

Educating for a Bright Future

Gurukula Network

Newsletter and Journal of Neohumanist Schools and Institutes

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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
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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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"The human race is moving at an irresistible speed. Today, humanity wants to forget those who have written their works centering around various kinds of fissiparous discriminations. Human beings want to channelise their whole range of vision towards the bright future – a future which will transcend all individual or group interests, all territorial limits of countries and states, and transform the fates of many people into one destiny". – Shrii PR Sarkar

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

"This Neohumanism, only this Neohumanism, can save our universe, can save human existence. So now we are to sing the song of Neohumanism. We should [forget] all our omissions and commissions of the past. Forget the past. Be the [vanguard of] a bright future; and the crimson light of that future breaks on the eastern horizon. We should welcome it – we must welcome it. There is no alternative but to welcome it." – Shrii PR Sarkar

Resilience in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Summary of a talk given at the "World Symposium on Artificial Intelligence, Governance and Disaster Management" held at JNU, New Delhi on March 11-13th, 2019)

Dr. Acharya Shambhushivananda Avadhuta

From a cosmological perspective, the Artificial or Augmented Intelligence (AI) toolkit should be perceived as an extension of Natural or Native Intelligence (NI). Each living being is endowed with NI and consciously or unconsciously utilizes it to survive, grow, and serve others. As eloquently expressed by philosopher-seer Shrii P.R Sarkar as early as 1959, "What the Cosmic Mind has been doing in a tangible manner will continue to be done on this earth by unit minds, in gradual steps." Technologies like AI, by freeing our minds from mundane preoccupations, also serve the divine purpose of aiding us to move towards transcendence. Science has already liberated us from hard labor. The digital revolution and AI are now promising to liberate us from the drudgery of repetitive chores and provide us with efficient and customized management of big data.

Disasters are reminders to correct imbalances that have crept into every sphere of human life. Resilience cannot be brought about unless we build systems that are friendly to all animate and so-called inanimate entities. The techno-ethical issues related to AI are the concerns of algorithmic biases, equity, dignity, health, privacy, safety, transparency, fairness, addictive propensity and accentuation of wage-productivity gaps. On the other hand, AI can contribute greatly in helping us improve disaster management responses and fulfill millennium development goals (MDGs) for the entire globe. For instance, the primary task of ensuring balance in the economic sphere (prama-samvridhi) entails taking care of three aspects: assessment of material needs; monitoring purchasing power of communities; and, ensuring the availability of goods and services. AI should be utilized to help us monitor that customized data and assist us with policy decisions for these tasks.

Divine Providence has endowed humans with an immense power and an apparent free will to use it benevolently or malevolently. Technology by itself is never value-laden. It is human beings who make it a boon or a curse. Hence there is a need for "morally conscious, emotionally sensitive and enlightened leaders" to ensure the benevolent use of this powerful tool for social good. The choice is ours. Do we relegate ourselves to become mere robots bereft of subtle human sentiments? Should we let technologies translate economic inequalities into biological inequalities and make ordinary humans "useless"? Or do we take responsibility to 'own' these technologies and deal with their consequences through proper systems of accountability, ethical frameworks and regulatory mechanisms? Inner urge and external pressure would both be needed to ensure the benevolent use of AI and related technologies. The goal should be to establish resilient and sustainable communities where MDGs are achieved. The aspiration of humanity to foster subtle sentiments, supportive human relationships, creative expressions, intuitional development, wisdom and spiritual equipoise cannot be relegated to a subservient position as we embark on using AI in greater measure.

As we utilize AI to build more effective disaster management capabilities, we should also be aware that it is ultimately the people who utilize the technologies, and they can use it for social good or to serve only vested interests—personal or institutional. While building smart infrastructures, we should never lose sight of the broader concern for building a compassionate and just society. A resilient society can only be built on the quality of its people. Data, Information and Knowledge must ultimately be guided by wisdom and higher consciousness in which there is love, empathy, compassion and inclusiveness. It is such qualities that distinguish us from machines and make us truly 'human'. Let the AI revolution grow under the banner of universal love (neohumanism) and be good for both animate and inanimate entities. Echoing the words of Albert Einstein, "The fate of humanity is entirely dependent upon its moral development." We are concerned today not merely with the technical problem of securing and maintaining worldly comforts and outer peace. We also need inner peace, so we should be eagerly concerned with the important tasks of education and enlightenment. Thus, age-appropriate courses on "The History of Moral Advancement" need to be developed and should be made an integral part of curricula in all our academic institutions as we explore wider applications for establishing a resilient society.

The development of a resilient society requires more than mere application of technology for material ends. The moral and spiritual fiber of nations needs equal attention. While it may be easier to establish physical equipoise in the mundane sphere, as some western nations claim to have achieved, it is more difficult to achieve mental equanimity. It is no surprise therefore that yoga and meditation have become household words in response to a compelling need to deal with the menace of 'stress' in the modern world. Thus, a proper socio-economic theory, neohumanist values, a spirit of service, cooperative mentality and survival skills contribute greatly to enhancing the resilience capability of a community. The endeavor to create a GLOBAL NEOHUMANIST VISION * can also inspire the younger generation to envision a world free from self-centered worldviews and myopic visions of the future.



* THE GLOBAL NEOHUMANIST VISION envisioning resilient sustainable smart communities

*where there is freedom, without fears; and,
a constant endeavor for harmony among all species;
where good health of all is the norm; and
there is local sustenance: free from scarcities, poverty &
disparities and, where purchasing power of all keeps
improving;*

*where conflicts are resolved through dialogues
and challenges are faced with optimism and courage;
where uniqueness and diversities are celebrated;
where ethics is the foundation of personal & social life;*

*where science & technology are dedicated to welfare;
where higher-consciousness guides all forms of biological
& Artificial Intelligence;*

*where religion & spirituality affirm cosmic kinship and
rationality;
where creativity, imagination, fine arts are for service and
blessedness; and, where compassion, humor, joy &
universal love pervade & reign!*

where deep-education (NHE) inculcates and nurtures
“deeper understandings, cardinal values, innovations and
leadership”; Relief Teams lend a ready helping hand in
disasters; and The Renaissance Movement & PROUT**
offer a new paradigm for self-sufficiency and economics of
abundance and coordinated cooperation.*

**Neohumanist Education (NHE) ** Progressive Utilization
Theory (PROUT)*

World symposium on “Artificial Intelligence, Governance and Disaster Management” - a report



A three-day world symposium on “Artificial Intelligence, Governance and Disaster Management” was held under the auspices of the “Special Centre of Disaster Research” (SCDR) of JN University (New Delhi) from March 11th-13th, 2019. It was held in collaboration with the National Institute of Disaster Management; the UN Asia-Pacific Office of Disaster Risk Reduction; NDMA (National Disaster Management Authority); Niti-Ayog (National Planning Body) of the Government of India; Springer Publications; Skymet Weather; participants from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Israel, Qatar, the USA and Afghanistan; reputed scholars from over a dozen universities; high level officers and researchers of the Indian National Army; JNU students and Media Representatives.

Dr Shambhushivananda (<https://youtu.be/FiBqQo2JaMM>) of the Neohumanist Movement was invited to share the neohumanist perspective on resilience and emphasized the need for elevated consciousness in order to ensure that AI contributes toward building a balanced, compassionate and just society. Prof Amita Singh, Prof T.V. Vijay Kumar, and Dr Keshav Sud led the symposium which explored the constructive role that AI can play in different stages of disaster management. Dr Sarawat, Chancellor of JNU and Member of Niti Ayog, gave a very informative presentation on AI and its potential applications for social good. Dr Robin Murphy gave an interactive presentation from Texas, USA, and concluded that not using AI and Robotics in disaster management situations would amount to loss of life and would be unethical.

Prof Vijay Kumar made a subtle distinction between calamities and disasters. Calamities turn into disasters due to our lack of preparedness. A highlight of the symposium was presentations by the men in uniform who have been playing the crucial role of first and second responders. Their contribution and use of technology was an eye-opener for most participants. Dr Ferda Ofli from the Quantum Computing Research Institute of Qatar shared the open-software that they have developed to be used by anyone for an appropriate digital response as well as in such fields as education. Dr Eran Lederman from Bezalel Academy of Israel gave a fascinating presentation on “Your Face Print can Save your Life”, elaborating on the role of relevant design in disaster preparedness. Dr Vaishali Mamgain from the USA led an experiential exercise on the importance of a multi-sensory approach to caregiving.

Dr Shambhushivananda also entertained and uplifted the audience at the end of the valedictory session through a Prabhat Samgiita song titled ‘I love this tiny green island’ and Baba-Nam-Kevalam chant. Dr Pramod Kumar, Registrar of J.N. University emphasized the importance of collecting and utilizing the indigenous knowledge that still lies hidden in remote communities. Springer Publication House signed an MOU with SCDR to publish the proceedings of this symposium and hopes to make “The Handbook of Disaster Management” available to the public in the very near future. Research teams from India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan enlightened the participants on use of AI initiatives in their countries. The role of community engagement was also shown to be very significant in most situations. AI for disaster management and the ethical and legal issues associated with the use of this new set of technologies were also discussed. Dr Animesh Kumar of the UN Office of DRR chaired the session on Using AI to support Vulnerable Groups (children, livestock, birds, physically challenged persons, old and sick, etc.) and shared his penetrating insights on the subject.

Neohumanism and Higher Education

Kathleen Kesson, Ed.D



Considering the many complex problems faced by humanity in these uncertain and precarious times can lead to a kind of holographic paralysis in which the critical examination of any single problem leads to an awareness of the ways in which all of our dominant and interlocking systems—economy, environment, governments, and education, to name just a few—are inextricably linked. Considering the purposes of a university education in the century ahead requires first that we inquire into the source and the scope of the global issues currently presenting themselves and that we examine the ways that higher education is itself implicated in the various problems it proposes to solve. Only then might we begin to think imaginatively about a new sort of postsecondary education, one that would frame our pedagogical mission in moral terms that begin to address the scope and complexity of our current dilemmas, and engage students and faculty together in genuine solutions for the seemingly intractable problems we face.

What is the relationship between the knowledge produced through research and reproduced through instruction in universities, and the planetary problems we face? In a compellingly argued book, *The Culture of Denial* (1997), C. A. Bowers articulates the connections between the "high-status" (abstract and decontextualized) knowledge embodied in most university curricula and the global spread of modern consciousness and a consumer lifestyle. Elites in most countries, usually educated in Western countries, are heavily invested, psychologically and often financially, in Western, "high-status" knowledge and they benefit from the spread of the culture of modernism. Modernization is accompanied by the loss of languages, the loss of cultural identity, the loss of traditional technologies that have evolved in response to local conditions, and the loss of bioregional sensibilities and traditional ecological knowledge: "...wherever education advances, homogenization establishes itself. With every advancement of education or the educated, a global monoculture spreads like an oil slick over the entire planet." (Prakash & Esteva, 1998, p. 7).

Neohumanism, while not opposed to modern ideas or technological advancement, supports the sustenance of local cultures, languages, traditional forms of knowledge, and other important aspects of decolonization. In this spirit, how might we "think against" the tendency of "high-status" knowledge to replace local knowledge systems? How might we work with students and colleagues to interrupt the devastation of local culture and language that results from the spread of university-produced technological innovation? How can we make explicit and examine the collusion of the university-knowledge production machine with transnational corporate interests? How might we work to create learning environments in which ethical issues can be debated across the curriculum, and where students are encouraged to become self-critical about the uses to which their educations will be put? And how can we turn our classrooms and community-based learning sites into more democratic spaces in an era of privatization, corporatization, and individualism?

Based on scientists' own projections about the limited window of opportunity we have to reverse current potentially catastrophic environmental and cultural trajectories, I am arguing for a "greening" of the university curriculum, and a serious investigation into the ways in which the high-status knowledge perpetuated by universities sustains ecologically and culturally problematic "myths", such as the myths of progress, autonomous individualism, growth and consumption. As a starting point for the elaboration of a Neohumanist philosophy of higher education, I offer these principles as a basis for conversation about educating for decolonization, ethical decision-making, environmental sustainability, democratic practices, and social responsibility.

Replace "holographic paralysis" with "holographic analysis."

I noted the paralysis that results from seeing the systemic dimensions of overwhelming global problems. We need to acknowledge the pain and perplexity caused by this awareness, and guide students into the broad and systemic analysis demanded by the scope of the problems. This requires that faculty shift from the narrow focus often required to obtain tenure and build a career to more interdisciplinary, holistic perspectives. We need to become astute generalists, as well as specialists, and we ourselves need to study the systemic nature of problems. Interdisciplinary and team teaching is one important move in this direction.

Acknowledge the cultural specificity of university knowledge

Most students leave higher education thinking that the knowledge they have received is value-free knowledge, gained from objective sources, and that it has universal applications. They learn that "other" cultures have biases, traditions, and superstitions, but that they have received a "neutral" education. We need to problematize this taken-for-granted notion that modern knowledge is a universal and unique form of truth, and educate students instead to understand it as a culturally specific form of knowledge, with a particular set of cultural results. For example, the particular form of modern knowledge embodied in science supposes a detached observer and the separation of the knowing subject from the known object. It further assumes that reason is necessarily separated from emotion and intuition, that scientists are free from bias,

and that there is a linear progression of knowledge, resulting in the idea of progress. Indigenous scholars and feminist philosophers of science (see, for example, Kimmerer, 2015; Merchant, 1980) who do not experience themselves as separate from a network of biotic relations, have critiqued this approach to knowledge for its contributions to the environmental crisis. The rational "technological" form of consciousness sees the world in a particular way, and tends toward the manipulation and exploitation of the world. Many of the world's people, rather than seeing themselves as masters of nature, understand themselves as deeply connected with plants, animals, and other humans in a complex web of relationships in which their own well-being is intimately coupled with the well-being of the whole. We need to value these multiple ways of knowing, contrast them with modern ways of knowing, and draw out the connections between ways of knowing and the uses to which knowledge is put.

Engage students in the solution of significant problems

In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey disputed the idea that education should be about preparing students for life in the future. While not disregarding the continuous unfolding of the present into the future, he believed that "every energy should be bent to making the present experience as rich and significant as possible. Then, as the present merges insensibly into the future, the future is taken care of" (1916, p. 56). Rather than focus on the memorization of immense amounts of data, much of which will dissipate after the final exam, students should be engaged in meaningful problem-solving activities that demand both the application of what has already been learned and continuous inputs of new information in an action/reflection cycle. Problems should be posed that connect with interests and concerns of the students, so that long-term social commitments might result from their experiences. Passionate involvement in a quest or a cause is a sure predictor of lifelong learning. Solving problems, even local and seemingly small problems, helps nurture the confidence that problems are indeed soluble, and may encourage students to attempt to unravel increasingly complex social and environmental issues.

Take to the streets

We need to move the site of learning outside the university walls into the community so that students might gain first-hand knowledge of social problems and their human dimension. We need to support institutional efforts at service, community-based, and project-centered learning, and ensure that these initiatives are both personally meaningful to the students and academically rigorous. These learning activities must be grounded in critical reflection and involve the kind of "holographic analysis" mentioned above, so that the experiences might be genuinely transformative for both the individual and the society rather than merely ameliorative. Feeding hungry people in a soup kitchen may alleviate momentary hunger, and it may make the service-learner feel momentarily righteous, but such activity does little in itself to reveal the systemic causes of hunger, or to initiate long-term solutions to the problem. When knowledge production in the university classroom is linked with informed efforts to collaboratively solve problems with (not for) local communities, students get a sense that their actions can lead to genuine improvements in the quality of life. Combined with a comprehensive, rigorous analysis, such community-based learning may indeed lead to long-term commitments on the part of students. In the field, students learn that applied knowledge always has social consequences, and faculty with a "systemic" understanding can help illuminate the sometimes unforeseen and complicated consequences of their activities.

Ethics is not an elective

Skepticism and deconstruction are valuable intellectual tools that keep us from slipping into dogmatism. An engaged citizenry in a thriving democracy, however, is continuously faced with moral dilemmas and ethical decisions that demand positive rather than negative intellectual labor. Lest students leave the university with the inclination to make decisions purely on the basis of pragmatism, or the "bottom line," they need to be educated to think about the ethical dimensions of all of their decisions. The study of ethics in the university is often an elective, leaving students with the impression that ethical decision-making and moral action are optional. When ethics are studied, it is usually within a narrow career focus such as medical ethics or business ethics. But if students are to graduate from universities with an education that prepares them for life in a complex and turbulent world, their ethical education needs to be much broader: every citizen of the planet needs to be able to understand the arguments around complicated issues such as genetic technologies, global warming, and nuclear fusion. And they will need to understand not just the scientific debates but the vast cultural impact of the issues.

