THE VEDA-S AND VEDIC CHANTING

The Veda-s are a vast collection of hymns that were heard by ancient Indian sages when they were in a deep meditative state. Collectively they are the most authoritative source of Indian wisdom as they contain information on every conceivable subject from the relationship between a teacher and student to the structure of the human system, from the relevance of nature and the elements in our lives to the technical know-how necessary to build weapons, from the origin of the universe to simple social etiquette and more. Thus, the Veda-s have for thousands of years been the primary source of reference.

Sanskrit, the classical Indian language, was the language of the Veda-s. Over the years the vast information contained in the Veda-s was preserved and transmitted from one generation of teachers and students to the next in an oral manner. There were no books or pens or laptop computers to facilitate taking notes. All teaching and learning was done orally. There were certain basic rules of Vedic chanting that had to be adhered to without compromise. It is because of the rules and pedagogy of chanting that until today, the Veda-s are chanted exactly as they were several thousand years ago.

In the Indian tradition, the concept of education implied a thorough study of the Veda-s and the dedicated practice of Vedic chanting. At the crux of this study was the relationship between teacher and student. In learning Vedic chanting, a student was expected to listen to his/her teacher and then to chant exactly as the teacher did. This process was called ādhyāyana. The Vedic tradition remains till today one of the important foundations upon which rests the entire gamut of Indian thought, knowledge, culture and beliefs.

INTRODUCTION TO THE VEDIC CHANT TEACHER-TRAINING PROGRAM

Today, Vedic chanting is gaining popularity all over the world, not just because it is the most authoritative source of Indian wisdom, but also because the practice of chanting has multiple benefits such as enhancing health, improving memory and promoting healing.

While Vedic chanting has been an integral part of KYM’s work for over 30 years, there is a need today to introduce this tradition as a formalized study and practice of an ancient Indian art. It is with the intention of preserving and carrying forth the Vedic tradition that Vedavani, a unit of KYM is offering an intensive Vedic Chant Teacher-Training program.

This two-year training program is offered with the aim of training participants to become professional teachers of Vedic chanting.
WHY DO VEDIC CHANTING

Vedic chanting has multiple benefits when done in the correct manner.

- Vedic chanting produces certain vibrations, and hence can enhance physical and mental health

- The process of *adhyanam* involves listening closely to the teacher and reproducing the chant exactly. Hence, this requires attention. The practice of Vedic chanting is very useful in improving concentration and memory.

- Listening to Vedic chanting and practicing chanting can also calm the mind. In fact, chanting is considered to be one of the important forms of meditation.

- Vedic chants can be applied in different ways with different effects. Hence, Vedic chanting can be effectively used in healing and yoga therapy.

WHO CAN DO VEDIC CHANTING

In traditional times, Vedic chanting was practiced only by certain specific sections of people. However, in the modern world, as more people who were traditionally authorized to learn and propagate Vedic chanting began taking up other professions, there came a phase when it seemed dangerously certain that the ancient Indian tradition of Vedic chanting would be lost. It was T Krishnamacharya who opened the doors of Vedic chanting to everyone irrespective of race, gender, occupation or religious/political affiliations. It was his firm belief that anyone who wished to learn and teach Vedic chanting with a view to preserving this ancient tradition had the right and authority to do so. Krishnamacharya's initiative set in motion the efforts to preserve and carry forth the timeless teachings of the Veda-s.

OUR TEACHER

Tirumalai Krishnamacharya - yogi, healer, linguist, Vedic scholar, expert in the Indian Schools of thought, researcher, author... in other words, a legend. Born in 1888 in a remote Indian village, T Krishnamacharya who lived to be over hundred years old was one of the greatest yogi-s of the modern era. If today, yoga is an inherent part of the everyday lives of millions of people across the world, it is due in large measure to the pioneering efforts of T Krishnamacharya who revived yoga in the early twentieth century. While preserving ancient wisdom and reviving lost teachings, Krishnamacharya was also a revolutionary innovator who developed and adapted yoga practices that suited the needs of individuals. Krishnamacharya's knowledge of yoga was so vast that he taught each student differently. In refusing to standardize the practice and teaching methodology, Krishnamacharya created an understanding of yoga relevant for a broad spectrum of students. By integrating the ancient teachings of Yoga and Indian philosophy with modern day requirements, Krishnamacharya created yoga practices that are as accurate and powerful as they are practical and relevant.

