



Divine Ambrosia

WINTER ISSUE , JANUARY 2013

A Drink For All

HIBERNATE AND REJUVENATE

Ah ! How beautiful and pristine the nature looks, bathed and covered in snow-flakes, each unique and distinct from other! Days have become short, and Sun does not always decide to shine through the thick clouds. The demarcating line between day and night grows thinner. And it seems, it only seems, as though going through this snow and cold is not easy.

But, did you know, that Winter is the best time to pause, reflect, hibernate and rejuvenate. For Growth or Progress, a period of rest followed by intense thinking and planning is required and winter provides such an opportunity. The senses are inclined to be more inward, not longing for attractions in the cold outside.

You can remain at home, and engage in study, reflection, utilizing this time to set lofty goals and come up with an action plan to achieve the same. Contemplation is the best way for spiritual growth.

Hope we utilize it to the fullest !

Happy Winter !
At HIS Lotus Feet

The Editor.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

INTEGRAL YOGA (3Hs)...2

YAATRA...6

MAY I ANSWER THAT ?...8

PERSPECTIVE...9

DIVINE CELEBRITY...10

FESTIVE MOMENTS...12

SWADHYAYA...14

SATSANG NOTES...15

HEALTH & FITNESS...16

SPECIAL FEATURES...17

FUN CORNER...18

FREE QUARTERLY SPIRITUAL E-MAGAZINE

<http://saranaagathi.wordpress.com>

Universe - A Painted Picture

by Swami Krishnananda

The process of the manifestation of the universe is fourfold, as there is a fourfold process in the painting of a picture. There is, first, a piece of cloth, pure in its original state. It is then coated with starch, to stiffen it into a canvas suitable for painting. The artist draws on the canvas an outline of the picture that is in his mind. Finally, the outline is filled with the necessary colour, giving it the appearance of the contemplated picture.

The universe is a vast picture painted, as it were, on the basis of **Brahman**. Pure Consciousness, which is the nature of Brahman, is the substratum of all things, and this may be compared to the pure cloth necessary as the background for the painting. The condition in which the projection of the universe is latently conceived and held in a seed-form, unmanifest and invisible, is the state of **Isvara**, where the universe is in sleep. There is a rousing from this sleep into a dreaming condition of creation in **Hiranyagarbha**, where faint outlines of the picture of the universe are visible, though a clear perception of it is impossible there. The colourful presentation of creation is brought into high relief in the state of **Virat**, where there is a waking of all things into their own individualities, and where each regards oneself as a distinct entity.

All manifested beings, right from the Creator to a blade of grass, animate and inanimate, exist as a graduated series of manifestations, all painted on the substratum of Brahman. Higher consciousness, lower consciousness and unconsciousness are differences introduced in the various items constituting the painted picture of the Cosmos, from the point of view of the degree in which Brahman-Consciousness is manifested in each of them. The difference in the expression of consciousness in different individuals does not mean that the individuals are really possessed of any intelligence of their own, for one and the same Consciousness is manifest in all these, in various ways, in accordance with the subtlety of the medium of expression.

The intellect or the **Buddhi**, being a subtler medium, reflects a greater amount of consciousness



“One should constantly engage oneself in a thorough investigation of the nature of Isvara (Lord), Jagat (World) and Jiva (Soul). Then dawns the awareness that the Jagat & Jiva have no independent reality of their own, but derive their existence from the Supreme Self”

than the lower kingdom, in which such a medium is absent. Just as we differentiate, artificially, the painted dresses and the painted human beings from the real cloth on which the picture is painted, we do in this world make a false distinction between the imaginary, reflected intelligence called **Chidabhasa**, and the real Intelligence, which is Brahman. As these reflections or Chidabhasa are different owing to the difference in the degree of intelligence manifest in them, **Jivas** are manifold in number, and there are countless ways of drawing a distinction between Jiva and Brahman. As the colour of the painted clothes is unwisely superimposed on the cloth-background by the observers, the individualities and the variegated world-forms are wrongly felt to be in the Brahman.

The feeling that **Samsara** is real, that it is intertwined with the Self, really, is the bondage of the **Jiva**, and this is called **Avidya**. The firm conviction that bondage does not belong to the **Atman**, that it is a phase of Jivahood or Chidabhasa, is true knowledge, and this is acquired by deep reflection. Hence one should constantly engage oneself in a thorough investigation of the nature of **Isvara** (God), **Jagat** (World) and **Jiva** (Soul). When there dawns the awareness that the world and Jiva are correlatives and have no independent reality or value of their own, they cancel each other, and there rises the higher knowledge of the **Paramatman** or the Supreme Self.

Mere non-perception of the world should not be mistaken for the liberation of the Jiva. Else, there would be liberation in sleep, swoon, death and cosmic dissolution, where the world is not objectively experienced. Liberation is positive knowledge of the unreality of multiplicity, and the reality of the universal Unity. In the state of the true Knowledge the outward perception of the world need not necessarily be negated. The appearance of the world may be there, but the feeling of its reality is not there. Such a state is called liberation-while-living (**Jivanmukt**).

Spiritual knowledge is of two kinds: direct and indirect. It is only in direct knowledge that contemplation and meditation reach their culmination. To know that Brahman is, is to have an indirect knowledge of it. To know that one is identical with it in actual experience, is to have a direct knowledge. Towards this end, the nature of Truth is being analysed here.

The One Truth appears to have a fourfold distinction as **Kutastha**, **Brahman**, **Jiva** and **Isvara**, even as the space contained in a jar, the vast universal space, the space reflected in the water contained in the jar, and the space reflected in the widely spread clouds in space may be distinguished from one another. Kutastha is that which is the changeless substratum of the physical and the subtle bodies which the Jiva experiences. This substratum is called the Kutastha because it is unmoving like an anvil, even while it is beaten severely.

The intellect which is superimposed on the Kutastha and through which the latter is reflected, becomes the source of the appearance of the Jiva, which



“All manifested beings, right from the Creator to a blade of grass, animate and inanimate, exist as graduated series of manifestations, all painted on the substratum of Brahman.”

is so called because it infuses life into the individuality and appears to get involved in Samsara.

As the space reflected in the water of a jar completely covers the real space in it, Jivahood takes the position of the Kutastha and makes it impossible for one to have a direct knowledge of the Kutastha, by mutual superimposition (Anyonya-Adhyasa) of attributes. The existence, consciousness, freedom and bliss of Kutastha are superimposed on Jivahood, and the Jiva begins to feel thereby that it exists as intelligence, freedom, bliss, and so on.

Conversely, the changing characteristics of the Jiva, such as pain, pleasure, etc., are superimposed on the Kutastha, and one begins to feel that one has really these experiences. Thus the Jiva, getting busy with itself and its activities, forgets its own source, and knows it never in its daily life. This forgotten nature is called **Mula-Avidya** or the original ignorance.



3H's >>> A SELFLESS HAND

Do not lose a single opportunity for helping and serving others. An opportunity once neglected may not come again. My method is to be always on the lookout for opportunities. Watch for them and utilize them. Be ever ready to serve. Be full of initiative. Create opportunities. Create a field for good service; create work. There is no yoga greater than *sattwic* charity of the spontaneous type.

