

AUPA e-Newsletter

November 2021
Volume 7, Issue 5 (No. 77)



Editor: Swami Chidananda
Associate Editor: Dolly Seth

Mantra to Ponder

Mind, Our Valuable Tool

Our own mind has to be the instrument with which we can realize the Self, our true nature. Generally, the mind has been much blamed for all the suffering and bondage in life. The Upanishads also admit that the fundamental error or wrong seeing has taken place in our mind. They however insist that the very same mind is the valuable tool to see rightly.

*manasā eva idam āptavyam
neha nānā asti kinchana*

We have to attain this (Self) by the mind alone and (discover that) there is no plurality here (in this creation) whatsoever!

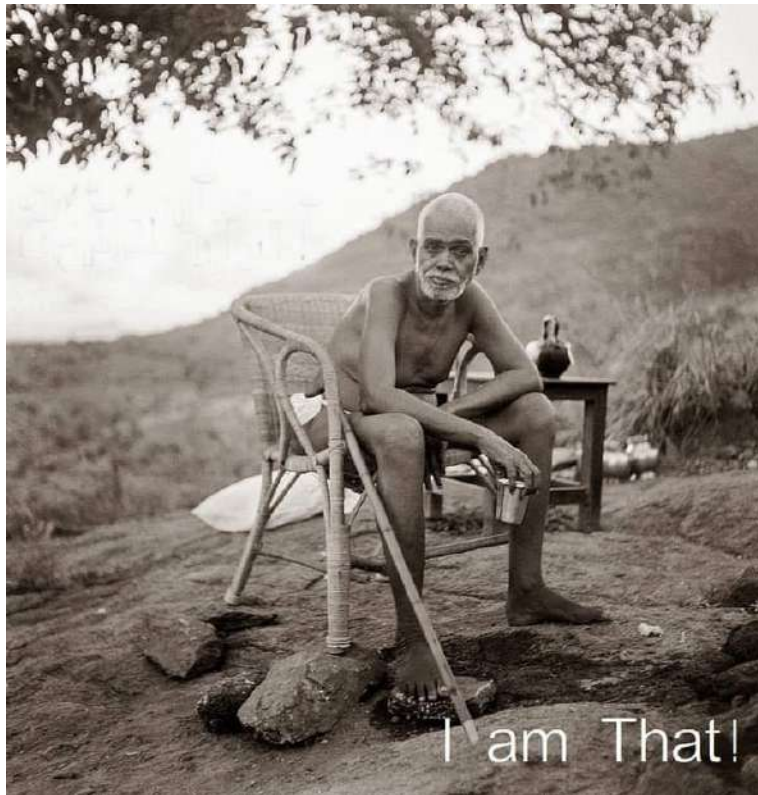
Kathopanishad 2.1.11

(Chapter 2, Valli 1, mantra 11)

The central job of the Vedānta is to eliminate the error in seeing, called *avidyā* or *adhyāsa*. When the Upanishadic statements, being essentially a means of knowledge, remove the error, the very same mind becomes the seat of the liberating wisdom.

Light on Self - Inquiry

MANY RELIGIONS, ONE PURPOSE



SHRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

A devotee asked: *Which is the best of all the religions? What is Sri Bhagavan's method?*

Maharshi replied: *All religions and methods are one and the same.*

D: *Different methods are taught for liberation.*

M: *Why should you be liberated? Why not remain as you are now?*

D: *I want to get rid of pain. To be rid of it is said to be liberation.*

M: *That is what all religions teach.*

(Source: Talk 479, March 22nd, 1938, Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi)

From the Editor's Desk



Swami Chidananda

DO YOU LIVE IN DENIAL OF A FACT?

Sundari was a 22-year-old girl, full of aspiration. Her parents encouraged her in everything she was trying to do, and one of her areas of interest was singing. Her parents, rich as they were, were among the elite of Kolkata. They helped her get some occasional coaching in singing from eminent singers of the time. Many celebrities also gave Sundari a few sessions. Most of them were passing by the town where Sundari was living with her parents and they were kind towards their student. They accepted substantial compensation from Sundari's wealthy parents. They, in fact, avoided mentioning to Sundari or to her parents certain serious shortcomings with the girl.

