



GURUKULA NETWORK

Newsletter of Neo-Humanist Schools and Research Institutes
affiliated with Ananda Marga Gurukula

Issue 24

May 2007

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

Gurukula Network

Newsletter and Journal of
Neohumanist Schools
and Institutes
affiliated to
Ananda Marga Gurukula

Two yearly issues published October and May serve as a means of communication for Neohumanist Schools and projects around the world.

Please send us news of your schools and projects, reports on research and publication efforts, articles on Neohumanist Education, stories, pictures, ETC notes, classroom activities, etc. by **September 1st for the October 2007 issue**

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The articles in this newsletter represent an evolving process and not necessarily official policy.

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Donations are welcome for AMGK Endowment Fund and Gurukula Network as well as schools and projects.

Please make checks payable to Ananda Marga Gurukula and send to AMGK Liaison Office.

Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar inspired the establishment of Ananda Marga Schools in 1963 out of which grew an international network of schools and the Neohumanist Education system. In 1990 he founded the Ananda Marga Gurukula University.

VISION OF ANANDA MARGA GURUKULA

Ananda Marga Gurukula is engaged in creating an international network of Neohumanist Schools and Institutes to hasten the advent of a society in which there is love, peace, understanding, inspiration, justice and health for all beings.

OBJECTIVES OF ANANDA MARGA GURUKULA

- To serve humanity with neohumanist spirit and to acquire knowledge for that purpose.
- To establish a strong base in Anandanagar and around the world in order to carry on the legacy of it's founder for the benefit of future generations.
- 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 around 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 of Ananda Marga Gurukula

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

Ananda Marga Gurukula serves as the Board of Education for Neohumanist Schools and Institutes around the world. These Neohumanist Schools and projects, some of which are featured in Gurukula Network, are managed by the Education Relief and Welfare Section and Women's Welfare Department of Ananda Marga.

ERAWS - Global Education In-charges

Ac. Shantananda Avt., Ac. Priyaksnananda Avt.

WWD - Global Education In-charge Avtk. Ananda Sucita Ac.

NEOHUMANIST EDUCATION

Universal Love and Values
Holistic Development of the Child
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 Approach
Integrated Curriculum
Exemplary Role of the Educators



ANANDA MARGA GURUKULA GLOBAL LIAISON OFFICE ONGOING PROGRAMMES, UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ananda Marga Gurukula

<www.gurukul.edu>
amgk.glo@gurukul.edu

CNS – Centres for Neohumanist Studies

Croatia - cns.hr@gurukul.edu, <www.cns.hr>
Sweden – cns.se@gurukul.edu, <www.cns-se.org>
Taiwan – amgk.tw@gurukul.edu
USA – cns.us@gurukul.edu

Music College at Uma Nivas

<<http://www.gurukul.edu/~unmc>>

Acupuncture Institute at Ananda Nagar

<<http://acuindia.org/>>

AMGK Taiwan

<www.gurukula-tw.org>

Neohumanist Education

<www.nhe.gurukul.edu>

NHE Forum

NHE Forum is an on-line discussion group for those interested in or working in NHE schools and projects. To join, please write to <amgk.glo@gurukul.edu>

CNS Forum

CNS-Forum is a format for the exchange of ideas among Neohumanist educators who are qualified and interested in higher education, beyond K-12. CNS-Forum provides an opportunity to help to develop the various departments and faculties of Ananda Marga Gurukula. If interested write to <amgk.glo@gurukul.edu>

NHE Resources

NHE Resources is a set of web-based resources for those working in NHE schools. It contains articles, information and classroom aides. If you would like to access these pages, please visit <www.nhe.gurukul.edu/resources.html>, and sign up for a login name and password.

Distance Learning Programmes

The two distance learning programmes are available for NHE teachers. The Neohumanist Diploma Programme is a one year or more in depth tuition programme, certifying the student as an NHE early childhood teacher. The Neohumanist Introductory Programme is a three month or more programme, with the option for certification as an NHE early childhood associate teacher. It is also available in Spanish. For more details see the description of Distance Learning Programmes at: http://www.gurukul.edu/instit_distancelearning.php

Standards Available

Ananda Marga Gurukula Standards for kindergarten and primary schools are available. You may write to <amgk.glo@gurukul.edu> for a copy or you may download a copy directly from NHE Resources.

Volunteers for Your Project

Ananda Marga Gurukula offers a service to bring volunteers in contact with NHE schools and community projects, that are highlighted on the AMGK website. More info at the Gurukula website: www.gurukul.edu under the tab <helping us>. If you would like to take part with your project in the Gurukula Volunteer Program, then please write to mayadhiisa@gmail.com

Gurukula Network On Line

Thanks to Mayadhiish, an electronic version of Gurukula Network is available on the Gurukula web site. Many past issues are also posted there.

NEW Baby ! Congratulations to Gurukula staff member, Mayadhiish and his wife Mamata on the birth of their son, Madhuka'nta on April 20th.

AMGK / NHE New Projects In Process

YES Manual

Didi Anandarama is now compiling material for the YES manual for 6 to 10 year olds. She welcomes any thoughts, suggestions, approaches, songs, stories, art, drama, philosophy discussions, activities, etc. related to teaching all aspects of the limbs of Astaunga Yoga please from your own experiences working with children in this age group. cns.hr@gurukul.edu

Spanish Translations

The YES Manual for 3-5 year olds is being translated into Spanish, and will be available this July, thanks to Krsna Priya in the US. Other materials are being translated in South America and include the AMGK Standards for NHE and the PSOLI Manual, thanks to the NHE School in Colombia. The NHE School in Costa Rica has also shared their Spanish materials which will be available through the new NHE Resource pages.

NHE Resources

The NHE Resources are in the process of being redone with a new interface. Stay tuned.

NHE Elementary Programme

Work is continuing on the NHE elementary level diploma programme.

NHE Diploma Programme Seminar October 2007 Thailand



The Baan Unrak Primary School in Sangklaburi Thailand, under Avtk. Ananda Anuraga Ac. as principal, is hosting the NHE Diploma Programme for Early Childhood and Primary Education. Didi and some of

her teachers as well as teachers from others NHE schools are participating.

There will be two seminars a year until 2009. The first one was completed this April. (see report is in this issue of Gurukula Network.) The second one will be October 2007.

The Diploma Programme is still a Distance Learning programme. The six two-week seminars at Baan Unrak School will support the students who are taking the course. Attendance is not required, but will be very helpful to those who can attend.

This programme is also an opportunity for local teachers to work under a principal who will be their mentor as well as for those from other places who are starting on the Diploma Programme on their own. Those from other places can attend one or more seminars during this period according to their capacity. Those who are interested in the Diploma Programme please apply at amgk.glo@gurukul.edu.

The second seminar in October 2007 will cover:

**Child Development and
YES- Yoga Education for children of all ages.**

There will be also be practical workshops on art, math and other curricular activities.

Participants will be able to discuss and experience and elaborate on practical methods and activities with the support of experienced facilitators. All participants receive a certificate of attendance.

Registration

For more information please check the website www.gurukul.edu and write to amgk.glo@gurukul.edu or Didi Ananda Anuraga baanunrakschool@gmail.com to register for the seminar.

Cost

The cost for the seminars including accommodation at the Baan Unrak School is 8000 Baht or \$ 220. This is in addition to the cost of the Diploma course for which you may apply for at amgk.glo@gurukul.edu.

Yoga Educators Conference

July 20-25th (arrival 19th July), 2007

Cost: 130 euros

Pre-registration deadline: May 15th.

Place: CNS-Sweden, Ydrefors.

This first international Ananda Marga yoga-educators conference will focus on topics of interest to Ananda Marga Yoga Teachers. Ananda Marga Yoga Teachers will gather, share, interact and learn from one another. The topics will include: Science behind 16 points; Sahaj Pranayama; Yoga Therapy; Specialities of Rajadhiraja Yoga; Bio-Psychology, Microvita & Yoga etc.

The conference is being hosted by CNS and sponsored by AMAYE-Ananda Marga Association of Yoga Educators. It is open to all Ananda Marga Yoga Educators. More information is available at www.amaye.org

For more information, please contact: tcsweden@gmail.com

Climbing the Bliss Pyramid

An integrated perspective on self and society

by Dada Shambhushivananda



Knowingly or unknowingly, every living being on this earth longs for pleasure, happiness and bliss. Human beings want and crave for them even more so. Despite our innate endeavors to achieve them, the fulfillment of this urge remains an elusive dream for a large segment of society. Instead, what we see is a fractured self, dysfunctional organizations and a tormented society.

Here, I advance four secrets drawn from a yogic perspective on how to climb the bliss pyramid and attain a stance of lasting peace and tranquility for both the self and the larger society as a whole. The basic thesis is that there are four inherent longings in humans viz., physical longings (*kama*); psycho-physical and psychic (*artha*); psycho-spiritual and proto-spiritual (*dharma*) and spiritual (*moksa*). Our endeavor to attain them may take us in two directions---the path of greater bondage or ultimate freedom from worldly bondages. The sum-total of individual and collective endeavors in these four domains ultimately produces a materialist or a spiritual society. Taken to an extreme, the path of selfish pleasure (*atma-sukha tattva*) is likely to lock us into an unending vicious cycle of un-satiated sensual gratification, insecurity, desire for more and more wealth and knowledge, craving for power and other manifestations of human ego, ultimate depression, frustration, disappointment and un-fulfillment. It has been a quite common scenario till today. There is however, a way out of this vicious cycle. It requires mastery of the following four secrets.

Secret 1

Moderation or Restraint is the secret of pleasure in this world. In order to maintain our bodies, we may need to indulge in *kama* (physical sensual gratification of any kind) but we shall need to use our conscience (*viveka*) in order to keep the *kama* under control. A mere indulgence without restraint is the sure recipe for attachment and pain. Our inner passions are like wild horses and need to be trained and cultured. Yogic lifestyle has several ways to achieve this.

Secret 2

Progressive Utilization rather than mere accumulation of wealth for selfish pleasure is the secret of overcoming psychological insecurity. We want to secure pleasure in the future via control of wealth, information and knowledge. Progressive Utilization Theory (*PROUT*) teaches us the importance of maximum and proper utilization of all wealth and to explore the inner secrets for the fullest and benevolent utilization of all wealth using the latest tools of science, technology and the arts for the good and happiness of all beings.

Secret 3

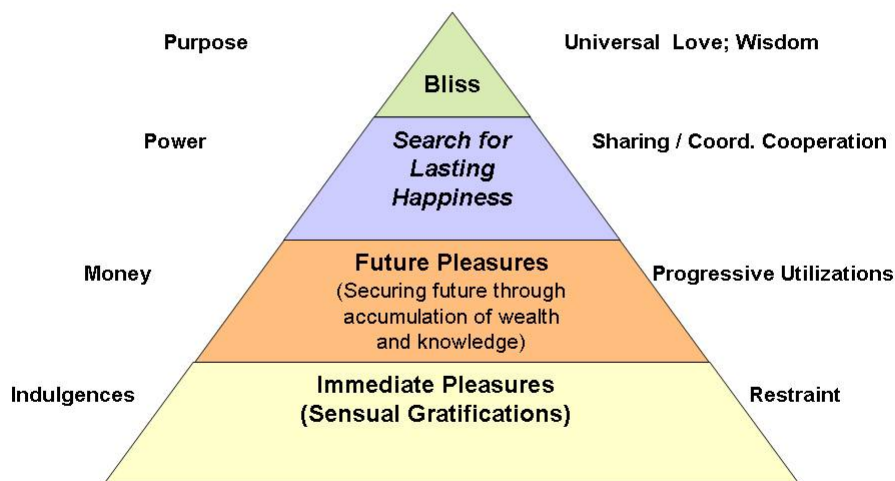
The tendency to control inner faculties of mind also usually simultaneously strengthens the tendency to control, manipulate and can sometimes lead to addiction to power. The secret of transcendence over this lust for power is to cultivate the spirit of service and sacrifice. Only such a philosophy of life that goads us towards neohumanist service is the panacea for fighting dogma and liberating the human intellect from the noose of intellectual extravaganza and pseudo-intellectual games. However, it is not an easy task. It requires constant application of discriminating intellect and a spirit of coordinated cooperation as opposed to subordinated cooperation.

Secret 4

Freedom is the innate urge in all living beings. However, freedom begotten out of control of others is not lasting. History is a testimony to the cruel ending of all endeavors to keep control of power through suppression, oppression

and repressions. The secret of true and lasting freedom is a peaceful attunement to the call of our Higher Universal Spiritual Self. This spiritual work brings inner-enlightenment; enfoldment of creativity, genuine wisdom; and, perennial flow of universal love. It also gives vitality to stand for Truth or fight for *Dharma* (righteousness). So, the ultimate solution for bliss is to strive towards spiritual enlightenment above everything else in life. Spiritual enlightenment comes through discipline of the mind, cultivation of selflessness and an unending devotional endeavor to unite with the omniscient Cosmic Consciousness-beyond all forms and expressions.

Climbing the Bliss Pyramid



Climbing the Bliss Pyramid

While the above four-secret theory may appear simple, its actualization is not an easy task. It is like climbing Mount Everest. It is fraught with dangers and risks. The obstacles are both internal and external. They originate both from the individual and from the collective-consciousness. The staticity of self and society intertwines and generates a powerful invisible power of gravity. Hence; a collective effort is required to create a proper environment for enabling the climbing of this Bliss-Pyramid. Any endeavor in this direction would be a laudable task. **The mission of Ananda Marga Gurukula is to empower each individual to overcome all obstacles; attain the highest stance of blissful spiritual attainment; and contribute towards removing the bane of fractured self, dysfunctional organizations and a tormented society.**

AMGK Affiliation Certificates

AMGK Affiliation Certificates have been awarded to the following NHE Schools in the past 6 months:

New Day School – Portland, Oregon, USA
 Escola Neohumanista Tera Viva Ananda Marga – Brasilia, Brasil
 Recreation Universal Infantil Ananda Marga – Brasilia, Brasil
 Centro Eucacional Ananda Marga – Belem, Brasil
 Ananda Marga Neohumanist School – Juiz De Pora, Brasil
 Neohumanista Escuela Basica – Toledo Capiata, Paraguay
 Universal Infantil – II (Dadas) – Asuncion, Paraguay
 Universo Infantil IV – Sapucaí, Paraguay
 Universo Infantil – II (Didis) – Asuncion, Paraguay
 Centro Educational Infantil lar de Crianças - Sao Paulo, Brasil
 Lar Ecreche Jardim Ecologico – Sao Paulo, Brasil
 Creche Jardim Ecologico – Sao Paulo, Brasil
 Escola Neohumanista De Ensino Fundamental Ananda Marga – Porto Alegre, Brasil
 Ananda Marga Creche Belem Novo, Porto Alegre, Brasil
 Escola Infantil Restinag Nova – 1, Porto Alegre, Brasil

NHE Schools are invited to apply for affiliation through amgk.glo@gurukul.edu

CNS Cairo

You are invited to join the team



KAPROS

Kahira PROgressive Studies

***Social Entrepreneurship
Blossoming of Human Excellence***

AMGK/CNS has set up an office in Cairo, Egypt which will serve as a hub for Neohumanist studies in the Middle East. As a first project KAPROS - Kahira Progressive Studies is focusing on the establishment of a school (KAPROS - Kahira Progressive School) from K-12 with attached teacher training facilities. In its first phase KAPROS will offer seminars, conferences and courses on holistic education and connect with local sustainable development initiatives.

Social entrepreneurship is surely a force that will shape the future of human society. What does it mean? What is it? How can it be a force of social change?

Imagine the mentality that runs big enterprises or that builds some of the greatest fortunes on the planet. Imagine the skills and power of leadership and achievement that the CEO's of big corporation have. Now imagine the same mentality, the same skills and power working for the welfare of society. This is indeed a new paradigm based on the idea that the best "business" is to truly serve society.

I am sure that most human beings will say that they would like to contribute to society. But seldom are we willing to sacrifice our whole life for it. But what if you could make a career in social service and get your salary? What if you could serve and at the same time make your living and be able to provide quality of life to your family? Why do social service and making a living have to be incompatible things? Who told us so? Providing quality water in an age where water is poisoned is true social service. Providing true education in this age of dogma and indoctrination is true service. Why shouldn't society pay for it? Social service does not necessarily mean free. Why not make a system where those who can afford to pay, do so for the education of their kids and also for underprivileged kids? Isn't this indeed part of the education process?

Imagine the mentality of great achievers directed towards the all-round development of society. Why should we not work in this spirit? KAPROS stands as a true social entrepreneurship project. It is a corporation for true education, for true development of the human spirit.

KAPROS - Kahira Progressive School - a Project in Development



A school serving 1200 children from kindergarten to high school with attached teachers' training facility, hostel, gardens and organic agriculture is the proposed plan in Egypt. The architecture was designed by Michael Rice from Ireland who is advocating biological architecture that supports life forces that are conducive to living and learning. We envision a true oasis of learning and developing and blossoming of human excellence. KAPROS will be modelled after the educational achievements of PSOLI, the Progressive School of Long Island. *For more info visit: www.goldenmean.info/kapros or write to: info.kapros@gmail.com*



KAPROS Studies invites you to join
**The Quest of Ancient Egyptian
Subtlety**
(Starting 5th July 2007)

A thrilling life time opportunity for personal and professional growth. Live in the land of the Great Pyramids and:

- Learn to become a dynamic social entrepreneur.
- Enhance your skills and acquire new ones.
- Acquire leadership and communication skills.
- Learn how to move in the field in areas such as finances and investment
- Witness and co-create a unique major school project
- Work in a multicultural team
- Immerse yourself in the Spirit of Tantra
- Deepen your self awareness
- Develop a positive and universal outlook in life.
- Learn sustainable living
- Emotional mastery
- Be versed in "The Secret" – learn the science of intentional creation

Optional Opportunities:

- NHE Diploma Course
- LFT Training and pre-WT Training
- Retreats in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria
- Nile Bliss Tour and Desert Safaris
- Red Sea diving at Bedouin Camp



Prama Institute
Holistic Seminar and Retreat Center

Prama: "dynamic balance" in Sanskrit. Individual prama: harmony between body, mind and spirit. Collective prama: balance between people, community, and environment.

