



GURUDEV

SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR

Uniting the World into a Global Family



BIOGRAPHY



Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is a universally revered spiritual and humanitarian leader. His vision of a violence-free, stress-free society through the reawakening of human values has inspired millions to broaden their spheres of responsibility and work towards the betterment of the world.

He is a multi-faceted social activist whose initiatives include conflict resolution, disaster and trauma relief, poverty alleviation, empowerment of women, prisoner rehabilitation, education for all and campaigns against female foeticide and child labour. He is engaged in peace negotiations and counselling in conflict zones around the world. His expertise in bringing opposing parties to the negotiating table in areas such as Sri Lanka, Iraq, the Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Kashmir and Bihar is widely acknowledged.

In 1981, Gurudev established The Art of Living, an educational and humanitarian Non-Governmental Organisation that works in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations. Present in 155 countries, it formulates and implements lasting solutions to conflicts and issues faced by individuals, communities and nations. In 1997, Gurudev founded the International Association for Human Values (IAHV) to foster human values and lead sustainable development projects. He is also a co-founder of India Against Corruption (IAC).

He has reached out to an estimated 370 million people worldwide through personal interactions, public events, teachings, Art of Living workshops and humanitarian initiatives. Not since Mahatma Gandhi has one person united people of different traditions and faiths into a spiritual communion across the length and breadth of India.

He has brought to the masses ancient practices which were traditionally kept exclusive, and has designed many self-development techniques which can easily be integrated into daily life to calm the mind and instil confidence and enthusiasm. These techniques have helped thousands overcome depression and violent and suicidal tendencies. One of Gurudev's most unique offerings to the world is the Sudarshan Kriya, a powerful breathing technique that facilitates physical, mental, emotional and social well-being.

Numerous honours have been bestowed upon Gurudev, including the highest civilian awards of Colombia, Mongolia and Paraguay. In 2016, he was conferred with the 'Padma Vibhushan', the highest annual civilian award of India. He has also been conferred with 16 honorary doctorates from around the world. Gurudev has addressed several international forums, including the United Nations Millennium World Peace Summit (2000), the World Economic Forum (2001, 2003) and several parliaments across the globe.

Gurudev is the Chancellor of Sri Sri University. He has also been appointed as the Chairman of the Quality Control of India Yoga Certification Committee. He is a member of the Amarnath Shrine Board (appointed by Government of Jammu and Kashmir, India). He was appointed the Chairman of Reception Committee for the 500th anniversary celebrations of the Coronation of Krishnadevaraya (by Government of Karnataka, India). Gurudev is also a member of the Amarnath Shrine Board (appointed by Government of Jammu and Kashmir, India).

He travels to nearly 40 countries every year, exemplifying his call to globalise wisdom. His universal and simple message is that love and wisdom can prevail over hatred and distress.

- ◆ Born in 1956 in southern India.
- ◆ At the age of 4, astonishes his teachers by reciting the Bhagavad Gita, an ancient Sanskrit scripture.
- ◆ Starts lessons with his first teacher, Pandit Sudhakar Chaturvedi, a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi.
- ◆ Becomes a scholar in Vedic literature and obtains a degree in modern science.

Conferred with:

- ◆ Highest civilian awards of Mongolia, Paraguay and Colombia
- ◆ Padma Vibhushan (2016), highest annual civilian award of India
- ◆ Honorary Doctorates from 16 international institutions.



ONE WORLD FAMILY



At 'The Yoga Way', an event jointly organised by Indian Embassy in Brussels, Gurudev addresses the European Parliament on relevance of Yoga for decision makers, April 21, 2015.



Gurudev addresses the gathering at UNESCO in France on the solutions for current global challenges, April 24, 2015.



Gurudev at the Interfaith Conference for World Religious Leaders in Seville, Spain. He has played a vital role in promoting interfaith dialogue. He encourages individuals to follow their chosen spiritual path while honouring the path of others.

Gurudev is engaged in bridging religious, social, ideological and economic divides in society by enlivening the ancient Indian ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (One World Family). He reminds us that diverse traditions and cultures have their roots in the same basic human values of peace, compassion, truth, belongingness and non-violence. The Art of Living serves society with a non-denominational, secular and holistic approach.

In March 2007, the Universal Declaration of Human Values, authored by Gurudev, was unveiled at the John F Kennedy Centre for Performing Arts in Washington DC. This document, in the form of a proposed resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations, represents Gurudev's vision for a fresh approach to fostering understanding and harmonious coexistence between different peoples and cultures.

In January 2005, Gurudev gave the keynote address at the First World Congress of Imams and Rabbis for Peace held in Brussels.

