

# Echoes of Eco

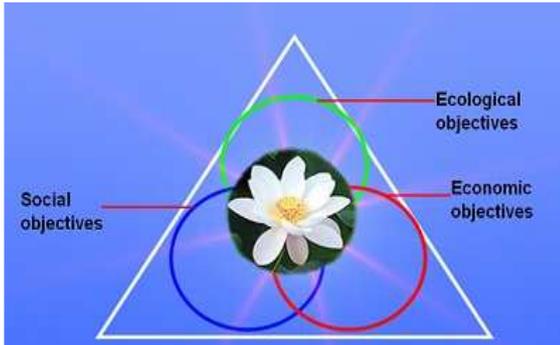


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Vivekananda Kendra- nardep Newsletter

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## Sustainable Development



The kind of society we are living in is what you might call a remedial society. We concentrate more effort on trying to put things right after they have gone wrong, than on making them go right in the first place. It reminds me of the story of the man who lived at a bridge over a river, and spent a lot of time saving dogs from drowning as they floated past. If he had realised that at the next bridge upstream another man was throwing the dogs in, he could have stopped him. That would have saved him a lot of trouble and the dogs a lot of suffering. An important thing to remember as we face up to the economic and social problems that confront us is that, as a rule, it will be more effective to deal with upstream causes than with their downstream effects.

Health is a good example of the remedial approach....Our Health Ministry is primarily a sickness ministry, and our Health Ministers are primarily sickness ministers. They cannot do very much to create a healthier society. That depends on things like employment and unemployment, food and farming, transport, planning and housing, which are other ministers' responsibilities. Law and order is another example.

We employ huge numbers of people, and spend vast amounts of money, on police, prisons, law courts, probation services and other responses to criminal and disorderly behaviour after the event. We give less attention to how we might create a less divided, more inclusive society in which there will be less criminal, disorderly and antisocial behaviour.

Or take the environment. As the Brundtland World Commission on Environment and Development said in its report "Our Common Future" over ten years ago (now twenty years have passed) "environmental management practices have focused largely upon after-the-fact repair of damage: reforestation, reclaiming desert lands, rebuilding urban environments, restoring natural habitats, and rehabilitating wild lands". It is now beginning to be realised that a more upstream approach is needed. It is called "sustainable development". ...There is a system here that has to be changed. The need is for systemic change, not just for disconnected changes in one part of the economic system or another.

[From Liverpool First E.F. Schumacher Lecture in 1998 by James Robertson – an alternative economist.]

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### The Bridge to Freedom



***The bridge to cross non-compassion is by giving and sharing.***

***The bridge to cross anger is by cultivation of tranquility of mind or absence of hatred.***

***Absence of sincerity should be conquered by cultivation of sincerity and attention.***

***Falsehood should be conquered by Truth.***

***–Sama Veda***



***Service to humanity is the highest form of worship – Swami Vivekananda***

Ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge: it is those who know little, and not those who know much, who so positively assert that this or that problem will never be solved by science. – Charles Darwin



## Conserving Ground Water: Reviving the Traditional system with community participation-I

This month...



### Water Conservation activities



VK-nardep started its tryst with water conservation and management programmes in the Southern districts of Tamil Nadu and also in one of the worst drought hit districts of the state – Ramanathapuram district.

The work in these areas include: creating awareness regarding the traditional water harvesting structures that have been neglected and creating social infrastructure so as to sustain the management of the revived traditional structures.

Neglected tanks and Ooranis have become ruined and at some places sources of pollution due to stagnation and contamination. Today they have been changed into functionally vibrant water harvesting structures.

There has been regular maintenance work that has been carried out by the social infrastructure that came up due to the work of Vivekananda Kendra – NARDEP. Today there has been improvement in the ground water recharge in the areas where VK-NARDEP has worked. The Artificial Recharging of tube wells also has made a tremendous impact on the water scarce areas chosen by Vivekananda Kendra.

At the arid district of Ramanathapuram VK-NARDEP took up Ooranis renovation work in the villages.

