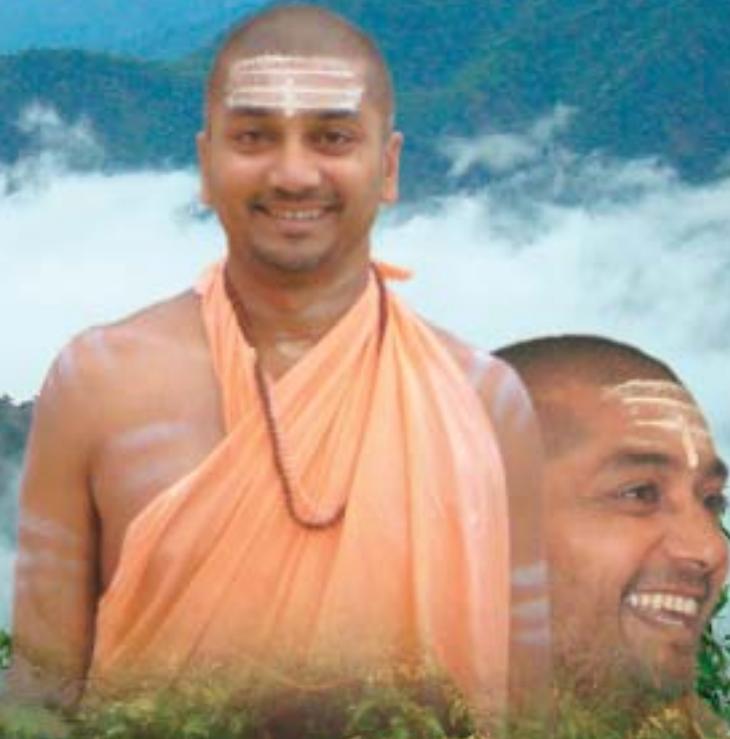




Nachiketanjali

...an offering



A Journey Into The Spiritual Realm!

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चक्रातुन्दा ललाकार्या
इत्युक्तो इत्यप्रबन्ध,
निरिच्छेत्तल कुरुते देव,
इत्युक्तं कुरुते इत्युक्तं.

Volume: 1

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February 2010

<i>Content</i>	<i>Page No.</i>
Blessings	2
Swamiji's Message	3
Editorial	4
Amrita Dhara	5
Adi Sankaracharya	6
Spiritual Quest	7
Sadhana	8
Pranayama	9
Yuvanjali	10
Too cool to be spiritual	10
Sister Nivedita	12
Quiz on Ramayana	13
Science behind Japamala	14
From Sadness to Eternal Bliss	15
The Conversation	16
Hearts that melt	17
An Ode to Bharat Mata	18
Mirror Mirror...	20
My Experience	21
Prasthanā Traya	22
A Spark of Inspiration	23
Learn Sanskrit	24
Manava Vikasamu...	25
Fact is a fact	26
Inside You...	27
Ashram Projects	28
News & Events	30
Shivaratri	31
Helping Hands	32
An Appeal	33
Subscriptions	34

Quotations by Swami Vivekananda

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A golden chain is as much a chain as an iron one.

BLESSINGS



I have witnessed the journey of Nachiketa Tapovan and the people around, who have nurtured and shaped the organisation like their own child. I have seen their palms facing upward not for asking but for offering...I have heard their silent prayers and working hands for the underprivileged ones...I have looked into their eyes and found the depth of compassion for the poor...I have even seen them simply accepting whatever comes their way and when such spiritual souls work together for any cause it becomes a living legacy for all...

One such soul, Subhadra Ma who carefully nurtured Nachiketa Tapovan with her gentle and compassionate heart, produced a spiritual treasure in the form of Nachiketanjali...an offering...to heal the mankind, to brighten their lives and leave this legacy behind for generations together to cherish forever...She is truly a silent worker working silently for the cause without expecting anything and offering whatever best she can...

To that great soul my heartfelt, soulful and silent prayers to make this living legacy more clearly heard, seen and felt all over but silently...

They say that silent work speaks volumes together and it is true with our Editorial Team with young Nachiketas and Karmayogis like Annapurna Ma who are carrying and caring for Nachiketanjali silently. This 'Spiritual Blend' is unique in nature and bringing spiritual aroma to Nachiketanjali with their wits and wisdom...

To such great souls I extend my heart joining both the palms together not for 'Namaskara' but to make an 'Anjali' to offer...

Om Namah Shivaya!



Om Namah Shivaya!

I shower my blessings on the editorial board on the launch of our Magazine, Nachiketanjali. The step taken by our editorial board is one step towards divinity. Every creature in this world is divine. But generally we don't try to make an effort to experience that divinity. Nachiketanjali is one such effort of writers and readers to experience the divinity within. Nachiketanjali is not just a magazine with lots of information. It has got many flavors and every flavor is full of Spirituality. Spirituality is the remedy for all the miseries, problems and evils which are present in the society. If you want to see any development, first your mind should be strong. Mental strength or inner strength can move a mountain. In today's world a child is taught about physical development and intellectual development but not the inner or mental development. It is possible only when you add spiritual flavor to life. If you want to make our India a developed nation physically as well as mentally, first you should have mental strength. Hanuman could cross the ocean only when he realised his inner power. You could also bring out that inner power from within you, through spiritual efforts. Our editorial board is making a spiritual effort with the gracious and divine blessings of my Master Pujya Swamiji, Swami Nachiketanandaji. With the blessings of the Almighty, Swamiji and the efforts of our editorial Sadhakas, this Maha Yaga of spirituality will definitely prove to be successful and universal.

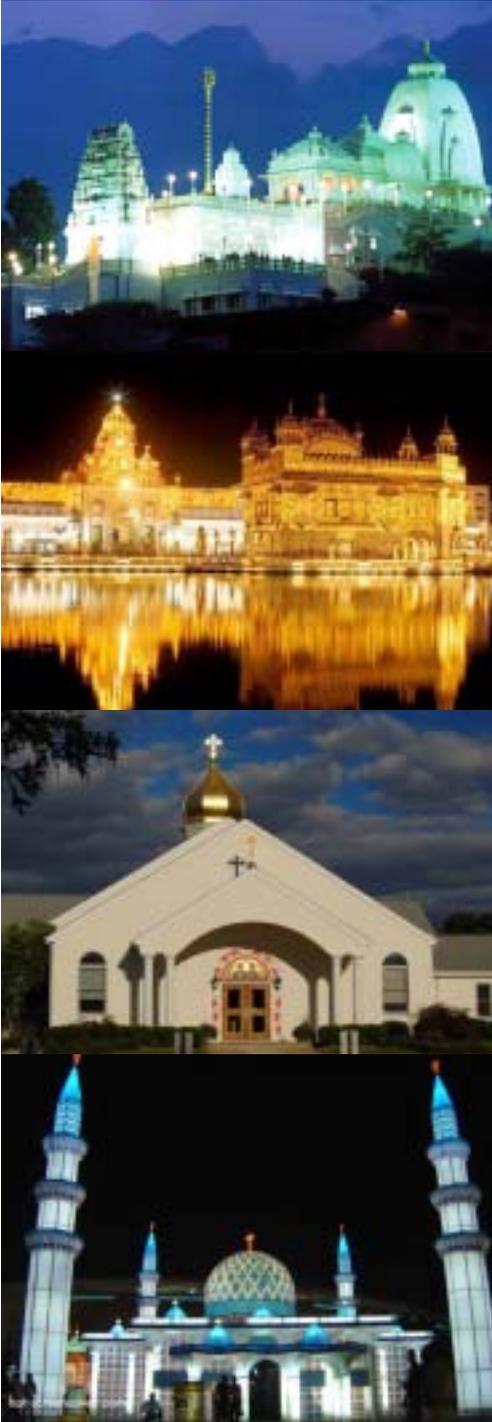


Swami Nachiketananda

Swami Shivanandamayi

The idea of body is a simple superstition.

SWAMIJI'S MESSAGE - FACE OF FAITH

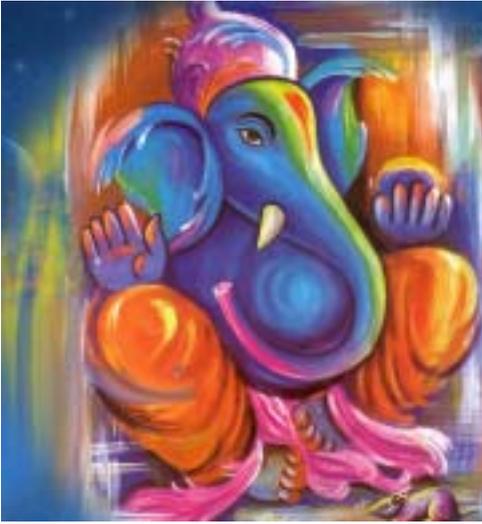


Once one old wise person in search of faith meets many religious people. He asks them “Could you tell me what faith is and how it looks like”? ‘Father’ tries to show him ‘Jesus and Bible’, ‘Maulavi’ ‘Mecca and Quran’, ‘Sikh’ ‘Guru Nanak’ and ‘Guru Granth Sahib’ whereas ‘Hindu priest’ ‘Brahma Vishnu Mahesh’ and ‘Vedas’. Wise man says “I feel that they demonstrated faith. Faith doesn’t have face. Faith can be exhibited and expressed but it cannot be picturised. I appreciate your religion and faith but truly speaking faith has no face”.

Then he comes across a spiritual soul wandering freely and fearlessly without any doctrine, preaching, dogmas or principles, enjoying freedom every moment. When the same question was placed to the spiritual soul he says, “Come I shall show you the face of faith”. Then he takes the wise person to a lake surrounded by trees and asks him to look at the lake and tell what he perceives. This wise person sees water, depth of the lake full of pebbles, fishes and many shining stones. Once again the spiritual person asks him to observe carefully. When the wise person starts seeing carefully, he sees even the sky in the lake and slowly he realises that he is able to see himself in the water. He experiences a very strange feeling and feels that something is passing through his body, soothing his entire being and conveying the profound truth of faith... When he looks around in search of the spiritual person...he finds nobody except himself...not in search of faith but in faith...

