

# Chinmaya Smrithi



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

**Volume 20, Number 6-- November 15, 2010**

**Happy Thanksgiving, Happy Holiday Season  
& Best Wishes for the New Year**



*Swami Dheeranandaji has been guiding Chinmaya Mission members in the Washington DC area since 1989. He will be conducting Jnana Yajna from December 27 – January 1 on Bhagavad Geeta, Chapter 12 – Bhakthi Yoga. The Yajna will be conducted in Virginia. Details at [www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org)*

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**Calendar and Upcoming Events ([www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org), Link – Calendar of Events)**

- December 4<sup>th</sup>, Saturday: Annual Banquet & Grand Magic Show @ Oakton High School, VA
- December 27 – 31, Youth Camp at Chinmayam by Acharya Vivekji
- December 27 – January 1, Jnana Yajna by Pujya Swami Dheerananda in Virginia. Topic: Chapter 12 of the Geeta: Bhakthi Yoga
- January 1, Saturday – Vishnu Sahasranama Puja and Guru Paduka Puja – will be held in Virginia
- January 17, Monday – Martin Luther King Birthday – Youth Seva day at Chinmayam – Sandwich for the Homeless

**Study Groups**

- Please contact Sri Vijay Kumar ji by email at [vijaykumar@rocketmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:publications@chinmayadc.org) to order any books, CDs, DVDs, etc.. Browse online at [www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org); and [http://www.cybermatics2.com/acb/webpage.cfm?&DID=6&WebPage\\_ID=2](http://www.cybermatics2.com/acb/webpage.cfm?&DID=6&WebPage_ID=2). Review list of Chinmaya Publications by downloading <http://www.cybermatics2.com/Catalog2008.pdf>
- Srimad Bhagvad Gita is online at [www.myholygita.com](http://www.myholygita.com)

**Next Issue**

- Articles for the next regular bi-monthly issue – January 2011, are due by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010
- Email submissions to [smrithi@chinmayadc.org](mailto:smrithi@chinmayadc.org). Submission instructions at [www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org), Smrithi link, “Information on publishing in Smrithi”

**Useful Links:**

CMWRC – Washington Regional Center  
 Chinmaya Mission Trust  
 Chinmaya Mission West  
 Chinmaya International Foundation, E-Vedanta Course  
 Washington Region – Dulles VA Chapter website  
 Washington Region – Frederick MD Chapter website  
 Washington Region – Springfield VA Chapter website

[www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org)  
[www.chinmayamission.com](http://www.chinmayamission.com)  
[www.chinmayamission.org](http://www.chinmayamission.org)  
[www.chinfo.org](http://www.chinfo.org)  
[www.chinmayadulles.org](http://www.chinmayadulles.org)  
[www.chinmayafrederick.org](http://www.chinmayafrederick.org)  
[www.chinmayava.org](http://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*

***Editorial Staff: ([smrithi@chinmayadc.org](mailto:smrithi@chinmayadc.org))***

*Raju Chidambaram, Sitaram Kontha, Acharya Vilasiniji, Acharyas, Chapter Coordinators and Teachers. & BV students - Vishnupriya Krishnan, Asmi Panigrabi, Atman Panigrabi, Harsha Neerchal and Srikanth Kontha*  
*Please contact us if you are interested in joining the editorial staff!*



## **Camps at Chinmaya Vibhooti in 2010**

### **Sampoorana Geeta (Essence of all 18 Chapters) Camp- in Hindi** **By Swami Advaitananda**

Dates: 12<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> November 2010

### **Yoga Vasishta talks** **by Pujya Guruji and Nrtya-Sura-Bharati Festival**

Dates: 24th December 2010 to 1st January 2011

#### Highlights:

- 14 discourses on Yoga Vasishta in English by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda
- Concerts by master performers such as Charumathi & Trichur Ramachandran (C. Vocal), Melattur Bhagavata Mela (group dance), Dr N Rajam (violin), Geeta Chandran (Bharatanatyam), Pt Suresh Talwalkar (Taal Vadya), Dr Prabha Atre (Hindustani Vocal) and Gotipua (group dance)
- Performances by Chinmaya Mission artists from across the globe
- 7-day performing arts workshops in Bharata Natyam, Hindustani Music, Devotional Music and Western Classical Music. (Separate registration required).
- Vishnusahasranama Archana, chanting and bhajans on New Year's Eve

### **Bhagawat Saptah in Hindi** **by Swami Abhedananda**

Dates: 4th to 11th February 2011

#### Highlights:

- The unique opportunity of listening to the complete Bhagawat in Hindi in 7 days
- Shri Krishna Janma Mahotsav
- A programme by Chinmaya Naada Bindu





## CHINMAYA MISSION WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER

(A non-profit religious organization registered in Maryland)  
Kailas Niwas, 46 Norwood Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905

### PRESENTS **BHAGAVAD GITA JNANA YAJNA** (A Series of Free Discourses) **GITA CHAPTER 12** (BHAKTI YOGA)

**By Swami Dheerananda**

Resident Acharya, Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center

**7:00 P.M. to 8:30 P.M.**  
**Dec 27, 2010 - Jan 01, 2011**

**Dulles South Multipurpose Center**  
24950 Riding Center Dr, South Riding, VA 20152  
(Venue of Chinmaya Mission Dulles Chapter – see directions below)

**WE INVITE YOU TO SPONSOR THE YAJNA & SUPPORT CHINMAYA SOMNATH**



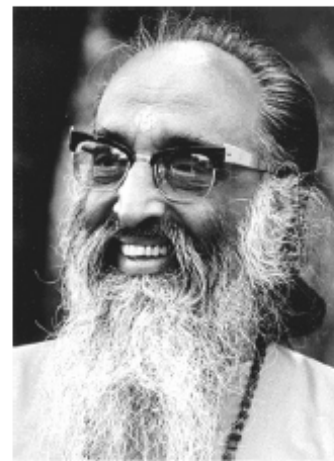
### **VISHNU SAHASRA NAMAVALI GURU PADUKA PUJA\***

Will be celebrated on  
**Saturday, 01-Jan-2011**  
**(10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon)**  
at the same location

\*Grand Inaugural Paduka Puja for Gurudev's Holy  
Padukas to be consecrated in Chinmaya Somnath



*Swami Dheerananda has served the Washington DC area, guiding families since 1989 when Poojya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda designated him as Resident Acharya for the Washington DC Metro area. Swami Dheerananda is the architect behind Chinmaya Mission's very popular Bala Vihar and Summer Camps for children in the Washington DC area.*



Can the Ocean be fully realized through the Knowledge of the Waves?

Or

Will the Knowledge of the Waves obstruct our comprehension of the Ocean?

In short, is Idol worship Justified?

Can it provide a helpful prop for a meditative mind to swing on and dive into the infinite?

If it can, what exactly is the technique?

**Activities for kids ages 4+ are planned during the Discourses**

**For Information or to Sponsor the Yajna**  
please send email to  
[yajna@chinmayadulles.org](mailto:yajna@chinmayadulles.org)

Contact: Vish Ramabhatta  
[vish.ramabhatta@gmail.com](mailto:vish.ramabhatta@gmail.com)

**DIRECTIONS:** From Beltway- Rt. 495 take I-66 W to Route 50 West past Route 28 overpass. Travel 5 miles, turn left on Loudoun County Parkway and turn right on Riding Center Drive. Go past the 4-way stop sign and the center will be to your left. Parking is free.

