

Conversations Today

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About Mrs Girija Raghavan and her efforts in women-centric journalism



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From the Editor

Dear Friend,

International Women's Day has been observed since in the early 1900'. It's root lies in the early 1900s when oppression and inequality was spurring women to become more vocal and active in campaigning for change. It is annually held on March 8 to celebrate women's achievements throughout history and across nations. Also known as the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace, it celebrates womanhood and pays tribute to the indomitable spirit of women across the globe. The United States designates the whole month of March as 'Women's History Month'.

The new millennium has witnessed a significant change and attitudinal shift in both women's and society's thoughts regarding women's equality and freedom. With more women in the boardroom, greater equality in legislative rights, and an increased critical mass of women's visibility as impressive role models in every aspect of life. We do have female astronauts and prime ministers, school girls are welcomed into university, and women can work and have a family.

The tone and nature of International Women's Day has, for the past few years, moved from being a reminder about the negatives to a celebration of the positives. So make a difference, think globally and act locally!

Let everyday be Women's Day! Let us do our bit to ensure that the future for girls is bright, equal, safe and rewarding.

—Marie Banu

Be A Candle And A Mirror!

There are two ways of spreading light: Being the candle or the mirror that reflects it --Edith Wharton

It has been observed that human beings, at large, desire to spread light all around them. There is an innate desire to be the candle and the mirror, that light up the paths of others.

In order to feel better, people gravitate towards light. However, when we also become a mirror, we reflect the light inherent in the other person as well. In other words, we make them aware of being a candle too.

As a candle, you are light and are lighting up the lives of all who cross your path, knowingly or otherwise. Being a mirror, your ability to reflect light and energy can be constantly enhanced with a steady cleansing of the mirror thereby amplifying its intrinsic ability to reflect.

The essence of spreading light is:

- can you help people sense love within themselves?
- can they break out of despair and sense the beauty of their life?
- can you be the source of positive energy that is contagious?

"Ego" keeps us trapped in perceiving every life situation as personal and serious. However, to spread and reflect light, one has to penetrate through the veils of ego. Beneath the ego is a mirror that is clear and transparent and perceives life without any distortions. And all of us have this mirror within us.

There are many who walk the path of life with limited awareness of how their own ways may be sabotaging their lives. They even think that all this talk about ego is meaningless. For such people neither the candle, nor the mirror is likely to create a stir. But there are those who are waking up to becoming aware and are able to see the 'drama' of the ego. To these, the candle and the mirror, both mean a lot. Oftentimes, such people are candles or mirrors, helping themselves and others, in their environments.

But what is most heartening is that



there is a growing population who are beginning to be consciousness. In other words, these people are candles and mirrors, always. In this awakened state, the light within them makes them glow as candles. And when they come in contact with others, their own light passes through the veil of 'ego' and reaches the mirror deep within and reflects the light in others.

Being a candle, we are in a state of self-awareness. The spotlight is on the self. But as we progress in this journey and begin to experience oneness with

all around, we become a mirror as well. Here the boundaries of the self and other begin to blur and the light from all around reflects in wondrous ways, creating divine panoramas.

With practices such as, the Positive Energy rituals, such as, meditation, acts of kindness, mindfulness, mirror exercise, affirmations, and deep inquiry, there is a promise for aware individuals, being candles and mirrors, to live consciously, with happier and compassionate outcomes for families and societies.

Yours Energetically

Dr. Bhulakshmi V and Ms. Bhuvaneshwari Ravi are trainers and facilitators of the Positive Energy (PE) program. They are spiritual seekers with a vision of transforming their own energy state from surviving to being. In this journey they have gathered deep insights and are continuously working towards creating a pathway for more seekers. With years of exposure to spiritual practices like yoga, reiki, and personal development interventions like coaching, the authors are working in the Organization Development and Leadership Development space.

This intervention is being offered by GapSkills Learning Solutions Pvt. Ltd to corporates and schools. You can contact them at info@gapskills.com to design a customized intervention for your organization or join the PE open program - www.gapskills.com.

Changing lives in the slums

Hailing from a poor family and now being supported by her own parents, in laws, husband and three children in her pursuit, Mrs Loganayagi, Founder of Puthiya Pookal Health & Education Trust in Chennai is an inspiration to many. Raised in the slums around Elephant Gate area, she hardly had opportunities to continue her education beyond class 10. “A local organisation called Marialaya helped me complete till class 10, after which I got married,” recounts Loganayagi.

Although 18 years is legally an accepted age for marriage in India, there are more complex debates questioning about how age alone can be a decisive factor for a girl’s marriage. Loganayagi however defies all this as she was able to associate and socialise with local organisations and pursue her interests. “Marialaya inspired me to get into social work. I feel that social work is probably the only field where passion matters more than qualifications,” she says.

Loganayagi was part of the organisation’s self-help group (SHG) that was initiated in slums and eventually grew to train many more SHG members like her. Soon, she got an opportunity to work on a project for HIV/AIDS awareness for pregnant women. Educating them on the spread of the disease, four modes of transmission and the means to prevent the newborn from acquiring the disease allowed her to further understand the health status in the community.

“I began with small scale projects. Open defecation was a big problem in my locality. The toilets were never put to use. With the help of Marialaya I advocated for demolishing these unused toilets and converted them into places for social gathering. We then built new toilets for children after clearing all the footpaths. When children use these toilets, I feel very happy,” she says.

Puthiya Pookal Health & Education Trust in Chennai is also involved in rescuing destitute elderly from the streets and rehabilitating them in homes. This required Loganayagi to work beyond regular hours as police verification was required for every person who was rehabilitated. “Work life balance is tough! I was able to cope mainly because of the support I received from my family. My children manage all the household chores with the help of my parents,” she adds.

Loganayagi forayed from one issue to another effortlessly, by addressing one at a time. As she was rescuing and rehabilitating the elderly, she also found street children



and children of single parents who were left to fend for themselves while their parent went for work. She rehabilitated these children through homes in the neighbourhood. Wherever possible she ensured that these children were admitted in schools through Right to Education Act.

She also addressed electricity and water issues in her area. “I urged the local authorities and provided extra taps so that women can fetch water in the neighbourhood, instead of having to walk

treacherously for the same,” she says.

Puthiya Pookal Health & Education Trust in Chennai was established in 2009 when all her friends, family and well-wishers insisted that she coordinated her social service activities in a more organised manner and reached out to more people who were in need. Today, the trust supports the education of 100 single parent children every year. “Our source of funds are from individual donors who are from the locality, lorry owners, political leaders and merchants,” she says.