Yes! Faith doesn’t have a face and cannot be picturised but when that ‘Self’ springs, it takes the form of faith. Whether it is Jesus, Nanak, Allah or Trinity, they never wanted themselves to be portrayed the way they are today. The one who tries to express or tries to take credit has nothing to do with faith. They are all selfish. Therefore be selfless. Once you experience the ‘Self’, you will never have any doubt about faith...because you are the true source of faith...the face of faith... the self...the faith... - **Swami Nachiketanda**

Whatever you believe that you will be.



COVER STORY

A mother to the hungry, father to the prodigal child, teacher to the seeker, friend to the lonely, a beacon to the lost, our Swamiji is; He brings out the best in you, leads you through the worldly path; not by holding hands but by letting you fly; into the realms of Spirituality! Swami Nachiketananda is the brain, heart and soul of Nachiketa Tapovan a haven for rich and poor alike helping all to "Be And Make".



EDITORIAL

I vividly remember that day in 2006. Swamiji had chosen the day to baptize me and take me under His loving care so quietly that I had no inkling of the great change that was to come into my life! "Amma! You are going to take up the News letter work," He had told me that day. "Me, Swamiji! No way, I am not eligible to take up this noble work," I exclaimed. He gave me a warm smile and remained silent but wrote down a message conveying the same, in my copy of "My Life is My Work." I was perplexed but did not bother to give it a second thought.

"Amma! Now you are doing this work," He said in an affirmative tone after launching the News Letter on January 11th 2009. I was baffled but picked up my copy and related information and silently left the place. However, I immediately started working on it, goaded by some unseen force.

"Amma ! We'll start our Magazine," He said after releasing the 12th issue. "Not yet, Swamiji! It is a great commitment. We'll wait for one more year." I replied firmly. He flashed a mischievous smile. He did not give up. He worked on me, churning, battering, kneading, rolling and smoothening out my thoughts. He did all that He could but in utter silence.

Things started happening. My mind started thinking positively. It was a flood of questions. From "I can't," "Could I?" "May be not," " Not yet," my mind started giving me commands, "Yes! you can ," "Go ahead!" This led to my accepting His proposal one fine morning only to see a triumphant smile on His face. He showered His blessings. His modus operandi was simple. The Divine magnet slowly worked His magic!

The downpour of Supreme love soaked my Soul, washing off loads of emotional, psychological and mental debris and cleared the vision about the true purpose of life. NACHIKETANJALI is a humble offering at His lotus feet which He would surely relish.

- Subhadra K.

Every great achievement is done slowly.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S AMRITA DHARA - ON DEVOTEES



All of us try and seek God in the limited time allotted by us for Him. Whereas He, the Eternal One is waiting with his arms open for us to call on Him at least once in our lifetime. Sri Ramakrishna has classified us into various categories based on our

intensity to realize God.

Sri Ramakrishna opined that all aspirants are devotees of God. It is said that the devotee of God is greater than God himself, because he carries God in his heart.

“God acts as the magnet and the devotee as the needle. God attracts the devotee to himself. Sometimes, the reverse is true i.e. the devotee acts as the magnet and God as the needle. Such is the attraction of the devotee that God comes to him unable to resist his love.”

His simplest categorisation of Devotees was the lowest devotee who says, “God is up there.” That is, he points to heaven. The mediocre devotee says that God dwells in the heart as the “inner controller”. But the highest devotee says: “God alone has become everything. All that we perceive is so many forms of God.”

He further categorised the Devotees based on their spiritual practices. They are

a) The **Nitya siddha**, eternally perfect and he is in a class apart. The nityasiddha realizes God by practicing slight spiritual discipline and sometimes without practicing any at all. But he does practice spiritual discipline after realizing God. He is like the gourd or pumpkin vine – first fruit, then flower”. Prahlada is one such devotee.

b) Those who have realized God through austerity, japa, and the like, are called **Sadhanasiddha** perfect through spiritual discipline.

c) There are those called **Kripasiddha** perfect through divine grace. These devotees may be compared to a room kept dark a thousand years which becomes light the moment a lamp is brought in.

d) There is also a class of devotees, **Hathasiddha** i.e. to say those who have suddenly attained God vision. Their case is like that of a poor boy who has suddenly found favor with a rich man. The rich man marries his daughter to the boy and along with her gives him land, house, carriage, servants and so forth.

e) And finally, another class of devotees the **Swapnasiddha** who have had a vision of God in a dream.

A **Siddha** is one who has the absolute conviction that God exists and is the sole doer: he who has seen God. And who is the siddha of the siddha? He who has not merely seen God, but has intimately talked with him as father, son, or beloved.

Sri Ramakrishna has the utmost love and regard for householder devotees like us. He said, “A devotee who can call on God while living a householder’s life is a hero indeed. God thinks: he who has renounced the world for my sake will surely pray to me. He must serve me. Is there anything remarkable about it? People will cry shame on him if he fails to do so. But he is blessed indeed who prays to me in the midst of his worldly duties. He is trying to find me, overcoming a great obstacle- pushing away, as it were a huge block of stone weighing a tonne. Such a man is a real hero”.

He urged householder devotees to seek God with fervor. He said that the further you advance, the more you realize that God alone has become everything. He alone does everything. He alone is the Guru. He alone is the Ishta. He alone gives us knowledge and devotion.

Compiled by -
Vasundhara P. & Geetha Laxmi K.

No book ever created a soul.

ADI SANKARACHARYA

In this time and age when people don't think twice to exchange their morals, values and even religion for mundane comforts, it is hard to comprehend that the chosen couple Aryamba and Sivaguru willingly opted for a son of short and brilliant life than one with a long but dull life. Sri Sankaracharya was born in a village called Kalady in Kerala (788-820A.D.) at a time when lot of Dharmic confusion was prevailing in the society. Buddhism was distorted by invaders while Vedic ritualists and Yogic ascetics were asserting their dogmatic views. Vedic religion needed to be restored to its previous glory when Sri Sankaracharya, considered the reincarnation of Shiva was born as the savior of the Vedic Dharma.

From a very young age Sankara realized the transitory nature of this world and at the age of eight He embraced monastic life. He sought the guidance of the great monk Govindabagavatpada who after training Sankara for 3 years instructed Him to proceed to Kasi. While in Kasi, Sankara had a strange encounter with an untouchable (who was Lord Siva himself) which helped Sri Sankara experience His own doctrines on Advaita and dispelled the last vestige of ignorance from His mind. With His keen intellect and rational interpretation of the authoritative texts, Sri Adi Sankaracharya cut through the tangle of ritualism. He travelled the length and breadth of India preaching his doctrines and reforming the Sannyasin organizations. Sri Adi Sankaracharya established four monasteries or Mathas in the four cardinal points of the nation led by his four disciples called Dashanami tradition.

According to Sri Sankara, the reality behind this universe of seeming multiplicity of names and forms is one and one only- '*Advaita*' which is Brahman. Brahman appears to be many due to maya which

can be vanquished only by jnana. Jagadguru Sankaracharya's legacy of vast literature can be categorized as:

Bhashyas – are commentaries on Dasopanishad, *Brahmasutras*, *Bhagavadgita*, *Vishnusahasranama*, *Sanatsujatiya* and *Lalitatrishati*.

Prakaranas- are simple treatises on Advaita Vedanta. The popular ones are *Aparokshanubhuti*, *Atmabodha*, *Laghuvakyavrtti*, *Upadesasahasri*, *Vakyavrtti* and *Vivekachudamani*.

Stotras- Alongside with the lofty philosophical commentaries, Adi Sankaracharya produced soul-melting Stotras or hymns on almost all the well known deities. *Anandalahari*, *Bhajagovindastotra*, *Dakshinamurtyastaka*, *Dasasloki*, *Gopalastaka*, *Harimidestotra*, *Manisapancaaka*, *Sivabhujangaprayata*,

Sopanapancaaka and *Visnusatpadi*.

Prapançasara and *Saundaryalahari* are two works on tantra by Him.

"I contemplate on Sankaracharya, who is seated in Padmasana, who is tranquil, who is established in self-restraint, whose glory is like that of the enemy of Cupid, who wears the sacred ashes shining on his forehead, whose smiling face resembles the blossomed lotus, who has lotus-like eyes, whose neck is conch-like, holding book in one hand and indicating Jnana-mudra (with another hand), who is adored by the foremost of gods, who gives boons to those who prostrate to him."

Compiled by **Annapurna R.**



SPIRITUAL QUEST

Swamiji answers questions from the seekers. Questions are welcome from everyone. They can be e-mailed to nachiketananda@gmail.com

How to stop thought process during Japa or Meditation?

Ans: Japa or Meditation will take care of our thought process. Japa itself is a divine thought and Meditation is a divine expression of Japa. Therefore we should be sincere in our efforts and follow the scientific guidelines set by higher souls. The whole journey through Japa or Meditation is to divert thoughts towards divinity. As we proceed towards God, thoughts get purified but when we move towards mundane world thoughts get polluted. During sadhana when we get polluted thoughts, we feel they are disturbing. Whereas, when we get purified thoughts we feel more elevated and find connectivity between soul and supreme soul. The same thought can

lead to devastation or creation. Such is the power of thought. But think about the state that is beyond thought...Real Japa or Meditation leads to thoughtlessness...beyond thoughts where 'Self' exists without 'I'...Therefore before Sadhana we can take few precautions.

1. Place: Should be clean and neat.
2. Sound: Keep yourself away from noise.
3. Mat: A proper mat for sadhana.
4. Spiritual atmosphere: God's photo, incense stick, flowers etc.
5. Habits: Avoid eating or reading two hours before Japa or Meditation.
6. Asana: Before Sadhana we can have shavasan or yoganidra.
7. Work: Do not leave work in pending.
8. Auto suggestion: Keep telling your mind that it is time to withdraw from all activities and get ready for Japa or Meditation.

Between a soul-searching Jnani living in recluse and a Yogi living in society sharing his wisdom and serving it, who is to be looked upon for inspiration?

Ans: Both and Yourself! 'Both', in the sense that Jnanis and Karmayogis are doing the same work in the society even though one stays in recluse and the other one stays in the society. Ramakrishna, Yuktेशwara or Bengali Baba did not travel like Swami Vivekananda, Yogananda or Swami Rama but their contribution to the society is equally important and truly inspiring. One is heard louder and the other one is felt silently. The impact is same, therefore both are equally important.

