

# END OF COURSE TALK BY SWAMI DAYANADA

Arsha Vidya Gurukulam July 22,1982

SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI

P. O. Box 9  
Piercy, Ca. 95467  
Phone: (707) 247-3424

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Dear Students,

When you begin your classes, there is a beautiful phrase, *Arsha-Vidya* (knowledge of the rishis) which you may use as a group name. This phrase will combine well with your place of location (as in Arsha-Vidya of Marin) or with some other term (Arsha-Vidya Center) so you can have a name which specially identifies your classes, but at the same time, has a common element reflecting our unity of vision and methodology. 'Arsha-Vidya' is being reserved for use by students who have completed a course of study under me and who have notified me that they wish to use the name.

As you undertake a teaching program, you will find that some kind of organization is helpful. At first you probably will want to set up a simple unincorporated association; later you can organize a formal non-profit corporation. You will be the sole, independent head of whatever teaching center you establish. There will be no centralized administrative agency controlling you. You are now teachers in your own right.

Absence of central control of teachers characterizes our teaching tradition. I love this tradition which does not admit any laterally linked hierarchy. For us, what is important is only the simple one-to-one vertical tie between teacher and taught, based on love for knowledge and care and respect for the person. We have no institution like a papacy controlling the priests and monks. The tradition is always handed over by the parents to the children and by the gurus to the sisyas. The absence of lateral organizational control may look weak initially, but in the long run it is the strength behind the survival of the tradition. There is no group domination from a central source. The freedom inherent in such a teaching tradition brings out great people from time to time, confirming the truth of the values and the wisdom of the method.

In the spirit of this vision, I also will allow a few people to establish an 'Arsha-Vidya' organization to be helpful to me. It will be called Arsha-Vidya-Pitam. Initially, the purpose of Arsha-Vidya-Pitam will be two-fold: (1) to support and help organize my public talks, seminars, general tours, and any other teaching activities; (2) to enable me to provide special services, material assistance, and financial grants to my students who are now themselves teachers of Vedanta. At a later time, perhaps it will sponsor the establishment of another course.

Arsha-Vidya-Pitam will be incorporated as a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation. (Some of you may also wish to seek tax exempt status for your Arsha-Vidya groups. I am having put together a 'how-to' set of instructions which will be helpful to you. You can let me know if you would like to receive this packet when it is ready.) The Board of

Sandeepany West - School of Vedanta and Sanskrit  
Phone: (707) 247-3466  
(Under the Auspices of Chinmaya Mission West)

Arsha-Vidya-Pitam will comprise some dedicated supporters in various communities and some of the students who have completed a course of study with me. Every three years the board will change substantially and new students will be given an opportunity to work with me in this service organization.

Even though the most important thing for transmitting the teaching is the guru-sisya parampara, an organization can be very helpful to the teacher. It brings extra hands to do the many jobs and, when tax-exempt status is obtained, protects donated income from tax liability and extends tax deductibility to donors for their donations. An organization loses its helpfulness to the teacher and the teaching only when it develops an ego of its own. The organization is an incidental aid - the teaching is not dependent upon organization. The repository of teaching is the teacher. An organization can exist or cease to exist - the teaching goes on.

With best wishes and love,



Attached is the July 22, 1982 message to Piercy students from Pujya Swamiji at end of course regarding Arsha Vidya.

In the March 2018 issue the above note was inadvertently placed, whereas the note is for this article.

Editor