

Chinmaya Smrithi



A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the **Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC)**

Volume 18, Number 4 -- July 4, 2008

Happy 4th of July

Meditate! Meditate!! Meditate!!!

*This is the highest vocation in life and man alone is capable of it.
Let us meditate and discover for ourselves its benefits and blessings.
And in this we must help ourselves - no one else can ever help us*

Swami Chinmayananda

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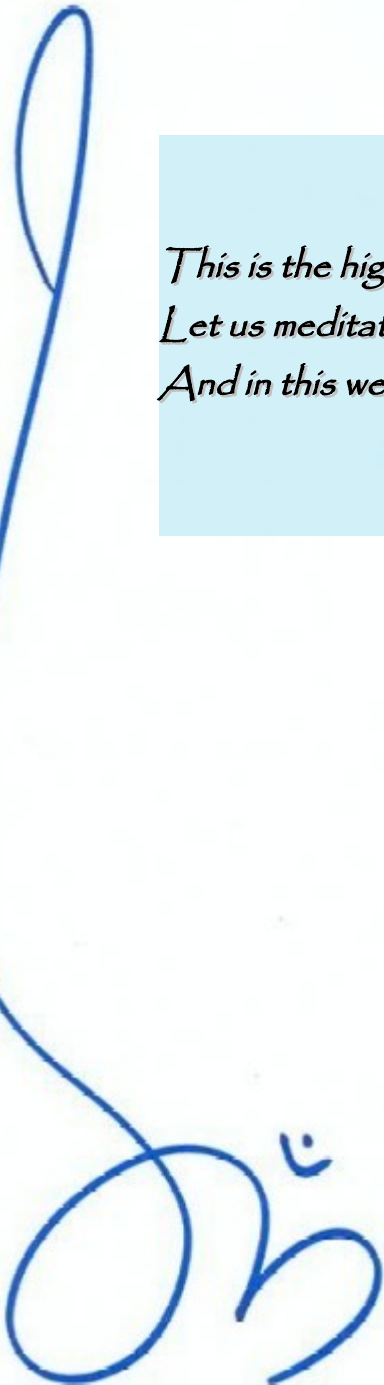
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Next Issue

- September 2008, Articles due by August 25th 2008
- Email submissions to smrithi@chinmayadc.org. Submission instructions at www.chinmayadc.org, Smrithi link, "Information on publishing in Smrithi"
- Contact us at smrithi@chinmayadc.org with your feedback or questions.

News, Calendar and Upcoming Events

- Registration In Progress
 - Mahasamadhi Camp 2008 (July 28th – August 3rd)
- Dance Program - Chinmaya Vibhoothi Fund Raiser
 - Sundarakanda and Ram Pattabhishekam by Kalamandapam,
 - Directed by Srimati Mrinalini Sadananda
 - July 12, 2008 at 7PM at Marshall High school, Falls Church, VA
- Bala Vihar Fall Classes Begin – September 7,8 by session

Study Groups

- Please contact Sri Vijay Kumar ji by email at vijaykumar@rocketmail.com, if you are interested in forming or learning more about study groups.

Bookstore/Library

- Please contact Mr Vijay Singh by email at publications@chinmayadc.org to order any publication. Review list of Chinmaya Publications by downloading <http://www.cybermatics2.com/cmadmin/PriceListMay2007.pdf>

Useful Links:

CMWRC – Washington Regional Center	www.chinmayadc.org
Chinmaya Mission Trust	www.chinmayamission.com
Chinmaya Mission West	www.chinmayamission.org
Chinmaya International Foundation, E-Vedanta Course	www.chinfo.org
Washington Region – Dulles VA Chapter website	www.chinmayadulles.org
Washington Region – Frederick MD Chapter website	www.chinmayafrederick.org
Washington Region – Springfield VA Chapter website	www.chinmayava.org

Please Note

The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of Chinmaya Mission or CMWRC

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Raju Chidambaram, Sitaram Kowtha, Swami Dheerananda ji, Acharyas, Chapter Coordinators and Teachers.

Bala Vihar students - Asmi Panigrabi, Harsha Neerchal and Srikanth Kowtha

Please contact us if you are interested in joining the editorial staff!



Chinmaya Mission®

Washington Regional Center

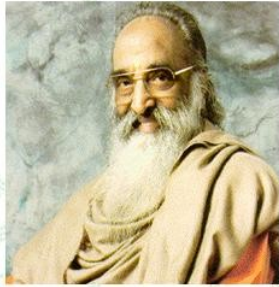
Mahasamadhi Family Camp 2008

Mon. JULY 28 – Sun. AUGUST 3, 2008

At Rocky Gap Resort, Cumberland, MD

NEAR WASHINGTON, DC

Conducted by **Swami Tejomayananda**



Listen to Mundaka Upanishad and absorb the timeless teachings to experience our inner Self, from Swami Tejomayananda, head of Chinmaya Mission worldwide. Several acharyas will be present for meditation, satsangs, and children's activities.

The backdrop for the retreat is the serene, nature-filled, award-winning Rocky Gap Resort and Lodges (www.rockygapresort.com), in Cumberland, Maryland. The resort is surrounded by hills and an alpine lake and is adjacent to Rocky Gap State Park. It combines the best of quiet resort luxury and the calm serenity of mother nature. The entire lodge has been reserved for use by the Mission during the retreat.

ADULTS

- 3 TALKS A DAY BY SWAMI TEJOMAYANANDA ON MUNDAKA UPANISHAD
- MORNING GUIDED MEDITATION, GROUP DISCUSSIONS, DISCOURSES BY ACHARYAS
- UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN A MAHASAMADHI DAY PUJA WITH PUJYA GURUJI AND ACHARYAS

YOUTH

- TALKS, DISCUSSION, Q&A LED BY ACHARYAS GEARED TOWARDS COLLEGE STUDENTS & YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
- OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES INCLUDING NATURE TRAILS

CHILDREN

- BALA VIHAR CLASS ACTIVITIES BY ACHARYAS AND DEDICATED TEACHERS
- CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, EVENING BONFIRE AND OUTDOOR GAMES ACTIVITIES

Registration is now open—Download form, more info at www.chinmayadc.org

E-Mail: mahasamadhicamp2008@chinmayadc.org





SWAMI TEJOMAYANANDA



An important announcement

We are pleased to announce the commencement of the 14th Vedanta Course at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Mumbai on September 3, 2008. This course is for two years on the line of ancient Gurukul tradition. The graduates initiated from this course, work for propagation of Vedanta at various centers of Chinmaya Mission worldwide.

The cost of conducting this course for 40 students is approximately Rs. 30 lakhs or (US\$. 75000) i.e. Rs. 72,000/- per student. This amount covers the cost of lodging, boarding, clothes, medical care etc;

We appeal to you all who value this cause to sponsor a student or send whatever contribution you can.

You may draw your cheque / DD payable at Mumbai, in favour of Tara Cultural Trust and send it with a letter to :

The Chief Executive, Tara Cultural Trust, Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Saki Vihar Road, Powai Park Drive, Mumbai - 400 072.
Phone : (022) 2857 0368.