Question the authority of knowledge

We need to be courageous enough to interrogate with our students the knowledge encountered across the higher education curricula. We need to ask the important questions: Whose knowledge is this? How was it created? Who paid for the research? What interests does it serve? What conflicts characterized its generation? How might it be applied? How might it be misapplied? What radical or disruptive cultural changes might occur as a result of its application? What will the effects of this knowledge be, seven generations from this moment? Young people across the planet are exhibiting remarkable capacities at this moment in history for questioning authority, for healthy skepticism, and for informed political action. Postsecondary education needs to meet these emergent dispositions with a focus on critical media literacy, the analysis of information sources (and "fake news"), and the willingness to explore epistemological questions about how we have been conditioned to our ways of thinking by a complex set of factors.

Practice democracy in the classroom

If we hope to educate people to be active, engaged democratic citizens, and if we hope that the university classroom might be a place where they learn to do this, then we must begin to model democratic processes through more democratic pedagogies. A democratic pedagogy recognizes that students are not products on an assembly line—they are unique individuals with complex sets of interests, emotions, cares, and concerns. They should not have to leave the persons they are outside the classroom. Students have a right to be heard, to practice articulating complicated ideas, and to express half-formed opinions. They have a right to pose questions they would like to have answered through the course of study they are engaged in, and they have a right to shape their learning in ways that will be most productive for them. One of the hallmarks of a democratic society is the freedom to make innumerable choices—about where to live, who to live with, what to eat, what to work at, what to read and what to think. The university classroom should be a place where intelligent choice is exercised—over what to study, how to study, and how to express one's learning. As members of a democratic classroom community, teachers also have rights—to pose problems, to bring in resources, and to move the learning toward higher levels of cognition, critical thinking, and creativity. A democratic classroom is characterized by open and participatory dialogue, caring and concern, attention to identity and difference, the negotiation of learning and knowledge production, and a commitment to reveal the hidden dynamics of power, so that students can come to appreciate the undemocratic forces at work in their lives, and work to transform them.

Teach for the well-being of subsequent generations

Those of us who have grown up in modern, industrialized, technological, information-saturated cultures have had great difficulty coming to terms with the moral responsibility we bear to the larger biotic community. We seem unable or unwilling to rethink our obligations to other species, or even to the generations of humans that will follow us. Climate changes, species extinctions, and environmental diseases do not seem to be enough to convince us to buy fewer cars, institute pollution-reducing forms of mass transit, stop using pesticides on our food, or invest in solar and wind power on the scale that is called for. Bowers (1997) suggests that this inertia is partly due to the conflicts we experience in relation to a number of cherished liberal notions: the "emphasis on individual freedom, the emancipatory power of critical reflection and instrumental rationalism, and the expectation that change represents a continual expansion of human possibilities" (p. 120). We will not be fulfilling our moral obligations to young people if we do not work to make some of the fundamental cultural myths contributing to the multiple and interlocking global crises—individualism, consumption, the linear accumulation of knowledge, unrestrained growth, progress, expansion, profit—problematic. Many of these myths, unfortunately, are inextricably entwined with the higher education curricula. If we are serious about unraveling these myths, we are talking about a fundamental rethinking, not just of the curricula, but of the very aims and purposes of postsecondary education. Bowers closes his profound and important book by reminding us that

...the cultural form of consciousness reinforced in the educational institutions that help advance high-status forms of knowledge are imminent in the system of dams that obstruct the migration of salmon, in the air that carries the chemicals that are altering the forms of life that exist in the soil, lakes, and rivers, and in the shopping malls that depend upon subsistence culture being economically "developed" in ways that integrate them into a commodity-oriented economy. (p. 262)

We need to think very carefully about the ways in which the forms of knowledge promoted in higher education are implicated in the social, cultural, and environmental crises that we face, and to what extent we are perpetuating a form of cultural consciousness that is imminent in the very problems we hope to educate our students to solve.

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People of the Watershed:

An Ancient Paradigm for Ecological/Social Sustainability

By Matt Oppenheim, PhD

A Call for Urgent Change

On March 15th, hundreds of thousands of youth from over 100 countries marched to save the planet from dramatic climate change: from melting glaciers, creating rising sea levels that inundate land, to record hurricanes, storms and tornadoes; to unheard of heatwaves, fires and then floods; to drought and desertification causing the death and displacement of millions.

These youth call for an urgent systems change that places a primacy on the biosphere as well as changing an economic system from privileging the wealthiest 1% to being more equitable. In this article, I offer an integrated Neohumanist/Proutist systems change, based on over 12,000 years of anthropological; archeological and historical evidence. Here we must look to the unchanging fabric of our planet: the system of watersheds that cover every ecological niche on the planet (See Figure 1: The Watersheds of Africa). When human societies live in harmony with the watershed, we flourish; when they are ignored, we perish.

As you will see, the founder of Neohumanism and Prout, Prabhat Rainjain Sarkar, can be considered one of the world's pre-eminent watershed experts and innovators of watershed sustainability. In fact, I believe that every feature, concept and principle of Neohumanism/Prout can be realized through Sarkar's insights and recommendations for working synergistically with watersheds

Watersheds: The eternal fabric of planet earth

Watersheds (See figure 2) are fed by high, often glacial mountain chains. As rivers, tributaries, and rivulets flow down lesser mountains and into valleys, we find resplendent forests and mineral-rich soils. Further into the plains we find savannahs, bush and abundant animal life and underground aquifers. As the rivers fan out into deltas, they create nutrient-rich alluvia and then enter the oceans. Coastal estuaries, marshes, and swamps create an amazing dynamic, where the coast is protected from the impact of hurricanes and storms while providing an amazing ecological niche of flora and fauna that has continued to provide a resplendent existence to humanity.

Whether through epic river civilizations—the Yangtze, Tigris and Euphrates, Indo-Gangetic or Nile or smaller systems such as the Mississippi, Thames, Rhine, Amazon, Nairobi or Niger—human beings have co-created and defined their worlds through their watersheds. Your local watershed is all around you. It may well be smaller than these grander watersheds, but it is determined by both the history of culture and land use and the ecological and geological characteristics that surround you. Chances are that you can walk out the door and see parts of the watershed. We are all “People of the Watershed”.

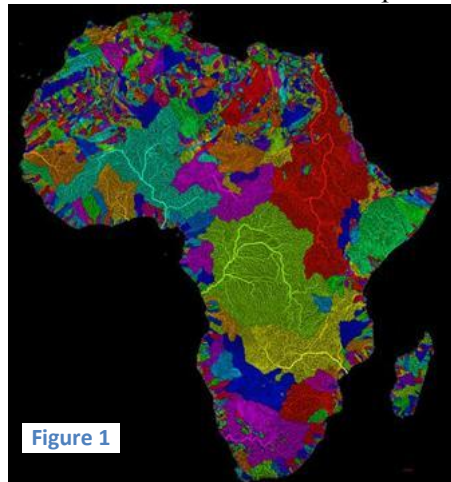


Figure 1

Our Ancient Watershed Legacy

Many ancient indigenous societies defined their cosmos as formed by their watersheds. In Southwest pueblo and Navajo cultures, creation emerged from “Sipapus”: large holes from the mountain tops, and evolution continued to flow down the watersheds. Later societies and civilization defined their territories by the surrounding

mountains. Common names for people and places referred to features of the watershed: “He/she born by the lake’s edge”, “The gathering place where water flows across flat rocks”, “A circle of juniper trees”, for example.

Many emergent societies and civilizations were designed in conformity to the flow of water. Villages, settlements, and cities of the early U.S. Southwest were first designed to follow the course of water, through acequias or water dispersal systems both amongst pueblos and later

What Is a Watershed?

Figure 2



Hispanic cultures. In the Shinto practice of Satoyama in early Japan, fish life and water flow interspersed with housing, transportation, and merged back into ponds and larger lakes (See Figure 3). A similar process was used in Norway, rural China and throughout rural Africa and New Zealand.

A review of the long cycle and evolution of human society has proven time and time again that when following the above dynamics, societies and ecologies are resilient and stable. With ignorance and then conscious destruction of these watershed dynamics, civilizations eventually collapse.

Thousands of archeological research projects around the globe attest to the challenges and solutions cited throughout this article. The common conclusion is that decentralized, self-sufficient, ecologically based societies are more resilient, while urbanized, centralized and hierarchical societies fail.

The Cause of Civilizational Collapse

As societies evolved to greater complexity, many became super-urbanized and hierarchical. This initially helped govern the fields, utilized individual talents, and distributed resources. However, as each aspect of urbanization intensified, collapse was eminent. What occurred in these civilizations is that leadership became more aloof from human need; natural resources were destroyed, and human capacity focused on activity that depleted rather than replenished the economy.

So, it is by no coincidence that the decentralization and community autonomy that emerges after the fall of large unbalanced urban systems is precisely the human return to the laws of the watershed. Land and trees; marshes, plains and agricultural land are replenished. Despite large-scale desertification, massive deforestation, strip-mining and desecration of the world's river systems, the watershed remains the one great constant in the story of planet earth.

An illustrative example is many Mayan Empires. As the priestly class gained power, much of the labor force, once focused on farming, was redirected to the building of huge temple complexes and the creation of ceremonial objects. Forests were rapidly lost and water resources dried up. In other words, the leaders of society lost their purpose in protecting and facilitating the collective good and balance with the environment and rather focused on their personal fame, wealth, and power. Does that sound familiar?



Figure 3

Civilizations survive when attuned to the Watershed

However, there are other examples that fly in the face of this paradigm. With the Mayan center of Tikal (which lasted over one thousand years), what is seen as a huge city center is actually a huge network of water canals, water cisterns, and distribution centers that reached a network of small villages. What appears to be the huge primary temple complex was actually made of large stone blocks, carved from the bedrock to create this water storage and distribution system. The runoff from these complexes would disperse into

marshes, reservoirs, and rivulets. Mayan culture still remains vibrant and resilient based on interdependent networks of autonomous, community-based villages, – and decentralization with self-reliant economies.

At Angkor Wat in the Mekong Delta in Cambodia, the central “Water Temple” was actually an elaborate web of water distribution centers, represented in a network of smaller temples, where water managers and their communities decided how to distribute water, and decision-making was made amongst a huge region of self-reliant villages attuned to the watershed. This great civilization finally collapsed, when the priorities of governance shifted to large scale maritime trade and military conquest; a common theme of empire collapse.

The common adage in these civilizations was to waste not one drop of water. There were ingenious ways to lift and carry water; to disperse water and to preserve and enhance all sources of water.

Principles of the watershed have been desecrated throughout history, through empire-building and conquest, and more recently the Chinese Cultural Revolution. It has really been the onset of the industrial revolution in the mid-eighteenth century that has blinded our attention to the watershed—our eternal legacy on this planet. Because of this, we view history from the lens of the “carpentered” environment that commodifies rather than sustains. Free market capitalism has made these problems extreme and barbaric.

The Current Problem

Analogies to today's dire urban predicament are evident. Large monument-like buildings utilize 76% of electrical energy in the United States. Inside are many industries that take away, rather than adding to a productive economy. In capitalism, the priests of ceremony and ritual are replaced by the stock market, and financial sector, which more often create the potential for destruction rather than genuine economic development. Added to this are the banking, insurance, and health sectors. Urban health care costs have accelerated through

air pollution, high urban stress, lack of exercise, and aloofness from the nurturing natural world. At the same time, while urban environments are disconnected from their rural support regions, they rely on the food production of China and other Asian and third world countries, which quickly become overused.

There is the obscene loss of energy from the global exchange of goods that traverse the globe; clogging shipping lanes and wasting fuel as basic goods are moved back and forth across continental highways. Then there are the escalating long-term consequences from petroleum disasters, both on the sea and on land.

Eighteen of the twenty-five largest urban centers across the world are along the coast. Because of rapidly melting glaciers, these cities are beginning to flood and will be completely flooded by the end of the century. Sweeping fires, leading to massive soil loss and flooding, have created a “climate diaspora” that has reached tens of millions. Multinational corporations are privatizing precious water, leading to millions of the poor to bathe in, cook with, and drink toxic water from toxic industries. Over 7 million people in the world are without sanitary water.

Only seven percent of land in China is considered arable. The human displacement, malnutrition, and unimaginable waste of resources foretells a doom scenario that is frightening. Even worse, this crisis is on a global scale, not just on the scale of one isolated watershed-based civilization that could collapse and recover without impacting others.

A Return to Our Legacy

We must return to the well-proven interventions that evolved over thousands of years, and then apply current technology to these systems. Many Moghul societies created systems of cisterns and water canals that dispersed water over large areas. Small ponds, lakes, dams, and reservoirs preserved fish and plant life, and meant that all people had easy access to clean water. In parched deserts, Muslim societies built desert mechanisms to extract enough water to serve large villages. Many ancient societies were water temple cities.

Sparkling a Transformation of Consciousness to Conscious Action

There are many keys to returning our worldview, ethics, and visceral experience of life back to the watershed. Most countries still boast ancient watershed pilgrimages that link ancient cisterns and natural springs together as well as linking modern religion with ancient mythic spirituality. All large rivers have their gods and goddesses and spirit-beings. People in Egypt still beseech the Nile god to assist them in times of social and economic strife. In India there are massive river pilgrimages that introduce the pilgrim to vastly different

languages, arts, and agricultural practices that still exist in symbiosis with the watershed.

Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar travelled great lengths of rivers in India, studying the impact of soils on language and how the convergence of rivers impacted culture. He created several model examples of how to return colonized regions of India back to their sustainable beginnings, and then how to link that to a modern future. He wrote extensively on reforestation, water-harvesting techniques and how to develop local, decentralized economies based on natural resources. He devised plans for small reservoirs and ponds and lakes where water plants and fish life converged with creepers and shrubs and then trees and bushes to create a resplendent ecological niche to enhance both natural and human life.

His vision for “master units” is for dispersed demonstration hubs where local technology, alternative energy, integrated farming techniques and local industries demonstrate a vibrant economy and ecology that return to harmony with the watershed. Here are living Neohumanist principles that preserve and enhance all life and recognize cultural and language differences, where diverse peoples cooperate across watersheds. Here also, all principles of Prout, from Economic Democracy to decentralized economic planning, to three-tier industries, to the essence of samaja, integrate seamlessly with the watershed.

The reshifting of priorities and urgent changes argued above are already occurring. Along with trial projects, there has been a shifting of consciousness, with many finding renewal and resilience by walking their own watersheds. Now this needs to become the dominant paradigm.

Plans for Action

“People of the Watershed” is a return to the laws of the watershed, brought to life through Neohumanism and Prout. A book is being written; workshops are being held and curriculum is being developed.

If you work in a Neohumanist school or with Prout, here is a quick guide:

1. Define your local watershed. Draw a simple map.
2. Describe its current condition and what has caused positive and negative impacts.
3. Research indigenous use and oral history of the watershed.
4. Plan a walk through the watershed. Collect samples of flora and fauna as well as of pollution and industrial effluent, and create a watershed scrapbook.
5. Meet with organizations that work with the local watershed and brainstorm a common activity.
6. Start utilizing the ideas of Sarkar to design a sustainable watershed. In addition, learn the many Prabhat Samgeets that sing of the magic and wonder of watershed features.
7. Begin with one project.

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On the Right to Healthcare

By Dr. Ed McKenna

In 2015, all United Nations member states adopted the Sustainable Development Goals. Part of the Sustainable Development Goals was a commitment to achieve universal healthcare coverage by the year 2030, where universal healthcare coverage is defined as all individuals and communities receiving the healthcare they require without suffering financial hardship. As of 2017, the latest date for which information is available, more than half of the world, including the United States, still lacks universal healthcare coverage. But why should the world make a commitment towards ensuring that everyone receives required medical treatment without undergoing financial hardship? In other words, why should medical care be something that every person has a right to receive?

At the most basic level, viewing healthcare as a right is simply a way of respecting the sacredness of human life. Without health, it is extraordinarily difficult to carry out a meaningful life plan, a plan that enables each person to experience the joys and challenges that ultimately allow us to become all that it is possible for us to become. At the social level, providing a right to medical care expresses a society's view that we are all involved in an ongoing, mutually beneficial social process; the mutuality of which requires that we all share both the benefits and hardships that inevitably flow from social interaction.

Even if society adopts the belief that medical care is a right, there still remains the question of how such a right should be implemented. There are many who think that the best way of providing all goods and services is to simply allow the market to work; that market processes will inevitably result in the most efficient way of providing everything, including medical care. But, is such a view correct?