'Yourself', because you are the best source of inspiration. You have tremendous energy, dynamism and spirituality in you. You just need to identify your inner strength. You are capable of doing anything and everything. If you look at yogis' lives, you will come to know that they have created the best possibilities through every action that they perform. They are doing nothing except witnessing every happening. They have understood this truth and are true to themselves. That's why they are great and we feel like deriving inspiration from them. We should not have any problem in deriving inspiration from anybody. Lord Dattatreya had 24 gurus from nature. He was able to inspire and motivate Himself. They say, 'Self motivation is the best motivation'. So let us look at our inner assets and pick up whatever best we can to get inspired.

Everything has a cause.

WHAT IS SADHANA?



We carry many samskaras or deep rooted habits. Sadhana is one tool that purifies one's samskaras and frees from the never ending cycle of births and deaths. The moment we hear the word 'Sadhana', many of us think that it is not

meant for us and tend to postpone it to the last days of life. But you don't know how long you are going to live. So Sadhana is needed for all from a child to a senior citizen.

Sadhana is neither staying in a forest, away from the people nor performing rituals, reading scriptures and attending satsangs etc. Sadhana helps in discovering your permanent address. Always remember, the house, the society or the world you live in is not your permanent address. Not even your own body is permanent. We forget that we live as a tenant in the body as well as in the world. Ironically, man struggles through out his life for a temporary address. He tries to build castles in the air. He feels happy and proud about his momentary success. He spends sleepless nights to derive the limited happiness from material gains. He does many bad acts to fill his stomach and finally one day he leaves this world. Rich or poor, no one can defy or stop death.



While leaving this world he can not carry his wealth, power and status with him. Upon death, all one needs is 5 to 6 feet space to be buried. But before leaving this world, it is necessary to know the Truth and purpose of life. The process of knowing the Truth or discovering the True Self is called Sadhana. It reveals to you, your permanent and eternal address. Sadhana is not intellectual understanding. It is a process of experience. It makes you free from the cycle of birth and death. As long as you don't realize the Truth, the cycle of birth and death keeps repeating.

Everyone doesn't have the same mentality or Prakruti. So our sages have practiced and introduced various streams of Yoga viz. Karma yoga, Bhakti yoga, Tantrayoga, Rajayoga, Jnanayoga, Kriyayoga for different people. You may have great interest in service, but not the same interest towards

Meditation or Jnana and vice versa. Now you may wonder as to what type of Sadhana is suitable for you. A realized Guru can guide you in adopting the right path or you can also discover your predominant nature; according to which you can choose the stream of Sadhana.

- Swami Shivanandamayi

Books are good but they are only maps.

PRANAYAMA



***Prana syedam vyashe sarvam
trideavayath pratishtitham
Maateva putraan rakshasva
srishcha pragnaamshcha
videhi na iti !***

Meaning: Whatever exists in three worlds is all under the control of Prana. (O Prana) Protect us as a mother protects her children. Give us affluence and intelligence.

Pranayama consists of two words 'Prana' and 'Ayama'. Prana means life force, Ayama means control or expansion.

P r a n a
which is the
life force exists
in every being
of the
u n i v e r s e .
W i t h o u t
Prana the
object is
dead. Mother
P r a n a



nourishes and takes care of us. These days Pranayama is gaining popularity for different reasons. While some adopt it to be physically fit, some practice it to improve concentration and memory, and others to cure various ailments. The real purpose of Pranayama is to purify all the nadis to experience all psychic nodes.

Pranayama is the 'Science of Breath' than mere breathing exercise. Fast breathing like in a dog and few other animals reflects on their shorter life span whereas slow breathing as in the case of a tortoise results in a longer life span. This is the Nature's illustration that proper breathing can increase your lifespan. There are yogis in the Himalayas who practice Pranayama and live for hundreds of years.

According to Patanjali Yoga Sutras, Pranayama begins only after preparing your body for higher spiritual discipline through practicing Yama, Niyama and Asanas. For best results Pranayama should be practiced only after purifying the mind and should be done under the guidance of a perfect Guru. Practicing with purified mind will lead to an encounter with the subtle nadis which are otherwise difficult to experience. You can feel the flow of Prana through the Chakras.

A fruitful practice of Pranayama also demands a balance of diet, constant watch over thoughts and a strong physical body. Pranayama activates the dormant energy. In order to sustain the activated energy, it is essential to fulfill the requirement of the entire process of purification.

Pranayama is the science of Spirituality that helps calm your mind and in the process, it leads you into a deeper state of meditation where you experience the union of various energies. The ultimate purpose of Pranayama should be to unite you with the supreme soul.

- Swami Shivanandamayi

AYURVEDA

Tridosha imbalance causes many diseases. Sirka does wonders in bringing about a balance between the three doshas - Vata, Pitta & Kapha. This makes a wonderful substitute for tea and coffee.

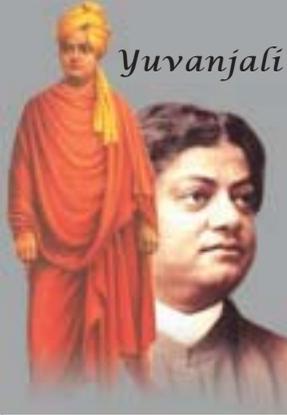
Recipe for Sirka:

To a cup of hot water, add a few drops of lemon juice, juice of one inch ginger and a pinch of black salt. You may also add Tulasi (Basil) leaves / juice.

Benefits: Sirka cures cold, cough, sore throat, asthma, diabetes, gastro-intestinal and renal problems, helps in digestion and is useful in weight reduction.

We are the effects, and we are the causes.

HINDU



Yuvanjalī

Each nation has a destiny to fulfil, each nation has a message to deliver, each nation has a mission to accomplish. Therefore, from the very start, we must have to understand the mission of our own race, the destiny it has to fulfil, the place it has to occupy in the march of nations, the note which it has to contribute to the harmony of races.

We are Hindus. Upon us depends whether the name Hindu will stand for everything that is glorious, everything that is spiritual, or whether it will remain a name of opprobrium, one designating the downtrodden, the worthless, the heathen. If at present the word Hindu means anything bad, never mind; by our action let us be ready to show that this is the highest word that any language can invent.

It has been one of the principles of my life not to be ashamed of my own ancestors. I am one of the proudest men ever born, but let me tell you frankly, it is not for myself, but on account of my ancestry. The more I have looked back, more and more has this pride come to me, and it has given me the strength and courage of conviction, raised me up from the dust of the earth, and set me working out that great plan laid out by those great ancestors of ours.

Children of those ancient Aryans, through the grace of the Lord may you have the same pride, may that faith in your ancestors come into your blood, may it become a part of and parcel of your lives, may it work towards the salvation of the world!

From “Rousing call to the Hindu Nation” by Eknath Ranade.

TOO COOL TO BE SPIRITUAL?

Before I joined Nachiketa Tapovan, my sister and I used to be Vasundhara Ma’s neighbors. So what you say? Well Nachiketa Tapovan was founded at Vasundhara Ma’s house and that’s where some of the day camps and non-residential camps used to be held. I used to see Swami Nachiketananda (then Viswadeep bhaiyya) go around in his white clothes, saffron jhola and bike. I always used to wonder what they did in that house. Then one day, Vasu Ma (as she is affectionately called) and Swamiji came over to my house and gave me and my sister a pamphlet announcing Nachiketa Tapovan and a one week summer camp.

When I saw the pamphlet explained that the organization was based on spirituality and Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ma Sharada’s ideals, I scoffed at the idea of attending such a camp. At that time I was 13- bordering on 14- years old; the I-am-a-teenager-and-too-cool-to-believe-in-spirituality phase. Of course the other reason I had scoffed at the idea of me attending the camp was that, they were going to teach yoga and I was already practicing yoga (and only because my dad woke me up and made me do it, but that was a different matter- parental pressure you know!)

You must be wondering why I am giving you all this personal history. Read on. I prevailed with my parents and didn’t have to go that summer, but my parents prevailed, or rather persuaded me to go the next year (just before I turned 15). Well, what do you know! To my surprise and pleasure I thoroughly enjoyed the camp, and my association with Nachiketa began. Wondering what made my snobby, too-cool, 14 year old attitude change?

Simple, it was fun! That’s the truth. Spirituality/ Yoga and fun- you might ask, baffled. It was fun because the teachers at the camp, especially Swamiji, made learning yoga, say Brahmaarpanam before eating food, learning slokas, devotional

Every moment is a new chance.

songs etc so much fun. It's so much more easier to learn something new when it is fun, when it is explained in a clear, easy-to-understand manner especially to a young teenager. Same thing applied to me. Once some of the reasoning behind some of the spiritual acts became clear to me, I realized it is to my own advantage if I practice them. Usually, why young people find it difficult, or disdainful to follow a spiritual path is because most of the time adults either force them into it, or they don't care to properly explain why they have to do certain things in certain ways that are beneficial to them.

Once again, I reiterate my point when I say that being spiritual doesn't mean that you have to be very serious and that it won't be so cool anymore to hang out with your friends, although there are some aspects about spirituality that have to be undertaken with a serious mind. Ultimately spirituality is the way we lead an efficient life, it's the way we discipline our constantly wandering mind. Because when we are able to focus or discipline our mind, we can achieve a great many targets in life. Some of you may want to be professionals, some of you may want to go into art, some of you, like Swamiji, may want to dedicate your lives to the greater good of the society or world. Whatever maybe your goal, you can learn to be the best in it by following a few principles of spirituality.

Even if you don't want to get to the top of the world, simple aspects of a spiritual life like meditation can help your thought processes clear up and give you solutions. For example you're trying to finish a project work, but for some reason you are not able to finish it, closing your eyes and clearing your mind for a few moments by saying 'Om' will refresh your

mind and help you think of something that you hadn't thought of before. It's simple tricks of life like this that I learnt at Nachiketa that made my life so much more easier to live. Spirituality helps you reduce or maybe even sometimes remove the frustrations that are plaguing you, any stress you may have, or even your anger. All these are negative emotions which will only make life that much more complicated.



