

# Imagine!

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Imagine a way of life that focuses on your identity as a soul, and that the soul is intrinsically good.

Imagine that all souls are children of one God who is the source of all goodness, and that we are one human family. In their knowledge the Brahma Kumaris share the idea that identifying with labels associated to the body divides people and feeds human weakness. Some of the misleading labels are race, nationality, religion and gender.

The Brahma Kumaris aspire to establish a global culture based on what they call 'soul-consciousness'. They understand that the present world is predominantly 'body-conscious' and believe that we would all benefit by seeing ourselves and others as spiritual beings. A favourite slogan is: "When we change, the world changes."



Brahma Kumaris at the retreat

Let me introduce you to a group of sixty-plus Brahma Kumaris gathered in Leura in the Blue Mountains north-west of Sydney in New South Wales, Australia. At the Brahma Kumaris Centre for Spiritual Learning they are attending a weekend retreat to remember and commemorate the founder of Brahma Kumaris.

Located on 132 acres of beautiful rugged bushland, the centre features architectural design which not only suits the Australian bush setting but also creates a soothing atmosphere, conducive to relaxation and meditation. Accommodation is in twin-share bedrooms with ensuite.

Delicious vegetarian meals are enjoyed, while overlooking magnificent valley views. Many walks are undertaken down to the delightful heritage stone cottage, set among English-style gardens, where crystal-clear water cascades over rocks in a natural Australian native bush setting.

## Who are the Brahma Kumaris?

"We are individuals of all ages and backgrounds who regularly attend classes at more than 8,500 centres of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University located in 110 countries. We study [spiritual knowledge](#) that nurtures respect for all faith traditions, coherently explains the [nature of soul](#), [God](#), [time](#), and [karma](#), and suggests an [enlightened lifestyle](#).

"We practise and teach a form of [meditation](#) that relaxes the mind and nurtures a healthy balance between our inner and outer worlds. Through numerous social service [activities and partnerships](#) we promote spiritual understanding, leadership with integrity and elevated actions towards a better world."