While he is known for his mastery over yoga, Krishnamacharya was equally an expert in other traditions such as Ayurveda, the Veda-s and other knowledge systems that originated from the Veda-s. In fact, it was Krishnamacharya's profound knowledge of the Veda-s, the secrets and powers of mantra-s (Vedic chants) and his skill in chanting that earned him the distinguished title of “Veda Kesari.”
TKV DESIKACHAR

Son and student of T Krishnamacharya, TKV Desikachar is today acknowledged as a great master in his own right. He had the unique privilege of studying under his father and teacher in the traditional gurukula system. (In this system of education, the student would reside with the teacher for the entire duration of the learning period, so that a total commitment to learning was possible.) His studies especially included the practice of Vedic chanting in the traditional style and also a study of the application of Vedic chants in meditation, healing and other daily activities. During his long and intensive study with his teacher spanning thirty years, Desikachar not only learned the practice and application of all the tools of Yoga, but also studied how to apply yoga for therapeutic purposes (including the very fine art of pulse reading), as well as many of the classical texts on yoga. These include the Yoga Sutra-s of Patanjali, Yoga Rahasya of Nathamuni, Yoga Yajnavalkya Samhita, Hathayoga Pradipika, Siva Samhita and Gheranda Samhita amongst others. He also studied Vedanta and Ayurveda. This is why Desikachar’s teaching is so close to representing the complete tradition of his legendary father. TKV Desikachar is the author of many books on yoga and Vedic chanting. He travels all over the world teaching and spreading the message and benefits of yoga and Vedic chanting. TKV Desikachar lives in India with his family.

VEDAVANI

Vedavani, the Vedic chanting unit of KYM, was founded with the objective of teaching Vedic chanting in keeping with the pedagogy of the Vedic tradition. Vedavani is committed to the highest standards of perfection in learning and transmitting the tradition of Vedic chanting. Vedavani’s mission is also to integrate and apply different aspects of Vedic chanting in the process of therapy and healing.

Vedavani has sixteen active teachers. Menaka Desikachar, wife and student of TKV Desikachar, with over thirty years of experience in teaching yoga and Vedic chanting was the first honorary director of Vedavani. She is closely associated with Vedavani and continues to train the teachers of Vedavani.

Vedavani’s activities involve teaching Vedic chanting to individuals and groups. The method of teaching is oral, in keeping with the traditional system of learning and transmission of knowledge. The emphasis is on the understanding and application of the rules and pedagogy of chanting.

COURSE OUTLINE

This course will be conducted in English and will

- provide an insight into the origin and evolution of the Veda-s and their scope and content
- present Vedic chanting as a powerful tradition that is as relevant in the 21st Century as it was a thousand years ago
- help students practice Vedic chanting keeping in line with the rules and pedagogy of chanting
- help students experience Vedic chanting as an important tool in the process of meditation
- offer an understanding of the application of Vedic chanting for health and healing
WHO CAN APPLY

This course will be appropriate for those who wish to become teachers of Vedic chanting. No prior knowledge of Sanskrit is necessary for applying to this course. This course is open to beginners as well as those who have had some exposure to Vedic chanting but wish to understand its pedagogy in greater detail. While not a must, knowledge of any system of music will be an added advantage in learning and practicing Vedic Chanting.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Vedavani and KYM do not impose any restrictions to acceptance based on the grounds of race, creed, color, occupation, religious or political affiliation, age, gender, and/or physical ability. KYM supports equal opportunity policies, as long as the student is mentally and emotionally healthy and shows commitment to the learning requirements of this course.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM

The participants in the Vedavani Vedic Chant Teacher-Training Program will undergo an intensive course of study that includes class-room lectures and group chanting sessions and private practice.

The training program will be spread over a two-year period (2010-2012) with students participating in three modules of five-months duration each.

Universally relevant and acceptable chants will be taught, along with basic rules of chanting, meanings of chants taught, an introduction to Sanskrit and the application of these chants in healing.

All chants will be taught using the aid of chant texts. Study material will be provided. The chants to be covered are

pancamayaslokam, ayurmantrah, laghunyasah, siva pancaksari mantrah (samhita, krama, jata, gha), surya namaskara mantrah, mantrapusam, candra namaskrtya mantrah (samhita, krama, jata, gha), gayatrimantrah (samhita, krama, jata, gha), durgasuktam, narayana upanisat, arogya mantrah (pranapana), bhrguvalli, ganapati prarthana (samhita, krama, jata, gha), siksavalli, purusasuktam.

