

Chinmaya Smrithi



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

Volume 21, Number 4- July 31, 2011

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ॐ Swami
Chinmayananda

ॐ

Guru Purnima, though we celebrate on this specific day - and have glorified it as the day of Vyasa; as a sacred day to start studies of Brahmasutra and our Upanishads; a day elected for the prayerful worship of the Teacher etc - it has a deeper significance.

Guru Purnima, is not a day, an occasion, a ritual, but a STATE of Consciousness, when the students try to tune in their minds to the Inner State of the Teacher.

The darkness within gets lit up with the full understanding and Knowledge Supreme (Full Moon). Let us tune our mind to Sri Gurudev; invoke Sri Swami Tapovana's Grace and let us prostrate to Sri Vyasa Bhagawan.

ॐ Chinmaya

Calendar and Upcoming Events (www.chinmayadc.org, Link – CMWRC Events)

- July 25 – Aug 19 – Summer Camp in Maryland
- August 3rd - Sadhana Day (Sri Gurudev Mahasamadhi Day)
- August 9-11 - “Mindful Living” workshop at Chinmayam by Acharya Vivekji
- August 12-14, CHYK Retreat with Acharya Vivekji in Washington DC. Theme: “All You Need is Love”.
- September 10-11 – Bala Vihar Classes Commence for 2011/2012

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 books, CDs, DVDs, etc.. Browse online at www.chinmayadc.org or www.chinmayamission.org
- Srimad Bhagvad Gita with Sri Gurudev's commentary is online at www.myholygita.com

Next Issue

- Articles for the next regular bi-monthly issue – September 2011, are due by September 10th, 2011
- Email submissions to smrithi@chinmayadc.org. Submission instructions at 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
www.chinmayamission.com
www.chinmayamission.org
www.chinfo.org
www.chinmayadulles.org
www.chinmayafrederick.org
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)

Sitaram Kowtha, Gopal Gopinath, Raju Chidambaram, Acharya Vilasiniji, Acharyas, Chapter Coordinators and Teachers. & BV students - Ananya Krishnan, Asmi Panigrabi, Atman Panigrabi, Harsha Neerchal, Nandini Kishore and Keshav Kowtha

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

Farewell - the blessings for our Bala Vihar

Anil Kishore

[Editor's Note: Anil Kishore ji is one of the prominent sevaks of Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center. He wears many hats – board of trustees of CMWRC, Bala Vihar Director for Silver Spring chapter, Bala Vihar teacher for Chinmayam classes (Grades 10- 12), Hindi language teacher, web sevak – designing and maintaining the chinmayadc website, and many others. He has recently opted to step down as Silver Spring Bala Vihar Director. During Annual Day in June, Anilji was applauded for his leadership and seva.]

Hari OM

Thank you very much for the sentiments expressed as beautiful words during the Annual Day (June 11 & 12, 2011) . These sentiments will resonate in my memory for a long long time to come!!

The beautiful flowers from Madhuram-1 children, the speeches from Deepakji and Sharadji in Session I started a very positive weekend for me. While I thought this is just a change of leadership to continue Gurudev's vision, I quickly realized that it was also time to reminisce the wonders of Bala Vihar and Gurudev's vision for us. While I was flattered by the remarks made about me, I also felt that Chinmaya Mission is not only about sevaks and sevikas but also the caring and the family bonds that we create during our interactions.

Mangala, Rekha and Rasshmi's comments in Session II added to the comments from the previous day and then in Session III Medha, Shashikala and Krishna continued the beautiful words. Rasshmi and Krishna have been my own students in Chinmayam and they just gave us a new vision - our own students providing selfless dedicated service for our Bala Vihar? What a remarkable way to look at the success of Bala Vihar. No doubt our accomplishments will continue into the future. I appreciated all the comments and I also noted that I was just the symbol of the accomplishments YOU ALL achieved. Without your efforts nothing would be possible.

AND As I have said, a Director is only as good and effective as the team one leads – the wonderful sevaks, and I mean each and every teacher, facility, sound, library, office, bhiksha, sound, web, etc are truly a team of amazing individuals. Their dedication, commitment are and have been a strong force of the winds that will lead us into the future.

Swamiji 's everlasting blessings, encouragement, inspiration and guidance just add up to the institution you have all collectively created. He is not just a visionary representative of Gurudev, but Gurudev himself for us in his guidance and love for us. His presence brings the magic that keep us doing the best. Those of us know were not privileged to hear Gurudev have seen his vision through Swamiji.

Vilasinji – I could not say much about you, it would just be short and incomplete because there is so much to say. Your mentoring and insights have been a blessing. Thanks for making me the Director in 2004, I automatically became a BV student too!!! I gained several years (not counting) that I missed Bala Vihar in my younger years.

To my family, thanks for the support and helping me maintain the deadlines of my commitment as director. While the choices were difficult at times, they made sure I was there for everything for them and the Mission !!!

Moving forward the emphasis is on, the momentum is there and for the coming years Deepa Krishnan has the support of some of the most marvelous people!!! We can, we will and we must move on with the blessings and create our leaders of tomorrow. This is only the beginning.

Thanks for all you have done, your confidence, trust and the friends I made are unique, caring and loving family that I have inherited from CM.

In His Glory
Hari OM

CMWRC Events Held

- 2011 Bala Vihar Tilak Ceremony for graduating seniors, was held at Chinmayam on May 21.
- The second round of Annual Day plays were performed by Bala Vihar children on June 11 and 12.
- A two-day spiritual workshop was conducted by Dr. D.C. Rao ji at Chinmayam on June 25 and 26.
- Swami Ishwaranandaji conducted a spiritual camp in Frederick on Sri Adi Shankar's Dhyanashtakam on July 4th. He subsequently conducted a Jnana Yajna in Frederick on the Gita from July 5 to 7.
- The 2011 Virginia Summer Camp for children was held from June 27 to July 22, at the Langston Hughes Middle School (Reston VA), under the guidance of Swami Dheeranandaji, and with Acharya Anantji as the Camp Director.
- Guru Poornima was observed on July 15 in Virginia.
- The commencement of site preparation work for Chinmaya Somnath facility in Virginia was launched with Ganesh Puja on Saturday, July 23 in Chantilly.

Chinmaya Somnath Project

You can follow progress of the Chinmaya Somnath project – new center in Northern Virginia at - www.chinmayasomnath.org

This website is continually updated to show progress and information on the project. Please review the fund raising appeal and use the pledge form, available at the website, to support this important CMWRC initiative.

Chinmaya West Newsletter

Be sure to read the July 2011 newsletter from Chinmaya Mission West. Browse and download at www.chinmayamission.org/newsletter:
<http://www.chinmayamission.org/newsletter.php>

Guidelines: Submit a report/newsbrief on their recent major events or activities, for print in September or subsequent issue of CMW News. In particular, centers where Pujya Guruji has already visited are requested to submit an article with photos.



Please email your article and images to cmwn-submissions@chinmayamission.org Due Dates for Article Submissions to CMW Newsletter in 2011: August 1, October 1, December 1.

LOAN PLEDGE FORM

I/We Mr/Mrs/Miss _____
would like to commit to advancing, as loan, a sum of Dollars _____ thousand
(multiple of \$5000) for a fixed term as indicated below to **Chinmaya Mission Washington
Regional Center (CMWRC)** for the purpose of supporting the capital projects in Northern
Virginia and in Maryland.

| | | |
|----------|-----------------|--|
| \$ _____ | For FIVE YEARS | @5.0% per annum- simple rate of Interest * |
| \$ _____ | For SEVEN YEARS | @6.0% per annum- simple rate of Interest * |
| \$ _____ | For TEN YEARS | @6.5% per annum- simple rate of Interest * |

I/We understand that the interest will be payable in the month of January each year for the
immediately preceding year. The principal will be payable at the end of the five/ seven/ ten year
term. The amount of my/our pledge, as stated above, will be available by:
(Please circle one)

| | | | | | | | |
|------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2011 | June 1 | July 1 | Aug. 1 | Sept. 1 | Oct. 1 | Nov. 1 | Dec. 1 |
| 2012 | Jan. 1 | Feb. 1 | Mar. 1 | Apr. 1 | May 1 | Jun. 1 | Jul. 1 |
| 2012 | Aug. 1 | Sept. 1 | Oct. 1 | Nov. 1 | Dec. 1 | | |
| 2013 | Jan. 1 | Feb. 1 | Mar. 1 | Apr. 1 | May. 1 | Jun. 1 | Jul. 1 |

and will be mailed/delivered to Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center within ten days
of a request for funds from CMWRC.

