

AUPA e-Newsletter

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Associate Editor: Dolly Seth



MANTRA TO PONDER

Take Proper Care of Yourself

We must never act without common sense, in the name of being spiritual. The Taittiriya Upanishad asks us to always mind 'selfcare' (*kushala*) and be ever engaged in noble efforts (*bhooti*), with activities that are meant to bring success to us, and do good to our families and to people around us.

kushalāt na pramaditavyam

bhootyai na pramaditavyam

Do not be careless when it comes to self-protection. Do not err in the matter of auspicious actions (that ensure continuous self-development).

Taittiriya Upanishad 1.11

(Valli 1, anuvāka 11)

The Vedānta carries a lot of advice like the one above, scattered across the mantras that constitute the Upanishads, along with pointers to the state free of egoism. The former is for the majority of us (*madhyama-adhikāris*) who are not yet fit to understand and abide by the highest revelations; the latter are for those of us (*uttama-adhikāris*) who have high *viveka* and ample *vairāgya*.

Light on Self - Inquiry

SELF-ENQUIRY AND THE 26 ALPHABETS



SHRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

“Bhagavān gave the entire essence of Vedānta in the smallest alphabet of English, “I”.

Arthur Osborne

(The first editor of the magazine ‘The Mountain Path’ of Sri Ramanāshramam)

[When you write the 26 alphabets of the English language, no other letter is smaller or simpler than the 9th alphabet, namely I. Likewise, the I-thought is the most basic one among all thoughts and it becomes the doorway to realize the Supreme I, the Pure Self. – Editors]

Thus Spake Chinmaya



LOVE AND SPIRITUAL WISDOM



A devoted, intelligent seeker of love can come to know the nature of love, and learn the true ways of enduring love.

Swāmi Chinmayānanda ji

From the Editor's Desk



Swami Chidananda

THE FIVE MEMBERS OF YOUR TEAM

Train them well to win the game of life

All of us know how important it is to have a good team to achieve anything. The examples of games like cricket or football bring out a lot of facets of such team work that lead us to victory.

In the game of life, we are constantly playing with our team consisting of five members. They are the body, breath, speech, mind and intellect. Each of these has to be individually healthy and strong; they have to work in harmony with each other to bless us with optimum performance. They are no doubt inter-related. It is a mistake to imagine they are watertight compartments.

The Body: Many people – intellectuals and others – neglect the body in several ways. They are not careful about their food; they do not exercise regularly and they do not pay enough attention to whether their body receives proper rest. Driven by ambition, they could be workaholics who achieve much in their fields of work but end up with diseases causing misery to them. Example remedy: Walk 45 minutes daily.

The Breath: Now there is increased awareness than ever before, about the benefits we receive from regulated breathing. The ancient practice of *prānāyāma* is receiving worldwide attention. This team member alone can bestow upon us enhanced wellness, improved mental skills and greater calmness in daily life. Example remedy: Do *nādi-shuddhi (anuloma-viloma) prānāyāma* for 15 mins daily.

The Speech: A lot of people, though bright otherwise, jeopardize their relationships by talking irresponsibly. Rather than minding their own business, they either talk ill of others behind the backs of the latter or leak out confidential information that they possess about some of their contacts. This lack of care, when we speak, can cost us heavily, leading to regrets and consternation. Example remedy: Cut down references to any third party, especially of the judgmental kind.

The Mind: Constant effort to expand our Emotional Quotient (EQ) needs no re-emphasis. We frequently meet people, gifted with high IQ, who suffer strained relationships because of no other reason than stunted emotional growth. Practising 'empathetic initiatives and responses' in our daily interpersonal behaviour can go a long way to raise our emotional intelligence. Example exercise: Practise seeing situations from others' angles of views, and understand their difficulties.