## Who was the catalyst in making it all happen?

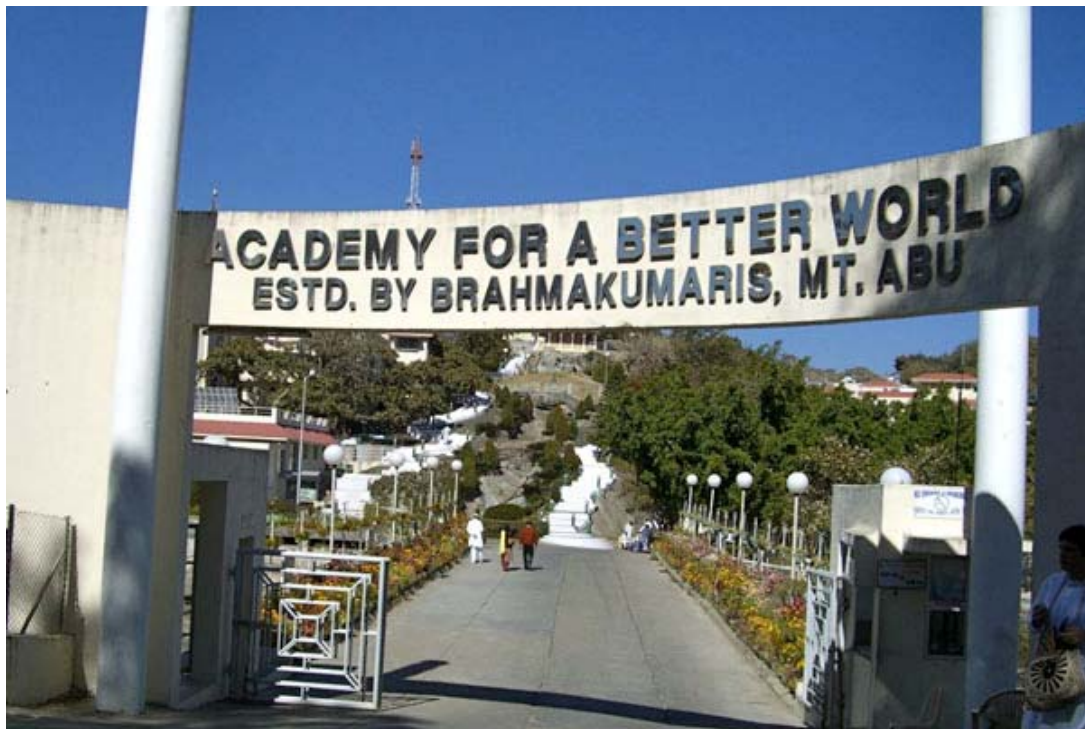


Brahma Baba

Born into a humble home in 1876, the son of a village schoolmaster in Karachi (now in Pakistan), Lekhraj Kirpalani was brought up within the disciplines of the Hindu faith tradition. Rather than following in his father's footsteps as a teacher, Lekhraj polished his skills as a diamond trader, creating one-of-a-kind and much sought after jewellery and building a considerable fortune. As a businessman and a family man, father of five children, Dada Lekhraj maintained a highly respectable position within the local community and was known for his philanthropy.

Adhering to his spiritual calling, in 1936 at the age of 60 Dada Lekhraj entered into the most active and fascinating phase of his life, focused on spiritual development, during which he became known as Brahma Baba.

Initially he felt called to invest more time in quiet reflection and solitude. Then one day, in a meditative state Brahma Baba felt a warm flow of energy surrounding him, filling him with light and exposing him to a series of powerful visions. These visions continued periodically over several months. They gave him new insights into the innate qualities of human souls, revealed the mysterious entity of God and described the process of world transformation. The intensity of the messages, conveyed by the visions, was such that Brahma Baba felt compelled to wrap up his worldly business and devote himself to understanding the significance and application of this revealed knowledge. Although the visions ceased, their source remained with him for the next three decades, guiding his transformation as well as that of those around him.



(Brahma Kumaris, Mount Abu, India)

### Brahma Baba's Legacy

In the 78 years since Brahma Baba received that series of visions the young women whom he placed at the forefront of the organisation, which he founded, have taken their place on the world stage, sharing platforms with political and religious leaders at the highest level, while leading a lifestyle revolution, currently shared by nearly one million people worldwide from all cultural and religious, racial and social backgrounds. At this time, when loss of integrity in human hearts and minds has plunged so many into despair, the teachings transmitted by Brahma Baba offer empowerment in the present and hope for the future.

The living skills that Brahma Baba taught have stood the test of time. The young women who were at the forefront, now in their eighties and nineties, have become beacons of love, peace and happiness in a world increasingly troubled by disordered relationships, greed, addiction, anger and violence.



Tower of Peace

### Brahma Baba - Tower of Peace

Brahma Baba passed on in 1969 at the age of 93. The Tower of Peace on the Madhuban campus is a tribute to the invincible spirit of this ordinary human being who achieved greatness by rising to the challenge of the deeper truths of life.

There are a few qualities of Brahma Baba which, when imbibed and applied diligently, can take anyone towards their highest potential.

**Generosity:** The most elevated form of generosity was Baba's ability to ignore the negativity in others and bring out the best in them, thus giving them the opportunity to advance in life.

