

Vasudhā Calling

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SPECIAL ARTICLE

Prof. A. Satyanarayana Shastryji's Contribution to Practical Vedānta¹

Raghunandan Trikannad

When Vasudeoji told that after expressing my feelings on the function to celebrate Respected Shastryji's Birth Centenary he mentioned about his Energy Model, and that I should discuss it in this Podcast, I suggested that instead, I will discuss exclusively on Prof. Satyanarayana Shastryji.

I have had the privilege of reading several Upaniṣads and listening to discourses by Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj, Swami Chinmayanandaji Maharaj, Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj (Divine Life Society), Swami Chidbhavanandaji Maharaj (Sri Ramakrishna Tapovanam), Sri Madhav Punditji (Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry), and many other enlightened teachers. Yet it was Shastryji who taught us the Upaniṣadic method of transforming our lives.



He was like the person who not only teaches you how to balance a bicycle but also how to ride it—only here, the bicycle was spirituality. Even today, I can still feel the reassuring hand of his guidance on my back. While he used Vedāntic terminology with precision, his scientific background enabled him to relate these concepts to our everyday experiences. Personally, I felt he made us *re-live* the dialogues of the Upaniṣads between masters and disciples.

He encouraged us to ask questions—questions that deepened self-understanding and directly touched our lived experience, questions that had a lasting impact on our lives and behaviour. I will try to share some of his contributions that continue to inspire and guide my *Swādhyāya* and *Sādhana*.

Is spirituality necessary?

His answer was clear: No, not at all. The world, or at least most of it, functions perfectly well without spirituality. It becomes necessary only for those who feel an inner restlessness or a deep longing for it. Most people accept life with all its changes and uncertainties.

But for some, this restlessness manifests as persistent problems. Shastryji classified all possible problems into three categories: Desire, Worry, and Boredom. Most people can manage these through effort, hope, and change. But for those whose desires have become obsessive, whose worries rob them of sleep, or whose boredom makes them restless and empty—these become unmanageable and lead to misery. For such individuals, spirituality can offer real relief.

The Ṛṣis' method of enquiry

Shastryji observed that the Ṛṣis never asked how a person behaves when gripped by desire, worry, or boredom. Instead, they asked the deeper question: *What is the state of mind during these experiences?*

¹ Speech delivered by Sri. T. Raghunandan on 27 July 2025 in a virtual podcast event organised by VK-NARDEP

Why do we desire? What happens when a desire is fulfilled? Such questions encourage self-observation. The theory of Vedānta can be understood by most, but this method of inquiry opens up a new inner horizon for the seeker.

To truly immerse oneself in its life-changing principles, one must develop the habit of looking within—leading gradually to *Aṅtarmukhatā* (inwardness). Shastriji would point out, for example, that during anger the flow of thoughts (*Vegam*) is fast, whereas in a calm and happy state the flow is slow. This is reflected in our breathing, speech, and actions.

His advice: slow down—do not rush. We are always in a hurry to achieve, even in meditation! He recommended what he called *Naidhānya* (deliberate slowing down). Interestingly, modern sustainability movements also advocate a slower pace of life.

Why do we act?

Shastriji began from a question that applied to everyone, not just seekers: *Why do we act at all?* Whether our actions are noble or ignoble, good or bad, creative or destructive, the underlying reason is this—we feel happy in doing what we do.

He termed this enquiry *Sukha-Dukkha Viveka* (discernment between happiness and sorrow) and called it the true beginning of the spiritual quest.

We are all familiar with the joy that comes when the senses contact their respective objects. He would illustrate this with humour: the first cup of coffee brings joy (*Coffee-Sukha*), but by the fourth cup it invariably brings discomfort (*Coffee-Dukkha*). This is true of all sense objects and proves that happiness is not in the objects themselves but is a **state of mind**. Even desires for name, fame, and power are attempts to bring the mind into this state of happiness.

The state that makes the mind happy

When a desire arises, it creates restlessness—a discomfort that pushes us to act. Once the desire is fulfilled, that restlessness disappears, and the mind becomes silent.