He has hosted and facilitated several dialogues and reconciliation events between different caste groups in various parts of India. In 2002, he hosted a three-day conference at The Art of Living International Centre in Bengaluru to showcase the contribution of Dalits to the rich heritage of India.

Respected as a neutral party with unquestionable integrity, Gurudev has inspired many groups to adopt peaceful means to resolve conflicts. He has engaged all the stake holders in the peace process in areas such as Sri Lanka, the Balkans, Iraq, Kashmir, Israel, Lebanon and the Ivory Coast. Trauma relief programmes have been conducted extensively in these areas to help individuals release negative emotions such as anger from the past, revenge and frustration, which can hamper the peaceful resolution of disputes. Gurudev convened the South Asia Peace and Reconciliation Conference in Oslo in April 2008.

"Pluralism and embracing people of all cultures should be part of our education," said Gurudev at the Presidential Conference entitled 'Facing Tomorrow 2009', in Jerusalem. "The Middle East crisis can be solved through educating people with a multi cultural, multi religious and broader spectrum of knowledge," he said.



ONE WORLD FAMILY - CELEBRATING DIVERSITY



Gurudev leads a meditation for an estimated 2.5 million people at the 25th anniversary celebrations in Bengaluru, India in February 2006

SILVER JUBILEE: CELEBRATING SERVICE

February 17-19, 2006

In February 2006, at The Art of Living Foundation's 25th anniversary celebrations in Bengaluru, India, an estimated 2.5 million people from 151 countries gathered to celebrate the spirit of service and togetherness. The historic gathering included 1,000 leaders from ten main religious traditions of the world and 750 key political figures from various countries. It was the largest recorded meditation for world peace in history.

Gurudev was central to the opening ceremony for the largest and most diverse multi-faith gathering of religious and spiritual communities in the world, The Parliament of the World's Religions in Melbourne in December 2009. He urged people and communities of faith, spirit and goodwill to "Make a World of Difference" in the midst of the challenges facing the global community.



Gurudev addresses the gathering at Olympic stadium in Berlin during the 30 years celebration in July 2011.

30 YEARS OF THE ART OF LIVING: CELEBRATING 3 DECADES

July 2-3, 2011

The Art of Living celebrated its 30th anniversary at Berlin's historic Olympic stadium - the Olympiastadion. The festival saw thousands of people from across continents, religions, and traditions sit together and appreciate the rich cultural diversity from around the world.

630 dignitaries from India and abroad, including the Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia, past Presidents and Prime Ministers, Ministers, Congressmen, several Members of the European Parliament, the German Parliament, ambassadors, business leaders, academicians, NGO representatives, religious and spiritual leaders, attended the festival.



Over 3.75 million people from 155 countries gathered to witness sterling performances by artistes, musical renditions, and dance shows and to participate in the world's largest meditation at the WCF 2016.

THE WORLD CULTURE FESTIVAL (WCF)

March 11-13, 2016

The World Culture Festival (WCF) 2016 held in New Delhi, India was a historic 3-day event from March 11th to 13th organised by the Art of Living to celebrate its 35 years of service, spirituality and humanity. Over 3.75 million people from 155 countries gathered to witness sterling performances by artistes, musical renditions, and dance shows and to participate in the world's largest meditation. On a unique 7-acre stage, 36,603 artistes 3000 dignitaries, 2500 religious and spiritual leaders from different fields came together to celebrate the diversity in cultures from across the world while highlighting our unity as a human family. In these times of conflict and turmoil, the World Culture Festival has brought forth the message of peace and the unity in diversity of a One World Family beyond the narrow boundaries of religion, nationality, race and language.

Interesting facts about the World Culture Festival

- ◆ World's largest floating stage of 7 acres that housed 36,603 artistes, 3000 dignitaries, 2500 religious and spiritual leaders.
- ◆ An estimated 1.8 billion people watched the live telecast of the event from 767,463 locations across 188 countries.
- ◆ The lowest step was 6 ft high and the highest was 47 ft high. Over 1000 people worked on stage and venue development.
- ◆ More than 20,000 international guests attended the event. Sizable contingents from South America, Mongolia, Russia, U.S., Europe, Middle East, Japan, Malaysia, Australia, Pakistan among others were present.
- ◆ World's largest Peace meditation: This was the first time in the world that 3.5 million people meditated for world peace on all three days at one physical location. Millions also participated virtually



At the WCF 2016, Gurudev said, "We are inspired to continue with more enthusiasm and greater speed to realize the dream, where life becomes a celebration and the world will become one family. The World Culture Festival is a celebration of achievements and a vision to do better."



CONFLICT RESOLUTION



Gurudev in dialogue with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki during his three-day peace mission to Iraq in May 2007.