Asheville, North Carolina, USA

The CNS at Ananda Girisuta, now called The Prama Institute (PI), is focusing its seminar and retreat activities on Spirituality, Art, Sustainability and Holistic Health. The PI recently sponsored workshops on "Transforming Our Emotions Through Kiirtan and Meditation" by Dada Pranakrsnananda that ran for three weekends in January. In March we hosted 30 Ananda Marga acaryas for their quarterly organizational meeting (RDS) for 5 days and held a "Council of All Beings" (environmental workshop) with 13 participants on the last weekend in March.

Grand Opening



The PI had its grand opening April 25-29 featuring American poet Robert Bly and Palestinian film maker Hanna Elias. The University of North Carolina at Asheville (UNCA), in collaboration with The Prama Institute, co-sponsored a poetry reading with Robert Bly entitled "The Soul Is Here For Its Own Joy: An Evening of Sacred Poetry" at UNCA's Humanities Lecture Hall on Wednesday, April 25. This was an especially inspiring evening for all in attendance. Tommy Hays, the director of the Smokie Mountain Writers Program at UNCA, thanked the Prama Institute for bringing Robert Bly and said "the community will be recalling this evening for some time to come". Susan Ross, a writer from Atlanta, said "It is impossible to adequately express my gratitude. This experience with Bly helped me open up to and trust my own voice." Joe Elliot, a local writer wrote, "Listening to Bly the other night, I couldn't help but think of his good friend and fellow scholar, Joseph Campbell, the late great mythologist. Both men were so generous with their gifts, so steady in their commitment to the Spirit, so helpful to others in finding their dharma." Bly gave an equally praiseworthy workshop at the PI for 36 writers the next day.

On the evening of April 26 the PI presented Hanna Elias, Palestinian writer/director who showed the first of two screenings of his independent movie, the Olive Harvest; shown again on April 29 to enthusiastic audiences that he engaged in a lively Q & A following the screenings. The film, which has won a number of prizes at international film festivals, integrates an enchanting tale of romantic love, tradition and family loyalty into the larger climate of political and economic unease in a Palestinian village. He followed the screening on the 29th with a workshop entitled One Man's Journey: The Use of Film to Promote Peace in the Middle East. At this workshop he presented a body of work including his interactive workshops with Palestinian and Israeli youth that he directed in having the youth make films that shared their views of each other's identity as well as a sample of 65 episodes of Sesame Street that were aired by TV stations that reached Palestinian and Israeli children, promoting themes of cooperative life styles among people of all backgrounds.

Upcoming Events at Prama Institute

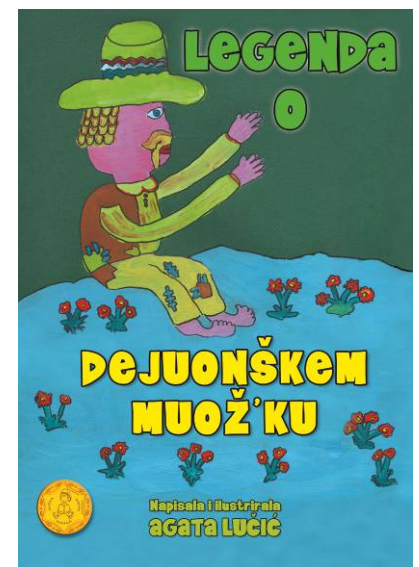
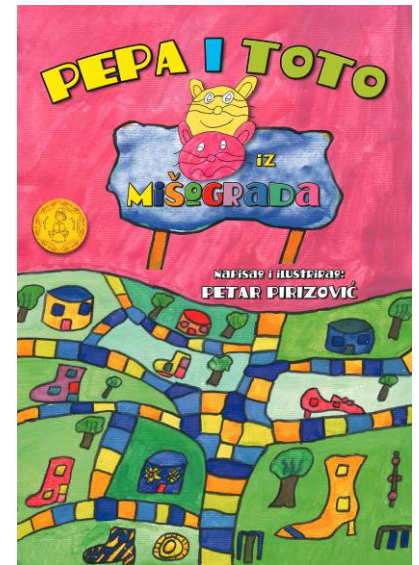
The Master Unit committee for Ananda Girisuta, the Atlanta Region Master Unit, is scheduling a two day planning session in June. This meeting will focus on the vision for the future of the MU including strategies for integrating its activities with the PI, expanding its horticultural activities on the MU and examining the development of the Didi's MU and possibilities of a cooperative community for families on the newly acquired land to the west of the brother's MU. The MU and the PI are initiating the Asheville Spirit Festival on July 14th that will bring together a variety of local and international spiritual musicians including the Kundalini Express, as well as some spiritual films and mela activities. Examine the www.pramainstitute.org website for a full calendar of future events.

CNS Croatia

My First Book Contest

This year's National children's contest for writing and illustrating one's own book is coming to its peak. The program for celebrating winners and the contest will be held again in the main theatre, Zorin Dom in Karlovac. The winners have been selected. The jury composed of the writers Sanja Pilić, Tito Bilopavlović, Romana Leko (CNS President), Helena Traub (Coordinator) and CNS staff were happy to announce the following deserving authors and illustrators: The first prize in the youngest age category 6-8 goes to Petar Pirizović for his stunning book "Pepa i Toto iz Misograda" (Pepa and Toto from Misograd). This is Peter's second year to win in our contest. The story describes how the two little mice Pepa and Toto (one is a stuttering and the other one wears glasses) win the respect of their town Misograd. Because of their handy capture they are bullied by an older student. When the bully falls into water and they could refuse to help him, they sincerely do their best and save him from drowning. The first prize in the second age category 9-11 goes to Agata Lučić (Lucic) for her story. (Agata is also a winner for the second time). She highlighted an educative legend of her area that inspires people for collective cooperation in the face of problems in their natural environment. It is important to emphasize here that Moja Prva Knjiga contest puts equal value on the text as well as on the illustrations. A special encouragement prize was selected for 4 books which will be joined into one volume and published. The authors are from every age category. The stories are:

1. a story about transformation and friendship.
2. a poetic story from Delnice
3. a detective story from Zadar
4. another story from Zadar, which tells about a magic garden and the happiness a child brought into the life of an old man.



STUVOL Croatia

Peers and Helpers

In the project, Peers and Helpers, several presentations on volunteering were held in a primary school. After that more than 15 children came as volunteers to workshops on cooperative games and poster-making. Then they talked about different disabilities that people can be born with or can get by hurting themselves in accidents. The children wrote short poems and thoughts about children with special needs. Also a journalist came and asked about the work. The children developed slogans like "We can grow together" and "Volunteer and help!" The project invited both children from the special school and children from the regular school for pizza and pancake-eating. Through these various activities, CNS, together with experts, points out to children and of course to grown-ups the problems in socialization for children with difficulties in development. Socializing and helping between children is inspired along with creativity and expression.



CNS Sweden

2007 Events at CNS Sweden

January 2–3, 2007
 "Building a Master Unit"
 Presented by Didi
 Ananda Prama



During her workshop, Didi Ananda Prama gave practical tips on developing a Master Unit. These included inspiring local skilled workers to become involved, visiting models (eg. Findhorn in Scotland), researching local government requirements/regulations and writing grants. She advised to have a vision, proposal and people. Put your energy into people instead a lot of money into buildings. Be about sadhana, service and sacrifice. Utilize all strengths and weaknesses talents and skills to build up the people by doing service with love. Network with other groups, offer yoga practices, be a nurturer, love the people and teach meditation. On MU land, one can usually start growing fresh organic foods that you can be served and shared with visitors and workers. So plant a small organic kitchen or green garden utilizing all the space efficiently. Utilize complementary planting techniques, etc. Garden means life – plant slow and fast growing trees – as outlined in the book *Ideal Farming* by Shrii P.R. Sarkar. Research your local food needs, growing conditions, climate, soils. Think "Agricultural Products" rather than just selling raw produce for maximizing income. Also support or start buyers or sellers cooperatives.

Feb 10-11 Prabhat Samgiita Workshop

March 3-4
 Homeopathic
 Workshop (Part 2)
 by Tony Carlyle
 This excellent two day
 workshop was on
 administering
 Homeopathy and First
 Aid to Children



April 1-8 Yoga Course Week (see article in this issue)
 April 20-22 Spirituality and Psychotherapy by Trond Overland
 April 27-29 Universal Renaissance: Opportunities & Challenges
 by Ac.Vedaprajnananda Avt.
 May 2 Ananda Purnima Celebrations
 July 1-12 Yoga Course Week / Yoga Educators Conference
 Sept 8-12 Prabhat Samgiita Workshop
 Oct 27-Nov 4 Yoga Course Week

CNS Cyprus

"My First Book" contest
 was launched for the first time successfully
 in Cyprus by Ananda Marga and Anti-Dote
 Children's Theatre. Workshops and
 publicity reached many children and we
 received 39 books. The jury of prominent
 writers and artists found three deserving
 winners. The prize giving ceremony will be
 in September in Nicosia. Below is the
 poster used for the event.

Παγκύπριος διαγωνισμός για παιδιά και νέους

Το πρώτο μου βιβλίο

Γράψε και εικονογράφησε τη δική σου πρωτότυπη ιστορία...
 Απλώς ξεκίνα και άφησε τη δημιουργικότητά σου ελεύθερη...

Τα θέματα για τις ιστορίες μπορούν να είναι:

- Αγάπη και Φροντίδα για τη Φύση
- Τα Δικαιώματα των Παιδιών
- Η Δύναμη της Φιλίας

Ο διαγωνισμός θα διεξαχθεί σε τρεις ηλικιακές κατηγορίες:
 7-9, 10-11 και 12-15 χρονών

Πώς να υποβάλετε το βιβλίο σας:

- Το βιβλίο σας θα πρέπει να αποτελείται από 16 σελίδες, εξώφυλλο και σπαστοβιβλίο.
- Χρησιμοποιήστε χαρτί μεγέθους Α4
- Μπορείτε να χρησιμοποιήσετε 8 σελίδες μεγέθους Α5 χαρτί για διαγράμμιση
- Διατάξτε τις σελίδες στη μέση και συρραψίστε με μεταλλικό σύνδεσμο ή κλωστή στη μέση όπως ένα βιβλίο
- Αράξτε τις σελίδες από το 1 μέχρι το 16
- Στη σελίδα 1 γράψτε τον τίτλο της ιστορίας, διαγράψτε μία εικόνα και γράψτε *
- Συγγραφέας και εικονογράφος (το όνομα και το επίθετό σας)
- Γράψτε πρώτα την ιστορία σας
- Προγραμματίστε το κείμενο και τις σελίδες, ώστε να μπορούν να εικονογραφηθούν
- Δοκίμαστε να συρραψίσετε το κείμενο, κόψτε και συρραψίστε τις σελίδες ξεκινώντας από τη σελίδα 2 μέχρι και τη σελίδα 16
- Ξεκινήστε να εικονογραφείτε την ιστορία
- Μπορείτε να χρησιμοποιήσετε οποιαδήποτε μέσα: κεριά/μπογιές, παστέλ, μαρκαδόρους, μελάνι, χρωματιστά μολύβια και οποιαδήποτε συνδυασμούς
- Στην τελευταία σελίδα 16 γράψτε το όνομα, το επίθετο, την ημερομηνία γέννησής, τη διεύθυνση, το τηλέφωνο, την ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση (email), το σχολείο και την τάξη σας και ένα σύντομο βιογραφικό σημείωμά σας

Οι εξαιρετικές ιστορίες έχουν:

- Αρχή, τοποθέτηση σε χώρο και χρόνο και χαρακτήρες
- Μέση: ένα πρόβλημα ή μία συγκρούση
- Τέλος: μια λύση πρέπει να βρεθεί για το πρόβλημα ή μία απόφαση πρέπει να παρθεί για να ληξει η συγκρούση

Πώς να ξεκινήσετε:
 Απλώς ξεκινήστε
 νικήστε το ιστορία χαρτί...
 οι ιδέες θα έρθουν όταν ξεκινήσετε
 να γράψετε.

Πρώτο Βραβείο:

- Η έκδοση του βιβλίου του νικητή σε κάθε κατηγορία
- Συμμετοχή σε εργαστήριο για την ετοιμασία των βιβλίων για τύπωμα
- Θα δοθούν έπαινοι για τα βιβλία που θα ξεχωρίσουν



CNS Haiti

A Report on new NHE educational initiatives in the NW (northwest) of Haiti

Give us Your Children and We'll Give You the World

By Demeter Russafov



The room is crammed with little kids, neatly dressed in iron-pressed uniforms, sitting in an orderly fashion upon rickety old desks, deep beautiful eyes looking around as if lost. The space sizzles not just with heat but also with a heavy feeling of rigid confinement and alienation, and I involuntarily quiver for a second. The preschoolers seem uncomfortable, as if frozen by an all-too-familiar to me set of conformist expectations and behavioral rules, in this case enforced by the occasional teachers poking their heads in the sizzling hot space seemingly with the intention of maintaining a commonly agreed-upon invisible code of commands and instructions. Don't do this, Do that, Stand this way, Don't talk too loud. A tiny girl in the corner begins to cry, and the kids sitting next to her seem embarrassed and scared, perhaps by the possibility of drawing attention towards themselves.



*Who says learning isn't fun?
Established NHE School at Delmas,
Port-au-Prince*

The preschool is part of a larger government school in Grand Savanne, an hour north of Gonaïves, Haiti. Yet this scene can be replayed anywhere in rural Haiti, where lack of resources and teacher training has resulted in an educational void so severe that it has become one of the primarily stumbling blocks in front of the advancement of its people and culture. As schools are struggling to pay teachers' salaries and fund school improvements they choose to make cuts to their preschool programs before all others, often under the assumption that these programs are "least important of all". And where there are kindergartens still existing the preschoolers participating in them are confronted by a teaching philosophy which is inflexible and linear,

focusing on the reinforcement of a disciplined and orderly regiment of call-and-response type of learning. This archaic rigidity impacts all educational levels following preschool, and a mechanistic factory-like approach to education is decimating most creative and self-initiated pursuits and self-discoveries.

Since 2004 AMURT has been enriching its ongoing community development initiatives in the NW of Haiti, focusing on the integration of problem-solving aspects of development in a tightly interlinked web of community supported programs. Initially concentrating on basics such as water supply, bio-sand filtration, food production and local capacity building among others, the programs have grown and matured in scope and longevity. The NGO recently launched an innovative operation assembling and distributing solar PV units utilizing scrap PV materials, thus starting its most popular and widely supported program up-to-date. Its 6 bio-sand water filter production facilities have become self-sufficient in terms of local management and resources, and a newly signed contract between the NGO and the World Food Program (WFP) has given its team the green light to begin laying the foundations of an alternative-method cooperatively managed salt-production facility. A half a million dollar health initiative sponsored by CIDA is targeting the creation of an innovative community management model of health care focusing on prevention, education, and increased community involvement. All these continually expanding programs follow a development model defined distinctly by a strong feeling of ownership on behalf of the local communities towards the ongoing projects. At a recent meeting with the central committee managing the solar panel distribution one member expressed that, "we have come to identify with AMURT, and to believe that it is in our best interest to have its programs run well and for a long-time".



*A tree steward, Ti Place, NW Haiti
AMURT's tree nurseries produce more
than a hundred thousand tree seedlings
annually*

This feeling of local ownership of and identity with the projects, linked to the participatory model of development which AMURT has initiated in the area, is

reflected in the philosophy of an innovative educational initiative which the organization is preparing to start in May 2007 with the support of a half-million dollar grant by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). This grant will fund an initial 2-year phase of a long-term integrated education project focusing on the establishment of a teacher training center, and the creation of series of workshops, certification courses, teaching manuals, and sets of educational tools and methodologies. The program will also build/reconstruct 3 schools, and offer various levels of support to 9 schools.

The CENEOH (Center for Neo-Humanistic Education) will establish several training modules taught in interconnected ateliers. A Visual Art and crafts studio will host visiting professional artists, offering courses ranging from paper mache, drawing and ceramics to jewelry, sewing, and crafts. A Movement and Music studio will focus on the fundamentals of theater, dance, and music, helping teachers become effective facilitators actively using storytelling and encouraging learning through play and experimentation. An important part of the curriculum is the creation of a yoga trainer certification course adapted to the context of Haiti through weaving stories and songs from the local folklore with yoga philosophy. A karate certification program starting at elementary school level will compliment the yoga (YES) training, both focusing on the creation of volunteer-managed after-school programs. An outdoor education core of courses will offer participants the opportunity to try their hands in ropes courses, canoeing, hiking, swimming, and bird watching. These courses compliment two other sub-programs – an environmental education and a GLOBE-related (www.globe.gov) experiential science curriculum. The objectives of these programs is to introduce basic scientific tools needed to observe and measure the natural phenomenon, form ecology (ELF) clubs and initiatives, and introduce universal Neohumanistic values of respect and stewardship of an environment highly stressed and exploited.



***Tree Planting, Ti Place, NW Haiti
AMURT / CENEOH environmental
education programs create
opportunities for students to get
involved directly in volunteer
reforestation campaigns.***

linear lectures. Some of the sessions will encourage observation and introspection; others will explore the links between images and language, and the interaction between humans and nature. A cosmological understanding of science will compliment the Neohumanist values, and challenge the prevailing religious and Newtonian understanding of the world as a fixed place of unchanging mechanistic relationships. Another innovative approach is the so called Gestion d'Proximité, a school management model involving parents and students in the running of all school related programs. One of the program's goals is to enable the community to manage Neohumanist type preschools despite the lack of support

The focus of the programs is to offer sets of hands-on exercises and experiences placing an emphasis on the process rather than content of learning. Concepts such as group dynamics, flow, dialogue, participation, introspection, service, creativity and play become key in creating an alternative to the current deeply-engrained system of beliefs and fixed linear approaches to factory-style transfer of knowledge. All programs are highly sensitive to the context of the local area, seeking to utilize the local human and natural resources fully and in an integrated fashion. Yet they also seek to promote learning through technology as well – an Internet-based learning center and mediatheque will offer long-awaited in this isolated area “treats” such as online education, computer certification courses, digital storytelling, distance education over the radio, and outdoor film festivals. An alternative technologies lab will give opportunity to students and teachers to gain valuable technical skills assembling and installing solar panels, and micro-economic courses will teach the basics of economic cooperatives through a hands-on participation in the distribution and maintenance of AMURT's expanding line of “products” such as the bio-sand water filters, the “Rocket” eco-stoves, and tree seedlings coming out of its 5 tree nurseries.

