

GURUKULA NETWORK



Newsletter of Neohumanist Schools and Institutes affiliated with Ananda Marga Gurukula

Issue 45- January 2018



**NEOHUMANIST
EDUCATORS**
in action!

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
Global Liaison Office of the
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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All NHE educators and projects
are encouraged to join

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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.

Chancellor

Ac. Shambhushivananda Avt., Kulapati <kulapati@gurukul.edu>

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

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NEOHUMANIST NETWORK

Rise of a Global Movement

By Dada Shambhushivananda

Shrii P R Sarkar initiated the idea of “Neohumanism” in 1981-1982 as the basis of a global movement for the “liberation of human intellect”. It was further legitimized with the founding of “Ananda Marga Gurukula” in 1990 as an educational forum’s raison d’être, its core purpose. Today, the neohumanist network spans over 80 countries and continues to expand day by day. Governments, NGO’s, grass roots volunteers and academicians alike are appreciating its appeal.

We are living in a world of contradictions, fears, insecurities, uncertainties and divisions which tear and split the fragile flower of cordial love among humans and between humans and other beings. Selfishness threatens to destroy the great achievements made by humans over the past two millennia. The journey of the neohumanist movement is to rise from obsession with ‘only me’ to concern for all of ‘us’.

Neohumanism provides the ideological worldview that embraces all people, all species and even the so-called inanimate mute entities. In the philosophy and practice of neohumanism, there is a room for everyone - for people of all colors, all shades of opinion, all clans and temperaments; all bound together by the invisible bond of one universal family. The good of one is the good of all; and the good of all is the good of each one. Our existence is intractably intertwined. We are all inter-connected by the sacred thread of one universal consciousness - one universal cosmic spirit throbbing eternally to the tune of the Cosmic Will. In the world of neohumanism, there is nothing insignificant. The existence of every created being is an inalienable birthright. Nothing should be considered useless or unworthy or a candidate for exclusion. All are begotten from the One Universal Consciousness and all will finally find their consummation one day in the same Universal Consciousness filled with brimming blissfulness and total awareness. The task for all global citizens and leaders is to enable each and every entity to arrive at its desideratum with ease, comfort and all embracing love. Let none get the scope to feel that their life is useless or they are forced by circumstances to feel that they are unable to move forward towards their innate dharma of unison with the Supreme Consciousness.

There is no room for violence or hatred in such a philosophical understanding. Yet, there is scope for preparedness for all eventualities of possible destruction or degrading tendencies of the human mind. We constantly live amidst elevating propensities and degenerating tendencies. The task of neohumanists is to transmute negativity into positivity, crudeness into subtleness, and selfishness into selflessness, everywhere. The centrifugal forces must never be allowed to supersede the centripetal elements in any situation. The brokers of vested interests must not be allowed to whisk away the unity of the human race or trade the human conscience for petty short-term personal or communal gains.

In order to build a universal society based on neohumanism, the role of youth is paramount. They are the ultimate victims of the fissiparous sentiments rampant in the society. Hence, the time has come to help create an environment where the youthful minds can begin to assert their higher nature and become the leaders of progressive changes. The global neohumanist network is glad to assist in building the solidarity of youth for change. Youth are idealist by nature. The experience of the seniors along with the youthful spirit of the young is a perfect combination to forge massive fundamental changes in the world. In this task, the teachers have also to come forward and pour out their neohumanist spirit to help channel the youthful enthusiasm. The Global Association of Neohumanist Educators (GANE) is proud to offer its services for nurturing this facilitation process. We also invite leading neohumanist educators to further accelerate their initiatives on the local levels and network liberally to fuel global changes towards a neohumanist society.

The Role of Youth – by Shrii P. R. Sarkar

The nature of life is to change and to grow. Where there is no change, it is just like the condition of death. In all living structures, the young are resilient and open to change. If a limb of a child is broken, it heals quickly. If a child is mentally wounded, he or she soon recovers. When new ideas and technology come forward, it is the young minds that can grasp them. The old become fossilized. To move the old is an effort; for the old to adapt to change is difficult.

Our world needs a great change in order to move forward and progress. A new order, a new wave, will have to take the place of the old to remedy all the physical, social, intellectual and spiritual ills of the world. As the vanguard of this new movement, the youth are indispensable. It is the youth, and the youth only, who have the vigor to bring about the necessary change. It is the youth who have the resilience to change and adapt and implement the vision of a new society. Without this vision, without the youth, the world will continue in the morass of suffering, injustice and exploitation that is our present social condition. It is the youth of the world only who can help bring about the new world order and the vision of a new humanity.

Shrii P.R. Sarkar Centenary Celebration

100th Anniversary of Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar



P.R. SARKAR INSTITUTE

cultural renaissance, socio-economics, education, language, literature, music, science, medicine, psychology and ecology.

To commemorate the centenary of his legacy, we are spearheading a series of events and initiatives aimed at inspiring new generations to find meaning and inspiration in the life, mission and teachings of Shrii P.R. Sarkar:

1. Documentary film
2. Interactive exhibition
3. Theme-based conferences, seminars and workshops
4. Academic papers on specialized areas of research
5. Global speaker circuit
6. Centenary-themed publications
7. Gurukula Network special centenary issue
8. Media publicity press kit
9. Inauguration of PR Sarkar Memorial Museum in several locations
10. Prabhat Samgiita special celebration

We invite your participation in sharing creative ideas and/or being part of the global working team to help organize and coordinate the celebrations around the world. We also invite your contribution of documents, images, audios, videos, historical artifacts, media articles, art and literature. Please contact Dada Gunamuktananda to arrange for your material to be submitted for consideration, at this address: prsarkar.centenary@gurukul.edu or info@prsinstitute.org. Also see www.prsinstitute.org, www.facebook.com/PRSarkarInstitute

Sponsored by Ananda Marga Gurukula, the P.R. Sarkar Institute is working towards a year-long
(May 2021 – May 2022)

celebration to honour the 100th anniversary of the birth of Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar.

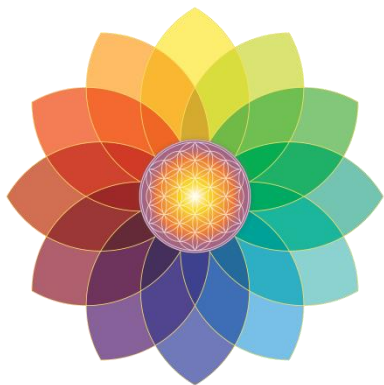
Shrii P.R. Sarkar, also known as Shrii Shrii Anandamurti (affectionately Baba to his followers) was a spiritual master, philosopher, seer and social-activist whose sublime teachings cover a wide spectrum of thought including spiritual practice, spiritual and social philosophy,



Artist's impression of the PR Sarkar Memorial Museum in Taichung, Taiwan.
Construction beginning December 2017.
See Global News for details.



PRSI and Archives staff recently visited the JFK presidential library and museum, currently celebrating the centennial of John F. Kennedy, where they discussed ideas for the PR Sarkar centenary with staff



Inauguration of the Neohumanist Center New Lebanon, NY, USA



Along State Route 20, as you travel west towards Albany, before you leave New Lebanon, you will pass a small homestead with a sign designated by the New York State Department of Education in 1932 as "Homestead of Ezra Gates, Revolutionary War Soldier (1775-1780)." The homestead sits on six acres of land, its northern boundary the Wyandanch Creek, which runs into the Reneslear River to the west of town. The property contains four buildings: the original homestead, two cabins and a little red barn. Inside the homestead, built in the 18th century, the original ceiling beams and wooden planks on the floors and walls are visible.

In 2015, Ananda Marga Gurukula took over the property for the charitable purpose of establishing a Neohumanist Center in order to share the expansive philosophy and practices of Neohumanism with one and all. The center will provide free meditation and yoga instruction for locals and community groups, and will house the PR Sarkar Institute and the PR Sarkar Memorial Museum and Resource Center.



While renovation of the main building may take some time, the center was inaugurated on Sunday August 27th, with welcoming speeches from Dada Shambhushivananda (Kulapati of Ananda Marga Gurukula) and Ac. Vishvamitra (President of AM Gurukula Inc.), a tree planting ceremony of four apple trees, an open house and collective kiirtan, meditation and lunch. The delicious lunch was lovingly prepared and provided by Timir and Shefali Prabhakar from Boston. NERI Board members were present including Rishi Prasad who contributed much labor in the weeks ahead getting things ready. Other AMGK board members present were Arete Brim and Ellen Landau. Guests came from as far away as Asheville and Greensboro NC, Ithaca NY,

Warren and Burlington VT, Boston and Northampton MA, New Haven CT, Cairo NY and other townships in the local area, New York City, and even Toronto, Canada. The event augured well for the advancement of Neohumanism (the culture of love for all beings) in the local area, and the activities this Neohumanist Center will play in complementing other related centers and activities in the area.

For further information or to contribute towards the development of this project, please contact:

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Unleashing Diversity

An Inside-Out Approach to Neohumanism

By Matt Oppenheim, PhD

What a wonder and how amazing it is to embrace true diversity; from ethnic background to gender; age; language; ability/disability to country of origin. Doing so unleashes tremendous creativity; innovation and alternative ways of changing the world based on the diverse lived experiences of people. This requires inclusion at all levels of organizations and communities. However, we are surrounded by educational, judicial, religious and governmental institutions having a history of the opposite; exclusion and oppression. These are often based on the limiting sentiments, dogma and psychological oppression as expressed in Shrii P.R. Sarkar's *Neohumanism: the Liberation of Intellect*. We cannot help but be affected by these institutions ourselves, unless we understand how these systems work. Our social liberation is intimately bound with that of the oppressed. This work requires deep reflection and analysis of our own lived experience and is aided by the work of Professional Diversity Facilitators.

Neohumanists and Proutists are a very diverse group of people in every way, shape and form; but we have a long way to become truly inclusive of those diversities both within and outside our organizations. This was the mission that created a program on diversity at a Conference on Neohumanism/Prout and Spirituality during the summer of 2017. The title of the program was **“Unleashing Diversity: an Inside-out Approach to Neohumanism”**.

In the afternoons, we formed a Diversity Working Team to further explore diversity issues in our lives and in our organizations. There was a pervasive passion to create a more inclusive and diverse Neohumanist and Prout organization. Since that Conference our group has met to develop recommendations; policies and strategies to move towards that goal.

I have to thank Anita Harshman and Richard Maxwell who assisted me at every step in the process. The initial workshop and afternoon trainings reflected some of the basic building blocks of this training. However, I recommend those interested in experiencing their own training to find a professional organization that facilitates diversity processes. Often, they are under the banner of “Anti-Racism” or “Anti-Oppression” Training.

The Morning Program - “The Privilege Walk”

The first step in diversity training is to begin to see life from the eyes of others. We engaged in an exercise called “The Privilege Walk.” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hD5f8GuNuGQ>). The idea was to find out who among us experienced greater privilege or opportunity in our lives and who experienced less opportunity and privilege. We formed a large circle of all participants, then asked them to take a step forward or backward, based on their answers to several questions. One question was whether they experienced more opportunities or fewer opportunities based on their gender. Many women stepped backward, indicating that they had experienced fewer opportunities; while many men stepped forward. An ensuing question was whether they experienced greater or fewer job opportunities because of the color of their skin; age; identity or language background. Another question was whether they felt their ethnicity was represented in school textbooks. After the exercise, we all looked around the room; noticing the wide spread amongst us; indicating a wide range of privilege or opportunity or lack of privilege or opportunity. It was obvious that we needed to learn much more about the lived experience of our participants in order to begin the process of real change.

Next, we reviewed a proposal for a definition of diversity from a group promoting anti-racism training.

- *On every step of our journey, each of us carries the unique perspective of our age, racial identity, gender, gender identity, [Immigration experience], national origin, ethnic heritage, class background, sexual orientation, language, spiritual belief, and life with or without a physical, mental or emotional disability*
- *We can choose to see these differences as divisions, or to view our cultural diversity as gifts to be cherished and nurtured. Our community is not a dull fabric of a single colored thread, but a tapestry of vibrant colors and rich textures, woven into a vital, ever-changing design*
- *For our world to survive in this time of intense and quickening change, we need the vision and insight of each person, and the strength and wisdom of each culture*

Jona Olsson

A second goal of diversity training is to understand how racism become habituated and then institutionalized. We viewed a film of a large audience of people (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NHeFgaVWs8>), where they were segregated based on either blue or brown eye color. The blue colored people were treated by the facilitators as being ignorant; uneducated and “factually” proven to be inferior. A tension arose in the room as brown-eyed participants

reinforced this stigma; giving their own examples and started to stereotype those with blue eyes. The blue-eyed students were angry; defiant and resented the brown-eyed participants.