Economists are widely seen as staunch supporters of the market, and deservedly so. Why are economists so supportive of the idea of free markets? The principal reason was provided long ago by Friedrich Hayek, a Nobel prize-winning economist. Hayek argued that market prices provide information about consumer wants and desires, and the costs associated with satisfying such wants. Because efficient decisions can only be based on full and accurate information, only market prices are capable of enabling an allocation of resources that efficiently meets the desires of consumers. Hayek argued vigorously that governments would never be capable of obtaining the information needed to allocate resources efficiently according to the demands of consumers. As a result, he strongly resisted the idea of government intervention in markets. Most economists have followed Hayek in the belief that market prices, in most instances, best provide the information necessary for making efficient decisions.

But what happens when markets do not provide such information? Economists have often avoided this question by simply assuming that people have perfect knowledge. This is the hallmark of the economic model that most economists view as being optimal, the model of perfect competition. But in modern times, many economists have come to see that real world markets and real-world people do not possess anything close to perfect knowledge. And, the more removed actual markets are from the assumption of perfect knowledge, the less likely are they to allocate resources efficiently. The work of Kenneth Arrow, also a Nobel prize-winning economist, has enabled economists to know for quite some time that health markets do not possess anything remotely close to perfect knowledge. And this, in turn, means that markets cannot efficiently provide healthcare resources. Why is this the case?

If one thinks about healthcare issues for even a moment, one can see the basic difficulty. Unlike purchasing food, which everyone knows they will need, if not immediately, at least in the very near future, the purchase of health insurance is made in conditions of great uncertainty. One does not know if, or when, one may become ill. Nor does one know whether this will be a relatively inexpensive event, like having a cold, or an extraordinarily expensive event, like having a heart attack or a stroke. Moreover, the information available to those purchasing health insurance and those supplying it is asymmetric. A person purchasing insurance may attempt to hide information, such as their health history or the health history of family members, in an effort to prevent their being denied healthcare coverage because of pre-existing conditions. Doctors and health insurance companies have information regarding the efficacy of treatments that is not available to patients, requiring patients to simply trust in the judgment of doctors and insurance companies. At least with respect to insurance companies, such trust is difficult to obtain. Insurance companies exist to maximize profit, providing healthcare insurance is just the means used to accomplish this. From the perspective of an insurance company, the ideal situation would be to provide insurance to healthy people who will never actually utilize it, thus reducing costs and increasing profits for the company.

Most economists have come to see these informational weaknesses as being endemic to healthcare markets. Most consumers of healthcare have come to understand that insurance companies do not necessarily operate in the best interests of their customers. As a result, there is relatively widespread agreement that markets are not an efficient way of providing insurance for healthcare. This is why, for example, the Affordable Care act that was recently passed in the United States requires insurance companies to provide insurance for pre-existing conditions. Very few believe that such protection would be afforded if free markets were relied upon to provide insurance. Nevertheless, there continues to be some

economists who advocate for free markets with respect to healthcare. Understanding the weaknesses in their arguments is quite instructive.

Economists advocating free markets in healthcare often make the argument that asymmetric information occurs in many markets, not just in the healthcare market. Why they see this as an argument justifying free markets in healthcare, rather than an argument that helps to explain why there are many markets that do not work well, is somewhat mystifying. One example that is often used by free market economists concerns the provision of automobile repair work. Most consumers do not understand how their cars work, while auto mechanics do, a clear case of asymmetric information. But suppose a consumer makes a mistake and has their car repaired by a less skilled auto mechanic. The cost of such a mistake is a few hundred, or perhaps a few thousand dollars. Now while it is undoubtedly true that this can be a significant burden, especially for low income families, it is ordinarily not a life shattering experience. How is this at all comparable to a case, for instance, where a person has a stroke and not only loses their employment, but has their entire life savings (assuming they had any) wiped out?

Another common example is illustrated by the case of legal representation. The law is a highly technical subject that requires extensive educational training. When one requires the services of a lawyer, one is again in a situation of asymmetric information since the lawyer knows the law, while the consumer does not. Yet, according to free market advocates, we permit markets to operate with respect to the provision of legal representation; we do not expect it to be provided for by the government. But is this really true? In most developed countries, everyone is entitled to legal representation, at least in most serious cases. And, it is widely understood that poor and middle income people often do not have sufficient resources to obtain legal representation, and hence that legal representation must be provided by the government. Indeed, one of the serious complaints about the American legal system is that it does not provide adequate resources for poor and middle income individuals, a fact that often results in inadequate representation and unjust legal outcomes.

But the case of inadequate legal representation provides insight for the case of health insurance as well. Even if the information obtained in healthcare markets is close to perfect, this would not mean that adequate insurance would be provided for all people. It is not sufficiently understood by most people that when economists talk about demand, they do not simply mean that a person desires something. For economists, before one can actually have a demand, one must not only want something, one must also have the ability to pay for it. The fact that a poor or middle income person wants medical insurance does not mean that they have a demand for it if they are unable to afford it. There is nothing in economic theory that guarantees that even a perfect market provides sufficient income for poor and middle income people to be able to afford health insurance.

The United States surely exemplifies this problem. Even though it is one of the richest countries in the world, there are millions of people who receive less than adequate medical attention because of an inability to pay for it. And, every year people find their life savings wiped out because their health insurance covers far less than their medical costs. Politicians and journalists alike were surprised recently by an announcement from the Trump administration that it would be supporting a legal case winding its way towards the Supreme Court, a case that if successful would bring about the end of the entire Affordable Care Act (Obamacare). While Obamacare certainly has many weaknesses, it has nevertheless enabled 23 million people to have health insurance, people who otherwise would not have had insurance coverage. While Democrats are campaigning on improvements to Obama care, Republicans have remained steadfast in their silence on healthcare issues, largely because they see this issue as one of the principal reasons why the Democrats were able to regain control of the House of Representatives in 2018. Trump's announcement that the Republican Party would become the party of healthcare has dismayed many Republicans, mainly because they do not have a healthcare plan. And, they do not have a healthcare plan precisely because their free market ideology makes it impossible for them to discover a plan that will actually work.

And this is what presents a dilemma for Republicans. Increasingly large majorities have come to believe that medical services are something that people have a right to obtain, that it should not be the case that a person's life is entirely upended because of an unexpected accident or illness. But even a perfect market will not respect such a right. And real world markets, in which information is asymmetrical and far from perfect, do not come close to satisfying such a right. This is why all developed countries, except the United States, provide significant support to ensure such a right for all of its citizens. While the form such support takes can vary, and will undoubtedly be an important issue among Democrats in the next presidential election, it is no longer possible for anyone to seriously maintain that a free market is capable of providing for such a right. But while most Republicans remain committed to the idea of a free market, many of them have come to the realization that there cannot be a free market solution to the health insurance crisis. The honest position for Republicans to take would be to admit that a right to healthcare cannot be satisfied without government support, but to then argue that such a right is not justified if one believes in free markets. But to do this is not politically viable, for the belief in the right to medical services is now a belief that is widely shared by the public. So, instead of being honest, Republicans wish to simply not address the issue of healthcare at all. And this is why Trump's statements about Republicans becoming the party of healthcare is causing such consternation among leading Republicans. Expect to see much fuzziness and prevarication should healthcare become an important issue in the next election, as it most certainly will.

Neohumanist College of Asheville, North Carolina, USA

By Ellen Landau

Neohumanist College of Asheville (NHCA), AMGK's first hub for a "college without walls" for Neohumanist Education, is located on 33 acres of land in the Blue Ridge Mountains, north of Asheville, North Carolina.

The "without walls" approach of the college is made possible by a higher education team that supports a blend of a distance learning and a mentoring model that will coordinate courses developed by a global AMGK faculty. This global campus that can offer online learning will be coordinated from several hubs in the future, and mentoring will be accomplished at sites where we have the faculty to offer supervision of practicum experiences and action learning projects.

Construction of NHCA began in November 2017, with the building of a metal pole barn to house construction materials. Before we could build the barn, we needed a road and a bridge to the site. The road, bridge and barn were completed in June of 2018 with the installation of a concrete floor and lighting fixtures, for a total cost of \$54,500.

During that time, we spent days digging large pits in the ground on a ridge high above, searching for an area whose soil would percolate (perk) for sewage water. Fourteen pits were dug and tested before an area for a septic field was finally accepted by the county and in June permits were issued. The soil of the field was so fragile, the septic field had to be dug by hand.

The foundation was laid for the construction of a structure high above on a ridge, upon which were placed two 40-foot geodesic domes. The cold winter in the mountains of North Carolina slowed the work, but the promise of this spring brought us the services of the master carpenter we needed to complete the complex work of framing walls inside of the two shells, which are made up of complicated compound angles.

One day in March a big drilling rig made its way up the mountain, bound to find a water source for the College. The drill was set up on a land basin situated between two ridges on the mountainside. A few hours later, 425 feet below the surface, the drill bit struck a vein of water in granite rock that flowed to the surface at a rate of 35 gallons a minute, more than sufficient for the dome complex.

The initial donation of 33 acres of land is valued at \$390,000. The total cost of the initial phase of construction, including the barn, infrastructure (roads, bridges), administrative building (dome #1), and classroom/lecture hall/meditation hall/distance learning lab (dome #2) is \$500,000. As of December 31, 2018, we have spent \$280,500 in cement, sand, gravel, wood, and now water. Up next is the roofing and siding, electrical installation, gas tanks, heating/cooling systems, insulation, sheet rock, flooring, more plumbing and then appliances.

One of our favorite projects is the long-distance learning lab in dome #2. We will be installing a grid from which to hang lighting fixtures for videotaping lectures to be streamed online, in addition to computer systems for their broadcast.

We need to raise an additional \$240,000 to complete the project and open for the business of training teachers in the philosophy and implemental of Neohumanist education principles around the globe. If you are interested in supporting the Neohumanist College of Asheville, or want to become involved in the development of a Neohumanist curriculum which includes not only education, but also PROUT, intuitional sciences, medicine, psychology, art/music and agricultural sciences, contact: **Ellen Landau (Shivapriya)** at ele.landau@gmail.com or **Sid Jordan (Vishvamitra)** at Sid.Jordan1@gmail.com, admin.nhcollege@gurukul.edu.



Neohumanist College of Asheville Joins Community Coordinating Council on the French Board River near Asheville

By Sid Jordan

The Neohumanist College of Asheville (NHCA) has joined an existing Coordinating Council (CC) that shares goods and services among members of the Mountain Breeze School, Prama Institute (PI) and Wellness Center (PWC) on the Ananda Girisuta MU, Women's Wellbeing and Development Foundation (WWD-F) on the Ananda Vithika MU, 10-acre dairy/creamery, and Katuah Ecovillage.

The CC participants not only serve one another but also offer goods and services to the larger community. In addition to the Neohumanist College, and the Mountain Breeze School (see below), the PI and PWC, on 32 acres, offer a variety of yoga life style programs that serve a nation-wide group of attendees. The WWD-F has service projects that provide food, clothing and education for public housing as well as Abha Farms producing vegetables, fruits and herbs on their 34 acres. The privately owned 10-acre dairy and creamery provide organic grass fed milk, cheese and butter for the local community and Asheville area. The 25-acre Katuah Ecovillage is largely inhabited by families working with local projects associated with the CC.

These projects share their well water, products, farm equipment, facilities and programs with members of the CC and the surrounding community. This local CC is an experiment in learning to live together in a coordinated cooperative manner.



Mountain Breeze School

By Rachel Maietta

Mountain Breeze School, approaching the end of its third year of operation, has become a strong anchor for the Katuah Community, located just north of Asheville, North Carolina, adjacent to the Ananda Girisuta Master Unit. Twenty-two children are enrolled in the preschool. With only three of those students graduating into kindergarten programs in September, enrollment is already closed for the next school year, with 15 children on the waiting list. Looking toward the future, the school has opened up a waiting



list for 2020-2010.

There is a buzz about Mountain Breeze Preschool in the local area, because the parents are so happy with the inclusive community of the school. Parents, children, and teachers are attracted to the calming, creative, and expansive nature surrounding the preschool, the focus on yogic values and practices, and the use on conscious, empathetic communication. The year started with many children that just turned three; they would try so hard to meditate and sometimes would put their hands over their eyes to try to focus, but now at the end of the year from consistent practice, it is so nice to see them slip into deep meditation so easily.

Mountain Breeze has expanded their garden with the help of a grant from a local organization, and the

children grow an array of fruits and vegetables. Our two teachers have received a grant to continue their degree in early childhood education; they are able to be reimbursed for the courses they take. All teachers and directors take many courses that are offered in the local area at a discounted rate to stay current on topics. Some courses taken this year are reconnection and resilience, the brain and trauma, creating positive relationships and behavior, talking to children about race, nature education and exploration, emotional intelligence, and growing gardens with children.





A Neohumanist Educational Project in Northern Italy

YogaSofia comes from the idea that yoga can no longer be considered only as hatha yoga. The greatest risk, as can be seen today, is distorting yoga and seeing it only as mere physical exercise, which, however beneficial, does not lead to the true change that the whole of philosophy hopes for in human beings and in the human world. Based on Neohumanism and the reality that everyone can finally take care of their own self-realization, we try to explore the importance of rational thought in fighting against dogmas, and the possibility of doing this in a coordinated and cooperative way. YogaSofia is intentionally not called a "method", but a "project", precisely because of its epistemology and gnoseology: the philosophy of yoga is not only explained as a theory. Each individual involved in a YogaSofia workshop gets involved in exploring individually and socially, to bring out awareness of an evolutionary and neohumanistic way of life. It is not a method to follow, but a project that co-builds, workshop after workshop. The goal is that nobody comes out the same person as before. After a YogaSofia laboratory, participants will be driven by the will to research and create better realities. This movement is possible at any age because each of us has the capacity to discern, the possibility of choosing what is best for oneself and for others. We explore the thought of philosophers, from Socrates, to Zambrano, to Merlau-Ponty, in order to unite the western world to yoga which sometimes looks so eastern, even if it actually has a common infinite origin. Ours is a project that hopes for a true social co-construction conceived and explored with our body in our reality.



YogaSofia is an educational project which comes from the experience of four people – Christian Franceschini, Alexia Martinelli, Salvatore Ingargiola and Cristina Terribile – in public schools in the north of Italy. It has the slogan *“Universal wisdom in practice”* for a practical but also ideological philosophy because schools need to know how to apply tantric intuitional science. We work in schools teaching not only young people, but teachers as well.

This project was meant to satisfy the needs of younger generations but it actually addresses all. Every year, hundreds of children are benefited by this kind of program. They are taught how to apply the practical wisdom of Yoga in their daily lives, through a physical, psychological, ethical, and spiritual approach.

For the teachers themselves there is a 3-year course. During the first year they learn about neohumanism, the importance of fighting against obstacles in life, having a higher goal, and practicing yogic lifestyle, yogic hygiene, ethics and much more. In the second year we show them how to teach children, and in the third year we act as tutors while the teachers apply YogaSofia in their classes. At the moment we are working with around 20 teachers.

There are many other courses and workshops that we give for singles, couples, and families on several personal and social issues. In the Belluno area, precisely in Lasego, Katjusa Viel has opened a small family school for children, infants through 6 years old. She wanted to use the YogaSofia method with children and parents right away. In August the first training for "Operators of the YogaSofia Project" will start at her center. Several parents are going to participate.

Ours is a work in progress. Any input is always welcome. Our email: yogasofia.edu@gmail.com



Studio Renaissance

A global non-profit movement to restore art as the dynamo of social unity and cultural enlightenment.

By Divyendu Anand

Studio Renaissance provides a global platform for artists and writers to express themselves and supplies every possible support and encouragement for their creative endeavour. Studio Renaissance also encourages Artists/Writers to work unitedly towards the common goal of the welfare of human society.

Our dream of a joyful and peaceful life on planet earth is withering away as we find ourselves in the grip of a profound crisis, complex and multi-dimensional, that touches every aspect of our lives—health and work, environment and social relations, economy, technology and politics. The cure to the crisis is the paradigm shift in perception from a fragmented worldview to the Oneness, from crude to sublime. This will only happen with awareness and transformation at the global scale. And on this journey, the role of gifted artists and writers is indispensable. Artists & writers certainly need a lot of support and encouragement to play this critical role in building the roadmap to the new world. Studio renaissance is one such platform which is here to support the gifted artists and writers. Nature has endowed artists and writers with subtle senses, hence their creations can touch the inner recess of human minds and bestow sublime joy that all are seeking. The world can become selfish, negative and chaotic if artists reflect the same through their actions and creations. Similarly, the world can become a heaven if artists and writers express the message of pure love and oneness and impart pure joy through their creations.

Studio Renaissance believes that the role of art should be the collective welfare of humanity, not just for any individual or group. Like any other profession, the art should fulfil the certain need of society which is to bestow joy to all. In every stratum of life, in every small action, human beings seek joy. Hence the role of artist and writers is to bestow joy and bliss to all through their creations.