The center will facilitate the teacher training sessions more as circles of dialogue and exchange of ideas and experiences rather than



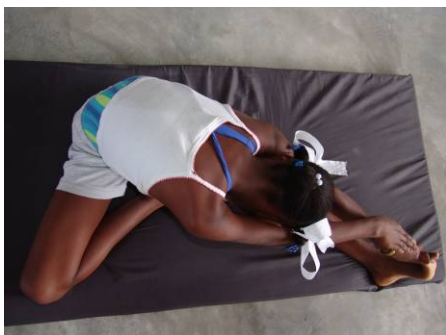
Teacher Training Session, Trassael, NW Haiti

of outside funds, merely using local human and natural resources and gaining skills and know-how at the regular CENEOH community workshops.

The second phase of the project will qualify for an additional funding and time-frame, and will focus on the creation of a model K-12 Neo-Humanist school attached to the teacher training center, and on expanding significantly the center's activities and programs. The departmental director of the Ministry of Education recently announced during his latest visit to the projects that once it takes shape CENEOH will be able to qualify for a government's authorization to become the only officially recognized teacher training institute in the NW of Haiti, in his words "raising a new breed of teachers dedicated to an education free from the shackles and mental prejudices of the past". His pledge to work very closely with AMURT and support it in its work is symptomatic of the high degree of acceptance of the NGO among the communities it serves, the agencies that fund it, and the government it seeks to reinforce. It thus joins other innovative NHE education projects in creating a model of integrating the programs within the social and cultural frameworks of their communities.

On the evening of that meeting the mood among the community members ran high, and the crowd did not disperse for a long time. The gathering exuded a feeling of closeness and identity to a process bonding the interests of all together. People expressed happiness that finally their kids would not have to go to the rough cities in the south to find good schools, and the dialogues often turned to visions and dreams and reminiscences which made me feel very close to this poor but pure mountain folks. One old woman drew me towards her, and almost shouted in my ear, "AMURT has done good work since it first came here, but now it is beginning to do a real good work." A man next to her nodded vigorously, adding "Education is the base for everything. And so far here we have seen only very bad examples of education." Another mentioned something about the importance of the young, making me think of an old proverb saying, "Give us your children and we'll give you the world". Suddenly a kiirtan tune joined the drumming sounds coming out of the nearby voodoo priest's house, curious I leaned over the balcony, to see a few small kids sitting on the fence outside singing and thumping on tin cans. As the last community members lingered in the deepening darkness I felt optimistic not just for this isolated and forgotten by most corner of our little planet, but also hopeful for all of us.

Demeter Russafov, a.k.a. Dharma, is the director of the CENEOH project in the NW of Haiti. He has been volunteering with AMURT in Haiti since August 2004. He can be contacted at haiti@amurt.net for more information on the project and its volunteer opportunities.



Yoga stretch, NHE School at Delmas



Sewing class, NHE School at Delmas



Dancers, at NHE School at Boudon, Port-au-Prince

Appeal for Volunteers

CENEOH-Haiti (Center of Neo-Humanistic Education) seeks self-motivated and experienced volunteers for its teacher-training workshops in the following areas: NHE pedagogy, art and crafts, yoga, karate, outdoor/environmental education, computers, science education, kindergarten, school management, architecture and construction. Stipends might be available depending on the timeframe of the volunteers' commitments and their qualifications. Please contact Dharma at haiti@amurt.net.

In this issue's "Sustainability" section of the Gurukula Network, we are featuring a couple's personal account of their visits to a number of Master Units (MUs – comprehensive rural projects) and ecovillages around the globe. Their experience challenges us to think "green" and practically about how different people, including Acaryas and members of Ananda Marga, married and unmarried, will participate in developing Shrii P. R. Sarkar's vision of Master Units, and what we can learn from the global ecovillage movement. With the growing interest in developing Master Units, we will begin an exploration in the next issue on how to apply comprehensive sustainability, including how to incorporate Neohumanist and Proutist concepts on Master Units.

Some topics that will be explored in future articles include:

1. The distinction between the Ananda Marga community based MU and the Wholetimer (monks and nuns of Ananda Marga) based MU. How can the former accommodate those interested in living together while also contributing to MU activities? How can the latter become a model for integrated and progressive development? We will also discuss in more detail the relationship between the two.

2. Practical information on major themes, including environmentalism, sustainability, community, land/housing, economy (agriculture, industry, energy, coops, etc.), service/spirituality, etc. Showcase existing examples of MUs and other communities that demonstrate the best practices.

3. Examine how Shrii P. R. Sarkar explains the balance between all of the issues above. That is, how can we practically achieve Prama (i.e. a conceptual framework for balance and equipoise in all spheres) on the individual, collective, social, economic, environmental and spiritual levels on MUs? This section will focus on how these aspects are integrated and become sustainable.

We invite readers to make suggestions about other topics to be addressed in this series of articles on sustainability and Master Units.

A Search for Community

By: Jill Lawless and Kevin Rossy

As a newly married couple we are concerned about the quality and state of the present world. Where can we begin to have a family? Where can we live that will nurture the livelihoods of our children and our spiritual well being? What options do we have to ensure a safe and loving environment where we can progress as a family? Last autumn we went on a sustainable community quest, firstly to find these answers and secondly to broaden our vision for the expanding Master Unit movement (rural development centres) in Europe.

Our quest brought us to the United States and India where we visited leading examples of sustainable communities and projects. Some of the places we visited set great examples in Permaculture, Non-Violent Communication, Consensus, Co-housing, Eco-village living, and spiritual values. All aim towards the same goal of creating a better world. By visiting them we realized even more that when ecological, universal, compassionate approaches such as these are implemented, they have an awesome power to lead and attract humanity towards ecological balance, social change, and spiritual fulfilment. It is through all of these that we will achieve the balance needed for future generations. Our travels opened our eyes to the pioneering people and movements that are manifesting the inevitable Neohumanist future.



To achieve this future, people are moving towards a more sustainable and ecological lifestyle. Sustainable environmentally conscious practices create an inspiring, low impact, earth friendly community and home. A family home next to Ananda Girisuta Master Unit, North Carolina, is a great example of this. They have created a beautiful "Earthship", which is unassumingly made from used tires and soda cans. This spacious handcrafted house cools and heats itself naturally, as well as catches its own rain water which they reuse in the home. We visited them on a freezing day and entered surprised to feel its 70F temperature inside. Its main source of heat comes from the sun which heats up the thick tire walls and radiates it back within the room. Their home regularly attracts local university architectural classes and on lookers looking for alternative examples bringing more awareness to the sustainable movement.

Earthaven Eco-village, North Carolina, (www.earthaven.org) is another example on a larger scale. It is founded on the principles of Permaculture (Permanent- Agriculture) and is a radical and beautiful example of what is possible while keeping within nature's laws. The village of about 50-150 people, depending on the season, is tucked away in the Blue Ridge Mountains amongst babbling streams and over 320 acres of abundant forested land. The homes and buildings are warm, inviting, efficient, and inexpensively built almost entirely of local and recycled materials. Their labor force usually consists of interns, volunteers, and students. It has regular courses and workshops on various topics from Permaculture

Design to Herbal medicines. Through this they are able to support their livelihood and infrastructure without having to leave their community.

Another reason for people to choose to live sustainably in community is for a more positive social and family environment. This is achieved through innovative techniques in communication and decision making. These are used to encourage positive relations and facilitate the harmonious well being of individuals as well as the community. Non Violent Communication, NVC (www.vnvc.org) is one of the methods used by various communities. At Yulupa Co-Housing in California (www.yulupacoho.com), there are weekly NVC group discussions to instil this difficult but worthy process of communication. Another technique is through consensus. Many of the communities visited have required courses that people attend before entering the community. At 'Écovillage at Ithaca', NY, (www.ecovillage.ithaca.ny.us) the process of consensus is the core of their governing body and enables all voices to be heard. Conflict is inevitable, but through an educated communicative approach a solid foundation for the whole community is created. Not only is this important for the adults, but it is a wonderful and inspiring example for our children to learn to communicate and resolve conflict through empathy and compassion.



However, living sustainably involves more than just environmental or social issues. What truly nourishes and sustains us is our connection to the Divine. Some communities are specifically developed to cultivate this connection. At Ananda village, California, (www.ananda.org) a community following the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda, the effects of a common spiritual outlook can be felt. Although less environmentally sustainable than other communities, their focus on the spiritual aspect of living in community is very strong. Here, daily collective meditation provides the support needed for each individual's progress. Paramahansa Yogananda is one of many great spiritual masters who were adamant about the need for collective living in a spiritually aware community. He said:

“Start now building colonies, and stop industrially selfish society from gambling with your destiny. Get away from the perpetual slavery of holding jobs to the last day of your life. Buy farms and settle down with harmonious friends....have time to constructively exchange Divine experiences and meditate.”

Another great advocate for a spiritual community was The Mother. Her inspiring vision of community is still manifesting at Auroville (www.auroville.org) in southern India. There are approximately 1500 people living here making The Mother's vision a reality. The core focus in the community is represented by the awesome Matrimandir, a large golden sphere specifically built for meditation. It symbolizes the “birth of a new consciousness seeking to manifest.”



The Mother believed:

“There should be somewhere upon Earth a place that no nation could claim as its sole property, a place where all human beings of good will, sincere in their aspiration, could live freely as citizens of the world, obeying one single authority, that of supreme Truth.”

It is through spirituality that true sustainability can be achieved. If the basic necessities of life are covered, i.e. food, housing, medical, and education, then a great platform is created for the expansion of consciousness and creativity. Although spirituality has not been such a central focal point for some of the communities we visited, it is an underlying theme that permeates all. No matter what path we take, if we choose a moral, ecologically sound lifestyle with respect for all life, then the spiritual goal is within reach.

It is a revolutionary step to create environments such as these. The great news is that this revolution is happening all over the world. Written here are but a few examples of the inspiring work that is being done. These examples have expanded our vision of Master Units and our concept of community. We have seen what is possible when you combine sustainable living and compassionate communication with spirituality and we see a bright future before us. Anything is possible and when we dare to begin to put sustainability on all levels into practice, the attraction of people and resources is inevitable. Success is inevitable.

Yoga Education Diploma Course

CNS is offering a Diploma Course on Yoga Education. The entire course can be completed in about a year or so. On successful completion of studies (or course requirements), AMGK will issue a Diploma in Yoga-Education.

The course consists of 10 modules as follows:

Module 1: Yoga- History, Traditions and Biographies

Module 2- Introduction to Yoga Anatomy, Physiology & Bio Psychology

Module 3- Classic Yogic Texts- Hatha Yoga Pradipika; Patanjali Yoga Sutras; Bhagvata Giita, Siva Samhita; Ananda Sutram.

Module 4- Yoga Philosophy : Namami Krsna Sundaram; Namah Shivaya Shantaya; Ananda Marga Elementary Philosophy; Discourses on Tantra(1,2).

Module 5- Yogic Practices: Conduct Rules; Yoga-Ethics; Yoga Dances ;Sixteen Points; Food & Fasting; Yoga Life Style.

Module 6- Yoga & Society: Neohumanism; PROUT; NHE; Integrated Farming; Microvita Science; Master Units.

Module 7-Yoga & Creativity: Prabhat Samgiita; Mandalas; Spirituality in Art; Mysticism in Poetry.

Module 8- Healing Systems , Yoga Therapy & Natural Remedies

Module 9-Independent Study on topics related to Hatha Yoga

Module 10- Independent Study on topic related to Psycho-Spiritual Aspects of Yoga.

The first two modules were covered at a recent Yoga Intensive. The next Yoga Intensive session will take place July 1- 12 and will cover Modules 3-5.

Yoga Intensive (1) Course

Ydrefors, Sweden, April 1-7, 2007

By Supriya

The Yoga Intensive (1) course in Ydrefors ran from 1st to 7th April 2007 and was attended by 13 serious students. On the evening of 1st April we watched a film called 'Evolution and Essence of a Spiritual Tradition' which gave a good overview of the history and evolution of yoga through the ages, starting from Shiva (5000 BC). It also explained different types of yoga which have evolved over time such as Bhakti, Karma, Jnana, Raja, Tantra, Kundalini and Hatha yoga and some of the spiritual masters who have been key in developing and spreading the tradition such as Patanjali, Vivekananda and Krsnamacharya to name but a few. What was not satisfactorily displayed in the film was the relation between the common origins of Tantra and Yoga.

Historically Yoga was developed as a holistic approach to quiet the mind and body in order to find inner peace and prepare for spiritual realization. However what also became clear from the film was that as Yoga has grown in popularity and been integrated into the west it has lost a lot of its spiritual origins choosing to concentrate more on the physical and health benefits. It was also very interesting to see how little was known about the Tantra Yogic tradition which we practice in Ananda Marga. Dada posed the question: What is left of yoga when we strip it from its historical and cultural context? The knowledge of the goals, methods and end results of Yoga is essential in order to determine its transferability across cultures and to keep it free from dogmas.

What struck me personally was just how rich and holistic the type of Yoga we, in Ananda Marga, practice with its origins and purpose rooted firmly in spirituality. It is heartening to see that Ananda Marga Gurukula has undertaken the initiative to support formal programs for transmitting this knowledge to others with the spirit of service rather than business.

Day 2 was spent looking more deeply into the origins, history, traditions and biographies of Yoga through a presentation by Dada Shambushivananda. By using Wikipedia live we were able to look more carefully at the lives, teachings and accomplishments of some of the great Yogis like Patanjali, Matsyendranath, Milarepa, Totapuri, Ramakrsna, Swami Rama Tiirtha, Paramahasa Yogananda, Ramana Mahars'I, Swami Ram das, Paul Brunton, Aurobindo, Ananda Mai-ma', Idries and Krsnamacharya.

Some of the highlights from the week included:

1. In depth review of Yoga History and its artistic presentation
2. Biographies of Yogiis of the Past
3. Yoga Subtle Anatomy
4. Human Physiology as it relates to Yoga Asanas.
5. Presentation on Cakras by Dr. Shatatman of Finland
6. In Search of Disciples and the Guru by Ac. Shambhushivananda
7. Acupuncture Meridians and the Mind
8. Fundamentals Principles of Human Life by Ac. Gatimayananda
9. One Human Society: How mind filters differences?
10. Minimum and Maximum Amenities of Life: The role of PROUT



We also looked at the different methods that Shrii Shrii Anandamurtiiji has prescribed for us to maintain good physical health in order to develop mentally and spiritually such as A'sana's, Mudra's, and Bandhas, Yama and Niyama, Madhu-Vidya, Guru-Saka'sh, Pranayama, Guru -dhya'na, Sattvika diet, Upava'sa, Kiirtan, Kaoshikii and Ta'n'd'ava etc.

During Day 3 and the morning of Day 4 we were presented with an introduction to yoga anatomy, physiology and biopsychology. Similar to the previous days the subject is so broad that we were only able to scratch the surface. The main aim being to see the whole spectrum of possibilities in order for us to decide where and in what aspects we wanted to study more deeply.

Dada gave a very beautiful quote from Shrii P. R. Sarkar on Biopsychology - which summed up very nicely the reason why it is so important for us to understand bio-psychology whilst practicing Yoga:

“Meditation should be performed knowing fully well the location of different glands and sub-glands and also the different cells in the human brain. And people should not only know the location of these glands and sub-glands, they should also be acquainted with their respective systems of hormone secretion, otherwise their meditation will not produce any fruit. So for this system of meditation, knowledge of biology is essential.” (Shrii Shrii Anandamurtiiji)

In order to understand biopsychology we need to first become familiar with anatomy and physiology. Dada emphasized that our starting point should always be an awareness of and a gratitude for the body that we have been given. Through this gratitude we will come to understand its workings. The spirit of gratitude is also cultivated by the daily prescribed use of the bath mantra that we recite after bath.

We started to familiarize ourselves with the different anatomical and physiological parts of the body and touched on the influence that yoga, and in particular asanas, can have on it by impacting the hormones, glands, nerves, muscles and joints. Once we had explored the therapeutic qualities of yoga on the physical body we went on to look at the interaction between the body and mind and the subtle body and anatomy such as Atman, Kosas, Nadiis, Vayus, Cakras, Kundalini, Prana-shakti, Vrittis, Gunas, Tanmatras and Indriyas which our yoga practices also have a direct impact on.

What I realized was just how important it is to fully appreciate the complexity of the gross and subtle body and the impact that our practices has on it at all levels.

In the afternoon, we worked on a group- mural to portray yoga history in pictures. It was fun to work collectively and brought the spirit of samgachhadvam (moving together).



During the next three days, we were joined by other 30 + yoga aspirants from Finland and other parts of Scandinavia. Dr. Shantatman gave two interesting workshops; one on “Cakras and Emotions” and another one on “Science of Acupressure Points”. Dada Shambhushivananda gave an inspiring discourse on “In Search of Disciples and Gurus” and traced the sacred relation between Sadguru and yoga-aspirants. Dada Gatimayanandaji showed how Buddhas eight fold path is fundamental to yogic living.

Akhanda Kiirtans were as always, the highlights of the Easter yogic fusion.

Overall, the yoga intensive ended with a discussion of some review questions which Dada had prepared for us. They have been posted on the www.amaye.org website for Yoga Education diploma course students. There are other interesting articles also posted in Online Journal of that website for Ananda Marga Yoga Educators to read. It is hoped that the list of these published articles will expand.

NHE Diploma Course Seminar March 26 – April 7, 2007 Hosted by Baan Unrak Primary School Sangklaburi, Thailand Report by Didi Anandarama

This teacher education programme emerged from the NHE Summit in Sweden 2006. It was the first two-week seminar of a series of six to be held over 3 years in Thailand. It has proven successful and very beneficial and supportive of the local project. It may well become a model for future teacher education initiatives in other places.