Actively seek the well-being or comfort of others. Do not procrastinate. Act now, not tomorrow or the day after. The person may change their mind later on and go away. We may not then have the opportunity of rendering our service to them. This is one of the most important rules in selfless service. Opportunities come and go. A karma yogi should be ever vigilant and utilize every opportunity for seva. When a task is put off for the next day, then other tasks accumulate around it and the opportunity for service is lost.

Serve cheerfully and willingly. Serve with pure love, kindness and courtesy. Never grumble or murmur during service. Never show a wry or gloomy face when you serve. The one you serve will refuse to accept such service and you will

the street. Read to the blind, and visit the old and aged, cheer them up with stories and news of happy events.

Equip yourself with first-aid knowledge, so you can always give the first help in all cases of emergency. Get medicine from the hospital or the dispensary to have ready for anyone who may need it. Visit a hospital daily, if you can, or weekly, and give your best attention to the non-paying wards. Distribute fruits to the patients. Sit by the side of the patient and speak a few encouraging words. Smile awhile. Repeat verses or read inspiring passages from the spiritual traditions. Tell him that you will meet him 'tomorrow'; and then do meet him.

Meet your friends and members of your society in a common place once a week or a fortnight for satsang and kirtan. Develop an understanding heart. Help others in the spiritual path. Lift them up. Throw light on their path. Do not expect perfection from them, but be kind to them. They are doing their best, as you are yourself doing yours. You will grow by helping them.

Kindness is the cheapest of all things. A kind look, a kind word, a kind act, a friendly smile all cost nothing but bring to others happiness



PRACTICAL HINTS FOR SERVICE

by Swami Sivananda

lose an opportunity. Utilize every minute in serving others in the best possible manner. Do not expect anything when you serve a person or when you give a gift. Thank him/her for giving you a good opportunity to serve him.

If your guru or friend asks you to wash a towel, take his clothes also for washing without his knowledge. If a passer-by asks for a cup of water, say to him with courtesy, in sweet words: "Brother, take your seat. Here is water. Here is a cup of milk for you. Rest awhile on this seat. I shall massage your legs and fan you. You are tired." This is real service. This is real yoga. If you do service with this mental attitude for one or two years, you will become an entirely changed being, a veritable God on this earth.

You can do selfless service according to your ability and station in life. An advocate can plead for poor people without accepting fees. A doctor can treat the poor free of charge. A teacher or professor can give free tuition to poor children. He can supply books for study. Give one-tenth of your income in charity. Serve your parents, elders, teachers and guests with divine bhava.

Serve any social institution for one hour daily without any remuneration. Collect some old clothes and distribute them to the needy. Distribute food to the destitute as you walk along

which money cannot buy. They are priceless in their value. Do kind acts now as service of your fellow travellers. Kindness is like a healing balm. It soothes suffering. Just as little drops of water make the mighty ocean, little acts of kindness make an ocean of goodwill.

If a guest arrives at your house, this is an opportunity for seva. Welcome them and ensure that they are treated properly, no matter how inconvenient the timing. Seva should be performed generously and with modesty. It should be done with feeling. The food that you offer a guest may be meagre fare, but if you offer it with love it acquires great power, nutrition and taste. Be it a relative, friend or beggar, give food with love and affection, whatever the quality of the food may be. There is no superior or inferior service.

There is no superiority or inferiority among karma yogis. In a machine, the smallest bolt or spring is as essential to its smooth running as the mighty wheel. Similarly, in an organized effort, the person who does even the least work, or attends to an insignificant detail, contributes as much to the success of the endeavour as the chief organizer himself; for, if there is some defect in even a small detail, perfect success cannot be achieved.



Worshipful homage unto the Great Reality, the Brahman of the Upanishads, That which is experienced by sages and seers of self-discipline, purity, intense aspiration, perseverance and determination. Those who give that Reality the greatest of all values, who regard It as the supreme value, who give It top priority, the central place in their life, qualify for the attainment of that Great Reality.

If that Great Reality counts as number two in one's sense of valuation, then long shall one have to wait. If It is one among many goals, if It does not occupy the central place in one's scheme of life, then one has to wait long. Making that Great Reality the goal of one's life to the exclusion of all other lesser goals—thus indeed do they describe the nature of true aspiration. *Ekagrata* (one-pointedness), *ananyata* (single-mindedness), *avyabhicharini* (total dedication) are words used in connection with aspiration and devotion.

Gurudev, during his sadhana days, embodied all these hallmarks of an ideal sadhaka and seeker to the highest possible degree—total dedication to the ideal of God-realisation, one-pointed devotion

the One who is the source and origin of all things, they attain Him. "*Mameva ye prapadyante mayametam taranti te* (Those who take refuge in Me alone cross over this illusion)."

This is a world of things. You should ask for that Being who is beyond all things—the Thing-in-Itself. If you ask for lesser things, you get lesser things. He gives immediately what you aspire for. Whatever you ask, that is given. So we have to be careful about what we ask of God because He is a wish-yielding tree.

"Take away all desire from my heart, O Lord. May I not want anything except Thee and Thee alone." This is what one should ask from the Supreme Being. Tulasidas says: "In my heart there is no other desire, O Lord, but for You and You alone." This is what all the great teachers have taught us by their own living example. Therefore, at the feet of the guru as well as God, the one thing worth asking for is aspiration for attaining the Reality and the Reality alone.

"Immortality is attained when one's wish is to let go of all other things besides the one Great Reality."



ASPIRATION FOR GOD'S LOVE

by Swami Chidananda

to sadhana, and absorption in that great struggle—setting aside all other considerations, making this his sole goal, and wholeheartedly striving for it with all his heart and mind. Day and night he lived for that great attainment. Therefore, the attainment was his. All the great ones manifested in their lives, in their inner spiritual life and struggle, this total dedication. This we must learn from them, receive and absorb from them.

We must try diligently, sincerely and earnestly to gradually come to a state where no other consideration weighs more with us than God, to a state where God fills our entire life—He becomes the most important thing. This indeed is the one common factor in the lives of all the great ones. This is the one thing worth asking for. We worship God, we try to please Him by various means so that He may make our lives comfortable, prosperous, successful, happy, long-lived. But seldom does anyone ask Him for devotion and devotion alone, one-pointed aspiration for Him and Him alone. Everyone wants things created by God, but very few indeed want the Creator and the Creator alone, Him and Him alone.

"Not what You have created, O Lord. I aspire for Thee and Thee alone." In this way, those who brush aside all created things as being of little worth and value and set their heart on

May we, therefore ask God to bless us with an interior state where there is no desire for any temporary, evanescent created thing of this external world of ours. We must ask Him to bless us with that aspiration that hungers and thirsts and longs and yearns for that one Great Reality alone. For That alone is worth having—attaining which everything is attained, attaining which one goes beyond, is liberated from all desire.

May you all aspire for That, ask for That, earnestly long for That, and pray for That. May you all attain That in this very life, and become forever blessed !





