

# GURUKULA NETWORK



Newsletter of the Global Neohumanist Education Network

3 USD

Issue 44 - July 2017

## EDUCATING *for a* New Era



Love, Expansion of Mind, Service to all of Creation



## **Gurukula Network**

### **Newsletter and Journal of Neohumanist Schools and Institutes**

**Gurukula Network is published by the  
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Global Neohumanist Education Network**

Two yearly issues, January and July, serve as a means of communication for Neohumanist projects around the world.

It is the spirit of Gurukula Network to encourage a free sharing of ideas and to stimulate discussion on educational and global issues facing our world. All articles express the views of the author.

Gurukula Network is open to any and all NHE related projects and faculties.

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## **NEOHUMANIST EDUCATION**

Universal Love and Values

Holistic Development

Astaunga Yoga

Ecological and Social Consciousness

Academic, Practical and Personal Skills

Knowledge of Self and World Applied for Universal Welfare

Joyful Learning through the Arts

Culturally Sensitive and Inclusive Approach

Integrated Curriculum

Exemplary Role of the Educators

**Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar** inspired the establishment of the global network of Neohumanist schools and institutions. In 1990 he founded Ananda Marga Gurukula (AMGK) as the Board of Education for Neohumanist schools and institutes around the world.

### **VISION**

The Sanskrit word "Gurukula" (pronounced gurukul) has the following etymology: Gu: darkness; ru: dispeller; kula: an institution. Gurukula is an institution which helps students dispel the darkness of the mind and leads to total emancipation of the individual and society at large. The international network of Neohumanist Schools and Institutes strives to hasten the advent of a society in which there is love, peace, understanding, inspiration, justice and health for all beings.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- To serve humanity with neohumanist spirit and to acquire knowledge for that purpose.
- To provide a sound and conducive environment for students for their physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual well-being.
- To promote ethical values in individuals and implement these values in the management of projects, schools and institutions.
- To establish and maintain schools and special academic institutions around the world as well as a cyber-university.
- To initiate teacher education programs to improve and upgrade the quality of education on all academic levels.
- To promote Tantra, Neohumanism and PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory) as the foundation for building a universal society.
- To initiate intellectual dialogues and research for all-round renaissance of society.
- To facilitate the placement of volunteers across cultures to help build meaningful relationships and to support community and social change projects.
- To support the building of a global eco-village network (Master Units)
- To encourage the development of micro-enterprises for sustainability of social service projects.

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Ac. Shambhushivananda Avt., Kulapati <[kulapati@gurukul.edu](mailto:kulapati@gurukul.edu)>

***Sa' vidya' ya' vimuktaye***  
**Education is that which liberates**

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**Humanity is now at the threshold of a new era. We do not want any dogma. The age of dogma is gone. What we want is an idea based on Neohumanism. We are for the entire created world; and not only for human beings or living beings, but for the entire animate and inanimate universe.**

**Now when you are in a mood of pleasure, just distribute it throughout the universe – let all the hearts of the created universe dance in ecstasy and throb with energy. And this is the gospel of the day: we are for all, we are for the Neohumanistic progress of the entire Cosmos.**

**Shrii P.R. Sarkar**

# On Neohumanist Economics

By Dr. Shambhushivananda

*Summary of a talk delivered at Ramjas College of Commerce, Delhi University, Delhi on March 23, 2017*

Dear faculty and students:

Every society wants freedom, happiness, abundance, progress and justice. Economics is intimately connected with all these sublime goals.

One cannot have freedom without recognizing the basic fact that individual freedom must be accompanied and balanced with collective interest. Thus, every human being must think and act in such ways by which no other creature is harmed or neglected in the process of pursuing individual goals. The laws and their enforcement must also ensure that individual and collective liberties are always protected. Unfortunately, the unbridled accumulation of wealth is ultra-vires to the goal of granting economic freedom to one and all. Economic freedom requires that the purchasing power of the masses must be raised. That is the true measure of economic growth. Today's society, where extreme economic disparities abound, cannot be considered an ideal society. Hence, Neohumanist economics expounds that the goal of economics must be to enable every human being to be free from mundane problems so that they can have greater opportunities for intellectual and spiritual growth. Lasting freedom is only possible in the spiritual realm.

A simple formula of happiness is:

$$\text{Happiness} = \text{Wealth} / \text{Desires}$$

There must always be a regulated endeavor to balance individual longings, wants, urges and desires with the purchasing power at hand. A restrained lifestyle is a sure way to achieve lasting happiness in personal and collective life.

Today, are we conscious about where our food comes from? What is the status of our water resources and their quality? Where does our energy come from? Where does our trash go? What is the status of our material resources in the country? Why do we have pollution? Why do we have wars? What are our competitive advantages vis-à-vis other economic-zones. We cannot shop our way to sustainability and resilience. We need fundamental shifts in our thinking and consciousness.

If we want abundance in our lives, we must come closer to nature and tap the abundant potentialities of nature. We must not follow lifestyles or economic policies, which decrease our degrees of freedom. We need to align our lifestyle to nature – the source of abundance. Unfortunately, we do not seem to have time for real issues and challenges facing society and our survival. We are too absorbed in our personal pleasures and that is a recipe for a bleak future.

Education in the field of Economics must be transformed from being a mere “intellectual extravaganza” and made into a precise, practical science where we can begin to see the interconnections between the status of our natural resources & potentialities, the state of technologies and human aspirations.

When a nation or community is dependent on other nations or communities for its basic necessities, it is always vulnerable. The seeds of economic-exploitation reside in this vulnerability. Hence, we must always try to make each socio-economic zone as self-reliant as possible especially for the minimum essentialities of life. The productive use of labour must ensure that purchasing power is improving the standard of living of the common masses and not merely bloating the coffers of a few private individuals or the state. The wealth of society must be shared among one and all through a cooperative economy. Imbalanced economies lead to war-psychosis and imperialist tendencies. Over-industrialization also causes collective psychic degeneration. Industrial revolution must be based on local raw materials and not imported raw materials. The surplus and deficit labour problem must also be tackled through a balanced economic approach: balance between agriculture and non-agricultural sectors; and between rural and urban centers. Decentralization of economic power is necessary for granting economic-justice to the masses.

The real development of our country requires attention to five R's.

1. Reflective eco-friendly education.
2. Redesign of eco-friendly habitats
3. Renewable energy conversion to clean electricity
4. Regeneration of life forms via sequestering carbon
5. Recycling of all wastes- solid, liquid and gases

Technologically, the solutions are available but the political will and consciousness of the masses is also necessary to bring about fundamental changes for nation building. A political process alone does not form a nation. It requires universal love and an enlightened lifestyle that reflects care for one-another. Albert Einstein rightly said: “The fate of humanity is entirely dependent on its moral development.”

When we begin to recognize that all creatures have both existential value and utility value, we shall begin to lay the foundations for a Neohumanist economy. It could lead to a happier, sustainable and a resilient world. In the words of Shri Shri P.R.Sarkar, “The value of any object changes according to time, space and person. The method of utilization should also vary accordingly.” This is an important dynamic principle of the Progressive Utilization Theory, popularly known as PROUT.



# Education for Liberation

By Dada Gunamuktananda

*I was recently invited to speak about education at a senior schools conference in Melbourne, Australia, where principals, vice-principals and senior teachers met for the weekend to discuss the future of education. In briefing me about the aim of the conference, one of the organizers said, "We want to break out of the traditional constructs enforced upon us. We are really attempting to challenge our governing bodies and constructs that focus on telling us what we cannot do as opposed to allowing creativity and freedom to make an impact on improving student outcomes." I can work with that, I thought! This is, of course, right up our alley as Neohumanist educators. On the first day of the conference we saw a movie called "Most Likely to Succeed" which further expanded these sentiments, illustrating that the concepts of NHE, as with spiritual and Proutist concepts, are naturally permeating into the collective consciousness of our society. It's an automatic process inherently tied in with the evolution of humanity on this planet. This article is a summary of the presentation I gave.*

According to Shrii P. R. Sarkar, education is that which liberates the mind. Education should free the mind, not enslave it. It should empower children to be what they ultimately want to be... themselves!

## Conventional Education

We have been conditioned to believe that we need a good job, money, possessions, etc, to be happy. Ken Robinson calls this the idea of linearity; that you go down a track and if you do everything right you will end up set for the rest of your life. This fallacy was created by the early industrialists and has been perpetuated ever since by corporate capitalism. It is at the heart of the industrial system of education that "educates" kids to work as cogs in the machine, prioritizing the subjects most necessary for the industrial complex.

But the industrial age has already ended. We are already in the wake of it. The old industrial model of education is no longer relevant, and we now know that industry and the purely mechanistic and materialistic paradigm that we have based our society on for the last 100 years does not make for happy and fulfilled individuals.

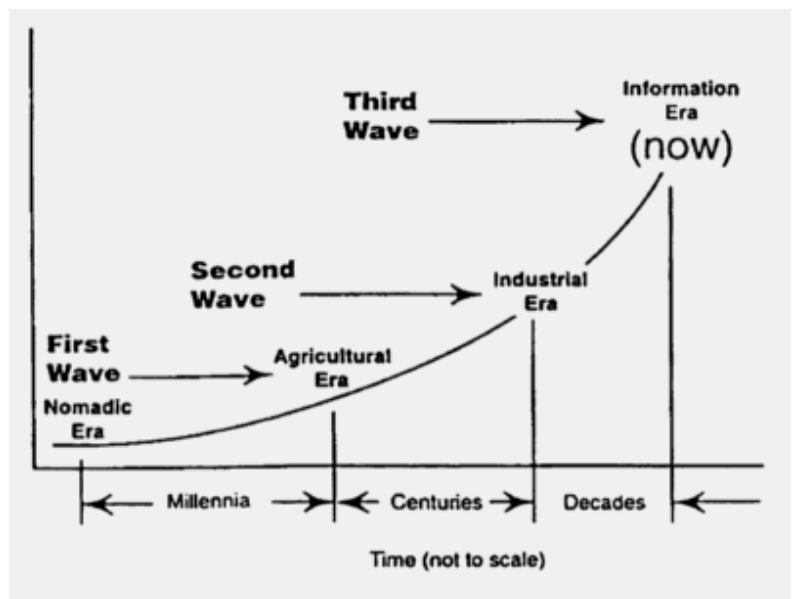
So we now have a global education crisis, just as we have a global economic, political and leadership crisis. In fact we have an existential crisis where people the world over are questioning the values of the past and challenging the wisdom of expecting round people to fit into a square system.

What we are in fact witnessing and living through is no less than the fall of a civilization and a revolution of sorts.

The agricultural revolution was 10,000 years ago. The industrial revolution was 500 years ago. The information revolution was 50 years ago. The old industrial model of education that we've all grown up with is the remnant of the industrial age that we've been in the process of emerging out of in the last 50 years into the information age.

But there's more to come. Human evolution is exponential. If you look at the volume of information we take in daily, it's about the same as people used to take in in a lifetime 1,000 years ago, even 500 years ago. It's become so great that we're now suffering from information overload. So what's actually happening now is that the speed of our evolution is accelerating and the psychic pressure of information overload is already propelling us out of the information age into a more creative, emotionally connected, intuitive and compassionate spiritual age.

We're currently in the middle of a global shift of consciousness — a revolution — into a truly spiritual age. And education, of course, is a big part of this.



It's interesting to take a look here at some more of the salient points from Ken Robinson's three brilliant TED talks:

*"Our education system is predicated on the idea of academic ability... the whole system of education around the world is a protracted process of university entrance... We need to radically rethink our view of intelligence. Intelligence is diverse. Human communities depend upon a diversity of talent, not a singular conception of ability, and our challenge is to reconstitute our sense of ability and of*

intelligence. Creativity is as important in education as literacy, and we should give it the same status.... See our creative capacities for the richness that they are, and see our children for the hope that they are, and our task is to educate their whole being. We have sold ourselves into a fast food model of education where everything is standardized and it's impoverishing our spirits and our energies as much as fast food is depleting our physical bodies. Life is not linear, it's organic. The reason why people are opting out of education is because it doesn't feed their spirit; it doesn't feed their passion. We have to change from an industrial/manufacturing/mechanical model of education based on linearity and conformity, to an agriculture model where we recognize that human flourishing is not a mechanical process but an organic process where all you can do is sow the seeds of possibility. Every day, everywhere, our children spread their dreams beneath our feet, and we should tread softly.