Background of the Venue

Sangklaburi is a small settlement town at the border to Burma in the North-West province of Kanchanaburi in Thailand. Sangklaburi originally stems from the word ‘Shankarpuri’ the city of Shiva. This area is the place of the Karen and Mon hill tribe people as well as Burmese refugees.



During the teacher education programme, guests were accommodated at the school as well as in walking distance air-conditioned guest houses. Delicious Thai vegetarian meals and snacks were served at the school. The guests delighted at the variety of tropical fruits and delicacies they were not familiar with such as roseapple, mangosteen, big guavas, sweet tamarinds, pomelo, rambutan, sweet fresh coconut water, longan, dragon fruit and new varieties of bananas.



Didi Ananda Devamala was posted to Burma in 1991 but due to difficulties entering Burma she worked here with the Burmese people and took care of displaced and disadvantaged children. There are now about 180 children connected to the Baan Unrak (House of Love) children’s home of which about 120 are living at the home. In 2004 the home moved to its new location on top of a hill on a 5 ha land area (Master Unit) overlooking a lake on one side. Abhijit, a PROUTist from the Philippines did a great job in designing the ecological Master Unit infrastructure. The old premises became the location of the Baan Unrak Primary School under the initiative of Didi Ananda Anuraga which opened in 2004 and now has 200 children. It serves the children of the children’s home and other local children. The school was a natural outcome of continuing quality care given to the children in the home and in response to the beating and mistreatment of children in the regular school system. The school was funded by the Bicycle Club of Thailand, the Thai-Singapore Chamber of Commerce and the Banyan Tree Group hotels.





Opening Programme

Didi Ananda Anuraga, the founder and principal of the school opened the seminar welcoming over 50 participants of which half were her teachers and the other half were teachers, principals, educators and volunteers that came from Ghana, Australia, Mongolia, Egypt, Sweden, Holland, Denmark, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, USA, Germany and England. The Thai teachers welcomed the guests with a graceful dance and a thread binding ceremony that symbolizes goodwill in connecting to each other.

Daily Flow



The day started early at 5 am with singing and meditation for those who stayed on the school premises. At 7am there were two parallel programmes. One was the most welcomed introductory yoga asana class with relaxation, meditation and kaoshikii led by Didi Candrima in Thai language. The other activity was collective meditation.



At noon time there was collective kiirtan and meditation before lunch which proved to be one of the spiritual highlights of the day where all were present connecting on a deep spiritual level. There was reading in Thai and English of a spiritual topic with someone rendering a short comment.

At 5pm the collective programme ended and the local teachers could go home.

Guest participants could go for walks, visit the bakery of the Children's home, hire the tailors to make new cotton or linen outfits for them at the children's home Weaving Centre, go for a swim in the lake, get a Thai massage, join the evening meditation and after dinner join the discussion on a topic that emerged each day.



Two cultural programmes were held at the Baan Unrak Children's Home where home children and a visiting French group of children performed. Ole Brekke performed pantomime at the home too and captured all the children's hearts. They all responded to him in a very natural way. He also performed in an interior Forest Children's home made of bamboo and at the Three Pagoda Pass temple for the local children.



NHE Diploma Course



The NHE Diploma Course is a distance learning course for which one applies through Ananda Marga Gurukula, amgk.glo@gurukul.edu. After acceptance into the programme the student receives the modules, the reading material and assignments. Each student works with a coordinator with whom they communicate until they complete all the 12 modules, at their own pace. The seminars set up in Sangklaburi are to help, inspire, motivate, support and enrich the experience of the students to go through the distance learning course. Diploma students are invited to join any of the seminars for their own benefit.

During this seminar we focused on 4 modules which support the teacher's all-round continuous self development and learning.

Module 1 – Personal Development (Physical Health, Ethics and Morality, Emotional and Social Development, Knowledge of Spiritual Philosophy, Spiritual Practice, Neohumanism , Service)

Module 2 – Intellectual Development

Module 3 - Creative, Artistic and Aesthetic Development

Module 4 - Foundations of Holistic Education and NHE

Spiritual Philosophy

Didi Ananda Carushila presented thorough classes in Thai language on Neohumanism; Jinana, Karma and Bhakti; Knowing Oneself; Vibrations, Form and Colour; Life, Death and Samskaras, Cycle of Creation, Bio-psychology, Layers of Mind, Yama and Niyama and Dharma. The teachers appreciated the classes in Thai very much because they could freely ask questions and have lively discussions. Parallel to these classes, Didi Ananda Rama held classes with the English speaking participants who also enjoyed these classes as they were geared to their interests and needs.



Art Activities

At the end of the class all joined in a related art activity with Didi Ananda Carushila which brought the topics closer to them.



Some examples:

Neohumanism: - Small groups of 3-4 observe the living world and make a piece of art in nature appreciation

Cycle of Creation: – Two participants, one directs the other to unfold a roll of tissue paper and create various forms without breaking the paper (Saincara) and then the paper is rolled back to its original state (Pratisaincara).

Bio -Psychology Chart: - A group of 4, one person lies on a big piece of paper and others trace around the body. Cakras and vrttis are added to the body drawing.

Yama-Niyama: - Two groups – one group comes up with a story using all points of Yama and makes

a book with illustrations. The other group does the same for Niyama.

Communication Skills and Personal Development

Eva Ekman from Sweden with a background in NLP (Neuro Linguual Programming) gave daily classes on essential communication skills for the personal development of the teacher. The major portion of the classes were practical exercises which participants did with each other that basically helped the teachers to be aware of “Who am I as a teacher and what do I want to communicate?”



Notes from the class:

- Teachers need to develop skills of deep communication with themselves as well as a clear and open communication with other adults and children around them.
- The significance of your communication is revealed in the response you receive.
- You are always responsible for the message you send. If the person you are talking to doesn't understand, it is your responsibility to try another way to make your message understood.
- The way we think affects the way we feel and communicate with others and ourselves.
- What is communication? - Communication is transferring a message over a certain distance to a receiver that confirms what she or he has heard and understood the message.
- What do we need to communicate in a good way? - Presence, awareness, confronting ability, approving, expression of voice, to be honest in our speech.
- We communicate a message with only 7 % through words, 55% through body language and 38% through the tone of voice.
- Is it possible not to communicate? - No. We always communicate something. We cannot stay silent and think that we are not giving some sort of effect.

Multiple Intelligences

Tara Macphail, a teacher at Ananda Marga Riverschool in Australia, teaching grade 6, presented a workshop on Multiple Intelligences as part of Module 2, Intellectual Development. The workshop intended for the teachers to become familiar with their own intelligence abilities and to validate them equally with the



commonly accepted linguistic and mathematical intelligences. Tara showed Power Point slides first explaining the 8 intelligences and then picked 'actors' with a predominant intelligence and asked them to present their qualities. Then she had 8 big sheets of paper on the walls describing the 8 intelligences and had each participant sign up to form small groups. Each group got the task of presenting a lesson plan to children on "Honesty" using that particular intelligence. The result was a very enjoyable learning experience for all.



Creative Development

Didi Ananda Carushila led daily art activities and workshops for the teacher's personal development. She started with simple exercises with individual pencil drawing to elaborate group art activities with broad themes such as 'home.' The teachers enjoyed the classes and would have liked more of them.

Relaxation, Concentration and Imagination



For creativity to unfold within oneself one needs relaxation, concentration and imagination according to Ole Brekke, director of The Commedia School in Denmark. They need practice so that they become our nature. He brought with him the art of moving and play and drew out the playful and expressive nature of each participant.

He said that although theatre in teaching focuses predominantly on the physical and social aspects of learning it can also touch the other areas of educational objectives and be useful teaching any subject in the class. (Educational objectives can be divided into 5 categories: knowledge; inquiry and problem solving; psycho-motor skills; social skills; values.) He demonstrated this by blending in his class with the subjects of that day and re-emphasizing them.

Many exercises and games and a systematic development of spontaneous story telling through involvement of all brought a high energy field of creative expression and learning. A very enjoyable game was the following:



Gurubaru (name of a mythical snake from Mexico that catches its own tale):
Get together in groups of 6. Make a train behind A. All follow A and imitate her movements. After a while A turns around and similarly all turn facing the opposite direction. Now the last B will be first and leads with a song. After a while A runs in front of B facing her and this means B will stop singing. Now all turn and a new A is



leading with movements etc.

Objective: develops leadership qualities for all ages; takes away people's shyness of being a leader; everyone has to take initiative to lead; and everyone gives encouragement to the leader.



Movement, Music and Mathematics

In the afternoons Miriam Godoshian (Mirabai), a retired elementary teacher from the USA who taught for over 30 years, took the students into more creative practical activities for teaching mathematics. The students used music, rhythm, movement and games to learn simple and complex mathematical concepts. This was a very practical activity on great demand by the teachers in the classroom who were eager to learn new methods and skills in teaching an often treated as 'dry' subject.

Qualities of a Neohumanist Teacher

This workshop was given by Prabha Demasson director of the Ananda Marga River School in Australia. This involved the teachers in small groups discussing what children are looking for in the personality of a teacher. This workshop connected with the personal development modules of the NHE Diploma Course.



Development of a Neohumanist Teacher

Didi Anandarama maintained the flow and thread of the NHE Diploma course modules. The first three modules are intended for the benefit of the teacher. Who a teacher is teaches more than what the teacher says. In these modules, the teachers can focus on themselves and become clear on their personal most important values in life and understand 'Who they are' and bring their thoughts, feelings and actions into alignment on all levels.

Throughout the two weeks the participants worked on formulating their own personal goals in the different areas of life. This task was an exercise related to the assignments of the first three modules and in general to the idea of 'lifelong learning.' The first three modules ask the students to observe their personal development and also to take up the study of an intellectual subject and a creative skill for the entire Diploma Course period.



Holistic Education and NHE

Didi introduced the general definitions of holistic education and in particular the philosophical foundations of NHE and the derived principles. She also touched on Human and Child Development, based on Shrii P. R. Sarkar's writings, as an introduction to module 5 which will be dealt with in depth in the next seminar in October 2007.

Feedback and Closing Programme

“What did I learn in these two weeks” was the topic of a 1 ½ minute presentation for everyone, using any of the multiple intelligence ways to express it. This was a phenomenal closing programme that truly witnessed the heart of what each person really got out of these two weeks. Every topic was touched by one or the other person. Many liked the early morning asanas and meditation sessions, kiirtan and the creative, communication and personal development activities.



“The programme was well done, very practical and inspiring. I learned how to be patient, listen to people, and express myself openly so it creates harmony in living. I liked the art, philosophy, math, and especially the drama.”

“It helped me a lot in enhancing my knowledge in my spiritual, intellectual and physical development. It has changed my lifestyle which is good for my whole life.”



“I have learned very much, especially to be myself and to be accepted by everyone. I felt welcome and worthwhile. It was very inspiring and I feel very good I have joined this course. It was good getting up early! “

“Very practical. My English is better after the programme! I know how to do interesting Circle Time.”

Songkran Festival

At the end of the Closing Programme the Thai teachers had a surprise for the visiting participants. They explained that very soon there will be the Thai New Year festival Songkran, which is also the beginning of the rainy season. They let us all sit outside and presented us with garlands and then started pouring water on our hands. The water pouring continued more and more and soon all were soaked in water and tapped with white powder on their faces. It was indeed a relief after days of heat rising up to 47 Centigrade. In their wet dress all joined in the typical Thai circle dance which moves counter clock wise to the rhythm of the music.



Future Plans

There was a lot of sharing of resources among the participants especially among those who have projects of their own, as well as plans.

Prabha Demasson will work on the Administrator’s handbook.

Didi Candrima will translate the modules into Thai.

Didi Ananda Carushila will read the assignments of the Thai teachers.

Participants are inspired to organise similar programmes in their areas.

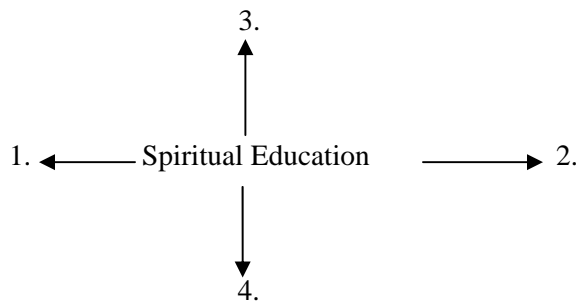
Workshop on Spiritual Education

Given by Didi Ananda Sushila
At the Ananda Marga Sectorial Conference
Cordoba, Argentina
Feb 3, 2007



In NHE, the most important aspect is spirituality. There are many existing theories and methods about education, but few really talk about how to teach children spirituality. Spirituality is the essence of NHE. That's why I chose this topic for the workshop. I began to be involved in NHE four years ago when I got posted to Paraguay with two schools to manage. I didn't have much knowledge about education but had the zeal and ability to learn new things, Tantra philosophy as background, and most important, meditation as an inner source. That was just more than enough to begin I thought. Four years passed, I am still learning, implementing, observing, experimenting and continuously thinking; so let us collectively think how to do it. In the workshop I encouraged the participants not to just listen to me but rather that we will think collectively, and through questions stimulate our inner knowledge. We can be positive, creative and intuitive without fear of criticism.

First we brainstormed answers to each of the following questions, preferably one single word answers. There are two types of thinking, horizontal and vertical; horizontal thinking relates to thoughts associated with the subjects, while vertical thinking talks about the cause and result.



1. What does spiritual mean?

Answer : Baba, love, link with God, truth, elevation, link with internal self, search our soul, aesthetic, Consciousness, auto-realization, back to home, know the reality, liberation, happiness, joy, peace...

2. What is education ?

Answer : develop, grow, inform, knowing, bring it outside...

Definition from Shrii P. R Sarkar : Education is that which liberates.

3. Why do we need spiritual education ?

Answer : For a better world based on spirituality

4. What is the result of spiritual education ?

Answer : become wise, neohumanist, sadvipra (spiritual revolutionary).

Then we explored some examples of Spiritual Education

The story of Madalasa is an example of a mother giving spiritual education to her sons. When her children were infants she would put them to sleep with the following lullaby:

" Dear son, although you are but a child in a small human frame, you are the veritable expression of the Supreme Consciousness. You are an ever-holy, ever-enlightened entity. As long as you think that you are only a small child, you are spiritually ignorant, but when you realize that you are a part of that Supreme Entity, you become that Supreme Entity. You are beyond the spell of the illusory Maya of this mundane world. You are the embodiment of the pure and unblemished self." (From The Awakening of Women P 174-177, by Shrii P.R. Sarkar)

Similarly Shrii P R Sarkar has given some guidelines for imparting spirituality to infants also. A special meditation can be done at the time of delivery. After the baby is born, the mother can sing kiirtan in a soft low voice so that the baby will hear it; and this will create a spiritual inclination in the child. At the time of nursing the mother's milk becomes like Divine Nectar, and will assure the physical, mental, and spiritual growth of the child.'

As children get a little older, they can be taught meditation through games and songs with mudras, poems, art, stories and dance, like the ones in the Circle of Love Manual.

Lastly all participated in the following activity:

Before the workshop started, I walked around and picked up two different kinds of flowers, a small yellow flower and a long stem flower, one stone and a small piece of round wood. I showed the participants the first item and asked them to write a sentence relating to the item with a spiritual sense and encouraged them to be creative and imaginative. While they were writing I played soft music so their mind would be in a subtler state; good for creativity. The vibration was quiet and peaceful, and everyone was able to concentrate and think. When they finished writing, I showed them the second item and so on until four sentences were written. Then they each shared what they had written with someone near by. They were happy to share their ideas. After sharing, we made several groups with a minimum of 5 persons in a group. I asked them to tear the paper and separate the 4 sentences, numbering them 1,2,3,4 to match the item I had showed them. Then I collected all the number 1s from the group and made them into a poem. They had to work out how to make the poem beautiful and spiritual by arranging the sequence or

adding some more words. In the same way we proceeded with numbers 2, 3, and 4. Each group started to work with much

attention changing the sequence over and over again to see how it went.

When they finished all 4 poems, we shared them with everybody group wise. The sister from the first group recited the poem in such a dramatic way that it drew everyone's attention. It was so beautiful. It was amazing to hear so many beautiful poems coming from them and everyone applauded when they heard the poems. Later on some expressed that they felt deeply that we are all connected, by doing the group work.



Below is a small sample of the poems they created (originally in Spanish)

FLOWER

The beauty of God's creation,
Always go back to the most natural
and simple,
Sonorous and creative harmony
taking care of the flower as oneself
Baba gave us sight, so we can see
beauty in everything.

POSY

Subtle beauty
grows besides a stream
and runs softly downwards
If you don't water your qualities
they may shrivel.
Life that nourishes us
let them grow.

STONE

Demonstration of the Divine
The obstacle in love learning
Being as tough as a rock
see the Divine Presence in everything
animated and unanimated

WOOD

Dead nature, roughness
Flexibility, nobleness
energy and hidden warmth

POSY

Eternal rains
Transformed into leaves, little
branches
and evolving and growing.
The sincere devotion,
developing the nobleness
A whole universe displayed
use of the unanimated creation of the
Whole.

FLOWER

Soul's reflection
Harmony with the universe
Joy of beauty and color
Flower, beautiful being
Flower, Purity of being
Flower, Joy of being

STONE

Solidity, unalterable strength
permanence in time
millennium wisdom
trust and safety
Little Plant
Harmony and brotherhood
dead calm, fragility and tenderness
ancient connection with oneself
through
the element earth-water.

To end the workshop I taught a children's song "force of peace" (in Spanish "fuerza de la paz") and asked the different groups to add some mudras and dance to it. Later on each group presented their song. Everyone was happy and enjoyed creating their own dance. In the end we made a big circle and danced all the groups' dances collectively.

Any donation and Spanish books are welcomed, please contact anandasushiila@gmail.com



Workshop for the Parents Love, Solidarity and Self-Esteem at the Neohumanist School in Paraguay By Didi Ananda Sushila



The idea of doing a workshop came out of our regular teachers meetings. We were facing several cases with violence in the families, especially with the fathers who are alcohol addicted, and some of our students are very shy, lacking self-confidence and have little attention from their parents. In order to have more involvement with the parents and establish constant communication between the parents, teachers and school, for the better education of our students, we felt a need to arouse the awareness of the parents. We first chose love, as it is the essence of everything. Love can solve, cure and bring happiness through all our life. And we need to create the loving environment both in the school and in the home. With

our collective efforts, two workshop programs were given. The following is a summary of these workshops.

