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As we enter July and share our memories of Nelson Mandela, we commit to 67 minutes of selfless service to make Mandela Day on 18 July a day of action. At the same time we welcome arrests linked to State Capture and the theft of state funds. The extradition of the Gupta brothers is in process, we await the same for Shepard Bushiri.

Deep concerns about the robbery of dollars allegedly not declared are abound in society. We call on the elected leaders of South Africa and Namibia to be transparent and accountable, to respect the rule of law and to work on redeveloping ethical practices and social norms.

The lack of reform and punishment, the delays in delivering justice, avoiding declarations means that the much needed take off in the economy lags. The suffering of the poor due to rising prices and lack of decent jobs affects physical and mental health.

We present the fourth instalment in our series of write ups on the master elements. Previous issues covered: Water, Sun, and Earth. We have printed and distributed these to households in the Phoenix and Chatsworth in 2022. We are grateful to generous sponsors for the paper, printing, and distribution.

Our feature article "Air is the Life Force Energy for all Living Beings" and the selection of mantras relating to well-being is the result of research conducted by our writers' collective. This issue focuses on Health.

Thanks to Dr Rekha Mohan and Dr Reshma Badal. Dr Rekha Mohan is based in Pietermaritzburg and has authored the article on "Diabetes Mellitus the Ongoing Pandemic." Dr Reshma Badal hails from Durban is a health activist. She has authored the paper on "The Role of the Progressive Primary Health Care Network in South Africa."

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ओम् इमं जीवेभ्यः परिधिं दधामि मैषां नु गादपरो
अर्थमेतम् शतं जीवन्तु शरदः पुरुचीरन्तर्मृत्युं दधतां
पर्वतेन।

Aum imam jīvebhyah paridhiṁ dadhāmi maiṣhān nu
gādaparo arthametam shataṁ jīvantu sharadh
puruchīrantarmṛtyum dadhatān parvatena. Rig Veda
10.18.4

God has blessed a human with a life of a hundred years;
reap the full benefit of this gift by keeping your body and
mind healthy and fit.

ओम् अव स्थिरा तनुहि भूरि शर्धतां वनेमा ते
अभिष्टिभिः।

Aum ava sthirā tanuhi bhūri shardhatān vanemā te
abhiṣṭibhiḥ. Rig Veda 8.19.20

A healthy mind and a strong body are the first requisites
to achieve desired goals.

Air is the life force energy for all living beings

The hundred years of life gifted to humanity can be divided into four parts to fit into the four ashrams of life. 25 years to learn and acquire skills and hone into our talents. 25 years to contribute to society – to contribute to the economy and to produce the next generation of workers. 25 years to give service to society and share skills and 25 years of material renunciation to guide society, and to be in contemplation.

In all these stages of life, keeping the body strong and the mind focused is what makes life beautiful. Taking time to appreciate nature, the sunrises and sunsets, the formation of clouds and the resilience of trees, the work conducted by bees to pollinate flowers and the way water flows over rocks helps one to understand that there is something bigger, more powerful, and more profound than your own mind, ego, and personality.

In the modern world life expectancy has improved. Globally the life expectancy increased from less than 30 years to over 72 years.¹ After two centuries of progress we can expect to live much more than twice the time as our ancestors did. This progress has brought with it new challenges to life and consequently new and more pervasive diseases and illnesses.

Keeping the body and mind healthy and fit is the responsibility of every individual. What we eat, how we work and play, our choice for leisure affects our bodies and minds. The modern sedentary work where we are not actively moving our bodies, means that we need to have a regular programme of exercise and keep fit. Yoga, meditation, visiting the gym, doing aerobics, running, and walking are some of the activities that we can perform to keep fit.

We live alongside other living beings. Are we living in harmony with animals and plants? They too have the right to coexist on this earth! We have begun to genetically modify seeds, plants, animals, and humans. How is this affecting the balance of nature? What impact does the GMO (Genetically modified organisms) seeds have on our bodies and health?



¹ Life Expectancy - Our World in Data

The composition of air is perfect for life on Earth. Air is invisible. It takes up space. It has volume. It exerts pressure. We forget that it is there.

The air all around us exerts pressure on us. We would collapse under the weight of the air. We have air inside us. This exerts pressure that balances out the pressure exerted by the outside air.



Air comprises of nitrogen and oxygen, about 1% argon and even smaller amounts of carbon dioxide and other elements such as krypton and helium.² Humans use oxygen from air. We breathe out carbon dioxide. Plants use the carbon dioxide to manufacture their food through photosynthesis. Plants in turn give off oxygen during photosynthesis. Humans and plants are co-dependent.