Gurudev visits refugees in different camps in Erbil, Iraq in November 2014.



Gurudev addresses the peace conference and honours Kurdish Kobani woman fighters.



With senior Yezidi leader & advisor to government of Erbil Dr. Mirza Dinnayi

IRAQ

Art of Living volunteers have been working in Iraq on a sustained basis since September 2003 to facilitate the physical, mental, emotional and social well-being of the Iraqi people. To date, 5,000 Iraqis have benefited from the trauma relief and community empowerment projects in Baghdad, Basra, Suleimania and Karbala. Gurudev visited the nation in May 2007 and in December 2008 at the invitation of Iraqi Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki. The Prime Minister requested Gurudev to expand The Art of Living programmes to more parts of Iraq, including the prisons.

Gurudev urged Iraqi leaders to give non-violence a chance. He met with a wide spectrum of Iraqi society including senior political figures, Shiite leaders, tribal heads, representatives of humanitarian organisations, women, soldiers and youth. Following his visit, the Iraqi government sent 55 youth to The Art of Living international headquarters to attend a month-long training. As a result, Iraq now has many more agents to bring about peace.

Working to help the Yazidis

In 2014, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar called upon the governments of Europe, America, and India to save the thousands of Yazidis trapped in the Sinjar Mountains in Iraq.

The Art of Living and its sister concern, the International Association for Human Values team has been working to bring relief to refugees and internally displaced people (IDP). From its base in Erbil, the team brought relief of 110 tons of food, water, and hygiene products to over five different camps, each camp sheltering 550 Iraqi families. Food supplies were also airlifted and distributed to Yazidi refugees on the Sinjar mountains. The IAHV reached out to more than 2,000 families in the region.

Gurudev also visited Kurdistan from November 19 to 21, 2014, to give solace to the hundreds of Christians, Kurds, and Arabs who had been displaced. The visit, which was Sri Sri's third to Iraq, saw him deliberate with various leaders, bringing them on a common platform to discuss peace.

Gurudev talked about co-existence, compassion, and commitment to peace at the IAHV-hosted conference titled 'Protecting Women and Bringing Stability and Peace'. Gurudev also addressed the Kurdish Parliament and interacted with the refugees at The Art of Living's relief camp in the Sinjar mountains.

The surmounting strife has been a cause for immense stress among the locals. To provide effective healthcare, The Art of Living started a unique Ayurvedic center on June 2, 2015. Dr. Rikot Hamah Rachid, the Health Minister of Kurdistan, extended his support to the center and inaugurated it. Till date, many Iraqis have experienced the benefits of Ayurvedic healthcare.



CONFLICT RESOLUTION



Gurudev travels to Havana where he maintains a dialogue with FARC Peace Delegation during three days. He invites them to embrace the Gandhian Non-Violence principle.



Gurudev meets UN director and victims of the conflict in Bogotá.



Mahinda Rajapakse, President of Sri Lanka, with Gurudev in April 2009, after an in-depth discussion of the Tamil refugees in the IDP camps.



Gurudev offers solace and comfort to the people in the Manik camp for Internally Displaced People (IDP) Sri Lanka.

COLOMBIA

A 52-year-old war formally ended with the signing of the peace agreement between the FARC and the Colombian government in Cartagena de Indias on September 26, 2016. Gurudev was invited by the President & the FARC to be part of the ceremony.

“Thank you for everything you (Sri Sri) have done for the peace process. You have been a great support and friend of this process. All your help is very useful and your spiritual guidance is so important and I will be grateful forever,” said the President of Colombia H.E. President Santos to Gurudev after the event.

During his visit to Colombia, Gurudev also addressed a group of 500 social leaders inviting them to cultivate inner peace and support the peace process. The Arhuacos indigenous community asked Gurudev for his support to protect the environment in their territory, culture and ancient traditions.

Forgiveness program

On Gurudev’s recommendation, The Art of Living facilitated a forgiveness program between FARC leaders and the families of 12 deputies who were kidnapped, held captive and finally killed by the FARC (only one survived). During this meeting, the families of the deputies expressed their suffering to the perpetrators who said, “Today with sincere humbleness, we would like to publicly recognize our responsibility and ask for forgiveness.” The meeting ended with the families and FARC leaders holding hands in a circle and together, praying for the souls of the deceased deputies.

With Gurudev’s guidance, The Art of Living in Colombia is developing peace-building programs that will be adopted in the post-conflict period. In September 2017, the FARC relaunched itself as a political party.