Signed _____ Date _____
(Please print)
Full name: _____ Phone# _____
Address: _____ Email: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Signed _____ Date _____
(Please print)
Full Name: _____ Phone# _____
Address: _____ Email: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

(* Note: If CMWRC decides to adjust interest rates during the first three years of this loan, those rates if moved
upwards will be applied prospectively to your rates but your interest rate will not go down if the adjustment is
downwards. Early withdrawals will be subject to rate reduction rules - please see FAQ. Please indicate if the loan is in
minor's name)

Please Mail or hand over this form to:
Prakash G. Soman, Treasurer, CMWRC - 6541 South Street, Falls Church, VA 22042

Nominee Designation Form

To:
Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC)
46 Norwood Road
Silver Spring, MD 20905

I/We Mr./Mrs./Miss** _____ wish to advance a sum of Dollars _____ Thousand only (\$ _____ Multiple of \$5000) at the interest rate indicated below to Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC) for a period of five/seven/ten years for the capital projects in Northern Virginia and in Maryland. I/We understand that the interest will be payable in the month of January each year for the immediately preceding year. The principal will be payable at the end of the five/seven/ten year term.

A check (Check # _____ dated _____ on _____ bank) made payable to CMWRC is enclosed herewith.

I/We nominate _____ to be the beneficiary(s)/nominee(s)/assignee(s) of the said loan amount (the principal as well as interest due thereon as stated above) in the event of my/our death prior to the maturity date of the loan.

The social security number to be used for the annual 1099-INT form is _____ and the mailing address for mailing the annual 1099-INT form is given below. We will promptly notify CMWRC if the mailing address changes in the future.

Signed: _____ Date _____

Signed: _____ Date _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Tel: _____ Mobile Tel: _____

Email: _____

Term and Interest Rates:

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| 5 Years | @5.0% per annum – simple rate of Interest * | Please Treat This Loan as an Interest Free Loan for _____ Years. |
| 7 Years | @6.0% per annum – simple rate of Interest * | |
| 10 Years | @6.5% per annum – simple rate of Interest * | |

NOTE: Please inform CMWRC promptly of any change in address.

* Early withdrawals are subject to rate reductions – see FAQ for details.

** Please PRINT name and indicate if the Loan is in a Minor's name.

Please mail/give this form to Prakash G. Soman, Treasurer CMWRC, 6541 South Street, Falls Church, VA 22042

Announcements

Thank Gurudev It's Friday (TGIF) Bala Vihar – Chinmayam class CHYK Connection (CCC) Socials

TGIF socials are held on Friday evenings every other month for CHYK and Chinmayam students/parents. (Chinmayam is Bala Vihar classes for Grades 10-12). TGIFs are get-togethers hosted by a CMWRC family, and all Chinmayam parents across CMWRC are invited to attend. The agenda is simple: free-form discussions, mentorship time, potluck dinner, and fun activity or hangout time. While Chinmayam kids and CHYK hang out, parents have their fun.

Next TGIF social is planned for the end of September 2011. Details to follow.

Last TGIF was held on Saturday, July 23rd at Potomac, MD. It was hosted by the Krishnan Family. The social included a short trek to Great Falls National Park, overlooking Potomac river.

Contact: Email chinmayamTGIF@gmail.com and/or call Abdulla Meer at (240) 381-1984 to RSVP or for further information, or with any questions, comments or concerns.

Current/Upcoming Events

In Progress (started July 10): Kenopanishad by Acharya Sadananda, 6.30 - 8.00 PM every Sunday at 4625 Holly Ave, Fairfax, VA 22033.

In Progress (started July 10): Panchadasi by Acharya Sadananda, every Saturday 10.30 - 11.30 AM at Durga Mandir, VA.

Aug 3, 2011: Join us to observe Sadhana Day (Swami Chinmayananda's Mahasamadhi Day)

Time: 7:30 - 9 PM

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

Aug 9 - 11, 2011: Mindful Living - Workshop by Acharya Vivekji.

7:30 - 9:00 PM at Chinmayam. Workshop limited to 40 participants. Registration required via email. See for [Flyer](#) Details.

CHYK DC Retreat with Acharya Vivekji: "All We Need is Love" - Aug 12-14. More details at www.chyk.chinmayadc.org



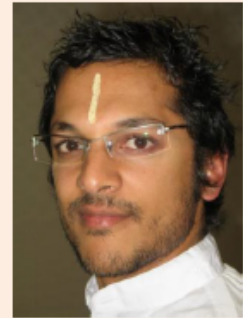
Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center

46 Norwood Road, Silver Spring MD 20905

Mindful Living

How to live more peacefully as a householder

Tips on practicing Vedanta in the workplace.
Insights into being even-minded at home.
Opportunities to discuss openly and
reflect deeply on how to live more peacefully.



Free Event • For householders only • Childcare will be provided
Register early • Registration is limited to 30 Adult Participants
Attendees have to attend all 3 days

Live more peacefully...

Date

August 9th to August 11th

Time

7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Location

Chinmayam,
46 Norwood Road,
Silver Spring, MD 20905

About Acharya Vivek ji:

In 2005, the young college graduate was accepted to the intensive two-year Vedanta Course at Chinmaya Mission's Sandeepany Sadhanalaya in Mumbai, India

Through his innovative and passionate style, Vivekji makes the ancient wisdom of Vedanta relevant, reachable, and applicable.

Questions: mindfulliving@chinmayadulles.org

RSVP: mindfulliving@chinmayadulles.org

Please mention how many adults and children will attend the workshop including ages of children

Our mission is to provide to individuals from any background, the wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to become positive contributors to society

Mission Motto

CHINMAYA MAHASAMADHI FAMILY CAMP 2011

Chinmaya Mission Chicago
Chinmaya Mission Northwest Indiana

Mind and Beyond: The Gītā Way



Discourses on
Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā
Chapter IX

by
His Holiness
Swami Tejomayananda
Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

July 29 - August 3, 2011

Camp Highlights

- Additional Discourses: *Jñāna Sāra* by Swami Shantananda
- Bala Vihar Classes for Children • Cultural Program • Recreation: Golf, Mini-Golf, Tennis, Swimming
- Yuva Kendra (CHYK) Program for College Students and Young Professionals • Vegetarian Meals
- *Upanayanam Ceremony* in Holy presence of Swami Tejomayananda — website for details

Camp Fees

(Rates Effective until March 31, 2011)

Double Occupancy: \$700/person

Children: \$275/child

CHYK: \$475/person (Quad)

Contacts

Ach. Shanker Pillai (630) 789-6607

Rajul Bhalala (847) 302-2383

Padmini Makam (219) 924-7268

For Camp Details and Registration go to: www.chinmayamahasamadhi.com

E-mail: info@chinmayamahasamadhi.com



Camp Venue

Hilton
Indian Lakes Resort
250 W. Schick Road
Bloomington • IL 60108



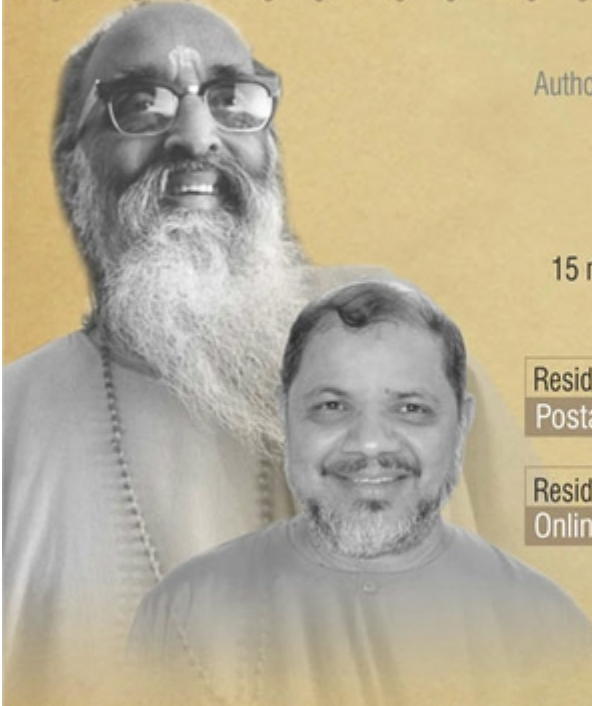
cif Chinmaya International Foundation

Affiliated to Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi & recognised by Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)

launches

BHAGAVAD GITA COURSE

Go through Gita... Grow through Gita...



Author: **His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda**
Head, Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

Course Highlights:

18 Chapters covered in 30 lessons
15 months duration @ 2 lessons per month

Course Donation:

| | | |
|---|---------------|--------------------------|
| Residents of the Indian sub-continent: ₹3,000 | Postal Course | Other Residents: US\$250 |
|---|---------------|--------------------------|

| | | |
|---|---------------|--------------------------|
| Residents of the Indian sub-continent: ₹3,000 | Online Course | Other Residents: US\$200 |
|---|---------------|--------------------------|

Knowledge of Sanskrit is not required
as the medium of instruction is English.

REGISTER NOW!

