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Editor: Swami Chidananda  
Associate Editor: Dolly Seth

## AUPA eNEWSLETTER

### BE THE SELF OF ALL

The Upanishads are meant to bring about an awakening in us, helping us see that we are not at all limited to our present personality. Going beyond his space-time limitations was the realization of Sage Vāmadeva. The body of ours is limited but we are not limited to the body. Our essential being can transcend the present identifications and realize its unlimited nature.

*tad-ha-etat pashyan, Rishir-Vāmadevah pratipede*

*aham Manur-abhavam, sooryas-cha-iti*

*tad-idam-api etarhi, ya evam veda*

*aham brahmāsmiti*

*sa idam sarvam bhavati*

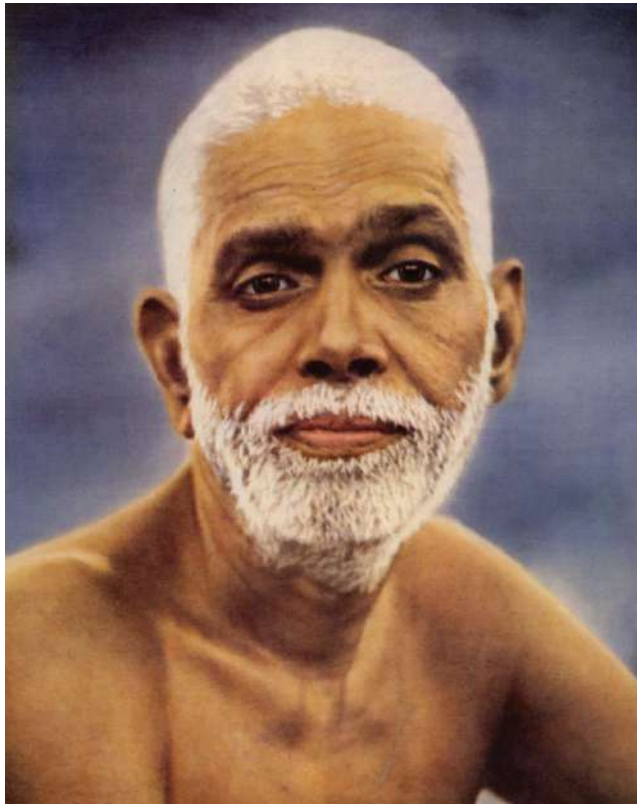
Seeing this indeed, the seer Vāmadeva knew: "I was Manu and the Sun too." This is so even now. Whoever knows thus, "I am Brahman," becomes all.

[The mantra 1.4.10 (chapter 1, brāhmana 4 and mantra 10) of the **Brihadāranyaka Upanishad** goes further to say that even the gods cannot prevent a person of such realization (from becoming all) for he becomes their self too.]

## Light on Self-inquiry

### SHOULD WE NOT PUT IN EFFORT?

[Backdrop: Because Advaita Vedānta says we are already That, many get confused and wonder if putting in effort is meaningless. The contradiction in them is that, when it comes to matters of the world, they put in effort without doubting its need. They also engage in spiritual *sādhana* – on and off – driven by their past tendencies and impressions! The following is Maharshi’s light on the issue, where everything is put in its proper place. –  
*Editors*]



*“There is a state beyond our efforts or effortlessness. Until it is realized, effort is necessary. After tasting such bliss even once, one will repeatedly try to regain it.”*

**Shri Ramana Maharshi**

(Source: Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi, Talk 131, January 19, 1936)



## **JOY IN THE JOURNEY ITSELF**

*Are you anxious about reaching the destination?*

In the transactional world, it is understandable that projects need to be executed in a timely manner. Justice delayed is justice denied, they say. All of us therefore are ever engaged in improving our skills of time management. We set goals and we wish to achieve those goals. There are milestones to be crossed and deadlines to be kept in mind.

