

AUPA e-Newsletter

August 2021
Volume 7, Issue 2 (No. 74)



Editor: Swami Chidananda
Associate Editor: Dolly Seth

Mantra to Ponder

IN PRAISE OF WATER

Reverence for all aspects of Creation runs through the Upanishads. It is wrong to imagine that Vedānta looks down at this universe, calling it an illusion. Sage Sanat Kumāra exhorts Rishi Nārada to look at the many dimensions of our existence with awe and regard, before reaching the heights of spiritual intuition where Bhoomā, the Infinite Reality, is appreciated.

sa yo'po brahmeti upāste, āpnoti sarvān kāmān, triptimān bhavati

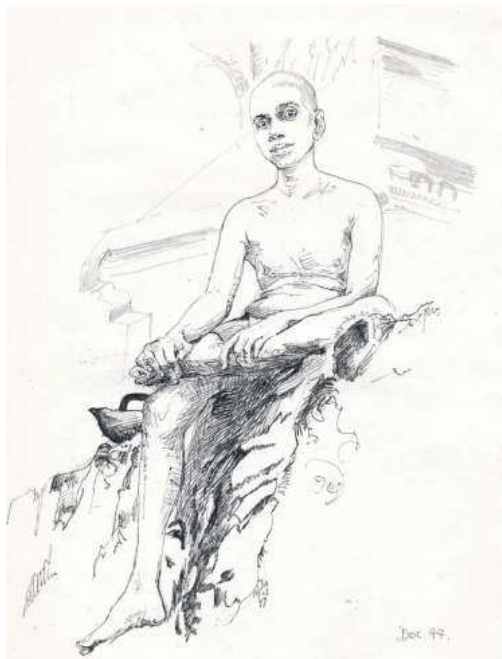
*He who meditates on **water** as Brahman, obtains all his desires and becomes satisfied.*

Chāndogya Upanishad 7.10.2

We must see the glory of this world, as expressed in name, speech, mind, will, thought, contemplation, understanding, strength, food, **water** and many more dimensions. In that sense, the world is real (*satyam*) but Brahman (called *bhoomā* in this chapter 7) is the higher reality (*satyasya satyam*).

Light on Self - Inquiry

DIVINE WILL MAKES US INQUIRE, “WHO AM I?”



“Divine Will prevails at all times and under all circumstances. The individuals cannot act of their own accord. Recognize the force of the Divine Will and keep quiet. Each one is looked after by God.”

Shri Ramana Maharshi

(Source: Talk 594, December 1938, Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi)

[Backdrop: Students are baffled by the statements of great, enlightened mystics to the effect that everything happens by Divine Will alone. Why should we then do any *sādhana* at all? Bhagavān Ramana Maharshi would just smile at such doubts. He would say, without compromise, that everything happens as per Divine Will only. Our doing *sādhana* one day and lying idle on another day are both as per the Divine Will. The notions that we did something good or we failed to do it are foolish. God does everything. – Editors]

Thus Spake Chinmaya



WHY DO WE CHASE SENSE-OBJECTS?



“Man is constantly seeking his share of peace and happiness and, since he does not know the real source of these, he looks for them in the midst of sense-objects.”

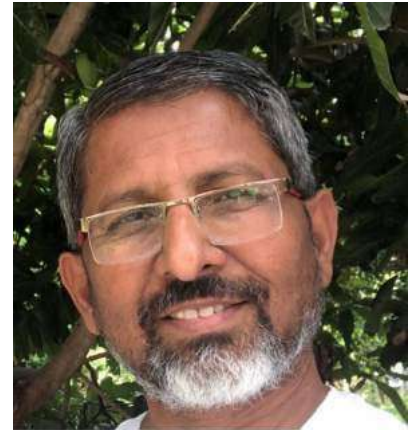
Swami Chinmayananda

(In the book “Vedanta – The Science of Life”, Part 2)

[Puja Gurudev drank from the fountain of the Upanishadic teachings and, energized by them, tirelessly spoke and wrote for decades – all a labour of love. – Editors.]



From the Editor's Desk



Swami Chidananda

NO PAIN, NO GAIN

Hard Work is Sometimes the Best Prayer

“Narayana likes the smell of your sweat,” said Swami Chinmayanandaji, urging us, his disciples, to work hard and not settle for comfort and convenience. He himself was seen to work hard, spending long hours in going through files, giving decisions, writing to devotees around the world and making new plans for the expansion of his spiritual work.

