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AUPA eNEWSLETTER

WHY DO WE LIVE IN FEAR?

The sense of “I, me and my” is a creation of thought, rooted in ignorance. Based on religion, nationality, gender, colour of skin etc. the sense of self-interest arises, where we look at ‘others’ without realizing that the same Awareness shines in them too. To know that everyone of us is primarily Awareness (chit), and the personalities are secondary is the hallmark of the wisdom of the Vedānta (Upanishads). As Awareness, we are one! Identified with personality, we are different. In the relationship between two individuals and between communities or nations, the wise sense of oneness fosters love and cooperation; the unwise senses of being different creates unhealthy competition and, above all, constant fear.

*yadā hi eva esha ud-aram-antaram kurute
atha tasya bhayam bhavati*

Taittiriya Upanishad, mantra 2.7.5

{When we (erroneously) perceive even a little division (between others and us), there is then fear!}





EDITOR'S DESK

BEWARE OF THIS MISCHIEF-MAKER

'Thought' is both a blessing and a burden in human life.

Two people meet. One has white skin and the second brown. These two – A and B – may have beautiful understanding, goodwill and friendship.

They may also, in a second possibility in human life, have unwarranted sense of superiority and inferiority.

A may have a conditioning, born of memory, that says, "We ruled all these brown people at one time"; B also may have some anger, "We need to settle score with these white people who exploited my ancestors."

The possibility of love and cooperation is marred and the atmosphere is vitiated by 'thought', technically speaking. In countless ways, 'thought' hijacks us and, drawing typically from the past, pollutes the present. We lose our objectivity, which means we see through coloured glasses.

Two sisters, born of the same mother, may have undue competition and suffer from jealousy or intolerance when they become victims of 'thought'. Otherwise, differences do not become a problem; they rather enrich a relationship.

Thought, we must admit, is a great aid in functional matters. The memory of how we solved a technical problem the last time comes handy while facing a similar issue this time. If we did not remember various skills (like driving or cooking), we would not have properly managed even daily life. In these instances, however, we consider the 'thought' as 'functional thought' based on 'functional memory'. There is no foul play of "I, me and my" in other words.

We must be very watchful against 'psychological thought' where there is self-interest, judgmentalism or labelling others or ourselves with certain bias. Wisdom calls for staying guard against all prejudice. As we move on, we must throw away old garbage and open a new page in the book of life. A mind that is free from (conditioned, psychological) 'thought' is a flower of great fragrance, a repository of understanding, love and compassion.

The Upanishads point out our true nature – the fountain of freedom and bliss – is beyond thought¹.

Note: ¹ yat manasā na manute.. {That which the mind cannot grasp..} Kena 1.5

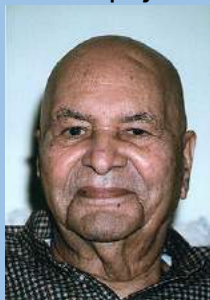


Swami Chidananda

Quote of the Issue

You are sitting by the side of the road and cars are speeding past you in both directions. These are like the thoughts, memories and desires in your head. They are nothing to do with you, but you insist on attaching yourself to them. You grab the bumper of a passing car and get dragged along by it until you are forced to let go. This in itself is a stupid thing to do, but you don't even learn from your mistake. You then proceed to grab hold of the bumper of the next car that comes your way. This is how you all live your lives: attaching yourself to things that are none of your business and suffering unnecessarily as a result. Don't attach yourself to a single thought, perception or idea and you will be happy.

Papaji



Papaji (H W L Poonja, 1910 - 1997) was a renowned teacher of Advaita Vedanta and spoke in the lines of the teachings of Shri Ramana Maharshi. He lived and died in Lucknow in his later years.



LEARN THIS WORD

DARSHANA - SEEING

The verbal root drish (becomes pashyati) means - to see. Samyag Darshana means right seeing. Samyag Darshana is the goal of all Vedānta study.

