

AUPA e - Newsletter

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Mantra to Ponder

LET US CONNECT TO THE CELESTIAL SPHERE.

Agni is the Medium to Reach the Gods.

The first mantra of the Rg-Veda helps us connect with Agni, fire-god, who provides to us the pathway to reach any of the gods in celestial spheres.

The Upanishads accept and endorse celestial beings – the gods (*devas* or *devatās*) – but eventually take us way above them to the One Absolute Truth, Brahman.

The *veda-poorva* has countless hymns to the gods. The *vedānta* gently leads us to the oneness, in the vision of which all plurality gets invalidated. The two parts – *veda-poorva* and the *vedānta* – together constitute the Vedas.



Fire, the Link between the material and the divine.

/ agnimeele purohitam /

/ yajnasya devam-rtvijam /

/ hotāram ratna-dhātāmam /

I invoke and worship AGNI, the god who is placed first, who is the (chief) priest in any Vedic fire ritual, who is himself an exalted divine being (*devatā*), who is a *rshi* (*rtvik*) too. He invites (all other) gods. He facilitates the process of our receiving the results of the rituals (*yajnas*) that we perform.

Rg-veda 1.1.1

(Mandala 1, Sookta 1, mantra 1)

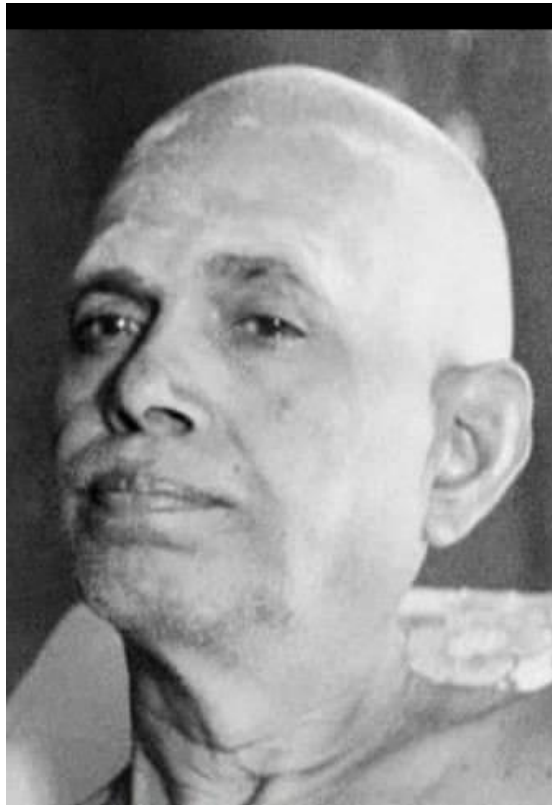


AGNI

We the students of the Upanishads need to have a balanced view of the places that the relative realities and the absolute reality occupy in this universe. We respect the powers of Nature, the forces that operate in the psychic realm, and the supernatural energies that are never away from us.

The Rg-veda therefore begins with due respect to Agni, the foremost of the celestial beings, which influence and control the phenomenal universe.

WHO IS DOING THE FALSE PROPAGANDA?



The body does not say, "I am."

It is you who says, "I am the body!"

Find out who this 'I' is.

Seeking its source, it will vanish.

SHRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

Source: Talks with Shri Ramana Maharshi, Talk #197, June 9, 1936.

[We must recognize the colossal role that thought (thinking) plays in keeping us bound and miserable. The thought, 'I am this body,' is at the root of all misery. Can we not nab this cheat? – Editors]

**Thus Spake
Chinmaya**

WORK HARD



Nārāyana likes the smell of sweat.

Pujya Swāmi Chinmayānandaji

[Most of us have a long way to go before we can live a contemplative life, without work schedules, deadlines, goals, priorities, teamwork etc. Therefore, as applicable to 99% of humanity, the above quote is most relevant. We should not let *tamas* masquerade as *sattva*.
– Editors]

**From the Editor's
Desk**



Swami Chidananda

THERE ARE NO BAD HABITS.
There are only stupid habits.

All kinds of things we do repeatedly, day after day, knowing well that these things do harm to us, waste our precious time, make us lose golden opportunities and jeopardize valuable relationships, are a sure sign of *lack of intelligence*. We are **stupid** to continue to do them.