For online registration visit: www.chinfo.org/courses/bhagavadgita

For further details contact:

Administrator, CIF Home Study Courses
Chinmaya International Foundation

Adi Sankara Nilayam, Adi Sankara Marg, Veliyanad, Ernakulam – 682 319, Kerala, India

Phone: +91-484-2749676, 2747307 Fax: +91-484-2749729

Email: gitacourse@chinfo.org

DHARMA SEVAK COURSE

CHINMAYA MISSION TRINIDAD



COURSE ACHARYA:

**SWAMINI
VIMALANANDA**

ASSISTED BY: SWAMI PRAKASHANANDA

February 1st to March 11th 2012

- ◆ Experience the joy of Gurukula living
- ◆ Learn the fundamentals of Vedanta
- ◆ Learn Sanskrit
- ◆ Learn how to conduct and be firmly grounded in spiritual practices
- ◆ Celebrate auspicious occasions like Ganesh Chaturthi, Janmashtami.



SAVE NOW!

Register Before
Gandhi Jayanti
2nd October,
2011

For A
15% Discount

COURSE DONATION

4000 USD / person (over 25yrs) with AC
3500 USD / person (over 25yrs) w/out AC
2500 USD / person (under 25yrs) with AC
2000 USD / person (under 25yrs) w/out AC

CHINMAYA ASHRAM

#1 SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA DR., CALCUTTA RD#1,
MC BEAN, COUVA, TRINIDAD, WEST INDIES.

TEL: 1-868-679-3652/1-868-636-1571

FAX: 1-868-679-3652

EMAIL: CHINMAYAMMISSIONTT@GMAIL.COM

CHINMAYA MISSION WEST
FROM THE DESK OF SWAMI TEJOMAYANANDA



Dear Chinmaya Family,

Hari OM! Greetings from *Krishnalaya*!

Herewith is some very important information that I would like to share with you all.

The all-encompassing, compassionate vision of Pujya Gurudev motivated him to take up projects of social service in rural India, starting with Sidhbari. In order to expand this work, we founded an independent Trust in India, in the year 2003, named CORD (Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development). This facilitated us to obtain funds from sources other than our Mission who support social and educational causes rather than religious and spiritual ones.

We in the U.S. felt the need of establishing a similar nonprofit organization to support the aforementioned projects in India, Sri Lanka, and USA. To achieve this objective, in the year 2009, we formed CORD USA. Please note that CORD USA is our own wing, and as such, you all should support it wholeheartedly. It will enable us to reach out to other philanthropic persons, institutions, and funding agencies—without harming centers' main spiritual work. In fact, it will only enhance our Mission's image in the community. All other details about CORD USA, and the role that all centers can play, will be communicated to you. Please respond positively when you hear from Subha Pathial, Secretary of CORD USA.

Thank you.

With Prem and OM,
Tejomayananda

CMWRC Event Summary

- Guru Poornima Observation: Submitted by Subramaniam Krishnan and Sri Gopalakrishna
 - CMWRC celebrated Guru Poornima on Friday, July 15 in Virginia at the home of Subramaniam and Bhanu Krishnan. The function was graced by the presence of Pujya Swami Dheerananda, all CMWRC Acharyas - Vilasiniji, Anantji, Pramilaji, Sadanandaji and Vibhootiji (visiting Acharya assisting with the Virginia and Maryland Summer Camps), as well as around 80 CMWRC members representing the Dulles, Frederick, Silver Spring and Springfield chapters. The five Yajaman families joined in performing abhishekam and archana to two sets of Sri Gurudev's padukas under the guidance of Swami Dheerananda. Swamiji recited and expounded an inspirational verse from the Guru Gita highlighting the role of the Guru in enabling the spiritual development of a disciple. Swamiji's talk was followed by a sponsored arati, bhajans, prasad and dinner.



CMWRC Event Summary

- Spiritual Camp and Jnana Yajna conducted by Swami Ishwarananda in Frederick, July 4 & 5-7, 2011
 - *Hari Om,*

Let me thank you and the whole Chinmaya Mission for the three evening discourse with Swami Ishwarananda at Urbana ES. I found each evening enlightening and engaging from start to finish. Swami Ishwarananda brought great clarity to my studies of the Bhagavad Gita and further enhanced my understanding from the readings of The Holy Geeta by Swami Chinmayananda. Being the only "westerner/American" that attended all three nights of the Jnana Yajna provides me with great strength to continue studies and increase my devotion. I hope Chinmaya Mission will continue to schedule events that bring us to a better world.

Prem, Om

Daniel Rindfuss

- Spiritual Workshop conducted by D.C. Rao ji at Chinmayam, June 25 and 26, 2011:
Submitted by Meera Ravichandran
 - *The spiritual workshop covered overview of Vedanta, , dharma, karma yoga, bhakti yoga, jnana yoga topics like sadhana catushtaya, gunas, applications of viveka, and meditation. All sessions were very interactive with ample time for questions and discussions. Registration was limited to 30, though the number of requests were nearly 50. The feedback from the attendees was very positive, with many expressing interest in attending such a workshop again.*

2011 Virginia Summer Camp

Poem by Thyagarajanji

**G IS MY A
(GRATITUDE IS MY ATTITUDE)**

**ALAKANANDA & BHAGIRATHI WERE ALWAYS
'ALAG ANANDA'
DARLINGS OF ALL IN SPITE OF CHALLENGES MANY
THEY SHREIKED, ROLLED, HOPPED ON THE BLUE MAT,
ENERGETIC INSPITE OF VERY MEAGRE FOOD INTAKE.**

**GANGA GLIDED THROUGH WITH GRACE AND POISE,
THE CAMP WEEKS PASSED BY WITH GREATEST EASE,
DID EVERYTHING RIGHT TO MAKE THINGS EASY
MADE THEMSELVES RESPONSIBLE TO GO WITH THE FLOW.**

**JAHNAVI AND MANDAKINI DANCED AWAY THEIR TIME,
ALWAYS KEEPING TO THE BEAT AND MUSIC OF THE CAMP,
NEVER ALLOWED TIREDNESS TO CREEP INTO THEM
BUBBLING WITH JOY, SOLID EXAMPLE FOR YOUNGSTERS TO EMULATE.**

**PADMA WAS ALWAYS DIGNIFIED ROLE MODELS,
GETTING QUALIFIED TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE YEARS TO COME,
LIVING THE LAST OF THEIR CAMPER WEEKS,
WITH FUN AND FROLIC TO MAKE THEIR PRESENCE FELT BY ONE AND ALL**

**SWAMIJI, AS ALWAYS, THE NERVE CENTRE OF THE CAMP,
UNIQUE MIX OF DISCIPLINE, LOVE AND SPIRITUALITY,
ADDRESSING CHILDREN BY THEIR VERY OWN NAME,
FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE SET BY OUR OWN POOJYA GURUDEV.**

**LAST OF THE CAMP WAS MICRO MONITORED,
TO SHOW CASE ALL THAT WERE TAUGHT IN THE CAMP,
WHERE ALL WHO MADE THE CAMP MEMORABLE,
WERE HONoured FOR THE BEST OF THEIR EFFORTS PUT IN.**

Chinmaya Yuva Kendra - Washington DC (CHYK-DC): Activities & Steering Committee

Ajay Ravichandran

The DC chapter of Chinmaya Yuva Kendra is a youth forum for spirituality and fellowship of like-minded individuals, with members ranging from college students to young professionals. We hold discussions every Sunday, plan and participate in various seva opportunities, and we are even planning our **2nd annual CHYK Weekend Retreat, which will be held the weekend of August 12th-14th right here in Silver Spring!** The retreat is open to rising high school seniors all the way through age 35. For more information on our retreat, visit <http://chyk.chinmayadc.org> now and register soon!

CHYK DC has been growing immensely, and also recently formed a committee that will carry out initiatives pertaining to CHYK in our area. We are proud to announce the members of the new CHYK DC Steering Committee!

- The CHYK Coordinators are responsible for overseeing all CHYK DC activities, delegating necessary responsibilities to the rest of the Steering Committee, and acting as liaisons between members of the CMWRC board and the members of the Steering Committee. Furthermore, they are representatives of CHYK DC as a chapter of CHYK West, partaking in activities that involve CHYK West as a whole. ***Ajay Ravichandran and Rasshmi Shankar will be the Coordinators from Jan 1st, 2011 until Dec 31st, 2012.***
- **The CHYK Secretaries of Finance** are responsible for keeping track of all financial records regarding CHYK DC activity and communicating with the CMWRC Board for any monetary transactions involved during CHYK DC events or fundraisers. In planning for events, we are tasked with budgeting and cash-handling to support current and future CHYK DC activities. ***Girish Sankar and Rohan Prasad will be the Secretaries of Finance from Jan 1st, 2011 until Dec 31st, 2012.***
- **The CHYK Secretaries of Communication** are responsible for communicating with the Steering Committee regarding specific tasks. They are also responsible for delegating and overseeing tasks pertaining to public relations and outreach, such as increasing awareness of local CHYK DC activities and publicizing CHYK-coordinated events. ***Vikas Bector and Pramod Konanur will be the Secretaries of Communication from Jan 1st, 2011 until Dec 31st, 2012.***

- **The CHYK Secretaries of Events** work towards developing a comprehensive schedule containing elements that further the vision of CHYK DC. This may include discussions, social events, summer retreats, guest lectures, etc. They also oversee the coordination of the events and supply pertinent information to the other committee members so that all aspects of the event can be effectively planned for and executed. ***Ramita Dewan and Tarang Bapna will be the Secretaries of Events from Jan 1st, 2011 until Dec 31st, 2012.***
- **The CHYK Secretaries of Technology** design, maintain and improve the CHYK DC website. They implement latest web technologies and techniques for making CHYK DC more accessible, visible and helpful for potential as well as current CHYKs. ***Krishna Bhamidipati and Rohit Dewan will be the Secretaries of Technology from Jan 1st, 2011 until Dec 31st, 2012.***

If you ever have any questions pertaining to CHYK DC, or if you are interested in joining or know anyone else who might be, you can visit our website <http://chyk.chinmayadc.org> or talk to any of the Steering Committee members.