Industrialisation, climate change and rapid urbanisation has brought about shifts in society. Industries have created pollution. This has added to the carbon footprint. The viruses causing the recent global pandemics are air borne. These changes are occurring faster than anyone predicted and consequently we are forced to adapt.

² The Four Elements of Matter – Key words tools



The National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act 2004 provides for national norms and standards regulating air quality monitoring, management, and control by all spheres of government in South Africa.

The law regulating air quality protects the environment by providing reasonable measures for the prevention of pollution and ecological degradation thereby securing ecologically sustainable development.³

The Act provides guidelines to minimize pollution through vigorous control, cleaner technologies, and cleaner production practices.

The spirit of the Act is to ensure benefit for the present and future generations through an enhancement of the quality of ambient air, to secure an environment that is not harmful to the health or well-being of people while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

In this article we provide an explanation of why air is sacred, why it is called life force energy and why we need to ensure the quality of air. Humans can survive days without food, and for hours without water but humans cannot live without air. When humans and animals stop breathing, they are no longer alive.

In the Vedas, the soul is addressed as *Vaayu*. *Vaayu* is wind - air in motion. The soul is that dynamic, spiritual entity which is 'in motion' from one life to the next.

Vaayuranilamamrtamathedam bhasmaantam shariram. Om krato smara. Klibe smara. Krtam smara.
Yajur Veda 40.15

Breaths go out to mix with the elemental air: the soul is immortal, and the body is to end in ashes. Om.

Now, think; think of the world full of enjoyments and think of the deeds you have done.

The Sanskrit word *praana* was first referenced in the Vedas and 3,000-year-old Chandogya Upanishad and can be described as life force energy, vital energy, breath of life, spirit-energy, or vital principle. *Praana* is the foundation of all life in the universe. It is the subtle life force energy. You cannot see it, touch it, or taste it.

Praana enters the body from the food we eat, the air we breathe, and from absorbing the energies of the earth and heavens.

The most subtle form of *praana* is the breath. *Praana* forms the energy of our consciousness. This subtle energy animates our every action - from gross physical movements to minute biochemical processes.

As life force energy *Praana* is the source of all movement in the body. It regulates all conscious and unconscious bodily functions like our breath, digestion, blood flow, elimination, cellular growth, and healing.

The flow of *praana* distributes its energy. Overall health and well-being are directly tied to the quantity and circulation of *praana* in our bodies.

Air is present and widespread by God's will and power.

Vishno raaatamasi (i) vishnoh snaptre stho (ii) vishnoh syürasi (iii) vishnordhruvo'si (iv). Vaisnavamasi visnave tvaa (v). Yajur Veda 5.21

You are the forehead of the omnipresent. (i)
You are the two corners of the lips of the omnipresent. (ii)
You are the stitching needle of the omnipresent. (iii)
You are the tight knot of the omnipresent. (iv)
You belong to the omnipresent. You to the omnipresent. (v)

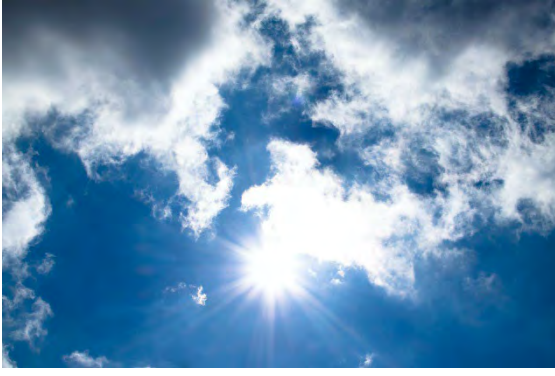
Air is all pervasive. Sound travels through air. Air is the medium within which vibrations make sounds. It is through air that we can hear sounds.

Ishiro vishwavyachaa vaato gandharvasta syaapo apsarasa oorjo naama. Sa na idam brahma kshatram paatu tasmai swaahaa vaatt taabhyah swaahaa. Yajur Veda 18.41

Air is quick. It pervades the whole universe. It retains sound in the atmosphere. Its components are known as givers of vigour and motion in the atmospheric vapours.

May it protect the learned and noble. Homage and respect to the air for contributing to our progress.

³ The National Environment Management: Air Quality Act 39 of 2004



Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, reason, and ego – these constitute My nature, eightfold divided.

In painting and sculpture music and dance sound, light, colour, and form are often linked to the play of light, flow of water, and the sounds of space and fire. The space created by movement in dance is through the displacement of air.



Humans have also used air to master recreational activity.