Donation to Tara Cultural Trust within India is eligible for exemption under section 80 G of Income Tax Act.

Thank you.

With Prem & Om!
In the service of the Lord

Swami Tejomayananda

Walking

Sonia Jindal
Sundaram, Springfield Chapter

I've walked and walked all my life as many people do
Searching for a meaning, some way to get through
I've walked to and fro,
From side to side
I have no where true to reside

I've walked and walked,
I've seen so much
I've seen things such as horrible poverty and foul hunger
But I've also seen happiness and wealth
I've walked and walked,
I've learned so many things
I've learned the meaning of the chirping of the birds and I've
learned the eloquent song of the mighty wind
But most of all I've learned that this world is no perfect place

I walked and walked.
I came to the immense sea
I looked up into the dark night sky and what did I see?
I saw a brilliant shooting star, ablaze against the dim night sky
I wished for something with all my might
What did I wish for?
I wished that this world was a perfect place
Suddenly I heard a voice
It was the star!
"I can't grant that wish," said the star
"Why?" I asked
"I can't do that," I said
"Yes, you can," it replied
Then, just like that it vanished as if the night had spread a
blanket over it
Suddenly I knew what it meant
It was my purpose. What I was here for
My purpose was to make this world a better place
I had to make a difference bit by bit

I've walked and walked all my life
As many people do
I've found a meaning,
A way to get through



Journey

*Samir Durvasula
Shivanandam, Silver Spring*

Journey
to the mind's eye,
where dreams do come true

Journey
to a place,
where you are the ruler

Journey
to the mind's eye,
where dreams do come true

Journey
to a perfect place,
perfect only to you

Journey
to the mind's eye,
where dreams do come true

Journey
to a place with no problems,
that is meant only for you

Journey
to the mind's eye,
where dreams do come true

Journey
to a place,
that nature cannot give you

Journey
to the mind's eye,
where dreams do come true

Dreams
do not last,
or so you think

A place so perfect
does not exist,
except inside you

Journey
to the mind's eye,
where dreams do come true

Congratulations to Bala Vihar Graduates

[Check them out at CMWRC Website, Graduation 2008 Link]

Aneesha Rao

Avinash Pakalapati

Deepak Muralidharan

Kalyani Nambiar

Komal Rani Dilwari

Maya Kumar

Michelle Shankar

Naresh Yalamanchali

Neha Mehta

Pranay Randad

Raghu Gottipati

Rasshmi Shankar

Sandhya Devraj

Scinjit Gadamsetty

Sriya Sarkar

Tanu Kumar

Tarang Bapna

Monica Devamanoharan

Varsha Prabhu

Veena Meer

Vikram Linga

Vikram Madan

Shivanandam class Journals !

*Shanthi Chandran,
Bala Vihar Teacher, Springfield Chapter*

This past year when I started taking my Shivanandam Class I noticed that when compared to previous years the class size had grown considerably. We had twenty eight students in the age group eleven to thirteen years. The text book we were to follow was titled “ Vibhisana Gita “. The subject matter of the book dealt with an important but sometimes difficult to understand concept in Hindu Philosophy called “Dharma”. When I tried to gauge the maturity level of the class I found that half the class had a good grasp of the basic ideas of what our religion stood for but the rest were rather vague. Everyone said they know the story of Rama and when asked about the author of ‘ Ramayana’, the majority said “ Valmiki”. Since “ Vibhisana Gita” is not from Valmiki Ramayan but taken from Tulasidasji’s “ Ramacharitmanas”, we discussed the many versions of Ramayan written by later authors in different languages. In spite of having one other teacher in the class I noticed that not all the students in such a big class were paying attention. Most of the students in the first two rows were eagerly participating in class discussions but some at the back had a tendency of talking among themselves. We wanted to come up with an idea to get the whole class pay attention to the teachers. I also wanted to get some input from them as to whether they are able to understand and appreciate what was being said in the class. We told them that they should bring a journal and jot down notes of what they hear from the teachers. Writing in the journal is not compulsory we said but if they took the trouble of writing a few lines every Sunday they will be rewarded for their effort at the end of the year. To my surprise more than half the class kept faithful notes and submitted to us at the end of the year. Some of them had only a few lines whereas others took the trouble of going home and rewriting it in neat paragraphs. I am giving below a few samples from their journal entries. Apart from keeping a journal the class was also involved in doing a class project called “The Dharma Chariot”. The creativity, effort and originality the students displayed for their individual projects was amazing. One student had his chariot in the form of a navel ship and called it “USS DHARMA”! Another had made it to look like a Star War aircraft! One student had built his ‘Dharma Chariot’ using Legos! Many others also used their imagination to come up with some unique and beautiful designs. The students were asked to explain their model chariots in reference to the Vibhisana Gita verses. They came up with intelligent explanations which showed their grasp of the subject matter. On the whole I had a great time teaching a class of very bright students this year. I must say it was a joyful experience!

Thank You for letting me share my experience as a Bala Vihar teacher.

Some of the journal entries from the Shivanandam Class 2007-2008 Springfield Center:

1. Ramayana was originally composed in Sanskrit by Sage Valmiki. Many people had difficulty understanding Sanskrit so later Tulasidasji wrote the Ramayana in simple Hindi called Avadhi script....Kushali
2. The above entry was worded in a different manner in another journal notebook giving a twist! Since Valmiki Ramayana written in Sanskrit was not appreciated by the common man Saint Tulasidas rewrote it in local script called Avadi Script!
3. This week I learnt that Vibhisana Gita is not included in the Valmiki Ramayan. It is found only in Ramacharitmanas. The Ramacharitmanas is written in a different language from Sanskrit. The language Tulasida Ramayan is written in the Avadhi Script, a local form of simple Hindi.
4. This week we learnt about ‘ Dharmo Rakshati Rakshitaha’. This saying means if you protect Dharma, Dharma will protect you. We had to decorate a door hanger and write this saying on it.
5. We learned the meaning of the first part of Vibhisana Gita which is as follows:
6. Ravana has a chariot, but Ram has no chariot, armor or even sandals. When vibhisana sees this he gets a doubt. Bowing down to Shri Ram he says with love and affection asking how Ram would defeat Ravan without a chariot. Ram replies saying that he has a better chariot than Ravan, a symbolic chariot, The Dharma Chariot. The rest of the Gita we are told will describe the different parts of Ram’s symbolic chariot.....Anirudh
7. To make your Chariot go forward in the right direction you need an intelligent Charioteer. The intelligent charioteer is symbolically represented by ‘ Isa Bajan” which means devotion to God. If you have faith in God things will go smoothly. The outcome may not always be what we want but if we have equanimity of the mind which is indicated by the word ‘Samata” we will always have peace of mind.....Rishi Simhal
8. Dharma is following right path. Adharma is following wrong path.Prathiba
9. Dharma has many definitions. It can stand for one’s religion. It can also stand for ethical conduct like you should not tell a lie or should not steal etc. Dharma can also be defined as one’s duty. For example teacher’s duty is to teach, soldier’s duty is to protect his country etc.
10. Hindu Philosophy is much deeper than simple puja and idol worship. Swami Chinmayananda our founder used to be a journalist but his curiosity for Hindu scriptures made him become a Swamiji !.....Jayanth
11. Parahita means caring for others. A person without parahita thinks the world revolves only for him!.....Manotri
12. Kripa means compassion for others. Ghandhiji had lot of compassion. He stopped drinking cow’s milk and started drinking goat’s milk out of compassion. He saw milk vendors being mean to the calves and will not allow them to drink from the mother cow. In some cases they even killed the calf out of greed.....Priyanka
13. Tapovanji lived in a cave. He taught Swami Chimayananda Hindu Scriptures in detail. He was very strict teacher.Jai Shiv Patel
14. Sauraja means Valor. It stands for both physical and mental strength. Dheeraja means patience. Hanuman had both valor and patience....Soham
15. You can be strong physically but still mentally weak. Ravana had physical strength but could not control greed and lust which means he was mentally weak...Sudarshan
16. Vasanas are our negative tendencies and are like invisible enemies. Shri Ram says to conquer your vasanas you need the science of self knowledge called bara vinyana which is symbolically represented by his bow- Kodanda.....Shruthi
17. We need to be free of desires to get liberation.....Aditya
18. Dharmic war: Must fight with people of equal skill. Must fight according to rules.
19. Shastra.. Weapons used for fighting enemies who are at close range. Astra are weapons used to fight from a distance.....Rahul
20. Yama and Niyama are mental and physical discipline one must observe to succeed in life... Puja