YAATRA : THE PILGRIMAGE

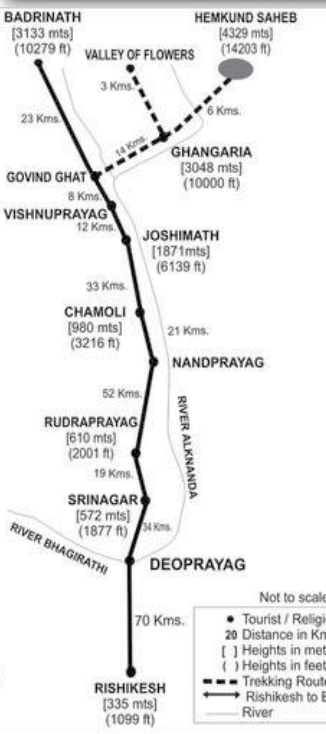
Our Trekking Trip in Himalayas

Aparna & Hari

Our journey to the higher and sacred altitudes of Himalayas had been truly a miraculous one, in which we experienced Narayana's hand guiding us at every step. Left to us, we would not have been successful in undertaking this trip in the middle of landslides and dangers, but the Divine Guidance laid out a clear road map for us. In August 2012, from Delhi airport we flew to Dehradun and then took a taxi to Sivananda Ashram. Our plan was to start for Joshi Math the next day in a bus, or shared auto (now that I think of it, vow!) or hire a taxi. Seeing Mother Ganga made me come alive. I could never get enough of it – looking at her graceful flow, bathing in her holy waters, and just sitting on her banks. Ganga inspires me, and I feel divine contemplating that since time immemorial many sages, saints, self-realised souls have purified her waters, and I am now taking part of the wisdom. To stand in Ganga and offer oblations to Sun in the morning plunged me in to peaceful state of mind.

We took blessings of Swami Vimalananda ji, president of Divine Life Society, and Swami Padmanabhananda ji, General Secretary of Ashram, and met many Mahatmas when we were in the Ashram. We relished spending time in the holy Bhajan Hall chanting Hare Rama Kirtan in different tunes. This Kirtan has been going on continuously since 1940s. It has great powerful vibrations. Also, in 2006, we were here during Dattatreya Jayanthi and partook the prasadam. The Dattatreya shrine is perched in peaceful surroundings and we met a Swaminiji who has done great number of Purascaranas in that shrine.

We came to know that there had been landslides and road to Badrinath has been cut off and we could not travel in such a situation. We thought we could spend our time in Ashram itself in contemplation and japa. But miraculously, we came in touch with a lifelong devotee of Swami Chidananda who organizes trips and tours to Badrinath. The next day morning, he made sure that the roads were being cleared, and sent us a very comfortable taxi to start our journey.



We traveled by car, enjoying the sights of Alakananda, took baths at the holy confluence of Dev Prayag, Rudra Prayag, and reached Pippalkoti by evening. We stayed in a hotel room, and Behold! we had a splendid view of the Himalayas from our balcony the next day morning. Our trip to Joshi Math was the treasure trove of resplendent and majestic beauty. At Joshi Math, we had paid our respects to Lord Narasimha, and other deities, and proceeded to Badrinath.

Lord Narayana is cozily ensconced on the hills of Nara and Narayana and we spent 1.5 days there, doing Japa and enjoying His glory. We also visited Vyasa Gufa, Ganesha Gufa where Mahabharatam epic was written and also the last village of India (Mana) and had tea at the tea shop before the border. From Badrinath, we started out to Govind Ghat, and then we trekked 14 kms from Govind Ghat to Gangharia village which is the center point for Valley of Flowers and Hemkund Sahib.



The trek was not easy. Even though we carried small backpacks, they seemed heavy, and by the time we reached Gangharia, we were exhausted, hungry, tired and cold. We took Government cottages there, and I was not hopeful if I could walk again atleast for few days. But morning rejuvenated us and we started our 7.5 km trek to Hemkund Sahib. It is all Divine Beauty around us - mountain peaks, flora, fauna - inspiring us with strength to walk. Hemkund Sahib was at an altitude around 15,000 ft above sea level, and where Sri Guru Gobind Singh did his penance. We spent quality time in Gurudwara, sinking in the melodious kirtans and chants, visited Lokpal Lakshmana temple adjacent, and were the last people to come down.

The next day, we again set out early in the morning on our 6 km trek to Valley of Flowers. This was a gorgeous day with resplendent Sun unlike the previous day when it was raining. We went through kilometers of natural flower gardens with a vast sky canopy above then, exuding titillating fragrance, and surrounded by the majestic snow peaks. We walked and walked without knowing what it is to tire out! In the afternoon we came back to our hotel, and since we were running short of time, we took a Helicopter to Govind Ghat where our taxi was waiting. And from there, we travelled to Rishikesh, thus completing a wonderful journey. This is the best trip of my life, and I pray to Himalayas & Ganga to grant me such trips in this life.



MAY I ANSWER THAT ?

Q & A With Siva

A man doing a wrong thing argues that he is doing it because of his Karma; and he does not even try not to do it, because it gives him

immediate happiness. How to impress upon him not to do it?

Karma does not compel a man to do wrong actions. Samskara does, to a certain extent. But God has bestowed free will on man, with which to make or mar his career. Man has no Bhoga-Svatantrata or the freedom to enjoy or suffer, which factor is governed by Karma. But, he has got Karma-Svatantrata or freedom to do good or evil. He can substitute good Samskaras in place of the old vicious Samskaras by Vichara-sakti, will-power and continued practice of good actions.

That evil seems to give immediate happiness is the greatest temptation and the greatest obstacle to the cultivation of virtues; and it can be removed only by discrimination and experience. Contemplation over the ultimate and permanent damage done to the very soul of man by the evil actions, and the harm he is causing to the entire society itself by his evil, ought to compel a man to desist from evil action— however pleasant it might appear superficially. There is no short-cut to this really serious problem; the wicked heart will not yield easily. And therefore our ancients have exalted Satsang. Constant association with the wise and spiritually evolved persons alone can remove these wrong notions from the mind of the wicked one.

Does purity of food lead to purity of mind? Is non-vegetarian food not Sattvic? We have in the Mahabharata instances of people taking the meat of goats sacrificed to the Lord.

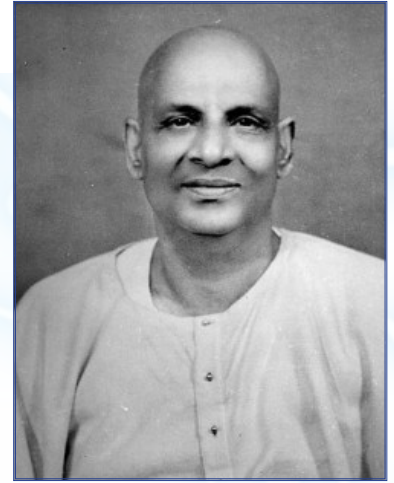
Yes, purity of food leads to purity of mind. **Aharasuddhau Satvasuddhih.** Take a dose of champagne and sit for meditation. Take a dose of orange-juice and sit for meditation. You will know the difference. Different foods exercise different influences on different compartments in the brain. By taking champagne, meat and garlic, the mind will be confused and will become restless when you sit for

meditation. By taking milk and fruits, you will get good concentration. Our Rishis lived on fruits and milk. The Chhandogya Upanishad says, "Pure food leads to purity of mind and then one attains Moksha". You should have dietetic discipline.

Non-vegetarian food is not Sattvic. It is not good for a seeker. Live for a month on milk and fruits and see. Give up meat for one month and see. Let us be practical. Practical experience will tell you that meat-eating is bad for the mind.

When the grace of Guru and God is there, why is the mind still not controlled?