## CMWRC Events Held

- Bala Vihar 2010/2011 session commenced with Ganesh Puja at all chapters
- Navarathri Puja was held in Virginia with Lalitha Sahasranama and a special message from Puja Swami Dheeranandaji. Swamiji's speech is available in the audio section of the CMWRC website ([www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org))

## Chinmaya Somnath Project

You can follow the progress on Chinmaya Somnath project – new center in Northern Virginia at [www.chinmayadc.org/ChinmayaSomnath/chinmaya\\_somnath.htm](http://www.chinmayadc.org/ChinmayaSomnath/chinmaya_somnath.htm)

The page is continually updated to show progress and designs. Please review the fund raising appeal and use the pledge form, available for your convenience at the site, to support this important CMWRC initiative.

## Chinmaya West Newsletter

Be sure to read the November 2010 newsletter from Chinmaya Mission West.

Browse and download at [www.chinmayamission.org/newsletter](http://www.chinmayamission.org/newsletter):

<http://www.chinmayamission.org/newsletter.php>



**"CHINMAYA SOMNATH"****-- Phase-1 Construction Contribution (Tax-Deductible) Pledge Form --****From:**

Mr. /Mrs. / Miss : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**To:**The Treasurer,  
Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center  
46 Norwood Road,  
Silver Spring, MD 20905

I/we Mr/Mrs/Miss \_\_\_\_\_ wish to pledge/pay my/our tax-deductible contribution toward the construction costs of Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center's "Chinmaya Somnath" building to be built at 4300 Pleasant Valley Road, Chantilly, Virginia, as indicated below.

I/we understand that this contribution is in addition to my/our annual membership contribution.

<input type="checkbox"/>	\$30.00 per month*	For two / three / five years	For a Total of \$ _____ per year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$50.00 per month*	For two / three / five years	For a Total of \$ _____ per year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$100.00 per month*	For two / three / five years	For a Total of \$ _____ per year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$200.00 per month*	For two / three / five years	For a Total of \$ _____ per year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____ per month*	For _____ years	For a Total of \$ _____ per year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	Lump sum payment	Enclosed Check# _____ Dated _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	Pledge	Payment will be mailed by date: _____

**\* BANK DEBIT AUTHORIZATION**

I hereby authorize CMWRC to initiate debit entries for the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ every month for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ years, starting from \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, till \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_ to my Checking account indicated below for credit to CMWRC's account with the Washington First Bank or such other bank as CMWRC may deem appropriate. I will notify CMWRC immediately if there is any change to my Bank information.

Name of Bank: \_\_\_\_\_

Transit/ABA Number. \_\_\_\_\_ Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Please attach one of your checks, marked "VOID," for verification of bank particulars.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone # : \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* Please mail this form to the address above and mark to "ATTN: Treasurer. Make Checks payable to "CMWRC" \*\*\*

**"Chinmaya Somnath"****~~~~~ Phase-1 Construction Contribution (Tax-Deductible) Pledge Form ~~~~~**

## Announcements

Weekly Discourse by Swami Dheeranandaji on “Drig Drisya Viveka”

Text: Drig Drishya Viveka (Insight into the Nature of Seer & Seen).

Day: Thursdays from September 16, 2010.

Time: 7:45 pm to 9 pm.

Place: Kailas Niwas 46 Norwood Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905.

### **Vedanta Dhara – Regular Discourse by Acharya Anantji at Dulles VA**

Topic: Isavaya Upanishad. Starts Sep 18. Held 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month at 9:30 AM  
See attached flyer for more details

### **Gita Chanting 2010-2011**

Registration is now underway for Gita Chanting Competition, to be held in April 30, 2011 at CMWRC chapters. This year, the chanting is on Chapter 12 of the Gita – Bhakthi Yoga. Please review Sri Nilkanth Bhatt's summary on Chapter 12 in September 2010 issue. Also, please review Acharya Sadanandaji's article on Bhakthi Yoga in the July 2010 issue. Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji's Jnana Yajna in December 27 – Jan 1, will be on Chapter 12.

Each and every member, young and old, are encouraged to participate in this spiritual exercise that brings intimacy to the beautiful and uplifting words of Bhagavan Sri Krishna, and firmly establishes the seeker on the journey to Truth. Registration fee is \$30.00 per participant. Study materials – book and audio CD will be provided upon registration. Register online at [www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org)

### **Jnana Yajna by Swami Dheeranandaji**

Dates: December 27, 2010 – January 1, 2011

Topic: Bhagavad Geeta, Chapter 12: Bhakthi Yoga (Yoga of Devotion)

Location: Virginia

Detail s will be posted soon on the website.

### **Youth Camp by Acharya Vivekji**

"H.E.R.O.E.S. (Honest-Explore-Reflect-Orchestrate-Endure-Serve)"

CMWRC's Annual Winter Youth Camp for High School Students

*All High School Age Children are invited to participate*

Date: December 27 – 31, 2010

Location: Chinmayam – 46 Norwood Road, Silver Spring MD 20905



## Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center

### **2011 GITA CHANTING COMPETITION**

#### **INVITES ONE & ALL TO PARTICIPATE**

*Let us understand the grand vision behind the seemingly simple program. Chanting initially introduces one to the world renowned Bhagavad Gita. Naturally this leads to the study of the text, resulting in the gain of the knowledge revealed therein. Knowledge translated into action becomes a way of living one's life successfully and joyously.*

**When:**

Saturday, April 30th 2011

**Where:**

Chinmayam - Silver Spring Md  
Frederick MD  
Dulles VA

**Who Can Participate:**

- Children from Grades Pre-K to Grade 12
- Youth, Chinmaya Yuva Kendra Members
- Adults

**What:**

Bhagvad Gita - CHAPTER XII

**Study Materials:**

Practice CDs and booklets will be provided upon registration

**Judging Criteria:**

Sanskrit Chanting of verses in order  
with proper pronunciation, memorization & presentation

**How to Participate:**

Please register and submit your form and fees of \$30 online at  
[www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org)



*For More Information*

Visit Chinmaya Mission DC Area Chapter websites

[www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org), [www.chinmayava.org](http://www.chinmayava.org),  
[www.chinmayadulles.org](http://www.chinmayadulles.org), [www.chinmayafrederick.org](http://www.chinmayafrederick.org)





## CHINMAYA MISSION WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER

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Kailas Niwas, 46 Norwood Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905

### *Vedanta Dhara* By *Acharya Anant Sarma*



ISAVASYA  
UPANISAD

Isavasya Upanishad derives its title from the opening words "Isa and vasya", "God-covered." Isavasya forms the closing chapter of the Shukla-Yajur-Veda.

The use of Isa (Lord) – a more personal name of the Supreme Being than Brahman, Atman or Self, the names usually found in the Upanishads – is the uniqueness of this Upanishad.

#### TIME

9:30 AM—10:30 AM  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday's of  
every month  
**Starts September 18, 2010**

#### LOCATION

Vibha and Vinod Kulkarni  
25467 Gimbel Drive  
South Riding, VA 20152

#### CONTACT US

**Phone**  
703 327 6776

**E-mail**  
[vibhakulkarni@hotmail.com](mailto:vibhakulkarni@hotmail.com)  
[vish.ramabhattacha@gmail.com](mailto:vish.ramabhattacha@gmail.com)



**Yahoo! Group**

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/vedantadhara/>



Acharya Anant Sarma was initiated as an Acharya of Chinmaya Mission after completing the Mission's two-year, residential Vedanta course at 'Sandeepany Sadhanalaya' Mumbai, in 2007. He was then posted to the Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC).

When he moved to the Washington DC area in 1989, he came under the tutelage of our Pujya Swami Dheerananda who inspired him to undertake serious study of Vedanta in Sandeepany under Pujya Gururji Swami Tejomayananda. Anantji now shares this scriptural knowledge with the members in the Greater Washington Metropolitan area.

Presently, Anantji serves as the resident Acharya of CMWRC's Dulles (Virginia) chapter. He also conducts Vedanta classes in Frederick and Salisbury in Maryland, as well as Ashburn and Fairfax in Virginia. Anantji, in the past 2+ years, has been active in various forums taking on texts such as Bhaja Govindam, Atma Bodha, Upadesa Sara, Isavasya, Vishnu Sahasranama, Bhagavad Gita and Self Unfoldment.