Robin Sharma, the popular author of books like *The Monk who Sold his Ferrari* and *The 5 AM Club*, talks about three phases of change that anybody among us should go through, in order to emerge as great achievers and effective leaders. The three are: Destruction, Installation and Integration. Old habits have to be destroyed; new, good ones have to be installed and the new ones have to get integrated into our system. The phase of installation, he remarks, is very painful but the misery is worth going through, considering the fabulous benefits of the right habits that we bring to our daily life.

No wonder the Kathopanishad declares¹, “The path to Self-knowledge is like a razor’s edge.” We make a little error; we bleed as a consequence. We must however walk the dangerous path for our heart’s desire for total freedom is fulfilled only through Self-knowledge. The Vedānta is never tired of asking² us to stay away from what is merely pleasing (*preya*) and to opt for what is truly beneficial (*shreya*). Pleasures and comforts are all the time tempting us to take life easy and, slowly, degrade ourselves to more and more materialistic ways of living.

Awareness or alertness, no doubt, is the primary tool to spiritual awakening. When we indiscriminately avoid pain and choose pleasure instead, those very choices are a sure sign of our having lost the wakefulness that is the vital need for the upward spiritual mobility. In contrast, when we find ourselves welcoming hardships and not minding certain extra stress

and strain on the path of right living, it is a sure sign of our being poised for personal discoveries of great spiritual truths.

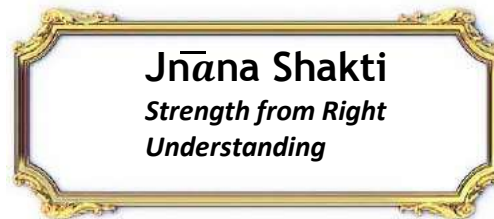
“That is the best kind of happiness, which involves tears and sweat in the beginning but brings nectar-like joy at the end,” says³ Geetā, urging us to relentlessly exert towards our own emancipation. From a higher point of view, however, it is Divine Will only that helps us turn around and begin to move in the right direction in life. Otherwise, the numerous forces at work, in this world of endless *māyā*, just hold us captive in their iron grip. Like someone trying to rise and escape from quicksand, our efforts too miserably fail and we sink deeper into delusion despite all our efforts.

We must therefore learn to welcome hardship; volunteer to walk the ‘road less travelled’. A quote from the armed forces, “The more you sweat in peace, the less you will bleed in war,” echoes the same value. Without such pain, there cannot be any worthy gain.

1: *kshurasya dhārā nishitā duratyayā* – Kathopanishad 1.3.14

2: *shreyascha preyascha manushyametaḥ* – Kathopanishad 1.2.2

3: *parināme amṛita-upamam* – Geeta 18.37



A Centre for Vedānta Studies

FOWAI FORUM is happy to announce that plans are afoot to build an Āshram, to be called Jnāna Shakti, at the village Vawe near Khopoli in Maharashtra.



Jnāna Shakti means the Power of Right Understanding. The wisdom that the Vedānta gives us is really unparalleled in terms of the empowerment it can bring about. This jnāna – knowledge – lets us know our true nature, which in turn helps us let go of numerous self-

imposed constraints. Jnāna thus releases Shakti, the ability to do good work with effectiveness.

During his recent visit to Mumbai, Swāmiji had meetings with key members of FOWAI and they together selected a competent architect for the project. Drawings are being prepared for the spiritual centre to come up on the 3.6-acre land that FOWAI FORUM bought in December last year.

We will update you on this project under this new column in every issue of AUPA. We will need the participation and support of all of you in this endeavour. *Team AUPA*



TAMAH

(Darkness, A Guna, Ignorance)

The word '*tamah*' is found at a lot of places in our scriptures. The following meanings may be noted.

1 Darkness: '*tamah*' and '*prakāsha*' are used to imply darkness and light respectively to imply utter opposites. Ādi Shankarāchārya, for example, uses this pair of words in the very first sentence of his Brahmasutra-bhāshya. Ishāvāsya Upanishad warns us that we will enter '*andham tamah*' (blinding darkness) if we remain attached to mere action (karma).

2 A Guna: One of the three attributes of *prakriti*: Shri Krishna declares² in the Geetā, "The attributes of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* arise from *prakriti*." [Prakriti here is Nature, as distinguished from Purusha, the Conscious Spirit. Prakriti is the original source of the material world as the Sāṅkhya Darshana puts it.]