Hari Om,
CHYK DC Coordinators

Recipe for a Gourmet Summer Camp

*Adithi Ramakrishnan
Sundaram, Dulles Chapter*

Trying to cook up the tastiest summer camp ever? No problem! All the delicious ingredients are listed below. Follow the directions carefully, and you'll have yourself a delicious camp!

Serves 129 eager campers

Ingredients:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1 large serving Vedic Chanting | 4 teaspoons Action-Packed Hopping Game |
| 16 tablespoons Inspirational Theme | 4 spoons Entertaining Board Games |
| 8 doses Insightful Vedic Math | 4 swirls Thrilling Movies |
| 8 cups Serene Yoga | 2 pints Water Day Fun |
| 4 sprinkles Expressive Arts & Crafts | ½ cup Astounding Magic Show |
| 8 pounds Energizing Sports | 1 fluid ounce Sea Animal Encounters |
| 6 ounces Toe-tapping Dance | 3 cups Selfless Seva |
| 2 scoops Homemade Chemistry | ¼ serving Open House |

Directions:

- ◆ Pre-prepare a grateful attitude to begin cooking. Once the right attitude has risen, gently direct it towards focusing on a Vedic Chanting session. For an extra-special flavor, we recommend the “Bhagavad Gita” and “Ganga Stotram.” (These two brands are heavily showered with instruction from our venerable and dynamic Swamiji.)
- ◆ Spread the message of good values through an inspirational theme, leaving a 1-inch strip along the long edge for personal growth. (“Gratitude is my Attitude” has topped the charts this year with the focus on gratitude to Nature, family, teachers, friends and the community. Celebrate Gratitude!)
- ◆ Mix in a dose of perceptive Vedic Math flavor blended with formulae and techniques to tease your brain and simplify mathematical operations.
- ◆ Combine the poses of Surya Namaskaar and Pranayama in Serene Yoga until well blended and relaxed.

- ◆ Generously sprinkle Arts and Crafts, spreading the fun to create masterpieces like pencil holders, torans, pop up cards and weaving baskets. Adding a pinch of glitter and sequins to the artsy mixture enhances the flavor.
- ◆ Combine Fitness Tests with Baseball and Kickball and stir well until the ingredients create one energetic Sports Concoction.
- ◆ Cream together the styles of modern and classical Indian Dance. Sift these two styles together layered with heavy culture and toe tapping music to create an amazing dance performance.
- ◆ Merge the imaginative spirit, everyday powders and liquids, and amazing potions together with the power of teamwork. The end product will be noticeably fascinating and appealing, as it depicts the wonders of Cool Chemistry.
- ◆ On a medium-sized foam mat, stir up to 4 runners. Add in the hopper until either a runner exits or the hopper makes an error. Repeat process until Hopping Game is complete.
- ◆ Unwrap new and old board games and divide up among campers. Games may be sifted by campers as they wish until Game Time is finished.
- ◆ Fill blender with Indian Mythology. Pour in Disney Animation and Classic Films. Blend until it is smooth and is one enthralling Movie Solution.
- ◆ Dissolve water slides and popsicles in with pizza and a relaxing movie. Let it cool until it transforms to an excitement filled Water Day! In a large bowl, mix an astounding magic show and an opportunity to touch sea creatures. Blend these two mixtures together to create a single serving of extreme Friday Fun!
- ◆ Swish the giving spirit until it has reached its optimum. Combine a Sandwich Drive in a bowl with Get Well Soon Greeting Cards and a Toiletries Drive until smooth. Repeat as much as needed until the Seva Fusion has risen to the maximum.
- ◆ Finally, pour filling into a brief introduction regarding the knowledge gained during camp. Sprinkle top with art projects created, fitness tests performed, yoga poses practiced and life lessons learned. This is called the Open House Syrup.
- ◆ Mix all ingredients together and top with an endless amount of good humor from Swamiji
- ◆ Bake for 4 weeks and simmer with a full day of showcasing achievements on Annual Day.

For best results, serve annually.

If you have any questions concerning the recipe, feel free to contact the patent owners, CMWRC – Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (VA summer camp) in the nation's capital!



Story about Swami Chinmayananda

Vaishali Sukumar

Sathyam Bala Vihar Student, Silver Spring

This is a story my grandpa told me about Swami Chinmayananda. Swami Chinmayananda used to be a journalist.

While working on a story about sadhus, he met swami Sivananda in Rishikesh. After meeting Sivananda he realized that he wanted to know more about God and spiritual life. So he became a student of Swami Sivananda and tried to learn about Hindu religion and God.

Swamiji was a very good student, so Sivanandji wanted him to learn from the best master of Vedanta, Tapovan Maharaj. He wrote a letter to Tapovan maharaj to accept Chinmayananda as his student. He gave the letter to chinmayananda and asked him to go to Tapovan maharaj in the Himalayas.

Chinmayananda did not have money to travel, so he walked barefoot for many days and reached the Himalayas just to find that he had forgotten the letter that his teacher had given him. Tapovan maharaj wanted to test Chinmayananda's devotion, so he sent him back to get the letter. Swami Chinmayanda did not get disappointed. He really wanted to learn as much as possible about vedanta so he could help others understand it better. So again he walked day and night to get the letter. Tapovan maharaj was happy and he let him study in his school. Chinmaya was his student for eight years. With Tapovan maharaj's blessings he worked hard for 40 years helping others. He spent a lot of time teaching everyone around the world what he had learnt from Tapovan Maharaj.

He created Chinmaya mission to share what he had learnt about God and spiritual life. Today there are 300 centers around the world spreading Swamiji's teachings.

Today on his birthday let us take a moment to thank him for all his great work.

Poem on Sri Gurudev – Swami Chinmayananda

Sudhakar Kalakonda

వందనామిదిగో నయ్య

Vandanamidigonayya

చిన్మయానంద

Chinmayananda

సచ్చిదానంద మూర్తి "వందనా"

Sacchidanana Murthi "Vandana"

గీత మాకు బోదించి

Geetha Maaku Bodinchi

దారి చూపి ధరిచేర్చిన

Daari Chupi Dhari Cherchina

దార్శనికుడు మీరేనయ్య "వందనా"

Darshanikudu Meerenayya "Vandana"

వేదాంత సారం తెలిపి

Vedanta Saaram Telepi

మా దుఃఖాన్ని తొలగించి

Maa Dhukhani Tolaginchin

సంతోషం నింపి నావయ్య "వందనా"

Santhosham Nimpi Navayya "Vandana"

బ్రహ్మస్థానం తెలియచేసి

Brahma Sthanam Teliyachesi

మా హృదయాన్ని శుద్ధి చేసిన

Maa Hrudayani Shuddi Chesiana

సత్ గురువు మీరేనయ్య "వందనా"

Sat Guruvu MeereNayya "Vandana"

Translation: Our salutations to Chinmayananda. He is the embodiment and glory of Eternal Existence and Blissful Consciousness. You have shown the path to attaining the supreme goal by teaching Bhagavad-Gita and you have become our teacher and guide. By explaining the essence of Vedanta you removed our sorrow and filled our lives with happiness. You have pointed and shown the place of Brahman and purified our hearts; and you are our sat guru.

Gurudev Loved Children

Prashant Shah

Gurudev loved children. His glory was his immense love for kids. He once said, "Children are not vessels to be filled but lamps to be lit. The seed of spiritual values should be sown in young hearts, and the conditions made favorable for sprouting and steady growth through proper control and discipline. It must be cared for with the warmth of love and affection and as such a tree shall blossom flowers of brotherhood, universal love, peace, bliss, beauty, and perfection".

When he was amongst children, he became like one of them. Just a minute before he might have given a talk to the adults on the Bhagavad Geeta or Upanishads, but once was in front of children he would come down to their level, often playing with them or telling them stories. He could be seen picking up the children, caressing them and playing with them. In the early days he would personally attend or conduct Bala Vihar sessions. I know this because I was a recipient of his immense love for children. When I was about 7 or 8 years old, my father enrolled me in Bala Vihar which I attended for about 2 years at Sandeepany Sandhyala in Powai, Bombay. My father would drive me all the way from Worli to Powai every weekend (which was about an hour and a half drive during those days). I was very young and I do not remember the details, but I do remember that I received special treatment from Gurudev (or so I thought). He would pick me up, put me on his lap, and cuddle me. I clearly remember that he would pick up an apple or a fruit and give it to me. I was too young to realize it then, but now I feel that he knew about the difficult childhood that I was going to have.