There must be **Purushartha** (self effort) also. Only when you do Purushartha, the grace will come. A professor will not answer the questions for you and make you pass. The Gita says, "**Uddharet Atmanatmanam**". One should raise oneself. Grace only helps one to raise oneself. Everybody should work out his own salvation. You may ask, "What is grace then?". If an aspirant gets letters from his preceptor, clearing his doubts, that is grace. If an aspirant comes here, takes Ganges bath and hears the lectures here, that is grace. Many people are thirsting, even croropathis (those who possess crores of rupees) are thirsting to come and bathe in the Ganges, but all do not get a chance of coming and having their wish fulfilled. If good books are available for **Svadyaya** (study), it is grace. If one enjoys good health for doing Sadhana, that is grace. If God so wishes, He can give Mukti to the whole world in an instant; but He does not do so. Grace descends only when there is self effort.



PERSPECTIVE

Lucid Dreaming - Study of a Maple Tree

by Steve Pavlina



Last night during a 20-minute midnight nap, I had a lucid dream. It started off as a regular dream, and then at some point I realized I was carrying a gargoyle, which seemed odd to me. I asked myself, "What the heck am I doing carrying this gargoyle around? That's unusual... even for me. And it's so light for its size. Hmmm... Is it possible I'm actually dreaming? Nah. Everything seems so real. Look at those trees and that building. And besides, I just had a chat with Gandhi in his tent a little while ago, and he seemed real enough. But what about this gargoyle? I don't normally transport such things from place to place. Maybe I should ask the gargoyle. He doesn't seem to speak English. I wonder if there's a way to ask him in gargoyle-tongue. Something is definitely odd about this situation. Am I absolutely certain this isn't a dream? Wait a minute... I remember telling myself that if I ever had to ask that question, then I'm definitely dreaming. So this must, in fact, be a dream."

At that point I became lucid. For some reason I saw a tree that seemed unusually realistic looking, so I flew in for a closer look. I identified it as a maple tree, and I spent a few minutes studying it to see if I could find any flaws that would differentiate this dream tree from a real one. I floated up through the branches and studied their fractal patterns, which seemed just like a normal tree, not a fake computer-generated one. I examined the leaves and noticed how vivid and real they seemed. It looked like a tree, felt like a tree, and smelled like a tree. The only difference I could discern was that the dream tree had an energy to it that made it feel slightly more alive than a real tree. It seemed more real than reality. As I studied the tree, I said to myself, "This is remarkable. This looks so incredibly real. Yet supposedly this tree doesn't even exist." So even though I was looking at a tree that supposedly exists only within my imagination, I couldn't see any evidence in the tree itself that would indicate it wasn't just as real and solid as a waking world tree.

Now that I'm sitting in my office, supposedly wide awake, staring out the window at the trees in my backyard, I have to wonder whether those trees are real either. What evidence do I have that all of reality isn't simply an

experience playing out in my own consciousness? Really there's no way to know. I can't escape my own consciousness (can I?), so any evidence of objective reality that comes to me is no different than the same type of evidence presented within my dream world. I even have stable persistent locations in my dreams that seem to evolve over time across years of multiple dream visits, just like physical reality.

Partly because of this conundrum, I view my waking reality as similar to my dreams in the sense that everything is taking place within consciousness. I'm not the characters (i.e. physical bodies) in those realities — I'm the conscious being that's having those mental experiences. Once I started thinking this way, I noticed that my dreams became much more vivid. This coincided with my switch to polyphasic sleep as well. My dreams are so realistic and complex now that it's hard to tell them apart from waking reality. I have to be triggered by something out of the ordinary, like noticing that I'm carrying a gargoyle.

The physical matter in my dreams seems so solid and real. About the only difference is that it has a different energy feel to it... as if it's vibrating at a different frequency. I feel a sense of radiant energy coming off of dream matter that is different from that in the physical world. Perhaps it's an alternate reality where the laws of physics are a bit different.

One thing I should mention is that when I went to sleep for that midnight nap, I actually put out the intention to have a lucid dream. I hadn't done that in a while, but it was nice to see that it worked the first time. I think I'll try doing that more often, since lucid dreams are a very exciting way to explore alternate realities. It's pretty amazing being fully conscious in your dream world, knowing that your real body is actually sleeping.

If you want to learn more about lucid dreaming and try it for yourself, I recommend you read Dr. Stephen LaBerge's *Lucid Dreaming and Exploring the World of Lucid Dreaming*. They're the best books I've read on lucid dreaming... and the ones that helped me get started more than 11 years ago. Lucid dreaming is a completely learnable skill.





DIVINE CELEBRITY



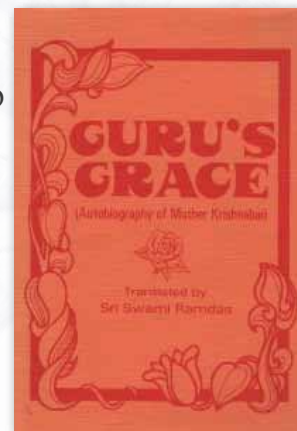
Mother Krishnabai

Mother Krishnabai - a Self-realized saint and embodiment of patience, strength, love, kindness, simplicity and service. She was like the wish-fulfilling tree under whose cool shade, several seekers of Truth have found relief and comfort. God's compassion, graciousness, forgiveness, purity and peace radiated in her and she came to be venerated by one and all. She beheld the entire creation to be the expression of the Divine Being and inspired many to follow the path of Nama (Name), Dhyana (Meditation) and Seva (Service).

Mother Krishnabai was born in September 1903 in a neighboring jungle near the village Haliyal (State of Karnataka, India), which the villagers, including her parents, vacated due to onspread of plague. From a young age, mother was drawn to devotion to God and worshipped in the family's Dattatreya temple and extended love to fellow beings. At the age of 12, she was married. She came into contact with great saints like Sri Chandekar Maharaj, Sri Pandurangashram Swami, Sri Siddharudha Swami, and took initiation into mantra japa. She performed crores of mantra recitation. At the age of twenty, her husband passed away after a brief illness leaving her behind with two sons, resulting in a growing detachment and dispassion towards the world.

Following the passing away of her husband, she underwent severe setbacks and shocks in her domestic life, was led to Beloved Papa in 1928 who accepted her as his disciple and initiated her into the all-powerful Ram Mantra - **Om Sri Ram Jaya Ram Jaya Jaya Ram.**

She attained realisation or Universal vision by implicitly following her Guru's teachings. Mataji, an embodiment of love and service, served literally as a mother to all who came under her spell from the inception of the Ashram till she dropped her body in 1989. Setting up of Anandashram gave her ample opportunities for whole-hearted service to her Guru, Beloved Papa, in His innumerable forms of those who sought spiritual guidance and those who needed material help. Both these needs were met by Pujya Mataji in the best possible manner. Mother's Autobiography "Guru's Grace", translated into english by Papa Ramdas gives insight into her life, hardships, spiritual quest and realization.



Day in and day out, Mother toiled hard to serve both the devotees as well as the poor and needy. For her, serving others was serving herself. This self-imposed life led by her in Anandashram made her an embodiment of selfless activity and a dynamic expression of the multi-faceted divinity. God's compassion, graciousness, forgiveness, purity and peace radiated in her and she came to be venerated by one and all.

As Beloved Papa would say, the entire Ashram set-up and activities found perfection in her unlimited love and dedication to her Guru. To her, Guru was God Himself and hence her dedication to Beloved Papa was total.