SRI LANKA

Rebuilding Trust for Lasting Peace

Gurudev has visited Sri Lanka four times since 2005 to resolve the crisis. Concerned about the conflict in Sri Lanka, and the plight of the civilians, Gurudev went on a 3-day peace mission to Sri Lanka in April 2009. He closely interacted with refugees in the Manik camp for Internally Displaced People (IDP) as well as a camp in Vavuniya and met with H.E Mahinda Rajapakse, President of Sri Lanka. Gurudev has also started the “Village of Hope”, an orphanage for children.

Since 2004, he has been actively involved in resolving the Sri Lankan crisis. He was instrumental in the formation of the ‘Committee for Peace in Sri Lanka’ comprising Hindu and Buddhist leaders, including the Dalai Lama.

He had extensive meetings with the President, opposition leaders, Tamil leaders and the general public during one of his visits to the nation in April 2006. During the visit, he was inundated with letters from the public seeking his help to bring about peace in Sri Lanka. In September 2006, Gurudev ventured into LTTE stronghold Kilinochchi for peace talks.

In two separate visits, Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickramasinghe and two parliamentary delegations from the United National Party (UNP) and Tamil National Alliance (TNA) visited Gurudev in India in 2006 to discuss the Sri Lankan issue.

Since 2005, over 1,500 Tamil youth, mostly from Jaffna, have undergone The Art of Living youth leadership training programme after which they have given up violence and taken on community empowerment projects.

In his fifth visit to Sri Lanka in October 2009, over 10,000 people visited Gurudev at the country’s largest indoor stadium in Colombo. He urged Sri Lankan Tamils to “have peace in your heart, in your mind, family and society.”



CONFLICT RESOLUTION



Gurudev with Kashmiri leaders during his visit to the state in 2006. The visit led to a rare dialogue between leaders of several Kashmiri separatist groups, including both factions of the All Party Hurriyat Conference and representatives of Kashmiri Pandits.

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Gurudev's peace initiatives in Jammu & Kashmir focus on:

- ◆ healing the trauma of decades of militancy
- ◆ facilitating dialogue between people from different ideological groups
- ◆ improving the inhumane conditions in migrant camps
- ◆ reforming prison inmates
- ◆ de-stressing army and police personnel
- ◆ channelling misguided youth toward constructive activities.

He has visited the state several times to open up avenues for dialogue and negotiation. His visit in 2006 culminated in a rare dialogue between leaders of several Kashmiri groups, including both factions of the All Party Hurriyat Conference and representatives of the Kashmiri Pandits. Inspired by Gurudev, thousands of youth who had been trained in terrorist camps, have shunned the path of violence.

Conferences like "Kashmir: Back to Paradise"(2016) & "Paigam-e-mohabbat"(2017 & 2018), provided a platform for all the stakeholders to voice their opinions in an effort to restore peace in the valley.

In 2005, IAHV established a child care centre to provide education and a safe haven for children affected by militancy and the 2005 earthquake.

CLASS CONFLICT IN INDIA

Gurudev's teachings and initiatives have transformed many villages in the Naxalite-infested areas of central Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. During his visit to Bihar in 2002, more than 100,000 youth from warring factions such as Ranvir Sena, CPI-ML, People's War Group and Maoist Communist Centre vowed to spread the message of non-violence.

As a result of his timely intervention, there was no retaliatory massacre in the aftermath of the 2006 Jehanabad killings. Instead, warring groups came together soon after the incident for a community gathering organised by The Art of Living in Ekwari, the nerve centre of Naxal violence in Bihar, which avoided further escalation of violence.

Gurudev has hosted and facilitated dialogues and reconciliation events between different Caste Groups in various parts of India. In March 2007, he hosted the Truth and Reconciliation Conference in New Delhi bringing together leaders from the upper and lower castes of India who pledged to strive towards bringing equality in society. In 2002, he hosted a 3-day conference at The Art of Living International Centre in Bengaluru to showcase the rich heritage of the Dalits in India.

KOSOVO

In Kosovo, The Art of Living has successfully carried out programmes to promote dialogue between people on both sides of the ethnic divide, thus expanding the circle of belonging to transcend narrow identities.

The Health Ministry of Kosovo directly supports The Art of Living's trauma relief efforts which have helped thousands of people including war veterans, prisoners, health workers, victims of war crimes, UN peace keeping forces and children in Kosovo.



Kashmiri children at The Art of Living International Centre in Bengaluru, India. The children were previously staying in refugee camps. They have now found a safe haven at the centre.



Women learn breathing techniques at an Art of Living trauma relief course in Plemetina Camp, Kosovo. The 105 participants, mostly Albanians, Serbs and Roma people, were all suffering from severe post-war trauma.



DISASTER MANAGEMENT & TRAUMA RELIEF



Gurudev consoles the victims of the December 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami in Nagapattinam. This coastal town in Tamil Nadu, India was among the worst affected areas.