Before my second Bala Vihar year was completed, I was put in a boarding school. My family was going through a difficult time and I was shunted from one boarding school to another. I finally moved to the US and after eighteen years I was reunited with the Chinmaya family. I was able to continue my Bal Vihar in the form of a study group. Even though I did not get the advantage of learning from Gurudev, I got the next best thing: I was fortunate to be part of the study group led by Vilasiniji. Finally, when my son Nirav joined Bal Vihar, I started the adult sessions under Swami Dheerananda. I think this was more of a continuation of my Bal Vihar that I started under Gurudev. When Nirav completes his Bal Vihar in 3 years, I feel like I will be completing my Bala Vihar as well. It is because of Gurudev's glory that I am able to continue and complete my learning that had started under him, and it is with his glory that I am the kind of person that I am today.

As I was preparing for this talk, I read the book "Every breath a teaching". As I was reading the book, I started putting a bookmark on each page that highlighted Gurudev's glory. Pretty soon I realized that I was bookmarking every other page.

After reading through the book, two of Gurudev's words kept swirling in my mind as I retired to bed one day – "Passionate Dispassion". According to Gurudev, the only way to become an effective worker, whether in one's chosen profession or while doing service within Chinmaya

Mission, is to cultivate Passionate Dispassion: a state of mind where one becomes “joyously indifferent”. Gurudev himself practiced that as he moved from continent to continent, teaching Vedanta.

Facing Life

We can all benefit from Gurudev’s advice in our day to day lives as it rings true even today!

Gurudev once blessed someone and told him, “Rajaram! Be a Ram inside and a Raja outside”. One should be serene and divine inside, but outside, as we face the world and do our duties one should “fight” like a king and be courageous. Being a sadhu and searching for god does not mean that one should shun fighting the evils or odds of life.

When someone complained to Gurudev that he had to do business with someone who was unethical, he said “In the business room, you fight him, but when you go outside you love him like a brother. Do your work; do your level best.”

Work

When Gurudev told his disciples to work with love, dedication and without selfish motives and selfish expectations, he was the best example of his own definition of work. He was at his desk most mornings at 4 AM or earlier, no matter where he was on the globe. This was true even in the years of his declining health. At 4 AM, he sat at his desk and would reply to all the letters piling up on his desk in long hand. Whether the letter was from one of his Mission workers or from a high school student, he would answer it without exception. The rest of the day was filled with other activities. However, whenever a free minute or two appeared in his demanding schedule, he would again slip away to sit at his desk, picking up exactly where he had left off without a moment’s hesitation.

Love

Gurudev said, “To give love is freedom. To demand love is slavery”. The day you take up the policy of giving love instead of demanding it, you will have rewritten your entire future destiny. Gurudev had taken up that policy and abided by it even more intensely as years went by. When he gave love, he said “Your permission is not asked, your acceptance is not demanded and your approval is not expected. It is my privilege to love, and I look forward to no return. What will you say to such a foolish one?”

“Give love, give love. Don’t think about what you get back in return, but if you keep on giving love, love will come back to you!” When someone complained to Gurudev that she had been giving love but nothing was being given in return, he said “You’re a mother. You have to give love! Don’t expect anything back; just keep on loving. Whenever the Lord sees fit, you’ll get love back.”

Golden words on Sadhana

On the topic of Sadhana, Gurudev said, “Whatever leads man to God is acceptable. Whatever stands in the way of realizing god should be rejected totally and unceremoniously. For a sincere spiritual seeker, one must never ever, ever, ever pay attention to the world”. “What we are seeking is not a thing or a being. It is not an objective experience; it is a movement, a shift in consciousness. Our own values – and so our attachments to this present plane of consciousness – alone are that which obstructs us from moving into the altered state of consciousness.”

He added - “The Infinite can never be gained by the finite. All Sadhanas are finite. Sadhana simply prepares us. It quietens our mind, calms the intellect and purges the vaasanaas.” As an encouragement he added, “Every saint had a past, and every sinner has a future. And if the kind of fellow that I used to be in the past could make it, anyone can!”

Remedy for the Disease of Life

In a 1954 letter addressed to one of his earliest devotees, Sheila Lal Keswani, Gurudev gave the following remedy for the “disease of life”.

“The disease of life is called the perception of plurality. This is caused by a very powerful germ called ‘ego’. This thrives on the mind and intellect. If you take the following mixture regularly, the cure is sure.”

Prescription

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|----------------|-----------------|
| Sincerity 11g | Love 10 oz |
| Regularity 10g | Meditation 9 oz |
| Honesty 8g | Serve all 6 ml |
| Courage 9g | Be pure 3 ml |
| Pursuit 7g | |

Directions:

Shake the bottle (intellect) before use; after use, cork it with a controlled mind.

1. Never taste scandal-mongering; if you want, drink plenty of Om chanting”
2. Don’t roam about much in animalism
3. Rest in meditations
4. Once a day, take a cup of Upanishad soup.”

Incident with Swami Dheerananda

Chinmaya Mission Hyderabad was celebrating Shree Gurudev's birthday on May 8, 1993. Shree Gurudev had asked our own swamiji (Swami Dheeranandaji) to sit next to him at the bhiksha. When the devotees announced that they had a cake for Gurudev, he exclaimed, "Cake for me?! Come, bring it here!" Pointing to Swamiji he said "You cut it". Swamiji rushed to the wash basin to wash his hands and was about to cut the cake when he noticed that the top of his hands were unclean. He was already holding the knife and could not return to the wash basin for a second washing. He felt embarrassed but Gurudev immediately placed his gentle but firm hands on Swamiji's. Swamiji says that he forgot about the embarrassment and his hand and surrendered to Gurudev. He could feel Gurudev's power cutting the cake using his hand. Let us hope that on this day, his birthday, Sri Gurudev has his hands on our hands and on our heads as we go through the complexities of life.

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Presence of Sri Gurudev – Here and Now

Sitaram Kowtha

Hari Om!

Swamiji, thank you for this opportunity.

The topic of my speech is the presence of Sri Gurudev, here and now.

When I was a teenager growing up in India, I enjoyed listening to Hindi songs, especially those of Mukesh. I thought of one particular song that applies to Sri Gurudev's work.

Jyoth se Jyoth jagathe Chalo

Prem ki Ganga bahathe chalo

The first line talks about lighting one lamp with another, as a way of life. The light represents knowledge, that which dispels darkness or ignorance. One interesting word in the first line is Jagathe Chalo. Jagana means to awaken or to enliven. So lighting a lamp is not mere lighting but awakening.

Sri Gurudev was awakened by Swami Shivananda and then established in the knowledge of the self by his guru, Swami Tapovanji. Sri Gurudev then made awakening many others his lifelong work.

The way Sri Gurudev awakened his disciples was through spreading love or Prem. The knowledge thus lit is the flow of river Ganga, which refers to the second line of that song - Prem ki Ganga bahathe chalo.

When we joined Chinmaya Mission, into this Prem ki Ganga, about eight years ago, we had never met Swami Chinmayananda, nor were we aware of his life, teachings and his glories. We were aware that Bala Vihar program was designed to teach the children spiritual values, and that adults have an opportunity to learn the Gita. Today, we feel the presence of Sri Gurudev in this hall, and in our lives.

The way I can explain this transition is with an example of Ramayana. If one were to ask “what is Ramayana?” A typical answer is that Rama was a handsome prince with three brothers and two step mothers. He won over princess Sita and was about to be coronated as King, when he was sent to exile by his stepmother. During the exile, an evil demon king, Ravana, abducted Sita. Rama went into battle with Ravana, destroyed Ravana, and returned triumphantly from exile to be coronated as King. If you hear Ramayana this way, then it is a good story, but there is nothing inspiring or glorious about it. However if we studied the great characters of Ramayana - Sabari, Hanuman, Vibhishana, Valmiki, Vishwamitra, Vasishtha, Kousalya, Janaka, Sita and others, and then recognize how each of them dedicated themselves to Rama, and then begin to contemplate how great Rama must have been to be the recipient of their dedications, only then we can truly understand the glory of Ramayana.

Saint Thayagraja, a prolific composer and performer of South Indian Classical music, composed a gem: 'endaro mahanubhavulu, andariki vandanamulu'. The main theme of this song is that there are many who have experienced greatness, I pay my respects to all of them. What they all have in common, my mind, is that they all surrendered themselves to the feet of Sri Rama. He is asking his mind, why don't you surrender to Sri Rama too?