The Intellect: Life is such a fascinating journey of unending discoveries. More we learn, there is more to learn. Study of good literature of a kind where our knowledge of the art of living grows can

strengthen this member of our lifelong team (of five members). Recommended book: *The Untethered Soul* by Michael Singer.

Like musicians ensure that their instruments are properly tuned before they perform, we need to take all possible care to keep the above five members of our team in good shape, nay to constantly improve them. Rise, awake¹ and get illumined!

Swāmi Chidānanda

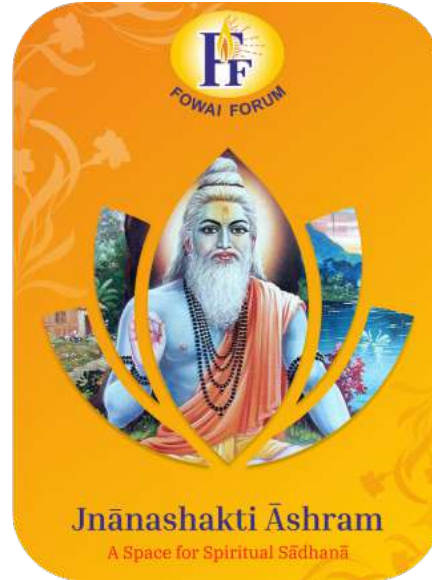
Notes 1: *uttisthata, jāgrata, prāpya varān nibodhata* – Kathopanishad 1.3.14



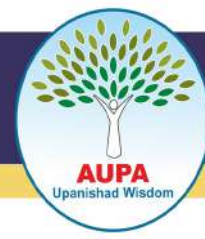
An Update On

JNĀNA SHAKTI

A Centre for Vedānta Studies



The brochure on this project was made ready and has, by now, reached many hands already. The efforts of key organizers and coordinators – especially of Shri Mohan Hejamadi and Shri Anil Khanna – are bearing fruit. On Thursday, November 23, both of them took another six key members to the site in Vāve (less than an hour from the well-known town of Khopoli, which is between Mumbai and Pune). Shri Sudhir Seth, a trustee of FOWAI, Swami Advyaanandaji from Nashik, Swamini Amrutanandaji



from Mumbai, Smt Dolly Seth, Shri Sadashi Mendon and Swāmi Chidānandaji together reviewed the situation at the 3.6 acre plot, which was looking wonderful with a lot of greenery.

On Wednesday, November 24, about 25 members of FOWAI gathered at The Classique Club (of Raheja's) in Andheri West and had a nice exchange of ideas. This get-together was sponsored and organized by Shri B L Mahajan, a friend and supporter of the Jnānashakti project. While all the participants expressed happiness at the slow but steady progress of the project, Dr Piyul Mukherjee stepped forward and made a substantial contribution, in the name of her beloved mother Smt Nivedita Patnaik, on the occasion. Nivedita ji has been associated with Swamiji since 1998 and lives in Powai.

There was also a significant meeting of three of our trustees with our architect, Shri Mānas Vanwāri, on November 23. Shri Lund Bihari, our advisor in architecture, and Shri Ramesh Sahajwani, our long-time supporter and friend, were also present. Several decisions and possible appointments of key functionaries in this project took place during this meeting.

We urge our circle of friends to collect the brochure, if not collected already, and generously support the initiative.

Word of the Month

KARANA

(An Instrument, A Tool, A Means)

[In the last issue we took a look at 'kāraṇa', which meant a cause. Please note we now are taking up *karana*, without the long vowel ā.]

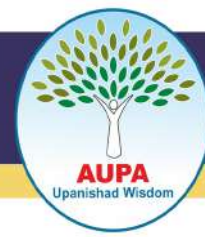
The word *karana* finds a mention in many scriptures. Shri Krishna mentions¹ it, for example, in the 18th chapter.