After an exam, a speech, or an interview, the tension of performance is gone. The person is not even concerned with the performance itself; they simply say, *“It’s over! I’m relieved!”* The desire is quenched, and the mind is silent.



Shastriji insisted that this silence is the mind's natural state. Many objected, saying the natural state is a continuous flow of thoughts. He would respond: “You have only examined the waking state—what about your sleep?” and would quote from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

Happiness without prior desire

We would then ask: what about those moments when happiness comes unexpectedly—like seeing a dear friend, receiving an unanticipated gift, or tasting a sweet—when there was no prior desire?

To answer this, Shastriji shared his personal experiments from the *Yoga Śāstras*. He described a continuous flow of energy from the base of the spine to the head, which is spent either through the senses or through thinking. Contact with an object spends some of this energy, relieving strain felt at the eyebrow centre.

He expressed this as an Energy Equation:

$$EP = ES + EL$$

- EP = Energy Produced
- ES = Energy Spent
- EL = Energy Load

When EP equals ES, the load becomes zero and peace results. He illustrated this using the **Sonometer experiment**—a demonstration of resonance. When the energy spent matches the energy produced, the mind becomes peaceful because the load is zero.

Activities that neither provoke *Rāga* (likes) nor *Dweṣa* (dislikes)—such as mindful walking or doing household chores with awareness—can help achieve this state. Without awareness, however, such activities may lead to workaholism. Similarly, rituals, *Japa*, and chanting can calm the mind if done mindfully; otherwise, they become mechanical.

The risk of overindulgence

While sensory indulgence can temporarily relieve energy load, overindulgence can lead to addiction, as seen in gluttony or other excesses. This requires **extreme awareness** during sensory contact.

Another method is to reduce the production of energy itself through the practice of Baṇdhas (neuro-muscular locks):

- *Mūla Baṇdha* – Perineum Lock
- *Uddyāna Baṇdha* – Diaphragmatic Lock
- *Jalāndhara Baṇdha* – Chin Lock

These must be learned only under expert guidance. Shastryji, an accomplished Yogi, could direct *Prāṇic* currents to different parts of the body at will.

Lasting influence

During my five years of close association with him, I received countless insights and suggestions that gave direction, resilience, and persistence to my *Sādhana*. He introduced me not only to Vedānta but also to the *Yoga Vāsiṣṭha* and taught me the method of studying such texts.

It has been more than forty-eight years since I first met him, and even now, Shastryji continues to guide my *Swādhyāya* and *Sādhana*. I believe this is the true meaning of Guru Paramparā.

Thank you for your patient listening





PERSPECTIVES

Nature Proposes - Man Disposes

Dileep Kulkarni

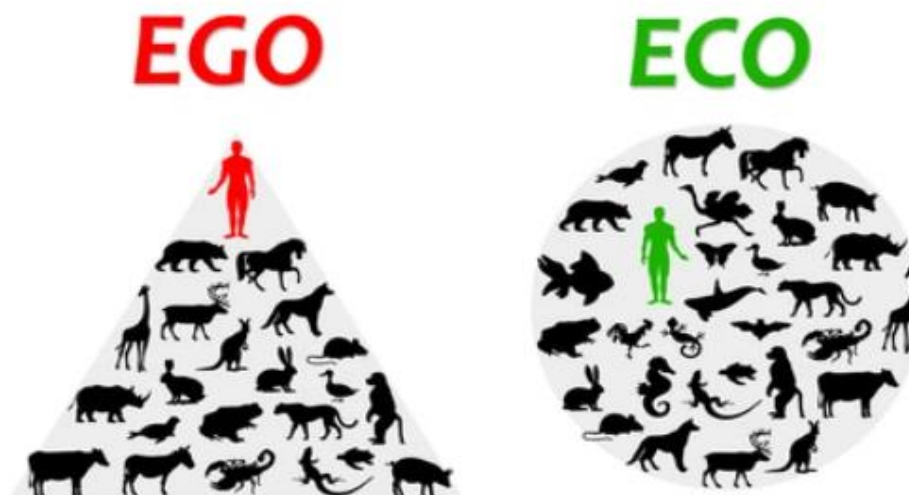
In this series, we will look at the salient features of the nature's system one by one, and understand the follies of human system vis-a-vis that. It will provide us many insights for making changes to move towards sustainability.

