

# AUPA e - Newsletter

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## Mantra to Ponder

### DEAL MATURELY WITH YOUR EMOTIONS

*Be Firm against Derailers*

Negative emotions are great derailers; when we do not control them, they make the train of our (right) living (and spiritual *sāadhanā*) go off the rails, and meet with a tragic accident. The value that the Upanishads have been emphasizing everywhere, therefore, is '*shama*', which is cultivating calmness of mind, where lust, anger, greed or jealousy cannot grow strong due to lack of attention.



Stay calm, remain alert and do not lose balance!

*/ shamena shāntāh shivam-ācharanti*

*/ shamena nākam munayo-anvavindan*

*/ shame sarvam pratisthitam*

*/ tasmād-shamah paramam vadanti*

People, endowed with '*shama*' do noble deeds. Contemplative seekers reach heaven by the strength of their poised conduct. All well-being depends on how composed we can remain in disturbing scenarios.

Therefore, the wise call '*shama*' (calmness of the mind) a supreme virtue.

**(Mahā-Nārāyana-Upanishad 79.5)**

Cultivating does not mean a superficial conformity to acceptable behaviour. We may develop an ability to remain outwardly calm but keep boiling inside us. Or we may not let go of certain negative prejudices, which are the root cause of undesirable emotions that arise and hijack us. That is not true *shama*. True cultivation, which is a mature affair, involves high levels of self-awareness. Total cleansing is the outcome.

**A BASIC BLUNDER**  
*Thought creates the ego.*

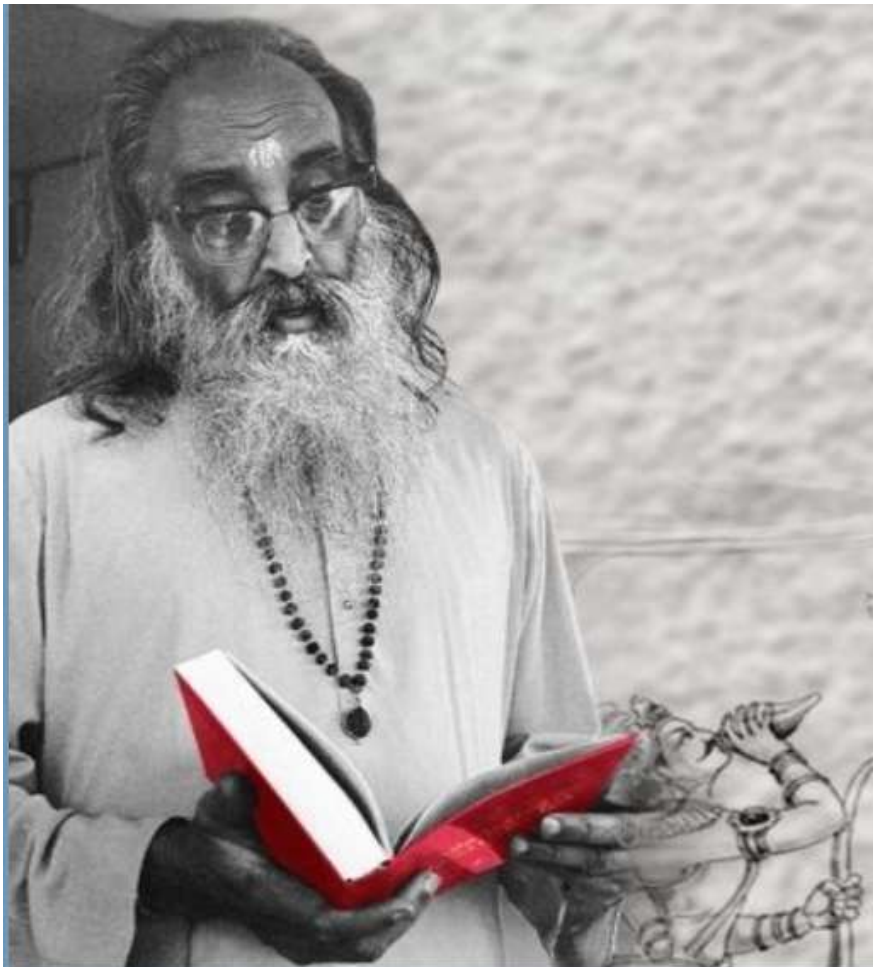


*The present difficulty is that man thinks he is the doer. It is a mistake. The higher power does everything and man is only a tool.*

