

# Chinmaya Smrithi



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

Volume 24, Number 6, November 30, 2014

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**Srimati Pramodini Rao**

**Director - Chinmaya Naada Bindu**

*Sang bhajans and devotional songs during 2014 CMWRC Annual Fund-Raiser event on November 1, 2014 at Chinmaya Somnath*

## Calendar and Upcoming Events

### Upcoming Events

- Sat/Sun December 6-7 – Geeta Jayanti and Swami Tapovan Maharaj Jayanti, observed during common-time and adult sessions, locally at all chapters
- Sat Dec 27- Tue Dec 30 - Geeta Jnana Yajna by Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji at Chinmaya Somnath. Topic: 'SthithaPrajna Lakshana', verses 54-72 from Geeta Chapter 2.
- Sat/Sun Dec 27-28 and Jan 3-4, 2015 – No Classes – Winter Break
- Thu Jan 1, 2015 – New Year Puja at Chinmaya Somnath and Chinmayam
- Sat/Sun Jan 10-11 2015 – Sankranti, celebrated during common-time, locally at all chapters
- Sat/Sun Jan 17-18 – MLK Day – Youth Seva – Food for the Homeless

### Study Groups

- Please contact Sri Vijay Kumarji 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 Sri Vijay Singhji by email at [publications@chinmayadc.org](mailto:publications@chinmayadc.org) to order any books, CDs, DVDs, etc.. Browse online at [www.chinmayapublications.com](http://www.chinmayapublications.com)

### Next Issue

- Articles for the next regular bi-monthly issue - January 2015, are due by December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014
- Email submissions to [smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org](mailto:smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org). Submission instructions at [www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org).

### Useful Links:

CMWRC – Washington Regional Center [www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org)

Central Chinmaya Mission Trust [www.chinmayamission.com](http://www.chinmayamission.com)

Chinmaya Mission West [www.chinmayamission.org](http://www.chinmayamission.org)

Chinmaya International Foundation, E-Vedanta Courses [www.chinfo.org](http://www.chinfo.org)

Washington Region – Northern VA Chapter website [www.chinmayasomnath.org](http://www.chinmayasomnath.org)

Washington Region – Frederick MD Chapter website [www.chinmayafrederick.org](http://www.chinmayafrederick.org)

Washington Region – Richmond VA Chapter website [www.chinmayadc.org/ActivitiesRichmond.htm](http://www.chinmayadc.org/ActivitiesRichmond.htm)

### 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))**

*Sitaram Kowtha, Raju Chidambaram, Acharya Vilasiniji, Acharyas, Chapter Coordinators and Teachers.*

*BV students – Nishant Carr, Siri Neerchal, Ananya Krishnan, Priya Tandon, Megha Karthikeyan, Abir Muhuri, Usha Konduri, Thara Konduri, Atman Panigrahi & Vishnu Dharmaraj,*

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

## News, Notes and Flyers

### CMWRC Events Held

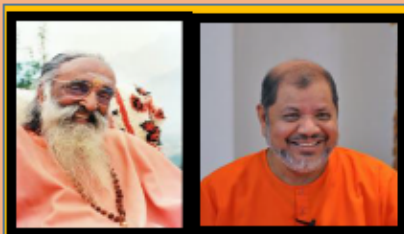
- Pujya Swami Dheeranandji's Silver Jubilee Celebration took place on October 4<sup>th</sup> at Chinmayam. The pictures, video, songs, chanting and speeches are posted on the website at <http://www.chinmayadc.org/SwamijiSilverJubilee/SwamijiSilverJubilee.htm>
- Dasara and Deepavali were observed during common time on Oct 5/6 and Oct 18/19 respectively
- Swami Ramakrishnanda from CM Nagapattinam visited Chinmayam in October, and taught "Easy Sanskrit" to 50 students. He will be back next year to continue teaching the next level of Sanskrit. As a representative of Chinmaya International Foundation, he described the CIF facility – Adi Sankara Nilayam – in Kerala, and expounded on the research work underway in Sanskrit and Vedic scriptures. He invited everyone to visit Adi Sankara Nilayam and support the important work of CIF.
- Acharya Sadananda conducted a one-day camp on October 11 at Chinmaya Somnath, on "Muni Kanda" from Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.
- Srimati Pramodini Rao, Director – Chinmaya Naada Bindu, wowed the audience with heart-felt rendering of bhajans and devotional songs during CMWRC Annual Fund Raiser event at Chinmaya Somnath on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Pramodiniji also addressed Bala Vihar children and adults during all three sessions at Chinmayam. In addition, she conducted a workshop on "Music and Me". She took time to describe the music and dance wing of Chinmaya Mission based in Chinmaya Vibhooti, and encouraged everyone to come and stay in the beautiful campus. To those interested in advancing their musical talents, she invited them to spend 21 days to immerse themselves in music.
- The CMWRC Annual Fund Raiser event was held successfully at Chinmaya Somnath. The program consisted of Children chanting; performances by Pramodiniji with support from our CHYKS – Vinay Mallikarjun, Purvi Nanavaty and Bhavani; presentation of special Rachana edition of Chinmaya Smrithi commemorating Swamiji's Silver Jubilee to Pujya Swamiji; an inspiring speech from Swamiji; an appeal for financial support by Karthik Shyamsundar; Gurudakshina offering; a vote of thanks and recognition of artists. All were treated to a special dinner. Children had their own activities in separate rooms. More than \$100,000 were raised that evening.
- A Seva workshop was held on October 25 at Chinmayam to improve operations in Silver Spring. A Chinmayam sevak, Raj Bommakanti has stepped forward to lead planning activities.
- Deepavali celebration at Chinmayam was held on Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup>.

### Announcements

- Registration and Practice is now underway for 2015 Geeta Chanting Competition. See attached flyer.
- Pujya Swamiji will be conducting Geeta Jnana Yajna at Chinmaya Somnath in December (27-30, 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM), on Verses 54-72 from Chapter 2 – 'SthithaPrajna Lakshana'.

### Current/Upcoming CMWRC Events

- Sat & Sun Dec 6-7 – Celebration of Gita and Tapovan Jayanti during Common Time
- Dec 27-30 - Geeta Jnana Yajna by Swami Dheeranandaji at Chinmaya Somnath
- Jan 1 – New Year Puja at Chinmaya Somnath and Chinmayam



## Chinmaya Mission® Washington Regional Center

[www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org) [www.chinmayasomnath.org](http://www.chinmayasomnath.org) [www.chinmayafrederick.org](http://www.chinmayafrederick.org)



# 2015 Geeta Chanting Competition

*“Chant Geeta, Enchant Krishna, Celebrate Chinmaya”*



## EVERYONE IS INVITED

*To participate in 2015 Chapter Competition*

**CHILD – YOUTH – ADULT**

*And even those afar can participate by Writing (Reflection)*

*Geeta Chapter 15 - Purushottama Yoga - Verses 1-20*

*Chinmaya Mission Washington DC center is pleased to announce the 2015 Geeta Chanting Competition. The aim of Geeta Chanting is to encourage everyone to chant, study and live the essence of the Upanishadic knowledge that Sri Krishna imparted to Arjuna. It is particularly poignant in 2015 as Chinmaya Mission world-wide begins celebrations towards Pujya Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda, birth centenary in May 2016. Swami Chinmayananda is synonymous with Geeta Jnana Yajna. He carried the message of the Geeta to kindle the knowledge of the Self to millions world-wide!*

Please visit <http://geetachanting.cmwrc.org> for more information, registration, and practice materials

### 2015 CHAPTER COMPETITION

#### Dates:

- March 21/22 2015

#### Locations:

- Chinmayam (Silver Spring MD)
- Chinmaya Somnath (Chantilly, VA)
- Chinmaya Frederick (Urbana, MD)

#### Participation Categories

- Memory
- Memory & Comprehension
- Reading
- Reading & Comprehension
- Writing (Reflection)

### 2015 GLOBAL COMPETITION

#### Regional

- Eligibility - Children with Diamond Star or Diamond Plus award in Memory category during Chapter Competition, & up to 15 Years of age as of Jan 1 2015
- May 16 at Chinmaya Somnath & May 17 at Chinmayam

