



Table of Contents

President's Message	2
Sanskrit – Our Heritage: What do Mantras mean	3
Sanskrit – Our Heritage: Learn 5 Sanskrit words	4
Know Bhagvad Gita: Sankara bashyam	4
Leadership lessons by study of Sundarakandam	5
Recent Events at Hindu Centre	5
Sree Rama Navami Celebration	5
A course in "Hinduism Life and Living"	6
A One Day YOGA retreat	7
PUSTAKA – Book Club at the Hindu Centre	8
Featured: Meet a Volunteer: Ms. Winnie Wong	9
Upcoming events at Hindu Centre	11
.....	12
Request for Volunteers & contributions to the Patrika	13
Help Us Promote our Vedic Heritage	13
Ask Us Anything on Hinduism	13
The Hindu Centre WhatsApp group	14



President's Message

Dear Friends of Hindu Centre,

Hindu Centre has emerged from the past two and half-years of isolation stronger and more vibrant. We are now reaching out to more Hindus, providing Knowledge about Sanatana Dharma, more opportunities for Seva, and more events to express our Bhakti.

In 2023, in addition to our ongoing activities, we are planning some significant events, such as a Yatra to significant holy places in India, and possibly a national conference to bring knowledge of practical Dharma to more people, especially the younger ones.

Meanwhile we have launched Pustaka, our Indic book club, Hinduism for Life and Living sessions, children's holiday programmes, sari donation drive and so on. Youth-based programmes are being planned for those taking their landmark exams this year.

To successfully carry out our plans, the Centre needs to enlarge its current pool of volunteers. We need to expand our bandwidth so that we can do more. I urge all members and current volunteers to bring in their friends to support our work. Such new blood will also help the Centre to renew itself and become more relevant to the new generation. A new generation of leaders also needs to step forward to guide the Centre in the coming decade.

I hope you enjoy this latest issue of Patrika, brought to you by a new editorial team.

May I wish Iswara's blessings upon all of you dear friends with good health, happiness and more Jnana, Bhakti and Seva.

Dr N Varaprasad

President



Sanskrit – Our Heritage: What do Mantras mean

In the coming weeks, we will discuss few Guru Mantras. Typically, Guru Mantras are chanted at the beginning of any congregation in praise of the Guru, or simply the Teacher. These prayers are chanted to seek the blessings of the Supreme Lord or the Brhman.

In Sanskrit, Guru can be split as two syllables gu (गु) and ru (रु) - which stands for darkness and "light that dispels it", respectively. Thus, Guru is someone who dispels the darkness and takes the student towards the light, traditionally a reverential figure to the student.

कायेन वाचा मनसेन्द्रियैर्वा बुद्ध्यात्मना वा प्रकृतेः स्वभावात् ।
करोमि यद्यत्सकलं परस्मै गुरुवरायेति समर्पयामि ॥

(with parsing)

कायेन वाचा मनस इन्द्रिय वा बुद्धि आत्मन् वा प्रकृतेः स्वभावात् ।
करोमि यद् यद् सकल परस्मै गुरु वर इति समर्पयामि ॥

(Transliteration)

Kaayena Vaacaa Manase[a-I]ndriyairvaa
Buddhy[i]-Aatmanaa Vaa Prakrteh Svabhaavaat |
Karomi Yad-Yat-Sakalam Parasmai
Guru-Varaayeti Samarpayaami ||

(word-by-word-meaning)

कायेन: with my Body; वाचा: with my Speech; मनस: Mind; इन्द्रिय: Sense Organ; वा: Or
बुद्धि = Intellect; आत्मन्: Soul, Feelings of Heart; वा (Vaa): Or
प्रकृते: through the nature [tendencies of the Mind]; स्वभाव: Innate or Inherent
Disposition; करोमि: I Do; यद् यद्: Whatever; सकल: All; पर: Others;

गुरु: Guru; वर: Supreme; समर्पण: Surrender

Meaning

patraikā

the voice of the Hindu Centre, Singapore

- 1: (Whatever I do) with my **Body, Speech, Mind** or **Sense Organs**,
- 2: (Whatever I do) using my **Intellect, Feelings of Heart** or (unconsciously) through the **natural tendencies** of my Mind,
- 3: **Whatever I do**, I do all for **others** (i.e. without the sense of attachment to the results),
- 4: (And) I **Surrender** them all at the Lotus Feet of the **Supreme Guru**.

