

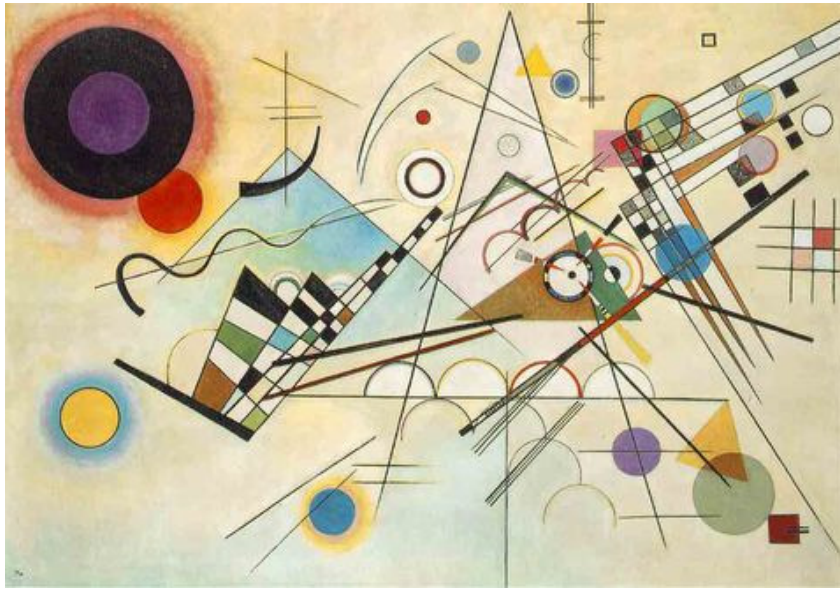
Education *Reality*

Happiness

Success

Aspirations

Our Nature



Relationships

Environment

*Social  
Issues*

Self-Confidence

**Do these sound relevant to your life?**

Then come to the ***JivanVidya Life-skills workshop*** from **13th February (Sunday) to 18th February (Friday), 2011** (both days inclusive). Through dialogues, films and activities, we shall explore these concepts and much more.

**Where:** The beautiful Huthina Betta campus in the forests near Sirsi (Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka).

**Facilitator:** This workshop will be facilitated by Vinish Gupta, who heads the Centre for Holistic Learning. He has been involved with various social and environmental movements in the past. Until a few years ago, when he took formal permission and left the order, he was a monk in a Buddhist monastic order for over a decade, during which time he also had opportunity to explore traditional Indian systems of thought and living.

**Cost:** This workshop is always shared as a gift, and the facilitator does not receive any payment for conducting the workshop. However, the cost of boarding and lodging, and campus maintenance expenses for the current workshop come to about Rs 4000 for the week-long workshop. Participants who can are expected to bear these expenses. If you are able to contribute more, you can help us support the costs of those participants who are unable to pay. The costs of the whole workshop are thus usually met by the participants. Nobody is ever denied participation in the workshop due to inability to make a monetary contribution. Participants who cannot be accommodated by us in this workshop for any reason will be offered the opportunity to attend this workshop at another date/location in the future.

**How to sign-up:** Send email to Vinish / Karuna at [centre.for.holistic.learning@gmail.com](mailto:centre.for.holistic.learning@gmail.com) or telephone 08283-240147, or +91.8762071817 before filling in and sending your registration form. Places in the current workshop are limited to 15 persons, so prior registration is necessary.

**P.S.**

- (a) Please note that the workshop is of an integrated nature and has to be attended in its entirety. It may not be attended partially. The workshop is residential; participants will be accommodated on the Huthina Betta campus.  
 (b) This workshop is open to anyone above 18 years of age.

[www.gapyearcollege.org](http://www.gapyearcollege.org)

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## Is Another World Truly Possible?

