

DHARMA in Indian Katha Parampara

Workshop Proposal by Vikram Sridhar

For the **MIND, BRAIN, AND CONSCIOUSNESS CONFERENCE 2025**

Concept Note:

The concept of DHARMA is so vast and so deep. While it can be translated to Justice, Righteousness , Conduct from social , moral , Ethics , political perspectives, there was a time when in ancient India society was sustained by Dharma . In the Shanthi Parva in the Mahabharata , Bheeshma discusses the power and need of Dharma to Yudhishtra from the perspective of Raja Dharma, ***Dharma is the only thing that sustains the people and That which upholds the created universe, supports it and sustains it, without which the universe just falls apart, is 'Dharma'***

While many of the Indian Philosophies is based of the 4 principles of Dharma , Artha , Kama , Moksha , Dharma finds a prominence and considered supreme in the Arthashastra of Kautilya .

The intersection of Spiritual and Cultural realm in various Indian Knowledge Systems is Dharma and the application of it makes a difference in how Systems have evolved . In a country as large as India , what connects us across geographies and demographics . In short it would be 'Dharma' and in detail it will take us into many lores from various sources .



Workshop Note :

The 2–3-hour workshop as part of the esteemed conference will explore Dharma from various Indian Katha Parampara and draw parallels to todays times. We will look at the Mahabharatha from various characters. How every Story has a back story and a next Story that centers on Dharma and makes us see things from a macro perspective. From Swadharma , truth , Duty , the largest epic Mahabharatha looks at Dharma at each juncture through various episodes and phases of each of the Characters . From the written text to Oral Lores to Temple Tales across the vast country, we shall explore how Lores play a strong roles in establishing Dharma right from tales told to Children to the Spiritual seekers .

The influence of the Mahabharata on our collective way of lie , thought and action of people for centuries . Innumerable performative forms from Yakshagana to Theyyam to Kattai Koothu have taken the concept of Dharma to people across the country. From text to Orality , it's like an encyclopedia of our value systems , cultural ethos , traditions , ethics , state craft , etc .



About Vikram Sridhar

Vikram Sridhar is a Performance Storyteller, Theatre Practitioner and a Narrative based Facilitator combining his various interests and work over 20+ years in Theatre, Conservation and Social Work.

Based in Bangalore and Chennai , he has spoken at multiple events on the power of stories and theatre like the TEDx and quoted in various media. He extensively travels the country performing and speaking at public spaces, community libraries, schools, corporates, business conferences, literary & cultural festivals for children , students and adults. With an engineering , Management and a law degree from institutes like SRM, IIT and NALSAR ,

Vikram moved on to be a full Time Arts Practitioner after working with IBM and SAP . He believes in the Desi way of Storytelling as a strong medium of conservation from nature to human relationships as his stories are rooted in folklore, Heritage and Ecology inspired from various communities of the soil . He strongly believes 'A Story a Day keeps the Doctor Away '