Performing Arts Annual Day: June 1, 2008

Prema Nair

Silver Spring Chapter

The Silver Spring Chapter presented on Sunday June 1, 2008, the Annual Performing Arts 2008 Showcase. This wonderful program consisted of the performances of all the students who attended the Sunday Arts classes in the Silver Spring, Maryland, Chinmaya Mission.

The program started with the "Welcome" speech from Vandana Bapna, who is the Washington Regional Chinmaya Mission's Performance Arts Coordinator. Vandana has done an excellent job in organizing the Arts program for Chinmaya Mission as well as putting together this Annual Performing Arts 2008 Showcase.

After the speech by Vandana and the invocation by Smt. Vasanti Athavale, the Arts program moved forward with the various instrumental, vocal and dance compositions by the students (and in some cases by their teachers). The following is a listing of all the musical, vocal and dance programs:

Carnatic Music I: "Ganesha Sthuthi & Dikshitar Krithis on Devi"

Bhangra I: "Let us learn to dance: Punjabi"

Keyboard: "Ram Dhun, Om Guru, Sitaram Jai Sitaram, Om Namoh Bhagavate Vasudeyaya"

Carnatic Music II: "Compositions Goddess Saraswathi and on Vishnu Avatars"

Mrudangam I, II, III and youth teachers: "Mrudangam Tones of Rhythm"

Carnatic Music III: "Maithreem Bhajatha & Sharanu Siddhi

Vinayaka (Purandaradas composition)"

Violin I: "Lightly Row, The Shire"

Violin II: "Minuet 1, Pirates of the Caribbean Theme, Jay Jay Jay Gananayaka"

Violin by youth teachers

Dandiya Raas: "Gopis of Vrindavan: Gujarati"

Bhangra by youth teachers: "Bhangra Remix"

Garba Raas: "Fast pace Gujarati Garba"

After the completion of the instrumental, vocal and dance programs, Swami Dheerananda addressed the artists and the audience. Swamiji was extremely pleased with the great performances and the accomplishments of both the students and their teachers. After Swamiji was finished the teacher appreciation, vote of thanks, Brahma-panam and Shanti paath were done. This led to the final part of the evening, which was the Aarati conducted by Smt. Laxmi Prasad, Smt. Sandhya Sundaram on vocals with Rohan Prasad on tabla.

Once the Arts Program finished, everyone moved into Kailas Nivas for a fantastic dinner organized by Meera, Pratima and Meena. They made certain that there was enough food for dinner by asking the performing arts students' families to bring dinner items. Meera, Pratima, Meena and all the families did an outstanding job such that there was only the correct amount of food for dinner with very little left over.

Finally the following items must be made mention of regarding the Arts Performance program. One is that acknowledgements must be given to all the Art's family and other Chinmaya members who assisted by working for example in backstage, photography, sound, lighting and in many other important areas to create this fantastic Arts Program. Secondly, there were two teachers, Smt. Latha Kannan Ramaswamy (Carnatic vocal's teacher) and Niranjana Murali (Mrudangam youth teacher) who could not be there for the teacher's appreciation period. In addition, Dr. PK Swaminathan and Geeta Kansal were not able to attend the Arts Annual Day performance.

Thank you again to Swamiji, Vandana, teachers, students and parents for another splendid and sensational year of the Arts program, and the Art Annual Day performance.



Golden Nuggets from Bhagavad Gita

*Devi Ramaseshan
Frederick Chapter*

*kavim puranam anushasitaram
anor aniyamsam anusmared yah
sarvasya dhataram acintya-rupam
aditya-varnam tamasah parastat
(Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 8, Verse 9)*

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On Saturday, May 31st, CMWRC Frederick Chapter celebrated its annual day. One of the programs was a short skit performed by the adult class. The name of the skit was “Golden Nuggets,” and the theme was picked from Chapter Eight, Verse 9 of Bhagavad Gita, that the adult class is learning/discussing presently.

In this skit there were four characters namely Dhritharashtra, Lord Krishna, Arjuna and Sanjaya's secretary (fictitious). The story starts with Dhritharashtra waiting for Sanjaya to return. Instead of Sanjaya, his assistant returns with the message that his boss, on hearing Yogeswara Krishna's description of Brahman, went into meditation. Dhrithrashtra was surprised with this message and wanted to listen to the conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna about Brahman. Lord Krishna tells that there are eight indicators of Brahman and meditating on them leads to self-realisation. Puzzled, Arjuna questions the Lord more about Brahman. Lord further explains that Brahman is 'puranam' (ancient) and is beyond time. [While sleeping, time is not known but Brahman is illuminating even that sleep state oblivious of time. Thus Brahman is so ancient that He was there even before time! The term 'puranam' should not be misconstrued to indicate Brahman as some old and dilapidated state]. Brahman is the very supporter of time itself, nay of everything (sarvasya dhataram).

The skit concludes with Swami Chinmayananda Maharaj's message, that even if the whole of Bhagavad Gita and Upanishads are lost, if Verses 9 and 10 of Chapter 8 are remembered by humans, then it is enough. We all know that Swami Chinmayananda Maharaj is the illuminator of time itself, always existing, shining like the sun and the stars above us, leading us all into a nobler life of sacrifice and service, producing more than what we consume and giving more than what we take. Jai Sri Gurudev!



Gurudev as we Knew

Nirmala Limaye

August 3rd. Gurudev in ICU!