**Shri Ramana Maharshi**

[We think we are doers (*kartā*) and enjoyers (*bhoktā*). Such thinking creates the ego. Self-enquiry dismantles such structures of thought, of memory and of long-standing conditioning. – Editors]

## WHAT DO WE UNDERSTAND BY YOGA?



*Yoga is not twisting the body, but straightening the mind.*  
**Pujya Swāmi Chinmayānandaji**

[Any of us who has studied the spiritual traditions of India, knows that Yoga is much beyond *āsanas*. The physical postures, called *āsanas*, are of course an important limb of the science of yoga but they are one of the eight limbs in the system outlined by Rishi Patanjali. They help us in keeping the body healthy. If the body has health issues, our mind fails to withdraw into contemplation on God. That does not mean we must remain stuck with caring for the body. – Editors]



Swami Chidananda

## MENTAL PATHWAYS

### *Spirituality Opens New Ones*

Let us say two people look at a certain situation where some people are going through a crisis. While what they see is the same setting, their thoughts flow in two different ways. One wonders how to make some personal profit from the scenario. The second thinks of helping the people caught in difficulty and imagines how nice it would be if they are relieved of their stress. The first person has his thoughts flowing repeatedly in a certain fashion and he is unable to give a new direction to his thoughts. He has found just one *mental pathway* by which his thoughts keep moving. The second person also is aware of the prospect of making some personal profit by exploiting the situation but, with certain compassion arising in him, tries to be of service to the people in trouble. Opening new avenues of kindness, caring, and serving is, in a sense, what spirituality is all about.



It will not be incorrect to summarise spirituality in yet another way: the journey from being selfish to becoming *sevā*-oriented. Irrespective of the religion, we find all the spiritual masters of the world appealing to humanity to help others, to serve the society and not to hurt anybody.

The teaching of *karma-yoga* in the Bhagavad-Geetā is essentially 'leaving one mental pathway' and 'adopting a new mental pathway.' Actions driven by personal desire are called *sakāma karma*; actions where the focus is not on *what we get* but on *what we give* make *nishkāma karma*, which is *karma-yoga*.

Imagine a cluster of cities, where going from one to another is hard due to frequent traffic congestions. The government creates new (roads or) freeways and it becomes a great relief to commuters. Interpersonal relationships are similar. When we are self-centred, we repeatedly get stuck in varieties of conflict, differences of opinion etc. Spiritual education and allied practices generate new mental pathways, which act like very helpful freeways, and life becomes easier. Our psychological life is then marked by mutual understanding, readiness to sacrifice, noble values being lived in daily life etc, and all this helps everybody involved to rise in their consciousness.

When mental pathways are limited, we live a life of self-imposed constraints. The quietude that spirituality brings to us can generate certain creativity in us, which opens new mental pathways where what was impossible before becomes possible now. We must thus realise that spirituality is not just for our own inner growth but it promotes social harmony too. It leads to increase in our collective productivity.

**Swāmi Chidānanda**

Imperatives from  
Upanishads

8

### **DO NOT DISRESPECT FOOD**

*It is bad karma to do so, and you will pay for it!*

The Upanishads have a holistic approach towards life. They are certainly not on an ivory tower, preaching merely metaphysical truths. They come down to the level of daily life and touch upon good habits too. They strongly advise us against bad habits. And one of them, which is unfortunately becoming more common in the modern, industrialised world, is throwing excess food away into trash cans.



*/ annam na nindyāt  
/ annam na parichaksheeta  
/ annam bahu kurveeta*

Do not disrespect food; do not reject food; produce lots of food.

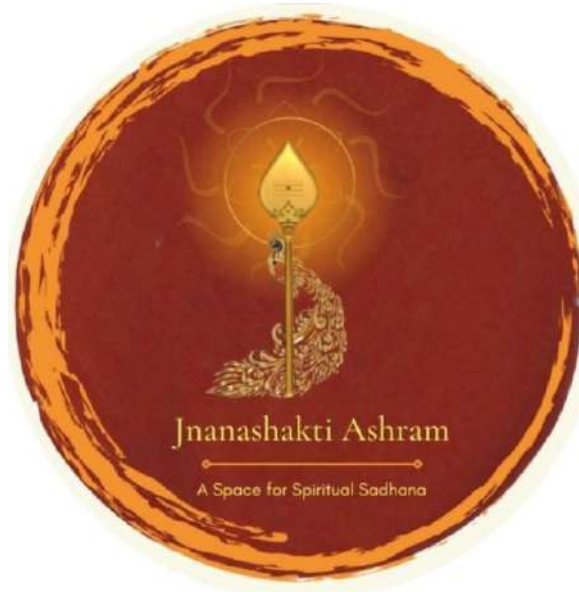
### **Taittiriya Upanisahd, mantra 3.7,8,9 (Valli 3, Sections 7, 8 and 9)**

