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Nachiketanjali

...an offering

A Journey Into The Spiritual Realm!

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Summer Camp



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Editor: Subhadra K.

Eternal Destination

Life is like a boat travelling in the ocean of samsara and has to encounter waves, storms and sharks. The entire journey may seem scary and turbulent. In these circumstances will the boat reach the shoreline? Would we disembark at our destination? There are two destinations for a human being. One is the inevitable death and the other, the most cherished Self-Realization.

The one who has no interest in spirituality perceives death as the final destination. Though he realizes death cannot be avoided, he lives in constant fear of death. Instead of pursuing his ultimate goal of Self-Realization, he performs actions, regarding himself as the doer and gets bound by his actions. For such a person, life is similar to a boat with a hole, travelling in the vast ocean. Rocked by waves, losing his stability, he leads a life devoid of peace.

On the contrary, there is another category of human beings, who with their perception, change their lives into an ocean of nectar. They are the spiritual people who are capable of changing the grave yard into a flower bed. Life is a yagna for a spiritual person. He perceives God in all His creation. He realizes that it is the Divine principle in all beings which is getting actions done through human beings as instruments. For him death is only a change of body. Worry is totally alien to him. He perceives death as a given opportunity to carry forward his spiritual sadhana. He incessantly and untiringly tries to gain access to the Supreme through his severe sadhana and is assured that even after many births he is sure to reach the Lord's feet. His efforts are genuine and he marches towards Liberty, Light and Love.

For anyone life is the same. But happiness lies in the way we perceive and accept life. Once we reach our true destination the world appears to be peaceful. All will be love... Love and only Love.

- Subhadra K.

Cover Story



Sometimes we feel sure we have caught the butterfly of happiness, but in the next instant it has darted away from our hand. Why not concentrate on the soul bird-of-paradise that resides in the bodily cage?

- Daya Mata



Challenges are many...

Challenges are many on every path. But when they come from our own people it hurts more. We feel helpless and morally let down. If challenges are thrown from others, we may not experience that severity but still it hurts. And if they are created by us then frustration destroys the fabric of life. Why? Because, we do not want to take up challenges. We always want a smooth ride. We always demand from others but do not want to fulfill the demands of others. We feel that life should be simple. We love eating delicious food sitting in the dining room and discuss about hunger and poverty. We don't hesitate to bribe to get quick results but speak about the highly corrupted world.

This very attitude really disturbs more than any kind of challenge in life. For us this is real challenge and we need to accept it as it is and move ahead leaving such people far behind. We even should pray to God that such people should remain in the precincts of their own house and discuss whatever they want. For when such people come on to the street, they will spread only negativity and passivity. Therefore it becomes more important for all of us to come on the street and hug challenges to see a new, fresh and transformed society.

Challenges are many... but they don't come simply without inviting. There is something called our involvement in the situation due to our past 'samskaras' and that attracts challenges from every side.

Challenges are many... but they simply don't threaten us without our passivity.

Challenges are many... but they cannot bother us without our negativity.

Challenges are many... but they will never engulf us without our selfishness.

Challenges are many... but they will never pressurize us without our submissiveness.



Challenges are many... but they will never overrule our existence without our permission.

Challenges are many... but they will never overpower us without our greedy nature.

Challenges are many... good and bad but relatively not in reality.

Challenges are many... inspiring and aspiring when we accept them without any hesitation.

Challenges are many... provoking and stimulating when we become active and energetic.

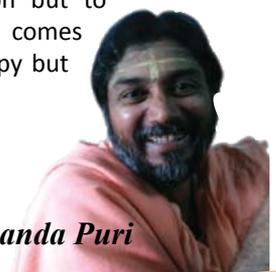
Challenges are many... simple and difficult but in arrogance not in love.

Challenges are many... sweet and bitter when we do have desires but not in desirelessness.

But have we ever stopped accepting them just because there is uncertainty in accepting challenges?

And even when we do not accept them directly; do we feel that they will not come and destroy the fabric of life? Challenges are bound to come, no matter in what form or from where but they will challenge our very existence. They will make a surprise visit like an 'atithi' (guest) then what are we going to do? Is it possible to discard them like a beggar who is standing at the doorstep? In fact beggar can be discarded but not challenges!

Accepting is more important than negating challenges. The very fabric of life is beautifully interwoven by God with the help of relative terms of the universe. Hence it is not ideal to run away from the situation but to accept everything that comes our way and lead a happy but challenging life.



- Swami Nachiketananda Puri



Japa Yoga



In both segments of life individual and social transformation is necessary.

Why is transformation necessary?

Every individual of the society expects a happy and peaceful life. Nobody wants to face difficulties or problems. Sometimes due to monotony one may get depressed or distressed, or might experience difficulties, dilemma and find oneself in chaos. How to overcome these situations in life?

As Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa says, "mind is like a white cloth returned from the laundry. In whichever color you dip in, it takes that color". So He asks us to direct our mind in the right direction.

When your mind is channeled in the right direction, you find satisfaction, happiness and peace in life. So we need to have a powerful instrument which can direct all your energies and thoughts.

What is the best tool or sadhana to direct the mind?

We might not be able to find a remedy for all the problems in the society and the world, but we can equip ourselves to face them by practicing Japa yoga. Japa yoga sadhana is the greatest remedy for all the difficulties. So Japa yoga is the best tool which brings transformation in life and society. Japa takes you beyond happiness and joy and leads you to experience the bliss.