Erroneous perception, in which both the perceived universe and the perceiving ego are mere appearances, is dispelled in samyag-darshana. Erroneous perception happens in the 'frame of reference' called avidyā-bhoomi. When the revelations of the Upanishads take effect on us, we arrive at the 'frame of reference' called vidyā-bhoomi, where Brahman alone shines.

Mundakopanishad (See notes below) declares, "When the Supreme Truth is seen, all our ignorance vanishes, all our doubts are cut asunder and all our karmas get exhausted."

Importantly, we must note that Vedānta is not about doing anything or traveling physically anywhere or becoming anything. It is about SEEING (darshana) of the truth, which is every present!

Notes:

1 bhidyate hridaya-granthih.. tasmin dristhe paravare - Mundaka Upanishad 2.2.8

Dr G wrote:



LET YOUR WAY OF LIVING BE MEDITATION

A student asked a Zen master, “How do you use your meditation in your life?”

The master replied, “In my sleeping and in my eating!”

The student, much puzzled, reacted, “Everyone sleeps and eats!”

The master nodded and said, “When it’s time to sleep, I sleep; when It’s time to eat, I eat.”

What the Zen master was saying was that, because of his meditation, he was so in touch with the rhythms of his life that he knew exactly what he should be doing and when he should be doing it. He was fully conscious, self-aware and living in the moment each second of his life. His mind and his body were relaxed and calm, totally connected and in harmony.

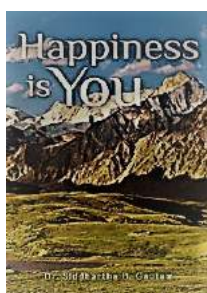
This should also be our goal.

Some people find it easier to calm their mind if their bodies are in gentle motion. I practice yoga myself every day. Yoga is a time-honoured meditative practice in which breathing techniques and physical poses combine to relax the body and calm the mind. Depending on the technique, you may be asked to focus your thoughts on a particular subject or to chant a mantra or to concentrate on your breathing. There are many different techniques and schools of thought for both meditation and yoga. Whether you find your inner peace through meditation, yoga or something else, remember to practice it daily and to integrate it fully into your life.

As the Chinese proverb says, “The man who removes a mountain begins by carrying away small stones.” You won’t move the mountain of mental distractions in your life in one day, but you can decrease its size a little at a time.

And when you do unplug from life’s distractions and turn your vision inward, the rewards are great. “In the attitude of silence, the soul finds the path in a clearer light. What is elusive and deceptive resolves itself into crystal-clearness,” Gandhi said.

{The above is excerpts from the book HAPPINESS IS YOU by Dr.Siddhartha B. Gautam, pages 33-34.}





Smt. Indira Gautam contributes from USA:

{The following e-leaflet shows the wonderful event that we had in Fayetteville on the first Saturday of February, 2018. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was specially focused on, as the e-leaflet shows.}



JOIN US! OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

TOPIC: **FIGHTING PTSD**

SPEAKER:

Dr. Angela Cook

WHEN:

Saturday, Feb. 3, 2018

WHERE:

**Kiwanis Recreation Ctr.
352 Devers St.
Fayetteville, NC 28303**

TIME

9:00 AM—11:00 AM

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The program is sponsored by the Society to Educate People (STEP), a non-profit organization initiated by Dr. Sid Gautam. It is a monthly event called "**HAPPINESS YOGA**" presented on the first Saturday in every month. We meet to have fun while we discuss a specific topic that the public can benefit from. Everyone is invited to attend.

On February 3, Dr. Angela Cook from Fort Bragg will discuss fighting PTSD. Prior to her presentation, there will be a segment on the **Magic of Movements and Meditation**, followed by **Food, Flavor, and Fun, with healthy food samples served**. For more information, please call 910.867.0070; email sidbgautam@gmail.com; or visit [Facebook Happiness Yoga](#).

Words from Guest Writers

Advice to Men from Big B

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOUR MOTHER AND WIFE?

