

AUPA e - Newsletter

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Associate Editor: Dolly Seth

Mantra to Ponder

FASCINATING VIEW OF CREATION

There is no creation other than the Creator

The Advaita Vedānta reveals that the one Absolute Reality – Brahman – itself is appearing as the entire universe, the creation. Unlike the case of a pot being created by a potter, where there are three distinct causes: 1) clay, the material cause, 2) potter, the efficient cause, and 3) the wheel, the instrumental cause, Brahman here is everything. Brahman is the material, the intelligence, and the instrument too. There is nothing other than Brahman at any time.



Three causes: the clay, the potter and the potter's wheel.

An Upanishad mantra illustrates this 'all-in-one' scenario. A spider does not use any material from outside to create its web. The waxy substance, with which the web is made, comes from within the spider and goes back into the spider. If we say the web is inert, the second illustration in the mantra shows the plants that come out of the earth are sentient. If we point out that the earth, the source of the plants, is inert, the third and last example gives us a scenario where a living man (sentient) is the source of hair. With some limitations of each illustration, the truth revealed by the Upanishad is that Brahman is the source,

Brahman is the secondary factors and Brahman itself is in every cell of the product, the creation.

*/ yathā-urmanābhih srijate grihnate cha
/ yathā prithivyām oshadhayah sambhavanti
/ yathā satah purushāt kesha-lomāni
/ tathā-aksharāt-sambhavati-ihā vishwam*

This universe arises from the Imperishable Principle (*akshara*, Brahman), just as the web of a spider comes from its within (and the spider can withdraw the web into itself also), just as plants arise from the earth and just as hair (on his head or at other parts of the body) comes out from a living man's body.

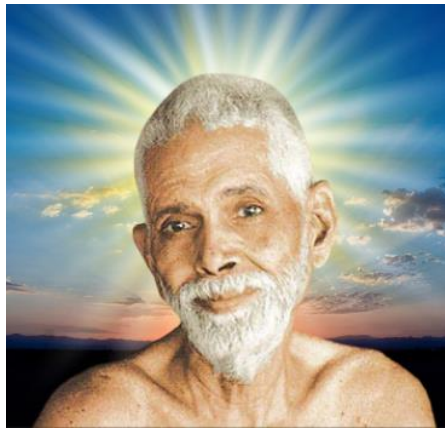
(Mundaka-Upanishad 1.1.7)

This fascinating vision of the Creator and the Created being one, helps us study the subject of the Vedānta with greater depth of understanding.

Light on Self-Inquiry

SIN AND MERIT

You get what you dwell on.



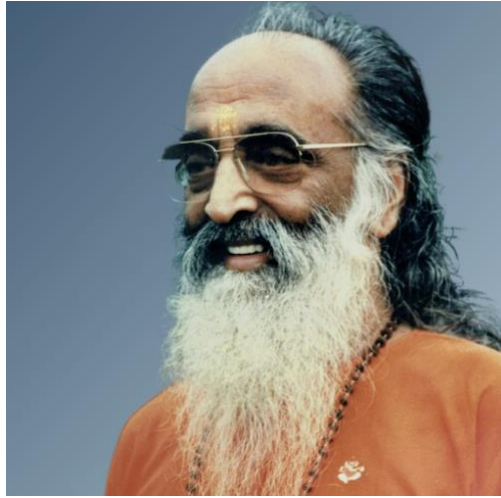
The person soaked in the idea, "I am the body," is the.. sinner. The experience of "I am the Self" is the greatest virtue.

Shri Ramana Maharshi in Talk 536

[This gives us a very good clue to overcome our sinful tendencies. If we dwell on the body and its demands, we go in one direction. If we dwell on *ātmā*, we go in the opposite direction. We must therefore study, understand, appreciate and dwell more on the Pure Self. Evil in us will then evaporate. – Editors]

**Thus Spake
Chinmaya**

WHAT DO WE CALL 'CULTURE'?



When a group of people live together in a particular geographical area for a long time, a collective system of norms, values and a distinct way of life develops, which makes the group's identity. This comes to be known as their culture.

Pujya Swāmi Chinmayānandaji

**From the Editor's
Desk**



Swami Chidananda

Swāmi Chidānanda

WHEN IS JOY OF WORK POSSIBLE?

Most People Work under Pressure

In a video I watched recently, over social media, Kapil Dev, the super star of cricket in early 1980s, says ruefully, "These days, I meet cricketers and other sports persons who

confess that they play under much *pressure*. In our times, it was sheer *pleasure* for us to play!"