There are many sadhanas prescribed and experienced by our sages, and Japa yoga is one of the best sadhana. In this Kali yuga, Japa yoga is the easiest path to realize God. It is the simplest and safest way to experience the ultimate goal of life. Japa is a simple, powerful and a wonderful yoga which gives insight of life. Japa yoga doesn't have any restrictions like Hatha yoga or any other yoga. Any body at any time is allowed to do Japa.

What is Japa? Japa means constant repetition of the Lord's name or the sacred name. 'JA' means which puts an end to the cycle of birth and death. 'PA' means which removes all the impurities or distractions. So Japa frees you from the pain and pleasure and shows you the life beyond. Japa yoga sadhana is done with the help of Mantra and Mala.

What is Mantra? "Mananat Trayate iti mantrah" - which is chanted mentally. Mantra is not a mere word in Sanskrit. Every syllable of Sanskrit is powerful and

has impact on the mind and on consciousness. There is a difference between sloka and Mantra. Sloka can be written by anyone. But Mantras are not written or claimed by anyone. Mantras were received by our sages from the cosmos. Mantras are not to be chanted blindly. Every mantra has an innate meaning. Mantra purifies all impurities and has a tremendous power to purify all the samskaras.

Our sages have introduced such sadhanas which are more scientific and spiritual. Unfortunately many people are under the illusion that sadhanas which were given by sages are mere superstitions. This misunderstanding occurs due to lack of complete knowledge and understanding of the concept.

Why is Mala used? Mala is used in Japa. Some use Rudraksha, Tulasi and Spatika etc. There is scientific and spiritual reason behind the Japa mala. All the nerve endings of fingertips are connected to the brain. When the Mala is held on the finger tips the brain gets activated. Chanting the Mantra helps direct your mind and makes us aware of our thoughts. Mala gives us many therapeutic benefits.

Lord Krishna says, "Yajnanam Japa-Yajnosmi"- among Yajnas I am Japa Yajna. There are many sages who have transformed after doing Japa sadhana. Here is the live example of the dacoit Ratnakara who was transformed into a great sage Valmiki after the Japa sadhana for a period of time. There are many examples like Dhruva, Akka Mahadevi, Vishwamitra, Sarada Ma and many more saints. Proper Japa yoga sadhana brings total transformation in the life without any effort.

Who should do Japa Yoga? It is a misconception that Japa is done in the last days of our life. Many parents are afraid to introduce Japa sadhana to their children because they think that it is done by senior citizens only. Children, youth, mothers, fathers and each and every individual can do Japa yoga sadhana. It is worthwhile to know that Japa is the greatest medium which directs your mind in the right direction and brings clarity in life. So by adopting Japa yoga we bring harmony in body, mind and soul. We understand life in a better way. Japa yoga gives one victory over enemies like anger, jealousy, lust, greed, attachment and pride and makes us experience the true freedom of life.

- Swami Shivananda Puri

Yogasana

Ardha Matsyendrasana

Yoga is the science of the soul. It is a systematic way of living.

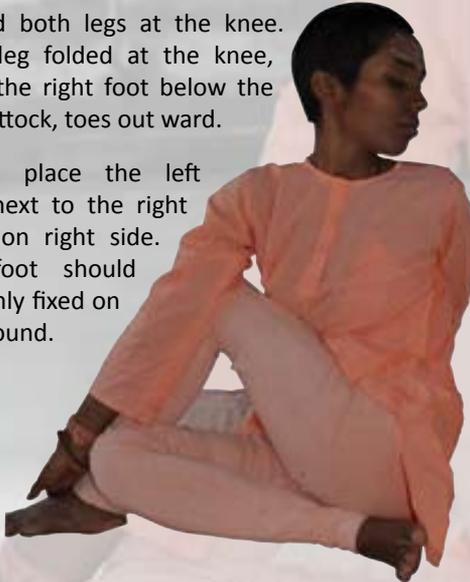
In this issue, we are going to discuss about Ardha Matsyendrasana. This asana has been named after the great sage Matsyendra who gifted this asana to the mankind.

Instructions

Sit with the legs stretched out and the palms facing the floor, next to the body.

Bend both legs at the knee. Right leg folded at the knee, place the right foot below the left buttock, toes out ward.

Now place the left foot, next to the right knee, on right side. Left foot should be firmly fixed on the ground.



Now pass the right arm over the left knee and hold the left foot or ankle with the right hand so that the left knee is close to the right armpit.

Sit up as straight as possible. Take the left hand and place its palm on the right thigh. Turn head towards left; look back over the left shoulder.

Try to maintain this posture for 1 to 2 minutes.

Counter pose: Counter pose is the most important aspect of Asanas. In order to counter, continue on the left side.

Sit with the legs stretched out, with the palm facing the floor, next to the body.

Bend both legs at the knee. Left leg folded at the knee, place the left foot below the right buttock, toes outward.

Now place the right foot, next to the left knee, on left side. Left foot should be firmly fixed on the ground.

Now pass the left arm over right knee cap and hold the right foot or ankle with the left hand so that the right knee is close to the left armpit.

Sit up as straight as possible. Take right hand and try to place right palm on left thigh. Turn head towards right; look straight over the right shoulder.

Try to maintain this posture for 1 to 2 minutes.



Concentrate: always concentrate on the parts which are compressed.

Who should not perform: pregnant woman, people suffering from peptic ulcer, hernia, sciatica, slipped disc should not practice this asana.