240 hand pumps in the area have been benefited by the raising of groundwater level which in turn is due to its recharging by the Ooranis renovation.

- Krishnankoil tank of Anandan canal (Pechparai system) was renovated by VK-NARDEP. This tank is part of a temple complex more than seven hundred years old.

It is also part of a larger irrigation system which also recharges two consecutive tanks.

- Renovation of Kanyakumari Theppakulam by VK-NARDEP brought it alive after a period of twenty five years.
- Renovation of Chakarakulam another tank with legendary fame also at Kanyakumari.

How does this legacy continue now? We will see that in the next issue of the newsletter.



Green Health Home at Vivekananda Puram functioned for 8 days and treated 201 patients.



Done with DST core support

### Direction and Development



- We can no longer guide our countries and our corporations because we no longer know what development is. We no longer know how to distinguish progress from failure...we are now a species without a vision. We cannot act together because we no longer know our goal.  
-Dr. Gerald Barney (Physicist)



*In the attitude of silence the soul finds the path in a clearer light, and what is elusive and deceptive resolves itself into crystal clearness. Our life is a long and arduous quest after Truth.*

*-Mahatma Gandhi*



PKC College students learning Vermi compost along with Grey Water Treatment Technology at VK-nardep



Training programmes on “Grey Water Treatment (with DST core support) were conducted for the following colleges:

- Pioneer Kumaraswami College, Nagercoil on 3<sup>rd</sup> with 29 students.
- Women Christian College, Nagercoil on 5<sup>th</sup> with 40 students.
- Noorul Islam College of Arts and Science, Kumarankoil on 11<sup>th</sup> with 49 students

Noorul Islam College students learning the Grey Water Treatment process with the help of Canna indica plant done at Vivekananda Kendra by VK-nardep



Phyto Remediation of Grey Water Treatment – students of W.C.C observing the beautiful plants which absorb heavy metals



## Water and Sanitation

Tested water from 14 wells in Kanyakumari Dist – programme of Central Ground Water Board, Chennai.

Murugan Kundram traditional rain water harvesting structure renovation work is continuing and nearing the end.

## This month... Networking



Shri.G.Vasudeo attended the Working Group meeting on Indira Awas Yojana for 12<sup>th</sup> Five year plan conducted by Ministry of Rural Development, R.H.Division, Govt. of India at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi on the 1<sup>st</sup> of this month.

An exposure visit of 24 farmers to Gramodaya Park, on 13<sup>th</sup>, was organised by Dept. of Dairy Development, Thachottukavu, Nedom Block, Kerala. Resource Person was Dr.P.Kamalasanan Pillai.



District Collector, Smt.S.Madhumathi, IAS, released the DVD (English and Tamil) on Shakti Surabhi Bio-methnation plant. Shri.A.Sankar, Asst.General Manager, NABARD, Kanyakumari Dist. received the first copy. The project was funded by NABARD under Rural Innovation Fund (RIF) programme.



*Our evolution in the ignorance...must lead inevitably towards evolution in the knowledge, ... a self-revelation of the Divinity in things.... –Sri Aurobindo*



**Workshop on Organic Farming: Participants have a look at the Azolla beds and learnt the technology in a hands on training session.**

**Happenings: This month for Sustainable Agriculture**

Workshop on “Vermi Compost Technology” was held for 40 students of Zoology Dept. of Women Christian College, Nagercoil at the J.C.Bose Nursery, at Vivekanandapuram on the 5<sup>th</sup> of this month. Shri.S.Rajamony was the resource person.

Workshop on “Organic farming” was held at the Technology Resource Center of Vivekananda Kendra nardep, Kalluvilai on 20<sup>th</sup>. 13 participants studied the technology. Smt.S.Premalatha was the resource person.

Sis.V.Saraswathi attended the Dist. Mission Committee meeting, conducted by Dept. of Horticulture, Govt. of Tamilnadu at the Collectorate Campus, Nagercoil on 22<sup>nd</sup> of August.