A Proposal for a Humane and Viable Alternative

Are you someone who is looking to do something meaningful with your life? Are you someone who believes that the world should be a better place? Are you someone who wants to make a difference? There are many of us who would answer all of those questions with an emphatic ‘YES!’ – yet the choices and opportunities put before us by our society, education and culture often seem to be very inadequate in helping us translate our intentions into meaningful practice. We are all faced with numerous questions and issues in all facets of our own lives, as well as that of society at large, to which there seem to be no answers in sight:

- Are exploitation, poverty, injustice, discrimination and war an inevitable part of human society or is it possible to have a just and equitable society?
- Are development and ecological sustainability always going to be at loggerheads with one another, or is possible to utilise technology for the benefit of humanity, without disturbing the ecological balance of our planet?
- Is the education of children just about rote, memorisation and eventually getting better jobs, or is it possible to have an educational alternative that not only helps children become thinking individuals but also better human beings?
- Are human lives bound to be an endless struggle just to meet one’s material needs, or is it possible to meet one’s economic requirements as well as lead intellectually and emotionally fulfilling lives?
- Are relationships between human beings bound to be full of conflict, differences, inequality, emotional distress and unhappy compromises, or is it possible to have extremely happy, contented, meaningful interpersonal relationships?
- Is unhappiness, meaninglessness and discontent an inherent part of human existence or is it possible for all human beings to live purposeful, meaningful lives?

The long history of mankind has seen numerous attempts to answer the above questions. While many religious and philosophical schools of thought have put forth ‘solutions’ to some of the above problems, their answers have often been mystical and unable to change the inequitable and exploitative structures of society. Moreover, these very ideas have been used as a means to justify religious and communal violence for many centuries. Postindustrial society has seen an intensification of the above problems and questions. Consequently, numerous ideologies, socio-political movements and social experiments have sought solutions

in the form of equality of opportunities, freedom from injustice and exploitation, the creation of classless societies, equal access to natural resources, as well as protection of the environment. Undoubtedly, these attempts have had some impact on the society we live in. However, apart from having their own share of supporters and detractors, no ideology, movement or experiment has been able to show any definitive outcomes. As a consequence, many of us have come to believe that no conclusive outcomes, results or solutions are even possible. We often work with the assumption that a meaningful life and a truly just, equitable society are utopian ideals that can only be dreamt about or aspired towards, but never actually realised or concretised.

Yet the need for answers/solutions remains. In fact, it is far greater than ever before. We are faced with a rapidly globalising world, with increasing inequalities, intensifying ecological imbalance, heightening war and violence and sharpened fundamentalist identities. Moreover, a materialist-consumerist culture and way of life is spreading in all parts of the world. The irony of this socio-economic structure/way of life/culture is that while it creates large numbers of 'have-nots', the people who are at the bottom of the pyramid and are struggling for survival; the very 'haves' who are at the top (and higher end) of the social pyramid are struggling with the meaninglessness and hollowness of their lives. Our current way of life seems inhuman and unsustainable from all perspectives.

So the question still remains – is there any alternative to the existing social, economic, cultural order? **Is there any philosophy/set of ideas/worldview that creates the possibilities of a meaningful way of life, and a humane, just and sustainable society?** Is it possible for all human beings to have all facets of their lives harmoniously interconnected – be it the personal, inter-personal, social or ecological? What we want to do now is to go beyond a general hopeful vision and a few promising small-scale experiments to a deeper, clearer, and more specific understanding of how such a way of life, and society could actually be developed. Any such 'understanding' would have to be universal; that is, it should satisfy the needs and requirements of all human beings. Any such philosophy that seeks to provide answers has to be one that can be examined and analysed by each individual, that is, it has to be free from any sectarianism, mysticism or spiritual leaders.

[Excerpted from a write-up by Atishi Marlena]

**Come to the workshop and you'll learn how another world is possible!**

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## ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

We are facing many kinds of problems today - corruption, exploitation, and violence in society, strife in family, and lack of satisfaction in the self.

1. What are the current problems a reflection of?

The source of current problems seems to be an emphasis on physical facilities, glamour, consumerist lifestyle, and a false sense of satisfaction in competition and one-upmanship ('neighbours envy - owners pride'). The focus on the external things leads to ignorance about the concerns of the self. It leads to a blind race for wealth, position and jobs. Many times, in spite of achieving ones goals, the individual remains dissatisfied - jobs and positions that are intellectually and mentally unfulfilling, and wealth that breeds chaos in family, problems in society, and imbalance in nature.

Physical facilities are needed to lead a proper life; however, there is a need to examine how much physical facilities are needed and what their role is.

