

AUPA E-Newsletter



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**100th
Issue**

**Editor: Swami Chidananda
Associate Editor: Dolly Seth**

Mantra to Ponder

IT BEGINS WITH HEARING THE GOOD NEWS

'I have heard, from venerable ones, that a knower of the Self crosses all sorrow,' says Sage Nārada, when he meets with Sanat Kumāra. Though well-versed in many subjects, Nārada was not at peace with himself. He confesses, 'I have sorrow in my life.' Recognizing unrest within ourselves, hearing from wise people that this discontent can end, and approaching a competent teacher to acquire the wisdom of liberation – are major milestones in a spiritual seeker's life. Narendra had heard from a professor at his college about Shri Rāmakrishna. He went and met his master in the year 1883. Before the master left his body in 1886, Narendra had a very bright flame lit in his heart. Narendra became known as Swāmi Vivekānanda and the rest is history.



Vedānta beckons those of us who experience a certain discontent with the way we live. Hearing about Vedānta can be a major step towards embarking on a journey that lifts us way above all journeys.

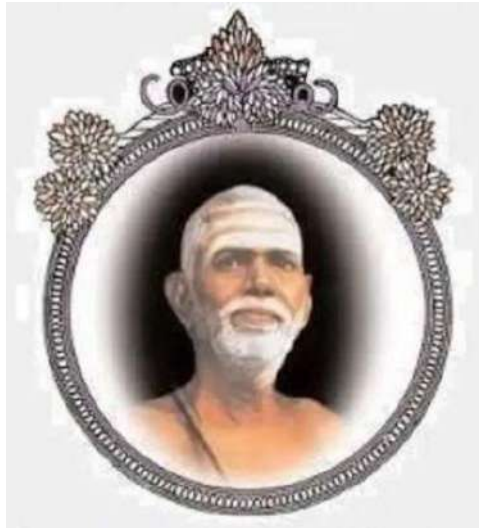
/ shrutam bhagavad-drishhebhyah tarati shokam-ātmavid – iti /

I have heard from revered ones that sorrow ends for one who knows the Self.

Chāndogya Upanishad 7.1.3

When we are ripe, just hearing about the Upanishads can trigger a series of events culminating in Self-realization.

DOES WORK TAX YOU?



There is no need to resign your job. Instead, resign yourself to Him, the bearer of the burden of all.

Shri Ramana Maharshi

(in chapter 12 of the book BE AS YOU ARE)

[This insightful advice by the Maharshi shows that the real problem is our egoism, made of self-judgments and notions of who we are. When surrender to God removes the ego, no work can burden us. – Editors]

THE DEEPER TRUTH OF LIFE



'I' and the 'World around me' are creations of the mind.



Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji

[The Pure Self, the light of consciousness, is not a product of memories. The ego however is the result of memories and conditionings. This ego – one side of the illusion – brings to us a certain perception of the world, which is different for different persons, and is therefore rightly called a creation of the mind – the second side of the illusion. – Editors]



Swami Chidananda

LUMINOUS ADVICE

Light on Working Effectively

The Upanishads are a fountainhead of valuable advice on right living. They are an abundant source of guidance and directions for us to act wisely and respond to situations in a befitting manner. It is rightly said that their study brings new strength to us.

Right in the opening section of the Chāndogya Upanishad, it is said¹, 'That work alone becomes surpassingly effective, which is done with knowledge, faith and concentration.' Three criteria – *vidyā*, *shraddhā*, and *upanishad* – are supplied, which together ensure that an action has the best results. (The word *upanishad* here means, as Ādi Shankarāchārya interprets, *yoga*, which in turn means concentration or bringing the body and the mind together.)



Taking up some work when we do not have adequate knowledge about it is not totally forbidden but we are warned that the results may not be satisfactory in such a case. Lack of knowledge can sometimes lead to dangerous outcomes too. A simple example that teachers often give is of a medical student who, before even completing his medical education and training, plunges into health service. He may have great sympathy for the sick and the suffering people but that does not justify premature action on his part. Even if he is a brilliant student at his medical college, he should have patience, learn all the theory and practice that proper medical education entails. When he joins other doctors after getting equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, he will render truly good service.

