaya*) and of keeping the company of Saints (*Satsang*).
5. We will vigilantly exercise strict control over our senses, thoughts, emotions and in the spending of our time and resources.
6. We will consider ourselves inseparable parts of the society and will see our good in the good of all.

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7. We will abide by basic moral code, refrain from wrong doing and will discharge our duties as citizens committed to the well-being of the society.
  8. We will earnestly and firmly imbibe in our lives the virtues of Wisdom, Honesty, Responsibility and Courage.
  9. We will constantly and sincerely endeavour to create an environment of loving kindness, cleanliness, simplicity and goodwill.
  10. We will prefer failure while adhering to basic moral principles to so-called success obtained through unfair and foul means.
  11. We will never evaluate a person's greatness by his worldly success, talents and riches but by his righteous conduct and thoughts.
  12. We will never do unto others what we would not like to be done unto us.
  13. Members of opposite sexes while interacting with each other will have feelings of mutual warmth and understanding based on purity of thoughts and emotions.
  14. We will regularly and religiously contribute a portion of our time, talents and resources for spreading nobility and righteousness in the world.
  15. We will give precedence to discriminating wisdom over blind traditions.
  16. We will actively involve ourselves in bringing together persons of goodwill in resisting evil and injustice and in promoting New Creation.
  17. We will remain committed to the principles of national unity and equality of all human beings. In our conduct, we will not make any discrimination between person and person on the basis of caste, creed, colour, religion, region, language or sex.
  18. We firmly believe that each human being is the maker of his own destiny. With this conviction, we will uplift and transform ourselves and help others in doing so. We believe the world will then automatically change for the better.

Our Motto is: " *Ham Badlenge - Yug Badlega*" , " *Ham Sudhrenge - Yug Sudhrega*" . When we transform ourselves, the world will be transformed. When we reform ourselves, the world will be reformed.

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## 4.2 Aims and Objective

- Awaken individual's inner spiritual force by sound body and clear mind
- Create addiction free society
- Promote Vegetarianism
- Work towards establishing a well balanced, pollution free ecosystem
- Harmony, friendship, brotherhood, peace and prosperity of the whole universe
- Promote Scientific Spirituality
- Inculcate family and cultural values in younger generation via Multimedia and other state-of the art technology
- Women awareness

## 4.3 Establishments

- **Akhand Jyoti Sansthan**, Mathura: **Akhand Jyoti magazine** publication center, and a residence of **Poojya Gurudev Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya** from 1941 to 1971
- **Gayatri Tapobhumi**, Mathura: Publication and mass training through religious establishments
- **Janmabhumi Anvalkheda**: The birthplace of Poojya Gurudev, Girl's Inter and Degree college, a **Mata Bhagwati Devi** Hospital

- **Gayatri Teerth - Shantikunj, Brahmavarchas Shodh Sansthan & Dev Sanskriti University**, Hardwar: A Research Center dedicated to Inter communion of Science and Spirituality
- **Gayatri Shaktipith**: Centers for mass propagation of Gurudev's teachings (Approximately 4000 centers worldwide)
- **Pragya Mandal, Mahila Mandal**: About 24000 centers spread all over India. They give basic lessons of self-sufficiency through cottage industry training

## 4.4 Mission Highlights

- **Diksha**: More than 50 million people have taken Diksha (initiated) of Gayatri Mantra
- **Samaydan**: Around 1 million workers devote three months to one year time as and when needed for noble cause
- **Herbal healing**: An herbal system has been established as a recognized method of healing. The institute conducts distinctive research on more than 500 plants
- **Personal development**: More than 15 million people have left their bad habits and addictions, families have been reunited and imbibed with spiritual disciplines
- **Eco-friendly rural industrialization**: This has been promoted all over the Indian sub-continent and such objectives are advocated all around the world
- **Lessons of national integrity**: Accepting whole ecosystem and

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mother earth as our deity, have been widely accepted by millions of Gayatri Pariwar disciples