Workshop 1 : Love and Solidarity

1. Opening

We started with a visualization using songs and Baba Nam Kevalam. Imagine love within you and surrounding you; feel the link with one another; feel we are one with the light of love in our hearts...

2. Dynamic Game

We had a box that we passed to each person one by one. Each person opened the box and saw the photo inside the box and then told the good qualities of the person in that photo. Actually there was no photo in the box, only a mirror. Everyone was telling the good qualities of themselves.

3. Lecture

Love generates good feelings in the heart and good thoughts in the mind. In this way, we can convey the most beautiful things within us to others. Live life with spiritual energy. Solidarity means a supportive action; it implies offering what belongs to us. It represents a solitary gesture that always starts from love. How to promote solidarity: each and every one of us can offer our help to one that needs and not close our eyes upon misfortune or injustice.

4. Drama

We divided into 5 groups, with parents and teachers included in each group. We gave each group a paper which had one of the following cases described on it, and we gave the participants 20 minutes to discuss. Each group had to find a solution and then perform a drama about it.

- 1) A mischievous child; his family tries to change him with violence. How he grows up, his future.
- 2) A happy family, with harmony. Their children's future.
- 3) A mischievous child that changes his behaviour due to his family's help.
- 4) Alcoholism in the family, how it affects children and their future.
- 5) Lack of communication in the family, children starting from 4th grade.

5. Conclusion

We need to learn how to express love to our children, and live in harmony. Remember to be good examples, because the children are the reflection of the parents.



Workshop 2 - Love and Self-Esteem

1. Songs and Visualization

Participants were instructed to sit quietly and think and feel how we are all surrounded by cosmic love; we are not alone, the cosmic consciousness is within us. Thinking I am divine, I am part of the infinite love, I am pure and unique...

2. Dynamic Game

Write the names of three animals and describe three qualities of that animal. Share with everybody and finally tell the qualities of the three animals from their point of view.

1. How I see myself.
2. How others see me.
3. My real self

The psychological reason for this exercise is that the way we think of and look at things reflects our inner thoughts about ourselves.

3. Lecture

Self-esteem is the way someone appreciates him/herself. That is, it refers to how one considers one's own values and abilities. It is reflected through the way we dress, speak; adapt what we have. With self-confidence, always says: "I can do that! ". To value oneself say: "I

am important! ". It is essential to emotional stability and personal balance.

4. Drama

As in the first workshop, we divided into 5 groups, with parents and teachers included in each group. We gave each group a paper which had one of the following cases described on it, and we gave the participants 20 minutes to discuss. Each group had to find a solution and then perform a drama about it.

- 1) A child comes home from school crying because he doesn't know how to write, and neither do his parents.
- 2) Parents are looking for a job; are turned down in different places; self-esteem drops down. Later on looks for the work that he feels good and does it at home and finally with his will power tries to find a job again...
- 3) The father puts a lot of pressure on his child and wants him to be perfect, though, the child doesn't fulfil his expectations. The child reaches puberty and goes to extremes for fear and lack of communication.
- 4) Parents are divorced and to the children refer to each other with bad words about the other that degrade them, leading to low self-esteem in the child.
- 5) Good self-esteem with positive outlook

5. A Questionnaire was given to the parents.

1. Are you aware of your son/daughter's assignments at school?
2. Do you help your children with their homework?
3. Do you often meet the teacher to find out your children's academic performance?
4. Is there fluid communication between you and your child about school activities?

5. Do you attend meetings that deal with your child's academic performance ?
6. Do you keep your children out of bad habits?
7. Does media affect your child's academic performance?
8. Was the parents workshop interesting to you?

9. Will you continue participating in this kind of workshop?
10. Which of the following issues would you like to be discussed next year?
a- discipline ()
b- honesty ()
c- hygiene ()
d- health ()
e- others _____

Feedback

Though not so many parents could come for the workshops, those who attended were highly appreciative and enjoyed them a lot, especially the dramas. They conveyed what we did in the workshops to other parents, so it created a mutual understanding in the community. Afterwards we had many parents come to us and share with us the difficulties in their families and the financial problems they face. We also try to help however we can. In general, the workshops improve communications and awaken the consciousness of the parents for the better education of the children.



Education Training Camp

Digos City, Philippines

Oct 23-24, 2006

By Sister Asima

Davao Sister Training Center

The education training camp for Davao and General Santos Region took place for two days at AMSAI Sunrise. It was organized by Didi Ananda Carushila and Didi Amita, assisted by WT trainees, Asiima and Chandradevii, and attended by 11 teachers and five staff members. The first workshop was on “STUVOL” by Didi Ananda Carushila, followed by a class on “Morality” by Didi Amita. In this session, each partner was required to create a story based on principles of Yama and Niyama and make a play from the story. In this way the teachers could acquire new ideas for story telling.



The next workshop was by guest speaker Mrs. Ciencia Plaza, a retired kindergarten teacher and a mother of one of our teachers, who is familiar with our principles. She spoke on “Ethics and Spiritual Values”, attributes which are very much lacking nowadays especially among younger teachers.

Manomaya, a former Neohumanist teacher gave a class on Neohumanism for the benefit of our three new teachers who recently joined the Mateo, Arabel and Spring Valley schools. In the evenings we played some outdoor games which they can use with their students. Afterwards, for recreation, we were entertained by a cultural performance of cheering dances, singing and acting by groups of teachers. The teachers were very excited and put on their best performances as this was a competition and there were prizes to be won. After an intensive day, a nice adventure movie titled “Duma” was shown to the participants, an inspiring story about the friendship between a boy and a cheetah.

The next day we started the day early with 5 am meditation, introduced PT exercises, morning circle by the teachers and a yoga dance by choreographer, Gaorii . This provided an opportunity for the teachers to gather new ideas for teaching yoga. Next they were taught some new Prabhat Samgiita songs, led by Candradevii on the guitar. By 10.00 am, off we were to the beach nearby. We organized some team-building games such as most creative cheering team, passing message, tallest pyramid, imitate forms, obstacle games and quizzes. All the participants loved the games so much that they forgot about their plan for a swim. After that we enjoyed some ice cream and a light brunch before heading back for another workshop. Savitrii, our next speaker is connected with an international NGO and manages a theatre and dance group specializing in traditional dance and music. She shared her experiences in working with poor children, teaching them discipline and responsibilities and performing arts as a channel to express their frustrations and anger and thereby giving them a chance for a better life away from their destitute condition, showing them love through arts. They hold regular performances in cultural events around Davao. About fifteen youngsters from age six up to teens are currently under her wing.

Lastly, there was an evaluation of the intensive two days course and feedback before a closing ceremony and the awarding of prizes to the winners. From feedback gathered, we know that we had reached our objective in providing new ideas with games, story telling, dance and plays, which are effective tools in teaching.

Finding Balance in Yourself

Zonnelicht Teachers' Training

Den Bosch, Holland, March 9 -11, 2007

A report by Ada Merz



An excellent teacher training weekend was held in the Zonnelicht Daycare and Neohumanist Education Centre in Holland on 9, 10, 11 March 2007 organised by Yolanda Koning, the director of the school. The theme was 'Finding Balance In Yourself' and focussed on 'Wisdom and the Art of Service.' Most of the teachers were from Holland. Most of the lectures and workshops were given by Dada Shambhushivananda and Ole Brekke. Both have become the regular annual trainers in Holland and gave their valuable contributions.

Making Music

The education seminar opened with a sing along session of neohumanistic songs led by Ada Merz, who intends to put her new songs on CD with a fellow teacher.



The Art of Service

One of Dada Shambhushivananda's lectures was called: The 'Art of Climbing the Bliss Pyramid' in which he focussed on the spirit and art of service. He presented service in the form of a pyramid that can be climbed steadily. Service is a process, a transmutation of short lived pleasure into long term bliss. His explanation was so rational that it left us feeling that rendering service is the most intelligent thing we can undertake in our life. It leads to an increase in personal and social happiness and eventually a state of bliss.

Service in Upbringing

How to be a Leader

Ole Brekke, director of the Commedia School in Copenhagen, got the teachers into a playful mood with 2 theatrical workshops. In one exercise, the teachers had to express a range of basic human emotions from feeling a little to feeling extremely e.g. angry, sad, shy, proud etc. In another exercise we took turns in using our ingenuity to persuade 3 recalcitrant personalities to move a bench into another room. We could solicit advice from the audience, which provided some relief. It was a good learning experience for classroom situations especially in dealing with older children.



Using Colours to Help Children to Deal with Emotions

Jovan Drapsin, from the NHE Sunshine School in Zurich, Switzerland, gave a workshop on 'Using Colours to Help Children Deal with Emotions.' She based her knowledge on the Aura-Soma therapy which the teachers found very interesting as it gave them an insight into their own mind and emotions. We were asked to pick 4 coloured cards in a sequence from 1- 4. She explained the meaning of the different colours, mentioning that no colour is high or low.

Here are a few examples:

Yellow/golden: is associated with knowledge and wisdom but if you don't live it, it leads to fear and becomes power seeking. Violet is a mystic colour, but it can lead to violence and escapism. Many people who don't want to be here like this colour. Pink: searching for the self, but if you don't live this it will bring you into a state of dependency. Orange: good for protection and for dealing with shock. (See poem, page 41)



Treasure Hunt

The first evening was spent engaging in a treasure hunt which required walking in pairs in the local park. The teachers were tested on their determination, courage, creativity and leadership. Yolanda is an excellent translator of neohumanist philosophy into treasure hunts. The teachers had to scale walls and find treasures in the lake without getting their feet wet. I myself was too tired to take an active role but signed up for sitting in the cold and dark with 2 older children. This was the last leg of the hunt. I was the goody and the other two the baddies. We had to cover our heads with a black cloth. The teachers had to guess by asking the right questions who were the baddies and who was the goodies. It was interesting to discover how difficult this seemingly small exercise was for most people.

Team Spirit

The success of the education seminar was partly due to the excellent team spirit amongst the teachers of the Zonnlicht School. They were good spirited, and service minded and took the collective meditation quite seriously. The ones who have been working there a number of years and attending teacher training sessions are starting to understand what NHE is all about. This was very inspiring to see. Yolanda provides her teachers with group meditation once a week in the school and her efforts are bearing fruit I believe.



A Summary of Dada Shambhushivananda's Lecture on "The Spirit and Art of Service"

Role of Services during Different Stages of Human Life

We all go through the following stages:

Dependence on others (as a child)

Independence (youthful spirit)

Interdependence (maturity of adult)

Taste of freedom (if we are lucky)

Dependence on others (the old age)



Dependence

From the moment of our birth we are graced by the service of others. We grow as human beings because first our parents and then others care for us, teach and guide us. The feeling we should develop is gratitude. When we give service we should know when to help and when to stop helping. Otherwise it maybe harmful or have an adverse effect. The person may need another kind of help. In our life we need different kinds of teachers and guidance. Life is only made possible due to the service we receive from others and the service we give to others. We cannot do anything alone. In this world there is a need for co-operation and co-ordination with mutual understanding. In the world of business, helping is a transaction where help is given in order to get something back. We do this in our personal life too. The real spirit of service is unilateral. You render service to the person in need without expecting anything in return.

Independence

The youthful mind starts to assert itself from parental dependency and authority. At this age, we think we can do it alone, but this is an illusion. We soon realise through different clashes and cohesions that others affect us and we affect others. We cannot live alone by ourselves. Our relationships, job, and community interactions- all remind us of our interconnectedness with 'others'.

Interdependence

Then comes the age of interdependence, the maturity of adulthood. It is when we realize that we actually cannot do it alone. Society runs by mutual cooperation. A person who doesn't understand this is a misfit in society. If we want to have a functioning society, we all have to understand this truth.

The Taste of Freedom

We may not be dependent on others for our peace of mind. But to remain free, we have to be alert; otherwise it will be taken away. As the saying goes: Vigilance is the price of liberty. Why is this so? Now danger lurks on two sides: in the external and internal world. Real freedom is having inner peace. In our evolution the mind moves from pleasure to happiness to bliss. Pleasure however is short lived, happiness lasts longer, and bliss lasts the longest. Pain is when we don't get what we desire. Happiness is dependent on desire. Happiness equals wealth divided by desire. Wealth allows us to fulfil our desires, it is a resource. Bliss is when the mind is in a constant state of contentment.

Dependence

In our old age we again experience dependency and feel gratitude for the help we receive. Despite all our wealth, we become helplessly dependent on others in our old age.

So the moral is: Life begins with dependency and ends with dependency. It means, life begins with receiving service from others and ends again with service from others. Knowing the wise direct their life and all its potentiality in rendering maximum service to others. That is the secret of fulfilment.

Wisdom Based Lifestyle and Life of Service

Immediate Pleasure: Life starts with immediate pleasure through sensory gratifications. The sensual/sensory level is a basic human need. This need continues to exist as long as we have a human body. But with pleasure comes pain. Now a person who is in a state of bliss knows how to enjoy without getting the pain. The secret is self control and moderation. If we don't know when to stop, we will feel pain. And if we only think of our own pleasure, imbalance comes. Others will feel deprived and start claiming their due. We should become aware of other peoples need. This is the key. Billionaires give money to keep others quiet and to gain control. The psychology behind this kind of giving is: my pleasure should not be disturbed.

Future pleasures: Because we want pleasure not only today but also tomorrow, we secure the future through accumulation of wealth and knowledge. But saving is not always the answer, because human beings can die from suffering a loss. A rich man is more likely to die from a heart attack due to a loss than a poor man. We know that the mind wants more and more and is not satisfied with little. But the more you have, the more insecure we become and fear to lose it. But if we combine this with the spirit of service we shall get great mental peace and security. Human beings have the ability to think of other peoples needs. Helping others is good business, an investment in accumulating bliss. To get happiness we need to be intelligent. It requires inner discipline and self-control, which is a kind of psychic power. We externalize control by building a hierarchical structure, creating a paternalistic society that sets out to subordinate others. A self-directed lifestyle is based on power and control of others, a other/wisdom directed lifestyle however is based on empowerment of the self and others. We need to build a society that is based on co-ordinated co-operation and not subordinated co-operation. Everyone has their utility and existential value. We need to understand and put this knowledge to good use. Progressive utilisations need to be applied.

One cannot do service without proper knowledge. Good intention is not enough. Knowledge allows us to do things better. There comes a time in our life when we realize that we are not permanent. We need to have a sense of purpose. Life is a mystery. Tomorrow is the result of today. And today is the result of yesterday. It is more natural to live in bliss. It is even possible to live in bliss. Only living at the lower levels of the bliss pyramid leads to a fractured self, a dysfunctional organisation or a tormented society. Knowing this we have no choice but to include the welfare of others into our life to gain lasting happiness. But the life of service is not without obstacles. In order to take action and reach our goal we need moral courage. We need to apply rationality and use our discriminating intellect. Proper ideation (applying godhood) is a prerequisite. This way we don't get entangled with our ego or attached to the result. Like the jackfruit when you cut it open, there is a sticky liquid inside. By putting oil on your hands, the oil will not get on your hands. Similarly, by oiling our mind with Cosmic ideation we can easily remove any kind of hurt or pain. We have to live our life based on some higher value which is the source of our tranquillity. Some values in our life are negotiable, some are not. We need to use our discrimination to see what is and is not negotiable.

Now how to develop a service-oriented mind? For this we need moral courage, a peaceful mind, determination, and a constant readiness to serve & sacrifice.

NHE Conference Taiwan

March, 2007

By Didi Sananda



The Fourth Neohumanist Conference in Taiwan was a success. The Conference was held at a temple in the mountains of Jin Gua shi, a place famous for its beautiful scenery. Twenty-nine people attended the program. The Conference started with a workshop by Dada Pranesh on “One Human Culture”. This was followed by a dialog on “Why is it necessary for Educators to engage in Spiritual Practices?”

The afternoon brought a workshop by Shakuntalah, the manager of Ananda Preschool Taipei. Participants created a story based on Yama and Niyama using song, painting, puppets, cloth etc and then presenting it to each other. During the evening, persons from different projects and schools shared about their work, and the presentations were weaved in with entertaining activities.

Sunday morning Didi Sananda gave a talk on “The Layers of the Mind” and how to help develop the mind of a child. Time was also spent in reviewing the ongoing work and planning for the future by the people already working within education. Those new to NHE had to create their "perfect school" They had to think about the ideal relationships between teachers and students, classes, environment etc and they came up with two extraordinary schools!

Before closing our program sister Supriya gave a fantastic class on how to work with children with certain problems, smaller learning problems as well as autistic children. She gave many guidelines and shared her experiences of how she has seen Yoga exercises help these children. The whole program was warm and full of laughter and joy and learning and sharing. Thanks to all who participated.



NHE Workshop, Stockholm, Sweden

By Miriam Godoshien

Didi Ananda Bhadra conducted a teacher’s training at her new preschool on February 26, and this workshop was part of that training. We focused on the Ten Moral Principles (Yama and Niyama), the foundation of NHE Schools. Introduction to the topic was made by reading from three well-known educators' writings talking about the need in today's society for greater "Self-actualization" and development of people's "will/doing" capacities and what this means with how we work with children: Abraham Maslowe, the originator of the Self-actualization theory, Annemarie Roper, a gifted -child educator, and Rudolph Steiner, founder of Waldorf education, as well as Marie Montessori all strongly advocated the same point. Then we read and discussed the ten moral principles as described in Didi Anandanivedita's book Head in the Stars, Feet on the Ground, Exploration of Yoga Psychology. The teachers related various feelings, experiences and current events and situations today they associated with the principles and with the aforementioned educators' philosophy.

Parrot Mind

A Neohumanist Approach to Foreign Languages

By Didi Ananda Devapriya

The mind of children is already in a state of creative problem solving all the time as they constantly absorb new information about their world and how to interact with it, making it easy and natural for them to learn new languages.