We began to understand the glory of Sri Gurudev through his direct disciples who live and serve amongst us, here. In the past eight years we had the opportunity to hear, listen, observe and appreciate some of the direct disciples of Sri Gurudev - Pujya Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda, our own Pujya Swamiji, Vilasiniji, Pramilaji, Sadanandaji, Anantji, Vijay Kumarji and DC Raoji. These disciples have dedicated themselves to make available to us the loving teaching of Sri Gurudev. They have surrendered themselves to work of Sri Gurudev. It is through them and the many sevaks they have inspired, we can feel Sri Gurudev's presence in this hall, here and now.

I close by invoking another Hindi song - a patriotic song, which says that 'Hum us desh ke vasi hain, jis desh me ganga bahathi hai'. The song says that we are of that country in which the river Ganga flows - in other words are known not by what separates us - language, caste, societal status, religious following, but the land in which the knowledge of self (Ganga) flows. I made a slight modification to that song - Hum is desh ke vasi hain, is desh me ganga bahathi hai' - we are of this country, and yes indeed, Ganga flows in this country. Is there any doubt that with all the vibrant and growing Chinmaya centers here and other places in the United States, that Ganga flows here?

Thank You Swamiji.

Hari Om!

Love is Freedom – The True Spirit of America

Uday Nanavaty

On my morning run today, July 4th, 2011, I was in a nostalgic mood of celebrating freedom. Well, quite honestly, I ended up in nostalgic mood and found a new meaning of freedom from old tunes.

The song that started in my ears was Jay Jay Garvi Gujaratni (Victory of Proud Gujarat) where the poet combined virtues of famous Gujarati citizens, from Krushna and Sudama to Saints and Servicemen, from poets and patriots to traders and artists. Immediately following this song, the commentator gave a very powerful message about love. He said, "To love is to be free. You don't fall in love. You travel unto love and become free from all bondages. Love is Freedom." Wow.

As always, you may wonder what the connection is. This story about the True Spirit of America was playing in mind for a long time but it was not coming to fruition. From my early days at the Medical College of Virginia in 1994, I had been collecting stories of the most wonderful patients that I met every day, and some of these stories were just so enlightening that I decided to share them. Some of you may have read the Christmas Cookies story that I posted on Facebook. I had promised that the next story would be about Spirit of America; here it is.

Sometime after July 1997 when I was a first year fellow at The National Institute of Health (NIH), proudly serving as a Public Health Commissioned officer, a patient's final journey to the end of life gave me an understanding of the True American Spirit. He served as a radio operator during the Korean War and when he returned to his real life in the USA, he took his understanding of radio operations to a radio station in Chicago. He had noticed that urban youth needed guidance and help to become good citizens. He was a gifted man, so he started his social services and invested in real estate. His marriage with a clinical psychologist/practicing psychiatrist brought him to Washington, DC, but his zeal to help urban youth found a larger playing field. Through out the 1980's he quietly pursued his dreams. In 1992, well past his middle aged years, he decided that his passion needed a more solid knowledge of counseling and he joined the University of Maryland to become a guidance counselor. As luck would have it, the day he started college again, he was diagnosed with lymphoma, a cancer of the immune system. But this freedom fighter would not give in. He took chemotherapy infusions during the day and enrolled in evening classes to get his masters. He also decided that he would counsel patients with cancer as well. But the cancer was difficult to beat. After going through some of the famous cancer centers in the USA without much hope, he came to the NIH for experimental therapy. When I met him, he was in 10D, the intensive care unit at the Clinical Center, NIH. His lungs were filled up with fluid and cells and it was hard to find a spot of air in his chest x-ray. It was also hard to find a spot of despair in this gentleman. Every morning when I asked him, "How are you doing Mr. V?", breathing 100% oxygen through a mask, he would reply with a smile, "Very well doctor, how are you doing?". It was not that he was not sick. Every day on rounds doctors wondered, "How can he be surviving without machines when all the numbers would suggest otherwise?"

Unfortunately, his lung disease was not responding to therapy. It was certain that he would need the assistance of machines to survive and the end of his life was near. He had to make a decision to either die without the help of machines or to take one final chance for survival. His wonderful family visited him daily and near the decision point, there was a nearly day-long meeting of family members. He decided that he would go on with the breathing machine and take a chance for two days. If he made miraculous improvement, the doctors would continue treatment. If not, the doctors should stop the machines and let his soul move on. By this time, I had felt that this was no ordinary man. I had learned bits and pieces about his life and admired his nobility in spite of the great work he had done. I have believed that communication of your thoughts and feelings to others is the most important aspect of life. So, while all of us were preparing for starting mechanical ventilation (artificial ventilation of the lungs), I handed him a clip board. I suggested to him that he practice writing so that when unable to talk, he could communicate by writing. Although he succumbed to his cancer, his last written words taught me what the True Spirit of America means. With shaky hands but a firm mind, the true patriot wrote without much fanfare- the Star Spangled Banner! As an immigrant from India, I knew that true spirit never dies. As a new citizen and a uniformed officer, I realized that this was what represents the True Spirit of America: unconditional love to the motherland that gives the rights of freedom, justice, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to all.

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Thirumaloor and Thirumandhiram - 2

Ravi Ravichandran

Thirumandhiram is an ancient Tamil scripture. The introduction to the author and the text itself was published in the May 2011 issue of Smrithi. The poetic language is difficult and thus it takes quite some time to understand each verse and move on to the next. I would like to share my thoughts on few selected verses in this issue of Smrithi.

The verses selected for this issue all point to the Brahman who is beyond description. If one reads the poems carefully, all of them refer to the Primordial Being – the Brahman, Sat-Cit-Ananda

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| சிவனொடு ஒக்கும்தெய்வம் தேடினும் இல்லை அவனொடு ஒப்பார் இங்கு யாவரும் இல்லை புவனம் கடந்தன்று பொன்னொளி மின்னும் தவனச் சடை முடித் தாமரை யானே | Sanskrit transliteration शिवनोडु ओक्कुम्देय्वम् तेडिनुम् इल्लै अवनोडु ओप्पार् इन्गु யாரும் इल्लै भुवनम् कडन्दन्दु पौन्नोळि मिन्नुम् तवनच् चडैमुडि तामरैयाने |
| English Transliteration śivanoḍu okkumdeyvam teḍinum illai avanoḍu oppār ingu yārum illai bhuvanam kaḍandandru ponnoli minnum tavanac caḍaimuḍi tāmaraiyāne | English translation God like Siva can be found nowhere There is none equal to Him He is beyond the worlds and his matted locks Shine like gold and his feet are like the lotus flower |

The poet here does not mean Siva as one of the Trinity. The poet means the Brahman. It is not possible to equate the Brahman to anything that we know. It is not possible to describe Brahman either. Because it is not possible to describe Him, one cannot find Him anywhere. The poet implies that He is within us. Because we cannot describe Him we cannot equate him to anything we know in this ephemeral world. The poet attempts to describe him as “He is beyond the world with lustrous matted locks and lotus feet”.. The phrase “shine like gold” is indicative of the Effulgence of the Brahman. It appears that the poet refers to Dhakshina Murthy.

The poet Thirumoolar while always refers to Isa, and Siva , if one reads closely, he really means Brahman ..

The next verse is very reminiscent of several verses in Atma bodha by Bhagavan Sankara.

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| <p>அவனை ஒழிய அமரரும் இல்லை அவனன்றிச் செய்யும் அருந்தவம் இல்லை அவனன்றி மூவரால் ஆவதொன் நில்லை அவனன்றி ஊர்புகு மாறு அறியேனே</p> | <p>Sanskrit transliteration அவநௌ ஓகிய அமரரம் இல்லை அவந் அந்ரி சேய்யம் அருந்தவம் இல்லை அவந் அந்ரி மூவரால் ஆவது அந்ரி இல்லை அவந் அந்ரி ஊர் புகுமாரு அரியேனே</p> |
| <p>English transliteration avanai oḷiya amararum illai avananḍri seyyum aruntavam illai avananḍri mūvarāl āvadonḍru illai avananḍri ūr puhumāru ariyene</p> | <p>English translation Without Him, there are no celestials Without Him, there is no penance Without Him, the Three can accomplish naught Without Him, I know not how to enter the City</p> |

Brahman is the efficient cause. When there is no cause, there cannot be any effect. In sloka 8 of Atma bodha, Bhagvan Sankara says ,” the Supreme Self is the material cause and prop of everything”. The first line of the verse, “without Him there are no celestials reminds one of verse 9 where Bhagavan Sankara says “ different ornaments are made from the same gold” When there is no gold, how can the ornaments exist? Because Brahman is the cause, the Three who are the effect cannot function without the cause.

In verse 59 Bhagavan Sankara says : all objects are pervaded by Brahman . All actions are possible because of Brahman, therefore Brahman permeates everything as butter permeates milk”. This is indeed what Thirumoolar says “ Without Him the Three can accomplish naught”.

All the penance revolves around Brahman is indicative of the practice of Nidhidhyaasana which for seeker revolves around Brahman. Only the Lord can help us reach His abode- the ultimate liberation The poet refers to City here as the liberation from the cycle of birth.