- **Awakening of collective consciousness:** Through *Yug sandhi mahapurashcharan* (recitation of specific number of *Gayatri Mantra* with meditation in early morning and evening hours till critical transition phase is over). It has been one of the gigantic endeavors of this Century in which more than 250 million people will be participating this year
- **Women emancipation:** The mission carries out activities and programs outlining the significant role that, women of modern world have to play by conducting rituals and reciting *Gayatri Mantra*. This is one of the unique achievements of this organization
- **Grand Ashwamedha Yagyas:** To this date, total of 27 such grand scale Ashwamedha Yagyas have been performed. The Purnahuti in Anwalkheda have been performed successfully with participation of about 2.5 to 3 million people or more
- **Gurudev's Writings:** Poojya Gurudev has handwritten an enormous amount of materials on various subjects. This amounts to more than 100,000 pairs of encyclopedia Britannica size books

## 4.5 Rev. Gurudev Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya

### 4.5.1 A SEER-SAGE AND A VISIONARY OF THE NEW GOLDENERA

His personality was a harmonious blend of a saint, spiritual scientist, yogi,



philosopher, psychologist, writer, reformer, freedom fighter, researcher, eminent scholar and visionary.

His life and work represent a marvelous synthesis of the noble thoughts and deeds of great personalities like Swami Vivekanand, Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi, Socrates and Confucius.

He pioneered the revival of spirituality and creative integration of the modern and ancient sciences and religion relevant in the challenging circumstances of the present times.

He successfully practiced and mastered the highest kinds of sadhanas of *Gayatri* and *Savitri*.



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He also practiced higher-level Sadhana on the arduous heights of Himalayas several times and had established enliven contact with Rishis of Himalayas.

His volumes on Gayatri Mahavigyan stand as most authentic and comprehensive treatise on the philosophy and science of the great **Gayatri Mantra**.

He initiated programmes of spiritual and intellectual refinement of millions of people without any discrimination of religion, caste, creed, sex, or social status.

#### **4.5.2 DEDICATED FREEDOM FIGHTER**

Acharya Sharma was a dedicated freedom fighter who had sincerely participated in the movement of India's independence. He did not accept any award or citation in his life-time. In 1992, the Govt. of India had released a postal stamp in his honour posthumously.

#### **4.5.3 FOUNDER OF "VICHAR KRANTIABHIYAN" (Creation of Enlightening Literature)**

Realizing the potential of inspiring literature and its relevance in the present era of intellectual evolution, he had chosen writing as the principal mode towards uprooting the evil tendencies and blind faith from people's minds and arousing the indwelling wisdom, strength and spiritual bliss.

He initiated the unique movement of Vichara Kranti with the very first issue of "**Akhand Jyoti**" in 1939.

The first book he wrote was "Mein Kya Hun?", an Upanishad level work on the knowledge of Real-self.

He wrote about 3000 enlightening books in Hindi on almost all topics concerning human life.

Erudite scholars as well as the common literates find rare knowledge, practical guidance and inspiration from his sagacious and lucid writings.

He wrote four Pragya Puranas in the style of ancient scriptures but containing the illustrations and stories relevant and useful for global teaching today.

#### **4.5.4 PROPAGATION OF VEDIC VANGMAYA IN NEW LIGHT**

He translated the entire Vedic Vangmaya (4 Vedas, 108 Upanishads, 18 Puranas etc) in Hindi elucidating the tradition, style, universality and history of Vedic Literature.

This invaluable contribution to the world of knowledge and human culture was highly acclaimed and appreciated by savants and saints like Dr. S. Radhakrishana and Acharya Vinoba Bhave; the distinguished title of "Vedmurti" was conferred upon him in its recognition.

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#### **4.5.5 WOMEN'S ASCENT AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION**

He launched the Yug Nirman Mission for personal, familial and social uplifting. He propagated Women's Ascent as the foremost necessity for the progressive development of the society and the nation. He encouraged women's education and equal participation of women in all walks of life. Way back in 1942, he supported establishment of Girls' intermediate college. He launched several revolutionary programs for women's progress from the religious platform too. This bears significant impact in the Indian context where religion appears to dominate the convictions and attitudes of the masses.

As part of the social reformation programmes of the Yug Nirman Yojna, he had given maximum importance to eradication of blind faith, superstitions and untoward customs and traditions prevailing in the Indian society in the name of religion.

Emancipation of the glory of marriage institution from the clutches of the social evils of dowry, child marriages, exploitation of women, etc., were propagated by Acharya Sharma from the religious platform too.

#### **4.5.6 A SEER-SAGE AND ANGELIC GURU**

He initiated nearly 24 lac people into Gayatri Sadhana. Miraculous effects of his blessings experienced by people from all parts of the society stand as

testimonies to the Supramental achievements (siddhis) of Gayatri.