Participants discussed how superficial differences easily become institutionalized and embedded in our psychology. We reviewed how this occurred in our own history and understood that in fighting oppression, institutionalized racism was a huge barrier. We discussed whether there was any basis for biological differences between people. The obvious physical changes have no association with mental or physical ability – they are a relatively recent (30,000 years ago) phenomenon based on the impact of varying climates. They have been an excuse for slavery; genocide and all forms of exclusion and oppression.

For those of us who have not lived under the shadow of oppression and mistreatment all their lives, it's harder to empathize with the deep suffering of those who have. Secondly, those people who have experienced this suffering have had to stand up and fight for justice, so have a great deal to teach others. This next slide expressed concisely the awareness and activist stance needed for this to come about:

If you have come to help me you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.

-Aboriginal Activists Group; Queensland, Australia

I then presented ways that our own liberation is bound up with others. The first way is to recognize that other oppressed groups have had to face their own oppression; with many ethnic groups facing annihilation unless they stood up. They were able to name and understand these systems of oppression and then rise up for their own liberation. Often, when we experience a privileged life; we cannot see these systems of oppression that surround us so clearly. We have to look to these oppressed people to lead our own process of liberation.

A second way to bond with the oppressed; is that many groups; after processing their oppression realize that the only lasting solution is to build their own autonomy and self-reliance. An example was given of a Mayan network of communities that has revived their spirituality, culture and language. They have developed a network of agricultural and women's cooperatives, as well as arts and medical cooperatives and are involved in reforestation. They understand a Neohumanist and Proutist future.

Nearing the end of our program basic concepts in diversity training were listed so that participants could continue the process combining introspection and activism towards true diversity:

- **White or other Privilege:** Realizing that European heritage people have automatic advantages over others.
- **Cultural Blindness:** Realizing that we may not see the true differences in people or the oppression and discrimination that occurs all around us.
- **Gender bias:** Realizing that we and/or society has treated others differently because of their gender or gender identity.
- **Institutionalized Racism:** I presented the fact that the prison system had institutionalized racism particularly for black males. As an example, blacks initially found guilty of an initial felony were much more likely to end up in a system that denied their basic rights for the rest of their lives
- **Educational Conditioning:** Realizing the US Education System has treated history as the story of the dominant culture; leaving out the history of indigenous peoples; black and Hispanic peoples and other identities.

The above presentations; dialogues and experiential exercises enhanced our ability to dialogue about the following diversity issues in our own organizations.

- How are we already diverse. . . what are our strengths?
- How can we become highly inclusive of all diversities?
- How can our organization infuse diversity at all levels?
- How can we assure all diversities that they are safe; honored and encouraged to soar?
- How can we develop affinities with all diversities?

Presentations from small group dialogues of the above questions emphasized an extreme gender inequality experienced over many decades. Other groups expressed the need to have true diversity in the leadership of our organizations, and to work in unity with diverse organizations in our communities.

Diversity Working Team

In order to achieve a greater depth of understanding of diversity and to develop action steps to take, there were two further workshops.

The Diversity Appreciation Exercise

A subsequent essential element of most diversity training is for all participants to share their life stories. It is designed for individuals and organizations to start with an **“inside-out approach”** to moving from harmful perceptions and actions to liberating actions.

An example was given of how through the lived experience of the one person, they moved from cultural isolation and privilege, to beginning to understand the exclusion and bias that the dominant society places on diverse peoples and a lifelong mission of transforming bias and uplifting diversity. Participants shared their own stories with one another, realizing that their own personal path was both a rigorous challenge to their own life experience and an inspiration for a rigorous life in becoming truly neohumanist.

Color-Blindness through “The New Jim Crow”

This presentation was given by Richard Maxwell, based on the book: “The New Jim Crow” by Michelle Anderson. With detailed research, personal stories and documentation, the author proves that the current situation for blacks, especially black males is very much the same as the “Jim Crow” South (mentioned earlier in this essay) in which black people were treated with violence; lacked educational opportunity, and were oppressed and excluded by every institution surrounding them.

Her thesis is that the Jim Crow that exists today is a product of the criminal justice system. Color-blindness in this situation means that people are blind to the ways that blacks are mistreated. Once convicted of a felony and they leave prison, they are excluded from social supports and services (low income housing, food stamps, employment opportunities and the right to vote). While one in three blacks face imprisonment in their lifetime, for white men the rate is one in seventeen. Police target poor neighborhoods and people of color for drug offenses that are largely ignored in other areas. The judicial system has been shown to be biased against defendants of color in plea bargaining, jury selection and sentencing. The prison system and corporations that contract with it, benefit financially from cheap labor.

The Working Team on Diversity

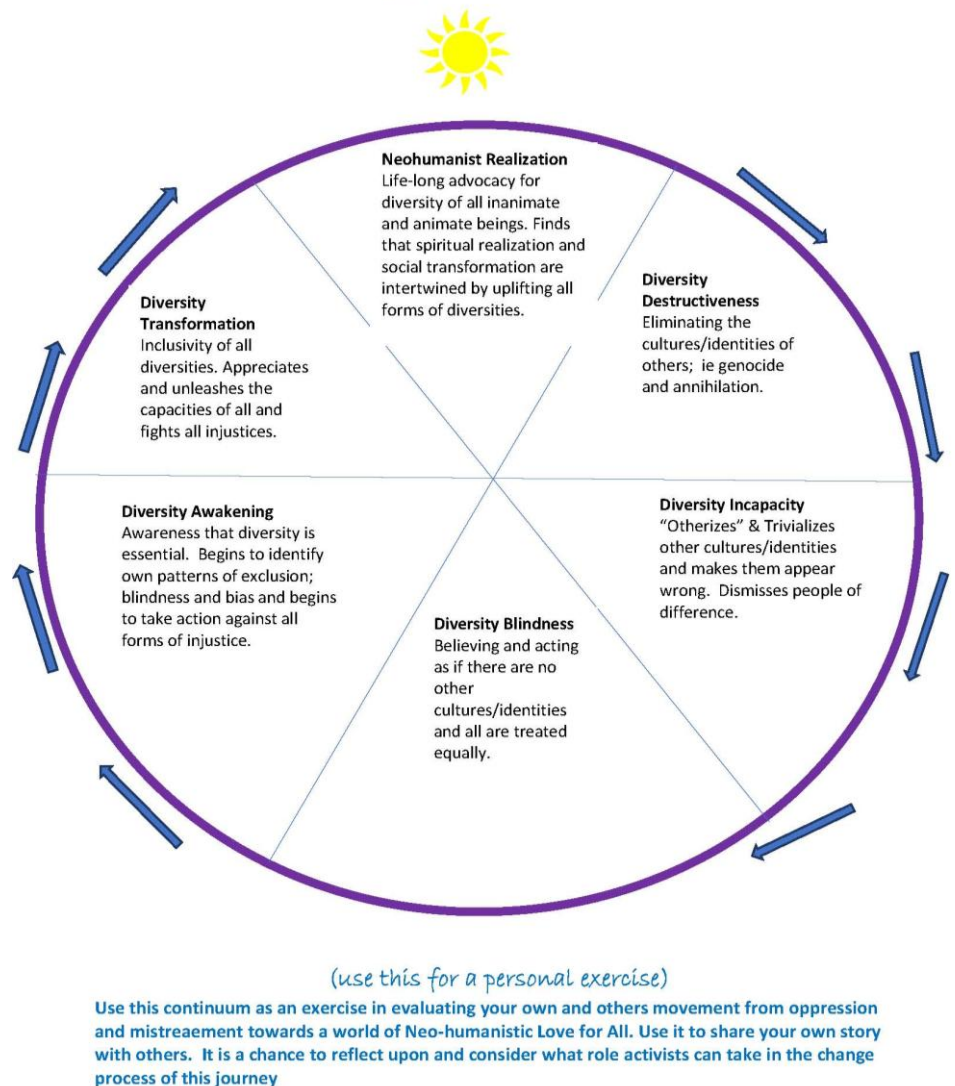
On the final day of the conference; the following statement was presented to the whole conference:

All participants agreed that the focus on diversity issues in Neohumanist and Prout organizations and in conferences is important and very motivating. Therefore, our primary action item is to continue the effort to address diversity through forming a diversity working group. Important ideas and issues include having language/cultural exchanges at conferences, creating opportunities for deeper sharing of personal and cultural experiences, encouraging collaboration with diverse communities, finding ways to build capacity and eliminate barriers for diverse leadership and making involvement accessible for all. Another important focus was to identify the barriers and initiatives that would bring more gender equality.

Action Steps for Inclusiveness in our Organizations

1. Have open dialogues about participants’ experiences of being marginalized, excluded or not being honored
2. Meet with activists from identity groups that have been excluded and begin to work with them on common goals
3. Give scholarships to poor and marginalized people who may want to attend programs
4. Invite members who may feel voiceless or marginalized in your organization to help plan activities
5. Find ways to encourage more leadership and involvement from women

Diversity Appreciation Exercise: An inside-out approach to Neohumanism



Waste Not – Want Not

by Brian Ragbourn, PhD

Newcomers to my kitchen occasionally ask, “Where’s the bin?” and are surprised to learn “There isn’t one.” Compostables go in the outside privy, combustibles get burnt in the wood-burning stove, and any jar or container gets washed for re-use. Were it possible to turn the clock back a few hundred years, this would have been common practice for our ancestors, who would have attached more value to a capped bottle or lidded jar than to its contents.

Items taken to the recycling centre typically undergo a process of downgrading. Although the discarded item gets transformed into something else that is usable, that something-else is of lower quality with a lesser range of uses. For example, when the different polymers within an assortment of plastic are melted to form a secondary-plastic, they lose their elasticity, necessitating further chemical additives to offset the hybridised rigidity. The speckled grey or chocolate-brown secondary-plastic sheeting and planks often contain flecks of metal which can hamper sawing and blunt the saw.

So what is generally referred to as “recycling” is a one-way downwards spiral, and not a “cycle” which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as “a series of events that are regularly repeated in the same order”.

Polluted by Plastic

China imports and processes rubbish from around the world in order to supplement its resources. Mountains of imported plastic waste are hand-sorted, and the wind-blown plastic and polythene littering the surrounding countryside get consumed by domestic animals, many of which die due to their stomachs getting clogged up with plastic. The water used to rinse the plastic waste has polluted streams which had formerly been the local source of drinking water, and many children living and playing in the waste-yards are contracting cancer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUmuOmEqXZQ>

The foreign donors of this plastic don’t always wash their bottles or cartons prior to disposing of them at the recycling centre. The mould from a few unwashed items can contaminate a whole batch. Consequently, a significant number of shipping container loads of used plastic have been freighted to China, only to be opened, inspected, rejected and shipped back for landfill: at least 17 container-loads were returned to Britain during 2012, and 24 shipped back to America in 2013.

A 2015 report in Science magazine estimated that every year 8 million tons of plastic waste goes into the sea, and according to Greenpeace a million seabirds and 100,000 marine animals annually die on account of ingesting this buoyant debris. Even the most exotic beaches in both Northern and Southern Hemispheres are now strewn with washed-up non-degradable plastics. <http://uk.businessinsider.com/photos-of-henderson-island-plastic-trash-2017-5?r=US&IR=T>

Many bobbing plastic items gets captured by circulating currents, and floating plastic junkyards have accumulated at five of these gyres, the most infamous being the Pacific Trash Vortex which, according to the UN’s environmental programme, is now visible from space.

Beneath these conglomerations of plastic on the ocean surface lies a thick soup of plastic fibres and microbeads, which have been found to outnumber the plankton by six to one. This is ingested by plankton and hundreds of marine species that for some reason find the scent of plastic appealing.

Microplastic can contain and absorb toxic chemicals and harbour pathogens, and has been found in a third of the fish caught by UK fishermen in research conducted by Prof. Richard Thompson of Plymouth University, who subsequently warned, “It became clear very early on that the plastic would release those chemicals and that actually, the conditions in the gut would facilitate really quite rapid release.”

Research by Orb Media, which analysed tap water from more than a dozen countries, found plastic fibres in 83% of samples. And a recent report, ‘Production, Use and Fate of All the Plastic Ever Made’ estimates that as of 2015, 79% of all-the-plastic-that-has-ever-been-produced ended up in landfill and the natural environment, 12% has been incinerated whilst only 9% was recycled.