Benefits: This asana stretches the muscles of back and abdomen. It relieves muscular spasms, massages the abdominal organs, cures all abdominal and digestive disorders. This asana helps in regulating adrenal gland, liver and pancreas and is beneficial for the kidneys.

- Swami Shivananda Puri

Spiritual Quest

How to differentiate between commercial, social and spiritual activities?

Swamiji: Let us take one simple example of running a school. There are people who take fees and give education. They are rigid people having a commercial mind and they always calculate everything in terms of money. Whereas there are people who are simple and dedicated, and they pass on whatever they can to the children without expecting anything. They might be imparting the same education but their attitude is somewhat different from commercial people and they are called social reformers and their activity is called social activity. There is a third category of people, they run the school similar to the social reformers, but they add moral and spiritual flavor to it. They only focus on creating a spiritual platform and provide that which is more important to nurture the young and tender minds leaving rest aside. They are compassionate, loving and caring. Such people are spiritual souls and their activity is called spiritual activity.

The impact that is created by commercial activity is temporary, whereas the impact created by social activity remains, till the transformation of that activity. But the impact that we see due

to spiritual activity is permanent. And we know very well that when such spiritual atmosphere is created it can transform human beings into potential divine beings.

Commercial activities are like machines that create ordinary human beings, while social activities are like the mother's womb that produces unique people, whereas spiritual activities are like the mother's heart that creates men of wisdom. If we are able to differentiate and understand the real activity that has got tremendous impact on the minds of younger generations then we will never try to venture into commercial activities. We may take up social activities due to the demand of the society, but we will certainly try to transform it into spiritual activities.

Today we need men of wisdom and the heart of mother to translate ordinary society into a loving society. It is all in our hand and if we take up this responsibility on our shoulder then sooner or later we can experience paradise on earth and see enlightened citizens as well.

- Swami Nachiketananda Puri

Physical body, when diverted towards God becomes Temple. Mind, when diverted towards God becomes heart. Intellect, when diverted towards God becomes knowledge. Knowledge, when diverted towards God becomes wisdom. Emotions, when diverted towards God become devotion. And Soul when diverted towards God becomes the servant.

- Swami Nachiketananda Puri

It's High Time!



Sri Anna Hazare

If there is any one stretch of land on this Earth that is blessed in every thinkable aspect, it is indubitably INDIA. I would be only repeating myself if I start counting my blessings for being born as an Indian. Natural resources, cultural heritage, religious fortification, unparalleled spiritual resplendence and profundity... name it and we have surplus of everything. Then, why is our culture not reflecting it? Why are grace, containment, fortitude, poise and dignity that go with such abundance not commonplace in today's India? Selfishness, greed for power, insecurity and fear, gluttony for money, moral famine and spiritual starvation are thriving like the witch's hair that outsmarts the host plant. An average tax payer of India is baffled by the sad state of affairs in every department- from endowments to enforcement.

Just around the time when corruption has taken an ugly and omnipresent form, just when the common man was losing hope, and surrendering to despair and helplessness, just as Shishupala who crossed his limit of 100 mistakes was liberated by the Sudarshana chakra of Krishna... a beacon of positivity and determination laced with sacrifice, non-violence, philanthropy and sincerity pierced through the skies of Bharath, instilling new spirit, hope and inspiration in the hearts of her citizens.

A 73-year old man's hunger strike in New Delhi, demanding changes in the anti-corruption Lokpal Bill was joined by more than a hundred people, supported by thousands of people and silently applauded by millions of people and followed by the entire India. **Kishan Bapat Baburao Hazare**, lovingly called as Anna Hazare stirred the nation with his simplicity, conviction and courage. Though the success of this movement is what put Anna Hazare on a national pedestal, he had been a relentless fighter all through his life fighting for

his family, his village and his country. He is revered by the villagers of Ralegan Siddhi of Ahmednagar in Maharashtra for transforming a barren, drought prone, poverty stricken, alcoholism infested village into a model village. His tool of protest - hunger strikes. And his prime target – "It is the deed not the person that I object to and fight against," in his own words.

The nation is looking at him now but he has been looking out for his nation as her responsible citizen. Incidentally, Anna Hazare was inspired by Swami Vivekananda. At one point in his life he was sinking in an ocean of confusion about the real purpose of life when he laid hands on a book by Swamiji that took him across to the shores of '**service to fellow men**'. As of date "Hazare and his supporters ended their 98-hour long fast on Saturday, after the Government agreed to Hazare's demands and a Joint committee was set up..." - IBN News, Apr 11, 2011

Victory to the warrior, whose weapons are inner strength, perseverance and motive to serve fellow humans! May his goodness, fortitude and spirit to serve his countrymen infect us all!

- **Annapurna R.**

Shraddhanjali



Nachiketa Tapovan offers shraddhanjali to a great spiritual soul, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, who gave hope and succor to millions and millions of people across the globe and inspired them to tread the path of love and service by making His life, His message.

Born in Puttaparthi on November 23rd 1926, He transformed the fate of this little town within no time. He has uplifted Puttaparthi from the age of bullock carts to the present level of finding a place in the International map. Having declared His avatar in 1940, at the age of 14, He went ahead and established His Ashram, Prashanthi Nilayam, on November 23rd 1950, His 25th birthday.

Sri Sathya Sai Institute for Higher learning a deemed University, schools and colleges, free speciality hospitals for the needy, Rural outreach programmes, and free drinking water projects launched to quench the thirst of people of Anantapur, East and West Godavari

districts, Medak, Mahbubnagar and Chennai stand testimony for the tremendous range of humanitarian projects initiated and inspired by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Through His Narayana Seva (feeding of the poor), He has proved to the world that 'Manava seva is Madhava seva' (service to humanity is service to God). His welfare schemes and development programmes benefited lakhs of people in India and abroad. Sri Sathya Sai attained Maha Nirvana on April 24th 2011 at Puttaparthi.