Pioneer of The Revival of the Rishi Culture

He pioneered the revival of the Rishi Culture and initiated several constructive programs of mass education.

#### **4.5.7 THE EARLY YEARS**

The eminent patriot, scholar and founder of the Banaras Hindu University Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya initiated Sriram in the worship of Gayatri mantra when he was nine years old.

On the auspicious day of Vasant Panchami festival, January 18, 1926, a guru by the name of Swami Sarveshvaranandji a great Himalayan yogi appeared before him in astral body from the flame of the Dipaka (lamp) during his Gayatri worship. This sparked the revelation of the divine origin and purpose of his life and bestowed upon him with the grace and guidance of his guru. This lamp is lit continuously since then and is enshrined at Shantikunj, Haridwar at Present.

The next 24 years of his life were devoted to 24 Mahapurashcharanas each consisting of the rhythmic recitation (japa) of 2.4 million Gayatri Mantra with strictest of disciplines. There is no parallel to this kind of sadhana. At the same time, he also whole heartedly participated in the freedom struggle of India under the inspiring guidance of Mahatma

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Gandhi, while continuing with his altruistic activities for the good of the society and attending to the familial duties.

In 1943, he married Bhagwati Devi, and ever since, the saintly couple dedicatedly pursued the noble mission of spiritual upliftment of humankind.

#### **4.5.8 FOUNDER OF A GLOBAL MOVEMENT**

On the completion of the 24 Mahapurushcharanas, Pandit Sriram Sharma Acharyaji established Gayatri Tapobhumi at Mathura (India) in 1953. He organized a grand Gayatri Yajna in 1958, which served as a base to launch the Yug Nirman Yojna, a global movement for moral, cultural, intellectual and spiritual refinement and reconstruction. The objectives of this movement are to reform the individual, the family and social values of mankind and to change the current ideologies and concepts of morality and social structure for a better tomorrow.

Through various activities at Mathura, including the performance of yagyas on large scale, Acharyaji gathered a team of dedicated men and women. Thus the organisation called "Gayatri Pariwar" was born.

The period 1971-1990 witnessed remarkable multifaceted accomplishments of Acharyaji's life. He climbed the arduous and mystic heights of the Himalayas several times and stayed there for specific sadhanas as per the guidance of his guru. In 1971

he instituted the mission's headquarters at Shantikunj (Haridwar, India) as an academy for moral and spiritual awakening and training. Here he began revival of ancient spiritual disciplines that were the hallmarks of Indian Culture.

#### **4.5.9 SUKSHMIKARANA SADHANA AND THE DAWN OF THE NEW ERA**

During 1984-1986, he carried out the unique spiritual experiment of Sukshmikarana, meaning sublimation of vital force and physical, mental and spiritual energies. He authored a special set of 20 books (termed Revolutionary Literature or Krantidharmi Sahitya) highlighting the future of the world and conveying the message of the dawn of the New Era of Truth during the 21st Century. On 2nd June 1990, he voluntarily shed his physical sheath.

Thereafter, his soul mate revered Mata Bhagavati Devi guided the series of Ashwamedha Yagyas, which accelerated the pace of global expansion of the mission during the critical juncture of the decade of change of a millennium and change of an era. She too joined Acharya Sharma in the subliminal domains of divinity after leaving her physical body on the 19th September 1994.

The divine light of knowledge and human glory kindled by them continues to illuminate the excelling path of their great mission under the auspices of Shantikunj and promises the ushering in "The Age of Truth" in the years to come.

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The last message of Gurudev unfolds the divine purpose of his incarnation and also assures us of the bright future. Part of it reads: "The light, of which I have been an instrument, a medium, will not extinguish with my withdrawal from the physical realm. I assure my followers that I will continue living and working with them at Shantikunj and elsewhere in my astral-causal body and guide, help and inspire them in their efforts to lead humanity into the Golden Era of Truth, Light and Immortality. I will finally merge into the Blissful Luminous causal self, after humanity has taken a decisive leap into the cosmic consciousness and attained the light of the New Era of spiritual Unity, Harmony and Peace. My blessings, love and prayer-filled wishes to all. I will always be with them in their selfless and noble endeavours in this divine work."