4. EQUAL IMPORTANCE

This principle naturally follows from the earlier one on *mutual dependence*. Since all species are mutually interdependent, they stand on par with one another. There is no such thing as one species being “more important” than another. In nature, there is no *VIP-ism*. Mutual dependence places all species—big and small; tall and short; broad and slender—on the same level.

How, then, do we come to say that “the lion is the King of the Forest” or that “humans are the most important species in nature”? We may say such things, but these assertions have no real validity. It is our perception that the lion is a king, or that we are the most important species; nature does not think so. She has placed all beings on the same footing.

Remember the children’s story *The Lion and the Rat*? The so-called “King” was once trapped in a hunter’s net and found himself helpless, until the previously obliged rat—a supposedly “trivial” creature—came to his rescue. Who, then, was more important: the lion or the rat? The truth is—neither. Both are equally important in their own way.



Why? Because there are countless tasks that need to be performed, and all of them are equally essential for the smooth running of nature’s cycles. Hence, all doers of these tasks are equally important. A bullock, for instance, may be far stronger than an earthworm, capable of ploughing the soil to a depth of one foot. But the tiny earthworm—whose size and power are negligible in comparison—enriches the soil with biomass to a depth of twenty feet. Who, then, is more important? Again—neither. Both, in their respective roles, are equally vital.

An eagle and a sparrow, a vulture and a butterfly, an ant and an elephant—each has a specific function in nature, a *niche*. None is “more” or “less” important than another. If any species becomes extinct, the loss is equally grave. It is like a web, where each strand is equally important; break one, and the entire structure suffers. This worldview is called **ecocentrism**.

We human beings are also just *one of the species*, and at the material level we are on par with all others. Yet, due to our intelligence, we tend to think of ourselves as superior to every other species. This is known as **speciesism**. It gives us the self-assumed “right” to exploit or even kill other species for our benefit. This outlook—called **anthropocentrism**—stands in stark contrast to the ecocentric view. Ecocentrism fosters humility, love, kindness, and cooperation; anthropocentrism breeds arrogance, cruelty, domination, plunder, and exploitation.

Historically, the Western attitude has been largely anthropocentric. For a long time, the impact on the environment was limited due to constraints in energy and technology. But once they—and subsequently the rest of the world—acquired vast amounts of energy and powerful technology, the environmental impact grew by leaps and bounds, pushing the entire system to the brink of collapse. Our exploitation of natural resources and the resulting pollution are proving disastrous.

We must recognise that, at the physical level, we are by no means “more important” than any other species. As living beings, we do have a legitimate right to Earth’s resources and energies, but not a fraction more than any other species. The sooner we shed our “superiority complex” and sense of entitlement, the better it will be for sustainability.

That said, we are unique—and in a certain sense, more important—than all other species in the spiritual realm. Only *Homo sapiens* have the capacity to voluntarily control the senses and mind, and to evolve spiritually. Only we can strive for *Moksha*; only we can transcend ourselves; only we can attain self-realisation. This is our true prerogative—our genuine superiority. It is not physical, but metaphysical. In that realm, we are “VIPs.”

The more we manifest this spiritual superiority, the more our consumption—and consequently our production—will decrease, paving the way for sustainability.

In our own interest, and for the good of all, let our “VIP-ism” manifest itself in this higher, benevolent way.



Balancing Health and Well-Being through Ayurveda's Tridosha Philosophy²

Dr. L. Mahadevan and Dr. Priyanka Sekaran

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian “science of life,” offers a holistic approach to health and longevity. At its heart lies the concept of Tridosha—three vital energies whose balance determines physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

The Three Doshas



Vata governs movement—breathing, circulation, and cellular communication. Vata-dominant individuals are creative and agile, but imbalance can cause anxiety, restlessness, and digestive issues.