The Art of Living conducted trauma relief programmes for army personnel (involved in rescue operations), families, children and school teachers in the aftermath of the Beslan school hostage crisis.



Art of Living volunteers provide emergency relief in remote areas of Assam and Bihar in the September 2007 floods.

Gurudev leads a worldwide network of volunteers to bring immediate relief and long term rehabilitation to people affected by disasters. The Art of Living has implemented disaster management and trauma relief initiatives for affected people in the aftermath of almost every major disaster in the world, including most recently:

- ◆ Kerala, India Flood Relief (August 2018)
- ◆ Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India Flood Relief (July 2017)
- ◆ Chennai Flood Relief (December 2015)
- ◆ Nepal Earthquake Relief (April 2015)
- ◆ 26/11 attack in Mumbai
- ◆ Manila Floods (September 2009)
- ◆ West Bengal, India and Bangladesh Floods (2009)
- ◆ Bihar and Assam floods, India (September 2007)
- ◆ Virginia Tech Campus shootings, USA (April 2007)
- ◆ Vidarbha farmer suicides, India (2007)
- ◆ Surat floods, Gujarat, India (August 2006)
- ◆ Lebanon war (July 2006)
- ◆ Mumbai train blast, India (July 2006)
- ◆ Kashmir & Pakistan earthquake (October 2005)
- ◆ Hurricane Katrina, USA (August 2005)
- ◆ Mumbai floods, India (July 2005)
- ◆ London subway blast, United Kingdom (July 2005)
- ◆ Gujarat floods, India (June 2005)
- ◆ Indian Ocean tsunami, India/Sri Lanka (December 2004)
- ◆ Beslan school hostage crisis, Russia (September 2004)
- ◆ Madrid train attack, Spain (March 2004)
- ◆ Iraq War (ongoing, 2003)
- ◆ Bam earthquake, Iran (December 2003)
- ◆ Jakarta floods, Indonesia (February 2007 & January 2002)
- ◆ River Elbe floods, Germany (August 2002)
- ◆ Gujarat riots, India (2002)
- ◆ Kosovo conflict (2002)
- ◆ Afghanistan War (October 2001, ongoing)
- ◆ 9/11 terror attack, USA (September 2001)
- ◆ Gujarat earthquake, India (January 2001)
- ◆ Orissa cyclone, India (October 1999)



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES



As a result of the Youth Leadership Training Programme (YLTP), people in this remote village in Cameroon have taken the initiative to build a road rather than wait for other agencies to help. Hundreds of youth in Cameroon have undergone the YLTP and are engaged in implementing the 5H programme in their villages.



The Art of Living's 5H programme has revolutionised lives in thousands of villages in India. Thanks to its hygiene initiatives, nine villages in Maharashtra, India have won the Nirmal Gram Puraskar award from the Government of India for achieving total sanitation targets.



Gurudev has led and promoted campaigns to end the practice of sex selection in India.

Through grassroots initiatives, The Art of Living has empowered rural communities to become partners in the process of sustainable development.

5H PROGRAMME

Gurudev started the 5H Programme (Homes, Hygiene, Health, Harmony in Diversity and Human Values) in 1997 to engineer a socio-economic transformation that will eradicate poverty, misery and disease and ensure peace and harmony among communities. The 5H programme is implemented by rural youth trained under The Art of Living's Youth Leadership Training Programme. In India, 110,000 trained youth leaders are working in 40,212 villages. The 5H projects are operating in villages and slums across Africa, Asia and South America.

EDUCATION FOR THE MARGINALISED

618 schools have been set up providing free education to 67,887 children every year in the tribal, rural and semi-urban belts of India, where child-labour and poverty are widespread.

ADDRESSING FARMER SUICIDES

The Art of Living is pursuing a comprehensive programme in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, where farmers have become suicidal due to successive crop failures and mounting debts. Earlier statistics suggested that one farmer was committing suicide every eight hours. In the 507 villages where The Art of Living volunteers have worked so far, there has not been a single reported instance of suicide. Encouraged by the results, the Government of Maharashtra has requested Gurudev to take up the work in all affected districts.

The Vidarbha programme focuses on:

- ◆ Building community support systems
- ◆ Instilling confidence and enthusiasm in farmers
- ◆ Promoting alternative farming techniques such as organic farming and zero budget farming, to improve the yield of crops in the long run
- ◆ Rainwater harvesting
- ◆ Implementing the 5H programme for overall self-sufficiency in villages.

RIVER REJUVENATION

The water scarcity challenge has affected populations across India. The Art of Living under the leadership of Gurudev has taken up this serious issue and initiated revival and rejuvenation of 40 rivers and over 1000 water-bodies across India.