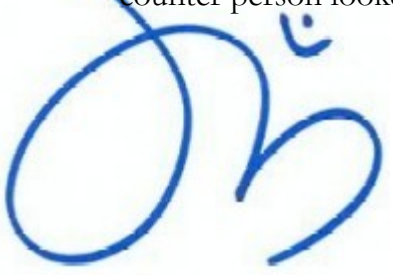
Oh no! we were sad and afraid of what will happen. We had tried our best to keep him in Washington feeling that his heart was not in good shape to travel all the way to San Diego . He just brushed aside our suggestions by joking that all we do is take him to doctors and poke him everywhere! First thought that came to our mind was to visit Kailash Niwas, so, we drove and reached there. After taking Lord Shiva's darshan and praying for his recovery, we went upstairs and sat in front of his picture.

My first exposure to his teaching was in 1962 at Azad maidan in Mumbai. Studying hard for medical school finals, my friend and I went to Churchgate area for a cup of cold coffee (a luxury for medical students indeed). On the way back we saw large crowd at the maidan and decided to wait to hear a "Swami Chinmayananda". We could not hear some of his talk as we were far away from the podium. We had to hurry back for more studies.

Many years had passed. Now we were in the U.S., reaching midlife and looking for answers to life as whole. That is when we heard his Geeta Yajna held at American University. Swamiji's first words were, "do not believe a single word I say unless you feel it is right". That statement caught us by surprise. By the end of 7 days, our decision was made to join satsang at Vilasiniji's home. Our group was supposed to take bhiksha the last day. I had inquired if there were any diet restrictions since I was to get dessert. I was told that he had diabetes so I prepared a fruit dish with some honey. I did not feel comfortable to serve it myself so, I requested Vilasiniji to serve him. He asked, "who made it". She pointed to me. I mumbled a few words like I had put a little honey in the fruit salad and he smiled mischievously saying "why little honey? why not more"? I did not have answer to it but I realized that he has a sense of humor.

Few months passed and we were visiting Mumbai. Naturally we went to Sandeepany hoping to see Gurudev but he was going to be in fort area downtown. We were told that we could see him there, so we went . It was summertime and very hot. Gurudev entered the room, we prostrated before him. When he knew we were from Washington , his first question was whether Vilasini had placed the curtains at Kailas Niwas? How could he remember about the curtains? He used to remember every detail at every ashram .Before leaving, we touched his feet and they felt like cool breeze coming our way.

That same trip we brought Gurudev's pictures with us which hang now in Chinmayam and Kailas Niwas. We did not have to pay any duty on these 2 big rolls, the customs man as well as the ticket counter person looked at those and let us take it as carry on luggage!



Gurudev was very particular about time .Any delay without a good reason did not sit well with him. The only time he would get upset is lack of timeliness and people taking photographs right in the middle of a lecture. He would stop and tell the person loudly, "please let me know when you have taken all the pictures ,then I will restart my lecture".

Swamiji needed an echocardiogram and we arranged it with our Cardiology colleague. The cardiologist said to him, "Look swami how the heart beats on it's own' and Gurudev immediately reminded him, "No, my friend there is some power by which it beats!"

He needed an eye check for which, he had drops put in his eyes to dilate the pupil. He could not read well due to the drops and he asked a devotee to read a children's book which had pictures of bunny rabbit. I have not seen any adult to enjoy that book like a curious child. He would play with a child with such concentration that the child was delighted. He always used his observations in his lectures and get to a philosophical principle.

Gurudev was a great teacher who would inspire you greatly to study our scriptures. We had gone to see him at Isabel's house and we sat around him for a few minutes. Gurudev was very quiet yet, we felt his closeness to us which was pleasant and profound proving that great souls do not have to say a single word yet , their heart speaks to you.

Words fail to describe the sadness we felt when we heard about his soul leaving his body for higher abode. But, He lives with all of us through his teaching , his multitude of ashrams and schools. His love and care for all the children and adults. One has to look at our Swami Dheerananda, Acharya Vilasiniji and so many others who have continued his legacy. He has not left us unattended. We sensed it when we attended his Shodashi. It was as if he is saying, "haven't I taught you well enough to know that only my body is absent. I Am still here!"



My Thoughts on Gita Chapter 7, Verse 25

Kodanate Lakshmanan

*Naaham prakasah sarvasya yogamaya samaavritaha
moodoyam na abhijaanathi loko maam ajam avyayam*

Lord Sri Krishna has been explaining to Arjuna throughout the Gita about the Supreme Principle and how an intelligent spiritual seeker, in the words of Pujya Gurudev, can both intellectually understand (Brahma Vidya) as well as realize (Yoga Shastra) the Supreme Truth. The Gita can essentially be divided into 3 sections corresponding to the MahaVakya. "Tat Tvam Asi" which translated means "That Thou Art". The first 6 chapters have spoken about the qualities of the seeker "Thou". Starting with the seventh chapter through the 12th chapter, the Lord explains the meaning of "Tat" the Supreme Principle and its characteristics. The last six chapters of the Gita then explain the **essence of Advaita**, the unity between "Tvam" and "Tat" or the seeker and the **Supreme Principle**. While it may be possible for a few to gain an intellectual understanding of this **principle**, there is a huge difference between an intellectual understanding and the actual realization of this principle. As the Lord Himself says in the Gita, only one among millions is able to attain this realization. In this verse of the Gita, the Lord sheds some light on why the Supreme Principle is not immediately visible or known to everybody.

The literal translation of this verse is as follows:- Being enveloped by the power of my Maya, I am not manifest to all. The foolish people of this world being deluded by Maya do not know Me who am unborn and imperishable.

As Swami Dheeranandaji will tell you, "Maya" is a topic that can take as long as you want to cover. Later on, I will try to shed some light on this term with my limited capacity. Let me begin to explain this verse from the terms unborn and imperishable. The Lord has already said many times in the Gita and reiterates here that His true nature is the substratum upon which all changes seen in this world occur. So it naturally follows that the Lord as the substratum is changeless. It is important to remember that anything that is born must die and is inevitably subject to change. The Lord however is "Sat-Chit-Ananda" or Existence-Consciousness-Bliss and is not subject to change, birth or death.

But people who are constantly identifying themselves with BMI are unable to appreciate this reality. Why do we identify with the BMI? The Lord explains that this is due to Yoga Maya. What is this Maya? There are three types of Gunas and there is an entire chapter in the Gita, Chapter 14, devoted to the details of these Gunas and all beings are essentially made up of these three Gunas in varying proportions.

