

# AUPA e - Newsletter

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## Mantra to Ponder

**GIVE GENEROUSLY, GIVE WITH FAITH**  
*Charity brings religious merit.*



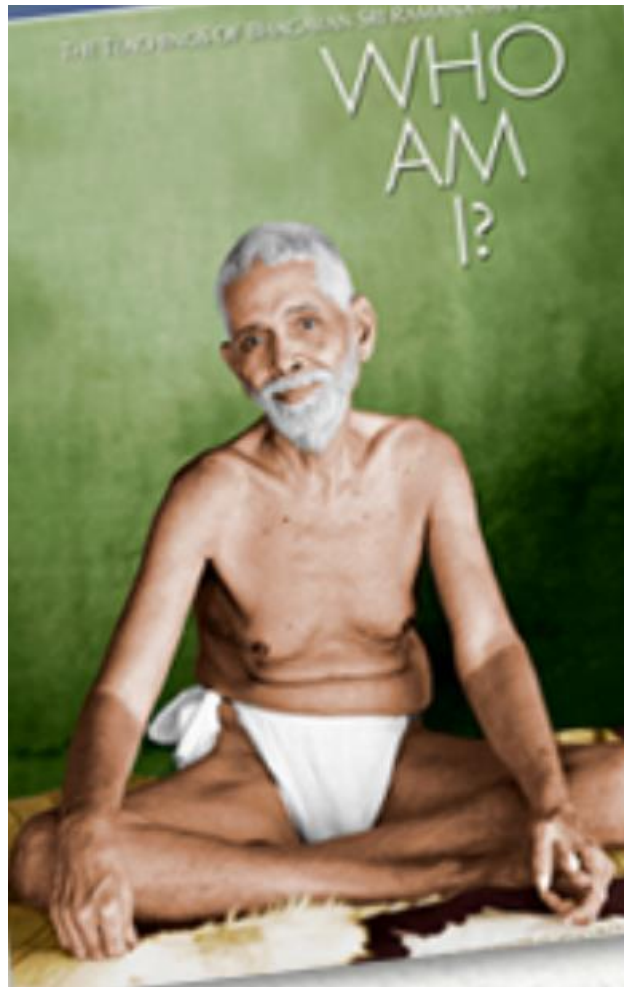
Referring once more to those portions of the Upanishads, which highlight right ways of living, we present here a little piece that asks us to give, do *dāna*. We must do charity, which means we should share our wealth with the needy. We must do so with the right attitudes. The mantra here emphasizes faith (*shraddhā*), appropriate measure (*shreeh*), humility (*hreeh*), fear (*bheeh*) of possible lapses, and consideration (*samvid*) for friends. The mantra forbids charity in a spirit of lack of faith (*ashraddhā*) in the act. Thus, there are six words of guidance, five in positive (*vidhi*) language and one of them being in the negative (*nishedha*).

*shraddhayā deyam, ashraddhayā adeyam, shriyā deyam  
hriyā deyam, bhiyā deyam, samvidā deyam*

*Give with faith; do not give without proper regard for the act; give as per your ability (commensurate with your wealth); give without feeling proud (you should rather feel shy that you are not doing enough); give with the awareness that not doing such good acts can come in the way of your rising on the spiritual scale (and therefore you should be a little afraid of possible lapses while walking on the hard path of dharma); give with adequate consideration for (the needs of) friends (members of the society around).*

**Taittiriya Upanishad 1.11 (Valli 1, anuvāka 11)**

**DO WE NEED A GURU AT ALL?**



*Guru is necessary so long as duality persists in you.*

**Bhagavan Shri Ramana Maharshi**

(In Talks, # 282)

[Maharshi also said, 'You are not the body; nor is the Guru the body. You are the Self; so is the Guru.' These revelations lift us to a higher plane of contemplation and help take enquiry to greater depths. – Editors]

