

# MAHABHARATA IMMERSION

*A deep dive into the world of archetypes*

**February 17th to 23rd 2019**

*Ritambhara Ashram, Kothagiri*





*It is a dark and dingy room. Not been opened for quite some time. Windows have remained closed too.*

*Open the door & windows with some effort.*

*There is a mirror on the wall. Quite old - its coating has faded. And, there is a thick layer of dust and & grime.*

*With some difficulty I open the door and the window.*

*Fresh air comes in slowly as if with some caution.*

*I look at the mirror.*

*I can't recognize myself.*

*Gently clean the mirror - remove all the dust and grime. Hold the mirror steady. I see myself now – yes, it is me.*

*I smile.*

*“Must allow fresh air and clean the mirror regularly”*

*I say to myself.*

*Thank you, Raghu and all you wonderful people.*

*In gratitude*



## **Mahabharata Immersion: The World of Archetypes**

Our deepest potentials lie hidden in the world of our archetypal energies. These energies are universal and exist in each one of us, yet they act out through us in ways that are unique to our individual journeys. The discovery of the expression of these archetypes has the power to bring deep healing, transform our inner world and unlock hidden potential.

Our Personal Energy is immense and can act in heroic ways, however, it is often locked up in our unconscious. The stories of Mythological heroes evoke our hidden potential. The practices recommended in Yoga and Indian dance use both the power of the archetypal energies as well as *prANic* energies to unleash these potentials. We need to enter our subconscious, cleanse it of the debris collected over years of struggle in the work-a-day world, and discover profound healing. This opens the doors to the vast treasures that lie buried under the debris.

The archetypes found in any mythology around the world will be found in the Mahabharata, and archetypes not found in the Mahabharata will not be found anywhere. The Mahabharata Immersion (MI) is designed to enable the participant to engage with the *purANa* from an “inside-out” location, to delve deep within, enter the space of the archetypal energies, enliven the archetypes and enact the primal drama that occurs at the various turning points in one’s own journey

The most evocative stories are metaphors of the inner adventure that the hero embarks upon to befriend the *dAivic* energies and subdue the *asuric* energies. It is through the discovery of the treasures that the inner dragon protects that the hero gains mastery over her gifts and treasures. The *purANa* and the *itihAsa* are not only powerful stories that evoke our desire to be heroes in our own eyes, they are also maps of the archetypal world.

The Mahabharata Immersion invites you to explore your inner world, navigate the landscape of your unconscious, engage with your inner deva and asura and unleash your heroic potential

## About the program

Working with the MI process is one of the most powerful and effective ways to gain mastery over

*Came back home, feeling the deep transformation I went through. Observing your 'clinical work' released in me hidden power, new accuracy comes out in me while meeting my patients, with lucidity and courage to say the things as they are, while embracing it with karuna. and in the night the immersion continues to work in my dreams, and finding myself telling you with *adbhutam* about the sacred space you created for experiencing the archetypal.*

*... rest when we meet, hug and then let our hearts do the talking*

one's hidden potentials, **it** is an invitation to an adventure into the world of archetype. The MI is conceptually designed to bring alive:-

- Learn the art of mastering one's archetypal energies
- Understand how the *purAna* can help in identifying the map of one's inner world

With the aid of curated powerful processes derived from a profound understanding of the Yoga Sutra, dance and theatre; the MI becomes a learning laboratory that is:-

- an invitation to experiment - delve into the depths of the invisible, the unarticulated and the disowned parts of oneself
- an enquiry into the practices of *antaranga yoga*
- A learning space where one can discover and embody one's deepest potentials

## OBJECTIVES OF MI

The MI is therefore a unique programme that will provide you an opportunity to:

- Create a space for you to access your inner dynamics by providing a map through which you can navigate the inner space/ archetypal energies
- Gain mastery over archetypal energies and foster hidden heroic potential
- Introspect upon the relationship between outer expression and inner processes.
- Develop a personal foundation of Role effectiveness, interpersonal ethics and intrapersonal discipline.
- Enable you to discover the "*shAntam*" location within from which to access healing energies
- Empower you to take the key practices of *antaranga yoga* forward into your life spaces
- Discover your mission in life and commit to it

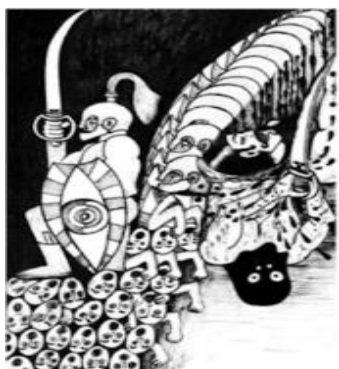
What MI is not

- An opportunity to learn the Mahabharata
- An opportunity for the faculty to offer their interpretation through discussions or discourses
- An opportunity to learn theatre or to appreciate tradition

## DESIGN OF THE PROGRAM

The two main design components of the program are:-

## ONE: THE LEARNING THEATRE

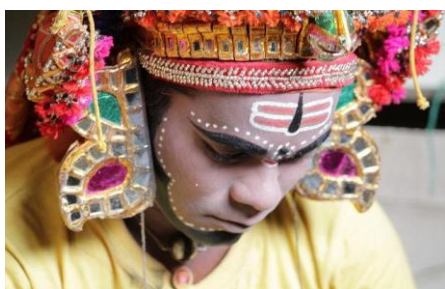


*I see that in the exploration for the enactment and coming up with the statements during the program, something has been touched within and now I am seeing that unfold in my actual life. It's tough but valuable. Connecting the dots....*

*It's beautiful. Thank you so much.*

An Individual is simultaneously a member of multiple systems - organization, society, family and others. Each of these systems is a complex network of interdependent roles and processes with distinct values and norms. The diverse pulls and pressures of the systems and lack of integration and synergy in oneself result in diffused inner energies and consequently affects expression. The learning theatre is designed to focus on archetypal energies, enable a mastery over its dynamics and bring in a coherence between one's inner power and outer expression. An exploration into one's inner-process is enabled by bringing alive one's inner drama and the archetypal figures that play out these psychodramas.