Towards Zero Waste

Reducing one’s material desires is a step in the right direction. As too is taking care not to break things, and having a preference for consumer durables that are actually durable. Numerous books have been written about waste reduction, eg. Zero Waste Home by Bea Johnson, The Zero Waste Home by Kate Anderson, Zero Waste Lifestyle by Amy Korst, and The Zero Waste Lifestyle by Anne Meyers. It is some indication of to what extent we have lost touch with the very Nature

that supports us that what our ancestors would have considered plain common sense has been elevated to the status of expertise.

My journey towards zero waste was initially unintentional. I took up the challenge when it occurred to me that I was producing one-carrier-bagful of household waste every two months. This rubbish typically consisted of the flimsy non-combustible aluminum foil from the lids of yogurt cartons and linings of tetra-packs, together with occasional worn-out footwear, dysfunctional light bulbs etc. I gradually graduated down through a one-carrier-bag-every-three-months phase, and am now probably somewhere in the region of one carrier bagful per year. Discarded boots and shoes are now utilised for capping splintered fence stakes, constructing raised beds or mulching. And during the winter months a (light)Bulb-for-(daffodil)Bulb exchange operates at a local hardware store.

Some people try to impress others with a display of conspicuous consumption, or make efforts to “keep up with the Jones’s”. Conversely, when one’s recycling endeavours are blatant and visible, local builders and neighbours occasionally drop by and ask whether you want any old windows, scaffold boards, or other second-hand building and farming materials. I always say “yes”, even if I have no immediate use for them, as I can invariably find somebody else who can utilise them. To refuse an offer of useable stuff that you don’t want could cause embarrassment, such that the person might not come round another time to offer you something that you do want.

Compost-Interest Investment

It is easier for those living on the land to lead a low-impact lifestyle. My compost toilet is the preliminary processing plant of a two-year maturity investment for kitchen scraps, ash, together with my daily constitutional, plus a sprinkling of sawdust or dry leaves for good measure. Its ground-level ventilation enables natural aerobic bacteria to break down the deposited waste, which is periodically wheel-barrowed to a compost heap where it matures into a rich humus which fertilises the soil to return a dependable yield.

Human urine has numerous uses. When added to a compost heap it accelerates the decomposition, or if diluted down with four or five times its volume of water it can be used as an organic fertiliser. Alternatively storing urine enhances its ammonia making it a useful natural herbicide, provided it is applied during a period of dry weather.

Ingenuity is required when building a compost toilet if one intends to keep rodents out. Drawing on eight years of experience using one, a design sprang to mind which at the time seemed worthy of entry for Bill Gates’s award for the world’s best compost toilet. And might even have been submitted, had not the contest already taken place.

The structure was supported by 5 nine foot 4” by 4” recycled plastic stilts with recycled plastic sheeting on two sides, a sturdy floor made from recycled teak window-frames, together with two recycled windows and a car windscreen. Although the windscreen has arced track-marks left by the wiper blades, to seasoned recyclers that is a bonus. A bit like collecting foreign stamps: the franked ones are sometimes more valuable than those which haven’t been used.

When finally constructed I inspected the expanded metal mesh that encases the composting chamber, and confidently assumed, “impregnable, no way will any mice or rats be getting in there.” Lo and behold, a week into operation and I noticed a tiny shrew roaming around in the composting chamber. The long-nosed shrew looked relaxed and friendly, so I was hesitant to cause any anxiety. Nevertheless I clapped my hands and watched the startled shrew run for cover, thus revealing its point of entry.

Two years on, after having plugged up other discreet, shrewdly-engineered tunnelings, I seem to have finally exhausted the imaginative schemings of the furry gatecrashers. Of course, I accept that an occasional foraging shrew or vole is just playing its natural role in the recycling process. But it’s not a smart idea to be creating incentives for them to set up home next to your dwellings, because they will inevitably attempt to gatecrash there too!

The standard flush-and-forget lavatory propels diluted sewage along a piped network into a holding tank where it joins more diluted sewage, compounding a problem which needn’t exist. The raw sewage is then either percolated through a chemical treatment system, which produces a sludge, peppered with dioxins, antibiotics and endocrine disruptors, or is



Eventually-mouse proofed compost toilet

discharged into the sea on the assumption that it will become decontaminated within the vastness of the ocean. A Western European urban household typically uses 35,000 litres of drinking water per year to flush their toilet.

Self Reliance and Regional Autonomy

Those not connected to a mains water supply network have the option of obtaining their water from a stream, a well or by rainwater harvesting. Having explored all three possibilities I chose rainwater harvesting, which is particularly well suited to Ireland with its abundance of rainfall.

Rain can be collected from the gutters into a recycled oak whisky barrel, the charred oak interior of which possesses natural anti-septic qualities, such that you don't get the same build up of algae and bacteria that occurs within a plastic water butt. Another method of sterilising rainwater is with a silver coin, which likewise kills bacteria.

Any large scale switch to rainwater harvesting and compost toilets would involve having people spread more evenly across the land, as opposed to the current situation in which more than half the world's population are residing in cities and towns.



Rainwater collection in stainless steel tank and whisky barrels

However, in order to regenerate rural communities, one needs to support their endeavours. Each local product purchased helps provide a livelihood for those in the neighbourhood, and lessens our dependence on imported goods, which are prone to unpredictable foreign circumstances beyond our control.

With mounting volatility within the international trading environment, the standard policy of "food security", based on imported foodstuffs, is destined to be operating in crisis mode. The ultimate security is food sovereignty whereby basic essentials are locally, regionally or nationally grown. Such regional autonomy will require more people living and working on the land, which would help to reduce our present-day waste epidemic.

Regional autonomy is not synonymous with political popularism, but is instead about thinking globally and acting locally, as expressed in Shrii Prabhat Rainjan.Sarkar's Progressive Utilisation Theory (PROUT).

PROUT operates on the principle of maximum utilisation of the world's resources for the benefit of all its present and future human and non-human inhabitants. At present the combined wealth of the 3.6 billion people who are the poorer half of the world's population is equivalent to the collective assets of the world's 8 richest people. These plutocrats have a smash-and-grab approach to the world's natural resources, and their mindset is to be shipping goods back and forth to exploit cheap foreign labour and lucrative tax loopholes.

Distributive justice, which concerns the equitable distribution of resources, has been overshadowed by procedural justice which involves a due process for maintaining law and order and resolving disputes. If greater emphasis was placed on distributive justice and limitations placed on the individual hoarding of wealth, there would be much less crime and litigations to be dealt with within the procedural justice system.

The incentive to adopt this compassionate 360 degree perspective is the understanding that "we're all in this together" based on an awareness of our underlying spiritual Oneness, and the realisation that a grand cosmic drama is unfolding on our planetary home in which we all have a positive role to play.



Local produce sold at Scariff Smallholders' Market, Ireland

Train the Trainer Master Class

Lotus Centre, The Netherlands, July 20-22, 2017

By Ada Merz



Under the wisdom, knowledge and guidance of Dada Shambhushivananda a group of teachers and coaches from the Den Bosch NHE child centre successfully completed their 3 day training in Neohumanist philosophy. The training was provided by the Lotus Centre, a NHE knowledge centre in the Netherlands.

‘Life is a journey,’ was the topic of the first day. This journey contains three parts: that which we take from our past, from our environment and that which we create by our own ambition or freewill.

On the very first day students were challenged to take a look at themselves by being asked to answer questions concerning their own spiritual journey such as: ‘Who am I, where am I going, where would I like to go, what are the obstacles on my journey, how to overcome them, what are the tools available?’

It was a thought provoking day and gave the trainers the opportunity to examine their own mind, thoughts, attitudes, strengths and weaknesses, efforts, ambitions etc. It was definitely an awareness-training session for all.

On our journey we need tools to protect ourselves from negativity and tools to cultivate positivity.

Some basic positive tools are daily sadhana, kaoshiiki and bath mantra. The bath mantra was new to the teachers and they surprisingly enjoyed practicing the mudras and deep underlying meaning. Bath mantra is honoring the past; showing our gratitude. Without reverence for the past we cannot move forward into the future, Dada explained.

Basic spiritual topics like the Cyle of creation (Brahmacakra), Life, death and samskaras, Layers of the mind, Chakras and vriitis, Dharma etc. were covered the next two days. It was a tightly packed program but very enriching for the teachers. And somehow they managed to connect the dots and realize how sacred life, especially human life is. Dada added flavour to the day by telling mystical stories here and there, relaying his personal experiences with his spiritual Master, which aroused the curiosity of the trainers. Some have now ordered the book ‘Advent of a Mystery’ by Dada Pranavatmakananda, to deepen their understanding of spirituality.



Heart of Education Conference

International AMGK Conference hosted by the Ananda Marga River School, Australia, July 5-8, 2017

Overview, By Kamala Alister

A beautiful Gurukul conference on Neohumanist Education was held at the Ananda Marga River School, from 5-8 July. The theme was The Heart of Education. The two global NHE trainers of Ananda Marga Gurukula, Eric Arun Jacobson, founder and director of Progressive School of Long Island and Didi Ananda Devapriya from the Neohumanist Foundation in Romania gave a number of talks and workshops for members of the River School staff and boards, teachers from the Sunrise Preschools in Melbourne, other educators from around Australia, plus two guests from Vietnam. The spirit of inspiration, sharing and learning among so many educators created an exciting and uplifting atmosphere. The smiles on the faces of the group photo on the last day show the energy that was generated.

Each day of the conference began and ended with collective kiirtan singing and meditation so that teachers themselves could experience the power of regular spiritual practices. We also were honoured with a welcome ceremony and dance with elder Wurringga Dunnaggir, to open the program.

On the first day Eric's excellent keynote address on [Neohumanist Education and Why Is it Important](#), was followed up by practical workshops on [Applying Philosophy to Practice](#) with separate groups for teachers working with younger and older children. (see separate article by Paula Beaumont on [NHE for Early Childhood Education](#)) In the afternoon, Didi gave an inspiring talk on [Establishing a Personal Practice](#) which clarified for teachers the importance of regular spiritual practices in their own lives.

Highlights of the next two days included workshops on [Engaging Children in Circle Time](#) (both keynote and workshops), [Neohumanist Aesthetics and Facing Pseudo Culture](#), a very practical class, [Therapeutic Story Telling](#) on the power of storytelling for social inclusion and to address classroom and social issues, and a class [Choosing School Literature](#) (see separate articles by Ada Merz). Didi also shared about some of the inspiring projects she is doing in Romania and across Europe in spreading Neohumanism.

On the fourth day, Saturday, we had a smaller group, which used an open space system to focus on three topics: **A Classroom Toolkit to Support Children's Executive Function** (self management), **Learning to Use a Process of "I am" Meditation**, and a **Storytelling Practice Circle**.

While the program was very full, it was also very engaging and highly informative. There was time to share with the other attendees during the delicious lunches and teas with other teachers and the presenters. Around 15 people (non River School staff) stayed at the Ananda Kamala Community during the conference and enjoyed collective meditations and shared meals. The presenters stayed several days later to continue to support the River School staff and some attendees stayed after the conference to observe the school in the following week. For the River School, this was an excellent chance to deepen staff understanding and inspiration for Neohumanist Education and it was a very positive and satisfying experience for everyone involved.

Journey to the Heart of Neohumanist Education, By Marcus Bussey

"Such an inspirational conference, expanding the minds of the educators will in turn expand the hearts of our children. This conference has expanded both my heart and my mind beyond imagination!" Kristy, River School Deputy Principal

It is a truism that culture eats strategy for breakfast, yet we can strategically engage culture in the service of collective goals. So, when the steering committee, happily called the Neohumanist Committee, came together to organise the Heart of Education conference held at the River School in July of this year, we decided that we wanted a 'neohumanist revolution' to occur. To achieve this revolution, we turned to Eric Jacobsen and Didi Ananda Devapriya. Together they were able to instill this gathering with a huge wave of love. Love after all is the heart of Neohumanist consciousness and a powerful, yet underestimated, cultural tool.

This article draws on feedback from River School staff to chart the way this gentle neohumanist revolution moved from a sense of expansive love, to the deepening of understanding around neohumanist concepts and how to integrate them into one's personal development as a teacher, and finally to the skills to implement neohumanist curriculum in the classroom. The teachers engaged one hundred percent with Eric and Didi over the three and a half days. It certainly was a journey for all to the heart of education.