The role of a teacher is to facilitate learning. But the dominant culture of education has come to focus not on teaching and learning but on testing, which is important but it should not be the dominant culture of education. It should be diagnostic. It should support learning, not obstruct it. The real role of leadership in education is not and should not be command and control. The real role of leadership is climate control; creating a climate of possibility, and if you do that people will rise to it and achieve things that you could not have anticipated or expected. I believe our only hope for the future is to adopt a new conception of human ecology, in which we reconstitute our conception of the richness of human capacity. Our education system has mined our minds in the way we strip mine the earth for a particular commodity. And for the future it won't serve us. We have to rethink the fundamental principles on which we're educating our children. What we need is a revolution in education."

## Progressive Education

What might that look like?

### 1. The cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead said, "Children must be taught how to think, not what to think."

It's not so much the facts but the faculty that's important. I believe that truly progressive education from now on will teach how to think, not what to think: the faculty of knowledge rather than the knowledge itself; the ability to think and act according to any given situation, not according to set facts or situations. Part of this, of course, will be the knowledge that in the greater scheme of things we don't actually know a lot. In fact, there's a saying that the more you think you know, the less you actually know. Increasingly more this will be an intuitive rather than intellectual process. So in actual fact, the ultimate education will teach not so much how to think but how not to think! The movement is from intellect to intuition. This is conceptual education, as opposed to the mechanical learning of facts and figures. It's an organic process. And because we're organic (not mechanical) beings, it stands to reason that it's the way to go.

### 2. Education must awaken a thirst for knowledge, not force knowledge onto children.

And the best way to do this is through play, stories and songs (for younger children) and projects (for older children).

#### Play-based learning for young children, giving them space to grow

If we give children homework instead of play time we will stifle their emotional development which will lead to unfulfilled unhappy adults. Children express their inherent desires through play which allows them to develop into fulfilled and happy adults.



Finland's minister of education, who presides over the most successful education model in the world, said in Michael Moore's recent movie *Where to Invade Next*, "They do not have homework. They should have more time to be kids, to be youngsters, to enjoy life." When I first returned to Australia in 2011 and was working at one of our schools I was surprised to learn that even primary school children are given homework these days. When I was young we had no homework until secondary school and we used to spend all our time after school playing. Maybe I'm in denial, but I don't think that was such a bad thing!



**Project-based learning for older children, giving them space to discover.** Rather than a concept divorced from reality, students are given a context within which it exists. Context gives meaning, meaning gives purpose, and purpose gives fulfillment.

Whether play-based or project-based, it must be child-centered. For example, kids teaching kids programs and co-generative dialogue (involving students in decision-making processes within classrooms and schools) both have a positive effect on behaviour, engagement and the emotional climate of classrooms. The academic curriculum acts more as a checklist than as a driving factor.



3. And there is **just as much emphasis on the non-academic curriculum**, which includes languages, music and the arts, physical education, health and hygiene, social skills (“soft” skills: creativity, critical thinking, compassion, empathy, confidence, communication, collaboration, perseverance, work ethic), ethical values, caring for animals, plants and the planet, helping others, and yoga and meditation.

As an aside, in the past there were initiation rites to give a sense of purpose, mission and destiny to children (as opposed to the hopelessness and nihilism that is currently contributing to the anxiety, depression, alcoholism and suicide rates). So in addition, an initiation ceremony to welcome youngsters into adulthood would help to give them a sense of purpose. Indigenous youngsters would particularly benefit from this kind of thing these days.

#### 4. And the example of teachers is also very important.

*“Teachers must possess such qualities as personal integrity, strength of character, righteousness, a feeling for social service, unselfishness, an inspiring personality and leadership ability.” (Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar)*

## Neohumanist Education

Neohumanist Education is based on the philosophy of Neohumanism: the culture of love for all people, animals and plants, not only of this world but the entire universe. It is a revival of the ancient Gurukula system, where in addition to (in fact, over and above) the academic curriculum, are these three most important aspects of education that are missing from our current education system: These teachings instill young people with the courage, inspiration and sense of purpose to live a fulfilling and giving life.

### 1. Ethics

Doing the right thing. It’s more important to be able to sleep at night than to possess ill-begotten wealth. A clear conscience is the greatest wealth. These are the Neohumanist Virtues that we developed to instill a sense of ethics in children. And these are the starting definitions we give them when we introduce each virtue:

1. Love is the sweetest and most special feeling of happiness within yourself.
2. Compassion is spreading the feeling of love within yourself to include others.
3. Service is when you express your compassion by helping others without expecting anything in return.
4. Respect is positive regard for yourself and for others.
5. Honesty is using your words and actions for the benefit of others as well as yourself.
6. Responsibility is when you act properly for yourself, others and society.
7. Courage is doing the right thing, whether it's easy or hard, because you know in your heart it's the right thing to do.
8. Simple Living is living in the best possible way for yourself, others and the planet.
9. Contentment is being satisfied with what you have and how you live your life.
10. Knowledge is increasing your understanding of yourself, others and the world.



These virtues hold much more importance in the overall scheme of a child’s education than academic subjects per se.

*“Education which leads to the acquisition of knowledge plus morality makes for a peaceful society.” (Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar)*

#### Message:

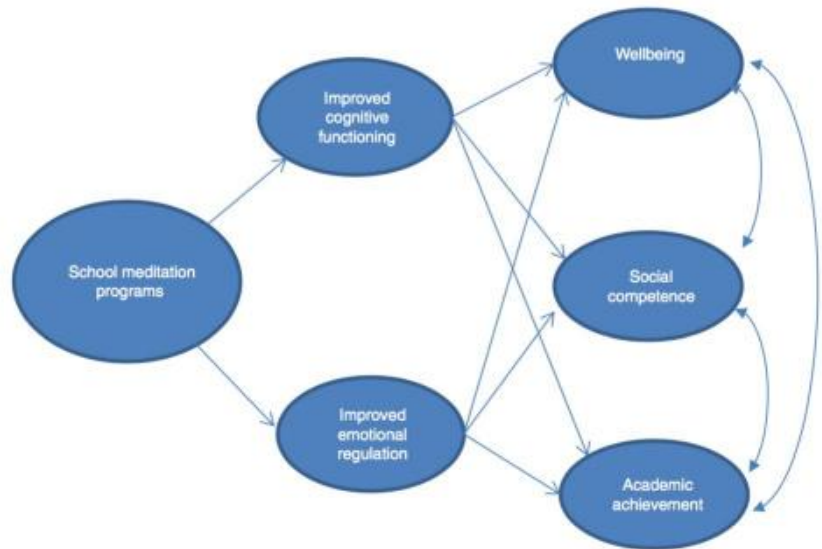
Always try to do the right thing. Often it will not be the easiest thing to do. But you will realise over the course of time that it was the best thing to do. Keep in mind the spiritual essence of everyone and everything and act on the feeling of that essence. If your thoughts, words and actions are in harmony with that feeling of unity amongst all people and all things, you can't go wrong.



## 2. Meditation

It's even more important to feel at peace with oneself than to possess knowledge and skills that may be relevant today but not tomorrow; or that you can remember today but forget tomorrow. It's not what you know but who you know (the who being yourself). Inner peace lasts forever. A recent study of the burgeoning meditation-in-schools phenomenon, in which evidence from 15 peer-reviewed studies of school meditation programmes were reviewed, revealed that meditation positively influences student success by increasing cognitive functioning and emotional regulation, leading to wellbeing, social competence and academic achievement.

See: <http://prsinstitute.org/downloads/related/education/ContemplativeEducation.pdf>



### Message:

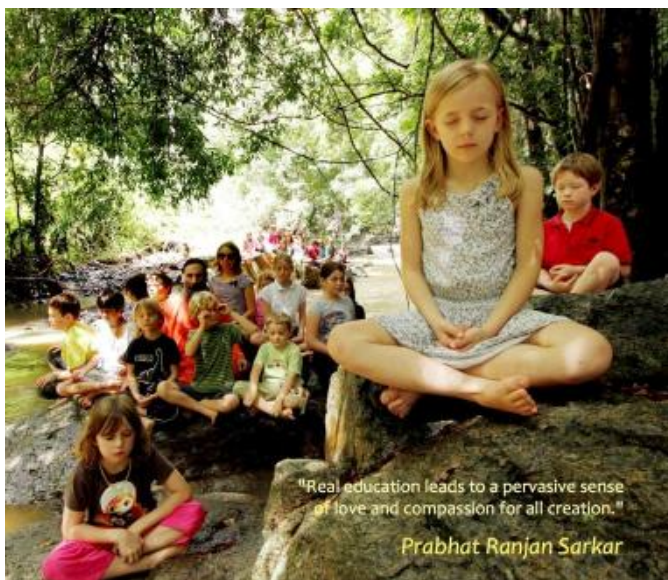
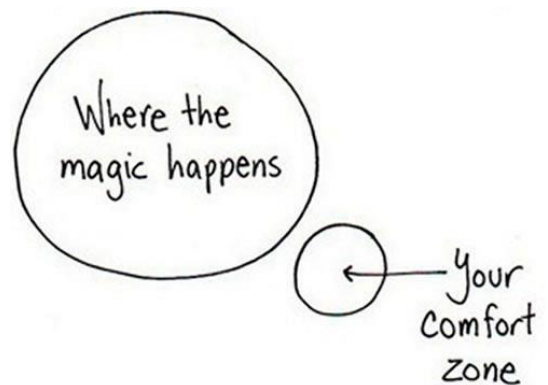
Don't be afraid to be yourself. Have faith in yourself. People will see you in the same way as you see yourself. Look for answers within yourself. Trust in yourself. Be true to yourself. After all, your true inner self is the self of the entire universe.

## 3. Service

It's more fulfilling and important to contribute to the welfare of others than to be overly preoccupied with one's own welfare. Satisfaction lies in the giving, not the taking. Giving is indeed receiving. Social service is helping those in need without expecting anything in return. This often means that you have to forsake your own comfort for the comfort of others. But that's where the magic happens!

*"Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth."*  
(Mohammed Ali)

*"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."*  
(Winston Churchill)



So we need children to be educated in literacy, mathematics, in the sciences, in technology, languages, music and the arts, environmental studies, the humanities, physical education, and in all the other subjects that will prepare them for careers in an ever-more complex and challenging world. But above all we need children to develop love for themselves and love, compassion and empathy for others. We need them to feel a sense of connection to their hearts, to all people, to all creatures and to the planet.

Practically speaking, ethics, meditation and a sense of service are instilled in children through what we call Quiet Time, a daily session which includes yoga, songs, kiirtan (singing Baba Nam Kevalam – "Infinite Happiness / Love / Peace / Consciousness is everywhere and everything"), meditation, stories, creative expression, games and service projects.



*Narendra Raj Purohit Seema is making efforts to introduce Neohumanist Education values to teachers, lecturers, professors, youth and students, in Maharashtra, India. Various lectures and elocution competitions have been organized in medical, engineering, management, B.Ed., and D. Ed colleges. The following is a sample talk.*

# Education for Character Building

A talk in Maharashtra, India  
by Narendra Raj Purohit

We send our children to allied schools, colleges and top universities to make them doctors, engineers, management consultants, civil service officers, celebrities etc., rather than educating them in true sense of the word—all in the name of pragmatism.

Students finish their education and join different fields and exploit the masses. They simply forget that they are appointed to take care of society. The Meaning of the Vedic verse “*Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye*”, “Education is that which Liberates”, has been lost in a frantic search for wealth and glory. Intellectual knowledge has become the hallmark, at the cost of values, ethics, character building and spiritual fulfillment.

The five minimum physical requirements of all human beings are food, shelter, clothing, medical care and education. Of these, education is the most important factor in furthering the future of society. There is a psychic need to know more and more, and this is called ‘mental expansion’. Education should link the physical and psychic need of learners with the spiritual need for happiness that will take them to the stage of all-round liberation.

Some developed countries have realized the shortcoming of their education systems and are trying hard to turn them around with the help of ethics and cultural education. However, their efforts are hindered by the dominance of consumerism in society. Education becomes focused on making more money and, as a result, it on the advancement of knowledge as means to get a good job in the competitive world for making more and more money. Consumerism leads to “*ātma-sukha tattva*”, or the principle of self gratification where a ‘me and mine’ psychology prevails. The current education system works on a model of the Individual as a Singular Entity pitted against the Forces of the Universe. Competition and the need to dominate and control are the hallmarks of this system. The psychology of the ‘individual against the world’ is cultivated, making students feel that they are on their own to face the world. The more they can grab from it, the more successful they feel. True education rejects this *raison d’etre* for humanity. Real education teaches Universal Brotherhood which is the Principle of Equality of All Living Beings: “*Sama Samaj Tattva*”. When Universalist psychology prevails, there is no chance of exploitation and accumulation of resources.

