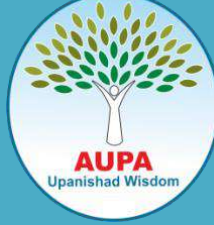


AUPA e - Newsletter

March 2024
Vol 9, Issue 9 (No. 105)



Editor: Swami Chidananda
Associate Editor: Dolly Seth

Mantra to Ponder

GIVE, GIVE GENEROUSLY *Support Good Causes.*

Dr Ruth Gottesman is in the news. A former professor at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in Bronx, New York, has made a donation of \$ 1 Billion to her college towards making the institution completely tuition-free for all the students, indefinitely! She is the current chair of the board also, governing the school.

In India, the Shri Satya Sai University for Higher Education (SSSUHE) has launched a medical college in Muddenahalli (near Bengaluru), which offers MBBS free of cost to all the students, from its inception itself!



The Upanishads endorse a culture of *giving*.

***shraddhayā deyam, ashreddhayā adeyam
shriyā deyam, bhiyā deyam***

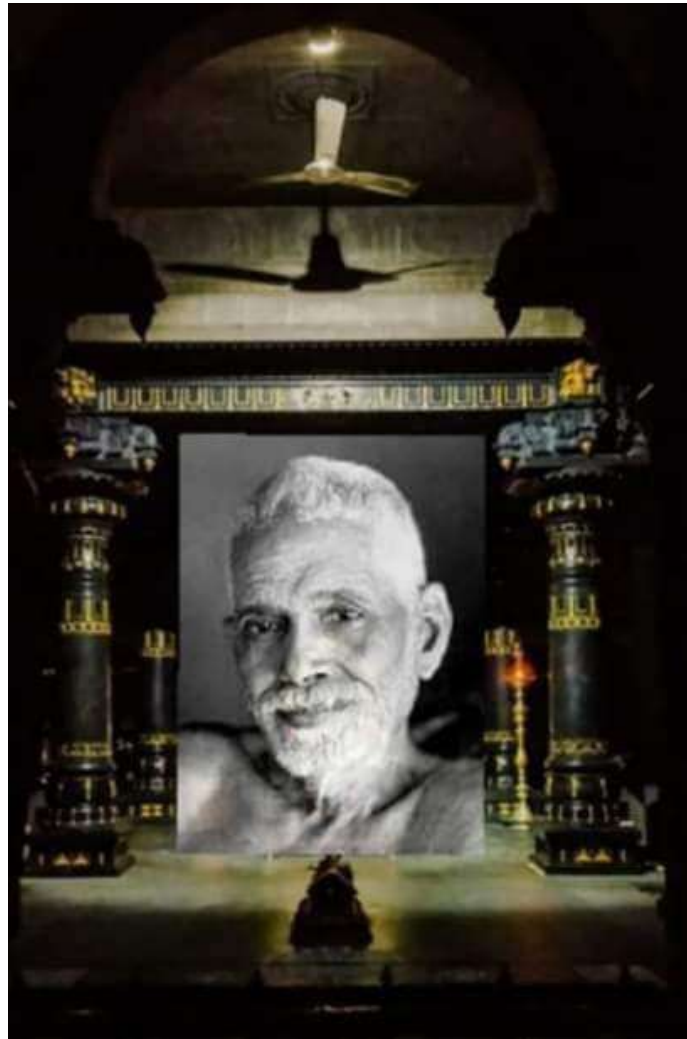
(Taittiriya-Upanishad 1.1.21)

Give. Give with faith. Do not give without faith. Give generously. Give with fear of moral laws.

Once more we see ethics and moral values going hand in hand with metaphysical teachings in the sacred lore. The rule is: those who live a life of dharma rise in consciousness, and become the deserving recipients of the liberating wisdom.

IS YOUR MIND RESTLESS?

Know what the mind really is.



The mind is Consciousness, which has put on limitations. You are originally unlimited and perfect. Later you take on limitations and become the mind.

Shri Ramana Maharshi

[The return to what we truly are is through self-enquiry supported by the Upanishadic wisdom. – Editors]

HOW DO WE BECOME HAPPY?



*Happiness depends on
what you can give,
not on what you can get.*

Pujya Swāmi Chinmayānandaji

[When our joy is in giving, we are closer to our true nature, which is infinite. When our happiness is in receiving, we are closer to our acquired nature, which is the limited self. This truth however should not make us get into a complex where we resist receiving for life is full of give and take! – Editors]



SCRIPTURAL STUDY

Is any practice needed following shāstra-adhyayana?