A Revolution

One teacher Kerrie, in summing up her experience of the conference noted:

I have always felt "love-filled" and just when you think you can't possibly expand that, you share an experience that shows how wrong you were. That I was surrounded by "love-filled" others was so apparent and my bucket was constantly overflowing with shared values, knowledge, understanding, inspiration and universal love. The value of kiirtan and just how wonderful it made me feel was such a beautiful gift to receive. Listening to Eric and Didi share their wisdom filled my head, heart and spirit with possibilities, questions and ideas.

This was the key: the sense of love overflowing acted as a glue and a scaffold for the rich mix of information, skills and spiritual insights that welled up over those days. Eric offered a wide range of insights into school and classroom process and underpinned that with his beautiful and inspiring kiirtans. Didi brought clarity and inspiration to this mix and invited participants to imagine much wider neohumanist connections to their work than most had ever considered. This was important – as the group worked together many things arose for us that came as a surprise and revelation.

As one participant Kristy noted:

Questions were flying around the room and many answers were always returned. Most importantly, we often left with answers to questions we had not thought to ask, and often we left having more questions of ourselves than of our presenters. There were questions that had sat amongst us unanswered for years and yet in minutes we had clear answers to these questions and a common understanding of what Neohumanist Education really is and why it works.

In this way participant's personal questions were given airspace and affirmed. To work in a neohumanist environment like the River School is a challenge in that neohumanist culture often comes into conflict with broader social norms that many of us take on unconsciously. The pressure cooker environment of this conference exposed us all to the tensions involved in this work and lead to deep self-analysis.

As Annie notes here, she came to appreciate the need to align her practice as a teacher with her life-practice:

Personally, [the conference] reminded me that I need to be patient and committed and that I need to question. I also need to trust myself. Regarding my life practice as a teacher I realised (or re-realised) that in order to teach authentically I need to align my life principles with my teaching practice. (I do not think I can do this successfully -i.e. teach

neohumanism without alignment.) I realised also that my teaching really requires an even deeper integration than what I am presently creating.

Often during the conference teachers expressed the sense of being affirmed. That some deep understanding they had was in fact truly aligned with the philosophy and practice of Neohumanism but that it had not been expressed so clearly before. Both Didi and Eric would crystalize an issue for the participants and this would lead to 'ah-ha' moments.

Belinda, for instance, noted:

I loved the assertion that love and discipline go hand in hand, just as freedom and responsibility go hand in hand. Less responsibility = less freedom, whereas showing more responsibility earns you more freedom. I have already used this several times in my classroom since the conference, and I think it's an everyday reality that students can understand and learn from.



It goes without saying that we wanted to push the neohumanist revolution along with a good dose of meditation and kiirtan. We had wondered how ready the staff and other attendees might be for that, so we ran a Survey-Monkey questionnaire in which we asked a series of questions about meditation and spirituality, before the conference. The response was overwhelmingly positive for including meditation in school development programs.

So we opened the kiirtan-faucet and were rewarded with a high level of delight with Eric referring to the school staff as the 'River School Kiirtan Choir'. The meditation too was deep and rich with all participants finding a new inspiration and seeing links to their teaching classroom practice.

Maria for instance notes:

Meditation has always been my biggest challenge, yet I actually felt, in connection with the Kirtan, that I was finally 'in the zone'. Since then I have gained confidence in my ability to lead meditation in my class. Kirtan is a greater challenge due to my lack of space.

Now for the revolution to occur in the heart of education we also need to involve the head. It is important to create a powerful sense of anticipation in the lead up to the conference and then to hopefully exceed this.

Rebecca reflected this sense perfectly when she observed:

My expectations were high, with Eric Jacobson (Progressive School of Long Island, New York) and Didi Ananda Devapriya (Romania) as guest speakers, but I must say that my expectations were totally exceeded by what was a magnificent, enriching experience. The rich discussions around Neohumanist Education was complemented by a true exchange of learning from around the world. The meeting of like-minded educators not only provided the perfect space to reflect, brainstorm, problem solve and ultimately improve the delivery of Neohumanist Education but we also all benefited from the sense of community that it provided. My heart was truly enriched by the experience and I am thankful for the opportunity to have been involved.



From here we moved towards a solid sharing of skills that enable teachers to teach more clearly from a neohumanist basis.

As Belinda noted:

I was encouraged by Eric's no-nonsense and structured, yet richly creative approach towards education, and inspired by Didi's humility and compassion, and the humanitarian work that she is involved with. I found her use of stories and metaphor to get messages and lessons across to students very helpful.



The Content

Though all staff were moved in their feedback to comment on the heart-work of the conference this was systematically sequenced with rich sessions focusing on Neohumanist curriculum, skills, concepts and techniques. Our Neohumanist Revolution is fuelled by inspiration and the sense of deep purpose and alignment this brings but needs building blocks.

Eric gave a keynote speech to open the conference in which he offered a platform for thinking and enacting neohumanist principles in the classroom. Essentially, we must adopt a three-pronged approach which involves **Expanding the Heart, Freeing the Mind and Creating a Social Outlook**. In preparing for the needs of an as yet uncharted future, where jobs of the future are yet to be conceived of, we need to teach children **to think, to filter, to creatively problem solve, to separate sentimentality from rationality and to care**.

Paula summarized some of the other highlights of this presentation that were valuable to her:

Eric gave a detailed account of his own role as a neohumanistic educator, describing neohumanism as including:

- *universalism, loyalty to and concern for all*
- *integral ecology - a bond between humans and the natural world*
- *compassion - a desire to transform passiveness*
- *a heart that extends to everyone and everything*

We discussed that through a school's cultural environment teachers can reimage and recapture their curriculum content in all academic subjects to offer a Neohumanist Education through the content and character of arts, music, drama, foreign languages and a nature curriculum. The curriculum should be taught

through example by the teachers and the traditional curriculum can be expanded and adjusted to include:

- *debating*
- *practical skills*
- *volunteering*
- *yoga*
- *alternative health*
- *gardening*
- *philosophy*
- *community activism*
- *coding*
- *independent study*
- *emotional intelligence*
- *biography*

I found this opening to the conference very informative and enthralling in developing my own perspective of what Neohumanist Education is and how I can develop and improve the curriculum I teach.

Belinda, who like other teachers, took many notes, reflected a few weeks after the conference how the following key take-aways from the conference had affected her thinking and classroom practice:

1. **Predetermined units per year level.** *I like this idea as I'm sure the units of work themselves would be to a high standard, and this approach safeguards against gaps in learning, and unnecessary repetition which only very careful and targeted curriculum tracking could avoid. This approach also frees up teacher time.*
2. **Predetermined book lists per year level.** *As above, avoiding repetition and crossing over, and a safe guard against "random" selection of texts.*

3. *A more structured approach to the physical layout for meditation – linear rather than in a circle* (less distracting), places already set up with meditation mats, sometimes stipulating where certain students sit (if they are prone to distraction).
4. *Age appropriate expectations for meditation.* Kept simple and not always feeling the need to change it and make it new and exciting, favouring the routine and structured approach so that children know what to expect. I liked the guidelines to meditation that Eric provided in terms of age-appropriate activities or expectations for meditation as well, eg. 6 – 9 year old: instructed to keep hearing the song in their heads.
5. *Quiet time at the start of each day.* Until the conference, I had been doing class meditation just after first break, for 15 minutes, but since the conference have changed my timetable so that we start each day with it, and it's had a wonderful, calming influence on my class and the way we begin each day together.
6. *Yoga stories* – I am yet to try this, but I really like the idea, and can see that it would be easy to incorporate into our routine. Today in Morning Circle, Trudi's class told a Greek story to demonstrate "Simple Living" and turned it into a yoga story, which worked brilliantly. I wonder if she got the idea from the conference?
7. *Talking about WHY we meditate.* This was something I never used to do much prior to the conference, but I talk about it every few days with the children now.
8. *Use of a 3 step approach to meditation – preparation (yoga and singing), meditation, and wisdom acquisition.* Prior to the conference my daily practice with my class comprised of 15 minutes of singing which led into meditation, but I've now expanded that to be 30 minutes at the start of each day, consisting of yoga and singing (preparation), meditation, and wisdom acquisition (story telling). The progress we've made in three weeks has been very encouraging, with children more focussed, and calmer at the start of each day.

The River School school principal Ann was impressed by the professionalism of the presentations. As she noted: *Over a three-day period, we were treated to a smorgasbord of topics that were engaging and professionally presented. Main, guest speakers Eric Jacobson from Long Island Progressive School, New York and Didi Ananda Devapriya from Romania came well prepared and willing to share their knowledge and expertise in a way that was clear, transferable and practical.*

She comments here on how the approach to morning circle has changed following a session given by Didi : *Staff of the River School loved Didi's explanation of a three-stage approach – preparation, inner focus (meditation) and the getting of wisdom (reflection). Using examples and discussion points from the conference we have taken on board the enjoyable task of redefining our daily meditation time so that it is more meaningful and consistent for our students and ourselves.*

The Neohumanist Lens

There is no doubt that the Heart of Education conference has been a catalyst for a deeper engagement with Neohumanism. It was the River School's previous principal Jenny who enthusiastically kick-started the preparation for this conference along with the school

Board and the Neohumanist Committee. The intention was to initiate a 'revolution' in thought and practice. In the lead up to the conference staff began to talk about 'wearing your neohumanist glasses' and seeing through our 'neohumanist lens'. This metaphor has continued to be used in the school and current principal Ann acknowledges how the conference has taken her and her staff on a deep journey. As she sums it up:

By the end of the final day my Neohumanist lenses felt beautifully adjusted, sitting so much more comfortably as a result of a deeper understanding of how to practise and apply Neohumanism in terms of myself and our (River) school. Feeling grateful.

Kristy, the school's deputy principal, also concluded with a similar sense of rightness; that her neohumanist lenses were well and truly adjusted to the ongoing work of building rich neohumanist futures based on new learning and past successes:

The conference provided us with clarity and strengthened our vision of Neohumanist Education. Now, looking into the future of our school, we view it from a new light – our Neohumanist Lenses are on tight and we are able to see things we have not been able to see before. There are so many exciting things we can expand upon and implement within our school and yet there are also so many things to celebrate that we are doing remarkably well already.



NHE for Early Childhood Education

A Workshop given by Didi Ananda Devapriya at the Heart of Education Conference Summarized By Paula Beaumont

I enjoyed the workshop I attended by Didi Ananda Devapriya on NHE for Early Childhood which gave me a simple but very effective approach to designing a curriculum through looking at curriculum with questions as your starting point, offering a flexibility to explore but also an opportunity to link the curriculum to the principles of NHE.

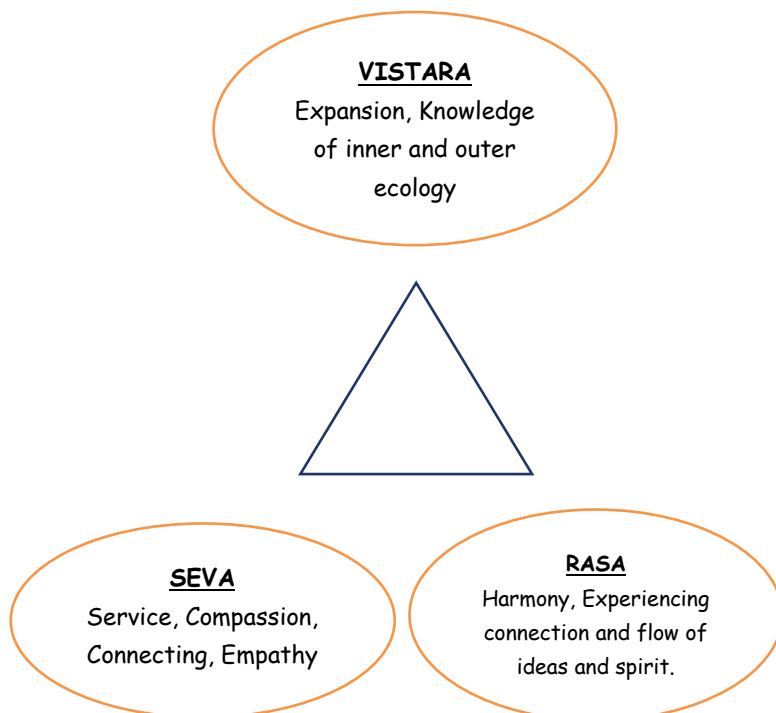
The following questions can start the flow for the topics you endeavor to cover within the curriculum alongside considering what kind of pupils you aim to create and what values you wish to install.