Loganayagi’s insistence of local presence did add value to her work. The Railway Police Unit calls the Trust authorities to hand over mentally retarded children and elders whom they find on the railway platforms and tracks. The Trust also provides support for provisions and basic amenities to 10 chosen families in the slum.

Having heard of CSIM from a friend at Marialaya, Loganayagi undertook the SEOP programme in 2014. “I am marveled that there are huge corporate funds that can be tapped from corporates,” she exclaims. Loganayagi is inspired by people like her who have successfully juggled household and social responsibilities. “Every time I take a decision, all such people

come to my mind. Their experiences help me in deciding my course of action. I can now think like a professional,” she says.

Loganayagi dreams of building a home for the elderly and launching education support services on a large scale for children from the slums. She firmly believes that education is the only thing that can help a family move upwards in the social ladder, allowing children to experience a more civilised life. “This is my dream and am sure I will see this happen soon,” she signs off.

—Shanmuga Priya.T

Serving tribal children: Satheesh Kumar

In Kanyakumari in a border district down in South India, people are known for their hard work and commitment to fulfilling their dreams. The general tendency for a typical middle class family would be to educate the children and instill in them the values of the service class. Dr. C. Satheesh Kumar (Satheesh), who was born in Nagarkoil, has taken to a different path, social service. In this article, we discuss how he looked up various career options and finally committed himself to making a positive impact on society through his deeds. This decision arose out of a passion, in existence from childhood, to improve the lives of fellow humans. Converting such decisions into action means sacrifice and asks for unquestionable devotion, humility and selflessness.

Early days: Satheesh was born to a middle class, conservative family. His father was a lorry driver and his mother was a homemaker. He studied in a government school. He took a lot of interest in moral science classes, and was fond of inspiring stories. He also attended *Vellai Vallai* Ashram classes and Bala Kendra, and drew inspiration from lectures he heard, when very young, on serving the nation. The seeds of social service were sown in those days, when he hardly understood what it meant to translate dreams into action.

After completing his secondary school education, Satheesh registered for a course on Ayurveda (BAMS) at a college in Coimbatore. This is a well-known institution that produces a number of ayurvedic doctors who practice alternate medical services based on herbs and natural sources. Satheesh is of the firm belief that a country like India, which has a rich heritage in alternative medicine, needs to foster the practice. Further, poor people who cannot afford allopathic medicine can benefit from alternate practices. While doing the course, Satheesh was clear that he would go to tribal localities and serve the people there. He would help them maintain good health. This might look like a contradiction, because you would expect tribal people to be expert in the traditional cure systems that their tribes practiced over generations. The advantage of having a trained medical professional helps to expedite the cure process. Further, traditional practices depend on hunches, whereas trained professionals are guided by the depth of their knowledge and the learning they derive from the cumulative experiences of others!

After passing out as an ayurvedic doctor from Coimbatore, Satheesh decided to join a social work project at Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh. Most of the

northeastern states in India require support, as they lie amidst mountain ranges and poor infrastructure places severe limitations on development. He joined a project called Arul Jyoti, which served the tribal rural people. Satheesh was there for two years and took no salary from the project owners. However, they took care of all of his requirements. He covered ten tribal villages by helping them meet their healthcare requirements in a limited way.

Trigger: Though Satheesh had a childhood ambition of associating himself

as a lecturer at the J. S. S College of Naturopathy and Yogic Sciences and served there for a few years. This is a unique institution, and the experience was very exciting for the young Satheesh.

During this period, he connected with Shyam Gupta, founder of the Ekal Vidyalaya Movement (www.ekal.org). He drew inspiration from the work of this movement. To digress here, readers may note here that a person needs not just a sense of social entrepreneurship, but also a lot of grit and comment to play the part of a social leader when building an organization in a

in social work and nation building through small and meaningful interventions. Satheesh's wife started spending two to three days a week on Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation work, and Satheesh took pains to find out and understand in detail the impact that he could make. After five years, Satheesh got more deeply involved as a full time associate in Ekal Foundation.

Opportunities: Ekal Vidyalaya focuses on delivering primary informal education programs to tribal and other underprivileged communities in rural India. Satheesh gave up his medical practice to educate tribal children. Since Ekal Vidyalaya goes beyond mere literacy, Satheesh was able to participate in its goal of achieving the national Minimum Level of Learning (MLL) standards for its students as well as enabling empowerment of the village community to seek and work on ways to achieve self-development. Ekal Vidyalaya solicits complete involvement of the local community, and this gave Satheesh a lot of opportunity to work on a broader spectrum.

Further, the schools are also oriented to make children and villagers aware of basic health and hygiene concepts. Satheesh found this a wonderful opportunity to utilize his capabilities. Teachers at the Vidyalaya are local youth who have completed some formal education. The teachers are selected and trained by Ekal Vidyalaya. Satheesh involved himself in every nook and corner of every tribal village in the Nilgiri mountain range. The infrastructural facilities for the schools are minimal. In some cases, the classes are held in the shade of a tree, or a verandah of the local temple or community hall. Apart from becoming an educational hub, the Ekal teacher interacts with villagers and contributes to the participatory approach and development of the village. For a long time, Satheesh was instrumental in close work with the teachers. Often, schools had a single teacher. Thus, Ekal Vidyalayas are also having a transformational influence on rural and tribal communities, and Satheesh's role has been very important in building up the network in Tamil Nadu.

In Recognition of practical needs, Ekal has set up a well-designed hierarchical system. For every sub-cluster (10-school unit), cluster (30-school unit), sub-area (90-school unit) and area (270-school unit), there are committees to oversee the functioning of the schools and the activities associated with healthcare, development and empowerment education. The involvement of the locals at every level is based on their commitment and urge to help the people around them. The sense of community development has now



with the social sector, the experience in Arunachal Pradesh really helped him to assess his potential for serving tribal Indians. After two years of service there, he moved to Ooty, in the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu. The Nilgiri Hills are a mountain range with a long tribal tradition and a recent history, going back over two centuries, of exposure to the outer world. Satheesh was fully aware of the area's potential as he studied in Coimbatore, which is an adjoining district. He joined as

particular location. It was indeed commendable of Shyam Gupta that he identified Satheesh for such a leadership position. It is interesting to see how Satheesh seized this opportunity with dedication and developed a carving to promote social welfare in tribal areas.

Satheesh mentions that it was his wife who was first hooked on Ekal Vidyalaya. Satheesh's wife is also a school worker. She hails from his hometown and knew him from childhood. Her family is also involved

permeated the national and global levels. Over the years, Satheesh assumed increasing responsibility for the organization and groomed people at various levels to strengthen the grassroots reach.