**Media and Events**



National Workshop on “Green Technologies” was organized by the Department of Civil Engineering, of K.S.Rangasamy College of Technology, Tiruchengode, Namakkal Dist. The event was held on 20<sup>th</sup> of August and Shri.V.Ramakrishnan Read a paper on “Shakti Surabhi Engery Plant in your Backyard”. 200 participants attended the programme.



**Happenings: This month for Holistic Medicine**

Traditional healers meet on Visha vaidya practices was held at Gandigram, Dindigul by Gandigram Trust on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of this month. Dr.V.Ganapathy gave the talk and 72 persons attended and benefited.

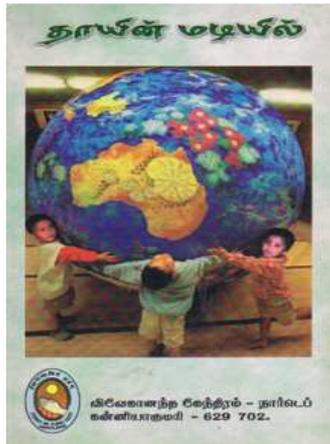
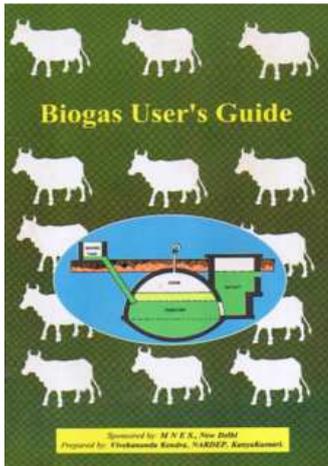
High Potency Compost technology was explained to 200 members of Kalanjium Thozhilagam Ltd., on 9<sup>th</sup> of August Dhan Foundation, Madurai organized the programme. Dr.V.Ganapathy was the resource person.

Dr.V.Ganapathy gave a guest lecture at St.Xavier’s College, Palayamkottai on 28<sup>th</sup> August. South Indian Traditional Vaidyars Federation organized the programme. The topic for lecture was “Use of Ethno medicines in Varma practices”. 110 participants attended the lecture.



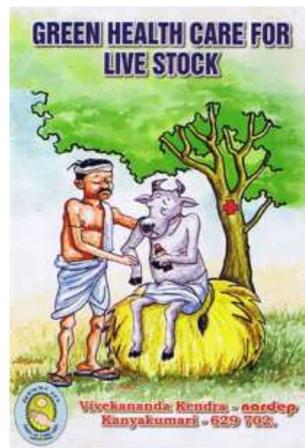
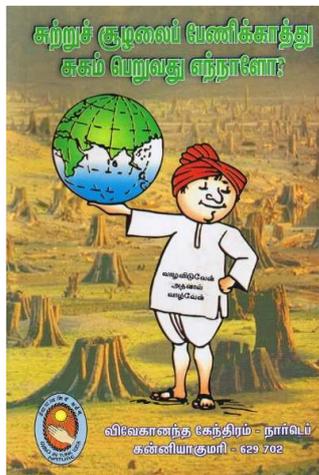
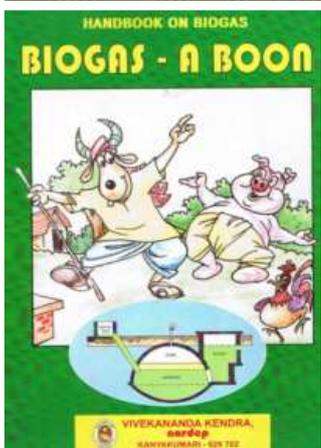
**Mamallapuram –the famous tourist place today generates electricity from organic waste: 100 Cu.m. Bio-Methanation plant constructed by VK-nardep. The plant is managed by ‘Hand in Hand’ an NGO which also does the social engineering for running the plant through community support.**

Both the good and the pleasant approach a man. The wise man, pondering over them, discriminates. The wise chooses the good in preference to the pleasant. The simple-minded, for the sake of worldly well-being, prefers the pleasant. - Katha Upanisadh