All this is fine, but you might be thinking that you don't want to look like a geek in front of your friends. Who said you have to be a geek or a dork to follow spirituality. One of the main aspects of being cool is how you carry yourself. I am a prime example. I was the most popular girl in school and I still went to yoga classes, wore kum-kum to school when I wanted to. Wore rudrakshas when somebody got them for my wellbeing. All of this continued even during my college life, and I was still popular. To top everything, you never find me in anything other than Jeans and raggedy T-shirts and my ipod only contains rock music. Your confidence in yourself is what makes you cool, so don't

ever lose it. If you are trying to imitate someone and not being yourself, then you automatically don't belong in the "cool" category. You are trying to lead someone else's life. Then it doesn't matter if you don't follow spirituality, because spirituality is all about learning how to lead YOUR life. So be cool! Be spiritual! And Good Luck!

- Bhavya Tottempudi



SISTER NIVEDITA

*“The mother’s heart,
the hero’s will
The sweetness of the
southern breeze,
The sacred charm
and strength that
Dwell on Aryan altars,
flaming, free;
All these be yours
and many more
No ancient soul
could dream before-
Be thou to India’s future son
The mistress, servant, friend in one.”*



Swami Vivekananda's benediction to
Sister Nivedita - Complete Works vol.6 [1]

A cold November afternoon of year 1895 was when one of the distinguished teacher-disciple pairs of the world, destined to meet in London where Swamiji was explaining Vedanta Philosophy. Margaret Elizabeth Noble was charmed by His philosophical exposition and personality. Thereafter she became an ardent listener of His talks. She would raise questions one after another to resolve her doubts and constantly meditate on them. And She soon realized that she met the guide she had been searching for and thus began one of world’s celebrated relationships.

In Margaret’s own words, “Suppose he had not come to London that time! Life would have been like a headless dream; for I always knew that I was waiting for something. I always said that a call would come. And it did. But if I had known more of life, I doubt whether, when the time came, I should certainly have recognized it.

Fortunately, I knew little and was spared that torture....Always I had this burning voice within, but nothing to utter. How often and often I sat down, pen in hand, to speak, and there was no speech! And now there is no end to it! As surely I am fitted to my world, so surely is my world in need of me, waiting — ready. The arrow has found its place in the bow. But if he had not come! If he had meditated, on the Himalayan peaks!...I, for one, had never been here.”

Margaret Elizabeth Noble (1867-1911) was an Anglo-Irish social worker, author, teacher and disciple of Swami Vivekananda. After meeting Swamiji in 1895 in London, She left behind her motherland, friends and relations, an established life and everything and travelled to India (Kolkata) in 1898 to join Swamiji’s task of nation building. Swami Vivekananda gave her the name Nivedita (which means one who is dedicated to God) on March 25, 1898. In November 1898 she started a school for girls which is now called Ramakrishna Sarada Mission Sister Nivedita Girls’ High School. She worked to improve the lives of Indian women of all castes.

Sister Nivedita was one of the many foreign women who were attracted towards Swami Vivekananda and Hindu philosophy. She was impressed by the ideals of Womanhood in India. She once remarked that India was the land of great women. She, however, felt that Indian women needed, to cultivate among themselves a wider and broader concept of the nation, so that they could participate along with men in building a free and strong nation. She propagated for the cause of India throughout America and Europe. Swami Vivekananda described her as a real Lioness. Rabindranath Tagore regarded her as Lok-Mata and Aurobindo Ghosh as Agni-sikha.

- Annapurna R.

It is good to be born a child, but bad to remain one.

QUIZ ON RAMAYANA



1. According to Hindu mythology, who make up the holy trinity?
2. What is the capital of the kingdom Kosala?
3. Who is the king of Ayodhya?
4. Dasaratha as a young prince killed a young hermit boy. What was his name?
5. What are the names of King Dasaratha's wives?
6. Which sage performed the yagna for King Dasaratha to be blessed with children?
7. Who is Rama's mother?
8. What is the name of Kaikeyi's son?
9. What are the names of Sumitra's sons?
10. Where was Sita born?
11. Which sage took Rama and Lakshmana to Mithila?
12. From which two rakshasas did Rama and Lakshmana protect the Yagna from?
13. Which bow does Rama break or bend to win Sita in marriage?
14. Who poisoned Kaikeyi's mind against Rama?
15. For how many years, does Rama go into the forest?
16. Which brother accompanies Rama into the forest?
17. In Rama's absence, Bharatha rules the kingdom by putting what on the throne?
18. Who cut Soorpanakha's nose?

Ans: 1. Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva 2. Ayodhya 3. Dasaratha 4. Sravana
5. Kausalya, Sumitra, Kaikeyi 6. Sage Rishya Sringa 7. Kausalya
8. Bharatha 9. Lakshmana and Shatrughna 10. Mithila 11. Vishwamitra
12. Subahu and Mareecha 13. Rudra's bow 14. Mantara 15. 14 years
16. Lakshmana 17. Rama's sandals 18. Lakshmana

- Gayatri N.

SCIENCE BEHIND JAPAMALA



Japa is the constant repetition or remembrance of a mantra or the name of the Lord. There are three forms of Japa: Manasika Japa, where the mantra is repeated mentally; Upamsu Japa, in which

the mantra is whispered or hummed; Vaikhari or Vachika Japa, where the mantra is repeated verbally.

During Japa, one must sit comfortably with the head, neck and trunk in one straight line. A comfortable asana helps to make the mind steady and aids concentration. One can sit in Padmasana, Siddhasana or Sukhasana.

The next important aspect of Japa is the mantra. The word mantra is made up of two words man+tra. 'Man' means the mind or thoughts. 'Tra' means tool or something which protects. "Mananat trayate iti mantraha." So, a mantra is one which protects or directs the mind.

Usually Japa is done with the help of a rosary or Japa mala. Using a mala enhances alertness and acts as an incentive to carry on the Japa continuously. Without a mala, the concentration may not be on the Japa and the mind may wander.

When the mala is rotated between the thumb and the other three fingers the unique texture of the beads activates the nerve endings present at the tip of the fingers. When these nerves are activated, an impulse is generated and it travels along the nerves, thus activating the brain cells. When we look at the electricity cables, we know that current passes through the wires, but actually how it happens, what happens inside the plastic coated cables, no one can see.

Fiber coated Cable - String - Electricity

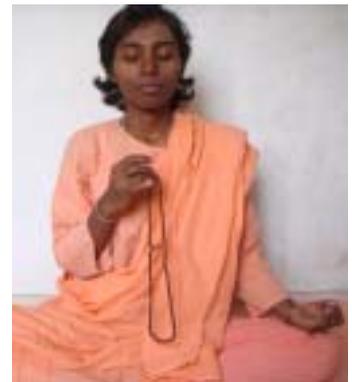
Similarly, during rotation of the mala, nerves are activated and energy passes through the subtle channels in the body and brain cells are activated.

Nerves - Subtle Channels - Energy

Once the brain cells are activated, some chemicals called neurotransmitters like dopamine are released from the cells. This dopamine is responsible for the pleasant and soothing feeling one experiences during Japa.

Electrical activity emanating from the brain is displayed in the form of brainwaves. There are four types of brainwaves ranging from the most active to least active – beta, alpha, theta and delta. Usually when a person is involved in some activity, like a conversation, teaching, debating etc. the Beta brain waves are predominant in the brain. But in Japa, the mind swings between the alpha and theta state. In the alpha state, the mind is very calm and relaxed; it is the meditative state. During the theta state, the mind is disengaged from the worldly activities and there is a free flow of ideas into the brain. This is a very positive mental state. When the brain slips into the delta state, dreams occur in this state.

The mind is purified by constant Japa and worship. It is filled with good and pure thoughts. Japa transforms the nature of the mind. It fills the mind with sattva. It calms and strengthens the mind and makes the mind introspective. During Japa, all the divine qualities steadily flow into the mind from the lord.



-Ananya Y.

Condemnation accomplishes nothing.

FROM SADNESS TO ETERNAL BLISS

After much evaluation I have arrived at the conclusion that the root cause of unhappiness is we ourselves. Our self consciousness about "our" existence is the origin or source of our troubles. We give so much of importance to our being on this earth that everything else is marred by it. If we for a minute forget ourselves as individuals and look at the world, I am sure we will find that so many people suffer from so much sadness that we will not be able to distinguish ours amongst it. When a situation renders us unhappy, the first question that comes to our mind is, why the accident has happened to us? And the Second thing that comes to mind is that God does not love us. But what we should think is, has the unfortunate event happened with us only? Well, no! We have millions of others who suffer and probably suffer much more than we do. Our sufferings are often because of our material wants. The wish list - A good job, house, money, health...the list is endless. But if we ever stop for a second and think how a blind person is surviving and probably wishing to see the beautiful earth, something which we take for granted. A lame person wishing to be able to just walk, a mother who loses a son and wants him to be just alive, a baby who loses both his parents...how do they survive? Our problems might seem nothing in front of theirs. Complaining is the easiest thing to do and who is the most convenient person to be blamed...who else! But God. Has he done the mistake of breathing life into us and bringing us to this beautiful earth that He should bear the brunt of it? The Almighty had so many things in mind when He created us and if we think with a clear mind we will find that it is His invisible hands that guide us in our tough times. It is for us to feel, understand and be grateful. But instead we opt for the easy path of blaming Him for every little thing that we don't get. We should think that the unfortunate events that happen with us actually brings out the best in us or the worst. It makes

us tougher and more understanding towards other human beings. If it actually transforms our thinking and brings us closer to God, then we have been successful in the Almighty's test. If under any circumstance we strive to move ahead with a positive note and more importantly love God more than ever...our path will become much smoother. We should remember that in human birth even Sri Krishna could not save his dynasty and though he knew that his Grandson would die, he couldn't stop the chain of events...why? Because sadness is a part of life, a lesson to lead life, a truth that is another name for realization. The purpose of life is to surrender to the Almighty. Our lives are but to serve Him and take His name for all our actions and deeds, then life would become more bearable and we will be in eternal bliss.

- Sukanya Ghosh



In an interview, Interviewer: How does an electric motor run?

Champak: Dhhuuuurrrrrrrrrrr.