At present, Satheesh is mainly responsible for fund management and for coordination with investors on progress of the project. His current activities are focused on building investor confidence so that the initiatives are seamlessly integrated. He presently handles the North American market. He feels that it is an immense opportunity for a person like him to demonstrate professional acumen in serving tribal children and villagers.

Grooms talents: One of the passionate engagements of Satheesh is to groom talented social workers in his project area. He is now responsible at the organizational level for ensuring effectiveness of all programs and for managing funds, especially from North America.

Here, it is worth mentioning Madhavan, who was attracted by the Ekal concept and its implementation. Before long, Madhavan decided to support the project. Satheesh played a key role in mentoring Madhavan. Madhavan is a professional who works in the area of content development and management. He used to work for a leading publishing house and an IT company. His specialization is customizing the needs of first time learners. The initiative of Ekal and Satheesh attracted Madhavan enough to cause him to commit his full time to develop content and learning tools for tribal children. Madhavan also realized that the reward from integrating value systems in learning is more important than earning pecuniary benefits. Though Satheesh and Madhavan are two among a number of social workers implementing education-oriented movements, their leadership plays an important role. Satheesh played a significant role in synchronizing Madhavan's desire with that of Ekal.

This author feels obliged to mention an interesting couple who have dedicated their lives to the Ekal system. Satheesh identified and mentored them from their early days. Sathyamani is from a tribal village near Masinagudi (<http://www.masinagudi.com/>), where sightings of

boars, elephants and panthers are common. Children of the area learn to merge into these natural habitats while at the same time they reach out and grow to be meaningful citizens. The alternative is to live and die as a tribal, with few opportunities to experience the world.

The organization of Ekal Vidyalaya influenced Sathyamani, who was a student there. The leadership of Satheesh particularly impressed her. She decided to take up a career of serving her fellow humans in and around her village, and she became quite popular because of her social work. Looking at her commitment, Satheesh encouraged her to visualize a larger role for herself and assume responsibilities accordingly. She is married to Anandan Kalidasan, who has a similar background. Both of them now manage the Ekal Chennai office. They travel the length and breadth of the country to train teachers and administrators in delivery of the Ekal programs. Satheesh is proud that the couple as a team travel for about 22 to 25 days in a month. Their office is in their small home in Chennai. They earn what most people would consider meager salaries. Their dream is to impact their fellow tribals, who have less or no access to development initiatives. According to them, by following the footsteps of Satheesh, they can have a meaningful impact on the lives of many people.

Other examples of people with talents that were groomed are Shankar in Kollimalai region, near Salem, and Saritha, from the same village as Sathyamani. These social workers are now busy travelling to a number of villages to administer Ekal projects under Satheesh's guidance. Satheesh avers that one can build such a dedicated team only through trust, love and affection. He feels it necessary to treat team members as part of the family. Their leader should participate in their welfare. They require demonstrations of simplicity and need to see action that is faithful to the lessons that are preached.

Satheesh conducts a lot of leadership grooming exercises. He conducts motivation camps and takes his team on visits to successful people. One of the places he makes sure they become familiar with is Sri Sarada Ashram, Ulunderpet, Tamil Nadu.

About Sri Sarada Ashram

The initiative of Swami Anantananda, an ordinary person in his pre-monastic life, was responsible for launching Sri Sarada Ashram. He was a university first rank holder and wanted to do something beyond working for materialistic things in life. He reached the Sri Ramakrishna Mutt and took the spiritual path for salvation at Vellimalai.

He started a school with three students in a rented, dilapidated building. He highly impressed Yatiswari Ramakrishnapriya Amba, another person who had been captivated by spiritual thoughts. Along with three other sisters, she joined the school and converted it to a ladies' ashram. She took up multiple roles, including cook, caretaker, teacher and headmistress. She played almost all the roles from matron to manager. Under the leadership of Yatiswari Ramakrishnapriya Amba, the President of Sri Sarada Ashram, a team of 45 well-educated *sanyasin* sisters has been engaged in social work. The sisters of the ashram come from different backgrounds, and hail from different parts of Tamil Nadu. They are a highly qualified team consisting of eight engineers, one lady with a doctorate and many post-graduates in various fields of speciality.

The ashram was established with the core objectives of promoting and developing the poor and backward villages by providing quality education, affordable healthcare, cultural and socio-economic development activities, agricultural development and much needed, timely relief during natural disasters. Over 1,500 students and 1,000 women are given schooling, vocational training and job-oriented career coaching annually.

Family Support: It is inspiring to learn about the family guidance Satheesh received in his childhood. His father always encouraged him to attend social programmes. He learned a lot from his father on the habits of developmental leaders and dreamt of becoming one. Frugality and prudence are the major virtues of such leaders. They do not given importance to personal wealth creation for the self and the family. It was a pleasant surprise that Satheesh's spouse has similar

traits. Satheesh's sister is also an important motivator, and is associated with his developmental activities.

The concept of working as an extended family was very important for Satheesh to be successful. A few instances would substantiate this statement. When Sathyamani's marriage to Kalidas Anandan was proposed, her parents, of typical tribal origin, opposed the proposal. Satheesh and his wife literally lived for a few days in Sathyamani's house, convinced her parents on the merit of this proposal and made them agree to it. This effort by Satheesh and his wife aimed at bringing about the happy union of a couple. Similarly, there was a time when Shankar of Kollimalai faced an obstacle to his continuing with social work, as his family felt that as though he was an adult, he was not supporting the family. Satheesh treated their family as his own and took up all responsibility for the education of Shankar's siblings, which made the family happy. The moral here is that social work cannot be undertaken at the cost of family, and one need not necessarily become a monk to serve society. Not everyone is capable of living life as a monk. One can be dedicated family as well as part of a team that builds up a solid social movement, as Satheesh and his family demonstrated.

Conclusion: It is not necessary to think and plan on a big scale to carry out social sector projects. There is abundant scope to align with an existing movement in the specific geographical area with which one is comfortable. After settling down, there is scope for scaling up operations and assuming larger responsibilities like any other promoter in any other cause, and drive the project forward towards a very large social coverage. In the process, one can groom many other social workers who could support and carry on the dream of serving society. Backward societies, like those of the tribal of India, would gain immeasurably if more spirited and committed professionals like Satheesh take to the social sector!

— This is part of the book *"Incredible Champions"* authored by N. Chandrasekaran and published by Partridge Publishers 2014.

Editorial

Latha Suresh
Marie Banu

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INITIATIVE AND MANAGEMENT



Centre for Social Initiative and Management (CSIM) is a unit of Manava Seva Dharma Samvardhani. It is a learning centre that promotes the concept of social entrepreneurship. **CSIM offers training and consultancy to social enterprises – for-profits and non-profits – to facilitate**

them to apply successful business practices and yet retain their social mission. It also offers training and hand holding support to prospective social entrepreneurs and enable them to launch their social initiatives. CSIM operates in Chennai, Coimbatore, Hyderabad and Bangalore.