TANDAV
The Primordial Dance



LALIT MARMIK
The voice of the Inner Spirit

As per Studio Renaissance, the role of the artists in the current world should be:

1. To express the lopsided justice in the society
2. To present the solution to the pressing problems with a benevolent mind, through their creations
3. To lead humanity towards Oneness, through their creations
4. To impart cardinal values through art and literature
5. To impart sublime joy to all through their creations

Studio Renaissance envisions a New-Artistic Renaissance where artists and writers work together as servant leaders of society to remove all divisions, bring oneness, reunite our global family and radiate this joy through their creations. Its mission is to make inner and outer worlds beautiful and bestow sublime joy to all.

Aims and Objectives of Studio Renaissance:

- Carry out extensive research on the Science of Aesthetics and use it for all-round development and welfare of humanity
- Research, review and re-create history for social unity and cultural enlightenment
- Impart values and share intellectual knowledge for individual and collective progress
- Support and promote artists and writers through various programmes and projects

Amidst this scenario, Studio Renaissance aims to create art that provides a much needed pause and opens up mind space for reflection and rumination. All artists at our studio work with the design philosophy that is informed by strands of art, science and spirituality. Hundreds of years before modern neuroscience put this in medical journals, master painters created works that gave viewers an intense experience, summoning emotions of sublimity and calm. We follow in the footsteps of these great masters to create art that evokes hope, peace and calm in a world struggling to slow down. Our work goes out in hope that it touches people, moves them and provides for a sanctuary in their existing space, be it work or home. Lastly we believe that art can advocate for a life of good thoughts and intentions and can provide the means for reaching a higher truth. It can ultimately promote social change through a feeling that spurs thinking, engagement, and even action.

To learn more about Studio Renaissance, please visit our website: <https://studiorenaissance.org/>



New Take on Leadership Training

A report by Timotheus Rammelt on

Leadership Matters

a workshop held in Den Bosch, The Netherlands

In November 2018, a unique group of people came together in Den Bosch for a new leadership training series in Neohumanist form. We arrived in Den Bosch from Norway, Germany, England, Denmark, the Netherlands and Australia. Our covenant was the desire to grow as human beings and to grow in our leadership, each in their own way in an idealist domain. Many of us work in education and childcare. The form in which we met these four days was a journey through a workshop in 16 parts. Satya Tanner & Dr Marcus Bussey led this workshop series.

In this workshop, the spiritual dimension of leadership was essential on all layers. Because this element of leadership is often overlooked in training, this key element made a complete shift in Perspective, and in the “Look” and “Feel”. Consequently, this workshop brought in specific terms from the yogic tradition to stimulate reflection on leading. It also included daily meditation sessions to charge the days with a spiritual flow.

In each session, we switched between dancing, singing, contemplating, talking, listening, playing and performing solo or as a group. Only the unexpected was to be expected. In this way, the workshop was incomparable to any other study, practical or intellectual training.

What follows is a short description of the workshop in Den Bosch, some of the many harvested fruits and perspectives on “Leadership Matters” [LM].



The Workshop Series

	Day 1 - Context	Day 2 - Tools	Day 3 - Style	Day 4 - The Calling
Session 1	The Grammar - InterPlay	Value-Based Leadership	Leadership Archetypes	The Future
Session 2	The Issues	Followers	Personal Authority	New Stories
Session 3	The Cosmic Story	lista and Self Nurturance	The Message	Constructive Hope
Session 4	Home: Micro-Macro	Purpose and Service	Sadvipra as Holistic Leader	Co-Creation

In the LM workshop series, we explored leadership as an art form. To guide our journey in Leadership, we came armed with a clear objective, an internal compass and a roadmap in the form of a written workbook that proved indispensable.

The workshop moved through four stages looking at leadership contexts, exploring tools for leading and for following, and recognising and understanding that our leadership style is key to facilitating strong, compassionate leading.

The workshop had a strong structure, building up to, and working towards an integration of all elements on day four. Finally, on the last day, we arrived at the calling of leadership in the 21st Century.

The alternation between pragmatic leadership expert and trainer Satya Tanner, and the philosopher, futurist and historian Marcus Bussey proved to be exceptionally rich in form and content, offering a big contrast in style

expertise and insights, coming from a depth of personal experience.

Marcus Bussey's thoughts on LM

When we gather with intention, something magic happens. This is what I felt when I joined Satya Tanner to co-lead the LM training. We worked with the participants and together, all of us, created a space in which we could explore our unique leadership styles. Authentic leading comes from that space within, where we find our spiritual footing in the world of action. Enspirited leading then requires that we become vulnerable, open and connected: both with the world, our fellow beings and with our inner self, too.

To work across these domains requires open and creative explorations beyond words. Culture eats strategy for breakfast – we all need to grow personal and collective cultures that are open, flexible, networked, inclusive and loving. This is why we did a lot of dancing, improvising and playing at the LM training – we needed to be

opening ourselves to embodied leading that was joyful. We needed to explore what it means to take risks, be vulnerable, to respond to life's leadership challenges lightly, as improvisation based on set values that enable and promote spiritual and life-affirming actions. So we danced, and then we sat and talked and explored a range of ideas, activities and aspirations, and then we danced again.

The result was four days of truly engaging, energising and inspiring collective self-exploration. We emerged with actions and goals unique to our situation. From little things, big things grow! That was one insight that we came away with. We will grow our leadership styles through making small but significant changes each day and being ready to take risks to lead, owning our mistakes, as no learning ever occurs without the right of trial and error. This means being open. Leading with heart.

Jasmijn's Journey

"Empowering, inspiring and hopeful" are the first things that come to mind when I think about LM. I most loved the dancing and acting to step out of my comfort zone and show what I have to offer. My experience of flow in these four days was free, without judgement, inspiring and focused on the development and on seeing all the opportunities to do that. For me, the workshop was very much connected and relevant to where I am now and where I need to go. It helped me see in perspective what I am doing. It helped me to take a step back, see what I am doing and what I want to be doing. So that I can make a plan for how to get there.

The main things I learned are all the different examples of leadership and the insight into how leadership builds. These examples exposed me to how I could start to show more leadership in my work. This workshop really helped me to be more balanced, focused and clear in what is essential in my work. I feel the impact of that every day still.

Thoughts from Lisette

What a lovely group of people and trainers we had. I immediately felt "safe" with them. (And for me that is a vital condition for development and learning). Exceptional flow and beautiful openness towards each other!

Personally, the moments when we were invited to dance or otherwise to be involved in bodywork were most beyond my comfort zone. Those moments brought me the most value. I was so free to feel, that it did not matter to me what others thought when I danced, moved, and enjoyed myself! Wow, that's an experience that flipped a mental switch, and I have to say; looking back it didn't flip back anymore! I now can always return to that feeling of basic confidence in myself and my leadership. The feeling of tremendous potency; the feeling that encourages me to do more than I did. It's good to get out of my comfort zone occasionally. ... And that I invite others now to do the same (as a trainer).

This training had the most impact on me, compared to other training and workshops series I attended. It did so by combining doing, bodywork and theory, and certainly also by the down-to-earth mentality of both trainers.

This experience (workshop) helps me now as a leader to have even more guts by doing something exciting, relying on my knowledge and skill! As an example of the changes I made, I'm



going to lead a Lotus leadership training! Challenging and exciting at the same time! LM helped me to be in touch with my strength in everything I do and carry out! And it helps me to show more of what I have to offer!

Huub's Story

I had no expectations of LM, and to be frank, this way of learning was more helpful and better than I could have expected. LM was a very free workshop, unlike other classroom workouts that I have attended before. Compared to (workshops with) tables in tight rows, listening, receiving too much information and doing very little, LM was so much better!

I now have a new view of 'beneficial' leadership. By discussing the topics in groups, we learned a lot from each other. This discussion gave me a lot of new insights.

One of the things I learned is that a good leader is an example for others, without any self-interest. The leader gives a good example by doing, not by conducting. Working together is the key. By putting into practice what I have learned, I notice that I'm now doing much better than before.

From little things, BIG things grow. I learned that all the little things are needed to bring about significant changes. In LM I learned how to be a good leader in a constructive way, in which the importance of the Organization or group you lead is paramount. In everything we did, all together we made a lot of laughter, and there was a fun vibe in discussing, dancing and learning.

My Story

This workshop series has been a steep and enjoyable ride – but also a wolf in sheep's clothes. Together we created a very safe space with the group, to share our truth and to enjoy our time together. Central for my journey was unlearning some of my beliefs and ways of doing.

To start with, on my first day, in the first session – just after the introduction – I recognised that my (belief and) definition of leadership was very narrow and false. My fixed idea about leadership was that it is very serious business... no fun in leading (for me). I even had to look serious and in earnest while leading. You can imagine I was thrilled to uncover this hidden unproductive belief.

Now I'm broadening my horizon with new work forms every day. Dancing through the room. Having fun, stretching my comfort zone and developing clarity on what matters

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Sharing Culture and Love NHE and Youth Camp, Bali

The Narayan Seva Children's Home family held an international camp with Balinese and American kids and parents from 1–4 March 2019, with the theme "Sharing Culture and Love". This camp had a purpose besides sharing culture and love; the kids at the Children's Home were able to practice English conversation, and showed their talent with their camp partner. Meanwhile, American kids found out about all the activities of the children's home and shared about their school, their personal experience, and how glad they were to have a lot of new friends from other countries.

This camp is an annual event at Narayan Seva. We work together with one group from America, called Planet Ranger. On the first day when they arrived, there was a tour around the children's home. This activity was conducted in groups, with each group guided by several children from Narayan Seva. Besides that, the parents had conversations and discussion with Didi regarding Balinese culture, and about NHE education for youth and children. All who participated in the camp followed the activities in Narayan Seva Children's Home such as cleaning, yoga, and meditation. Meditation we introduced ourselves especially for the people who participated the camp. Other activities included English class with English conversation, NHE games, Balinese dance, swimming at Air Sanih Spring and a market challenge for the parents. On the last day we held a closing event with a birthday party for everyone who has a birthday in March, as well as a cultural program.



NHE Teacher Training CNS - Center for Neohumanist Studies, Bali By Maya Pagandiri

From 20–25 November 2018, CNS Bali successfully conducted training for early childhood teachers from 8 schools in two different cities, in our master unit in Singaraja and in Sidan Jagriti in Gianyar. Ideas were brought to us by Avtk. Ananda Shubhada A'c, Didi Kirti A'c, and Brother Arun. Workshops included:

- Yoga for children to include big movement, yoga fun, yoga game and story
- Brain Gym
- NHE, storytelling, lesson planner
- Universal Paradigm, an open class for all margiis

As much as the dissemination of knowledge, the aim of the training was inspiration and encouragement of teachers and schools to practically apply their knowledge of NHE in their classrooms.

The training was really well received and generated a good deal of enthusiasm among teachers, school managers and the organizer. Now teachers are connected using whatsapp to share their classroom experiences.

We are all looking forward to next year's bi-annual training session, in May and November, and more!



AM Yoga Wellness

Annual One-Month Naturopathy Training in Cebu, Philippines February to March 2019 By Bhavanii of Malaysia

My transformation journey was beyond expression. Hopefully I am able to share it as close as possible through my words.

Although this yoga wellness program was very intensive, the outcome was profoundly felt by me - mentally, physically and spiritually. When I first arrived, I was worried if I would be able to cope and adapt to the program that started at 5:00am and continued until 9:30pm daily. To my surprise, I was able to adapt within 3 days.

Diet

The first 10 days, we were served delicious vegetarian food. Morning breakfast consisted of 5 types of seasonal fruits. Afternoon lunch and evening dinner consisted of soup, raw salad, cooked vegetables, all without oil. The first days there was also wholegrain rice, which was then discontinued when we started detoxing. Before every meal a Probiotic fermented-cabbage drink named "Revejulac" was served. After 10 days, we were put on fruit juice fasting lasting for a minimum of 5 days. Later, breakfast consisted only of fruit for the next 3 days, and slowly vegetables, grains, legumes and so on were added.

Activities

On a daily basis, we did 4 times kiirtan and meditation, 2 times yoga teachers' training, valuable naturopathic lectures, cardiovascular exercises, healthy cooking classes, posture correction classes, easy to follow natural healing treatments such as Sun Bath, Mud Pack, Hip Bath, Warm Apple Cider Vinegar Bath, Hydro-Spa, Hot Packs, Steam Bath, Infra-Red Sauna, Colema, etc, evening walks, evening art therapy or video watching. There were also 5 outings and 5 inner dance energy healing therapy sessions which I enjoyed very much.

Transformation

During detoxification, on a physical level, my sleep was abnormal for the first 10 days. I wasn't sure if it was due to the strong vibration coming from the center, a sudden diet change or if it was a challenge to my comfort zone by new experiences. Later when I



relaxed, I experienced that I only need 5 to 6 hours of sleep on a daily basis (my normal hrs are 7-8). After 5 days of juice fasting, I continued the fast for a total of 15 days as I enjoyed it. Juicing made my body light. Occasionally I experienced healing symptoms of fatigue, dry mouth—I even drank 4 to 5 liters water a day—body aching, headaches and sudden hot flashes or cold attacks. Mentally, I sometimes felt confused. I deeply questioned my life path. With no valid reason, I sometimes experienced feelings of hurt, anger and worry.

Sometimes I cried during kiirtan and meditation. Honestly, it was amazing. On a spiritual level, I built up the sort of disciplinary habit I have long needed of daily practice of kiirtan, meditation, and asanas.

By the end of the program, I had lost quite a bit of my excess weight. My digestive system healed. I had suffered indigestion for years due to an improper lifestyle. I felt like I had a complete makeover from top to bottom. I'm not only feeling light and calm but full of joy. I am very thankful to the center's staff and fellow peers for support, especially the mysterious voice whispering to me once, "Keep it up!"

My friends have noticed the difference this has had on me. Knowingly and unknowingly this program has changed my lifestyle. I am indeed very happy that I was invited to join this program by Dada Dharmavedananda.

To me, it's not only a wellness program, and a training enabling me to help others, but an awakening program. I encourage everyone out there to join this program at least once in your lifetime. You will definitely benefit from it! Namaskar!

(For information about future training, contact info@amwellness.org)



Love in Action

Three-day teacher training 2019, Zonnelicht, Holland

By Meike Bosch

This year the neohumanist school, Zonnelicht in Den Bosch organized their annual three-day teacher training on the theme Love in Action. The training, which took place on 7, 8, 9 March, consisted of two parallel programs at two separate venues. For the junior teachers it was held at the Lotus Centre in Den Bosch and for the senior teachers in Reek, a nearby village. The trainers for this year were Didi Ananda Devapriya, Ada Merz, Satya Tanner, Tonke Kuijt, Lisette Smulders, Tim Rammelt and Jasmijn Baten.



Junior Teacher Training in Den Bosch

As a brand-new HR employee, I was lucky to be involved in the development of this training. The purpose was to let the teachers discover and shape their own gift to the world. The ingredients were: Yama Niyama, the layers of the mind, storytelling, singing, dancing, meditation and games. I also participated in the training myself. I'd like to tell you about my experience during the training in this article.

Day 1: Yama Niyama, qualities and gifts to the world

The first day of the training Didi started with yoga. With serenity and radiant eyes Didi told us about the Yamas and the Niyamas. We did an exercise to find out what we want to give (more) time and attention. In the afternoon, under the guidance of coach Lisette Smulders, we did practical and educational exercises about our qualities and our role in a team. Finally, we drew our own gift to the world! What a beauty I saw! It was amazing. Everyone gave an open and honest insight into something personal, into something beautiful. It was shown with love and viewed with love. There was genuine interest and room for everyone's 'being'.

Day 2: Layers of the mind, storytelling and musical expression

The second day Satya started with an exercise about our perception of the behaviour from others. We laughed a lot. Didi gave us concrete examples of how we can develop the different layers of the mind. Tonke told us to sing upright from the sit bones and to use the own voice from within. Sounds are beautiful and should be pronounced in their completeness. We danced and sang in a circle of love. Ada and Satya told us about the ingredients of a good story: to the point, expression, lively voice, metaphors, pictures and emotions. Connection with the story is important. Images become more complete when they get the space to be formed in the mind of the child. We made stories, we practiced storytelling and we received tips from each other and from the trainers. The baby-teachers made and sang baby songs.

Day 3: Practice, presentation and evaluation

The third day started with a nice warm-up with coach Lisette Smulders. The baby-teachers sang under the guidance of Tim and Jasmijn and later for the whole group. Tim recorded it to make a CD. The other teachers rewrote the story about the apple tree (that was made during day 2) and visually designed it with drawings and attributes. The story was nicely rewritten and designed. Creating something together with everyone's unique contribution gave us positive energy. After that Didi shared her projects with us. It was a touching story about her beautiful work. The end of the training was very nice. We stood in the circle and Didi mentioned all kinds of things that we had done and experienced. If it applied to someone, that person was allowed to take a step forward and received 'applause' from the colleagues.