In the psychological world, the matter is different. It becomes a painful bondage if we fancy becoming somebody, and the desire to boost our image in the eyes of the society shackles us, endlessly sometimes. Our mind plays a vicious game, giving to us always a negative report on our self-worth. It compares us with another person, declaring him as a winner and describing us as a loser. If we surpass that man in our achievements, our mind quickly brings yet another person into the scene and the story repeats: you are not as good as he is!

It becomes a bad habit very soon to live thus in self-rejection and we lose our ability to enjoy life. We are sore about 'not reaching somewhere' and we cease to enjoy the journey. In psychological simplicity, in contrast, we can be filled with wonder as we travel through life. Our journey gives us glimpses of very many fascinating facets of this mystery called life. There is happiness every now and then, if only we have the eyes to see. Therefore, the wise ones remark, "Success is not in reaching the destination but in enjoying the journey itself."

This psychological simplicity requires openness of outlooks, made possible through constant alertness. We must put aside the hundreds of ideas of prestige, status, past glory and notions of superiority or inferiority. We must, again and again, return to the simplicity of a child. Vedānta really helps us do this. Through its repeated admonitions to get rid of false identification with the body and the mind (*anātmā*, the not-self), the wisdom of the Upanishads facilitates a certain awakening in us. All the images are a dream. The Pure Self (the *ātmā*), of the nature of unconditioned awareness, is the true waking state. No wonder Lord of Death issues<sup>1</sup> a clarion call, "Arise, awake and get to know the (liberating) truth!"