It is also important to ask the question - besides physical facilities, what else is important in human life? The lack of attention to relationships leads to strife in the family, in spite of all the worldly successes. It is human

relationships and human values that are a source of our perennial happiness. We all possess these human values inherently, and what is needed is to bring them out in each one of us.

The workshop addresses the self in the human being. It draws attention to human needs - need for human relationships, inherent desire to seek knowledge, and the joy that we naturally derive from these. In our current situation, we might be seeking different things. Thus, it brings about a dialogue between what we are and what we want to be. It does not posit happiness in an after-world, but here and now, based on a "humanness" common to all human beings. The approach is rational, secular and universal.

## ***2. Experiences of earlier workshops:***

The approach is holistic, covering a large canvas, and it has made a tremendous impact on people from different walks of life. Some experiences are given below. Although, the concerns of each of the groups are different, what they realize at the end is that there is a need for human values and relationships and that is founded upon the knowledge in the self.

### **2.1. Young students in engineering**

The workshop was included as an essential part of the academic curriculum at some engineering institutions a few years ago. It has led students to reflect on what their goals are, the place of money in life, the joy one derives in relationships; a focus on the pursuit of knowledge and not merely on jobs and the money they get out of it. They have become relaxed in their self, and become more sensitive to relationships with their friends and family, and regarding society and nature.

### **2.2. People from different walks of urban life**

People from different walks of life are affected by the workshop. Many realize the lack of time they give to their family in their relentless pursuit of wealth, and even more importantly, the way they behave with their children, spouse or old parents.

Many such people are affected profoundly and come back to further workshops with their family members, again and again.

### **2.3. Criminals in jail**

The workshop touches criminals in jail most directly. Those who are seething with revenge, slowly start realizing that in fact their "enemies" are not bad. They are to be pitied and not hated.

In turn, they themselves get depressurized and relaxed. This eventually gets reflected in their day to day behaviour with other jail inmates and with jail authorities. Bilaspur jail experience shows that some of the most violent criminals with also the worst behaviour inside the jail, got totally transformed.

### **2.4. Social workers from NGOs**

People working for uplift of the downtrodden in rural and urban areas are greatly affected by the workshop. It dawns on them that along with work on employment generation, agriculture, irrigation, health, sanitation, scientific temper, it is also important to work on "understanding" of the self and on relationships, without which their work and successes are short lived.

### **2.5. Farmers and rural folk**

Rural folk today are in a state of demoralization. They are being told that they are backward, and need to be developed; that they are ignorant and do not know what is good for them; that they need to study English and IT without which there is no future. The present political structure and political parties have led to a breakdown of community decision making. High powered marketing along with TV has led to a loss of community life and led them to yearn for the "luxury of city life". They do not notice what they might already possess - clean air, clean water, and a stronger possibility of a wholesome life with fulfilling relationships in family and community.

The experience of rural people who attend the workshop has been that they feel a sense of empowerment regarding themselves and what they can do at their own place. Rather than treating farming as an unworthy activity, they see value in what they are doing. The importance and necessity of physical labour for all, comes out as a corollary.

There are established business men who have done the workshop and been motivated to take up sustainable or "zero-input" farming where all the required resources for farming are generated from the farm land itself. Several experiments in renewable energy are also in progress. They are deriving happiness out of farming and physical labour.

## 2.6 People with a spiritual background

People with a spiritual background usually take time to come to terms with the possibility that one can talk about "human values" without bringing in elements of mystery or the unknown. Many are elated at this discovery. People from different faiths - Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam, Christianity - have started getting deep into a process of self-exploration after doing the workshop, and are able to see that human values can be derived through this process of self exploration by each one of us and are the same as those professed by their respective faiths.

## 3. *What the workshop is not*

3.1. The Workshop is not a course in moral science. It does not tell you DOs and DONTs. It does not tell you what you should become, or what you should do. (It only seeks to connect you with your Self and encourages you to seek answers within self.)

3.2 The workshop does not talk about rewards and punishments in an afterworld. (The goal is happiness here and now. It puts forward the proposition that the basic human values are inherent and intact in all of us, what is needed is to be aware of them. When we follow what is innate in us, we derive joy and happiness. The listener is free to do self investigation and self exploration and come to his own conclusions.)