He has been a source of strength to millions of devotees and He would indeed be with us in thought and deed forever. His message of "Love All and Serve All" will eternally resonate in the world. His messages have always been universal, especially His message of 'Satya, Dharma, Shanthi, Prema, Ahimsa' which has transcended all barriers of caste and religion. He will continue to guide us by living in the hearts of millions of devotees.

Baba's Message

- to a Devotee after His Maha Nirvana

Where have I gone? Where can I ever go?
I have gone no where. I am stationed in you
as much as you are stationed in Me... You are
Mine and you must never forget that... and I am
always yours...

You are undergoing the pain for

Your mind has begun to believe

In My end of this body...

It is making you weep...

It is making you desperate...

It is making you plunge in despair...

But always remember that your heart

Will not keep quiet for long

I have gone no where...

Know that to be the Truth...

I am there where you are...

I am watchful of every moment now and
forever...

Remain in joy...

Capture the bliss of Myself that I have gifted to
you

And graced you with...

Tears are the instrument

Of the weakful mind...

That is not your walking stick,

Neither is it the glasses that

You shall see with...

The devoted hearts with a pure mind

And a loving heart shall call Me

From time to time...

They alone with the strength of their purity

Shall make me once again

Visible to the world...

And I will come back once again

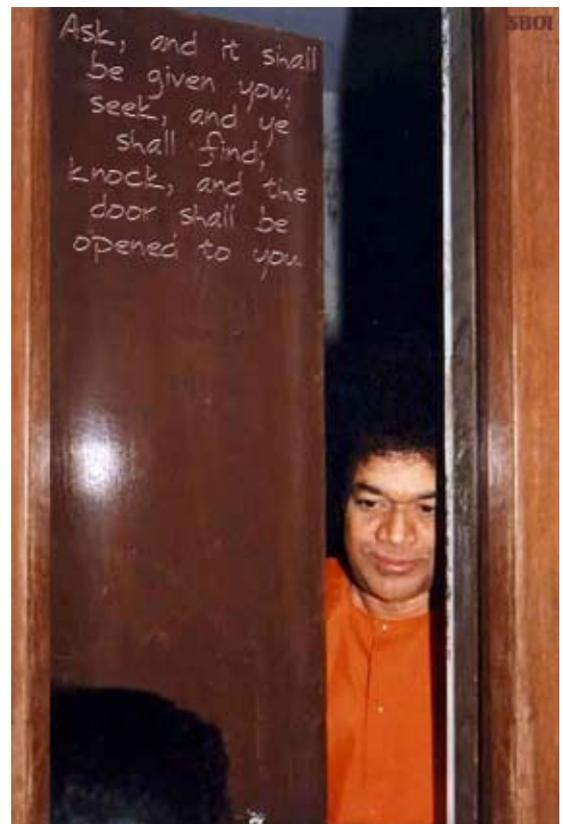
With My hands full...

Free yourself from emotion...

And await My return...

You have not lost Me... I was always there
then... now ... and for all times to come. All you
have lost is Atma Vishwas (self-confidence).
Return to the confidence and restore its will.

- *Sathya Sai Baba*



Yuvanjali



Do not teach, let them learn



You cannot teach a child any more than you can grow a plant. The plant develops its own nature. The child also teaches itself. But you can help it to go forward in its own way. What you can do is not of a positive nature but negative. You can take away the obstacles, and knowledge comes out of its own nature. Loosen the soil a little, so that it may come out easily. Put a hedge round it; see that it is not killed by anything. You can supply the growing seed with the materials of the making up of its body, bringing to it the earth, the water, the air that it wants. And there your work stops. It will take all that it wants by its own nature. So with the education of the child; a child educates itself. The teacher spoils everything by thinking that he is teaching. Within man is all knowledge, and it requires only an awakening, and that much is the work of the teacher. We have only to do so much for the boys that they may learn to apply their own intellect to the proper use of their hands, legs, ears and eyes.

That system which aims at educating our boys in the same manner as that of the man who battered his ass, being advised that it could thereby be turned into a horse, should be abolished. Owing to undue domination exercised by the parents, our boys do not get free scope of growth. In every one there are infinite tendencies which require proper scope for satisfaction. Violent attempts at reform always end by retarding reform. **If you do not allow one to become a lion, one will become a fox.**

The end of all education, all training, should be man-making. The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow. The training, by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful, is called **education.**

- Swami Vivekananda

Song of Youth



- A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

As a young citizen of India, armed with technology, knowledge and love for my nation, I realize, small aim is a crime.

I will work and sweat for a great vision, the vision of transforming India into a developed nation, powered by economic strength with value system

I am one of the citizens of the billion; Only the vision will ignite the billion souls.

It has entered into me ; the ignited soul compared to any resource is the most powerful resource on the earth, above the earth and under the earth.

I will keep the lamp of knowledge burning to achieve the vision - Developed India.

If we work and sweat for the great vision with ignited minds, the transformation leading to the birth of vibrant developed India will happen.

I pray the Almighty: "May the divine peace with beauty enter into our people; Happiness and good health blossom in our bodies, minds and souls".