Language acquisition is even easier for children than adults when presented in play way format because they have no inhibitions about learning something new. They naturally parrot-imitate new things. Often you can find small children babbling new words to themselves as they gain mastery over them during moments of free play.



Expression is motivated by feelings and thoughts which are universal to all human beings. Everything in the universe emanates particular vibrations. To communicate thoughts or ideas, we use sounds that we learned to associate with those different vibrations. Communication means to share or exchange our inner state with another - and this can be transmitted both verbally, through sounds, as well as non-verbally. Tone of voice, gestures and context are just as important to effective communication as having a common vocabulary of words. In fact, according to the science of Biopsychology, all human expression is universal up until it reaches the 5th chakra. It is only there that expression takes the form of a particular language. So, if we are able to remain undistracted by the difference in the sounds of a new language, and try instead to simply connect to the person that we want to communicate with, then that exchanging flow of communication can happen, regardless whether we understand their words or not. In order to do this successfully, we must open up our minds and let go of our inhibitions so that we can communicate from a subtler, more intuitive layer of the mind.

When I was living in Sweden, sometimes we went door to door in Swedish neighborhoods to do fundraising. I had memorized a small introductory speech in Swedish and had learned a handful of vocabulary words. I remember once meeting a lonely older lady, who, glad for some company, immediately began talking to me in Swedish without realizing that I didn't actually speak the language. Yet as she pointed to photographs, I could easily understand that she was showing me her daughter who lived in Florida where it was very hot, and how her son had just graduated from university, and that they hadn't visited in a while and she missed them. When your heart is open to people, you can understand them. I nodded, smiled, expressed sympathy through my facial expressions, and used my few words of Swedish to keep up the conversation. I don't think she ever realised that I didn't understand her words, because she could feel that I had understood her.

Children are already doing this naturally, as they learn like a sponge everything they can about the new world they find themselves in.

Teaching new languages to small children through playway has many advantages. As their minds are relatively free of complexes, it is easier for them to learn through direct intuition and experimentation rather than through intellect, a far more laborious and inefficient process. Also, by having a positive, affirming experience of learning a foreign language, they already have a taste of the joy of realizing that there are other ways to express things, and that it is fun to learn and understand this seemingly 'secret code'.

Last school year, I did an experimental class in teaching a new foreign second language to small children aged 3-7 years old in Romania. As the teachers already were doing English classes with the children, I decided to use Italian as the foreign language. In this way, it was a language that the children had no previous systematic exposure to, and I could more easily evaluate the effectiveness of the methods I was using. In addition, I am fluent in Italian and know

many stories and songs as I had been working in a NH school in Italy previously. I had also experimented with the same style of play-way teaching using English with Italian children, and the same principles used here would be applicable to teaching any new non-mother tongue language to small children.

From the very first session, lessons were conducted entirely in Italian. Sometimes, when the teachers were present, they would translate parts of what I was saying, however I noticed that this usually disrupted the flow of comprehension of the children, as they would stop trying to directly intuit and guess the meaning and instead shift into a more indirect, intellectual flow of understanding through the teacher, instead of through their senses. I would reassure the teachers that it did not matter if the children were not able to understand all of the words. If I was successful in engaging their interest, and provided enough context and clues, they would soon figure out on their own the overall meaning of the individual words. Adults usually attempt to learn new languages by processing words through their intellects and translating each one into the familiar mother tongue language and then, in a second step, attempting to piece together the meaning of the whole sentence. Philosophically speaking this is an analytical approach, dividing the whole into parts and attempting to understand each part in order to understand the whole.

Children, however, are still working in a synthetic way, unless they are trained out of it. Synthetic approach is to perceive or grasp the whole - to get an intuitive feeling for meaning, and then later, gradually the parts of that whole also become more clear and organized, but always in relation to the whole meaning, not as isolated bits. The approach to teaching language presented here, is essentially synthetic in nature. Rather than presenting new vocabulary from a page with pictures of a diversity of items such as “book, apple, bicycle, tree” that have no inherent connection, new vocabulary is presented within the context of a whole story, song, or dialogue. It is then repeated, and presented again through more songs, games and stories. Gradually experiencing the same vocabulary repeated in various circumstances, children understand not only the meaning of the word, but recognize it in the context of a whole sentence and know how and when to use it.

The lessons always began in a playful, joyful way introduced by a doll named “Arianna”. Arianna was introduced in the first session as a little girl from Verona, Italy. We began with songs that the children already knew in Romanian, such as “Good morning dear earth.” As they already knew the melody and the meanings of the gestures, it was easy for them to guess at the meaning of the new words in the song. To introduce greetings (hello, how are you, fine, thank you), Arianna first asked me “Buongiorno, come stai? ”, and I replied. Next I introduced a song based on “Here is Thumbkin” which reinforced this new vocabulary, as the same introductions are repeated as a dialogue between the fingers of each hand. Because that song is so simple and repetitive, repeating the same formula of greeting for each finger, the children quickly were singing along. At that point, Arianna then went around the circle, singing in the same tune “Hello, how are you” to each child and then letting them respond.



Didi and Arianna teaching Italian

This is an example of the principle of vocabulary building through context and repetition. It is important for new words to be introduced not abstractly, but in a context or situation where it is easy for them to guess at the meaning. Then, after the initial introduction of the vocabulary, it is good to repeat it several times throughout the lesson, but in a variety of ways: in this case, first as a dialogue between the teacher and the doll, then as a song, and finally as an interaction with each child. Later lessons would typically open with a quick refresher of one of these games - either Arianna would sing an introduction to each child, or we would play the game with the fingers, for example. Even once the children knew the routine very well, still I often began classes with this simple ritual because it is easier for them to switch into a playful mood with something familiar in the beginning, and then building from that to something new.

Related to the principle of introducing new vocabulary through repetition, is the principle of building vocabulary systematically. As most lessons usually centered around a story, when planning the lesson, I would usually consider the following:

1. What vocabulary that they already are familiar with can be repeated again in this story as a reinforcement?
2. What vocabulary is new and how can I introduce those words before introducing the story?

3. How can I simplify this story to maximize the use of familiar vocabulary, limit the amount of new words, and make sure to repeat new words many times?
4. Is there a simple song, poem or game that I can use or invent to reinforce the meaning of the new words introduced?

For example, I based one lesson around a story about fish in a pond. First a big fish comes and tells that he knows 100 ways to escape the fisherman's net, and then an even bigger fish comes and says that he is even smarter and knows 1000 ways to escape. Finally a teeny tiny fish named Guiseppino comes along and says he is not very big, and not very smart and knows only one way - to hide! When the fisherman comes with his net - Guiseppino runs and hides and saves himself, but the others get caught.

After warming up the children with some familiar songs, using hand gestures, I introduced the ideas of big, bigger, little, and teeny tiny. I used a louder, lower voice for "big" and "bigger" with wide outstretched arms, and a squeaky voice for "teeny" miming with my fingers as if holding something very small. Children love making silly voices and gestures, and easily and naturally repeated after me, squealing in delight. I also introduced the 3 colors of the fish by going around the circle and pointing at different clothes and saying the name of the color. Then I asked who else has on orange, or yellow etc? Asking simple questions is another excellent way to reinforce and repeat new vocabulary. Also, being able to understand and respond to questions is an essential part of being able to interact in a new language. The idea of hiding was also presented as a simple "peek a-boo" game. In this way, most of the main new concepts of story had already been introduced. This increases comprehension of the story, and then the story itself serves as reinforcement of new concepts.



Counting to Ten with a Song and Finger Game

I had prepared cut outs in paper of the different fish characters, the water of the pond, and the fisherman's net, which I used to illustrate the story as I told it. As the children already knew the basic greetings, in the story the fish start by greeting each other. I took care to repeat several times the new words such as little, big and really big (grandissimo!) throughout the story, every time that fish appeared. I also used very expressive and theatrical

voices for the characters, as children understand much of the meaning according to the tone of voice. At the end of the story, I introduced a song about fish that repeated again almost all of the new words. Children easily learn new words when they have been put to music and rhythm, as the music and rhythm helps them to memorize entire phrases even before they understand the separate components. It is a very synthetic tool for vocabulary reinforcement. Singing also creates the blissful happy atmosphere that is a key to good retention of knowledge.

When the vocabulary has been prepared, and enough clues are provided through facial expressions, the tone of voice of the teacher, actions or movements, and through props and pictures, it is not difficult for children to guess and deduce the main meaning of a story, even if they haven't understood every single word within it. The process of guessing is in itself a very active, participatory task that fully engages children. It is inherently delightful for children to discover meaning in this way, and I believe that their ability to retain what they have learned is far greater when they have discovered the meaning of a word themselves, rather than having had it translated and explained to them, which doesn't involve their own cognition, but only shallow memorization skills. Guessing meaning however, fully engages their attention in the same way as figuring out an interesting puzzle.

Sometimes to clarify a meaning, it is helpful to introduce the opposite. For example it is easier to introduce the concept of open if it is presented together with closed using an open hand and closed fist. Also the concepts of big, bigger, small and smallest were introduced in this way. Or instead of replying to "How are you?" with the usual "Very good", the doll can reply "Sad" one day - with the teacher modelling the appropriate facial expression and tone of voice. Then children can be asked "How are you today - very good or sad?"

Pacing is also very important, and requires good observation skills on the part of the teacher. It is important to not overwhelm children with so many new words that they cannot follow and "tune out", and yet it is also important to keep the pace challenging enough so that children are actively involved, as otherwise they will again become bored and "tune out." The teacher must stay in active communication with each child, mostly through eye contact, and feeling

whether or not they are “with” her. If even one child is starting to look distracted, it is important to try to directly involve them - perhaps through a simple question or game, and it is important to understand whether they need you to go faster or slower. My experience with the children in our school last year, was that I really had to move quickly to keep the pace lively, interesting and challenging enough for them. I could usually not repeat the same story more than 2 or 3 sessions before they were able to fully comprehend it and were hungry for something new.



Practicing “open” and “closed”
with hand movements

As their vocabulary systematically expanded, I was also able to tell increasingly complex stories without losing their interest. It is a great delight for them to realize they can recognize words even in completely new stories and situations. Throughout a story, I would often stop and ask simple questions or let the children anticipate a phrase that repeats throughout the story - the more that they interact in this way with the story, the more that they are manipulating the information and integrating in deeper levels of their consciousness.

In Biopsychology, knowledge is referred to as a type of “pabulum” or food for the mind. In the same way that we absorb and digest food, so new information must be presented in a “tasty” or interesting way, to even enter within the mind. Next, just as food must be chewed properly, the new knowledge must be manipulated, interacted with, broken down so that it can be better assimilated. This chewing happens with language when the words are repeatedly used and experimented with in variety of different situations and contexts so that their full meaning and usage can be understood. Finally, the digestion of the language happens as the words are internalized and become intuitive knowledge - no longer is there a conscious need to think about what a word means - you just know it. Anyone who has achieved fluency in a new language knows that there comes a moment in which the mind is no longer engaged in translating but rather can just think directly in the new language, even if in a limited way due to lack of vocabulary. Once the mind achieves even a limited ability to directly think in the new language, absorption begins to accelerate exponentially. I think of it as a kind of “snow-ball effect”. Once there is a small workable kernel of internalized language within the mind, new words and phrases stick to that core and it quickly grows and expands. With children, the “translation” stage that adults go through is skipped, and they begin acquiring a kernel of internalized language immediately when the language is presented in this synthetic style.

Another fact that is important to understand when teaching language, is that though languages may be very complex in their full vocabulary - for daily use, research shows that most human beings use a much more limited vocabulary - with only 100 words consisting of about 50% of all spoken languages. The Saturday edition of the New York Times newspaper contains, on average, only 600 different words.

When teaching a language, mastery does not necessary come from the quantity of words memorized, but rather from understanding the rules of how and when to utilise them meaningfully. Language is actually a machine for transmitting ideas. A machine is not just composed of metal bits and wheels - it needs a certain structure in order to work. The words are simply building blocks, but the structure is grammar.

Most of us when we hear the word grammar, think of very abstract, rather dry and boring classes explaining rules and formulas of grammar. But actually, grammar can be just as fun and exciting a part of understanding a language as learning new words, if it is not taught separately and intellectually, but rather simply demonstrated in action.

When the vocabulary is simple and easily understood - then basic rules of grammar can be demonstrated effectively with examples. Children’s minds are in a state of trying to absorb the whole universe, and to do this efficiently, the mind is constantly searching for patterns and laws so that complex amounts of information can be simplified by organizing them into predictable, systematic patterns. It is this natural tendency towards classification and order that can make grammar easy to intuit if simply presented in a way that that focuses the attention on a logical pattern or law, and demonstrates it as a consistent in a diversity of situations.

For example, the law of plurals can be easily presented using a few sets of similar objects such as fruits. First one apple is shown with the word “apple”. Then “two apples, three apples, many apples” - each time emphasizing slightly the

final “z” sound. Then the same pattern is demonstrated with pears, with oranges. Then to further generalize and assimilate the rule - it can be demonstrated with body parts - hand, hands, leg, legs, eye, eyes. Of course - in the beginning only examples that follow a regular rule should be used (ie not child, children right away).

The idea of possessive case can also be demonstrated through a dialogue or game. “This is your apple. This is my apple”, with the child giving an apple to one child and keeping one for himself, and then using other objects so that the consistency of the your, my pattern is highlighted. Then a playful game can be invented - “Is that my shoe?” the teacher asks the child. “No! it is your shoe!!!”

In languages where verbs change their endings to agree with the subject - this is best understood by hearing simple sentences with just subject/ verb repeated. In this way the common change to the ending can be recognized.

When you consider that most children have achieved significant mastery over their mother tongue before they enter into formal education about grammar - it is obvious that we can and do learn grammar in an intuitive, practical way through perception, then generalizing the pattern and practicing it. This is far more synthetic, and holistic approach than trying to memorize abstract rules and then figure out how to put them into practice which requires a lot of interference of the conscious intellect, and only slows down the process of internalization of language. Once a workable grasp of language has been achieved however, then intellectual understanding of the rules does help provide deeper insights into the workings of language, but this is not necessary with small children.



Introducing Numbers

In summary, to learn how to teach language in the most synthetic and efficient way possible, it is necessary to intuitively study how children absorb and acquire language. This can be done through objectively observing small children as they learn language, but a more yogic approach is to also do subjective research as we seek to remember and observe our own experiences with learning language. Having had to learn and achieve fluency in several new languages as an adult, I have found that the process of acquiring a new language brings up many early-childhood memories of learning language, and has also provided me with many insights into the functioning of the mind as it acquires and organizes comprehension skills of a new language and also learns how to mobilise and utilise that information for self-expression. It is a very fascinating process to observe oneself as the mind creates new connections and patterns, almost like new circuitry, for the expression of a new language. This subjective research then makes it easier to intuitively understand and discriminate effective psychological ways of presenting a new language to children. For example, I have observed within my own mind that when I am learning a new language, my mind tends to lapse into a sort of “parrot” state where when I have grasped a new word or concept, I tend to find myself repeating it many times in order to “chew” and digest it. I may even unconsciously play with it, imagining using it in some situation where I needed it and didn’t know how to say it. Usually, I seek opportunities to again repeat that word later in the day to further make it “stick”. However, if I hear a new word, but do not go through that “parrot” process, it quickly fades and disappears. I also noticed that when I read many new words from a vocabulary list, I may understand them when I read them - but later in real-life situations where I need to use them - they are very difficult to recall. However, when I figure out the meaning of a word on my own - for example, seeing a word I have been hearing for days written on a poster advertising juice, and finally I understand what that word means and how it looks written - I am very unlikely to forget that word ever again.

So all of the various principles that I have mentioned in this article, such as repetition, systematic vocabulary building, deducing grammar through learning to recognize patterns, answering simple questions, guessing meaning from context and clues as more effective than having it translated, using music and rhythm, and making the knowledge practical and interactive - are all things that I have subjectively discovered work best for me when I am learning a language. Having read and studied various other techniques of teaching language have served to clarify and better express some of these basic discoveries. I believe it is an essential part of Neohumanist teaching to develop this synthetic, subjective approach of reflecting on our own experiences as learners in order to improve our teaching techniques and make them more intuitively rooted. Neohumanist teaching techniques cannot simply be learned from the intellectual level like a recipe, but must be grounded in our personal intuitive experience so that they are a spontaneous and natural expression of our being.

Ananda Marga School of Neohumanist Education

Managua, Nicaragua

By Didi Prema

It is a pleasure to communicate with you all once again after so long. I would like to give you a glimpse of what our work has been in the school here in Managua. We have been conducting so many different activities, since I've been here, in order to increase the educational standard and give the kids as high a level as possible and an experience of what it means to be in a place where they will be complete beings. Yes, the school is like a bubble; many of these kids find here with us a place where they learn really nice and good things, because they are in a loving environment.



This year as usual we are in full capacity. It has been a challenge to say to any kids “sorry we do not have space, so believe it or not we have 72 kids in a very small place with 4 small class rooms including the back patio which is the fourth grade class. We are at full capacity but still we can work, though we have to make some adjustments to accommodate everyone. Some parents especially like our school because they appreciate what we do which is not available elsewhere. Also we are the cheapest school in the area and probably one of the cheapest in all of Managua. We charge only 6 dollars a month yet about 20% of our kids are attending for free as they are from very poor families in the area.

We hold several teaches training programmes a year and recently we have had a visit from Giita, from Denver who is working in Cost Rica as an LFT. She passed by here and did a teacher training about Yoga for kids; it was very instructive and useful for us. By the way the kids know all the songs of Circulo de Amor CD, so my plan is to make a second CD this year. It is really necessary for us and I hope for many more schools.



For several years we have been giving swimming classes where we go to a pool 15 minutes away from the school by car once a month. Many of the kids overcome fear of the water and some others never have had the experience to be in the water before.



Another of our activities which is a half block away is a Cyber café where they go and learn to use the computer. Our plan is to communicate with other Ananda Marga schools from other countries that speak preferentially Spanish. So let me know if some of you are interested.

Of course English is also spoken and taught. Last year a member of Ananda Marga from North Carolina, Brian came and taught a new system call Accelerated School which we are applying and gives a new way of learning to Nicaragua. You can have a look in this web page: <http://read444.com>. You can apply to this program if you like for your school.

