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## AUPA eNEWSLETTER

### MEDITATION REQUIRES TOTAL ATTENTION

The Upanishads urge us to gather our mental energies and dwell on their core teachings, which can set us free. This needs tremendous attention, called concentration popularly. "Concentration of the powers of the mind is our only instrument to help us see God....," said Swami Vivekananda, who continued, "The concentrated mind is a lamp that shows us every corner of the soul."  
(Complete Works, 7:59-60)

*pranavo dhanuh sharo hyātmā*

*brahma tal-lakshyam-uchyate*

*apramattena veddhavyam*

*sharavat tanmayo bhavet*

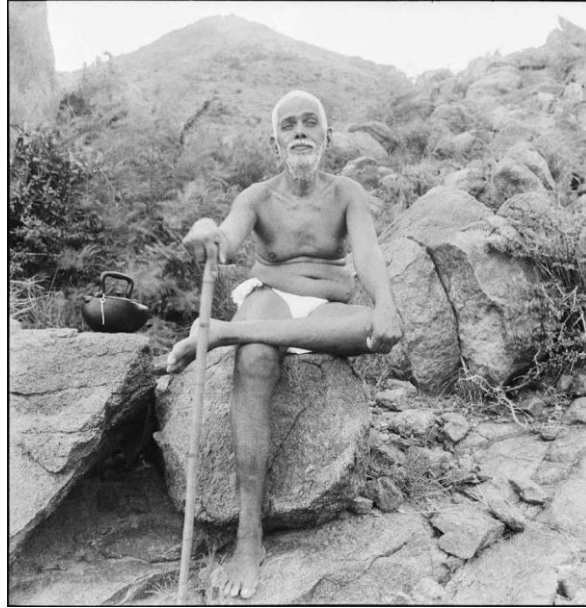
#### **Mundaka Upanishad mantra 2.2.4**

{Om is the bow; the soul is the arrow; and Brahman is called its target. It is to be hit by an unerring man. One should become One with it just like an arrow.}

## PRANAMS AT HIS LOTUS FEET

**January 3, 2018: 139th Birth Anniversary**

No words suffice to express our gratitude to the legacy of Shri Ramana Maharshi (1879 – 1950), who brought great clarity to our minds on self-inquiry and Self-knowledge, with the light he threw on 'the essentials' of the non-dual wisdom, and with the utter simplicity of his own lifestyle.



[December 30 was the day of his birth in 1879 as per English calendar; the Āshram in Tiruvannamalai however celebrated it on January 3 this year as per Tamil astrology.]



## WORLD AND ME – SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The self (called the ego by many) is the product of various conditionings, which are essentially memories. This self divides people as 'my people' and 'those that are not mine'.

An old verse (subhāshita) says, "The petty-minded have notions of 'my folks' and 'others'. For those of generous mind-set, the whole earth is one family<sup>1</sup>.

As we advance in self-inquiry, and as the egoism in us gets thinner, we can perceive the truth of how all of us are one. The Upanishads point to the high plateau where<sup>2</sup>, "She has no fear whatsoever who sees all in herself and beholds herself in all!"

When various forms of bias or prejudice leave our bosom, we relate to our surroundings – humans, animals, plants, rivers and hills – with intense sensitivity. We respond to the true needs of those around us, not because some book of virtues asks us to do so but because we find a natural urge to respond. In this 'responding,' there is 'responsibility'.

Today we talk about CSR – corporate social responsibility, where the law of the land requires that companies spend a minimum of 2% of their profit on social uplift. There could be many business heads who do some social service because the law demands it. Those executives who, on the other hand, reach out to their neighbourhood and help the needy irrespective of the law, are indeed evolved and awakened in the context.

Self-observation, self-inquiry and contemplation on Upanishads' statements are some of the examples of the exercise that takes place on way to the awakening of sensitivity and compassion. In the sleep of ignorance, we live selfishly; our own personal needs never seem to end. When we wake up from this sleep, we have tremendous silence within us on one hand, and, on the other, we spontaneously respond to the world around us, without any form of partiality.

Then the dividing line between 'the world and me' seems to disappear.