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CSIM also facilitates Social Audit for social enterprises through Social Audit Network, UK and SAN, India.
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LADIES FIRST!

“I used to have several government officials on the shows that I hosted. Part of my anchoring involved getting these officials to commit towards helping women out in any way they could.”



“My morning ritual involved accompanying my grandmother in the kitchen, who would then get me to read the paper and write out all the news I read. I did just that. In fact, I read the paper, and would reproduce the news that I read on the walls of our kitchen.”



In the 1980s, just a year-and-a-half into her marriage, Girija Raghavan had to endure a personal tragedy. She lost her husband and was thus widowed at a young age. In an era, when widowhood was considered social stigma and with a toddler to support, she returned to Chennai from her new home in Bangalore. “I grew up in a joint-family back in conservative times,” Girija recalls, “Although I was an excellent student — I used to score a centum in most subjects — my father was of the opinion that I did not need to be educated more than what he felt was required. I thus graduated in mathematics, turned down an opportunity to join IIT Madras and got married.” But marriage ensured that Girija learned life on her own. “My husband was extremely supportive. He taught me everything I needed to know about life. When he died, I couldn’t help but wonder if he came into my life just to teach me all those valuable lessons I learned.” She worked at Punjab National Bank in Bangalore, and requested for a transfer to Chennai soon after the tragedy.

Today, Girija is the editor of arguably Chennai’s most popular regional women’s magazines. But much before she began editing the pages of Ladies Special in 1997, her proclivity for journalism was something she already possessed. “My grandfather was the editor of the Indian Express, and a copy of the Dinamani would faithfully be at our doorstep every morning,” she says, “My morning ritual involved accompanying my grandmother in the kitchen, who would then get me to read the paper and write out all the news I read. I did just that. In fact, I read the paper, and would reproduce the news that I read on the walls of our kitchen. My aunts

and uncles would remark that they didn’t need to look at the paper. Our home’s walls had all the news they needed!” What began back then, was just a small step towards her greater tryst with journalism.

On her return to Chennai, Girija not surprisingly, fell back on a profession that was natural to her. She joined Junior Vikatan as a freelance writer and subsequently went on to freelance for other magazines too. “When I began as a freelancer, editors would ask me to ideate for stories. I would give them 20 ideas in one go and they wanted all of them,” she recalls with a smile, “Gradually, one thing led to another and I began writing for several magazines, gradually making the move to film journalism. Most editors wanted me to write permanently. I quite enjoyed the impact of my work and the feedback that I received.”

It was then that Girija made a move to television. She started off as a presenter, anchor and announcer at Doordarshan, and went on to host shows on Sun TV and Raj TV. “Through these assignments, I thought I must do something for a female audience; just my bit for women much like myself,” she says. The only problem: she didn’t quite have the proper know-how when it came to running a business. But that was when a Raj TV show by the name of Ladies Special began, which saw her host women-centric television content for close to 52 weeks. “It was a great idea. Back then, when cable television was just about beginning, there was no quality programming in the afternoons. There were movies that used to air, before prime time programming began in the evenings,” she recalls, “There was always a market for quality afternoon programming; I felt I could

capitalize on this market and better still, attract an audience that would actually watch these shows. That audience was obviously the woman of the house who would watch TV during this time-slot.” Such was the drive that Girija possessed, that she decided to go the extra mile in this venture.

Girija became producer, director and anchor on Raj TV’s Ladies Special. She had to endure several challenges along the way, including dealing with sponsors who didn’t pay up dues. Even before she embarked on the venture, she tried her hand at various businesses including a cassette business, and even jockeyed radio airtime. “One of the best parts about working in the media was the letters that we received from our audience,” she recalls, “Reading these letters was something I really enjoyed. It would take a good part of my time. When I was going through these letters one day, I decided that all I wanted to do for the rest of my life, was engage in women-centric journalism.” That was how she decided in 1997, to start Ladies Special.

Part of the magazine’s work in its initial days, was to put out content exclusively for women. This included entrepreneurial advice,

announcing workshops and most importantly, attempts to connect women to the government. “I used to have several government officials on the shows that I hosted. Part of my anchoring involved getting these officials to commit towards helping women out in any way they could. I decided that I should continue that kind of work in the magazine too,” says Girija. Gradually, she also began travelling, delivering talks and connecting with women on a broader level. “Any woman can walk into my office anytime, any day of the week,” she says. Credit for much of her success, Girija ascribes to her son who she feels, has been the pillar of support in her life.

When she was a child, Girija’s father used to only demand the best. “When I scored a 94, my father would ask me where the remaining six marks went. When my marks were 99, he would ask me where the lost one mark was. When I scored a 100, he would remark that my handwriting was bad,” she recalls fondly. “Wanting to impress my father was the one thing I aspired to do.” Similarly, wanting to be a perfectionist today has been the guiding force in all of Girija’s ventures, Ladies Special included.

Mrs. Girija Raghavan is the founder of W.I.S.E. Trust (Women Improvement and Social Empowerment) that focuses on women empowerment. She also has a guidance cell for Women Entrepreneurs named ‘BRAWE’ (Business Related Advice for Women Entrepreneurs) through which she provides counseling for women who wish to start businesses and conducts seminars and workshops for them.

She is the present President of Rotary Club of KK Nagar, Chennai. She has been in the Rotary movement for many years and is committed to serve the society. As a Rotarian, she has visited Rotary Club – La Jolla Harris in San Diego, Rotary Club of Buffalo, Rotary-Club Euskirchen-Burgfey in Germany and participated in their events.

Mrs. Girija Raghavan has taken Women Empowerment as her mission and women look upon to her for guidance, encouragement and help.





Taking e-waste seriously

Picture this. You have bought a new phone, and you would like to dispose the old one, lest it collect dust sitting on your shelf. To put it to good use you give it to the scrap dealer and your relationship with the gadget ends there. But, have you ever wondered what the scrap dealer does with the parts that are of no use? Do you check if they are disposed in an environment-friendly manner?

One such similar incident is what led Achitra Borgohain to found BinBag. “I was in a similar dilemma. I wanted to dispose a gadget, but when I called the recycling centre, they said they wouldn’t accept anything less than 100 kilograms. And, when I asked them about a door-to-door pick up service, they gave a rough pick up date and said it would vary again depending on the quantity of e-waste to be collected from my area,” recalls Borgohain. As a third option, he approached NGOs in Bengaluru which act as e-waste collection centres. But the challenge there was that the NGOs were concentrated in specific locations and often, owing to traffic and distance, many people from far away locations wouldn’t take the effort to come there just to dispose off a gadget or two.