Depending on which Guna is predominant, a person's mood is ruled accordingly. The three Gunas are Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. If Tamas is predominant, a person feels lazy. It is also called inertia or lethargy. How many times do we come home from work or from some trip and then decide to procrastinate our work. Can I do this tomorrow? Can it be pushed off to next week? When is this assignment due? This can lead to a last minute rush since we have put off the task due to our lethargy initially. As Swamiji likes to quote the example of people getting up Saturday morning and thinking -- today is Saturday...I have to go to Chinmaya....can I hit the Snooze button and sleep a few more minutes...All of us have seen such people who essentially postpone their work etc....understand that in such people, Tamas is the predominant Guna. The 14th chapter of the Gita actually expands on this tendency and mentions the types of food that lead to the dominance of this tendency and how to avoid it and so on. The overall effect of Tamas is to create a veil over the intellect. What about Rajas? This is seen in people who are very aggressive and active but are driven by selfish desires. They tend to be easily agitated when the desired goals are not reached. They are often times driven by the need to accumulate wealth or fame. The effect of Rajas is to project images on our mind. An example which is often quoted and is quite famous is that of a person mistaking a rope lying on a dimly lit road as a snake. So the lack of knowledge about the rope (Avarna shakti from Tamas) leads to the projection of the snake image (vikshepa shakti from Rajas). At least this projection is relatively harmless. Bhagwan Shankaracharya actually says that the way we go on dealing mindlessly in the world getting entangled with the worldly desires is actually more akin to mistaking a snake to be a rope which can be very harmful indeed. The third Guna, which is relatively better is Sattwa. At least when Sattwa predominates, there is a tendency to try to understand the underlying principle. In a sense, identification with Sattwa too strongly can also be a problem. The combined effect of these three Gunas is what is commonly referred to as Maya as they tend to veil the Self within. Impelled by the power of this Maya, one fails to recognize the changeless underlying Supreme Principle as one is carried away by the name and form seen around us and we are subject to pleasure, pain, honour and dishonour etc.

The Lord is merely repeating here what he said in Chapter 3 verse 29, "Prakrte Guna Sammoodhah Sajjante Gunakarmasu" and in Chapter 2 Verse 45, the Lord Says, "Traigunya Vishaya Veda.....Nir[ya]yogakshema Atmavan". The Lord is telling us to rise above the three Gunas and free oneself from the pairs of opposites and leaving aside all care about acquiring things and maintaining things and be established in the Self within. How can one do this? The Lord has very kindly suggested three methods, "Karma Yoga", "Gnana Yoga" and "Bhakti Yoga," to be adopted by each person according to their temperament and current state of mind so that they can purify their mind by constant practice and using the purified mind focus on realizing the Truth about the consciousness which is eternal. We need to take every opportunity to offer selfless service so that our desires are reduced and then this will tune our mind and enable it to reflect. Upon deep introspection and reflection, one will realize that the Subject that is in all of us which cannot be grasped by the senses, mind or intellect (since these can only grasp objects) is the Supreme Principle which the Lord is referring to in this verse. Praying to Poojya Gurudev for his grace and blessings so that our efforts at spiritual growth and development may bear success.

Om Tat Sat. Hari Om.



Brief Introduction to Bhagvad Gita

*Nilkanth Bhatt,
Richmond VA Chapter*

Ch.1 (Arjuna Vishad Yoga) Arjuna's Grief

The war was imminent. Krishna, as the envoy of Pandava, had tried and exhausted all peaceful means to resolve the conflict between the royal cousins Pandavas and Kauravas.

The two armies have now come to face each other in war at the great battlefield of Kurukshetra. The only person, who could now stop the war, was the blind King Dhritarastra. Bhagavan Veda Vyasa in his last minute efforts to make the King realize what a colossal mistake it would be to allow this war to happen, offered the blind King divine vision. The King refused to accept vision, as he was so comfortable in the usual darkness of his mind. Instead he asked Veda Vyasa to offer the vision to his charioteer Sanjaya, so he can see the happenings at Kurukshetra while sitting in the palace and keep him informed. Thus Sanjaya became the world's first war correspondent using "tele (distant) vision."

The king Dhritarastra was getting impatient to know what was happening at Kurukshetra, so he asks Sanjaya to describe what his and Pandu's sons are doing at that moment. With the divine vision given to him, not only he could see the action at Kurukshetra, he could also read their minds. He said, Oh King having seen the Pandava Army arrayed in battlefield, (your son) Duryodhana went to the great teacher Dronacharya and told him to pay attention to the great army of Pandavas led by none other than his bright student, son of King Drupada. He also asked him to make a note of the great heroes in Pandava Army such as Bhima, Arjuna, Yuyudhan, Virat, Drupad Dhristaketu, Chekitan, great king of Kashi, Purujeet, Kuntibhoj and the best among all Kings, Shaibya.

Then Duryodhana addressed Dronacharya as the best among the Brahmins (not the warrior Kshatriyas) and asked him to note the great warriors in Kaurava Army, who are ready to sacrifice their lives for him (Duryodhana), such as Bhishma, Karna, victorious Krupacharya, Aswatthama, Vikarna and Somdatta. He said our army guarded by Bhishma seems inadequate, but their army protected by Bhima seems adequate.

Grandsire Bhishma overhearing these comments by Duryodhana realized how insecure and fearful Duryodhana was, so to cheer Duryodhana up and boost his morale Bhishma blew his conch loudly. Thus Kauravas became the declarer of Mahabharat war and the aggressor.

The atmosphere then was filled with great noise of blowing conches and beating drums. In response, Arjuna blew his Devadatta conch and Krishna blew his famous Panchjanya conch and everyone else blew their own conches, just as in a modern day meetings everyone has to express his/her own opinions.

Arjuna at that point decided to gauge the situation on both sides as any responsible army general would do, so he asked his charioteer, Lord Krishna, to place his chariot in the middle of the two armies. From that vantage point he saw armies, fathers and grand fathers, teachers, uncles, brothers, sons and grandsons and friends ready to fight each other and die. Seeing the potential destruction of his kinsmen Arjuna broke down and told Krishna, "Oh Krishna, seeing my people ready to fight my limbs are failing, my mouth is getting dry, my whole body shaking and I am having goose bumps. My Gandiv bow is slipping from my hands and I am having difficulty standing. I see the world whirling around me and I do not see any good omens in fighting this war. I do not desire victory, neither any kingdom nor any pleasures.

Oh Govinda, for what purpose should I have the kingdom or even life for that matter? For whose sake we desire kingdom, enjoyments and pleasures? They are standing here ready to die. I would not fight this war for the kingdom of all three worlds, so what is the point in fighting for the kingdom on this earth? What pleasure can we get in killing these sons of Dhritrastra? We will only incur sins. These tyrants do not see any thing wrong in fighting this war but at least we, the wise people, who know war is evil, should stop this war."

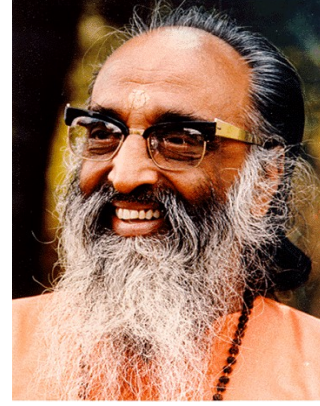
Arjuna Continued justifying his arguments for not fighting the war. He said, "By war, families get destroyed. By the destruction of the families, Santana Dharma (eternal order of society) gets destroyed. By destruction of dharma, entire clan will incur sins. By increase in sins, the women of the clan will become impure and by women becoming impure the purity of the race will be lost in the future generations.

The impure generation will become cause for all clan destroyers and ancestors to go to hell. Thus the eternal family order and the clan order will be destroyed. Is it not shame that in our greed for the kingdom, we have decided to commit this horrible sin of destroying our clan? Even if, the Kauravas kill me, when I have no weapons and I offer no resistance, it will be better for me than committing the sin of fighting this war"

Sanjaya concludes his narration by saying that, having said this, Arjuna gave up his Gandiv bow and sat down in the back portion of the chariot.