Every morning colleague Elly Musscher created a serene atmosphere with candles and aromatic oils. Every day she also prepared a delicious healthy lunch. Thank you Elly for that "Love in Action"!

During the evaluation, the teachers said that the training brought them love, connection, positive energy, creativity, insights, tools and inspiration. I certainly felt and saw "Love in Action" during these three days. Thank you colleagues and trainers for this lovely experience.

Engaging Children in Societal Change

by Ada Merz

Senior Teacher Training in Reek

The senior teachers had their three-day Love in Action training in a former old monastery, a picturesque monument dating back to the nineteenth century.



On the first morning, the film *Soil, Soul and Society*, presenting the social-spiritual activist Satish Kumar's TED talk on planetary and self transformation, set the tone for the training. The teachers were then presented with seven different areas of societal living: politics, ecology, economy, culture, health, spirituality and education and asked to brainstorm on the kind of significant changes they wished to see happening or to bring about. After that they teamed up and chose a specific area that resonated with their inner core. They were asked to discover their personal calling by finding the meeting point between the story of the world and their individual qualities and talents.

The purpose of firing up their passion for change and aligning this to their gift was to bring their personal awakening into the classroom so as to arouse the consciousness of the children, to help and guide them with setting up activities, and to motivate them into becoming agents for change. Putting theory into practice, the teachers were invited to draw/paint and map out a plan. All this material was further used for setting up a quest.

The teachers thoroughly enjoyed this particular part of the training where they were encouraged to use elements of magical play, adventure, colorful attributes, self-made raps/jingles and different aspects of yama-niyama and the layers of the mind in bringing their message home. The monastery garden, filled with old trees, winding paths and niches, served as an excellent outdoor space for fueling their imagination in preparing and demonstrating an educational quest for children.



Storytelling as a Medium for Teaching Yama and Niyama to Children

By Ada Merz

This article is based on our storytelling workshop for junior teachers that was given in Den Bosch

Why it is effective to teach yama-niyama through stories.

- Children love stories! Everybody loves a good story. They give us great pleasure and fuel our imagination.
- Stories are a powerful medium for transmitting messages you want to get across. They sell well. Storytelling captures our emotional brain, and ethical stories can touch our higher sensitivity, i.e. our creative and intuitive layers.
- Our human brains are wired for stories. It's one of the oldest forms of communication. We human beings and our society run on stories. Stories are our food.
- Stories can be a fun and are emotionally an exciting way of learning. Children learn best when learning is joyful.

What is it about stories that make them such a good medium?

Storytelling makes use of images, emotions, context, sound (voice, jingles), causality, and more.

1. Imagery use – information presented in images captures a child's mind more than dry information. These images are woven together in sequences and into a bigger picture (the story itself) making it easier for children to pick up the messages they contain. They stick to the mind. As they listen to the story many children have the ability to form pictures on the screen of their own mind which can be mesmerizing, more than reality itself.

2. Emotional content - children are drawn by the emotional content in stories. Stories that convey positive emotions and qualities have the ability to increase our empathy and humanness. They can connect us to ourselves and to others, be it to the human or the natural world.

3. Contextual messages – messages put into a context make more sense than loose information. The unfolding messages in stories provide order or resolutions to problems or emotions we do not yet understand. Ethical messages conveyed in a story form are less threatening to a child. There is no direct finger pointing. It's the fictive naughty characters in the story that get corrected and not the child listening to the story.

4. Causality – through stories, children develop an understanding of causality. On a moral level that means by doing good, you reap goodness or by acting bad you reap bad karma.

5. Conflict resolution – heroes are often depicted as someone who successfully overcomes difficulty in pursuit of a goal or an ideal. They meet their challenges and stand up against the forces working against them. Heroes are problem solvers and in an ethical story make great role models.

6. Role modeling - children identify themselves with the characters, especially the hero. Unconsciously they absorb the qualities and ethical behavior of their heroes, or deplore the misdeeds of the villains. In a story form, children may recognize the greatness in others or in themselves or, on the other hand, get a glimpse of the moments they were mean, inspiring them to correct their own behavior. Stories act like mirrors in that way.

7. Metaphor – the use of metaphors creates images that give stories a poetic touch and can leave a more lasting impression. A good metaphor conveys a thought more powerfully than a mere statement. Metaphors such as 'her mind was a peaceful lake', or 'the lion in him roared', capture our imagination more than a mere descriptive statement. Metaphors add to the emotional and magical content of the story and their use can give greater clarity to what is being conveyed. Children love animals and using them metaphorically is a great way of teaching values. Metaphor also gives stories different levels of interpretation, making the story accessible to everyone.

8. Enchantment – stories can transport children to a world of enchantment and wisdom; a world filled with endless possibilities where horses can fly, frogs turn into princes, and a pumpkin into a golden carriage, where the world of humans merges with that of animals, plants, rocks and where nature elements and creatures from different kingdoms can communicate with each other, creating a feeling of oneness. They affirm that transformation is within our reach, that growing and emerging is a part of life. Children move into the deeper layers of their minds and closer to the essence of their beings. Enchanting stories can induce or increase the children's longing for a deeper meaning in life.

9. Storyteller's voice and expression – the quality of the storyteller's voice is an important component in storytelling. A melodious use of the voice helps to build up a pleasant tension and mesmerizing atmosphere as the story progresses and unfolds. Combined with supporting gestures and the right facial expression, it will hold children spellbound. A storyteller who merges her being into the story and connects herself to the children's hearts creates a wonderful energy exchange, a oneness of mind which can be powerful in conveying empathic messages.

Conclusion: We can conclude that yama-niyama presented in the narrative form can be paradigm shifting and deeply connecting, instilling a common vision and presenting modes of behavior that bring out the children's humanness in an effective way. Through stories children can share passions, sadness, hardships, and joy as they journey into adulthood.

Reflective Teachers, Reflective Learners:

Weaving Permaculture Principles into NHE Curriculum

By Didi Ananda Devapriya

Permaculture - More than Gardening?

While many people equate permaculture with gardening, this is only one of the many ways that permaculture can be practiced. Permaculture at its core is a set of ethics and principles applied dynamically to daily decision making. It can be flexibly used to inform choices about the best combination of plants for a shady part of the garden, or for designing a process to make sure all children's voices in a classroom are valued.

The Active Role of a Designer

Permaculture is often referred to as a design system, seeking to emulate the interdependent patterns of ecological systems.

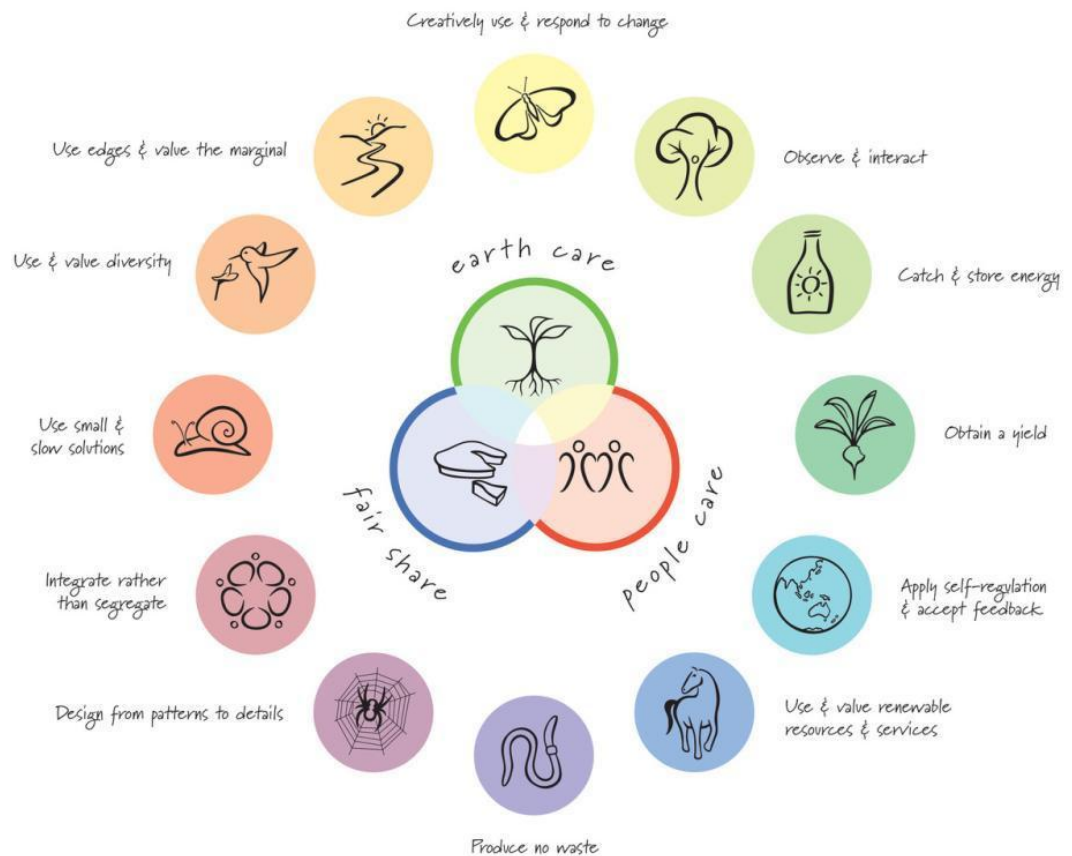
When one steps into the role of a designer, this requires an intelligent, strategic and creative attitude. It is an empowered position, in contrast to the passive position of a simple user or consumer. In education, inviting children into the role of a designer, means to see them as dynamic co-creators of their own curriculum, rather than as recipients of content and skill-building exercises, according to learning objectives pre-determined by adults.

Developing a Reflective Neohumanist Consciousness

Using the three ethics of "earth care, people care and fair share", permaculture challenges human beings to broaden the way they make decisions. Rather than blindly considering only our own short term comfort and welfare, permaculture ethics guide us to include the welfare and prosperity of other beings and natural resources. This is a key part of developing a reflective Neohumanist consciousness, rather than an anthropocentric one. This is the consciousness we need in order to transform human beings' current dysfunctional, toxifying relationship to the natural world into one that generates health, abundance and prosperity for the whole ecosystem.

Scaling Permaculture to a Critical Mass

Yet, the permaculture movement has remained mostly confined to a fringe of progressive thinkers and activists, and predominantly identified with its application in agricultural contexts. Unfortunately, its rate of



absorption into society is still far slower than the great and urgent need for massive shifts in our collective behaviour and in the consciousness determining it.

Part of this is due to a perception that permaculture would require us to all return to a pre-industrial revolution lifestyle, renouncing the lifestyles and comforts we are accustomed to. Human psychology is to continuously expand towards the new and the subtle. That is one of the underlying laws of human nature. As permaculture seeks to work in harmony rather than in opposition to nature, it helps us then to recognise that sustainable human change must take into account this quality. To oppose the tendency towards expansion and progress may have limited success for a period of time with highly motivated and committed people, but this is difficult to spread on a mass scale. Even if successful on a mass scale, change that is not aligned with human nature would likely only be temporary if it is reactionary rather than progressive.

Working with Human Nature

However, a true permaculture strategy that is aligned with human psychology, is to apply our intelligence, creativity, and technology towards solutions that are harmonious and beneficial for the whole natural system that includes, but is not limited to human interests. Such a shift implies a fundamental shift of values. Do we only value immediate sensorial pleasure—or can we learn to become increasingly sensitive and to develop our ability

to seek pleasure in choices that are ecological and compassionate? How to tap the natural inclination of human beings towards service in this direction?

Introducing Permaculture in Childhood

As childhood is a critical time of life for the formation of life-long world views and attitudes, it is an ideal period to introduce the permaculture ethics of earth care, people care and fair share in order to develop a Neohumanist relationship with the surrounding world. Yet, to those who have only had superficial contact with it, permaculture can sometimes seem abstract and difficult to access for the non-technically minded. Is it then even realistically possible to make it palatable for small children?

Whereas coherent ethical behavior, in which a person explicitly uses a set of values to weigh decisions, emerges together with other complex cognitive skills of analysis. Even small infants already respond in a rudimentary, but clearly positive way towards kind, compassionate behavior vs. selfish, mean behavior. (Wynn and Bloom “Moral Baby”, Yale University.)

Weaving Principles and Ethics into Daily Life

So ethics and principles can be taught even to small



children— but not in a direct, didactic, lesson-based style —rather woven into the fabric of everyday life.

When the adults in a child's life narrate the thinking happening during decision making processes, and bring ethics and principles into that conversation, it brings the hidden mechanisms of choice making to light. Explicit demonstration of ethical thinking in the direct context of ordinary situations effectively help children to imbibe those values. This approach works not only with small children but is effective with school-aged children and youth. These more mature young people can be even more involved in answering open ended questions, and invited to contribute their thinking about decisions.

Given the great need in modern society for a fundamental shift in how we relate to our natural world and each other, how can education provide a pathway to accelerate the understanding and application of permaculture principles in a wide variety of circumstances? How to successfully integrate these principles into existing kindergarten and school curriculums?

The Children in Permaculture Project

This was the very challenge that the Children in Permaculture (CIP) project has undertaken. This three-year project was the result of an intensive collaboration between permaculture teachers, Neohumanist educators, public school teachers and forest kindergarten experts from seven organisations in five partner countries. One of the significant achievements of the Children in Permaculture project was the publication of the teachers' manual “Earth Care, People Care and Fair Share in Education”. This book, which was advertised in the last issue of Gurukula Network, is available for free online, and can also be ordered on the website: www.childreninpermaculture.com.



In the manual, the permaculture ethics and principles were translated into simple, child-friendly (and teacher-friendly) ways, in order to give teachers the tools to not only explain the principles, but more importantly, to use them as tools to systematically reflect on decisions and enhance learning throughout the day. Whenever ethics principles are introduced in the manual, they are accompanied by set of open-ended reflection questions for direct use with children, thus stimulating them to consider the needs of other people, animals and plants, or to use other permaculture principles as a lens that deepens their understanding and connection to nature.

Continuous Reflection for Deep, Lasting Change

Changing a value system does not happen in a two-week theme project, but rather is something that happens when there is a continual process of reflection in ordinary situations and decision making. The manual and website provide many “seeds for activities” in which short,

practical examples of activities are given that are designed to trigger further elaboration by teacher for inclusion in different areas of curriculum — science, social studies, art, etc. Small children will not sit attentively to understand the principle of “catching and storing energy”, but they can be fascinated by an experiment to catch rain water in differently shaped containers. They also pick up on all of the times that an adult explains why they fill up the sink with water to wash the dishes rather than letting it the tap run continuously while rinsing. Children are pattern-seeking machines and through repeated experiences, understand what is important.

Children as Change Agents

Using permaculture methods in education has a revolutionary potential to usher in Neohumanist consciousness into society. It requires long-term coaching and supporting teachers to make this value shift in their thinking, in the first place. Through the vehicle of permaculture, once children grasp and internalize a neohumanist approach to thinking, there is the potential to viralize it, as they become agents of change in their own families. Imagine the impact on parents when children start to advocate for using bicycles instead of fossil fuels, or want to grow vegetables together at home. Parents tend to aspire towards being the best examples

they can for their children. The mass changes in human behavior needed for a sustainable, livable planet will certainly require many influence strategies to be successful, but education can play a key role in reaching the masses.

Let's Bring Children in Permaculture into NHE Schools and Beyond!

Indeed, when the executive director of the Permaculture Association of Great Britain, that was the lead partner in the Children in Permaculture project, met at the conclusion of the project with the CIP team, he announced that their next year's strategic plan was going to prioritize bringing permaculture into education. It is natural for all Neohumanist kindergartens and schools to play a lead role in pioneering the integration of permaculture into their curriculums, using the CIP materials. In writing the Children in Permaculture manual, I directly integrated much of our Neohumanist Education approach into it, and I believe that it can enhance our ability to cultivate awakened conscience, or rationalistic mentality in the children and adults we are working with. The CIP project has also developed a two day training for educators. Please contact didi@amurtel.ro if you would be interested in organising such a training at your school or kindergarten.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19 - New Take on Leadership Training A report by Timotheus Rammelt

with “Dance, Talk times three”. Telling fellow human beings about what I want to do in the world without holding anything back... that was spectacular.

Looking back, I have to say I enjoyed growing in LM. This enjoyment is unique because growing for me had previously always been associated with some pain. “No pain, no gain...” was an uneasy truth in much of my growth. Growth derived mostly from my “Pusher-self”. When things were not working in my studies or work – push harder. No choice but the uneasy path of growth. Learning and growing in schools, therefore, was often unpleasant for me. Unlearning, expanding and developing in this workshop series – escaping my pusher self – has been a delightful and captivating ride!