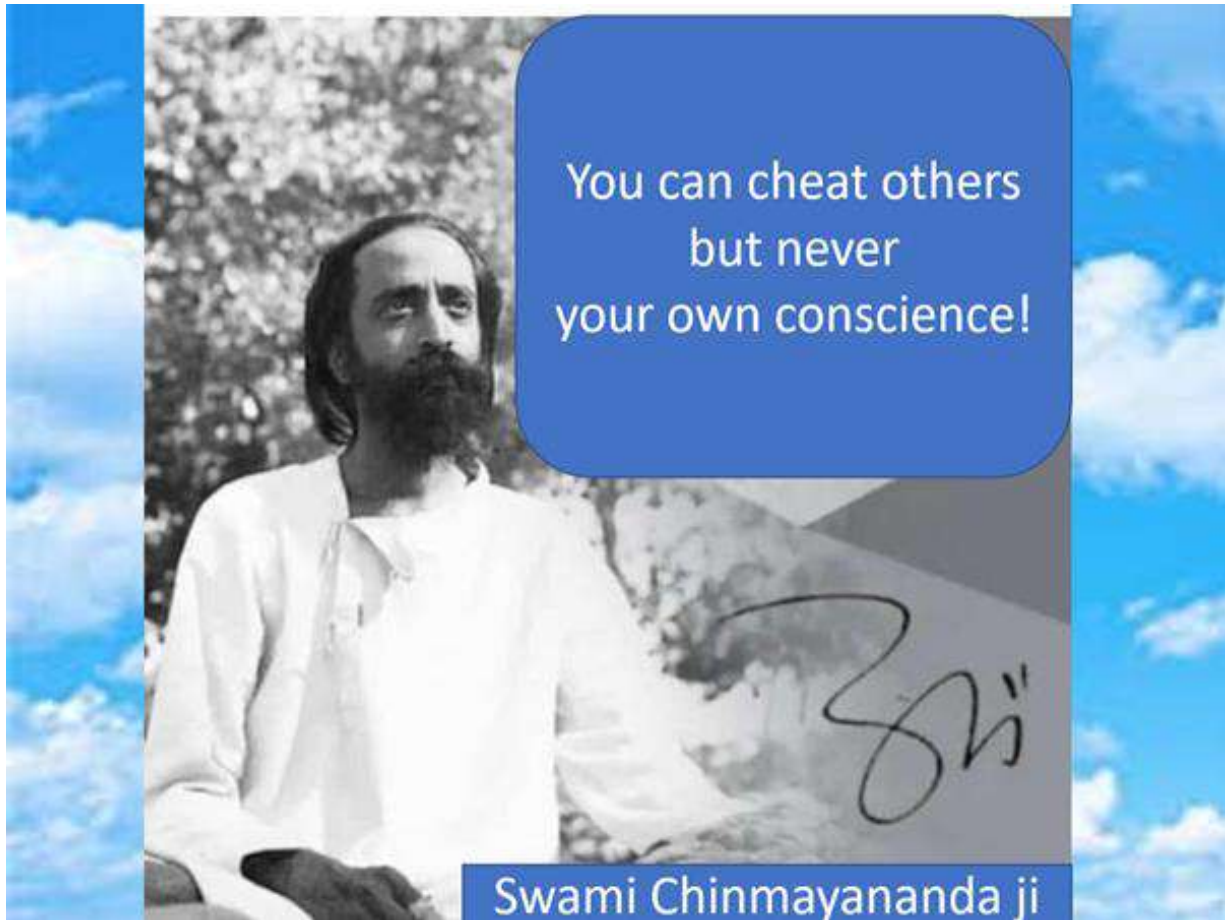
**Swāmi Chidānanda**

Note 1: *uttisthata, jāgrata, ...nibodhata* – Kathopanishad 1.3.14

*Thus Spake Chinmaya*



**DO NOT TRY TO BE TOO SMART!**



[What made Pujya Gurudev dear to large numbers of people, wherever he went, was how he deftly blended 'wisdom for daily life' with 'lofty Vedānta'. The quote above is an example, calling for transparency and honesty in our everyday living. - *Editors.*]

## Word Of the month

### NIRVEDA

#### (Dispassion / Dejection)

Mainly two meanings can be considered in the context of Vedānta works.

1 Dispassion: The famous mantra<sup>1</sup> in the Mundaka Upanishad speaks of a man coming upon dispassion or detachment, after examining all the possible results of 'karma', actions. Vedic rituals or secular works, however noble they may be, can yield only such results that are finite, time-bound. After such examination (*pareekshā*), he is no more interested in the pursuit of the finite ends. (He leaves *karma* and goes for *sannyāsa*.) This highly desirable state of mind is *nirveda*. Called *vairāgya* at other places, this is a prerequisite for the truly fruitful study of the Upanishads.

2 Dejection: Shri Krishna asks Arjuna to carry on meditation without getting dejected<sup>2</sup>. If '*nirveda*' means dejection, its adjective is *nirvinna*, meaning dejected. Its opposite is '*anirvinna*', which means, 'not dejected'. The motivational portions of Geetā ask us to do everything – meditation or work, religious duties or secular programs – with enthusiasm, and not in a manner of dragging our feet. "Be cheerful; do not pull a long face," is the message of Geetā, as applicable to discharging responsibilities in the world.

[Apte's dictionary gives yet another meaning of the word '*nirveda*', which is, "not acknowledging the Vedas, an atheist, infidel". We do not find such usage in the scriptures of the Vedānta. Sanskrit literature elsewhere perhaps uses the word in that fashion.]

Notes:

1 *pareekshya lokān karmachitān, ..nirvedam-āyāt .. Mu.Up.1.2.12*

2 *sa nischayena yoktavyo, yogo anirvinna-chetasā.. Geetā 6.23*

## Tips from the Upanishads

### DO NOT GET DELUDED

A little success makes many a man think of himself as a big fellow. Egoism and arrogance then mark his behaviour. Somebody lived in Europe for ten years and, after returning to India, he took quite some time before realizing that he was like anybody else. A lady had won a gold medal at the convocation in her university and life had to give her a few hard knocks before she understood that nobody can rest on past laurels for long, and avoid the work needed in present scenarios.

We must not let anything cause delusion in us, which expresses as various kinds of "imagining oneself to be special".



There is a 3-word statement in the Prashna Upanishad, which exhorts us against any mental delusions.

Please do not come under any delusion!

*mā moham-āpadyatha*

**(Prashna Upanisahd 2.3)**

We do not save ourselves from delusion and come upon humility by deciding to be so. Honest introspection, listening attentively to wise counsel and ensuring that our private life is as pure as how we present ourselves in public can help us remain grounded in reality. Then nothing can hijack us to make us stay on imagined clouds!