“That’s when I asked myself, how can the process be made easy?” Thus, in August 2014, he founded BinBag.

The last mile service

On one hand, BinBag partners with recycling centres, and on the other, it connects with residents, NGOs and companies, which want to dispose e-waste. “Since we are in the early stages we make a



tabular record of every call for e-waste pick up. Once we’ve received a certain number of orders, we share a pick up date with the customers, we collect the e-waste and send it to the recycling centres,” he explains. Currently, the company has partnered with two authorised recycling centres. Once the orders increase, it will look at further partnerships.

Putting out the word

“If you notice the Indian mindset our people seek value in every transaction. They want something out of everything they sell. That’s why the informal sector is

still operational,” he opines. Thus, in a move to encourage more people to take the sustainable route, BinBag awards retail coupons for every customer who disposes off e-waste with them. “The coupons are in the form of green points which they can redeem at stores that offer eco-friendly products,” states Borgohain. Essentially, it’s a win-win situation for both, especially, for the retailer, because he earns his focus set of customers through this initiative.

As a second strategy, it plans to increase its presence on social media sites and rope in more customers. Thirdly, as the next logical extension, it plans to explore

partnerships with micro, small and medium enterprise. “They also generate a lot of waste but no recycler wants to serve them because, as individual entities, they don’t generate enough,” he points out. In fact, the company is also looking at partnering with the IT giants (like Wipro and Infosys) to collect e-waste and to encourage employees to be more environment-friendly.

In the future

During the founding days, BinBag was incubated by the NS Raghavan Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (NSRCEL) at IIM Bengaluru. Going forward, to further its reach, it is actively on the lookout for external funding. “Going through stages one to five, we are at stage two in the funding process,” admits Borgohain but is cautious about sharing more information.

In the next two years, BinBag aims to replicate its model in four cities and expand its team size to support operations. “The first thing we look for when entering a new city is identifying like-minded people who can sustain the initiative. Secondly, we need to create a presence in a central location with access to authorised recycling centres,” he says.

Borgohain’s philosophy is quite simple. Instead of spending thousands of dollars in propagating sustainability, he would rather identify actionable ways to motivate the e-waste generator to be responsible.

—**Madhumita Prabhakar**
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‘Listening To Someone Is Respecting Them’

“A World Health Organisation report has fully endorsed the possibility of suicide being preventable. In a sense, that’s what we at Seva work towards... a reinstatement of self-worth.”

Counseling has, for several years, been the ideal approach to ensuring mental wellbeing. But here in India, it remains a social stigma. Eliminating this stigma is one of the aims of Hyderabad-based NGO, Seva, which has engaged in effective and in-depth counselling services for the last 21 years. With 40 counsellors and 3 centres, the NGO has spearheaded the cause of mental well-being through counselling. “A World Health Organisation report has fully endorsed the possibility of suicide being preventable. In a sense, that’s what we at Seva work towards... a reinstatement of self-worth,” explains Thiagarajan Arunachalam, Director, Seva. With a background in IT, but zeal to truly make a difference, Thiagarajan has played a key role in Seva’s counselling services. “We’ve counselled nearly 400 people in the last six months alone,” he says, “And that’s only including those who’ve opted to approach us for counselling sessions.”

At Seva, free counselling sessions are carried out in the pursuit of better mental health. “The most common problem that people come to us with is low self-esteem and feelings of no worth. We aim to eliminate that,” Thiagarajan explains. Adopting its novel AAA rule (AAA is the acronym for Seva’s working principle of Ask, Assist, Approach), Seva has successfully managed to do its bit in helping society cope with several issues that require professional, effective counselling. “Help beings only when you ask for it. Assistance is then an invaluable component in helping the person who’s in need of it; that’s what we do here at Seva,” says Thiagarajan. “Approach, however, is a key area in ensuring that help is at hand. “We can help you only when we’re approached,” he adds. Through its endeavours in counselling itself, Seva has adopted a more human touch to its methodology. “We don’t refer to the people who approach us as clients, we call them callers,” says Thiagarajan. “One of the main aspects of counselling that society has to understand is simply the fact that counselling itself isn’t advice. The main purpose of engaging in counselling is to



listen rather than speak.” He elaborates on how the key component of good counselling lies in a caller-centric approach. “The person is more important than the problem,” he says, “A number of the people who approach us, are filled with emotion. Our aim is to get that emotion out.”

On an average, a caller is counselled for close three or four sessions. Sometimes, counselling could go on for about 10 sessions. But the most important rule that Seva’s counsellors follow religiously, is confidentiality. “It’s one of the most imperative rules that we all follow without any compromise,” Thiagarajan explains. “We also take care to maintain and sustain that confidentiality. Even after counselling ends, and I happen to see a caller at a supermarket, I pretend to not know the person. That’s something that’s critical to good counselling.” Of course, in the course of the counselling itself, Seva’s

counsellors also learn to fine-tune techniques in the attempt to stay effective and result-oriented.

Seva’s work moves beyond merely organising counselling sessions on a regular basis. One of the highlights of its work is Seva Mela where the NGO attempts to reach out to other organisations and assist in tackling issues on a broader level. Seva also organises life-skill training modules in the pursuit of life-skill empowerment. This of course, is in addition to also introducing innovative counselling techniques as part of its bigger mission. “One of our more successful introductory techniques is the attachment-based family therapy, which has been worked on by psychologist Pravin Israel,” says Thiagarajan. The technique, he explains, involves counselling the entire family when attempting to intervene in the life of a youngster who is in need of counselling.

“A great deal of credit for Seva’s success has to go to the founder, Sharada Gopalakrishnan,” says Thiagarajan, “Most of us learnt some basic lessons from her.” In fact, one of the more important lessons for everyone to take home, Thiagarajan says, is the importance of listening. “That’s something most of us forget,” he

explains, “When you hear a discussion or an argument, the one thing that you always hear is someone who keeps exclaiming ‘listen to me!’ That’s something we need to pay attention to: the fact that all people want, is to be listened to. So, it’s about time we stop merely hearing someone, but listening to them. Just listening to someone is the best way to respect them.”

The importance of counselling almost goes understated today, although the imperative need to have good counselling services is for all to see. “We all have a mind that keeps bothering us from time to time,” says Thiagarajan. It is this importance that has prompted the need to expand. It is this need for expansion that has Thiagarajan aiming to open more Seva centres in the near and distant future. “It is my dream that we have several more centres with many more volunteers,” he says, “Before I retire, I am to open at least a hundred more centres.” Thiagarajan also says that focussing on conducting more seminars and conference is also an extension of this need to strive towards better mental wellbeing. In the long run, there is little doubt that a sensitive, sensible and confidential towards helping people live could well be the future of stigma-free counselling. Seva, one might think, is well and truly on the right track.