Sources of hope were therefore many and varied during those days. Learning to cherish our first followers, love our second followers, and then we can indeed inspire a new movement. Learning to see we already arrived at the pinnacle of world transformation; instead of pushing for change. Learn to ride the wave.

LM came at the right moment for me and was served with precisely the right intensity. It helps me to escape from habitual business, and to focus on the right things with the appropriate action. I am moving away from Human Doing and towards Human Being. How to finally hack my life and my society – that's my kind of question! Now going forward; hacking the future. The possibilities are endless as are the sources of hope for all of us.

*“I want to say it's time to get moving
but really, we are always moving
Along with atoms and stars and all that lies between
No, it's time to move in other directions!”*

Ending this article with the first part of a poem by Marcus Bussey, “It's Time”, from his book of poetry and reflections, *The Next Big Thing*, I express my gratitude.

If you want to hear about the next Leadership Matters; sign up to the Lotus newsletter!"
Go to: <<https://www.lotus-training.nl/>>

Best Practice: Expanding the Heart

By Arun Jacobson

In the application of the all-encompassing philosophy of Neohumanism to education, we have recently sorted our endeavors into three main avenues: Expanding the Heart, Freeing the Mind, and Engaging in Society. These three endeavors need to be ongoing throughout a person's educational experience—from early childhood through early adulthood—if they are to be counted on to make deep roots, and bear beautiful fruits one day. It is a long-term process.

That is why we describe our Progressive School to every new family as a “long-term character-based program.” Over the years, I have had the chance to meet with adults who went through our Neohumanist school system at Progressive School, and who exemplify those personal character traits we could term Neohumanist. In these interviews, we attempted to unwind their learning back to its beginnings, and discover which practices had the most profound influence on their values, personality, and ambitions; on their hearts, minds, and actions.

Exploring the avenue specifically deemed Expanding the Heart, we identified ten major (and several minor) practices that were considered most effective:

1. Deep meditation
2. Teacher as role model
3. Service-based learning and Volunteering
4. Choice of great literature
5. Classroom micro-society
6. Collective projects
7. Nature-based learning
8. Aesthetic-based learning: all the Arts
9. Compassion-based learning in Social Studies and Current Events
10. Biographies of individuals who exemplify an expanded heart

When one's circle of love includes not just family, or a few friends, or certain pets, or useful plants, or even all of humanity, but rather all of creation, including the elements that make up the physical universe, that is the stance of Neohumanism. The result of that stance is a natural tendency towards Cosmic Ideation.

Those who experience Cosmic Ideation do not all arrive there via the same route. That is to say, not everyone responds to same way to the ten practices listed above. For some, a lasting inspiration might have started with a song (8), or a walk in an ancient forest (7), or a chance to step into the shoes of Mother Teresa (10). However, we can summarize our experiences by highlighting the top three items on the list as being frequently credited for sparking the inspiration to become a Neohumanist.

(3) Service-based learning and Volunteering:

A search through the Progressive School handbook finds the word “service” listed 36 times. Service-based learning is simply the most effective way to put

information and skills into long-term memory. Why? Here are just a few reasons: because we are expanding the heart when considering another entity's needs, because it solves a real-world problem, because it often involves collective planning, because it brings meaning to our lives. The act of Service or Volunteering takes us temporarily out of our ego, and realigns our perspective. Suddenly our troubles don't seem so big. Suddenly bringing joy to another is worth more than any material object. Suddenly the suffering or inconvenience we have to go through becomes an opportunity for which we are thankful. I have watched countless students cite Service experiences in their graduation speech as the most meaningful of their childhood. A common statement that comes from the lips of those describing their mental state while engaged in Service is this: “That could be my mother.”

(2) Teacher as a role model:

It is hard to conceptualize expanded love. What does it look like? How does it feel? How does it act? Yet it is easy to conceive of when embodied by a great teacher. At Progressive School we have two teachers in a classroom. This gives double the opportunity to find a role model, and a chance to see a daily living example of how two people should relate and interact with each other. When a teacher touches a child's heart with patience, or generosity, or a tenacious belief in them, or by compassionate listening, or by personal sacrifice for them, or by showing them a better way, or by including the neglected in their circle, it is not easily forgotten. In fact, we all know that it is remembered for a lifetime. It becomes a perennial source of inspiration. The loving model of a teacher with an expanded heart brings about this mental statement: “That could be me.”

(1) Deep meditation:

People most often think of meditation as a quiet or lonely practice, a way to get away from the world. The quiet, lonely, getting away from everything aspects of meditation only apply to the world of sensory stimulation. At a deeper level of mind, when the senses are suspended, meditation brings us closer to our essence, our source of being. Despite our physical separation and superficial differences, the deeper we go, the more alike we are. All long for peace, love, security, freedom, happiness in unlimited quantities. There is a song we sing before meditation at Progressive School that has this stanza:

*Every heart in the world wants to love infinitely
Every soul in the world wants to feel that it is free
Go beyond, let no dogma bind us
We are one with the force that guides us.*

Deep meditation leads to this mental statement towards everything: “That is me, I am That.”

Expanding the Heart in Neohumanism means finding

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

Peace Ambassadors at The River School Melany, Australia

By Ann Donoghoe, Principal

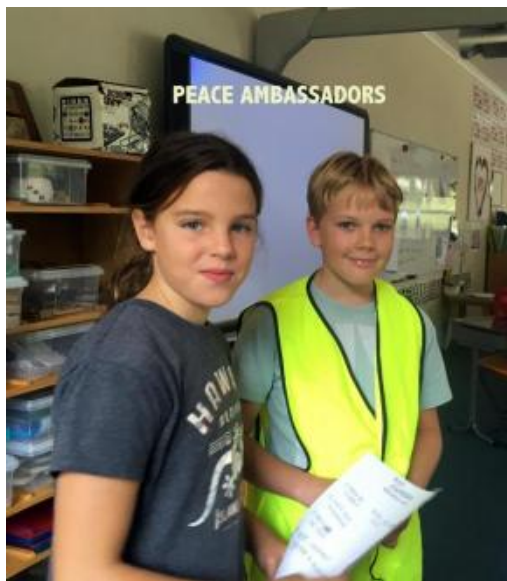
The most powerful leadership tool you have is your own personal example – John Wooden

Peace Ambassadors (PA) is a student mentoring and leadership program in its second year at the River School. The program is open to Yr. 6 students who are keen to learn **Restorative Practice** methods to assist their younger peers resolve low-level playground conflict in a peaceful and restorative manner.

To qualify as a Peace Ambassador students must participate in three training sessions with Ann Donoghoe, member of Restorative Practices International, and Principal of the beautiful River School.

The first session begins with students defining the role of a Peace Ambassador using a group brainstorming process. The qualities are identified, scribed and discussed. This is followed with a three-step activity to explore the big picture in order to determine what the students envisage a ‘peaceful playground’ would look like (adapted from — *Positive Peace in Schools Tackling Conflict and Creating a Culture* by Hilary Cremin and Terence Bevington).

The second training session starts with students reflecting on what they decided were the ‘most important’ indicators of a peaceful playground. The selected indicators are made into a charter for their classroom to guide students as Peace Ambassadors while on ‘duty’. The students are introduced to Restorative Practice through two short video clips — *A Short Introduction to Restorative Approaches* by Luke Roberts and *A mini video tutorial on Restorative Practice* by Benn’s Beaches.



Following the videos students discussed **Traditional** (*What happened? Who’s to Blame? What punishment do they deserve?*) and **Restorative** (*What happened?, Who’s been harmed?, What needs to happen to repair the harm?*) approaches to conflict.

To clarify the role of a restorative Peace Ambassador, students agreed on the following four steps:

1. Identify the harm, who has been affected and how
2. Repair the Harm, using Restorative Chat
3. Repair the Relationship
4. Restore the Peace. Students then worked in small groups to role-play conflict scenarios using the restorative chat questions — *What happened? Who has been affected? How can we/you fix this?*

In the final training session, a ‘fish bowl’ approach is used to practice the restorative chat. This involves students sitting in a semi circle while one group acts out a conflict situation, which they then use a restorative approach to repair. At the end of each role-play, the audience (other students) have the

opportunity to ask questions and to make positive suggestions on ways to improve the way the conflict was handled. At the end of this session, students are excited to receive their PA vests and name tags.

Since completing the training our PAs are very active in the playground. They also present a weekly report at our whole School Morning Circle to share the kind behaviours they have spotted in the playground. We are very proud of the ‘serve to lead’ role our Yr. 6 students voluntarily take on as River School Peace Ambassadors.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

that everyone and everything is in your circle. If we take the mental statements of our top three techniques for Expanding the Heart, we get the following: “That could be my mother, ... that could be me, ... that is me.” In this way it becomes clear how service, proper role model, and meditation form a natural progression that can take one to the pinnacle of compassion: seeing your Self in everything.

The River School Experience

Interview conducted by Didi Ananda Tapomaya', edited by Alieta Belle

These two smiling young people are Lotte Butink (20) and Isabel Wingert (27), who came to the River School from Stenden University in the Netherlands, where they currently study international teacher education for primary schools (ITEps). ITEps is a recently initiated course that prepares students to teach at international schools.

Lotte and Isabel completed their teaching practicum at the River School in the first nine weeks of 2019. They were supervised and guided by the River School's class teachers. Before arriving, Lotte and Isabel had done some research into Neohumanism and the school's values. As they expressed in their introduction letter, they were ready to embrace the philosophy and the school's teaching vision. As the last day of their visit was drawing near, we were eager to hear what was their 'River School Experience'.

Natural surroundings; the beautiful creek, of course!

Lotte and Isabel both expressed that they loved the natural rainforest surroundings and the school grounds, where most children run barefoot. Lotte was thrilled about how many additional activities were a normal part of the children's time at school, such as going to have a swim at the school creek, going by school bus to the town pool, and going for an excursion in town. She delighted in the atmosphere one can experience when living in a small village; people knowing each other in the community and the outdoors in easy reach.

Isabel found it fascinating how amazingly the school has managed to combine the demands of Australian National Curriculum and the nature approach and community of the River School. She did her practice with Year 1, Pademelons, with class teacher Trudi Cauley. Isabel was glad to find out not only that children had enough time to play, but also that the school reinforces learning by play, playful learning.

"I think it's very important for the children to grow up by building their knowledge by playing. I think these days we forget children are still children. We expect a lot of them, without realising that it is important for them to have a break, go outside, have a play in nature, and even have a few minutes of meditation. I loved how here you see every student as an individual human being, and not only as a number. In a lot of schools, you see that teachers and students don't work as a team anymore, and I am a strong believer in teamwork between students and teachers. I saw that it was possible at this school," Isabel reflects.

Socio-emotional dimension in teaching – and in being

When asked how this experience has become part of their formation as a teacher, Isabel tells about her previous teaching practice at a school in Germany. She explained that it was a very strict and structured school, where a lot of emphasis was placed on academic skills only. Isabel felt shaken by her time there and wasn't sure anymore if she wanted to become a teacher after all. She found herself disagreeing about a lot of the teaching methods, eg. on treating children as just a number, on not taking care of their emotional needs, and just focusing on tests and exams.

Her stay at The River School and her observations of how teaching and learning can be completely different has truly opened her eyes and renewed her positive views on teaching.

"My time here helped me a lot to see how to follow my path, and that I didn't choose the wrong studies. I got reaffirmed that it is possible to teach differently and in a human way." Isabel feels that it has been a definite breakthrough for her as a teaching student and has been significant for her personal development.

Lotte added that it was good to see how the socio-emotional aspect to learning has been included in the teacher-centred classroom. She was positively surprised on her first days at the school to see a child being comforted and hugged by the teacher and given time to sort out feelings. Whereas elsewhere in her previous practicum placements she was told teachers are never to hug children (which she thinks is nonsense).

Values of connection and respect – inner motivation

Lotte expressed that she learnt a great deal from her Year 6 mentor teacher Kerrie Kirwan. One of the key tools she was happy to be able to use was the concept of 'grounding'. She was surprised how the students have included it into their common vocabulary. In this practice the teacher asks children to 'ground' themselves before entering the class, and again before starting the lesson.

For Lotte the "best thing ever" has been making a meaningful connection with the children. She recalled times when a child had been upset and she was allowed to comfort and listen to them. She was happy to discover that amazing connections with the Year 6 Red Cedar class of 11-year-olds have grown from these moments.

During her last week, many of the children came up to tell her how it won't be same without her. She also enjoyed being able to have humorous jokes that had grown between her and the students, eg. one boy would always start colouring his nails while in her maths class. Lotte was planning give him bright-neon nail polish when she leaves!



Isabel has discovered how important the value of respect is. In some schools, she notes, they want the children to show respect for teachers, but they don't really give respect back. "We are role models and we should all respect each other," she says. What Isabel really appreciated in this Neohumanist school was the teaching of values; showing everyone respect and treating everyone how you want to be treated. Isabel stressed her belief in this 'Golden Rule'.

Isabel thinks we should teach values and behaviour in our schools and has sadly seen in her practicum placements that there has been little focus on values. She understands that it can be a point of contention, eg. some parents wanting to teach values at home and other parents seeing it as an important part of education. She takes a firm point of view asserting that "we definitely should teach values at school especially in early childhood settings."

"Here the children really experience what is kindness, what is caring," Isabel reflects. "It is really important to embrace and to remember those values and to have it felt in your body. I don't think it's something just for kids, it's also for the adult world, it's something you will carry for the rest of your life." Isabel elaborated on how values help us to be thoughtful and prepared to sort out conflict, "as life is not just black and white, and we need tools and ability to solve problems."

Lotte shares Isabel's thoughts on which one of the inner values she finds most important in education. "What I find really important is Respect; respecting others, respecting nature, respecting yourself, respecting all things." Lotte continued, discussing her line of thought, "...giving others space, space for yourself just to be, becoming aware of what you need and fulfilling your own needs, being able to take care of yourself, realising your own autonomy."

Lotte feels strongly that in education the ownership of learning should be given to the children and that they should have the chance to be in charge and manage their own learning in a responsible way. She agrees that the model of giving children their own stewardship in learning requires trust in children's abilities. "In many education models we are taught not to listen to an inner guide, and so often we don't know what we actually need or want and have lost our ability to follow our own curiosity. We rather choose to follow 'outer motivation' which is learning because we are told to, in order to pass exams and advance."

Lotte passionately articulates that, *"The only education we should have is learning with the heart because with it comes being able to work with curiosity and inner drive, only then true learning can happen."*

Child-centred vs. teacher-centred

Lotte has experienced many different forms of education and is very fond of student-centred education. She was very curious to see Neohumanist Philosophy put in practice at The River School. She believes learning at The River School is still teacher-centred. She is

grappling with the issue of being 'progressive' and 'teacher-centred'. Lotte appreciates the socio-emotional practices she observed at The River School and saw it as a sign of progressive education. However she observed 'teacher-centred' practices, such as the teacher deciding what is learnt when and how much time is spent on it. "How do I feel about that? I'm still looking at this question," she says and laughs. She prefers children to have them follow their own inner guidance, their own curiosity in learning.

Challenges

For Isabel some challenges were realising how much hard work a teacher puts in to differentiate their teaching practice, in order to meet the skills and talents of children. Isabel commented that, "teachers are expected to reach out to every child, and challenge them with academic skills, even though there can be a big gap in abilities and knowledge." She thinks teachers in general are very harsh on themselves, because they always try the best they can and question what to do better the next time. "Reflecting on one's own actions at lessons can be challenging, but it's important for one's own growth."

For Lotte a challenge has been finding how far to go with listening and giving space for emotional needs of children, without dwelling in the feeling too long.

Parents

When asked how they saw the cultural differences in parent participation here and elsewhere, Isabel comments that parents at River School are quite engaged, since they are allowed to be part of the school. She really likes the concept of letting parents be involved and has seen them quite often in lessons helping out. In Germany Isabel barely met parents, because the rule was for parents to say goodbye at the gate. No parents were allowed in the class. Isabel thinks it's good for children to see that the school and parents work as a team and are connected.

Lotte didn't see many parents assist in the Year 6 classroom, but met them helping at the tuckshop, at bake sales and other school events. "The fact that they have chosen The River School for their children is an act of being involved in the philosophy already," she mused. Lotte also perceived most of the parents as open and free-spirited.

Isabel absolutely loved her time at the River School and being mentored by Trudi, from whom she learnt a lot. "You really feel the loving, kind and caring community here. You really feel that, while you teach here. I love that."

Lotte expressed how much she enjoyed her practicum placement at The River School. She saw how nurturing a connection with children is given lot of importance at this school. In her previous teaching placements she didn't always agree on the school's teaching methods. "But here I have seen how it all makes sense; fostering inner values. I'm very much on the same line," she shared enthusiastically.

