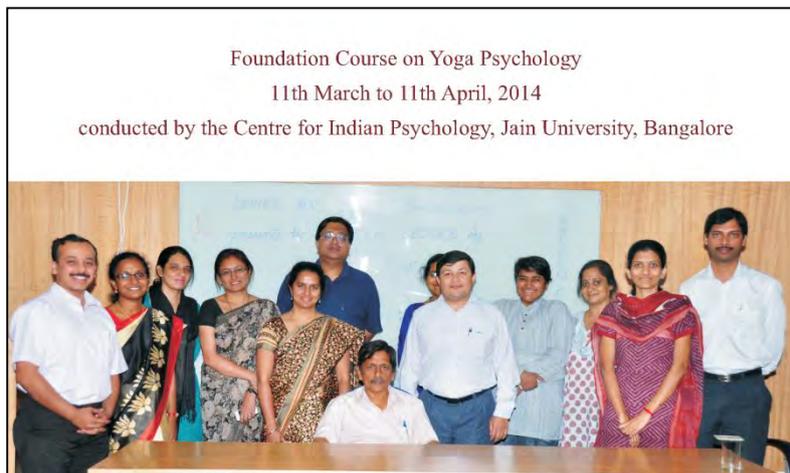


## A Brief Report on 2<sup>nd</sup> Foundation Course in Yoga Psychology 11 March to 11 April 2014

Conducted by  
Centre for Indian Psychology

The Centre for Indian Psychology, Jain University, successfully concluded its second one month Foundation Course on Yoga Psychology that was conducted from 11 March – 11 April 2014. The aim of the Foundation Course on Yoga Psychology was to help the participants understand the psychologically significant aspects of the Yoga tradition so that a more comprehensive and effective psychological system could be evolved and applied for self-development.

Six dedicated participants completed the 60hrs / 4 credits course which introduced them to the theory and application of the psychological dimensions of various streams of yoga as depicted in texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavadgita and Yoga Sutras. The course included interactive sessions on the concepts and theories related to Consciousness, nature of self, identity, various streams of Yoga with a focus on trying to understand them in relation to existing theories from mainstream psychology. The participants were further familiarised with the Centre's ongoing research in Yoga as a tool for First Person Research in Psychology. In this context, they had to undertake a personal project on applying some technique of Yoga Psychology in their life and observe its impact on their nature. They presented their reports on the final day in the presence of Dr. H. S. Ashok, Head, Department of Psychology, Bangalore University, who offered his expert comments on their observations and conclusions.



The Foundation Course started on 11 March 2014, with a brilliant Inaugural lecture by Dr. H. S. Ashok, Head, Department of Psychology, Bangalore University, on 'Paradigms of Psychology: East and West' where he clearly presented the salient features of Mainstream Psychology and Indian Psychology and highlighted the contributions

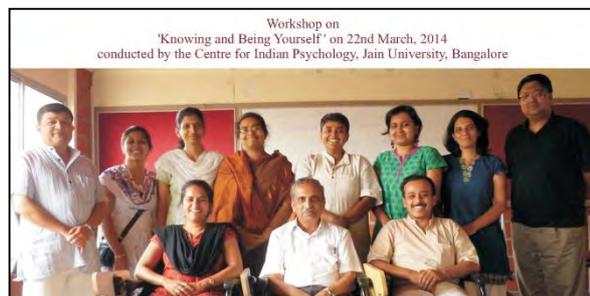
that Indian Psychology could make in the field because of its unique and time tested approaches to understanding human mind and nature.

The inaugural session was followed by classes on a more elaborate orientation into Eastern and Western approaches to Psychology, on Vedic Psychology, the concept of Consciousness in the Upanishads, the model of the *sthitaprajña* from the Bhagavadgita as the ideal person. The course then comprised of a series of lectures on the different streams of Yoga, viz. Jñāna Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Rāja Yoga to give the participants greater clarity on the psychological insights of these paths and to enable them to appreciate

their practical relevance in their day to day dealings in order to effectively harness their potential as effective tools for self-management and self-development. These classes which typically started with some relaxation and awareness building exercises were followed by a short meditation on observing the breath. They were mainly conducted by Dr. Anuradha Choudry and Dr. Vinayachandra B. K. from the Centre for Indian Psychology, Jain University with a special lecture on Bhakti Yoga being delivered by Sri N. V. Raghuram, Founder-Director, Yoga-Bharati (USA).