**Notes:**

1 *ayam nijah paro veti*

*gananā laghu-chetasām*

*udāra-charitānām tu*

*vasudhaiva kutumbakam*

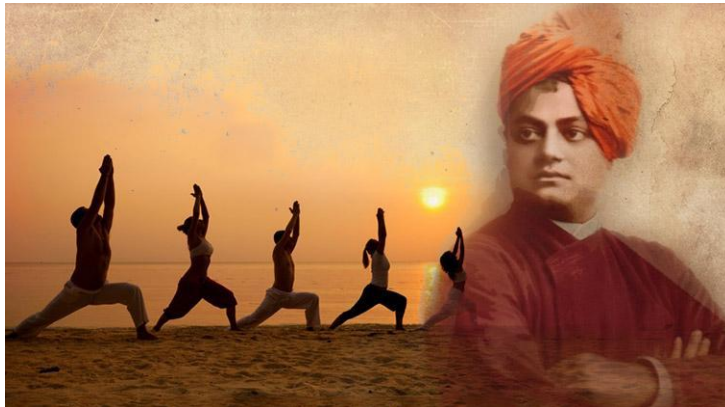
2 *yastu sarvāni bhootāni.. – Ishāvāsya Upanishad, mantra 6*



**Swami Chidananda**

## REMEMBERING THE LION OF VEDĀNTA

January 12, 2018: 155th Birth Anniversary



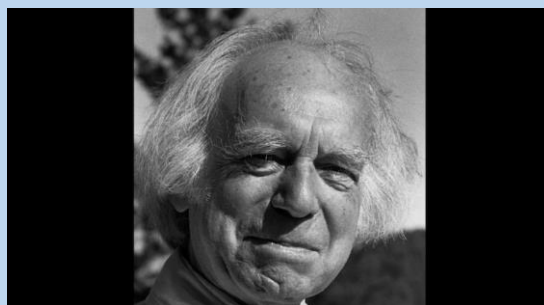
We pay homage to Swami Vivekananda (1863 – 1902), who infused tons of new energy into all the students of Vedānta with his vibrant personality, brilliant head and noble heart.

### Quote of the Issue

#### CLING NOT TO IDEAS

"Free yourself from all beliefs, all norms. See that you live completely without beliefs. Free yourself from second hand information. See clearly what is beautiful in you. All that is beautiful in you is right. Look at the situation with an open mind, free from hearsay. The solution is in the situation. So, see the situation clearly with an open mind. Then the choiceless decision comes."

**Jean Klein**



{Jean Klein (1912 – 1998) was a French author, spiritual teacher and of Advaita Vedanta (Nondualism). Born in Berlin, he studied musicology and medicine in Brno and Prague. He later went to India and studied Vedanta under Pandit Veeraraghavachar Rao. According to Jean Klein, it is only in a "spontaneous state of interior silence that we can open ourselves to our true nature: the 'I Am' of pure consciousness." He is the author of several books like The Transmission of the Flame.}



## LEARN THIS WORD...

### MOHA (मोहः)

Translated very often as delusion, four meanings are given of this word in *sarva-lakshana-sangraha\** (सर्व-लक्षण-संग्रह) of Swami Gaurishankara Bhikshu.

1 ममत्व-बुद्धिः the notion of possession; ideas like "this is my house," "she is my daughter" etc.

2 चित्त-वैकल्यम्: mind in disorder, distorted perceptions

3 वस्तु-तत्त्व-अनवधारिणी चित्त-वृत्तिः the mental mode that fails to determine the true nature of things

4 हितेषु अहित-बुद्धिः अहितेषु हित-बुद्धिः वा - the wrong understanding where the beneficial seems harmful or the harmful appears beneficial.

Coming from the verbal root मुह् (muh), this noun finds a place in many places in the Upanishads (and the Geetā too). For example,

mā moham-āpadyata (Don't be deluded) - *Prashna Upanishad, chapter 2, mantra 3*

nir-māna-mohāh (those who are free of pride and delusion) - *Geetā 15.5*

Moha goes away by adhering to truth, by striving to see things as they are and by clear discrimination with regard to the eternal and the ephemeral. (सत्येन, यथार्थ-ज्ञान-रूपेण, विवेकेनमोहस्य निवृत्तिः )

*\*Published by Chowkhamba, Varanasi.*

**Dr G wrote:**



## **SILENCE HAS ITS OWN VALUE**

### **Spend daily a little time in silence**

“See how nature – trees, flowers, grass – grows in silence; see the stars, the moon, and the sun, how they move in silence,” said Mother Teresa of Kolkata, “We need silence to be able to touch souls,” including, I would add, your own.

But it will not be easy to silence yourself. We live in a society that puts a great emphasis on communication and talking. Silence is not something we welcome. Silence is even sometimes used as a punishment – teachers who sentence rowdy students to “silent lunch” or former friends who give us the “silent treatment”.