*For more information, please contact
Mr. Thiagarajan Arunachalam at
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visit www.sevacounselingcentre.org*

Conversations with Shri Ramana Maharishi

A visitor asked: 'What is mouna (silence)?'

M.: Mouna is not closing the mouth. It is eternal speech.

D.: I do not understand.

M.: That state which transcends speech and thought is mouna.

D.: How to achieve it?

M.: Hold some concept firmly

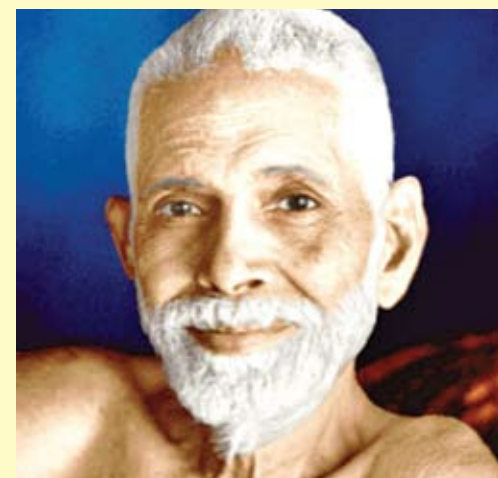
and trace it back. By such concentration silence results. When practice becomes natural it will end in silence. Meditation without mental activity is silence. Subjugation of the mind is meditation. Deep meditation is eternal speech.

D.: How will worldly transaction go on if one observes silence?

M.: When women walk with

water pots on their heads and chat with their companions they remain very careful, their thoughts concentrated on the loads on their heads. Similarly when a sage engages in activities, these do not disturb him because his mind abides in Brahman.

—Excerpted from talks with Shri Ramana Maharish



Project Management: Body of knowledge

Social organizations are guided by a vision and strong conviction to see transformation or reformation in society. This vision is made a reality through a number of missions and goals that accomplish each mission. The accomplishment of goals require planning and excellent project management. Just in India with 1.27 billion population, imagine the extent of social support required to address myriad number of issues. Therefore, imagine the number of projects that are needed to be executed; if the projects' excellence enhances, the impact it can have across the country. So an excellent project management is paramount for realization of an excellent vision.

A project is defined as having clearly defined task/group of tasks, deadlines, objectives that are unique in its nature. These are to be managed with clarity, purpose, processes that are well crafted. Every intent to do better, bigger, brighter needs a focused intervention, approach and a sound methodology. In spite of so many social organizations and powerful passionate high ideal intents why is it that we are grappling unable to increase the reachability ratio in India and in some projects it is dismally low. There was a time when there was paucity of funds, poor infrastructure and ignorance to a high level that made reachability in all aspects very tough process. Today in spite of better funds, better infrastructure, social media interface, awareness, CSR and so on, yet due to poor project management issues the reachability is not rising at a desired level.

Some of the key issues in project management still seem to be

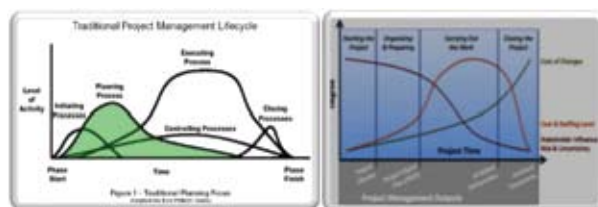
- Not having a clarity and understanding of what is expected of the project initiative
- Not knowing background and complete information about the key customer/ stake holder
- How to get things done in the best efficient and effective ways are not documented and communicated – no knowledge management practice
- Spending too much time, money and energy on things which are not important but urgent – firefighting as a way of everyday life
- Inability to respond and therefore react in every crisis situation
- Very limited technical and functional know how till the last level
- People in wrong fitment; multiple roles; incompetence
- Poor cost consciousness and inability to tap resource utilization without proper analysis and plan
- Delays and extensions for work to be completed without proper impact analysis

- Lots of blame game and passing the buck with dissatisfaction and stress underlying
- All these and many more issues in various extent may bring large gap between the envisaged project intent and actual project realization.

Ideally, any project would have 5 important phases in its life cycle, as given in the above fig. 1

Any project would start by initiation. The first phase is where there is lot of clarity as to what is to be done, who are the stakeholders, a rough plan as to what is expected, what are the requirements from the key stakeholders, who can do the critical activities, what does it take to get the job done and related questions. Traditionally this phase is typically conceived in mind. However, the ideal approach is to document every thought and intent in a structured manner so that it can be easily communicated and understood by the project team members. These details are captured in "Project Charter", a document that is very critical and governs the project cycle and decision making.

To plan the execution of the project the critical requirements are



1. Integration of all resources, machine, materials for meeting the stake-holders requirements.
2. Defining the Scope – this would mean clearly defining the boundaries w.r.t what would be done and what would not be carried out in the project.
3. Laying clear timelines- schedules for every activity and tasks- start and end date and time, duration of the activity.
4. Cost factors for every activity or group of activities- determine what it costs to execute the said activity.
5. Human Resources required to carry out the job – the complete hiring, staffing and training along with utilization of their competence and their sustenance.
6. The quality standards of each task in the project. The processes to monitor each task and measurements to tap the gaps. Clear data points have to be developed for every possible transaction to track and review performance and progress.
7. To identify all the risks involved in each activity /

group of tasks, classify them as high, medium and low and develop clear mitigation plans to combat them.

8. Identify stakeholders and based on the impact of the project on them, they are classified as direct and indirect.
9. All communication to be given to all stakeholders both internal and external are listed and formats with extent of information are determined.
10. Identify all infrastructure and procurement needed along with funding for each of them.

These 10 areas have to be objectively managed and measured so that any decision that is taken is well informed and data driven. "Not having a good plan is planning for failure". The documentation of the project management plan in the Project Charter is the key documented reference for any decisions / modifications and scope change. "A well planned project is almost 40% completed".

One of the most compromised dimension is the documentation of every decision, change and financials. Everything about the project, all financials, learning, story of how the project was executed, complaints, issues, achievements, awards, performance has to be documented. Closure has to be well planned with documents stored for retrieval and future developments. Capturing the learning is the most critical activity.

In social organization having dedicated resource for monitoring projects is a big challenge. So it is essential that the available senior person is trained in PMP and is able to monitor, control, measure, track and report both to internal and external stakeholders the progress, performance and any course corrections required.