How can anyone deliver the goods, when he doubts the system or his own expertise? If we go about our work while harbouring negative feelings about certain aspects of it, we will certainly falter every now and then. We will lose strength or momentum as we proceed with the execution of various tasks. The initial enthusiasm will give in to a spirit of dragging on, with complaints or conflicts. We must therefore have the necessary belief in ourselves and trust in the organization.

'Let your mind be where your hands are,' said Swāmi Chinmayānandaji, referring to the need for concentration in any work we do. The sad predicament of lots of people is that, when they are at the breakfast table, their mind is already at their office. When they are at

their desk in their office, a few hours later, they wonder what breakfast they had in the morning! How can the best in them come out in such a scenario? We must therefore train our mind to stay focused on the job on hand.

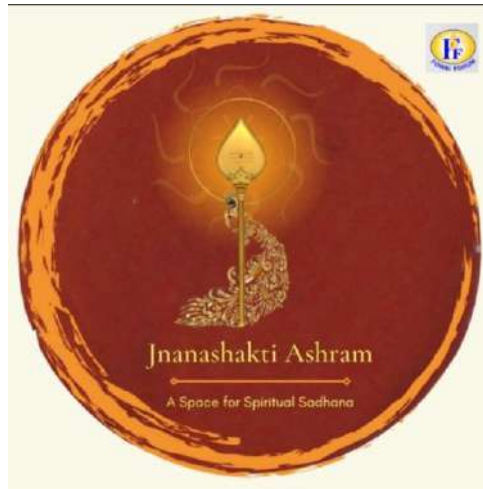
The tips that this Upanishad from the Sāma-Veda gives to us are thus luminous, helping us in daily life.

1 'yadeva vidyayā karoti, shraddhayā, upanishadā, tadeva viryavattaram bhavati' Chā. Up.
1.1.1

Swāmi Chidānanda

Jnāna Shakti
Strength from Right Understanding

An Update on
JNĀNA SHAKTI
A Centre for Vedānta Studies



We are happy to let our readers know that more people in different parts of the world have been showing interest in our project and are eager to participate in various ways when the facility begins to operate. Swamiji's US tour, August 14 thru sept 24, has brought many more students of Vedānta into our fold. Financial support also has been trickling in and we are grateful to the Lord above for keeping us adequately equipped to face the immediate challenges.

The construction will begin soon as the government is poised to give us the permission. The authorities recently asked us to wait a little for the Ganesh Festival to get over as many

government staff go on leave during the week or ten days around these extremely popular celebrations in the State of Maharashtra.

Be in touch

Team Jnāna Shakti

Imperatives from Upanishads

IMPERATIVES FROM THE UPANISHADS

What do they ask us to do?

If truth be told, the Upanishads ask us to *do nothing!* On the high plateau, where they mainly operate, they ask us *to see*, and not *to do*. They are primarily the trailblazers of *jnāna* to come upon, and not the commanders of *karma* to be performed. *Jnāna* is liberating wisdom, consisting of seeing rightly¹. Karma is action, a task to be performed².

The Upanishads, however, do come down a notch below and provide to us a lot of instructions to follow. When we listen to their clarion call, our life stands on higher moral ground. We achieve greater purity of mind³, and our ability to grasp the *jnāna* in the Upanishads significantly increases. To go with the hundredth issue of this e-newsletter AUPA, we begin here a set of 18 imperatives from the Upanishads.



1 Speak truth, Live righteously (satyam vada, dharma chara)

In this first one of the eighteen, which is from the Taittiriya Upanishad of Yajurveda, we find the 'body of divine revelations' touching upon a cardinal value, which all the religious traditions of the world endorse. To speak truth and to eschew lies is a fundamental human value of the greatest importance.

The truthful ones alone win, declares another Upanishad⁴, and praises this value by saying the road to the heavens is tiled with truth. Those who compromise with truth may appear to win battles but are sure to lose the war.