**Thus Spake  
Chinmaya**

**DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR PROBLEM LIES?**



***Attachment is self-made slavery.***

**Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji**

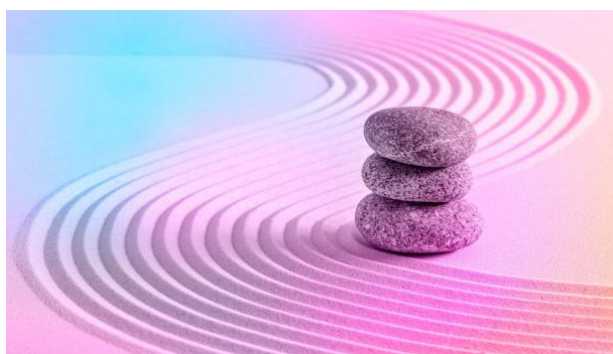
[Our general tendency is to look for causes outside of us for our misery. Spirituality however begins when we realize the cause could be within us, in our ways of thinking and feeling. Pujya Swamiji adeptly throws light on how attachments – those beliefs in our mind that make us depend on others for our happiness – are a major cause of sorrow in life. Editors]



Swami Chidananda

## HOW TO MEDITATE ON THE SELF

The Pure Self (*ātmā*) is *nirguna*, *nirākāra*, without attributes and without form. How do we then meditate on it? The two-word answer to this hard question is – by negating.



Negate what the *ātmā* is not. You will remain the self-evident Self. It is like how the sun becomes visible when, at the middle of the day, the clouds in the sky move away and nothing else needs to be done to behold the sun.

If financial problems bother you, ask yourself, 'Does the Self, my true nature, have financial problems?' Your Vedānta study then helps you see the truth that the Self is free from financial issues. As the thought of money (the cloud) goes away, the abidance in the Self (the sun) becomes unobstructed.

If your mind compares your social status with that of a cousin of yours, ask yourself, 'Is the Self in me less respected in our society than the Self of my cousin?' The understanding that your competent teachers have given you will enable you to see that the Self is one in the cousin, in you and in everybody else. The Self is not available for comparison as there are no two. This understanding makes the painful thought of being inferior vanish. You remain the Self.

Your conditioned mind values glitter, glamour, name, and fame. Enquire into the reality of these; thoughts that give importance to all of them will subside. That is meditation on the Self.

Let your meditation not be mere repetition of words. Let it not be fanciful imagination either. Let it be a matter of insightfulness. Seeing the falsity of mental concepts and, through such seeing, landing on the firm ground of truth, should be the nature of Meditation on the Self.

You may use mantras, shlokas, symbols, and techniques – to start with. Do not stay with them. Let them not limit or confine you. Let them help you behold the highest truth and,

having done their job, let them stand by the side without interfering in your quiet appreciation of the infinite Reality.

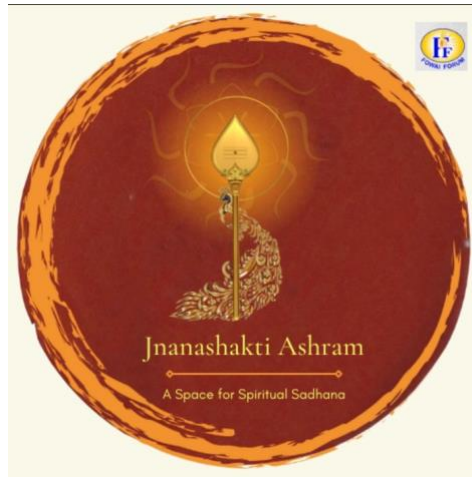
Looked at this way, meditation is a process of endless cleansing. It helps you emerge clean from amidst the debris of countless social conditionings and numerous residues of a wounded ego. Meditation frees you from the shackles of the past. The insight it gives you will leave no room for any anxiety for the future.

Study Vedānta properly. The clarity that the study gives you will make meditation happen.

**Swāmi Chidānanda**

**Jnāna Shakti**  
**Strength from Right Understanding**

**An Update on  
JNĀNA SHAKTI  
A Centre for Vedānta Studies**



A full-fledged team consisting of Architects, Contractors, Structural Advisors, Project Management Consultants (PMCs), Mechanical-Electrical-Plumbing (MEP) Consultants and others – all of them appointed after due deliberations – are waiting for the government permissions, which got further delayed because of certain new rules that have come into force in recent times. As a result, the drawings are going through another round of changes and improvements.

We are almost there – to start the construction – but not quite!

We appreciate the patience of all our donors, supporters, workers, volunteers and well-wishers.