In the languages of both dos and don'ts, the sacred lore here tells us the value of food. For our own material and spiritual well-being, we must ensure that maximum people in the world get nutritious and delicious food. In the spiritual context, as Shri Shankarāchārya comments, eating right food (*sāttvik* in nature, sufficient in quantity), we are better positioned to study the wisdom of liberation (*moksha-shāstra*). The revered Bhāshyakara says we must not disrespect food as do not do so regarding our spiritual teachers (*gurum-iva annam na nindyāt*).



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

**LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL?**



*The Update:* With some formalities going one like calling for tenders, from construction companies that bid for the work, Team Jnāna Shakti is getting set for creating the infrastructure for the good work.



***A thin wood model of the facility to come up.***

The First Phase: The academic block will have a seminar hall, a visitors' room, and a meditation hall. The participants' residence will provide for about 45 people's stay, on a twin-sharing basis. A kitchen, a dining hall, and a Reception Section will also be part of the first phase. In addition, two acharya cottages will be an important feature.

Commander (IN, Retd) S N Bijur has taken charge as the Convenor for the project.

We once more appeal to all our friends' circle and to Vedānta students to support this noble project.

**Team Jnāna Shakti**

**Quote of the  
Issue**

### **LIFE CHANGES**



*... the more you listen in silence to your heart.*

*Stillness creates clarity. In today's fast-paced world, stillness is vital. Otherwise, we miss out on the beauty of life. Imagine a vibrant, velvety rose unfolding its petals and releasing its sweet fragrance into the air. If you are on a flight, you will not notice a thing. Even when you are in a car or running at a fast pace, you may not notice it. But if you stand still in front of the flower, you can appreciate its entire beauty. Mind is the fastest thing in the Universe. If the mind is in a storm of restlessness, can you appreciate the beauty blooming in your heart?*

**Daaji  
(Kamlesh D Patel)**

[Daaji is the spiritual guide of the global Heartfulness movement. He has spent the four decades training people across the globe in Heartfulness meditation. He is the author of numerous books, including the bestselling titles *The Heartfulness Way*, *Designing Destiny*, and *The Wisdom Bridge*. He gives keynote addresses at conferences and conducts workshops around the world. Daaji's passion lies in grassroots efforts, especially in taking meditation to the villages of India. He enjoys going on nature walks with his grandchildren in Kanha Shānti Vanam, Hyderabad, where he lives with his family. – Editors]

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

## **WORSHIP GOD BY SERVING HUMANITY**

*Living a Value-based Life is Itself a Poojā*

Sanātana Dharma has always held the view that this universe is God's manifestation. This truth has been expressed in many ways. For example, the scriptures say these eight are the ways<sup>1</sup> in which we may behold God: earth, water, fire, air, space, the sun, the moon, and the human soul. It is good to have an altar at our homes with God-forms like Vishnu, Shiva, Devi etc adorning the place. It is equally good to care for the environment and be kind to fellow human beings. Both are forms of worship.



Popular quotes support this outlook. 'Service to humanity<sup>2</sup> is service offered to the Lord,' and 'Helping people<sup>3</sup> is an offering to Janārdana,' are examples.

We live in contradictions; our bosom has certain negativities like lust and greed. We must raise the standard of life, which means the values by which we live. (The standard of living, in contrast, means the comforts and conveniences that we possess.) When we live a life of higher values, there is purification of our mind (*chitta-shuddhi*) and the negativities taper off.

Let us worship the Lord by offering these eight flowers to Him in our daily life:

*/ ahimsā prathamam pushpam*

*/ pushpam-indriya-nigrahaḥ*

*/ sarva-bhūta-dayā pushpam*

*/ kṣamā pushpam viśeṣataḥ*

*/ śāntiḥ pushpam*

*/ tapah pushpam*

*/ dhyānam pushpam tathaiḥ cha*

*/ satyam, aṣṭa-vidham pushpam*

*/ Viśnoḥ preetikaram bhavet ||*



Non-violence, self-control, kindness towards all, forgiveness, maintaining peace, performing austerities, regular meditation and speaking truth – are the eight flowers we must daily offer to Lord Vishnu.

I wish all of you the very best in your *sāadhanā* in daily life, and in your efforts to elevate your consciousness to higher levels.

