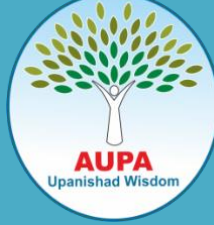


AUPA e - Newsletter

April 2024
Vol 9, Issue 10 (No. 106)



Editor: Swami Chidananda
Associate Editor: Dolly Seth

Mantra to Ponder

DO NOT IGNORE PHYSICAL STRENGTH

Eat well, have a strong, healthy body

“Strength is life; weakness is death,” said Swami Vivekananda. He surely meant strength on all levels, including on the physical.



*balam vāva vijnānad-bhooyah
shatam vijnānavatām eko balavān ākampayate
... balena lokas-tisthati
balam upāssva
(Chāndogya-Upanishad 7.8.1)*

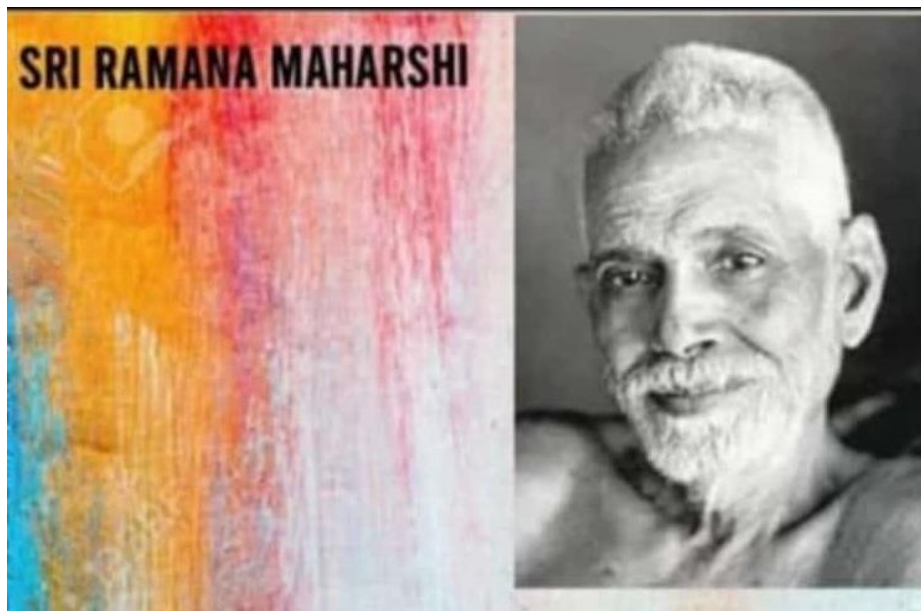
Strength indeed is superior to (mere) knowledge. A single man of strength makes a hundred men of knowledge tremble. This world stands on the basis of strength. O Narada, contemplate on strength (and rise in strength)!

An elephant, in a maddened state, rushes towards a hundred men in such fury that all of them run in a helter-skelter fashion. Ādi Shankarāchārya gives this example while explaining the importance of strength. From good food, proper exercise, and other forms of right living, we develop a certain strength, which, in addition to giving us physical stamina, empowers us to grasp the meaning of *mantras* (spiritual insights), leading us further on the path of the inner journey.

[Please note a correction in what appeared under this column – Mantra to Ponder – in the last issue, namely in the issue of March 2024: The medical college we referred to, where MBBS is offered free of cost to all the students, is Sri Madhusudan Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (SMSIMSR), which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi ji on March 25 of the year 2023.]