We are suspicious of the silent. If a child is extremely quiet, we may think something is wrong, no matter what the other evidence is. Albert Einstein’s parents were concerned because their son was a late talker, not speaking until he was nearly three years old. According to a story told by Otto Neugebauer, a mathematician and a historian of ancient mathematics, young Albert finally broke his silence at the supper table one night to say, “The soup is too hot’.

His parents, greatly relieved to hear their son’s first words, asked him why he had never spoken before. “Because up to now everything was in order,” young Albert replied.

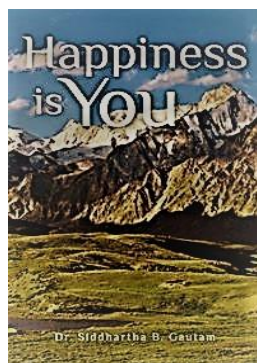
I tell this story as a reminder that most of what we say isn’t all that important. If we never told the world how we slept the night before or how expensive gasoline is getting or how well our children are doing in school, would it really matter? What if, like young Einstein, we held our tongues until we had something we needed to say?

Another important point about silence is that, when we choose to be silent, it is a sign of strength, not weakness. Think of American cowboy movies and the heroes known as, “the strong, silent type.” Or, more appropriately, think of the quiet dignity of those black Americans who showed the superiority of their character during the civil rights movement by not responding with harsh words when they were taunted and tortured by their

tormentors. Their silence spoke volumes about their civility and strength and earned them the respect from reasonable people.

When I suggest that you should spend more time in silence, I am not saying that you should go suddenly mute or never turn on your television again. Instead, you should develop a habit of silence. Start slowly, maybe for as little as five minutes a day at the beginning, and gradually increase your silent time. For me, silence is easier in the morning than later in the day. When you get up in the morning, don't automatically turn on the TV or radio to catch up on the day's news. Instead, use this quiet morning time to think.

*{The above is an excerpt from the book by Dr. Siddhartha B Gautam, **HAPPINESS IS YOU**, pages 27 – 29.}*



**Smt. Indira Gautam contributes from USA:**



**Inspirational Story**

### **HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY**

A poor man lived in a small village and had a big family. He earned his living by cutting wood and selling it to people in the nearby city to support his family. He woke up one day and, as was his routine, went into the jungle to chop wood. He was chopping away when his

axe slipped out of his hand and fell into the water in the pond below. He jumped into the pond and looked around, tried his best but could not recover his axe. He became sad and started crying. He wondered how he would make a living now since he lost his axe.

A few moments later a fairy appeared and asked him why he was crying. He said, "I lost my axe in the pond." The fairy said, "Don't worry. I will get your axe back." She dove into the pond and came up with a golden axe. She asked the poor man, "Is this your axe?" He said, "No". She dove again and came up with a silver axe and showed him. He said again, "No, this is not mine." The third time she dove into the pond and brought out his axe, made of steel. He said with joy, "Yes, this is mine." The fairy was pleased with his honesty and gave him all the three axes.

### **Report on Happiness Yoga, Session 57, held on Saturday, December 2, 2017**

The regular event on the first Saturday of every month at the Kiwanis Recreation Center in Fayetteville (North Carolina) went off very well on December 2, with special focus on "weight loss". Dr Ijeoma Ejeh, MD, a general surgeon board-certified by the American Board of Surgery discussed how one could achieve one's 'weight loss' goals. Having a specialty in bariatric surgery, she provided her medical expertise on the subject, and the possibility of resolving diabetes, hypertension and sleep apnea.

Andres Josephs guided the participants through simple movements of yoga and also conducted a 'group meditation' exercise for their benefit. The movements could be done while sitting on the chair. The meditation was to help people gently clear their minds, allowing insights to emerge that could resolve their issues of stress in daily life.

Kamlesh Tandon and Vidhya Hegde provided guidance on healthy, nourishing vegetarian cooking. All the participants received a "recipe" – how to make a delicious and nutritious "vegetable and lentil soup." Chef Monica Primus made the details available, where lentils, tomatoes, onions, garlic, celery, carrots, cilantro and vegetable stock were mainly the ingredients.



**Mrs.G**



## Words from Guest Writers

### Dean Ornish, MD



#### How Does a Busy Person Begin a Meditation Practice?

**Even a minute of meditation each day can make a meaningful difference.**

Many doctors, even those who are interested in nutrition and exercise, often view stress management techniques as less important than other factors. They believe that nutrition is important. Since you have to eat every day, it's just a question of what you consume so it becomes part of your awareness. Most people know and appreciate the importance of exercise—and exercise looks productive, like you're really doing something.

However, stress management techniques are not part of most people's daily routine; until they are, it takes some effort to remind yourself to do them. Also, to the untrained observer, sitting with your eyes closed looks like you're not doing very much.