## Quote of the Issue

### WILL ALL KNOWLEDGE COME UNDER SCIENCE?

*“A few years back, Stephen Hawking, the well-known physicist, made a bold claim that Physics is converging so fast that in his lifetime it will come up with the Theory of Everything (TOE for short). Alas, Physics has not reached anywhere near omniscience and Stephen Hawking has turned into a more humble scientist who has stopped making exaggerated claims about the scope of Physics.”*

**Jay Lakhani**

(In an article in ‘Upanishads in Daily Life,’ published in 2008)



[In the 1960s and 70s, Jay Lakhani studied Physics at the Imperial College in London, and did some postgraduate work in quantum mechanics with Roger Penrose, this year's Nobel laureate. He is known these days for hundreds of lectures on various facets of Hinduism, of which videos are posted on YouTube.]

[Stephen Hawking, born in 1942, has meanwhile passed away in March 2018. The famous theoretical physicist and cosmologist from England wrote many books like 'A Brief History of Time' and 'The Universe in a Nutshell'.]

## Remembering Dr G

### THE WAY THE WORLD IS

(This is a story by the Jesuit priest, Father Anthony de Mello (1931 – 1987), re-narrated by Dr Siddhartha Gautam)



A crocodile is trapped in a net and appeals to a boy passing by to help free her. When the boy approaches, however, the crocodile tries to gobble him up. The boy manages to keep the powerful jaws from closing on him and berates the crocodile, "Is this how you repay my kindness?"

"Don't take it personally," the crocodile says, "This is the law of life. This is the way the world is."

"I don't believe that," says the boy.

The crocodile says, "Please ask any passer-by what he thinks."

A mother bird tells the boy how she watched a snake devour her nestlings. A donkey complains to the boy of being abandoned by his master in his old age.

"This is the law of life," they agree, "This is the way the world is."

The boy then asks a rabbit. The rabbit says such an important question cannot be discussed when the boy is stuck in the crocodile's mouth like that.

"He will run away if I let him go," the crocodile protests.

"Nonsense," the rabbit says, "Why? You could kill him with one blow with your tail!"

So, the crocodile, not remembering that most of her body including her tail is still trapped in the net, lets the boy go and the rabbit tells him to run.

He also advises the boy to bring back some villagers to kill the crocodile and have a feast. The boy does just that, but his dog also comes with him. Upon seeing the rabbit, the dog attacks him and kills him.

The boy then realizes – **this is the way the world is.**

{From the book *Happiness is YOU* by Dr Siddhartha B Gautam, page 65}

**Smt. Indira Gautam**  
**writes from USA**



## THE BRIGHT SIDE

Readers of AUPA, dear friends,

For more than nine months now, our way of living has been different. The dark side is that our freedom has been curtailed. We cannot go places; cannot meet people as we wish; cannot socialize at nice places; and have to think twice, even at home, as our hand tries to touch our own face!

There is a bright side too, to these Covid-19 days. Our mind is turning inwards, more than ever before. Our self-awareness is increasing. We get more reflective moments for introspection and self-examination. Our strengths and shortcomings, our good and bad habits, come before our mental eyes with their own messages, asking us to revisit the lessons that the 'school of life' always offered us.

Looking at the large numbers of death everywhere, due to the virus, we are more aware, than ever before, of the impermanence of life. Our Rishis had always said it. Lord Shri Krishna did not mince words when he said<sup>1</sup>, "ephemeral, miserable," and<sup>2</sup>, "abode of sorrow, impermanent".

All this is to help us have 'inner detachment,' while we must continue to do our duty in the world with enthusiasm, with a smile on our face. Death, disease and old age have always been on this earth; there is nothing new about them. They should however not be a cause for any of us to lose heart and develop cold feet while facing various situations that life necessarily brings before us.