Sri Amitabh Bachchan



What is the difference between your mother and wife....
They both LOVE us,
Both SACRIFICE for us,
Both make us eat
more than we require,
Both make our
house into HOME,
Both PRAY for us,
Both are ALWAYS
there for us,
Both LIVE for us..

...then why do we post/say funny jokes about wife and laugh and always post respectable quotes for mother?

The only difference I can see is one brings you into the world... and other makes YOU her world, but men always take their wives for granted and often ignore them in important talks, matters, decisions, planning etc.

...because they think that they are inefficient to handle them.

Dear men, it's true...
that your mother sacrifices to make you become a leader
but a wife sacrifices to maintain your leadership...
your mother gets your affection and care throughout her life..
but a wife gets your full attention only when she is near the end of her life...
waiting to get your certification of her soulmate...
Please give her importance in the early age of her life
so that she can feel that she is not only the princess of her father
but also the queen of her husband.



FISHERMAN OR PRINCE ? JIVA OR BRAHMAN ?

(narrated by Swami Shivananda)

A prince is sailing in a ship. He is the royal heir to a great kingdom. His father is a great emperor. The ship is caught in a cyclone and dashed upon a rock and through shipwreck all perish and only this prince clings on to a piece of wood and he is washed ashore to an unknown land where no one knows him, and the land is strange and he is penniless, and starvation has made him ill. Some fisherman takes pity on him and takes him into the fishermen's colony and nurses him back to health. After some time he gains strength and becomes a part and parcel of the fishermen's colony.

He has completely forgotten everything about his former state. He has got but faint memories of his previous life in the palace, but he knows nothing more of the palace. In this way he grows up as a fisherman, putting up with all the hardships of a fisherman's life.

The king meanwhile sends searchers. Ultimately someone manages to contact the prince after years of searching and he is someone who is intimate with the emperor, who knows certain birth-marks on the prince through which he can identify the prince without any fear of error, and he happens to come across this boy and he recognizes him and informs him that he was a prince, heir to a royal heritage. But attachment has grown between the young man and the fishermen and he cannot entertain the idea of leaving his foster-mother and foster-father. He declines to leave the fishermen. The successful searcher however tries to convince the young man.

Sincere effort on the part of the searcher finally pays. The young man returns to his biological parents, and, before long, is crowned the new king of the country.

{Comments: In the story above, the young man growing up amidst fisherman is the jiva, the *jivātmā*. The searchers are the saints, the children of God, and the spiritual books, and the Jiva, the shipwrecked prince, has forgotten his true home. From a state of plenitude, he has almost come to the position of beggary, ill-fed, sometimes starving. Searchers are going from country to country but who can recognize the prince among millions of people? Such is the condition of Jiva!

This is the process that takes place when the Guru tells the Jiva, "Your real nature is bliss. Unlimited wealth is yours." But the Jiva is attached to this miserable existence. So the Guru has to wean the aspirant from the state of forgetfulness. When the prince gets convinced by the knowledge given by the searcher, then a struggle begins. He has to make efforts to break his attachment and if he has to get back his lost heritage, he has to go back, and this process of going back is called *Sādhana*.}



Auroville, Tuesday, February 6: A very interesting place named Sadhana Forest hosted a talk-cum-interaction with Swamiji, and the topic was *Merging of Spirituality and Science*. The Ahimsa Eco Solutions, an international organization that runs this fabulous place, works towards making the world pollution-free! About 25 participants, most of whom were from foreign countries, listened attentively. QA and delicious, vegan dinner followed.
{Please take a look at www.sadhanaforest.org}

Mysuru, Tuesday, February 13: Sādhana Mandira, a new spiritual organization headed by Swami Hamsananda, organized Shivarātri Celebrations on a grand scale. Between 5.30 pm and 12 midnight, Hamsanandaji himself led the formal 'rudrābhisheka' that was performed 5 times. Chidanandaji spoke (in Kannada) for 30 mins, to an audience of 2000 enthusiastic devotees. The first-of-its-kind event was held at the NIE Sports Complex in the historic city of Karnataka.