Due to the present education system, values are diminishing in society. What are values? Values are positive qualities that refine our behaviour and expression. There cannot be a negative or bad value. The lack of values is commonly

*Continued on Page 24*



**Talk at Engineering College at Pandharpur Dist Solapur, attended by more than 500 hundred students & teachers.**

# Catching Fire! A Neohumanist Love Story

By Marcus Bussey

Neohumanism is a socio-spiritual philosophy for personal and global transformation. But what does this mean? Essentially it means that any change in the world comes about from changes at the individual level. Gandhi's 'Be the change you want to see in the world' is where it begins. As teachers this means we must be the change we want to see in our classrooms, schools, communities and lives. Being means becoming. Being also has its socio-ecological dimension and implies, inter-being.

We are because of others—the human, the non-human and even the inanimate. We exist only in relationship. We find meaning only through relationship. So our being-becoming is relational in nature. That means we respond to the world and the world responds to us. The logic then dictates that if we wish to see less violence in our classrooms, we must become less violent. If we wish to see more creativity in our classes then we need to be more creative. If we wish to see more curiosity, spirituality, love, care and hope, then we must embody these things. Not as perfect exemplars but as people walking the path, doing the hard yards. Neohumanism is therefore a philosophy of becoming 'more' than we are now. This means we are always becoming neohumanists. That is the beauty and paradox.

Each of us is always complete and responding to the world as becoming-neohumanists. Yet that completeness and response is always also provisional. We are always yearning to be more, called into being by our relational context. This means there is a distinction between the curriculum as content, and the curriculum as lived being-becoming. The neohumanist teacher is working to trust this distinction and allow for their own process—their being-becoming—to infuse their classroom with expansive possibilities generated by their own becoming-more.

So, if universal love is on the curriculum it infuses the math class with its own sweetness. The love of the subject, the trust involved in mathematical inquiry, the joy and playfulness of all deep learning, the respect and nurturance of each student are part of the broader ethos that generates its own tacit knowing. This is a relational quality, it is not the content but the conduit. How do we do this? Simple, but hard and elusive: we grow universal love in ourselves. We nurture it through conscious practice and unconscious allowing. This is a kind of mindfulness—to hold and transmit the sweetness of an abstract love is no mean feat. We must practice it, observe it, notice what happens when we can feel it more, and what happens when it evaporates in the heat of the moment.

The becoming-neohumanist teacher is a scientist and they and their classrooms are the laboratory. Each teaching-learning encounter is reciprocal. Each lesson an opportunity to revisit the key question—your question. One that grows out of your unique path. This question will remain unanswered if you do not allow time for it to come into focus, grow and evolve. You need to build time into your lives to reflect, time to share and cross examine with colleagues, time to go within and meditate on the cosmic connection, to grow the feeling of relatedness.

This is how we deal with the core problem facing us today in schools: that in a secular world, spirit is shy and retiring and that to think of bringing it into education seems to challenge old taboos. No, spirit lies at the heart of education and it is our birth right to go deep into spirit to bring magic into the class so that every subject catches fire; So that students become passionate participants in knowing this sublime world we inhabit! If we for a moment, imagined the classroom as a temple filled with the sacred, we might reframe the instrumental and give it deeper richer possibilities. Of course such a classroom is a microcosm of the Cosmos which is a temple, though conditioning and habit have cast a veil over our appreciation of this fact.

The promise of neohumanist teaching is an invitation for us all to catch fire and fall ever more deeply in love with the sacred at the heart of learning.

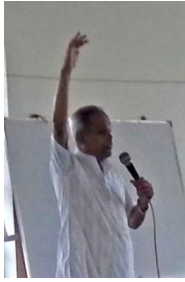


*"Through action mixed with devotion and knowledge you will find the meaning of your life, the supreme treasure of your heart." – Shrii P. R. Sarkar*



# Education Training Camp at Durlavpur, Bankura West Bengal, India

Report by Didi Anandarama



The half yearly Education Training Camp was held at the Ananda Marga School in Durlavpur last December. The week-long major ETC is a well-established practice in Ananda Marga for the past fifty years. Teachers from far and wide come to attend these professional and inspirational programmes. Teachers who are from nearby schools, especially come in big numbers. The ETC venue is shifting to give a chance for local teachers who cannot afford to travel far distances to be able to take part. There are about 800 Ananda

Marga schools in greater India, and 250 teachers and principals participated in this event.

ETC is neither a seminar nor a conference but as the name tells – a camp – a rigorous tightly packed programme that starts at 4am with showers or ablutions before the 5am singing and meditation and ends after 10pm with late dinner, walks and before-sleep meditations. The classrooms are transformed into mat-sleeping accommodations. The attendees are well accustomed to such camps and come well-prepared with their paraphernalia for such a camp. The atmosphere is of sharing, caring and inspiring each other.

Collective meditations are fully attended due to the melodious Prabhata Samgiita and Kiirtan chanting prior to the meditation. Mornings, afternoons and evenings are filled with presentations, workshops and sharing of songs, dramas and cultural programmes. Dr. Asit Dey gave a class on “Birds, Animals and Plants”, Danish Chandra Paul from Tripura who worked for 40 years in government schools, gave much-in-demand classes on Micro Teaching and Lesson Planning. Other classes were on ‘Play-Way Methods’, ‘Creative Expressions – Rhymes and Storytelling’ by Sukumar Nandi, ‘Multiple Intelligences’, ‘Rewriting History’ and setting up a STUVOL classroom with shelves of manipulative educational material. The decorated walls were painted with the help of pupils.



Sukumar Nandi is an experienced teacher at one of the oldest Ananda Marga schools at Vardaman that has 700 students. Besides attending the camp and giving a presentation he also ‘gave a hand’ during this event to the year-end children’s programme that was held during this event. Within three days he managed to organize a parade through the town and put 300 children on stage with a great variety of performances – a dance drama, plays, songs and many dances to the delight of a huge crowd of parents and camp attendees.



The matron Tanushree Chattaraj, widow of Partha Chattaraj, who donated this school, expressed her delight at the speed and dynamism with which this school took off only one year ago with Acarya Satyanisthananda as the principal. And this dynamism and enthusiasm was the most outstanding atmosphere of this ETC and certainly something for the participants to happily take home.

*A "Train the Trainer" seminar took place February 23-25, at the Lotus Training Center in Den Bosch, Holland, followed a week later, by the trainees giving a seminar to a group of 40 teachers. The following two articles, philosophy Masterclass in Neohumanist Philosophy for Education, and Philosophy in Action, document these two successive events.*



## Masterclass in Neohumanist Philosophy for Education

At the Lotus Training Center, Den Bosch, Netherlands  
By Timotheus Rammelt

How does one get a deeper understanding of some of the key concepts in the teachings of Shrii P. R. Sarkar for inspiring Neohumanist Education & educators in Europe? In Den Bosch, Netherlands, as an effluence of the wish to get more clarity and experience on this topic, a three-day philosophy masterclass was conducted for Neohumanist educators by Dada Shambhushivananda at the Lotus Training Centre. This article is written to give an idea about what was discussed and the approach that we took. But it also covers some of the educational insights that resulted from this approach.

### Why a Masterclass?

When expressing some of the core concepts of Neohumanist philosophy to new people, you are always at risk of coming across as narrow minded, dogmatic or preaching. Many of the concepts are better understood by 'showing' rather than by 'telling'; for instance, 'showing' your understanding of the Yamas and Niyamas (moral principles) instead of 'telling' about them. But particularly in an educational context it is, besides showing, also important to be able to verbalise your understanding as a teacher or a trainer, and to express to parents, teachers and children why you are doing what you do as a teacher. For instance, you might ask, "Can you explain the relevance of Satya to a five-year-old?"

Society is changing faster than ever and education is changing with it at an evenly rapid pace. A day in our normal life is no longer comparable to a day in the time that Patañjali wrote down his 8 limbs of Yoga. Even after Shrii P. R. Sarkar last expressed his understanding of the mind much has changed in daily life under the influence of technology and developing futures. And even much more change is natural and necessary to cope with our future society's needs.

How can we find new ways today to relate to these philosophies that have their roots in old scriptures? Ofcourse these concepts still have great significance in modern-day life in Western Europe, but how can we relate to them in modern society? How can they help us now? And what bridges do we need to overcome, in a European context, where everything needs to be proven and understood before it can be experienced or accepted? Eg. In a very secular context, almost everything that is said about spirituality is considered dogmatic and basically not to be trusted. That is quite a challenging context for these philosophies.



### The aims of Masterclass were therefore:

- Exercising expression of the basic philosophical concepts
- Getting firmly rooted teachers who can train/help other teachers
- Growing the understanding of core concepts in Neohumanist philosophy
- Fuelling clarity for (new) educational endeavours

To increase our trainees' rooting in this philosophy and to grow their understanding, we focussed on approaching three big concepts of Neohumanist philosophy; Brahma Cakra, the Yamas and Niyamas, and the Kosas, or Layers of the Mind. We did this with a practical take on Neohumanist philosophy. The angle taken was not so much an academic analysis of what was written and said, but it was more about how to implement the core concepts of Neohumanist philosophy in a training or a lesson or a spoken expression.

The topics/concepts were approached from an educational perspective by a group of teachers that were willing to express this philosophy to other professionals in training and education. The sessions were mainly conducted by Dada Shambhushivananda and soon became enriched and fuelled by the input and experience of teachers and trainers with combined decades of experience in education.



### The Masterclass in Chronological Order

On the first day of the training we shared our personal situations as teachers and trainers. Where do you work, and what is the relevance of this philosophy for your work in education? Why are you attending this training, and what are you hoping to gain from this? After this we dove into the topic of mind.

#### Day 1 - Layers of the Mind

Dada started by refreshing the concepts and philosophy of the realms of the mind. The Kośas were one by one unraveled, and connected to more familiar topics and concepts. Also the connection between the witness mind (Mahat) and the layers was clarified. Because all trainees already were involved in Neohumanist Education for some time, they already knew quite a bit about the topic. But it was, in substance and in depth, a useful refresher of known concepts—at first. And by asking questions, there were also many new discoveries and neural connections made in this session, judging from regular cries of “Aha” as a sign of increased understanding.

We took all this refreshed understanding and addressed questions interactively in the afternoon session to increase understanding and the practical application of this theoretical knowledge. We answered questions like:

- What teacher qualities are needed in helping children to grow at the Atimānas Kośa (creative layer of mind)? “Creative thinking / playing drama / understanding emotions”
- What are inner and outer expressions of the Manomaya Kośa (intellect) in children at several age groups? “Understanding, exploration of objects and qualities” and “Sorting, combining, and associating”, at a certain age. We related that to necessary teacher qualities for age-related needs of the children to grow (things like discernment of needs, facilitating experiences and encouraging investigation).

#### Day 2 - Yama and Niyama for Teachers

In approaching the Yamas and Niyamas, a slightly different approach was taken by asking the trainees to come forward to share their understanding of a particular Yama or Niyama limb of their choice, for example, “How would you explain Ahimsa to a parent who does not know anything about this topic yet.”

Getting more understanding by expressing this in front of a group was clearly a valuable exercise. These small stories about Ahimsa/Satya/Tapah... became the subjects of an interactive discussion supplemented by other teachers and trainers. Finally Dada added an extra layer of clarity to the topic by explaining the true intention and refinement from a deeper understanding.

This understanding became firmly rooted when Dada made a connection between the Meta-level (big picture) and the role of Yama/Niyama in forming Wisdom Teachers, and the realisation of higher truths, the broad perspective. Afterwards the teacher qualities that are needed for the development of Yama/Niyama in children were addressed. Here are some examples:

- What teacher qualities are needed for cultivating Tapah in children?  
“Willingness to sacrifice” / “Endurance” / “Devotion to duty” / “Putting children first”.
- And what about qualities needed for Aparigraha?  
“Sharing and a philanthropic attitude” / “Contentment” / “Inner trust” / “Take only what you need” / “Maximum utilisation”.

### Day 3 - Brahma Cakra & the big picture

In about fifty minutes, the Yogic understanding of the creation cycle of the cosmos was explained; From the triangle of static, mutative and sentient forces to the development of the human beings, up until their final realisation. This continued in a fascinating and inspiring talk from Dada about the implications Brahma Cakra has for education, including the social cycle and the future of civilisation. This touched us all and we listened with a great deal of interest.