## TWO: KOOTHU ENACTMENT



The participants will witness an engaging *Koothu* performance on a scene from the Mahabharata. Having explored the dynamics of heroism within, the participants will be introduced to the nuances of the myth. By working with the traditional masks, music, rhythm and dance the rasa of each hero is evoked and explored

One wears the mask of the Heroes, and in playing out the archetypal drama, views oneself in the mirror of the emerging “here and now re-play” of the eternal motifs of life and of relationships with significant others.

For example, through an exploration of ‘*Draupadi VastrAharanam*’ (the disrobing of Draupadi) a powerful field is created where the helpless rage of the victimized is contrasted with the blind greed of the oppressor and the lack of conviction in the legitimate protector. The individual who explores this archetypal drama with authenticity enters the universal motifs of human suffering. Such engagement with one's *duHkha* is deeply insightful and healing. The stage is thus set for an honest introspection of one's inner patterns of feeling and thought as well as ones outer patterns of action.

## MAHABHARATA IMMERSION , YOGA AND LEADERSHIP: THE CONNECTION



The Arthashastra recommends that all leaders must be yogis. The Natyashastra, the Vaastu Shastras and a host of other texts specify that the professional must be a yogi.

The reason is very simple...

Yoga practiced in a holistic fashion – beyond the limited *asana* and *pranayama* practices, ensures that a person becomes capable of *being the best he or she can be*. Leaders and professionals need to strive continuously to perform at their peak capabilities. This demands that one make continuous investment in one's competencies, one's inner well-being and one's health. Our *itihAsa-purANa* were written to bring out this meaning of Yoga through stories that illustrate how different types of minds perceive a situation and how they respond.

The Mahabharata portrays the five Pandava heroes as the central archetypes of a human psyche, the Kaurava as the anti-hero/shadow archetype and Krishna as the meditative mind. Through the drama played out by Pandavas and the Kauravas the text discusses Yoga, i.e. *being the best that one can be*, in the context of familial strife. *The Mahabharata is a dialogue on the Yoga of leadership, a dialogue about dharmic conduct*. The Mahabharata is a complete text of Yoga, it not only captures its philosophical profundity, it evokes the person deeply by portraying different types of archetypal heroes, placing them in difficult and trying situations and describing their struggles as they delve into themselves and overcome these obstacles

### Who is this Immersion for?

The participant- co-creators of the MI are:

- Leaders, Change Agents and Professionals in the field of Social Services, Management and the Arts wishing to delve inwardly and regenerate themselves.
- Those who wish to discover and develop creative processes of their own unfolding and therefore facilitate self-discovery in others.
- Professionals in the field of inner work wishing to learn the key principles of Applied Indian Psychology.

*Here is a poem inspired by an ancient Tamil verse that is close to how I feel:*

*Love is my lamp, Eagerness the oil  
My heart is the wick, the radiant sun the flame  
Melting myself  
I light this lamp and offer what I have  
Unlearned and learned  
yesterday, today and tomorrow ....*

## **Facilitators**

This programme will bring together experienced facilitators in human processes and world renowned traditional Koothu artists to work with the participants.

**Programme Director** : Raghu Ananthanarayanan, he has worked extensively in the field of Yoga and Behavioral sciences. He has successfully developed an approach to individual and group processes based on a creative convergence of the traditional and the modern.

## **Venue**

The Ritambhara Ashram is a registered trust (not for profit) small meditation center situated near Kotagiri in the Nilgiris. This programme will be conducted in a space surrounded by shola forests and graced by many beings of the wild. Away from the hustle-bustle of modern life, the main purpose of the Ashram is to help foster contemplative conversations, inspire authentic inner work and a reverence for the Earth. Accommodation is simple and comfortable. Food is vegetarian.

## **Accommodation and contribution**

The Ashram runs on donations. Please contact us for details.

Accommodation options at the venue are:

Twin Sharing rooms (Non A/C) - (16 pax)

Bamboo huts - (8 pax)

There are a few scholarships on offer for those who would like to avail of them.

## **Dates & Contact**

**The immersion starts on Feb 17th (5pm) and ends on Feb 23rd (2pm). Last date for registrations: November 15<sup>th</sup> 2018 (Preparatory work starts soon after.)**

Should you wish to explore the nature of the program further you are invited to get in touch with us about it. **Email: [ashram@ritambhara.org.in](mailto:ashram@ritambhara.org.in)**

## **Disclaimer**

*There may be some emotional stress involved during the Lab. Participants must take responsibility for self- screening if stressful situations are a concern. The MI Lab is not a substitute for therapy or psychiatric treatment. If you are currently in therapy or under psychiatric treatment, you are required to obtain a clearance from your therapist/ psychiatrist before attending. Please also consult your physician, in case you have a current condition of heart ailment or any chronic illness.*