3 Error in Understanding or Ignorance (*avidyā*): Ādi Shankarāchārya uses the word '*tamah*' to imply *avidyā* itself at some places in his Sutra-bhāshya. Avidyā is essentially the error in understanding, which then becomes the frame of reference in which space, time and causation appear.

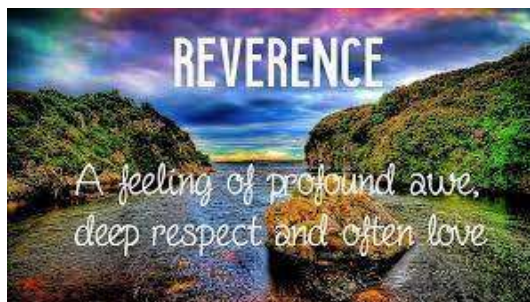
1 *andham tamah pravishanti ye avidyām upāsate* – Ishāvāsya Upanishad, mantra 9.

2 *sattvam rajas-tamah iti gunāḥ prakriti-sambhavāḥ* – Geetā 14.5

Tips from the Upanishads

REVERENCE FOR ALL LIFE¹

The Upanishads are all-inclusive in their approach to life. They had deep concern for all life, which was born of perception of the One Truth that is present everywhere. In their prayer, they sought the wellbeing of all beings – human beings or birds (two-legged) as well as animals and insects (with four or more legs).



May peace be upon the two-legged and upon the four-legged ones!

shan no astu dvipade, sham chatushpade

[Peace invocation associated with Purusha Sukta, Taittiriya Āranyaka, 3rd Prashna]

This vision recognizes the unity of life and emphasizes the interrelatedness and interdependence of existence. As man evolves, he recognizes his own higher self that is present in everything. He begins to treat all life forms with reverence.

He feels compelled to contribute to the wellbeing and prosperity of all. Such a wholesome idea of interdependence is dawning on the modern scientific community now. Better late than never.

¹ We acknowledge that the paragraphs in this piece of writing are based on an article titled *Upanishads and the Ideal of Service* by M Lakshmi Kumari, the President of Vivekananda Kendra Vedic Vision Foundation.

Quote of the issue

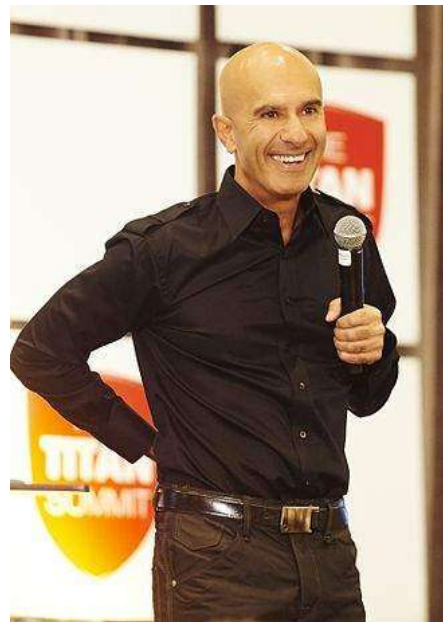
PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

(picture of Robin Sharma)

“The old you must die so a better you can be reborn. For you to upgrade to greatness, you must undergo an annihilation of your weakness. It requires enormous courage, immense conviction and uncommon strength of character. You have all this in you. Just resolve to apply it. With practice and patience, it will all get easier.”

Robin Sharma

(In his book ‘THE 5 AM CLUB’)



[Robin Sharma is a Canadian writer, best known for his *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari* book series . Sharma worked as a litigation lawyer until age 25, when he self-published *MegaLiving* (1994), a book on stress management and spirituality. He initially also self-published *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari* (1997), which was then picked up for wider distribution by HarperCollins. Sharma has published 12 other books, and founded the training company Sharma Leadership International.]

**Smt. Indira Gautam
writes from the U.S.**



Smt Indira Gautam writes from USA:

WHEN THE BALLOON FLIES AWAY

Readers of AUPA, dear friends,

A child was enjoying her time at a beach with her parents. There was a balloon seller around and he had colourful balloons, filled with helium, that would go as high as their strings would permit. The child was naturally very attracted to the balloons and asked her parents to buy one for her. In this old-time story, the parents, who were rather poor, thought twice before getting her desire fulfilled. When she got the balloon, of her chosen colour too – red – she was indeed on cloud nine.

As the little one ran from here to there, and from there to here, with her new toy flying in the sky, the string of her balloon came very near some men who were smoking. Unfortunately for her, the burning end of one of the cigarettes touched the string and, in an instant, it got broken. The girl's prized possession – the red balloon – flew away and soon vanished!