After Beloved Papa's Maha Samadhi in the year 1963, it was left to Mother Krishnabai to guide the affairs of Anandashram and minister to Papa's spiritual family spread all over the world and in spite of her poor health, she carried on her mission tirelessly till she attained Maha Samadhi, 26 years later in 1989.



"If you see greatness in others, the same greatness is in yourself. If you see littleness in others, the same littleness is in yourself."



Mother has initiated 15,500-Crore Nama Japa Yajna (Japa of om Sri Ram Jaya Ram Jaya Jaya Ram) for world peace, and it was completed successfully. The Yajna has been restarted and to date the grand total of Japa completed is 2861 crores.

Mother says: "We should develop a childlike nature. We should become innocent and pure like children. Ram Nam removes all the Vasanas and makes everything void in us while reading (spiritual literature) lends us strength and power to carry on with our Sadhana till we have developed that childlike nature."

Source: Book: Guru's Grace, Anandashram website



Anandashram
Anandashram P.O.,
Kanhagad 671531
Dist. Kasargod,
Kerala,
India.

Tel: (0467) 2203036/ 2209477
Email: anandashram@gmail.com
<http://www.anandashram.org/>

Subscription for The Vision
International Monthly Magazine
dedicated to Universal Love & Peace:
India: Annual Rs.40, Foreign: Pound 4 or \$6



RATHA SAPTAMI - SALUTATIONS TO THE BRILLIANT SUN

FEBRUARY 16, 2013

Ratha Saptami falls on the seventh day (Saptami) in the bright half of the Hindu Lunar month *Maagha*. It marks the seventh day following the Sun's northerly movement (*Uttarayana*) of vernal equinox starting from Capricorn (*Makara*). It is symbolically represented in the form of the Sun God Surya turning his Chariot (*Ratha*) drawn by seven horses (representing seven colours) towards the northern hemisphere, in a north-easterly direction. It also marks the birth of Sun-God and hence celebrated as Surya Jayanti (the Sun-god's birthday).

The festival is observed by all Hindus in their houses and in innumerable temples dedicated to Surya, across India. Rice boiled with milk, sugar and ghee (clarified butter) is offered to Sun as oblation. Sun is the life-source for all life on this earth. He is visible manifestation of God. It is through His heat and light energies, entire life comes into being and is sustained. The brilliant light of Sun destroys the darkness and is symbolized as the lamp of wisdom why which ignorance is dispelled. The Supreme Being manifest as the splendorous light as embodied in the visible orb of the sun, is the giver of light and the sustainer of the life-process in this world of ours. It is auspicious to offer salutations to Sun everyday through the following Mantras:

Om Mitraya Namaha	Salutations to the friend of all
Om Ravaye Namaha	Salutations to the shining one
Om Suryaya Namaha	Salutations to he who induces activity
Om Bhanave Namaha	Salutations to he who illumines
Om Khagaya Namaha	Salutations to he who moves in the sky
Om Pushne Namaha	Salutations to the giver of strength
Om Hiranya Garbhaya Namaha	Salutations to the golden cosmic self
Om Marichaye Namaha	Salutations to the Lord of the Dawn
Om Adityaya Namaha	Salutations to the son of the cosmic mother
Om Savitre Namaha	Salutations to the Lord of Creation
Om Arkaya Namaha	Salutations to he who is fit to be praised
Om Bhaskaraya Namaha	Salutations to he who leads to enlightenment

On the special Ratha Saptami day, a stotra in praise of Sun called "**Aditya Hrudayam**" (The Hymn of Heart of Sun) is chanted. This Stotra was taught to Lord Rama by Sage Agasthya on the battlefield. This Stotra is known for its extreme power in bestowing good health and brilliance in life.

[Click here to download the PDF of Aditya Hrudayam \(in Sanskrit with English Translation\)](#)

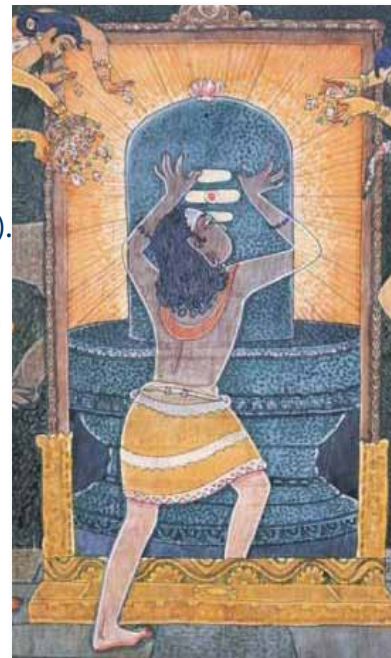
[Click here to watch Youtube Video containing a nice rendition of this Stotram](#)



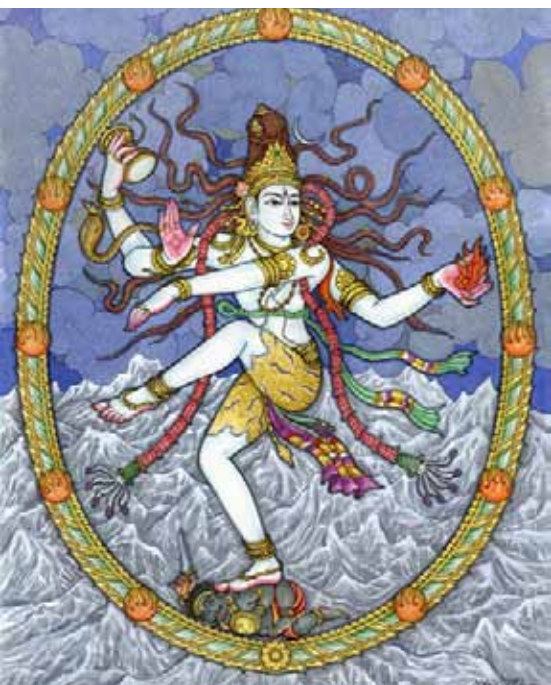


MAHA SIVARATRI - WORSHIP OF LORD SIVA MARCH 9, 2013

Maha Sivaratri means the great night consecrated to Lord Siva. It falls on **Trayodasi** or the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight of **Kumbha** month (February-March). The Divine Supreme in the form of Siva is easily pleased like a father pleased with even the smallest act of his child, and hence he is called **Bhole Baba** ! In all the temples in India and abroad, chanting of Rudram – Namakam & Chamakam glorifying Lord Siva in all existence is performed throughout day and night on the auspicious Maha Sivaratri day, and the devotees generally fast and do vigil in the night spending their time in worship, prayer, japa and meditation.



Sivaratri is an auspicious occasion to please Lord Siva. He will be very pleased with Japa, Dhyana and Abhisheka (ceremonial bath of Linga with water, milk, honey, rose water etc) on this day. Generally **Upavasa** (fast) and **Jaagarana** (night vigil) are carried on today by devotees. Japa of Panchakshari, the five-syllable mantra (**Om Namah Shivaya**) on this day will benefit immensely. The worship of Lord Siva will remove all impurities and make our mind and hearts pure and clean.



Lord Siva is really formless. He has no form of his own and yet all forms are His forms. All forms are pervaded by Lord Siva. Every form is the form or Linga of Lord Siva. He is embodiment of wisdom. He is the Light of lights. He is Paramjyoti or supreme Light. He is self-luminous or Svayam-Jyoti. The dance of Siva represents the rhythm and movement of the world-spirit. At His dance the evil forces and darkness quiver and vanish.