Let's start with a simple example. When we smell a rose, the nose that helps us get the fragrance of the flower is a '*karana*', an instrument or tool with the help of which we are able to perceive the object (*vishaya*) known as smell or odour. The '*karana*'s are the means (*sādhanas*), associated with the Self (*ātmā*), whereby particular ends (*sādhya*s) – perception of particular objects – are accomplished.

How many are the *karanas* that we possess? One answer is eleven. Another is fourteen. Other answers are twelve and thirteen too!

Let's count how many *karanas* we are blessed with. Five sense organs (*jnāna-indriyas*), five organs of action (*karma-indriyas*) and the mind (*manas*) – all these eleven² – help us perceive gross or subtle objects. Thus, we have a set of eleven (as many as in a cricket team!) to mention first.

What we call *manas* (the mind) can also be looked at *manas* and *buddhi*. This will take the number to 12. These two are sometimes looked at as three also: *manas*, *buddhi* and *ahankara*! The count goes to 13. Lastly, what began as just *manas* is viewed as four 'inner instruments' (*antah-karanas*): *manas*, *buddhi*, *chitta* and *ahankāra*. Thus, we have 14 *karanas*, with ten of them known as *bāhya-karanas* and four as *antah-karanas*.



All of these, along with *prāna*, are sometimes together called the *prānas*³. The *prāna* (*mukhya-prāna*) however is not a *karana* by itself because it has no object to perceive or grasp.

All these *karanas* merge in the Self during deep sleep (*sushupti*). The Self, which is not a doer (*kartā*) or enjoyer (*bhoktā*), seems to be a doer or enjoyer when there is (an erroneously perceived) association with these *karanas*.

Notes:

1 *karanam cha prithag-vidham* – Geetā 18.14

2 *indriyāni dashaikam cha* (ten *indriyas* and the mind) – Geetā 13.6

3 Such a reference, for example, can be seen in Shānkara-bhāshya on the Brahmasutra 2.4.6.

Tips from the Upanishads

INSIDE OUT, A SUPERIOR APPROACH

Seeing versus Doing

A whole lot of popular 'self-help literature' belongs to the category of 'outside in' approach in the matter of getting a handle on our way of living. It is all about numerous do's and don'ts. The Upanishads primarily adopt the superior approach of 'inside out'. They emphasize enquiry and contemplation, whereby our vision changes. When the way we perceive situations (or, for that matter, the way we see ourselves) changes, our actions are bound to change from being disorderly and self-contradictory to humane and harmonious.

tasmin dristhe parāvare

*When you **see** That, which includes the higher and the lower...!*

[Mundaka Upanishad, mantra 2.2.8]

This 'seeing differently' is the crux of Vedānta. The power of right seeing (*jnāna*) is far superior to that of doing (*karma*). When we see rightly, right action flows from it with ease, with spontaneity. Without right vision, when we merely go by do's and don'ts, it is a struggle that engenders conflict and exhaustion.

Therefore we must study the Upanishads, reflect on them and take a second look at life.

Quote of the issue

UPANISHADS – A FLOOD OF REVELATION



The Upanishads are the supreme work of the Indian mind, and that it should be so, that the highest self-expression of its genius, its sublimest poetry, its greatest creation of the thought and word should be not a literary or poetical masterpiece of the ordinary kind, but a large flood of spiritual revelation of this direct and profound character, is a significant fact, evidence of a unique mentality and unusual turn of spirit.

Sri Aurobindo

(in his work *The Foundations of Indian Culture*)

[Sri Aurobindo (1872 – 1950) was a philosopher, yoga guru, maharshi, poet, and Indian nationalist. He was also a journalist, editing newspapers like *Bande Mataram*. He joined the Indian movement for independence from British colonial rule, was one of its influential leaders till 1910 and then became a spiritual reformer, introducing his visions on human progress and spiritual evolution.]

