

## **The Art of Living**

**By**

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### **Abstract**

With the vision of one world family, Vaasudhev Kutumbkam, Art of Living is probably one of the unique institutions on the planet that has made its presence in more than 180 countries. Art of Living is run solely by volunteers. If you ask any of the volunteers what they get working for Art of Living, the answer will probably be a beaming smile and a contented face. Because working for the Art of Living, you are not working to get money but what you get is beyond what money can buy.

### **Keywords**

Art, living, world, peace

### **Art of Living**

Art of Living, a non-profit organization was founded by globally revered spiritual and humanitarian leader Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar. Words fall short when talking about his work and vision for the planet. Conferred with 'Padma Vibhushan' in 2016, the highest annual civilian award in India, Gurudev has been honoured by the highest civilian awards by many other countries like Colombia, Mongolia, Paraguay, Surinam and Fiji. He is one of the few people who has 27 honorary doctorates from around the world.





**Image 1: Sri Sri Ravishankar**

Born in 1956, in Paapnasan, a small village in Tamil Nadu in India, Gurudev has a vision to bring a smile to every face. He founded The Art of Living as an international, non-profit, educational and humanitarian organisation. The educational and self-development programs by Art of Living offer powerful tools to eliminate stress and foster a sense of well-being.

The Art of Living works towards making life a celebration. It has turned out to be a global movement that has touched millions on this planet. The core program of Art of Living is to bring peace to Individuals. As they believe that a society can be peaceful only when every individual is, at peace. To do this, they have many programs that teach meditation and give different tools for self-realization.



**Image 2 : The Art of Living Logo**

The Art of Living has 57 unique programmes designed by Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar that cater to every section of society. Happiness Program is the basic course taught in the Art of Living, where a powerful breathing technique called Sudarshan Kriya is taught. As quoted by CNN the programmes are ‘life changing.’ The Harvard Medical school has quoted that the programs ‘show promise in providing relief for depression.’

The Art of Living also provides programmes for children and teens that support the overall wellbeing. Programs like Utkarsha Yoga, Medha Yoga, Intuition process and Know your Teen helps in empowering children to foster peace of mind, mental clarity, focus, emotional stability and nurturing values. The Art of Living runs over 1200 free schools educating thousands of children, many of whom are first-generation learners from the remotest parts of India.

The Art of Living nurtures the Vedic Wisdom that helps imbibe the essence of the Vedas in our life. It has helped keep the ancient Vedic traditions and the Guru Parampara of passing the knowledge to the future generation with love and reverence.

Art of Living also indulges into permaculture. A unique concept of permanent agriculture restoring the techniques of farming for a sustainable planet. It looks into the flora and fauna, water harvesting, organic and natural farming. The Art of Living Ashram in Bangalore is a classic example, which is also a lush green farm. What set the Art of Living farm apart from other farms was the challenges that lay in transforming the mountainous land sans topsoil into a living jungle with abundant food supply. Once again Gurudev led by setting an example and showed the world that it is possible to grow food on the most infertile terrain. With several workshops for organic farming Art of Living has helped the farmers who were prone to suicide through National Farming Programmes debt free and self-reliant.

The World Cultural Festival (WCF) another unique concept of The Art of Living brings together people of the planet together to showcase their ethnic cultural programs just like how the Olympics brings together athletes from around the world. People from around the world come together and share not only their native food and flavours but also indulge in dance and music. They celebrate diversity on the one hand while connecting hearts on the other. The several WCF that have been held so far have created many record-breaking programmes.

The International Women Conference (IWC) nurtures and recognises the importance of the role of women in society. Art of Living recognizes the fact that a happy woman will lead to a happy family and a happy society. Empowering women and recognizing the role they play in society through love and harmony is what IWC does.

Besides touching the heartstrings with art and culture the Art of Living also indulges in corporate culture and spirituality. The programmes unleash human potential, unfolding innovative methods of discovering latent abilities.

The Rural Development Programme of the Art of Living empowers the rural community globally. Over 1000 model villages have been created in India that provides electricity with the help of solar power in over 90,000 homes. The Youth Leadership Training programme has empowered rural youth from across the globe.

The Art of Living has always stood in the front line whenever there has been any trauma or any kind of mishap. The vast global network of Art of Living helps in being the first to respond in any kind of disaster and trauma.

The Prisoners Rehabilitation program has brought back many deviated violent people into the mainstream, transforming them into better persons. Thousands of militants have laid down weapons and have chosen the path of nonviolence after doing the Art of Living programmes.

There are programmes for war veterans that have helped them come over the anxiety and pain after coming back from the wars. The programmes have helped them to adjust to normal civil life. They have helped in healing the unseen wounds of war.

The Art of Living has held peace conferences and relief camps in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon. The Art of Living has initiated conflict resolution and trauma relief programs in many countries including Afghanistan, Colombia, Brazil, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel-Palestine, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Mauritius, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and United States of America.

The Art of Living worked to bring peace between the Colombian government and the rebels of the FARC, a 52-year-old conflict that came to an end with the intervention of Gurudev. FARC thanks Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar as it relaunches itself as a political party, calling it a miracle. Art of Living has contributed to rebuilding war-torn Iraq. Art of Living has gone to the most devastated regions of Syria, teaching them yoga and breathing techniques for trauma management and stress relief.

The Art of Living has worked very efficiently towards rejuvenating rivers. Since 2013 thousands of dedicated volunteers have committed to reviving dying and drying rivers. With teamwork they have brought back to life many rivers and have kept them flowing. This has helped solve water crises and has made a positive impact on climate change. Besides, tree plantations and cleanliness drives have helped create a greener planet.

Last but not least, under the guidance of Gurudev the 500-year-old conflict of Shri Ram Mandir was resolved. To the surprise of the world the 1000-year-old ancient Shivling has been handed over to Gurudev, and soon it will be consecrated in Somnath temple in Saurashtra.

## **Conclusion**

There are plethoras of programmes coming from the Art of Living that help one to not only manage mind and emotions but also boost energy levels without any stimulant. The programs by Art of Living give emotional, physical, spiritual, social, professional, intellectual, financial and environmental upliftment. The programmes have not only created inner well-being and peace but empowered thousands of people to make the world a better place.

## **Reference**

[artofliving.org](http://artofliving.org)

### **About the Author**

Author of award-winning book *Cosmic Vibes from chaos to quietude*, Shristee Singh has been an Author with an Impact by MomsLeagueGlobal in Mumbai. Her literary work has been honoured with Bharat Award International for short story and Rabindranath Tagore Poiesis Award for excellence in Literature for poetry.