The three-day Masterclass ended with the topic of enlightened leadership qualities—leadership as personal capability - by asking and answering big questions like:

- What can your educational organisation do better to develop a sense of purpose in children?
- If we look at Brahma Cakra and Yama/Niyama, what can we do better at an organisational-level?

### Conclusion and Fruits...

Ofcourse we ran over time - discussing the entire universe and education in a broad philosophical way. That did matter mainly to the people waiting outdoors for us. We on the other hand were focussed on the fruits and applications of this Philosophy; passing of time seemed relatively unimportant.

Looking at the core of Neohumanist Philosophy in depth, the fruits are many and they are ready to be harvested. For instance, by adding an extra layer of perspective and clarity to understanding ourselves and the world we live in better. But the applicational value for education is much wider. From the understanding of the necessity of broadening education and curricula - for inspiring society's children to learn more - and infuse them with a sense of wonder to get to know the contents and layered structure of their most used tool...the mind.

Realising this, you can't be anything but joyful because of the inherent added value that this philosophy has for the modern secular society and more particularly because of the added value for education. The sources that can be tapped in this philosophy are deep and rich, also for the western European context today; Maybe even more than ever before.

Looking specifically at Yama/Niyama in depth one can easily flow into a regained understanding of the valuable and irreplaceable role of a good example in a moral value teacher; A teacher that is unified in expressing and living these values as an example.

Looking specifically at the Brama Cakra helps to focus us on the bigger picture. What do you love most in this world - and what is worth fighting for - to you? What do you wish for this world? And after getting a deeper understanding of these philosophies - and yourself; How can you best be of service?

These realisations can subsequently be transferred from a deeper understanding to the children that you guide – to awaken a flame in them. A feeling of belonging to a bigger context, a love for the Universe in all its diversity, and a feeling of wanting to contribute your best possible work and self.

### Follow-up “Teach the Teachers - Philosophy in Action”

During this philosophy Masterclass, plans were finalised for follow-up training. This training was given one week later - as a knowledge integration assessment - by the trainees of the Masterclass. The trainees gave this training to a group of 40 teachers. You can read more about this training in the article “Philosophy in action - three day teachers training” in this newsletter.

Both the Masterclass and the follow-up training were offered by Lotus Training, Den Bosch. This Lotus is a Dutch Neohumanist Training and Knowledge centre with a specialisation in spiritually aware and evidence based educational reform. We have international aspirations. In September 2017, we have planned a similar Masterclass with Dada Shambhushivananda. Contact us for further details at [www.lotus-training.nl](http://www.lotus-training.nl)



# Philosophy in Action

## Three Day Teachers Training

Den Bosch, Holland  
By Jasmijn Baten

At the Neohumanist school, Zonnelicht, in Den Bosch, The Netherlands we have a three day Teacher Training course every year. This year the theme was: *Philosophy in Action*. We focused on Yama and Niyama, the Layers of the Mind and Brahma Chakra. Didi Ananda Bhadra and Didi Ananda Devapriya came from Sweden and Romania to support us.



The new teachers had the opportunity to learn about the fundamental aspects of Neohumanist philosophy with Didi Ananda Devapriya. The more experienced teachers were involved in interactive workshops to deepen their understanding together. In addition to a variety of workshops, activities and presentations about the three philosophy subjects, there was also space to feel oneness through kiirtan, meditation and yoga practice and teachers had the opportunity to learn or review their personal meditation practices with the Didis.

To create a feeling of unity and joy, we started each day with lively games to bring the subject of the day to life. In the afternoon, we discussed the subject more in depth, and looked at how to apply the philosophy in our daily teaching. After dinner, we closed the day with fun, relaxing programs – including dancing, drumming, and watching the film “The Beginning of Life.”

### Day 1 : Yama – Niyama

The first day of the training we started with kaoshiki, kiirtan and meditation, like we do every day in the training. It was the first time we used our new meditation room, and there was a good feeling right away. When the meditation was finished we went to the big hall to play a game about Yama Niyama. Each teacher received a paper with one of the Yama or Niyamas, and then had to demonstrate it to the others without words so that they could guess what was presented to them. After it was guessed, there was a conversation about how you could see or motivate this in yourself and others. This helped us to look at Yama Niyama in a creative way and connect to how you could see it in the world. This helped us to internalise the values in ourselves, so we could connect them in practical ways to our daily work, which we discussed in the afternoon.

In the afternoon program we related this to different ages and split up in three different groups. The first group was the baby-group, from 0-2 years old. The second group was the toddler group, from 2-4 years old. The last group was the afterschool program, from 4-8 and 8-12 years old. We reflected together about the ways we already have incorporated Yama Niyama in practice and how we could further stimulate this as teachers for the children. From these in depth conversations came some beautiful plans, like a new development program for the afterschool program, so the children will be provided with chances to develop Yama Niyama in themselves.

This first day was ended with the film: ‘*The beginning of life*’. This was a wonderful and inspiring movie where we could see Yama Niyama in neuroscience. The film tells us how we are formed by our genetics, combined with our relationship with everything around us. The *Beginning of Life* investigates what separates us and what is essential to all of us, how we can create a better society by investing in the first years of children’s lives.



## Day 2 : Layers of The Mind

The second day was all about the Layers of the Mind. We introduced this theme with games again. The first game we played was hide and seek. All the teachers chose a layer and then hid. When they were be found they had to express their layer at a certain age to the seeker, who had to guess it. The seeker had his mission fulfilled when all the layers were found and the age where the level of consciousness was guessed correctly. In this way our understanding about the layers of the mind was enlarged. The importance of the sensorial quality for teachers was clear when we discovered that one of the teachers was still hiding. When we all gathered again for a cup of tea she came out of her hiding place after twenty minutes with a frown on her face saying, ‘You didn’t look for me!’ So we learned to use all our senses when playing hide and seek with the children.

When the game was finished we talked about what teacher qualities we need to be able to provide the children with the best opportunities to develop the Layers of the Mind with the children. A lot of teachers became aware of their qualities, but also of the things we need to develop in ourselves. In the afternoon program we split up into the three age-groups again to have an in-depth conversation about daily practice. At the baby group we talked about the needs of baby’s in all the different stages of their development. We talked about the opportunities we need to create so we can help the babies to develop their full potential.

This day ended with a dance workshop and a music workshop. In the dance workshop we discovered our physical boundaries and tried to see if we can push ourselves to feel more free to express ourselves using the whole body. In the music workshop we discovered our internal rhythm and discovered our vocal powers.



## Day 3 : Brahmachakra

The theme of the last day was the Brahmachakra. We began the day watching a film on the “Brahmachakra”, seeing life as a journey of evolving consciousness, and our role as teachers in facilitating this evolution. We then continued with a discussion about ‘What do we wish for the world’. It was then that all of the three subjects that were presented in this course came together. The philosophy classes developed our awareness of the importance of our personal development as a teacher and our awareness of the personal development of the children. In the concluding session, we focused on the society. We started this session with a song we listened to while we visualised what we could contribute to society. The song was by a Dutch singer and rapper about discovering your personal power to help the world, After this visualisation we used our intuition to make a creative expression about our personal idea. Everyone made a poster with this wish, all in our own way; colours, words, drawings, pictures, songs.

A lot of teachers expressed that they were able to connect to their purpose in life, because of this opportunity to reflect on our work in a broader way. It helped everyone to feel part of a bigger mission. Sharing this with each other was very inspiring, as well as looking at the opportunities that life brings.

We also listened to the obstacles every teacher personally had in this moment of life that held them back from fully committing to these dreams. The limitations were written down on paper and then we went outside and made a big fire to burn them all. It was as if we literally “burned our samskara’s” (accumulated reactions in potentiality). It sparked our altruism and hope to be able to do something for this world without any limitations.

## Experiences of Teachers

The teachers gained a deeper understanding of Neohumanism and grew closer to each other. We received a lot of energy from these days that we can bring, with love and passion, to the children of Zonnelicht. Two new teachers share their experiences here:





### *Tessa, Teacher of 2- and 3-year olds:*

*The 3-days training was very inspiring. The theoretical deepening in the morning (day 1: Layers of the mind, day 2: Yamaniyma, day 3: Brahmachakra) and the connection with practice in the afternoon. This facilitated the theory becoming clear immediately. From the theory we looked at how to further deepen the program, how to better support both the group and the individual child and how to improve the communication towards the parents in relation to our vision. This has given me new insights that I have been able to apply in practice immediately in the week following the training. What impressed me the most however was the connection and bonding. After such a special, sometimes confronting but most of all instructive weekend, with lots of new insights, we have become one team again that wants to go forward.*

### *Sébastien, Teacher of 8- till 12-year olds:*

*At first I didn't know what to expect when I heard about the 'three-day course' at Zonnelicht. I remember looking at the schedule and being extremely confused. I saw terms I never heard before, like Didi, kiirtan, Brahmachakra, etc. From the very first day the content of Neohumanist Education became clear to me and I really liked the fact that there was an excellent balance between theory and practice. Apart from the obvious fact that I learned a lot about NHE, I really loved the atmosphere during the course. You really could sense the inspiration and excitement that was going on!*

*Both Didis were very nice and intelligent people. I really liked their effort in providing great quality and delivering information in a very understandable way. I also liked their positive energy and open-mindedness.*

*During the course it became clear to me that it is very important to teach children to care for other human beings, animals and plants. In our Western society we are used to living our lives at full speed. It is very hard to find time to reflect and observe. We often don't think about the things that really matter to us and everything around us.*

*As a teacher at Zonnelicht, I find it very crucial that I pass on values like empathy and altruism to the next generations. Not only do we need to tell them, we also have to search for meaningful situations. During the course we (after-school teachers) decided to create an education program concerning Yama and Niyama; a prime example of inspiration leading to motivation to improve the way we educate our children.*

For all who are interested in the learning the philosophy and practice of Neohumanist Education, we kindly invite you to join the yearly Lotus Teachers Training. It is usually held in February. We welcome international guests!





# A Tour to Strengthen NHE in our West Africa Schools

## By Didi A'nanda Gun'amaya'

*This year I visited our schools in Togo and Burkina Faso, and in Ghana, in Ejura, Mafi Zongo, Kasoa, Accra and Ho, with the purpose of sharing NHE activities and training the teachers in NHE. In this article I will share some highlights of this trip.*

### Togo School in Lome

It is natural in West Africa, where basic necessities are missing, that we spend much time and energy struggling to secure a project's land, fund raising to get and improve basic facilities, getting good educators and arranging for their salaries, etc. Yet we are doing our best to make these efforts worthwhile by imparting Neohumanist principles to the children, teachers and parents. In our Togo school in Lome, for example, we had a Cultural Program from 20th to 24th February where students performed drama, local songs and dance and expressed themselves in a very creative and subtle way.



*Students Performing Local Dance*



*Togo - Didi visiting classes with Dada to explain Neohumanism to the kids*

In this school students water the plants daily, but they don't always do it by themselves and they need to understand deeply, to feel at heart the importance of taking care of Mother Nature. They do not have much



*Students water the plants daily*

knowledge of Neohumanism, so Dada Padmeshananda and myself went to each class and taught the basics of Neohumanism to the children and educators. Sensing the receptive mind of the students and staff we started to give regular visits to the school.

We gave three lectures on integral education to the fourteen teachers so that they could start to incorporate NHE principles in their day-to-day teaching. The way teachers were disciplined, taking notes and questioning, was very touching. They



*Lectures on NHE have been given to 14 teachers at Togo School, mostly on how to impart psychological education and also to motivate them to implement cultivation of morality and meditation in their daily routine with kids.*

also proved to remember very well what was taught in previous classes. Lokanath, who is one of the local people responsible for the school, said that they do appreciate these trainings because they feel it gives them new educational tools and it contributes to improve the quality of the teaching and certainly expands the mind of the students. This was so inspiring for me that afterwards I made time to tour our different schools in West Africa just to impart Neohumanist Education.