#### National

- Eligibility - Winners of Regional Competition
- September 5/6 at Chinmaya Badri, Chicago

#### Global

- Eligibility - Winners of USA National Competition
- December 25 at Chinmya Vibhooti, Pune, India



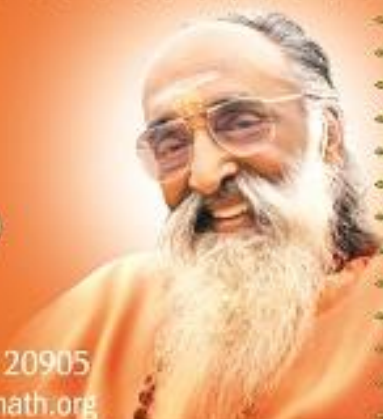


## CHINMAYA MISSION® WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER

*A non profit religious organization registered in MD*

Kailas Nivas, 46 Norwood Rd, Silver Spring MD 20905

<http://www.chinmayadc.org>, <http://www.chinmayasomnath.org>



### PRESENTS



## Bhagavad Gita Jnana Yajna

A SERIES OF FREE DISCOURSES

**Gita Chapter 2 Verses 54-72**

(Sthita Prajna Lakshana)  
(Qualities of a Realized Master)



**By Swami Dheerananda** (Resident Acharya, Chinmaya Mission  
Washington Regional Center)

*Swami Dheerananda has been serving in the Washington DC Area since 1989 when Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda placed him as a Resident Acharya for the Washington DC Metro Area. Swamiji is the architect behind Chinmaya Mission's very popular Bala Vihar and Summer Camp for Children.*

**7.00 pm. to 8.30 pm Dec 27-Dec 30, 2014**  
**@ Chinmaya Somnath** 4350 Blue Spring Drive Chantilly, VA 20151

Activities for Kids ages 4+ are planned during the Discourses



**Vishnu Sahasra Namavali, Lakshmi Puja &  
Guru Paduka Puja**

*will be celebrated at the same location on  
Thursday January 1, 2015 10:00am - 12:00 Noon*

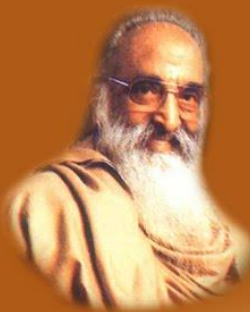


**We invite you to sponsor the Yajna and Support Chinmaya Somnath**

For information or to sponsor the Yajna, Please send email to [yajna@chinmayasomnath.org](mailto:yajna@chinmayasomnath.org)



# 22<sup>nd</sup> Mahasamadhi Family Camp New Jersey 2015



July 29th to August 3rd 2015



## Upanishad ganga

*Ancient wisdom, limitless strength*

With

H.H. Swami Tejomayananda

H.H. Swami Swaroopananda

and Acharyas from North America

### Camp Highlights:

- Chinmaya Vishwa, bird's eye view of Chinmaya Movement
- Chinmaya Jeevan Darshan
- Meditation / Yoga
- Special Balavihar / Chyk / Sethukari program
- Sumptuous vegetarian food

### Location:

DoubleTree by Hilton  
Somerset, NJ 08873



**Chinmaya Mission Tri-State Center**

Our Acharyas: H.H. Swami Shantananda  
H.H. Swami Siddhananda

**For further information**

Write to: [msc2015@chinmayavrindavan.org](mailto:msc2015@chinmayavrindavan.org)

Website: [www.chinmayavrindavan.org](http://www.chinmayavrindavan.org)

Ph: 609-655-0404

*Come discover yourSelf...!!*

## CMWRC Financials: 2013-2012



### INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Board of Trustees  
Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center, which comprise the statements of financial position as of December 31, 2013 and 2012, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

#### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Organization's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

#### **TIMONIUM**

9690 Deereco Road, Suite 500  
Timonium, MD 21093  
410-828-CPAS (2727) | 410-828-9512 (FAX)

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9881 Broken Land Parkway, Suite 220  
Columbia, MD 21046  
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Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-838-5717 | 410-838-2579 (FAX)

[www.KatzAbosch.com](http://www.KatzAbosch.com)

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Board of Trustees  
Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center  
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Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center as of December 31, 2013 and 2012, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

*Katz Abosch Windesheim Gershman & Freedman, PA*

Timonium, Maryland  
July 8, 2014



**CHINMAYA MISSION WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER  
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
DECEMBER 31, 2013 AND 2012**

<b><u>ASSETS</u></b>		
	<b><u>2013</u></b>	<b><u>2012</u></b>
<b><u>CURRENT ASSETS</u></b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,554,084	\$ 3,144,325
Investments	102,577	78,982
Pledge receivable	5,000	15,000
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	<u>11,329</u>	<u>3,354</u>
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b><u>2,672,990</u></b>	<b><u>3,241,661</u></b>
<b><u>FIXED ASSETS</u></b>		
Land and land improvements	2,185,625	2,185,625
Buildings and improvements	3,088,625	3,088,625
Furniture, fixtures and equipment	62,885	59,575
Construction in progress	<u>8,682,042</u>	<u>3,054,246</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,019,177</b>	<b>8,388,071</b>
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(1,069,019)</u>	<u>(985,234)</u>
<b>TOTAL FIXED ASSETS - NET</b>	<b><u>12,950,158</u></b>	<b><u>7,402,837</u></b>
<b><u>OTHER ASSETS</u></b>		
Loan origination costs - net	8,334	16,667
Deposits	91,352	91,352
Restricted cash	<u>200,000</u>	<u>200,000</u>
<b>TOTAL OTHER ASSETS</b>	<b><u>299,686</u></b>	<b><u>308,019</u></b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>\$ 15,922,834</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 10,952,517</u></b>

The Accompanying Notes are an Integral Part of the Financial Statements

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**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

	<b><u>2013</u></b>	<b><u>2012</u></b>
<b><u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u></b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 1,018,344	\$ 171,217
Accrued interest payable	253,809	211,255
Current portion of member loans payable	809,000	280,000
Current portion of notes payable	3,829,008	1,278,619
Retainage payable	<u>646,241</u>	<u>149,113</u>
 TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	 <u>6,556,402</u>	 <u>2,090,204</u>
 <b><u>LONG-TERM LIABILITIES</u></b>		
Member loans payable - less current portion	3,755,000	4,040,000
Notes payable - less current portion	<u>130,140</u>	<u>165,864</u>
 TOTAL LONG-TERM LIABILITIES	 <u>3,885,140</u>	 <u>4,205,864</u>
 TOTAL LIABILITIES	 <u>10,441,542</u>	 <u>6,296,068</u>
 <b><u>NET ASSETS</u></b>		
Unrestricted	4,269,676	3,875,414
Temporarily restricted	<u>1,211,616</u>	<u>781,035</u>
 TOTAL NET ASSETS	 <u>5,481,292</u>	 <u>4,656,449</u>
 TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	 <u>\$ 15,922,834</u>	 <u>\$ 10,952,517</u>

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The Accompanying Notes are an Integral Part of the Financial Statements

**CHINMAYA MISSION WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER  
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2013 AND 2012**

	2013		
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
<b><u>SUPPORT, REVENUE AND GAINS</u></b>			
Membership pledges	\$ 565,529	\$ 0	\$ 565,529
Building fund pledges	0	422,066	422,066
Donated goods	<u>0</u>	<u>8,515</u>	<u>8,515</u>
Total contributions	<u>565,529</u>	<u>430,581</u>	<u>996,110</u>
Camp revenues	212,218	0	212,218
Less: costs of providing camps	<u>(96,009)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(96,009)</u>
Net camp revenues	<u>116,209</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>116,209</u>
Other program and event revenues	174,876	0	174,876
Interest income	7,633	0	7,633
Dividend income	1,240	0	1,240
Gain on investments	<u>24,258</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>24,258</u>
Total other sources of revenue	<u>208,007</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>208,007</u>
TOTAL SUPPORT, REVENUE AND GAINS	<u>889,745</u>	<u>430,581</u>	<u>1,320,326</u>
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>			
Functional expenses:			
Program services	431,709	0	431,709
Management and general	43,335	0	43,335
Fundraising	<u>20,439</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>20,439</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>495,483</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>495,483</u>
Change in Net Assets	394,262	430,581	824,843
Net Assets - Beginning of the Year	<u>3,875,414</u>	<u>781,035</u>	<u>4,656,449</u>
Net Assets - End of the Year	<u>\$ 4,269,676</u>	<u>\$ 1,211,616</u>	<u>\$ 5,481,292</u>