Note: 1. The source is not definitive but a similar verse occurs in the Srimad Bhagavatam

Sanskrit – Our Heritage: Learn 5 Sanskrit words

1. **Ahimsa**: Nonviolence non harm
2. **Bhakti**: Unwavering devotion; faith without question
3. **Citta**: The emotional or the feeling component of mind. Also, associated with memory.
4. **Dhyana**: Meditation
5. **Esha**: meaning “pure”. Esha refers to the Goddess Parvati

Know Bhagvad Gita: Sankara bashyam

Chapter 4 Verse 12

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपा ।
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥

*na tvevāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ na tvam neme janādhīpāḥ
na chaiva na bhaviṣhyāmaḥ sarve vayamataḥ param*

na—never; tu—however; eva—certainly; aham—I; jātu—at any time; na—nor; āsam—exist; na—nor; tvam—you; na—nor; ime—these; jana-adhipāḥ—kings; na—never; cha—also; eva—indeed; na bhaviṣhyāmaḥ—shall not exist; sarve vayam—all of us; ataḥ—from now; param—after

Neither you nor I ever existed and neither did these Kings. Neither in the future shall we all cease to exist.

Shankara says

The body gets destroyed but the Self never perishes - whether in the past, present nor will it in the future.



By saying that there never was a state when we all (you, them, myself) did not exist, Bhagavan is introducing the concept of Self being Trikala-atitam.

Leadership lessons by study of Sundarakandam

- A report by Shanthi Ravindran

We all know the story of Ramayana, but have we thought of the beauty of Sundarakandam? It is the story of Hanuman's travel to Lanka in the quest for Sita.

The speaker Ms. Harini Chari talked about Hanuman's journey and 6 Leadership lessons that we can learn from it.

1. Positivity - how Hanuman gained confidence from his friends and cheerleaders, transformed and grew in size, but his ego was light and he was set on his task.
2. Emotional Intelligence - in refusing to stay on Mainak mountain, promising to come back
3. Agility - When confronted by Surasa, he showed lateral thinking with awareness, seeking alternatives and alterations, making himself then small and rushing out of her mouth
4. Communications - Recognising the pulse of the audience and framing his conversation with Sita with empathy, humility, credibility
5. Stepping up - going the extra mile, ended up burning Lanka
6. Centredness - Being, purposeful doing and surrender. Strength of being, guided by God, giving in to Him.

There was a question from the audience - Hanuman was in a flow state, in the process, intent on Ramakaryam. Can we also do it in our daily life? Yes, because all the dharmic goals and actions are Ramakaryam.

I remembered one of my teachers at Hindu Centre saying that our study of scriptures should always start with Ramayana, then Ramayana again and again!

Recent Events at Hindu Centre

Sree Rama Navami Celebration

Sree Rama Navami was celebrated on Thursday 30th March 2023 Hindu Centre with great devotion by all bhaktas. A report by Sri Shankar Rajan, Head, Bhakti Wing



Introduction

Lord Vishnu incarnated as Sree Rama, the 7th in his series of avatars (incarnations). The whole world, wherever Hindus are present, celebrates Sree Rama's birth anniversary with full gusto. According to puranic records, Rama was born in the month of Panguni on the waxing Navami in nakshatram (star) Punarpoosam. This translates to 30th March this year.

Rama is one of the most widely worshipped Hindu deities and is considered the embodiment of chivalry and virtue. He took birth as the eldest son of King Dasaratha of Ayodhya to eradicate evil and to teach mankind the importance of duty over desire. Principal amongst Rama's achievements was the killing of Ravana, the evil King of Lanka.

Hindu Centre's Celebration

The Centre has been celebrating Rama's birth anniversary for over several years in a dignified manner with prayers and devotional singing. On Thursday 30 March, devotees met at the Centre and began prayers at 7.30pm. Opening prayers were followed by Sankata Nashana Ganesha Stothram, Rama Stothram and Hanuman Chalisa.

Following this, the Gita Reading Society started Kirtan singing – a special arrangement that the Centre has with the Gita group for several years now.

With Sanskrit slokas, emotional bhajan singing and the lovely floral decorations, the atmosphere was total bliss.

Closing of Puja

The event ended at about 9.15pm with the Centre President Dr N. Varaprasad thanking everyone present, followed by the distribution of delicious home-made prasadam.

A great way to spend an evening.

[A course in "Hinduism Life and Living"](#)

The Hindu Centre conducted a four-week course for ~ 30 participants. It was a popular course and had lively, interactive audience. Discussions were focused on topics such as What is Hinduism? How does it enrich and support our life? A report by T.Karthik, Editor, Patrika

The participants had a chance to imbibe basic principles of Hinduism into their daily lives. Concepts like Dharma and Karma were discussed in detail as also their application in real life situations. Participants also had a chance to chant simple slokas in all the sessions that included the opening and closing prayers as well.



Topics like Samanya dharma, Swadharma and Ashrama dharma saw a lot of discussions led by our skilled instructors and teachers. Sensitive topics like Varna dharma were skilfully explained providing a clear distinction between jati-kshatriya and karma-kshatriya for example. Other topics included Patanjali's ashtanga yoga and an explanation on the 8 limbs of Yoga.