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



WHEN CLOUDS SPOKE

Ethics is Where Spirituality Begins

Readers of AUPA, dear friends,

Our spiritual teachers have told us the story from one of the Upanishads where clouds speak in their thunderous voice: *da, da, da!* The monosyllable '*da*' means, "Live in Self-control" for the gods (*devas*), "Give to the needy," for the humans (*mānavas*), and "Show compassion," for the demons (*asuras*). Interestingly, the three beautiful meanings¹ for the same cryptic sound '*da*' point to a strong ethical foundation for all high spirituality. Prajāpati's advice to the three categories of his children echoed through the clouds, resulting in an all-time message of great value.

On occasions, clouds speak! On occasions, clouds carry the message of a husband to his beloved wife, as we see in Kālidāsa's 'Meghadoota'. Why clouds alone, all Nature can speak to us, if we have the ears to hear.

As Covid-19 continues to torment humanity, with new variants surfacing all over the world, we need to be on alert again. One of the explanations of the genesis of this whole menace is that we, humanity, have not been ethical in our dealing with Nature, and with each other too. Is it possible that the Coronavirus too is a messenger carrying messages to us of the need to strengthen the moral fibre in our personality?

Ethics and morality are indeed where right living begins. Spirituality then becomes a valid, sustainable extension. May we carry on our study of the Vedānta, taking enough care at the same time to be practising right values in personal and inter-personal domains.

Harih Om!

Notes:

1 *dāmyata, datta, dayadhvam* – Chapter 5, Brihadāranyaka Upanishad.

GuestSpeak

REMOVE THE GOLD LID THAT COVERS THE FACE OF TRUTH

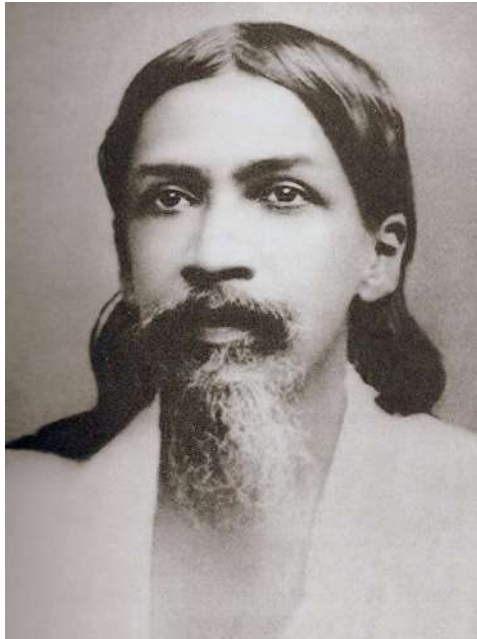
The famous prayer of Ishāvāsya Upanishad

hiranmayena pātreṇa satyasyāpihitam mukham

tat-tvam pooshan-apāvrinu, satya-dharymāya dristhaye

(mantra 15)

Sri Aurobindo



Sri Aurobindo explains the inner meaning of Surya, the Fosterer as realised by the Vedic rishis:

“In the inner sense of the Veda, Surya, the Sun-God, represents the divine Illumination of the Kavi, which exceeds mind and forms the pure self-luminous Truth of things. His principal power is self-revelatory knowledge, termed in the Veda “Sight”. His realm is described as the Truth, the Law, the Vast.

“He is the Fosterer or Increaser, for he enlarges and opens man’s dark and limited being into a luminous and infinite consciousness.

“He is the sole Seer, Seer of Oneness and Knower of the Self, and leads him to the highest Sight.

“He is Yama, Controller or Ordainer, for he governs man’s action and manifested being by the direct Law of the Truth, satyadharma, and therefore by the right principle of our nature, yāthātathyataḥ.

“A luminous power proceeding from the Father of all existence, he reveals in himself the divine Purusha of whom all beings are the manifestations. His rays are the thoughts that proceed luminously from the Truth, the Vast, but become deflected and distorted, broken up and disordered in the reflecting and dividing principle, Mind. They form there the golden lid which covers the face of the Truth.