Interviewer shouts: Stop it.

Champak: Dhhuurrrrr dhup dhup dhup..



Tourist: Whose skeleton is that?

Champak: An old king's skeleton.

Tourist: Who's that smaller skeleton next to it?

Champak: That was same king's skeleton when he was a child.

Kings having gone, the power is the people's.

THE CONVERSATION

A young girl after not getting through an interview for job gets upset not just with her life but also with her God. She starts blaming him for the loss. Upset and disturbed, the girl attempts a suicide. Just before she was going to end her life, she hears a voice. And then starts a conversation, a piece of which is below:

Krishna: You were five when you fell down from a merry -go-round. Not a drop of tear fell out of your eyes, though the thumping sound of your head hitting against the concrete ground was unbearable. Silently you walked away from the place, looking around if someone had seen you or if there was someone to pamper you. None. You didn't cry. Not that it didn't hurt but you didn't want other kids to see you cry. They would mock you. You held the tear inside you. You were five but knew to stand up for yourself. You stood among the crowd motionless.



The Girl: The fall was painful.

Krishna: And then amidst everything your eyes fell on the slide. You saw your peers screaming out of joy on the slide. You ran to join others in the queue to the top of the fixed iron ladder. Impatiently you awaited your turn, climbed every step carefully making sure nobody pushed you away. There you were on the top, all ready to slide down. With both your hands up in the air, like celebrating a victory, you slid down. The slide made you forget the fall and the pain. It were as if you never fell down and your head was never wounded. The power of sliding from a seven feet high slide was more rejoicing than the pain the merry-go-round gave you. You were very happy. You ran back to the

queue, waited impatiently again. It was then you realized that the merry-go-round was not for you. It made your head whirl round.

The Girl: I hate merry-go-round. It threw me away. It hurt me. The slide brought me happiness. I never went back to the merry-go-round.

Krishna: Yes, because the merry-go-round was not for you. That job was not for you either.

You always get depressed when you don't achieve something to which you have given your best. You become miserable when you don't get what you desire or what you think will bring you happiness. But how do you know that that desire will bring you

peace and happiness? It may not. As a human you are not powered to foresee the future, you are only empowered to build your future. And that, you do by your efforts. It is not necessary that the efforts which you put in a work is the best work for you. If it is not the best for you, you don't get that. However, your hard

work does not ever go un-rewarded in life - it is the law of life, an effort never goes in vain. I don't let it go waste -Yes, I add all your efforts and hard work to something that brings more light and happiness in your life. Something that is meant for you...you don't clear the interview of a job because you deserve a better job. You don't succeed in a career because there is something else that will make you happier. You are ignored by people because there is someone else whose company you will enjoy more. You only have to be a little patient, keep trying and leave the rest to me. After all, seeing you happy makes me happy...

The merry-go-round was not for you, nor was that job....

- Suhani Dewra

Death is the result of inaction.

HEARTS THAT MELT



There lived a Sannyasi who often visited a temple to distribute food among the needy old people. He enjoyed this service and developed a deep bond with them, especially an old lady who was physically handicapped. Though she lived alone without any food and shelter, she always helped and shared whatever little she had with other needy people. She was more concerned about their welfare and strived to improve their quality of life. She helped many families to set up shops with her small contributions.

Once there was a curfew in the city and the Sannyasi could not go out of his ashram for the next four days. He was worried about the old lady as she was handicapped. He knew the area was in the danger zone and the poor people had no safe place to take shelter but he was helpless. On the fifth day when the curfew was lifted, he rushed to the temple with some cooked food. He met all the people except the old lady. He sensed trouble and his heart started throbbing incessantly. After serving food for every one, he enquired an old man about the handicapped lady. The old man answered him with great difficulty, "She died this morning. She could not save herself. As we watched helplessly the mob brutally attacked her and beat her up. For three days she was lying on the road side without food and water. But before dying she left this letter for you."

The Sannyasi took the letter and left the place, his heart filled with grief. He went back to the ashram, had a shower and went to his sadhana room where he opened the letter and started reading...

Dear Sannyasi

Thanks for taking care of the needy and serving us everyday without fail. You always took special care of me but I couldn't give you anything in return. Somewhere I felt that I am very selfish. I never asked you about your health or well being. Every day you came to greet us with hand loads of delicious food and a beautiful smile on your face. Even though we were not allowed to enter the temple, I felt God appeared in your form meeting , greeting and serving us every day.

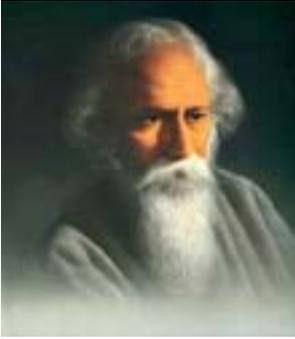
Now I am breathing my last and I feel that I should share whatever little wisdom I could collect while observing the society and people around. I know how much honey a single honey bee could collect through out its life. But when many honey bees come together and collect honey, it becomes a huge collection. I did whatever I could do. Please do not stop your activity. You are young and energetic. People will get inspired by your wonderful gesture and the day will come when many honey bees like you will come together and make a huge difference in the society...serving, offering and living selflessly.

P.S. Can I call you son? Can you perform the last rituals for me? I know Sannyasis are not supposed to do it. But if I am not wrong, I remember that Adi Shankaracharya had performed the last rituals to His mother...do you think I deserve that status? I know that I am not the mother but you are the Sankaracharya for me. Dear son will you come and perform?

- Swami Nachiketananda

Whatever man desires, he gets.

AN ODE TO B



*Where the mind is without fear
 and the head is held high;
 Where knowledge is free;
 Where the world has not been
 broken up into fragments
 by narrow domestic walls;
 Where words come out from
 the depth of truth;
 Where tireless striving stretches
 its arms towards perfection;
 Where the clear stream of reason
 has not lost its way into the
 dreary desert sand of dead habit;
 Where the mind is led forward
 by Thee to ever-widening
 thought and action -
 Into that heaven of freedom,
 my father, let my country awake.*
-Rabindranath Tagore



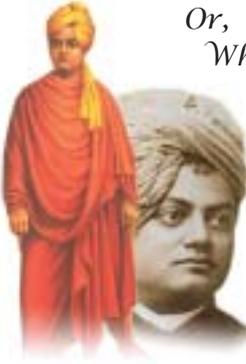
***“What India wants is a new electric fire to stir up a fresh
 vigour in the national veins”. - Swami Vivekananda***



Banyan Tree: The National Tree of India is The Banyan Tree which in every aspect symbolizes India. This huge tree towers over its neighbors and has the widest reaching roots of all known trees, easily covering several acres. The banyan tree regenerates and lives for an incredible length of time—thus it is thought of as the immortal tree. Its size and leafy shelter are valued in India as a place of rest and reflection. The shade of Banyan tree became haven for many of the countless Mahatmas of this Punyabhoomi.

Dirt cannot wash dirt, hate cannot cure hate.

BHARAT MATA



*And tell the world—
Awake, arise, and dream no more!
This is the land of dreams, where Karma
Weaves unthreaded garlands with our thoughts
Of flowers sweet or noxious, and none
Has root or stem, being born in naught, which
The softest breath of Truth drives back to
Primal nothingness. Be bold, and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease,
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.*

- Swami Vivekananda



Peacock - The peacock was declared as our 'National Bird'. It symbolizes the qualities like beauty, elegance, pride, delight, spirituality and mysticism. The bird being native to the country and well-distributed within the country is truly considered the national bird. In the Hindu tradition the peacock is the vahana (vehicle) of Kartikeya. Kumari (shakti) rides a peacock in the entourage of the Goddess Durga. Its scientific name, Pavo is derived from a Sanskrit word, Pavana that refers to the Hindu deity Vayu, the wind who is also the breath of life and the father of Hanuman. The birds are associated with the rainy season and hence, fertility. Krishna is also often depicted in the company of peacocks.



- Centre page theme by Annapurna R.

Desire is infinite, its fulfillment is limited.

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL.....

*Mirror, mirror
on the wall.....
Who is the perfect
Guru of all? -Life.*

“Give me a Guru who is Guru enough to bow to life in all its forms and to him I would give my love and that love...forever.”

Many of us long to find a spiritual teacher. We may feel unsure of how to practice our spirituality without one, or we may long for someone who has attained a higher level of insight to lead the way for us. Some of us have been looking for years to- no avail and feel frustrated and even lost. The good news is that the greatest teacher you could ever want is always with you- that is your LIFE, fully awake to the problems of spiritual seekers who approach for its bounty.

The people and situations we encounter everyday have much to teach us when we are open to receiving their wisdom. Often we don't recognize our teachers because they may not look or act like our idea of a Guru, yet they may embody great wisdom. In addition some people teach us by showing us what we don't want to do. LIFE conspires to teach us exactly what we need to be learning at any given time through various situations from the insignificant to the major. A stern teacher that it is, always unfailingly presents us with lessons to learn and if missed presents them again in a new pair of clothes. LIFE encompasses- patience, compassion, perseverance, honesty and letting go in its classroom. Strife and achievement, suffering and pleasure, horror and ecstasy like the thousand-fold song of the river come as one.

Each morning we might find a moment to remember the perfect teacher with a few simple words to say, “I acknowledge and honor the

teacher that is my life. May I be wise enough to recognize the teachers and lessons that I encounter today and may I be open to receiving their wisdom.” We might also take some time each day to consider what our lives are trying to teach us at this time. A difficult phase in your relationship with your child may be teaching you to let go. A homeless person you see everyday may be showing you the boundaries of your compassion and generosity. A spate of lost items may be asking you to be more present to physical reality. Trust your intuition on the nature of the lesson at hand , work at your own pace and ask as many questions as you want- Our teacher has all the answers.

- Dr. Surendra A.



HUMOUR

Rohan: Why is some of your hair white Mom?

Mother: Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy one of my hair turns white.

Rohan: Mom, how come all of grandma's hair is white?

Teacher: If I had seven oranges in one hand and eight oranges in the other what would I have?

Student: Big Hands!

Education, education, education alone.

