

DHARMA SHASTRI



Foundational Principles for Social Reform and Curriculum Design

SESSION 5 – PRACTICAL APPLICATION

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INVOCATION

- + dharma-mulam hi bhagavan
- + sarva-vedamayo harih
- + smrtam ca tad-vidam rajan
- + yena catma prasidati

The Supreme Being, the Personality of Godhead, is the essence of all Vedic knowledge, the root of all religious principles, and the memory of great authorities. O King Yudhisthira, this principle of religion is to be understood as evidence. On the basis of this religious principle, everything is satisfied, including one's mind, soul and even one's body. (SB 7.11.7)

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1. FOR ISKCON IN GENERAL

1. Support Rural Communities (GBC Resolutions)
2. Establish Traditional Gurukulas
3. Establish Varnasrama Colleges
4. Create Varnasrama Research Teams [VRT] (IDVM-India)
5. Establish National Varnasrama Committees
6. Establish National/Continental/Global Varnasrama Ministries
7. Establish Global Varnasrama Initiative Committee (GVIC)

1.1 BRAHMANICAL ACTIVITIES

1. ISKCON Ministries for Education, Deity Worship, Book Distribution, etc.
2. Bhaktivedanta Academy (Gurukula) in Mayapur
3. Bhaktivedanta Gurukula and International School (BGIS) in Vrindavana
4. Vaisnava Institute for Higher Education (VIHE) in Vrindavan
5. Mayapur Institute (MI) in Mayapur
6. Varnasrama Training Course in Mayapur (IDVM-India)
7. Bhaktivedanta College (Radhadesh) in Belgium
8. ISKCON LEADS (Leadership Education & Development System)
9. Varnasrama College Foundation (VCF) in Sri NandiGram, Sridham Mayapur

1.2 KSATRIYA ACTIVITIES

1. **ISKCON** Ministry of Communications, Leadership Seminars, Anuttama das

2. **INDIA** Faculty of Politics – Danda Niti, at Varnasrama College Foundation (VCF) located at Sri NandiGram, Sridham Mayapur.

At Mayapur Gurukula, Kung Fu School

3. **ITALY** Murari Caitanya Das, Founder of Ksatriya- Dharma, International Academy of Vedic Warrior Arts <http://www.ksatriya-dharma.com/>

4. **HUNGARY** Radha Krishna das as Deputy Mayor of Somogyvamo village in Hungary in year 2008.

5. **INDONESIA** Gita Nagari Baru recognized by local government, paid head of village.

1.3 VAISYA ACTIVITIES

HUNGARY	Krishna Valley and Global Ecological Network (GEN)
INDIA	Gokul Dham [Belgaum] (Traditional Technologies) Govardhan Eco Village (International Award/2013-16)
AUSTRALIA	New Govardhan [Woofers Program supports farming]
INDONESIA	Gita Nagari Baru (Video – Make Vrindavana Villages)
USA	Murari Sevaka Kirtan Valley (Cow Products) New Vrindavan Community Kitchens Gita Nagari Community

***** Many ISKCON Communities in Different Continents. See ISKCON Directory.**

2. FOR CITY TEMPLES

1. Establish Varnasrama Colleges
2. Home Schooling and Sunday School for Children
3. Start Varnasrama Research Teams (VRT) Study Groups
4. Develop Community Gardens (Urban Farming)
5. Purchase from ISKCON Rural Projects
6. Develop a Farm Community
7. Avoid Harmful Consumer Produced Foods

3. FOR RURAL PROJECTS

GOLDEN RULES TO FOLLOW

1. **Temple** comes first and then comes **education** of community residents (Gita Nagari by Srila Prabhupada).
2. **First is Food** means Agriculture is essential along with Cow Protection, **the basis of Vedic Economy.**
3. **First is Character** means through both **Gurukula** and **Varnasrama Colleges** we help mold the character of residents.
4. **Produce only what you need** (avoid agro-business mentality)
5. **Use only what you produce** (Utilize **first & all** that Krsna provides)

4. FOR INDIVIDUALS

1. Deepen our understanding of the dual meaning of Dharma, i.e. both Varnasrama Dharma and Bhagavat Dharma.
2. Strive to establish a strong sadhana.
3. Learn to be satisfied with the minimum in life.
4. Develop the inquisitive mentality of a student.
5. Appreciate the Vedic aphorism of “Education is Life and Life is Education.”
6. Work towards up-grading your skills and abilities.