The child began to cry inconsolably. It seemed to her as though her world had ended. *Are we different?* When we do not get a much-desired promotion, when a much-valued, long-time friend leaves us, when our hard-earned money goes down the drain because of unexpected market fluctuations or when our dream-project stops half-way with no prospect of regaining its momentum, don't we also feel as though our world has come to an end?

One of the essential messages I get for the Vedānta is that we must understand the impermanence of things of the world; we must know that change is life's nature; and we must fix our mind on God, who alone is permanent, who alone stays with us forever.

We must not let go of God; He will surely not let go of us¹ either! When our balloons fly away and vanish into thin air, we must take a deep breath and, remembering the Lord of our hearts, smile.

Harih Om!

Notes:1 *tasyāham na pranashyāmi, sa cha me na pranashyati* – verse 6.30 of Geetā

GuestSpeak

OPEN YOUR HEART TO “THE LIGHT”

Do not let your energy be scattered

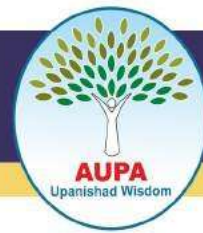
Mother Meera



On happiness and satisfaction

Try to be content with what you have. You said that you tried to achieve something more but you did not get it and you are unhappy about the whole situation. Trying is good. But be happy whether you get it or not.

There are different types of satisfaction or contentment. If you work hard with justice, then you have the contentment of your earnings. When you earn money based on your good deeds and morality and spend the money on good deeds, then you are cheerful and joyful with your actions. With good thoughts, feelings, words and actions, you have the satisfaction of



truthfulness. When one does one's duty wholeheartedly and sincerely, this gives the duty satisfaction. These are all signs of spiritual growth.

On silence

People are too active and rarely sit quietly. In silence one can receive more because all one's activities become concentrated at one point. My teaching is to give only the essence, the Divine, that which is necessary. I give exactly what is needed by each person. Paramātman is silent. God is silent. Everything comes out of silence. In silence more work can be done. The true experience of bliss is without words.

On decision making

Sleep for one night and then make the decision. Don't panic. Don't waste time asking yourself constantly: Shall I do this or that? Decide, be finished and then go for it.

On jobs and work

Be grateful to have a job and earn money. There are problems with every job; even with a new job there will be problems. It is better to accept the situation and adapt first. If that doesn't work, you can switch jobs.

On lessons from the pandemic

All people, rich and poor, and all nationalities are affected. It is an invitation to all people and all countries, regardless of any individual characteristics or attributes, to work together. Don't be afraid, keep calm and pray!

[Mother Meera is an Indian mystic and spiritual teacher born in 1960 in Telangana, and lives in a small village near Limburg in the German countryside. Here, and during her travels around the globe, she gives her unique blessing of Darshan. She is a spiritual personality, who is not a teacher in the conventional sense. Devotees regard her as an embodiment of the Divine Feminine, the Divine Mother on earth. The free transmission of Light, Love and Grace is Mother's gift to the world. In her own words, "*The whole purpose of my work is in the calling down of the Paramatman Light and in helping people. For this I came – to open your hearts to the Light.*" See mothermeera.com for more details.]

This piece was contributed by Nimish and Nikhaar Sharma from Dehradun.

Story Time

THE ABUNDANCE PRINCIPLE *And a Hard Test of Faith*

Once a man got lost in a desert. The water in his flask had run out two days ago, and he was on his last legs. He knew that, if he didn't get some water soon, he would surely die. The man saw a small hut ahead of him. He thought it would be a mirage or maybe a hallucination, but, having no other option, he moved towards it. As he got closer, he realized it was quite real. So, he dragged his tired body to the door with the last bit of his strength.

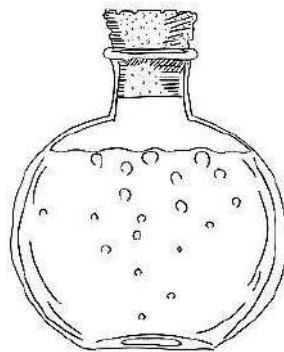
The hut was not occupied and seemed like it had been abandoned for quite some time. The man entered it, hoping against hope that he might find water inside.

His heart skipped a beat when he saw what was in the hut – a water handpump.....It had a pipe going down through the floor, perhaps tapping a source of water deep underground.

He began working the hand pump, but no water came out. He kept at it and still nothing happened. Finally, he gave up out of exhaustion and frustration. He threw his hands up in despair. It seemed he was going to die after all.