MY EXPERIENCE

After staying so many years abroad, I came back to India for good, five and a half years ago. I made my home in Hyderabad and it took me six months to adjust and settle down comfortably. I was thinking, 'What to do next? Should I apply for a job or not?' I knew it would be difficult to get a job at my age. However, I went for an interview in GE and to my surprise I was offered a fulltime night job in a Call Center with a good pay. But I didn't like it, nor did my family and that was the end of the job.

One day my friend Sowmya told me about Nachiketa Tapovan Vidyamandir. I went to see Vasundhara Reddy who established this Organization for the underprivileged children with the help, inspiration and perception of Sri Nachiketanda Swamiji. I started teaching as a pastime activity but I got interested as the time passed by. I noticed the children were very keen to learn and study. But it was hard to make them concentrate even for a few hours as they were not used to it. I took it as a challenge and became successful to some extent using so many techniques.

In 2005 June, Vidyamandir moved to a 3 storey building, constructed by the kind organizers. Since then, it grew to be a proper school following C.B.S.E. syllabus with appointed teachers. It is flourishing from strength to strength and there are about 150 children now. Their manners and cleanliness have improved so much. Their health also improved as they are nourished with milk everyday and fed with good lunch two or three times a week. They also get medical help when they are sick.

This Tapovan is unique as the name sounds, where the children are taught spiritual activities like Yoga, Meditation and Sanskrit Slokas by Swamiji and Mataji along with Elementary Education. They chant Vedas beautifully and remind us of the ancient Gurukulas. They pick up Maths better than any other subjects. Indians are known for their excellence in Maths and it

proves to be true even with these children. They are better in English than Telugu although it is their Mother tongue. They have developed public speaking skills. They entertain the guests with their singing, dancing, mono acting and dramas. Recently their performance in Silparamam attracted many visitors.

Every year during Diwali season, these children paint and decorate hundreds of Diyas with the help of some volunteers and they get sold rapidly. The profits go these children. It means they are also earning money while studying. Some IT companies reward them with gifts now and then. They also learn arts and crafts, abacus, karate, singing, spoken English etc in the afternoon taught by some kind volunteers. They like drawing and some children draw like professionals. They felt sorry for the victims of recent floods and collected what ever money they could and sent it to the Relief fund. How kind and understanding they are about fellow humans! There is no end for the activities of these children.

I like teaching these children however hard they are. These children have no help at all from their parents because they are financially poor and illiterate. May be, it is a challenge to educate these children. One day they will realize the true value of education as the years pass by. They also have dreams, aims and ideas. This Vidyamandir is an opportunity for these unfortunate children to become what they want to be. One day they would be good citizens and even the leaders of this country with good ethics. Swamiji is the backbone of Tapovan and the driving force for the children. If this Tapovan did not exist where would these buds be today? I wish the Government would recognise and provide necessary help for these children.

I wish the children all the best and may God bless them.

Serving children is serving God.

- Manikyamba

The greatest secret is-absence of jealousy.



PRASTHANA TRAYA

Prasthanā means 'system' or 'course' as in journey; *traya* means 'threefold'. It refers to the three authoritative primary sources of knowledge of the Self: *Sruti*, *Smṛiti* and *Nyaya prasthanā*, the scriptural trinity

of the Vedānta. The teachings of the Upanishads, the Brahma sūtras and the Bhagavad-Gīta that form the basis of Vedānta philosophy are called as *Prasthanā Traya*. No study of Vedānta is considered complete without a close examination of the *Prasthanā Traya*.

The first of these is *sruti*, which refers to the Vedas, incorporating the Upanishads. *Sru* means to hear and they were handed down orally from teacher to disciple. The Upanishads are regarded as part of the Vedas and as such form part of the Hindu scriptures. Each Upanishad is associated with a Veda e.g. Isha Upanishad with Shukla Yajurveda, Kena Upanishad with Samaveda, and so on. The Upanishads are known as Vedānta i.e. the end/culmination of the Vedas. The earliest of the Upanishads were composed between 800-400B.C. There are 108 Upanishads available today.

The second is *smṛiti* and refers to material 'remembered' and subsequently written down by sages based on their understanding of the Vedas. In practice, it refers to books of law providing guidance for living, which were written and based upon the knowledge in the Vedas. Most often it is used to refer to the book - Bhagavad Gīta which originated from epic Mahābhārata. Gīta presents the essence of Upanishads as a conversation between Krishna and Arjuna in the battle field prior to the start

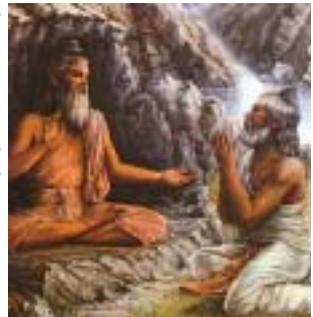


of a war. The conversation summarizes a number of different Yogic and Vedāntic philosophies, explaining the meaning and purpose of life and existence.

Finally, there is *nyaya prasthanā*, which refers to logical and inferential material based upon the Vedas, of which the best known is the Brahma-sūtra of Vyāsa. A sūtra or an aphorism conveys an idea or truth in fewest words possible. Upanishads are not Sūtras but form the basic text for Brahma-sūtra. "Badarayana" Vyāsa after a penetrating study of the science of Vedānta presented the substance of Dasopanishads in an extremely terse form as 555 aphorisms called Brahma-sūtra also known as Badarayana-sūtra or Bhikshu sūtra or Uttaramīmāṃsā or Sarīraka.

The Brahma-sūtra seeks to answer the fundamental questions such as who or what is man (the individual self)? What is the nature of the world (*jagat*) in which he lives? And what is the truth underlying all this? According to Sri Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi MahaSwamiji "Vedānta-vākya-kusuma-grathanarthatvat sūtranam". If the flowers that are Upanishads in the tree called the Vedas are strewn all over the earth, how can we gather them to make a garland? Brahma-sūtra is the string that presents the flowers or the Upanishads strung together in the form a garland.

-Annapurna R.



Fire and enthusiasm must be in our blood.

A SPARK OF INSPIRATION



Sri Poornachandra Rao is a true friend of the orphans. He was born in an agricultural family and lost his father at

the age of six. Even at that tender age he was moved by the hardships the family had to face. In 1989 he came to Hyderabad in search of a job. He had an exposure to the travails of people surrounding him and the seed to serve the needy sprouted in him. When he had no job satisfaction, he realized, the same services could be rendered to the deprived community. He initially dedicated his services to voluntary organizations, simultaneously making preparations to have a permanent structure to house the underprivileged children and take care of their basic necessities. He sold his house at Bollapalli village in Prakasam district and bought 300 sq yards of land for establishing a Residential Boys school for the needy children at the remote Mynampadu village in Guntur district and named it NEEDY ILLITERATE CHILDREN EDUCATION (NICE).

He undertook a door to door campaign and travelled at least 70 KMs every day to seek funds for the establishment of the school. Initially he recruited 10 children from different villages who were in dire need of financial help. They

were given free accommodation and food and two teachers were employed to coach them, following CBSE curriculum. Today NICE is educating 125 children supported by 10 teachers and has a full-fledged library and internet facilities. In the academic year 2008-2009 the first batch of 10th graders appeared for examination through National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), an undertaking by Govt of India. All the 9 students who appeared for the exams secured more than 66% and 5 students got a distinction. This is a feather in his cap. He aims to provide education to 1000 children by the year 2015. His vision also extends to establish a Residential school exclusively for girls.



He is supported by well wishers, individual donors and corporates. Eminent personalities like Hon'ble Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Megseese Awardee Sandeep Pandey and many others have appreciated his

services. He seeks financial support from one Rupee onwards for bringing more children into his fold. If you come across any orphan or rag-picker you can please refer to Sri Poorna Chandra Rao who would welcome them with an open heart and take them into his NICE family. You can contact him at www.nice-india.org or **9848235103**.

He is fortunate enough to receive the blessings of Swami Nachiketanda who strongly supports his cause and urges people to extend a helping hand in his noble venture. - **Subhadra K.**



The goal of the soul is freedom.

Why do we need Samskrit in this modern world?

When Mataji asked me to take up a one-page column on Samskrit, I felt exhilarated. After spending about 25 years in computer software profession after my graduation from IIT-Kharagpur, I was looking for a fresh start in a totally different but essentially meaningful way of life. By God's grace, I am now a full-fledged Samskrit Volunteer of Samskrita Bharati and I enjoy every moment of my life. I would like to share some of my learning with you all in the following few paragraphs.

Samskrit and Brain Function

During the last 6 years, I have experienced that Samskrit creates a wonderful balance in one's life. As a language it is unparalleled in its structure. Poetic thinking is natural in Samskrit and there is no wonder that the best literature in the world is in Samskrit. There is a built-in rhyme and rhythm in the language. This makes it soothing to listen to and calms the mind both of the speaker and the listener. Western research says that listening to Samskrit takes one to the state of Transcendental Meditation, irrespective of understanding the meaning.

Samskrit, being Dhatujanya bhasha, is a derivative language. Each word in Samskrit is derived from a root, namely, a Dhatu. The Dhatu has a close link with the deed associated with it. Accordingly, uttering a Samskrit word produces better linking with the object or idea associated with it. For example, when somebody uses the word 'putraH', the role and responsibility of a son in our society is implicitly reminded to both the speaker and the listeners. Accordingly, it is more likely that the persons affected by the word, both father and son, are helped by the effect of the feeling it generates in them.

Young boys and girls taught Samskrit at an early age have better mental abilities, because of the mathematical precision of the language. Without confusion with symbols, they imbibe intelligence in a natural way and outshine others in academic pursuits.

Samskrit and Health

You may be aware that the Varnamala of Samskrit is the most scientifically designed one. Each letter has a clearly defined place of birth and is associated with a specific flow of air through our body. Accordingly, speaking Samskrit with clear pronunciation is like doing Pranayama. The Visarga pronounced correctly creates the effect of Kapalabhati. Proper pronunciation of Anusvara is like doing Bhramari Pranayama. Similarly each letter's pronunciation produces a natural vibration in our body which creates positive effect on one's health.