Many readers would perhaps be surprised to know my answer: If we really have total clarity regarding the teaching of the Vedānta *shāstra*, there is no need for any practice! The question, 'Should I practice?' does not arise at all!

In the understanding of the great statement (for example, *tat-tvam-asi*), the three-fold division (*triputi*) of the knower-knowing-known vanishes right away. Where 'time' ends, how can there be any practice that requires the basis of time?



The rigidly austere position (of the teaching tradition of the Vedānta) with regard to practices such as *japa* (repetition of mantras, holy names etc.) and *dhyāna* (meditation on the messages of the Upanishads, which reveal the ultimate truth) is that they are required to prepare our mind to 'see correctly'. Suppose a rose is held before our eyes, and we are unable to see the flower, the reason could be that some dust has fallen in our eyes. Once we remove the dust, our healthy eyes will easily see the rose.

All practices are therefore for *chitta-shuddhi*. The same equipment – our *antahkarana* – that was earlier unable to comprehend the supreme teaching of oneness of all that is, succeeds in beholding the truth. That is *jnāna*, right seeing, and the uncompromising statement of the Rishis is: *jnānad-eva tu kaivalyam* – Liberation is through right seeing only.

Bhāshyakāra Shri Shankarāchārya states, “(Everything) gets completed at the same time as when right understanding of the meaning of the (great) statement dawns (upon the student).”

This clarification from the great Advaita commentator is one of the high plateau teachings of the whole system of Advaita. [Many allied topics like *vastu-tantra* (object-centric) and *kartr-tantra* (subjective) activities need to be discussed for anybody to deeply appreciate this matter. *Jnāna* is *vastu-tantra* and *karma/upāsana* is *kartr-tantra*.]

Swāmi Chidānanda

Notes:

1 *vākyārtha-jnāna-sama-kāle eva tu paryavasito bhavati*. Bhāṣya on Mundaka Upanishad 1.1.6 .

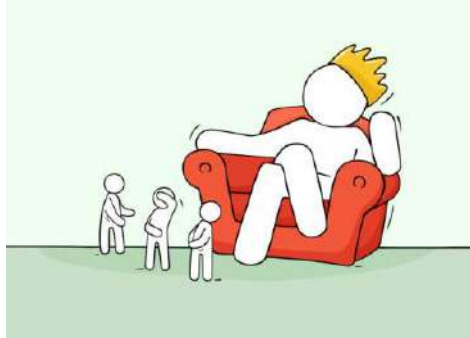
**Imperatives from
Upanishads**

5

DO NOT OVERRATE YOURSELF

Know your abilities and act accordingly.

In this sixth selection, we get to learn a lesson that is important in day-to-day life. Many a time, some success here and there gets into our head and we begin to get deluded. This delusion (*moha*) causes an overestimation of our worth. We then think so highly of ourselves that we try to take everything in our hands, ignoring or disrespecting certain others who might be more qualified and competent. In lack of discretion, our actions then smack of arrogance.



Do not get deluded (mā moham-āpadyata)!

Prashna Upanisadh, mantra 2.3

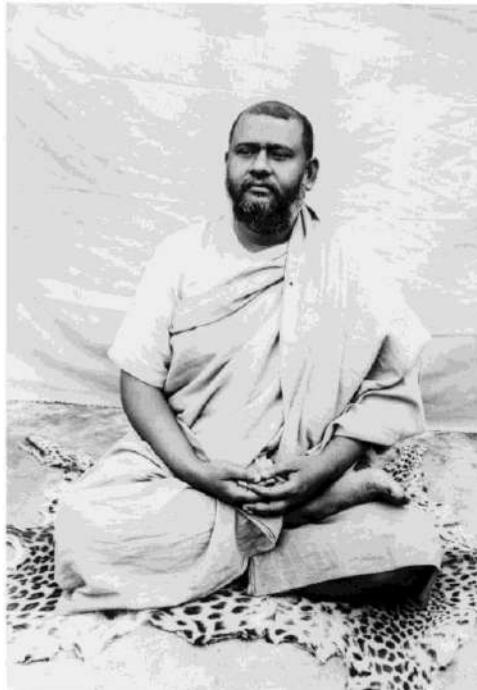
In an allegory that the Prashna Upanishad (from Atharva Veda) narrates, the different organs of perception and action (*jnāna-indriyas and karma-indriyas*) tell the main life-energy (*mukhya-prāna*) that they support and hold this body in place. The main life-energy, realizing that these entities had got deluded, says, “Do not get deluded!”