On this day, the devotee should Fast, perform holy bath of Siva Linga with pure water, milk, honey, Ghee, Banana, decorate with flowers, Sandal paste and if available Bael leaves (Bilva or Maredu), offer **Naivedyam** (food offering) and **Aarati** (waving of lights), recite various chants and hymns praising Siva, engage in **Kirtan** of Lord Siva, perform Japa throughout night and do Japa with meditation on Lord Siva. Pray for Spiritual Upliftment, and not any material gains. Offer all your worship and prayers unto Lord Siva.

[Click here to listen to Rudrashtakam Audio](#) (In the voice of Swami Tejomayananda, President of Chinmaya Mission)

[Click here to download Rudrashtakam Text](#) by Goswami Tulasidas in RamacharitManas

[Click here to download an elaborate exposition on Lord Siva & His Worship](#) by Swami Sivananda





SAYINGS OF MAHA PERIYAVAR



Various Manifestations of God:

A devotee of one manifestation is a devotee of every other manifestation. While the Alvars (worshippers of Lord Vishnu) and Nayanmars (worshippers of Lord Siva) were universalistic in their outlook, their later followers introduced narrow distinctions and dogmatic partisanship. How can there be a higher or lower, superior or inferior, when in reality there are not two but only One God manifesting differently? As each progresses in his devotion and concentration, he will be led on to the One where the differences disappear. That has been the experience of great sages and saints.

Harmony among followers of different religions:

As the God of all religious denominations is one, there is no need to give up one religion and adopt another. This does not mean that all religions are uniform; uniformity is not important; what is important is unity and all our faiths are united in proclaiming the supreme reality of one God. The religions are like arches of a bridge – to a man standing under a particular arch, that one would loom large and the others would appear small. But the fact is that all arches are of the same dimension.

Gist of Advaita -Absence of Duality:

Our waking state is for doing work. Deep sleep is for getting rid of tiredness that results from work. These two seem to be enough! Why should there be a dream-experience? I reflected on this. Iswara is everywhere. He is the non-dual Brahman. All is of the nature of Atman. In order to prove this truth, it appears, He has projected the dream world as an example. There is no other purpose. The apparent plurality of the empirical world is similar to that of the dreams. When we wake up from this empirical world which is a dream, only consciousness will remain. Hatred and desire are at the root of all our miseries. They arise only in respect of objects other than us. They will not arise if those objects are rendered identical with us. Are there not in this world many people? How can all of them become one? How to accomplish secondlessness? Vedanta teaches us that what we see in this world as many are illusory. It declares that all are of the nature of Iswara. We do not see thus. If it is true that Iswara is all, then what we see must be illusory. If what we see is true, then the declaration that Iswara is all must be false. If what appears to us is true, then there should be no misery for us. But misery does come to us. Therefore what Vedanta teaches must be true. If that be so, that all are of the nature of Iswara should be regarded firmly as the truth. What appears to us is illusory. Advaita teaches that there is a Reality as the basis of the entire world. What appears to us to exist are all illusory; the true Existence that is one is alone real. If all is Iswara, are we alone different? We should dissolve ourselves too as that Iswara. Then good will result. Even in the empirical world if two minds become one, there is no strife.

Similarly if all become one as Iswara, we shall become all; then there will be no desire in regard to ourselves. In the absence of desire, there will be no sin; and if there is no sin, there will be no body and if there is no body, there will be no misery at all.

Swadhyaya

FROM LONELINESS TO ONLY-NESS



Satsang with Swamini Svatmavidyananda ji (June 5 - 10)

The Sanskrit word "*Kaivalya*" can be understood as the moment of unbridled happiness and contentment with oneself. In our lives, we keep seeking many things – objects, relations, securities etc – due to our mistaken vision that we lack something and that an external thing outside of us will fulfil this feeling of lack. Because nothing external fulfills us, we remain forever a seeker. So the correct vision is to transform ourselves from "infinite seeker" to "*seeker of the Infinite*". The first step in this transformation is to sit at the feet of the Teacher with the readiness to suspend and drop the mistaken notions in our mind, and with trust and openness to the hypothesis that "Perhaps, I am already what I seek."



Kaivalyopanishad is a teaching on Self-Knowledge imparted by the great Teacher Prajapati to the eligible student Sage Aswalayana. The eligibility and preparedness of the student seeking Self Knowledge is indicated by the word "*Atha*" in the beginning of the first verse. This indicates that the student should gain emotional maturity through *Viveka* (discrimination), *Vairagya* (Objectivity), and the six-folded virtues. Once this wealth is gained, it will be effortless to swallow the butter of Self-Knowledge. The teacher corrects the mistaken vision of the student and makes the student realize that he is already free in and through.

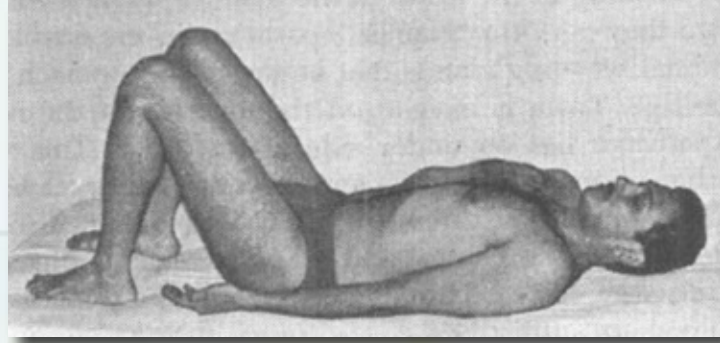
There are three secondary sadhanas prescribed by the Teacher Prajapati to his student Sage Aswalayana - *Sraddha*, *Bhakti* and *Dhyana* – that help the student clean the mirror for a clear understanding of his own Self. Vedanta is the mirror and one is by default inclined to see one's reflection in the mirror. But if one's understanding is immature and covered with false notions, the reflection is unclear. Hence, the prescribed secondary means will be helpful in removing these false notions. *Sraddha* is trust in the teaching and belief in the working hypothesis that the teaching reveals my true Self. *Sraddha* comes by suspending one's judgments and opinions. It should be cultivated. *Bhakti* is commitment to be with the teaching and *Dhyana* is discovering that I am a devotee.

The last day, Sri Swaminiji focused on Yoga in Bhagavad-Gita. In Swaminiji's words, "Connecting with certain attitudes and values is Yoga". It is a committed way of life so that the teaching about myself sinks in. It is disassociation from association with sorrow. Some of the valuable instructions that were presented to cultivate this yogic way are leading a life of dharma by sifting the desires through the sieve of Dharma, growing into a mature person who likes what one does, and having a cheerful temparement by bringing the mind back to "Now". This journey from Bhogi to Yogi, and resting within one's own Self is the journey from Lonely-ness to Only-ness.

Technique: Sit comfortably on a chair, sofa or easy-chair. Draw the air through both nostrils, as long as comfortable. Retain as long as comfortable. Repeat your Ishta Mantra or 'OM' while retaining the breath. Then exhale as long as comfortable. You need not observe any ratio between the inhalation, exhalation and retention; but let the inhalation and exhalation be deep and full.