This imperative statement highlights the application of *satya* in speech, though the word has wider applications in human life such as being true to oneself, living a life of integrity etc.

This order from the sacred lore, to speak truth, is akin to the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament accepted by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. If we do not obey this command from God, we would be playing with fire.

The second part of this instruction is *dharmam chara*. To live righteously has a larger connotation than to speak truth. In other words, *satya* is one of the facets of *dharma*. The *smritis*, the second category of scriptures in the Sanātana Dharma, next only to the Vedas, enlist ten aspects⁵ of dharma: fortitude, forgiveness, mind control, non-stealing, cleanliness, control over organs of perception and action, cultivating intelligence (discernment), acquiring knowledge, truthfulness and abstaining from (destructive) anger. When we develop these components of dharma, our inner strength grows tremendously. In seen and unseen ways, dharma then protects us. The well-known slogan⁶ ‘dharma protects its protectors’ then comes into force. Dharma indeed is the stepping stone to moksha (liberation), the ultimate goal of human life.

Notes:

1 *samyag-darshana*.

2 *vidhi-nishedha-roopam*, of the nature of dos and don'ts.

3 *chitta-shuddhi*.

4 *satyameva jayate, na anritam* – *Mundaka Upanishad* 3.1.6

5 / *dhritih-kshamā-damo-asteyam shaucham-indriya-nigraha*

/ *dheer-vidyā-satyam-akrodhah dashakam dharma-lakshanam* – Manu 6.92

6 *dharmo rakshati rakshitah* – Manu 8.15

Quote of the Issue

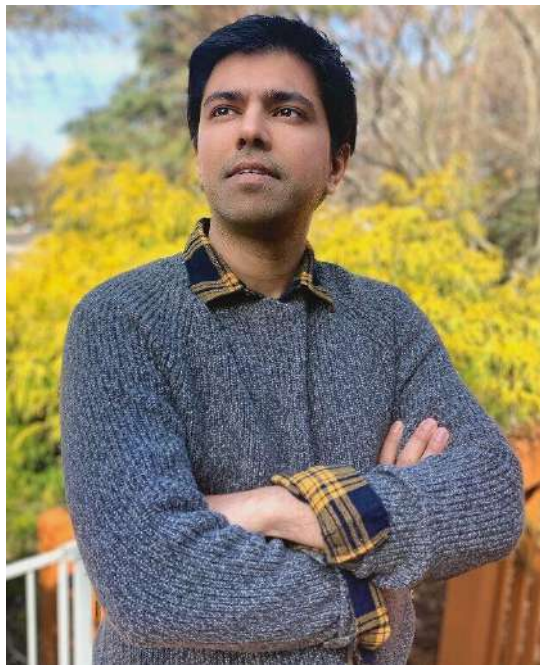
UNDERSTAND EVERY SINGLE THOUGHT

If enlightenment is just an experience, how is it (seeking enlightenment) different from an ambitious person chasing his millions? Ignore the definitions, the promises, the hints, and the declarations (on enlightenment). Commit yourself to one and only one thing – understanding every single thought that you have, at its root. If one has not resolved the entirety of one's past, then one is not enlightened regardless of how many million followers one has or books one has sold. If one has resolved all the problems of one's life, why does one then need enlightenment? What more can it give one that one does not already have?

Amit Pagedar

(in his book FINDING AWARENESS, The Journey of Self-discovery)

[The author ably shows that, if we make a fancy concept of enlightenment and chase it as our goal, it becomes another psychological trap. In contrast, if we put aside the glamorous idea of illumination and live in awareness of the movement of the self, the unburdening can be amazing. The words in parentheses in the above quote are from us. – Editors]



Amit Pagedar is a writer and founder of FINDING AWARENESS. His following on Instagram over the past two years has gone to over 60,000.

Mrs. Indira Gautam writes
from the U.S.