We will soon give you the good news!

Team AUPA

## THE AMRITA-BINDU UPANISHAD

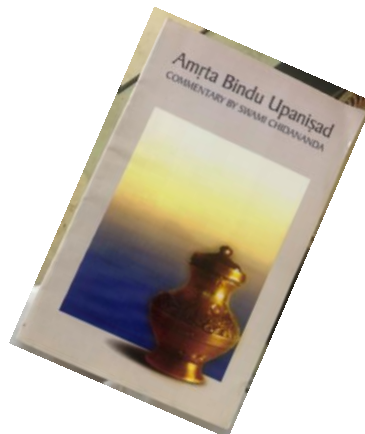
*Insights Comparable with Drops of Nectar*

The Amrita-Bindu Upanishad is a Minor Upanishad. (The ten Upanishads on which Ādi Shankarāchārya wrote commentaries are regarded the Major Upanishads.) This one is not minor in terms of its significance. It has the same depth and force that the major Upanishads have. The 22 mantras of this sacred text from the Atharva Veda highlight the place of scriptural study that can motivate a student to get down to serious *sādhana*, leaving behind all non-essentials. A mantra here says:

*'As we take rice, discarding the husk, the intelligent seeker grasps the Truth and leaves the books behind!' (Mantra 18)*

Mind and its management, the nature of the Self, the place of scriptural study, the limitations of conceptual thinking, and the oneness of myriad books of wisdom are the shining facets of this gem of a revealed text.

Upanishads teach Self-knowledge. They address the most significant question of life, "Who am I?" A study of the Upanishads lifts our mind to great heights of contemplation. Our habitual identifications are loosened and we derive an openness of outlook. In being truly introverted, in a mindset facilitated by the study of the Upanishads, we observe the falsity of our priorities, and take cognizance of how our value system is topsy-turvy. For example, upon being better informed by Vedānta, we clearly see the pursuit of power to be destructive and, moving away from it, go for peace instead. We let go of egoistic gratification and opt for true love in relationships. We stop operating from insecurity and begin to act from inner serenity.



Beginning with a two-fold classification of mind as a) attached to sense pleasures and b) free from seeking pleasure, this sacred work declares that liberation is gained by the latter kind of mind. It calls for restraining the mind's movements, making the mind merge in the Self. It

points out the nature of Brahman, the absolute reality. Pure, infinite, and changeless is the Truth. By mistake, we think there are many souls, which have their own limitations. The Upanishad awakens us to the truth that the Self (the unconditioned ātmā) is one in all, just as the moon in the sky is one, though its images reflected in ponds and rivers are many.

Spiritual study (*shāstra-adhyayana*) and practice (such as meditation/*dhyāna*) are meant to recognize this one Self in the illusory plurality. Amrita-Bindu discusses the place of *shāstra-adhyayana* on one hand, and the relevance of *dhyāna* on the other. With inspiring illustrations and forceful expressions, the mantras here motivate a student to get down to serious involvement in spirituality, leaving behind unnecessary engagements in the world.

[This is the seventeenth piece in this series after the Upanishads – *Ishā*, *Kena*, *Katha*, *Mundaka*, *Taittiriya-1 (shikshā-valli)*, *Taittiriya-2 (Brahmānanda-valli)*, *Taittiriya-3 (Bhrigu-valli)*, *Brihadāranyaka (in four parts)*, *Chāndogya (in four parts)* and *Kaivalya* were introduced in the previous sixteen articles. – Editors]

### Quote of the Issue

## SMART AND WISE



*He who knows others is clever; he who knows himself is enlightened.*

**Lao-Tse**

[Lao-Tse, also called Lao Tzu, (born 571 BC) was a Chinese philosopher credited with founding the philosophical system of Taoism. He is best known as the author of the *Laozi* (later retitled the *Tao-Te-Ching* translated as “The Way of Virtue” or “The Classic of the Way and Virtue”), the work which exemplifies his thought.]

**Smt. Indira Gautam**  
**Writes from the US**

## **LEARN AND GROW WE MUST**

Every one of us often wonders, “Why should I go through all this?” when difficulties arise in our life. Our dreams are sometimes shattered. Things happen in ways contrary to our expectations, to put the matter in a milder language. We hope our life will be a bed of roses but many a thorn greets us on the way.