**Please register by sending an email to [vish.ramabhattacha@gmail.com](mailto:vish.ramabhattacha@gmail.com). This is mainly intended for planning and communication purposes**

**CHINMAYA MISSION®  
WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER**

PRESENTS

**THE GRAND  
MAGIC SHOW  
HOLLYWOOD FAMOUS  
JEFF PARMER**



**BANQUET DINNER – ANNUAL FUND RAISER**

December 4, 2010 - 5:30 PM – 9:30 PM

Oakton High School, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna VA 22181

*All Proceeds will go to building  
Chinmaya Somnath Center  
Northern Virginia  
to meet the spiritual and value based  
educational needs of the growing  
Northern VA community*

Jeff Parmer is a favorite performer at the Magic Castle, in Hollywood California. He has performed with his group in more than 12 countries. Jeff has a very refreshing blend of Magic and Comedy. He has appeared in movies, and performs for many Hollywood celebrities.

**Tickets\*: \$500, \$250, \$125, \$75, \$50**

*\* Ticket amount in excess of \$50 per ticket is tax deductible*

Tickets are available

At Chinmaya Mission Centers in MD or VA

Online @ [www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org)

Contacts: (571) 969-1160 or (301) 684-8883 E-Mail: [grandmagicshow@chinmayadc.org](mailto:grandmagicshow@chinmayadc.org)

Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center ♦ 46 Norwood Road, Silver Spring MD 20905

## Stotra Parayana at Sri Siva Vishnu Temple

*Ram Nayak, Dulles Chapter*

Dulles Chapter Shloka Class has been gaining in popularity the last few years and this has led to adding an extra class to accommodate all the students interested in the class. The class is being taught by Sri Gopalakrishna, Jaya Rajagopal, Raji Krishnan and Janaki Mahadevan.

The class usually holds a Stotra Parayanam about every six weeks in the houses of members on a rotation basis. However, on Saturday, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>, the class held its Stotra Parayanam at SSVT in front of Lord Ayyappa. The Sannidhi was overflowing with over fifty children and close to a hundred parents!

The temple was reverberating with the children's' chanting. A priest from the temple was present for the entire chanting and performed the aarathi while the children chanted the Vedic Aarathi.

The children chanting the following:

1. Invocation (Shuklam bharadharam, Saraswati Namastubhyam, Guru Brahma)
2. Ganesha Sankata Nashana Stotram,
3. Ganesha Shodasha Namani Stotram
4. Ganesha Stava (Ajam Nirvikalpam)
5. Guru Stotram (first 5 verses + last verse)
6. Medha Suktam
7. Lalitha Panchakam
8. Bhagavad Gita Dhyanam
9. Guru Sishya Parampara
10. Thotakashtakam
11. Nirvana Shatakam
12. Hanuman Chalisa
13. Navagraha Stotram
14. Sharada Bhujangam
15. Vedic Aarathi



Om



The SSVT management was very appreciative of all the efforts by Chinmaya Mission and they conveyed the following words:

*“SSVT is very glad that the stotra parayanam was a great success. It was great to see children, some of them very young, chanting with devotion the stotras so well. I want to congratulate you and the Chinmaya Mission for training the children with such dedication. Chinmaya Mission's training of young children in Hindu traditions is a real asset to the community.*

*Let us continue to collaborate and see how we can make this relationship between two important Hindu institutions in the Washington area continue to grow and reach greater heights.”*



Om



## My Summer Highlight – Chinmaya Mission Summer Camp

*Adithi Ramakrishnan  
Sundaram, Dulles Chapter*

Every kid looks forward to summer vacation! School's out and it's fun in the sun! But I get excited about summer for a very special reason - Chinmaya Mission Summer Camp! For four weeks, this camp exposes me to a range of activities from Vedic Chanting and Yoga to Art, Story time and Sports! I not only get the opportunity to interact with a group of wonderful teachers, but also to make great friends!

The main guiding force of the Chinmaya Mission Virginia Summer Camp is Swami Dheerananda a.k.a. Swamiji as we respectfully call him. Swamiji leads the morning chanting sessions with us in his unique and engaging style, and hosts the well-known and loved "Hopping Game"! This year, we learned 20 verses from Chapter 12 of the Bhagawad Geeta. Additionally, we also learned the Kala Bhairava Ashtakam, Shivopaasana Mantrah, Medhasuktam, and many more toe-tapping bhajans!

Every year, we focus on a specific theme that broadens our character and instills good values, such as "Live to give" or "We Can, We Must, We Will!" This year's Camp Theme was "God is in Everyone." During the week, either Swamiji or our class teacher talked to us about the theme and through stories and real life examples, they explained how we can use it in our daily lives to become better individuals. This year, Acharya Vivekji from Niagara Falls also came to speak to us about "God is in Everyone". Every child was drawn to his enthralling explanations and team exercises!

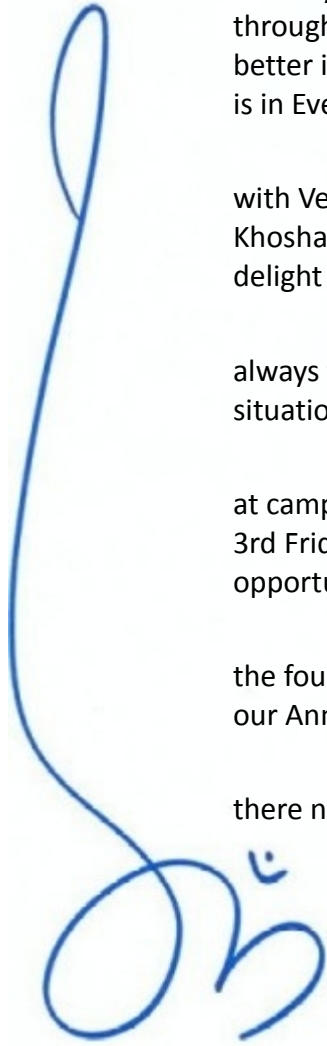
In addition to Vedic chanting and Bhajans, other fun activities at camp include brain teasers with Vedic Math, creative Art projects, Dance, Sports, and Yoga. This year, we also had Amara Khosha, which is a Sanskrit Dictionary written by Buddhist Amarasimha. All these classes are a delight to all the campers!

The "young mentors" of the camp are the youth volunteers! The Youth Volunteers are always there to help the teachers and children whenever they need it! If you ever get into a sticky situation, or just need a helping hand to guide you, it's a Youth Volunteer to the rescue!

Every Friday, the camp staff organizes a fun outdoor day for us! This year, the first 2 Fridays at camp were Water days, complete with huge slides, fun games, face painting, and a movie! The 3rd Friday was a field trip to Bowling and Laser Tag, along with a pizza lunch! This was a wonderful opportunity for me to enjoy these activities with all my friends at camp.

