Consciousness-Based Agriculture and Environmental Relationships: The Move of Consciousness in the Environment
Course Homework, Projects, and Exercises

1. “Golden Thread Exercise”

The purpose of this course on Vedic Agriculture and Environmental Relationships is to learn to “agree with the culturing intelligence of total natural law.” It's to connect your own individual life with the greater intelligence of the whole environment.

There are many ways that this connection is made. The TM and TM-Sidhi programs are the primary means to experience the deeper connection between man and nature. However, certain other aspects of knowledge and experience help to stimulate and enhance that connection. For example, knowledge is the greatest supporter of growth of experience. So the knowledge of this course, based on your already refined consciousness, will often-time lead you to a deeper level of experience, understanding, and awakening.

It's this value of awakening that we're looking for. Some new perception of reality, some new understanding and experience of the way things work and how they're interconnected, some sudden realization as a result of which you see things in an entirely new and different light. These steps of awakening are the steps of growth of consciousness.

In the course, we're going to use the phrase *golden threads* to pictorially represent these ah-ha! experiences. *A golden thread* is a beautiful and perfect connection between one level of understanding and a new level of understanding and experience. It's like a link, and it just comes at a particular moment, and then you have awakened to a new reality. It may be something that Maharishi said, it may be something that a scientist said, it may be something you've heard or seen in the environment, it may be a particular encounter with a plant or tree or an animal. There are many ways that all of a sudden you see things differently and more profoundly.

These *golden threads* are like intensified and compacted bits of knowledge that are unique to you. Your *golden thread* may be completely different than your neighbor's. It's a personal thing; it's something that connected with you and for you, and took your understanding and evolution forward.

These experiences are extremely important to your growth of consciousness, and we want to culture them. And we do this by simply being alert to a change that you experienced, when you come in contact with one of these *doors* that opens up a new reality for you. Please write them down and keep a track of them in your course diary. Write down the particular phrase of knowledge or type of experience, and how it led to a new level of understanding and experience, describing the details of the transformation. The Maharishi Vedic Agriculture and Environmental Relationships Brochure is a rich source of these *golden threads*.
It's also important for us as course leaders to know what is most effective in helping you make these transformations in understanding and experience, and helping you to grow in that “agreement” with the culturing intelligence of Total Natural Law. At the end of each week we will give students opportunities to read out some of their golden threads, and at the end of the course we will collect these, and the quantity and quality of these threads will be part of your grade.

2. Daily Walk: Take a 20-minute walk every day as part of your homework.

Each day your assignment is to take a 20- to 30-minute walk, alone, in the natural environment. We want you to be alert to notice each detail of your environment, specifically, what do you feel when you see something in the environment? When you look at the sky, or a particular tree or plant, or a building, anything(!), what feeling does it invoke in you? This feeling is the beginning of a kind of communication between you and nature.

In this exercise, we are not interested in what you think about something, but only what you feel about it. Learn to see and perceive the difference. This is not your intellect in operation, it is your heart! Record your experiences each day and hand them in as part of your course grade at the end of the class.

3. Noticing Your Food: Keep a record of how you feel about your food.

Each day during meals, occasionally take notice of the food you are eating. Notice its taste, its texture, its feeling of freshness and vitality. Try to notice what effect the food is having on your physiology and mind during and after eating.

In particular, if you have the opportunity to choose your food, see how you feel about each item before you take it. If someone is serving you the food, then take note about each item before you eat it. Do you feel that that particular food will be suitable to you? Do you feel attracted to it?

Specific exercises for each lesson

Note: Work on the homework exercises below according to material covered in the course to date, for the allocated time each day. Follow your thoughts inward on each exercise to deepen your experience and understanding. Research is a process of discovery and awakening. Keep your insights in your course diary, and be prepared to report your insights each day in class. The more attention you put on these exercises, the more you will profit. There are no right answers, only what you think and feel is important in these exercises.