*Togo School - Children wearing local dresses receive prizes for best performance in dance*



*Togo School - Children Studying*

## Burkina Faso Junior High School - Bzanga

I visited our JHS Bzanga (which means “love for all” in the local language) in Bissiri village in Burkina Faso Master Unit. In this very impoverished rural area, there were 150 students from 12 to 24 years old (yes, some had to delay so much their education for lack of finances), who I found to be very receptive to Neohumanistic ideas too. It is so interesting to see that the universal principles touch the heart of everyone, no matter how diverse may be the context in which they live. Also, in this Muslim area, where the tradition puts the women much behind the scene, the girls seemed inspired to have a woman giving classes to them! I was fortunate to witness a happy occasion when the school received a donation of story books and I looked at the emotion of the children when they started going through the books, as it was certainly a new experience for most of them. Dada has now prepared a room with shelves, which is becoming the library and a place where workshops shall take place (drawing, theater, yoga postures, etc.). There, the school has set up a successful system with teams of volunteers (among students) for all the different Neohumanist activities in the school. It started last year with the 45 members of the “Green Team” • who got trained to grow plants and take care of new trees (up to 500 fruit trees were recently planted in the courtyard). This is a quite challenging work due to water scarcity and extreme heat of such an arid area, yet, thanks to persistent efforts gradually the big school compound is getting greenish with a variety of trees. Now they also have volunteers for cleanliness and for the library room. Besides this, training the teachers and students on understanding and applying the principles of Neohumanism has officially started!



*New School Building*

*School grounds with Dada and new trees, Students with new books, and girls sharing food.*



## Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

In Ouagadougou, capital of Burkina Faso, one and one half hectares of land, in a much neglected community, was recently donated for building a new school. We had a class on the *Principles of an Integral Education* to those local people who have the responsibility to start up this new educational project.



## Ghana – Five Schools

In Ghana we have five NHE schools: Namaskar Primary School in Ejura at Kumasi, Ananda Marga NeoHumanist Academy in Ho, AM International School in the Village of Mafi Zongo in Volta Region, Path of Joy in Kasoa in Central Region and AM Early Childhood School and Lotus Children's Center in Greater Accra.

### Namaskar Primary School, Ejura, Kumasi

When visiting our Namaskar Primary School in Ejura, I taught Neohumanism through story. The staff enjoyed this very much. Even the cook was accompanying me from class to class to hear again the same story through the window, and the children were inspired to try meditation which the story proposed.



*Ejura - Didi teaching with the Love is Everywhere Story and Children Meditating*

### AM International School in the village of Mafia Zongo

Next I gave teacher training at our AM International School in the village of Mafi Zongo where we have an AMURT water project. The community is ready to donate land for a school but as there are no funds for building the facility. At the moment we are temporarily using a room from a local family. Although the school lacks resources, we have got good staff, retired teachers who are enthusiastic to know more about Integral Education. I also spent time with the kids, using stories to teach them to hear their inner voice through meditation, and to feel that love is everywhere, in animals, plants, rocks and also in their hearts! It was nice to see how these village children experience their first time managing crayons and painting. Our school is free of charges because the community is very poor, but it is unable to accommodate many children or provide feeding to the students.



*"On the dust of the earth, countless flowers bloom into tender buds." Shrii P. R. Sarkar translated from PS 2085*



## Ananda Marga Neohumanist Academy in Ho, Ghana

After a long time planning I could finally visit the Ananda Marga Neohumanist Academy in Ho to impart two days of basic training in NHE, and plan to come to share more often. The teachers understood well our basic ideology and psychological ways to impart education. Children enjoyed “Baba Nam Kevalam” and Circle of Love with songs, asanas and story. The future of this school is surely bright. For more details on the Ho School, see article in this issue.



## AM Early Childhood School, Lotus Children’s Center, Accra Ghana



*Kids are studying the butterfly in Nature Studies time at AM School Lotus Children Center*

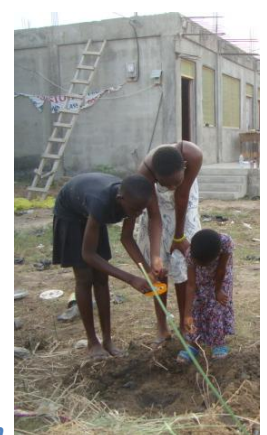
Back to Accra at our AM Early Childhood School, Lotus Children’s Center I am glad to see how students are learning well Reading and Maths at an early age, as these subjects are lacking importance in local private and public Primary Schools. Along with a good academic base, children also have regular gardening, planting, watering or just observing the plants. The daily routine includes Moral Stories, Sports, Vegetarian diet, Songs in the local language, Arts and Crafts using recycled paper and Nature Studies based on the Circle of Love curriculum. Meditation and yoga postures are also part of their daily routine. Lotus is not only a school but also a shelter for girls; besides providing them the basic needs, they also have regular classes on morality. We just acquired a Solar Panel, although it needs to be expanded, which is helping to deal with the energy crises in Ghana. <https://www.gofundme.com/wvaqp4>



*Children celebrating solar panel at Lotus Children Center, Accra*

## AM School Path of Joy, Path of Joy School, Kasoa, Ghana

At our AM School Path of Joy, Kasoa, Ghana we have been receiving children for library activities. They used to have their activities on the floor but now we got proper furniture. Next is to get funds to solve problems related with the water logged land so that small kids can come and Early Childhood education can start. We are grateful to Rudramohan (Tang) and Mohamukta from Taiwan and their circle of friends, who have helped we materialize this building.



*Planting moringa at the path of Joy School*

# Celebrating World Cultures Through Neohumanist Education

**By Magda Zambet, Director  
Gradinita Rasarit  
Kindergarden, Romania**

Living together with “others” gives us the opportunity to know ourselves better, to learn about the best in others and to help each other in a reciprocal way. The purpose of intercultural curriculum is to widen our perspectives by learning to see the world through other cultural frameworks and to value other cultures. The intercultural approach differs slightly from a multicultural approach in that while both approaches recognize diversity, in multiculturalism, the diversity of cultures in a society simply co-exist, while in interculturalism, efforts are made to cultivate deep understanding and respect for the variety of cultures in order to create inclusion. Intercultural education, is in fact, closest to our Neohumanist approach as both are based on respect and understanding. Neohumanism adds the element of grounding that respect and understanding in universal love.



Introducing knowledge and acceptance of cultural diversity in the educational environment prepares the children to develop a greater sensitivity and openness to the cultural dimension of their existence. It educates respect towards both oneself and towards others, creating conditions for the development of intercultural social skills, friendship and cooperation.

The goal of introducing intercultural education in our kindergarten is to help children to develop the life skills needed for living together in our increasingly diverse, pluralistic modern society. When children and their parents accept the diversity of cultures in our world with interest and curiosity, it leads towards a harmonious acceptance of living together with many cultures. Imbibing the spirit of interculturalism helps to deal with this heterogeneity in a healthy, positive way. Any socio-cultural group in our society can contribute to enriching the overall cultural life of the community through sharing its unique identity through dialogue and interaction. It is thus important to consciously create such opportunities to include all community members, especially those with different cultural backgrounds, in the life of the kindergarten.

Indeed, intercultural education is an integral part of our kindergarten’s approach, in order to promote equality, respect for diversity, acceptance, and unconditional love as well as to prevent and fight against all types of discrimination, marginalization and social exclusion.

The Neohumanist teacher is a key factor in the children’s internalization of these principles. The teacher, in this context, becomes a learning facilitator or a cultural mediator. The teacher's task is to create an appropriate educational context and real life situations that stimulate dialogue amongst the children and a diversity of community members as well as encourage the child’s autonomous, critical thinking about stereotypes. It is essential to create positive relationships in interactions between the children and a diversity of guests, as well as to facilitate constructive relationships within the group in order to give them the opportunity to experience their own identities.

The Neohumanist teacher must cultivate an intercultural perspective on the personal level as well. It is important for the teacher to cultivate personal experiences of diversity, either intentionally or in casual, spontaneous situations, which can then be drawn upon and applied when working with the children. This often means that teachers must cultivate the courage to go beyond their comfort zones, and to seek to understand people that they might not automatically enter into contact with.

In addition, it is of fundamental importance that the teacher is aware of their own culture and to cultivate the ability to perceive the mechanisms of their own biases as well to question the ways these may unconsciously influence their value system.

Knowing that kindergarten is a fertile ground for early social learning, the teachers in our kindergarten are aware of various social inclusion projects and programs in the wider society, often led by other NGOs. They actively seek opportunities to connect to such initiatives and create activities that facilitate positive, integrated attitudes.



In Rasarit Kindergarten, interculturalism is one of the key educational projects within Neohumanist Education, as the intercultural approach provides an important antidote to racism, exclusion and marginalization. To facilitate intercultural learning, every year teachers in our kindergarten choose a special country or ethnic group as the focus of an intercultural thematic project. The content and themes are carefully selected, to avoid reinforcing stereotypes and the superficiality of a "tourist" approach. Rather, intercultural learning in our kindergarten is based on providing opportunities to develop authentic relationships with real people from that cultural group who can tell us their stories and teach us about their history, attitudes and customs from their own perspective.

## Cultural Theme – India

In the month of February this year, in our kindergarten we chose the theme, "India, land of contrasts!" It was an especially favorite project for us. Through this thematic project, the teachers worked to shape intercultural education by promoting and developing:

- A better understanding of Indian culture within modern society
- Increased capacity to communicate with people from other cultures
- A flexible attitude towards the context of cultural diversity in society
- An improved capacity of participation in social interactions
- Recognition of the common heritage of humanity



The educational environment which we offer our children throughout the project provided important information about "who I am" and "how I am". (These are part of broad thematic questions that guide the Romanian kindergarten curriculum). Accordingly, we made every effort to create an environment rich in possibilities for exploring cultural diversity.

We decorated the classrooms with objects made from a variety of materials belonging to Indian culture, listened to Indian music, watched a performance of traditional Indian dance, listened to Indian folklore and stories, and played Indian children's games.

Each day of the week was full of interesting challenges for the children, as well as for the kindergarten team. The journey through the magic of India began on the first day of the week, when we welcomed a special guest, Alexandra, from the Indian Embassy. She helped introduce the children to India as a country, its people, clothing, land, symbols, culture etc., through videos, a slideshow and leaflets.

The next day was spent in the company of the family "Bhojwani". The husband is from India, while his wife is Romanian, and they have two small children that also attend a nearby kindergarten. They told the children about the beauty of India, showing them pictures from a trip they made with the whole family to Rajasthan, dressed in traditional clothing. They brought many special, Indian things to show to the children. The children had the opportunity to dress up in traditional Indian costumes, try on bangles, dance to Indian music and taste the spicy and exotic flavors of Indian food. They ate papadam, pakoras, chana-chur snacks and Indian sweets. The children were even involved in both making and tasting delicious, creamy mango lassis! They also decorated the classroom floor with brightly colored "rangoli" sand artwork.



In the last day of the week we learned about a beautiful Indian classical dance with the guidance of a lovely dancer of Indian classical dance, Iuliana. She performed several pieces and then explained the meaning of different "mudras" or symbolic gestures used in the dance. The children also had the chance to imitate the gestures together with her.



## Conclusion

Music, dance, stories, crafts and art are effective ways to introduce children to the secrets of another culture. Creating an environment full of opportunities to explore diversity encourages children in developing their ideas about themselves, and about others. It creates conditions in which children can initiate conversations about perceived differences, which offers adults the opportunity to offer positive, supportive and clarifying information about diversity.

Our teachers give special attention to educating children in self respect, respect towards others and acceptance of different opinions. Acceptance means understand and appreciate the way of life of those around us. Our children are taught to accept individual differences, no matter how unusual they are, because everyone has a unique personal value. The work of the teachers in our kindergarten isn't limited only to educating the children, but continues as well amongst the parents. Here in Romania society, exposure to interculturalism is a relatively recent, progressive phenomenon. Although different ethnicities have long been present in the society, they mostly co-existed together with mutual tolerance rather than developing understanding, unity and inclusion. We must explain to parents the value of this approach, by highlighting the fact that kindergarten is guided by principles of equality and inclusion and we strongly believe that embracing differences is valuable, enriching and compliments our growth as human beings.

Since our society is becoming more and more complex, as borders disappear and the explosion in the circulation of information, ideas and people becomes an unavoidable facet of modern life, we must teach children how to live within this multiplicity of cultures. We need a social education that teaches how to accept, appreciate and value differences, and Neohumanism gives us the responsibility, insights and tools to bring this into early childhood education.

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### Continued from Page 9

### Education for Character Building - by Narendra Raj Purohit

known as bad values. Values take birth in the womb of conscience. Shri P.R. Sarkar has defined conscience as, "Conscience is that kind of deliberation where there is conscious endeavour to decide in favour of benevolence (welfare of all), when confronted with the two opposite ideas of benevolence and malevolence." Shri Sarkar has also given the real meaning of education: *"The real meaning of education is trilateral development – simultaneous development in the physical, mental and spiritual realms of human existence. This development should enhance the integration of the human personality. By this, dormant human potentialities will be awakened and put to proper use. Educated are those who have learnt much, remembered much and made use of their learning in practical life.."*

The primary goal of education is to awaken the dormant potentialities of the human mind. In order to do that, it must integrate the three aspects of human personality— physical, mental and spiritual— and goad them towards perfection in all realms of existence. There has to be a balance between individual needs and the needs of the society.