The session on Karma started with a discussion examining our daily life through manasika, vachika and kayika karma – the three modes of karma. The interesting topic of the cycle of samsara resulted in the understanding of agami, sanchita and prarabdha karma. The 6 types of karma were discussed: nitya, naimittika, kamya, prayascitta, upasana and finally the prohibited or nishiddha karma. This gave the participants a good understanding on how to lead a dharmic life and attain the goal of our life as intended by the sastras.

Another lively session on the vision of God in Hinduism generated great deal of enthusiasm as well. The Hindu pantheon of Gods are literally infinite and the instructor provided the rationale for why this was so. Hinduism being a way of life basically views divinity in every aspect of Ishwara's creation and this allows followers to choose their own path based on their spiritual maturity. This led us to examine the various traditions such as Shaivism, Shakta, Vaishnavism among others. Lastly the reason for detailed iconography among the various deities of Gods was explained and included concepts such as the need for avahanam and murti puja.

In all, the participants greatly enjoyed all sessions, and we all got a little bit more intimate with our practices while understanding the religious significance of many daily actions that we follow.

[A One Day YOGA retreat](#)

We had our first ever Yoga retreat, right here, at our centre on Sunday, March 12th. The focus was on "Right posture for Healthy Living" as this helps sustain muscles, protects joints, back and knees for life. The retreat highlighted the importance of developing and maintaining the posture, not just whilst doing an asana, but throughout the day - while sitting, standing, walking, running, lifting weights or sleeping. The students were able to learn ways to engage all their muscles and pull themselves erect posture always.

Students were welcomed with a simple welcome drink – homemade panakam and spent a whole morning doing asanas and suryanamaskar thereby developing muscle memory. After a simple lunch, they learnt pranayama and meditation, how to breathe into the joints and relax our muscles, exercising 3 of the 5 pancakoshas.

patrika

the voice of the Hindu Centre, Singapore



On our Yoga Preview on zoom on April 13, uncover the exciting history of Vedic Yoga, and ways to achieve a daily Yoga practice. This will help develop fitness to deal with life and its challenges in an amicable and enjoyable manner!

PUSTAKA – Book Club at the Hindu Centre

Pustaka, the Hindu Centre contemporary book club was setup to bring together book lovers to appreciate unique, home-grown books and their authors' journeys. Covid made us all understand, more than ever, the value of the written word. This book club was set up to celebrate our memories of our dear volunteer and extreme book lover, Ravethy, who passed away last year.

'An Atheist gets the Gita' by Rahul Singh made us really get the Gita through its pages and from the author directly. 'Forgotten Kings' by Changez Jan gave us the heart tugging story of how those Hindu kings stood at the forefront and fought the army of Mahmud Ghazni so many times, giving up

patrika

the voice of the Hindu Centre, Singapore

everything they had for their country. In the third session, presided over by Sri Ranvir Singh, President, Lakshminarayan temple, we launched our own Krishna-108 Q&A book, published by our Research & Publications group, headed by Dr Medha Kudaisya.

We talked to our authors Prof Krishnamurthy, Dr Uma Jayaraman, Ms S Anuradha and Dr Chitra Varaprasad - in a session moderated by our previous R&P Head, Dr Chitra Sankaran - immersing ourselves in “venuganam” played by Ms Lalitha Rajandran, listening to the stories and enjoying the ultimate Krishanubhavam.

Prof Krishna talked about Krishna brought up by the whole village in Vrindavan. We would like The Hindu Centre to be the village that brings up your children, with our book on Parenting – the Hindu way, to be published next year.



Featured: Meet a Volunteer: Ms. Winnie Wong

patrika

the voice of the Hindu Centre, Singapore

A volunteer speaks: Winnie Wong

Patrika speaks with Winnie Wong, a long-time participant (since 2012) in the Hindu Centre Vedic Yoga program and has recently been tasked with coordinating the program.



On behalf of the Hindu Centre, our deepest appreciation and gratitude for your Seva, Winnie.

What drew you and your family to the Hindu Centre Vedic Yoga program?

The Hindu Center is conveniently located for me being close to Jaggi's restaurant, one of our family favorites. This was a key driver for us to give the yoga program a start. As I started the classes, I found that teachers were good and that gave me additional motivation to stick with the program.

Please share with us a little bit about your journey as a Hindu center volunteer

I have been a Hindu center Yoga student for over 10 years. Interacting with the teachers and volunteers has been a very inspirational journey. I feel it is time for me to give back to the community I have gained so much from, even if it is in a small way.

Yoga is globally thought of as a physical exercise routine that builds flexibility and mental strength. What does Vedic Yoga mean to you?

To me the value that Vedic yoga brings is to be able to relax mentally and physically via the breathing exercises. Additionally, the physical exercise in the form of stretching promotes health

How has practicing yoga impacted your life and how do you see it benefiting others?