(For all lessons, in preparation for each new lesson of the course)

Read the quotes from Maharishi and Maharishi’s Vedic Science, and those derived from other researchers, after each corresponding lesson. These supplementary quotes are available in your course workbook. Try to match the Vedic quotes and the modern quotes within each lesson, showing how Maharishi’s knowledge forms the fundamental basis for the research on consciousness and the environment being done today.
Explain how Maharishi’s knowledge and experience of consciousness gives us true understanding of nature’s functioning, and how the insights from other researchers and scholars enrich our understanding of Maharishi’s Vedic Science. Just read the quotes from the lessons that have been completed already in class.

(After Lesson 1)

1. Read the Course Goals and Course Outline through three times, until you are familiar with the sequence and logic. Be prepared to explain why the sequence of the lessons is integral to the understanding of the knowledge. Note those topics of most interest to you and why.

(After Lesson 1 and again after Lesson 5)

2. When Maharishi first introduced Vedic Agriculture in 2000, the first five words he said were, “Vedic Agriculture is Brahma Vidya.” Explain and justify why Maharishi’s expression is the perfect Krishi Sutra.

(After Lesson 3 and again after Lesson 8)

3. Look carefully into the 40 branches of the Veda and the Vedic literature. By using the qualities of each branch, its physiological relationships, and any other criteria you find applicable, show which branch might be used to enliven and balance which of the eight prakritis.

4. “See the eight, see the eight, see the eight.” Learn to “see the eight prakritis,” as Maharishi was fond of saying, in everything in your life and the environment. Take specific examples, such as a branch of Vedic Science, or your pulse, or a tree, or an environment, or anything, and uncover the eight within it as its fundamental basis of both structure and function. Show how the structuring dynamics of each prakriti come together to create and maintain the structure and function of everything in creation. Record your understandings and experiences in your course diary.

(After Lesson 4)

5. What is consciousness? What is Total Natural Law? What is awareness? What is the difference between plant consciousness and human consciousness? Explain these terms and concepts in the context of Maharishi Vedic Organic Agriculture. Write your answers in your course diary and be prepared to report in class.

(After Lesson 6 and again after Lesson 15)

6. (a) You have been invited to the USDA to explain to them, “What is Vedic Agriculture?” The audience is a group of hard-core scientists who believe GMO will save the world. You are asked to explain Maharishi Vedic Organic Agriculture in one minute, three minutes, and five minutes. Record your talk and present it in class.
(b) You are sitting in a bullock cart in rural India with a farmer and his daughter. They want to know what is Maharishi Vedic Organic Agriculture. You have to explain it in one minute, three minutes, and five minutes. Record your talk and present it in class.

(After Lesson 5)

7. Divide the class into two halves. One group should be prepared to defend the statement, “The whole is generated from the togetherness of the parts.”

The other groups should be prepared to defend the statement, “It is the whole which generates and governs the parts.” Each side should justify its viewpoint from personal experience, scriptural references, Maharishi quotes, and modern science.

(After Lesson 12)

8. A caterpillar climbs up the stock of a bean plant and begins chomping on the leaves. Is the caterpillar violating Natural Law? Why or why not?

A chemical farmer comes along and sprays the caterpillar because it is eating his crop. Is he violating Natural Law? Why or why not?

An organic farmer comes along and sprays a natural insecticide on the crop. Is he violating Natural Law or not?

(Before Lesson 13)

9. Study the Maharishi Vedic Organic Agriculture Institute Certification Program Standards Brochure. Note the wholeness of the standards to reach every level of agriculture production.

(After Lesson 15)

10. You have decided to do your dissertation on Maharishi Vedic Organic Agriculture. Outline your thesis topic, and the nature and some detail of your proposed research. What do you hope to prove and present to the world? Show how the research will validate some of the basic lessons of the course and substantiate Maharishi Vedic Agriculture as a breakthrough in agriculture technologies.

(After Lesson 15)

11. Prepare a presentation that you will want to give at the agriculture universities in India on how the Maharishi Vedic Organic Agriculture yagya program works, and how Vedic Organic Agriculture improves the quality of our food. What are the basic mechanics of how yagya creates a new quality of plant physiology, and what does that mean in terms of vitality and nutrition? Be sure to include all aspects of what “quality food” really is, from gross to subtle to transcendent.

There should be a step-by-step logic, understandable to someone who is new to Maharishi’s Vedic Science. Be prepared to explain it in three minutes, five minutes, and ten minutes.