My mind went straight to Geetā 18.26, where Shri Krishna describes the A-Grade worker¹ (*sāttvika kartā*) as someone who is endowed with enthusiasm. A study of the Geetā, sincerely taken up and sustained over years, reveals to us the secrets of living in enthusiasm, and not working under pressure!



Working under Pressure

An honest self-examination that any of us can do exposes the very many likes and dislikes that rule us in all our transactions. We (like or) dislike persons, places, things, topics, issues etc. Why do we not look at everything without bias? Why can we not have objectivity, whereby we see facts and not what our own mind projects? Why do we suffer from coloured perception?

Calling them *rāga* and *dwesha*, Shri Krishna pinpoints the numerous likes and dislikes that have struck roots in our psyche to be the culprits when it comes to our living in stress, exhaustion etc.

Work done without attachment (to *phala* or to *karma* itself) and eschewing likes and dislikes is praised by Shri Krishna as A-Grade work² (*saatvika karma*), which is bound to be joyous.

While much can be said about ways and means to free ourselves of these impurities, it should suffice for now to summarise all the practices with one piece of advice that Swami Chinmayanandaji used to give:

Attach and Detach.

Attach to the Higher (like God), and you will find it easy to detach from the Lower (like sense objects!)

Swāmi Chidānanda

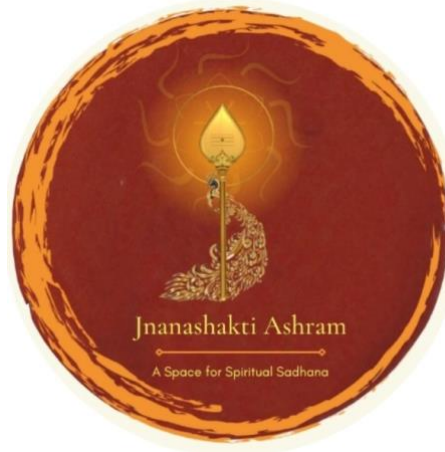
Notes:

1 *dhriti-utsāha-samanvitah* Geetā 18.26

2 *sanga-rahitam, a-rāga-dweshatah kritam* 18.23

Jnāna Shakti
Strength from Right Understanding

AN UPDATE ON
JNĀNA-SHAKTI
A Centre for Vedānta Studies



ALL SET TO BEGIN CONSTRUCTION

The Update: As this newsletter is reaching your device's screen, we are finalising the construction company, which will start the work within a few days from now.

Our team – Convenor Cdr Bijur, Managing Trustee Vibha Chaitanya, Architect Om Lakhani and Project Management Consultant (PMC) Shri Sharavanan – visited the site on July 3 and took stock of the topography of the 3.6 acre land parcel.

The place is lush green now, with the blessings of Varuna (the god overseeing water, rains etc.). The stream behind our plot is flowing with full vigour.



This tree (in the picture above) towards the backside of the property has been a witness of students, teachers and administrators who came to the site with their dreams, plans and aspirations. Photograph taken on July 3, 2024.

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 āchārya cottages will be an important feature.

We once more appeal to all our friends' circle and to Vedānta students to support this noble project for the uplift of the society.



Team Jnāna Shakti

Imperatives from
Upanishads

10

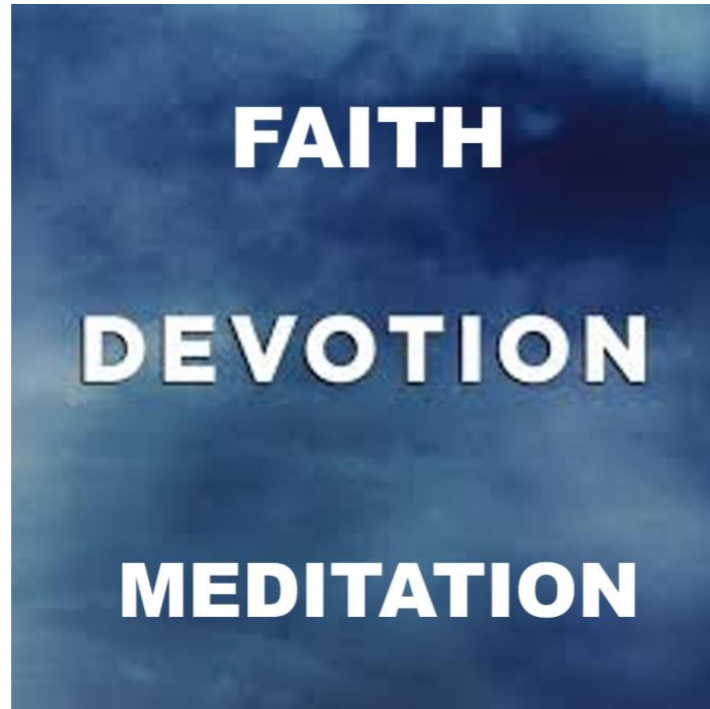
MEDITATE, HAVE FAITH AND POSSESS DEVOTION