Arjuna's collapse is complete at this point. He was physically shattered, mentally overwhelmed by pity and intellectually stunned by dejection and frustration. Such a collapse can come to any one of us or even to a whole community or to a nation. Geeta teaches us in the following chapters, a complete scientific way to come out of such dejection and live life in a right way.





Chinmaya Mission Alexandria Study Group

Dr. Manesh Nachnani

The **Chinmaya Mission Alexandria Study Group** recently formed in the Fall of 2007. We started by undertaking the study of the Bhagavad Gita. Vijay Kumar is leading us shloka by shloka knowledgeably and enthusiastically through the text. Currently we are doing Chapter 2. The structure of the class is as follows:

21. Beginning prayers
22. Brief meditation
23. Geetha Teachings led by Vijay Kumar
24. Class Discussion. Everyone participates in Q&A and discussion
25. Closing Prayers
26. Prasad

Dr. Nagula and his family generously host our group. Meetings are held every Friday beginning at 7:15 PM, until 8:45 PM. The class consists of about 10-14 regular attendees. The Alexandria Study Group is eager to add interested students. All are welcome to join us for a class. Please send an e-mail to nagula@cox.net for more information regarding joining the study group

Venue: Dr. Seetharamayya Nagula, 2210 Traies Court, Alexandria, VA 22306

Telephone: 703-660-6734



Look at the Problem

Acharya Ananta Sarma ji

(Based on a series of talks at the Pentagon, inspired by Gurudev Sri Chinmayananda's "The Art of Manmaking")

We have to face life problems as challenges. Our mind interprets and our intellect judges the outer problems that the happenings and the pattern of the external environment create. Then our responses arise from us towards them. Behind our hands and legs, we have a set of intricate and highly sensitive instruments which evaluate and judge the outer world of us and finally discriminate and decide what our organs of action must do in response to the challenges ahead. This is the mind-intellect complex. The beauty and strength, smartness and alertness of the mind-intellect decide the quality of an individual's performance in life, his success in life.

The intellect may come to the right decision only if it has the correct data. The unsteady, confused and quite often severely disintegrated state of mind, messes the reading of the outer problem by our unbridled senses. The mind gathers the sense-reports and presents them to the intellect to decide how, as an individual should respond to the external challenge. When the mind is unsteady, the data presented become a confused, misinterpreted jumble, and the intellect, even if its decisions are right, is not effective in solving the problem as its decisions are based upon incorrect data.

In short, if we do not cultivate a system of order in our inner instruments of experiences, and do not discipline the outer sense-organs of perception and action, then like an improperly tuned instrument, we will get but a clutter of noises, never the fluid melody, the dancing rhythm, the lilting notes and the stupendous harmony of a life lived dynamically, rich in its successes and achievements.

The subtle technique of re-tuning our shattered mind-intellect equipment is achieved through what is so famously known as *Karma Yoga* – the path of selfless dedicated activity.

When we perceive an object or try to evaluate a situation, not only do the sense-organs bring in their reports and the mind compiles and presents them to the intellect for final judgment, but the very ability to think, rationalize, judge etc., is influenced and conditioned by what the modern psychologists call the 'Unconscious/ Subconscious'. This Subconscious is composed of impressions the personality has gathered from its own thoughts and actions in the past. These impressions are called by the Hindu *Rishi*-s as '*Vasanas*'.

If I am an alcoholic, I have the drink-*vasana*, and when I see a liquor bottle, my reaction is to grab it immediately and pour myself a drink. On the other hand, if you are a perfect teetotaler, you will turn your face in disgust and walk away. I cannot complain that the bottle tempted me. Really speaking, the liquor bottle has no such powers, else how did you walk away so easily?



The *Vasanas* in each of us gathered from the past march out into their expression – first as ‘desire’ in the intellect, then as a ‘thought’ in the mind, and lastly as an ‘act’ at the body levels. Each one of us is thus a helpless (! ?) expression of our own past – our *Vasanas*. These *Vasanas* are to be intelligently exhausted or eliminated. They are first to be purified and then exhausted through appropriate action. When the *Vasanas* are the healthy ones, the problems get easily solved by our correct evaluation of them and our apt counter actions. Where the *Vasanas* have ended, problems also end.

Therefore, the apparent problems outside the individual’s environment are but reflections ordered by the Subconscious in him. The world is the final projection of the total *Vasanas* playing in life. The national and international problems are all essentially eruptions caused by the *Vasanas* in all the individuals put together. Through the individual perfection alone can the world perfection be achieved – this is the declaration of all scriptures. Now the question is, how best can an individual purify and ultimately redeem himself from the compelling encrustations of *Vasanas*? The technique advised in the *Gita* is *Karma Yoga* – the way of performing actions in an attitude of selfless dedication to a desirable goal.



Aparokshanubhooti - Annual Day Picture

Analysis of the Mind

Sadananda ji

3. Classification of the Mind

(Editor's Note – This is from a series of 7 chapters. 1st and 2nd chapters were published in January and May 2008 issues of this newsletter)

'Mind' is a general term used to designate the thinking aspect involved. In the computer terminology it can be thought of as software in contrast to the hardware, the brain. In Vedanta, mind is considered as 'flow of thoughts' (vRitti dhaara) or more correctly the basis on which the thoughts flow, rather than the flow itself. Like flow of water is called river, flow of thoughts is the mind. We can have stagnant water but we cannot have stagnant thought, since thought itself involves a movement, although we could have regurgitated thoughts or a whirlpool of thoughts, when we are intensely attached to a particular theme. Mind can only think one thought at a time, but it can jump from one thought to the next like a monkey jumping from one branch to the other, without coming down to the basis or ground. These are interconnected thoughts. Interestingly the very sequence of thoughts defines the time and occurs in time. Thus time becomes part of the embedded system in the definition of the mind, since flow of thoughts involves flow of time. Dr. Ananda Wood (an author of an advaita text and a moderator of the internet Advaitin list) thinks that since simultaneously two thoughts are not perceived in the mind, 'space' that is based on simultaneity is more an imagination by the mind than 'time'. However, according to Vedanta 'space' is the first 'subtle element' in the sequence of creation, although sequence itself implies a time-factor. The fact is 'space and time' are inseparably interrelated, as movement in space defines time and movement in time defines space; and this is recognized by modern science as space-time continuum. The point of our concern here is both are intimately connected with the operation of the mind. Thus subjectivity through the mind enters in the perception of 'time and space'. We will address this issue more later when we discuss the perception of spatiotemporal objects and thus the world through the mind.

Mind has been classified depending on its function and field of operation. Understanding of this helps to identify its role in each operation. We will present some aspects of it to unravel the mysteries of the mind.

Freudian Classification: Sigmund Freud (early 20th Century) provided a topographical view of the mind in terms of (a) the perceptual aspect of the mind, called conscious mind, (b) autonomous functional mind called 'subconscious mind' and (c) 'unconscious mind', a storehouse of suppressed or oppressed thoughts and memories from the conscious level that may still influence the conscious mind. Conscious mind constitutes the 'ego' which plays the role of a deliberate agent in all our actions and enjoyments.

