

Shy to Strong: The Art of Living Transforms Girls' Lives in Karnataka & Maharashtra

Category: Business

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In the quiet lanes of Haveri and the bustling neighborhoods of Dharavi and Kalyan, an inspiring story of transformation is taking shape. Rooted in the vision of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, a revered humanitarian and spiritual leader, The Art of Living – through its Social Projects arm and in collaboration with Ashirvad Pipes by Aliaxis – is enabling hundreds of young women from underserved communities with practical skills and helping them step boldly into their future.



Soft skills, strong squad

From 2024 to 2025, this transformative initiative has trained 375 women across Karnataka and Maharashtra – reaching those from underserved communities with little to no access to such opportunities.

What makes this initiative remarkable isn't just the curriculum – it's the confidence it instills.

At the core of the initiative is the Youth Leadership Training Program (YLTP) – a game changing blend of ancient wisdom and modern tools. Through Sudarshan Kriya, yoga, and meditation, participants develop inner resilience and emotional strength. These practices are complemented by interactive sessions on leadership, communication, and confidence-building, nurturing both personal growth and community awareness.



Jayashree Koppad finds independence through a telecalling job

In addition to inner transformation, the programme offers practical, job-oriented training in spoken English, basic computer literacy, Tally accounting software, and customer service. This integrated approach equips women with the

mindset and competencies needed to step into roles such as office assistants, front desk executives, and customer service representatives, setting them firmly on the path to economic independence.

Stories of Change: Voices from the Ground

Vidyashree Nyamati

A diploma holder and mother of two, Vidyashree once set aside her career dreams for family responsibilities. Yet her determination never faded. Walking 15 kilometres daily to attend the centre, she embraced every opportunity the programme offered. Today, she leads as the Centre Coordinator in Haveri, a role she earned through grit and grace.

"I still remember buying myself a new dress with my first salary, just in time for Eid," she shared with a smile. "It was a proud moment for me and my family."

Jayashree Koppad

After completing the programme, Jayashree began working part-time as a Telecaller at BMS Electronics. With her income, she now supports her education while easing the financial burden on her parents, marking her first step toward independence.

Salma Bidari

Salma, once held back by family restrictions, is now a Computer Operator and Receptionist. Her first salary brought tears of joy to her mother and shifted her family's perspective – from hesitation to pride and respect.

Saniya Hosmani

Now working at a Dish TV office, Saniya serves customers with grace and confidence. "I am living a dream right now," Saniya says. For the first time, she bought Eid gifts for her family – a moment of joy she described as "beyond words."

Meenakshi

At Mahaveer Automobiles, Meenakshi handles the front desk with quiet efficiency and reliability. Her role has not only brought financial stability to her home but also made her a pillar of strength for her family.

Behind the scenes, facilitators like Savitri Amma nurtured the women's journeys. *"These girls arrive shy and hesitant. Within months, they're speaking up, leading groups, and dreaming bigger,"* she says. *"It's been a joy to witness."*

To ensure long-term success, the women received prestigious certifications from the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Ashirvad Pipes, and Sri Sri Rural Development Programme Trust (SSRDP) – an NSDC approved training partner. The results have been heartening: 202 women have received job offers, and all 375 have received dedicated placement assistance.

Project Coordinator Ketki Vaidya captures the spirit of the mission: *"We're not just teaching skills here. We're building a generation of women who believe in themselves. They're no longer just students – they're leaders."*

This initiative exemplifies what's possible through holistic training, community engagement, and a deep belief in human potential. It also reflects the strength of corporate collaboration in delivering measurable social impact. Equally essential has been local support. Community leaders like Bharathi Jambigi have helped ensure participant safety and encouragement throughout the journey.

With more centres planned across India, this movement is not just transforming individual lives – it's setting in motion a ripple of change that uplifts families and transforms communities

And this is just the beginning.

About The Art of Living Social Projects – SSRDP

Sri Sri Rural Development Program (SSRDP) is dedicated to uplifting rural communities across India. Inspired by the teachings of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, initiatives leverage sustainable technologies, value-based education, and strategic partnerships to empower farmers, enhance livelihoods, and foster a balanced, prosperous environment.

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