In fact, these approaches are very powerful, as many research studies are documenting. Meditation, for example, is about focusing your mental energy. Focusing energy increases its power. When you can concentrate better, you can perform better—in school, in business, in sports. Whatever you do, you can do it more effectively and with less stress.

As with nutrition and exercise, you have a spectrum of choices when it comes to practicing stress management techniques; it's not all or nothing. The longer and the more frequently you practice these techniques, the more benefits you receive.

Even practicing a few minutes a day has benefits. Consistency is more important than duration—more is better, but even a minute of meditation each day can make a meaningful difference. Sometimes, when I'm really busy and pressed for time, I'm tempted to just skip doing the meditation. Of course, the times that I'm busiest are usually the times that I need it the most. As Sydney Harris once wrote, "The time to relax is when you don't have time for it."

Instead, I play a little game with myself. I'll ask, "Do I have just one minute to meditate?" If I don't, then I would have to admit to myself that my life is so out of balance that it's easier to just go ahead and meditate for one minute.

Getting started is always the hardest part for me. Once I've overcome the inertia and I'm meditating, chances are I'm going to do it for more than just a minute anyway.

Now, even a minute of meditation has value. Have you ever listened to a song on the radio and found yourself humming it later in the day? It's like that with meditation—you continue to meditate subconsciously throughout the day.

*(Dean Ornish (born 1953) is an American physician and researcher. He is the founder of Preventive Medicine Research Institute (PMRI) in Sausalito, California and teaches at UC San Francisco. His book – **Dr. Dean Ornish's Program for Reversing Heart Disease** – is a best-seller. He was deeply influenced by Swami Satchidananda (1914 - 2002) and he advocates vegetarian diet, yoga, meditation and certain "life-style changes" to treat and prevent heart disease. Celebrities like Bill Clinton followed the diet prescribed by him.)*



## **GRACEFUL PRESENCE**

### **Benefit Others - to get Enlightened**

Zhao Zi Hao made it big in business so he spent money buying a piece of land in the suburbs and built a three-storey villa. He had an impressive swimming pool in the garden with a hundred-year-old lychee tree in the backyard to boot. In fact, he bought the property precisely because of this tree. His wife loved eating lychees.

During renovations, his friends urged him to get guidance from a feng shui master, just to tread on the side of caution. Zhao Zi Hao never quite believed in feng shui yet surprisingly he took the advice to heart and went out of his way to engage a feng shui master from Hong

Kong. The Grand Master was none other than Master Cao who had been in the profession for over thirty years, and was renowned in the feng shui circles. They had a meal in the city and then Zhao Zi Hao drove the Master to the suburbs. Along the way, when cars behind them tried to overtake, Zhao Zi Hao would simply give way.

The Master laughingly remarked: "Big boss Zhao, your driving is really safe." He spoke really fluent Mandarin for a Hongkie.

Zhao Zhi Hao laughed at the remark: "Usually people who need to overtake have some urgent matter to attend to, so we shouldn't hold them up."

Arriving at a small town, the streets grew narrow and so Zhao Zi Hao slowed down.

A giggling child suddenly darted out from an alley and as the child ran across the street, Zao still didn't speed up. Instead, he kept his gaze on the alley, as if waiting for something. Out of the blue, another child darted out, chasing after the child ahead.

Master Cao was surprised and asked: "How did you know there'd be another child following suit?"

Zhao Zi Hao shrugged: "Well, kids are always chasing after each other so it's impossible for a child to be in such glee without a playmate."

Master Cao gave him a big thumbs up and laughed out loud: "That's really considerate of you!"

Arriving at the Villa, they got down from the car. Suddenly about seven to eight birds flocked from the backyard. Seeing so, Zhao said to Master Cao: "If you don't mind please wait here for a little while."

"What's the matter?" Master Cao was taken aback.

"Oh, there are probably some kids stealing lychees in the backyard. If we walk in now, we might give them a fright, let's not risk anyone falling off the old Lychee Tree." Zhao replied humorously.

Master Cao stayed silent for a while before stating in a matter-of-fact way: "This home doesn't need a feng shui evaluation anymore."

Now it was Zhao's turn to be shocked: "Why's that?"

"Any place graced with your presence naturally becomes the property with the most auspicious feng shui."

When our minds prioritize others' peace and happiness, the one who benefits is not just others, but ourselves too. When a person is considerate of others at all times, then this

person has unconsciously accomplished Buddhahood. The Buddha is in fact a person who through benefiting others becomes enlightened.



