



ASHRAM CULTURE

“The Indonesian word for culture is “budaya”, which is a combination of two words, buddhi and hridaya. Buddhi is intelligence, the refined mind; and, hridaya pertains to the refined emotions. So, budaya or culture is a process, by which mind and heart are refined. The Ashram Culture facilitates this very process.”

Anand Krishna

Anand Ashram welcomes all genuine seekers of spirituality – irrespective of their caste, creed, sex, faith or nationality – who are truly keen upon working on their own “selves” to find the source of *Anand* - Inner Joy or Bliss within – and to share such joy or bliss of their own finding with others.

The daily schedule, programs, and workshops in the Ashram are, therefore, created, geared, and offered with the above objective in view.

The Hindu Way of Life adopted in the Ashram is beyond all “schisms” and “isms”. It transcends all kinds of doctrines, dogmas, and creeds, therefore very universal by nature, and can be studied and/or adopted by anyone.

The Basis of Hindu Way of Life is *Dharma* rather than a certain belief system. *Dharma*, most often interpreted as “duty” and/or “righteousness” is actually both and much more. It is the way of living righteously. It is being compassionate, yet courageous. It is the art of living in accordance with one’s conscience, and, at the same time, being considerate about others’ right to live in a similar manner.

Dharma is doing the right thing at the right time.

It is also, often defined, as “something that upholds unity”. That, which integrates and unites is *dharma*; whereas, that, which disintegrates and disunites is *adharma*, the opposite of *dharma*.

Living in *Dharma* is living free from religious fanaticism and allowing full freedom in matters of belief, faith, and worship. One is free to worship the form of Divine Principle that is most appealing to the individual without being disrespectful to other forms of worship.



We do not propagate conversion to or from other faiths and belief systems, as we consider all faiths, and belief systems as valid ways of worshipping the same Divine Principle.

The Ashram provides an environment that is conducive for Self-Discovery and Empowerment. It is a kind of spiritual retreat to live and study under the guidance of a spiritual mentor.

The Chapel of Mother Goddess in the Ashram premises is a place of Inner Spiritual Worship and Meditation, as such its sanctity must be maintained at all times. We urge you to shower and wear clean, modest clothing before entering the Chapel, at least one's hands, feet and face should be washed.

When there is no *Mantra* Chanting, *Bhajan/Sankeertan* or *Satsang*, please maintain silence as much as possible, avoiding unnecessary talk.

On the "physical side", the Chapel is entirely constructed of recycled wood. The flooring is made of at least a century old wooden planks from the old narrow gauge railway tracks, so please walk gently.

The Bodhichitta Meditation Hall is an all purpose space, consistently energized by the meditators doing their practices there. If you maintain its sacredness and sanctity, it shall respond by sanctifying your entire being.

The name "Bodhichitta" has the meaning of "Awakened" or "Enlightened" Mind. This is a constant reminder to all those using the space to work on their enlightenment.

The Sai Osho Meeting Room and Library, following the Ashram tradition, should be considered as the Temple of Learning, and not only a storehouse of books or an ordinary meeting room.

Books in the Ashram Library are meant for reading in the library only. Please handle them with utmost care, and return them to their respective shelves after reading.

The Bookstall carries all in-print books by our mentor both in Indonesian and English. Please check with the Ashram Caretaker/Manager should you not find a title of your interest.

From time to time, it may also stock some exclusive ashram souvenirs, t-shirts,



cds, and etcetera, all of which, of course, related to spirituality.

The Garden Area is alive with energy; please add to this with your care and love. The Flowers are discreetly plucked for offering only. The person in charge on behalf of all the *ashramites* does this.

The Mantra and Crystal Energized Pool is, of-course, for swimming, and yet, with your mind and heart open, it is not an ordinary swim that you shall experience.

Mantras are not some kind of magical mumbo jumbo; they are *yantra* or tools to control the wavering of mind or *manas*, The word *manas* actually refers to the mental/emotional layers of consciousness, which uses the brain as a tool of expression.

Another meaning of *mantra* is “that, which liberates you from the clutches of your mind and its vagaries”. As such, *mantras* are often used to support a *sadhaka*, or a true spiritual aspirant, in his *sadhana* – spiritual practice.

Bhajan/Sankeertan refers to congregational, devotional group singing. Hymns of praise to the Divine Principle That is both Imminent and Transcendent are sung to invoke the Divinity within. In Anand Ashram, this is interfaith, intra-faith, and inter-denominational in nature. You are most welcome to sing a Hymn of Praise from any tradition.

Satsang is a gathering or *sangha* of seekers of truth or *satya*. It is a communion of hearts and meeting of minds in the realm of spirit. Normally facilitated by a spiritual mentor, it is more of a dialogue than a monologue.

Prayers in the Ashram are purely to help promote a feeling of humility and devotion.

Pooja is an extended form of prayer, which can involve offering of flowers, fruits, incense, and etcetera. The central idea is to invoke the Divinity Within, and learn to be prayerful and grateful in our day-to-day life.

Greeting each other in the ashram is a mean to remind us of the Divinity That envelops us all, and our purpose for being in the ashram. As such, we use the word “*Anandam*”, meaning “True Joy” or “Bliss” as our greeting.

You can use “*Anandam*” for hello, welcome, bye, good morning, good afternoon, good night – at any time, and for any occasion.



As a visitor, you are not obliged to use this greeting, although we suggest you do so during your stay, in order to create a collective mass energy, all focused upon *ananda*, true joy, and inner bliss.

Agnihotra, Homa, or Havan is a fire ceremony for the cleansing of body, mind, and emotions; as well as purification of the soul and the atmosphere. It also helps you in neutralizing the negative effects of radiation, and unavoidable interactions, which are not beneficial for the advancement and progress of the soul.

Aarati is a mini fire ceremony after *Bhajan/Sankeertan*, symbolizing the burning away of ego.

Prasaad, meaning “gift” is the blessed cookies, food, or any other edible distributed outside the Chapel, after the *Aarati*.

Footwear/Edibles are Not Allowed inside the Chapel, Meditation Hall, and Library – as all of them are considered Sacred Grounds. Treading upon these grounds barefooted benefit you immensely, as you open up to the Existence and turn into a hollow pipe receiving and sharing the gift of energy that each of this space has to offer.

Removing your footwear is not a mere formality. It is also more than a symbolic way of showing respect. It is, actually, shedding off all the conditionings before the Divine, and opening to the Existential Energy.

Similarly, edibles can draw your energy to the lower instinct, which is, certainly, not a desirable situation when you are engaged in your *sadhana* or spiritual practice.

Do not engage yourself in activities, such as gossiping, backbiting, politicking, and etcetera, which are not supporting your individual *sadhana*, and also not serving the purpose of your stay in the Ashram.

For this purpose, it is in your interest that you adhere to the timings for eating, resting, and etcetera. Spend your time in the way that supports your Inner Journey and Growth.

Do not waste food, energy, thoughts/emotions, intelligence – for all these are divine. So, do not waste food; be discreet in the use of electricity and water, switch off the lights, and close the tap when not in use; watch your thoughts and



emotions; use your faculty of discretion to decide what is rightful to do at a given time, and what should be avoided. This shall help you in seeing the Divine everywhere and at all times.

Last but not least, speak sweetly and softly, respect the elders, love the young ones, and try to serve all at all times.