3.3 The workshop does not say physical facilities are unimportant and must be shunned. It rather talks of prosperity in every family. (It says that there is place for facilities in life and encourages people to fix their place in their own life. This also requires separating needs from desires generated by TV and consumerist culture, where the irony is that accumulation of wealth is accompanied not by a sense of fulfillment but by a sense of deprivation, The workshop presents this aspect forcefully.)

3.4. The workshop is not the representation of an organization or society. It does not insist on any specific faith or any specific belief. (It only proposes and asks its listeners to investigate and explore into their own inner self and connect to what is innate and intact in all of them as something which is universal, natural and all-fulfilling for them as well as others. They can do this irrespective of their own religion or faith or beliefs.)

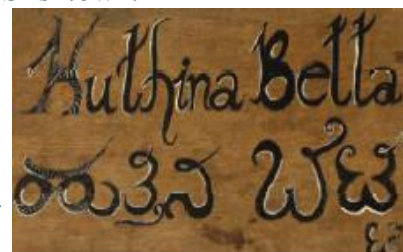
## INFORMATION ON HOW TO REACH THE HUTHINA BETTA CAMPUS

The workshop venue is **Huthina Betta**, Karkolli village, which is 18 kms from Sirsi town.

### Getting to Sirsi

Train:

For those coming from other places by train, the nearest major station is Hubli. [Click here](#) to see trains connecting various places to Hubli. From Hubli there are regular buses to Sirsi, and the journey takes about 3 hours.



Bus:

There are regular buses from several major cities to Sirsi. For information on KSRTC buses from Bangalore, [click here](#). There are also buses by private operators ([click here](#) to check available options). Some people might prefer to take an overnight sleeper bus. Sirsi is about 6 hours by bus from Goa (Madgaon) and about 9 hours from Bangalore.

### **Getting to Karkolli Village**

Once in Sirsi, you will need to make your way to Karkolli village. At the "Old Bus Stand" in Sirsi, ask for the "Hulekal-Sonda" bus and buy a ticket (about Rs.15) for Karkolli. There are buses at 7:30 am, 9:45 am, 12:00 noon, 2:30 pm, 4:30 pm, and 8 pm. At other times, you can try to catch a bus for Hulekal. From Hulekal to Karkolli there are motorcycle taxis available for about Rs.25 a trip.

An autorickshaw from Sirsi to Karkolli would cost around Rs.200.

A Maruti-type car taxi from Sirsi to Karkolli would cost around Rs.300.

A motorcycle taxi from Sirsi to Karkolli would cost around Rs.100

Get off at the Karkolli bus stop and phone us (08283-245588) from the nearby shop and someone will come to fetch/guide you to the Huthina Betta campus.

### **Contact details:**

**Centre for Holistic Learning  
Jeevanshala Trust, "Nagalaxmi Bhavan",  
Hulekal Village, Sirsi-581336. Karnataka. India.**

Phones: 08283-240147 (Hulekal Office), 0-8762071817 (Vinish's mobile),

Campus address:

Huthina Betta, Karkolli Village, Hulekal P.O., Sirsi-581336.

Phones: 08283-245588 (Huthina Betta), 0-9480299200 (Sunita's mobile).

**Email: [centre.for.holistic.learning@gmail.com](mailto:centre.for.holistic.learning@gmail.com)**

**Website: [www.jeevanshala.org](http://www.jeevanshala.org)**



## **Information Sheet for Workshop Participants for the JV Life Skills workshop, 13th -18th February, 2011.**

The workshop will take place at "Huthina Betta" which is a 9-acre forested campus and homestead. The residents of the campus attempt to live in ecologically sensible and socially meaningful ways.