"Remember Me and do your duty," is Shri Krishna's summary advice<sup>3</sup> to all of us. Let us follow the



divine instruction and make our life beautiful. **Harih Om!**

Notes:

1 *anityam, asukham* – verse 9.33 **Geetā**

2 *dukkhālayam, ashāshvatam* – verse 8.15, **Geetā**

3 *mām-anusmara, yudhya cha* – verse 8.7, **Geetā**

**Words from  
Guest writers**

## **COVID – 19, GATEWAY TO FREEDOM**

**Ishwarya Chaitanya**

[Darker than Corona are our own thoughts about ourselves, opines this Bengaluru-based writer, who also thinks it could be God's greatest gift to us, during these Covid times, to be able to look at ourselves. – Editors.]



This externally enforced self-isolation has put quite a few of us in a state of panic and despair. What to do with all this time? In certain parts of the world, online shopping services are still available and people can retain a sense of normalcy. What about those of us for whom this is no longer an option? What about places where home delivery is not an option as all efforts are being put to curb Corona's spread?

Those who were used to going to the gym now have to make-do with home workouts without the expensive equipment. In some places, the police are belting those seen out on the streets without a purpose. Let's face it. Some of us have never been alone and feel totally lost. Some of us do not have the luxury of large apartments or homes where we have space to run around, jump around, stomp our feet in frustration or ecstatic dance (as there are people living below). There are no libraries nearby, or no habit of reading in the first place. Some of us barely have space to roll out a yoga mat or God-forbid: slow internet! We are truly in a fix.



Are we? Being left with next to nothing in an almost apocalyptic situation is a true blessing in disguise. Being forced to look at yourself could be God's greatest gift to you. When you have nothing, you have everything to gain. And this is the time you can gain the ultimate: self-love, self-acceptance, best-friendship with yourself despite what's happening around you. Perhaps for the first time, you know for sure that you are not alone. Why is there so much restlessness in being alone?



Who are you trying to get away from while watching TV, reading a book, “doing” yoga or hanging out with friends? Why so much disdain that there is a constant need to “improve”, experience new people and places and “become better” in whatever sense of the term? Why this innate dissatisfaction, constant self-judgement and a need to engage in activity that helps you forget yourself and the problems you think you have? Why this chase for something other than what you have or who you are at present?

I'm not saying that we should not practice yoga or travel or experience new things (I pretty much do only this). I'm questioning the motive behind it. We spend our entire lives inside this body, yet our every action seems to take us away from being with the indweller of this body.

If boundless in nature, freedom, then, cannot lie in just being able to do what you want to do. It involves being free no matter the internal or external circumstance. In true freedom, neither the shape or condition of your body, nor the changing state of your mind, nor external circumstances would matter. Freedom implies total acceptance of the present, the ability to let go of the past and being able to give in to the winds of change without personal agenda. This is not apathy or complacency. *It is the acknowledgement of the supremacy of life as a whole that is not just a sum of the parts that we can cognize.*

Darker than Corona are our thoughts about ourselves. We have now, as a species, been placed at a gateway of discovery. Will you step through the door and go on this adventure into the unknown? What is there to fear when there's nothing to lose and everything to gain?



[**Ishwarya Chaitanya** likes to be looked at as just “a student of life”. Her Blog – [www.beneathabanyan.wordpress.com](http://www.beneathabanyan.wordpress.com) has many of her musings. While her parents live in Canada, she loves to be in India and has practically settled in Bengaluru. She is active in yoga and bharata-nāṭyam.]

## Guest Poem

### THE OLD MAN

Advait Shrivastav



The mansion I built  
Quakes destroyed with no guilt.

The money I had  
Has gone in hands: good and bad.  
My lady rests in garlands,  
And my sons work in foreign lands.  
All, that I considered mine  
Is now six, which earlier was nine.

The big questions of life  
Keep coming to my mind.  
"I am not this, I am not that,  
This is temporary and so is that."  
The river of pleasure,  
The torrent of agony,  
The wave of thought,  
All dissolve in the eternal sea.

I venture to find  
My life's purpose and goal  
I sit with my eyes closed  
And begin to discover my eternal soul.