Benefit: The benefits of this Pranayama are incalculable. All the muscles are relaxed. All the nerves are toned. Rhythm and harmony are established in the entire being. Mind is calmed. Circulation is promoted. An inexpressible peace and bliss come to reign within you.

You can do it in the morning while lying in bed. Your mind will become alert for commencing Japa and Dhyana. You can do it when the mind is about to lose balance on account of the setting in of lust, anger or other evil Vrittis; the mind will be filled with a great power that will prevent the evil Vrittis from disturbing it. You can do it just before commencing your study; the mind will be concentrated easily and what you study will be indelibly impressed in your mind. You can do it during your office-work; you will get new strength every time and you will never be tired. When you return home from the office you can practise this Pranayama and you will be recharged with fresh energy.



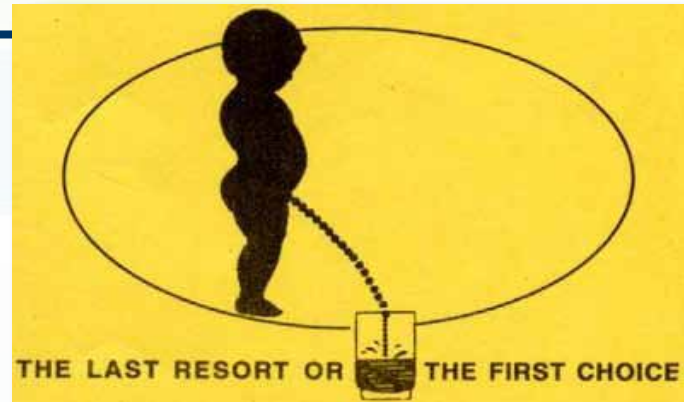
The greatest advantage is that once you start doing it you will do it very often; and your mind can never find an excuse for not practising this very easy and comfortable Pranayama which has all the advantages of regular Pranayama.

SHIVAMBU - URINE THERAPY

Urine is filtered blood, which is the by-product of repeated filtrations of the blood by the kidney, and can be used as a potent medicine for health to bestow vitality and disease-free life. In Sanskrit, Urine is called Shivambu – Holy Water. Urine therapy is one of the oldest treatments in existence in Asia, especially India & Tibet.

Method:

One very common and simple form of Urine Therapy is to drink one's own urine every day morning after waking up from sleep. In order to overcome the feelings of repugnance and anxiety over the odor and taste of urine, it is advised to drink as much water as possible previous night, and also to eat foods rich in starch, vegetables, fruits, legumes and avoid salty, pungent, spicy and heavy protein foods. It is preferable to be vegetarian during the treatment. Collect the mid-stream urine (after the first few seconds, and before the last few seconds) in a cup and sip it slowly. Do not gulp. If the quantity seems too much to tackle at first, start with smaller quantities and work up to the whole amount. Drink as soon as you collect it and not after it has become old. One can also wash eyes with urine in order to remove any ailments and gain clear sight.



Diseases effectively cured by Urine Therapy are a variety leukemia, breast cancer, gangrene wounds, skin infections, acne, digestive disorders, pain in spleen, menstrual cramps etc.

Free E-Books

<http://www.shirleys-wellness-cafe.com/pdf/shivambu.pdf>

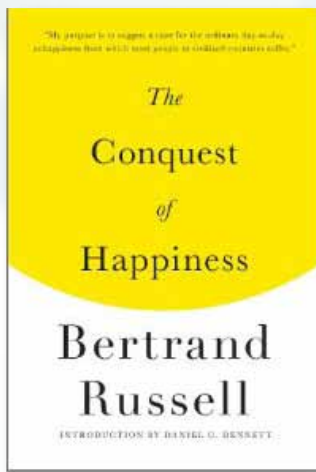
<http://books.google.com/books?id=XUX73XhakQ0C>



CONQUEST OF HAPPINESS BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

George Bertrand Russell has penned down an insightful book on conquest of happiness by offering unprejudiced observations on identifying some of the common causes of unhappiness that we witness in our day-to-day lives like envy, boredom, fear of public opinion, fatigue, competition to name a few.

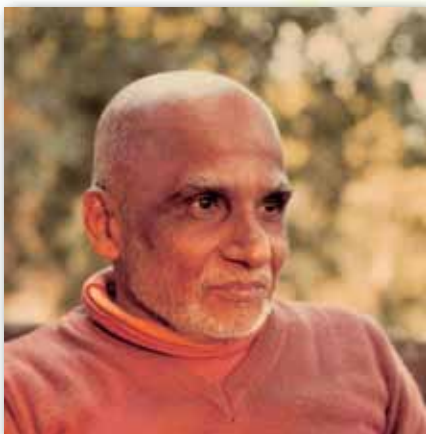
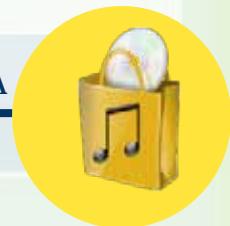
SPECIAL FEATURES



Bertrand offers great insights into how the human mind thinks in terms of acquiring wealth, possessions etc. but still remains unhappy. In the introduction, he outlines four points that have given him the wealth of happiness in his daily living: (1) largely due to a diminishing preoccupation with oneself, (2) partly due to discovering the things that make one happy and gradually acquiring them, (3) partly due to dismissing certain objects of desire as essentially unattainable, and (4) due to learning to be indifferent to oneself and one's deficiencies. He also categorizes and expounds on causes of happiness - zest, family, work, impersonal interests, effort and resignation - to name a few and gives tips to cultivate them. In his words:

“The Happy Man is the man who lives objectively, who has free affections and wide interests. He does not suffer from a lack of integrity between self and society and has a personality neither divided against itself not pitted against the world.”

MEDITATION BY SWAMI KRISHNANANDA



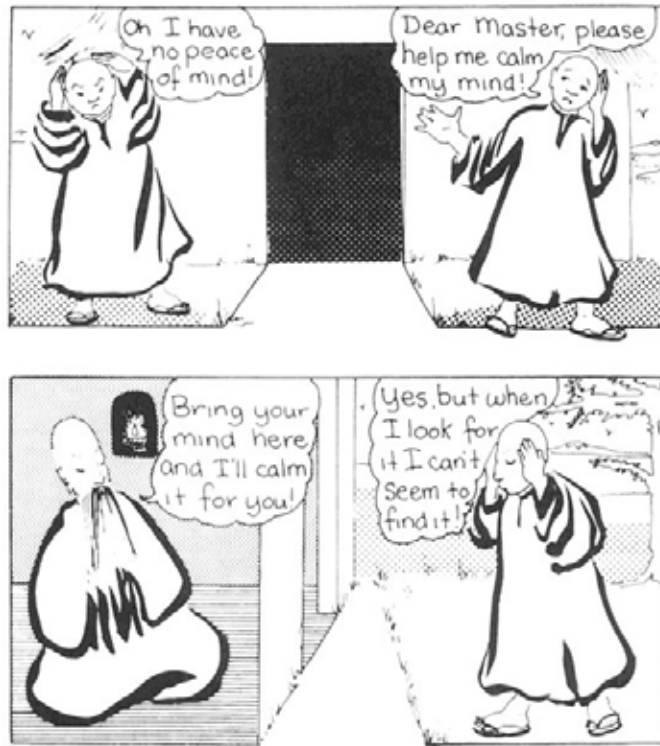
The Audio CD on Meditation by Swami Krishnananda ji is simply astounding. He starts with thought provoking discussion on what meditation is and what we are meditating upon, and goes on further to elaborate it in the context of the not so often studied Patanjali Yoga Sutra - ***bahih akalpita vrittih maha-videha tatah prakasha avarana ksayah***. Swamiji says that when you base your meditation upon attaining something external to you, or imagining an object, that is never successful, because what you do not have, can never be obtained. If you think God is external to you, and that is not yourself, then you cannot be helped. We need to discover our identity in everything and as ourself. Only then true meditation is said to be successful. The whole world will come to you, provided you are the whole world. Swamiji says, “Transfer yourself to that on which you are meditating. By persistent practice, you can uplift yourself and succeed in meditation.” Audio is available at: http://www.swami-krishnananda.org/disc/disc_87.html