Circle of Kindness

Once there was a butterfly named Flutter. She was very kind. One day she was flying around. Suddenly, she saw a little ant carrying a big sack. "Here, why don't I help you?" asked Flutter. "Thanks a lot", said the ant.

"Remember, Kindness is a virtue. Pay it forward."

The next day the ant went strolling. Out of the corner of his eye he saw a cow moaning. Remembering what Flutter said, he asked "what happened?" "My back is itching," said the cow. "I'll scratch it," said the ant and he did so. "Oh



thank you!" said Enid the cow. "Kindness is a virtue. Pay it forward." said the ant.

In the evening, Enid was munching grass. Suddenly she saw a little puppy crying bitterly. "Waz appin?" she asked with her mouth full of grass. "I am lost" sobbed Cutie the puppy. Feeling sorry for the puppy, Enid asked "Where do you

live?" "With Mary Ann," said Cutie. "Why! I know her!" exclaimed Enid. So she took Cutie to Mary Ann. "Thanks a lot!" said Cutie. "Kindness is a virtue. Pay it forward" moaned Enid.

The next day, Mary Ann took Cutie on a walk. Suddenly some mean boys came and pushed little Mary Ann into the pool. "Mary Ann!" squealed Cutie and at once went to Mary Ann's rescue. "Gosh! Thanks!" said Mary Ann to Cutie. "Kindness is a virtue. Pay it forward." yelled Cutie wisely.

Next day, Mary Ann again took Cutie for a walk. Then she saw a frog hopping. Suddenly a man came and trapped the poor frog. Mary Ann felt sorry for the little frog. So she boldly told the man "Stop it!" Fortunately, the man was a coward and he ran away. "Thank you!" croaked the frog. "Kindness is a virtue. Pay it forward." said Mary Ann.

In the evening, Froggie went flycatching. Suddenly, he saw poor Flutter stuck in a nasty web. "Oh no, A frog is coming to eat me" murmured Flutter. To his surprise, Froggie said, "don't worry, I will save you", and he carried Flutter out of the web. "Thanks" said Flutter. "Kindness is a virtue" said Froggie, making Flutter blush. "Seems my message passed around in a circle" said Flutter.

Everyone watching, immediately shouted "KINDNESS IS A VIRTUEEEEEEE!"

Moral: Be kind to others. Others will be kind to you.

Pratya Poosala is studying 3rd grade in Vidya Shilp School, Bangalore. She is an avid reader and also enjoys writing short stories, playing violin and directing plays with her cousins.

- *Pratya Poosala*

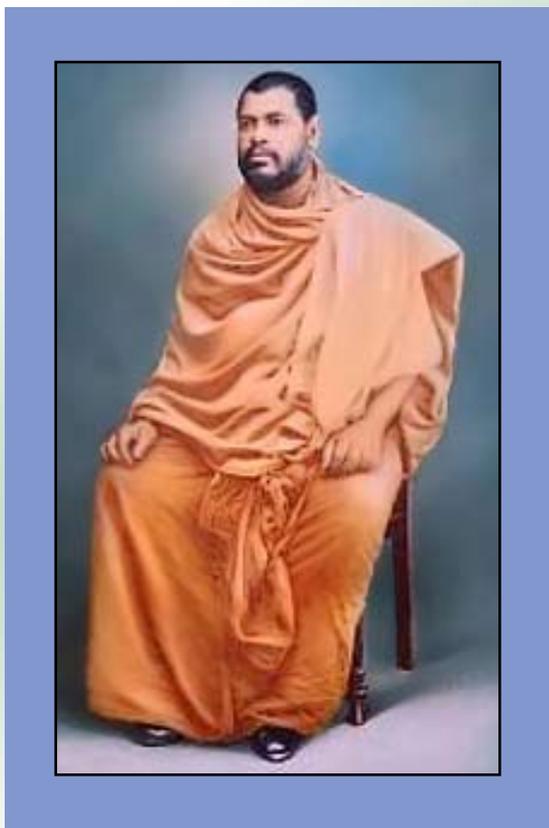


Sri Ramakrishna's Amrita Dhara

Direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna - Swami Ramakrishnananda

Shashi Bhusan Chakrabarty as Swami Ramakrishnananda was known in his pre-monastic life was born on 13th July, 1863 to Iswar Chandra Chakrabarty, a court pandit and Bhavasundari Devi a guileless, pious woman. His father was well versed in Tantra scriptures and disciplines, and was a great devotee of the Divine Mother.

Right from his boyhood Shashi was on a spiritual quest. He was a brilliant student and had a wonderful academic record in college; his special subjects were Sanskrit, Mathematics, English Literature and philosophy. He along with his cousin Sharat (Swami Saradananda) was a member of the Brahmo Samaj. When they hear



Keshab Chandra Sen, the great Brahmo leader, speak about Sri Ramakrishna, both went to meet Him. Sri Ramakrishna asked him whether he believed in God with form or without form. Shashi replied frankly, "I am not certain about the very existence of God, so I am not able to speak one way or the other!" This frank reply pleased the Master very much. Thus began the intense love between the Master and disciple.

He visited the Master regularly for two years and acquired great spiritual treasures from Him. In the middle of 1885 Master developed throat cancer and was taken to Calcutta for treatment. A small band of devotees and the Holy Mother took special care of Him. At this time Shashi was preparing for his BA examination. He would serve the Master at night. He faced a great dilemma as he was caught between serving his Master and satisfying his parent's expectations of pursuing a brilliant career. He finally gave up his studies and decided to serve the Master.