In my experience practicing Vedic Yoga has improved my mental and physical health tremendously and I see the same in my fellow practitioners.

Please share some of you and your family's highlights in being associated with the Hindu Centre?



Along with practicing Yoga as a family, the key highlight of the many years of Yoga has been making many nice friends along the way.

Finally, as the Vedic Yoga coordinator, what are your plans for the Hindu Centre members?

As and when time permits, I would like to volunteer for more events

Upcoming events at Hindu Centre

14-day Yatra to South India.

South India Yatra 09-23 July Hindu Centre is pleased to offer a specially curated guided tour of the main temples and places of pilgrimage in South India, from 9-23 July 2023. You can find the itinerary and prices here: <https://sfh.sg/hcyatra2023.pdf> And you can register your interest here: <https://sfh.sg/hcyatra> Enjoy a spiritual journey and meet like-minded friends on this special journey from Kochi to Chennai. End the Yatra with a shopping break in Chennai before heading back home to Singapore.


patrika

the voice of the Hindu Centre, Singapore

Meeting of Pustaka Book Club

PUSTAKA





Hindu Centre
Jnana - Bhakti - Karma

CHICKPEAS TO COOK & OTHER STORIES

Real Women, Real Stories




Join our book discussion! Meet the author!
For a gendered perspective on the lives of women in some of the smaller communities of Singapore.

Women leading lives delicately balanced between cultural demands and a fast changing, modern Singapore. Explore questions of identity, community-life, faith, gender and interfaith space in multicultural Singapore.

Moderated by Dr Chitra Sankaran, Associate Professor at NUS and volunteer at The Hindu Centre for over a decade.


Nilanjana Sengupta is a poet, writer of creative nonfiction and community historian based in Singapore. She has also been a Research Fellow at ISEAS and NUS.



The book can be purchased at the session or via Amazon. Royalties will go to **pave**, a charity that works with women who have been victims of domestic violence.

Venue: The Aurobindo, Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society (SIFAS), 2A, Starlight Road, S 217755
Time: Saturday, June 10, 4:30-6 PM SGT
Free entry, please register early at link below

Register at this link
<https://sfh.sg/hcpustaka>
Or scan the QR code



Visit us at www.hinducentre.org.sg
Subscribe to our calendar of events at
<https://sfh.sg/hcevents>

For enquiries, pls call at 62918540 in office hours or email us at admin@hinducentre.org.sg

To get an update of future events, please add +65 87680532 to your contacts and send WhatsApp JOIN



Request for Volunteers & contributions to the Patrika

The Hindu Centre invites interested participants who would like to Volunteer for our various programs either as a program lead or a volunteer. Please register your details at this link []

For those that are interested in contributing content to the Patrika, please send us an email at editor@hinducentre.org outlining your interest in one or more areas. We are currently looking for journalist who can interview prominent Hindus in Singapore and also others who can contribute articles for the various sections. We will provide your content ideas with editorial support including drafting and proof-reading as needed.

Help Us Promote our Vedic Heritage

“Every Little Bit Counts”

Hindu Centre Singapore is dedicated to the spiritual progress of Singapore Hindus through the three pillars of Jnana (Knowledge), Bhakti (Devotion) and Seva (Service). We are a non-profit society run entirely by volunteers. HC depends on the goodwill of generous donors and supporters who believe in our work and mission.

For more information please click here <https://www.hinducentre.org.sg/donate/>

Ask Us Anything on Hinduism

Do you have a question about Hinduism, Sastras, Life in general, Relationships or activities of Hindu Centre? Send us your question at admin@hinducentre.org.sg and our panel of respondents will get in touch with you. Please be assured of protection of privacy, at all times, regardless of the nature of your questions. Please refer to our privacy statement listed at the end of the Patrika or email us at admin@hinducentre.org.sg

patrika

the voice of the Hindu Centre, Singapore

The Hindu Centre WhatsApp group

Thank you for reading Patrika our newsletter. Learn more about our events and engage meaningfully with the community by being a part of our WhatsApp group.

If you would like to receive our event notifications by WhatsApp, please send "JOIN" to 8768 0532 and save this number as What'sUp@HinduCentre



WHATSUP@HINDUCENTRE

  **Hindu Centre**
Jnana • Bhakti • Seva

Be in the loop of happenings@HC

- ✓ Hinduism talks
- ✓ Hinduism for kids (*Balagurukalam*)
- ✓ Hinduism forums
- ✓ Q & A sessions
- ✓ Vedic Yoga
- ✓ Mass Chanting sessions (*Skanda Sasthi, Maha Shivarathri etc*)
- ✓ Our Publications
- ✓ Community Service opportunities (*eg Mitra*)

+65 8768 0532

Add number to your phone contacts..

and Whatsapp 'JOIN' to join our publicity list!