Light on Self-Inquiry

THE DIVINE IS NEVER AWAY FROM US.
Our worries are baseless



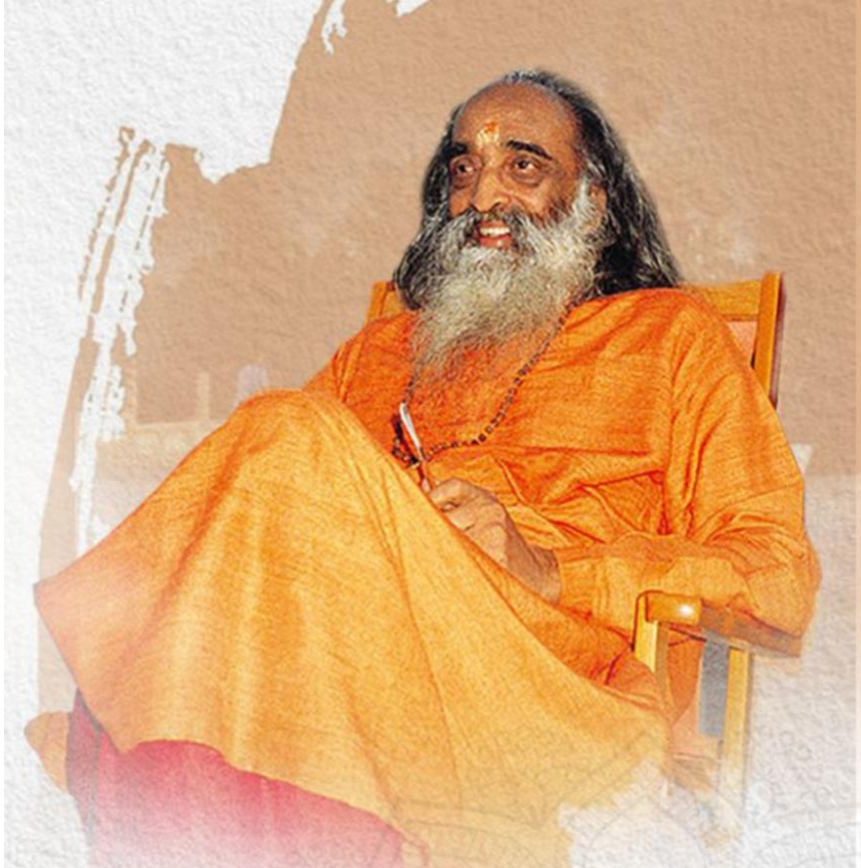
*I will always be with you, wherever you may go.
There is no need for you to worry about anything.*

Shri Ramana Maharshi

[Such words of compassion and assurance came from Maharshi's lips occasionally. Even then, they are enough for all his devotees to surrender to him, to do *upāsana* of his. –

Editors]

YOU ARE REALLY NOT SHORT OF TIME



*Time stays long enough
for anyone who will use it.*

Pujya Swāmi Chinmayānandaji

-

[In this witty remark, the master chastises all of us who complain of shortage of time.

True enough, when we have adequate self-management, the so-called time-management becomes easy. We begin to experience availability of a lot of time. –

Editors]



Swami Chidananda

DEVOTION AND VEDĀNTA

Are the paths of bhakti and jñāna opposed to each other?

Very often we hear people saying they are into the path of knowledge (*jñāna-mārga*) and therefore do not join programs that belong to the path of devotion (*bhakti-mārga*).

A mantra in one of the well-known Upanishads says¹, “All these truths become evident to the pious person who has great devotion to God, and has equal devotion towards his Guru too.”



We have to admit that the two disciplines have many differences. *Bhakti* is a matter of the heart and *jñāna* is of the head. The important question is – is there anybody among us who has only one of the two – the head and the heart – and lacks the second completely?

A scholar put it quite well, “At a given point of time, you may practise *bhakti*. At that time, you cannot go for *jñāna*. You may however practise *jñāna* at another time but you move away from *bhakti* at that second window of time.”

Maharshi Ramana summarized all spiritual approaches in two departments by saying, “Either you surrender or you enquire.” In the former, we submit to the will of the Higher Power with love in our heart. In the latter, we enquire, ‘Who am I?’

A large number of people in this world feel at home with *bhakti* but they too practise *jñāna* (or *vichāra*) to a lesser extent. Then there are people, maybe less in number, who are primarily into knowledge (or enquiry) and, secondarily or to lesser extent, into devotion.

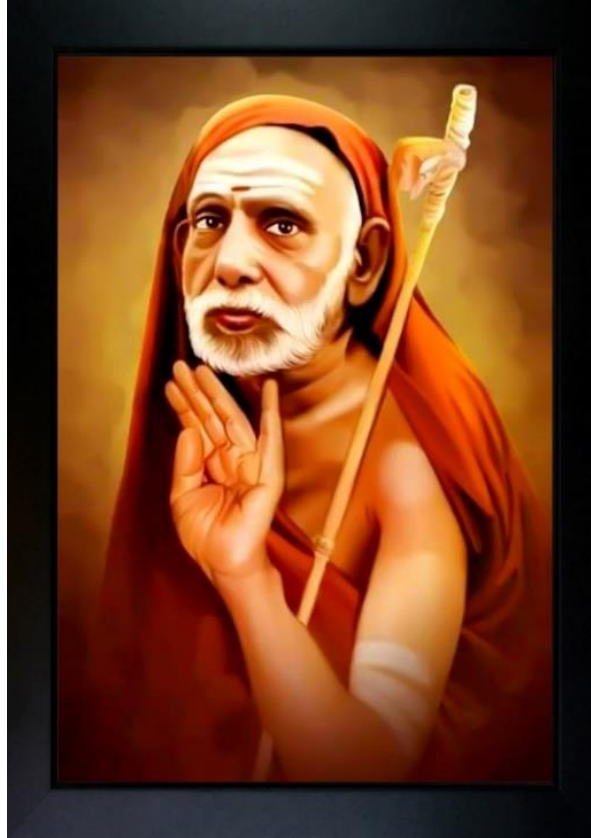
We must be true to our intellectual and emotional makeup, and go by whatever combination works best for us.