Samskrit and inadequacy of translation

I now teach Bhagavadgita in Samskritam. Because of my knowledge of Samskrit, I relate to it totally. As you start with the Gita, you understand its worldly meaning. As I recite, think about and meditate on each Sloka, a new meaning emerges. I seem to appreciate that as I mature in Spirituality, I am seeing deeper meaning in the same sentence. I have now come to a conclusion that a translation, irrespective of the greatness of the translator, is just a translation and can never replicate the same effect. For getting to the root, the original must be understood.

Samskrit and Science

I am really flabbergasted by the abundance of science and technology in Samskrit. Name any science, we have a master piece in Samskrit. Since technology has advanced without a concern for the nature, the science in Samskrit in a nature-friendly manner will prove to be a boon. However, the key for understanding these scientific master pieces lies in knowing Samskrit inside out. Some of the works are encoded and have inner meanings. To break the code, one must be a sharp wit and extremely proficient in Samskrit.

There is nothing like learning Samskrit in a classroom atmosphere. You can contact me on 98661 40406, if you need details. Otherwise, please follow the lessons from next issue onwards.

- Krupalu O., Sec, Samskrit Bharati,
Hyderabad okrupalu@samskritam.net

మానవ వికాసము - విద్య పాత్ర

‘చదువురానివాడవని దిగులు చెందకు మనిషి మదిలోని మమత లేని చదువులేందుకు?’

అని అన్నాడు ఓ మహాకవి. ‘కృషి ఉంటే మనుషులు ఋషులౌతారు, మహాపురుషులౌతారు’ అని అన్నాడు ఇంకొక మహాకవి. మానవ వికాసానికి



విద్య పాత్ర ఎంత వరకు తోడ్పడుతుంది అనే విషయాన్ని పరిశీలిస్తే మానవ వికాసానికి విద్య తోడ్పడుతుంది, అని అనటంలో సందేహం లేదు. కాని ఎంత వరకు తోడ్పడుతుంది? అన్నదే ప్రశ్నార్థకం. ప్రస్తుతం విద్య అనేది అక్షర జ్ఞానానికి మాత్రమే తోడ్పడుతుందని చెప్పవచ్చును. విద్య వలన జ్ఞానం కలుగుతుంది అని అనటం కంటే, మానవుడు తన ఆలోచనా విధానం ద్వారా జ్ఞానసముపార్జన చేసికోగలుగుతున్నాడని చెప్పడం కొంతవరకు సమంజసంగా ఉంటుంది. మానవునికి జ్ఞానం కలిగించేది ‘విద్య ఒక్కటే మూలాధారం’ అని చెప్పలేము. అలాగని ‘విద్యను నేర్చుకోకూడదు’ అని చెప్పటంలేదు.

ఇంతకు పూర్వం అంటే ‘లిపి’ అనేది లేని కాలంలో మానవుడు జ్ఞానవంతుడు కాలేదా? సుఖమయమైన జీవనాన్ని గడపలేదా? అని ఆలోచిస్తే వారు అన్ని విధాలా తమకు అనుకూలంగా అన్నింటినీ మలచుకొని సుఖజీవనాన్ని గడపినారని తెలుస్తుంది. లిపి లేని కాలంలో కూడా కొత్త వస్తువులను మరియు కొత్త విషయాలను కనుగొన్నారు. మరి వీటన్నింటినీ తెలుసుకోడానికి గ్రంథాలపైన ఆధారపడినారా? అని ఆలోచిస్తే లిపి అనేదే లేనప్పుడు గ్రంథాలను ఎలా చదువుతారు. కాబట్టి ‘మనిషికి జ్ఞానాన్ని కలిగించేది కేవలం విద్య మాత్రమే’ అని చెప్పటకు వీలులేదు. మరి కొత్త వస్తువులను కొత్త విషయాలను ఎలా కనిపెట్టగలిగినాడు అనే ఆలోచన మనకు కలగవచ్చును. అయితే మానవుడు

తన అవసరాన్నిబట్టి వివిధ రకాలైన కొత్త వస్తువులను కొత్త విషయాలను కనిపెట్టి ఉండవచ్చును.

విద్య వలన ఇంతకుముందు జరిగిన విషయాలను మరియు ఇతర భాషలలో ఉన్న విషయాలను తెలుసుకోవడానికి ఉపయోగపడుతుంది.

కాని కొత్త వాటిని కనిపెట్టడానికి అంతగా అవకాశం ఉండదు. ఎందుకంటే గ్రంథాలను చదివి కొత్త వాటిని కనిపెట్టడం లేదుకదా! మనిషి తన ఆలోచనా శక్తితో కొత్త విషయాలను కనిపెట్టగలుగుతున్నాడు. ఆ భగవంతుడు ప్రసాదించిన ప్రకృతిలోని వస్తువులను ఆశ్రయించి జ్ఞాన సముపార్జన చేసికొనవచ్చును. ప్రకృతి నుండి మానవుడు నేర్చుకోవలసింది ఎంతో ఉంది. కాబట్టి మానవ వికాసానికి తనచుట్టూ ఉన్న పరిసర ప్రభావాలు మరియు అవసరాలకు అనుగుణంగా తన ఆలోచనకు పదును పెట్టి జ్ఞానవంతుడుగా తయారైనాడు. దీనిని బట్టి మానవ వికాసానికి విద్య పాత్ర ఒకరికి తెలిసిన విషయాలను ఇంకొకరికి తెలియపరచడానికే తప్ప జ్ఞానసముపార్జనను పెంపొందించుకోవడానికి పూర్తిగా ఉపయోగపడుతుందని చెప్పలేము. కాబట్టి ‘నిరంతర అభ్యాసం నైపుణ్యాన్ని అధిగమిస్తుంది’ అని స్వామి వివేకానందుడు అన్నట్లుగా జ్ఞానసముపార్జన కోసం నిరంతరం నిర్వరామంగా కృషి చేస్తూనే ఉండాలి.



- Chalapathi V.

FACT IS A FACT



Seven Colours of Sunlight

Seven colours mix together to become an intense glow of white rays of the Sun. Sir Isaac Newton; the renowned scientist of 16th century had been accredited with this discovery. World believes this with all the fanfare.

Ages before Newton, the Ancient Vedic knowledge had revealed that the sunlight consists of seven colours.

Sapta tav harito rathe vahanti deve surya sociksesam vicakshana (Rigveda 1.50.9)

Ava divyastarayanti sapta suryasya rashmayah (Atharvaveda 17-10-17-1)

Sun's seven coloured rays are making day.

Does that mean sun has only seven rays? No, sun emits millions and millions of rays. But each ray of light has seven colours embedded in it. The Vedic terminology often refers to word "sapta ashvaruda".

It actually means seven coloured white sun rays. The Vedic meaning of word "asva" also means "light rays".

The Taittiriya aranyakam says "eko-ashva vahati sapta namah" (Rigveda 1-164-2)

It means sun light is one (white) but called as seven (figuratively). The above sloka can be expressed as sun being carried by one horse called the seven names.

Interestingly in Chandogya Upanishad there is sloka (8-6-1), it says that sunrays has three colours; they are blue, yellow and red. In fact this is also true in the sense that three colours are the basic colours, which become other colours.

Ref: Pg 13 Eternally talented India 108 facts

2D and 3D

2D and 3D terminology is predominantly used in the computer field. Not to forget that we are taught about it in Maths too. What are these 2D and 3D?

2D stands for 2-dimensional and 3D stands for 3-dimensional in any given space. That 'space' could be a sheet of paper, in a computer, the space around us too. In 2D, it is the X and Y axis which help us measure the length and width. Whereas, in 3D, there are three axes namely the X, Y and Z axis which help us in measuring the length, width and height (or depth). This is the way we calculate on paper or with respect to the space around us.

To understand the difference between 2D and 3D, let's get to know what are the different views with respect to the human eye. We have got the front view, side view, top view, bottom view and last but not the least, the perspective view. As the name suggests, if you view any object from the front, it is the front view. In this view, you can just make out the length and width of the object but not its depth. Similarly, the side, top and bottom views. What about the perspective view? It is this perspective view through which we can see the third dimension i.e. the depth of an object too.

A very good example to understand the difference between 2D and 3D is a painting and a sculpture. Another example is a photograph and the way our eyes see things around us.

- Vinnu

INSIDE YOU...

Most religions emphasize the core belief of God being 'omnipotent', i.e. present everywhere. This thought is an integral part of our Indian culture too, which has for centuries been personifying animals, rivers, trees, and other elements of nature in order to worship them. Also, the significance behind bowing down to someone and saying 'Namaste' is that we are acknowledging and paying homage to the divinity present in them, and they, in turn, to the divinity in us.

Considering that this thought is so well-embedded in our blood, and very much a part of our present culture, why is it that we succumb to the ungodly temptations of greed, jealousy, hatred, irritation, anger, frustration, violence, and, on a larger scale, global epidemics like terrorism, pollution and indifference to burning social issues? Is it not contradictory that the very God we believe to be within us performs these acts? Or maybe, the truth is that we have turned our backs to that very God within us and walked so far away that we can no longer hear the faint voice of that 'goodness' calling out.

Last Sunday evening, I conducted a little experiment myself. I visited the ISKCON temple in Mumbai, famous for its beauty and *bhajan-kirtans*. As I stepped in the temple, I felt a sense of deep peace overwhelm me almost instantly, with the bells ringing, the smell of flowers and the strong positive vibes all around. I became completely oblivious to the outside world for the few hours that I spent in there.

When I was leaving later that night, I quietly promised myself that I would carry this feeling of divinity with me, nurture it and also spread it all around. However, the inevitable happened. Its spell began to wear off, and by the next morning, I was back to being my old self. So, did my experiment fail? No. Not at all!



In fact, the way I see it, it was a huge success! Let me explain.

Recollect all the times you have tasted something delicious, hugged a little baby with unconditional love, breathed in the evening sunset, or just simply been in a beautiful situation of any kind. What do you do?

Unconsciously, impulsively, you close your eyes.

Devotees from all over the world throng to the famous temple in Tirupati, stand for hours in long queues, pushing and shoving and stumbling, just to get a *darshan* of Lord Balaji. And finally, when the moment comes and they approach the deity, what do they do? They fold their hands and once again, *close their eyes!*

Why go through all that trouble just to stand in front of the deity with your eyes closed?

We close our eyes, in moments of prayer, beauty and love because the object and subject of our prayer are both *inside* of us.