Bengaluru, Thursday, February 15: A Montessori Teachers' Training Institute in Koramangala was the venue for a lively (talk and) discussion on the theme of *AWARENESS*. The event had some 25 young ladies and men, who are prospective Montessori teachers.

Bengaluru, Thursday, February 15: Later, on the same day, a get-together of some 40 keen students of Upanishads gathered in Malleswaram. Smt Veena Nagaraja had completed the text Kenopanishad and was going to take up Amrita Bindu Upanishad. Prof. BVA Rao chaired the meeting where Swamiji spoke on the *highlights of Kenopanishad*.

Bengaluru, February 16 thru 18: A residential retreat on *AN OUTLINE OF VEDANTA WITH GLIMPSES OF ADVANCED TOPICS* was held at Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma.

While the main theme was taken up by Swamiji, three sessions on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras were held by Swami Abhishek Chaitanya Giri, who came from Rishikesh. Āchārya Dr Nagaraju also took three sessions, where he threw light on a bunch of inspiring ten verses from Viveka-Choodāmani, which urge us to meditate on our true nature as Brahman.

Mumbai, February 19 thru 24: Six talks were delivered at the elegant venue of Somaiya Centre for Lifelong Learning in South Mumbai.

Shri Samir Somaiya, the young and dynamic chairman of Somaiya Group, inaugurated the lecture series. While the general theme was *CONTEMPLATION ON UPANISHADS*, Swamiji took the following six topics during the six evenings:

Pointers to Strength and Peace, Light on Noble Living, Resolving Conflicts in Relationships, Release from the Prison called Thinking, Managing Old Age and Facing Death, and The Main Principles of Vedānta.

Mumbai, February 25: *“HUMAN EFFORT AND DIVINE GRACE, AND THE MYSTERY OF OUR EXISTENCE”* was the topic on which Swamiji spoke to a gathering, which had a good number of members of Rotary Club Gen X. Its president Shri Jinesh Choksi organized the event with much zeal. The event was held at Juhu Gymkhana in the forenoon.

Mumbai, February 25 thru 27: The beautiful hall on the first floor of the well-known Mithibai College in Vile Parle was the venue for 3 evening talks on *JNANA-YOGA IN GEETA*. The specific topics on the three evenings were:

- a) *Every body dies, nobody dies,*
- b) *You are the light of all lights and*
- c) *The mind cannot bind you.*

Participants like Shri Sudhir Seth, Shri Ashok Chandavarkar, Smt Lakshmi Mohan, Smt Gayatri Valia and Shri Ashok Jain sang melodious bhajans before the lectures.

Smt Anita Mehra was the Master of Ceremonies (MC).

Mumbai, February 28: Shri Mohan Hejamadi, Smt Dolly Seth and Swamiji visited the elegant office of ATMA-DARSHAN and CHANAKYA ANVIKSHIKI, led by Smt Surekha Pillai and Dr Radhakrishnan Pillai respectively.

Swamiji spoke to the staff on *‘excellence in work, which is yoga,’* at these premises located in Mulund West.

Webinar, February 18: Cdr H C Guruprasad (retired, Indian Navy) presented the only webinar of this month and his topic was: *SIMPLE STEPS TO EVERYDAY HAPPINESS THROUGH SPIRITUAL INSIGHTS.*

{All these AUPAwebinars can be viewed on YouTube, by visiting the FOWAI channel. Use the search word fowai. This webinar for example is at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXTV9OEqb9k>}



Scene in Sadhana Forest, Auroville, before some 25 people - mostly foreigners - settled down to hear Swamiji on “Merging of Spirituality and Science” Feb 6.



Swamiji addressing the Shivaratri audience at Mysure, Feb 13, 2018
Swami Hamsananda ji doing Shiva Pooja is seen in background.



A section of the nearly 2000 strong participants at Shivaratri celebrations in Mysuru.



