

Echoes of Eco



February, 2012

Vivekananda Kendra- nardip Newsletters

Vol:3 No:12

Inscape: Caterpillar as Zen Master



The hope was that by paying total awareness to one square foot of earth, you're experiencing in the natural world what you do contemplatively when you give total awareness to the inner world - the "inscape."

One woman came back and told a story of how she had sat with her square foot of earth which was full of grass and it took twenty minutes for her to quiet down to the point where she noticed a small caterpillar that she had in fact been looking at for twenty minutes. She remembered the instructions that if a question was coming up from your heart, to simply allow it to come and in fact to direct it to the creature that you were sitting with. Out of her heart rose the question for the caterpillar: "will you teach me about metamorphosis?"

The caterpillar responded rather like a tough old Zen master: "Why should I teach you about metamorphosis?" She said, "because you will be going through complete metamorphosis and turn into a butterfly - who better to teach me about it?" He said, "you don't seem to understand - most of us don't make it to butterflies. Either we don't find the right food plants and die or we're eaten by predators."

There's no guarantee at all that I'll become a butterfly. On the other hand, you, as a human being, experience metamorphosis all the time. If you want to know about metamorphosis, study yourself."

Looking at our own experience as humans on the Earth in the last, say, fifty years, we've gone from being a species with generally localized impact to a species that has very significant global impacts. We've become the dominant species, we control much of the biomass of the Earth, and are beginning to change the climate, the atmosphere, and so on in a significant way. But we haven't had a shift in consciousness consonant with our shift in status as a species. My sense of how to bring about that shift is a simple and humble one - if enough people are willing to experiment and experience a shift in consciousness, then Earth itself, Gaia itself, ... can push on our consciousness, accelerate the process and a global shift in consciousness becomes imaginable..

This excerpt is from the interview of James Thornton, author and an eco-activist turned eco-psychologist. He devised a psychological technique of inscape - exploring the inner ecology.

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Inter-dependence



Without Tigers Forests cannot exist. Without Forests Tigers cannot exist. Tigers Protect the Forests. Forests Protect the Tigers. He who rules should always remember this mutual dependence and harmony.

-Mahatma Vidura in Vidura Neethi, Mahabharatha



The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing which stands in the way. Some see Nature all ridicule and deformity, and some scarce see Nature at all. But to the eyes of the man of imagination, Nature is Imagination itself. As a man is, so he sees.-William Blake



This Month ...



This Month ...



This month...



Workshops on “Sustainable Agricultural Practices” were held this month:

The first workshop was held at Uthduvalmadam, Kankakumari Dist. on 9th of this month. It was organized by Dept. of Agricultural Development, ATMA, Kanyakumari Dist., Govt. of Tamilnadu. 26 farmers attended and benefitted. Sister Saraswathi was the resource person. One more workshop was conducted on 16th and 17th at Technology Resource Center, Kalluvillai. 35 farmers attended and benefitted. The programme was organized by Dept. of Agricultural Development, ATMA, Pathanamthitta Dist., Govt. of Kerala. Dr.P.Kamalasanan Pillai was the resource person.

Workshop on ‘Azolla Cultivation’ was held at Vivekananda Kendra – nardep at the TRC, Kalluvillaion 25th. 2 persons attended. Dr.P.Kamalasanan Pillai was the resource person.

Sustainable agriculture workshop; participants learn the technologies.



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

Workshop on “Rural water supply and water treatment” was held at Govt. Polytechnic College, Konnam, Nagercoil on 9th and Extension centre on 17th. 60 and 50 students attended these programmes respectively. It was organized by Govt. Polytechnic College, Konnam, Nagercoil. Shri.V.Ramakrishnan was the resource person



Networking Activities

National Horticultural Mission 2011 – 2012 Dist. Mission Committee meeting was conducted on 17th at Collectorate Campus, Nagercoil, it was organized by Dept. of Horticulture, Govt. of Tamilnadu. Sis.Saraswati attended it.

A study tour of 50 members from COODU, Coimbatore, visited Gramodaya Parkon 8th and studied different farming technologies.

‘The Hindu’ published in its ‘Farmers’ diary’ Q & A column, a note on Azolla on 16th of this month.

Dr.Pillai explaining Azolla technology at the one day intensive Azolla training programme



Green Health Home at Vivekananda Puram functioned for 8 days and treated 165 patients.



Done with DST core support

Ecological Intelligence is about...



...Ecological intelligence allows us to comprehend systems in all their complexity, as well as the interplay between the natural and man-made worlds. But that understanding demands a vast store of knowledge, one so huge that no single brain can store it all. Each one of us needs the help of others to navigate the complexities of ecological intelligence. We need to collaborate.