Much encouraged by the pat on the back that she received from eminent singers and famous personalities, Sundari began to dream of herself becoming a singing celebrity one day. As per her persistent request, her father arranged for her to get rigorous coaching under a music teacher in Mumbai, where she had to stay in some expensive, rented accommodation and go to the classes every day.

Now came a sad turning point. The teacher in Mumbai was straightforward. Within a few classes, he told her on her face that she did not have the potential to be a professional singer. It was one thing to sing at parties and family get-togethers and get applause from relatives and friends but quite another to master various rāgas and perform with high level skill and expertise.

Sundari was shocked. She checked with one or two other music teachers and they too hesitatingly confirmed the opinion of the first teacher. Sundari stopped the classes. For some days, she continued to stay in Mumbai but was crying daily. Then she went back to Kolkata.

For some years, she could not accept her defeat. She was in a state of denial. An inner voice would say, with much pain though, "I can sing. I am made to be a great singer. All of them are wrong. Their words are mere opinions. They are not facts."

Slowly, however, she came to admit her limitations. During the period of denial, she went through a lot of suffering. Thanks to honest introspection, some spiritual advice from a Swāmi of Ramakrishna Mission, a lot of counsel from an aunt and some fruitful study of literature on life, she aligned herself with the truth of her personality. In Geetā's language¹, she positioned herself in her 'swadharma' and found peace.

In life, a lot of us – if not all of us – go through periods when we try to be what we cannot be, and our ego prevents us from accepting the cold fact of the mismatch. We live in denial. Divine grace can and

does bring us to an agreement with truth. That is the return to swadharma and the reward is happiness.

Swāmi Chidānanda

Notes

1: *swadharme nidhanam shreyah, paradharmo bhayāvahah* – Geetā 3.35

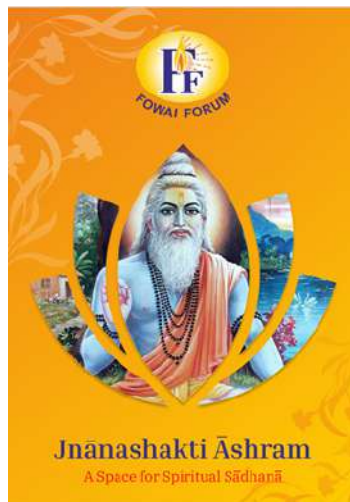


An Update On

JNĀNA SHAKTI

A Centre for Vedānta Studies

With the soft version of our brochure being ready, we are set now to raise funds for the noble project. Philanthropic citizens – abroad or in India – can now take a look at how they may sponsor any of the many parts of the infrastructure that is envisaged. Any of the units like a simple room, a suite, accommodation for teachers or seminar halls can be chosen by a donor to make his/her contribution towards.



We now intend to meet people in groups or individually to let them know all the facets of this project.



Continued interaction with the architects is also going on parallelly. The whole idea is to make the facility truly conducive to spiritual studies and practices, causing the least inconvenience to participants.

Thus Spake Chinmaya

THE MYSTERY OF HAPPINESS

Silence within is joy infinite and bliss absolute.

The Yogi alone knows what it is.



Swami Chinmayananda

[Geetā 3.35 speaks of silence as the ultimate secret: *maunam chaiva asmi guhyānām*: Editors)



Word of the Month

KĀRANA

(Cause, of three kinds)

The word '*kāraṇa*' has the general meaning of 'a cause'. In lay usage, therefore it can mean the cause of anything. For example, the cause for Kamala to laugh and the cause for the sun to rise in the east etc. can certainly employ the word *kāraṇa*.

In the Vedāntas, however, the word *kāraṇa* is considered in the context of creation of the universe.



1 *upādāna-kāraṇa* is the material cause. The common example given is of clay, which is the material cause for a pot. Gold is the material cause – *upādāna-kāraṇa* – for all the ornaments made of gold.