LOCATION OF TRAINING

The address and contact information for the venue are as follows:
31, Fourth Cross Street, RK Nagar
Mandaveli, Chennai - 600028, India.
Phone : + 91 44 24952900
Web : www.kym.org
Email : vedavani@kym.org
DATES OF TRAINING*

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<th>Semester I</th>
<th>Semester II</th>
<th>Semester III</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 2010 - April 2011</td>
<td>June - October 2011</td>
<td>December - April 2012</td>
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* subject to change

COST OF THE TRAINING AND PAYMENT PLAN

Fees for each module will be have to be paid as per the payment plan given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Amount Payable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester I</td>
<td>Fee Rs. 6000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester II</td>
<td>Fee Rs. 6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester III</td>
<td>Fee Rs. 6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total fees (for all Semester)</td>
<td>Rs. 18,000</td>
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This cost only includes tuition fee and study material.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated and their progress assessed in the following contexts:

- Relationship with instructors – The quality of the relationship between student and instructor reflects the evolution of a good teacher-student relationship, which is central to learning and teaching Vedic chanting.
- Ability of the student to chant with attention to detail and from memory.
- Performance and participation of the student in the classroom sessions
- Written and/or oral examinations during course of the training and at the end of the program
- Continuing assessment of studies – Vedavani will evaluate each student’s progress continually over the course of the program based on certain criteria that will be announced prior to evaluation.
- To be certified as Vedic Chant teacher, each student is required to pass all evaluations in all modules. If the required conditions are not fulfilled in any module, those students will be required to take private lessons to improve his/her proficiency and will be permitted to undergo a second assessment/evaluation prior to the commencement of the next module.
CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Upon satisfactory completion of the program and a review of the student's credentials and other details, students will be certified and graduated as Vedic Chant Teachers. Certification will be valid for a period of five years and must be renewed at least six months prior to the end of this period. This system ensures participation in continuing education and enhancing quality of learning and transmission.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

In order to maintain high standards of teaching, all program graduates are encouraged to continue learning through teaching and their own personal chanting practice, and by participating in Continuing Education Units (CEUs) offered by Vedavani. Graduates are expected to interact regularly with their respective chanting instructors.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

KYM and Vedavani will provide you with an effective support network that includes

- A professional training program conducted in a fair and open manner
- Facilitating a relationship with the faculty who will offer guidance throughout your training and support your practice after completion of the course
- Opportunities to attend the national and international Continuing Education Units (CEUs) organized by Vedavani.

YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE COURSE

In return for being accepted into the course, you are expected to fulfill certain conditions:

- respect and fulfill the training program requirements
- meet with your chanting instructor regularly during the training program and maintain contact with your chanting instructor after graduation.
- Continue to practice the chants taught throughout the training period and after
- Attend all course meetings and any additional seminars and elective courses recommended by the trainer.
- Be a dignified ambassador of the teachings of this ancient tradition.

ATTENDANCE AND CLASSROOM ETHICS

Participants are expected to attend all three modules of the training program. Certification will be issued only upon completion of all three semesters. An overall attendance of 80% is compulsory to be eligible for certification. Absence due to minor illnesses or other unavoidable circumstances will be considered within the mandatory overall attendance of 80%. It is the responsibility of the participants to catch up on missed sessions by working with the other participants. It is also expected that participants will arrive on time for each class. Participants are expected to conduct themselves with dignity at all times during the training modules and during interactions with chanting instructor. Each space in the program is non-transferable, so participants will not be permitted to exchange their space with anybody else. Audio/video recording of sessions is not permitted.
REFUND POLICY/ CANCELLATION POLICY

All fees, once paid will not be refunded.

SUGGESTIONS/COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If during the course of the program you realize that you would like to contact us to offer suggestions or register any complaints, please use snail mail only. Please write to the administrative office of Vedavani at the address below. The office will review your letter and respond appropriately as soon as possible.

The Director,
Vedavani
Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram
No. 31, Fourth Cross Street, RK Nagar, Mandaveli
Chennai – 600028
India.