Science fundamentally answers the question, "Is it true?" This search of truth prevails against dogma that creeps into existing knowledge in the form of various '-isms' that destroy the chance for mental expansion as well as the thirst of the student for knowledge.

*"No ism except universalism can be allowed in the educational system. The thirst for knowledge will have to be awakened among students, and reverence, devotion, orderliness and discipline will have to be taught as well. Along with this, a scientific outlook will have to be inculcated."* – Shri P. R.Sarkar

Education must liberate the infinite learning potential that is bound up in our minds by expanding our understanding of our own potential. Spirituality, creativity and love are at the centre of this new force. We must feel part of a universal family engaged in a universal enterprise. We should seek to affirm our kinship through service to the universe.

Students should be educated with love and care. When this love and care for all living beings is instilled in them, it will sweeten whatever they do in this world and will create universalism in them. This Universalism in education is called Neohumanism, hence the name Neohumanist Education. 'Neohumanism' means love and care for not only human beings, but all living beings. Neohumanism is the spirit of benevolence.



# How To Maximize Learning in an ECE Classroom – Part One

By MahaJyoti Glassman

The student focuses on the way the teacher engages the students' interest and ability to learn from activities. The teacher actively tries to engage students by asking effective questions, involving the students in activities, playing with the students, etc. Students may be seated, or standing at centers, or moving. The teacher is moving around, getting the students involved through conversations or in various activities. The teacher is not sitting passively and watching the kids, but is as actively engaged as the students. The teacher balances his or her involvement with student exploration to maximize students' involvement.

Open-ended (requiring more than a yes or no response) and effective questions are asked by the teacher:

- What are you doing?
- What are you building here?
- What is happening?
- What happens next?
- What will you need?
- What does it do?
- What made you think of that?



These thoughtful questions assist in expanding their participation, as well as having available other accessories and other materials.

- Can I get you some more trucks or animals for this building?
- I am a customer at your Ice Cream Shop. How much does the strawberry ice cream cost?
- Please tell me what is the name of this musical instrument and how did you make this?
- What lives in the water?
- Which bottle do you think will fill faster?



Asking questions enables students to stay concentrated and involved for a longer time. Asking questions can involve the students more than the teacher lecturing. Limited time is spent in lecturing. Student interest can be observed by their active participation, listening, and focused attention. If you are not seeing one of these factors falling into place for a child, more brainstorming and conversations about what this child's passions are may be needed.

The teacher may use a variety of modalities and a variety of materials to effectively get the students interest and to gain their participation. Make sure that your learning activities offer a range of sensory opportunities – auditory, touch, and movement for starters.

- Auditory activities include: reading a story, making sounds, acting out a story and singing.
- Touch activities include: Making and playing with play dough, water, dirt, sand, beans, leaves, and such.
- Movement activities include: Finger plays, hand movements, yoga, jumping, crawling, and dancing.

The teacher will use of variety of interesting and creative materials and provides a variety of hands on experiences. Student interest or participation is invited by clapping, singing, volunteering information, or raising hands to participate. If a student is being destructive or

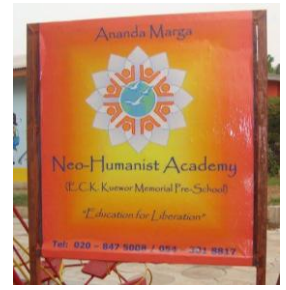
wandering, the activity may not be interesting to them. How can your planned activities have an appeal of interest to all? How can you have 3-4 activities happening at the same time? How can you develop a system to rotate the children from center to center?

**Continued on Page 28**



## New School

### Ananda Marga NeoHumanist Academy in Ho, Ghana By Dada Mahaprajinananda



After years of preparation and the generous support of many people, the Ananda Marga NeoHumanist Academy in Ho, Ghana opened last September. There were only 2 children for nursery during the first term. When I visited last month we had 16 admissions and now there are 22 children attending nursery and KG. Future growth is expected. Both our teachers will soon complete their diploma course in Early Childhood Development. Last week was perhaps the most significant milestone - Didi Ananda Gunamaya came and imparted two days of basic training in NHE, and she plans to come to share more. The future is surely bright. Yet there is still continuous need for financial support - for recurring costs as well as obligatory improvements in infrastructure. A special thank you to Papa Avinash and all the local management committee, Rudramohan (Teacher Tang) and Mohamukta in Taiwan, their circle of friends, and to each and all who have kindly assisted our work.



## STUVOL – Student Volunteers

### Ananda Marga High School Anandanagar, India

Acarya Vivekananda Av. has been the principal of the Ananda Marga High School at Ananda Nagar since its early days when it started in 1964. It has now 850 students from class 5 to 10. Higher Secondary classes 11 and 12, are shifted to the Degree College. There are three hostels housing 350 students from Kolkata, Tripura and Jarkhand, who attend the High School. Dadaji is also advisory to three High Schools in Tripura.

Dadaji has been part of the struggles the school went through, including the historical events of Dadhichis in 1967 and the complete destruction of the college in 1978. In our interview with Dadaji he said that there are so many dogmas in the surrounding society yet, year by year, many students and guardians leave disturbing sentiments behind as they embrace a Neohumanist Education. Nowadays, Muslim and Hindu students study peacefully side by side. 'Many guardians used to be my students', Dadaji said, 'they feel we are doing good for them'.

Dadaji compiled three guidebooks for STUVOL which is a daily 40 minute period. The basic idea of STUVOL is how to create love for all – a 'human-making mission'. The daily curriculum includes Prabhat Samgiita songs, Sanskrit, inspiring quotations recital (Ananda Vaniis), meditation, moral teachings, general knowledge, physical education including Tandava and Kaoshikii, yoga asanas, philosophy and conduct rules. Once a month the students engage in





# Neohumanism in China

By Rutger Tamminga

Neohumanist Education is the natural evolution in an education that expands from academics into the area of personal growth and transformation. Under the motto of “Education for Liberation” Neohumanist Education is in contrast with mainstream education. But the good news is that the NHE message is reaching more and more educators throughout China and Taiwan.

Now in Shanghai there is a Neohumanist Education Association, in Pindingshan (Henan Province) where we have long term cooperation with 4 local ECE institutions as well as the local university to train their interested students in NHE methods. In Beijing, the Beijing University has accepted our Kids Yoga Teacher Training as part of their course and diplomas are issued with their name. We also are soon to finalize a new textbook series for language centers, a program called “KidsWorld”. This material also opens doors for greater interaction on a very practical level with educators and different institutions of learning.

For us to move ahead there are basically two options: start our own schools or help others change their existing institutions. Actually both are happening. In Zhangzhou one of our firm sympathizers has bought a school, which is now slowly getting transformed along NHE lines. At the same time we are moving towards consultancy models whereby we introduce practical steps to implement the following seven aspects of NHE:

- Consciousness based Psychology
- Ideal Based curriculum
- Character training
- Biopsychology
- Quiet Time Exercises
- Social Outlook (local festivals, service activities)
- Community School (school connected to local area's needs)

Lao Tze said that “One idea is more powerful than a thousand facts.” In the past, most teachers wanted to learn new teaching methods, not a whole new vision. But that is changing now. The concept of Neohumanism is beginning to inspire teachers to change their approach to teaching children. We hope that in the coming years we can help more schools in China to change along these guidelines and become more Neohumanistic. This is a gradual change that needs much nurturing and endurance. But the beautiful



thing is we see it happening before our own eyes.

At the same time we are glad to say that all these efforts of working in China have helped raise substantial amounts of money which are used for the construction of NHE schools around the world, most recently in India and Africa. So far we have assisted 15 plus schools in developing countries with school construction.



# Five Years at Nile River School

From the very beginnings in 2011 the little 'Nile River School' on the banks of the life-giving Nile in Egypt has been steadily 'flowing' along its ideals of 'decentralizing good educational practices' from big cities to reach rural children. In a non-formal way children and the village get exposed to lots of friends, local and international volunteers, and benefit from the 'unwritten curriculum' of Nile River School.

Recently we have focused on STUVOL – student volunteers taking up trade training – we have a gardener who propagates plants, collects seeds, and packs them for sale, there is a painter who gets orders for her paintings, a carpenter who is happy to make tables, shelves and other wood work, a cement worker, another who is a cook and can prepare meals on order, another who makes flowers, a puppeteer, seamstress, and of course our group of young teachers who are running the kindergarten.

End of last year, the Manahyaha NGO that has been helping us for over one year started a community primary school in the village. We feel it is a continuation of our Nile River School in the all-round educational service to the village. In general the learning culture in the village of 150 families has been enhanced. The latest media attention of a dozen channels on our project has put this little village into the bigger map of Egypt. Over 50 students were invited to the CBC TV studio in Cairo.

The school has its own life flow and gets invigorated with volunteers who bring in their skills and talents. We are looking for long-term volunteers for a minimum of three months to be able to have a good impact. There is a new spacious room on top of the school building for volunteer accommodation. We can accommodate women and couples. Please contact [didianandarama@gmail.com](mailto:didianandarama@gmail.com)



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***How to Maximize Learning in an ECE Classroom – By MahaJyoti Glassman***

Teachers mention what the learning goal or objective is and guide students towards that goal.

- Let's think about which objects are red?
- We are getting off track.
- Let's make sure we are talking about red objects.

Students are drawn back to the learning goal. The teacher may ask:

- Why are you doing this?
- What are we doing?
- So we just talked about how farm animals and zoo animals are different.

And the children should be able to answer and describe what and why they are participating in the activity.

Sounds of the students interacting are the predominant voices heard in the classroom with plenty to keep them occupied.





# Yogis Academy

## Salorno, Italy

By Christian Franceschini

YOG.I.S. Academy (Yoga and Intuitional Science) was founded in 2015 by a small

group of Italian members of Ananda Marga with the aim of spreading knowledge about the Science of Yoga as taught by Shrii P. R. Sarkar, to as many students as possible. In the first course, 35 students enrolled.

The 35 students of YOGIS are from all over Italy and want to study every aspect of Shrii P. R. Sarkar's philosophy in detail to deepen their knowledge and spiritual practices and compare it also with other schools of Yoga and Tantra.

Students and teachers meet 4 times a year during a 3-day intensive program as time is divided into study sessions, kiirtan dance, meditation and asanas (yoga postures) classes and more intense programs like sadhana shivirs (extended meditation sessions) and sessions of 24-hour kiirtan dance, to experience the subtler levels of the mind and really live the intuitional science of yoga. Apart from these "physical meetings", students and teachers "meet" via skype for webinars on various subjects.

We have a team of local Italian teachers plus many guests coming from abroad like Dada Rainjitananda, Dada Krsnananda, Dada Devashuddananda, Didi Ananda Devapriya, Dada Vitashokananda and Dada Bhaskarananda.

The three year program is very rich and includes: History from Shiva to Shrii Shrii Anandamurti; the study and practice of asanas, mudras, kaosikii and tandava dances, etc.; the study of aspects related to meditation: different systems of meditation, Astaunga Yoga, the role of Guru, Biopsychology and 16 points, etc.; philosophy; microvita science; brahmacakra (cycle of creation); yoga psychology; the six spokes of society, and much more.

Students are also divided into groups in charge of researching certain subjects in detail. At the moment students are researching and writing about Shiva, Krsna, Prabhata Samgiita, cakras, vrttis, asanas, kiirtan and many other subjects.

The staff of Yogis is directed by Acarya Kamaleshvara, with the help Shanti, Susumna, Parabhaktideva and Sudhiira is now working on making YOGIS a project for every main city of Italy, in order to reach more and more interested students.