Pitta controls digestion, metabolism, and body temperature. Pitta types are driven and sharp-minded, but excess Pitta may lead to irritability, skin problems, and digestive disorders.

Kapha provides stability and structure, governing growth, strength, and immunity. Kapha-dominant individuals are calm and nurturing, yet imbalance can result in lethargy, weight gain, and respiratory issues.

Daily and Seasonal Alignment

Ayurveda recommends Dinacharya (daily routines) and Rutucharya (seasonal adaptation) to keep the doshas in harmony. These practices align lifestyle with nature's rhythms, helping preserve vitality and resilience.

² This article is adapted from Mahadevan, L., & Sekaran, P. (2024). Indian system of medicine. *Vivekananda Kendra Patrika*, 52(105).

The Three Pillars of Well-Being

1. Food (Ahara)

Food is both nourishment and medicine. Diets should be tailored to balance one's dosha—cooling foods for Pitta, warm grounding meals for Vata, and light dry foods for Kapha. A balanced diet includes all six tastes (*Rasas*): sweet, sour, salty, bitter, pungent, and astringent.

Strong Agni (digestive fire) ensures proper nutrient absorption and prevents toxin buildup (*Ama*). Spices and herbs help maintain Agni. Mindful eating—free from distractions—improves digestion and satisfaction.

2. Sleep (Nidra)

Sleep is essential for restoration and healing. Ayurveda advises a consistent sleep schedule, a calm and comfortable environment, and bedtime routines like meditation or warm oil massage (*abhyanga*). Avoiding caffeine, heavy meals, and stimulating activities supports deep rest.

3. Celibacy (Brahmacharya)

Brahmacharya means moderation in sexual activity. It conserves Ojas—vital energy—for creativity, personal growth, and spiritual pursuits. Overindulgence can aggravate Pitta or deplete Vata, causing imbalance. The approach varies with constitution and life stage but focuses on mindful self-control.

Understanding Disease (Vyadhi)

In Ayurveda, disease arises when doshas lose balance. Causes include:

- Dosha imbalance
- Toxin buildup (*Ama*)
- Weak Agni
- Mental stress or unresolved emotions
- Environmental factors like seasonal shifts or pollution

Treatment addresses root causes through diet, herbs, lifestyle changes, Panchakarma (detox therapies), and mental well-being practices.

Prevention First

Ayurveda prioritises prevention—maintaining doshic balance to avoid disease before it manifests. This personalised approach adjusts routines and treatments to an individual's constitution (*Prakriti*) and current imbalance (*Vikriti*).

A Path to Harmony

Health in Ayurveda is a state of balance between body, mind, and spirit, maintained in tune with nature's cycles. By understanding the Tridosha, following daily and seasonal routines, and upholding the pillars of food, sleep, and celibacy, one can achieve lasting well-being.

With its emphasis on prevention, root-cause healing, and holistic living, Ayurveda remains a timeless guide to a healthy, harmonious life.





Food Is Not What You Eat! Food Is What You Digest

N. Krishnamurthi

Hanuman Singh was a respected temple guard and wrestler known for his devotion and discipline. When a new wrestler came to challenge him, everyone expected Hanuman Singh to lose because he did not eat much or train like his rival. Instead, he spent his days chanting and eating only one meal.

Sri Ramakrishna, the master, asked him if he really thought he could win without physical training. Hanuman Singh replied, “True strength comes from proper digestion, not just eating large amounts. I noticed my opponent was overeating beyond what his body could digest.”

On the day of the match, Hanuman Singh defeated the challenger. This story shows how the mind and how we eat affect our strength and health.



The lesson is simple but powerful: When we rush through food or overeat, much of the nutrition is lost because the body cannot digest it properly. Eating slowly, chewing well, and being mindful allows the body to absorb nutrients fully. It also helps us enjoy food more, feel satisfied sooner, and avoid overeating.

This mindful way of eating teaches us patience and respect for our bodies. It shows that true enjoyment and strength come from balance—not excess. When applied beyond food, this approach helps us lead happier, healthier, and more sustainable lives





BEST PRACTICE

Simple Steps to Reduce Food Waste and Live Sustainably

T. Valliappan

Food is precious, and wasting it means wasting effort, money, and nature's resources. Here are easy ways anyone can practice sustainable food habits in daily life.