DISCERNMENT

(VIVEKA)

It seems to me that all knowledge of scriptures fails to bless us with desirable results unless we develop '*viveka*' or discernment, which should show in real life scenarios. An ant climbs up a dung heap to pick up a grain of sugar placed on top. It rejects all the dung on the way up. Certain worms climb up a heap of sugar to help themselves to a bit of dung on top. They reject sugar. With due respect to ants and worms, both of which are created by God, the analogy here is just to illustrate a possible ability in us to choose *dharma* over *adharma*.



Accept

Refuse

When we lack *viveka*, we increasingly make wrong choices. As a result, our relationships turn sour, which causes disturbances in our mind. Our mind then gets muddled in the

process. The confused mind then makes more of wrong choices. Thus *aviveka* (lack of discernment) and wrong actions become a vicious circle.

In contrast, when we spend time in remembering God, doing yoga, *prānāyāma* or daily walks, our body and mind get purified. There is then rise of *viveka*. This leads to more of right choices in daily living. The betterment of relationships that follows makes our mind purer. We then will more easily take to *japa*, prayer, yoga, walk etc. Thus, the vicious circle is broken. Increased goodness, heightened *viveka* and enhanced *sattva* (balance, alertness etc.) lead to a *snowball effect*, in contrast to the vicious circle. Our wellbeing goes on increasing.

Let us resolve to get out of wrong ways, put a stop to bad habits and rise higher and higher in spirituality.

Hearty best wishes,

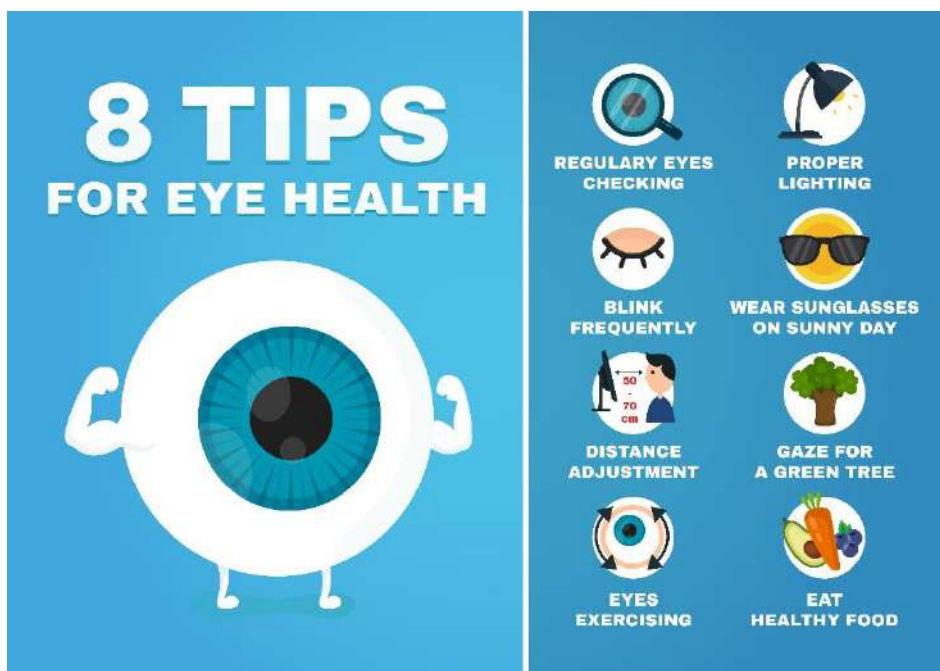
Indira Gautam

Health is You

DO YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR EYES?

Eight Tips

We keep an eye on many things like our bank balance, prospects for career growth, possibilities of profitable social contacts, what others are doing etc. Do we keep an eye on how our eyes are doing?



Give some thought to these possible measures (a little different set than what are shown in the graphic above) to ensure good eye health.

1. Eat right to protect your sight. Keep your eyes healthy by eating a well-balanced diet.
2. Get moving.
3. Speak up if your vision changes.
4. Wear your glasses.
5. Keep germs away.
6. Gear up.
7. Wear your shades.
8. Give your eyes a break.