#### **4.6 Rev. Mata Bhagwati Devi Sharma**

Born on September 1926, in a famous priestly family, Mata Bhagwati Devi (Vandaniya Mataji), was extraordinary in her own way and unlike other children, was not interested in regular childhood activities such as playing, etc. Instead, she was more interested in worshipping God. She spent most of her time in singing devotional songs. Her favorite pastime was to make the offering of the Bilva tree leaves at the idol of Lord Shiva, and writing "OM NAMAHSIVAYA".



During the early stages of her education, she studied Bhagwat Gita, and Ram Charit Manas. After her marriage to Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya (Gurudev), Mataji took over the responsibility of looking after visitors and guests. She willingly donated all her personal jewelry, which she received at her wedding, to Gurudev's Yug Nirman Yojna (mission for creation of a new Era), for establishment of Gayatri Tapobhoomi at Mathura. This is the place where a grand 1008 kundiya Gayatri Mahayagna took place in 1958.

In 1960, when Gurudev went to the Himalayas, Mataji took over Gurudev's responsibilities such as editing and publishing various magazines, administration of Gayatri Tapobhumi, and Yug Nirman Yojna, etc. When Gurudev returned, he declared celebration of Grand 1008 kundiya Gayatri Yagnas at Porbander in Gujarat, Baharaich in Uttar Pradesh, Mahasamund in Madhya Pradesh, Bhilwada in Rajasthan, and Tatanagar in Bihar. Mataji took an active role in all of these activities. At the same time, more than four thousand branches of Gayatri Pariwar, all over the country,

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were started.

By then, Yug Nirman Yojna mission had spread all over India; and there was significant readership of various magazines of Mission.

In 1975, under the leadership of Mataji, Mahila Jagran Abhiyan (movement for emancipation of women) was initiated. Soon, about 4000 branches of Mahila Jagran Abhiyan were established with more than one million active participants. Its work was not limited to mere Slogan-raising, but also women's education, economic self-support, sacramental rites and acquiring self-respect, abolition of dowry and fight against the discrimination of women.

Mataji considered everyone as part of her family. It was of prime importance to her, to arrange for their comfortable stay and spiritual guidance. It would not even come close if compared to all the comforts and luxuries that one would receive in a luxurious hotel.

Such was the love and affection that people enjoyed from her. People do not come to **Shantikunj** as tourists, but come for recharging themselves and to experience the peace and tranquility in t

their personal lives. Mataji's physical presence was, thus, very essential at Shantikunj. It was this consideration for the welfare of the Parijans that prevented her from leaving Shantikunj for more than 20 years. Occasionally, she used to go for evening walk with **Gurudev** to the bank of Holy river Ganges.

When Gurudev took mahasamadhi on June 02, 1990, Gayatri Jayanti day, Mataji took over all the responsibilities of the mission and carried them over with great courage. In October 1990, under Mataji's guidance, Grand Shraddhanjali Samaroh, a program to pay homage to Gurudev, was organized . Over 15,00,000 devotees from all over the world participated in it, and resolved to carry-on the works of Gurudev, for dissemination of philosophy of Gayatri and Yagna. In 1992, on Gayatri Jayanti Day, Mataji disclosed about Gurudev's message from subtle and astral realms for the spread of Dev-Sanskriti (divine Indian culture or religious culture) all over the world for which series of Grand Ashwamedha Yagyas were to be performed.

The series of Ashwamedha Yagnas started from Jaipur in Nov.1992. Till now, twenty-seven such grand Ashwamedha Yagnas have been celebrated in INDIA and abroads, besides the grand Anwalkheda (birthplace of Acharyaji near Agra, city of Taj) Pratham Poornahuti Samaroh in 1995. Mataji attended eighteen of them. It was for the first time that Mataji visited UK, Canada and USA in three Ashwamedh yagnas in Leicester-UK, Toronto - Canada and Los Angeles - USA.

Mataji initiated millions of people into Gayatri Mantra and with this, a new wave of character-building and social reform started. Mataji too, withdrew to the astral realm, to join her aradhya satta there, on September 19, 1994, Bhadrapad Mahapoornima day. This



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was done so that both of them could work together, as collaborators of the immortal Rishis and sages of Himalayas, (who are the guides and Guardian Angles of the Soul of the Earth), for ushering in a new Era in the Twenty-first century.