The *mukhya-prāna* then teaches a lesson to all these. They come around and admit their folly.

In various transactional situations, it is necessary that we correctly assess our own strength and shortcomings (*balābala = bala+abala*). We must neither act too smart nor undermine our potential. All this requires greater self-awareness, which includes unbiased self-observation. We must also not get carried away by how others show themselves to be.

Quote of the Issue

WAITING FOR THE RIGHT TIME TO MEDITATE?



Without meditation, the mind cannot be calm, and again, without calmness of the mind, meditation is not possible. If you think that, when the mind is calm, you will practice

meditation, you will never get a chance for meditation. You must strive for both simultaneously.

Swāmi Brahmānanda

(In the book *A Guide to Spiritual Life: Spiritual Teachings of Swāmi Brahmānanda*, page 47.)

[Swāmi Brahmānanda (1863 – 1922) was the first President of the Ramakrishna Order, Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission. Born in the same year as Swami Vivekananda, he was known as Rakhal before he became a monk. Under his fostering care, the infant Ramakrishna Mission, handed over to his charge by his great brother-disciple, the illustrious Swami Vivekananda, spread its branches far and wide, doing its humble bit of service in the alleviation of the sufferings of man. – Editors]

Smt. Indira Gautam
Writes from the US

IN CALM AND STORM

There is always something to learn.

When we look back at life, we realize how we received some of our best lessons during those stormy years, when everything seemed to go wrong and we found ourselves at our wits' end! It was at such time that we could clearly know who our real friends were and who had been pretending all the time. Many of our presumptions were proved incorrect. We could discover new opportunities in directions where we had not looked at all before!



We cannot however make a sweeping remark that only bad times teach us lessons. During good times too, we learnt and grew, in a different way though. Times of peace, where we could apply our energies to some classes, exercises, experiments, and training, were also very beneficial.

It seems, therefore, we need to keep an open mind that is ever ready to learn. Even as our conditioned mind tends to jump to a conclusion, we must examine and re-examine its inferences. Most importantly, we must take the maximum care not to hurt innocent people by hurriedly rejecting them, and not to encourage evil-minded ones by letting them take advantage of our poor judgments.

We pray God, therefore, again and again, to bless us with the alertness to avoid errors and take right steps in this long journey called life. May He lead us from the false to the true, from darkness to light, and from death to immortality!

*asato mā sad-gamaya
tamaso mā jyotir-gamaya
mrityor-mā amritam gamaya*

Hearty best wishes,
Indira Gautam

Health is You

HOW MUCH SHOULD WE EAT?

Geeta-bhāshya has some tips.

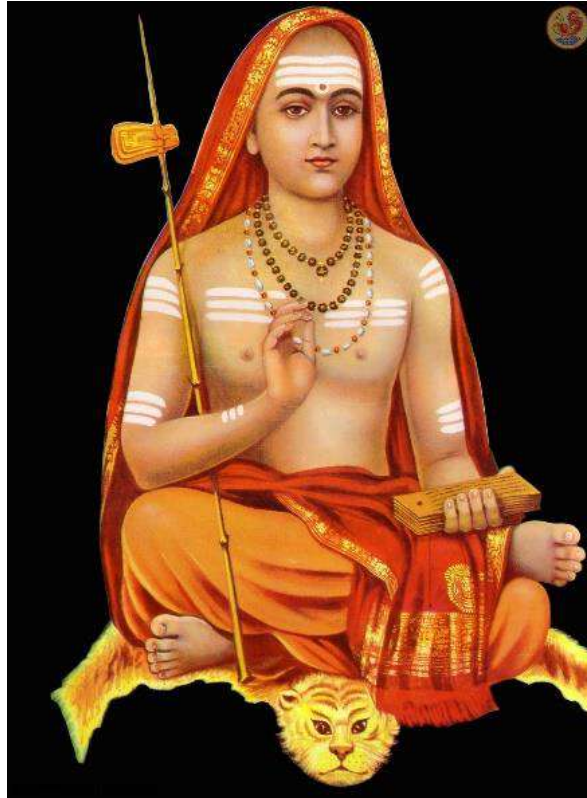
Especially as we get older, it becomes more important to fast than to eat! Lots of people around the world are practising what is popularly known as 'intermittent fasting,' where for a duration of 12 hours or more, they do not consume anything. Dr Dixit in Pune, a fully qualified physician who teaches at a medical college, advises two intakes only of food in 24 hours, and just dilute buttermilk, green tea, black tea, or black coffee at any other time. Lots of people have reported success in reducing obesity or/and blood glucose following his diet plan.