Sri Ramakrishna was moved to Cossipore gardens in December 1885. All of His attendants were great devotees, but Shashi's devotion was exceptional. His spiritual practice was only serving the Guru. Forgetting his personal comfort, food, or rest, he was always ready to serve the Master. His life's purpose was to alleviate the Master's suffering. Indeed, he would have given his life if he thought that would cure Him. Everyone marveled at his inexhaustible energy, his endurance, and his boundless love for the Master. The Love was reciprocated in full if not more by the Master. Once in the middle of a cold night, he left the Master's room to clean the commode. On his return, he saw that Sri Ramakrishna, who was very sick, had crawled across the room and was reaching up for a shawl that was hanging on a clotheshorse. At this painful sight Shashi thought

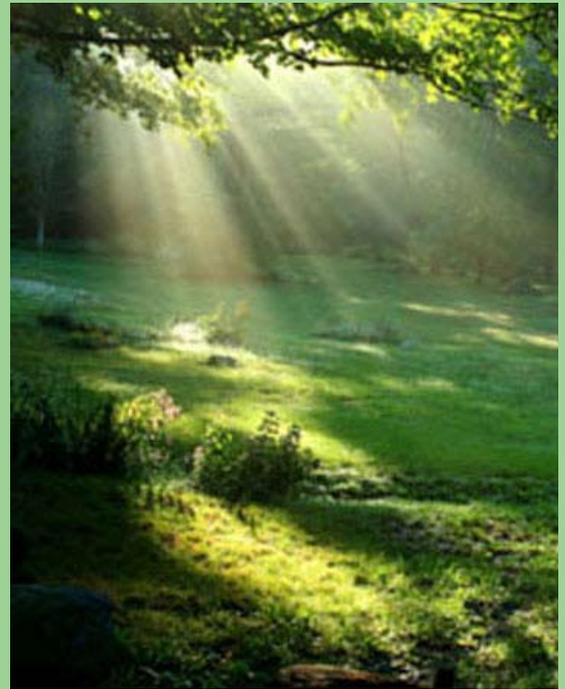
to himself that perhaps he forgot to cover the Master. "What are you doing, sir?" he asked Him in a scolding tone. Filled with love and concern, the Master held out His shawl, and then said in a feeble voice: "I felt cold as you went out almost barebodied on such a cold night, so I picked up this shawl for you. Please take this." Shashi was overwhelmed.

After the Master's passing away and the young disciples were together in Baranagore Math, Shashi kept a constant vigil over the Master's relics, seldom visiting any holy place or leaving the monastery overnight. He performed the Master's worship as one serves a living human being. In December 1886 when they took their vows, Narendra gave the name 'Swami Ramakrishnananda' to Shashi, knowing that his devotion to the Master was second to none. He took care of his brother disciples like a mother, rousing them from their spiritual practices to feed them.

He obeyed his brother disciple Swami Vivekananda implicitly and left to Madras to spread the message of Sri Ramakrishna and start a monastery there. He faced tremendous difficulties financially till the Math was established. He was a strict disciplinarian and a hard task master to the monks in training. He continued to serve the Master as if He were alive and would wake Him, put Him to sleep and ensure that He was never disturbed during that time.

Ramakrishnananda's life was short but eventful. He spent fourteen years to spread the message of his Guru in South India. In April 1911, he fell seriously ill and was moved to Calcutta in June 1911. He would incessantly talk about his Master even while suffering great pain. A couple of days before passing away he asked his attendant to spread the carpet as his Master, Mother and Swamiji had come. He left his mortal body on 21st August, 1911 and joined his Master in eternity.

- Geetha K.



Go(o)d Morning!

Get up early in the morning and repeat some prayers for getting mental and physical brahmacharya (purity). Pray in any manner you like. Become as simple as a child. Freely open the chambers of your heart. Sincere devotees know well the high efficacy of prayers.

Pray fervently, right now, from this very second. Do not delay friend; that 'tomorrow' may never come.

"O Lord, I do not know what I should ask thee. Thou only knowest what I want. I surrender myself unto thee. I open my heart unto thee. Thou art merciful and omniscient. Thou knowest the interior of my heart. Let me accomplish thy will. Make me a fit instrument for thy unhampered play (lila). Prostrations unto thee."

- Swami Sivananda

Revenge is sweet...

But STOP tasting it



“OSAMA GONE, BUT WHEN WILL MUMBAI GET JUSTICE?” screamed every newspaper and tabloid on the morning of May 3rd, 2011. At the end of a decade-long search and the world’s largest man-hunt, Osama bin Laden had been terminated. Shot in the head, some reports claimed. Well done, indeed.

India stood up along with the rest of the world in applause and then turned around to question herself, as if on cue. ‘When will I get justice?’ every voice seemed to shout out loud. The frustration pulsating through the nation was visible- 18 months after 26/11 and no ‘good’ news. Justice delayed is justice denied, as they rightly say. But that brings us to one valid question- What is justice?

Google gives me 397,000,000 results in 0.07 seconds for the word ‘justice’. Not a single one of them makes any sense to me. Oh, the words are all right. But what does it really mean? Those who are guilty must be punished. Agreed. But to what end? Are we killing the disease or the patient? Do the complicated, often-misinterpreted-misquoted principles of ‘morality’ and ‘righteousness’ give us the right to kill people who kill other people? We now want all the Ajmal Kasabs to share the same fate as Bin Laden. And rightly so. They are guilty as the devil.