The most important constituent of the mind is the 'ego', but according to the Freudian analysis, it constitutes only a peripheral conscious state, in the waking state. The unconscious mind plays a more dominant role in the dream state. Freud recognized that prior thoughts, desires, suppressive and oppressive thoughts in the past can leave behind subtle impressions buried deep in the mind, which he calls as unconscious (meaning one is not keenly conscious) and they could find expressions in conscious mind when one is not vigilantly aware – which a psychoanalysts call as 'slips'. In comparison to the Vedantic analysis of the mind, as we shall see below, these classifications sound very elementary, nevertheless are given prominence in the western psychology, particularly in relation to mental disorders.

Four components of the mind: Vedanta provides a different classification for the mind, which is the basis for the flow of thoughts. It is divided into four components based on their functions: a) mind (manas), b) intellect (buddhi), c) ego (ahankaara) and d) memory (chitta). All four components together generally referred to as just 'the mind'. The four components of the mind along with five faculties of senses (that is the power of seeing, power of smelling, etc – that give rise to knowledge), five faculties of action (motor driving faculties related to hands, legs, speech, two excretory organs – that produce results) and five physiological functions called 5-praanAs (power of breathing, digestion, circulation, etc – that sustain life), all together we have nineteen entities ($4+5+5+5=19$) constituting what is called 'subtle body' (suukshma shariira). This is in contrast to gross physical or material body (sthoola shariira) consisting of skin, flesh, bones, fat, blood, etc., along with all the physical organs of the body, including the brain. Thus subtle body is considered to have 19 gateways through which it interacts with the gross body and through the gross body with the external world. Thus mind is considered as locus for all faculties for physiological functions.

Death is defined as the separation of this subtle body from the gross body. The process of death involves mind collecting all its 19 physiological functional group and existing the body. In the common language, we say 'He is dead and gone' – implying that someone residing in the body has left the body. Thus gross body, which is product of food, sustained by food and it will eventually go back into food (for insects), is left behind when the subtle body leaves stopping all associated physiological functions. Doctors cannot define what life is, but can only know if a person is alive or dead by expressions of life through the physiological functions. According to Vedanta, death occurs when this subtle body finds the gross body no more conducive for its residence. Hence, in simple terms, death is described as changing worn out clothes by the subtle body or shifting its residence, since we say 'he is dead and gone'. Worn out does not necessarily mean that the body is dilapidated and hence not useful. It could be any body that is no more conducive for the subtle body to express itself for one reason or the other. Extending this argument, then, the birth is the subtle body entering with its package at the conception. Parents give birth only to the physical body and not to subtle body; the subtle body enters taking its new residence. As the new body matures, the faculties get expressed more and more vividly to yoke out experiences with the external world. Biologically, one can only account for the physical body in terms of chromosomes and genetic codes, but expression of life through the mind, physiological functions, and individuality comes with its own inherent traits that differ from one child to other, even born of the same parents.

Even if one clones and creates an offspring duplicating the mother, the individuality of the child is different from that of the mother and they even can compete with each other for their survival. Hence genetically they may be the same, but subtle bodies are different.

Subtle body is considered made up of subtle matter, which is not perceptible to the sense organs. Even the existence of mind cannot be established by direct perceptual or empirical means. It has to be inferred since it is subtle. But we all accept that we have a mind of our own and we can theorize its nature based on its functions and working; but none of the theories can be validated by any objective scientific means. The tools of validation that we normally use in the field of objective sciences are inadequate to handle the subtle matter. Validity or invalidity, therefore, cannot be established by objective means. Hence one can only infer based on the individual behavior to the external stimulus, just as a physician uses external stimulus to infer the working of the physiological functions. In fact, according to some idealists, existence of the objects and the world 'out there' also cannot be established independent of the mind. 'Can the world be established independent of the mind?' and conversely 'Can the mind be established independent of the world?' are questions that concerned many philosophers. Here, we only recognize that there is interdependency of the world and the mind and it appears that one cannot be established independent of the other.

Of the four components that were defined, mind, intellect, ego and memory, each has its field of operation. The mind in the above is the locus of emotional thoughts –classified as nine moods or feelings of expression (nava rasas) consisting of love, passion, anger, jealousy, etc. In addition, the mind is also a clearing house for input from the senses and output through organs of action, thus can be thought of as receiving and dispatching clerk. Furthermore, it is also a 'doubting Thomas', entertaining all the doubts and the associated worries, and indecisions. Some people cannot make up their minds easily, because they are dominated by this part of the mind, which is indecisive. This emotional component of the mind is where intense attachments and emotions play a major role, many times overpowering logic and reason. Some constantly doubt themselves about their capabilities, doubting and worrying at every step - whether something will materialize or not, whether the house is locked or not, whether stove is off or not, whether he is going to be successful or not, etc. with constant worries, nostalgia and nervous break down occurring at this level. At the same time it is also a center of beautiful expressions of love, admiration, compassion, etc. In general, nature appears to maximize this component more in women, perhaps for the protection of the offspring. I am reminded of the song by the professor in 'My Fair Lady' – 'Why cannot the women be like men or like me?'

The second level of the mind is the 'intellect' (buddhi) which is the locus of discriminative thoughts, right from wrong, thoughts of decisive character, field for logic, reason, judgment, etc. In contrast to the lower mind, the intellect can be considered as an officer in charge, analytical and synthetic, objective and can hop from the known to the unknown to gain knowledge. Those that are predominately intellectual (where this component of the mind is well developed) are less emotional, more analytical, decisive, logical, reasonable and determined with 'will' to proceed and a goal to reach, with attachments governing less in their actions.



The third component is the ego. In Sanskrit it is called ahankaara. It is defined as – ‘aham, aham, aham, iti karoti, ahankaara’ – the one who claims as ‘I am – I am – I am’ in all our transactions involving, of course, our mind. In our discussions of ‘who am I?’ it is this ‘ahankaara’ that responds with the answer. In the western psychology, it is this ‘ego’ that is considered as the conscious mind. However, according to Vedanta, ego is just a pattern of thoughts of ‘I-ness’ that arise in the mind, that tries to identify with a set of thoughts as ‘I am this’ and another set of thoughts as ‘this is mine’ (mamakaara) as ownership of thoughts. Thus ego involves two aspects – ‘I am this’ (ahankaara) and ‘that is mine’ (mamakaara) or simply ‘I and mine’. In the identification of ‘I am this’, there is inclusion of ‘this’ as part of I. In this very inclusion, there is also exclusion involved as ‘this’ is separate from ‘that’ as ‘I am not that’, thus differentiating ‘this’ from ‘that’, and similarly ‘mine’ from ‘not mine’. By inclusiveness and by its mirror part, exclusiveness, ego tries to define or crystallize itself differentiating I vs. you, he, she, it, or they, etc., and mine vs. yours, his, etc. According to Vedanta, this ego is a fake or false ‘I’, since, as we discussed before, it involves identification of ‘I am’, the subject, with an object ‘this’, with ‘this’ keeps changing from body, mind to intellect. Thus the meaning of ‘I’ that I associate with keeps shifting when I say ‘I am six feet tall or I am black or white or brown’ – where identification is at the gross body level - or ‘I love her’, ‘I am envious of him’ or ‘I hate this’, - where identification is at emotional component of the mind - or ‘I am an engineer’, a doctor, scientist, etc., where the identification is at the intellect level. The locus where ‘I’ is placed shifts from gross body level to emotional mind level to intellect level. The essence of ego is identification of ‘I’ with ‘this’; I being an invariable, while ‘this’ being a variable, I being a conscious entity while ‘this’ being an inert entity.