**Individual qualities for Holistic citizen**

1. Non-violence or love – Ahimsa
  2. Truth – Satyagraha
  3. Fearlessness – Saravatra Bhaya Varjana
  4. Self-organisation or self rule – Swaraj  
Self regulation means self-knowledge and taking responsibility.
  5. Non-stealing – Asteya. Part of this is Non-consumerism – Asangraha. This requires ecological humility; realizing that waste is a sin against nature and that nature's cycle should be followed. It is about having enough.
  6. Sacred Sex – Brahmacharya
  7. Physical work - Sharirashram
  8. Avoidance of bad taste – Aswada.
  9. Respect for all religions – Sarava Dharma Samanatva
  10. Self economy or Local economy – Swadeshi decentralisation.
  11. Respect for all beings – Sparsha
- Mahatma Gandhi



**How to feed the future humanity?  
How to make development sustainable?  
Some of the best publications on the subject for layman and professionals alike are from VK-nardep.  
Contact: The Secretary, Vivekananda Kendra-NARDEP  
Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari-629702  
Tamil Nadu  
Phone: 04652-246296 Email: vknardep@gmail.com**

**This month... Shakti Surabhi**

This month training programme on Bio-methanation plant (supported by DST, New Delhi) was conducted at TRC, Kalluvilai on 27<sup>th</sup>. Er. Ramakrishnan was the resource person. 25 persons attended.

Follow-up camp on "Kitchen Waste (Shakti Surabhi) Biogas Plant sponsored by NABARD, Chennai TRC, Kalluvilai was also held on 27<sup>th</sup> of this month. 24 persons attended. Shri.Kadiresan guided the participants.



25 cum Bio-Methanation Plant at Lucas TVS, (Pondicherry) under construction by VK-NARDEP.



## **Four-Based Approach to Peace**

### **Four Preparations**

**1. Assume right attitude toward life:** Stop being an escapist or a surface-liver as these attitudes can only cause in-harmony in your life. Face life squarely and get down below the froth of its surface to discover its verities and realities. Solve the problems that life sets before you, and you will find that solving them contributes to your inner growth. Helping to solve collective problems contributes also to your growth, and these problems should never be avoided.

**2. Live good beliefs:** The laws governing human conduct apply as rigidly as the law of gravity. Obedience to these laws pushes us toward harmony; disobedience pushes us toward in-harmony. Since many of these laws are already common belief, you can begin by putting into practice all the good things you believe. No life can be in harmony unless belief and practice are in harmony.

**3. Find your place in the Life Pattern:** You have a part in the scheme of things. What that part is you can know only from within yourself. You can seek it in receptive silence. You can begin to live in accordance with it by doing all the good things you are motivated toward and giving these things priority in your life over all the superficial things that customarily occupy human lives.

### **Four Purifications**

**1. Purification of the bodily temple:** Are you free from all bad habits? In your diet do you stress the vital foods - the fruits, whole grains, vegetables and nuts? Do you get to bed early and get enough sleep? Do you get plenty of fresh air, sunshine, exercise, and contact with nature? If you can answer "Yes" to all of these questions, you have gone a long way toward purification of the bodily temple.

**2. Purification of the thoughts:** It is not enough to do right things and say right things. You must also think right things. Positive thoughts can be powerful influences for good. Negative thoughts can make you physically ill. Be sure there is no un-peaceful situation between yourself and any other human being, for only when you have ceased to harbor unkind thoughts can you attain inner harmony.

**3. Purification of the desires:** Since you are here to get yourself into harmony with the laws that govern human conduct and with your part in the scheme of things, your desires should be focused in this direction.

**4. Purification of motives:** Obviously your motive should never be greed or self-seeking, or the wish for self-glorification, you shouldn't even have the selfish motive of attaining inner peace for yourself. To be of service to your fellow humans must be your motive before your life can come into harmony.