Acharya Dr Nagaraju and Swami Abhishek Chaitanya Giri are to Swamiji's left as 8 of the participants, led by Smt Veena Nagaraja (to Swamiji's right), pose for a photograph with the Pyramid meditation Centre in Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma, Feb 18, 2018.



Prof. BVA Rao, eminent academican (formerly senior faculty at IIT Madras) addresses Upanishad students in Malleswaram; Smt Veena Nagaraja, their teacher, is also seen.



Shri Samir Somaiya, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of The Somaiya Trust, lighting the lamp to inaugurate Swamiji's talks at the Somaiya Centre for Lifelong Learning, South Mumbai, 19/2/2018



Talk in progress at Somaiya Centre for Lifelong Learning (Feb 19 - 24)



They were of diverse backgrounds, of good intellectual caliber and truly interested in listening to Vedānta; audience at Somaiya.



Mr Jinesh Choksi, President of Rotary Club of Mumbai Gen X, is flanked by Mr Ramesh Sahajwani, Past President of Rotary Club of North Island and Swami Chidananda ji at Juhu Gymkhana, Feb 25, 2018.



Swamiji addresses young Rotarians (Gen X) on Effort versus Destiny



Audience in rapt attention as the talk on “Human Effort versus Divine Grace” is in progress.



Sri Mohan Hejamadi, Sri Sudhir Seth and Smt Dolly Seth are behind Swamiji as he lights a flame to inaugurate the talks on Geeta in Jagruti Hall, Mithibai College, Mumbai.



Melodious rendering of devotional bhajans by Sri Sudhir Seth during talks on Geeta.



The Jagruti Hall in the Mithibai College, Mumbai provided the right ambiance for the talks on Geeta. Feb 25 - 27.



Lord Vishnu at the altar



Smt Purnima Patel and her mother doing Arti (ārti) during the Vishnu Sahasra Nāma Archana at their house on Monday February 26.



Dr Radhakrishnan Pillai, well-known author and speaker, with Swamiji during a visit to Dr Pillai's office, Mulund, Mumbai on Feb 27, 2018.



Staff of Atma-Darshan and Chanakya - Anvikshiki listening to Swamiji



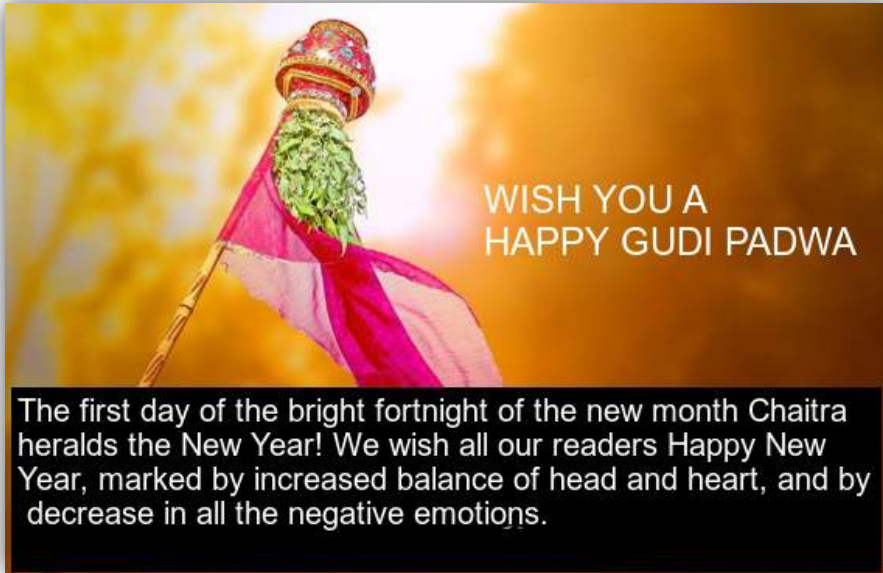
All smiles, following the interaction....Dr Radhakrishnan Pillai's young office associates, his family and team DHIMAHI.