Our latest social service commitment was to pick up all the garbage from the park where we go and play and do sports once a week. We are not able to go more often because it is too hot. Nicaragua's

temperature is generally, year round from 28 to 40 degree Celsius. Very hot and no winter...just from May until October we have rains but it is still hot and damp. In that program we collected about 8 big bags of garbage and we were very inspired to see the kids, especially the small ones doing it with so much desire and happiness.



Dance and Folk is a regular class every week and we have been able slowly to make more clothing for the different performances over the year. The not very bright side of the school is the lack of space, that does not permit sports and gardening among other things, or even running, but hopefully we can have another building one day.

Another issue is the realities of many kids that demand a lot of skills from the teachers to guide them away from distraction and hyperactivity in the class room. Most of the families that live here in Nicaragua and are below the economical standard. The children's home upbringing if often not reflective of neohumanist values. As a result the children come to the schools filled with inappropriate behavior, but over the year they do adjust little by little and see that here is another reality. That's why I mentioned the bubble because many of these beautiful souls feel that to experience and remember Love are the greater things they can experience in life.





A visitor's report:

AMSAI Haiti

a Neohumanist School

By Dada Vimalashananda

It was eight years since I left Haiti. The

school at that time had two tiny classrooms with a tin roof, two teachers and fifty students. The people at that time were mostly engaged in works not related with Ananda Marga. Today the situation has radically changed. The school has more than 300 children and the same people are now employed in responsible positions as the backbone of a model neohumanistic school. Dada Karmavratananda's continuous effort along these years has made it possible.

One of the aspects of the school is that it has a key role in the local community. It is not only a large size kindergarten and primary school. There are multiple services offered that utilize the same building:

- a computer room able to accommodate 20 students with individual computers
- a computer cafe with fast internet connection
- an analysis laboratory
- a medical clinic that need some more work to make it operative.

All these services are basically independent from the school with separate entrances and at the same time they use the same structure.

Several groups and other non-profit organization utilize our facility for meetings and activities. There is also a regular karate class held on the premises. And last but not least our water reservoir sees a continuous stream of people coming to get potable water for their homes free of charge. A power generator guarantees the continuity of electricity for the different activities. In fact, regarding the supply of water and electricity, Haiti hasn't change over the years. But due to these external difficulties the role of the school has become more and more prominent.

The school has around twenty staff people working together according to a functional structure:

- a pedagogic director supervises all the curriculums and exams in order to comply with the neohumanistic

directives and government constraints

- a kindergarten director coordinates the six teachers employed in the three kinder years
- a primary school director coordinate the six teachers
- a secretary is in charge of most of the paper work involved in the administration of the school including the World Fund Program that supplies the food given to the students at lunch time
- an accountant takes care of the rest of the administrative process
- 3 cooks and 3 cleaners provide the necessary logistics for the whole school.

Specialized teachers complete the staff of those subjects that give the neohumanistic bent to the school. It is a unique aspect of our school and most valuable:

- an agriculture teacher and an attached roof garden for vegetables
- a computer director who is also in charge of the internet cafe'
- a discipline in charge who is responsible for all disciplinary corrections. It should be reminded that in Haiti teachers used to administer corporal punishment and in our school those practices have been banished.
- a karate teacher
- art and music teachers are in the plan but are not hired at present

The level of education offered is comparable to the high cost private schools. It is our pride to offer this high standard to students coming from the poor areas nearby. Due to that the tuition fees are limited to \$10 per month and only 60% of the student families can afford to pay for their kids' education.



This is the reality of Haiti that we confront every day. Poverty and criminality offer a constant challenge. Our neohumanistic system of education is the way to solve the problem in a permanent way. We witness how the community responds to it and how the Ananda Marga Community has a key role in this process. In my eyes this not a miracle – this is Ananda Marga.

Sunshine Playgroup

Zurich, Switzerland

Run by Jovan Drapsin



Sunshine School is a private multi-lingual pre-school inspired by the ideas of NHE. Language is a natural companion of child's development. About 54 children are accommodated in different groups and

times. Playgroups are in English, German and Spanish. The program features: Yoga for Children, Workshops for parents and children, Arts and Crafts, Music, Drama, Movement, Stories, Birthday parties and Fun.

To enhance the child's development, environment and activities at Sunshine are designed for specific age-groups.

For 2 year olds - a rich indoor and outdoor play area to explore their own senses and motor organs (through activities like cutting, pouring, climbing, creating, music, modeling etc) and Circle of Love activities.

For 3 year olds – program expanded to more games and regular opportunities for different crafts



For 4 year olds - entering the age of curiosity- ecological thinking, social games to strengthen the feelings of friendship, unity and tolerance; movement, music, arts, crafts, story telling, acting, fun, sports etc.

For 5 year olds -rich fantasy dominates this age- puppet theatre, face painting; creative visualizations, guided fantasy games

For 6 year olds - pre-writing, pre-reading skills, visits of acrobats, musicians, dancers; communicating with other play groups in the community.



Poem about Colours by Tatjana Popov & Jovan Drapsin

White

I am colour white, I clean day and night,
In the pure light, which is me, your reflection you can see

Red

I am so active; I never go to bed, no wonder, because
I'm red
I like to move it, move it all around, take care with me
or you'll crash on the ground

Orange

A little bit of red, a little bit of yellow, and here is the
orange fellow

Play, protect and heal, is the orange colours zeal

Yellow

I am yellow shine from the sun divine, don't you make
a game with my yellow flame
Wisdom is required here, if you want to be my dear

Green

I am green; I am not mean, but rather friendly and
clean,
I am healthy and wealthy and long on the scene

Blue

I am blue, I am big, I need space, I spread and cover
every place
All you see is me, there is you in blue.

Violet

When I look deep inside, violet light is my guide,
Full of secrets and mystic glow, towards inner world I
flow

Pink

Now, before you choose what you want to do, here is a
clear message from heaven straight to you:
"You should think only pink, selfless love for one and
all, good and bad, big and small."

Neohumanist Music Performances at the Showcase for Private Schools and Camps

The Woodlands Market Street, Texas, USA, March 3rd

By Anjali Nataraj

Texas is a very interesting place. It is the home of President George Bush, and many, many conservative Christian republics. Just to give an example, at the Showcase of Private Schools and Camps, hosted by our Waldorf school, over half of the participants were Christian schools and camps, with a smattering of alternative schools and organizations being in the minority. The Woodlands is mainly a wealthy, Caucasian community. As head of the diversity committee at our school, I felt it important to bring diverse cultural programs to this event, coloring it with pockets of NHE.

I hosted a workshop and storytelling tent; and scheduled the artists for stage performances. I hired an elder African drummer (member of Ananda Marga) to give a two hour workshop. Abuji works beautifully with children, teaching them the morals and ethics of his native Ghana. I brought in storyteller PK McCary, as an African American woman who also chooses stories with moral and ethical content. As she tells stories, she asks the children to participate adding their own pieces to the stories of good will and right intention. I told the neohumanist story, "The Fairy's Flowers", to a group of parents and children, and sang neohumanist songs and kiirtan with the children. One little girl from my school joined me, singing with much love. Several parents there inquired about NHE and the concepts of Yama and Niyama.

I called in a capoeira group from the Brazilian Cultural Arts Foundation. Capoeira is a martial art that was created during the time of slavery in Brazil. The African slaves disguised it as a form of dance in order to be able to train without suspicion from their masters. There are many success stories in how different tribes were able to overcome their oppression and form revolutionary groups. Thus, capoeira and African culture are important to the strength of the Brazilian people. We made a "roda" and sang Afro/Portuguese songs of the history of capoeira and of the African sages. We encouraged the audience to join and play the instruments. Much joy and community spirit was shared.

The last performance was with the Sur Samgiita School of music. Three weeks ago, my teacher, Chandrakantha Courtney, had asked me to come in and teach her students Prabhat Samgiita. I chose Raingin Pari and Tiny Green Island. This performance had the most profound effect on the surrounding area. I told a little story about a flying fairy, asking all to come with her. "She is flying always towards the light. If she sees any children sad, lonely or hurt; or any animals that have lost their way, she picks them up and carries them with her. She is asking that we all do the same, so put on your fairy wings and fly with the fairy. Take care of all the children and animals and help them towards the light."

The whole atmosphere was transformed as we sang. The children wore beautiful colorful Indian costumes. We sang on an outdoor stage, a grassy park in front of us where grownups sat, and children played. Several people commented afterwards on the peace they felt from the songs. The organizers and participants of the Showcase were appreciative of our efforts this year, and have asked us to come back next year. There is talk of a neohumanist themed summer camp for children at an eco village the following year.

In other Texas News

In the fall of 2006, Dada Gunamaya told stories to the children at The Harvest Waldorf School, grades 1-4. We taught them how to sing and dance to kiirtan, as my son, played the tablas. The children at the school were attracted to the African kiirtans, and danced with sweet, joyful expressions. A group of older girls came on the stage with us and danced and sang with all of their hearts. Some of these children come from homes where their parents practice yoga. Several of them have kiirtan and The Fairy's Flowers story CDs in their homes.

In November, my two sons and I celebrated a late Diipavali (Festival of Lights) with the Kindergarted, 3rd and 4th grade children at The Harvest Waldorf School. We sang Prabhat Samgiita, and danced kiirtan together. I told the valiant story of Satyabhama, and we distributed sweet cakes to the children.

In January, I teamed up with world known storyteller PK McCary to present stories and songs of peace in several classrooms at Harvard Elementary School. Harvard Elementary is near downtown Houston and is a little more progressive than other city schools. It has a make up of around 90% Latin American children. I was pleased when we entered a bi-lingual classroom, and did a circle time in Spanish and English, to the joy of all the children! PK and I are presenters and committee members of PEIS - Peace Education in Schools, promoting ideas and actions of peace in children of all ages.

On February 9th, I presented the AMGK project, The Fairy's Flowers audio CD; and did a segment on NHE philosophy on The Peace Hour radio program, KPFT Pacifica Radio. It was pledge drive, so I offered CDs to listeners for a premium. The show was well received, and we raised twice the allotted amount for the program! I have a copy of the show to put in the AM archives.

In Other

Global NHE News



Manila Sector



Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Dada Shambhushivananda gave a high-profile lecture to thirty corporate members, business people, architects, etc. The talk was organized by Carol Yip & Jane Rai and the theme was Beyond the Superconscious Mind. Copies of Gurukula Network were distributed to everyone, and the NHE Futures book was introduced and sold.

Singapore

Didi Ananda Shivani and Dada Shankarsanananda are making a yoga academy in Singapore. Dr. Dhanjoo Ghista is helping with the curriculum.



Lampang, Thailand

Nuntaka has been running the Rakrook Kindergarten in Lampang for many years along neohumanist principles. She also has a well established yoga centre above the kindergarten. She did her masters in neohumanist education at Chiang Mai University and is now considering doing a PhD in NHE. She has written one beautiful small book in Thai that highlights NHE also. Her articles about NHE are published in Thai magazines and newspapers. She also spearheaded several cooperative programs with local colleges and universities in the area highlighting neohumanist methods.

Las Pinas, Manila, Philippines

The AMSAI Kindergarten has been running for the past 20 years since 1986 when it started in the WWD owned premises in Las Pinas, Manila. In 2005 a new 3 storey building was constructed that now houses the AMSAI in the ground floor which has now 16 children. The other floors serve as offices and meeting space where workshops, collective meditation and ETCs (Education Training Camps) are held regularly. Recently a livelihood skills training was held for 14 mothers. Last ETC was also attended by teachers sent by other NGOs besides the other AMSAI schools in greater Manila area.



Sangkhlabhuri, Thailand



The new children's home building, under the direction of Didi Ananda Devamala, is very spacious and is home to 150 children. The school under the guardianship of Didi Ananda Anuraga has added two new classrooms and a total renovation of the kindergarten has been completed. A sports field will be installed soon.

Dada Ramakrsna has 52 children in his boys home.

Delhi Sector

Nepal

During his tour in November, Dada Shambhushivananda visited Nepal where he gave 6 lectures and visited the schools. Nepal has a budding AMKG nucleus of 30 people.



There are five schools there. The biggest school in Hithora where Dada Ounkareshvarananda is the principal. It goes up to 8th grade. The school in

Kathmandu is run by family Acharya Sister Shanti. The 3 story building is 10 minutes from the airport. Her school was the first one in the area. It now has 36 children and goes up to 6th grade with permission to go up to 8th. It can accommodate up to 200 children.

While visiting Nepal, Kulapati spoke at the Kathmandu University on the topic of Neohumanist Approach to Life. He also met with the Vice chancellor and graduate students. He gave a lecture at the local high school as well.



In Dhulikhel, Dadaji spoke to the Rotarians of Nepal on the theme: "Spiritual Perspective to Life". Students and Teachers of Dhulikhel High School also benefited from Dada's talk on Science of Meditation"



Dada Shambhushivananda met with Professor Tulasi Diwasa, a celebrated poet, writer and research



scholar of Folk Studies in Nepal and head of Folklore Society in Nepal. He was the cultural attache for the Nepal government and is working on cultural empowerment through focussing on the lives of people throughout Nepalese history. There are 67 tribes in Nepal and 127 dialects. They each have their own rituals, customs, economy etc. Prof. Diwasa is helping to record the archives of all these communities. Our Gurukula representative in Kathmandu, Dr. Rudra Laxmi Shrestha is also working with the National Folklore Society of Nepal in this important research work. Ananda Marga Gurukula supports this important research initiative to preserve the folk culture of Nepal.

Jharkand

Institute of Veterinary Science and Animal husbandary has been re-opened by Ananda Marga Gurukula in Bokaro Steel City, Jharkand, not far from Anandanagar. The Principal is Ac. Bhavananda Avt.

Ananda Nagar

Dada Rudradevananda is running the computer centre at Anandanagar with the assistance of Dada Citkrishnananda.

Berlin Sector

Stockholm, Sweden

In November, 2006 about fifty people attended a lecture given by Dada Shambhushivananda on "Spirituality in the Light of Neohumanism" in Stockholm. Dadaji talked about the human mind and its characteristics and the importance of Yoga and Meditation in life. He proposed to enhance the study of the self, introspective practices (like meditation) and to make the habit of rendering selfless service to the human and universal community and integrate these values in the education of our children. Didi Anandabhadrha inaugurated her new school building in Hasselby Strand in Stockholm and has already 26 children.



Moldova

In December the "Neohumanist" educational association started a new project "Home Care" sponsored by Smitz-Hille Foundation from Germany. The aim of this project is life improvement for the socially vulnerable people. Home Care provides social and



medical assistance at home to increase physical, moral and spiritual health of invalids, incurable diseased and people with minimal sources of existence.

Malta

The Sunrise Centre in Malta, under the direction of Didi Rasamayii, has a new website.

<www.tbexbix.org> They are also welcoming volunteers, especially for the summer, working with the children in the morning, and enjoying the sun and sea in the afternoon.

Bucharest, Romania

Sunrise Schools Update by Didi Ananda Devapriya

The creativity of our teachers is one of the most precious jewels of our schools in Bucharest. This year, we had an innovative Mother's Day celebration in the Mihai Bravu School. The teachers and children spent a week designing springtime costumes out of scraps of cloth, paper, paint and other materials for a fashion show! Parents were so charmed and fascinated when the children began to walk out on the red carpet catwalk to model their clothes - that at first they were stunned, forgetting even to clap - but they quickly recovered, and were soon enthusiastically applauding each of the children as they proudly showed off their work. A video clip from the event is available on our website www.romania.amurtel.net



In Bucuresti Noi school, we invited an African drumming teacher from Rwanda named Vincent to come and teach percussion classes to our children during our multicultural theme of Africa. When he arrived and began slipping six large African "jembe" drums out of their cases, the children were immediately entranced. They enjoyed getting to know Vincent better as he shared pictures from his family with us, and of course they loved the drumming!



The multicultural day in Mihai Bravu school was on Greece this year. The children and teachers all came to school dressed as gods and goddesses from the Greek pantheon, and in circle time each one shared which god or goddess they were representing. The school was also elaborately decorated, with many Greek flags, an olive tree, Greek

temples, and more. Events included a re-enactment of a physics experiment of Archimedes, Olympic games, a masked theatrical enactment of the stories of Prometheus and Pandora's box, and Greek grapevine step dancing. Everyone received a crown of laurel leaves as a prize at the end.

Nairobi

Accra, Ghana

The A.M. Technology Center (AMTech) is a non-profit, non-government funded initiative affiliated with Ananda Marga. AMTech provides Primary and Secondary schools in the Ga West district of Accra, Ghana with access to information and communications technology on a non-commercial basis that aims to facilitate learning and increase opportunities for the future. It was founded in June 2005 by Gilbert Nyavie who trained at NIIT, a respected Indian-based computer school with branches in Ghana.



The first phase is to establish a basic training lab equipped with up to twenty workstations. This will be utilized initially to train the trainers, i.e. instructors who will then be assigned to specific secondary schools in Accra. As resources become available, AMTech will assist each targeted school to establish its own computer lab and a resource library of reference materials, curriculum aids, etc. The effort is not simply to teach computer literacy skills but rather the use of ICT in imparting academic subjects and encouraging use of the internet for research and learning.

There are numerous computer training centres now in Ghana. Nearly all of them operate as commercial enterprises. AMTech has been registered as a non-profit organization and a local board formed. An office has been established. Discussions have been held with the Ghana Education Service. Resource people and mentors in Asia, Australia, Europe and the USA are in contact and provide valuable guidance. A proposal and budget has been prepared.

The Project is need of:

- 1) Educational CD'S: Math, Science, English, Geography and Computer Science
- 2) Computer networking materials and interactive educational programmes
- 3) Donations
- 4) Volunteers

Please write to: a_shanta_2000@yahoo.com

For more information please visit:

www.amtechghana.org

Kahira Sector

Athens Greece, by Didi Ananda Uttama

The Neo Humanist Center offers progressive educational classes for children and a wide array of health and environmental awareness programs for adults.