The PROUT Parliament Game

By Dr. Sohail Inayatullah (UNESCO Chair in Futures Studies)

At a recent conference in Australia, I had the chance to experiment with gaming and creating progressive policy futures by running the first Prout Parliament Game. The core question was what would the world look like if Prout – as theory and movement – were in power; if the core ideas of Prout¹ were adopted as the norm, as informing and framing global and local legislative priorities?²

The Prout Parliament Game has four parts. Part 1 is an explanation of core Prout ideas in a futures context. Part 2 is a futures wheel process that develops the implications of key emerging issues. Part 3 is the development of a checklist that is used to inform decision-making. And part 4 is the process of using the checklist to vote on parliamentary proposals. The structure and processes of the game lend itself to easy adoption for other social movements and organizations.

PART ONE

I began the workshop with the overall global context. First was Sri P.R. Sarkar's argument that not only was time "galloping" – increasing at a rapid pace – but that as global and local political and economic systems are experiencing flux, individuals can have a greater impact: you and I can make a difference. Second, the critical importance of vision, of defining where we as a society wished to be in 20 years. The argument made was that those who can imagine a desired future, feel the future they wish, had a greater chance of achieving the future. Strategy thus emerges from vision and not as an outcome of current problems.

I then presented some critical aspects of Prout. These were:

- a. Inclusive spiritual practice
- b. A vegetarian diet, especially non-violence towards animals
- c. Deep sustainability in that Gaia is treated as a cooperative partner
- d. The switch to renewable energy and the creation of energy cooperatives through peer to peer energy platforms
- e. Neohumanistic education – a focus on teaching and telling stories based on planetary identity.
- f. The move toward regional association, imagining a confederation of Asian and antipodean states – an Asian-Australian union by 2038
- g. Finally, we sought to move beyond GDP to a quadruple bottom line to measure this future: prosperity (increased goods and services), sustainability (nature, first), social inclusion (a society where inclusion is designed as the norm) and spirituality (happiness and other measures of bliss).



PART TWO

In this context, we developed six working groups and asked a series of what-if questions (derived from the foresight literature)³ for Australia by 2038. Each group explored the implications of each question and articulated Prout strategies.

1. Chindia wins the current economic game – 50% of world GDP is produced by these two nations
2. The Neohumanist Education revolution – national policy of teaching deep sustainability and inclusion.
3. The energy shift to renewables – 50% of all homes produce their own energy
4. Plant based diets as the new normal – 50% of all individuals self-identify with a plant diet based (up from the current 1 million or 5% vegetarian or vegan in Australia)
5. Gender equity – in 50% of all boards (up from the current 27-32%)
6. Technologies of the mind – eight million practice meditation or 36% of the Australian population by 2038. This would be up from the current two million.

Each group presented policy positions. I report on two of them.

For the rise of plant based diets, including the likely exponential growth of cellular agriculture, participants (who all happened to be between the ages of 8-14) suggested that Prout work with farmers to help them transition from meat-based systems to plant-based systems. The suffering of animals needed to be addressed. Prout practicing compassion was paramount here.

¹ Prout has five dimensions: 1. an alternative cyclical theory of history; 2. an alternative economic system that is cooperative based; 3. a global governance system with spiritual practice as foundational; 4. a new theory of integrated leadership that transforms the historical cycle to a dynamic spiral; and 5. a gaian theory of self based on gender equity and planetary identity.

² Sohail Inayatullah, Prout in Power. Policy solutions that reframe our futures. Delhi, Proutist Bloc of India, 2017.

³ For more on this, see: www.metafuture.org. Also, www.shapingtomorrow.com and www.futuresplatform.com

The technologies of the mind group noted that with 50% of people meditating, there would likely be improved physical and mental health, thus freeing up financial resources to be used in other areas. There would also be an elevation of consciousness – softer, wiser, integrated – of the society, making progressive policy changes in other areas easier.

PART THREE

After brief presentations by each group, participants were asked to develop a Prout checklist. A checklist becomes a way of articulating policy based on the core Prout ideas and not on sentiments one may privately hold. It also helps in taking Prout from a theory to practice.

Groups articulated a number of salient points. Some of the key ones were:

- Does the policy lead to reduction in crime?
- Is the policy inclusive?
- Does the policy reduce pain to animals and nature?
- Does the policy encourage cooperation?
- Does the policy reduce inequity?
- Does the policy encourage cooperatives?
- Does the policy ensure that the basic requirements of housing, health, and education are provided for all?
- Does the policy wisely use new technologies?

PART FOUR

With the establishment of a working checklist, we then convened the Prout parliament. As this was experimental, we first had policy positions that were easy to dissect.

In the first, it was suggested that all western medicine be removed by 2038. Using the checklist, this was quickly voted down – as it excluded an important healing tradition, it would lead to more harm, and as one participant reminded, Sarkar was pluralistic toward healing tradition – what mattered most was whether the modality cured or not. The second policy suggestion was terminating funding for renewable energy sources and the move toward full nuclear. This was also quickly voted down as the risk of harm was considered too great. Nuclearization would also lead to a concentration of economic power. Local, cooperative energy solutions from solar, wind, and geothermal were recommended instead.

The parliamentary floor was then opened up to all proposals. Three individuals presented.

The first suggested that meditation practice be legislated for all high schools in Australia. There was a debate as to which type of meditation. This was clarified as 20 minutes a day of quiet mindfulness every morning. Further clarification was sought as to primary versus high schools. The presenter argued that for primary schools it would be optional, but for secondary schools, it would be mandatory. Given the health gains and correlated reduction in crime and other positives associated with mindfulness/meditation, the resolution was passed.

The second suggested that regulation of housing be reduced so that one could quickly put up homes as needed so as to reduce homelessness. The votes were positive, however, the gender group was concerned that a lack of regulation could adversely impact safety, nature, and cultural heritage. The presenter modified his proposal, asking for reduced regulation and not the end of regulation.

The last presenter wished to adopt a policy of no government interference in private education. Upon clarification that there would still be federal neohumanist⁴ guidelines, the proposal was passed. Education policy would be set through educational experts and registered bodies using evidence-based policy.

The game concluded with the parliament funding the three proposals. Each committee was given (an imaginary) one million dollars to fund research and implementation.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion was that the Prout Parliament Game was a practical and easy way to teach Prout and a great way to envision what a Proutist society could look like. While some expressed positive doubt, the workshop ended with a quote from Sri Sarkar:

***"A bright future awaits you – your future is glorious, your future is luminous, your future is effulgent ... the future of humanity is strikingly resplendent."**⁵*



⁴ For more on neohumanism, see: Sohail Inayatullah, Marcus Bussey and Ivana Milojevic. Eds. Neohumanist Educational Futures. Tamsui, Tamkang University, 2006.

⁵ P.R. Sarkar. The Electronic Edition of the Works of P.R. Sarkar, Version 7.5. The Thoughts of PR Sarkar. You are never alone. Kolkata, Ananda Marga, 2008.



MANILA SECTOR



Let the Children have a Happy World! NHE News from Vietnam By Trần Thúy Ngọc

Dana Winner has sung:
*“Let the children have a world
where there is no pain or sorrow,
where they all can live tomorrow
and they share a brighter day.
Let the children have a world
where the people can be free,
where they all can join together
and their hearts will share a dream.”*



To share this dream of a just and sustainable world, we have been doing some activities here in our efforts to expand the heart and free the mind for kids. Besides the annual celebration of the International Children's Day on June 1st with Yoga for Kids, courses on Kids Yoga Teacher Training have been held at our AM Ho Chi Minh City Quarters from time to time for pre-school teachers. Some NHE aspirants have practiced their learning: Phạm Thị Hiếu Anh has been conducting a Kid Yoga class at “Kitty Kindergarten” as well as some training courses for interested students at “Yoga Daily Academy” in Ho Chi Minh City.



Phan Khanh Quỳnh and Nguyễn Thủy inaugurated their kindergarten “Chuyện Nhỏ” in Ho Chi Minh City last February.

Additionally, some charity services (cooking, donation, festivals ...) have been offered regularly by AMURT Saigon to various poor orphanages in South Vietnam, such as Linh Quang Children's Home (Xuân Lộc, Đồng Nai), Thiên Bình Orphanage (Biên Hòa), Từ Ân Orphanage (Bà Rịa – Vũng Tàu), Love School for Handicapped Children (Hòn Đất, Kiên Giang) ...

Yes, to quote Dana Winner's song again:
*“There is a place for a child in your heart
as long as you still believe in a fairytale,
and always know, deep inside, we are all the same.”
we are searching for a child in our heart...*



AMSAI Yangon Preschool Myanmar

The AMSAI Yangon Preschool has been running for 6 years. It is mainly for low-income families. Currently, it has 32 children aged 2 to 5 years old, and two teachers. The principal is Dada Divyasundara'nanda. The school is using the local curriculum with an NHE foundation including stories from the YES manual, regular kiirtan, meditation, and asanas.



On April 12, they had the Burmese new year celebration, locally called the "water festival" - the biggest festival in Myanmar. They had a new year's party celebration in the school, with the children doing free dancing, singing together and making sweets together. This week long holiday is maybe the happiest time for Myanmar people.



GEORGETOWN SECTOR

Argentina Ánanda Náráyaña Project, By Kuntur Deva

We have already entered in our fifth year of the project of harvesting day by day the fruits of those good seeds that were sown making a dream become a reality. Among some of the latest occupations and engagements, as well objective achievements, the following are of greater relevance:

Public talks

Several public programs were given in various Argentinian cities in Córdoba and San Luis provinces that include presentations about the purpose of a MU combined with Chinese Medicine Health Concepts and Yoga as a Lifestyle.

New construction

After 8 long months of intense work setting up the main structure and roof of our new building, we have finally completed an important part. We can now continue making the walls and organize the spaces where a laboratory will be

located to continue producing natural medicine and the distilling of essential oils.

New instructors of Yoga in Buenos Aires, Argentina with trainer, Dada Arnavananda



Family programs

This summer we began a new program focused on the inclusion of family members in yoga, meditation, healthy food habits, and moving together activities, welcoming 23 families throughout these blissful months of sunshine, blue sky and flower blooming.

Social Service

Together with members of the Organic Market we visit regularly an Elderly's Home located in Villa General Belgrano town where we sing kiirtan, practice simple exercises and have time to listen to and share inspiring stories.

NAIROBI SECTOR

Update from AMNHA, Ho Ghana

By Dada Mahaprajinananda

After years of preparation and a gradual construction of the building, the Ananda Marga Neohumanist Academy began serving the community of Ho, Volta Region, in September 2016. We opened with just a handful of children but our well equipped Creche/Nursery/KG, good intentions, positive spirit, and dedicated staff impressed the local people.

We now have 110 children admitted. Parents have asked us to expand into higher classes and though it is a great challenge, we aspire to rise to the occasion.

We've submitted to the District Assembly architectural drawings that include a two story structure of eight additional classrooms, toilet and urinal block, and all necessary facilities. An initial inspection has been made. Our target is to add at least one additional classroom each year.

In late November, 2018 our dynamic sister Nadia Rabah from Lebanon came for one month to share her many skills and years of experience. With Nadia's very capable guidance, the head teacher and her teaching staff increased their knowledge and appreciation of the basics of NHE and learned many more creative classroom interventions.

The daily routine now includes a quiet time circle. Basic yoga based exercises are done by the children, and more art work as well.

While in Ghana, Nadia met with the school's PTA, made contacts with the Lebanese business community, and also conducted training and programs at the Lotus Centre in Accra managed by Didi Ananda Gunamaya. Her visit and work has made a lasting impression and put the growing school on a more firm NHE footing.

The school staff in Ho, and those at other Ananda Marga schools in Ghana, will greatly benefit from additional training in NHE and related skills.

If you are available to visit and assist with teacher training, preferably for minimum 1 month, please contact Dada Mahaprajinananda <mahaprajinananda@gmail.com>.

Update on Lotus Children Center, Accra, Ghana By Didi Ananda Gun'amaya'

At our school we have regular teacher training. We focus on moral principles weekly. Although Ghanaian people are quite religious, mostly they go to church in search of miracles, but learn little or nothing about moral

principles. It is important for our teachers to understand those principles. Usually they get very inspired in our sessions as there is an innate flow of love for God in the human heart. Still many dogmas bind their minds so we work on opening their minds and hearts.

In our training sessions, teachers bring their own words to express various attributes related with a moral principle. Then they try to explain how they would teach those attributes to the children.

The staff of Lotus is from our local community which is still underdeveloped. People do not have a habit of reading books, especially women. Thus we encourage them so that they can express their own ideas in these subtle subjects.



Mandala-art, cooking and playing were part of the teachers training during the last Xmas holidays. These activities help to create unity among the teachers and expand their creativity. Some of them have never cooked before and were given the main duties of cooking

Service Activities at Lotus

As we plant seeds in the mind of very young children the sprouts and fruits do not belong to us. It is something to ripen and bear fruit in the future. However, among the adults, we can see how the local people can get influenced quickly by the nobility of high ideals. "Service to Humanity is Service to God" is one of these. We have been training our teachers in the principles of NHE, not only in theory but also in practice. For example as promoting the spirit of service, we brought our teachers to distribute clothes to a poor in the village.

Pictured here, Festus Tandoh, an ex-teacher of ours who left years ago to enter in the career of footballer, gathered his friends to donate needful stationary and toiletries to the school. Through a quiz they also reminded the kids of how important hygiene is. Everyone got prizes.



HONG KONG SECTOR

NHE Activities in Taiwan – by Geeta Li

Family Yoga Day

This program, which takes place, four times a year, includes Kiirtan, QTE (Quiet Time Exercises), Parent-Child Yoga, Family RAWA & Sattvic Foods sharing.



Parents Seminar

This program by Geeta and Arunima takes place in Janakii's kindergarden.



Health Class

Chandana shared the TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) health concept.



The 7 steps to be Wisdom Teachers

Dada Shambhushivananda gave a class on Wisdom Teachers which included these seven steps:

1. Bhiksha-cultivating gratitude
2. Diksha-initiation
3. Shiksha- education
4. Samiksha- self reflection
5. Pariksha-a test
6. Pratiks'a- patient waiting
7. Pratis'ta- establishment in the goal – attainment





Ethnobotany and Important Herbaria of India Training Course, Gwalior, India, March 12-16, 2019

A five day training course on ‘Ethnobotany and Important Herbaria of India’ was conducted by Dr. Vartika Jain at Gwalior, India. Dr. Vartika told that study of all kinds of relationships existing among people and plants is called Ethnobotany. Urban people do possess immense knowledge about plants and man-plant relationships in urban environments are studied under a new academic discipline termed “Urban Ethnobotany”. Dr. Jain has initiated research in this area and reported interesting results obtained in a case study done on some prominent temples of Udaipur city in Rajasthan. She elaborated the concept of traditional as well as non-traditional botanical knowledge and also discussed future dimensions of this research in India along with highlighting methodologies of studying urban botanical knowledge. Dr. Vartika said that although UBK (Urban Botanical Knowledge) is mostly considered as non-traditional that is not always the case, as there are some elements of traditions present in urban communities that are linked to botanical knowledge such as culinary knowledge of a migrant

population in cities.

In a second lecture, Dr. Jain revealed that there are 97 herbaria in India and among them the Central National Herbarium of BSI, Kolkata, Forest Research Institute, Dehradun and CSIR-National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow, are India’s largest herbaria helping in identification of unknown plant specimens. Dr. Vartika also emphasized the role of herbaria as a tool of ethnobotanical studies and the importance of physically visiting live herbaria rather than virtually visiting in today’s digital era. Dr. Vartika Jain is emerging as a budding scholar in this field and widely solicited for lectures on this subject by different institutions.

Uma Nivas Update

Uma Nivas is a unique place – its name means “The Abode of the Divine Mother”. It is an area of several square kilometers spanning over a dozen impoverished tribal villages. This place was chosen by Shrii PR Sarkar in 1978 to be the global seat of the Women’s Welfare Department of Ananda Marga. Uma Nivas is foremost a community service project with 7 primary schools, a Girl’s High School, clinics, farms, a Music College and now a Women’s College under construction.



Uma Nivas, encompasses all that lies in the essence of its Tantric nature – the deep silence of the ancient barren hills of Rarh, a mystic place of contemplation of saints and sages, the sweet fragrant air of spring, the orange palash blossoms, the unbroken song of birds... mingling with the early chanting that flows into songs, music and chatter of learning of hundreds of children and teenage girls in several scattered compounds ...