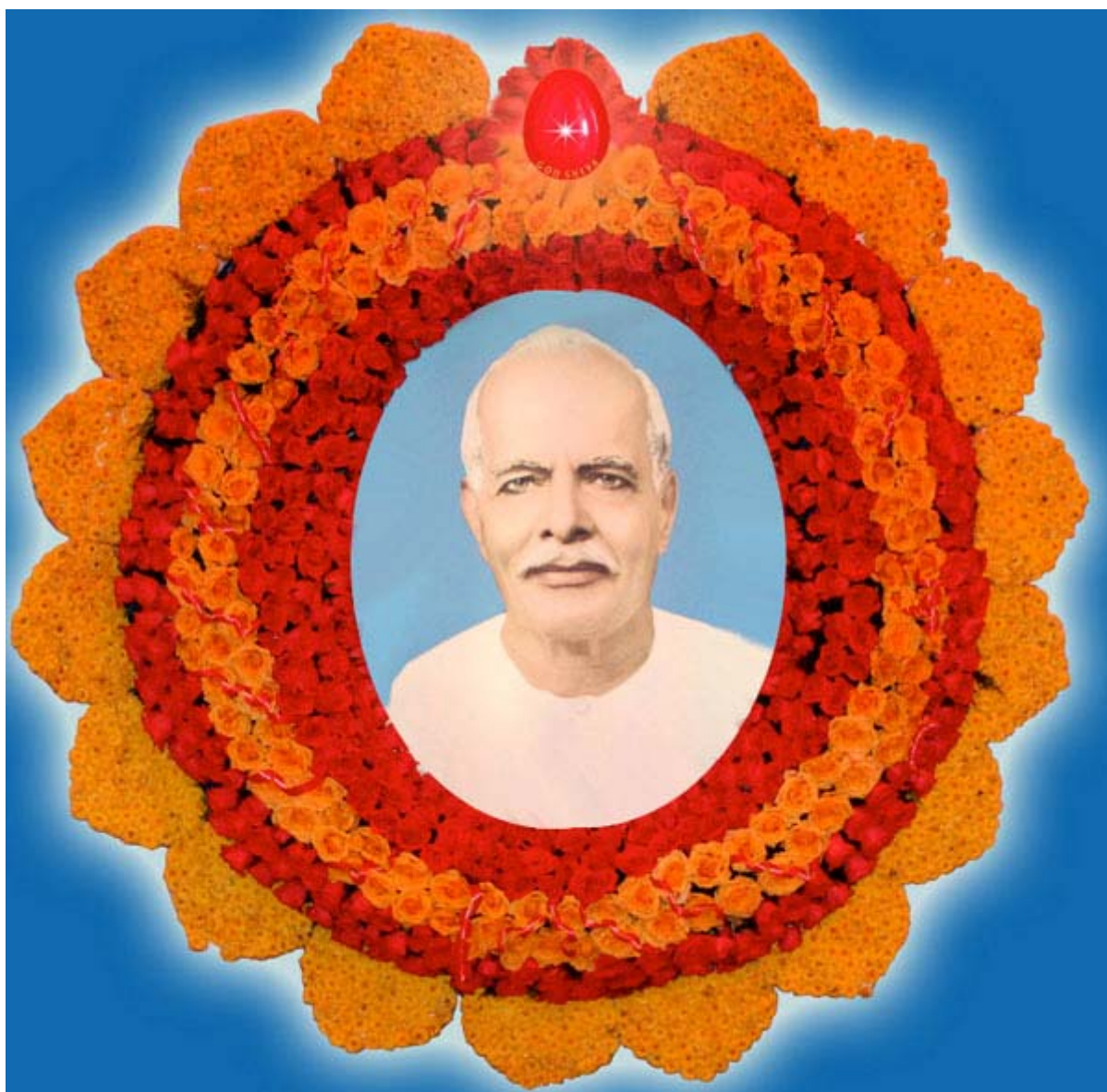
**Well-wisher of all:** Baba was always filled with good wishes for all without any discrimination on the basis of caste, faith, gender, education or social status.

**Respect:** Giving respect to all and considering himself as a humble instrument of the divine, Baba endeared himself to those with whom he came in contact

**Care-free emperor:** Brahma Baba had unflinching faith in the Almighty, the benefactor of all, so that he could remain care-free in all trying circumstances.

**Being detached from his body and its relations:** Brahma Baba was able to stay in deep soul-consciousness and that enabled him to be detached from his own body and bodily relations.

**Embodiment of Purity:** The power of purity was very much visible in all his actions at the level of thought, word and deed.



**Brahma Baba**

It was on January 18th 1969 that Brahma Baba, the founder of the Brahma Kumaris, achieved a stage of spiritual perfection, passed from this earthly life and became an angel. On this day every year the Brahma Kumaris observe a day of silence worldwide. In Mount Abu, Rajasthan, India, the BK headquarters are beautifully decorated with flowers and there is the fragrance of a specially powerful

spiritual atmosphere.