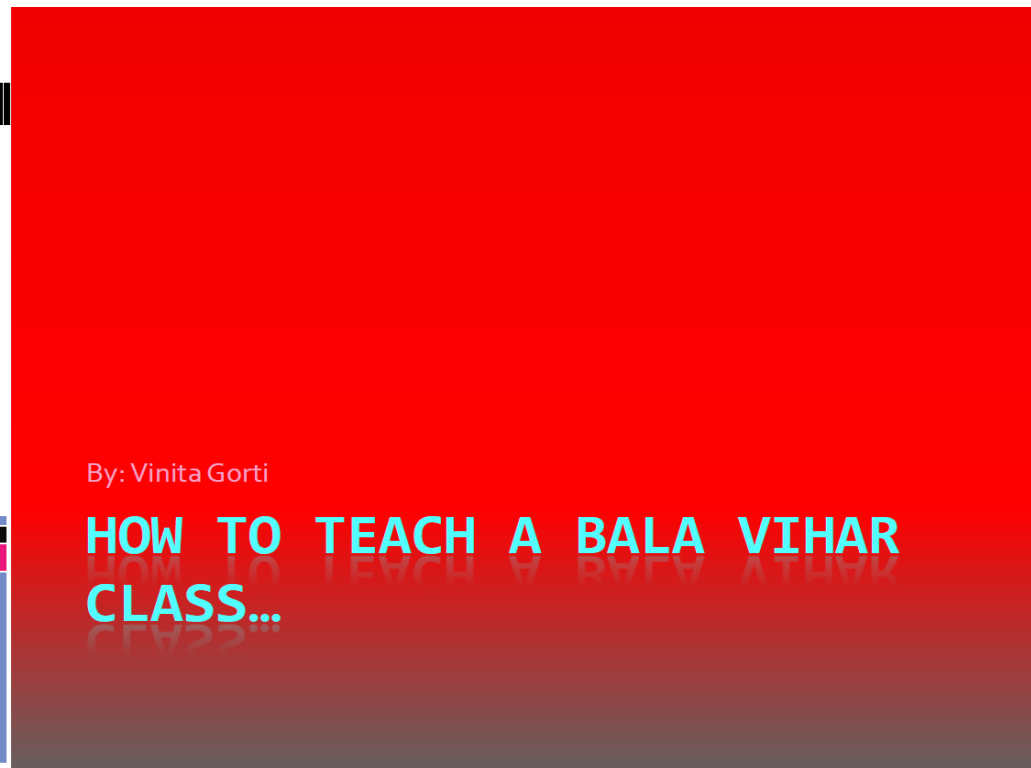
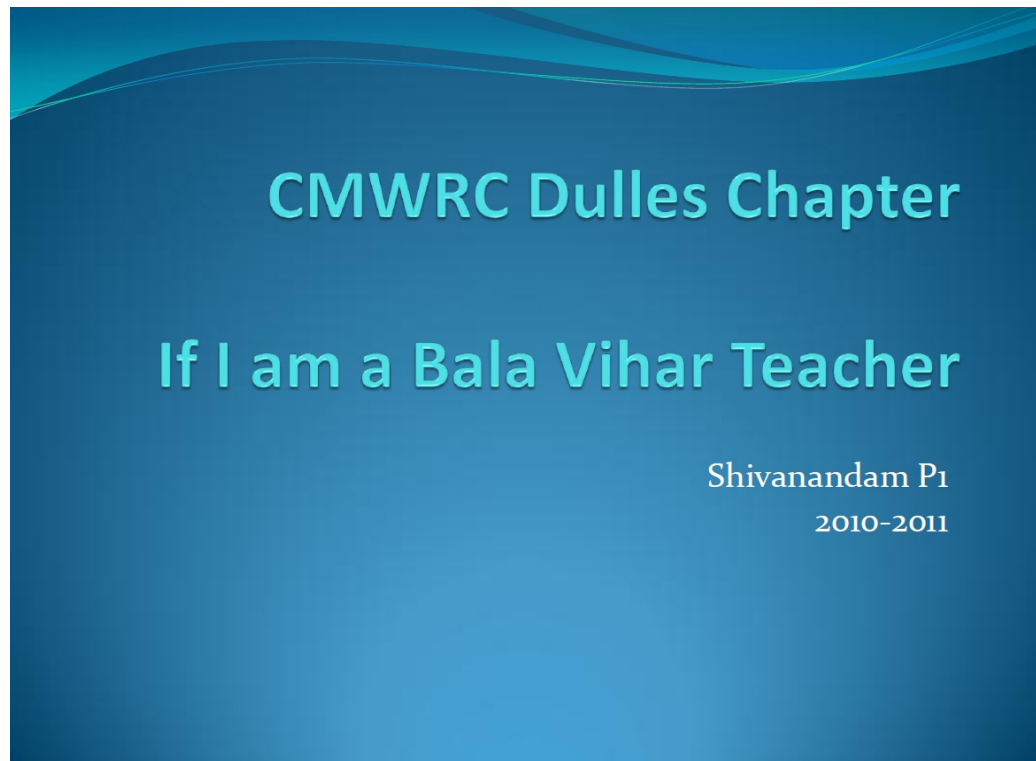
The conclusion of the camp is Annual Day, where we showcase what we've learned during the four weeks at the Chinmaya Mission Summer Camp! Packed with Chanting, Dance and Drama, our Annual Day is the most unforgettable experience for all of us!

Chinmaya Mission Summer Camp is definitely the highlight of my summer, and you'll see me there next year for sure!





Om



## Preparation

- ✿ Research on your teaching
- ✿ Talk to parents
- ✿ Find out how many kids there are
- ✿ How much you will teach each day
- ✿ What you will do if you have extra time
- ✿ What you will do for the main presentation at the end of the session

## During Class

- ★ Punishments and rewards
- ★ How to control the kids
- ★ How to set the law and authority
- ★ How to let the kids enjoy if there is extra time
- ★ Teach everything to the maximum capacity





## After Class

- ॐ Check how to catch up kids if absent
- ॐ Call parents if there was a unreported absence
- ॐ Check to see how far the lesson is going
- ॐ Prepare for next class

## IF I AM A BALA VIHAR TEACHER

- ✕ I would teach the day's lesson with many games, projects, and other creative ways.
- ✕ Also, I would get them involved with many stories, and interactive skits.
- ✕ During the class, I would divide the students into groups and make them play Jeopardy or other fun games.
- ✕ If they do a great job and learn the lesson, they would get no homework for the day!
- ✕ Twice during the year, we would go on a field trip to learn more about the lesson we are studying.