HOW TO PLEASE YOU, LORD ? BY AKKA MAHADEVI, TRANSLATED BY VINAYA CHAITANYA



*How to please you, O Lord, with the eightfold offerings ?
You are beyond all external transactions.
How to please you, with meditating in inner space ?
You are beyond word and mind.
How to please you, with chants and praises ?
You are beyond sound.
How to please you, with the knowledge of your becoming ?
You are beyond the intellect.
How to please you, by placing my love in the middle of the heart-lotus ?
You fill every part.
It is not for me to please you, O Lord !
Your grace is well-being, O ChannaMallikarjuna, jasmine-tender ?*



Source: Zen Comics illustration by Ionna Salajan, 1975

Fun Trivia

1. The Sun is about 4.5 billion years old. It will probably continue to exist in its present form for about another 5 billion years before running out of hydrogen.
2. The Moon takes about 27 days (27 days, 7 hours, 43 minutes, 11.6 seconds) to go all the way around the Earth and return to its starting position.
3. Human eye can detect 10 million color hues, but cannot see ultraviolet or infrared light. Insects can see the ultraviolet light.
4. When you were born, your brain weighed about 350-400g and you had almost all the brain cells you will ever have. In fact, your brain was closer to its full adult size than any other organ in your body!
5. Once a human reaches the age of 35, he/she will start losing approximately 7,000 brain cells a day. The cells will never be replaced.
6. A bee travels an average of 1600 round trips in order to produce one ounce of honey; up to 6 miles per trip. To produce 2 pounds of honey, bees travel a distance equal to 4 times around the earth.
7. Your heart beats about 100,000 times in one day and about 35 million times in a year. During an average lifetime, the human heart will beat more than 2.5 billion times.
8. A single snowstorm can drop 40 million tons of snow, carrying the energy equivalent to 120 atom bombs.
9. Elephants have a slower pulse of 27 and for a canary it is 1000!

There was a woman, who lost her needle in the house. She was too poor to afford a light in her house, so she went out of the house and was searching in the streets. Somebody asked her what she was searching for in the streets. She said that she was searching for her needle.

The gentleman asked, “Where did you lose the needle?”

She said, “In the house.”

He said, “How unreasonable it is to search in the street for a thing which was lost in the house!”

She said that she could not afford a lamp in the house and there was a lantern in the street. She could not search in the house; she had to do something, so she searched in the street.

This is exactly the way with people. You have the Ocean of happiness within you, the paradise; the home of bliss within you; and yet you are searching for pleasure in the objects, in the streets, searching for that thing outside, in the objects of the senses. How strange!



MORAL: Searching for pleasure in the worldly objects is vain. The Home of Bliss is within you.

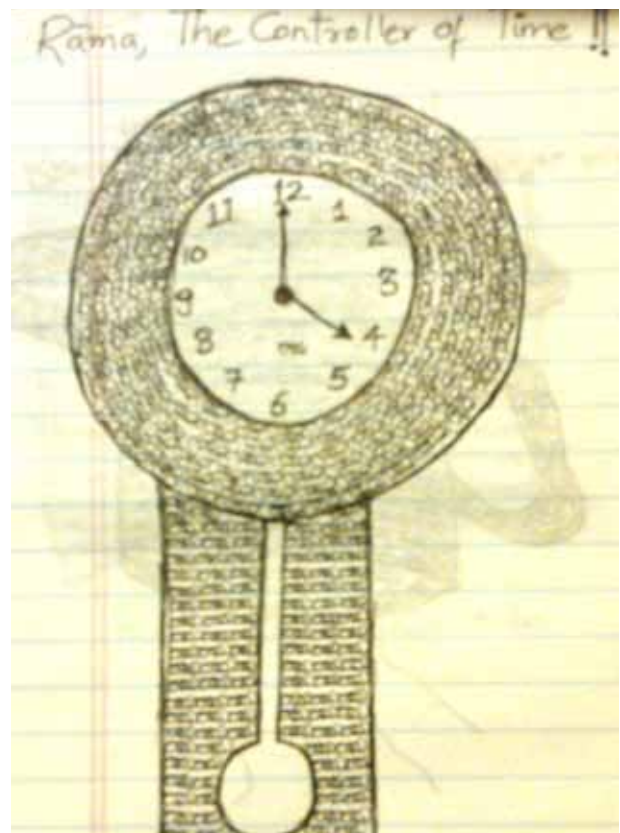
Source: Parables by Swami Rama Tirtha

Likhita Japa

Likhita Japa constitutes an important part of spiritual sadhana. The groove of our Guru Mantra is etched more deeply in our minds with repetition and one-pointed concentration. The benefits of Mantra-writing or Likhita Japa cannot be adequately described. Besides bringing about purity of heart and concentration of mind, mantra-writing gives you control of Asana (posture), control of senses, particularly the sight and the tongue, and fills you with the power of endurance. You attain peace of mind quickly. By prolonged and constant practice, the inherent power of Mantra (Mantra-Sakti) will be awakened, which will fill your very existence with the Divinity of the Mantra. In Mantra-writing, there is no restriction to language. One can write the Divine Name in any language.

“Write down daily in a notebook your Ishta Mantra or Guru Mantra for half an hour. When you write the Mantra, observe Mouna or Silence. Write the Mantra clearly in ink. On Sundays and Holidays, write this for one hour. This is Likhita Japa. It brings about purity of heart, concentration of mind, control of asana, control of senses and power of endurance.”

-Swami Sivananda



UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love !
Salutations and Prostrations Unto Thee
Thou Art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient
Thou Art Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss)
Thou Art the Indweller of All Beings !

Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, Devotion and Wisdom
Grant us Inner Spiritual strength,
To resist temptations and to control the mind
Free us from egoism, lust, greed, anger, jealousy and hatred
Fill our hearts with Divine Virtues !

Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms
Let us ever remember Thee
Let us ever sing Thy glories
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips
Let us Abide in Thee forever and ever !

-Swami Sivananda

Om ! Prosperity be unto All, perfect Peace be unto All

Fullness be unto All, Auspiciousness be unto All

Happiness be unto All, perfect Health be into All

May All see good in everyone, May all be free from suffering.



We would like to hear from you about our new E-Magazine, any tips, suggestions and feedback for improvement. We welcome your articles for publication in this magazine. In the meanwhile, if you think someone will benefit from this E-Magazine, please send it to them. We hope you enjoyed this issue. This issue is also available online at: <http://saranaagathi.wordpress.com>. Thank you for your time !

Yours, In Service,
The Divine Ambrosia Team,
DivineAmbrosia.ezine@gmail.com