When? Timing, rhythms, cycles, flow
Who? Teacher's self development and example
What? Curriculum Content
Where? Learning Spaces
How? Pedagogy, Methodology
Why? Philosophy – Core Principles

Didi continued to explain that there are three aspects to guiding your NHE curriculum, with the first one, Vistara, being the driving element in developing it. These were:

1. Vistara - Expansion - I Discover the World
2. Seva - Service - I Love to Help
3. Rasa - Flow of love - I am guided by Love

She provided an effective visual interpretation of this which increased my knowledge and understanding.



I connected with this approach to organising the children's learning and enjoyed discussing the ways we can develop Vistara within our own classroom. Vistara being the expansion of the mind and allowing the discovery of learning to be developed through:

Following the children's lead:

- Using open ended materials
- Giving time for the learning to develop
- Using different mediums
- Providing provocation for inspiration
- Group discussions
- Involvement

I gained a successful way to planning whole days, small sessions or individual learning through Didi's rhythm of the day. This again was split into three sections.

- Sprouting: life force, vitality - I am
- Ripening: Transforming, growth - I do
- Harvest: Achievement - I have done.....

Very clear and concise method, although I feel prior knowledge needed to be added to the sprouting:

I know this - I am going to learn this.

Other Conference Reflections

I enjoyed the Quiet time workshop discussing elements of circle time and feel as a school we have all tried to adapt and improve our own quiet time sessions. I have allowed children to be leaders within these sessions. This has increased their motivation as they wish to be the lead meditator and involve their own thoughts and ideas, allowing for the expansion of the mind. I have started to use therapeutic stories within the class day and have purchased a book of these from the suggested author, Susan Perrow.

To finish I would just like to add that attending the conference inspired me to allow more time in my own life for meditations and service to others.

I aim to continue developing my thoughts, ideas and practices in small steps based on the information we shared within this conference.

Thank you to all those involved in the organising and delivering of the conference for inspiring and motivating me.



Teacher Training for AMSAI Schools in Nepal

By Rutger Tamminga

Right in the middle of the rainy season, Lien Ching Fa, Miss Jiang and myself went to Nepal to meet the teachers of seven AMSAI schools in the different parts of Nepal. As we started off from Kathmandu I was ill prepared for the condition of the mountain roads in Nepal. There were landslides everywhere, and while life seems to be relatively quiet and slow, for over four hours we drove at neck breaking speed to Heitouda, a town not far from the Indian border in the Southern region of Nepal.

There we stayed in the hostel of the AMSAI school that caters to students from KG 1 to High School and started our first three day teacher training session for the teachers from AMSAI schools in the area. As I was new to their environment, I focused on storytelling and singing games, kids yoga teaching methods and phonics. For three days the teachers practiced storytelling techniques and story based lesson planning, kids yoga and spelling methods. They were very inspired and positive during the training.

The last day of the training coincided with the worst rain in over 20 years! The rain was so loud, we couldn't hear each other anymore, even with a loudspeaker system. The river next to the school tripled in size and the houses close to the river were submerged up to the first floor. Later we heard that 500 people had died due to the rains that day. Fifteen million people were affected in Nepal, India and Bangladesh. The agricultural damage was astronomical.

In spite of the rain we had to leave for the next program in a remote village, Sarlahi. However the road had been partially washed away and what normally would take one hour, took four to five hours. We had to sleep half way due to lack of transport and could only continue the next day early morning. Luckily we reached just in time for the training session in Sarlahi. There Dada Kamalakantananda with help from AMURT Italy, and help from the UK and Portugal, is building a double story school in a very isolated and disadvantaged village. He has been there for over five years and the whole village sends their children to him. He has ten teachers and 300 children.

The third and fourth trainings were in Kathmandu, where Didi Shantimaya has a beautiful school with 100 children. The program was shortened due to lack of time.

What we noticed in these trainings is that the AMSAI schools are run by very devoted people, who often basically volunteer to provide the best education for the children. The salary they get ranges from one to two US dollars per day. The teaching methods used are traditional and test oriented. The children learn through copying and are managed in a commanding way. This limits their training in self-expression and personal development.

In order to change the Nepali teachers asked for volunteers from other parts of the world to visit them, stay with them even for a week or two and through interaction help them incorporate better teaching methods. This time we just showed them how to use storytelling for teaching; they would love to learn about dance, music, art and other techniques.

The Nepali's hospitality and spirituality is overwhelming and it is a great joy to have been there. Now that we have several good schools with reasonable infrastructure, the need for Gurukul's guidance in improving the contents of their teaching is urgent.

I hope we can move step by step to help the teachers find new and more child centered ways of teaching, as well as bring in some different teaching material. The teacher-student ratio is still very low, with one teacher having to work with thirty to forty students at times. This very much limits their scope of experimenting. Still, any idea outside their present teaching experience may help them create a more child friendly learning experience.

If you would like to be a volunteer in rural Nepal, please contact Dada Kamalakantananda at <sadvipradeva99@gmail.com> to discuss details. There is wonderful fresh buffalo milk and yogurt, chapatis and dal and the most beautiful eyes of hundreds of innocent children infinitely curious waiting for you! One piece of advice, if you want to volunteer, avoid the rainy season!



From my side, I am researching how to print cheap editions of the school books we have made for Taiwan and China and introduce them in Nepal and different parts of India. We want to move phase wise and initially start with the Nursery and KG 1 and KG 2 classes. If that goes well, we can progress to offer alternatives for the bigger students.



And finally a word of thanks to all Dadas and Didis and local supporters who helped make this training so memorable. Unforgettable love and devotion!



Teacher Training at Nile River School

Al Baharwa, Egypt

By Didi Anandarama

The Nile River School Children's Centre hosted a week-long teachers training for the local school teachers in Al Baharwa village in Egypt. The training involved a combination of theory, practical activities and discussion. The attendees were twelve teachers and assistants.

The programme included daily creative movement and examples of English lessons. The workshop and presentation sessions by Suzi Balaban were on *"The Learner, Growth Mindset and Motivation"* and on *"Your Challenges, Needs and Wishes (using Aladdin's lamp)"*. This gave the teachers a chance to write up their ideas and empowered them to improve the learning outcomes of their children. Another session was on: *"Assessment, Formative and Summative"*.

Corina shared her experiences on fun teaching activities with young children. Marwa gave workshops on Creative storytelling and creative writing. Joireya, a Montessori expert shared very valuable child psychology methods with children. Didi Anandarama explained the classroom management at Nile River School and emphasized correct English writing skills. Finally on the last day Engy did an interactive closing evaluation workshop of this teachers' education week. It was our first Teachers' Training in Baharwa and all were surprised at the rich, varied and valuable presentations. Thanks to all the presenters and also to Hadeer who persuaded them to come all the way from Cairo to share their knowledge and experience.

Suzi's observation:

"The activities engaged in during the training included pair work, group work, whole group discussion, physical movement, videos and powerpoints, role play, making and using play dough, finger puppets, question and answer ball throw.

The teachers engaged in animated discussions about their own experiences at school as well as their teaching experiences. Opinions were expressed on the problems of the education system, including bad management, corruption, cheating, violence in the classroom (verbal, emotional and physical), negative learning outcomes in government and private schools and even in the parallel system of private lessons.

They are proud to be teaching in the community school in Baharwa and see a real opportunity for change. Their wishes were the freedom to use teaching materials suitable for the children's environment (as opposed to the one-fits-all national textbook), more family participation, school trips and visits to familiarize the children with outside society, and teaching crafts."





Teacher Training in Lebanon July 3 to 5, 2017

By Didi Anandarama

At the AMURT educational project with Syrian children in Lebanon we had a 3-day Teacher's Training. To begin each day we had philosophical reflections on 'family', 'love' and 'struggle' respectively. This brought forth a lively interactive and connecting flow among the 25 participants.

For example on 'Family' the following thoughts came up: Anything to change starts in the family, family is all about loving each other, is peace, is most important, is everything, is security, life, stability, tenderness, respect, strength, a special gift from God, sharing, cooperating, is not only small family and relatives but village, community, the whole world.

UNCR Children's Rights

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

UNCRC Basic Rights of Children life, survival and development include:

- Right to protection from violence, abuse or neglect
- Right to an education that enables children to fulfill their potential
- Right to be raised by, or have a relationship with, their parents
- Right to express their opinions and be listened to.

Free Publication from Save the Children on implementing in your program is available here:
http://toolkit.ineesite.org/toolkit/INEEcms/uploads/1101/Getting_it_Right.PDF

The first and second day we dealt with Children's Rights, based on the resolutions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and the 13 Points resulting from Character-Based Education as researched in the NHE Progressive School of Long Island.

We discussed and each teacher shared their creative and concrete approaches and practices that they would implement towards the specific goals of Children's Rights and Character Education.

The last day was devoted to learning communication skills. This was a lively day with many real life situations and the realization of great need for effective communications in the surrounding societies.

Progressive School's Results of Character-based Education

- 1: Service
- 2: Zest for Learning
- 3: Self-Knowledge
- 4: Leadership
- 5: Self-Constructivity
- 6: Calm Rationality
- 7: Literacy
- 8: Self-Confidence
- 9: Universal Outlook
- 10: Aesthetic Sensitivity
- 11: Discriminating Trust
- 12: Integrity
- 13: The Joy Factor

You can find details about these here:
<http://progressivelyli.org/index.php/blackboard/intangible-gains>

All Together for a Neohumanist Education Flor e Ser Neohumanist School

A new school in

Araruama, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

By Glauber Pimentel and Juliane Garcia

The methods and techniques used by the Brazilian educational system to educate children and adolescents have long been questioned. In Araruama, a city in the interior of the state of Rio de Janeiro, the situation is no different. Understanding that schools, both public and private, have not met the desired goals for the education of their children and after an intense search for a school unit that would meet their real personal and collective needs, it was clear to a group of parents that their search would only cease with the creation of a school where the teaching practices were aligned with the commitment of the integral growth of its students and their children.

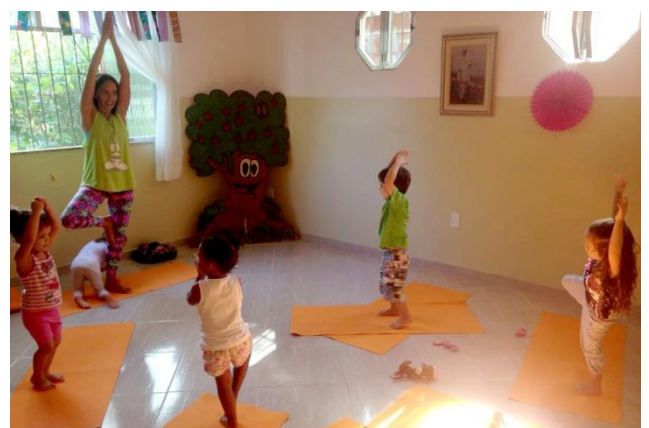


It was from this underlying desire to provide a space where it was possible to educate children in a way that would potentiate their abilities as individuals and members of the collective that the Flor e Ser Neohumanist School emerged. The seed of this project began very small, with a few parents eager to make this educational space happen. Thus, Flor e Ser Neohumanist School was born from the desire to transform the world into a better place. Through educational activities, children are encouraged to develop healthy potentialities as individuals and as integral parts of nature and the universe. By working to internalize Neohumanist values, the children are touched by the sense of taking care of and helping others. All this work only exists because of volunteers and partners who dedicate their support, either face-to-face or financial, so that this dream continues to become a reality.

The school started in March with five children. In a short time, it was clear to the staff at the school that it needed to be expanded beyond those who were already practicing Shrii P. R. Sarkar's philosophy of Neohumanism. Thus the school began to serve people in situations of social vulnerability. Over time and with more people joining the project, Flor e Ser occupies a physical space structured specifically to needs of the children and develops activities aligned with the philosophy of Neohumanist Education. Currently, there are eight children studying at Flor e Ser Neohumanist School. Some of them are children of those already familiar with Shrii P. R. Sarkar and Neohumanism, and the others – who can't afford for their basic needs – are from our neighborhood area, an outskirt community located in Areal (Araruama). The school serves children ages 2 to 5 years; some are paying and some are scholarship holders. Araruama is one of the nine cities of Região dos Lagos Bhukti, in Rio de Janeiro state, therefore the school and their staff are supported philosophically and spiritually by Dada Siddheshvarananda, and Firmina Labre.

Some parents work at the school as volunteers. Due to this the children have asana classes, music classes, English classes, German classes, cooking classes, Art classes, and obviously the moral and ethical principles of Yama and Niyama. All the regular classes are taught according to the Neohumanist educational philosophy.