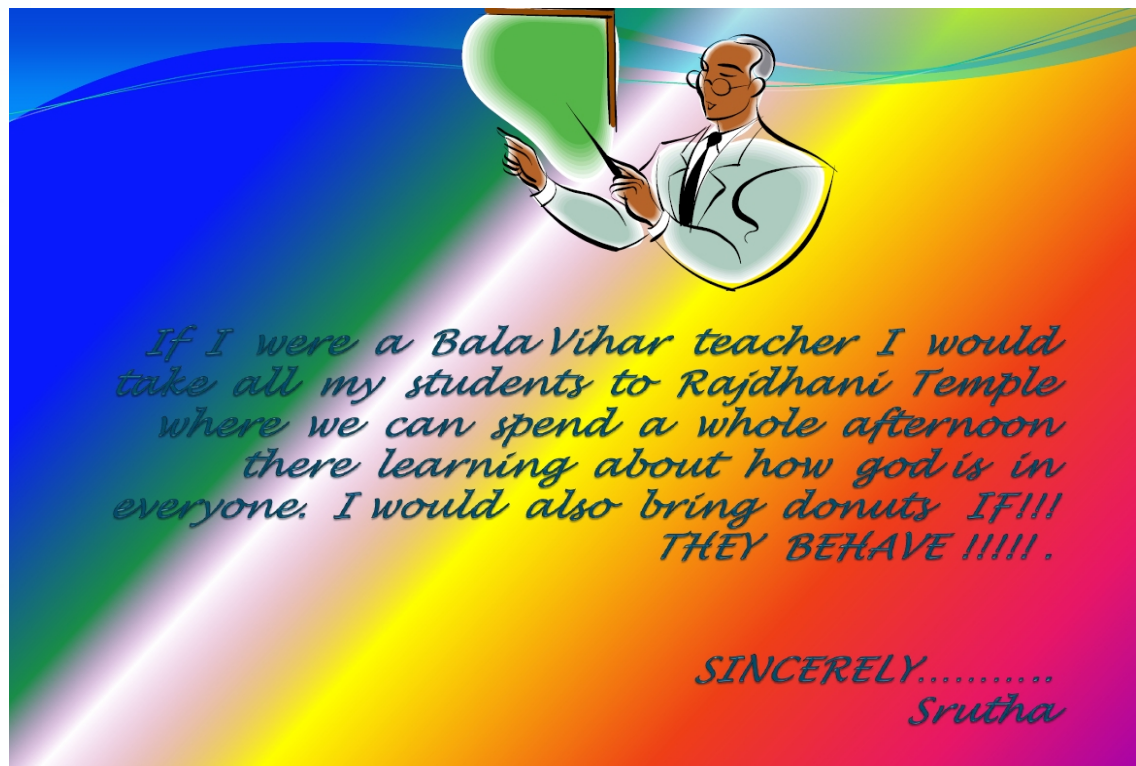
By Vamsi Manne

## If I were a Bala Vihar teacher



- If I were a Bala Vihar teacher I would put into practice the values of selfless service by encouraging the kids to serve the poor and needy in the community for we have learned that service to the people is service to the supreme self.
- If I were a Bala Vihar teacher I would teach them the meaning of the Bhagavad-Gita and also how to apply it to our daily lives.
- If I were a Bala Vihar teacher I would teach the children to treat all religions; cultures and people with respect

- Trinith Radhakrishnan



## If I were a Bala Vihar teacher I would...

- ◆ ...teach the symbols of each god and goddess
- ◆ ... make sure you learned the names of the gods and what they did.
- ◆ ... make sure you learned the names of all the guru's and what their accomplishments were.
- ◆ ... make sure you wrote things down on paper so that you can remember what we learned in the last class.
- ◆ ...teach in a way to make learning fun.

- Sejal

### *What If I Were A Bala Vihar Teacher - Nitya*

- *First I would start class with Sahana Vavatu .*
- *Then I would go over the homework from the previous class.*
- *Next we will discuss the objective for class. We could do worksheets, games, projects, activities, and any questions to get the subject rolling.*
- *Next I'll try to have some free time where we could play games about previous subjects and even new ones. We can share things we would like.*
- *We'll end the class with giving out homework, and ending class with dismissal.*

# IF I WAS A BALA VIHAR TEACHER

By: Nickash Sivakumar

## What Would I Teach?

- ◉ I would teach about God and how God affects our daily life.
- ◉ I would teach about why we should pray to God every day.
- ◉ I would teach about how different symbols have different meanings and what they mean.
- ◉ I would teach about the different Hindu festivals and why we celebrate them.



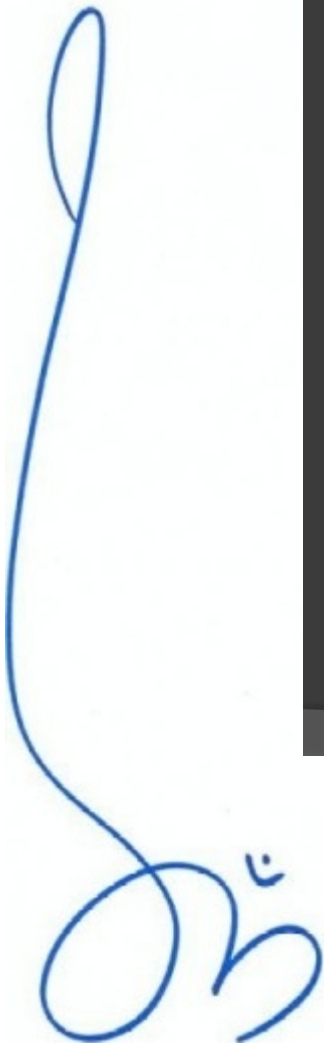


## Why I would Teach those things

- I would teach about God because we need help every day and the person that can give us that help is God.
- I would teach about symbols because if you go to a temple or religious place then you can understand what the symbols mean and relate to your life.

## Why I would Teach those things cont.

- I would teach about what the festivals were because then you could help your family get ready for the festival. You can also know which God to honor on the day of the celebration and why you celebrate it.



## If I am a Bala Vihar Teacher...

- ✿ There would be more stories
- ✿ There would be more games
- ✿ Kids would get to debate and get more involved in what the teacher is teaching
- ✿ Homework would not be mandatory for older grades but they can skip it only 3 times a year
- ✿ There would be more class projects



» By: Madhumita Aryasomayajula

## If I were a Bala-Vihar teacher By Tushar Radhakrishnan....



1. Make them laugh and play Games in the class, and teach them about Hinduism in a fun way
2. Share with them that God is present in all creations-big and small
3. Share stories that are part of our great culture and teaches important values such as the Ramayana



## SOME OF MY IDEAS!!

By Aishu Hombal

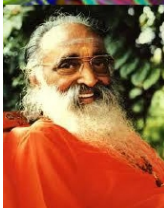
- § I would play fun games such as a scavenger hunt to help others understand better
- § I would do art activities like clay god sculptures and other activities so that kids can understand by actually looking at the object
- § I would read books about all of the gods and kids can know more stories, myths, and how things happened
- § I would teach good songs
- § I would teach about god and the history of them
- § I would show videos for more you can see of the past

Using these I would help kids go in the right path and maintain our culture.



## What I would do if I were a Balavihar Teacher....

- I would arrange for the class to do a fundraiser at the temple or another place to talk about what we learned in Chinmaya Mission, then we would give the money we raise, from the amount of people who attend, to a homeless shelter or an orphanage.
- I would do a few class projects, like last year when we built the chariot in Vibheeshana Gita.
- We could also help when natural disasters such as hurricanes or tsunamis hit land by clothing and non-perishable foods to be sent to them.
- I would read stories and the riddles from the Balavihar magazine pertaining to what is being taught in class.



**Archana Ravishankar**

Handwritten signature in blue ink.

## What I would do as a teacher

- If I were a Bala Vihar teacher, I would probably take many educational field trips
- That's because most people learn visually or through listening, at museums and tours you learn both ways
- Also while you are learning you have a lot of fun!

By Revu Pillai

\* \* \*





## The Legacy of Gurudev

*Nirmala Limaye*

Many scholars have compared Gurudev, Swami Chinmayanada, to Swami Vivekananda. He became a messenger of the Geeta when he traveled all over the world tirelessly for 50 years. Not only did he perform Jnana Yajnas everywhere, he also built centers and placed an acharya who has taken swami deeksha, locally in each of them. From children to elders, his messages continued to sing the divine song of the Geeta and Upanishads.

To know the extent of his work, one can get a glimpse by reading and understanding the Gurudev Ashtottaranamavali, which addresses all his qualities.

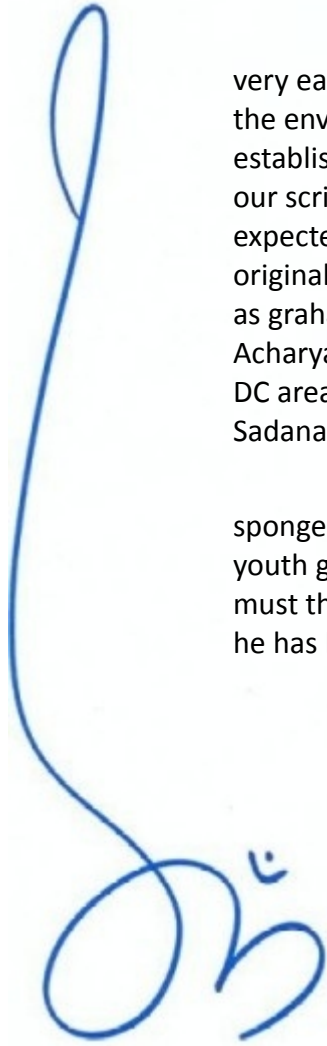
One can also try to visit Chinmaya Vibhuti, near Pune, India where his life is depicted. There one can see his vast collection of writings on the Geeta, Upanishads, as well as various commentaries on Adi Sankara's treatises.