Three Prerequisites for Reaching Spiritual Heights

A guru once asked his disciples to bring some embers (small pieces of burning wood from a dying fire), to help him light up the fire in a certain Vedic ritual. The disciples enthusiastically proceeded to some houses that were not far from their āshram. In their over-excitement, they did not carry any vessel to hold and bring the embers.

Some householder readily offered them some embers but how would they receive them? One of the disciples quickly ran to a shop nearby and collected some old newspapers. All of them then took the embers upon the newspapers, and started walking back to the ashram, eager to hand them over to their guru.

What would you expect now? Can the newspapers hold the burning pieces of wood? If a large metal bowl were to replace the newspapers, it would hold the embers and then the disciples would successfully bring the embers to their guru.



/ shraddhā-bhakti-dhyāna-yogād-avaihi

Know the highest truth through faith, devotion, and meditation!

Kaivalya Upanisad, mantra 2

Likewise, the inner equipment (*antah-karana*) of ours cannot hold the lofty teachings of the Upanishads, if it does not possess three qualities. If our *antah-karana* were to be endowed with faith, devotion, and meditation, it would receive the right understanding and hold it also.

This tenth selection thus is an instruction to us – yet another imperative – to develop *shraddhā*, *bhakti* and *dhyāna*!

Quote of the Issue

DO NOT REMAIN CAUGHT IN CONCEPTS
Just Be the Self.



Self-discovery is always beyond all imagination.

Shri Nisargadatta Maharaj

Health is You

**PLEASE USE
THESE 12 EXCELLENT MEDICINES!**
Other Medicines may not be Needed.



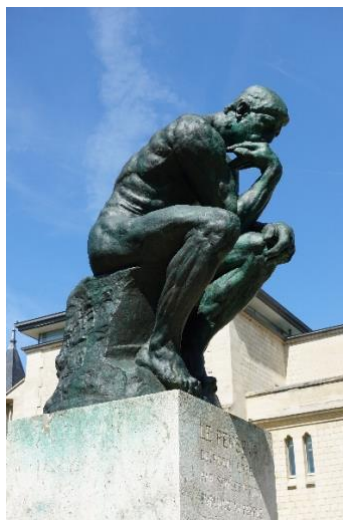
- 1) *Daily walking (or jogging) is a medicine!*
- 2) *Regular exercise is a medicine!*
- 3) *Fasting (skipping a meal periodically) is a medicine!*
- 4) *Laughing is medicine!*
- 5) *Getting up before sunrise is medicine!*
- 6) *Spending time with people who are close to us, who understand us is medicine!*
- 7) *Staying in a happy mood is itself a medicine!*
- 8) *Maintaining silence, at times, is medicine!*
- 9) *Cooperating with our associates is medicine!*
- 10) *Having a good friend is like easy access to a medical store!*
- 11) *Understanding God's power and mercy, and remembering him a lot is a great medicine!*
- 12) *To forgive and forget is good medicine too!*

AUPA Yuva
As Young Eyes See

THE POWER OF THOUGHT

It can make or mar your life.

From time immemorial, the wise ones have said, 'As you think, so you become.' Good thoughts have proved to be the sure way to an orderly life and bad ones have ruined many a life. "Sow a thought," goes another saying, "Reap an action. Sow an action, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a destiny!"



Think your way to heaven or hell!

The difficulty we have in the matter is that our thoughts do not seem to be in our control many a time. How do we ensure that we avoid negative thoughts and opt for noble ones? The problem is not as hard as we may imagine.

Two Answers: One of choice and the second of intelligence

On a lower plane, our thoughts are directly the product of what we consume – the food we eat, the books we read, the friends we listen to, the movies we watch and, nowadays, the social media that we follow. In the matter of ‘factors that influence our thinking,’ we do have some amount of choice. We must consciously opt for such things that lead to constructive thoughts that pave the way to a happy life where we become good citizens and we contribute to others’ happiness as well as our own.