The Accompanying Notes are an Integral Part of the Financial Statements

	2012		
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
<b><u>SUPPORT, REVENUE AND GAINS</u></b>			
Membership pledges	\$ 550,879	\$ 0	\$ 550,879
Building fund pledges	0	186,947	186,947
Donated goods	0	11,472	11,472
Total contributions	550,879	198,419	749,298
Camp revenues	194,810	0	194,810
Less: costs of providing camps	(74,027)	0	(74,027)
Net camp revenues	120,783	0	120,783
Other program and event revenues	261,587	0	261,587
Interest income	11,561	0	11,561
Dividend income	1,810	0	1,810
Gain on investments	6,853	0	6,853
Total other sources of revenue	281,811	0	281,811
TOTAL SUPPORT, REVENUE AND GAINS	953,473	198,419	1,151,892
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>			
Functional expenses:			
Program services	506,283	0	506,283
Management and general	64,560	0	64,560
Fundraising	20,390	0	20,390
TOTAL EXPENSES	591,233	0	591,233
Change in Net Assets	362,240	198,419	560,659
Net Assets - Beginning of the Year	3,513,174	582,616	4,095,790
Net Assets - End of the Year	\$ 3,875,414	\$ 781,035	\$ 4,656,449

The Accompanying Notes are an Integral Part of the Financial Statements

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## Photo Tour: 2014 CMWRC Annual Fund Raiser

*Photos by Shyam Menon and Sangamesh Konaraddi*



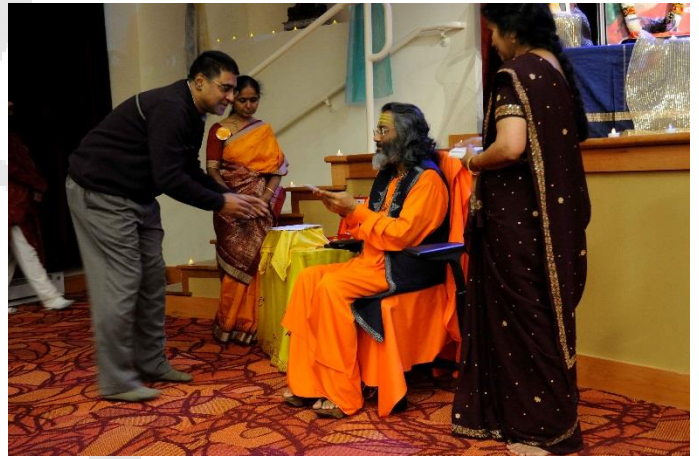












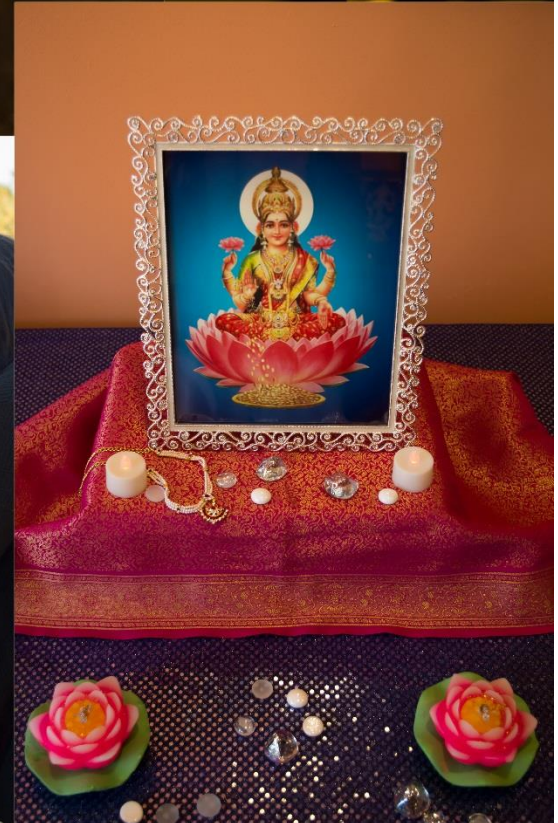






## Deepavali Collage

*Nishant Carr*



## Swamiji's BalaVihar Common Time Messages

*September-October 2014*

*Usha Konduri*

The start of another Bala Vihar year each September always reminds me of what I missed throughout the summer – the time spent in the beautiful Chinmayam hall with those mesmerizing photos of Sri Krishna, the familiar faces of friends, friendly Aunties and Uncles, and of course, the Common Time with our dear Swamiji, followed by the beautiful meditation. While I miss sleeping-in, I am always happy and leave contentedly each Sunday – such is the power of the time spent at the mission; it puts me in the right frame of mind for the week ahead. It is my pleasure and blessing that I have been given the opportunity to capture the Swamiji's common time messages for Chinmaya Smrithi.

Over the month of September and October Puja Swami Dheeranandaji gave us many wonderful messages during common time, and they have lead me to introspect and consider how I can implement them. We started the school year with Ganesh Puja, and I always like the symbolism of Lord Ganesha, as explained by Swamiji. This year, what stood out most to me is how the trunk of Lord Ganesha is curved inside, reminding us to turn inwards, and look within us. It is hard to do this as we get caught up each day with "peer-pressure", counting the number of likes on our Facebook and Instagram pictures. However, hearing it, as explained by Swamiji, I cemented it in to my mind and tried not to get swayed by the daily wanderings of my heart; I do need that message repeated though ....and glad I am writing it.

Then came Navaratri, the nine holy nights of the Goddess. Following the lovely presentation on Navaratri by Bala Vihar children, Swamiji told us a beautiful story of a boy named Shreyas, who, just by

expressing simply and sincerely the love he felt for his grandparents, gave them maximum joy. Swamiji reminded us of the Chinmaya Mission motto – to give maximum happiness to the maximum number of people for the maximum time – and asked us to try our best to provide maximum joy to each and every one we meet.

After Navaratri came Deepavali, the festival of lights. Common Time featured a lovely Deepavali celebration led by Bala Vihar children. Swamiji then reminded us that Deepavali is the time for us to reflect upon the divine light that shines in all of us and take the time to see the divine light that is within everyone around us. Time for introspection again...

Swamiji also reminded everyone to be on time – those who come early are on-time, those who come on-time are late, and those who are late, are so because they did not plan. Ability to plan well and execute effectively is an important regimen one has to cultivate.

I thank you for taking the time to read and look forward to bringing you more next month.

## Silver Spring Session II: Chinmayam Class Summaries

*Submitted by Anil Kishore*

**September 14, 2014**

**Thayjus Pancholi**

This week in class was our first true “welcome back” week. We began with usual rudimentary procedures for the first week and received our introduction for the class and what it would cover this year. Students received a new list of prayers and were reminded that they would be responsible for bringing their copy of the Geeta to class on a weekly basis. We then learned that we would be studying the second half of the Geeta, so in order to review (and catch up new students in the class) we reviewed with an activity. The activity was that we first divided into 3 groups. Every group received important scenes from the first half of the Geeta that were on individual strips of paper. We then had 20 minutes to work together and try to ascertain the correct order of events that was presented to us. After each group presented their respective ideas, this segued into our discussion for the day (albeit shorter than usual due to the new class talk). The discussion was first centered on the significance of the Geeta in our daily lives. While the class acknowledged that there would never be a direct situation that correlates with the Geeta’s events, the conflicts and advice that are prevalent in it is what ties it back into our daily lives. One will never be faced with the conflict of going to war against your family members, but it is practical to imagine a family conflict. To summarize, the Geeta takes these conflicts that dilute our everyday lives and projects them on a grandiose scale.