Then the man noticed a bottle in a corner of the hut. It was filled with water and corked up to prevent evaporation.

He uncorked the bottle and was about to gulp down the sweet life-giving liquid, when he noticed a piece of paper attached to it. Handwriting on the paper read, "Use this water to start the pump. Don't forget to fill the bottle when you're done."



He had a dilemma. He could follow the instructions and pour the water into the pump, or he could ignore it and just drink the water.

What to do? If he let the water go into the pump, what assurance did he have that it would work? What if the pump malfunctioned? What if the pipe had a leak? What if the underground reservoir had long dried up?

But then... maybe the instruction was correct. Should he risk it? If it turned out to be false, he would be throwing away the last water he would ever see.

Hands trembling, he poured the water into the pump. Then he closed his eyes, said a prayer, and started working the pump.

He heard a gurgling sound, and then water came gushing out, more than he could possibly use. He luxuriated in the cool and refreshing stream. He was going to live!

After drinking his fill and feeling much better, he looked around the hut. He found a pencil and a map of the region. The map showed that he was still far away from civilization, but at least now he knew where he was and in which direction he had to go.

He filled his flask for the journey ahead. He also filled the bottle and put the cork back in. Before leaving the hut, he added his own writing below the instruction: "Believe me, it works!"

[The story above is collected and re-narrated by Shalini Keshavan]



THINK HAPPY, MOVE FREELY AND BUILD YOUR IMMUNITY

Your posture affects your mood and vice versa

In their experiments and trials, The National Centre for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) have proven that stooped posture activates negative mood and influences recovery from pre-existing negativity. Stooped posture evokes negative thoughts as compared to a person with a straight and open posture. We understand straight, but what do we mean by 'open posture'? According to Charles Darwin sign language was used in primitive man to convey

emotion and movement in humans and animals. Similarly posture today is the language that is used to understand human emotions and it is how judgments are made in a social environment. We can understand this better by these examples of open and closed posture.



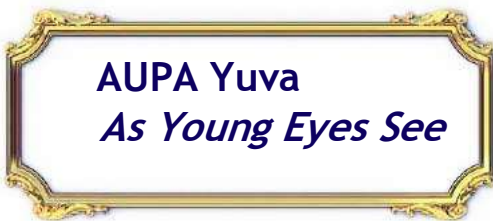
Closed postures can give the impression of indifference, boredom and introvertedness. While recalling a dismal event or brooding over the death of a loved one, eyes tend to look down, the back stoops and head bows down. Notice the posture of people who are worrisome and always pessimistic. They always imagine and recall negative events and think of the worst scenario during conversations. Sitting in a hunched position rather than an upright posture while thinking of an event, leads people to recall more negative aspects related to the event. Negative thoughts and emotions increase stress and that reduces immunity and disrupts optimal well-being.



Open postures communicate to the observing individual there is enough confidence, self-validation, warmth and thus openness of expression. Rarely, is a happy excited person slouching. Nor have I ever met a depressed or negative person who has their chest held high with an open heart. Some research has even proven that children with better postures score well at maths tests in school. Learning outcomes increase for any individual with an upright spine. This has been the foundational aim for most Yogic practices in India. ‘Focus on keeping the spine straight. It is the job of the spine to keep the brain alert’ – B.K.S. Iyengar.

So watch your current body language! What does it convey about your present emotions and thoughts?

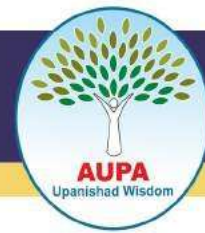
(Shikha Puri Arora is a rehab trainer, posture, ergonomic consultant and your support from injury to fitness based on real science. You can write to her on shikhapuriarora@gmail.com)



{We invite young women and men to contribute to this new column.}

YOU AND I TOGETHER MAKE LIFE





How Can You "SM_LE" Without "I" ?
How Can You Be "F_NE" Without "I" ?
How Can You "W_SH" Without "I" ?
How Can You Be "N_CE" Without "I" ?
How Can You Be a "FR_END" Without "I" ?
"I" Am Therefore Very Important!

How Can I Achieve "S_CCESS" Without "U" ?
How Can I "LA_GH" Without "U"?
How Can I Take A "C_P" of Coffee Without "U"?
How Can I Enjoy The "S_NSHINE" Without "U"?
How Can I Have "F_N" Without "U"?
All This Makes "U" More Important Than "I"!*

Therefore, in this human life of ours, U and I = WE need one another in life to be happy, to work together and to achieve great things. Let us propagate positivity and shun negativity.

