

Man-Making in Action

Balachandra The Vivekananda Way



Captured by: **Avdhesh Vaid, New Delhi**
www.mynachiketa.com



Born on the night of Amavasya, a moonless night, he was named Balachandra-meaning the young moon. From an early age, he displayed an unusual depth of thought and inclination towards introspection. While other children spent their time playing with toys and indulging in games, Balachandra preferred sitting quietly before a small altar, praying in his own words. Too young to know formal Vedic chants, he would create his own verses and murmur them with devotion. His pocket money was spent not on toys, but on figurines of Hindu deities.

At the age of six, Balachandra was introduced to Swami Vivekananda during a school programme. The stories of Swamiji's life and teachings left a deep and lasting impression on his young mind. The iconic image of Swami Vivekananda standing with folded arms remained etched in his heart from that moment onward.



During his first standard, Balachandra travelled across South India with his parents, concluding the journey at Kanyakumari. While he enjoyed the entire trip, the visit to the Vivekananda Rock Memorial profoundly moved him. Learning that Swami Vivekananda had meditated alone on the rock for three days, contemplating solutions to the problems of Bharat Mata, touched something deep within him.



While his family explored the memorial, Balachandra sat on the parapet overlooking the sea nearly a hundred feet below, lost in his own world. In his imagination, he suddenly saw a man gliding over the waters. His young mind could not comprehend how a human could walk on the sea. Later, while turning the pages of a pictorial book on Vivekananda that he had bought during the trip, he was stunned to realise that the figure he had imagined was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

Balachandra grew up in a family of devoted followers of Swami Vivekananda. Inspired by Swamiji's teachings, his father and uncle established the Vivekananda Educational Society in 1972. Initially run under the aegis of the Vishva Hindu Parishad, it later evolved into an independent institution known as Saraswati Vidya Peetham.

Reflecting on Swami Vivekananda's life, Balachandra recalls:

"I read that Vivekananda was a naughty child. His mother often scolded him and made him sit before the altar after a cold bath. That must have been when he began immersing himself deeply in meditation. There is a story where a snake approached him while he was meditating. His friends ran away, but Vivekananda sat still like a rock. That story makes me feel divine. It taught me that once you take an oath, you should never get distracted."



Another incident that deeply impacted him was Swami Vivekananda's life in Chicago:

"After his historic speech, he was offered royal comfort. Yet he couldn't sleep at night. He cried, thinking how he could enjoy such luxury when his countrymen could not even afford three meals a day. He decided then that until he found a solution for his country, comfort had no place in his life. This story brings tears to my eyes even today."

At a very young age, Balachandra resolved that he would not live beyond the age of 45. His inspiration, Swami Vivekananda, had left his physical body at 39, yet created a legacy that continues to guide generations. Balachandra too wished to dedicate his entire life to the service of the nation.



"We may not get the opportunity to lay down our bodies for the country, but we can lay down our lives - for the sake of our fellow beings."

Throughout his teenage years and early twenties, this resolve grew stronger. Balachandra pursued higher education and graduated with a B.Sc, LL.B, and became a Fellow Member of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), New Delhi.

At the age of 30, he informed his parents of his decision to remain a bachelor for life, believing that personal attachments could distract him from his purpose. His parents respected his decision and organised a ceremonial event to formally announce it. All the gold and cash received during the ceremony were converted into fixed deposits. Along with his personal savings of ₹1,00,000, this became the seed capital for the abhaya Foundation, established in 2006.



From 2006 to 2013, while working full-time as a Company Secretary, Balachandra simultaneously devoted himself to building the foundation through selfless service.

Full time in Serving the Country Men

In 2013, deeply moved by the suffering and misery he witnessed around him, Balachandra resigned from his professional career and committed himself fully to the mission of abhaya Foundation.

abhaya means fearlessness. The Foundation's vision is to alleviate suffering and reassure those in distress that help is always available.



Over the past decade, abhaya Foundation has been actively serving society with its H.E.A.R.T. mission:

- ♦ Healthcare
- ♦ Education
- ♦ Awareness
- ♦ Rural Development
- ♦ Transformation

More focused on Education, Empowerment, Environment and Enlightenment for the years ahead.

Impact so far:

1000+ patients with critical and chronic illnesses supported across India.

1000+ students provided access to higher education.

100 orphans fully supported at abhaya Home of Happiness, Ibrahimapatnam.

100+ families assisted with livelihood support through employment with abhaya projects.

1,25,000+ blankets distributed across India, Nepal, and Africa.

10,000+ Umbrellas served to those running petty businesses on the roadside during Summer.

CSR awareness created among **1000+** companies across Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka.

The Foundation has also established abhaya - Home of Happiness (TG), abhaya CCL Campus (AP), Ranga Learning Center (TG) and abhaya Yuva Campus (KAR) which gives food and accommodation to thousands of needy individuals and provides livelihood skill training. To date, over 20,000 youth have received skill development and empowerment support through their campuses.



Thoughts on Service and Society



"Money is abundant in this country. Swamiji asked for 100 men of diamond will. Even after 150 years, we still lack them. We have material, machinery, and money - but there is a shortage of committed men."

"There are nearly 30 lakh NGOs in India, yet not even 10% file returns properly. That shows the lack of passion. For community work, what we need is passion in the stomach, compassion in the heart, and innovation in the brain."

At 56, Balachandra has interacted with millions of young people across the country, motivating them to broaden their perspectives, acquire life skills, and embrace responsibility toward society. His mission remains the dissemination of Swami Vivekananda's message of strength, service, and self-belief.

Balachandra does not define himself as religious. For him, unconditional service to the poor, ignorant, and needy is the true path to God...it's a realisation rather than religion.



"If you want to live after death, love all and serve all while you are alive."

Inspiring Personalities

Along with Swami Vivekananda, Balachandra draws inspiration from Alluri Sitarama Raju and Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

"Swami Vivekananda and Alluri Sitarama Raju shaped my personality, while Sathya Sai Baba infused strength into my heart, soul, and spirit."

The life and sacrifice of Alluri Sitarama Raju deeply influenced Balachandra from a young age. Around the age of 15, he found spiritual guidance in Sri Sathya Sai Baba, whom he regards as his God, Guide and Guru.



Favourite Quotes

"Whatever you think, that you become."

"Anything that makes you weak - physically, mentally, or spiritually - reject it as poison."

"Purity, patience, and perseverance are the three essentials to success - and above all, love."

"You are the creator of your own destiny."

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