Gurudev founded his worldwide Chinmaya centers and activities. Then, one can find a concise form of his works in Poojya Guruji's Chinmaya Aarati.

He established a center for Vedic studies at the birthplace of Adi Sankara in Kaladi, Kerala, where scholars could study from the scriptures and Adi Sankara's works.

I feel that his approach to teaching can be summarized in three parts. First of all, he realized very early that, if work has to continue even after his lifetime, it can continue only if he can foster the environment for Guru Sishya Parampara (an ageless tradition teacher and taught). Hence, he established Sandipani Academy where disciples are chosen carefully and given rigorous training in our scriptures. At the end of 2 years training they become well versed and able to teach. Gurudev expected these individuals to work diligently during those years as he himself had done. He liked originality in the students. He made them independent thinkers. He accepted brahmacharis as well as grahasthas (householders) as his disciples and bestowed the title Swamiji (for brahmacharis) or Acharyas (for grahastis) regardless of gender. We have some examples right here in the Washington DC area - Swami Dheeranandaji, Acharya Vilasiniji, Acharya sarmaji, Acharya Pramilaji and Acharya Sadanandaji.

Gurudev felt strongly that values are to be instilled at a very young age, as children are like sponges. They learn and retain these values well into adulthood. So, he encouraged Bala Vihar, youth groups as well as Yuva Kendra,s (CHYK) and adult study groups. He emphasized that adults must think, contemplate on the teachings, and progress spiritually. Many of you know Srikumar as he has been with Chinmaya mission since younger age.



Bringing the scriptures to the world, Gurudev wrote commentaries on the Geeta and Upanishads in such a fashion, that even if one does not know Sanskrit, the transliteration and word meaning of each Sanskrit word helped many people all over the world learn these with ease. He had question and answer sessions with various groups. His habit was to answer every written question by writing answers to questions, even into the wee hours of morning. Gurudev used to oversee all the centers around the world and knew minute details about them.

In spite of his tremendous workload, Gurudev had time to be with children, attend classical dance recitals and music programs, and he enjoyed them.

To continue his legacy, , Guruji has started a Dance and Music Academy at Chinmaya Vibhuti, and a study course for pandits -purohits at Sandipani has been started so, they can perform proper ceremonies.

There is a television program, being produced consisting of a series of 26 serial episodes based on Upanishadic principles. So, his work continues today vibrantly, under the stewardship of Guruji Swami Tejomayanand.

To understand what Gurudev intended to achieve for the world, recite our Chinmaya mission pledge which points to what he wanted us to be!

Such is his legacy.

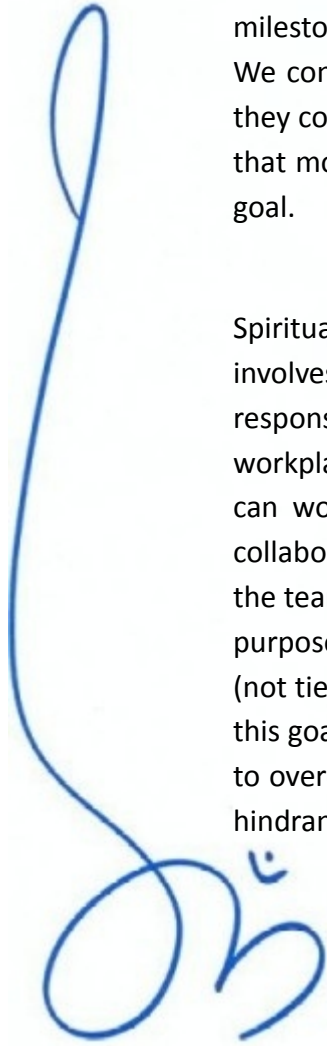
## Being Successful

*Shashikala Duraiswami*

As we open up India Abroad, Times, and other such magazines, we feel tremendous pride and satisfaction to see Indians achieving success. The most recent success story in the news is of Dr. Venkatraman Ramakrishnan winning the Nobel Prize for Chemistry. I am not aware of the details of his work but I can only surmise that it must have involved many hours of dedication and sincerity. It is always heartening to see when such efforts are duly recognized and appreciated. There is a saying, "Behind every successful man, there is a woman". I would like to rephrase this statement in a more modern context as- **"Behind every successful person, there are always a few good people"**. I can imagine all the school teachers, even from Dr. Ramakrishnan's primary school, taking pride in having the opportunity to have taught him and feeling some sense of contribution towards his feat. I am sure in the next few weeks we will hear a lot more tidbits of his life contributed by his close friends and relatives. All of a sudden, he has become a role-model and has created hope for many people who are waiting to achieve something and do something meaningful with their lives/careers.

Not all of us can demonstrate our success in the form of a nobel prize but I think we can all claim to have achieved some success in our careers in our own ways. Of course, the moment we reach a milestone, we set another milestone for ourselves and work as hard or harder to attain that goal. We continue this cycle of milestones, as long as we possibly can, meeting success and failures as they come along. Success is usually never an accident; there is a genuine passion and drive – a force that motivates a person to be resilient, patient and energetic to continue their work to reach their goal.

Spirituality at workplace is quite a popular topic these days. Bringing spirituality into the workplace involves bringing our inner strengths and virtues to the fore and allowing us to work in a socially responsible and ethical manner. [Reference: Swami Ishwaranandaji's presentation on Spirituality at workplace] It also brings into focus a common vision or purpose towards which all the employees can work as a team. It is no longer a solo-effort geared towards fulfilling selfish desire but a collaborative effort of achieving a team's goal which will end up satisfying the personal goals of all the team-members as well. In other words, bringing spirituality into workplace redefines the goal or purpose from each individual's point of view. Since this goal is removed/outside of the individual (not tied to the Ego), each one of us can view it objectively and take necessary measures to achieve this goal. Since we are seeing ourselves as a participant influencing the global outcome, we are able to overcome any shortcomings in this journey quickly and seamlessly without letting it becoming a hindrance or an obstacle.



Seeing ourselves as a participant or an instrument is the crux of becoming a spiritually conscious person. While we interact with the world, we become an active participant; but when we sit down for meditation or contemplation, we see ourselves as a witness or an instrument. Rising above from our body (ego) conscious to becoming a soul-conscious can be accomplished only through a process or journey. This journey has to be made by each person, individually by realigning the goal and purpose complimented by appropriate tools and efforts. It is not so much as changing one's lifestyle or career path, rather just looking at the goal from the perspective of the non-egoistic Self, learning the right skills and applying them properly. Just as we learn to interact productively and effectively with other team members in our worldly transactions (to attain success), in our journey to the inner Self, we need to learn to interact effectively with the various thoughts and emotions arising in our mind. Here again, we need to learn to separate ourselves from them and become a witness and a listener – such that we use the positive ones to elevate ourselves and reject the negative ones that may become our obstacle. If we are bound to our emotions and thoughts, then we will just be reacting and we will not be able to make progress on this path. We need to remind ourselves that only teamwork can bring success; make the body, mind and intellect our co-workers and with a goal that is not tied to the Ego, we all collectively work together to attain success. In all liberated souls (realized masters), there was great teamwork (internally) that is instrumental in achieving success (liberation).

I would like to think that with the right kind of work and with the right perspective of the goal one can be successful both materialistically and spiritually. By bringing spirituality to our workplace we can avail of the benefits and enjoy the place in which we spend the majority of our time. After all, success is an accomplishment that gives us happiness and satisfaction. In the case of worldly success, the result is more tangible whereas in a spiritual journey, the result is personal. In our scriptures, King Janaka is quoted as a liberated soul who perfectly juggled his kingly and spiritual duties. In more modern times, I consider Mother Teresa a liberated soul who became very successful by incorporating the spiritual values in her workplace. We are modern day professionals – we need to achieve success both internally and externally - which we can - with the help of a few good people.