[Author: Someone who is surely young in heart.]



One Month Break in YouTube Classes

Swāmiji took a month-long break from the regular, weekly classes on YouTube. The Geetā and Upanishad classes will resume on August 3 and 6 respectively. The Kannada Satsangs under the banner of Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma also were put on hold for the month of July.

Other Online Classes

The Saturday evening classes on Kathopanishad, under the banner of The School of Ancient Wisdom, continued without any interruption. Those who wish to receive the link may write to mgravi2000@gmail.com

Guru Purnima, July 24, 2021

The auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima was celebrated with much enthusiasm by the Vedanta students under the umbrella of FOWAI FORUM with an 80 minutes online event. Shri Mohan Hejamadi planned the program and Smt Ashwini Kulkarni was the master of ceremonies. Kum. Ashika presented a short piece of Bharata Nāṭyam, followed by melodious bhajans by Shri Ravi Bharati of Trinidad. He was a student of Swāmiji between 1991 and 93

at the Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Mumbai. Swami Hamsanandaji from Sadhana Mandira, Mysuru, Swāmini Tattvapriyānandaji from Sangli and Brni Vibhā Chaitanya from Pune gave short talks on Shri Veda Vyāsa, Shri Swāmi Chinmayānandaji and Ādi Shankarāchārya respectively. Ms Shreyas Gawde from Goa, Master Ribhu Yatish from Bengaluru and Smt Ashwini Kulkarni from Goa presented beautiful hymns (stotras) to add to the delight of all participants. Towards the end, Swamiji spoke on the importance of having a guru, highlighting the subtlety of the subject of the Vedānta. He also announced the name – Jnāna Shakti – for the new āshram that will come up soon. The program concluded with a short poojā by Swami Hamsanandaji, where the 108 names of Vyāsa were recited and ārati was performed.



WEBINARS HELD

Sunday, July 4, 2021, 8.30 pm IST

203 by Smt Radha Muralidharan on “Shri Vidyā Upāsana”

Sunday, July 18, 8.30 pm IST

204 by Swami Chidananda on “Deep Relaxation – Tips from Bhagavad Geetā”

WEBINARS TO BE HELD

Sunday, August 8, 2021, 8.30 pm IST

205 by Swami Chidananda on “The Wisdom of Two Rooms”

Sunday, August 23, 2021, 8.30 pm IST

206 – Speaker and Topic to be announced.



Shri Ravi Bharati from Trinidad (West Indies) sang melodious bhajans at the online Guru Purnima function, July 24.



Swami Hamsananda from Mysuru spoke on Shri Veda Vyasa, July 24, 2021.