2 *nimitta-kāraṇa* is the efficient cause. The potter, who has the intelligence with regard to making a pot from clay, is the *nimitta-kāraṇa* in the example of creation of a pot. The jeweller who makes an ornament out of the raw material of gold is the *nimitta-kāraṇa* for all the ornaments.

3 *sahakāri-kāraṇa* is the instrumental cause. The potter's wheel, using which the potter is able to make a pot, provided clay is supplied to him, is the instrumental – *sahakāri-kāraṇa* – in the context of a pot coming into being.

While the three kinds of causes can be three different entities in mundane examples like those of a pot and a gold ornament, the case is different in the metaphysical context of the creation of the universe. Brahman (the *akshara*, the Imperishable) is at once all the three causes – *upādāna*, *nimitta* and *sahakāri kāraṇas* – of this universe including all living beings. The mantra¹ in the Mundaka Upanishad, comparing Brahman with a spider, making a web, where the material for the web comes from within the spider and not from somewhere outside, supports this view.

Notes: 1 *yathā urnanābhīh srijate grihnate cha* – Mundaka Upanishad 1.1.7

Tips from the Upanishads

SAY GOODBYE TO SINFUL WAYS

The s̄ankhya philosophy itself had pointed out that the problem with our life is that ‘the spirit’ is caught in (or bound by) ‘matter’. The Vedānta goes further and declares that such bondage is in the domain of ignorance (*ajnāna*) and true wisdom (*jnāna*) can set us free.

Before we get glimpses of that liberating wisdom, we need to undo all the damage that ‘matter’ does to our personality. We get much defiled when we are in the tight embrace of matter. Attachment to matter not only blinds us to the truth of our being the ‘pure spirit’ but also causes numerous forms of undesirable behaviour. To speak lies, to mindlessly go after sense pleasures and to revel in worldly power or position etc. are the sinful ways that make it very difficult for any of us to turn towards the exit door – to proceed towards moksha.

yuyodhi asmat-juhurānam enah

Make us free of crooked, sinful acts!

[Ishāvāsyā Upanishad, mantra 18]

The last mantra of the Ishāvāsyā Upanishad thus makes an earnest prayer to the Supreme Almighty Lord, visualized as Agni, to separate us from the tight grip of sin, which is no other than the delusion caused by matter.

To say goodbye to wrong ways of living paves the way to enlightenment.

Quote Of the
Issue

TALK AND WALK



[Lao Tzu (commonly translated as Old Master) was an ancient Chinese philosopher and writer. He is the reputed author of *Tao te Ching*. The founder of philosophical Taoism, and a deity in religious Taoism and traditional Chinese religions. The above quote echoes the mantra 2.3 of Kenopanishad. Editors]

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



HOW WE OFFER VERSUS WHAT WE OFFER

God asks us to have a pure heart

Readers of AUPA, dear friends,

Matters become pretty simple when we look at them from the point of view of *bhakti*, devotion. Lord Shri Krishna does not mince words when he says, "I gladly accept what you offer to me with devotion. It can be a leaf, a flower, a fruit or even a spoonful of water!" (Geetā 9.26)

It is thus clear that God sees 'how we offer' and he does not make an issue of 'what we offer'. A pure heart that unconditionally loves him is what matters. We hear of the inspiring story of Devi Rukmini who placed a Tulasi leaf on one of the plates of the balance, on the other plate of which Shri Krishna himself was seated. And that plate went down, proving to be heavier than Shri Krishna. It was obviously not the Tulasi leaf but the wholehearted devotion with which Rukmini placed it on the plate. In contrast, a lot of gold ornaments that Devi Satyabhāmā had placed on the same plate had failed to measure up to Shri Krishna!

This gives us a golden key to live a noble life. We must ensure that we never harbour evil motives or selfish intentions in all our transactions. Purity in thought, word and deed can take us to heights of spiritual excellence, irrespective of our walk of life. We may be highly educated or illiterate; in high position or in humble settings; living in advanced cities or in poor villages. None of them matters. Purity is the most important factor.

As with God, so should be with fellow human beings. Pomp and show have no place in right living. True goodwill and readiness to help those that are suffering can take us to divinity.