*In every sphere of life – social, economic, mental and spiritual – making human beings conscious of their rights leads to the expansion of knowledge, and the full application of these rights is called the cultivation of science. Neglected people who, for whatever reasons, have not pursued knowledge and science, should be given full opportunities. There should be no discrimination. It is true, however, that self-seeking vested interests have taken advantage of the ignorance of the people, and have taken over in every field: social, economic, psychological and spiritual. They don't want the ignorant to receive the light of wisdom, or the low-caste to climb the social ladder, or the hungry to have square meals, or the superstitious to banish their superstitions. They do not want all people to acquire spiritual and scientific knowledge, to have equal opportunities to attain the kingdom of God. In order to remove this false distinction between the "literate" and the "illiterate", human values have to be recognized. Knowledge and science will be as free as light and air – they will be like a free-flowing spring, keeping all alive, supplying vital energy constantly to the human society. Shrii P. R. Sarkar*

# Naturopathic Training

## Life Changing Experiences in Maharlika and India

By Divakar Basso

The target is to develop more and more love for God and His creation, i.e. for everyone; To develop the capacity to accept everyone as they are, and to go on giving of oneself selflessly and unconditionally. This totally positive attitude comes not by any psychological maneuvers, but by continually doing the yogic practices and the natural therapies while simultaneously trying to serve others. – Shrii P. R. Sarkar

In order to serve the universe and maximize our potential as individuals collectively, Shrii P. R. Sarkar mentions these three essential factors which are needed to bring out the required attitude of universal love; Adherence to regular yogic practices, sincere effort to serve society and the application of natural therapy. While the first two factors, namely yoga and service, will seem obvious to many readers, the third factor of natural therapy might sound out of place to some. Why is natural therapy needed then, aren't the first two enough? In order to be able to do yoga as a lifestyle and help others as a habit, there is one essential requirement: good health. By this is meant holistic health and not merely being fit physically — to develop such an all-round healthful being, natural therapy in the yogic sense is needed.



Say you are a devoted practitioner of yoga and additionally you also fulfill your duty in serving humanity to your capacity. Many people do this and yet they may encounter a lot of problems in life due to forgetting about the essential need for natural therapy. Fortunately there is a global network of yoga wellness programs established by Ananda Marga which focuses on teaching and applying natural therapy with centers in USA, Maharlika (Philippines), Taiwan and India. I was lucky to receive training and treatment in two of these centers, spending four weeks in the Ananda Marga Yoga Wellness Centre in Cebu, Maharlika and two weeks in the Ananda Nagar Naturopathic & Yogic Treatment Centre in India. I would like to share the experiences I've had over the course of these past weeks with all of you.

In Sanskrit my name means “sun” but in the weeks preceding my travel to Cebu I hadn't been feeling too warm or radiant. In fact I had been struggling with my mental and physical health for many years which was one of the main motivations for attending the training besides the desire to learn. Nevertheless I felt strong hope and believed in my capacity to overcome my struggle in the long run. “I can do this, I'm ready to change my life for the better!” I thought amidst many doubts and anxieties about the future. On my arrival I was fetched from the airport by two upbeat and chatty local staff members — a pleasant start to the program. Eventually one of them threw into our conversation, “I am sure you'll enjoy the coming weeks and learn many new things - but the most amazing thing about our centre is the delicious sentient food!” By the time we arrived at the center it was already almost time to sleep and I went to bed with a good feeling in my gut about the upcoming weeks.

Over the next few days I was introduced to the rest of the staff as well as other students participating in the training. The yogic principle of unity in diversity was well expressed in the great differences between the students' ages, origins and motivations to take part in the training. Among the 12 trainees, I was the youngest at 23 years of age, with others there of all age groups, including one American man who was in his seventies. All continents and sectors were represented, too, with trainees from Croatia, Sweden, Italy, China, Russia, Singapore, Australia, Texas, Malaysia and even South Africa. Our daily schedule was quite full with activities including a minimum of three times kiirtan and meditation each day, which served as a panacea for any mental ailments and stress. Daily yoga and asanas classes were offered by a changing roster of teachers providing an interesting and varied approach to the postures and stretches. Most of the attending trainees



had some experience in yoga, especially the acharyas completing the training, and so their skill was shared to the benefit of all trainees.

Twice each day we would also have personalized natural treatments drawn from a varied pool of options in accordance with our own condition and needs. They ranged from hydrotherapy using mainly water such as Hipbath, Steambath, Spinal Compress, Hot Footbath and Colema to treatments involving other elements such as Mudbath and Sunbath. Most of the treatments were at the same time very effective and also extremely easy to prepare and perform. This approach was inspired by one of the main principles of Ananda Marga Yoga Wellness, which is to



make sure that once people leave the center they are still able to easily maintain the healthy lifestyle and naturopathic treatments used in the centre. As Dada Dharmavedananda, our main teacher and guide at the training, reminded us regularly: “Unlike many other naturopathy centres, we do not aim at our visitors coming back often. Our main goal isn’t making a lot of money but rather creating better, healthier individuals who can easily maintain the lifestyle they learned here at home.” In this vein most days a cooking class was also given, teaching us how to prepare a selection of sentient vegetarian meals as well as probiotics and other health foods.

In fact the many people visiting the centre aren’t called patients even if they arrive with a chronic and serious illness, rather for the staff and trainers they are students who learn about the healing process while simultaneously experiencing it. So while I, like some of the other trainees, came to the centre mainly to improve my health, I also learned extensively about how to self-sufficiently better my life and health as well as the life and health of others by following a simple but proven system of yoga and naturopathy. Especially the daily classes delivered by Dada Dharmavedananda, based on his knowledge of medical facts, yogic naturopathy and vast personal experience, were very helpful in creating a solid foundation to support further learning by the students. While his classes focused more on theory and terminology, more practically oriented classes were also given by the chief medical in-charge, Chintamani who, with the help of the staff, showed us the ropes with the preparation and execution of all the different treatments used at the centre.

Initially I had my doubts about the emphasis on long fasting as a means for detoxing, but after some days I started to really enjoy it and thanks to the system of graduated fasting it was very easy to do; I even ended up liquid fasting on juices and broth for twice as long as suggested. The graduated approach means that step by step, the food items are changed and reduced to prepare for the detox in relation to each student’s necessity and personal preference. Thanks to the tasty variety of vegetarian dishes, salads, soups, juices and fresh fruit available every day the gradual fasting experience was delightful and didn’t pose problems for any of the trainees. One attendee from Durban, who was also a diabetes case, hadn’t had much previous experience with fasting and she was especially inspired by the way it was done at the centre. On one of the last days of the training she approached me and announced with excitement: “During fasting my blood sugar readings dropped from BET 11 to 6.8! My stamina is much better, I lost significant weight and I feel so healthy!” In a similar fashion all trainees experienced some degree of transformation during the training and came out the other end more knowledgeable, healthier and well-rounded students of naturopathy and yoga. We all became a lot better, stronger and more experienced physically, mentally as well as spiritually thanks to the holistic and wholesome outlook of the training.



The day I was leaving the training for India I felt like I was reborn, my mind body and soul were completely refreshed and I was ready for building upon the grounding knowledge and experience I had acquired in Cebu. “I can’t remember the last time I felt so all-round healthy, it must have been in a past life,” I jokingly thought to myself as I boarded the flight to Delhi in an elevated mood. After some time for traveling I eventually arrived in Ananda Nagar and was instantly engulfed by a spiritually charged atmosphere of peace and serenity. The Naturopathy centre is located in the middle of Ananda Nagar and surrounded by a picturesque landscape typical of West Bengal. I instantly felt at home here thanks to the caring staff and especially the always helpful and smiling medical in charge, Nirainjan. For me the schedule here was less filled with activities, which left me a lot of time to put what I had learned previously into practice and also focus intensely on my spiritual practices. Almost daily I would wake up before dawn, enjoy long sadhana sessions at one of the Tantra pittas (i.e. locations immensely conducive to tantric practices such as meditation), swim in the nearby river, have stimulating conversations with local acharyas and drink fresh milk from the local farm. Although the number of trainees here was less, the quality of the classes given by Dada Dharmavedananda didn’t decrease in the slightest and he always made sure that all students understood the contents properly. It felt great to revise and expand on the things I had already grasped fully while also learning many new things and remembering important teachings I had come to forget. For those trainees who were in Ananda Nagar before I arrived, I heard the classes they got from Nirainjan had also been excellent.

In conclusion the overall experience of attending the trainings at these two centers was extremely positive and I couldn’t have invested my time in any better way. I am extremely grateful to all the people working in these centers for their inspiring dedication and unfaltering motivation. Special thanks are due to Dada Dharmavedananda who throughout these weeks not only established all trainees’ education in the field but was also always available to help, give advice or crack a few jokes when appropriate. I have undergone tremendous personal growth in all spheres of my being thanks to the system of naturopathy and yoga that I immersed myself in over the past two months and I encourage anyone and everyone to experience it for themselves. Hear me when I say: “Feel the benefits of this naturopathic way of life, and make natural therapy a constant companion for better health, stronger service and broader love!”



# GLOBAL NEWS



## HONG KONG SECTOR

### Founding of Taiwan-India Cultural Educational and Economic Association

On May 10th, 2017, in the presence of Dr. Shambhushivananda and at his initiative, "Taiwan-India Cultural, Educational and Economic Association" was founded by many key entrepreneurs, academicians and leaders of Taiwanese society. Dr. Shambhushivananda and Dr. Peter Siao met with the Chancellor of National Chiao University, Frank Chang; Mayor Lai, of Tainan; the Mayor of Kanazawa Japan, Yuki Yoshi Yamano; the Chairman of Taiwan-Japan Cultural and Economic Association, C. Y. Cheng; the



Director General of Southern Taiwan Science Park Bureau, Dr. Ti-Lin Kuo; the Chairman of Taoyuan Aerotropolis, Chairman Huang; the Deputy Director General of Hsinchu Science Park, Andrea Hsu; the Founder of Accton, AJ Huang; Taiwan Industrial Technology Research Institute, Director General Dr.



R. D. Yang; and many other leaders, and motivated them to take Taiwan's Southbound policy forward through concrete initiatives and build up relations among these two



countries.

In India Dada met with the Chief Minister India Rajasthan State, and the Deputy Chief Minister India Punjab State among many others.



*Peter Siao, A J Huang, Peter Lin, Dada Shambhushivananda, Cheng Chi-Yao, Michael Chang, Owen Chi, Shi Cho Huang. Dr. Tai-lin Kuo of Tainan and Mayor of Tainan also sent their support towards this initiative.*



## Taiwan News

We have had regular training for Kids Yoga teachers throughout the island and there are now many of our teachers in schools and community centers. We also now have three Centers for Applied Neohumanism (CAN), in Southern, Central and Northern Taiwan. The latter place is about 50 acres, and will be operational by September this year. It will be similar to the Prama Center in Asheville, but for Neohumanism activities. We will have regular classes and programs in all three locations. Photos are from the Intermediate Kids Yoga Teacher Training.



## MANILA SECTOR

### Vietnam - Fasting Camp

### The Star of our show of Naturopathy

### By Tran Thuy Ngoc

A sound mind needs a sound body; therefore, we often start the year with a program of detoxification, where fasting camp is the star, to illustrate the healing power of naturopathy. The first fasting camp this year fell on March 11 -12, the full moon days when the water in our body is at its highest level, an ideal time for fasting without much fatigue. Leaflets had been distributed to various yoga centers in Ho Chi Minh City a week before to inform people of the schedule in time to allow them to prepare to attend the camp. This time it was organized at Didi's house, a small space, so the total number of participants was limited to 10.

The six steps of natural treatment were made clear to the students from the beginning: water, food, fasting, exercise, stimulation treatment and meditation, all of which were illustrated with classes on meditation, natural facial mask, jala neti (nose cleaning), fasting and food intertwined with asanas (yoga postures), massages and psychology games. People who had overcome sickness with a yogic healthy life style also came to class to present their experience: one with the thyroid gland removed, another with inflamed knees... looking at them, no one could imagine they had been seriously ill.

Seeing is believing. In the sharing at the end of the fasting camp, everyone said that fasting was not as terrible as they had imagined for they could undergo it without difficulty and felt like new healthy people after breaking fast. They recommended organizing fasting camps more regularly to make it popular. We did not promise but said we would make it a point in our annual load of work.



*Massage Class*



*Natural Facial Mask Class*

## NEW YORK SECTOR

### Toronto, Canada

Dr. Shambhushivananda spoke on the "Importance of Meditation in Daily Life" on January 13, 2017



### New York, USA

Dada Shambhushivananda participated in the community vigil to protest the killing of a tourist by criminals in Queens, NY on January 7, 2017. Dada sang kiirtan to transmute hate and negativity into positivity, hope and love



## New Lebanon, NY, USA

Neohumanist Education Resource Institute of New Lebanon, NY begins partnership with a temple in Richmond Hill, Queens, NY. Mrs. Ellen Landau visited the center at New Lebanon and reviewed plans with Mr. Rishi Prasad for its activation and discussed ways to serve the community with neohumanist values.



Acharya Shambhushivananda shares spiritual inspiration with seniors and teaches Baba Nam Kevalam mantra to the elderly in Richmond Hills Seniors Club. He also spoke to them about the power of mantra to transmute unit-consciousness into Universal Consciousness. Yoga for Elderly is now taught regularly at the Hindu Temple in Richmond Hill, Queens.