Havishmateerima aapo havishmaan avivásati. Havishmaan devo adhvaro havishmaan astu sooryah.
Yajur Veda 6.23

Water contributes to purity, comfort, and usefulness. Air can be used and abused. May the pleasure promoting actions and sacrifices grant us happiness, may the sun give us health and comfort.

Aadityaa rudraa vasavah suneetha dyaavaakshaamaa prithivee antariksham. Sajashaso yajyamavantu devaa oordhvam krinvant vadvarasya ketum. Rig Veda 3.8.8

May the cosmic divine powers such as sun, wind (air) and life-giving breath protect us; and may heaven and earth and other divine powers working in unity, receive our respect and worship.

Yajur Veda Chapter 7.35-38 verses are a refrain on vital breaths – *praana*.

The uses of air in performing a myriad of functions by humans is covered.

In breathing air people who work with their hands and those who teach, and minister are under the protection of God.

The breaths taken in are crucial to our functioning. By breathing we are accepted by God. (Yajur Veda 7.35)

On each intake of breath and exhalation you become the abode of God. We are thus able to increase our prosperity, endure hardships and be protected. (Yajur Veda 7.36)

Taking deep breaths and slowing your breathing calms you and enables you to face fears.

Thus, air is a destroyer of Nescience – false beliefs. Taking in vital breaths of air strengthens you to resolve to destroy enemies and drives your aggressors away. (Yajur Veda 7.37)

Our breathing also enables us to enjoy music, dance, drama, and food. These provide bliss and inner joy.

Through swallowing we carry the wave of sweetness down to our stomachs. Humans in breathing assist to complete God's work. (Yajur Veda 7.38)

Rabindranath Tagore, a Nobel laureate for literature, in his book, *Pancha Bhoota*, explained that the emotional faculty of the human mind is keenly sensitive to all objects of light, colour, sound, effect of speed, sun, moon and stars.

Bhoomir aapo'analó vaayuh kham mano buddhireva cha. Ahankaar iteeyam me bhinaa prakriteer ashtadhaa.
Bhagavad Gita 7.4

May they hold high our flag of dedication and actions for the greater good.

Over last two centuries humans have progressed but have not been in harmony with the environment. New variants of viruses are developing at a rapid pace, and these are transmitted through the air.

In the modern world with the innovations in science and technology, from the steam engine to the internet, we witness the effects of industrialisation and urbanisation which has upset the balance in nature.



Biodiversity is not just about plants and animals in other words about biological diversification. It is also about cultural diversification and particularly the intimate and interdependent relationship between the two. Over the years humans evolved and developed practices through an interaction with the natural environment.

Natural sources of energy, animal power was first used. Later machines were developed and so we accordingly shape our lives through an interaction with our environment. The industries we created have polluted the air and rivers.



Air travel is the most popular choice for moving from one country to another and even within a country. Airports bring in and take out goods and people, but the aeroplanes use fossil fuel, which brings about pollution.



Our well-developed road infrastructure connects the hinterland to the ports and into Africa, but our well-developed roads use more cars, and this increases the emissions into our atmosphere.



Factories create jobs. Jobs ensure that families have food and shelter and the means to survive. The concentration of factories also means that there is pollution in industrial areas. This means that there are health risks for communities living close by.

Industries have been in the forefront of best practices. Unleaded fuel, catalytic converters to reduce emissions are all the result of industries being responsible and innovative. It is industry that can bring about solutions to the modern challenges.

Most of the industries that have found solutions have done so by trial and error. And most of them have also reaped in profits from such innovations. Better and cleaner and safer technologies have been developed and produced in factories by industries and the workers in factories and this will assist to curb pollution.

Author: Veda Jyothi Writers Collective

Vedic Mantras on well being

The role and benefits of plants and trees and forests are referred to in the Vedas as *Aushadhi* and *Vanaspati* – as gifts and blessings from God through nature for our health and well-being, and for enhancement and beauty.

Thank God for His benevolence, and declare our humility before Him, whilst also showing respect and appreciation to nature in our prayer.

Aum aham bhoomimadadaam - aaryaayaaham vrishtim daashushe martyaaya. Ahamapo anayam vaavashaanaa mama devaaso anu ketamaayan. Rig Veda 4.26.2

God sustains the earth for the good of all beings. He blesses us with rain and water for all life. All of nature's bounties function in harmony by His will.



Aum yaste rasah sambhrta aushadheeshu somasya shushmah surayaa sutasya. Tena jinva yajamaanam madena sarasvateem-ashvinaavindram-agnim. Yajur Veda 19.33

The pure essence of soma is extracted from plants for our beneficial uses. May the soma bring joy and happiness to all people.