Lord Rāma in the Rāmāyana and Prince Yudhisthira in the Mahābhārata went through very hard times. They were embodiments of virtue but even they were not spared. What to talk of us, who often err?

That is where we must pay heed to the wise advice of mystics and seers. “The gem cannot be polished without friction nor man perfected without trials,” said Confucius<sup>1</sup>. We must therefore look at adversity as a time when maximum inner ripening takes place. We also read the reassuring words of Ovid<sup>2</sup>, “The burden becomes light which is cheerfully borne.”

Healthy attitudes are thus of great help. “Give me the strength, lightly to bear my joys and sorrows,” wrote Tagore in his Geetanjali<sup>3</sup>.

Pain and pleasure are part of everyone’s life. How we take them varies from person to person. When handled with maturity, they become the tools in Nature’s hands to refine us, rebuild us and lead us towards a bright future.

Let us not be afraid of bad luck, failure or misunderstanding. Let us do our best every moment and then, if things go wrong despite our best efforts, let us deal with them with maximum equanimity.

May everyone of you master the skills required for a happier life!

**Indira Gautam**

Notes:

1 Confucius (551 – c. 479 BCE) was a Chinese philosopher and politician who is traditionally considered the paragon of Chinese sages. Confucius's teachings and philosophy underpin East Asian culture and society, remaining influential across China and East Asia to this day.

2 Publius Ovidius Naso (43 BC – 18 AD), known in English as Ovid, was a Roman poet who lived during the reign of Augustus.

3 Song 36 in Geetanjali.



## **FIVE HABITS THAT HAMPER OUR SLEEP**

*Sleep well at night, and be cheerful during the day!*



Just as important as eating well is getting a good night's sleep. Most of us choose to take medications rather than alter our lifestyles to address our problems. Let us change the habit.

*Use of screens before bed:* We all enjoy using our phones, laptops, and the computers in the hours before night but have you ever questioned why doing so is bad for your health? Will not the screen's light interfere with our body's normal sleep cycle? No wonder many individuals struggle to fall asleep after using their laptop or watching television right before bed. So, to get a good night's sleep, it is advised that you restrict screen time before bed. In fact, relaxing activities that can aid in getting ready for bed include reading a book or keeping a journal.

*Working out just before going to bed:* Exercise is necessary but it is not a good idea to work out hard right before bed. Over time, this bad habit lowers the quantity and quality of sleep as well as depletes the body's energy stores. Try stretching or yoga before night instead of working out because these activities are less demanding on your energies and are less rigorous.

*Improper mattress type:* It is critical to avoid placing strain on our muscles and joints at the end of the day. It can be difficult to sleep on a mattress (or use a pillow) made of foam. Many people roll and toss in their sleep because of pain caused by wrongly chosen kind of mattress. Find a mattress which keeps the body cool while you sleep, preventing hight sweats, and which also conforms to body shape, minimizing back pain.

*High caffeine consumption around dinner and bedtime:* While many of us might not be aware of it, use of coffee keeps us from falling asleep. While coffee does provide us with the stamina to stay awake, it also causes our minds to race, which could make us feel uneasy. Because of this, consuming coffee right before bed or soon after dinner is like working against our will, making it harder to fall asleep.

Ambiance: The impact of light and noise on sleep is an important factor in making possible a good night's sleep. People rightly associate bright light as they key hindrance to sleep but fail to understand that noise is also a major concern. It is extremely difficult to fall asleep when someone is talking loudly in the next room or outside our window. Therefore, creating a quiet and supporting bedroom is an important aspect of sleep hygiene.

We must not underestimate the importance of adequate sleep for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Like in every other situation, a little effort goes a long way and will have significant impact on one's quality of sleep.

Courtesy: (online edition of) India West, a major publication in California, May 17, 2023

**AUPA Yuva**  
**As Young Eyes See**

## **INVICTUS**

W E Henley

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be,  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance,  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance,  
My head is bloody but unbowed.



Beyond this place of wrath and tears,  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years,  
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul.

Note: \* *Invictus* means invincible or unconquered in Latin.