“The Seer prays to Surya to cast them into right order and relation and then draw them together into the unity of revealed truth. The result of this inner process is the perception of the oneness of all beings in the divine Soul of the Universe.”

Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, Vol. 17, p. 6

(See 'Quote of the Issue' for a brief description of Sri Aurobindo.)

A decorative gold-colored frame with intricate scrollwork and a central oval cutout. The text "Story Time" is centered within the oval.

Story Time

THREE MEN IN DANG *Simplicity is Sometimes a Blessing*

Author Unknown

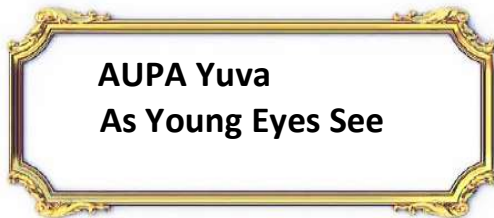
A philosopher, a scientist and a simple man – none of whom could swim – were trapped in a cove with sheer cliff faces. They split up, but the tide kept coming in. Rescuers lowered a rope with a safety harness.



The philosopher said, 'Ah, this looks like a rope, but I might be mistaken – it could be wishful thinking or an illusion.' So, he didn't attach himself, and he drowned.

The scientist said, 'Ah, this is an 11 mm polyester rope with a breaking strain of 2800 kg. It conforms to the MR 10-81 standard,' and then proceeded to give an exhaustive, and entirely correct, analysis of the rope's physical and chemical properties; but he didn't attach himself, and he drowned.

The simple man said, 'Ah, I'm not sure if it's a rope or a python tail, but it's my only chance, so I'm grabbing it and holding on with my whole life.' He was saved.



Perceptions and reality | the grass is not greener on the other side

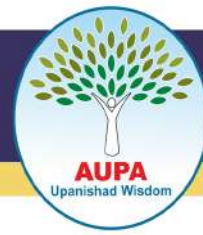
Sometimes we spend such a huge amount of time, being envious of friends or relatives who we think got a better deal than us , whether it's their professional or personal life.

Sometimes many of us are guilty of taking advantage of the situation where our friends or relatives are not doing so well (financially)in terms of our behaviours and attitudes towards them ..just to keep score .

We spend almost half our lifetime in hating or feeling sad that they have it better than us . This attitude dictates our actions, thoughts and behaviors towards them which are more like insults based on insecurities that we need to deal with ourselves rather than projecting it on them.

On the flipside, when we are at the receiving end of these sorts of behaviours, we again spend so much time fretting and wondering why this person behaves the way he/she does with us. We simply cannot fathom the reasoning behind these jealous and insulting behaviors and waste so much time and energy questioning it and being unkind to ourselves.

Moreover, it gets too late to realise that life comes to a full circle and time is more powerful than anybody's thoughts and actions and thus both parties here should not waste so much time focused on each other , but truly use that time to get ahead and focus on themselves and try to forgive the experience and hurt. Only when many years pass by, one tends to question what they got or achieved in the end. Providence eventually catches up with everyone and everything and every person has their own journey .



So do yourself a favor, stop wasting your time questioning why someone is purposely insulting you and hurting you and on the flip side stop wasting time being jealous of the other person. In the end it's all the same. Focus on yourself and continuously forgive yourself and others and keep a distance if you wish for your sanity.

Written by Sukriti Dugal



Sukriti Dugal is an Edtech entrepreneur and lawyer by qualification, LL.B (SOAS, University of London) and LL.M (University College London, University of London) and LPC from BPP Law School, London. She has a rich and varied experience across art advisory, education and the legal sector. She is an avid reader and finds spirituality, self-development and study of religion as crucial aspects of her life and devotes a lot of time in enhancing her knowledge on the same. Gardening, reading, writing, meditation, art and design are some of her other passions.