Aum pavasva madhumattama indraaya soma kratu-vittamo madah. Mahi dyukshatamo madah. Saama Veda 692 (Utt. 16.1)

The medicinal herb that absorbs the light of the sun is full of sweetness. It gives joy, wisdom, and liveliness; and is worthy of respect.

Aum shivaaste santvoshadhaya ut tvaahaarsham-adharasyaa uttaraam prithiveemabhi. Tatra tvaadityau rakshataam sooryaa-chandramasaa-vubhaa. Atharva Veda 2066 (Bk 8 Anu 1.2.15)

May there be auspiciousness in the plants that grow in every region. As they are enriched by the energy of the sun and calmness of the moon, so may we become lustrous and healthy.



The medical prescription for taking medication is in the Shaanti Paat - ***Aapah Shaanti, Aushadhi Shaanti.*** Yajur Veda 36.17

May water and the medicinal herbs be a source of peace. Water is the first medicine, and remedy for all ailments.

It is incumbent on us to acknowledge and appreciate the role of God in medication, which brings peace to the body, mind, and soul. Whilst preparing, taking, administering medication, one should mentally recite: ***Aum Aapah Shaanti, Aum Aushadhi Shaanti.***

God and the universe are at peace. Let us - ***Edhi Shaanti*** - be at peace within ourselves, with each other, with the universe and with God.

Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus: The Ongoing Pandemic

Is Diabetes a result of unhealthy habits, stress, gluttony, or a genetic predisposition? None of these are scientifically proven as the cause of Diabetes and therefore remain postulates.



The word Diabetes comes from Greek origins meaning to siphon which is to pass through. Mellitus is a Latin word meaning sweet urine or *Madhumeha* meaning honey urine as described by the Indian Physician Sushruta about two thousand years ago. He also accurately said that Type 1 Diabetes occurs in children and Type 2 Diabetes in obese individuals.

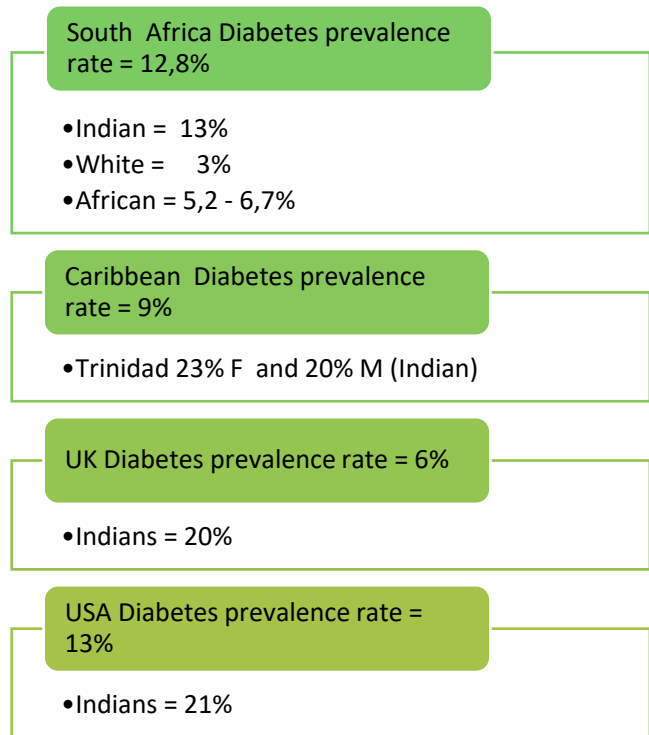
Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is now commonly referred to as Diabetes. Diabetes is a result of inadequate or complete lack of the insulin hormone released by the pancreas. Type 1 or insulin dependent DM occurs when the pancreas does not produce appropriate insulin. This is considered to be an autoimmune disease. Type 2 is non-insulin dependent Diabetes and occurs when the pancreas releases inadequate insulin to meet the demands for glucose metabolism.

Globally 10% have Type 1 DM and 90% have Type 2 DM. Gestational Diabetes occurs in pregnant women. Neo Natal Diabetes occurs in babies till the age of 6 months.

- 537 Million adults are living with Diabetes in the world
- 4 in 5 adults with Diabetes live in low and middle income countries
- 6,7 million deaths occurred due to Diabetes in 2021

Over five hundred million suffer with type 2 Diabetes. Fifty percent of diabetics are undiagnosed. This makes Diabetes an ongoing pandemic in the world. In South Africa, the prevalence has increased from 7% to 12.3%, (approximately six million people).