[Advait Shrivastav | shrivastavadvait99@gmail.com | is a student of English literature at the Indraprastha University, pursuing his BA. This poem first appeared in "The Direct Path," the magazine of Ramana Kendra, Delhi, in its May-June-July 2020 issue.]

## Story time

### The Miracle of an Innocent Prayer

There lived in a city a certain owner of a medical store who was a non-believer of God, an atheist. However, he was much appreciated by the people of the locality due to his service-oriented attitude. While he was a non-believer, the rest of his family had firm faith in the Almighty. He belonged to a family that was constantly in the thought of God, prayer and temple visits. However, none of this changed his thoughts and he continued to be a non-believer.

Late one evening, the sky was highly over-cast and there followed a heavy downpour. As a result, the power supply was affected and there was no light in the medical store and on the streets. A completely drenched little boy came running to the store, handed out a prescription. He told the owner that his mother was very sick and needed the medicines urgently. The owner very reluctantly searched for the medicines in torch light and gave it to the boy who ran home.



In a while, the rains stopped, power supply was restored, and the lights came on. The owner walked towards the shelf and checked the medicines he had given to the boy. He was aghast at what he realized – he had given the boy a bottle of pesticide instead of the appropriate medicine bottle! He was consumed by guilt at his irresponsible behaviour. He felt criminal that an innocent life would be lost, and a young boy would be orphaned because of this. He felt quite helpless as he thought about how he could rectify the situation. As he glanced around, a picture poster of God hanging on the wall of his store caught his attention. It had been forcibly hung there by his father.

It reminded him of his father's words – *"In a situation which is beyond your control or if you are in a helpless situation, look at this picture and with folded hands pray with complete sincerity. You are sure to find a way."*

For the first time, this non-believer prayed with folded hands – something he had never done earlier! At that moment, as though a miracle, the same little boy came running to the medical store. The bottle of medicine that the owner had given him fell from his hands as he was running home in the rain. The boy tearfully begged that he needed another bottle of the medicine but had no money to

give to the owner.

The owner was overcome with relief. He hugged the boy tightly and sent him home, giving him the right bottle of medicine along with some money.

Although a non-believer until that moment, the owner's sincere prayer had indeed performed a miracle!

A sincere prayer from the heart is sure to make the 'as though impossible', possible!

*na me bhaktah pranashyati – This is Lord Krishna's declaration in the Bhagavad Geetā (9.31).*

*[The story above is translated from Kannada by **Shalini Keshavan**]*

## News

**Los Angeles, November 25:** The seventh Satsang in memory of Smt Ratna Bhatia in Los Angeles was held on the Thursday, November 26 (evening of Wednesday, November 25 in USA), online over Zoom. The topic was "Understanding and Handling Loneliness". During his presentation, Swamiji made a reference to the book on loneliness titled, "TOGETHER," written by Vivek Murthy, the 19<sup>th</sup> Surgeon General of USA.

**Talks on Radio:** The FM station 'jnāna-dhwani' (FM 90.8) has been airing Swāmiji's talks on every Monday at 7 am in Mysuru.

**Geetā and Upanishad talks on YouTube:** These have been going on, receiving excellent response from audiences in India and in the USA. As the Daylight-Saving Time ended in Europe and America, the timings in India have changed. Anyone can now join by reaching over to FOWAI channel at 8 am (IST) for Geetā on Wednesdays and at 9.30 pm (IST) for Mundaka Upanishad on Fridays.

**Kannada talks** every Wednesday, 7.30 pm IST: Swamiji has been delivering 30 minutes talks on Geetā to an audience consisting mainly of teachers at the Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhama in Bengaluru.

**Thursday, November 19:** Swamiji delivered a talk on "Is there action at all in our life? Or is it all mere reaction or just inaction?" online over Zoom, addressing mainly the members of the J Krishnamurti Study Circle of Indore. The 45 mins talk was followed by interaction.

**Saturday, November 21:** Swamiji presented his thoughts on, "Where does all this watching take us?" online over Zoom, addressing mainly the circle of friends associated with "Akshara-Maney," a school in Bengaluru.