-Daniel Goleman



The natural world is the larger sacred community to which we belong. To be alienated from this community is to become destitute in all that makes us human. To damage this community is to diminish our own existence.
- Thomas Berry



Participants of the workshop on bio-methanation plant also study and learn the technologies first hand at Technology Resource Center, Kalluvillai.



Happenings: This month

Workshop on “Paramparia Bone Fracture Treatment” was conducted for two days at the Technology Resource Center of VK-nardep at Kalluvillai. The programme was sponsored by DST, Core Support.

The workshop was held on 14th and 15th 83 persons: students of Siddha system, traditional physicians and practicing Siddha and Ayurveda doctors as well as allopathy doctors attended this programme and found it very useful.

Dr.V.Ganapathy and his team conducted the programme.



A demonstration in progress on traditional Bone Fracture Treatment in the workshop on these practices.



Shri.V.Ramakrishnan presenting his paper in front of the packed audience at Cape Institute of Technology



Happenings: This month

At Gramodaya Park Kanyakumari, there are live models which explain through simulation, how to harvest rain water effectively for both urban and rural areas.



The live model on water harvesting is being explained at a session during study tour programme.

National Seminar on “Opportunities and challenges in Renewable Power Generation” was held on 10th of this month at Cape Institute of Technology, Levengipuram, Tirunelveli Dist. 200 persons attended this seminar. Shri.V.Ramakrishnan presented a paper on Bio-Methanation plant.

A training programme on “Bio-methanation Plant” was organized by DRDA, Nilgiri Dist. It was held at Kothagiri on the 22nd of this month. 40 persons attended and had an introduction to the Bio-methanation technology. The Resource Person was Shri.V.Ramakrishnan.

Workshop on “Kitchen Waste (Shakti Surabhi) Biogas Plant” was held at Technology Resource Center (TRC) Kalluvillai on 25th of this month. The resource Person was Shri.V.Ramakrishnan. 14 persons attended this programme.

We are committed with our lives to building a different model and a different future for humanity, the Earth, and other species. We have envisaged a moral alternative to economic globalization and we will not rest until we see it realized.

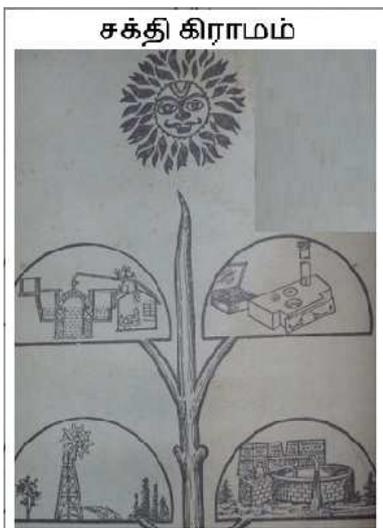
-Maude Barlow



From our Publications



Energy Village (Tamil)



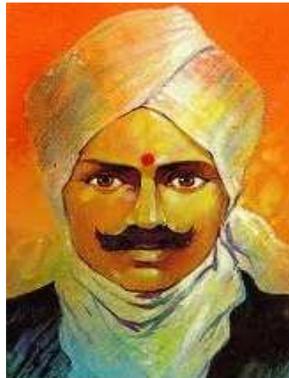
This is one of the earliest publications of Vivekananda Kendra-nardep. It was published in 1988 that is some 24 years ago – almost a quarter century ago.

So today this publication has a vintage taste and also has a historical significance. It provides the base point from which VK-nardep started the journey. It shows with which goals we started this eco-pilgrimage. Today we can look back and revive our pledge to the cause of a sustainable future. Also we can see how the problems have changed and how the perspectives have transformed. This is the path VK-nardep has travelled. In a way this is our re-commitment to the eco-cause.

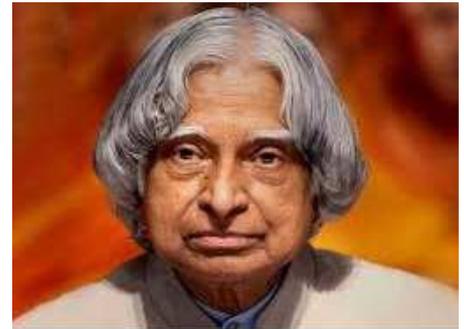
The book starts with the need for our villages to become energy conscious. Energy has a price. Do we realize this truth? Do we realize that rural women are caught in a vicious web of cooking fuel crisis? The book asks. Today the crisis has become part of the problem of urban woman as well. The book has been a prophetic warning indeed.