The example of this that we discussed in class was the hesitance that Arjuna had over entering battle against his friends and family. We then focused on Krishna’s advice to Arjuna explaining how the fruits

of our actions were not more significant than our duty to fulfill them. This led to a debate on whether this statement was true and applicable in our own daily lives. The prime example used in the situation was how students were being taught how to regurgitate information in school as opposed to learning how to think and problem solve. Memorizing facts is not learning, and students only comply with this in order to receive the fruits of their labor (in this case, an A in the class).

We ended the class with the final question posed. “Is it important to dedicate yourself solely to your goals?” The class was scattered on this one, with many students arguing on both sides of the argument. An interesting (and relevant) analogy made was the application into Medical/Law schools. Although we were still in high school, there were students in the class who had plotted their lives out years in advance. An argument was that it is important to have goals to focus on, but they should not be the only thing that matter in your life. An example of this that tied in the previous analogy was how college students often change their mind about what they want to do. Will this one goal of being a lawyer set you down a path that you may not be on in the future? Also, what were the sacrifices involving the time spent away from your friends and family because you were so set on getting into the top law school? The class remained in gridlock as we closed with both arguments making compelling points. We then found a place in the discussion to stop as we closed class for the day.

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**September 21, 2014**

**Vishnu Dharmaraj**

Today in class, we discussed the 7 Steps to a Positive Attitude:

1. Broaden our vision of life
2. Do Our Duty, Our Dharma
3. Enjoy Life, Subject to Dharma
4. Be a Team Player
5. Work for a Higher Cause
6. Surrender the Actions to God
7. Don't be Attached to the Results

We started discussion the meaning of the first step. In general, people thought that it meant that we should expand our horizon, whether it be trying new things, setting multiple goals for yourself, experiencing new things, or looking at situations from different perspectives. Some people related this step to preparing for college. For example, some of us are pressured into majoring in some subject that we don't truly enjoy. Instead of succumbing to this pressure, we shouldn't be afraid to explore new fields. At this point, it is important to note that there is a big difference between being driven and being closed off. The latter implies that a person has not explored new ideas, whereas the former implies that a person has decided what he/she is passionate about once these new ideas have been explored.

Aniket Uncle then questioned us on the purpose of having more than one goal. A common theme in this part of the discussion was that it's always good to have both short term and long term goals so that it is easier to see what something does in the grand scheme of things. In a way, this idea connects with the fifth step, working for a higher cause. If a person only sets short term goals, he/she will lose sight of

the higher cause he/she is working for. Another interpretation of the fifth step is that you should not only to work for yourself but also help others around you as well.

The class then discussed the sixth and seventh steps. We all agreed that both of these steps were connected. The seventh step tells us that we should not be attached to our results. However, this idea gives us no motivation to do any type of work. The answer to this comes in the sixth step. Instead of being attached the results of your actions, you should surrender your actions to god. The idea of selfless dedicated service springs from both of these ideas. Every action you commit should be motivated by a higher cause. It need not be god, but it could be something smaller, like your community. However, if we broaden our vision of life and continue to surrender our actions rather than be attached to their results, we will find that the higher cause we work for will be greater than just a community.

In the context of the Mahabharata and the Geeta, each time Arjuna became more attached, he failed to follow one of the seven steps listed. For example, when Arjuna didn't want to fight against his relatives and teachers in the war, he wasn't following steps 2 and 3. He was also attached to the result of the war and lost sight of the higher cause he was working for.

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**October 5, 2014**

**Taruna Emani**

Today we focused on making personal, professional, and spiritual goals. To inspire ourselves, we split into four groups and brainstormed key notes on things that:

- 1) you are good at
- 2) you like to do

3) make more money

4) make the world a better place

the list we made is attached to this email.

Keeping the four lists in mind, we all individually conjured up our own goals lists with goals that are personal, spiritual, and professional. We probably wouldn't have done these lists on our own, so it was interesting to see what we all truly thought our goals were/are.

After creating our lists, we discussed, "Why are goals important?"

here are some answers that were given:

- so you have motivation; something to work for
- they help you progress as a person
- so you don't become a scrub
- you'll have a reason to live

After sharing our answers, we wrote (a) paragraph(s) on who is God in our opinion, which prompted us to think a bit on what we have faith in. I personally included zombies in my essay to add some zest into my ideals.

Today's lesson was very helpful and germane to our class as a whole, as making a list of goals is something we never have time to do, but can be expedient in the future. I hope others had as much fun as I did!!

ॐ

**October 12, 2014**

**Brianna Kapur**

We started off class with the questions: If you had to write an introduction on yourself what would you write? Would you brag? Do you feel weird bragging about yourself? Most of the class did feel weird about bragging, but we agreed that it depends on the

situation. For example, at a job interview your job is mainly to brag and show off your skills (that are of course relevant to the job). The objective in that situation is to show how you are unique and explain why they should choose you above all other applicants. Overall, actions speak louder than words.

We then read chapter 10 from the Gita, where Krishna explains to Arjuna how he is everything and more. This is because Arjuna was not aware of Krishna's powers/qualities. He was very curious and wanted to know more about Krishna, so therefore Krishna gave his best introduction. In his introduction He too elaborated to Arjuna how He was unique. We concluded that when a person is curious about who you are and wants to know what makes you different from everybody else, it is only appropriate to list your best qualities that make you unique.

We ended class with a discussion around the question What is God? This is a very personal question, as everyone's answer will be different. So, Is there a final answer? Is that a valid question to ask? In class, there were a few different perspectives on what they believe God is.

God is:

- a human/physical figure
- a force
- not there
- just made up to explain the unknown
- something that people believe in when they need guidance or hope

No matter your belief, you should always be open minded. Since there is no concrete answer or final point, you must be open to all opinions.

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**November 9, 2014**

**Ananth Shastri**

After reciting our opening prayers and assigned verses of the Gita (without Vishnu, to our dismay), Aniket uncle began class with a question: what do you think of when you pray? Responses were varied; some students said that they envisioned specific deities as manifestations of important qualities, while others thought of their goals, a divine flame, or attempted to keep their minds blank. The vast majority of students said that they had a specific place of worship in their houses, but surprisingly few students prayed consistently, with most only praying upon parental command.

Having been exposed to the various ways in which people prayed, we moved on to a discussion of the first 12 verses of Chapter 12 in the Gita. Here, Arjuna posed an important question: is it better to worship a personification of God, or to pray to the formless or indeterminate divinity? Arjuna's question naturally arose after Krishna revealed himself as the entire universe, giving Arjuna doubt as to which version of Krishna - the anthropomorphic or the indeterminate - to worship. We found that Krishna gave no definitive answer to Arjuna's question, instead saying that every path leads to God as long as certain conditions are met. Each path has its own limitations and restrictions, and different routes are better suited for different types of people, but in the end, the common destination is the divine.

We were able to come up with various analogies to help us understand this idea. As students, studying is an integral part of our daily lives, and we found that our methods of studying varied tremendously based on an individual's preferences. For example, Karthik (spelled correctly?) finds that burning incense prepares him for doing his studying, while Aniket uncle is irritated by incense and would find it

annoying instead of useful. This analogy illustrates that in many cases, there is no right or wrong way to achieve a goal, but rather various routes that different people might take in working towards the same objective. However, regardless of the method he used, Karthik would have failed to achieve true mastery of his schoolwork had he been focused on memorization instead of comprehensive understanding of the material.

Similarly, there are certain prerequisites in the search for self-realization and religious truth that transcend individual methods. These requirements include perfect faith, steadfast worship, and complete immersion in the Lord. Without possessing each of these essential requirements, an individual cannot hope to achieve salvation regardless of the object of their prayers or other specific personalized religious practices. We then delved into a discussion of the difference between "blind faith", often leveled as a criticism against religions, and *Shraddha*, a Hindu concept of faith. *Shraddha*, in the words of Swami Chinmayananda, is "my belief in something I do not know, so that I may come to know what I believe in." While this originally seemed circular to us, we were able to understand it after a few analogies.

Aniket uncle likened *Shraddha* to a scientific hypothesis. In science, to discover a new phenomenon or concept, one must first believe in the possibility that said phenomenon exists. In Hinduism, to understand God, we start by believing in the divine - in other words, faith is a starting point instead of a destination. The other conditions were easier to understand. We translated steadfastness in consistency in prayer and ritual, and determined that it is better to pray for one minute every day of one's own volition than to go on irregular praying sprees just because one's parents say that it is a religiously significant day. Unfortunately, time limitations meant that we could not speak further about the meaning of being immersed in the Lord.