- ◆ **Maharashtra** - 28 rivers (Gharni, Tavarja, Rena, Jana, Mudgul, Manjara, Waki, Terna, Rajegavi, Benitura, Bori, Bhogwati, Narola, Bahiravi, Galhati, Soyanjana, Kasura, Vidrupa, Jatai Shankar, Venna, Waghadi, Panzan, Kalki, Shivnadi, Mannganga, Gomai, Sina and Shivganga)
- ◆ **Karnataka** - 5 rivers (Kumudavati, Vedavati, Kaveri, North Pennar and Palar)
- ◆ **Tamil Nadu** - 6 rivers (Naganadi, Goddar-Saraswati, Shanmuga, Vattaru, Noyyal and Koushika)
- ◆ **Kerala** - 1 river (Pampa)

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Gurudev has inspired numerous initiatives to uplift and create opportunities for women, especially in rural areas. He has initiated mass campaigns against female foeticide. With female literacy rates abysmally low in some parts of the world, The Art of Living rural schools encourage parents to send girl children to school. At one such school on the outskirts of Bengaluru city, 46% of the children are girls, with the numbers rising every year.

Women are given vocational training to reduce economic dependencies, and are given free homes registered in their names. Health education for women covers nutrition, hygiene and disease prevention, while self-development courses help to instil inner confidence.



EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS



Over 30 million people from all walks of life have benefited from Art of Living workshops world-wide.



The Art of Living programmes eliminate stress, create a sense of well being, restore human values and encourage people to come together in service and celebration.



More than 350,000 inmates in jails around the world have been provided an opportunity for serious rehabilitation through The Art of Living prison programme.

“A disease-free body, a stress-free mind and a violence-free society are the birth right of every individual,” says Gurudev. He has designed a myriad of self-development programmes to release stress, create a sense of well-being, restore human values and encourage people from all walks of life to come together in a spirit of service and celebration.

SUDARSHAN KRIYA

The Sudarshan Kriya, a powerful breathing technique cognised by Gurudev forms the cornerstone of a diverse range of self-development programmes catering to all sections of society. Customised courses are available for executives, youth, military, children and villagers. Special programmes have been designed for prisoners, as well as individuals with drug and alcohol dependencies.

Independent medical research from reputed institutions such as NIMHANS (National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences) and AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences) have documented the benefits of the Sudarshan Kriya, including:

- ◆ alleviation of depression
- ◆ heightened awareness and enhanced brain activity
- ◆ reduced cortisol levels (stress hormone)
- ◆ improvements in the blood cholesterol profile, with significant drops in total cholesterol and LDL (harmful) cholesterol, and increases in HDL (beneficial) cholesterol.
- ◆ strengthened immune system.

PRISONER REHABILITATION

Since 1990, over 700,000 prisoners in countries such as India, USA, South Africa, Denmark, Cameroon, UAE, Serbia, Argentina, UK, Argentina and Russia have been provided the opportunity to reform themselves, and break the cycles of violence, guilt and self blame, through The Art of Living programme. In Denmark, the nation's judicial system recognises the effectiveness of the course and sends juvenile offenders to The Art of Living programme in lieu of jails.

In India, 350,000 inmates, including terrorists, in over 100 jails have been provided an opportunity for serious rehabilitation. To provide a more holistic rehabilitative intervention, Gurudev has also initiated recreational opportunities such as theatre, music and dance workshops and vocational training for inmates. In cooperation with the jail authorities, production units have been started in select jails.

4500 armed insurgents from extremist outfits have been rehabilitated through trauma relief workshops and vocational skill training.

DE-ADDICTION

Gurudev has initiated programmes to help people come out of drug, alcohol and substance dependencies which have been highly effective in USA, India, Mongolia and Bahrain. In India, de-addiction centres are operating in West Bengal, Punjab, Delhi, Kolkata, Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. Thanks to the education imparted by the 5H programme, thousands of villagers have given up alcohol and other addictions, reducing the incidence of domestic violence.



AWARDS & HONOURS



"Orden de la Democracia Simón Bolívar" Colombia's highest civilian award was conferred upon Gurudev by its Parliament in June 2015.



Gurudev is honoured with the Illustrious Visitor Award by government officials in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



Gurudev conferred with the Order of the Pole Star, top civilian honor of Mongolia, by the President of Mongolia, Mr. Nambaryn Enkhbayar.