An innovative feature of the course was that it included **4 One Day Workshops** on various related subjects that were open to all for participation. The workshops which were conducted by eminent scholars in the field, spanned a variety of topics to give the participants an in depth understanding and practical experience of some important concepts from Yoga Psychology. They were as follows:

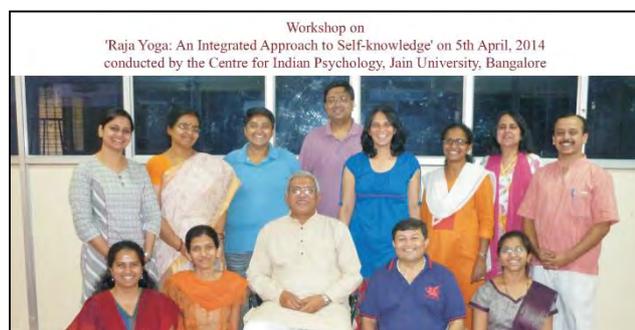
1) **Knowing and Being Yourself** by **Prof. S. K. Kiran Kumar**, Dept. of Psychology, University of Mysore, Mysore, on 23 March 2014. This workshop attempted to introduce the participants to a few concepts like *svabhāva*, *svadharma*, *puruṣārtha*, etc., which are already part of our daily linguistic repertoire, from a psychological perspective of self and identity. These concepts were then related to modern psychological concepts, so that their value and significance would be better appreciated.



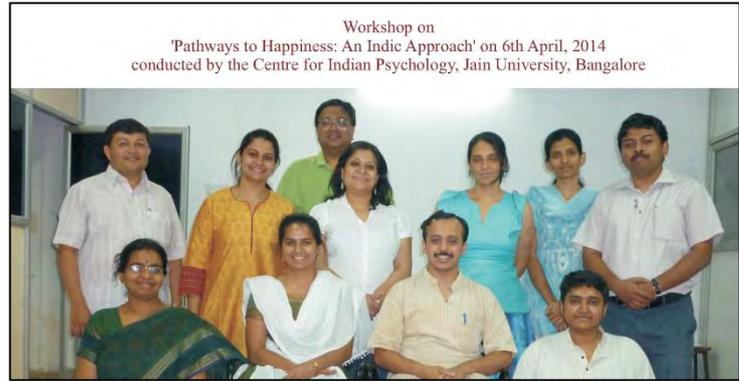
2) **Planes and Parts of the Being** by **Dr. Matthijs Cornelissen**, Founder-Director, Indian Psychology Institute, Pondicherry, on 23 March 2014. This workshop provided the participants with a theoretical as well as experiential understanding of the different planes and parts of our nature with a focus on the development of the Witness Consciousness or *sākṣī bhāva* and on the four ways of knowledge as described by Sri Aurobindo.



3) **Raja Yoga: An Integrated Approach to Self-Knowledge** by **Sri N. V. Raghuram**, Founder-Director, Yoga-Bharati (USA), on 5 April 2014. This gave the participants an insight into the integrated approach of Raja Yoga with a special focus on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. It further introduced them to the various limbs of Ashtanga yoga and how their effects on the different levels of consciousness as well as on the outcomes of reaching them.



4) **Pathways to Happiness: An Indic Approach** by **Dr. Anuradha Choudry & Dr. Vinayachandra B. K.**, Centre for Indian Psychology, Jain University, Bangalore, on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014. This was designed to provide the participants with a deeper understanding of the various concepts of happiness present in the Yogic tradition and to view them in the context of the contemporary discourse on the subject. It also included detailed discussions and activates on practical ways of experiencing relatively lasting happiness. About six more participants joined these workshops and everyone felt greatly benefited by the presentations of the facilitators.



The valedictory programme was held on 11 April 2014 in the presence of Prof. K. S. Shantamani, Chief Mentor, Jain University, who is the main inspiration and guiding force behind the Centre. The participants shared their experiences of the course followed by interaction with the Chief Guest where she stressed on the concept of Consciousness or the Universal Mind as the underlying reality as a key feature of Indian psychology and urged the participants to focus on using this approach to gain a better understanding of their true Self and live on that basis. After this, the participants received their certificates from her.

The one month course thus came to a successful close with the participants looking forward to signing up for any follow up course to this basic introduction to Yoga Psychology. The Resource Persons also expressed their keen interest to facilitate similar programmes in the future and congratulated the Centre for conducting such courses for the benefit of interested participants and for the subject on the whole.