To conclude, following is the quote from Swami Ishwaranandaji's presentation on Spirituality at workplace: The actual presentation is available on the Chinmaya Mission LA website.

- If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap
- If you want happiness for a day, go for a picnic
- If you want happiness for a week, go on a vacation
- If you want happiness for a month, get married
- If you want happiness for a year, inherit wealth
- If you want happiness for a lifetime, learn to love what you do



## How Battlestar Galactica Explains Divine Lila

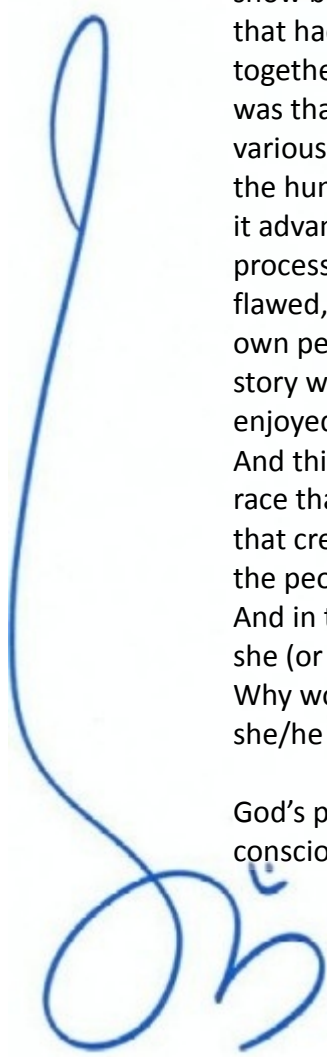
*Usha Naik*

Do you ever wonder what the purpose of life is? What the point of it all is? Why did the world come into existence? Not how, just simply, why? The question 'why?' implies the existence of reasoning behind the creation of the universe so there is an assumption here of something having created the world, something which most of us define as God. The purpose here is not to discuss the existence of God or a divine force. The intent here is simply to understand the meaning of my existence. So, assuming the existence of the divine, we return to "What is the point of existence?" and "why did God create the universe?"

Hindu philosophy tells us to treat the creation of the universe as "Ram Lila" or "Krishna Lila" - as God's play - meaning we were all created for the pleasure of the Divine. Why would God create a world with pain and suffering? I couldn't fully explain that but I do accept that pain and pleasure are two ends of the same continuum. We need to know the negative emotions in order to recognize the other emotion as positive. But that still doesn't explain why the divine would want to create either positive or negative emotions. It was only as I watched the last season of the science fiction show 'Battlestar Galactica' that the idea of Ram Lila made perfect sense!

Battlestar Galactica (the 'reimagined' version released a few years ago) is a great story. The show begins with the annihilation of most of the human race and their planets by Cylons (machines that had evolved and overthrown their human masters). The few humans who did survive came together to improve their chances of survival. What struck me though as I watched the last season was that we were watching and observing the human drama that unfolded - the journey of the various characters as they struggled to survive. As we watch the series we witness the progress of the human race – we see the evolution of a community – how it comes together, how it forms, how it advances, the dynamics between the various personalities, the development of politics, the process of spiritual evolution. None of the characters or ideas presented is perfect. They are all flawed, ordinary people struggling not just to survive in their world but also to work through their own personal issues and deal with their own personal demons in their search for happiness. The story was fascinating – whether the episodes were happy or sad or filled with strife and angst. I enjoyed every aspect of the show. It was a pleasure to watch something that was so skillfully made. And this is where we get a glimpse into how God may feel by witnessing the drama of the human race that unfolds as we all continue on our journeys. I was just a viewer and in awe of the talent that created the show. The directors, writers and producers - how much deeper is the pleasure of the people who created the show, the pleasure of creating something so beautiful as they watch it? And in the same vein, how deep is the bliss of the Divine? How much pleasure must God feel, as she (or he) creates the world and everything in it, writing and directing the stories of our dramas? Why wouldn't the divine create the universe for his/her pleasure? It makes perfect sense that she/he would.

So for me, now, I am willing to accept the theory that maybe the universe, creation, is in fact God's play or pleasure and it is a fascinating play in which I play a role. Even though I don't consciously have a script, everything is in fact a part of the script and it is perfect.



**Series – Summary of the Gita****Ch. 13 (Ksetra Ksetragna Vibhaga Yoga) The field and its knower***Nilkanth Bhatt, Richmond Chapter*

This world is the field of our experiences and we are the knower of these experiences. There is no confusion in this and we also know without any doubt that this knower “I” includes my body, my mind and my intellect. With these three entities body, mind and intellect, I know this world of objects, emotions and thoughts and therefore I conclude that this world is the field and “I” with my body, mind and intellect is the knower. So far so good; however, the problem is Bhagavan Krishna does not agree with us.

Bhagavan tells Arjuna, “This body (including mind and intellect) is called the field and one who knows it is the knower.” He says the field includes five great elements (space, air, fire, water and earth), ego (the sense of I am the doer), intellect, the unmanifest (tendencies), ten senses, mind, five (types of) objects (corresponding to five senses of perception; i.e., sound for hearing etc.) and their modifications, such as desires, hatred, pleasure, pain, etc. In other word the entire world of “knowables” is labeled as the field of objects, and “Consciousness” the knowing principle functioning, as the knower is the subject.

If that is the case then, why do we feel that this body is I, the subject? It is something similar to my thinking that my eyeglasses are part of me. I need eyeglasses to see clearly, I also need my eyes to see clearly, however, I make distinction between my eyes and my eyeglasses. My eyes are me because they are part of my body; my eyeglasses are not me because I can replace them anytime I need to. If we think carefully, there is no real difference between my eyes and my eyeglasses in their relationship to me. Without my eyeglasses I still remain as I, so do I remain as I without my eyes. Of-course it will be inconvenient without my eyes, because I would not be able to see, but so is the case without my eyeglasses. I the seer am someone other than my eyes and the eyeglasses. It is my identification with this body, which has created this sense of “I am the body”. In reality it is part of this world and therefore will remain here in this world when I die.

Bhagavan says the knower of the field is the all-pervading consciousness. It is neither being nor it is non-being. It is undivided yet it exists as if divided into beings. It is the supporter of all beings. It is within and without of all beings, the moving and also the unmoving (the inert objects). Its hands and feet are everywhere; its eyes, ears, heads and mouths are everywhere because all the beings exist in it. It exists in the world enveloping all.

The consciousness in me is not different than the consciousness in other beings. Its expressions are different in each being depending on the “Body-Mind-Intellect” equipment of each being. The electricity is the same everywhere, but depending on the equipment it manifests as heat, light, cold air or fire.

The field is also known as Prakriti (matter) and the knower as Purusha (spirit) in scriptural language. Bhagavan says both these Prakriti and Purusha are beginning-less and are the expressions of the Supreme Reality. The cause and effect relationship we see in this world is because of the nature of Prakriti. And the experiences of pain and pleasures are because of the presence of Purusha in the beings. Purusha seated in Prakriti, experiences the qualities of Prakriti. The attachment of the beings to the qualities of prakriti creates cause for birth in good and evil wombs. The supreme Purusha (all pervading consciousness) seated in the body of a being remains unaffected by the being’s good or evil qualities. It remains as a spectator, permitter, the supporter, the enjoyer, the great Lord and the supreme self.

One who knows the Purusha and Prakriti together with their qualities gets liberated from the cycles of births and deaths. He knows that births and deaths are caused by the qualities of the prakriti and the self; “the I” in me is not affected by it, just as the universal space is not affected by building a new house or demolishing an old house in it.