HONOURS BESTOWED BY GOVERNMENTS ACROSS THE WORLD

- ◆ Title of "Friend of Military Police of Brazil", Bengaluru, India, October 2, 2018
- ◆ **Padma Vibhushan, highest annual civilian award**, Government of India, January 25, 2016
- ◆ Humanitarian Award from the Municipality of Lima, Peru, June 30, 2015
- ◆ "Medalla de la Integracion en el Grado de Gran Oficial", Andean Parliament, Lima, Peru, June 30, 2015
- ◆ "Diploma de Honor" by the National Congress of Peru in Lima, June 30, 2015
- ◆ **Highest civilian award**, "Orden de la Democracia Simón Bolívar", Bogota, Colombia, June 24, 2015
- ◆ Honoured by the city of Tampa, Florida, USA by declaring June 18, 2015 as "A Day of Happiness", Florida, USA, June 18, 2015
- ◆ Certificate of Recognition from the California Legislature Assembly, USA, June 30, 2014
- ◆ 'Most Illustrious Guest Award' awarded by the Mayor of Lima, Peru, September 15, 2012
- ◆ **Highest civilian award** "National Order of Merito de Comuneros", Paraguay, September 13, 2012
- ◆ Illustrious citizen by the Paraguayan Municipality, September 12, 2012
- ◆ Illustrious guest of the city of Asuncion, Paraguay, September 12, 2012
- ◆ Tiradentes Medal in Rio, the highest honor from Rio de Janeiro State, Brazil, September 3, 2012
- ◆ Vishwa Chetana award, India, December 19, 2011
- ◆ Human of the World Award, (bestowed by the Academy of National Security of Russia), Russia, July 1, 2011
- ◆ Phoenix Award, Atlanta, USA, 2008
- ◆ Honorary Citizenship and Goodwill Ambassador, Houston, USA, 2008
- ◆ Proclamation of Commendation, New Jersey, 2008
- ◆ Architect of World Peace Award, India, 2008
- ◆ 'Light of East' National Award, India, 2008
- ◆ Honoured by United Nations Millennium Campaign (UNMC) for his contributions towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, 2007
- ◆ Honoured by the city of Washington DC by proclaiming the week of his visit as 'Human Values Week' in March 2007
- ◆ Leadership Award for Extraordinary Promotion of World Peace and Harmony by Amity University, New Delhi, 2007
- ◆ Honorary Citizenship by City of Baltimore, Canada, 2006
- ◆ Honorary Citizen of the city of Calgary, Canada, 2006
- ◆ Centennial 2006 Medallion by the Legislative Assembly of Calgary, Canada, 2006
- ◆ The Humanitarian Award by the city of Brampton, Ontario, 2006
- ◆ **Top Civilian Honor**, "Order of the Pole Star", Mongolia, 2006
- ◆ Peter the Great First Grade Award, Russia, 2006
- ◆ Mongolian Prime Minister's Award, Mongolia, 2006
- ◆ Alberta Legislative Centennial 2006 Medallion, 2006
- ◆ Global Humanitarian Award, Illinois, USA, 2005
- ◆ Bharat Shiromani Award, New Delhi, India, 2004
- ◆ The Illustrious Visitors Award, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2004
- ◆ Phoenix Award, USA, April 29, 2002
- ◆ Guru Mahatmya Award by Government of Maharashtra, India, 1997
- ◆ Nominated to the Advisory Board of Yale Divinity School, USA, 1990
- ◆ Title of Yoga Shiromani (Supreme Jewel of Yoga) by the President of India, 1986



AWARDS & HONOURS



Honorary Doctorate conferred upon Gurudev by Nyenrode University, Netherlands, June 2012.



Gurudev is honoured with a honorary doctorate by Gujarat Technological University in Jan 2013.



The Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, India's largest medical university, conferred Gurudev with an Honorary Doctorate in Science.

HONORARY DOCTORATES

- ◆ Honorary Doctorate, Sharda University, Greater Noida, India, Mar. 4, 2017
- ◆ Honorary Doctorate, Desh Bhagat University, Punjab, India, Oct. 21, 2013
- ◆ Doctorate Honoris Causa, Utkal University, Orissa, India, April 25, 2013
- ◆ Honorary Doctorate, Gujarat Technological University, Jan. 19, 2013
- ◆ Doctorate Honoris Causa, Universidad Autonoma de Asuncion of Paraguay, Sept. 13, 2012
- ◆ Diploma of Honour from the Buenos Aires University, Sept. 6, 2012
- ◆ Honoris Causa Doctor, Siglo XXI University Campus, Cordoba, Argentina, Sept. 5, 2012
- ◆ Honorary doctorate, Nyenrode University, Netherlands, June 15, 2012
- ◆ Honorary Doctorate from Suresh Gyan Vihar University, Rajasthan, India, 2012
- ◆ Professor Honoris Causa, Szent Istvan University, Budapest, (Hungary), 2009
- ◆ Doctor of Letters Honoris Causa, Bengaluru University, India, 2009
- ◆ Doctor of Letters Honoris Causa, Nagarjuna University, India, 2008
- ◆ Doctor of Letters Honoris Causa, Maharaja Sayajirao University, India, 2007
- ◆ Doctor of Science Honoris Causa, Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, India, 2007
- ◆ Doctor of Philosophy (Holistic Medicine) Honoris Causa, Open International University for Complementary Medicine, Sri Lanka, 2006
- ◆ Doctor of Literature Honoris Causa, Kuvempu University, India, 2004

SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR DAYS

- ◆ October 23, 2014, St. Louis, Missouri, USA
- ◆ April 25, 2010, Hamilton County, Ohio, USA
- ◆ April 23, 2010, Milwaukee, USA
- ◆ April 20, 2010, Denver, USA
- ◆ October 29, 2008, Irving, Texas, USA
- ◆ July 4 - 6, 2008, Edison, New Jersey, USA
- ◆ July 29, 2007, Pomona, California, USA
- ◆ March 28, 2007, Washington DC, USA
- ◆ December 4, 2006, Regina, Canada
- ◆ November 25, 2006, Windsor, Canada
- ◆ November 21, 2006, Surrey, Canada
- ◆ November 21, 2006, Richmond, Canada
- ◆ September 13, 2006, Ottawa, Canada
- ◆ September 10, 2006, Halifax, Canada
- ◆ September 7, 2006, Edmonton, Canada
- ◆ June 28, 2002, Chicago, Illinois, USA
- ◆ May 9, 2002, Beverly Hills, California, USA
- ◆ April 29, 2002, Atlanta, Georgia, USA
- ◆ January 10, 2002, Austin, Texas, USA
- ◆ August 26, 2000, Washington DC, USA
- ◆ June 28, 2002, Chicago, Illinois, USA
- ◆ May 8, 2002, Beverley Hills, California, USA
- ◆ April 29, 2002, Atlanta, Georgia, USA
- ◆ January 10, 2002, Austin, Texas, USA
- ◆ August 26, 2000, Washington, USA



AWARDS & HONOURS



Professor Honoris Causa, Szent Istvan University, Budapest, Hungary, June 24, 2009



Tiradentes Medal in Rio, the highest honor from Rio de Janeiro State, September 3, 2012



Gurudev receiving the highest civilian award of Paraguay, September 13, 2012

OTHER AWARDS

- ◆ Peace Ambassador Award, World Peace and Diplomacy Organization, Bengaluru, India, June 6, 2018
- ◆ International Leadership Award, Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles, USA April 17, 2018
- ◆ Bharat Gaurav Lifetime Achievement Award, Sanksriti Yuva Sanstha, UN Headquarters, New York, USA, June 10, 2017
- ◆ Jeevan Gaurav Puraskar, Maharashtra State Marathi Patrakar Sangha, Pune, India, April 19, 2017
- ◆ Highest award for Human Values & Development by President of Guatemalan National Reserve Bank, Guatemala, December 8, 2016
- ◆ Dr. Nagendra Singh International Peace Award, New Delhi, India, November 20, 2016
- ◆ Acharya Mahapragya Ahimsa Samman, Bengaluru, India, September 9, 2016
- ◆ Asia Pacific Brand Laureate Award, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, March 28, 2015
- ◆ Independent Charities of America Seal of Excellence, California, USA, October, 2013
- ◆ One World Family Award at the first "One World Family Days 2013" Conference, Stuttgart, Germany, September 13, 2013
- ◆ Gandhi, King, Ikeda Community Builders Prize by Martin Luther King, Jr. International Chapel, Morehouse College, Atlanta, USA, April 3, 2013
- ◆ Siddha Shri Award, Belgaum, Karnataka, India, December 2, 2012
- ◆ Sir M. Visvesvaraya Memorial Award, Bengaluru, India, October 1, 2012
- ◆ The Sivananda World Peace award, Sivananda Foundation, South Africa, August 26, 2012
- ◆ Award for peace and harmony by the Al-Mustafa University, Delhi, India, March 11, 2012
- ◆ Crans Montana Forum Award, Brussels, June 24, 2011
- ◆ Atmajyoti Award, Delhi, India, September 23, 2010
- ◆ Culture in Balance Award, Dresden, Germany, October 10, 2009
- ◆ The Ball of Peace awarded by The Peace Doves, Norway, June 13, 2009
- ◆ National Veterans Foundation Award, USA, 2007
- ◆ The 2006 International Peace Award by 'For the Love of Children Society of Alberta Canada', 2006
- ◆ Dara Shikoh National Award for Harmony, New Delhi, India, 2005
- ◆ Mahavir-Mahatma Award, India, 2005