Hearty best wishes,

**Indira Gautam**

Notes:

1 *bhoor-ambhāmsi-analo'nilo'mbaram-aharnātho himāmshuh pumān* – *Dakshnāmurti Stotram*, verse 9.

2 *nara-sevā* is *Nārāyana-sevā*.

3 *jana-sevā* is *Janārdana-sevā*.

**Health is You**

## THE 9 BENEFITS OF BREATHING EXERCISES

*They can Help Achieve Soundness of Mind*



“*Take a deep breath*” — a phrase we are all too familiar with as a last resort to relieve stress and frustration. And it is probably good advice.

“Breath work is the foundation for stress management,” says Alistair Hawkes, a licensed professional counsellor.

### *What Is Breath Work?*

Breath work refers to deep, diaphragmatic breathing or belly breathing, which research suggests may trigger relaxation responses in the body, according to a study published in June 2017 in *Frontiers in Psychology*. Breath work encompasses a range of breathing exercises designed to enhance physical, spiritual, and mental health, according to *Yogapedia*. Within published research, breath work is commonly referred to in terms of “interventions” such as diaphragmatic breathing, breathing techniques, or even breathing rehabilitation.

Breath work includes specific breathing practices like Clarity Breathwork and holotropic breathing, which are used more as mind-body therapy, and are associated with theories and varying degrees of supportive evidence, according to *GoodTherapy*.

### *The Potential Health Benefits of Breath Work*

Research shows a variety of health and wellness benefits and quality of life improvements that intentional breathing (including diaphragmatic breathing, yogic breathing, and other breathing exercises) may provide for people experiencing certain health conditions and concerns. Breath work may:

- 1) Reduce stress and aid in stress-related medical illnesses, anxiety, depression, and substance abuse, according to a review in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*.
- 2) Alleviate post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), according to a study in the *Journal of Traumatic Stress*
- 3) Improve immune response.
- 4) Mitigate asthma symptoms.
- 5) Decrease hypertension in adults.
- 6) Aid with COPD rehabilitation. [COPD means Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease]
- 7) Aid glycaemic control in people with type 2 diabetes, according to a study in the January 2021 *International Journal of Yoga Therapy*.
- 8) Improve the quality of life in people with cardiovascular disease and cancer, according to a study published in May 2020 in *International Journal of Yoga (IJOY)*.
- 9) Many recent studies, including a systematic review published September 2018 in *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, have found that breath work reduces anxiety, sharpens memory, treats symptoms of depression, promotes more restful sleep, and even improves heart health.

Breath work is not new. As Hawkes points out, “Western science is patting itself on the back for saying breath work works, whereas [some] people have been doing this for [millennia].”

Source: <https://www.everydayhealth.com/alternative-health>

## **SHOULD YOUNG PEOPLE MEDITATE?** *Is not meditation for the older ones?*

The youth will benefit a lot from meditation, if it is in a form suitable to them. They need not try to meditate in ways that suit older people. Let us therefore examine how meditation will be truly rewarding to young women and men. There are three reasons for the younger generation to practise meditation.



*Meditate, to make your mind a great instrument!*

### *1 To develop strength to guard yourself against bad influences*

Meditation is where you channel your thoughts in certain healthy directions. ‘*As you think, so you become,*’ is an adage, which has relevance in these modern times too. If you dwell on a passage like the one below, involving your heart and soul in the practice, you are sure to protect yourself against many an evil influence of this mad world:

*/ asato mā sad-gamaya | Lead me from the false to the truth.*

*/ tamaso mā jyotir-gamaya | Lead me from darkness to death.*

*/ mriyōr mā amritam-gamaya | Lead me from death to immortality.*

Other factors remaining equal, any youngster who reflects on such aspirations as above is less likely to fall a prey to temptations or provocations in her or his surroundings.

### *2 To make your mind a good instrument for chosen tasks*

Please do not forget how your mind is the common instrument in all your endeavours, irrespective of the field of your work. You should train your mind to engage in duties and disengage from activities that are a waste of time. You should, at a given phase of your life, be true to your sense of right and wrong. Your values may change over time as you get to know higher and better opportunities. Meditation can be a

powerful technique to gently practise self-persuasion in desirable directions and self-dissuasion in undesirable ones.

### 3 To make yourself receptive to divine grace

All wise people have talked of a power that is way above human intelligence. Call it God or otherwise, it is wholesome and all of us – the humanity – are like its children. That Supreme Being is conducive to the well-being of all. When you meditate on lines like the ones below, you will touch something deep within yourself, which is good for you and, what is wonderful, is good for others too. The Supreme Being will act upon you.