A student of the Brahma Kumaris, who attended this year's retreat in Leura shared, "Each one of us is engaged in being a part of a variety of different activities through the day. Some days we may not do much physically and yet feel a little low on energy. On other days, packed with activities from morning till night, we feel an inner joy and a state of elation. I need to pause and ask myself - What fills me with inner power and what drains me of this power?"

A much-appreciated feature of the two-day retreat were sessions led by BK Charlie Hogg, the national co-ordinator of the Brahma Kumaris in Australia. As the theme of the weekend was *Becoming Spiritually Powerful*, Brother Charlie shared many stories about Brahma Baba. He explained how, while loving to be sometimes in solitude, at other times Brahma Baba was full of humour and very entertaining.

Brother Charlie shared some of his thoughts on spiritual development, as follows:

The more we waste our thoughts and time, the more we lose our spiritual power. The basis of power is love. When I do a task with my heart, no matter how difficult it may be, after I finish it, not only do I feel good but this also increases my confidence and leaves me on a spiritual high.

Often we get into a habit of dependence - dependence on people, possessions, etc. The moment I become a slave to anything, I begin to lose my inner strength and freedom. I need the courage to let go, to let go of the habit of dependence. The sign of a person who is internally independent is that he will be constantly cheerful.

What I need to do is to spend some time in silence and see the rubbish inside me that I need to renounce? Renunciation is the method to regain lost spiritual power. Along with this, when I mentally surrender to God what I value, and live the life of a trustee, this becomes the method for my spiritual progress.

What special qualification do trustees have? The special qualification of trustees is to experience being light in every aspect. A trustee is one who does not have the burden of even the consciousness of the body. When you belong to the Father, you do so with your mind, body and wealth. Since it doesn't belong to you, how can you have the consciousness of it being yours? If you still have this consciousness, it proves that you have taken back what you had given. A trustee is one who does not have any consciousness of "mine". When the consciousness of "mine" finishes, all attachment also finishes. A trustee does not have any bondage. A trustee is a free soul. If you are attracted to anything, it means that you are not a trustee. A trustee means one who is free.



Brother Charlie and Sister Sally

The ego always wants to react and overthink. Let my mind always be healthy so that it is not affected by anything. In my relationships there should not be any attraction or repulsion, as that takes up a lot of our energy. Let the mind be disciplined about not being pulled and overthinking about people. There should be no fear of people. If there is anyone who disturbs me, let me practise deep detachment and then give love to them in my thoughts and have good wishes for them.

When I use my time, money, energy, thoughts, words and deeds in the right way, it gives power to the soul.

After the session we had to reflect on 2 questions -

1. What fills me with power and what drains me of power?
2. From Brahma Baba's life what inspires me to be more powerful?

Some things that came up in our group sharing were -

**What fills us with power:** silence, positive and elevated thoughts, meditation, good karma, keeping good company of people and books and other media, sharing.

**What drains us:** waste thoughts, worry, doubt, criticism and comparison, gossiping about others.

The inspiration from Brahma Baba's life was his unshakeable faith in the Supreme, which brought stability even in the most adverse situation.

BK Diana shared: "The highlight for me was understanding the degree to which Baba faced and overcame the obstacles he encountered in his life. He was able to do this because of his ability to renounce body-consciousness, relationships, the physical senses and waste thoughts. I find Baba to be a truly amazing and inspirational soul. I am humbled and appreciative of his realisations about truth and his ability to take directly from the source of truth."

It also happened to be the birthday of two retreat participants. David Cutlan shared: "I was overwhelmed by the love and blessings showered upon me on the occasion of my 80th birthday, the spiritually powerful atmosphere of the retreat and the loving consideration of the BK clan for my current physical disability".