## 4.7 Brahmvarchas Research Institute

### Inter-communion of Science and Spirituality

Modern man could not be persuaded to accept the values of life propagated by ancient Rishis until and unless these were proved to be scientifically viable for the welfare of the individual and the society.

This was indeed a Herculean task, given the trends of intellectual and scientific evolution over past millennium and almost simultaneous deterioration of religion and culture, which had resulted in a near total neglect of spirituality in the human life and the emergence of blind faiths, misconceptions, and prejudices.

#### Overview

The Brahmavarchas Research Institute, the research centre of Shantikunj, Haridwar was founded by Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharyaji in 1979 near Shantikunj stands as a living example of how these ideas could be implemented and researched in the modern laboratories.

This centre is dedicated to the integration of the modern and ancient sciences in a practical way motivated

by the noble goal of health and happiness for all. Innovative scientific research aimed at grass root applications is being carried out here in the ancient sciences in an enliven collaboration with the relevant modern sciences. Major areas of research include

Ayurveda and Yagyopathy, Total Psychology, The Science of Mantra and its Therapeutic Applications, The Philosophy and Science of Yoga, Sadhana, Mantra and Tantra and the Science of Spirituality, etc.

This center houses well equipped laboratories of Haemetology, Biochemistry, Neurophysiology, Cardiology, Phytochemistry, Psychometry, Yagyopathy, etc.

Apart from its own team of doctors, engineers, scientists and philosophers, the center has live interaction with the Hospital, Ayurvedic Pharmacy and Yoga Labs of Shantikunj and with some of the Hospitals and Universities in and around Haridwar. Distinguished researchers, professors and other experts also visit the center regularly.

It has a rare collection of Himalayan herbs and medicinal samples prepared from the same after thorough experimental research. Several of the Ayurvedic medicines prepared here are in great demand as these have been found effective in the treatment of some otherwise incurable or advanced stage diseases.

Research studies of tens of Ph. D. degrees awarded from different

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universities in India have been carried out here and larger nos. are currently ongoing.

### **Silver Jubilee Celebrations**

From the *Gayatri Jayanti Parva* June 29, 2004, the mission is celebrating one-year Silver-Jubilee Celebrations of *Brahmavarchas Shodh Sansthan* (established by *Gurudev* in 1979 for carrying out verifiable research towards integration of Science and Spirituality). As a special part of these celebrations it is proposed to take up the task of deepening, strengthening and properly organizing the activities of our branches abroad.

## **4.8 University's Mission**

Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya has been established to meet the pressing need to impart global education on scientific spirituality and life style with new thought of ethical, moral and spiritual transformation of youths and production of specialists, and devoted nationalists. Excellent character, indomitable courage, firm determination, and intense love for labor, must be their trait, so that they may carve their own destiny. They must have respect for elders, love for younger and compassion for all. Robust faith in own duty rather than right must form the bedrock for their life phenomena.

Dev Sanskriti involves human values, conventions, practices and life style inherited from the sublime truth adopted by saints, seers and sages of

this celestial land. These values are capable to uplift the mankind to the highest state of divinity.

Vishwavidyalaya means the university that serves the human race inhabiting the globe irrespective of nationality, race, religion, faith, etc. and imparts true knowledge for the development of divinity and wisdom in mankind which are essential ingredients for self enlightenment & virtuous transformation of personality besides meeting material needs of peace, progress and prosperity.

The University is situated on the lap of lush green Shivalik hills and holy bed of mother Ganga, almost 7 km away from Hardwar on main Rishikesh Road, near Shantikunj glorious land (around 1 million sq.ft) covered by evergreen mango grooves and ornamental plants of exquisite charm which had been the sacred abode of Sapta Rishi's was purchased. Bhumi Pujan was performed on 23.5.1999 in the presence of his Holiness Kalyan Dev, Swami Satya Mitra Nand ji, Swami Awadhesha Nand Giri, Muni Chidanand ji and many other holy saints, statesmen and renowned educationists besides dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

### **4.8.1 DISTINCTIVE FEATURES**

- **Unique Educational Perspective :** Devsanskriti Vishwavidyalaya is totally different from all other universities of the world because of its fundamental characteristics. Unlike other universities its objectives and activities pervade from academics to spiritual,



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cultural and social facets as well. The value based education will contribute in the total personality development, rather than just being the mode for earning livelihood. It will facilitate the development of divinity in students and provide every opportunity for their latent potentials to flourish. Its fundamental characteristics are evident in the following points.