We left class after our ending prayers with several important messages. In Hinduism, faith is the starting point instead of the destination, prayer is individualized, and several paths lead to the common destination of religious truth, with prerequisites of salvation being perfect faith, immersion in God, and steadfast worship. Personally, several concepts discussed today resonated with what I know of Hinduism, namely that the religion encourages instead of suppresses the idea of variety in worship. The extensive pantheon of deities each personifying a different value and the broad range of ways to worship the Lord both support religious diversity. Personally, the most significant message of today's class is that Hinduism is a religion of variation; however, each of its many paths have the same destination: salvation and the divine.

## Event Summary: Swamiji Silver Jubilee Celebration Oct 4, 2014

*CHYK DC Member*

On October 4th, we celebrated the joyous occasion of our beloved Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji's 25th Anniversary of being the Acharya of the Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center. The celebration was held in our beautiful Chinmayam Hall, which many of us have come to know as our home-away-from-home.

Swamiji was formally welcomed with a Poornakumbham by our CMWRC Acharyas and a chanting of the Vedic Arati by the entire congregation. The Balavihar children then treated Swamiji and all of us to a melodious chanting of the Gurustotram. The main program for the evening included speeches by various key figures in the CMWRC family: founding members, respected Acharyas, and current members, as well as artistic performances celebrating Swamiji's contributions to our lives.

First to speak were the founding members of CMWRC. The words of our founders were truly inspiring, and a true testament to Gurudev's will and vision. All of us were filled with gratitude and awe at just how much CMWRC has grown since its inception, and we felt truly blessed to be part of such a divine organization and family! True to Swamiji's humorous nature, the founders all had very interesting anecdotes about our Swamiji when He first arrived in the D.C. area. Many of us were in tears of laughter at the antics that our Swamiji would get up to!

After the founders spoke, we had a brief interlude of sorts. The Balavihar children presented a short poem with Swamiji's initials, followed by a Bhajan written by Vandana Bapna and performed by Balavihar students and CHYKs. The Bhajan's lyrics were in

English, and described the glory of our Swamiji—making it both touching and easy to follow along with all at the same time!

The last part of our program were the messages by current CMWRC members. We had various coordinators, Balavihar teachers, and CHYKs speak. Each gave very moving messages on how Swamiji had touched their lives deeply, and how He inspired them to give their best to the Mission in every moment, as Swamiji always has since the moment He arrived here.

After all the speeches were concluded, Swamiji gave a very stirring message. He spoke on how this is all Gurudev's grace guiding everything that has happened. Swamiji's Bhakthi for Gurudev is always so powerful, and seeing Swamiji exuding humility in every word filled us with a special reverence and appreciation for Him. The audience's love for Swamiji was palpable and filled the entire auditorium that day, and can still be felt by all those who were present.

*[Editor's Note: Pictures, Video, Chanting, Songs, Speeches are on ChinmyaDC website under Swamiji Silver Jubilee link]*

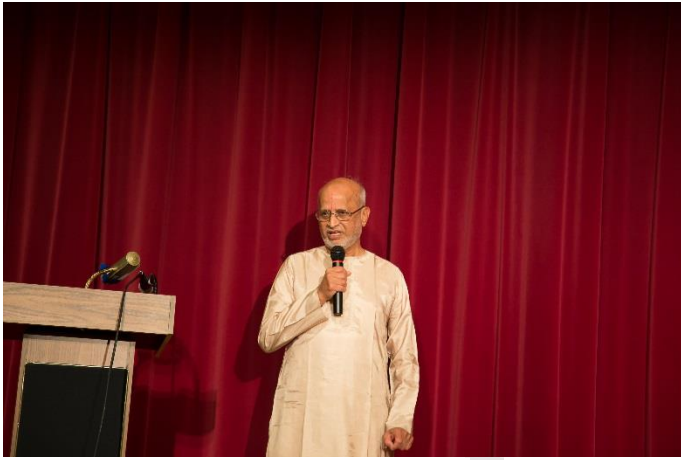












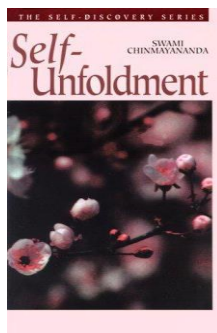






## “Self-Unfoldment” Summaries

### Chapter 17: Self Realization



*Editor's Note: This series provides short summaries of each chapter of the foundational introduction to Vedanta by Pujya Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda, “Self Unfoldment”. This book is part of the curriculum for Chinmayam (10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade) Bala Vihar class. It is also the recommended starting book for newly formed youth and adult study groups. These summaries are from one such recently formed study group.*

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### Chapter 16 – Self Realization

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Breaking through the layers of matter to discover the ultimate Reality at the core of our being is our sole and sacred vocation as spiritual students. The consummation of that great effort is Self-realization, or liberation (moksha). The signs of a Self-realized person were first compiled in the Geeta by Veda Vyasa. These are found in the concluding verses of Chapter 2.

#### *Steady Wisdom*

The Self-realized individual is a dynamic person of action. In order to understand such a person, we must understand them as they live in the world – (a) how do they see the world? (b) how do they react to problems?, and (c) how do they relate to others?

A realized person is a dynamic individual who's every moment of existence is dedicated to the service of humankind. A person of steady wisdom, he functions in the world with total freedom: physically he demands nothing; emotionally, he has no encumbrances; and intellectually, he is extremely brilliant at all times. He is a master of all situations, as well as of his own physical, mental and intellectual equipment. He keeps his composure and is rooted in pure consciousness – he is called 'Sthithaprajna', one of steady wisdom.

- No thoughts of the past, no worries for the future and indifferent even to the present. (Indifferent to current limitations, excesses or obstacles).
- Recognizes all distinctions of the good, the bad, the vicious, the evil, and the noble as expressions of the one divine Reality alone. He sees the Lord in and through everything.
- While good and bad are kaleidoscopically changing all around him at all times, he sees all with equal vision – no likes or dislikes, no attractions or repulsions, no elations or disappointments, etc. Under all circumstances he maintains equanimity.

#### *Inner and Outer*

For one who is enjoying the bliss of the higher state of Consciousness, all thoughts of the mind and intellect are ever engaged in experiencing that bliss. The liberated individual no longer draws distinctions of that which is within and that which is without. These distinctions are with respect to one's body. A dreamer while dreaming may experience an inner world and outer world. When the dreamer awakens to become a waker, the inner and outer worlds in the dream disappear. The Self-realized



person only experiences Consciousness that pervades both inner and outer worlds.

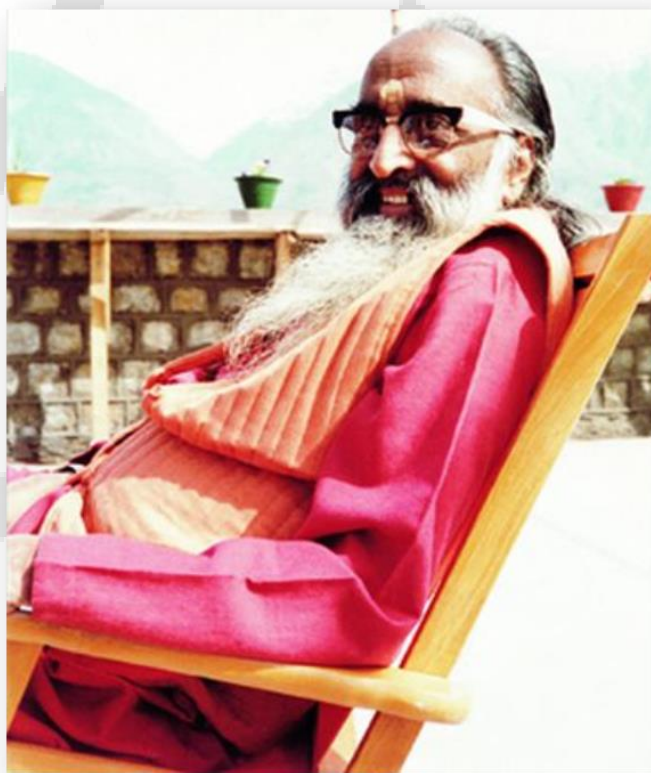
The master also has no conceptions of “I” and “mine”. The “I” ness comes from identifying with the body, mind and intellect, and with the ephemeral relationships in the world of experiences. The ‘my’ ness comes from a sense of possession of objects of experience. Just as a waker rises above all sense of “I” and “mine” in the dream world, so does the master who has awakened to the Reality rises above the false worldly identifications within and without. His realization is:

- The changeless Essence in me (Atman) and the substratum of the whole universe (Brahman) are one and the same.
- The Self in me is the Self everywhere
- The substratum of the whole universe, Brahman, is playing as the pluralistic phenomenal world.