But I fail to see why we have turned a ‘March for Peace’ into a ‘War against Terrorism’- because there’s a world of difference between the two. If I was given a choice between a tomorrow where a ‘War against Terrorism’ was being waged as opposed to a ‘March for Peace’, I would choose the latter, without a second thought. I believe there is more to a ‘March for Peace’ than holding hands and walking the length of Rajpath Marg or chanting slogans at the Gateway of India. There is more to it than just a brightly burning candle reflected in a pair of misty eyes.

No, I’m not trying to undermine the sentiments of those who have loved and lost in these despicable acts of ‘terror’. Never. What happened

was cowardly, disgusting and downright evil. There is nothing more painful than the unexpected loss of a loved one for someone else’s ‘cause’. It’s a wound that the balm of time may never be able to doctor. The culprits must be brought to order- in this life or the next.

But the real question here is- What do I do? How can I make a difference?

Well, you can’t. You can never make a difference. Not until you become we.

It’s amusing to observe that, despite the million years of evolution, techno-lution and a whole lot of other so-lutions, there’s this habit that is still embedded deeply in our physiology. It’s our habit of developing a habit. No longer can we walk past a nasty incident with a shrug and say ‘Thank God it’s not happening to me.’ Well, it very well could, tomorrow or the day after. And you wouldn’t want the next not-so-good Samaritan saying the same thing, would you?

Let’s not get used to a bunch of brainwashed midgets deciding when or how we die. Let’s not switch our mental channels every time the same old topic comes up. Let’s not wait for them to strike again, harder and closer.

Let a name, a turban, a beard, a cloth or a holy building not be a reason to fight any more. Let’s kill the devil that lurks in the hearts and minds of men and controls their bodies. Let’s cure the madness that is slowly taking over the soul of humanity. Let’s not forget that a better universe starts with a better U ‘n’ I.

Let peace, love and respect not be hollow words any more. Let’s have a vision, not just plain sight.

Let’s fight for what is right.

- Avinash Agarwal

Student of St. Xaviers College,
Mumbai





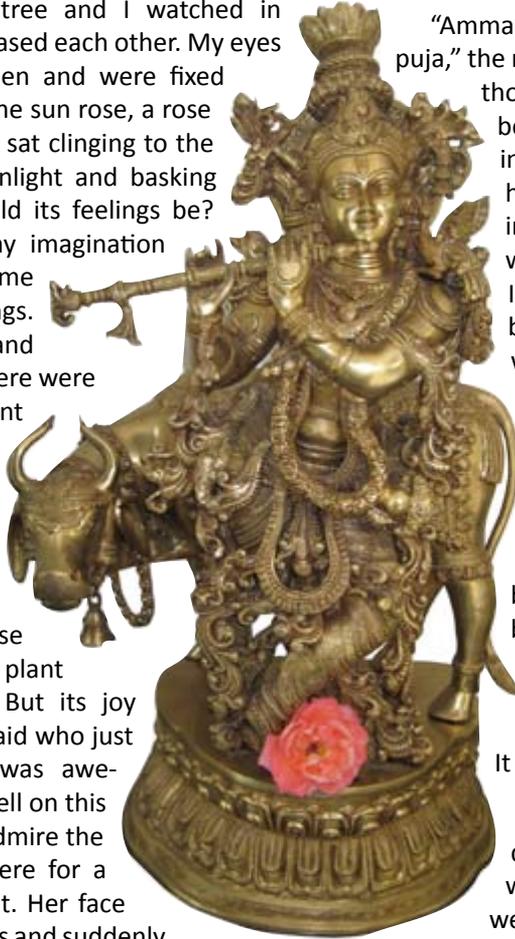
The Rose



One early morning I sat in my garden, enjoying nature's creation. Birds chirped as they pecked at the guavas left for them on the tree. I felt happy to see them savor the fruits. Squirrels ran up the coconut tree and I watched in amusement as they chased each other. My eyes roved round the garden and were fixed on the rose plant. As the sun rose, a rose bud bloomed. There it sat clinging to the stem, catching the sunlight and basking in its glory. What could its feelings be? As I contemplated, my imagination ran wild. I felt it became aware of its surroundings. It was very content and proud of its beauty. There were other roses on the plant but this rose was sure that it was the best and the most special of them all.

The wind started blowing and the rose swayed along with the plant enjoying the breeze. But its joy was short-lived. My maid who just entered the garden was awestruck when her eyes fell on this rose. She seemed to admire the rose for she stood there for a long while looking at it. Her face beamed with happiness and suddenly before I could warn, she plucked the rose. "Oh, why did you do that?" I reprimanded her. Oh, the poor rose! What would it have gone through? I seemed to sense its feelings. Terror gripped the rose as the maid's hand stretched towards it. 'Why? Why was this happening? Is my joy short-lived, why did it have to change? Why? The day had only just begun and the end had come so quickly.' It seemed so unfair. It seemed so meaningless. It tried desperately to

do whatever it could to cling to the stem, but it was of no use. Finally, it let go, surrendering to the maid. The rose decided its fate ended up like other flowers.



"Amma! Take this, it is time for your puja," the maid's voice broke the stream of thoughts flooding in and I looked in bewilderment as she put the rose in my hand saying, "Last night I had a dream where Lord Krishna in your puja room was adorned with a beautiful rose and when I saw this rose I felt very happy because it is the same rose which I had seen in the dream. Offer it to Lord Krishna, I have to get going." She ran to attend to her daily chores. I felt the rose experienced deep joy as I placed it at the Lord's feet. Now it had no life, but it was not destroyed. It had become one with the whole. It had performed its appointed mission and felt the Lord looked down at it and smiled. It made its day.