“Beyond the periphery of material mobility, there is the world of aesthetics; and above it, beyond it, there is the world of mystics. The world of mystics and the world of aesthetics are for human beings. And each and every human being should get a proper chance, should get adequate chance, to move into those worlds.” – Shrii P. R. Sarkar



Uma Nivas is a perfect place of aesthetics and mystics that Shrii PR Sarkar talks about. It is the fusion of nature, life and people. It has still of course a lot of scope for building on in every way and that is the reason we are here.

Our construction of the Women’s College and a model Primary School is progressing with the help of your kind and generous donations. It is a creation of compassion, a continuous inspiration to bring it to its completion for the meaningful purpose of serving many more children, girls, women, families and the community as a whole to live in healthy cooperatives.

Make Uma Nivas as part of your destination on your next trip to Ananda Nagar, Rarh. You can follow us and send your contributions to us on umanivas.weebly.com Thank you ! Didi Anandarama

From Kulapati Tours..

Ac. Shambhushivananda visited Taiwan, Gold Coast and Maleny (Australia), Den Bosch (Netherlands), Denpasar (Indonesia), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Hanoi (Vietnam), and led workshops on "Wisdom Teachers and Social Transformation". In Taiwan, several business leaders received instruction in meditation from Dada. Dr. Peter Siao organized most of the meetings in Taiwan. While in Australia, Dada also visited the River School and met the Principal, Ann Donoghoe. Daphne Wong hosted Dada in Kuala Lumpur while Denpasar Public School hosted a lecture on Neohumanist Education for all its teachers.

Dada's visit to Taiwan was hosted by Dr Peter Siao, Mr. Peter Lin and Sumati



Dada also visited Taichung and reviewed the progress of Taichung Neohumanist Center under construction with Mohamukta and Rutger Tamminga



Gurukula class in Gold Coast Australia



Dada with Gen. Prabowo Subianto, head of Genindra Party and Presidential Candidate of Indonesia



From Kuala Lumpur Puchong Learning Center



Wisdom Teachers Training in Hanoi





*Participants at a yoga teacher training in Brazil
honoring the setting sun*

The Revival of AMAYE

By Dada Vishvarupananda and Sumati Brekke

AMAYE (Association of Ananda Marga Yoga Educators) has been revived with the objective of creating a sharing network of educators who want to develop each other's capacity; and spread the yoga teachings of Shrii Shrii Anandamurti into the world.

After our first round of invitations, we now have over 45 confirmed members worldwide with expertise in various topics – and surely more to come! At the request of those members, we have set up a mailing list and discussion forum, and have started the process of reviewing our teacher training manual and standardizing steps of practice for Ananda Marga asanas. We have also published the first AMAYE newsletter, which can be viewed at <https://mailchi.mp/29fcd4b2a4db/amaye-voices-first-issue>.

Members of AMAYE will be meeting at the forthcoming Gurukula conference in Italy: <https://neohumanisteducation.org/educating-for-a-bright-future-conference-invitation/> to discuss the implementation of our strategic plan that includes strengthening our network of educators through discussions and conferences, developing an upgraded web site, better defining our Yoga "brand," and creating high quality publications.

We invite you to become part of the network. Please sign up through the above newsletter link. For further communication, contact us at info@amaye.org

TOOLS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

**New Study Guide - Based on the
Progressive Utilization Theory (Prout – Level 1)
By Dada Maheshvarananda and Miira Price, M.Ed., Ed.M.**

Planet Earth needs impassioned activists working together to raise consciousness and transform society. Tools to Change The World, inspired by P.R. Sarkar's Progressive Utilization Theory (Prout), is a study manual offering a compelling vision of a more equitable, sustainable, and just society that will empower people and communities.

Those who learn about the suffering and destruction in the world soon discover that these problems do not exist in a vacuum – they are interconnected and caused by a broken political system and global economy that makes a few individuals very rich at the expense of both people and the environment.

The activist tools in this manual are proven techniques that unlock our capacity to educate, to build collective power, and to make a change. The tool box includes: telling your story, journaling, meditation, public speaking for activists, one-on-one interviews, consciousness-raising groups, choosing winning words and slogans, starting successful cooperatives, capturing media attention, leadership training, critical study, and unpacking privilege.

The book's many resources, activities, and links to articles and videos will deepen your activist experience. The companion Facilitation Guide includes discussion questions, cooperative games, exercises, and more to excite and inspire a democratic study group and to encourage positive activities to transform both you and the world.

ORDERING:

The pdf books can be downloaded for free from www.prout.info.

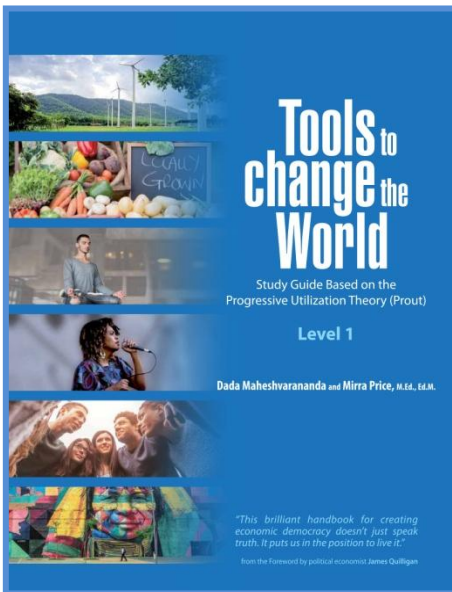
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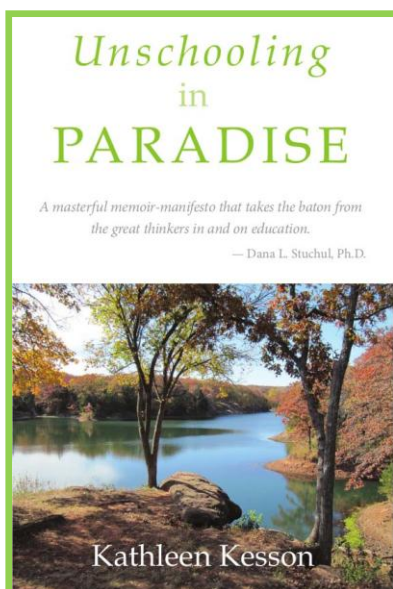
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Unschooling in Paradise

by Kathleen Kesson

(InnerWorld, San German, Puerto Rico, 2018)

Reviewed by Dada Maheshvarananda

Homeschooling is the education of children at home or elsewhere as a legal alternative in the United States to compulsory school attendance laws. Parents or other adults usually supervise the education. This is called “home education” in Europe and many Commonwealth countries. According to the US National Center for Education Statistics, about three percent of all children in the United States were homeschooled in the 2011–2012 school year.

However this book is about unschooling, an educational method and philosophy that advocates learner-chosen activities as a primary means for learning. Unschooling encourages exploration of activities initiated by the children themselves, believing that

the more personal learning is the more meaningful, well-understood and therefore useful it is to the child.

There is no better guide to unschooling than the author, Kathleen Kesson, Professor Emerita of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership at Long Island University Brooklyn. This book describes her five-year unschooling experience with her four sons on their rural property in Oklahoma. She admits that this book “blurs the lines between essay, memoir, narrative nonfiction, and manifesto!”

She says that her four boys “taught me much of what I know about how children think and how they learn, more than I have gathered from two graduate degrees in education, reading scores of books about the subject, and decades of teaching in formal environments.”

This book is a devastating critique of today’s schools in the United States that were designed to produce obedient workers for the Industrial Age. Certainly there are some things that all children need to know in the twenty-first century. However the author writes, “Put a hundred great scholars in one room to decide what these things should be and they will debate endlessly. I know this because I have served on panels and commissions loaded with very smart people charged with coming up with answers to [this].”

Instead, she advocates for productive idiosyncrasy, which challenges the current fixation on common standards, standardized learning, and testable outcomes, arguing instead for multiple forms of instruction and expression that address the “whole” child, their various needs, and their different timetables for learning.

She encouraged her boys to “mess about,” freely observing the natural world around them, playing, thinking creatively, and wondering about it, which is, of course, the thirst for inquiry that is at the heart of good science and lifelong learning. The results were astonishing. When they had to return to public school, they were far ahead of their peers.

One chapter is titled, What About God? In that, the author notes that “Unschooling... is an incredible opportunity to explore together the magical mysterious world we are born into and ponder the unanswerable existential questions.”

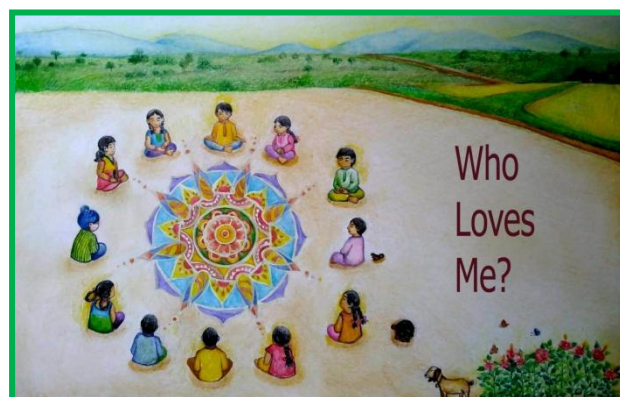
I have recommended and made presents of this book to all the parents I know who are homeschooling or considering it, because Kathleen Kesson’s advice is so practical and wise. In fact it should be read by everyone who cares about our future.

If you want to know more about Dr. Kesson's work, or order the book, you can visit her website at kathleenkesson.com

New NHE books, India

AMGK in India is working on new textbooks including story books for all grades starting with Preschool to go along with an NHE curriculum framework. The title of the books under work in progress so far are "Who loves me?" "Kalyana Sundaram" and "I am kind" and "Tiny Green Island".

For more information please contact Didi Anandarama:
<didianandarama@gmail.com>



THE NEXT BIG THING!

MARCUS BUSSEY

The Next Big Thing!

By Marcus Bussey

New Book - Reviewed by Sid Jordan

Marcus Bussey, a leading Neohumanist educator at the University of Sunshine Coast, Queensland Australia, has expressed an interest in “an emergent Neohumanist poetics as a basis for rethinking and enacting a deep pedagogy of universalism.” His new book of poems, *The Next Big Thing*, that has attracted praise from many reviewers, appears to be a stepping-stone that illuminates the path towards a poetic “pedagogy of universalism” for our Neohumanist schools.

In Marcus’ introduction of this poetry book he asserts that reading and writing poetry is a way of accessing a “dissenting imagination” that helps free us from “the habits governing the heart, mind and body.” Our Neohumanist Education supports a poetic pedagogy that expands the heart, frees the mind and serves others.

In his poem, *My Voice*, he shares this anthem of dissent and our connection to Greater Things:

*Theory and Distance dwell
amongst the thrown-ness of it all.
Embodied scholarship and
personal resistance work this space;
The churning Chaosmos.
My body wears it all!
Poesis and poetry, declarative in nature
demand a response:
'We will rise up!' She declares and I respond:
'Again and Again!'*

*This is a body wisdom calling!
My heart throws itself against my ribs
mixing eros and critique, blood and light!
And what is the path?
A challenge to conditioning;
A doing differently:
A patterning of new lacuna:
A dancing of community back into the flatlands.*

*My voice sings
my body's ability to act
as an intimate conduit of Transformation.
My voice an I-We-Us-Them-It harmonic*

*A singing bowl for the Chaosmos and the
skin that seals us all in.
That is, until we realise our perfect connection to
A grace of Greater Things!*

In his opening poem, *It's Time*, he echoes the urgency of this dissenting poetic voice:

*I want to say it's time to get moving
but really, we are always moving
along with atoms and stars and all that lies between.
No, it's time to move in other directions!
Grab the rudder from the feeble hands of fate
take control of this boat of being
throw off the weight of the past, cherry pick it
for what's best in us, an always best beyond the stains
and strains
It's time to ask what next, when saying enough is futile.*

*It's time to love and laugh more, and time to cry and
grieve.*

It's time to take responsibility in all its forms.

*It's time to out-love the bad in all and see or seed the
good.*

*I am restless with this sense of timefullness of things
dwelling with that perpetual yearning that calls us all.
Yet our compasses are skewed so we need to recalibrate.*

*It's time for sure and in time maybe we'll find out what
for.*

*Right now, I step out, stand up, playfully embrace this
timely state.*

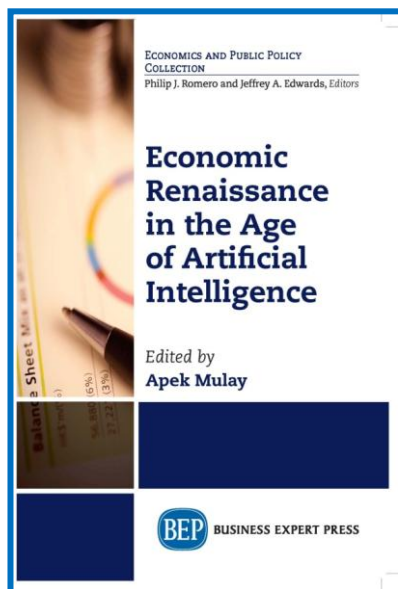
*It's time to find new pathways to where we'd like to be
before we are timed out, over cooked in the furnace of
becoming!*

This “perpetual yearning that calls us all” is embraced throughout this book of poems as an embodied “connection with all that is” and the “power of collective movement” celebrated in the poem, *The Next Big Thing*. Here are the last two stanzas.

*When I love I am expanded!
Fear cuts me off; diminishes me
And then I fail to see the pattern,
Fail to connect the dots and taste
My connection to all that is.*

*To move beyond fear is the next 'Big Thing!'
To take up love as the challenge that enables,
To realise the power of collective movement where
The most mundane of experience reveals itself in a
myriad of ways
To be a message to me, and you, that we can be so much
more...*

This is a small glimpse of an exhilarating collection of poems, *The Next Big Thing*, that challenge us to transcend old patterns and surrender to the universal beauty that surrounds and permeates us. It would be interesting to gather reports from a variety of Neohumanist schools that illustrate the application of poetry as we collectively move together to create a Neohumanist poetics.



Economic Renaissance in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Edited by Apek Mulay

New Book - Reviewed by Professor Sohail Inayatullah

Apek Mulay has edited an intriguing book. It draws on the foundational work of Indian mystic, macro-historian, and philosopher, Shrii P.R. Sarkar. Almost 60 years ago, Sarkar began the process of envisioning and creating a world after communism and capitalism. Communism has largely disappeared as a vision of the future, while crony capitalism appears to be if not at its end, certainly in its dying stages as inequity continues to increase within nations and between nations. Sarkar imagined a world with far greater efficiency, far greater productivity, far less inequality, living with nature and enhanced by amazing new technologies—"mind in technology" • if you will—"what we know today as the beginning of artificial intelligence (AI)". This would be a planetary civilization where the boundaries would be functional not sentiment-based as in today's nation-states. However, this was not a utopian vision in

that it was a no-place, but a Eutopian vision, a good place. Contradictions do not magically disappear; however, exploitation decreases and the world gets better and better.

What seemed far away 60 years ago no longer seems distant. Discussion of global governance, a universal basic income, an Internet of everything, dramatic advances in robotics all challenge the current world capitalist system and the mindset that sustains it. But how would this system actually work? It is this question that many contributing authors seek to answer. What would a universal basic income look like? Is it even possible? Would it create security or a culture of incapacity? What legislation is required to encourage cooperatives? Do we need a global constitution? How do we create an economy where the "money flows"? Can we, should we, move from dark green to bright green (ecology with AI), or more important, are structural changes in the world economy. These and many other similar questions are tackled and answered by the contributing authors.

This book is rare in many ways. First, as suggested earlier, it fills in the details to Sarkar's alternative vision of the future where technology creates less inequality with higher productivity. Second, it takes macroeconomics seriously. Mulay is an economist and to his credit, he has created a community of thought leaders who move between economics, sociology, law, and futures studies. (Among the co-authors of the book are Navin Doshi, Dr Shambhushivananda, Steven Richheimer, Craig Runde, Matt Oppenheim, Stephen Willis, Roar Bjornes, Michael McAllum, Shrikant Shete, Sreeniva Adiki and Satinder Paul Singh.) Issues of taxation and the employment implications of robots are not lost sight of. Indeed, solutions from new taxation regimes to blockchains to constitutional amendments are offered. Also inner issues, for example the implications of meditation and spiritual consciousness on post-capitalism, are met head on.

Thus, the text both attempts to optimize our life in current reality—the world as we know it—how can we create more value for all, how can we be happier, and how can we create a more just planetary civilization after capitalism. The present and the emerging possible future are both addressed.

This is a unique time in our human history. There is much to appreciate, even though horror is everywhere. As we transition to a new society we need visions and operational suggestions as to what to do next.

ORDER: <https://www.businessexpertpress.com/books/economic-renaissance-in-the-age-of-artificial-intelligence/>



Neohumanist Education



Participants at a yoga teacher training in Brazil honoring the sun.

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