In the Indian diaspora, prevalence rates among people of Indian origin are higher than the host country. Reasons for this is partly ethnicity, low socio-economic status, and poor access to health facilities.



The cost burden of Diabetes as it progresses to renal and cardiac complications is extremely high. In South Africa, in 2018, the public sector costs of diagnosed type 2 diabetics were estimated to be R2,7 billion. If both diagnosed and undiagnosed patients are considered the estimated costs would increase to R21,8 billion. In real terms, the 2030 cost burden of all types of DM is estimated to be R35,1 billion.

So, controlling blood-sugar early in the onset of Diabetes is crucial to decrease the cost burden. This can also lead to longevity.

The Society for Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes of South Africa (SEMDSA) has guidelines for diagnosing diabetes.

The normal blood sugar range should be 3.5 – 5.5 mmol/L. A fasting blood-sugar sample of more than 7 is Diabetes according to the guidelines. A random sample of above 11mmol/L is diagnosed Diabetes.

An HBA1C blood sample measures the glucose in the haemoglobin and is a good indication of prognosis of the disease. HBA1C above 7% is a call for action.

The many reasons for poor control of diabetes exist and these are:



Signs and symptoms of DM

- Polyurea**
 - (frequent urination) and nocturia (passing of urine at night).
- Polydypsia**
 - (increased thirst)
- Polyphagia**
 - (constant hunger and eating big meals)
- Easy fatigue, tiredness**
- Skin manifestations:**
 - Thickened skin
 - Dry skin
 - Black discolouration of skin around the neck and armpits
 - Fungal infection of skin
- Recurrent infections (chest, ears, throat, urinary tract)**
- Non-healing wounds**
- Blurred vision**



Diabetes is a progressive disease, i.e. once diagnosed it will not go away with treatment however blood sugar levels can be controlled to almost within normal range 3,5 to 5,5 mmol/L.

This is not easily achieved if one has a long-standing diagnosis. Therefore a level of 7mmol/L is acceptable.

A multidisciplinary team is the best approach i.e., is having a trusted GP (General Practitioner) family physician or Endocrinologist to prescribe and support one with continuity of care. If there are complications then a Cardiologist, Nephrologist, Urologist and Ophthalmologist, need to be added to the team. Dieticians, diabetic nurse educators, bio kineticists, podiatrists, and psychologists are also part of the team.

Ten Best Ways to Manage Type 2 Diabetes



A diabetic should be able to do blood sugar self-monitoring - measuring the blood sugar daily with a glucometer. He or she should have a strong inclination to self-care. There should be a good motivation for 3 to 4 doctor visits annually depending on the level of blood sugar complications and prevalent infections. All diabetics should know the name, dosage, and side effects of their medication.

Doing laboratory blood test biannually, for excluding complication and knowing the prognosis of the disease is essential. Having a support buddy, friend, or belonging to a diabetic support group or creating a support group in your neighborhood or community is imperative.

Complications of Diabetes Mellitus

Most common is renal and cardiac failure (kidney and heart failure – heart attacks and angina)	Strokes	Alzheimers
Early senile dementia	Erectile dysfunction	Breast cancer
Lung cancer	Gallstones	Peripheral Vascular Disease (clots in the lower limbs)
Peripheral neuropathy (small nerve damage of the feet)	Blindness, Glaucoma, cataracts	

Know your numbers, that is measure your blood sugar regularly.

Check blood pressure and treat if necessary.

Check cholesterol and ensure treatment.

The Mediterranean diet is best.

- There is no such thing as a Diabetic diet (no refined sugar, brown or white should be taken by diabetics).
- Reduce intake of carbohydrates (potatoes, rice, bread).
- Eat small quantities.

Eye check-up annually.

Measure kidney function bi-annually.

Look after the feet.

Exercise regularly: do not sit for more than two hours.

Get a support buddy. Join a support group or create one in your neighbourhood or community.

Motivate yourself for self-care and be proactive.

According to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) a healthy lifestyle can help to prevent Type 2 Diabetes and early and uninterrupted access to appropriate care can avoid or delay life threatening complications of Diabetes. Newer drugs that address pancreatic neogenesis might be beneficial in stemming the ongoing Diabetic pandemic.