- **Firm resolution to meet prevailing challenges** : Its primary concern is to meet the challenges of the era. Today numerous intricacies are challenging global mind. Ecological imbalances, physical and mental health problems, cultural crunch, segregation and terrorism have besieged human life. Devsanskriti Vishwavidyalaya has ventured to accept these challenges in its academic syllabus and research schemes. Teachers and Students together will propose genuine solution to these global problems through deep analysis and altruistic deeds. The out come of their collective efforts may be noticed and acclaimed soon.
- **Resurrection of Rishi tradition** : Universities founded by the sages of yore in ancient India have been the centers of Divine Culture (Devsanskriti). Descriptions of such universities are found in ancient historical scriptures. In ancient India, sages who are worth mentioning are: *Agastya, Kanva, Jabali, Parshuram, Valmiki, Bhardwaj, Vashisth, Vaamdeo, Vishwamitra, Vyas-Shounak* and *Sandipani*. They established universities in their respective ages, where both the master and disciple practiced a life dedicated to eternal values and culture. True knowledge was the plinth of all the conventions. Divinity bloomed and culture flourished through their radiance. Devsanskriti Vishwavidyalaya is a sublime effort to rejuvenate ancient Rishi tradition. Numerous effulging currents of this glorious tradition will be circulated from this center.
- **Commencement through Gyan Diksha Samaroh** : Gyan Diksha Samaroh is organized to help students begin their education in the new environment through Vedic systems & procedures. Chanting of Vedic Mantras during the entire event recalls the memory of ancient Gurukul & Aranyakas like Nalanda & Takshashila. While the students take oath to adhere to the prescribed norms & disciplines, the teachers as Acharya also take an oath to deliver his/her best. In this process therefore, an attempt is being made to work together & attain the objectives of the University.
- **Orientation for the Students** : Understanding Indian Culture and imbibing the same is the prime concern and focus of this University. In order to attain this goal a well planned two weeks Orientation Programme is organized in the Premises of Shantikunj. The Spiritual Environment is quite conducive to understand the concept of

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Scientific Spirituality. The Orientation Programme is a continuous process throughout the day providing opportunity to look forward different dimensions of behaviour and acquire new ones. This also provides direction for their future learning during the course of their stay in the University.

- **Internship A part of the study :** Internship is included as an integrated component of their study programme. The students are getting three months intensive practical training at various Shaktipeeths (our active centers), Chetana Kendras and Charan Peeths spread all over the country. These practical sessions are helpful for the students to sharpen their skills in the areas of their specialization. Dissemination of Indian culture and to generate awareness among common masses is the motto of this program. The results are quite encouraging & widely accepted by the common people as well as the various social, political and administrative bodies.

#### **4.8.2 ART OF LIVING-AN INTEGRAL PART OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH :**

Art of Living as a subject is taught in few Universities. Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya is the first to start this course as an integral part of the teaching programme. Through this subject one learns about the various facts about how to think and live in this Mundane World. Education itself does

not give the knowledge about “Who we are and what we should aim for.” The art of becoming, the art of thinking, the art of working and the art of organizing combined together makes the art of living. This curriculum of art of living helps students to imbibe various concepts of self-management leading towards self-exploration and development.

**Ascetic- life style** shall be an essential part of every student of Devsanskriti Vishwavidyalaya. Usual life style is besieged by various constraints of unwanted habits and tendencies, that motivate our actions onto the path opposite to the desired goal. Such deeds though take place in excitement and on impulse. They ultimately bring remorse at the awakening of prudence and introspection. But a practitioner of austere lifestyle never regrets. Life never lets him fall into dark pits. He never feels depressed by the obstacles of time, rather overcomes them effectively. Considering the virtues of this lifestyle, it has been recommended as an ideal for the students of Devsanskriti Vishwavidyalaya.

#### **4.8.3 SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL MOVEMENT**

Devsanskriti Vishwavidyalaya is not an ordinary academic institute but rather a center of spiritual and cultural movement. Every acharya and student of this institution will be an active participant in this movement. Making an ideal man, an ideal family and ideal society are the three objectives of this academic and spiritual movement. Study, research and pervasion of

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spiritual and cultural life-values are the modes to accomplish these objectives. Its scope is the whole world.