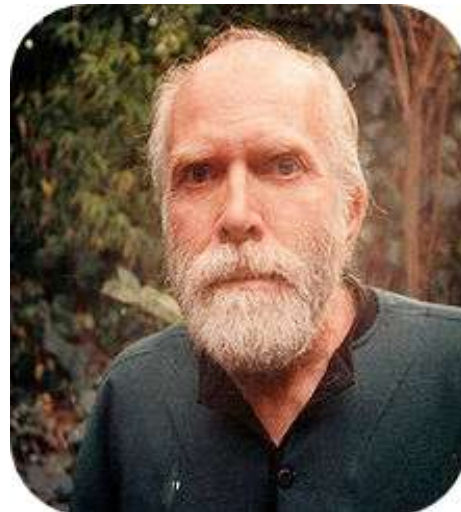
I wish everyone of you, speedy progress in the inner journey of the soul towards its spiritual perfection.

Harih Om!

GuestSpeak

**DAILY METHODS AND MEDITATIONS
TO EXPERIENCE A NEW REALITY**

Robert Adams



You must do something spiritual every day. I call you to do these things every day. You will live in a New Reality. Your entire life will be transformed. You will have a Direct Experience of Bliss, The Supreme, Peace, Love, Truth that does not change. Life will become bright.

You will feel a brotherhood with all of humanity. A new life. A new consciousness. A new experience of ultimate awareness in your life. It is all up to you. It is time. As I have said, I can show you the vein of gold, but you have to dig for it. This is the earthly predicament. Yet it is a beautiful predicament. For you have the Freedom to transform your life. At any moment. Won't you begin now? There is a real world of beauty, love, harmony, peace. What Reality are you relating to?

The Pathway to Illumination is from my unique personal experience, and embraces the fundamental Pathways. As you begin to experience gentle inner illumination, you begin to associate yourself with your original spiritual nature, rather than your physical-human limitations.

You begin to naturally practice the pure fundamentals, the fundamental precepts of "all true religions" of the world. "Begin at the beginning." The result is a "Direct experience of God", resulting in extended periods of peace, an awakening of loving kindness, compassion, humility and a realization of a sense

of brotherhood with all. Living in natural spiritual integrity, one's life is guided by The Power That Knows the Way.

The happiness comes bubbling up. A lasting, authentic new happiness that includes all of life. The happiness of this life, with a loved one, a beautiful sunset, a selfless act, is real, yet it is a glimmer of the eternal indescribable joy that never fades. You must acquire a sense of brotherhood with all of humanity.

[**Robert Adams** (1928 – 1997) was an American Advaita teacher. In later life Adams held satsang with a small group of devotees in California. He mainly advocated the path of jñāna yoga with an emphasis on the practice of self-enquiry. Adams' teachings were not well known in his lifetime, but have since been widely circulated amongst those investigating the philosophy of Advaita and the Western devotees of Sri Ramana Maharshi. A book of his teachings, *Silence of the Heart: Dialogues with Robert Adams*, was published in 1999.]



THE WISE WOMAN'S STONE

Author Unknown



A wise woman who was traveling in the mountains found a precious stone in a stream. The next day she met another traveller who was hungry, and the wise woman opened her bag to share her food. The hungry traveller saw the precious stone and asked the woman to give it to him. She did so without hesitation. The traveller left, rejoicing in his good fortune. He knew the stone was worth enough to give him security for a lifetime.



A few days later, however, he came back to return the stone to the wise woman. "I have been thinking," he said, "I know how valuable the stone is, but I now give it back in the hope that you can give me something even more precious. Give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me the stone."



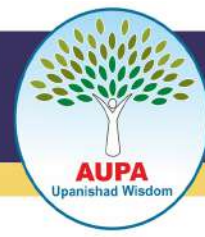
REFLECTING ON HABITS

They make us or break us!