Great degrees that we may possess, very good positions that we occupy in the society and enviable talents that we are able to show off on occasions – all of them – pale into insignificance when these stupid habits prevent us from waking up from our spiritual slumber and cause increased weakening of the divine forces in us.



They are unintelligent ways of living.

“Awareness is the beginning of spirituality; awareness is the middle of spirituality; and awareness is the end (peak) of spirituality,” observed a wise writer. All the so-called bad habits, which are better referred to as *unintelligent ways of living* are marked by low self-awareness. People do not know what they are doing. To make matters worse, they have false arguments to justify their wrong practices. A smoker said once that he smokes because the cigarette industry generates a lot of employment. An alcoholic also may think his addiction is, indirectly, a great service to the society.

Rise, rise and rise in awareness! Spiritual studies and related practices are not meant to go into a state of stone-like indifference to matters outside or within us. On the contrary, they enable us to observe, more intelligently, what is going on around us and inside us. Terrific changes can primarily take place within the emotional and intellectual spheres of our lives, facilitating a quiet but significant transformation. When we change for better, our contributions to the external world also get better in unthinkable ways.

Can we therefore pause and proceed? Can we take note of our error zones in daily life? It is not just about the grosser bad habits like smoking, alcoholism, and consuming unhealthy food. Poor communication, pitiable time-management, being harsh or rude to family members etc. are also *stupid habits*, which are expressions of inadequate self-awareness, which keep us on lower planes of intelligence. “Anger takes you to trouble; pride keeps you there,” said Swāmi Chinmayānandaji, commenting on wrong psychological habits.

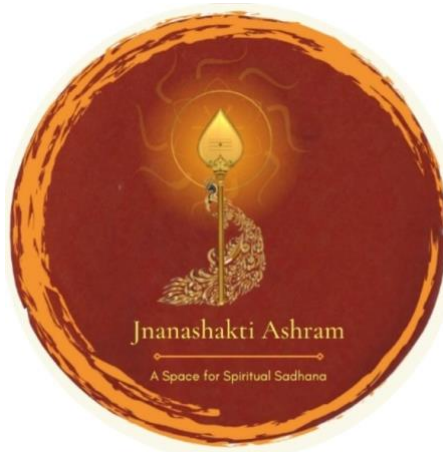
There is so much to do whereby we may set our own house in order. Let us get down to this important task without delay. Let us live rightly.

Swāmi Chidānanda

Jnāna Shakti
Strength from Right Understanding

AN UPDATE ON JNĀNA-SHAKTI

A Centre for Vedānta Studies



THE WORK IS IN PROGRESS

The Update:

Oris Architects, after due deliberations, have been working closely with the Project Management Consultant (PMC) and other key members of our team. Cdr Bijur, the Convenor of the Jnana Shakti project, has been in regular touch with all, and is leaving no stone unturned to expedite the work.

Ms Parminder Vir, OBE, from London, and her husband, Prof. Julian Henriques, visited the site on Sunday, August 18, accompanied by Swamiji and Vibhaji. Parminder, who had good discussion with Mohan Hejamadi the next day in Mumbai, is likely to play a vital role in taking the project further.

The drawing below shows the eight blocks A thru H, in the master plan for the whole Jnana Shakti ashram.

Reception area: **Block A**

Kitchen and Dining Hall: **Block B**

Accommodation of Participants: **Block C**

Accommodation of Participants: **Block D**

Meditation Hall and Āchārya Residence: **Block E**

Learning Block 1: **Block F** (Seminar Hall, Visitors' Room, Library)

Learning Block 2: **Block G** (Seminar Hall, Wash Rooms etc.)

Auditorium: **Block H**



Brisk discussions, exchange of thoughts and important decisions are taking place between members of the team: the Convenor, the PMC, the Contractors, the Structural Advisor, the Architects, the Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MEP) Consultants, and the trustees including Swāmiji.

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We pray Lord for the speedy progress of this project and successful completion.

Team Jnāna Shakti



**Imperatives from
Upanishads**

12

BRING YOUR MIND TO WHERE YOUR HANDS ARE!

Let not your energies get scattered.

In the 12th selection from the Upanishads, here is an instruction that has a 'do' and a 'don't' too. Do engage in spiritual contemplation. Do not let the mind and the senses go in different directions.