Swamini Tattvapriyananda praised Swami Chinmayanandaji



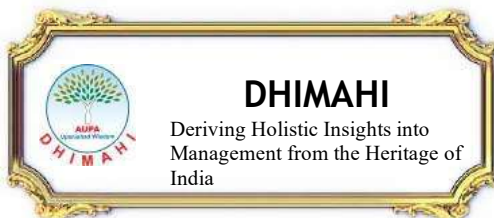
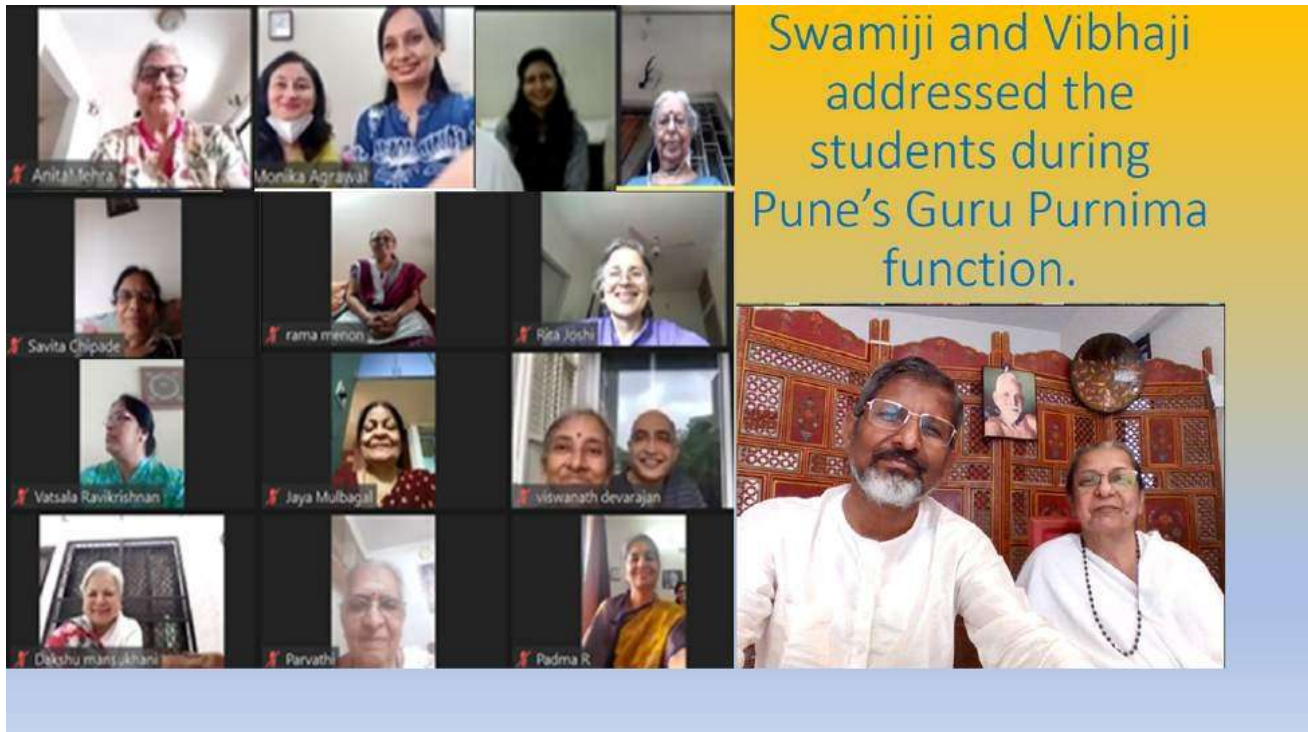
Master Ribhu sang Guru-Ashtakam.



Vedanta students from far and wide took part in the Guru Purnima celebrations, July 24, 2021

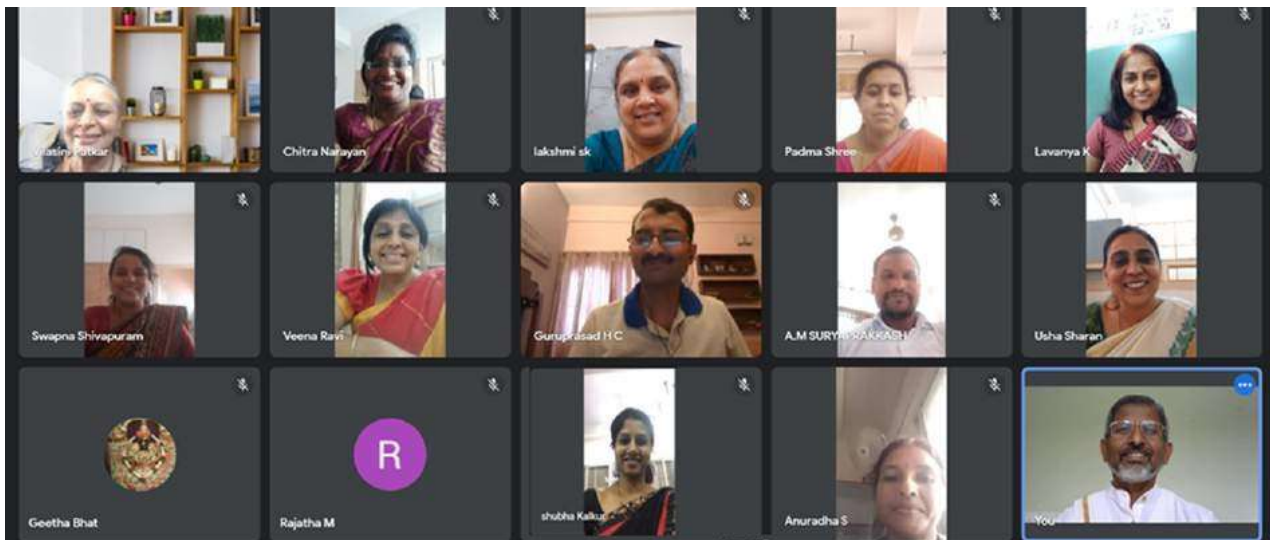


In his speech, Swamiji announced the name 'Jnāna Shakti' for the upcoming Ashram of FOWAI FORUM.