#### **Goa, December 4:**

Long-time Vedānta students and other associates, joined by some members of Swāmiji's (poorvāshram) family, wished him happy, long life marked by good health, with a traditional āyushya-home, followed by tulā-bhāra (weighing a person against certain grains and cereals, as a mark of love and respect). Attended by around 75 people, this was conducted at a Durgā Mandir. (Pictures were given in the last issue). Commander Guruprasad (Indian Navy, retired) and his wife Anuradha acted as the yajamānas for the Vedic rituals, while the families of Ashok Kulkarni and Suryakant Gawde (Fowai Forum trustees in Goa) were active in organizing all the arrangements.

#### **Kudal, Maharashtra, December 8:**

Some of the trustees took Sri Viswanath Bokkasam, a retired, eminent civil engineer with knowledge of Vāstu, a resident of Bengaluru, to Fowai Forum's site in Kudal. Sri Bokkasam examined the piece of land from various angles of view and pointed out a certain defect from the vāstu point of view. It was decided to take corrective measures to set the defect right. Sri Bokkasam however said that, once the defect gets corrected, the piece of land would be excellent in all respects. It was however decided to pursue the project TASMAI CENTRE FOR LEARNING at an alternative site near Lonavala in Maharashtra while Kudal could remain as a back-up.

#### **Delhi, December 9:**

Swamiji paid a visit to Chinmaya Ranjan, the elegant facility of the Chinmaya Mission in Chitta Ranjan Park in South Delhi. The elderly Swamini – Gurupriyananda ji – received him with much love and regard. The beautiful centre on 4 floors has a library, an auditorium with audio-visual presentation features, residential space for spiritual teachers and much more. The hosts treated Swamiji to a delicious dinner too before he returned to Dr Reghunath's home in Kidwai Nagar.

## Webinars:

**Sunday, December 10:** Swami Chidananda presented the Webinar 105 on ***The Power of Sankalpa***, where he drew from Chāndogya Upanishad, chapter 7.

**Sunday, December 17:** Dr Thimappa Hegde presented Webinar 106 on the topic: ***Greatness of Bhagavad Geeta***.

**Sunday, 31:** Swāmi Chidānanda presented Webinar 107 on the topic: ***Glimpses of a Minor Upanishad: Skanda Upanishad***.



Swamiji at the residence of Swamini Jnanananda at C R Park, New Delhi on November 26.





During the 60th year .



Mahā Mandaleshwar Swāmi Abhishek Chaitanya Giri graced the occasion on December 4.



Devi Durgā blessed the ceremonies, at the temple at Davorlim, Margao



With some members of purvāshram family: (L to R) Anurādhā, Mālini, Susheelā, Guruprasād, Rājeshwari (in foreground) and Master Ribhu (on lap)



Swamini Gurupriyananda ji lovingly reminisces on their guru - Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji (with visiting Swami Chidananda ji), 9/12/2017

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Bengaluru, January 8 thru 14:** Swamiji will speak on Upanishads: **Reflections**, in Kannada at the Jayarama Seva Mandali's hall in Jayanagar – 8th block. 7 pm every evening.



**Bengaluru, January 16 thru 18:** Āchārya Dr Nagaraju and Swamiji will conduct a 3 day Retreat at Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma, in the medium of Kannada, with the themes: ***Skanda Upanishad and Bhagavad Geeta.***

**Mysore, February 13:** Swamiji will join and speak at the **Maha Shivarātri celebrations** at the premises of Sādhana Mandir Trust. This new ashram in Brindavan Extension in Mysuru is active with varieties of programmes of spiritual learning.

**Bengaluru, February 16 – 18:** Āchārya Dr Nagaraju and Swamiji will conduct a 3 day Retreat at Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma, in the medium of English, with the themes: ***“An Outline of Vedānta, with Glimpses of Advanced Topics” and “Meditation in Viveka-Choodāmani”.***

**Mumbai, February 19 – 28:** Swamiji will speak at Somaiya Centre for Lifelong Learning for 6 evenings: Feb 19 thru 24. He will also address audiences at Juhu Gymkhana on Sunday, February 25 and at the Mithibai College hall for 3 evenings on February 25, 26 and 27.



May we live with self-respect, free of self-importance! Let's do what's right, with no pride or hurt. Let's be active, not selfish.  
Happy New Year! ~ Swami Chidananda



(AUPA is the short form of AUPANISHADA-PURUSHA, the truth of the sacred source called Upanishads. This e-newsletter comes from Project Manager of the website: [aupa.in](http://aupa.in) – Upanishad Wisdom).

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