

Webinar on “Finding Fulfillment in Education and Life”

- Topic:** Finding Fulfillment in Education and Life
- Speaker:** Prof. Devdas Menon (Institute Chair Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Madras)
- Date:** 5th September 2020 (Saturday)
- Time:** 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M.

Abstract:

Life is wonderful when we feel joyful and fulfilled. Life is terrible when we feel frustrated and defeated. Life is ‘lifeless’ when we feel apathetic and empty. All of us undergo these feelings periodically, and perhaps it is true to say that feelings of fulfilment are relatively rare for most of us, although we wish it were otherwise. As Sri Abdul Kalam put it: We are all born with a divine fire in us. Our efforts should be to give wings to this fire and fill the world with the glow of its goodness. As students and teachers, what is it that we can do to feel inspired and to transmit this peace and happiness to others? This is the subject matter that will be explored in this talk.

Biography of the Speaker:

Prof. Devdas Menon had his BTech in civil engineering at IIT Madras (1975-1980). He worked in the industry, in structural design consultancy, at New Delhi (1980-'85), and during this time, did a (part-time) post-graduation course in structural engineering at IIT Delhi. He subsequently opted for an academic career, initially with REC Calicut (1985-'98), and later with IIT Madras (1998 onwards). During this time, he continued his education in structural engineering, receiving degrees of M.Sc. (by research) from the University of Calicut in 1989 and Ph.D. from IIT Madras in 1995. He also ventured to do a post-graduate course in English Literature at the University of Mysore. His academic performance had been consistently top ranking.

Devdas Menon is presently Institute Chair Professor in the Department of Civil Engineering at IIT Madras, engaged in teaching, research and consultancy in structural engineering, and in developing a holistic approach in education, with emphasis on inner development and transformation.

In engineering, his primary research interests are in the area of structural concrete design, and in the analysis and design of buildings, bridges, towers and chimneys. He has also carried out innovative research and development in affordable and sustainable building systems and in biomechanical orthopaedic devices. He has published a large number of technical papers, and received patents and awards. He has a special interest in developing codes of practice, and is presently the Chairman of the Bureau of Indian Standards CED 38 Committee on "Special Structures".

He has a deep interest in teaching and continuing education, and has authored / co-authored several textbooks, titled "Reinforced Concrete Design", "Structural Analysis", "Advanced Structural Analysis" and "Handbook on Seismic Retrofit of Buildings".

Devdas Menon has also authored two books called, "Stop sleepwalking through life!" (1998) and "Spirituality at work" (2016), and has been conducting numerous lectures and workshops for students, teachers and corporate organizations, on finding meaning and fulfilment in life through self awareness and inner transformation.

He teaches two uniquely designed elective courses at IIT Madras, GN5001: Self Awareness and GN6001: Integral Karmayoga, which are open to all interested students and faculty.

He has been conferred several awards, notably the "Distinguished Service to the Institute (2013)" by the IIT Madras Alumni Association, the "Srimathi Marti Annapurna Award for Excellence in Teaching (2014)" by IIT Madras (CITATION), the "Ultra-Tech Award for the Outstanding Concrete Engineer (2014)" by the Indian Concrete Institute (Chennai Chapter) (CITATION) and the "Guru Shreshta" award (2015) by Rotary Club (Madras NorthWest), and "Institute Chair Professor" (2019) for distinguished service in education, research and technology development.