After this session there was an exercise in exchanging "drishti", that is, soul-conscious vision, maintaining the inner awareness that each one is a spiritual being and exchanging this energy, while looking at each other. BK Margaret Parker on the drishti exercise: "I had a realisation that I need to take support from the One who is the source of my strength. There was also much discussion about how Brahma Baba continues to sustain meditators in his own unique ways. A fine example of this was Brother Charlie's support of us during this special weekend retreat."

BK Said Amer on drishti: "I experienced intense vibrations of spiritual love and peace. I also understood from Brother Charlie's talk the importance of renunciation and being soul-conscious in order to move to the next level of our spiritual growth".

BK Fiona, "During drishti I experienced deep love and tranquillity".

BK Linda, "Meeting my soul family in the subtle region made me feel light and pure".



**BK Brothers in the dining hall**

Pure vegetarian food was served at each meal. BK Dami Patel said that "Cooking in silence in a peaceful atmosphere is magical. In silence you are able to connect with God and put more love and care into any activity."

After lunch there was a creative art session of making mandalas. Seka Jankovic shared: "My best experience was of making a mandala in introspection. It's so beautiful to get together with the BK community."





Creating Mandalas in Silence



Mandalas

Later in the evening there was a power-packed 2-hour meditation session in the stone cottage. With light instrumental music in the background after a few minutes of complete silence everyone was absorbed in a deep stage of meditation. How the two hours slipped by was a wonder! Many shared in their experiences that this was the best part of the retreat for them.



**Yog Bhatti (Meditation) at the Stone Cottage**

"Being in silence and experiencing the depth of soul-consciousness helped me feel extreme love from God, my Supreme Father and my spiritual family. This is my great fortune." shared BK Eva.

BK Annette, "As is your consciousness, so is your world. This weekend my consciousness was with Bap Dada. So my world was Bap Dada's world...filled with light and might".

BK Jagdish, "Every time I reflect upon Brahma Baba's work, his personality based on truth, his relationship with all souls and him being constantly filled with benevolence, it gives me a deeper experience and my level of effort making is enhanced. As a result I am able to apply the knowledge in a practical manner in life".

The next day started with meditation and a session on how to change the attitude and vision in everything we do from physical or worldly to spiritual. Unless one is able to bring about transformation in the self, there cannot be world transformation. One needs to develop enough power to transform weak thoughts and behaviours. Just this one effort of changing the worldly into spiritual will liberate one from all problems and weaknesses.



Peace

Purity is said to be the mother of peace and happiness. Any type of impurity makes us experience peacelessness and sorrow. Even if there is a scene of sorrow, where there is the power of purity, there cannot be the experience of sorrow. Pure souls become master bestowers of happiness and transform sorrow into an atmosphere of spiritual happiness.

Being there from India on that day BK Behari Jai Raj felt lucky. He shared: "I understood how the purity of soul is connected to inner and constant happiness."



**Q & A session**

This was followed by a Question-Answer session with Brother Charlie. Later a few shared their experiences and everyone received a blessing card and a sweet, before they proceeded for lunch which was the closing of the retreat.

BK Ravindra Kotwal, "The highlight for me is knowing that my real purpose lies in being of service. Based on the teachings, discussions and activities, I realize that I need to step up in my spiritual practice".

BK Jeanine Peroomal, "The retreat was amazing. It was my first time in Leura. Everybody was very obliging. I would personally like to thank Sally for her warm welcome". (BK Sally Segal is the co-ordinator of the Brahma Kumaris Centre for Spiritual Learning in Leura, the Blue Mountains.)

At the end BK Sally shared, "To me Brahma Baba is an example of an ordinary man who lived an extraordinary life of purity, peace and happiness. He was most generous-hearted and shared with everyone his wisdom, his deep love for the Supreme Soul and his care and concern for all of humanity. "



BK Jaie

### Spiritual Retreats - Benefits

A spiritual retreat can help you rediscover and cultivate spiritual awareness. Once you've experienced this higher consciousness, once you've learned to reconnect with your eternal self, you can move out again into the bustle of life with a fresh perspective. You'll have found new purpose and meaning to life and the way you connect with others and the world. So go on, treat yourself to a spiritual retreat!