**Thursday, November 26:** Swamiji delivered another talk on "Reflecting on Thought" online over Zoom, addressing mainly the members of the J Krishnamurti Study Circle of Indore.

## Webinars

### WEBINARS HELD

Sunday, November 22

# 186 by Swami Chidananda on “Comparison: Right or Wrong?”

Sunday, November 29

#187 by Shri Jnan Ranjan Dash on “Swami Vivekananda’s Teachings

### WEBINARS COMING UP

Sunday, December 6, 9.30 pm IST

# 188 by Swami Abhishek Chaitanya Giri on “Does Jivanmukti Exist?”

Sunday, December 27, 9.30 pm IST

# 189 by Dr Thimappa Hegde on “Contributions of Sri Vidyaranya Swami”

Sunday, January 3, 2021, 9.30 pm IST

# 190 by Swami Chidananda on “Verses in Geeta Highlighting Advaita”

More will be announced / intimated over Emails to our subscribers.

### Webinar Presenters



Shri Jnan Ranjan Dash

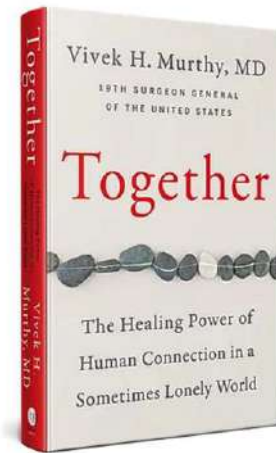
Swami Abhishek Chaitanya Giri

Dr Thimappa Hegde

Presenters of Webinars 187, 188 and 189

## AFFECTS PUBLIC HEALTH

- Vivek Murthy, MD's book
- Humans are social creatures
- Human connection has healing power
- Loving, caring, feeling loved



One of the slides that was presented during the Satsang on Nov 25.

### Upcoming Events

**Saturdays, December 5, 19:** Swāmiji will speak to a large audience, spread across the world, on OrthoTV, a channel especially meant for the World Association of Orthopaedics. Two webinars will be offered on Saturdays December 5 and 19 on the topics, “Emotional Intelligence: Spiritual Perspectives,” and, “Nuts and Bolts of Spiritual Intelligence (SQ)”.







**#Spiritual Saturday**

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE,  
SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVES

**Swami Chidananda**

5th December 2020, 8.30 am IST

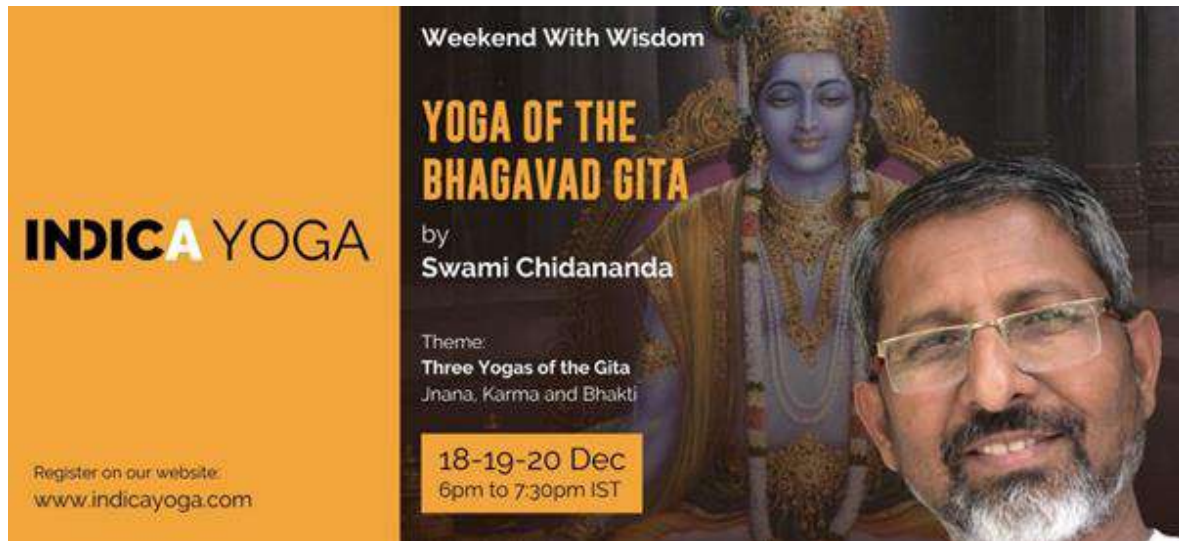
Moderators:  
Dhiren Ganjwala, Hetal Chiniwala, Tushar Agarwal