The students have a stimulating routine that encourages them to practice at home what they learn at school. They start the day singing spiritual songs and kiirtan, and then they meditate. They have sentient vegetarian food for breakfast and lunch. Ludmilla Labre and Maycon Carvalho are in charge of the children, most of the time. It's important to mention that the chores, administration, and other maintenance works of Flor e Ser School are in the charge of those parents who are practicing Neohumanists.



Thus, the school is supported by a cooperative team – that is composed of practicing Neohumanists and other people who are new to but inspired by the ideals of Shrii P. R. Sarkar. The staff consists basically of volunteers who, without their physical and / or financial support, the work developed in the school would be impossible. The staff is supervised by Dada Siddheshvarananda.

Always seeking improvement in the work with the children, the team that acts directly and indirectly has been training constantly in order to broaden their knowledge about Neohumanist Education. So this year, three workshops were held, as well as several meetings with professionals who are experienced with this area of Brazil, as well as with other countries.

The goal of the school is to reach more socially vulnerable children who are hoping to attend our school, but we still need more support for its maintenance and growth. Due to the well known reputation of the good work being done by Flor e Ser Neohumanist School, the project recently received a land donation from a local resident on which a new school building will be built. The new building will be able to serve a larger number of children. It will also be located in a more central neighborhood which will facilitate access by families from all social backgrounds. Currently the school is maintained through donations and events that raise funds for the maintenance of the same, and we welcome help to build this new school so we can continue to improve this work.



If you want to extend your support, please, let us know. Send us a message: floreser.edu.neohumanista@gmail.com or visit us at: www.facebook.com/floreserneohumanista



The opening of ESCOLA FLOR E SER took place on March 26, 2017. About 100 people, including adults and children, were present for the inauguration, which included activities for the children, meditation, and a delicious lunch.

NHE Teacher Training in Indonesia

By Rutger Tamminga

We conducted a Teacher Training in Bali and Java. We had two sessions at universities, one for the Teacher Association and one for AMURT trainers. We also visited four local schools.

All was very inspiring and we did Quiet Time with the Muslim teachers as well as yoga. This is a breakthrough and shows the universal appeal of Neohumanism.

They have a very good network here in Indonesia and the future for Gurukul activities looks good as we have several NHE schools here already.



Centro Educaco Neo Humanista Ananda Marga

A Neohumanist School in the Brazilian Amazon

By Taís Monteiro de Freitas

One of the most important themes of Neohumanist Education is the importance of taking care of animals and nature. This knowledge is taken very seriously at CENHAMAR, Centro Educaco Neo Humanista Ananda Marga which is located in a rain forest, where nature is abundant and where there is the greatest biodiversity in the world, but also where devastation is running fast, like a tractor passing over an ancient culture with its rich values of cooperation with nature. I spent 20 days observing the work that happens on the outskirts of the city of Belém, the capital of the state of Pará where many lack basic infrastructure like sewage, water and electricity.



CENHAMAR is an island in the middle of the desert; the place is clean and healthy. Before the beginning of classes all 40 children make a Circle of Love together, sing and meditate for a few minutes. They love to talk about nature. Neohumanism is concretely developed through the observation of nature, its care, and preserving the indigenous culture. Work is also done with the surrounding community. We can gradually see the result of the work; for example there is a reduction in bird hunting and cages.



Children, ages 2-7, have been attending this school since 2004. They receive a lot of love and affection and are offered healthy snacks every day. Many are children from parents who are sanitation workers and families that suffer from lack of various basic necessities. Many children come with emotional problems from their home, and experience the school as their home.

Lucia Rodrigues is the great leader of this project, but it would not be possible without the help of Dada Nirvedananda and the network of friends of Belém. Their involvement is daily, from the food to be served in the children's snacks.

Lucia often goes to her own home refrigerator when something is missing as her house is next to the school. Teachers are completely involved in the mission of the school. Sometimes events in the community affect the school as it is located in a dangerous region with traffic and police presence as everyone is affected by violent actions.

A place such as this school changes the lives of children and consequently of families, as it gives them a referential point of ethical and moral values. It is transformative in the face of the total neglect and lack of public policies. My way of contributing was through a day of activities with the teachers. Sensorial exercises of awareness were done, research on our self portrait through art education, and we talked about the principles of Neohumanist Education, including the theme of the Circle of Creation. If there is any interest to know more about the school and to get to know the work, please contact taismonteirof@gmail.com.



Mountain Breeze Preschool

Marshall, North Carolina, US
By Rachel Maietta

Mountain Breeze Preschool in Marshall, NC, situated on land bordering two master units, has recently become a licensed five star center in a residence. With a lot of emotional support, volunteer hours, and donations of items and funds, we have created a beautiful community Neohumanist preschool. We had 10 inspections in 7 months. North Carolina is very detailed and particular about who they award a license to. We passed all building, fire, environmental health, safety, and early childhood education inspections. I am so very happy to say we are a NC FIVE STAR LICENSED FACILITY. To become five stars you have to fulfill all of the regular licensing and then you have an in-depth assessment of everything, our curriculum, how many seconds we wash our hands, how we talk to the children, how we represent other cultures, etc. This is an important step because we are now able to accept childcare vouchers and offer care to families that are in financial need.



I am so happy to say that through jumping through all these hoops we never had to compromise our philosophy of Neohumanism. In fact, many of the inspectors praised our curriculum and philosophy and said children are "blessed" to go to school here. Our children learn yama and niyama and we focus on one per month. They meditate every day, sing Baba Nam Kevalam, do Namaskar, practice the weekly yoga posture, and eat vegetarian food. We follow the Circle of Love curriculum.

Children are pure magic, I am convinced of it. It has been a busy first week of school with 14 families coming from 5 different towns. I hope to start a Mountain Breeze Family Meditation Group this year. Our teachers are truly wonderful and fell in love with our NHE model. I am so grateful for them and what they bring to our school.





Taiwan University Student Teachers Visit The River School, Australia

By Kamala Alister

*"I'll never forget the laughter, friendship and happiness...":
Taiwan University student visiting the AM River School*

In mid-July, eight student teachers from the Teacher Education Centre of Fu Jen University visited the Ananda Marga River School with their professor and Education Department head, Diinesh Teng Huang and another staff member. They stayed for one week, rotating through the primary school classes to learn about Neohumanist Education. They also had classes with the Principal and other staff to assist their learning. Their stay was part of a one month tour which included sight-seeing and visiting Steiner and Montessori schools and was supported by a grant from the Taiwanese Ministry of Education. Professor Diinesh's 11 year old daughter traveled with the group, and she loved attending year 5 at the River School.

Gift for the school: Ananda Marga River School in Chinese calligraphy.

From the beginning, the River School staff were impressed with the friendliness and openness of these lovely student teachers, and they seemed to enjoy the school very much. A highlight for the school was when the student teachers put on an impressive performance of Chinese Yo-Yo with music and then performed an energetic play sharing information about the country of Taiwan. Afterwards they delivered three beautifully organised workshops which the River School students attended by rotation. River School students learned and experienced Chinese calligraphy, lantern making and traditional rice-flour dumplings — and had a wonderful time.

At the end, the school held a special farewell program for the group, singing kiirtan and songs and presenting a gift bag to each student teacher. It was a tearful moment for some students from both sides.

Here are a few of their comments.

"Students here are like angels. They are friendly to each other and always full of energy. Teachers always work hard on teaching. It's what a school should be!" (Beatrice, Gan, Li-Yun)

"All of my impression of the River School is "love." It is hard to express my feelings, but I'll never forget the laughter, friendship and happiness." (Sandy. Sun, Zih-Yun)

"We had an unforgettable experience. We saw that the connection between teacher and student is so close and also between student and student. They are so energetic and have a great ability of imagination. They love to study." (Erin, Hsu, Yue)

"I didn't know that teaching can be so creative and motivated until I saw what the teachers here do for their students.... I'm just one of the family here. I want to take the things that I felt here back to Taiwan and hope to make a change in the education of Taiwan." (Ivania)



Learning Chinese calligraphy with lovely brushes and paper brought from Taiwan



Chinese yo-yo presentation

"River school is a place full of love and warmth. I won't forget these days." (Ryan, Feng, Wei-Lun)

"In Taiwan, because of the traditional culture and competition, schooling provides little space for student development and focuses too much on logical thinking and academics. So our Taiwanese student teachers felt so incredible to see the relationship between teachers and students. Such experiences made them reflect on the limitations of Taiwanese education and

created a strong feeling and desire to change and improved Taiwanese education." (Diinesh Teng Huang)



Everywhere is Love

Kidsyoga Festival, Malaysia

by Rutger Tamminga

Our kidsyoga teachers in Malaysia organized an "Everywhere is Love" Kidsyoga festival with a variety of speakers and workshops on September 16th. The theme was "How Kids Yoga Can Prevent Bullying". With parents and kids yoga, sand drawing, art and storytelling, as well as lectures on family counseling and the benefits of yoga and meditation, the program offered families and educators a path to raising children centered on love for all. Very impressive and well attended.



Most inspiring was the unity of the Everywhere-is-Love team, who selflessly worked so hard to make this program a success. I hope their work inspires all of us to organize similar programs! If you want to see more photos of their work, please visit their FB page: [Everywhere is love, Love is everywhere.](#)





Prama Institute and Neohumanist College

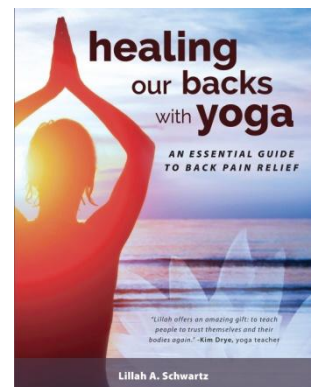
Marshall, North Carolina, USA

By Sid Jordan

The Prama Institute (PI) and Wellness Center celebrated its 10th anniversary this year with over 100 friends and former attendees. A day of workshops, meditations, massage therapists, guided hikes and yoga classes that typified the PI's programming over the past decade were offered free of charge to participants. The PI continues to offer rentals and its own programs to many who return repeatedly for what they regard as life-changing and rejuvenating experiences. Here are three testimonials first from a director of a yoga center, an attendee of a silent meditation retreat given by the Prama staff and a NC poet laureate

"I have been leading retreats at the Prama Institute for years and come back every year. Having taken and led retreats in many venues here and abroad, I can say with confidence that the Prama Institute has mastered the art of creating the space, the energy, and the logistics of yoga retreats. My students feel welcomed, the staff goes out of the way to meet a myriad of needs, and the practice space is pristine."

"I have thoroughly enjoyed every last aspect of this retreat - the best yoga classes I have ever attended, healthy meals full of life and energy, the wonderful, energizing walks, the time for reflection that I seldom get. The spiritual instruction has been absolutely life-changing."



Local Yoga Teacher and Writer



Massage Therapist

"Wow! I am leaving here so rested, so relaxed, so energized, so nourished - physically, spiritually, intellectually. The food was some of the most delicious and healthy I have ever had. The building and surroundings are lovely -- freeing for the spirit." (Former Poet Laureate of NC who gave "The Healing Power of Poetry" workshop at Prama.)

The Prama Institute scheduled its annual Kiirtan on November 17 - 19, 2017. The weekend consisted of lots of kiirtan, satsung and vegetarian meals. This year they were joined again by Sukhadev and Sojha. For more information please visit <https://prama.org/kiirtan-retreat-2017/>.



Neohumanist College of Asheville

The PI and Ananda Marga Gurukula, who conceptualized the PI as a Center of Neohumanist Studies (CNS) ten years ago, are now collaborating with the development of a 33 acre Neohumanist College of Asheville (NCA) that borders the Ananda Girisuta master unit. The NCA, with its own board, has started construction on two sites, one to serve as a reception area and the other as an administrative building to support the development of the campus. The vision for NCA involves developing a department of education to train Neohumanist educators worldwide with distance learning and on-campus matriculation that would involve practicums in our local schools including the Mountain Breeze pre-school. There are longer term plans to develop a broader campus with classrooms, offices and dorms that support departments of intuitive sciences/tantra, economics/Prout, medicine/yoga psychology, and art/music.

Therapeutic Storytelling

Workshop given by Didi Ananda Devapriya

Report by Ada Merz

Stories are fundamental and play a special role in NHE. As a collector of stories, Didi Ananda Devapriya used stories not only for children but for adults. She found story telling the easiest and most memorable way to share spiritual teachings. She was attracted to people's real experiences and to the Buddhist tradition that are full of stories about the relationship between the spiritual master and the students. Stories, especially spiritual stories contain so many different layers of meaning. They have something magical that you can keep coming back to all throughout your life. The meaning in stories is fluid and changing. Every time that you hear it, it might resonate with you on a different level and you will discover a new meaning, a new interpretation of it. We all have experienced such stories in our lives. Even our own life, how we understand ourselves is a story. We are constantly telling the story of our life. At different points in our life, as our understanding changes, we can tell the same story in a different way. When we feel ourselves to be a victim, the story is told with anger, and later on we can tell the same story as a humor story. We are constantly reinterpreting and understanding our lives through narratives. Even what we are thinking and how we are sharing our experiences with people is a form of narrative.