Start by **growing your own food** in a small garden. It takes some effort but watching plants grow will inspire you. Compost vegetable waste to nourish your plants naturally.

When shopping, **buy only what you need**. Plan meals and stick to a list to avoid waste and save money. Don't hesitate to buy oddly shaped fruits or vegetables—they are just as good as perfect-looking ones and often fresher without harmful chemicals.

Store food wisely by using older items first and keeping your fridge organized. Understand food labels: “best before” means quality may reduce after that date, but food can still be safe, while “use-by” means the food should not be eaten after that date.

Take smaller portions and **consume leftovers** by storing them carefully or using leftover scraps as compost.

Support **local farmers** by buying from them directly. It helps the community and encourages sustainable farming.

Remember to **save water and soil**, as they are vital for growing healthy food. Sharing excess food with those in need or joining community gardening can spread the benefits further.

By respecting food and reducing waste, we protect our environment and build stronger communities.





Slow City Movement

Dileep Kulkarni

The 'Slow City' movement began in Japan in 1989—an ironic feat at the time. Japan was then riding the wave of rapid development. Two ideas were common: *Gambaru*, meaning "I will work hard," and *Gambare*, meaning "You too, work hard." Against this trend, the city of Kakegawa declared itself the first 'Slow City.' Its people voluntarily chose to live slowly. A new concept emerged: *Gambaranai*—"Go slow; take it easy!"



Slowly, the movement gained momentum. After 2000, people in developed nations began feeling frustrated. They had money, houses, cars, gadgets—everything—but no real satisfaction. This led to a search for alternatives, resulting in the 'Slow Living' movement.

Though slow living started as an individual choice, as more people embraced it, they sought to make their cities slow too. Kakegawa took the lead, inspiring many other cities worldwide. On July 24, 2003, the first 'Slow Living Conference' was held in Gifu, Japan, with 15 municipalities participating. They committed to adopting slow living principles for their citizens.

'Slow Cities' aim to slow down social life. They have fewer cars and more buses and trams; roads are transformed into gardens and recreational spaces; children enjoy more play areas. People work without hurry and take time to come together for singing and dancing.

Proponents say 'Slow Cities' are an antidote to negative globalization. The worldwide 'Cittaslow' movement fights the homogenization of towns and seeks to improve quality of life by promoting happiness and self-determination. Using 'glocalization,' these cities balance local uniqueness with global connections.

Today, the Cittaslow movement has spread to 28 countries, and more cities are joining every year.





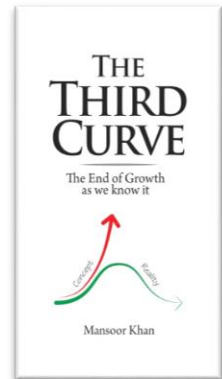
REVIEW

The Third Curve – The End of Growth as We Know It authored by Mansoor Khan

Ajit Sharad Barje

In a world hypnotized by economic growth, stock indices, and consumption-driven optimism, Mansoor Khan's "The Third Curve" is a compelling and thought-provoking book that challenges conventional beliefs about economic growth and sustainability. The book asks us to fundamentally reassess how we define progress. Is "more" always better? and should we measure prosperity by "GDP" or by the "quality of life"?

At its core, 'The Third Curve' is a discourse on the fundamental mismatch between our financial expectations and the laws of nature. Khan, an IIT and Cornell alumnus turned filmmaker and now author, brings a rare clarity as he dissects the modern myth of perpetual economic growth. He builds his argument with the calm logic of a physicist and the intuitive sensibility of someone who literally has chosen to live away from the frenzy lifestyle.



He introduces two curves— "the financial curve" and "the energy curve". The financial curve is exponential and has an insatiable hunger for GDP growth. It reflects how governments, banks and investors believe the world should function: always expanding, always accelerating. But then comes the energy curve—the real constraint. Finite and limited.