If you have ever closed your eyes in any of the situations mentioned above, without any doubt, your unconscious self knows of the divinity present inside you.

It is only 'us', standing at the material level, the threshold of our infinite sub consciousness, that refuse to acknowledge any other supreme being but our 'egos' or false identities.

The negative powers in this outer world are only just strong enough to subdue this deep knowledge of realization.

For once we all truly get a glimpse of what we really are.

It is just a matter of the spark bursting into flames of light, quelling an impenetrable darkness that has surrounded us for as long as we can remember...

Behold,

The power of the divine!

- Avinash A.

ASHRAM PROJECTS



Store Room



Toilets



Quarter

COMPLETED PROJECTS
Store Room, Quarters-2, Water Sump, Cottage, Overhead Tank, Septic Tank, Toilets and Generator



Septic Tank



Tank

Project Cost Rs.41,85,000/- Donation Received Rs.41,85,000/-



Generator



Water Sump



Cottage

COMPOUND WALL

COMPOUND WALL
Donation Received
NIL

Project Cost
Rs.40,00,000/-

Amount Required
Rs.40,00,000/-

VIDYA MANDIR

VIDYA MANDIR
Donation Received
Rs.13,50,000/-

Project Cost
Rs.1,50,00,000/-

Amount Required
Rs.1,36,50,000/-

**Please join us in our
Spiritual Yaga!**

Even if an imitation is good, it is never genuine.



RAMAKRISHNALAYA



DHYANA MANDIR

RAMAKRISHNALAYA		
Project Cost	Donation Received	Amount Required
Rs.68,00,000/-	Rs.52,40,000/-	Rs.15,60,000/-

DHYANA MANDIR		
Project Cost	Donation Received	Amount Required
Rs.26,50,000/-	Rs.18,20,000/-	Rs.8,30,000/-



TEMPLE

TEMPLE		
Project Cost	Donation Received	Amount Required
Rs.1,40,00,000/-	Rs.1,05,50,000/-	Rs.34,50,000/-

TOTAL AMOUNT REQUIRED FOR 1st PHASE - Rs. 2,34,90,000/-

SPIRITUAL INVITATION

Please join us in our Spiritual Yaga! As small as it could be, each drop is essential in filling the ocean. Cash or kind, craft or skill, art or technology combined with a spoon of love will go a long way in realizing our dreams. Your contribution is much needed for our continued success in serving the needy.

To be a part of Nachiketa family visit us anytime or contact our

Adhyatmik Praneta at

040-23113887, 098491 68937

email: n_tapovan@rediffmail.com, nachiketanjali1@gmail.com

nachiketananda@gmail.com, mataji19@gmail.com

Nothing external can be eternal.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Nachiketa Tapovan celebrated Sarada Ma's Birthday on 22nd December 2009. The entire campus was enveloped by the magnetism of Vidya Mandir Children's scintillating dance performance on the Mother. The skits performed



by the children added a touch of humor to this wonderful programme. Credit goes to Kumari Krishna, a nachiketa for her wonderful choreography. Vasundhara gave a beautiful narration of some unknown facts about the Holy Mother.

Christmas bells jingled at Nachiketa Tapovan by Santa Claus to the childrens' pleasure. We thank the Intelli group volunteers for celebrating christmas with our Vidya Mandir children.



Sri Ajit and his colleagues ensured the children had good entertainment. Games were conducted and gifts and goodies distributed.

Swamiji and Mataji were invited on 29th December 2009 as special guests to the convention held by National Defence NGO's association. Swamiji enlightened the delegates with a spiritual talk on 'True Identity'.



A Satsanga was held at the residence of Smt. Laxmi at Trimulgherry on 2nd January 2010. Besides words of wisdom, bhakti laden melodies by Swamiji and devotees filled the air. After having their full, the audience requested for more such Satsangas.

Swami Vivekananda's birthday which marks the National Youth Day was celebrated on 12th January 2010 at Nachiketa Tapovan with Shraddha and



Bhakti. Children also watched an inspirational movie and took part in a quiz competition before they enjoyed the birthday meal.

Kindness and love can buy you the whole world.

SHIVARATRI
CELEBRATIONS
at
NACHIKETA TAPOVAN
on
12th February Friday



PROGRAMME

10.00 PM - BHAJAN SANDHYA & SATSANGA
12.00 MIDNIGHT - LINGODBHAVAM,
POOJA & SADHANA

ALL ARE WELCOME

Practice makes us what we shall be.

HELPING HANDS

*Anna daanam maha daanam;
Vidya daanam mahattaram.
Annena kshanika trupthihi
Yaavajjeevanthu vidyaya.*

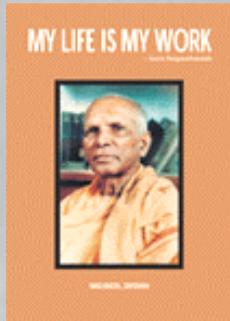
Vidya Mandir at Nachiketa Tapovan is currently able to accommodate a family of about 150 children, who receive all-round nourishment from man-making education to milk-n-meals and basic health-aid in an atmosphere of genuine love. Kind-hearted well wishers have been the unseen force behind this offering to God. We thank you for your continued support.

Vidya Daanam (Education)	Rs. 3500 / year / child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	Rs. 3000 / day
Ksheera Daanam (Morning Milk)	Rs. 600 / day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	Rs. 600 / 2 pairs
Dinnerware (Steel Plates & Glasses)	Rs. 5000 / 50 sets
Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)	Rs. 5000 / term
Festivals Celebration	Rs. 1500 / festival
Oushadhi (Medical Supplies)	Rs. 5000 / month

Celebrate your Special Days with the Children at Nachiketa Tapovan!

PUBLICATION

“My life is my work” is a pictorial biography that leads the reader through different dimensions of Srimat Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj’s life providing a glimpse of his oneness with the nature through His teachings. The first edition of this book was released on 1st March 2006 followed by the



second edition on 11th July 2006 and the 3rd edition on 22nd November 2007.

The Books are available at Nachiketa Tapovan, Kavuri Hills and Ramakrishna Math, Hyderabad for a subsidized price of Rs. 250/-.

Love is life and hatred is death.



Dear Atman,

Nachiketa Tapovan has launched a massive Ashram project in Kodgal village, Jadcherla Mandal in Mahboobnagar district with a noble vision of providing Free Education, Medical aid, Vocational training and Spiritual upliftment for the underprivileged. Temples, Dhyana mandir, Residential Campus, Vidya Mandir and Dispensary are given priority in the 1st Phase of construction. With the grace of the Almighty we have been moving forward towards the completion of some of these projects.

First we want to thank our supporters and well wishers for accomplishing our goals of constructing a Dhyana Mandir and Residential Campus at the Ashram. Your support was essential for meeting the substantial expenses of this Humanitarian work for which we are deeply grateful. At present our top priority is the major Temple Project and Vidya Mandir which are under construction. The total cost for these projects is estimated at **Rs 2.9 Crores**. Currently we have collected **Rs 1.19 Crores**. The rest of the funds have to be raised to inaugurate the Ashram. For the coming year, our goal is to continue reaching out to more and

more souls with our basic spiritual services, programs and publications and also to accomplish a number of smaller projects at Nachiketa Tapovan, Kavuri hills and Ashram at Jadcherla.

We hereby make a fervent appeal for generous donations. You can contribute to the project in any manner possible. Please participate in this noble task so that our cultural heritage and religious traditions will be safeguarded for the coming generations.

It may kindly be noted that donations to Nachiketa Tapovan are exempted from Income Tax U/S 80 G of IT Act, 1961 of Govt of India. Donations in the form of cheques/ Demand drafts may please be drawn in favour of Nachiketa Tapovan.

Yours in the service of Motherland

Swami Nachiketanda

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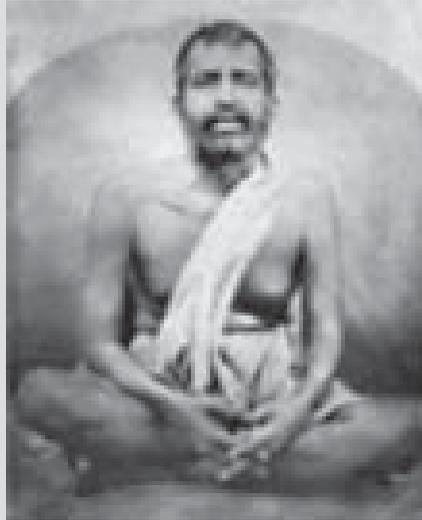
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"They alone live who live for others, rest are more dead than alive..."
- Swami Vivekananda

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**Ramakrishna Paramahansa Jayanti
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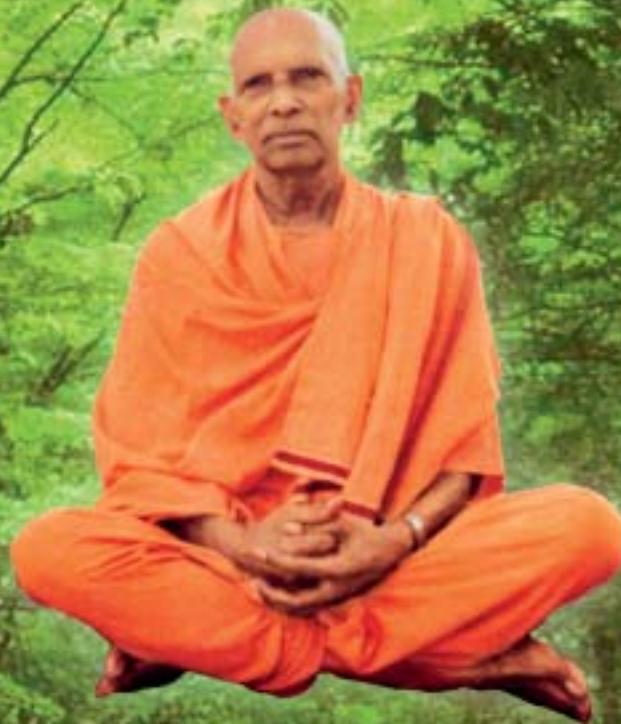
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fruits always bends low.
If you wish to be great,
be lowly and meek.*

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