Faculty Development Program for College Teachers

Swāmiji and Cdr Guruprasad conducted a 5-day Faculty Development Program (FDP) organized by the C B Bhandari Jain College in Bengaluru. Teachers of Commerce and Excellence. Guruprasad covered 'Wisdom and Strength to Sail through Stress'. Swamiji handled topics like 'Finding Peace in a Hurried World,' 'Turning Proficiency into Efficiency' and 'Enhancing Emotional Intelligence' apart from offering a whole session on general introduction to Holistic Excellence. Ms Usha Sharan, the head of department of postgraduate studies at the C B Bhandari Jain College, was the coordinator.



Swamiji and Cdr Guruprasad conducted a 5-day online Faculty Development Program, a Workshop with the theme 'Holistic Excellence' organized by C B Bhandari Jain College of Bengaluru, July 26 – 30, 2021




C.B. BHANDARI JAIN COLLEGE
BANGALORE
शान्ति परमो धर्म


C B Bhandari Jain College

#84, K.R Road Shankarapuram Bangalore 560004
NAAC ACCREDITED 'B' GRADE AFFILIATED TO BENGALURU CITY UNIVERSITY

**THE POST GRADUATION DEPARTMENT ORGANIZES
(UNDER THE AEGIS OF IQAC)
a 5 day Faculty Workshop
On
"HOLISTIC EXCELLENCE"
BY**



SWAMI CHIDANANDAJI

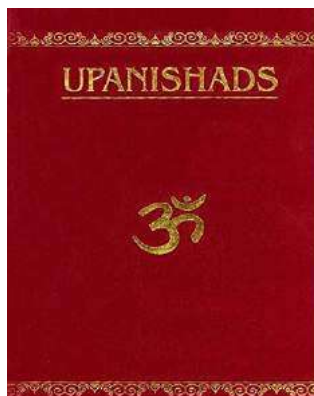


CDR H. C. GURUPRASAD

This 5-Day Workshop was held between July 26 and 30

Upcoming Events

All the regular classes online will be in full swing, starting August 3.



WEEKLY CLASSES ONLINE

UPANISHADS By Swami Chidananda

8.00 am Pacific Time,
Fridays
8.30 pm Indian Standard
Time, Fridays
Join directly on "YouTube"



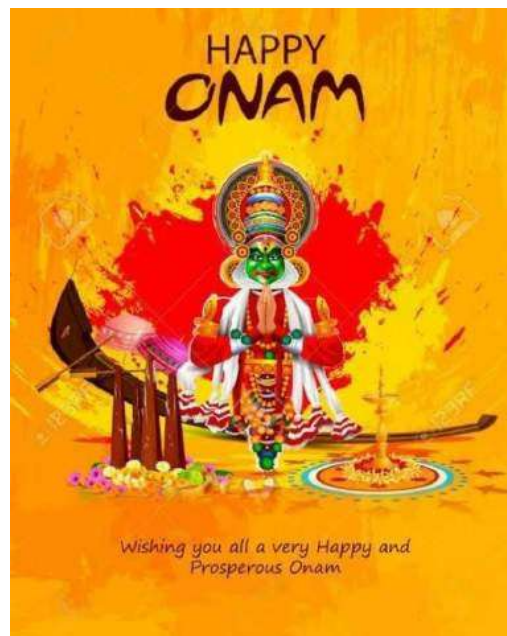
WEEKLY CLASSES ONLINE

BHAGAVAD GEETA By Swami Chidananda

6.30 pm Pacific Time,
Tuesdays
7 am Indian Standard Time,
Wednesdays
Join directly on "YouTube"

WISH YOU HAPPY ONAM

Saturday, August 21, 2021



This festival marks the occasion when King Bali visits the land of Kerala, as an annual gesture of divine goodwill. Bali was blessed by Lord Vāmana, the fifth incarnation of Mahā Vishnu.

May the divine intelligence bless you with spiritual ascent.

Team Aupa

CELEBRATE RAKSHĀ BANDHAN (RĀKHI)

Sunday, August 22, 2021



Symbolizing the strong bond between a sister and a brother, the special of 'Raksha Bandhan' is celebrated everywhere with much joy.

May this day bring cheer to you!

Team AUPA

JANMĀSTHAMI GREETINGS TO YOU

Monday, August 30, 2021

Born at midnight, amidst darkness, this most glorious incarnation of Lord Vishnu, brought light and joy to all.



A very special day especially for all of us, students of Bhagavad Geetā!

May Shri Krishna's boundless grace uplift you!

Team AUPA

(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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