On the higher plane of advanced philosophy, our thoughts undergo a healthy change if we periodically watch them with steady attention. For an analogy, a thief will leave our house if he realizes somebody is watching him. Wrong thoughts, false beliefs, erroneous perceptions etc. cannot stand the heat of vigilance.

We may eliminate harmful thoughts through adopting these two approaches.

We may build a glorious life on the foundation of noble thoughts and good deeds.

Swāmi Chidānanda

Webinars

FOWAI FORUM’S WEBINARS

Go for knowledge, online or offline!



PRESENTED ALREADY

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>antyeṣṭhi</i>)

Note: All these webinars – 270 done so far – are available on YouTube. Please visit the FOWAI channel to watch them.

COMING UP

Sundays, 8.30 pm IST

By Swāmi Chidānanda		
July 7, 2024	Webinar #271	An Overview of Jeevan-mukta-ānanda-lahari, Part 2
By a Guest Speaker		
July 21, 2024	Webinar #272	Topic to be announced.

News

June 14 thru 16, 2024, Retreat at Ritambharā, Bengaluru

About 15 participants made the deliberations on 'Nuts and Bolts of Self-enquiry' quite enjoyable at the serene facility of Ritambharā. While Swāmiji delivered the main lectures, Dr Thimappa Hegde and Swāmi Advaitānanda also addressed the gathering. Sri Datta Prasād conducted the 'yoga' classes in the early mornings for three consecutive sessions on the 15th, 16th and 17th. Dr Vinayachandra, the head of Ritambharā, delivered a short talk on 'Indian Knowledge Systems' (IKS) one afternoon.



Inauguration of the Retreat on 'Nuts and Bolts of Self-enquiry'

June 17, 2024 Happy Time at Advaitam, northwest of Bengaluru

Almost all the participants of the Ritambharā Retreat proceeded to ADVAITAM, the beautiful campus of the āshram built by Swāmi Advaitānanda at a village near Doddaballāpur, which is a town not far from Bengaluru. Srinivās Datta and Padmā ensured that the visiting group enjoyed a delicious lunch amidst the serene surroundings. A class was held in the afternoon with the topic 'An Introduction to the Upanishads.'



Swāmis Advaitānanda and Chidānanda

17 thru 19: Retreat at the School of Ancient Wisdom, Bengaluru

'Essentials of the Teachings of the Upanishads' was the theme for this second Retreat in June. The most beautiful campus of the School of Ancient Wisdom (SAW), just a 20 mins drive from the Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru, was the venue for three wonderful days of Vedānta contemplation. Swāmi Advaitānanda, Swāmi Nārāyanānanda (resident monk at the SAW) also shared their thoughts on spirituality, meditation etc. Brahmachārini Vibhā Chaitanya ably coordinated the different items in the schedule and facilitated group discussions, bhajans etc.



Smt Girijamma and Shri Viswanāth Bokkasam were our honoured guests at both the Retreats at Ritambhara and the SAW.

July 2 and 3: Online lectures for a Specific Audience

Swāmiji delivered two talks – online – and addressed nearly 100 teachers at various institutions of higher learning in the country, who had gathered for a program under the UGC (University Grants Commission), at its MMTTC (Mālaviya Mission Teachers' Training Centre), and the program was organized by SLBSRSV (Sri Lāl Bahādur Sāstri Rāshtriya Samskrit Vishwavidyālaya, National Sanskrit University). The topics were 1) Reducing Stress and Managing Time Better and 2) Life-Work Integration. Prof. Amitā Pāndey Bhārdwaj oversaw the proceedings.



Sri Lāl Bahādur Sāstri National Sanskrit University, Delhi

Upcoming Events

July 15, 16: Lectures in Kannada at SSJM

Shri Shankara Jayanti Mandali will once more host the talks on Geetā by Swāmiji on Monday and Tuesday (July 15, 16) at its hall, where spiritual talks have been going on since 1958!

July 21, 2024: Guru Purnimā celebration in Mumbai

A special function will be held at the well-known Maheshwari Bhawan in Andheri West (near Oshiwara Police Station) on Sunday the July 21 to celebrate Guru Purnimā, between 10 am and 12 noon.



The Venue for Guru Purnimā on Sunday, July 21.

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.

Satsangs (online) under the banner of **Suvarnamukhi Samskrit Dhama** (SSD), in **Kannada**, have been going on. They are at 7.30 pm IST every Wednesday. Anyone who wishes to join may send a Whatsapp message to the Headmaster of the SSD School on +91 99729 70502.

(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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