### *Perfect Balance*

The perfected being has ended all identifications and has awakened to the steady and changeless Essence, he retains his balance even when he is expressing himself through the body-mind-intellect equipment. Even though the body and mind go through various experiences, he is never affected by them because he is not in the equipment; the equipment is in him.

The common factor in all liberated souls is peace and tranquility. Liberated from thralldom of body, mind and intellect, they abide in the Self and remain ever serene and tranquil – every ready to give their fullness and love to others.



## Event Summary: Deepavali 2014 at Chinmayam

*Vandana Bapna*

Chinmaya Families from all three sessions at Chinmayam celebrated Deepavali on Saturday evening, November 8th, 2014.

It was a festive evening. In the Chinmayam foyer, we were greeted by the beautiful décor of Silver Ashta-Lakshmis and kalasha set amidst lit up diyas by Smt. Chetana Neerchal. The cultural program started at 5 pm with invocation by Vishnu Dharmaraj. This was followed by the classical dance recitals of Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi (Taught by Smt. Subha Maruvada) by Bala Vihar Children. The enthusiastic adult men and women then presented a varkari and lezim dance (coordinated by Smt. Pratima Jadhav and Smt. Anita Kulkarni) based on a Marathi song depicting the devotees of Lord Vithal going on a pilgrimage constantly chanting hari naam. Following this we had a musical segment beginning with recitals by Carnatic class Bala Vihar students of Smt. Nandini Duraiswami and Rama Stuti by the adult music talent. We concluded with the exotic bhajans rendered by the SaReGaMaPa second place winner, Sri Krushanu Majmundar and his wife Smt. Deeti Majmundar with musical accompaniments by our talented members. This was such a divine treat that Pujya Swamiji offered half of his Deepavali message time in order to listen to more of their bhajans.

### *Glories of MahaLakshmi*

*Swamiji's Deepavali message on glories of Mahalakshmi was indeed glorious. His acronym was GOAL (Glories Of Adi Lakshmi). Swamiji spoke about the 'Real' wealth, the shat-sampatti, the eighteen-ities that one cannot get in the universities, and the values that have been equated with Kshetrajna or supreme knowledge as being taught by Swamiji in Chapter 13 currently. [The Video of Swamiji's*

*message, taken by Rishika Jadhav, is posted on [www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org) under video link]*



This was followed by Garba Raas by all members from 6:30 to 7:30 pm with live music again by the SaReGaMaPa famed - Sri. Krushanu Majmundar and orchestra. Wow!



At 7:30, we had a sumptuous potluck dinner with the traditional Deepavali goodies--mathiya, cholafali, boondi laddus, gulab jamun, sev kheer, sooji halwa, lemon rice, yoghurt rice, chole, and naan. Everyone enjoyed being together with Chinmaya family.

Beautiful event coordinated by Smt. Paulomi Nanavaty, Smt. Priti Mehta and the events team.





## Series: Saints of Maharashtra – 1

### Sant Jnaneshwar

*Nirmala Limaye*

Amongst all the saints of Maharashtra, Saint Jnaneshwar was considered “the king of Jnanis or avatar of Pandurang Vittala”, by saint Eknath. The bhaktas or devotees call him “mauli” (mother).

His whole life span on earth was only of 22 years.

Before describing his life, his great works, a little information about forefathers and also a little geopolitical history is necessary. During his life, 2 religious sects prevailed. First one was known as “Mahanubhawas who worshipped only Lord Krishna (similar to present the Harekrishnas and the Brahmakumaris). They did not have faith in the Vedas or varnashramas (caste system). Bhakti of Krishna was the main goal. The second sect was Navanath Sampradaya, who were Shaivas and they stressed Advaitic philosophy. They were following yoga and their yogic powers were legendary. There were no Islamic raids yet in 11th century especially in the south of Vindhya Mountains. The ruling dynasty was of Yadavas and Ramadevraya of Devagiri region was the king who was a devotee of Vittal. (At Pandharpura on one of the pillar in Vittala temple, there is an inscription stating that the king visited the temple in 1292 A.D. on a full moon day).

Jnaneshwara’s great grandfather Trimbakpant took initiation from Gorakhnath. His grandfather Govindpant was a pious administrator of the town of Aapegeon.

Father Vittalpant inherited the administrator’s position from his father after he completed studies of the Vedas. He was married to Rukminibai, daughter of Siddhopant of Alandi at a young age as

was the custom. After his father died, Vittalpant took it very hard and developed vairagya (dispassion) for samsara (the ephemeral world). Observing this, his father in law brought the young couple to stay with them in Alandi. This did not deter him from vairagya and one night he asked his wife permission to go to Kashi, which she did, reluctantly. Arriving in Kashi, he sought a guru and visited Swami Ramananda and asked to be initiated into sanyasa (life of a renunciate). He did not reveal his marital status to the guru. After some months the Swami went on pilgrimage of the south and while traveling, came to Alandi. Hearing about a great Swami, Rukminibai went and prostrated before him. He blessed her with ashirwad (auspicious words) that said, “may you be the mother of glorious children”. Upon hearing those words, she started crying and stated that her husband has gone to Kashi and has not returned yet. The Swami realized that her husband is none other than Vittalpant. Upon returning to Kashi, he confronted him, who then admitted his guilt. The swami remonstrated Vittalpant to return to Alandi and resume grihastha-ashrama, (life of a house-holder).

Accepting the guru’s agnya (wish, order or guidance), he returned to Alandi and lived with Rukminibai. This caused a great uproar amongst the Brahmins and Pandits who ostracized the family and sent them to live in the jungle near river Indrayani.

Vittalpant and Rukminibai had 3 sons and one daughter. Their names were Nivrutti, Jnanadeva Sopana and Muktabai. (Some find it interesting that their names Nivrutti—vairagya, Jnana—knowledge,

Sopana---ladder, and Mukta—moksha or liberation, translate into an expression that knowledge and renunciation are steps of a ladder leading to liberation).

They lived peacefully near the river. Their whole family praying, learning Vedas, and bhakti (devotion) to the Lord. When Muktabai was 3-4 years old, the father took them on a pilgrimage around Brahmagiri mountain (near Nasik) circumambulating around Tryambakeswara. During this travel a tiger chased them so, everyone dispersed as fast as they could. Nivrutti got separated from the family and entered a cave to get away from the tiger. There, he met Gahininath the great Nath guru who initiated him into sanyasa. Later Nivrutti was reunited with the family and all returned to Alandi. Nivrutti initiated Jnanadeva into sanyasa.

Meanwhile, Vittalpant sought purification of his children, so they could get thread ceremony to become Brahmins (twice born). He approached the orthodox Brahmins in the town to purify the children which they denied vehemently as these children were born to a sanyasi! He begged them to find a solution and they sanctioned a punishment that both father and mother must end their life.

The parents ended their life by drowning in the river Indriyani. Now, all children were orphans but the Brahmins of the town told them to get purification by Pandits in Paithan which was considered south Kashi. So, the children traveled by foot to Paithan (250 kilometers approximately).

They approached the Pandits with great humility and respect. However the Pandits could not find a solution in the shastras (scriptures). Jnaneshwara, who was 14 or 15 at that time, gently reminded them that their parents did follow their punishment as ordered, so they should get purified. He said that all living beings have a soul which is paramatma. The Pandits were amused and in jest said, “if it is true,

can this buffalo recite the Vedas?” Jnaneshwara said yes. The legend has it that when Jnaneshwara touched the buffalo, it started reciting Vedas!