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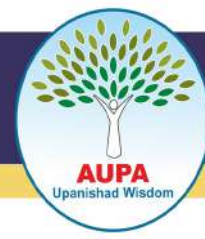
Health is You

COPING WITH STRESS – THE YOGA WAY

Anuradha Guruprasad

Stress, the Modern Menace

Due to increased work pressure and faulty life styles, stress has been taking a heavy toll on the health of many people in the modern age. In the current post pandemic scenario, 'stress and its



management' has become a major topic of interest for people all over the world. Stress simply put is the pressure people feel which can cause uncontrolled repetitive speed in thoughts and actions. Sometimes, stress may not be in the situation but our response patterns can cause distress. Stress can often make us feel that we are running around in circles without making any headway.

The Yoga Way

Yoga is considered one of the important approaches that is holistic and integrated, that is effective in dealing with stress, amidst the everyday chaos. Part of yoga's power to heal and transform comes from its ability to slow us down, relax our minds and to connect us with our own bodies through breath control. As the breath is the link between the body and the mind, by controlling breath one can control the mind.

One of the best ways to control stress as per Yoga is mindful abdominal breathing. In abdominal breathing, you inhale and exhale using your stomach like a balloon. Being aware of breathing can be practised throughout the day whilst carrying out day-to-day activities like driving, walking, writing, cutting vegetables etc.

Certain prānāyāmas Like Kapālbhāti, Sukha prānāyāma (alternate nostril breathing), Bhrāmari (producing bee-like buzzing sound during exhaling) etc can be done regularly. Shavāsana and Yoganidrā lead to a state of relaxation. If practised over a period of time, these can bring immense benefits to the health of mind and body as also improve their responses to stress.

Upavista Konāsana (seated wide legged straddle) – helps in relieving lower back pain while increasing balance and stability. Jānu Sheershāsana (head to knee pose) can strengthen the spine and ankles while removing tensions therein. Mārjāri āsana (Cat Cow pose) also stretches the spinal cord. Matsyāsana (fish pose) clears pressure in the head, neck and shoulders while Dhanurāsana (bow pose) massages the stomach organs and relieves mild depressions. 10 to 20 Surya Namaskāras, if done mindfully, also help retain general wellbeing of body-mind by improving the circulation of blood as also provide relief from stress and fatigue.

Conclusion

It is important to remember that Yoga is a holistic practice which works on many levels including body, mind and spirit. Stress control is really effective when along with these Yogic exercises we make intelligent choices regarding control of our senses, leading a mindful life, appreciating the small little pleasures in life and training the mind to focus on the things that matter most to us in all situations.



{Anuradha is a qualified yoga instructor, teaching and practicing yoga for the last ten years. Located in Bengaluru, she has some students in different parts of the world who get online guidance from her.}

News

Satsangs in Pune

Two evening sessions at Brahma Exuberance, Kondhwa, and a session each in Khadki and Uday Baug, were held during Swamiji's visit to Pune between Nov 20 and 22.

Visit to Mumbai

Please see the update on Jnānashakti (ashram) project for details on Swāmiji's visit to the commercial capital of India between Nov 23 and 25.

Satsang at Udupi

Swāmiji was at Udupi in Karnataka on November 27, where he addressed a gathering in the hall of Bhandarakere Matha, just outside the world-renowned Shri Krishna temple. The topic was 'Shiva-bhakti' and the language was Kannada. The event was held in honour of Late Shri Krishnappa Sharma, and was organized by the family members

Webinars

Webinars held:

Swamiji on Nov 14, and Shri K S Gopalakrishna of Mysuru on Nov 28 presented webinars (numbered 211 and 212) . Their topics were 'Shri Dakshinamurti' and 'Understanding Our Own Mind: Perspectives from Yoga respectively.

Webinars to be held:

The webinars 213 and 214 that will come up are slated for Sunday, December 12 and Sunday, December 26.