Do's



Don'ts

/ *tapasā brahma vijijnāsasva* /

Seek to know the highest truth by *tapah*, the bringing together of the mind and the senses!

Taittiriya Upanishad, mantra 3.2

When our mind (*manah*) is totally focused on a chosen, good activity, and, in addition, our organs of perception (*jnānendriyas*) and of action (*karmendriyas*) are also cooperating fully, it is *tapas*. Our scriptures, including the Upanishads, are unequivocal in emphasizing the need for us to bring coherence in the functioning of our inner equipment – the body, the head, and the heart – to use another expression.

“Let your mind be where your hands are,” roared Swāmi Chinmayānandaji, sharing with all of us, the young and the old, the key to success. Just as a team has to work in cohesion, in order to come out with spectacular results, the inner components of our own personality have to operate with synergy to make it possible for us to reach heights of excellence in all that we do.

While the context in which the ‘imperative statement’ above, from the Bhṛigu-valli of the Taittiriya Upanishad (from the Krishna Yajurveda) is Self-realization, the advice applies equally well to mundane contexts. Students studying at high school or college, working professionals busy with their chosen projects and social workers striving to ameliorate the living standards of people, and all of us in various fields of human endeavour need to develop a greater degree of personality integration, without which we will end up as examples of mediocrity.

The demand here, made by Varuna, an illustrious Rishi, the father of Bhṛigu, is very significant for, in the domain of self-enquiry, little progress can happen if we waste our time and energy in diverse pursuits. “If you are chasing two rabbits at the same time, you will catch neither of them,” said two popular authors¹, making a strong case for concentrating on one goal. We must put our heart and soul into this supreme goal of human life, which is to know who we are.



Do not chase two rabbits at the same time!

In the section of the Upanishad where this instruction appears, the son, Bhrigu, rigorously pursues the investigation into Brahman, the highest truth, and realizes it, thanks to his *tapas*. Shri Krishna means this kind of single-pointedness, through the word *tatparah* when he declares², 'Those who have faith, focus and self-control attain the liberating wisdom,' in the Geetā.

NOTES

1In *THE ONE THING*, by authors Gary Keller and Jay Papasan

2 *shraddhāvān labhate jñānam, tatparah, samyatendriyah* – Geetā 4.39

Quote of the Issue

MONEY CAN BE MĀYĀ!
Be Watchful.



A frog had a rupee, which he kept in his hole. One day an elephant was going over the hole, and the frog, coming out in a fit of anger, raised his foot, as if to kick the elephant, and said, 'How dare you walk over my head?'

Such is the pride that money begets!

Source: The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna

FILL MORE OXYGEN IN YOUR LUNGS.

Prevention is Better than Cure!



When more oxygen goes into our lungs, our blood gets purified to a greater extent. Experts say the lungs' capacity to take air inside them is anywhere between 1.5 liters to 4 liters. Those of us who play, run, walk, or do *prānāyāma* ensure that a greater amount of air will fill the lungs. These exercises make the lungs expand more, welcoming more air.

As all of us know, only 20% of the air we breathe in, is oxygen. Therefore, if we breathe in 2 liters of air, we get 400 mL of oxygen in the lungs, which purifies the blood. This blood is then sent to all the nooks and corners of the body by our heart, the great pumping organ. If we do exercises as mentioned before, we will succeed in *doubling the amount of oxygen that goes all over our body.*



Run, let your body get double the oxygen than otherwise.

Purer the blood, greater is its support to all the limbs, processes, and systems in the body. Imagine our drinking pure water in contrast to contaminated water. No one will have a second opinion that pure water is most essential. Likewise, pure blood is a very important need of our body. Exercises therefore are a must to keep the whole physiology in our body in good shape.



Do prānāyāma, the time-tested way to stay healthy.

We must not neglect, therefore, activities and exercises. We must give ourselves more oxygen. Our body does a lot of work for our sake. We owe to our body the supply of the right amount of oxygen. Otherwise, it is like taking a lot of services from someone but paying him very less.

We must see that our body does not get sick. Prevention is always better than cure!

Webinars

WEBINARS OF FOWAI FORUM
Go far and wide over the Internet!