Author: Dr Rekha Mohan

The Role of the Progressive Primary Health Care Network in South Africa

*A kraal at the foot of the majestic Drakensberg Mountain was my home. We were more than a community; we were a family. The children without a worry in the world, belly filled with what the land offered ran and played in the rolling hills. The women, without a worry in the world, busied themselves with tending the land and making sure that everyone had a warm meal. The men without a worry in the world hunted the wild game, protected their livestock, and loved ones. We loved our lives and what we did because we knew that we were stronger together. It was a time before 'work,' before 'ownership,' before 'possessions,' and a time before **greed**. It was a time when we were happy, and we never really got sick. And we surely did not need civilizing, because we were already courteous and polite!*



The sedate pastoral life of the native inhabitants served them well. They found all they needed from mother earth with their diet consisting of vegetables, beans, tubers, grains, roots, greens, and the occasional animal meat. They did not need a lifestyle shift.

But it came and at great expense, for which the majority are still paying. For all the so called “Christian civilization” the colonisers brought to the African continent, the imposition of their way of life on the natives can be described in one word – “Ungodly.”

Prior to the Second World War primary health care was in theory non-existent and was not even regarded as an area of health in any government policy. The National Party’s rise to power in 1948 with policies of forced segregation and the creation of the homelands pushed most of the

Black population into dire poverty. The population density coupled with poor housing and living conditions created communities teetering on the edge of a pandemic waiting to happen. The Bantustan governments of the homelands, with barely any resources were tasked with providing for the health needs of its people. They were set up to fail.

Despite the governments nefarious strategies, there were some good-hearted people who were working tirelessly to improve the lives of those affected the most. In the early 1940’s people like Drs Sidney and Emily Kark pioneered primary health care by linking poverty with disease, later named the “The Pholela Model”. They established that lack of proper sanitation, poor housing and deficiency in nutritional food played a significant role in the spread of disease. The services at Pholela provided the community with nurses and assistants who had a comprehensive awareness of the effects of poverty on disease.

Due to the groundswell for reform the Smuts government set up the National Health Services Commission, chaired by Dr Harry Gluckman. The Gluckman Report released in 1945 proposed a unified healthcare to all the people of South Africa with the establishment of community health centres based on the “Pholela Model”.

The rise to power of the Nationalist Party government in 1948 resulted in the withdrawal of support for the centres forcing them to close and this drove the Kark’s into exile. There was simply no viable and coordinated health care for Black South Africans.

At the height of apartheid in the 1970’s and 1980’s a host of activists voiced political, social, and economic imperatives. Through sheer might and determination, the health campaigners adopted a progressive health care declaration at the Alma-Ata Conference in 1978, which would later call on the international community to develop and implement primary health care throughout the world.

It must be noted that the unrelenting persecution and horrendous policies of the government at the time made it difficult to design and implement these life changing affirmations effectively and efficiently. Nonetheless the activists at the time persevered and it must be appreciated that the approach adopted remains to date unchanged and resolute.

Doctors, unions, and health care activists in a joint primary health care consultative meeting in September

1987 united to bring about change. A national conference held in Johannesburg themed “Towards a National Health Source” also reaffirmed and formalised the NPPHCN.

Today the network is active only in KwaZulu Natal and can be accessed through its website www.pphc.org.za

In 1987 the Progressive Primary Health Care Network (PPHCN) was formed and can be considered the vanguard of primary health care in South Africa. The national body had an office in each province and focused on health activism and health promotion through education.

The organisation helped the most marginalized by creating access to affordable services. Community health care was stimulated by educating communities on preventative actions, curative measures, rehabilitative methods, and palliative care. People were taught that their health lay in their hands.



The organisation continued with training, health rights awareness and community-based programs that catapulted it into a leadership role in the primary health care sector.

The immense financial generosity of the Henry J Kaiser Family Foundation helped keep the organisation operational and a going concern. The vigorous campaigning for social justice together with the publicising of the unspeakable health conditions and the frightening mortality and morbidity rates started a movement. This evidence-based research and activism alarmed the authorities. This led to the raiding of PPHCN offices and the harassment of staff by the state security services.

Despite the stifling environment, the work continued unabated and this resolve only motivated and strengthened the effort. Theory became practice and the activism never ceased.

The unbanning of the ANC in the early the 1990's allowed NPPHCN to play a leading role in ensuring that the new dispensation would filter into their primary policies

primary health care programmes. In non-governmental organisations the programmes of NPPHCN were taken further.

NPPHCN joined forces with the South African Health and Social Services Organisation (SAHSSSO) and the National Medical and Dental Association (NAMDA) and played a key role in the formation of the Patriotic Health Front. Together with regional and provincial health forums transformed the health sector.

The role of NPPHCN changed during the period 1994-1997 to complement the primary health care programmes and the development of progressive health and welfare policies. In 1995 a programme was launched to produce accessible, easy to read policy briefs around health legislation.