Remember, not much is really lost if wealth is lost but a lot is lost if health is lost.

AUPA Yuva
As Young Eyes See

HOW TO OVERCOME FANATICISM

['To honour diversity is now a necessity, not an option,' says Sri Sri Ravishankar. The youth of the world should especially think about Sri Sri's views. That will be in the interest of this divided world. Sri Sri adds, 'The only way to get rid of fanaticism in the world is through spiritual education that is broad-based, multicultural and multireligious: that which creates a reverence for diversity in nature.' – Editors]

It is time that we bring down the walls between cultures and civilisations across the world and recognise that we are a one-world family and come together in a spirit of celebration, spirit of love, compassion, and serving.

The centre of every culture is love; the very core of humanity is love. Harmony in sound is music. Harmony in movement is dance. Harmony in mind is meditation. Harmony in life is a celebration! And, culture through art, music, dance, food, and dress is the thread that can weave harmony in a community.



Our knowledge and communication are growing, while our world is shrinking. We have no other choice than to honour diversity. It is now a necessity, not an option. In a world with rapid advancements in science and technology, a bigger spotlight must be thrown on culture.

The polarisation and mistrust in the world today call for a humanistic approach, one that includes the well-being of all. This can only happen when every child knows a little about the wisdom from different cultures. Then the world would be a happier and more peaceful place.

You love to have food from every part of the world. You listen to music from all over the world. You don't need to be a person of Chinese origin in order to eat Chinese food. You don't need to be an Italian to go to a pizzeria and eat pizzas, nor a Danish to eat Danish cookies. One doesn't have to be an Indian to listen to bhajans or sitar music. Similarly, we need to learn to accept knowledge and wisdom from every part, and this is what has been lacking in the world.

Fanaticism fails to recognise that the divine loves variety and diversity; and that many different schools of thought can coexist in this world. The only way to get rid of fanaticism in the world is through spiritual education that is broad-based, multicultural and multireligious: that which creates a reverence for diversity in nature. It is when a child grows up considering other religions or cultures as bad or with the notion that my idea of God is the only idea of God, that he or she is ready to give up his or her life for that cause; but when a child grows up learning a little bit about all other religions, cultures and customs, then there is a sense of belonging with everybody. Then the child will not have inhibitions or hatred towards other religions or cultures.

{Courtesy: The Indian Express, September 29, 2023, Online edition}

Webinars



PRESENTED

Swāmiji presented the following webinar at 8.30 pm IST, on a Sunday:

October 1, 2023	Webinar # 253	The Great Statements of the Upanishads
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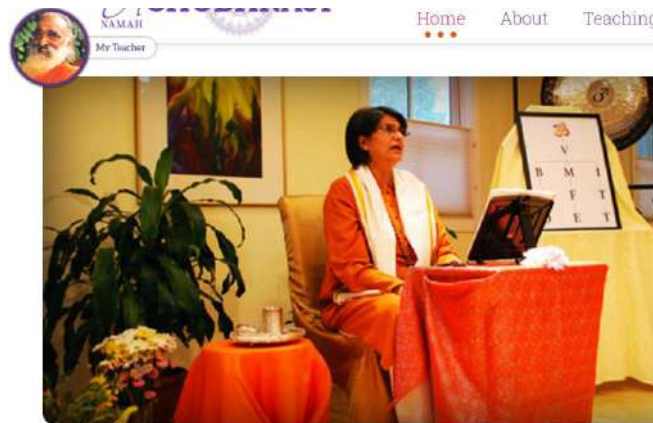
TO BE PRESENTED

The following webinars by Swāmiji will come up at 8.30 pm IST, on Sundays:

October 15, 2023	Webinar # 254	Understanding Hinduism, Episode 6
October 29, 2023	Webinar # 255	My Experience of the Parliament of the World's Religions, Part 2