A wise person sees the supreme Lord existing equally in all beings. He sees the self remaining imperishable and immutable within the perishable beings. He sees that all actions are performed by the Prakriti alone and the Self is actionless. Some achieve this knowledge by meditating upon the nature of the self in the self. Some achieve this knowledge by inquiring into the nature of the truth. Some achieve this knowledge by selfless actions and yet others achieve this by simply having faith in the nature of the self, heard from other wise people and worshipping it with devotion.

The self in us is so near to us but it seems so far. It is our own self but it seems unattainable and unknowable because of our identification with the non-self.

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## On the Concept of Creation – Part I

*Acharya Dr. K. Sadanandaji*

As the very title indicates – it is a concept and not a fact – says GouDapaada in his kaarika. Vedanta does not distinguish between energy and matter – both are inert and the Einsteinian equation  $E=mc^2$  also establishes the identity of the two. As we come to the level of electro-magnetic wave lengths, science also talks about both the wave nature and particle nature of the energy. Hence all created entities are matter and thus inert. This includes what some call as cosmic energy; unless that word has a different connotation. In addition, creation being inert cannot exist by itself, nor can it be self-revealing. Hence, existence of the world cannot be established independent of the conscious entity. Does the world exist if there is no conscious entity? – one may ask. Who is there to prove its existence or its non-existence? Hence it becomes indeterminate or what Shankara calls it as anirvachaniyam. It is similar to the question – does the world exist when I am in deep sleep state? Who is going to answer? Even if someone (a conscious entity) answers, I am not available to listen to what he says, and if I am awake then he does not have to prove the existence of the world. I am there to prove even his existence. Existence of a thing and hence this world is established only when a conscious being becomes conscious of the existence of the world.

How does anyone can prove existence of anything? I, a conscious entity, have to use my mind as instrument (and the appropriate senses for external objects) to recognize the presence of the world, out there. When there is no instrument to recognize the world, then the world is not recognized. In fact, even the instrument, the mind, that is required to recognize the universe is itself inert and need something else to establish its existence. This is what Krishna says in the 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter in the sloka – bhuumi raapo .. and with the next following sloka that says that this eight-fold nature of the world that includes both gross as well as subtle matter (mind, intellect and or ahankaara or ego) is supported by something higher, which cannot be described by words- since words can only describe that which is finite.

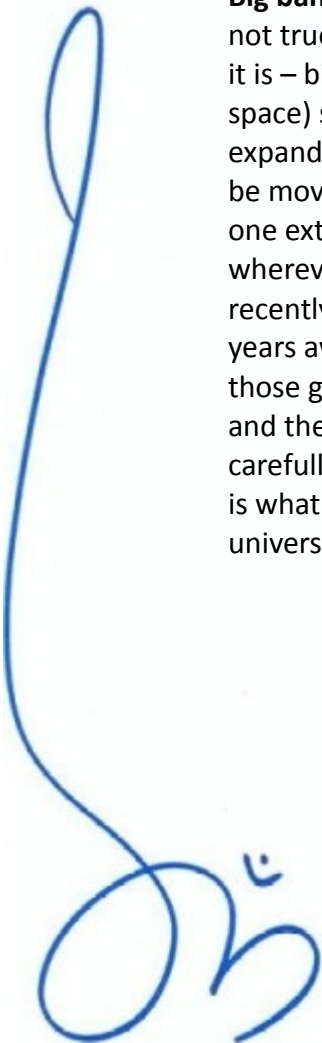
The world does not say I am there. Only a conscious entity can declare that there is a world out there. Hence, whether there is a creation or no creation cannot be established independently of a conscious entity. On the other hand, the existence of the conscious entity is not established by world. It is self-existence and what is self-existing is also self-revealing. This is what is analyzed in the ManDukya Upanishad with the famous declarative statement in Mantra 7 – naantaH prajnam ....This is where the current concepts in Science are also at fault (I am not saying Science is at fault). Currently scientists are trying to investigate the origin for the consciousness in the matter – using inert tools – without recognizing that every investigation presupposes the existence of consciousness, since unconscious entities cannot do the investigation. It is like thief is trying to search for the person who stole things. In Vedanta we call it as – trying to objectify the subject. We think scientists have the problem – but Vedantins also have the same problem, in fact, it is more serious, since Vedantins think they know, yet they do not know (reminds me of a sloka in Kena). They are looking for –themselves-with the hope that they will discover themselves in future–



knowing that future never comes. I am searching for myself –but the fact is - When the very seeker himself is the sought, any seeking on the part of the seeker is going to fail miserably, since in the very seeking there is inherent assumption that sought is not there where the seeker is. Hence we cannot blame the scientists either who want to objectify consciousness and investigate its source or the trying to bang the particles with higher and higher energy to investigate the fundamental particles – without recognizing that the higher and higher energy that is induced to break the particles itself produces finer and finer particles that are short lived. The end is set only by the limit of our banging.

**Creation according to Current theories of Science:** Recently there was a news article, by the famous scientist, Steven Hopkins, that said – God did not create this universe, as if he knows who that God that did not create this universe is. (Interestingly when Dr. Chandrasekhar was asked about the famous quote of Dr. Einstein – that God does not play dice – Dr. Chandrasekhar responded- how does Einstein know about what God does?). Dr. Hopkins has his proclamation: it is the natural laws that created the universe. The question that he did not pose, obviously, is – what is the cause for these natural laws such as gravitational forces etc that created the universe? Do the universal laws pre-exist before the universe is created? Obviously, he stops the buck at the Natural laws, while for others, the buck stops at God level. Ignorance only prevails after wherever the buck stops. Hence, Goudapaada says for any cause that we attribute for the universe, there has to be a cause for that cause – thus leading to infinite regress.

**Big bang theory:** When we think of big bang we think that it occurred somewhere in space. That is not true. The reason is space and time, both originates with the bang. The correct way of looking at it is – big bang occurred everywhere (even though the word- everywhere - is again a concept of space) simultaneously (even this word involves a concept of time) as galaxies that formed expanded and still expanding separating simultaneously from each other. The distant galaxies will be moving further and further away with their separation increasing with distance. Interestingly if one extrapolates backwards in time the distances, they all meet to the point of the observer, wherever that observer is; and that is where the creation or the bang occurred. We came to know recently through Hubble telescope that young galaxies are still forming billions and billions of light years away. It is not that they are forming now. Light left billions and billions of years ago from those galaxies has just reached us. If there is an observer in those galaxies and looking at our galaxy and the neighboring ones, he will say that we are just forming now as young galaxies. If one thinks carefully – every observer becomes the center of creation or center of the bang – That, in essence, is what Vedanta says: The observer, the conscious-existent entity that I am, is the center of the universe.



The problem in this big bang model is – just as Dr. Stephen Hopkins leaves us no where – the big bang itself follows the banging laws – the laws of physics that drives the particles apart against the existing gravitational forces to separate from each other. What is the cause for these laws, and what the cause for the bang itself is, and from where the material for the bang came from – all are unanswerable questions of the big-bang theory. The law of conservation fails miserably unless we have infinite mass at every point, which bangs everywhere simultaneous following some physical laws. Deterministic physical laws cannot come out by a random process. It will be like beautiful reproducible poetry being created by randomly pressing the keys in the key-board. Banging occurring simultaneously everywhere, where there is no space to begin with, itself is a big problem. We need to have a stronger belief to believe this, than the belief that there is a God who created this with his magic wand. At least in the God's creation, there is pre-existing conscious entity creating an inert world. In the Big Bang theory, consciousness has to evolve after the bang, after the matter has cooled down and when some complex molecules meet accidentally. How consciousness arises in inert matter is again a mystery, unknown. Hence current science cannot account the origin of the universe. We need to go to Vedanta to address these issues.

*(This series of articles, in three parts, by Sadaji came about in response to a question to him - "Could you please lend your thought on the concept of creation?" )*

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