UPCOMING Events

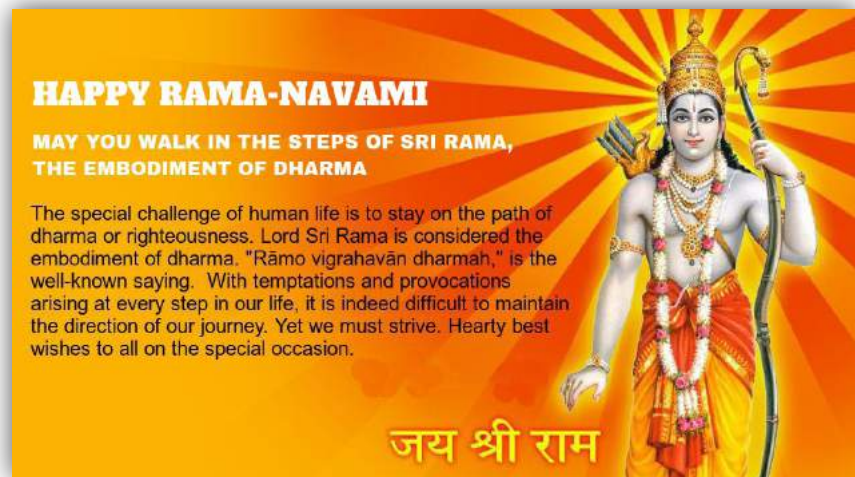
July 6 thru 13: A residential retreat will be held at a nice campus between Nashik and Shirdi. We will soon post the details on our websites: fowai.org and aupa.in.

TEAM AUPA WISHES ALL A VERY HAPPY FESTIVE MARCH

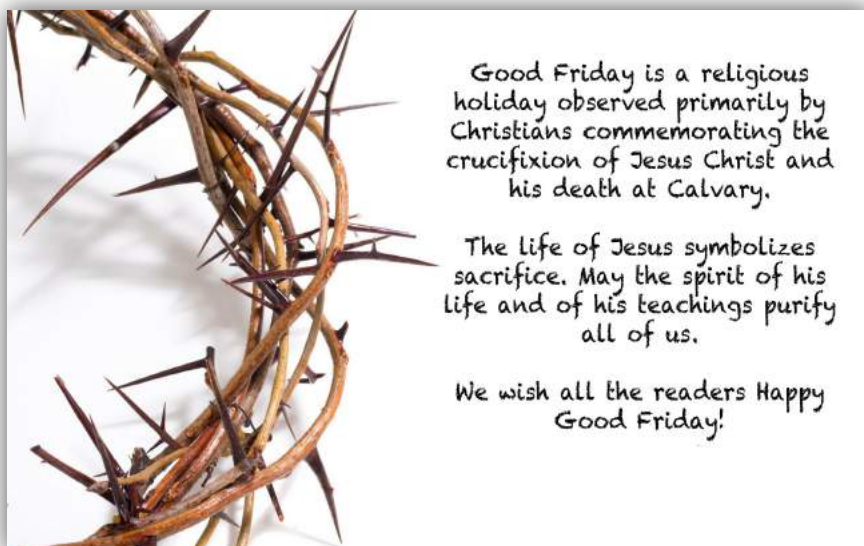
(Sunday March 18, Gudi Padwa / Ugadi)