The Pandits were surprised and accepted his argument and performed purification rites.

Now the siblings traveled to Newase town where they stayed near a river. Upon entering the town they saw a man near death (kulkarni). Jnaneshwara touched him and he got up.

By now Jnaneshwara’s fame had been spreading fast in all towns. Nivruttinath asked Jnaneshwara to offer commentary on Bhagavad Geeta in Marathi language, so that the large masses of people will understand our philosophy. One Satchidananda decided to serve as a scribe for Jnaneshwara.

Jnaneshwara started pravachans in Marathi which were followed by people of all castes, underprivileged poor and rich alike. These were written down by Satchidananda. It was originally called “Bhawarthadipika” but now known as Jnaneshwari. It in OVI meter consists of four line unit.

This upset the Pandit class as teaching this knowledge to ignorant people was blasphemous! In order to strengthen his stance, he stated that his Marathi poem will “win over even the nectar in its sweetness”.

Now guru Nivrutti suggested that he should write about his experiences in samadhi. This resulted in “Amritanubhava” a pure Vedantic treatise which is similar to Adi Sankara’s Viveka Chudamani.

Jnaneshwara, out of compassion for the downtrodden masses, hard laboring farmers, and people of other trades who had very little time for study, wrote 28 verses of “Haripath” advising bhakti (devotion), truth and discipline which even today is chanted by many people. In addition, he wrote many Abhangas (devotional sonnets).

He decided to spread Bhagwat dharma in the population. He assembled large number of people of all castes, religions, men women who went with him to Pandharpur in the month of Ashadha travelling on foot with minimal food and singing bhajans on the way. Upon reaching Pandharpur, they bathed in the river Chandrabhaga, (a semicircular part of river Bhima) took darshan of Lord Vittala then returned back to Alandi. He called it Wari (pilgrimage), which became greatly popular with the masses and to this day 1000 years later, the tradition is still alive. People to this day do the pilgrimage in a very disciplined and peaceful manner.

Bhagawat Dharma was well established in Maharashtra. Jnaneshwara's fame spread like wild fire all over. This reached the ears of Changadeva who was very old and proud of his yogic power. He wished to see Jnanadeva. He decided to write to him but could not decide how to address him, for he was not sure whether he should address him as Chiranjeevi as Jnaneshwara was only 16 or 17, or should address him as Shriman because of his knowledge and fame! So, he sent a blank paper instead! Jnaneshwara was amused and answered him in 65 verses a text which is known as Chagadeva pasashti (meaning 65 lines). The work is pure Advaita Vedanta.

That made Chagadeva to come and visit him but in his pride he came riding on a tiger! Jnanadeva was sitting on a wall when he saw him approaching, he requested the wall to move and greet Changadeva. The wall moved towards him. This was the phenomenon which brought Changadeva to prostrate in front of Jnaneshwara who discussed the Truth with him. Changadeva became his disciple. After this, Jnanadeva, with his siblings and saints like Namadeva and some devotees, traveled around India going up to the northern state of Punjab. Some of his and Namadeva's abhagas are part of Granthasaheb of Sikh religion.

When the group returned to Aladi, Jnaneshwara thought his work was done in this world and he pined for leaving his body and merge with the Lord. He sought permission of his guru, Nivrutti, who concurred. With his guru's blessings, in front of Lord Shiva's Murti, Jnanadeva did bhajans, sankirtans and on Kartik ekadashi entered the cave, and sat in Samadhi. Nivrutti sealed the cave with boulder. The year was 1292 A.D.

Unfortunately, after his samadhi, for some hundred years this temple with the samadhi place became covered with trees and was covered with thick jungle. In the 16th century, saint Eknath had a dream, where Jnaneshwara requested him to come to Alandi and clear the temple surroundings, then clean the roots grown in to the cave around his neck and find his Jnaneshwari. Eknath did as advised and revived Jnaneshwari by replacing the old Marathi with current language. At the end, he stated that henceforth no one should add or subtract from this book as it will be like putting dirt in a clean pot of water.

People started visiting this place again and even now it has become a holy place with hundreds of people coming and praying. The wari tradition is back, with many lakhs of people joining. Many ladies sit and read Jnaneshwari in the courtyard. These are farmers and laborers.

Jnaneshwari and Haripath are the most chanted texts.



## Jnana Yoga and Self Realization - XXII

Acharya Sadananda

### Obstacles for spiritual progress - VI

Krishna provides the guide lines for Nidhidhyaasana. He says - ***aatmasamstham manaH kRitvaa na kinchitadapi chintayet***, with the mind centered on aatma and without thinking anything else, one should contemplate. Again it is not thoughtless state but recognizing one's own nature or as sat chit ananda swaruupa. Shree GouDapaada in advaita prakaraNa of ManDukya kaarika discusses the obstacles that arise during the nidhidhyaasana.

**GouDapaada** lists four obstacles that can arise for seekers as they contemplate on the nature of the self. They are discussed in the following. 1. Laya or Sleep. Sitting quietly induces sleep for many, and this arises from tamasic state of the mind, since mind normally sleeps when it is quiet. 2. Vekshepa or restlessness of the mind arises from rajasic condition of the mind. Both these obstacles are obstacles against saatvic condition. Satva guNa involves alert or vigilant or focused mind. 3. kaShaaya or stagnation of the mind is the third obstacle. It is a state in which the mind is neither sleeping nor wondering, but yet not available for meditation also. Mind becomes stagnant or immobilized, and it happens when there are deep internal disturbances at subconscious level. It is some kind of a shocked condition when the mind goes blank as it faces a situation suddenly. This state is reached when the mind has deeper suppressed emotions such as anger, hatred, depression, etc. Lastly, 4) ***rasa aaswaada*** or enjoyment of meditation itself. *rasa* means happiness – ***raso vai saH*** says Tai. Up. When the mind is relaxed as in meditation and withdrawn from all the pressing problems or worries, it starts enjoying certain happiness arising from that state. This is a conditional happiness. Meditation brings joy and experiential pleasure available at the time of relaxation. That joy is a temporary, since it depends on the mental state. Any experience-dependent pleasure of the mental state is temporary. It is also samsaara only – like sense pleasure – but meditation-pleasure. Since it is an experiential pleasure and therefore temporary,

aachaarya says do not get attached to that temporary pleasure also as the mind longs for it. It is not an intrinsic nature but depends on the state of the mind. Many people experience some happy moments in meditation once in a way. They say we have beautiful meditation on that day, etc. We hear stories of people, particularly the beginners who get into that state occasionally and say they are enjoying the bliss of meditation. From then on they long for it or want to repeat that experience. We hear the statements - I experienced pure bliss once, and I am trying to experience it again during meditation, and it is not coming – Such assertions or complaints are common when they can not access that state, at will. GouDapaada says do not get attached to this temporary pleasure – you will get also addicted to meditation. As a result, one starts disliking the worldly transactions. Always looking for meditation pleasure is also an obstacle for growth. He calls this as ***rasa aaswaadaH***, meditation dependency for happiness, which is more subtle bondage since any dependence on other than oneself is bondage or samsaara.

GouDapaada and some sub commentators suggest some remedies to overcome these obstacles. 1. Remedy for sleep involves removing the contributing factors for sleep. Any or all of the factors may cause sleep. a.) The first is incomplete sleep or ***nidraa sheShaH***. If I do not give enough rest for the system, (BMI), the recommended seven or eight hours, the body looks for an opportunity to get that missing sleep. Meditation is an ideal condition to get that missing sleep. Hence to avoid sleeping during meditation, one should give the BMI sufficient sleep. It means meditation should not be done when the mind is sleepy, unless sleep is the main goal of meditation. Another cause can be b) Indigestion or ***ajiirnam***. That is a dysfunction or sedation in the body which can make the mind lethargic. c.) Over eating or ***bahu ashanam*** or meditation with full stomach induces sleep. Finally d) Physical exertion or ***shrama*** – One should not meditate when one is physically too tired. Body would like to relax

and sleep comes naturally during meditation. Hence the remedy for sleep is to remove the causes for sleep. Auto suggestion to the mind not to sleep during meditation can also work. Essentially one should use any appropriate method that works for him to keep the mind vigilant or *saatvik* during meditation.