Norbu H Negi

Though I am in my late 20s and am a practising lawyer in Himachal Pradesh, the book '*The 7 Habits of Effective Teens*' has inspired me to write this short article. When Swami Chidanandaji gifted me the book, written by Sean Covey, I did not open it for more than a month. Then, one day, my eyes fell on it and I casually opened it without much of an intention to read it. A sentence, however, made an impact: *We first make our habits, then our habits make us.* I began to look at my own life in the light of the sentence. Then began a relationship with the marvellous book, which has helped me tremendously. The ideas or remarks in the book threw light on the way I was living; the changes I began to make in my way of living were helping me discover more and more new insights in the book!

In olden days when I was a law student in Shimla, and nowadays when I am a practicing lawyer in Solan, I had and have days of celebration and of dejection. One of the concepts in Sean's book made me understand that I am myself responsible, to a great extent at least, for my happiness and sorrow. The concept of Personal Bank Account (PBA, not MBA) struck me as something so true in our real life. It is basically how I feel about myself. How I feel about myself is like a bank account. I can make deposits into and take withdrawals from the PBA, by the things I think, say and do! When I stick to a commitment that I have made to myself, I feel in control. It is a deposit. In contrast, when I break a promise to myself, I feel disappointed and that amounts to a withdrawal.



If I make it a habit to be honest to myself, which means I do what I plan to do, my PBA will have increasing balance. I noticed that many good habits, which can be made a part of my life by little wise choices, can make me happier on one hand and more efficient also on the other. This is what I wish to share with all of you here.

[The author is a young professional, originally from Kinnaur district of HP, who lived for some months in the neighbourhood of Swami Chidanandaji's residence in Solan. He continues to live and work in Solan but in a different area of the city.]



BALANCED MIND, HEALTHY LIVING

Kavitā Rāju

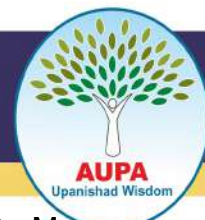
Real comfort is in good health. Health is a universal requirement. WHO defines it as - "A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." According to Āyurveda, health is –

*sama-doshah samāgnischa
sama-dhātu-mala-kriyāh
prasannātmendriya-manah-
svastha iti abhidheeyate* (Sushruta-samhitā-sootra-sthāna chapter 15, verse 10)

Health is a balance in the three Doshas (*Kapha*, *Vāta* and *Pitta* – water, wind and fire components), balance in the digestive fire, in all the body tissues and components, in all physiological processes, and when the sense organs and mind are in a state of harmony.

Yoga, a way of life in ancient India, inculcates a lifestyle and culture that contributes immensely towards the state of balance. Yoga has found acceptance across the globe today. The Yogic science is proving its importance with its usefulness in many aspects of daily Life.

Yoga truly means union, the union between all the facets of our existence. Our Indian philosophy speaks of Pancha-kosha as five dimensions of our existence. The balance in the functions of these five dimensions is said to indicate perfect health. The five facets include the



Annamaya Kosha (food sheath), Prānamaya Kosha (vital air sheath), Manomaya Kosha (mental sheath), Vijnānamaya Kosha (Intellectual sheath) and Ānanadamaya Kosha (Bliss sheath).

The mental sheath is of greater importance among the five sheaths. The classical yogic teachings deal with it in much detail. Yoga Vāsistha says –

manah-prashamanopāyah yoga iti abhidheeyate

Skilful ways to calm the mind constitute Yoga. Yoga Vāsistha 3.9.32

And Patanjali Yoga sutras (a set of 195 aphorisms) says –

yogah chitta-vritti-nirodhah

Quieting of the mind is yoga. Pāda 1, Sutra 2

Psychosomatic illnesses (diabetes, cancer, thyroid etc..) are on the rise in the world today, due to improper lifestyles and the polluted environment. Diseases arising from the mind and finding their expressions in the body are called *ādhiya vyādhi* according to Yogic philosophy.

[Kavitā Rāju is a qualified yoga instructor and a serious student of Advaita Vedānta. She lives in Bengaluru.]

News

New Delhi, October 7 thru 9, 2021

Swāmiji went to the nation’s capital on a mission to develop goodwill with a few selected people there, especially in the context of the Jnānashakti Āshram project. Shri Bansi Mahājan (from Mumbai) and Swāmiji received a few distinguished visitors at the place of their stay. Shri Alok Kumar, the International President of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, paid a friendly visit to them and spent time with them discussing various spiritual and cultural issues. Suryaputri Rashmi Malhotra, who brings out the magazine ‘Om Patrikā’ also came and shared her thoughts with them. Shri Prafull Ketkar, the editor of ‘The Organizer’, was another noteworthy visitor.