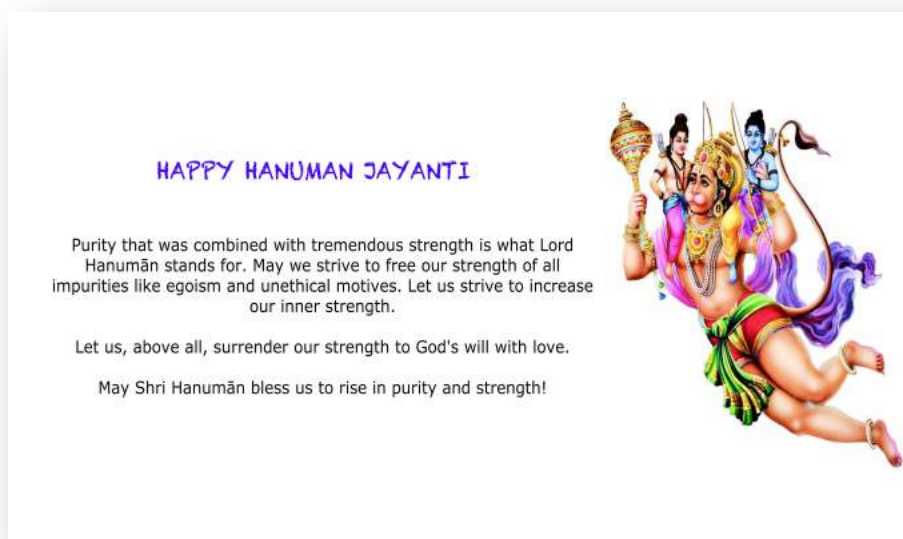
(Sunday, March 25 Rama – Navami)



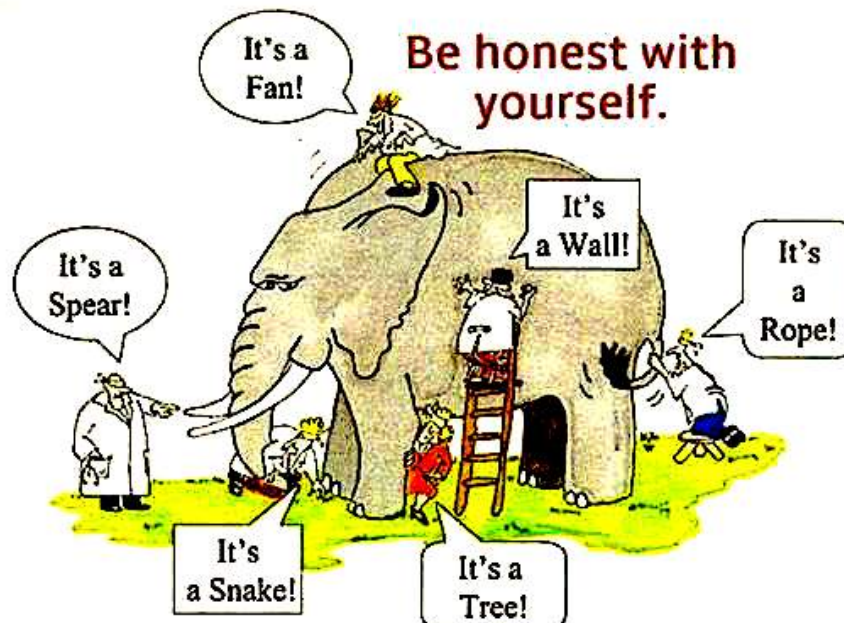
(Good Friday falls on March 30, 2018)



(HANUMĀN JAYANTI, March 31, 2018)



The false needs to be negated



As soon as you get up say to yourself,
"I am not my arms, I am not my legs, I am not my torso,
I am not my head, I am not my bones, I am not my blood,
I am not my respiration, I am none of these things.
For most of these things are functioning without my knowledge.
My heart beats, I didn't tell it to beat.
I have to go to the bathroom,
I didn't give my body permission to go to the bathroom.
The body wants to eat it gets hungry.
I never told my body to be hungry.
It appears as if I have nothing to do with my body at all".
You go further.
You say to yourself, "How about the world? I am not the world.
The world didn't exist a few moments ago when I was asleep.
Now that I am awake I think about the body,
the world, God, work, food, bathroom.
All these things happen when I wake up.
Well if I'm not those things, who am I"?
Who is the 'I' that is experiencing all this? I don't know.
Be honest with yourself.

Robert Adams

(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 – Upanishad Wisdom).

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