

### **Self-Discovery and Management**

#### **Preamble:**

One of the biggest challenges that modern life-style and working conditions expose one to is management. In a race to meet the demands of today's competitive world while trying to strike a balance between work and personal life, we invest most of our energy managing things. One does not have to wait to enter the professional world before he finds himself handling the challenge of management. With the plethora of options and opportunities available, and the desire to acquire more and more skills to keep up with the peers, even a student at an early stage of life has to cope with so much that he stands nowhere without learning the skill of management. Right from human resources in a corporate to the time spent by a student in studies and play, from the arduous task of raising children to a small activity such as participation in a co-curricular event - everything needs management. To add to the demanding trends, the humanity is now faced with the bigger challenge of management of depleting natural resources. The stress caused due to endless efforts spent in managing people, activities and situations around has led to the coining of a new term – stress management. In our attempts to manage external entities, we have forgotten that management begins with self. With self-management, so many aspects will be automatically managed and would need no separate attention.

Self-management is a multi-dimensional concept encompassing all aspects of an individual's existence ranging from health and diet management to managing the complex human mind. Managing one's time, relationships and behaviour, all falls under the purview of self-management. Clearly, effective self-management aids in building confidence, reducing stress levels and enhancing mental, physical and emotional health, and thus has a direct impact on one's quality of life. Needless to mention that this concept has been receiving immense attention in psychology, philosophy and health forums. As it turns out, many ancient Indian scriptures like and Vendanta very deeply talk about different aspects of self-management – something that the modern world has started focussing on only recently.

This course is planned to scientifically and systematically explore the skill of self-management. Scientific knowledge is built on the bedrock of experimentations, which are followed by development of universal scientific theories that attempt to explain these experimental observations. There are primarily two methods of making observations in these experiments. The third person method makes observations on an object that is outside the observer and independent of the observer. Naturalistic science-based experiments on physics, chemistry etc. follow the third-person method of observation (with the advent of Quantum Physics, strictly speaking, we now know that there is no observation possible without the observer influencing the system). The first-person method of observations relies on observation of phenomenon happening within the observer. This method of observation gave rise to the science of Yoga and Vedanta that is being re-discovered by the world these days. The course will begin by exploring both modern and ancient bodies of knowledge to first understand the meaning and spread of the term. It will then proceed to uncover and elaborate on many dimensions of self-management and their impact on one's thought process, inter-personal relations, professional and spiritual development. In a nutshell, the course is aimed at answering the question that haunts the new generation – How to strike the right balance between work and personal life while doing justice to both and yet take good care of oneself? The course would also throw some light on how managing one's own personality physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually can resolve many external issues. In addition to the theoretical frameworks, the course aims to give practical insights and tips

using which students will be able to manage themselves well thereby transforming their lives for the better.

**Course Objectives:**

At the end of the course, the students should:

- Get a preliminary understanding of theories underlying self-management from Psychological and Vedantic perspectives
- Gain a theoretical appreciation of the currently held theories about self-management impacting one’s behaviour, thought process and efficiency
- Understand and apply the practical techniques for self-management proposed in modern forums and the ancient texts like Vedanta.

**Course Plan:**

S.No.	Topic	Theory	Practical
<b>Module 1: Introduction to Self-Management</b>			
1	<b>Who Am I</b> Eastern and Western philosophical aspects of Self, trichotomous structure of human personality, self-identity. Why Self-knowledge is important, naturally solution to mental problems.	1.5	
2	<b>Human Personality Paradigm</b> Functioning meaningfully in the world by understanding your personality, meaning of personality, aspects of persona, masks of the ego, the different selves, scriptural interpretation of ‘I’ and the ‘world’ (yushmat-asmat), ontological aspects of self, personality types from psychological and Ayurvedic perspectives.	1.5	
3	<b>Mind and Perception</b> Who creates your experience of life? How do we know? Epistemology in Vedanta and Science, Perception theory in Vedanta and Science .	1.5	
4	<b>Self-Management</b> Handling Body-Mind-Soul-----A study of physical self, psyche, thought, emotion, awareness.	1.5	
<b>Module 2: Mind Management – Need and Techniques</b>			
5	<b>Techniques of Mind Management</b>	1.5	

	Will include time management, relationship management, practical methods to change the thought process, a study of Happiness		
6	<b>Neuroscientific perspectives on Mind Management</b> Neuroplasticity, neurosculpting, engrams, habits, traits, character	1.5	
<b>Module 3: Research Methodologies and Practical Applications</b>			
12	<b>Modern Problems, ancient remedies</b> Stress, EI, decision making, connecting individual and collective, IQ-EQ and SQ	1.5	
13	<b>Research Methodologies</b> In Neuroscience, Yogic sciences, Phenomenological method of Vedanta	1.5	
14	<b>How to apply Yoga-Vedanta</b> In empirical life, in organizing knowledge systems, in augmenting the evolutionary elan	1.5	1
	Total	13.5	1

**Evaluation Components:** This is a Pass/Fail course. There will be seven assignments spread over the semester to gain practical insights. 90% attendance is mandatory along with 90% of the assignments done satisfactorily to pass the course.

**Reference Texts:**

- Raja yoga, Swami Vivekananda
- Yoga Darsana: Sutras of Patanjali with Bhasya of Vyasa (2011), by Ganganatha Jha, Dev Books
- Mandukya Upanishad with Gaudapada's Karika and Shankara's Commentary (2006) by Swami Nikhilananda, Advaita Ashrama, Sixth edition.
- Eight Upanishads: V.2: Aitareya, Mundaka, Mandukya & Karika, and Prashna (2001) by Swami Gambhirananda, Advaita Ashrama, India
- The Psychology of Yoga: Integrating Eastern and Western Approaches for Understanding the Mind by Georg Feuerstein
- Psychology in the Indian Tradition (2017), by Anand C. Paranjpe and K. Ramakrishna
- Theoretical Psychology: The Meeting of East and West (Path in Psychology) (Nov 2011), by A.C. Paranjpe, Springer.
- Handbook of Indian Psychology, (May, 2008), by K Ramakrishna Rao (Author, Editor), Anand Paranjpe (Editor), Ajit K Dalal (Editor), Cambridge University Press India Pvt. Ltd.

**Course Instructor:** Pravrajika Divyanandaprana

Pravrajika Divyanandaprana is a monastic member of Sri Sarada Math stationed currently as the Principal of Nivedita Vidya Mandir, a school for girls, at New Delhi which is run by the Ramakrishna Sarada Mission. She is also the editor of 'Samvit', an English journal published by Sri Sarada Math. She has given lectures at various forums on diverse topics including talks and seminars at IIT Delhi, JNU, IIT-Madras, DU etc. She has also spoken at universities and various forums at University of KwaZulu at Natal, South Africa, Imperial College London, Ireland, Dubai and University of Toronto Canada. She also mentors the Vivekananda Study Circle activities at IIT Delhi.