2. **vikshepa parihaaraH** – Krishna also says main cause for this restlessness of the mind is attachments. Mind wants to dwell on the object or person towards whom we have strong attachments or aversions. To overcome these *raaga* and *dvesha* or likes and dislikes, mind needs to get attached to something higher or surrender to higher. For this **abhyaasa** (practice) and **vairaagya** (detachment) are two traditional methods. By repeatedly reminding that *raaga* or attachments are cause of sorrow one can get detached from them. Second method is *viaraagya* by withdrawing or detaching the mind from attachments and redirecting it to object of meditation. Krishna says – **yato yato nishcharati manashcamcalam asthiram/ tatastato niyamyaitad aatmanyeva vasham nayet/** By bringing into my mind the understanding that (a) all objects of the world are *mithyaa*, (b) hence, they have no validity in the long run, and (c) nothing is really real other than the self, I redirect my mind back into self-inquiry or *aatma vichaara*. Thus by remembering the lessons learned during *shravana* and *manana*, my attachments to the objects of the world get reduced. Therefore I turn the attention away from the world of objects using the lessons learned.

3. **kaShaayaH** means stagnation of the mind. We do not have any solution for this. We need to be aware that the mind is a hostage for deeper suppressions. This happens when the mind is forcibly withdrawn from its attachments (withdrawal symptoms). The best method suggested is to be a *saakshii* to the mind. In due course the mind will get out of this stagnation. Like child is forced to study when important play is going on TV – That is *kaShaayam* – Mind is not watching the play but it is not ready to study.

4. **rasaaswaadaH** is where meditation itself becomes an object of pleasure. The best way to overcome this is educating the intellect that any temporary pleasure is *samsaara* and that this happiness is not due to intrinsic self. Since it is available only during meditation, this

temporary *ananda* or happiness is also a reflection of the original *ananda* of myself. It is like getting attached to the image in the mirror or one's own photo. With this wisdom or discrimination one can get out of this obstacle and in the process shift the attention to the original than the image. Krishna also calls this as **rasam**, the remnant taste for sense pleasures. How to overcome this **rasa aaswaadanam** – lingering taste for sensuous objects or even to meditation? Krishna says: **rasa varjam raso pyasya param dRishTaa nivartate/** One can give up the taste by turning attention or investing the mind on the supreme reality. This is the real *sanyaasa* where one withdraws the mind from doer-ship and enjoyer-ship and reinvests it in the enquiry of the absolute truth. Another way of looking at the problem is to shift the attention to the **saakshii chaitanya**, or that I am the pure witnessing consciousness witnessing even the mediation and the associated happiness.

By shifting our attention to the witnessing consciousness that I am, I get slowly detached from all the *raaga* and *dveshaas*, attachments and aversions. Thus the moment one discovers that the mind is getting high-jacked by any of these diversions, I need to shift the attention of my mind immediately to the witnessing consciousness that I am. That involves the recognition that all abrasions or projections are just reflections of the consciousness, and I am pure consciousness conscious of even the abrasions or projections. They are objects of my knowledge and I am the subject. The subject being conscious entity and object being an inert entity, and therefore objects can never affect the subject, which is of higher order of reality. **Janma mRityu jaraa vyaadhi duHkha doShaanudarshanam**, says Krishna. The greatest attachments come from the body identification. Change is the essential nature of the world of objects including the body. By recognizing their intrinsic changing nature and understanding that any attachments to the naturally changing things will only give rise to mental suffering, one should withdraw the mind from their clutches and recognize the divine unchanging nature of oneself. This constant shift in the attention is done by detaching the mind from lower and attaching it to the higher. This is called *sanyaasa-yoga*, *sanyaasa* to lower and *yoga* to higher or detachment-attachment technique.

Shaastra says that there is no anaatma separate from aatma – annatmas are only naama and ruupa or names and forms without any substantive of their own. Therefore GouDapaada totally rejects reality to anaatma – just as there is no dream world separate from me. Hence, no crying for the dream-diamond that I had in the dream, after I get up from sleep. He says recognize that there is nothing other than Brahman. Thus by repeatedly reminding myself that anaatma is not different from Brahman, the wondering mind is withdrawn from the superficial names and forms to the substantive of everything, that is Brahman, the self that I am. Therefore this mithyaa world, GouDapaada says, is as good as non-existent like the mirage waters. In stead of quenching the thirst, going after mirage waters makes me thirstier, as it is nothing but dry sand where water does not exist. By waking towards the mirage water to quench the thirst will make us only thirstier. Similarly, we are going after the world of objects in search of happiness where there is no happiness; instead it binds us causing more unhappiness. The constant awareness of this fact, keeps the mind alert and vigilant so that it does not wander in the field of anaatma.

Whenever the mind goes out , it goes out to where we have invested our minds. The objects of our minds attention are sources for our attachments and aversions, or raaga and dveshas. Half the problem is solved when one recognizes that the mind has gone out. Most of the time, we are not even aware that our minds have gone out. Before we know it, the half-hour meditation time is over. Hence the very recognition that the mind has gone out is a positive sign that we are watching where our minds are. The obvious remedy is to immediately withdraw the mind from where it has gone and reinvest in self-inquiry. When this is done repeatedly, the mind slowly settles down, as the attachments become weaker and weaker. The attachments become stronger only when we let the mind indulge in those attachments, says Krishna – ***dhyayato vishayaan pumsaH, sangastheshuupajayate....*** The more one thinks about any object the more one gets attached to it and more the mind wants to run towards the object, says the Lord. Hence being vigilant makes the mind alert, and makes easy for the one to recognize that the mind has run away and for deliberately bringing it back to the subject of

inquiry. Vairagya, dispassion to the sense objects helps the mental withdrawal easier without suppressing the mind. Meditation with the absence of thoughts can become a source of happiness and therefore becomes a trap for the mind to indulge in. It is similar to sleep since even in sleep there are no thoughts. Like sleep happiness, meditation-happiness is a temporary happiness, and thus it is a reflected happiness like any other objective happiness. The gradations in this happiness are discussed as priya, moda or pramoda ananda, in Ti. Up. Therefore it belongs to only ananda kosha. The proof is after coming from meditation, one says I was blissful, with the ***past tense***, implying that I am now tensed. Even the extraordinary pleasure during nirvikalpaka samaadhi that one gets is not brahmaananda but it is pratibimba ananda or reflected happiness only; and it will be like any sensory addiction. Therefore, it will be also a samsaara. This is called ***yoga ananda***. GouDapaada says never get addicted to it. Let it come during my meditation or go away – I am the original which is available all the time; therefore no need to long for experiencing the temporary happiness. The very longing for it makes us bound and the very longing also deprives us from our very nature which is ananda swarupam or our intrinsic nature. Knowledge therefore clear understanding and claiming that I am pure happiness in spite of any external circumstances, that is, whether I am in meditation or not. Happiness is my very nature and can never be perturbed by anything. One who understands this clearly is what Krishna calls as sthita prajna.

**How to see or experience the original ananda?** One can never see or experience the original since is not an object for experience. It is matter for claiming the original since reflected ananda alone can be experienced, but recognition of the original in the reflection is self-realization. I have to recognize the original looking at the reflection. This is called discrimination or nitya anitya vastu viveka – seeing the original in and through the reflection. It is like when I stand in front of the mirror to see my face. I cannot see my face without a mirror. What I see in the mirror is only the reflected image of my face where the image is located in the mirror away from me. Yet, when I want to shave my face, I do for the original while looking at the image. That shift in understanding that I am the original and not the reflected chidaabhaasa



in the mind is viveka or discrimination needed for self-realization. Reflected happiness comes and goes (anitya) while the original happiness that I am is ever present as I am (nitya). This constant awareness of the original consciousness while seeing the reflected consciousness or chidaabhaasa is what is termed **akhanDaakaara vRitti** or what Bhagavan Ramana says – **aham aham tayaa spurati hRit swayam** – I am, I am .. raises spontaneously in the mind and this I am is **paramam purNam** and **sat swaruupam** – supreme, full and of the nature of pure existence-consciousness that I am.

This constant shift of the mind to this understanding is Nidhidhyaasana.