The Community Health Workers programme of the network was a tremendous success and for the first time brought awareness in communities on community gardens, HIV/AIDS support groups and so much more.

A snapshot view at the primary health care plan of the ANC will highlight evidence of the impact of the work done by the PPHCN. The Community Health Worker programme, advocacy of health rights, portable sanitation and water in communities, accessible health centres and hospitals are some of the legacies of the work.

It must be stated unequivocally that South Africa, the beacon on the African continent, still has preventable and treatable diseases like Tuberculosis which still accounts for the largest percentage of deaths in South Africa.

The undoing of our horrifying past will take generations and we still have mountains to cross – but we will get there! - Because we know mountains. Amandla.

Author Dr Reshama Badal

Sanskrit words explained

मन्त्र

mantra

The word is derived from the verb *man* to think and *tra* meaning instrumental. Thus mantra is that which brings thoughts together.

Literally this is an instrument of thought, suggesting that a mantra is a vehicle by which higher consciousness is manifest. A means by which we become harmonious with the world. Mantras raise consciousness, quieting and elevating one's state of mind.

In the modern world the use of the word mantra is also known as litany, leitmotif, slogan, motto, watchword, refrain, tagline, catchphrase, catchword.

In the business world a mantra is three or four words that explain why a product, service, or company should exist.

A mantra is a sacred word, sound, or phrase, in Sanskrit, recited within a wide variety of religious and spiritual traditions such as Hinduism and Buddhism.

Rig Veda 3.62.10; Yajur 36.3: Gayatri Mantra (Man – mind – to think):

In giving life, God is *Bhooh*, we are then expected to appreciate, seek, and live by the Guidance of Knowledge that each human being is bestowed with.

Then we can manage, bear, and overcome our pains, sorrows, and difficulties (*Bhuvah*). This will result in true happiness and peace (*Swah*). This guidance and knowledge must be constantly sought through thinking and meditation (*Dheemahi*), so that our intellect – mind, thoughts, intentions, and desires are noble and righteous, discerning right from wrong, truth from untruth (*Dhiyo yo nah prachodayaat*).

The real value is to understand the mantras. To study the mantras is to realise truth through one's own experience.

The third principle of the Arya Samaj states: "His Word, the Veda: The Veda is the Scripture of true knowledge, it is the paramount duty of every Arya to learn and teach the Veda, to hear it read and to recite it to others."

Message from the President

My Dear Readers,

Prem Namaste

This July, Hindus observe Guru Purnima, in celebrations of Gurus.

Who are Gurus?

All enlightened persons who impart knowledge to an individual, dispelling ignorance are called Gurus.

Guru is derived from Gu meaning darkness, ignorance and Ru meaning elimination of or removing of.

As recipients of knowledge leading to wisdom, it is incumbent upon every individual to pay their respect to their institutions of education and to those learned men and women who facilitated their education, so that one could achieve one's goal in life. Presenting oneself in suitable and respectable attire, speaking with respect and respecting one's school or other institution of learning, is of the utmost importance.

Sadly, this is not the norm today. Students dress, speak and act to the contrary. Although, on a lighter note, I would say, that the young men of today, sporting "man buns" and long hair either in ponytails or let loose, are going back to the days of Sri Ram and Sri Krsna.

On the 13 July, the auspicious day of Guru Purnima, let us remember our Gurus, beginning with our parents who taught us and showed us the path to a successful life.

Doha of Sant Kabir on the importance of a Guru:

"Guru Govind dao khade lage pāye, Balihāri Guru apne Govind diyo batāye"

If God and my Guru are standing together, whom should I bow down to first? I would choose my Guru, as it is because of my Guru, I am able to identify and see my God. It is impossible to find God without the help of the Guru.

At end of May the Arya Samaj South Africa held its Biennial General Election. I take this opportunity to thank all our Affiliates for placing their confidence in me and giving me the opportunity to serve as President for another term.

The next two years will witness various activity around the work of the Arya Samaj with Affiliates playing a leading role in their respective areas to build and promote

unity amongst all faith groups. Our Phoenix members have already commenced on this, and we hope to see more areas doing the same.

In 2025 we will be celebrating our 100th Anniversary on a grand scale. Planning for this milestone will commence immediately.

Our Standing Committees are our pillars of strength. All activities and programmes of the Standing Committees will run on digital platforms.