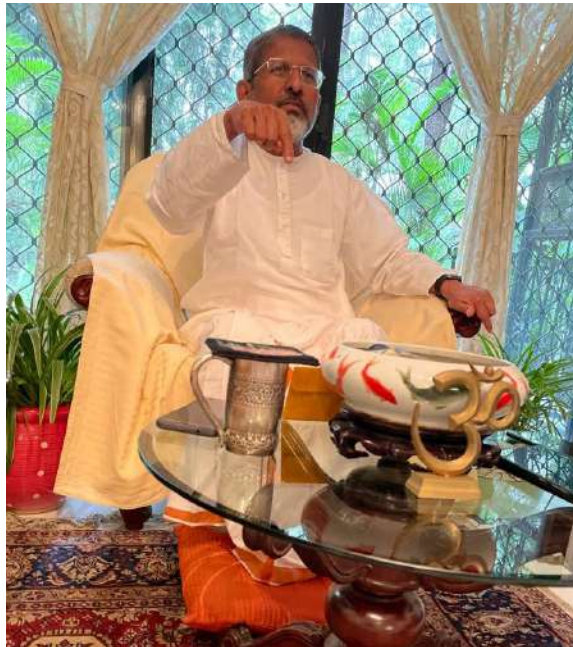
Those who wish to receive the Email invitations to our webinars may please write to fowaiforum@gmail.com



A section of the audience at Khadkhi, Nov 21



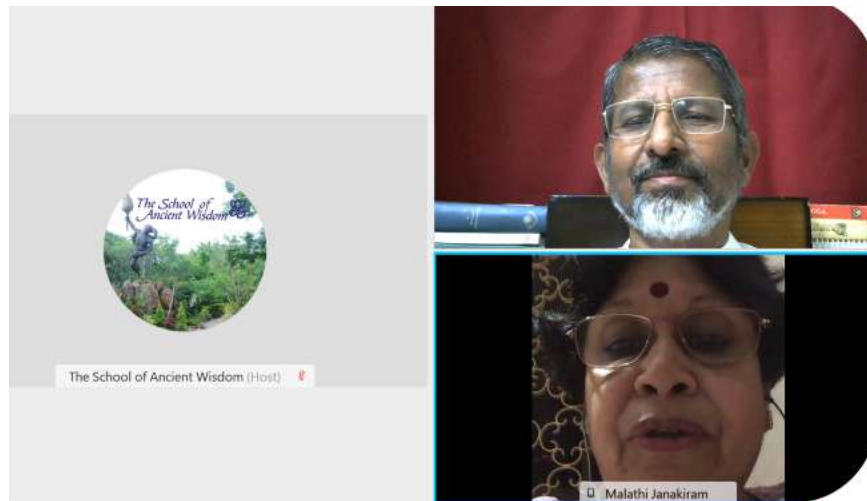
Smt Manju Banerjee joins Swamiji, Sukumaran, Vibhaji and Venugopal in lighting the lamp to start the Satsang at Khadki (Pune)



Swamiji makes a point during his lecture at Mansukhani residence in Pune, Nov 22, 2021.



Hosts, Sundar and Dakshu Mansukhanis, pose for a photograph, Nov 22, 2021.



The classes on Kathopanishad concluded on Saturday, Nov 20, 2021 when Swāmiji delivered the 38th lecture on the scripture. Smt Mālathi Jānakiram coordinated the event, under the banner of The School of Ancient Wisdom, Bengaluru.



Friends of FOWAI got together at The Classique Club in Mumbai on Nov 24, 2021 and applied their minds to fund-raising



Shri Bansi Mahajan addresses the circle of friends, Nov 24, 2021.



A group of 8 visited the premises of the (upcoming) Jnanashakti (Ashram) at village Vave, Nov 25, 2021.



Group at Jnanashakti (Ashram) site



An Online Intercollegiate Webinar on Nov 18, 2021 was organized jointly by Valia and Clara's Colleges. Swamiji and Dr Vilasini Patkar were the main speakers. Dr Shobha Menon, the Principal of the Valia College, is seen at bottom left.