The things that seem simple and doable are the most taken for granted. When corporates and international banks are willing to invest in social projects they are also looking for excellent project management. When management of project is seen as low in standard, faith, trust, hope, involvement, interest are all lost along with funding. Noble intent excellently executed will leave behind lasting impact and continuing legacy.

Reflect:

- To what extent am I focused on PMP in my organization?
- What part of the projects are well documented and what are not and how to begin documentation?
- Do we have people trained in project management within the organization and how much of their expertise is used for excellent project execution?
- This is the third article in the series 'Performance and Cultural Excellence – hand in hand'

—Dr. Kalpana Sampath and Prathaap B

Little Women - Big Feats

What makes a woman special? The media and poets over the ages put the limelight on her frailness of mind and fairness of looks. It is time we look at the common women who are endowed with uncommon wisdom, heart of steel to brave the odds and the mental strength to stop not till her goal is reached.

We spoke to six women who may be someone you could meet on the road but not know their grit. They are special in their own right and exemplify the issues and solutions faced by women - the right to education, livelihood and financial freedom. These are their stories.

Success, stitch by stitch

Standing on her own feet has been a long-term aspiration for R Dhanam, a native of Sathanur village, Thiruvannamalai District, Tamil Nadu. More so, since she had lost the use of her legs due to a polio attack at the age of five. "My parents were migrant construction workers. So I stayed with my grandmother and she used to carry me to school everyday," she says. Her schooling ended at Class VIII.

"People would openly tell me that I was a burden for everyone. At the age of 13, I resolved to earn a living and not depend on anyone," she says.

But finding a job or learning a skill was not easy. "My friends joined a tailoring class but as I could not operate the pedal, they refused to teach me," she recalls sadly.

Despite such setbacks, she picked up the basics of tailoring from her friends and knocked on many doors to get a job.

One opened — an NGO in Chennai taught her tailoring and gave her a job. She worked for nearly five years at tailoring units run by NGOs in Chennai and with the Centre for Social Initiatives and Management in her native village.

Today, she runs her own tailoring shop and teaches too. "I currently teach 10 students and earn around 8,000 rupees on average every month. I want to grow my business and provide jobs to other women," she says with quiet pride.

Going places with confidence

If you have the drive, you can win anywhere in the world. Kalpana Shakya, 34, from Kathmandu, Nepal, is testimony to this adage. "My father passed away when I was a child. At 16 years of age, just after I passed Class X, I started working to support myself. I wanted to do well and be respected in the community for my own achievements," she says.

She worked in the local tourism industry. This helped her pick up conversational English, the fundamentals of customer service and communication skills. And when an opportunity came up in 2008 to work at the Gulf Hotel in

Bahrain, Kalpana and her friend took it. "The salary was higher and with food and other amenities provided for, I could save well," she explains.

But wasn't she worried about managing in a new country?

"When you are young and inexperienced, people may try to take advantage of you. But I had work experience and could handle difficult situations," she observes confidently.

She now works as a senior waitress, handling corporate events. "I get to meet a lot of people and it helps me understand what service is and what tourists want. This is very valuable education," she says.

And with her savings she has bought a piece of land in Kathmandu. In a few years, she plans to construct her house on one floor and an office on another to run a tourism-related business.

"I am now building a network, developing contacts and saving money to start my own services business — travel agency, tourist transportation and other related services and may be also an internet centre."

She adds that there are not many jobs available in Nepal and hopes that her business will help provide some employment.

"You cannot succeed all alone in business. You need the support of family and community."

This is true for both men and women. I am hoping that I will get lots of support to be successful," she says optimistically.

Marriage didn't stop her studies

K Malarvizhi was married when she was only 19 years old, just after completing her school education and a certificate course in catering, in Chennai. But she was determined to study further despite the demands of marriage and raising two children. "I enrolled in a correspondence course and completed BA in History. Then I did MA and M Phil," she says.

The family was saddled with personal loans due to a failed business. So money was tight and she paid her fees with cash earned from her catering service business — serving food to singles working in IT firms.

She also sold artificial jewellery and conducted tuition classes late in the evenings for the neighbourhood students.

With all this, how did she find the time to study? "There is always the night. I studied late into the night and woke up at two in the morning while appearing for exams," she says.

She is thinking of taking up a teaching job in a nearby school and is preparing to appear for her PhD entrance exam in May.

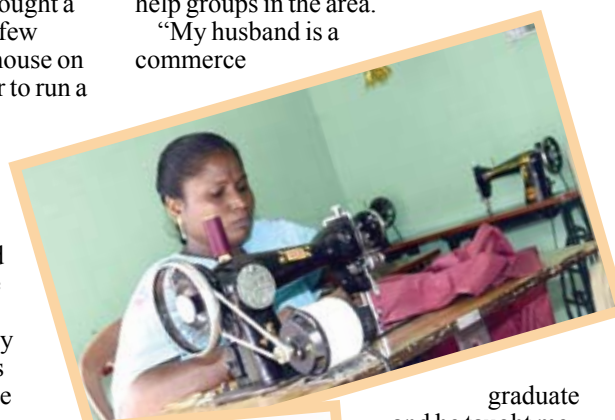
"I want to do my PhD in Tourism. Education has given me a lot of confidence to talk to people and try new things," she says.

Making a mark in business

R Radhika of Tindivanam, Tamil Nadu, was just 19 years old when she failed her school finals and married her differently-abled sweetheart against her family's wishes. A daughter born right after the wedding and her husband's difficulty in finding a job left her in a financially difficult situation.

She started working with women's self-help groups in the area.

"My husband is a commerce



graduate and he taught me the basics of accounting. It was very helpful when working with the women's groups," she says.

Social work interested her and she completed her BA in the subject.

She also took a four-month course on NGO management at CSIM.

"We analysed why our skill training programmes do not yield good results. What we found was that the women were not able to find employment," she says. So, she started a small unit to make sanitary napkins with a loan for 50,000 rupees taken through a self-help group. It later expanded with a total investment of 2 lakh rupees; the factory now produces 50,000 pieces a month and employs 10 women. "We sell our products locally and also get orders from hospitals," she says.

Radhika also tried her hand at politics and contested the State assembly elections in 2010. Now, she is full time into social work in health and hygiene, organic farming, skill training and raising awareness on government schemes. She is encouraging her two girls, who are in Class VI and Class IX, to study agriculture and become IAS officers. "If you are in power, you can make a big difference at a wider level," she advises them.