*/ sarve bhavantu sukhinah | May all be happy.*

*/ sarve santu nirāmayah | May all be healthy.*

*/ sarve bhadrāni pashyantu | May all possess healthy outlooks.*

*/ mā kaschid dukkha-bhāg bhavet | May nobody live in sorrow.*

In summary, meditation can make you, dear young friends, a good and strong person. It can lay the foundation for a bright future in your life.

**Swāmi Chidānanda**

## Webinars

*I got wiser, through the screen!*



**PRESENTED ALREADY**

Sundays, 8.30 pm IST

By Swāmi Chidānanda		
May 5, 2024	Webinar #267	Understanding Hinduism, Episode 12 The 16 Samskāras – Part 3 ( <i>vivāha</i> )
May 26, 2024	Webinar #268	An Overview of Jeevan-mukta-ānanda- lahari, Part 1

**COMING UP**  
Sundays, 8.30 pm IST

By Dr Shriram Vajapeyam June 9, 2024	Webinar #269	Hinduism A Modern, Simple, Scientific Introduction
By Swāmi Chidānanda June 23, 2024	Webinar #270	Understanding Hinduism, Episode 13 The 16 Samskāras – Part 4 ( <i>antyeshti</i> )

Note: All these webinars – 266 done so far – are available on YouTube. Please visit the FOWAI channel to watch them.

**News**

**April 28, 2024, A Special Event at New Delhi:** As reported (under News) in the last issue, the organization called International Spirituality Olympiad (ISO) Council is going ahead with its plans to hold an international competition for children and young adults – from age 6 thru 25 – in their knowledge of religions and spirituality around the globe. As a part of the run-up to this mega event, there was a grand function at the India International Centre (I I C) at New Delhi, where Swamiji was also one of the speakers. This function focused on releasing the ‘front cover’ of the book, being made ready with the necessary contents that participants in the Olympiad will study. 25 to 30 saints from different Spiritual Centers from around the country (and some from abroad too) attended this program.



Vice Admiral Ghormāde, former Deputy Chief of Indian Navy, felicitates Swāmi, New Delhi, April 28, 2024. Shri Sāi Sharanāgat looks on, in the middle.





A few of the speakers and dignitaries pose for a photograph before the event.

**May 12, 2024: Ramana Ārādhana (samādhi) Day function in Mumbai:** About 40 devotees of Shri Ramana Maharshi gathered at the residence of Anil and Sabby Khanna, Khanna Terrace in Vile Parle West. Brni Vibhā Chaitanya, Shri Mohan Hejamādi, Swāmiji and a few others from FOWAI FORUM joined the auspicious event. Vedic chants, group recitation of Akshara-Manamālai and Upadesha Sāra, a 20 mins talk by Swāmiji etc. and 'flower offering to Maharshi with his 108 names' were among the program details. Shri Janaki Raman from Chembur guided the proceedings.

**May 18, 2024: Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO), Young Adults Wing,** had Swāmiji speak online to their members worldwide on the topic 'You and Your Personality: Vedic Insights into Fragmentation and Integration'.



Swāmiji addressed the international gathering of Young Adults, online.

## Upcoming Events

**June 10, 11, 12 and 13, Offline Talks:** Swāmiji will deliver four lectures on Geetā, in Kannada, at the Shankara Jayanti Mandali, Jayanagar 3<sup>rd</sup> Block, Bengaluru.

**June 17, 18, 19: A Retreat at the School of Ancient Wisdom,** Bengaluru: FOWAI FORUM proposes to have a Spiritual Retreat on the theme, 'Essentials of Vedānta'. Please write an Email to [fowaiforum@yahoo.com](mailto:fowaiforum@yahoo.com) if you wish to join.



*The Torch-bearer at the School of Ancient Wisdom*

**June 24, 25, 2024: Meditation and Study Circle,** Bengaluru, will have Swāmiji speak on Geetā in English on Monday the 24<sup>th</sup> and in Kannada on Tuesday the 25<sup>th</sup>.

### CLASSES ON YOUTUBE

**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

Webinars under FOWAI FORUM will continue at 8.30 pm IST, which will be 8 am Pacific Time. These are typically on alternate Sundays.

**Kindly note.**

(AUPA is the short form of AUPANISHADA-PURUSHA, the truth of the sacredsource called Upanishads. This e-newsletter comes from Project Manager of the website: [aupa.in](http://aupa.in) – Upanishad Wisdom).

**Publisher: Shahid Sayed**  
**AUPA ProjectManager for STEP Press**