The next verse describes the Omnipresent nature of Brahman.

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| <p>தானே திசையொடு தேவரு மாய்நிற்கும் தானே உடலுயிர் தத்துவ மாய்நிற்கும் தானே கடல்மலை யாதியு மாய்நிற்கும் தானே உலகில் தலைவனு மாமே.</p> | <p>Sanskrit transliteration தானே திசையொடு தேவரமாய் நிற்கும் தானே உடலுயிர் தத்வமாய் நிற்கும் தானே கடல்மலை ஆதியமாய் நிற்கும் தானே உலகில் தலைவனு மாமே</p> |
| <p>English transliteration tāne disaiyoḍu devarumāy nirkum tāne uḍaluyir tatvamāy nirkum tāne kaḍalmalai ādhiyumāy nirkum tāne ulahil talaivanum āme</p> | <p>English translation Himself as space and celestials stands, Himself as body,life and matter stands, Himself as sea,hill and dale stands, Himself—all worlds Lord Supreme.</p> |

We all pray to different deities in different temples, because they all remind us of the Brahman. Vedanta tells us that the ephemeral world is the expression of the Sat-Cit-Ananda swarupa of Brahman. There is no one in this world who has not stood on a sea shore and admired its beauty. At the same time, we all experienced the mighty power of the sea during the 2004 tsunami. Thus we all admire nature and also appreciate its enormous power.

This verse serves as reminder to us to go to Bhagavat Gita Chapter 10 slokas 20-41 and read Sri Gurudev's beautiful commentary. I have taken the liberty of quoting Sri Gurudev's commentary here as any paraphrasing will be very inappropriate and ruin the import. Gurudev writes, "Krishna here directly summarizes , and provides Arjuna with an acid test in knowing , what exactly constitutes the divine presence in the world of plurality. Whatever that is great or glorious or mighty is nothing but the expression of a ray of Lord's own Infinite Splendour."

There are many more verses like thes ones above, in the few hundred verses I have read so far. Every student who can read Tamil when reflecting on the Thirumandhiram verses will see multitude of resemblances to vedantic texts such as Atma Bodha, Vivekachudamani, Upadesa Saara and of course the Divine Song, Bhagavad Gita.

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Series – Summary of the Gita

Ch. 17 (Shradhdha Traya Vibhaga Yoga) The Yoga of Threefold Faith

Nilkanth Bhatt, Richmond Chapter

All our activities in life are driven by our faiths in various things. Our role models in life are generally in accordance with our faiths and our faiths are generally in accordance with our tendencies. People with artistic tendencies will have some great artists as their role models. They will have faith that Arts & Culture are the only way to improve the quality of life. On the other hand the people with business tendencies will have successful business people as their role models and they will have faith that economical prosperity is the only way to improve quality of life. Artistic people will put their efforts in the field of Arts and the business people will put their efforts in the field of commerce. It is not difficult for us to understand such distinction among people. However the question arises, what happens if I have faith in business but no knowledge of doing business? Will my business be successful if I put efforts in it without acquiring any knowledge? The answer is only having faith is not enough; I also need to acquire required knowledge. In a similar manner for the spiritual quest, we must also get the guidance from the scriptures and the teachers.

Bhagavan Krishna says that there are three types of faiths, depending on the inherent tendencies of *Sattva* (Purity), *Rajas* (Passion). and *Tamas* (Ignorance) of the beings. As the faith, so is the person. Persons of *Sattvic* faith worship divine Gods, persons with *Rajasic* faiths worship *Yakshas and Rakshasas* (Yakshas represent wealth, they are described in Puranas as brothers of Kuber Dhanapati and Rakshasas represent power and strength, as in Ravan of Ramayana) and those with *Tamasic* faiths worship *Pretas and Bhutas* (Dead spirits and such other low vicious entities. It is not important for this discussion whether they exist or not. They represent unlawful and vicious characters in the society). To achieve our goals we either seek help from the wise and pure or the rich and powerful in the society depending on whether we are *Sattvic* or *Rajasic* in nature. However if we are *Tamasic* we try to achieve our goals by seeking help from unlawful characters in the society.

The choice of foods, practice of sacrifices, types of austerities practiced, gift giving habits, etc., is also indicative of peoples' tendencies. *Sattvic* prefers foods that promote life, vitality, strength, health and happiness, which are succulent, juicy, nourishing and pleasing. *Rajasic* prefers bitter, very salty, very sour, very hot, very dry, very pungent and burning foods; such foods generally cause misery, unhealthiness and unhappiness. *Tamasic* on the other hand would prefer stale, tasteless, decomposed, smelly, impure and left-over foods, which will not require much effort to acquire.

Sattvic person performs Yagna sacrifices (activities for common good) according to the prescribed methods without having desire for its reward, simply to fulfill one's duties. *Rajasic*

person performs sacrifices ostentatiously to gain the desired results and to show off in the society. *Tamasic* person even though performing sacrifices, performs not according to the prescribed method, and even contrary to the methods prescribed, without having proper materials and equipment and having no faith (confidence) in it. All of us (particularly men) have experience of trying to assemble new furniture, toy or a gadget without reading the instructions or having proper tools, when we feel lazy and impatient

Worship performed by a person is also indicative of mood he or she is in. Predominated by *Sattvic* mood, a person will worship the deities that are representative of the Supreme Lord, Teachers, Brahmins (Scholars) and Wise People. Such a person practices bodily austerities of cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy, non-violence and respect for all living beings. Moreover the *Sattvic* person practices austerity of speech by being truthful, pleasing, and inoffensive to others and reciting scriptures regularly. He/she also practices austerity mentally by having serenity of thoughts, compassion, gravity, self-control and purity of purpose. When these three kinds of austerities (body, mind and speech) are performed by a person diligently he/she becomes *Sattvic*.

On the other hand *Rajasic* person will perform austerities hypocritically to gain respect and honor. The reward of such austerities is temporary and insignificant. *Tamasic* performs austerities without clear understanding on foolish whims and may harm him and also others.

Charities given by the people are also indicative of their predominant nature. Charities given without any expectation of reward at an appropriate time and place for the purpose of fulfilling one's duties and to help others are considered *Sattvic*. Those, which are given in order to gain some reward and with reluctance are considered *Rajasik* but the charities that are given to unworthy recipients at an improper time and place, without any respect, are certainly *Tamasic*.

In order to ensure *Sattvic* mood in everything we do, Bhagavan prescribes that we must start all activities such as sacrifices, austerities and charities with utterance and remembrance of the scriptural declaration "*Om Tat Sat*," which is a triple designation of the ultimate reality the *Brahman*. *Om* indicates the transcendental and pure self, absolute and unborn, which is the substratum upon which the projections of body, mind and intellect are maintained. The term *Tat* is used in our scriptures to indicate the eternal goal, the changeless and ever perfect. *Sat* means existence, the principal of existence functioning through all beings which enables us to perceive, feel and think in our day to day life.

The actions performed without faith and to achieve temporary gain are neither beneficial here nor hereafter. Therefore the utterance of *Om Tat Sat* at the beginning of all actions reminds us that all our actions should be performed with faith, without the desire for the fruits of actions, to achieve liberation from this limited existence and to achieve the state of eternal bliss.

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Jnana Yoga and Self Realization – Part II

Acharya K. Sadanandaji

There are essentially two yogas or two paths, karma yoga and jnaana yoga, says Krishna. 'lokesmin dvididhaa nishTaa puraa proktaa maya anaghaa| jnaana yogena saankhyaanaam karma yogena yoginaam||' This comes from kriyaa shakti and jnaana shakti as two branches originating from the same source " shaakhayodvayoH shakti muulakam", says Bhagavan Ramana. The two are the path of knowledge for those who are intellectually oriented and the path of action for those who are action-oriented. Of the two, Shankara says by the path of knowledge alone one can realize the highest state, while the path of action can lead to samsaara. However, if karma is done properly, with the attitude of yoga, then the path of action will purify the mind to prepare for jnaana yoga. Thus the path of action is for jnaana yoga yogyataa sidhyartham, na tu vastuupa labhyaye; Karma yoga is meant for qualifying the seeker for jnaana yoga and not for self-realization. Here, bhakti yoga is not specified by Krishna as separate yoga, since bhakti forms the essential ingredient for both karma yoga and jnaana yoga. Karma yoga cannot deliver the goods because it cannot eliminate the root cause for suffering or samsaara, which is ignorance of one's own self, since the karma itself is born out of ignorance of not knowing that I am akartaa and abhoktaa, i.e., I am never a doer nor enjoyer, although all actions and enjoyments take place in my presence.

Any ignorance can only be eliminated by knowledge. Since self-ignorance is the root cause, self-knowledge alone can remove self-ignorance, and not any other knowledge; just as physics ignorance can be removed only by physics knowledge. Hence, one can be knowledgeable in terms of all other subjects; physics, chemistry, meemaamsa, vyaakaraNa, etc.; all are grouped as apara vidyaa or transactional knowledge. The knowledge that which is really countable is the knowledge of the supreme or knowledge of Brahman. All other knowledge is only relative knowledge, useful at the relative or vyaavahaarika level. Hence scripture says brahma vid aapnoti param. Knower of Brahman gains the supreme, the supreme being the highest purushaartham.