**Time Donation by the Teachers, Resource Persons and the Students :**

The Teachers, who are the building blocks of this university, donate their wisdom, love and affection towards the students. There is no salary structure but only subsistence allowance in the form of honorarium, to sustain their livelihood is given. Various Resource Persons/Visiting faculties guide the students almost in the form of honorary services. The students are also found very much in tune with the similar concept. Just taking admissions, getting Knowledge, giving the exams and going out is not 'THE-END' of their education. After completion of their studies students have shown tenacity, courage & willingness to serve the society. They are voluntarily donating 3 months time for social cause. The results obtained so far, have been quite encouraging and exemplary for other universities.

**People's participation in the overall growth and development of the university:** Dev Sanskriti University is totally dependent as far as fund is concerned on Vedmata Gayatri Trust, which is governing a charitable, philanthropic organization-All World Gayatri Pariwar. It is the Philosophy of our founder Pt. Sriram Sharma Acharya's muthi-fund scheme, in which the members of this mission and socially conscious people are donating one rupee per day. Millions of followers associated with this mission's ideology and thinking are actively involved in the overall growth and

development of the university. This is a true example of utilizing the people's fund in the best possible way

**4.8.4 WAY OF LIFE IN DSUV**

University campus is embellished by exquisite natural surroundings. The Shivalik ranges of Himalayas ceaselessly aggrandize its glory. The sacred breeze from the Ganges pervades its holiness. Astounding effects of this place can be realized only by personal experience. In order to keep pace with the existing times and assist individuals in their personal growth & development the university is offering a wide array of opportunities to participate in various activities. This leads towards spiritual development for all irrespective of caste, creed, region & religion. Specific spiritual attractions of the university are:

**Sustainable Architecture :** The campus situated in the lush green surrounding is designed according to the Principles of Vastu Shastra. In addition to this architecture & planning is done in such a way that the consumption of the energy should be at the minimum level.

**Smoke Free Campus :** Smoking on campus is strictly prohibited to support a healthy lifestyle. Lush green environment with a systematically planned landscaping and blooming flowers pass a message to enjoy a vibrant spiritual environment.

**Pragyeshwar Mahadev :** The elegant temple of Prageyshwar Mahadev is located at the center of the University

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campus. The Pran Pratishtha Ceremony took place in March 2003 with the chanting of mantras and recitation of Vedic hymn. The concept behind the construction of this temple is to dissolve the boundaries between man and the divine. The principal Shiv linga faces the rising sun and has its entrance to the east. The temple has a semi curricular seating arrangement on the lines of an open-air theatre, which works as a meditation place for the students & visitors.

**Yagyashala** : Yagya is the daily feature of the student's life in the campus. According to Gurudev's philosophy Yagya does not mean merely offering obligations in the holy fire. The wider meaning of Yagya is to dedicate one's capacity and insight for making others life fragrant. The benefits of Yagya are proved on scientific basis and Yagyotherapy is getting attention of the world at large.

**Goshala** : Cow rearing and maintenance is quite important in today's context, particularly in showing pathways towards poverty amelioration. In order to evolve a model showing the efficacy & productive capacity of cow-based enterprises, the Goshala has a special significance in the University.

#### 4.8.5 MAJOR FACULTIES

Highlighted here are the proposed major faculties that are launched recently and planned to be fully operational in the first phase.

- Faculty of Sadhana
- Faculty of Health

- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Self Employment

*Faculty of Sadhana*: The subtle science of yoga, sadhana and spirituality devised by the sages of yore will be thoroughly studied, reinvestigated and applied in new scientific light.

*Faculty of Health*: Research, education and service for absolute health for all is the major objective of this faculty.

*Faculty of Education*: The domain of activities here is quite vast. Principal focus would be to bridge the lacunae in present system of education by nurturing vidya that effectuates cultural evolution and expansion of intellect into sagacious & emotional intelligence and guides adept use of school education

*Faculty of Self Employment*:

Project and plans to counter the employment crisis and offer viable support and hope to the youths will be implemented here

The holy land of Vishwavidyalaya is surcharged with cultural heritage since time immemorial. Peace and fragrance are embedded in its ecosphere. Soothing environment always infuses delight. The secrets of knowledge are exposed with ease. No wonder, if these provide unique semblance and rich Dev Sanskriti heritage to Vishwavidyalaya unavailable elsewhere.