www.orthotvonline.com



**Fri-Sat-Sun, December 18, 19, 20:** Swamiji will present three talks on “The Yogas of Geetā” online, addressing the large circle of students associated with Indica Yoga.



**YouTube Classes:** These will continue as per the schedule mentioned above.

## **GEETĀ JAYANTI 2020** Friday, December 25

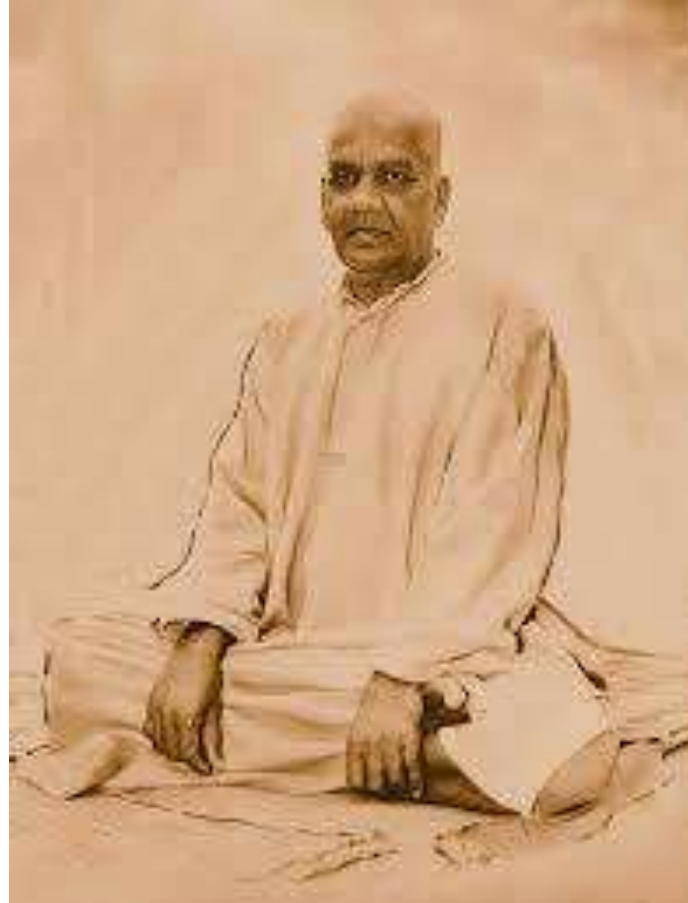


Geetā literally means a song. The wisdom in the teachings of Lord Shri Krishna, as

contained in this holy text, can surely make our life a 'song of joy'. Spiritual ignorance is behind our sorrow and delusion (*shoka-moha*) and it leaves us when we understand and live the guidance from the 'Song Celestial'.

**TEAM AUPA** wishes all our readers a Happy Geetā Jayanti!

[The 11<sup>th</sup> day of the bright fortnight (*shukla-paksha*) of the month of Mārgashirsha is always the auspicious day of Geetā Jayanti ]



On this auspicious day, we observe the birth anniversary of Pujya Swāmi Tapovan also, who was the teacher of Pujya Swāmi Chinmayānanda ji. We offer '*pranāms*' to the *parama-guru*. We express the hope that all of us, the readers of AUPA, imbibe the great virtues like dispassion (*vairāgya*) and devotion to knowledge (*jnāna*) that the master of Uttar Kāshi stood for.

**TEAM AUPA**



**TEAM AUPA wishes all our readers a very happy New Year 2021**

(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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