The question of quantity

There are surely numerous sources of guidance on this topic from all schools of medical thought. We present here a piece of advice that we draw from the commentary (*bhāshya*) by Ādi Shankarāchārya on the Bhagavad-Geetā.

“Those who eat more than what is appropriate for them cannot rise in yoga. Nor those who go to the other extreme of not eating (or eating too less). It is said, ‘*The right quantity does not harm a person; excess hurts; less (than the right amount) fails to protect the person.*’ Alternatively, (Shri Krishna means), whoever eats more than what the ‘*yoga-shāstra*’ prescribes fails to achieve yoga (spiritual excellence). There is a verse that says¹, ‘*Half the stomach should be filled with food including vegetables; a quarter should be filled with water; the last quarter should be left empty for free movement of air.*’ (end of quote)”



The above words by Bhagavān Bhāshyakāra are upon Lord Krishna’s exhortation (Geeta, verse 6.16) to Arjuna that moderation in eating is of vital importance to anybody on the spiritual path.

Swāmi Chidānanda

Note 1:

ardham svyanjanam-annasya

tritiyam-udakasya cha

vāyoh-sancharanārtham tu

chaturtham avasheshayet || (verse quoted by Shankarāchārya)

YOUR LIFE AND YOU
Make it a Piece of Simple Beauty



FIND

- 1 Find meaning in life.*
- 2 Find life's purpose.*
- 3 Find the way to true end of sorrow.*
- 4 Find an end to contradictions in your values.*
- 5 Find how you can be strong and yet not hurt another.*
- 6 Find how you can dissolve your anger in the sympathy of understanding.*
- 7 Find a way to grow – in peace and love – and not in ambition or aggressiveness.*
- 8 Find joy in work – small or big.*
- 9 Find another's joy or sorrow to be your own.*



From the book 'Light on Right Living' published by FOWAI PUBLICATIONS, with a Foreword by Dr. Siddhartha B Gautam.

- **Editors**

Webinars

Online Spiritual Education



PRESENTED

Sundays, 8.30 pm IST

By Shri Jnān Dāsh, California		
February 11, 2024	Webinar #262	Self-knowledge as presented by Viveka- Chudāmani

COMING UP

By Swāmi Chidānanda		
March 10, 2024	Webinar #263	Understanding Hinduism, Episode 10 The Sixteen Samskāras
By a Guest Speaker		
March 24, 2024	Webinar #264	Topic: To be announced

News

Mumbai: An informal get-together took place at the residence of Smt Tripta and Shri Bharat Bhalla at their Shastri Nagar residence, Andheri West, where Swāmiji addressed a group of some 12 receptive listeners on A General Outline of Hinduism.



Satsang at a residence in Lokhandwala Area, Feb 4, 2024

Bengaluru, Jan 17, 18: Swāmiji delivered two talks at the Shankara Jayanti Mandali on the kaccit-sarga of Valmiki Ramayana, and completed the 4-talk series in Kannada.



A talk in progress at Shankara Jayanti Mandali, January 17, 2024

Talk at Serene Urbana: Swāmi Advaitānandaji and Swāmiji were invited by the Residents' Committee at the beautiful and spacious Senior Living Space called Serene Urbana, just 3 kilometers away from the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) in Bengaluru. While Swāmiji spoke on '*Letting Go – The Two Words that Hold the Secret of Peace*', Advaitānandaji conducted a guided meditation. Both the Swāmis engaged the 80 strong audience in a lively QA session at the end. Smt Lakshmi Nandakumār, the Secretary of the RC facilitated the program, while Smt Padmā Vijayādri provided support.



The Audience at Serene Urbana, Bengaluru, Jan 17, 2024



Swāmi Advaitānanda answers questions.

Meditation and Study Circle: Swāmiji delivered an online talk on 'The Nature of the Self as presented in Viveka-Chudāmani' on January 23 under the banner of the M and S Circle. The language was Kannada.

J Krishnamurti Study Circle, Indore: On alternate Thursdays, Swāmiji has been giving 30 mins online talks on various themes, followed by a couple of other speakers and then open interaction. These are online. Two such talks took place on January 11 and 25, and the topics were *Energy that is not of the self* and *Musings on Fragmentation*.