Solan, Himachal Pradesh, October 6

Smt. Asha Sharma, the grand daughter and the distinguished biographer of (Samuel) Satyanand Stokes, visited Swāmiji along with her husband Shri Vishnu Sharma. Both of them, residents of San Francisco Bay Area in California for long, have been students of Vedanta for many years. Ashaji’s mother, Champavati, was the first daughter of Satyanand Stokes (1882 – 1946). Stokes who had come to India at the age of 21, as a missionary, to work in a home of lepers, eventually converted to Hinduism, became a leader in Gandhi’s independence movement, introduced the American delicious apples to the Himalayas, and became a revered, household name in the region of today’s Himachal Pradesh.

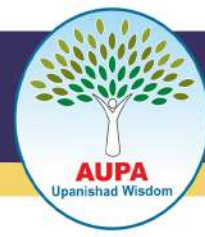
Solan, October 17 thru 19

Swami Yogatmananda, an ascetic disciple of Swami Chinmayanandaji, was Swāmiji’s guest for three days. Formerly of Chinmaya Mission (1988 – 2008), he has been an itinerant monk after he severed his bonds with any institution. Swāmiji went with him for the first time to the very tall Shiv Mandir at Jatoli, just 30 mins drive from Solan city.

Vijayadashami Event, October 15, 2021

Sadāshiv Mendon melodiously sang a few devotional pieces and an online program began on the auspicious day. Swāmiji delivered a talk on the spiritual significance of Dussehra and Vijayadashami. He also released (and spoke on) a brochure, which highlighted the Jnānashakti āshram project and the plans to raise funds for it.

Online Memorial for Smt Manorama Mohapatra, Oct 17, 2021



Smt Manorama Mohapatra was a very eminent lady of Odisha, highly regarded for her scholarship, public speaking, social service and leading role in journalism. She was the editor of 'Samaj', the leading daily in Odisha. Vice President Shri Venkiah Naidu and Prime Minister

Shri Narendra Modi sent condolences to the family when Manoramaji left for her heavenly abode on September 16, 2021. A month later, an online (over Zoom) Memorial was held in her honour. Swami Sarvapriyānandaji of Vedānta Society, New York and Swāmi Chidānandaji of FOWAI FORUM spoke at the 2 hour event, and paid rich tributes to Manoramaji, whose multifaceted personality was also remembered by many others who knew her or were related to her.



Webinars Held

- 209 on the topic *The Wisdom of the Two Titans* was presented by Swami Chidanandaji on October 17.
- 210 on the topic *Emotional Intelligence and Patanjali's Perspectives* was presented by Smt Shweta Arya on October 31.

Webinars to be held:

Swāmiji and Shri K S Gopalakrishna (of Mysuru) will present a webinar each (to be numbered 211 and 212) on November 14 and 28 respectively.



Shri Alok Kumar, the International President of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, was among the dignitaries who met Swamiji at Delhi, Oct 7, 2021



Suryaputri Rashmi Malhotra came and presented Swamiji with her magazine and book, Oct 8, 2021



Shri Bansi Mahajan facilitated the meeting between several prominent citizens of the nation's capital and Swamiji, Oct 7 thru 9, 2021