Notes:

1 *yasya deve parā bhaktih
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasya-ete kathitā hi-arthāh
prakāshante mahātmanah* - **Shvetāshvatara Upanishad 6.23**

Swāmi Chidānanda

DO NOT SEEK SHORTCUTS



*People do not realise that
to be free means to be firmly attached to a system,
that discipline is the road to a higher freedom.*

Chandrasekharendra Saraswati

[Swāmi Chandrasekharendra Saraswati (May 1894 – Jan 1994), also called Mahā-Periyawa, was a towering figure during his lifetime and is highly adored today also by millions. His devotees have experienced countless miracles in their life. He had *loka kshema* (welfare of world), Veda-rakshana (protecting and studying Vedas) and go-rakshana (protecting cows) among his top priorities. He was a great ascetic. He majestically headed the Kānchi Sankara Mutt for more than 8 decades. – Editors]

SEEING ALL EQUALLY

It is perhaps the foremost mark of enlightenment

All of us are students of Geetā. One of the teachings of Shri Krishna, which seems to be the most unfailing indicator of someone's attainment of the highest spiritual excellence, is the ability to see all equally, without any partiality or bias.



Various forms of bias or prejudice – for or against others – based on gender, race, religion, colour of the skin etc. are like formidable hurdles on our path. They are often in the broad category of likes and dislikes (*rāga / icchā* and *dwesha*). Lord Shri Krishna says¹ everybody is born with certain likes and dislikes.

The message of hope, however, is that we can overcome these attachments and aversions through looking within, understanding our *erroneous zones*, and consciously letting them drop off.

It is then that the Lord would call such spiritual seekers 'totally purified' (*pootāh*, 4.10). They look at a lump of clay, a stone and a bar of gold with equal eyes².

Though it is a long journey, and an uphill climb, it is what can make human life a total fulfilment.

Hearty best wishes,

Indira Gautam

Notes:

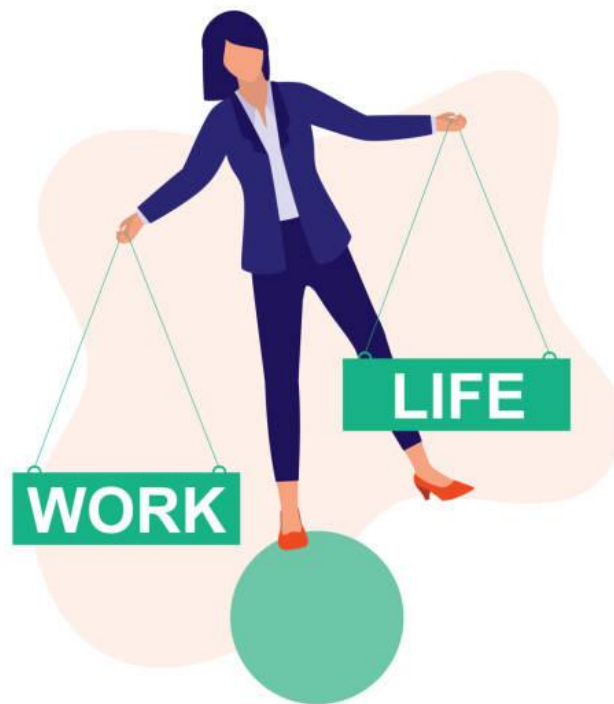
1 *icchā-dvesha-samutthena... sarva-bhootāni sammoham sarge yānti. Geetā 7.27*

2 *sama-losthashma-kanchanah. Geeta 6.8*

A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING

And everything in its place

Work Hard, Sleep Well, and Leave Some Space for Other Things Too



Health, when you think about it, is a concern only for us humans. While the rest of creation goes about life in a clock-like set manner, it is only us, the humans, who are aware of and have the need to improve our health, and yet we often are not so successful with it.