Situated in a northern suburb of Athens, Greece NHC is a project geared primarily, though not exclusively, to the needs of women and children. We are researching now how to formally register as a school. We need to be out of our place by February of next year so within this year, we will look for a house with a yard and get official. Lots of work but we are happy doing it.

We have 16 children now which is a good number for the space we have though we can still receive a few more. As we're not at our capacity yet, children enroll all year and now little ones are coming to be ready for September. Vimala is doing a great job with the help of Florence and Elena. Florence is also our Infant Massage instructor and she's about to begin with Yoga for Babies. The massage course is great, mothers and babies love it. Our mother-infant and mother-toddler programs are going well and we've got a good number coming for Mother-Toddler Yoga.

Our other women's programs are continuing, the Breast Cancer Support Group and most recently, a women's environmental awareness group. The environmental group is working to organize programs for children, starting with recycling awareness as well as events for children and adults for the upcoming Eco Week.

The monthly Wellness Connection presentations are well attended and we always have a waiting list of practitioners ready to do a presentation. We just had our annual Wellness Fair which draws Greek and English speakers together to see what's being offered in Athens for Wellness care.

And last but not least, we finally have a website up and running. Still needs a fair amount of work but it's done enough to get an idea of what we do.
www.neohumanist.net

Hong Kong Sector

Taiwan

Dada Rasabuddhananda, pictured here with his yoga students, is doing some research on therapeutic benefits of different asanas.



Ulan Bator, Mongolia

Didi Ananda Kalika and Didi Sudeshana at the Ananda Marga

Lotus Childrens Home in Mongolia are now caring for over 180 children with 50 people on the staff.



During the past summer, over 1,000 visitors came to tour the project, including representatives of the Himalayan Foundation. The website for the Lotus Childrens Home is <http://www.lotuschild.org/>.

The primary school is now educating children from kindergarten through to fifth grade. Thirty five children are in the kindergarten program and sixty are in the primary school. The staff now has thirteen teachers. In September, the school was awarded the City Educational Bureau Medal of Excellence. On his recent visit to Ulan Bator, Australian's Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer met Didi

Ananda Kalika, a former Australian. He was very impressed with her project to which he donated \$10,000.



Georgetown Sector

Cordoba, Argentina

Kulapati presented AMGK at the Ananda Marga Sectorial Conference at the Cordoba Master Unit which is managed by Dada Ramashrayananda. The Master Unit, which is two hours away from Cordoba, boasts over 700 hectares with hills, mountains, river and a lake. It is one of the largest master units outside of Ananda Nagar. The MU is right on the main highway from Argentina to Chile. It has land on two sides of the highway. They are building a house there now to host eco-village camps. Besides sharing the work of AMGK, Kulapati gave a talk on Yoga in Light of Neohumanism and participated in a PROUT Workshop. Dada also coordinated GK work with representatives from Chile along with Dada Moksananda and with representatives from other countries.

Asuncion, Paraguay



During his recent visit to Georgetown Sector, Dada Shambhushivananda also visited the MUs and schools in Paraguay. In addition, he gave a seminar to teachers as well as a public lecture on Development of Human Personality that was organized by Dada Paradevananda and Didi Ananda Sushiiila. (details below). Ananda Marga owns 6 properties in Asuncion. The Didis have a Master Unit and manage two schools. The schools are managed by Didi Ananda Sushiiila one of which is a high school. Didi Anandamayii is the Director of the smaller school which is run in a rented facility. The Didis live in a beautiful house on the MU and make the long commute to the schools each day.

The Dadas own a two floor house which serves as the regional office. They also own a school building one block away. The Dadas Master Unit is 20 hectares. The

school serves 20 kindergarten aged children from very poor homes. It has a beautiful 1000 square meter garden. It was started by BP Sister Niliima. The schools and MUs are in close communication with each other and support each other in a cooperative way. There is a strong family feeling amongst them.

Dadas Visit to Paraguay by Didi Ananda Sushiiila

It was my dream to have Dada visit our schools. When I read Gurukula Network newsletter I used to wonder why doesn't Dada come to South America. So when the Dada in charge told me that Dada will visit South America in January, and asked me if we would like to have Dada pass by Paraguay, immediately I said yes. So the Margiis made the preparation for Dada to come; they printed posters and handouts and distributed in the city before Dadas arrival for his public lecture while we acaryas were in the meeting in Argentina. Finally Dada arrived on the 10th of February and gave an education seminar in our school attained by all teachers, directors, LFTs and Dadas and Didis from 4 schools here. The following day he gave a public talk on "Developing Harmonious Personality through Yoga and Meditation" which was attended by about 100 people. All were inspired by his talk and wisdom and his open and warm personality.



Sao Paulo, Brazil

Traveling by bus for 24 hours from Asuncion to Sao Paulo, Dada Shambhushivananda reports on the vastness of the country and horizon, with vast, beautiful, rolling, green hills and lots of sunshine. In Sao Paulo Dadaji visited two schools. One run by Kamalesh and Mirabai which serves 65 kindergarten children up to age 6. There are 150 children on the waiting list. Didi Ananda Jaya runs a vibrant school with Director Jayagiita. There are 120 children in this free kindergarten school, with 300 on the waiting list. With money from the

municipality they are also running after school activities. Didi Ananda Jaya is a fountain of inspiration for all in the community. Dada Diipajinananda is the director of a Yoga Academy in a large owned facility in Sao Paulo. The Yoga Academy is now attracting many students for intensive training in yoga philosophy.



Sorocaba

Sorocaba is one and half hours from Sao Paulo. The school property there was donated by Sister Rukmini and the school serves 40 children from very



poor neighborhoods. It is a very beautiful place, which includes a lake, swimming pool, woods and basketball court.

Porto Alegre, Brazil

Dada Shambhushivananda attended an Ananda Marga Regional Seminar held at the Master Unit run by Dada Cittabodhananda. He gave three talks: viz., Yoga, Values and Mission; Guru and Disciple; and a class on NHE.

Dadaji also had a tour of all the schools in the area. The largest one is celebrating its 10th anniversary. It currently goes up to fourth grade with 250 students, with plans to add a grade every year up to 9th grade. It is a high quality school, very well organized and functional with high quality facilities that include computers, science laboratory, beautiful library, gymnasium and herbal garden. The schools emphasize the arts, music and vegetarianism. The school is legally registered and receives a subsidy from the local government. Sister Giita is the director. While there, Dadaji participated in a TV interview for the schools 10th anniversary.



The properties in Porto Alegre are owned. Thanks to Sudama who also donated property for a vocational project for street children where they grow herbals and produce herbal products. Four social welfare workers are also posted to the program by the government. Through the efforts of Dharmamitra they were chosen from among 50 applicants for a government grant of \$17,000 dollars for this street childrens project.

There are three kindergartens in Porto Alegre in addition to the Elementary School. Sister Kevalanii, who sets all the standards for the kindergartens, got NHE recognized with Ministry of education. She runs a very creative kindergarten program with lots of educative stories amplifying yama-niyama.

Barranquilla, Colombia

The 2007 academic year started in the Neohumanist Education centre PR Sarkar in Barrio Las Malvinas

with three levels of Kindergarden and five levels of Primary school with a total of 230 children.

Mr. Mario Williams, the Education secretary of the Atlantic Region, a State of Colombia, visited the school in Barranquilla and was very inspired to see how the children do meditation and the benefits of neohumanist education. He is going to help the project. Regular group mediation started in the neohumanist school in Barrio Las Malvinas Barranquilla with the teachers of the school.

New York Sector

Los Angeles, California, USA

Eight Ananda Marga Yoga Educators participated in the International Yoga Therapy Conference Symposium held at Hilton, Los Angeles,



USA on January 20, 2007. While there, they also held a meeting to coordinate the matters of interest to Ananda Marga Yoga Educators. Among those present were: Dada Shambhushivananda, Dr. Richard Maxwell, Eileen Maxwell, Dr. Bruce McEwen, Kristine Weber, Dr. Steven Landau, Dr. Sid Jordan.

Toronto, Canada

Dadaji gave a talk to 55 persons on The Secrets to Health & Happiness. It was arranged by Sister Mita Chen and Mrs.



Anita Lah in Trillium Condominium Lounge in Toronto.

Suva Sector

Maleny, Australia

A play about Baba's life was performed in December at the River School, for the whole school and the parents.



It was very nice and touching. For a view of photos of the play, plus other parts of the River School performances please visit:

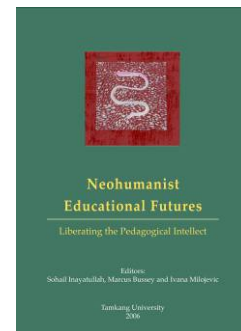
<http://anandamargaaz.blogspot.com/2006/12/am-river-school-performances-babas-life.html>

NHE Publications

Neohumanist Educational Futures

Edited by Dr. Sohail Inayatullah, Marcus Bussey and Dr. Ivana Milojevic

Neohumanist Educational Futures breaks new ground by linking neohumanism with pedagogy and futures thinking. Inayatullah, Bussey and Milojevic, all educators, theorize the ethics of inclusion and exclusion; situate neohumanism in Tantric and transcultural futures; map out issues in neohumanist pedagogy (including, education for world futures; from information to wisdom; social cohesion in South Africa; speciesism and vegetarian pedagogy in Sweden; alternative indicators for neohumanism; integrated intelligence, peace and non-violence, partnership education; and the politics of historiography) and provide case studies of neohumanist educational practice. Interspersed throughout this text are short pieces by Indian mystic and author, Shrii P.R.Sarkar; Ananda Marga Gurukula's Chancellor, Ac Shumbushivananda Avt, and an interview with Paulo Freire conducted by social activist Ac. Maheshvarananda Avt.



Along with Inayatullah, Bussey and Milojevic, contributing authors include Ac Vedaprajinananda Avt, Tobin Hart, Marcus Anthony, Riana Eisler, Marlene de Beer, Helena Pederson, Vachel Miller, Peter Hayward, Joseph Voros and Mahajyoti Glassman. The authors argue that the current paradigms of uni and multiculturalism have reached their limits (and the tensions between them). A new approach, as in neohumanism or transcultural and transcendental sustainability, is required for humanity to move forward, and while doing so include those it has pushed aside.

To create this alternative future, a new educational philosophy and practice is required; one that inspires but does not become yet another method to be tamed and imitated. Rather, it must awaken the intellect from its narrow boundaries (nationalist, religious) toward planetary spirituality. Education in this future would be holistic – physical, mental and spiritual; ecologically and technologically driven; global and local in its orientation, and person based, meeting the changing evolutionary and developmental needs of each child, adult, teacher and student-learner.

ORDERING

Copies can be ordered from <books.tw@gurukul.edu> 730 NT \$ per copy plus postage or <amgkpublications@gurukul.edu> \$15 US per copy plus postage.

Available to NHE Schools

Progressive School of Long Island Teacher's Handbook

This handbook was prepared by the Director of the Progressive School of Long Island teachers of primary school teachers is the practical application of neohumanist principles with students in primary school in New York City. Though the specifics of teaching will need to be adjusted for your locale, the general principles have universal applicability. Table of Contents listed here. Available on CD for \$10 US for NHE schools only. amgkpublications@gurukul.edu

Forward	Communication:	Free time, Enrichments,	Quiet Time Yoga
Introduction to our	Language Arts	Electives, and	Reading
Philosophy	Communication: Parent-	Independent Studies	Report Cards
Art	Teacher	Math	Science
Assessment	Computers	Morality	Social Studies
Classroom Management	Crafts	Music	Spanish
and Responsibilities	Discipline	Physical Education	Social Studies
Clubs	Drama	Policies: Internal	Teaching Methodology
	Duties of Administration	Policies: Public	Writing

NHE Publications

Foundations of Neohumanist Education

Neohumanist Education is founded on the teachings of Shrii PR Sarkar and the application of these teachings to the field of education. The content of this book was extracted from the NHE Early Childhood Diploma Programme and the AMGK Standards for NHE schools. In this compilation, the foundations of NHE are outlined with reference to direct quotes from Shrii P.R. Sarkar. Table of Contents Follows. Available on CD for \$10 US for NHE schools only. amgkpublications@gurukul.edu

Introduction

Aim and Objectives

Philosophical Elements of NHE

Basic Principles of NHE

Human Development

Methodology

Social Context of Learning

Secret Mysterious Ingredient

Teachers

Curriculum Specialties of NHE

Special Programmes of NHE

Assessment

NHE Materials For Sale from AMGK and Other Sources

The Fairy's Flowers

A Neohumanist Children's Book

The Fairy's Flowers is inspired by the ten moral principles of Yama and Niyama as elaborated by Shrii P. R Sarkar in his book Guide to Human Conduct. Each concept, non-harming, benevolent truth, non-stealing, universal love, moderation, purity, contentment, service, study and self-realization, is delightfully interwoven into the adventure of Jonathan who sets out to meet the fairy in the forest. The Fairy's Flowers is a 32 page full colour glossy book with soft cover printed in India. It costs \$ 7 US plus \$ 3 for postage. amgkpublications@gurukul.edu



Bulk orders of 10 or more are available for wholletimers and NHE projects. Wholesale cost:\$6.00 per CD

O Circuio de Amor

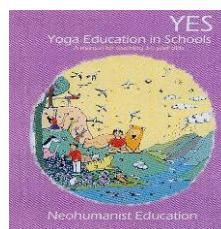
A new 65 page book, The Circle of Love, is now available in Portuguese with an accompanying CD of songs in Portuguese as well and a video. Cost of the package is \$20 US. amgkpublications@gurukul.edu

YES MANUAL - CD

Yoga Education in Schools

A manual of practical activities of Astaunga Yoga for the personal development of children ages 3-5.

YES is the inner core of the NHE curriculum. This manual gives theoretical foundations and practical guidelines for teaching yoga practices to young children ages 3 to 5, in a gentle and safe way. It is composed of



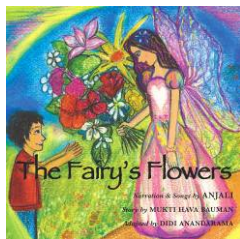
tested activities from experienced teachers from around the world who have practiced in Neohumanist school classrooms for many years. You will gain a deeper understanding of how to teach the subtle concepts of yoga, values and meditation to children.

As a teacher you can use this manual as a foundation to create your own curriculum adapting to the needs of the children in your locality and culture. This version is available on CD for NHE Schools. Cost of CD \$25US amgkpublications@gurukul.edu

The Fairy's Flowers –CD

A Neohumanist Story and Songs CD

This subtle work is based on a blending of storytelling and song. The Fairy's Flowers story is simply narrated Phrases are sung throughout using the lyre, Indian bells, guitar, harmonies and counter voices. 14 celestial songs satisfy the young child's need for repetition. Narration and songs produced and performed by Anjali (Angela Silva-Natarajan) Story by Mukti Hava Bauman Adapted by Didi Anandarama Published by AMGK



Cost: \$15US per CD amgkpublications@gurukul.edu

NHE Publications

Joyful Things by Kamala

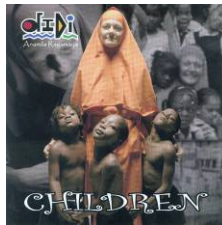
CD of songs includes the voices of 70 children from the Ananda Marga River School in Australia along with top musicians

<inrsong@ozemail.com.au>.



Circle of Love Early Childhood Education Manual and MP3 Songs on Computer CD

On this computer CD, the manual is available as six PDF files which can be read directly from your computer or printed. The Circle of Love Songs are available as 307 MP3 music files. Cost \$10 US plus shipping. To obtain a copy, please write to: amgkpublications@gurukul.edu



Children By Didi Ananda Ragamaya

A song about honouring the rights of our children, loving them and encouraging them to reach their full potential.

anandaragamaya@gmail.com



Kid's Yoga Poster

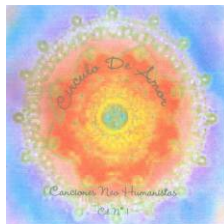
This brightly coloured poster, made in Taiwan, is available for sale from Gurukula Academy of Taiwan. Measures approximately 20 x 30 inches.

books.tw@gurukul.edu

Circulo De Amor By Didi Prema

Didi Prema sings 20 Neohumanist songs for children in Spanish.

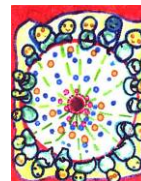
amgk.glo@gurkul.edu



Circle of Love STUVOL Guides for Kindergarten

New STUVOL booklets for KG 1 and KG 2 have been prepared for Delhi Sector by AMGK mostly from material from the Circle of Love manual. Anyone interested

to reproduce them in their own Sector can contact amgk.glo@gurukul.edu



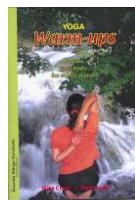
Puppets and Dolls from Peru

You can order from www.rurapuk.com or contact Didi Ananda Muktivrata didiamv@ec-red

Yoga Warm-ups Prepare your body for subtle asanas

by Mita Chen and Carol Yip

Yoga warm-ups is a compilation of poses that comes with complete instructions to guide you through your exercise routine. Suitable for all ages and levels of fitness and strength.

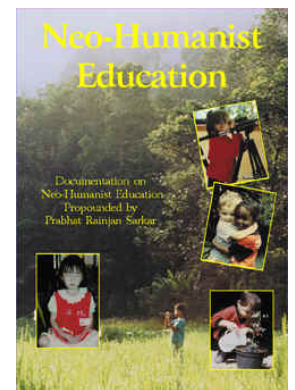


Neo-Humanist Education A Documentation on NHE Schools Around the World

Edited by
Avtk Ananda Rama Ac

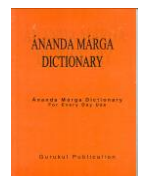
This full sized 100 page book provides a colorful picture of the Neohumanist Education system world wide, with over 40 articles and 260 pictures from NHE schools around the world. The articles are written by teachers working in the schools, giving a first hand look into the NHE classroom.

Available through amgkpublications@gurukul.edu



Ananda Marga Dictionary For Every Day Use Compiled by Ac Premayananda Avt

The book has 160 pages and contains more than 1500 entries. Order at: amdictionary@eudoramail.com



Neohumanist Education



Ulan Bator, Mongolia



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