



Vivekananda Institute of Values (VIVA)

Practical Spirituality for All

“Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep;
you are souls immortal, spirits free,
blest and eternal; ye are not matter, ye are not bodies;
matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter.”

From a speech of Swami Vivekananda in the Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 1893.



LOOKING INWARDS (Let's welcome the New Year with Hope)

Do you agree that quite often we tend to lose hope when things don't go our way? However, even as we put our broken selves to sleep at night, most of us know that we'll rise with the morning sun and things will get brighter soon. Even when we feel there could be no possible reason left to smile, we suddenly find ourselves breaking into a smile at something a child says or at the antics of a pet. Hope is that everlasting light inside us that nudges us to see the bright side of things. After all, neither failure nor success is permanent. We have Swami Vivekananda's assurance, that we are children of immortal bliss and it is in never losing hope in ourselves, that we see our powerful soul shining through. Wishing our readers a wonderful and fresh start in 2023.

-The Editorial Team

Value Education – A Collaborative Effort

Our focus on spreading values through our programs finds its impetus with the various collaborations we have in the form of MoUs with Government and Private School Management such as Kendriya Vidyalaya Sanghathans, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, State Governments of MP, Rajasthan and Haryana, Defence Educational Authorities to name a few.

Our flagship value education program for middle school coined the 'Awakened Citizen Program' (ACP) has been endorsed by the CBSE and they have encouraged schools to adopt it. Commitment Letters to conduct the ACP for a minimum of three years has been obtained from several private school managements who are part of our program.

Recently, Swami Shantatmananda (Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi) and Dr. Anuradha Balaram (Chief Co-ordinator, Value Education Programs, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi) were invited to advise the Kasturirangan Committee on National Curriculum Framework in Bangalore on how Ramakrishna Mission (Delhi-Gurugram) introduce values in a structured yet child friendly way in schools.



Commodore AA Abhyankar, Vice Chairman Navy Education Society and Swami Shantatmananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Delhi exchanged MoU at a brief ceremony held at RK Mission, headquarters, New Delhi to facilitate the conduct of the 'Awakening' for primary students of Navy Children School.



Our Value
Education
Team
All India Reach



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ARISE – Empowered Parenting Workshop

“Every seed has the potential to grow into a healthy plant. We can nurture it, remove obstacles, and give it adequate sunshine, soil and water. We cannot force the seed to be a rose bush or a banyan tree. We can ensure that it grows well - that is all.”

Swami Vivekananda



ARISE is about forming a loving bond with our children thus enabling them to lead a fulfilled life.

ACCEPTING

REFLECTING

INVOLVING

SHARING

ENCOURAGING



“The program was interactive, everybody felt included. All of us were encouraged to speak out, especially in the break out room. Having breakout rooms with parents having children of similar age group was very nice. We found we were not alone in the journey, other parents are facing similar challenges. The slides where we depict the various behaviour between mother and child was a great takeaway. Overall the entire workshop was fruitful.”

“The presentation was not typically bookish speaking about psychology, etc. The content was simple and presented beautifully. It may help to have parents with children in similar age group for in-depth discussions on a situation, at least in breakout rooms”

**Some testimonials of appreciative parents*

The journey of parenting starts with a hope of a wonderful child who will fulfil the parents. However, no parent is ever ready for the role as it entails accepting and adapting to the child’s nature. In recent years, parenting has emerged as a major challenge. Due to professional commitments and the rising culture of nuclear families, parents are struggling to keep pace with their demands from life and therefore often feel disconnected from their children and vice versa. Parenting has more often than not, been reduced to a stressful responsibility. VIVA has developed an interactive workshop for parents ‘ARISE’ which enables parents to form a loving bond with their child. The workshop also empowers parents to awaken their own highest potential as a human being. Many parents, who have attended the workshop, shared that it gave them a suitable platform to interact with other parents. For some, it was soothing to discover that other parents too shared similar challenges. The interactions also facilitated exchange of strategies amongst participating parents. To know more about the program, please write to: arise.parents@gmail.com

ASK SWAMI SHANTATMANANDA

A reader writes:

“A friend of mine has gone through some really terrible situations in her life like battling cancer, financial crises etc., but each time she has faced it without losing hope. Is hope then, just positive psychology or a sign of spiritual progress?”

Swami Shantatmananda replies:

Keeping up hope is no doubt positive psychology but the source, origin or support is spirituality. Spiritually awakened people believe that they are intrinsically blessed with infinite power knowledge and glory. This underlying spiritual idea gives them the confidence to believe that come what may, they have in them the power to deal with the challenge. Hence they remain positive. Those who are unaware of their spiritual nature often feel defeated by the uncertainties of life.



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ANSWER TO READER'S SECTION FROM PREVIOUS ISSUE



ABOUT THE PICTURE:

The picture is of a coiled rope, which at first glance appears to our mind as a snake. It is the classic symbolic example provided in Vedanta to bring out the truth of what's real and unreal about the world.

Vrindha Balagopal from Chennai writes:

Very often in life we avoid challenges because we assume it will be difficult. When we take time and analyse we often find solutions. What appears to be a deadly snake on closer inspection is just a rope. Introspect and you will see reality.

Suchira Das from Delhi writes:

'The Rope and the Snake' picture reminds us that our perception of reality can be disguised by darkness i.e. ignorance. We always need to apply 'Viveka' (power of discernment) to seek the truth and not just believe what our eyes see in case of any situation.

Shruti Banerjee from Delhi writes:

I perceive that our life is like a maze in which we get entangled as we grow up day by day and become so fixed and careless in it that then we do not understand the way to get back out of it. It is easy to enter this maze, you will have to try yourself to get out of it.

READER'S SECTION

We invite our readers to look at the picture below and share with us what they feel. Please title the email 'Answer to Reader's Section'.