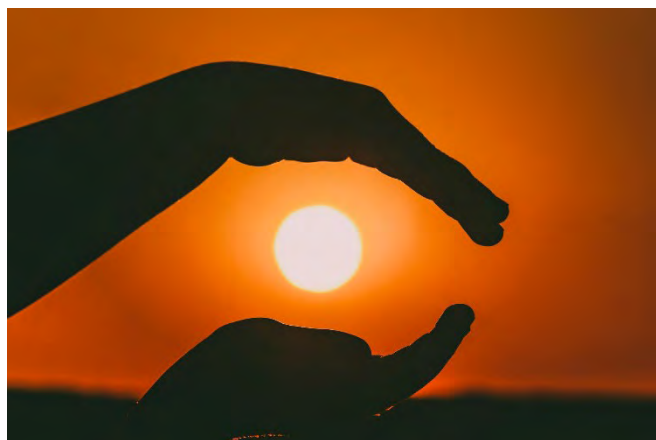
This will enable us to develop and strengthen our links with the diaspora. Our structured modules of the School of Vedic Studies for the training of Priests and the propagation of the Vedas through the medium of the graded examinations of the Veda Niketan will be online soon.

The Narain Jeawon Vedic Centre, situated in the heart of an informal settlement in the Sea Cow Lake/Kenville area, will house the Arya Samaj Clinic. I make an appeal to all health professionals to join us in this venture by sharing their expertise to improve the health of communities.

The Arya Samaj Women's Forum has already made inroads with the women's empowerment programmes. We look forward to a wider outreach to build the skills of young women in our country.

The HEAL Foundation is now a standing committee and has built a robust programme on humanitarian work and responses to needs for relief in the form of food, clothing, stationery, and other necessities to those in dire need.

So dear readers, we have exciting times ahead and we will keep you updated as we progress.



Comments from Readers

Namaste,

I would like to express my excitement on reading the Issue 6/2022 publication. The finesse of the author's style and articulation of words is highly praiseworthy.

It is refreshing to see the nature of the articles and matters being dealt with as these are burning issues in the everyday life of people and communities.

Being married in Vedic rights, I found further insight on the prescribed doctrines and meaning behind key words such as Vivaaha, Parinaya and Upayama to mention just a few.

On the topic of social conventions, I really think that this needs to be inculcated into all facets of Hindu bodies.....

In hindsight, as I reflect on my wedding day, I would have rather toned down the expenditure towards the fancy items, for rather the upliftment of the poor and elderly. Once again, I accept I was flawed and sucked into the grips of keeping up to societal norms.

Seeing topics pertaining to gender equality, maintenance practices and being discussed on this platform is also heart-warming as this is our reality and further augments the progressive thinking and pragmatism of the South African leadership and movement at large.

In summary, I really really really commend the methodology and charismatic approach of the publication as one that is forward-thinking, visionary and relevant.

Thank you for translating in-depth concepts so eloquently. Truly food for the soul and sought-after thought-provoking conversations have been manifested from this read amongst myself and my peers.

Paramathma's blessings to your team and know your conscientious efforts are far reached and sincerely appreciated.

Best wishes,

Divesh Bhooshun

Announcements

You are invited to send articles to the editorial committee for publication. Please email your submissions to admin@aryasamajsa.org

Acceptance conditions:

1. All submissions must be in word for the attention of the editorial committee.
2. All Sanskrit words must be in Italics.
3. Photographs submitted must be in high resolution.
4. All references must be cited.
5. The limits for articles will be as follows:
 - 5.1. Short articles & messages three hundred words,
 - 5.2. Current issues and social justice up to nine hundred words
 - 5.3. Feature articles 1500 to 3000 words,
 - 5.4. Secondary articles up to 1500 words.
6. The acceptance of articles will be considered based on the following criteria:
 - 6.1. Vedic teachings,
 - 6.2. Principles of the Arya Samaj,
 - 6.3. Social justice and social action,
 - 6.4. Relevance to current issues.

To contribute to projects of the Arya Samaj contact admin@aryasamajsa.org
Please send your comments and suggestions to admin@aryasamajsa.org

Rig Veda 9.63.5

कृण्वन्तो विश्वामार्यम् "Krinvanto Vishwam Aryam" Make the World Noble

Yajur Veda 36.18

मित्रस्याहम् चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूताननि समीक्षे mitrasyāham chakṣuṣā sarvāṇi bhūtānani samīkṣe May we all live in friendly cooperation and mutual trust

मित्रस्याहम् चक्षुषा समीक्षामहे "mitrasyaaham chakshushaa sameekshaamahe" May we look at all with an Equal and Friendly Eye

Veda Jyoti Founding Editors were Pt Nardev Vedalankar (1913-1994) and the late Manohar Somera



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