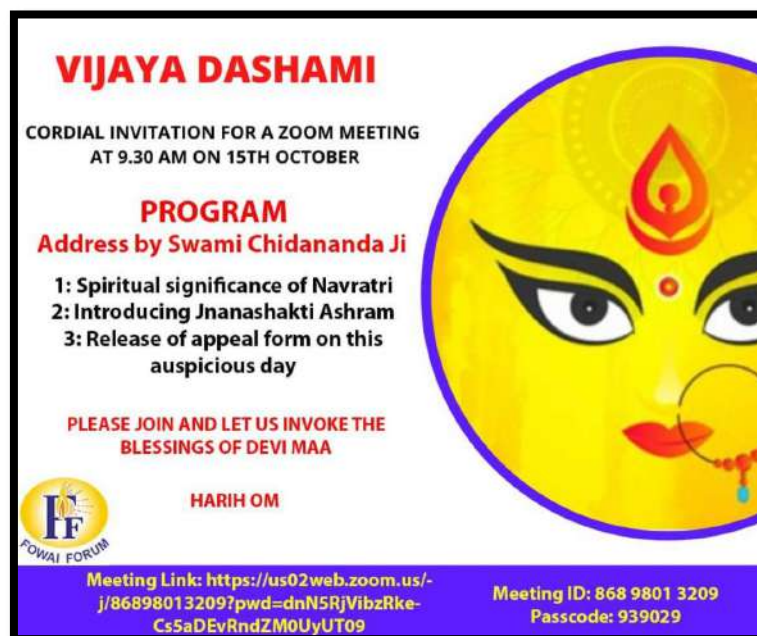
Shri P C Rana and Swāmiji, with Swāmi Yogātmānanda, at Jatoli



Smt Asha Sharma, the author of *An American in Gandhi's India*, visited Swāmiji, October 6, 2021
(venue: Mohan Park in Solan)



Smt Shweta Arya from Bhopal was the presenter of Webinar 210 on Emotional Intelligence and Patanjali's Perspectives



VIJAYA DASHAMI


CORDIAL INVITATION FOR A ZOOM MEETING
AT 9.30 AM ON 15TH OCTOBER

PROGRAM
Address by Swami Chidananda Ji

- 1: Spiritual significance of Navratri
- 2: Introducing Jnanashakti Ashram
- 3: Release of appeal form on this auspicious day

PLEASE JOIN AND LET US INVOKE THE
BLESSINGS OF DEVI MAA

HARIH OM

 FOWAI FORUM

Meeting Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86898013209?pwd=dnNSRjVibzRkeCsSaDEvRndZM0UyUT09> Meeting ID: 868 9801 3209
Passcode: 939029

A promotional flyer for a Zoom meeting on Vijaya Dashami. It features a large yellow circular image of the face of Goddess Durga on the right. The text on the left provides details about the meeting, including the program topics and contact information for FOWAI Forum.

A special event on Vijayadashami, October 15, 2021, was when a brochure on Jnānashakti Ashram was released



Swāmiji spoke at the Online Memorial held in honour of Smt Manorama Mohapatra (1934 – 2021).



The Valia C. L. College of Commerce and Valia L. C. College of Arts in Andheri West, Mumbai, will host an online 'Intercollegiate Webinar' on November 18 at 2 pm for administrative staff of several participating academic institutions. Swami Chidanandaji and Dr. Vilasini Patkar will speak on *Turning Proficiency into Efficiency* and *Efficiency at Workplace* respectively.

Upcoming Events

Spiritual Retreat in Lonavala, Feb 27 thru Mar 5:

We have decided to hold an offline Spiritual Retreat in Nārāyani Dhāma in Lonavala, where we had organized a Retreat in January 2019. The tentative dates are February 27 thru March 5, 2022. We will soon confirm the dates and supply all the necessary details to those who wish to participate.

Swāmiji's Visit to Pune and Mumbai:

Swāmiji will visit Pune for two days and Mumbai for three days towards the end of this month. The tentative dates are 21, 22 for Pune and 23 thru 25 for Mumbai.

BHAI DOOJ

Saturday, November 6, 2021

Tilak Ceremony on Bhai Dooj



On *Bhai Dooj*, sisters pray for their brothers to have long and happy lives. They perform a 'Teeka' ceremony and brothers offer gifts to their sisters.

GURU NANAK JAYANTI

Friday, November 19, 2021



While Guru Nanak Jayanti is a Sikh holiday, the festival is enjoyed by many demographic groups in India, including Hindus and secular people. Of course, it is a particularly major event in the Indian state of Punjab since Sikhs make up the majority of the population there.

