



INSPIRING LESSONS FROM ICONIC INDIANS

SHIV NADAR FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

At the Shiv Nadar Foundation, one of our goals is to create greater interest in the field of education. This little E-book introduces you to some of India's greatest teachers. Many of them were not teachers in the traditional sense, yet they showed the way forward. Both their thoughts and the techniques they used have relevance in the modern world.

This comprehensive E-book is designed to be a quick, easy read, which will nevertheless give you a basic idea about some of our greatest men and women. For more details on each one, read our 'Teachers Who Shaped The Nation' series at the Shiv Nadar Foundation blog. Each article gives you a quick overview of the person, and provides many interesting and rare links for further study.

CHANAKYA

(371 BC - 283 BC)

INDIAN TEACHER, PHILOSOPHER,
ECONOMIST, JURIST AND ROYAL ADVISOR



• FACTS & TRIVIA •

Did you know Chanakya had advised “Porus”- King of Punjab to fight and win against “Alexander the Great”? Although Porus didn’t take his advice and lost the war. Chanakya was also known as “Kautilya” or “Vishnu Gupta.”

• TEACHINGS •

“Education is the best friend. An Educated person is respected everywhere. Education beats beauty and youth”.

Chanakya believed highly in education and was a prominent lecturer at the ancient Takshashila University. His teachings of Political Science and Economics are still relevant in today’s era.



WHAT DID OTHER PEOPLE SAY ● ABOUT HIM? ●

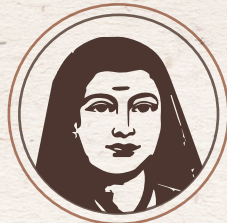
“When Chanakya speaks about the meaning of life, which is the Vedic concept of purushartha, he refers to three pillars: dharma, artha and kama, which is order, success and pleasure. He does not refer to the fourth spiritual pillar of liberation, moksha. He does not care for it.”

Devdutt Patnaik, ‘Ram Rajya and Chanakya’ (2017)

SAVITRIBAI PHULE

(3 JANUARY 1831 – 10 MARCH 1897)

INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER,
EDUCATIONIST AND POET.



• FACTS & TRIVIA •

Did you know Savitribai Phule was the first woman teacher of India? At the age of 17, she opened her first school for girls from different castes in Pune. She also became the first woman principal of India.

• TEACHINGS •

“Sit idle no more, go, get education. End misery of the oppressed and forsaken”

Savitribai Phule spent her entire life in promoting women's education; she believed every girl had the right to learn and study. From her teachings we can learn the importance of gender equality which is a key milestone for progress of any country.



WHAT DID OTHER PEOPLE SAY • ABOUT HER?

“You owe her. But do you know her? Savitribai Phule, the mother of modern education. If you are an Indian woman who reads, you owe her. If you are an educated Indian woman, you owe her. If you are an Indian school girl reading this chapter in English, you owe her. If you are an educated international desi woman, you owe her.”

**‘Savitribai and India’s Conversation on Education’
by Thom Wolf and Suzana Andrade (2008).**

RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHANSA

(18 FEBRUARY 1836 – 16 AUGUST 1886)

INDIAN MYSTIC, YOGI AND TEACHER



• FACTS & TRIVIA •

Did you know that people considered him an avatar of Lord Vishnu? Ramakrishna's first spiritual encounter was at the age of six while walking along the paddy fields. He became so absorbed that he lost consciousness of his surroundings and was overwhelmed with joy.

• TEACHINGS •

“The supreme goal of life is the realization of God”.

Ramakrishna's main teachings included God realization as the supreme goal of life, renunciation of Kama-Kanchana, Harmony of Religions. The key concepts in Ramakrishna's teachings included the oneness of existence and the unity and truth of all religions.



WHAT DID OTHER PEOPLE SAY • ABOUT HIM? •

"I learnt from my Master that the religions of the world are not contradictory or antagonistic. They are but various phases of one eternal religion... The first part of my Master's life was spent in acquiring spirituality, and the remaining years in distributing it... His life is a searchlight of infinite power thrown upon the whole mass of Indian religious thought."

**Swami Vivekananda's tribute to
RamakrishnParamhansa.**

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

(7 MAY 1861 – 7 AUGUST 1941)

INDIAN POET, MUSICIAN AND ARTIST



• FACTS & TRIVIA •

Did you know Rabindranath Tagore wrote his first poem at the age of 8? Rabindranath Tagore founded Vishwa Bharti University with the money he received for his Nobel Prize.

• TEACHINGS •

"We read the world wrong and say that it deceives us."

Rabindranath Tagore said that for the development of a child's body and mind, learning through activity is essential. Therefore, he included activities like climbing trees, drama, jumping, plucking fruits, dancing etc. in his educational programmes.



WHAT DID OTHER PEOPLE SAY ● ABOUT HIM? ●

“Who am I to take this institution under my protection? It carries God’s protection because it is the creation of an earnest soul. It is my conviction... that Gurudev as a person was much bigger than his works; bigger even than this institution.”

Mahatma Gandhi, during his last visit to Shantiniketan after Tagore’s death.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(12 JANUARY 1863 – 4 JULY 1902)

INDIAN HINDU MONK AND TEACHER



• FACTS & TRIVIA •

Did you know that Swami Vivekananda in 1880 passed the Calcutta University Entrance Examination in the first division, at the age of 17? He was the first person to introduce the practice of Yoga to the Western world.

• TEACHINGS •

Swami Vivekananda believed that education is the manifestation of perfection already in man. His teachings played a key role in inspiring the nationalist movement. He believed that a country's future depends on its people and his teachings focused on human development.



WHAT DID OTHER PEOPLE SAY ● ABOUT HIM? ●

“Swamiji harmonized East and West, religion and science, past and present. And that is why he is great. Our countrymen have gained unprecedented self-respect, self-confidence and self-assertion from his teachings.”

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on Swami Vivekananda.

S U M M A R Y

We at Shiv Nadar Foundation deeply thank you for taking out time to read this E-book. By now we hope you are inspired by these men and women of India. All of them had their unique methods with a single goal- Education, comprising of strategy, politics, economics, spirituality, women education and holistic living which are still relevant today and if we implement these methods, we will witness a successful India. So, let's share this E-book with our fellow Indians and make our nation flourish.