

Welcome to Sadhana Camp 2026 **Ananda Girisuta, NC**

Sadhana camp is not an ordinary retreat. It is a spiritual immersion designed for one purpose and one purpose alone: to help us improve our sadhana and speed our progress on the journey. It is a chance to concentrate solely on our spiritual practices and our spiritual discipline, without outside distractions or other responsibilities. In order to derive the maximum benefit from this unique opportunity, the collective discipline is of paramount importance. Similar to getting swept away by the strong current of a mighty river, by creating a strong collective flow the spiritual current carries everyone along. Here are the main features of the collective discipline that we request everyone to follow so that everyone benefits, ourselves included.

Japa

What is japa? A word has a particular meaning; repeating the word inwardly again and again, after having understood its meaning, is what is termed japa. As a result of the prolonged repetition of a word, whose inner meaning is clearly understood, its ideation becomes permanently imprinted on one's mind, and consequently there occurs a radical change in one's mental arena. The extroversial tendencies of the mind gradually become introverted. This is the benefit of japa. And if anyone's name is to be repeated, it is the name of the Lord. (Baba)

One of our main practices in Ananda Marga is trying to maintain the repetition of our Ísta mantra throughout the day. We repeat our guru mantra before each action to create the proper ideation and then we continue with our Ísta mantra to maintain that ideation while we make our way through our day. If we forget our Ísta mantra then we recite our guru mantra to restart our ideation and again continue the repetition of Ísta mantra.

You boys and girls, you know that one should go on repeating one's Ísta mantra always. You are always doing your work, but you are not repeating your Ísta mantra in your mind. Why? Because you have forgotten the fact that you should repeat it in your mind. Your smrti, your memory, is not strong, that's why you have forgotten it. Here, Lord Buddha said, Samyak smrti, that is, "You must not forget, you must never forget, that it is your foremost duty to take the name of the Lord, to repeat your Ísta mantra." This is samyak smrti, that is, proper memory.

Baba also refers to this practice as a "symphony."

Moreover, if the symphony of meditation or japa persists for some time, and if in the natural course of events the jiiva does not forsake the meditation or japa, then loss of memory does not occur. This state is called dhruvasmrti, or "infallible, eternal remembrance". A sádha with this capacity continues his or her dhyána and japa even in sleep. This kind of japa is called ajapá japa – which is to say, without one actually performing japa, japa is going on.

So try to keep repeating Ísta mantra and guru mantra all the time. The monitor will remind you of this at each change of activity. He or she will announce aloud: "Guru mantra... Ísta mantra..." and the name of the next activity. When you hear the announcement, repeat your guru mantra internally, then repeating your Ísta mantra internally and continue with the next activity.

Maonavrata (vow of silence)

Maintaining silence is a very ancient and a very powerful practice that helps us enormously to cultivate our spiritual ideation. Maona means "silence" and vrata means "vow. Thus, the "vow of silence." When we are talking, our mind has a tendency to become externalized and it becomes much more difficult to maintain our spiritual ideation. Talking also requires energy. During maonavrata we put that energy into our spiritual ideation. For this reason, Baba recommends practicing maonavrata for some period of time every day. Maonavrata begins with external silence but it is more than that: it is the effort to establish oneself in the pure immaculate silence of the Self, untouched and unaffected by the "noise" of the outside world.

In sadhana camp we are going to maintain maonavrata at all times, except during the morning and afternoon class, when we are free to join the spiritual discussion and ask questions. In the

interest of maonavrata, please, do not whisper to anyone, do not pass notes, but do pay attention if someone whispers to you. This is for the good of all. Do not sing kiirtan outside of collective kiirtan, do not hum in the shower or play an instrument. Listening to music and reading are also not permitted. Keeping a spiritual journal, however, is encouraged. Baba recommends that we use our spiritual journal for daily self-analysis.

An auxiliary related practice is cellular and internet maonavrata. During sadhana camp all cell phones must be either shut off or in airplane mode. It is not permitted to access the internet. The only cell phone functions that are permitted to use are the camera for pictures, the voice recorder for kiirtans and class, and the clock. Furthermore the use of computers and other devices are not permitted.

In case of emergency, ask your family or friends to call the Prama Institute landline at 828-649-9408 and leave a message. We will pass that message to you.

If you need to send an urgent message, then during free time you can leave campus and send a text message, but this is discouraged unless absolutely necessary.

Meals

Sentient breakfast, lunch, and dinner will be simple but nutritious. Food will be set out for each person to serve themselves and eat in silence. No coffee or tea with caffeine will be available to avoid that stimulant. Each participant will wash their own dishes. Anyone with special dietary needs should contact the organizers.

Daily Practice of Kiirtan and Meditation.

We will be doing 8 hours daily of kiirtan and meditation. In order to maximize our practice, there is also a certain discipline to follow:

In order not to disturb anyone's sadhana, you are not allowed to enter or leave the meditation hall during the meditation periods. Once the meditation session has begun, please remain seated until the next kiirtan. Use the restroom only during kiirtan and finish before the end of kiirtan. If you are in your room or elsewhere when the meditation begins, please remain there until the next kiirtan or guru puja. If you need to lie down, please do so elsewhere. If you want to skip a round of meditation, you can remain in your room and rest, but you can't leave the room until the next kiirtan or the meditation is over. There are chairs at the back of the meditation hall for those who need them.

Other tips:

If you have any needs or suggestions, wait until the next class. At the beginning of each class, you'll have a few minutes for announcements and administrative matters, such as choosing the kiirtan players.

The meditation after the avarta kiirtan in the evening doesn't have a set duration. You can meditate for as long or as short as you like before going to sleep.