The human individual is an assemblage of 4 layers – Physical, Emotional, Intellectual and Spiritual, kept alive by the most important, yet taken for granted factor – Consciousness! We go through life experiences that involve all 4 layers but how much attention do we pay to this fact? No layer can work on its own and so our health is determined by the health of each

layer and their working in harmony! It is only when the spiritual layer is given sufficient attention that we live consciously, being aware of the inner harmony and balancing our life well.

Most often physical health and intellectual health are emphasized and encouraged by the world around us but the most ignored are emotional and spiritual health. Just physical health and intellectual progress would leave us wandering, without a clear path to the worthwhile destination – unlimited happiness! Spiritual well-being gives us this direction.

What rules emotional health?

Knowledge coupled with observation and some introspection reveals to us the possible causes for our emotional disturbances, such as –

- Refusal to accept what I cannot change
- My obsession with my desires
- Misplaced priorities – ignored duties
- Unbalanced work-life situation
- Insufficient self-love

The list can go on...but this gives us a chance for correction. As emotional disturbances reduce, the spiritual layer is available for enquiry regarding subtler aspects of ‘Who am I, really?’ ‘What is my relationship with this world?’ and ‘Who is the creator, the Lord of our faith?’

While spiritual progress goes together with right prioritization of activities, if spiritual activities are overly prioritized over physical and emotional health, it will not be long before we find ourselves unable to keep up with those activities, as we age!

As we ponder over this, another key factor that comes into play is time! Time seems to rule our life as we run from task to task in the given period. All of us are impartially provided 24 hours each day by the creator. What we do with the given 24 hours is determined by our prioritization and time management skills.

If we look at our actions during a normal, routine workday, a good number of actions involve duties towards our body, mind, intellect and towards our family and work. Some actions may involve service to the society, community, or nation. For many of us, a few actions are dedicated to the Lord of our faith. However, it is also important to prioritize ‘*my time*’ as they say, kindling and keeping alive our self-love as we go through life’s ups and downs with a smile and some cheer, ensuring our holistic well-being!

Thus, moderation and prioritization, along with plenty of self-love, are inevitable for balance and harmony of our personality layers and consequently, our health.

The poster below gives a routine that might help us in this regard. Of course, it is not a general prescription for all, but it does provide us with a direction towards holistic well-being.

8+8+8 Rule

Distribute your day into 8+8+8 hrs to make a good balance sheet of your life.

- 8 hrs of honest hard work.
- 8 hrs of good sleep and
- 8 hrs should be spent on
(3Fs, 3Hs, & 3Ss)

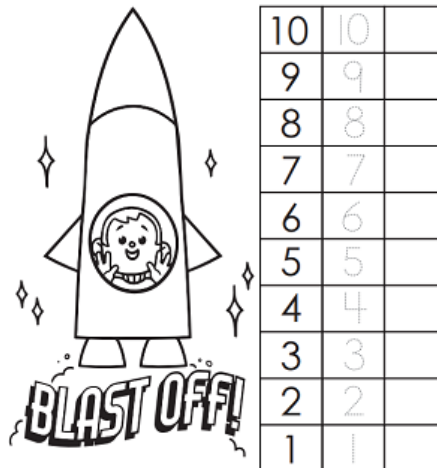


3Fs are family, friends, and faith.
3Hs are health, hygiene, and hobby.
3Ss are soul, service, and smile.

{Elaborated, edited by Shalini Keshavan, following some inputs from the Internet.}

AUPA Yuva
As Young Eyes See

GOOD THINGS TO DO TEN TO ONE



10 Be in the morning sun for ten minutes daily. This will do good to you, both physically and mentally. And you know that sunshine is free.

9 Drink nine glasses (250 mL each) of water daily. Better digestion and shining skin are among the benefits.

- 8** Sleep eight hours in every 24 hours. A lot of diseases will not come near you if your body gets adequate rest, during which the body heals itself.
- 7** Walk at least seven thousand steps daily. As you know, walking is an excellent exercise that you can keep doing even in old age.
- 6** Spend sixty minutes daily with your family members without paying attention, at that time, to TV, mobiles, computers etc. A good bonding with family members ensures happiness.
- 5** Do breathing exercise for a minimum of 5 minutes daily. We recommend abdominal breathing, where your stomach should come up when you breathe in and it should go down when you breathe out. It is considered as a way to boost your health.
- 4** Do some exercise of your choice – yoga, workout at a gym, swimming – for 40 mins daily. In addition to better physical health, you will get to be cheerful most of the time.
- 3** Eat three times a day. Let it be home-made, nutritious food. Do not be carried away by ideas of long intervals of fasting. Nor go for brunch and then no dinner at all etc. Eat properly breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Eat to live well. Do not live to eat. And do not eat old food. Let your food be as fresh as possible.
- 2** Take two breaks amidst your day's work. Suppose you work from 9 am thru 5 pm, for example, you may take two breaks of 5 to 10 mins (other than lunch break) and give yourself (especially to your eyes) a change.
- 1** For a minute at least, daily, express gratitude to God for all that He has given you. If you do not believe in God, thank your parents who did so much for you.