5. FOR GENERAL SOCIETY

1. Networking with like-minded persons (interfaith dialogue)
2. Promoting Eco-Village Development, Yoga Retreats
3. Introducing Vedic concepts of governance in existing leaders
4. Preparing devotees to become Social Leaders
5. Preparing devotees to take Government Leadership positions
6. Organizing Conferences on Self-sufficiency and Sustainability
7. Towards Revival of Agrarian Lifestyle

6.1 TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY

SIX ACTION IDEAS

- 1. GET GROWING:** Start a temple garden. Size is irrelevant, although the bigger the garden the more facility to engage others. Be sure to validate the efforts of the gardener(s) by making a point to offer his/her fruits, however insignificant, to the Deities.
- 2. UPGRADE THE OFFERING:** Improve brahminical standards by preferentially offering bhoga to the Deities that is not the product of exploitive and toxic agricultural practices. Local sourcing of fresh commodities opens up a whole world of people and organizations living on the metro fringe, many of whom are favorable to devotees.

6.2 TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY

SIX ACTION IDEAS

- 3. AHIMSA SUPPORT GROUPS:** Within your local congregation, organize an ahimsa support group. Krishna conscious mothers and grandmothers naturally want to protect their children from meat eating. Initiate the dialogue. Nurture the development of the group. What are the challenges for Indian youth? How can we protect them from McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Chicken?
- 4. LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO INTERACT:** Public perception about most ISKCON city temples is that it's a "religion for Indian people," or that we are unconcerned with anything as mundane as recycling or climate change. Change the dynamic by embracing opportunities to interact with local environment groups. Be eager to share our ideas.

6.3 TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY

SIX ACTION IDEAS

- 5. CONGREGATIONAL PURCHASING POWER:** Indian families in America are looking for sustainable answers, especially where to find cruelty free milk. Families should be encouraged to pool their food dollars into well-capitalized buying blocks. Locate a dairy farmer on the metro-fringe who is looking for a niche market. If he's willing to protect the herd, from slaughter, including the newborn calves, secure a long term contractual agreement to supply milk to the congregation.
- 6. ADVERTISE ISKCON'S FARM VENTURES:** Wonderful things are happening throughout ISKCON's network of farm communities. Each project is an incubator for the future of daiva-varnashram...and they're all desperate for help! Making people aware of these projects by prominently and consistently posting farm community news sends recruits and supporters.

7. BOOKS OF REFERENCE

- 1. *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Canto 7, Chapters 11 to 15
- 2. *Gita Nagari Essay* [1956] (available in VedaBase/Folio) by Srila Prabhupada
- 3. *The Light of the Bhagavat* [1961] by Srila Prabhupada
- 4. *Speaking About Varnasrama* [1999] (VedaBase/Folio) by Hare Krishna Dasi
- 5. *Make Vrindavan Villages* [2007] by Bhakti Raghava Swami
- 6. *Modernity is Killing Civilization* [2018] by Bhakti Raghava Swami
- 7. *Vedic Vaisnava View of Sociology – Its Application in the 21st Century* [2023]
Doctoral Thesis by Bhakti Raghava Swami

6. WEBSITES

1. BRS Védique

www.brsvedique.org

2. Vedic Eco Village

www.vedicecovillage.ca

3. Sri Surabhi Campaign

www.srisurabhi.org

4. International Society for Cow Protection

www.iscowp.org

5. Varnasrama College ONLINE (VCO)

www.varnasramacollege.com

6. Varnasrama College Foundation (VCF)

www.vc-foundation.com

7. VCF/Varnasrama – The Last Wave

www.varnashramthelastwave.com