PRESENTED ALREADY

Sundays, 8.30 pm IST

By Swāmi Chidānanda		
August 11, 2024	Webinar #273	A VEDIC CONVOCATION ADDRESS <i>Parting Advice when Students Leave Gurukula</i>
By Swāmi Chidānanda		
August 25, 2024	Webinar #274	THE PRUDENCE OF LEADERSHIP Glimpses from Vidura-Neeti

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COMING UP

Sundays, 8.30 pm IST

By Dr Rājashekhar		
September 15, 2024	Webinar #275	JOIN HANDS WITH NATURE Towards Excellent Health
By Swāmi Chidānanda		
September 29, 2024	Webinar #276	UNDERSTANDING HINDUISM <i>Episode 14 - Temples</i>

Note: All these webinars – 274 done so far – are available on YouTube. Please visit the FOWAI channel to watch them.

News

August 4, 2024 Talk at the Valley School, Bengaluru

Swāmiji delivered a talk on *Exploring Love* at the Seminar Hall of the Valley School, which comes under the Krishnamurti Foundation India (KFI) on Sunday, the 4th. More than a hundred people – young and old – attended the event, which included lively group

discussions after the talk (and tea break). The program concluded with delicious lunch served by the School to all the participants.

August 5, 6 and 7: Talks at Shankara Jayanti Mandali, Bengaluru



Swāmiji continued his series on Prominent Teachings of the Geetā (in Kannada) at the Shri Shankara Jayanti Mandali in Jayanagar, 3rd Block.

August 9, 2024: Addressing Students of Duke University

Ten to twelve students of the Duke University (in North Carolina, USA) were camping at the Suvarnamukhi Samskrit Dhāma in the outskirts of Bengaluru for eight weeks, offering their services to the school on the campus, teaching several subjects to the students. Swāmiji addressed the group on the 9th of August in the morning, and joined them at a cultural event the same evening. Ms Priyā Nāgarāju, assisted by a team, coordinated this program, supported by the Melinda Gates Foundation. Priya happens to be the Hindu Chaplain too at the Duke University.



Upcoming Events

FOWAI holds the first camp in Hindi, Sept 5 thru 9, 2024: As this issue reaches the screens of the readers, members of FOWAI FORUM from different parts of the country will be in Chattisgarh, taking part in the spiritual get-together at the Shri Krishna Pranāmi Sāadhanālaya (āshram) near Raigarh.



The theme is '*jeevan ke liye samagra mārga-darshan*' (Complete Guidance to Live Wisely) and Swāmiji will cover (the essentials of) all the 18 chapters of the Geetā.

USA Tour: Swāmiji is scheduled to tour USA, beginning with Vedānta talks in Houston in Texas on October 25, 2024, and concluding with San Francisco Bay Area on December 8. Among his engagements, being one of the chief guests at the 10th anniversary of the Hindu Temple of Greater Fort Worth (HTGFW) will be the most important one. Our next issue will let the readers know the final itinerary.

Yoga Festival: Upon his return to India, he will join the Mysuru Yoga Utsava between December 12 and 14, which is being organized by the INDICA group. Everyone is welcome to register for this grand event by reaching <https://mysuruyogautsava.com/>.



Subramanian Ananda
Venkata



Swami Chidananda



Walter Ruta



Dr. Vinayachandra
Banavathy



Dr. Anuradha Choudry

Some of the Speakers at the Yoga Festival in Mysuru.

Talks on Geetā in Kannada: Swāmiji will continue the series on The Prominent Teachings of the Geetā at the SSJ Mandali in Jayanagar, Bengaluru, and deliver three talks on October 7, 8 and 9.

DHIMAH I

Deriving Holistic Insights into Management
and Academics from Heritage of India

The SIES College of Arts, Science and Commerce in Nerul, in Navi Mumbai, invited Swāmiji for the third time in recent years to address the first-year students of Banking and Commerce on Friday, August 23, 2024. Mr Sangam Gupta accompanied Swāmiji. Dr Koel Roy Choudhury, the Principal, welcomed the speaker. The event was ably coordinated by Ms Bhumika More, a teaching faculty. The girls and boys, who had gathered at the Library Hall, were very attentive.



The Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)

The topic was '*The Prudence of Leadership: Glimpses from Vidura Neeti*', under the broader theme of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS).

(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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