In education, as a learner what you remember are the stories. They can stay with you for years, while the information comes in and goes out. Stories grow inside of you and give you meaning. Stories can feed us on a deeper level. This is the message in the story of Frederic the Mouse who before the winter set in, collected the 'rays of the sun and the colors of the flowers' to brighten and warm the hearts of his mice friends during the dark winter days. These were his winter supplies. This particular childhood story stayed with Didi. Stories like this can feed the mind. Every one of us has childhood stories that resonated with us and we still remember them. Stories are magical and we can use this magic in education; not only for children but adults. Stories can contain many different layers of meaning and they continue to work inside our mind. They contain powerful messages for our life. Information doesn't have that stickiness.

There are ways to create stories for classroom needs. You can utilize your personal experiences as a resource for storytelling. Now how to design stories that facilitate an inclusive environment and channelize behavior problems? So much of life happens on a deeper level. It is interesting that at the deepest level you have the narrative, the myth.

"A people are as healthy and confident as the stories they tell themselves. Sick storytellers can make nations sick. Without stories, we would go mad. Life would lose its moorings or orientation... Stories can conquer fear, you know. They can make the heart larger." — Ben Okri

Stories provide a mirror for the world, a mirror to see ourselves and understand ourselves better. A lot of discrimination is not overt. It's implicit. The experience of certain children is not visible. So many materials for children have implicit assumptions e.g. many of the books might depict the situation of father, mother, brother, sister, the idea of the family. Children who don't fit into this paradigm have difficulty in finding themselves or having their experience validated. That is the sensitivity you need in choosing stories. A lot of the stories that were handed down until recently do not have this awareness. And so, there is still a lot of invisibility of certain type of experiences. No matter how enlightened a society might be, it is difficult to create a story for everybody. But we do not need to limit ourselves to prefabricated stories. As a teacher, we know exactly the experiences going on for each and every child. We can tailor things according to the needs in our class. We can look for specific ways to create that mirror so that all children can find their experiences reflected and understand their place in the world and move away from certain states of uneasiness and show them potential pathways towards healing and towards feelings of inclusion.

Simple structures for designing therapeutic stories for children

The three elements for designing a story

1. Metaphor
2. Journey
3. Resolution

The metaphor: The metaphor is the starting point, the seed. This is where you have to do some poetic work. The story cannot be too literal, otherwise it doesn't have the poetry and also if it is too literal it becomes obvious to the child that it is about them. That will close them down and also lead to finger pointing by the other children. For example, for a pinching child, a crab would be a good metaphor. So, start your story by looking for a metaphor that fits a real situation or problem in your class. Your metaphor can be an animal or other entity to represent that. The story has to resonate poetically with the situation and does not need to be exactly like it. It is a lot easier to let the child see the situation in the mirror rather than tell them directly how they should behave. You have two major metaphors: One that represents the problem and the

other is the helping metaphor, an element that represents wisdom. It can be something magical, a type of creature or fairy. In selecting metaphors you can choose objects from nature such as shells, stones or from fairy tales. Avoid stories that are too literal. They are moralizing and written from an adult's point of view. You need to have a metaphor that captures the child's imagination. Therapeutic stories are not only therapeutic for the child but also for the teacher because you have to change your frame of reference. Instead of reacting you empathize and try to find out where the child is coming from, what is the cause of their problem. You come down to their level. This reframing helps you to choose a metaphor that resonates with them.

The journey: there has to be some conflict and tension, some state of imbalance. You have to go from imbalance to balance; you need to have obstacle metaphors that increase the tension. Tension can also be created through repetition like in the story of the big radish, where more and more characters are brought in to pull the radish out of the ground, or through repetitive rhymes like in the story called A Dark Dark Tale where the word 'dark' keeps being repeated to build up the tension. At the end of this story there is a release of tension, a resolution.

Resolution: This is about finding a way for the situation to come back into balance. Do not ask questions after finishing the story – like did you like the story or what should the hero have done etc. This takes the magic away from the story.

Self-made stories: If you make your own story, the child will feel your love. As an example, Didi read out *The Jeweled Web*, a beautiful story she made for a child with special needs. For this child who is slower in her movements and needs more time to get things done, a spider with only six legs was used as a metaphor. The spider being slow in building her web, was teased by her peers. The helping metaphor was a wise owl who encouraged and praised her for her dedication in making a beautiful web.

A recommended story is *the Red Pony* for ADHD children by Susan Perrow, a well-known Australian writer of therapeutic children stories. The metaphor for the child is a red pony who gallops, is restless, kicking, moving and the helping metaphor is a brush. When the red pony gets brushed, the brush is really happy and the pony becomes all quiet. The actual child in the classroom for whom this story was written even volunteered to be the red pony and get brushed. It was very settling for him to get massaged by the other children.

The following is a good resource book that will help you to create your own therapeutic stories. *Therapeutic Storytelling: 101 Healing Stories for Children* by Susan Perrow. She has also just published a new collection of therapeutic stories that are wonderful for use in the classroom: *An A-Z Collection of Behaviour Tales: From Angry Ant to Zestless Zebra*

Choosing School Literature

Workshop by Eric Jacobson

Report by Ada Merz

To choose appropriate literature, the teacher needs to filter the books and that filter is neohumanism.

The following 10 moral guidelines are recommended for picking good stories.

1. Treating all beings with compassion, love and respect
2. Being truthful and using your words to benefit all
3. Not taking things that don't belong to you even in your thoughts
4. Seeing that Love is everywhere
5. Taking no more than you need so there is enough to share with all
6. Keeping our world, ourselves and our hearts clean
7. Serving others even if it is not convenient
8. Acting with patience and an even temper
9. Studying to acquire wisdom
10. Meditating to realize that we are all connected

In selecting books for your children, as a teacher you will have to read the children's books yourself. You won't be able to understand them only by the looking at the cover.

The 5 filters

1. Moral content based on yama/niyama
2. Expansion of mental horizon, e.g. learning indigenous culture and of those of distant lands
3. Re-evaluate your beliefs
4. Showing reader, a new perspective
5. Inspiration to dream big

It is good to provide a mix of the classics, past, and latest Newberry winners. If you exclude the past – it will be ungrounded and there won't be any perspective about modern culture. Shakespeare provides excellent reading for older students and is a favorite at the Progressive School of Long island.

Continued on Page 33

Caring and Connection in the Early Childhood Classroom

By MJ Glassman

Caring and Connection with all of the dynamic life forms and elements of the created universe is an integral part of Yoga Education or Neohumanism. It is rooted in our interconnection with all living beings in that great Circle of Life, including both animate and inanimate alike; in yoga all these are considered living. This sense of kinship, the weaving all beings together, as one global family is reflected in active learning from theme to theme in the early childhood classroom. Every day will hold within it opportunities to express support and connection.

Active positive understanding of these beings – plants, animals, the elements, the environment - with whom we share life - are nurtured, showing kindness and empathy. Just as we emphasize sharing and love for fellow human beings, this love is also openly expressed and shared with other members of the created world that surround and embrace us. Active interactions and respect are extended to all. Each being has a special task or gift that it performs for the Earth or Mother Nature. Getting along with each other with love and expressing caring is the first step to realizing world harmony.

Activities of Care and Connection will be made available to students every day. Examples follow of some themes and some of their possible corresponding activities.

Asian New Year - Sending drawings with stories of pandas to a panda sanctuary where they are actively engaged in saving the species. Perhaps sharing how valuable and wonderful they are to children and the world.

Birds – Caring for birds, feeding them, making bird feeders, providing water, bird treats.

Bugs – Being kind to bugs, watching not handling, leaving them in their natural habitat.

Gardening – Which flowers can be picked and not picked, what do plants like or not like, growing flowers and vegetables, what do they need.

Earth Day – Collecting litter safely, keeping the earth, air, water happy, what do they need.

Land of Ice & Snow – Feeding winter animals, why support animals in winter.

Trees – Watering trees, learning how to care for trees, watching/drawing their seasonal changes.

In what other ways can we show Caring and Connection within each theme?

How does our connection, our relationship, with each being – enrich our lives and the world?

How can we become or express each being in asana?



Continued from Page 32 - Choosing School Literature

The 3 three types of questions to ask after the reading:

1. Questions of evaluation
2. Questions about facts
3. Questions of interpretation

Examples of questions of evaluation:

Do you believe in good luck? Do you have something that you think will bring you good luck? Do you think that things happen by accident? When did something happen that was too big to be an accident or coincidence? Have you ever made a sacrifice? How did it feel at the beginning, how did it feel at the end? Would you like to try it?

If you don't do the questions of evaluation (there is no wrong answer) the students won't know how to apply them to their lives.

For Eric's list of grade-wise books used at Progressive School in the USA, write to: <amgk.liaison@gurukul.edu>

GLOBAL NEWS



HONG KONG SECTOR

Taiwan

PR Sarkar Memorial Museum and Neohumanist Training Center Taichung

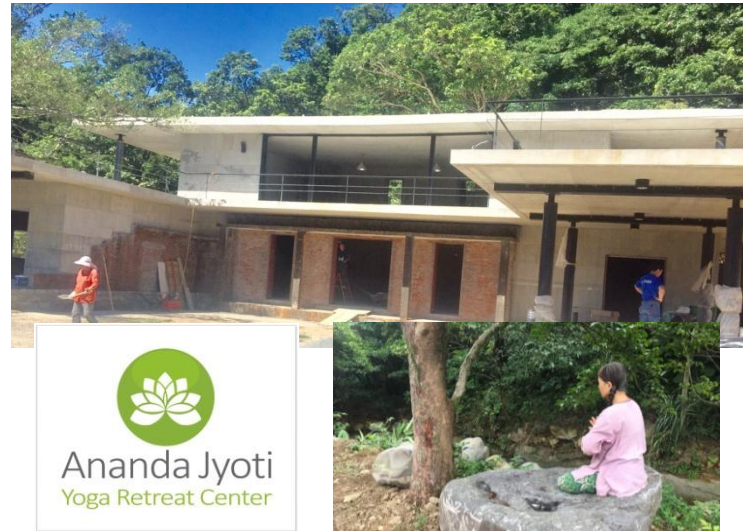
With the magnanimity of Ms. Shih Chi Lin and Rutger Tamminga, we are able to undertake this new project under the auspices of PRSI and the PR Sarkar Centennial Committee. The architectural plans are complete and the process of applying for the building permit is going on. Construction is expected to start by the end of the year. It is located on a quiet street and close to transportation. There is also a parking lot nearby and the public garden is just across the street.



The three story building will host a permanent bi-lingual exhibition space, audio-visual center and library related to the thoughts of Shrii P R Sarkar, as well as a reception area, research room and digital-lab room. The upper floor will house seminar rooms, a meditation hall and supporting rooms. On the third floor will be permanent residential spaces for the owners, Gurukula Chancellor and overseas guests.

Gurukula Master Unit Ananda Jyoti

The construction of the Gurukula Master Unit– Ananda Jyoti– has been in full swing for the past few months. Shih Chi Lin, Rutger Tamminga and many volunteers joined together to create many aesthetic spaces on the land, located one hour north of Taipei. At the end of October fifty people attended a house warming. Current activities were introduced and future planning was discussed.



DELHI SECTOR

Ananda Nagar, India AMGK College of Education



The new session started with 100 students. The institution has also been allotted 84 teachers for training in a two year Diploma in Elementary Education course. Efforts are also in full swing to introduce a Masters of Education program and Diploma courses starting in 2018 under the leadership of Ac. Svarupananda Avt.

AMGK Office Delhi, India

Mr. T S Nimbekar has selflessly served as the general secretary of AMGK (Registered body) in India for close to two decades. The offices of the AMGK society are located at: C-8/243 Yamuna Vihar, Delhi 110053, India. Dada Shamhushivananda has been conducting several lectures across the country under the auspices of AMGK in India



Chandigarh, India

Dr. Shambhushivananda and Shri Puneet Bawa (Executive Director of NERI-Chandigarh) met with Dr. Shyam Sunder Pattnaik, Director of NITTTR-Chandigarh and explored the possibilities of joint NERI-NITTTR Initiative for spearheading clean & green technologies for India. Also present in the meeting were Dr. Sanjay Sharma and Shri Rakesh Goyal Estate Officer.