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Upstate New York, Aug 30 thru Sept 2, 2023: Swamiji took a bus on the 30th at Port Authority Bus Terminus in Manhattan, and proceeded to Kingston where Shubhrāji, of Namah Om, received him with a bouquet. A spiritual teacher based in the Woodstock, NY, area, and sharing her Vedanta knowledge around the world, Shubhrāji knew Swamiji from the early 1990s. She had met Pujya Gurudev Swāmi Chinmayānandaji when she was 18 years old, and the latter guided her in many ways. After two days of stay at Shubhrāji's āshram in Saugerties (close to Woodstock), during which he had lots of valuable discussions with her and her associate Rājpriya, Swāmiji moved further north to a city called Lake Luzerne near Saratoga Springs, north of Albany, the State Capital. Prof Mark Kriger, a distinguished academician, who had taught at universities in USA and Norway, hosted him for two days. With degrees from Berkeley, Harvard and MIT, this scholar had deep interest in Buddhism and in Ramana Maharshi.



Shubhrāji, the Vedānta teacher in Upstate New York (file photo)



Joshua, his father Prof Mark Kriger and Swāmiji at Lake Luzerne, Sept 3, 2023

Baltimore and Virginia Beach, Sept 3 thru 6: Swāmiji delivered two talks in the Baltimore area at the residences of Smt Sudhā Gouthama and Dr S Sridhara on the 3rd and 4th respectively. Many people met him at both the places during the sessions and at other time too. He then had two quiet days at Virginia Beach, VA, where Shri Kumār Vashisth and he went around to see places of interest. A warship of the World War 2, USS Wisconsin, now parked by the sea near Norfolk, the Douglas McArthur Memorial, the Chrysler Museum and the Virginia Beach were among the fascinating spots the two visited.



The statue of King Neptune at Virginia Beach, Sept 6, 2023

North Carolina, Sept 7 thru 11, 2023: Ms Priyā Nāgaraju, the Hindu Chaplain at the Duke University, organized two events on the huge campus of the prestigious institution. Swāmiji took part in the Shri Krishna Janmāstami celebrations on Sept 7 where he addressed an audience, consisting mainly of Hindu students, for 12 minutes. The next day, he delivered an hour-long lecture on Geetā at a larger hall, for a more diverse audience. Prof. Kishor Trivedi, a senior faculty at the Duke University, was present on both the occasions.



With Priya Nagaraju, the Hindu Chaplain at Duke University, Sept 7, 2023

He also spoke to nearly 30 teachers of the Sanskār Gurukul, during a 'teachers' training workshop on Sunday, Sept 10. This Gurukul has classes every Sunday for children, comparable with Bāl Vihār of Chinmaya Mission or Bāl Vikās of Satya Sāi. On same day, he also delivered an online talk to yet another organization, like Sanskār Gurukul, named Vidyā Niketan, based in Maryland.

Houston, Texas, Sept 12 and 13: A quick and short visit to the State of Texas consisted of a Satsang on the 13th at the residence of Vidhyā and Ranga Dandi at the city of Sugarland. Swāmiji visited the Shri Krishna Vrindāvan (a Krishna temple run by Puttige Matha of Udupi) and the temple run by Shringeri Vidyā Bharati Foundation in the Houston area.

Tucson, Arizona, Sept 14 thru 19: Satsangs / talks at the SAINT (Seniors' Association of Indians in Tucson), at the residence of Shāntā Maddur and Dr Jayahari, and at the Shiva-Vishnu-Durgā temple marked Swāmiji's first visit to Tucson. It also included a visit to the very popular tourist destination Sedona. Apart from the marvellous scenes of Nature, a visit to the man-made, picturesque *Chapel of the Holy Cross* amidst the magnificent rock formations, was significant.



Swāmiji with members of SAINT, Tucson, Sept 15, 2023



The Chapel of the Holy Cross, Sedona, Sept 19, 2023

Los Angeles, Sept 20 thru 24: Informal meetings with many people, a visit to the headquarters of the Self Realization Fellowship (Yogoda Satsang Society in India) of Paramahansa Yogānanda, a talk at the Satya Sāi Center in Arcadia and one Satsang at the residence of Kānchana and Rājamannar Abbot in La Palma were the highlights of the short visit to Los Angeles, from where Swāmiji flew back to Mumbai.