### **Four Relinquishments**

**1. Relinquishment of self-will:** You have, or it's as though you have, two selves: the lower self that usually governs you selfishly, and the higher self which stands ready to use you gloriously. You must subordinate the lower self by refraining from doing the not-good things you are motivated toward, not suppressing them but transforming them so that the higher self can take over your life.

## **Peace Pilgrim**



- She walked all her life for peace and she walked with no possessions...

**2. Relinquishment of the feeling of separateness:** All of us, all over the world, are cells in the body of humanity. You are not separate from your fellow humans, and you cannot find harmony for yourself alone. You can only find harmony when you realize the oneness of all and work for the good of all.

**3. Relinquishment of all attachments:** Only when you have relinquished all attachments can you be really free. Material things are here for use, and anything you cannot relinquish when it has outlived its usefulness possesses you. You can only live in harmony with your fellow humans if you have no feeling that you possess them, and therefore do not try to run their lives.

**4. Relinquishment of all negative feelings:** Work on relinquishing negative feelings. If you live in the present moment, which is really the only moment you have to live, you will be less apt to worry. If you realize that those who do mean things are psychologically ill, your feelings of anger will turn to feelings of pity. If you recognize that all of your inner hurts are caused by your own wrong actions or your own wrong reactions or your own wrong inaction, then you will stop hurting yourself.

One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child.

-Carl Jung



## Thinking

The monkey in the tree feels hungry, and then the urge arises to take a fruit or a nut. Action comes first, and then the idea that you had better store it up. To put it in different words, does action come first, or the actor? Is there an actor without action? Do you understand? This is what we are always asking ourselves: Who is it that sees? Who is the watcher? Is the thinker apart from his thoughts, the observer apart from the observed, the experience apart from the experience, the actor apart from the action? But if you really examine the process, very carefully, closely and intelligently, you will see that there is always action first, and that action with an end in view creates the actor. ... If you think very clearly and without prejudice, without conformity, without trying to convince somebody, without an end in view, in that very thinking there is no thinker, there is only the thinking. It is only when you seek an end in your thinking that you become important, and not thought. Perhaps some of you have observed this. ... If the thinker comes first, then the thinker is more important than thought, and all the philosophies,



*J. Krishnamurti*  
Seer



## Feeling

Our feelings play a very important part in directing all of our thoughts and actions. In us, there is a river of feelings, in which every drop of water is a different feeling, and each feeling relies on all the others for its existence. To observe it, we just sit on the bank of the river and identify each feeling as it surfaces, flows by, and disappears. There are three sorts of feelings--pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral. When we have an unpleasant feeling, we may want to chase it away. But it is more effective to return to our conscious breathing and just observe it, identifying it silently to ourselves: "Breathing in, I know there is an unpleasant feeling in me. Breathing out, I know there is an unpleasant feeling in me." Calling a feeling by its name, such as "anger," "sorrow," "joy," or "happiness," helps us identify it clearly and recognize it more deeply....If we face our unpleasant feelings with care, affection, and nonviolence, we can transform them into the kind of energy that is healthy and has the capacity to nourish us. By the work of mindful observation, our unpleasant feelings can illuminate so much for us, offering us insight and understanding into ourselves and society.



- *Thích Nhất Hạnh*  
Monk



## Knowing

The Eastern mystics repeatedly insist on the fact that the ultimate reality can never be an object of reasoning or of demonstrable knowledge. ...The firm basis of knowledge on experience in Eastern mysticism suggests a parallel to the firm basis of scientific knowledge on experiment. This parallel is further enforced by the nature of the mystical experience. It is described in the Eastern traditions as a direct insight which lies outside the realm of the intellect and is obtained by watching rather than thinking; by looking inside oneself; by observation.... A mystical experience, therefore, is not any more unique than a modern experiment in physics. On the other hand, it is not less sophisticated either, although its sophistication is of a very different category. The complexity and efficiency of the physicist's technical apparatus is matched, if not surpassed, by that of the mystic's consciousness - both physical and spiritual - in deep meditation. The scientists and the mystics, then, have developed highly sophisticated methods of observing nature.



- *Fritjof Capra*  
Physicist