[Today, in English-speaking schools all over the world, children learn to *memorize* and recite this inspiring poem. They feel the unmistakable impact of its force and power. And to countless thousands of men and women, faced with sorrow, pain or fear, it has brought the courage to accept the blows of fate, to triumph over physical handicaps, and carry on with head unbowed. William Henley won immortality on the strength of *Invictus*.]

(O youth of the world, please read the last two lines of Henley's poem above: I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul. – Editors)

## Webinars

Webinars presented and to be presented by Swamiji:

**PRESENTED** by Swāmiji on Sundays at 8.30 pm

|              |     |  |           |
|--------------|-----|--|-----------|
| May 7, 2023  | 244 | Understanding Hinduism                 | Episode 2 |
| May 21, 2023 | 245 | Understanding Psychological Insecurity | -         |

**TO BE PRESENTED** by Swāmiji on Sundays at 8.30 pm

|               |     |                             |           |
|---------------|-----|-----------------------------|-----------|
| June 11, 2023 | 246 | Understanding Hinduism      | Episode 3 |
| June 25, 2023 | 247 | Visiting Kaivalya Upanishad | -         |

To join these webinars on Sundays at 8.30 pm IST, please go to YouTube, FOWAI channel at the time. To join on Zoom, where you get to see other participants and ask questions through voice, please Email [fowaiforum@yahoo.com](mailto:fowaiforum@yahoo.com)

## News

**May 5, IRC Talk:** The proposed online talk under the banner of International Relations Council got postponed to June 10. Please see under EVENTS COMING UP.

**May 12, 2023, Indica Moksha:** Under the month-long celebrations of 'Festival of Oneness', where many eminent scholars spoke on spiritual topics every morning and evening, Swāmiji gave a lecture on 'Space and Time in Shānkara Vedānta'.

**May 14, Udupi district:** In a beautiful setting next to the Vishnu Murthi temple in Sāligrama, a two-day event was held, where Niranjan Adiga, a 12-year-old boy, was given *Brahmopadesha*. On the eve of the main function (an important samskāra in Hinduism) of Upanayana, Swāmiji addressed a large gathering on the significance of the program, where

the boy was initiated into Vedic studies. The Kannada version of his booklet in English, 'Live Wisely, Live Happily' was distributed to all who came to the main function the next day.



Speaking on Upanayana, May 14, 2023

**May 29, 30, 31, Bengaluru:** Swāmiji delivered 3 evening talks (in Kannada) on 'Selected Gems from Shānkara-Bhāshya on Geetā' at the Shankara Jayanti Mandali in Jayanagar 3<sup>rd</sup> Block.

**June 2 thru 7, Nagpur:** Talks on Hinduism began on June 2 at NĀGALOK in the city of Nāgpur, where a bunch of about 25 to 30 young men and women were Swāmiji's audience. See [www.disomfoundation.org](http://www.disomfoundation.org) and [www.nagaloka.org](http://www.nagaloka.org) for details of The Leadership School (TLS). Nagaloka is the venue for a week for the 15-month program of TLS. The DISOM is a wing of Initiatives of Change, which has a campus (Asia Plateau) at Panchgani. Please see [in.iofc.org](http://in.iofc.org)

#### Upcoming Events

**June 10, IRC Talk:** The International Relations Council will have Swamiji speak on *Convergence of Yoga and Spirituality* at 6 pm. This talk will be online. The IRC is based in Kolkata. Those who wish to join may write an Email to [ircouncil18@gmail.com](mailto:ircouncil18@gmail.com) / Ms Joyeeta Majumdar, the Director of IRC, will arrange to provide the link to the talk.



**June 12, Meditation and Study Circle:** The M and S Circle of Bengaluru will have an online talk on 'WANTING TO BECOME, A Cause of Sorrow' by Swamiji, starting at 6.30 pm. Those who wish to get the link to this event may write to [vani.vasudev63@gmail.com](mailto:vani.vasudev63@gmail.com)

**June 27, 28, 29, Bengaluru:** Swāmiji will continue his talks (in Kannada) on 'Selected Gems from Shānkara-Bhāshya on Geetā' at the Shankara Jayanti Mandali in Jayanagar 3<sup>rd</sup> Block.

(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: [upa.in](http://upa.in) – Upanishad Wisdom).

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