DHIMAHI

Deriving Holistic Insights into Management and Academics from the Heritage of India

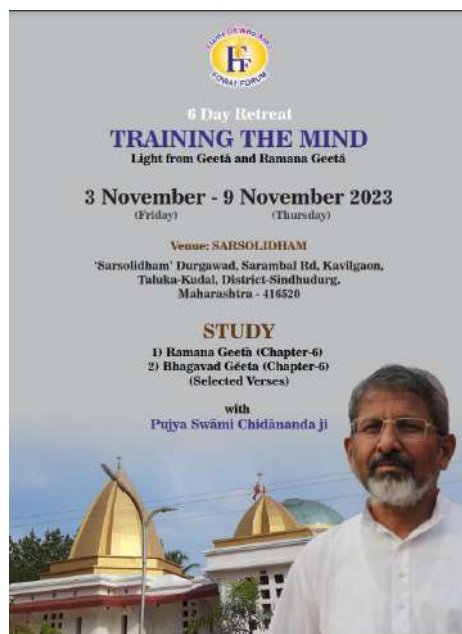
The two events at the Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, reached out to students at the famed place of learning. Several students, pursuing Masters in Engineering (degree of MS) or in Engineering Management (MEM) were part of the audience, and some of them evinced keen interest in Geetā or Vedānta.

October 13, 2023: Swāmiji will address the students of First Year in college (Banking, Commerce) at the SIES (South Indian Education Society) College in Nerul (New Mumbai). The topic will be Management Lessons in the Vedas and Kautilya's Arthashastra.

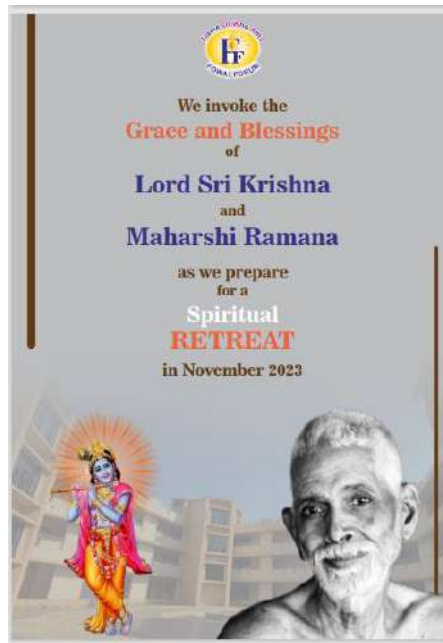
Upcoming events

Bengaluru, Oct 19 thru 26: Three talks at Shankara Jayanti Mandali on *Yajna*, *Dāna* and *Tapah*, on the 19th, 25th and 26th; a 3-day visit to Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma (SSD) will be part of the program in Bengaluru.

Spiritual Retreat in Kudal, Nov 3 thru 9: 'Mind Management: Light of Geetā and Ramana Geetā' is the theme of the upcoming Retreat at this small town in Mahārāshtra, close to the Goa border. Readers, interested in joining the event, may please write to fowaiforum@gmail.com.



The poster features a logo at the top with the letters 'EF' inside a circle, surrounded by the text 'FOWAIFORUM'. Below the logo, the text reads: '6 Day Retreat', 'TRAINING THE MIND', 'Light from Geetā and Ramana Geetā', '3 November - 9 November 2023', '(Friday) (Thursday)', 'Venue: SARSOLIDHAM', 'Sarsolidham Durgawad, Sarambal Rd, Kavilgaon, Taluka-Kudal, District-Sindhudurg, Maharashtra - 416520', 'STUDY', '1) Ramana Geetā (Chapter-6)', '2) Bhagavad Geetā (Chapter-6) (Selected Verses)', 'with', 'Pujya Swāmi Chidānanda ji'. At the bottom, there is a photograph of a man with a white beard and glasses, wearing a white shirt, standing in front of a building with a golden dome.



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(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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Mobile: 99678 78798