### **Essentials to Carry:**

1. Toiletries\* and bath towel (\* Please do not bring bring shampoo or other detergent products, or insect repellents etc as these can poison the soil. Eco-friendly shampoo and similar toilet products will be available at the Huthina Betta eco-shop on campus).
2. Sleeping bag, (along with optional ground mat).
3. Own regular medication (if any)
4. Torch
5. 2 Bedsheets
6. Clothing – it is likely to be chilly here in mid-February, especially at night. So please carry some light warm clothing: at least one warm sweater/jacket/shawl and a cap. (folding mattresses and floor blanket will be provided here).
7. One pair of slippers
8. Water bottle (you might require it while traveling)
9. Notebook and pen/pencil (would be required for the workshop).
10. A small bag/handbag to avoid bringing plastic bags on campus when making purchases etc.
11. A rucksack/backpack is ideal (suitcases, even ones with wheels, are sometimes unwieldy in this terrain). Best to travel as light as possible.
12. Sufficient change of clothes for the week. (Undergarments may be washed by participants during the workshop, for which mild soap will be provided by us.)

\*(For women participants only: Please do not bring conventional sanitary pads/napkins as these are made of plastic and other synthetic materials and are virtually impossible to dispose in an eco-friendly way. Compostible 100% cotton sanitary pads will be available at the Huthina Betta eco-shop on campus, or contact Sunita/Karuna for them upon arrival).

### **Some Information:**

1. The workshop coordinators will have a First Aid Kit, although it is advisable to get your personal medicinal requirements.
2. The campus kitchen will serve only vegetarian food, some of it organic; the local Malnad cuisine predominates.
3. The campus is a no-smoking, no-intoxicants zone.
4. The campus is a plastic-free zone. Please help us by not bringing inessential plastic carry bags, wrapped material etc.
5. No Internet access is available on campus for workshop participants.
6. The workshop will commence on the morning of the 13th February (Sunday) at 10:30 a.m. and will close with lunch on 18th February (Friday). So it is best to arrive by the evening of the 12th February and plan to leave after lunch on 18th February (or any time on the next day, 19th February, if that is more convenient).
7. The workshop participants are expected to participate in campus work for about half an hour every morning and evening, to help with various campus tasks (like kitchen duties, cleaning of sleeping area, garden duties etc.).
8. Workshop participants are expected to maintain the campus ethos and not indulge in any behaviour which is contrary/damaging to the ethos.
9. The accommodation on campus is simple camp/dorm style shared accommodation.
10. Participants usually carry back their plastic and other non-biodegradable waste with them, since there are

no recycling facilities for such waste locally.

N.B.: Please check with us about availability of places before sending in your registration form. (Tel: 08283-240147 or 0-8762071817)

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**Jivan Vidya Life Skills Workshop**  
Registration Form  
*13th February to 18th February, 2011 (6 days)*

Full Name of Participant:

Age:                                  Sex:

Registration Advance: Rs.1000

Mode of Payment: Cheque / Demand Draft/Electronic Remittance\*:  
(The Cheque/Draft must be payable at Sirsi to "Jeevanshala Trust")

Details of Cheque / Demand Draft / Electronic Remittance:  
(Name and Branch of the Bank, & Cheque or Demand Draft Number)

Phone:

Full Postal Address:

Email ID:

College/Institution/Organisation/Company:

Please mention any food/dietary restrictions:

How did you find out about this workshop (please be specific):

Have you attended a JV workshop (shivir) earlier?  
If yes, how many times? Where?

Languages you are comfortable with: English / Hindi / Kannada / Others : \_\_\_\_\_ /  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(The workshop will be conducted in English)

I understand that this workshop is of an integrated nature and may not be attended partially. I undertake to attend the whole of the workshop (all 6 days) and to arrive in time for the commencement of the workshop.



Signature:

Date:

**NOTE: Please fill in this registration form and send to the following postal address, along with the cheque/draft of Rs.1000 payable at Sirsi to “Jeevanshala Trust” by registered/speed-post (Do not send by private couriers since they do not deliver to the rural area where our office is located). Please write your name and address on the back of the cheque/draft. This registration amount is non-refundable, but will be deducted from your total contribution to the workshop.**

**Centre for Holistic Learning  
JEEVANSHALA TRUST  
Nagalaxmi Bhavan  
Hulekal Village, Sirsi - 581 336.  
Karnataka**

\* Please contact us for details of how to make the electronic remittance: [centre.for.holistic.learning@gmail.com](mailto:centre.for.holistic.learning@gmail.com)

**[Click here](#) to download a pdf version of this registration form.**