Hence, karma yoga is only a preparatory for jnaana yoga and once karma yoga has done its job, it is important to switch to jnaana yoga. Karma yoga purifies the mind, which is the necessary instrument for jnaana yoga. Now, the question is when should I switch from karma yoga to jnaana yoga? Bhagavan Krishna himself provides the answer using the example of climbing the horse. As long as I have not climbed the horse and not sat comfortably on the saddle, effort or action is required to do the climbing. However, once I am comfortably sitting on the saddle, all the efforts to climb automatically cease. Does that make any sense to say, I have to renounce the action of climbing the saddle after I sat on the horse? Or the opposite, I should keep climbing after I sat on the saddle? If I keep falling down from the saddle, then I have to keep making efforts to climb again. This process of climbing is over, once I am fully settled on the horse. However, I have to make sure that I am well balanced sitting on the horse with reins in my control and horse is not going to throw me down, and I am in complete control so that I can ride the horse to the destination, assuming that I know where the destination is. Some say, sir, as long as you are a gRihastha, you need to do karma but when you take up sanyaasa you can ride the horse. That is

true, if gRihastha means having legs on the ground and not on the horse. Hence effort or actions are required for purification as long as I am not able sit down, study and contemplate on the nature of reality. Therefore, it is not a particular aashrama but the purity of the mind to study the scripture and do the inquiry that determines if my mind is on the ground or on the saddle. Who is going to tell me if I am on the saddle or on the ground? If my mind is still running allover and not able to contemplate in the direction pointed out by scriptures that is a sure sign that I am still trying to climb.

Even after sitting down on the saddle, if I do not know the destination, then I can get lost in the wilderness or go wherever the horse takes me, since I cannot provide the direction for the horse. Hence Krishna uses the word yogaaruuDhaH, that is when I am fully established in the jnaana yoga, karma yoga will be redundant since it has done its job. At least after climbing, I need to know which direction to proceed. For that scripture itself provides the answer. It does not say go and study the scriptures. Once I recognize that no action or any amount of action will not take me to the destination, the destination being the absolute unconditional inexhaustible happiness that I am seeking in all my actions or pursuits and not able to get it, scripture advises me to approach a teacher who is well versed in the scriptures and who himself is well-established in that knowledge of the self “tat vijnaartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet, samit paaNiH, shrotriyam brahma nishTam”. It says approach a teacher ONLY, with an attitude of service. The teacher of the truth has no interest to go to door to door and say please believe in this then you will be saved from eternal hell – like a Jehovah witness. One, who follows a belief system, has to recruit more believers into his system, since his strength does not lie on the truth but on beliefs. A physics teacher who knows Newton’s laws of mechanics does not have to go door to door to recruit students to believe in the gravitational force. He teaches to those who are keen in learning and approach him with proper qualifications. Hence Krishna himself says “tat viddhi praNipaatena pariprashnena sevayaa| upadeshyanti te jnaanamm jnaaninaH tatvadarshinaH|| Know the truth by approaching a teacher with humility and an attitude of service, and by questioning about the nature of the reality. The teacher is obliged to teach such a student, since he was also in that state before when he approached his teacher. Hence, he teaches because of his obligation to his teacher, which is called aachaarya RiNa. Hence scripture says we need to approach a teacher who knows the subject and knows how to teach too. Shankara says there are three kinds of teachers “1. One, who knows the truth, knows the scriptures and knows how to teach, 2. One who knows the scriptures and knows how to teach but not fully established in the truth and 3. One who is fully established in the truth but does not know how to teach. The first one is the best if one can find, and second one is the second best. The third one is to be respected but one cannot learn from him. The reason is very simple. Spiritual teaching involves communicating that which cannot be communicated, since it is not an objective science but subjective reality. There is no litmus test to find out whether a person is realized or not. Therefore how am I going to find a realized master? Hence, it is said that only by grace of God one is lead to a proper teacher who can provide the knowledge. It is advisable on my part to assume that my teacher is realized. That way I have a full faith or shraddhaa in the teachings, for me to realize. From my reference, my teacher is a realized master “hence with clear understanding I prostrate to him with full devotion as, Guru brahma guru Vishnu..etc.

All communications involve shabda bodhakam through a medium of language. That is the only way the knowledge can be communicated. Vedanta is shabda pramANa. Hence teaching involves communication between the teacher and the taught. It is not by sparsha or magic touch

or by dRik or compassionate glance or by any other means. If such methods are available Bhagavaan Krishna himself would have used it for Arjuna, instead of the continuous teaching involving 17 chapters or 700 + slokas. Or, he could have just instructed Arjuna to sit in his chariot and inquire ~"Who am I?" silently. He taught answering every question Arjuna raised until Arjuna declared ~"nashTo mohaH", I lost all my delusion, born out of ignorance. This communication between teacher and the taught is called samvaadaH, where teaching is not a bunch of commandments but delicate and systematic unraveling of the truth, using what Vedanta calls as adhyaaropa apavaadaH. It involves teaching in steps, where the previous steps are negated as one fully climbs and establishes himself in the next level. This is what is discussed in pacakosha prakriya vichaara where each kosha, starting from annamaya, praanamaya, manomaya, vijnaana maya to ananda maya is taken as aatma, and later discarded as anaatma, when one is fully established in the next kosha. Anaatma that was negated is understood as mithyaa and not satya swaruupa aatma, since it is understood as product (kaaryam) and therefore is only naama and ruupa or just name and form, and hence mithyaa, the substantive of which is the satyam that I am. Thus anaatma is resolved into advaita aatma. Shankara provides the steps involved as we discard each kosha as I am not this. In the process of rejecting that the kosha as it is not aatma, the steps outlined are anaatmatva nischayaH, kaarya ruupatva nischayaH, naama ruupatva nischayaH, mithyaatva nischayaH, and pravilaapanam, where the anaatma is recognized as not independent but dependent on aatma. Thus, teaching involves vichaara or inquiry into the nature of reality following the guide lines of Vedanta, as clarified by the teacher. Shankara himself provides the guidelines for vichaara or inquiry discussing the steps involved in the inquiry or vedanta vichaara. It is an intellectual inquiry only, since there is no other inquiry possible "tat vigijnaasaswa", says the Upanishad, the truth need to be discovered by inquiry. (A more detailed analysis on the panchakosha prakriya vichaara and Shankara's commentary on it one can listen to the discourses on the Taitreya Upanishad stored in the CMWRC website – visit: <http://www.chinmayadc.org/sadananda.htm> and browse to Anandavalli of Taitreya Upanishad.).

It is important here to note that meditation is not a means of knowledge (it is not a pramANa). Some have misconception that all these discussions are only intellectual gymnastics, and it is more important for us to sit down calmly and meditate. Let us understand this clearly. Only by intellectual discussions using Vedanta as pramaaNaa, the knowledge can take place. There is no other instrument other than the intellect, for knowledge to occur. There is no other means other than Vedanta to communicate the identity relationship involving jiiva-brahma aikyam. Or conversely, any teaching that provides that identity is Vedanta or the ultimate knowledge. Hence Shankara says in Vivekachudamani - "na yogena na saakhyena, karmaNaa na na vidyayaa, brahmaatmaikatva bodhena mokshaH sidhyati na anyathaa||" No other means other than the knowledge of the identity of the self with Brahman, or that I am is Brahman that I am longing for, is the means of liberation. Hence knower of Brahman becomes Brahman, "brahma vit brahma eva bhavati" says the scriptures, since that knowledge involves knowing I am that Brahman and not "this is Brahman". Meditation, then, is only meant for reflecting on the knowledge that has already been gained, so that the knowledge that is gained is internalized, provided of course I know how to meditate and what to meditate on. Hence meditation is not a means of knowledge but it is a means for firmly abiding in the knowledge that has been gained. The knowledge is required FOR meditation and not that I gain knowledge BY meditation.

Hence the Scripture, bearing in mind the nature of the reality and the condition of the student who has preconceived notions about the truth, advises as the requirement for knowledge as shravanam, mananam and nidhidhyaasanam. Shravanam involves study of the scriptures for a

prolonged length of time under a competent teacher until it is crystal clear. For that only sanyaasa aashram is recommended since in the gRihastha aashrama, one has no time to devote for consistent systematic study of the scriptures. What is required is shravanam not the ashrama per se. Shravanam has to be reinforced by mananam or constant reflection on the truth until no more doubts are left. Shravanam or listening to the teaching is the direct means of knowledge, as in the 10th man-story, where the object of inquiry is ever available for immediate knowledge, aparoksha anubhuuti. Mananam helps to remove any doubts about prameya, about the nature of the truth. Nidhidhyaasana removes the doubts about the pramaata, which we will discuss next.

Hari Om!

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