Courtesy: Nrithya Mayur, Motivational Speaker

Webinars

Online Spiritual Education

PRESENTED

Sundays, 8.30 pm IST

By Swāmi Chidānanda		
March 10, 2024	Webinar #263	Understanding Hinduism, Episode 10 The Sixteen Samskāras
By Smt Rādhā Muralidharan		
March 24, 2024	Webinar #264	Sādhanā in Srividya



Rādhā Muralidharan

~

COMING UP

Sundays, 8.30 pm IST

By Swāmi Chidānanda		
April 7, 2024	Webinar #265	Understanding Hinduism, Episode 11 The Sixteen Samskāras – Part 2
April 21, 2024	Webinar #266	An Overview of Ātmabodha

News

Shivarātri at Pune, March 8, 2024: Mahā-Shivarātri was celebrated in Pune on March 8, 2024. Brahmachārini Vibhā Chaitanya and her associates in Pune and Mumbai organized a Poojā in an elegant way. Swāmiji delivered four to five talks during the four days (on 7th thru 10th) on Shiva and on Bhagavad-Geetā.

Bengaluru, March 13, 14: Swāmiji delivered two talks at the Shankara Jayanti Mandali on *Vidura Nīti* in Kannada.



Vidura exhorts Dhritarāshtra on morality in administration

Upanishad classes on YouTube: The online classes on Kena Upanishad, with vākya-bhāshya by Shankarāchārya, got completed on March 22, after 21 classes. Atmabodha will be the new text in the slot (8 pm IST) on Fridays, starting on April 12.

Centenary of Sri Ramanāshramam, Celebration in Mumbai, March 23: Sri Ramanāshramam in Tiruvannāmalai had started in 1922. The centenary celebrations thus started in 2022 in different cities. A 3-hour program took place at the beautiful Vivekānanda Hall in Rāmakrishna Mutt in Khār, Mumbai on March 23. The President of Sri Ramanāshramam, Dr Anand Ramanan, made an hour long presentation with numerous slides giving a fascinating account of the āshram's history, its activities in the past and in the present. Swāmiji spoke on 'The Teachings that are a blessing for all'. There was a captivating Sarod recital by a father-son duo at the end. About a hundred attended the program, which concluded with delicious lunch prasada for all.



The President of Sri Ramanāshramam speaking in Mumbai, March 23.



Swāmiji praising the teachings of Bhagavān Sri Ramana

New Farmhouse at Kudāl property, Vedic rituals to ward off evil, March 31, April 1: Some appropriate vaidika-karmas were performed on late evening of 31st and in the morning of 1st, to sanctify the place and chase away negative energies.



The new farmhouse, with three bedrooms, built on FOWAI FORUM's land in Kudal.

(Seen in the picture are Vibha Chaitanya, Ashwini Kulkarni, Ashok Kulkarni and Suryakant Gawde.)

DHIMAH I

Deriving Holistic Insights into Management
and Academics from Heritage of India

RISE School at a village near Pollachi, March 19 - 21: Swāmiji addressed the young girls and boys, numbering more than 300, who were students of Rural India Student Education (RISE) school near Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu. He also interacted with Ms Francesca Lattanzi, from Florence, Italy, who was volunteering at this school to organize their library as per international standards.



Swāmiji flanked by Francesca and a library staff at the RISE School, March 21.

Upcoming Events

Bengaluru, April 22, 23: Swāmiji will deliver two more lectures on Vidura Neeti at Shankara Jayanti Mandali, Jayanagar 3rd Block, at 6 pm on the two dates (Mon, Tue) in Kannada

New Delhi, April 28: Swāmiji will be part of a program of the International Spiritual Olympiad (ISO), which is preparing to hold a competition worldwide in children's (students') knowledge of spirituality and world's religions.



Shri Sāi Sharanāgat (Shri Bhāiji) at an previous event in Delhi of the ISO.

CLASSES ON YOUTUBE

TIMINGS AFTER MARCH 10, 2024

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

Ātmabodha 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 kicked in at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 10, in USA.

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).

Publisher: Shahid Sayed, AUPA Project Manager for STEP Press
Mobile: 99678 78798