An event at Badlapur: The J Krishnamurti Self-Education Society had Swāmiji join them at the day-long Annual Gathering at their Anand Vihar Retreat in Badlapur on Sunday, February 11, 2024.



‘Education: Why is there no sense of love here? Have we become so intellectual?’

Varanasi, Feb 16 thru 22: The 27th Retreat under the banner of FOWAI FORUM went off smoothly, with 50 participants at the beautiful Resort – Kāshi Ānandam – to the south of the city of Vārānasi. On one of the days, all the participants went to the Shrine of Lord Viswanāth in the morning, to a few other temples, and, in the evening, enjoyed a boat ride on Gangāji.



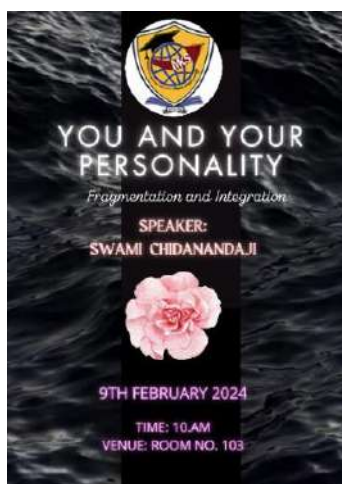


Scenes at Kāshi Ānandam, the resort near Shool-Tankeshwar Mandir in Madhopur.

DHIMAH I

Deriving Holistic Insights into Management
from the Heritage of India

On Friday, February 9, 2024, Swāmiji addressed the students of Malini Kishor Sanghvi College of Commerce and Economics at Juhu. The young girls and boys, numbering more than 100, listened attentively to the words on personality development.



Swāmiji flanked by the Principal Dr Ghorude (to his left) and Vice Principal Hemanshu Thakkar (to the right) at the College after the talk.

Upcoming Events

Shivaratri at Pune: Mahā-Shivaātri will be celebrated in Pune on March 8, 2024.



On Friday,
March 8, 2024
Time: 10 am through
12 noon

ॐ

Venue:
E101, Bramha
Exuberance,
off NIBM Road,
Kondhwa,
Pune 411048

FOWAI FORUM
invites you all to the program on
the auspicious day of MahāShivarātri -
in the divine presence of Pūjya Swāmi Chidānandaji.

Program:
rudrābhisheka and sahasranāma-archanā

followed by
A short talk by Pūjya Swāmiji

Maha
Shivratri

Talks in Bengaluru: Two talks will be delivered in Kannada by Swāmiji at the Shankara Jayanti Mandali on March 13, 14. The theme is from Vidura-Neeti of Mahābhārata.



SHRI SHANKARA JAYANTI MANDALI

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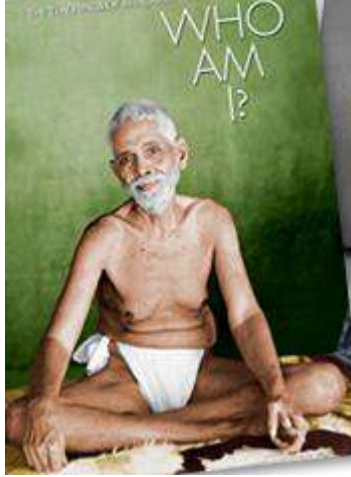
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ವಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ
ಸ್ವಾಗತ

WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY
MARCH 13, 14 - 2024
6 PM - 7 PM

A Ramana Maharshi event in Mumbai: The President of Shri Ramanāshramam, Tiruvannamalai, Dr Ānand Ramanan, and Swāmiji will speak at a special event (between 9.30 am and 12.30 pm) in Mumbai on Saturday, March 23. For details of the venue, please write to fowaiforum@yahoo.com ||



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CLASSES ON YOUTUBE

TIMINGS AFTER MARCH 10, 2024

Geetā Class: 7 am Wednesdays in India / 6.30 pm Tuesdays Pacific Time

Upanishad Class: 8 pm Fridays in India / 7.30 am Fridays Pacific Time

The above changes are due to the starting of Daylight Saving in the Western Hemisphere. Daylight saving time in 2024 will kick in at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 10, going by California time.

Webinars under FOWAI FORUM will continue at 8.30 pm IST, which will be 8 am Pacific Time from March 10.

Kindly note.

(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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