New Delhi, India

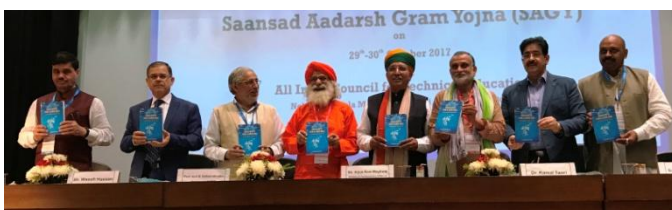
A seminar was held on “Designing India’s Future” at the National headquarters of All India Council of Technical Education-AICTE” in New Delhi. Among those present were the Chairman and Vice Chairman of AICTE and about 50 directors of technical institutions from around New Delhi’s metropolitan area. Dr. Shambhushivananda gave a half-hour presentation on the subject, which was highly appreciated. Dada Shambhushivananda also met with Chairman and Vice Chairman of AICTE to discuss the subject of International Collaborations. The meeting took place in the AICTE Chairman’s chambers.



AICTE National Conference

Over 500 activists, scholars, students and representatives from different governmental ministries of India gathered under the auspices of the statutory body AICTE (All India Council of Technical Education) on Oct .29-30th at their auditorium to discuss the theme of "Developed Village-Developed Nation". Hon'ble Central Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal was the chief guest of honour at the valedictory session and released the new book "Thoughts for the New Era" - collection of speeches of Dr. Shambhushivananda delivered all across the globe. His Excellency Mr. Hassan of Jordan, Dr Anil Sahasrabudhe, Dr M P Poonia, Mr Kamal Taori, Retd IAS, Sandeep Marwah, Vijay Tiwari were also present among many others.

Dr. Shambhushivananda chaired the session on Education and gave his keynote address concerning the "Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana" - dream project of Narendra Modi-Prime Minister of India. The two day event marked the beginning of a national movement to link up higher educational institutions with 600,000 villages of India. It is indeed a laudable initiative of AICTE which is now actively being promoted by IECSME, Village Parishads and Neohumanist Institutions in India.



New book, "Thoughts for the New Era"
A collection of speeches of Dr. Shambhushivananda
released by Hon'ble Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal

Palampur Himachal Pradesh



Dr. Shambhushivananda visited Palampur and also met with Dr. Ashok Kumar Sarial, Vice- Chancellor of Agricultural University at Palampur.

Bangalore, India

In October, 2017 the IFIM Business School and the Center for Developmental Education in Bangalore hosted a series of talks on Holistic Education by Dr. Shambhushivananda.

As part of this, on Oct 9-10th Dr. Shambhushivananda spoke to faculty, deans, directors, principals, postgraduate and undergraduate students of the institution on the theme of "Education, Happiness and Transformative Leadership"



BERLIN SECTOR

Romania



Didi Ananda Devapriya is developing a training session for members of the ISSA network in collaboration with Sardes, a Dutch organisation that provides teacher training and professional development workshops in the Netherlands. Sardes has already worked on creating a program to enhance Executive Functioning of the brain in ECE programs, based on the "Tools of the Mind" program in the US. Didi will be bringing in a new dimension inspired by yoga. The training will take place in November 2017.

Stockholm, Sweden

Prabhat Samgiita Day was celebrated on September 14th, 2017 with much music and songs. Several artists sang Prabhat Samgiita songs including Shantanu, Prabhakar, Mahesh, Dhyanes Overland and many others. Dada Shambhushivananda also spoke on the "Essence of Devotion" and sang a few Prabhat Samgiita songs. Didi Ananda Bhadra organized a sumptuous meal afterwards.



Italy



Yogis Academy is holding regular workshops, classes and seminars in the Bolzano area of Italy. Acharya Kamaleshvar and Dr. Shambhushivananda are scheduled to lead another seminar on December 26th/27th 2017 organized by Yogis Academy.

Their new website is here:

<https://www.yogisacademy.org/>

Peace Day was celebrated in Stockholm this summer with participation of many dignitaries. Here, Dada is seen with representatives of the Thai Buddhist Association of Europe



MANILA SECTOR

Bangkok, Thailand

Bio-Psychology Series

Dada Lillananda gave a series of four class on Bio-Psychology at the Ramkhamhang Neohumanist Foundation in Bangkok, Thailand. There were over 30 students, 24 of them new. The classes were about the chakras and their propensities. Dada's explanations were mixed with stories.



NEW YORK SECTOR

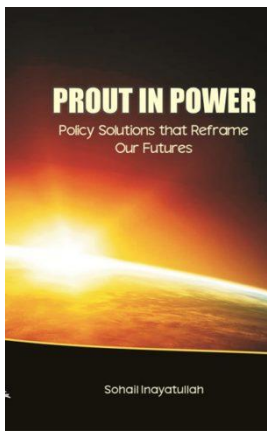
Nicaragua

Centro Educativo Ananda Marga

By Dada Visnupremananda

Our school now has a new kitchen which the German embassy funded with the effort of Comamos Juntos, another NGO which we are also a member of. We are collecting vegetables every Tuesday and Friday from the market and we are distributing them to some poor places. Our school was one of the beneficiaries from the collection. Every Wednesday we cook the vegetables and feed them to all the students including teachers and parents. They are learning to eat vegetarian food and also learning to cook vegetables they never knew before in their life how to cook and eat. Now even when it is raining we have no problem cooking.





NEW BOOKS

Prout in Power Policy solutions that reframe our futures By Sohail Inayatullah



Published by Proutist Bloc India 2016
Reviewed by Bruce Dyer/Harideva Nelson, New Zealand

PROUT is an acronym for Progressive Utilisation Theory – a socio-economic theory first propounded by Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar in 1959. The 2008 global financial crisis exposed the inherent instability of neo-liberal economics. Prout's spiritual foundation on the other hand asserts a new paradigm, one that rejects the world's top-down corporate market place in favour of regionally self-reliant co-operative economies.

In modelling the development of Prout-related policies, Inayatullah's Prout in Power represents a landmark publication and represents an important maturing in the emergence of Prout. For those asking what is the Prout view of a particular topic, Prout in Power offers examples of Prout's policies and ways to formulate them. As such it is likely to be of interest to policy makers and Proutists alike. Diverse examples are given, including those relating to governance in Asia, the Olympics, education, prisons and political economy. That many of the examples have been the result of seminars with those active in the field makes them all the more relevant.

Identifying Sarkar's social cycle, spirituality, governance, neo-humanism and his socio-economic system as Prout's pillars helps make Prout more accessible. While profound, Prout is made additionally accessible by the book having a lightness about it reflected for example in learning how to experience the social cycle by playing the Sarkar game.

Part of the framework that builds on the pillars and helps the process of developing policies that reflect Prout principles, is the author's causal layered analysis. This method sees an event or given situation as being composed of different layers that take each stage of the analysis progressively deeper. Thus there is the day to

day litany or overriding story, then the systemic – 'the interrelated parts that comprise the issue' being addressed, third, 'the worldview or the interests and perspectives of stakeholders' and finally, the underlying myths or metaphors that 'support and provide meaning to the entire framework'.

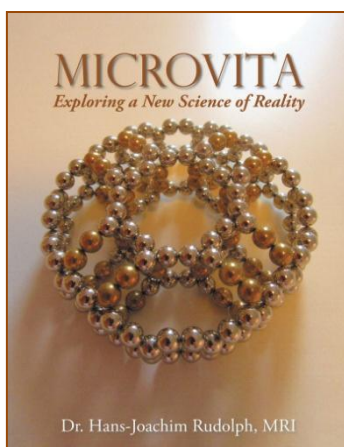
For those unfamiliar with Prout, the book is likely to raise as many questions as it answers. For example what would a co-operative university look like? Would it be like the Mondragon University for example that is jointly owned by its academic and administrative staff?

At one point the author suggests that Asia needs to become a place where identity is far less based on ethnicity ... and far more on our common humanity. This is put in context by subsequently acknowledging the value of our cultural diversity and the need to support local languages.

Prout policies are open to interpretation. Asking what a Prout policy might be in any given situation places an onus on Proutists to deliver. Sohail Inayatullah has done us all a service in taking the lead.

There are no end of books spelling out problems we are facing. There are few books like Prout in Power that are entirely given over to elaborating an approach that is capable of generating alternative and transformative policy. This is a book that deserves to be read a number of times to fully appreciate its import. I don't see mine sitting on a shelf gathering dust.

For More Information and to Order:
<http://www.metafuture.org/2017/05/18/new-book-prout-power-2017/>

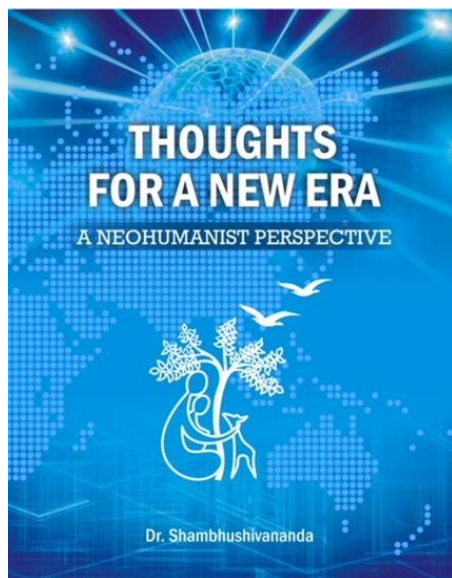


Microvita – Exploring a New Science of Reality By Dr. Hans-Joachim Rudolph

This book offers a smooth integration of Microvita (units of consciousness) into a well-grounded scientific scenario, consistent with the equations of Newton, Maxwell, Einstein, and Schrödinger. It also provides a link between the worlds of perception and conception and implies that the distinct disciplines of physics, biology, psychology, and mathematics can be merged into one science of everything.

Order: <http://www.newscienceofreality.com/buy/>

NEW BOOK



Thoughts for a New Era Collected Speeches By Dr. Shambhushivananda

When the love of human heart extends to embrace the entire living and the so-called inanimate world, it is called neohumanism. Neohumanism was presented as an alternative paradigm in 1982 by Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar for the liberation of human intellect.

Acharya Shambhushivananda Avadhuta has been the spokesperson for the neohumanist education movement for the past few decades.

As one of the closest students of Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar—the propounder of neohumanist philosophy—and as the global



chancellor (Kulapati) of The Neohumanist Education Network, he has carried the message of neohumanism to scores of countries around the planet earth. Shambhushivananda's elaboration of neohumanism expresses a deep vision and a viable alternative for the suffering humanity.

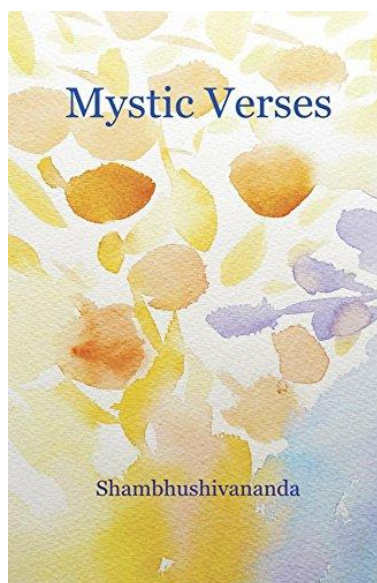
This compendium is a small sample of his thoughts on diverse subjects and a window to the thoughts of Shri P R Sarkar. We hope present and future generations will be inspired by the ideas contained in this book, and will greatly benefit from them. We are honoured to present this volume as a first offering towards the commemoration of revered Shri P. R. Sarkar's (1922-1990) first centennial celebrations

"Shambhushivananda's eloquent and inspiring presentation of the progressive and down-to-earth ideas of Neohumanism is sure to have a positive impact on our troubled times. His words touch the heart! Dynamic!"

Dr Peter Rs'i Siao (San Francisco, USA)

To order copies please write to <amgk.glo@gurukul.edu>

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The Spirit of Giving

...

We make a living by what we get,
but we make a life by what we give.

The spirit of giving is a gift of the higher mind.

It gets richer by every act of giving. Giving is a
way to overcome insecurities and fears.

It is the key that opens the door through which
abundance can enter. The act of giving is indeed
a sacred blessing.

Let us not hesitate to open our bags and share
the contents with those who need.

Let us climb the ladder of greater magnanimity to
enter the realm of pure joy!

Neohumanist Education



Children at the Nile River School, Egypt.

Gurukula Network
146 Honness Lane
Ithaca, New York 14850
USA