A village self-sufficient in its energy needs or in other words energy independent – such a village should be called 'energy village'. The book goes on to unveil different technologies then available for making the village energy self-reliant. Solar powered panels, smokeless chulas, energy biomass plants to be grown in village commons, biogas plants – floating type as well as fixed ones... the book is a veritable catalogue of all the alternative technologies available 24 years back,

The book details each of the renewable energy technologies. The book deals with solar energy panels used in cooking and in street lights. It deals with foot-valves and wind mills. Then the book details very interestingly the transformation of a village into a self-sufficient energy village by integration of these technologies appropriately. There are two chapters devoted to this. One of the advantages of the book is the innovative use of Bharathi's poetry. Because of this aspect, the reader, whether a lay man or a professional, can read this book with involvement and passion which the subject deserves.



In this connection it will be interesting to compare the concept of energy-independent self-sufficient villages as envisioned by VK-nardep and the modern concept of PURA for village development as put forth by Dr.APJ Abdul Kalam – rocket scientist and previous President of India.



Recently Dr.Kalam says that in his PURA model village: "...the rural economy will be driven by renewable energy such as solar, wind, bio-fuel and conversion of municipal waste and forest waste material into power. In this approach, the task is to make sustainable development using the core competence of the rural sector. Let me discuss briefly the components of typical PURA and method of integration."

When going through the yellowed and dog-edged pages of "Energy village" one cannot but feel the book to be an echo of Dr.Kalam coming from the past through some kind of time paradox. This book deserves an update and reprint.

"Shakthi Gramam" (Energy village: Tamil)
Pages: 78
Chapters: 15
Year of publication: 1988



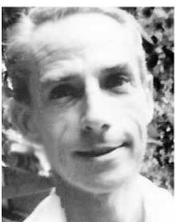
The word 'matter' remains a dry, inhuman, and purely intellectual concept... How different was the former image of matter—the Great Mother—that could encompass and express the profound emotional meaning of the Great Mother. -Carl Gustav Jung



Divine Future

One can readily understand that if a single being amidst our millions of sufferings, manages to negotiate the evolutionary leap, the mutation of the next age, the face of the earth will be radically changed. Then all the so-called powers with which we glorify ourselves today will seem childish games before the radiance of this all-mighty spirit incarnated in the body. Sri Aurobindo tells us that it is possible, not only that it is possible but that it will be done. It is being done now and all depends not so much perhaps on a sublime effort of humanity ... as on a call, a conscious cry of the earth to this new being which the earth already carries within itself.

All is there, already within our hearts, the supreme Source which is the supreme Power, but we must call it into our concrete forest. We must understand the meaning of man, the meaning of ourselves. The multi-voiced cry of the earth, of its millions of men who cannot bear the human condition any longer, who no longer accept their prison, must create a crack through which will surge in the new vibration. Then all the apparently ineluctable laws which close us into our hereditary and scientific groove will crumble before the Joy of the "sun-eyed children"



Satprem

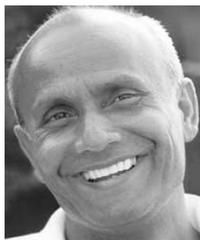
Sri Aurobindo disciple



Divine Nature

Nature is God the Mother. Nature is supposed to help God's children. But God the Mother is ready to give like any human mother. If the child wants something to munch on, the mother gives. If the same child wants sugar, if he wants milk or nectar—whatever he wants, the mother gives.

If we use the mind and the vital, then nature is only charming and tempting. Let us use the term 'tempting'. If we see only the outer beauty, then temptation enters and we are ruined. But if we want to see the inner beauty of nature, then immediately we have to pray and meditate. If we want to appreciate the inner beauty of nature, then we can pray and meditate at the foot of a tree or near a river or in a garden. When we look at a flower, we have to dive deep within. But if you do not care for the inner beauty of the flower, then this flower only gives a kind of charm. It can create even vital excitement in us. Then the problem starts....Nature is always ready to be of help. The beauty of nature depends on what you want from the beauty. If we want to enter into the heart of beauty, then we pray and meditate. But if we want to see and appreciate the body of the beauty, then we are lost.



- *Sri Chinmoy*
Spiritual Teacher



Divine Music

I am very old-not that I feel that I am dying-to feel old is natural, very natural. But in the morning I go to the piano and I play every day of my life two preludes and a fugue of Bach. ... I see God in the melody of Nature. Sometimes I see a flower, just a bud ready to bloom, and I call Martita, "Come with me! See, can you see God?" I am with Nature constantly. That is why I am so happy, so happy. I enjoy everything, everything that Nature does. I see that this is God.

Nature itself is the manifestation of God, so you are seeing God in Nature. This is why I say God is Nature or Nature is God. You see? It is a wonderful work of art. The spirit of the art is wonderful. I feel that I am myself because I have never taken music lightly. You take music as prayer, constant inner prayer to bring down the highest Light from Above. It is not that, one takes music as a vocation. In this case music has become a prayer, a meditation, oneness with Nature, with God. Earth is God's manifestation. Music is then a manifestation of God like everything else.



Don Pablo Casals
Mexican musician