In the statement of Descartes that ‘I think, therefore I am’, my existence is ascertained by thinking process which was criticized later by Immanuel Kant (18th Century), whose arguments were no better either. According to Kant, self-consciousness or subject consciousness, ‘I am’ is established by the consciousness of objects – ‘this is’. Thus, ‘this is’ is required to establish ‘I am’ since mind can operate only in the subject- object duality. The problem here is not the duality *par se* but what is considered as an independent variable and what is the dependent variable. That is, is consciousness of ‘this is’ required to establish ‘I am’ or is it the other way around? At the ego level, we do operate with out being keenly aware of it, when we say ‘I am this’. Without ‘this’ to identify with, I do not seem to have any other existence. No body stops their introduction saying ‘I am’ without any object ‘this’ attached to it.

Hence Kant’s conclusion that self-consciousness appears to arise only with the object consciousness seems to be justified. However, we just now noted that locus of ‘I am’ keeps shifting from body level to mind level to intellect level, with adjectives that are added keep changing with the changing bio-data. That there is a changing part and a changeless part in this duality of ‘I am’ and ‘this is’ in the equation of ‘I am this’. It is obvious from this analysis that ‘I am’ seems to be more substantial than ‘this is’ since ‘this is’ keep changing without the changing ‘I am’. In the dependent and independent variables, the one that is changeless is independent and the one that is changing is dependent. Hence Kant’s conclusion is wrong. In fact, Descartes statement ‘I think, therefore I am’, ‘I’ is there before the action verb ‘think’. Hence by implication the subject ‘I’ should be there independent of what ‘I think’

since what I think keeps changing or dependent variable while thinker I appears to be constant and thus independent. Additional implication of Descartes statement is the requirement that I need to keep thinking to ascertain myself that 'I am'. Thus there are two aspects involved based on the above discussion- 'I am this' and 'I think, therefore I am'. Vedanta rejects both these assertions on the basis that 'I am' is independent of 'this' and 'I am' is present before I can think (thinking is focussed on 'I', than 'I am' focussed on thinking). Vedanta arrives at 'who that I am' is by rejecting any assertion with 'I am not this' 'neti, neti, not this, not this'. Thus according to Vedanta, ego is a false 'I' where subject is confused with an object 'this', in the 'I am this' identification. Vedanta does not say you are 'some thing' else than 'this', since any 'something' is another object 'this'. Only way to arrive at my real nature of 'I' is by intuition by rejecting any thing that can be objectified as not I am – as 'I am not this'. I can reject anything and everything as not 'I' but I cannot reject 'I- itself since I have to be there even to reject. This process of sublation or negation is called meditation where I drop the false I, to ascertain my real nature. That is true conscious entity, 'I am'-is without any this or that attached to it – as in the biblical statement 'I am that I am'. This is concerning the first statement, 'I am this'.

Relating to the second statement, 'I think, therefore I am' Vedanta ascertains that 'I' exists in deep sleep state without any thinking, since 'I am' there in the deep sleep enjoying the sleep, where there is the absence of any 'this' and 'that' that I can identify with. Hence I get up from sleep, saying that 'I slept very well', implying that I was there very much in deep sleep, sleeping very well. Vedanta points out that if 'I' really ceases to exist in deep-sleep, then no body would like to go to sleep. However, everybody longs for a good night sleep, after tiring oneself like a rat racing for 'this' and 'that'. People are ready to take pills to get sleep. Hence deep sleep experience points out, according to Vedanta, that one can exist as pure 'I' without any identification with an object 'this'. Only problem in the deep sleep is I am also not conscious of myself in that state. All problems cease in deep sleep state, where everybody is happy and no body complains (they may complain that they do not get sleep), whether it is a king or a pauper on the street. All subject-object (I and this) duality ceases in the deep sleep state, with I alone remaining without any inclusions or exclusions, since there is no 'this' and 'that' that I can perceive. Everybody is happy in deep sleep state; whatever the problems are in the waking state, all are transcended in the deep sleep since there is no duality. I am neither a man nor a woman, I am just a pure unadulterated 'I am' in deep sleep, without any qualifications attached. Hence duality appears to be the fundamental problem for unhappiness. Vedanta says cessation of identification of 'I' with any 'this' is the key to happiness. This can be done by removing all 'this' and 'that' as in deep sleep state. However that is only a temporary, since once I am awake, all 'this' and 'that' will also arise. I am back to the miserable state of false identification as 'I am this' or 'I am that', suffering the limitations of 'this' and 'that'. The point is the deep sleep experience points out that there is a possibility of existing as pure I, as consciousness and existence, without any identification with this or that. Vedanta says this cessation of identification with this and that can be accomplished in the waking state itself, in spite of existence 'this' and 'that'. 'I am' is self-conscious and self-existent entity, independent of any 'this' and 'that' or independent of the external world. Hence Kantian statement that self-consciousness depends on the object consciousness is to ascribe reality to the false I, the ego. Vedanta says, the fact is the other

way; the object consciousness depends on 'I am'. Thus the 'ego' or ahankaara, is a component of the mind with a false notion that 'I am this'. This 'ego' component, ahankaara, is called notional mind, since identification 'I am this' is only a notion in the mind. When I realize my true nature, these false identifications or notions drop, or more correctly the reality that I assign to the notions is withdrawn. Then, I will be 'as though' operating as pure self, without any false identification, treating the mind as just a subtle body that I can use to transact with the world, through the 19 gates discussed earlier. We will address this aspect again when we discuss our true nature and the nature of the world that we transact with.

Going back to our classification, the last component of the mind to be discussed is memory, chitta. All objective knowledge that is gained is stored in the memory, which forms the basis for all re-cognitions. We can build up our memory bank by gaining the knowledge, storing the information and retrieving it whenever it is needed for communication and transactions. New knowledge is build based on the past knowledge stored in the memory. There are two aspects involved, capacity to store and the capacity to retrieve that knowledge. Retrieval and restorage keep the knowledge fresh in the memory and those that are retrieved less and less will get buried in the memory and retrieval also becomes increasingly difficult. With age, the capacity of hardware degrades and therefore memory fails, retaining mostly the long time memory, while loosing the short time memory. As we get old, we remember all our childhood experiences, declaring to every listener how things were great in those days, while forgetting where we put our keys or check book, an hour back. Thus we have four components of the mind that are involved whenever we transact with the world, 'out there' – mind, intellect, ego and memory.

The working of the mind can be classified in various other ways, and these will be discussed next.