From a small town to the IT hub

Divya G, a native of Ramnagar in Magadi Taluk, Karnataka, was in Class X

when she attended a career planning programme organised by Chiguru, a non-profit organisation. Given her good academic performance, she was asked to consider engineering as a career. "I was not sure what it meant to be an engineer, but decided to try it," she says.

However, her father, who was a farmer and mother, a cook in a mid-day meal scheme, were reluctant to send her out of the village. But her determination, along with support from non-profits such as Prerna, helped her enrol in the Government Women's Polytechnic, Bengaluru. She received her diploma and then joined engineering at SJT College. She now works with iGate in the city.

She is putting away a portion of her salary for further studies. "I want to improve my English and develop my soft skills. And do a Masters to enhance my technical knowledge," she says. Divya is forming a small group to provide scholarships for less-privileged students in college. She is also providing career counselling services and mentoring students in her village. "With education you can think maturely about the future, do the right things to take care of yourself," she says.

Tailoring her future

Neela Dhrubhai Muda, who lives in a small village called Khori Faliya Warna in Gujarat, was also driven by a desire to earn. Her household constitutes 11 people, including her two children and an extended family of in-laws. "I would do housework and work on the farm. But during the lean farming season, there was extra time," she says. She wanted to utilise it productively and add to the family's income.

So, when she heard of a tailoring programme in Silvassa, nearly 20 km away, she was eager to join it. But it required taking the bus and walking, in all two hours of travel each way and spending ₹50 daily. She finally joined it after LabourNet, a social enterprise that ran the skill development centre, convinced her of the programme's effectiveness.

"I was scared to go to a new place. I did not understand what they taught. But the trainer was very kind and helped greatly," she recalls.

After completing training, Neela Ben started her own tailoring shop by borrowing 10,000 rupees from Sakhi Mandal, a self-help group. In just two months, she earned enough to repay half the loan. She then trained a girl in the village to help her in the shop.

She borrowed 50,000 rupees more to buy another machine. She also opened a kirana store.

"I want to buy cloth, stitch it and sell as ready-made," she says confidently.

—Meera Siva

This article was published in *The Hindu BusinessLine*

“I might feel that God has spoken to me. But, this does not imply that God has not spoken to you.”

Fr. Michael Amaldoss shares with **Marie Banu** the need for acceptance of other religions amongst youth.

Rev. Fr Michael Amaladoss is a Jesuit Priest in Tamil Nadu. He hails from Dindigul and pursued his graduation at St Joseph’s College, Trichy. He has done his Bachelors in Latin and has won the title ‘Sangeetha Vidhwan’ from the Tamil Nadu College of Music in Chennai, which has now become a University.

Fr. Michael joined the Society of Jesus in 1953 and was ordained a Priest in 1968. He did his doctorate in Theology in Paris and on return taught at St. Paul’s Seminary at Trichy and Vidya Jyoti College of Theology, a Jesuit institution in New Delhi. He served as Principal and Rector for this College and was also in-charge of the formation of Jesuits in the whole country.

He was elected as one of the assistants of the Superior General of the Jesuits in 1983 and lived in Rome for 12 years. A professional Theologian, he has also written several books some of which have been translated into other languages—French, German, Spanish, Italian Portuguese, Japanese, Vietnamese and Indonesian.

Fr. Michael is the Director of the Institute of Dialogue With Cultures And Religions (IDCR). The Institute involves in research on conflicts between religions and cultures and on ways of evolving conflict resolutions through dialogue and understanding.

In an exclusive interview, Fr. Michael Amaldoss shares with Marie Banu the need for acceptance of other religions amongst youth.

What is the purpose of launching IDCR?

I had a Guru—Fr. Ignatius Irudayam—whom I used to admire while I was studying. He was an expert in *Shaiva Sidhantha*. He established a Christian Ashram in Chennai and conducted regular morning and evening prayers and courses in Indian Christian spirituality. After his lifetime, I was transferred to Chennai to take over this institution. I converted this into a research Centre, affiliated to the Madras University in 2004, offering a PhD in multi-cultural and religious studies. The students can choose any theme in a culturally and religiously pluralistic context. So far, four students have got their PhD and two more will be submitting their thesis shortly.

We moved into the Loyola College Campus in 2005 to be near other educational and research institutions offering us a chance to interact with the staff and the students.



Photo: Marie Banu

Can you tell us about the research projects coordinated by IDCR?

As a research institute we have our own research projects. The first was on inter-religious violence. We chose Coimbatore for the study as there was a Hindu-Muslim conflict some 15 years ago. We interviewed people from different communities who were affected by this violence and enquired about the causes and the possibilities of peace making.

A second topic for research was on inter-caste violence, choosing three villages in the districts of Villupuram and Tirunelveli. We recently completed a third project on inter-religious marriages. We had four research scholars working from Hyderabad, Chennai, Trichy, and Tiruppattur.

In our country, there is not much that we can do with regard to promote peace amongst religions. Some countries have had Truth and Reconciliation Commissions—there was one in South Africa that was presided by Bishop Desmond Tutu, who won the Nobel Prize for peace. They have the support of the government, the police and the churches and could confront the people and promote forgiveness and reconciliation. The political situation in India would not permit this. We are also a small institute

with limited resources. So we focus on research and on training students to live in harmony, respecting and accepting people of other religions and cultures.

What has IDCR done to reach out to the youth in this way?

We have a regular department for Value Education in all our college where students learn about different religions. Texts from various religious traditions are also used during morning prayers. We are trying to make it more experiential and also reach out to school children. So, helped by the initiative of Arun Fernandes, who was a student in Loyola College, we launched the “Peace Rangers”. It brought together 40 to 50 students belonging to different religions from various colleges for three months during weekends. They talk to and discover each other as different but friendly; listen to lectures on different religions from experts; and interact with them. They also visit together the holy places of different religions. Such interaction dispels prejudice, promotes true knowledge and encourages acceptance of other religions thereby leading to harmonious living.

What is BLINK Foundation and its focus?

Inspired by “Peace Rangers”, Blink Foundation seeks to educate the school children for inter-religious harmonious living. Specially chosen and trained student volunteers from different colleges will go to various schools and train children of classes 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11. Understanding and accepting the religion and culture of others, and collaborating with them as people with human dignity and freedom will be the focus.

I might feel that God has spoken to me. But, this does not imply that God has not spoken to you. I must listen to you. All religions believe in One God, though they may have various names for God: Brahman, Yahweh, Allah, etc. This is the dialogue that we are facilitating through the Blink Foundation. All religions also support common human and social values like love, trust, justice, and equality.

Blink is also launching a web-portal in which the young people can ask any question that deals with problems and values of life. They will be answered online by a group of Knowledge Patrons whose help Blink has managed to secure. In this way, our outreach will transcend space and time!