Guru Nanak Jayanti is a time for happiness and fun, but the festival also brings attention to the teachings of Guru Nanak. This holiday starts on the full moon day during the month of Katak. Since lunar calendars fluctuate each year, Guru Nanak Jayanti is celebrated during October or November on the Gregorian calendar.

We wish all our readers a *Happy Gurburab!* May the Divine Master's teachings guide your life along the path of virtue!

KANAKADĀSA JAYANTI

Monday, November 22, 2021

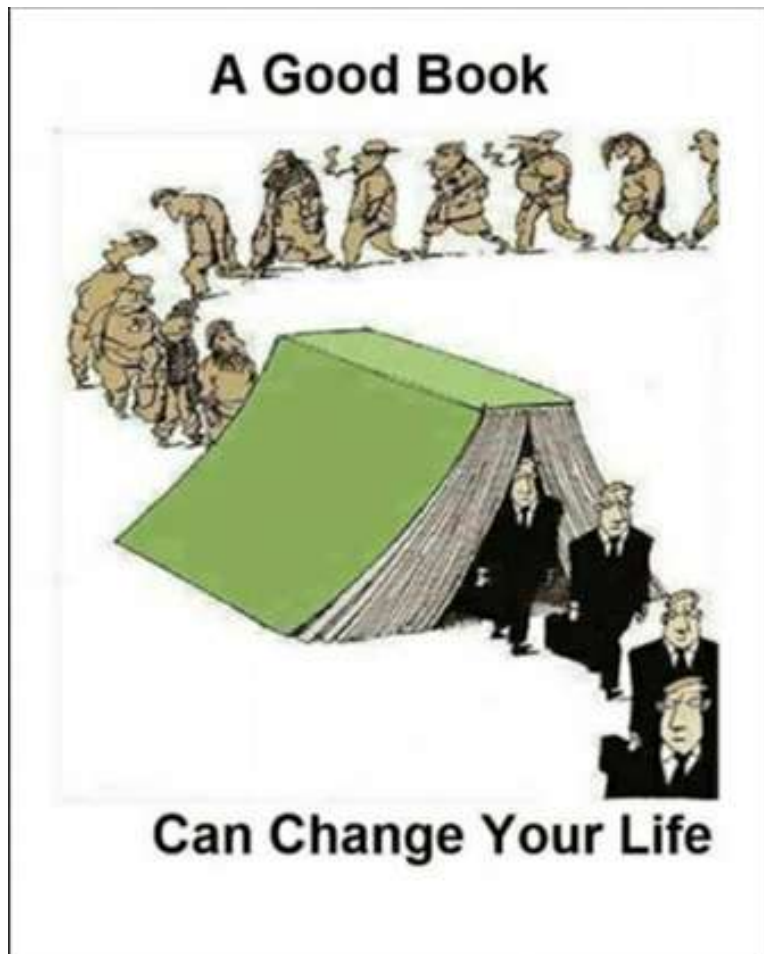


Kanakadāsa Jayanti is celebrated especially in the State of Karnataka on the 18th day of the Hindu month of Kārtika each year. It usually falls in November in the Western Calendar. The general holiday commemorates the noted poet and saint Shri Kanakadāsa on the anniversary of his birth in 1509. This saint was an army commander, to begin with. In a certain war, he was badly wounded and was lying semi-conscious on the battlefield. He was certain that he would die. Then he heard a voice, which was from God, “Would you like to serve Me?” Kanaka replied yes to Shri Krishna with all his heart. He very soon regained all his energy and good health. He gave up all his positions and spent the rest of his life in singing the praise of Lord Shri Krishna (Ādi Keshava of Kāginele). He rose to become a poet, philosopher and musician, known for numerous compositions in the Kannada language. He went down in history as an eminent Haridāsa.

May we discover the love of God that saints like Kanakadāsa had!

Suryaputri Rashmi Malhotra came and presented Swamiji with her magazine and book, Oct 8, 2021

A comic strip that makes you laugh and think at the same time.



(An e-newsletter can change your life too! – Editors)

(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).

Publisher: Shahid Sayed, AUPA Project Manager for STEP Press

Email: info@aupa.in

Contact: +91 9967 878798