## BERLIN SECTOR

### Romania

Children in Permaculture is a 3-year European project that seeks to bring the ethics of "Earth Care, People Care and Fair Share" into the education of young children, in order to create a future where humans live in harmony with each other and with nature.

The project is funded through Erasmus+ Key Action 2: School Education, and has established a partnership across 5 countries:

UK, Romania, Czech Republic, Slovenia,

and Italy. The Association for Neohumanist Education, (AEN) is one of the Romanian partners, together also with Romania in Transition, an expression of the Transition Towns movement.



CHILDREN IN  
PERMACULTURE

CiP is an innovative, international cooperation bringing together key educators (from different schools, kindergartens, and non-formal educational centers) in order to cross-fertilize, share and synthesize ideas, as well as strengthen the capacities of all involved.

As part of the project, in May 2017, a group of 19 children from Scotland will fly to Romania to spend a week together with the children from AMURTEL's "Fountain of Hope" after school center in Panatau.



The visiting children will have the opportunity to experience the authentic traditions of Romanian rural life. They will taste local honeys, visit a shepherd making cheese in the mountains, travel by horse-cart, learn folk dances and experience village lifestyle. They will also see examples of permaculture at the Fountain of Hope and Rasarit kindergarten as well as the Ferdinand primary school in Bucharest. The exchange aims to help both the Romanian and Scottish children to value rural lifestyle, sustainable living and permaculture principles.

For more information and to see the resources being developed in the project come to the project website: [www.childreninpermaculture.co](http://www.childreninpermaculture.co)



## GEORGETOWN SECTOR

### Brazil

#### NHE Training by Tatjana Popov

NHE workshops were given in Campinas, Ubatuba, Pontal do Sul and Belo Horizonte, and a four-day intensive teacher training was held in Porto Alegre, by Tatjana Popov, director of Sunshine, a progressive school of early childhood education in Switzerland. The intensive was held at the Ananda Daksina MU from March 2-5<sup>th</sup>.

Organic pedagogy is seeing education as an organic process and not as a mechanical product. Education is subject to the cycles of life, the play of the fundamental factors of creation (air, water, ether, fire and earth) and eternal laws of Cosmic Intelligence. In this course the students explored three dimensions of internal and external interaction between an individual and the collective. Exactly there lies the field of education, linking personal potential development to the needs of society!

A small video documentation about one of the workshops can be found here: <https://youtu.be/46w9wqoSliA>



## DELHI SECTOR

### Anandanagar

#### Umanivas Rarh School Underway

### Help to make a model Rarh School



Can you imagine spacious classrooms with plenty of light and ventilation which have an abundance of all kinds of educational material on shelves for the children to use, which have tables and chairs and enough space to assemble, sitting on the floor? Can you imagine a child-friendly learning environment which stimulates the child's curiosity and wonder? Can you imagine a class teacher who facilitates the classroom flow, whose main role is observing and helping children individually when needed, or drawing the whole class into a fascinating lesson?

This is what the new Rarh School will be about in the rural setting of the ancient land of Rarh – ‘the cradle of civilization’ as Shrii P R Sarkar names it. He further said, that once in the hoary past these people were perched on the summit of civilization ... nowadays they are neglected, yet with glowing eyes of hope to be again uplifted and feeling the Supreme Benevolence giving them their rightful place in the garland of today's humanity.

In the architecture and school environment we would like to incorporate the art and style of the local people's dwellings in their mud houses... let this school be ‘their school’ – an extension of the best in their cultural life.

The proposed Rarh School will serve 300 children from Nursery to Standard 4. After Standard 4 the students are absorbed by the nearby successful Umanivas High School. The present Rarh Hostel where the Rarh School is now crammed in will continue to serve as a hostel for children from remote areas where there is no transportation to schools.

### Fundraising

We are fundraising for the construction of this new Rarh School which will be located in the spacious adjacent Kanchan Compound. We hope for your generous contribution of this noble endeavor of a model school at our global headquarters.

Thank you. Please contact [didianandarama@gmail.com](mailto:didianandarama@gmail.com).



### Vishalgarh, Tripura, India Tripura School Building

On 31st January, a beautiful four story newly constructed school building was inaugurated. The total area of this building is 15000 square feet. The building was constructed with the help of local members of Ananda Marga and public support. The inauguration programme included Kiirtan and collective meditation. The public response was overwhelming. About 1500 people attended the programme. The total number of



students is 700 including 150 newly admitted students. During the inauguration a beautiful cultural programme was also organised.

## Delhi, India

Dr. Shambhushivananda was one of the key note speakers at the International Conference on Spatial Decision Support Systems for UN Sustainable Development Goals organized by The Department of Geography, Kalindi College, New Delhi, India in collaboration with DST Govt. of India. The two-day event was held on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2017. Following the event Prof. Santosh Kumar of NIDM (National Institute of Disaster Management) also invited Dr Shambhushivananda to speak at his institute on the subject of “Resilience”.



Dr. Shambhushivansnda was the guest of Kalindi College (Delhi University) where he gave a key note inspirational speech on “Moving towards Millenium Development Goals” at the international conference.



The Department of Commerce of Ramjas College, Delhi University invited Dr. Shambhushivananda to speak on “Neohumanist Economics” on March 23, 2017. See speech included in this issue.



Dr. Shambhushivananda also addressed another interdisciplinary group at Delhi University on March 28, 2017. Here, he is seen with the dean of social sciences, faculty and selected students after the talk on “Self-Realization”.





## Pune, India

Yoga Meditation & Human Values courses have been approved by the Board of Studies in Biotechnology for Undergraduate and Postgraduate programs in Rajiv Gandhi Institute of IT & Biotechnology, Bharati Vidyapeeth University, Pune. The course was designed with input from AMGK (Ananda Marga Gurukula) and inaugurated by Dada Shambhushivananda, Chancellor, AMGK. Yoga Acharya Dr G D Sharma, current director of RGI of Bio Technology, Bharati Vidyapeeth in Pune has been conducting the course himself so far and has trained others to lead the course.



## Chandigarh, India

A class on Enlightened Leadership was conducted by Acharya Shambhushivananda Avadhuta at the Naya Gaon Meditation Center, behind PGI Chandigarh on February 5, 2017

On Feb 15th, Dr Shambhushivananda also held a memorial lecture on the subject of “Human Values” for over 250 faculty and students of NITTTR in Chandigarh.

Talk On “Coping with Stress through Meditation” was given by Dr. Shambhushivananda at the ICICI bank’s zonal headquarters in Chandigarh on March 22, 2017.



Dr. Shambhushivananda was the invited special guest at the Annual Samskrta Day Celebrations at the PL Auditorium of Punjab University on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017. He was honoured by Prof. Shankar Jha, the Head of the Dept of Sanskrit and spoke on the occasion on “Role of Samskrta in the Modern World”.



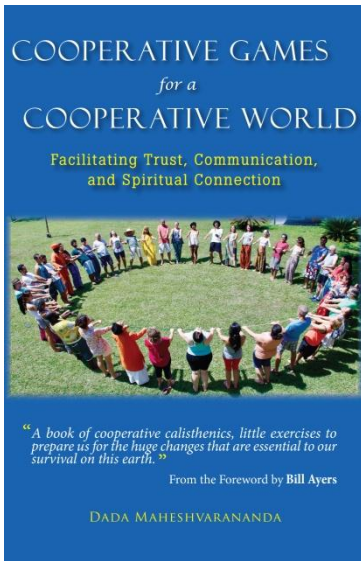
## Sri Lanka

Dada Shambhushivananda visited Sri Lanka at the invitation of Mr. Isuru Codippily and taught meditation to several interested persons. Iishvara Deva has begun spiritual lifestyle training in Neohumanist philosophy.



# New Book!

## Cooperative Games for a Cooperative World Facilitating Trust, Communication, and Spiritual Connection By Dada Maheshvarananda



This book includes 102 amazing activities plus 41 variations for adults and adolescents. These innovative games bring fun and laughter to any event and create powerful, safe learning experiences. Teachers, trainers, community

organizers, youth leaders, yoga instructors, and conference organizers will find the skills and resources needed to help participants interact and share, gain self-confidence, improve collaboration, and develop a genuine compassion for others.

### Book Review by Ed Glassman

I have been teaching cooperative game activities for the last 25 years while being a public school teacher for over 30 years. It was my pleasure to review “Cooperative Games for a Cooperative World.” Dada has captured the best of the best games for children as well as adults. They combine leadership skills, sharing, communication skills, and problem solving skills all in a single book. I have used these games with all ages and only have had success. They bring out the best human qualities while instilling genuine excitement. I highly recommend this book for educators who want to teach a variety of social/emotion skills for new leaders to succeed in this complicated world.

### PURCHASE

You can buy this book with free shipping anywhere in the world from [www.cooperativegamesworld.com](http://www.cooperativegamesworld.com) or you can buy it from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). **PRICE: \$19.95/€18.95/£15.95**

### Sample Game:

## Balloon Trolleys

**Instructions:** Hand out a balloon to everyone and ask them to blow up their balloons to 80 percent capacity; then tie a knot in the end of it.

“Stand in a tight circle, shoulder-to-shoulder. Turn 90 degrees to your right. Place one hand on the shoulder of the person in front of you, and place the balloon between your stomach and the back of the person in front of you. Now put your other hand on the other shoulder of the person in front of you. “The challenge is for the entire group to move in this formation to the finish line I have designated [about 10-20 meters or 30-70 feet away]. You cannot touch the balloons with your hands. If a balloon falls, the group has to stop and figure out a way to pick up the balloon and re-insert it where it was without losing any other balloons. Remember, please, that you are standing in a circle, which means that instead of going around in circles in the same place, the entire circle has to move across the area to the finish line. So some of you will be walking sideways and some will be walking backwards to maintain your formation and to reach your goal. Any questions? Begin.”

**Facilitation Tips:** If you have many people, divide into groups of 10 or 15 each. You will need to assign a volunteer judge for each group to watch if any balloon falls.

This is an initiative test of the group’s ability to cooperate and move together; in the yoga tradition, it is called Samgacchadvam. Moving in a circle without losing the balloons is more difficult than it sounds.

Another variation is to form a single file line instead of a circle, so everyone is walking forwards. To make that more challenging, add the rule that you cannot touch the person in front of you, either.



*Balloon Trolleys in lines, at the AMURT/AMURTEL Skywalker Project (Caminante do Céu) in the Perialto Favela of Sao Paulo, Brazil*





# Announcements



P.R. SARKAR INSTITUTE

invites your participation for

Centennial Celebrations

of

Sh. Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

**2021-22**

*We have begun working towards the celebration of this special occasion in the form of a retrospective exhibition that will tour the world.*

*We invite your contribution of documents, images, audios, videos, historical artefacts, media articles, art and literature, etc.*

*Please contact us to arrange for your material to be submitted for consideration.*

A GLOBAL INITIATIVE



prsarkar.centenary@gurukul.edu



http://www.prsinstitute.org

## The Heart & Soul of Education

**International AMGK Conference**

**July 5-8, 2017**

hosted by the Ananda Marga River School,  
Sunshine Coast, Australia

**For More Details and to Register:**

**[www.heartofeducation.org.au](http://www.heartofeducation.org.au)**

This conference will be appropriate for those experienced in NHE, teachers at NHE projects and educators interested in learning more. We expect attendees from local and international NHE and non-NHE schools as well as those working in both primary and early childhood settings. We are working to design a program that offers choices and sharing options for these varying backgrounds.. Our themes will include Growing as a Neohumanist Teacher, Key Issues in NHE and Sharing the Australian Experience in NHE with a rich variety of theoretical and practical opportunities.



ananda marga

**RIVER SCHOOL**

education for the whole child



**GANE**

Global Association of  
Neohumanist Educators

## GLOBAL ASSOCIATION OF NEOHUMANIST EDUCATORS

GANE - The Global Association of Neohumanist Educators is a membership association for the professional development of neohumanist educators worldwide. Established by AMGK, GANE brings together all neohumanist educators, institutions (including schools, yoga academies, PROUT institutes, master units, wellness centers, neohumanist centers, etc.) and staff members of AMGK around the world on a common platform, strengthening our global network.

If you are not already a member, you are invited to join. There are many levels of membership offered in GANE on a sliding scale starting from free. Through membership dues we all support our global network which in turn benefits each member with support services, including the GANE website itself with our network directories.

**Go to [<gane-educators.org>](http://gane-educators.org)**

# Neohumanist Education



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