But he doesn't stop there. He proposes a third curve—which is less defined. This is the curve of awareness, of sustainability, and of grounded living. It is the path that humanity must now consider if it wishes to avoid ecological and economic collapse. This curve calls for rethinking success, redesigning modern lifestyles and most importantly, detaching from the blind belief in infinite growth.

The author argues that the global economic model is built on a flawed assumption: that perpetual growth is not only "possible" but "desirable". He meticulously illustrates how money creation through debt grows exponentially due to man-made hypothetical calculations, while the actual physical economy, which depends on energy (especially fossil fuels), grows linearly or even stagnates. This divergence creates a dangerous imbalance. Using clear analogies, graphs and illustrations, he explains complex concepts like the "limits to growth", "peak oil", and the "energy return on energy invested (EROEI)". He emphasizes that cheap and abundant energy, particularly oil, has been the hidden enabler of economic expansion over the past century. However, as energy resources deplete and become harder to extract, the cost of energy increases, and economic growth slows down or even contracts. In an age where everybody focuses on the word "scale," this book asks a million dollar question: what happens when you hit the ceiling?

He criticizes policymakers and economists who continue to promote the idea of infinite growth without acknowledging energy and ecological constraints. The book is also a critique of modern consumerism, pointing out that blind pursuit of GDP growth results not only in environmental degradation but creates social inequality, and psychological dissatisfaction.

The book may not comfort the economists or thrill the equity investors, but it will stir the thinker and generate scholarly debate. The author presents a compelling blueprint of insight which policy-makers should consider about the consequences of exponential growth. On the other hand it is an essential read for anyone seeking to understand the complex and challenging times we live in. For a layman it encourages a shift in thinking (and of course living!) that is not only timely but crucial for a sustainable future. The message is clear; we need to slow down, live more consciously, and respect the limits of our natural systems.

The concept can be better understood from the author's TEDx Talk - [The Third Curve: Mansoor Khan at TEDxYouth@Anaikatti](#)



Vasudha Exhibition Updates

Try Our Quiz Kiosk!

We are excited to introduce a fun and interactive addition to the Vasudha exhibition — a **Quiz Kiosk**!

After you explore the exhibition and learn about sustainable lifestyles through our slides and videos, you can visit the kiosk to take part in a quiz. The questions are designed to help you remember and reflect on what you have seen and learned.

It's a great way to test your knowledge and deepen your understanding of how simple changes in daily life can help protect our planet.

Everyone who participates will receive a **certificate of participation** — a small token of appreciation for your interest in living sustainably.

So, don't miss out! After your visit to the Vasudha exhibition, make sure to stop by the quiz kiosk and take the challenge. Learning can be fun and rewarding!

We look forward to seeing you there.



Vasudha Eco Selfie Corner



There is another fun addition to the Vasudha exhibition — the **Vasudha Eco Selfie Corner**!

After completing your visit, don't forget to stop by this special spot to take a selfie. It's a way for you to celebrate your journey towards sustainable living and proudly show that you are a **Vasudha Sustainability Champion**!

Share your selfie with friends and family and inspire others to join the movement for a greener, healthier planet.

Come, capture your moment and wear your sustainability with pride!





In the month of July 7020 visitors came to see the Vasudha exhibition. Shri.P.S Murthy, Rtd. Joint Director, Information Tech & Communications (IT) Andhra Pradesh Secretariat, Mobile No. 9989599242, Email: psmurthy14@gmail.com who visited on 5th July 2025 had given the following feedback in the visitor's book.

I am indeed very much delighted to learn the initiatives of **NARDEP** under the aegis of **Swami Vivekananda Kendra**. An excellent initiative that leverages Information Technology as a powerful tool for the upliftment of rural society. The use of advanced platforms like cloud computing for fostering happy, sustainable, and inclusive living is truly commendable. I wish the Kendra God speed, good luck, and sterling success in their endeavors in protecting the environment. **All the Best to the Team.**

Coming Events

The Podvast on 24th August will be by Shri.Yoeshwar Kumar and on 31st August by Shri.Tency of Auroville. **Podvast Link:** <https://meet.google.com/sen-nzas-hzc>