Swamiji spoke on 'Escape from What is' at the online discussion under the banner of JK Study Circle, Indore. He joined from the Chainani residence in Mumbai, Nov 25, 2021.

Dhimahi

The Valia C. L. College of Commerce, Valia L. C. College of Arts in Andheri West, Mumbai, and the Clara's College in Mumbai, hosted an online 'Intercollegiate Webinar' on November 18 at 2 pm for administrative staff of several participating academic institutions. Swami Chidanandaji and Dr. Vilasini Patkar spoke on *Turning Proficiency into Efficiency* and *Efficiency at Workplace* respectively. The event was well received. Dr Shobha Menon, the Principal of the Valia Colleges and Dr Madhukar Gite, the Principal of Clara's College conveyed their appreciation.

New Coordinator:



Antarang Kumar, a young software professional, has joined **DHIMAHI** as the new program coordinator. He did a lot of groundwork for the Mumbai event of DHIMAHI in November. Based now in Dehradun, he will contact academic institutions in the country for extending DHIMAHI's services to faculty and students everywhere.

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 Bengaluru:

Swāmiji will be in Bengaluru for most of the time in December and January. He will hold classes on Saddarshanam at Hamsa Ashrama near Hosur in Tamil Nadu, the location being quite near Bengaluru. The dates are December 14 thru 20.

INDICA YOGA holds a Retreat

He will also hold a weekend event at 'Ritambarā Retreat' in Bengaluru on the theme, "Regaining Inner Strength and True Happiness: Geetā's Guidance". This program will begin on January 7 and conclude on January 9, 2022.

Geetā Jayanti

Tuesday, 14 December 2021

All of us are students of Vedānta (Upanishads), and Geetā is the best restatement of the wisdom of the Upanishads.

All the Upanishads are like cows;

Shri Krishna milks the cows.

After Arjuna, the calf, wise people drink the milk.

The divine milk is no other than Geetā!



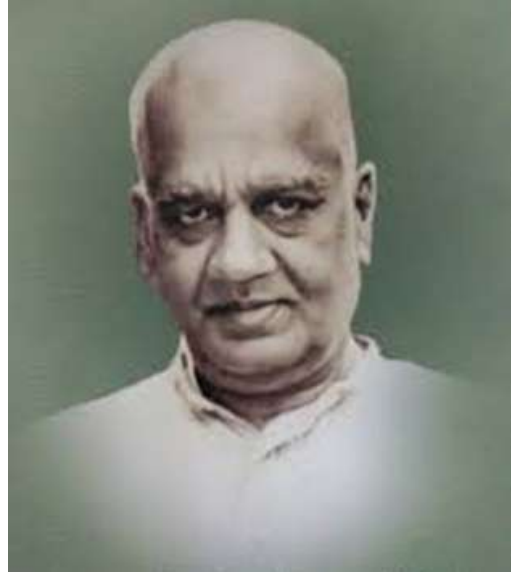
We bow down before Mother Geetā on the 5158th anniversary of the historic event, when Lord Krishna instructed Arjuna through this Song Celestial.

We bow down before Shri Krishna, the most divine manifestation (*purna-avatāra*) ever on the earth.

PROSTRATIONS BEFORE SWĀMI TAPOVAN

Tapovan Jayanti, 14 December 2021

In this world, we approach rich people when we face financial difficulties. On the spiritual path, we must approach saints like Swāmi Tapovan when we face a deficit of the inner wealth called *vairāgya* (detachment), without which spiritual progress gets seriously hindered! With his unshakeable lack of interest in worldly pleasures, he came to be known as Himavad-Vibhooti (a glorious figure in the Himālayan regions) during his time.



We bow down before Swāmi Tapovan Mahārāj on his birthday, which always coincides with Geeta Jayanti of the year.

(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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