We might feel that God really does not want to do anything with us. But whatever situation we may find ourselves in, know that God will never write us off! That is just not His nature. If the sun has set in our lives, know that it will rise again. Stay assured that when darkness and sadness has enveloped us, "We will smile again!" Don't give up and don't give in. Make motivation as our steering wheel. Let us endure taunted experiences with patience and perseverance. Persevere through the difficult patches and better times are sure to come.

- Subhadra K.

I shall come back soon...

This is the story of a young boy Kalu. It is the era of King Maha Rana Pratap. The King is hiding from invader Akbar in Haldi Ghati forest, Rajasthan. Kalu lives in the same forest with his mother and they struggle hard for their livelihood. With great difficulty they are able to procure food.

One day, Kalu's mother comes to know that the King needs food. She goes to work and gets some flour. The last two days both mother and son had no food to eat. But the only thought in their mind is to serve the King. A strange but wonderful chemistry between mother, son, King and society.

She cooks jowar roti and curry. She tears a piece of her saree, in which she ties the food and hands it over to Kalu. Kalu hugs his mother. Mother hugs Kalu. They forget their hunger. Their only thought is to serve the King. Four eyes meet each other. Faces are blurred due to tears. Throats are choked. Mother bends down and lifts Kalu's face up. Keeps both the lips on his forehead gently. Kalu closes his eyes. There is total darkness all around. But he feels transformed. Energetic. Ready to face any challenge of life. He prays to God, "Let this moment be forever." What a kind of soothing and inspiring touch! He is completely moved. He enjoys the soft feathery touch of his mother's kiss. Feels blessed. Content. Smiles! Opens eyes and says, "Mother! Take care; I shall come back soon..."

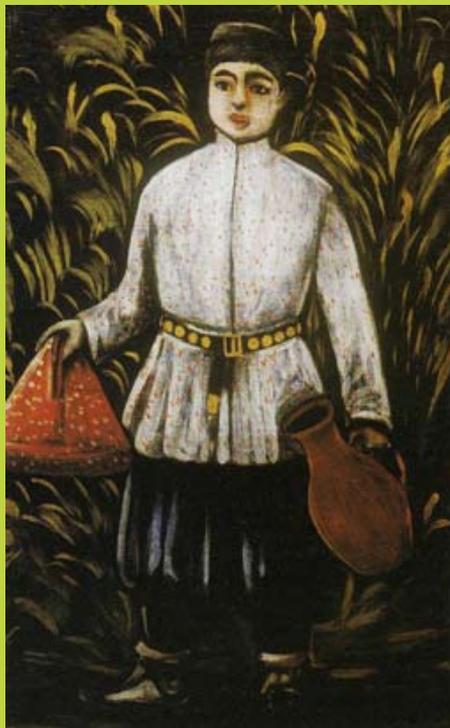
Both come out. She looks at her son and then the horizon. Sun is setting slowly, making a promise to come

back the next day. It is a pitch dark night. Rainy season. Akbar's soldiers are hunting for Maha Rana Pratap all over the forest. Kalu needs to travel a long distance under cover. Dense forest. Hilly area. Wild animals, but not dangerous than Akbar's soldiers. Now Kalu is close to the King's hut. Suddenly lightening flashes in the sky. A soldier sees a young boy and shoots. Silence breaks down. Somewhere from the dark the sound of 'Ma' comes louder than thunder. But only once. Once again silence prevails. Darkness pervades all over. No lightening... No thunder... No noise... only silence...

Kalu reaches the hut. Knocks at the door. King comes out. Sees a young boy. Standing with food in his hand. Kalu offers food to the King and then does pranams. Boy is still on the ground. King bends down. Tries to lift him. But could not. King looks at the boy and the blood around him. Four eyes meet together. King sits down. Slowly lifts the boy's head up. Keeps his

lips on his forehead. Tears in King's eyes. Tears in Kalu's eyes. Voice is heavy. "Mother is waiting in the hut" says Kalu, "I need to go back." "Make me stand on my feet King. I will run and go fast... Mother is alone. I promised her, "I shall come back soon..."

Two drops of tears fall on Kalu's face. He experiences compassion and deep pain in that. He tries to look at the King but heavy eye lids don't permit. King utters, "Get up my dear child, get up. You have to go back to your mother." Something echoes in his heart. He listens carefully. That is





King Rana Pratap

nothing but the promise that he made to his mother. Ma! I shall come back soon... Ma! I shall come back... Ma! I shall come... Ma! I shall... Ma! I... Ma... Ma... Ma... and then once again piercing silence engulfs the surroundings... Perhaps Kalu only can hear, no one else. Now his eyes are fixed at darkness. Half closed and half opened. Half opened and half closed...

In that small hut there is no food, no lamp but only scorching silence... whole night no sleep. She is eagerly waiting for sun and son. Now it's time for dawn! Mother is outside... looking at the horizon... illusionary meeting point of earth and space... She knows it is delusion. Then she looks toward the crisscross path... feels, life is like path. Where it leads, nobody knows. What it brings, nobody knows. What it takes, nobody knows. "Same with the life", she thinks. And suddenly a simple prayer springs forth, "My dear child... since three days I could not feed you. Today I shall prepare sweet for you. My dear child... come soon. Keep your promise... I am waiting for you. Today I shall feed you. You have made me proud. Please come."

Once again she looks at the horizon and the rising sun... the crisscross path and the trees... feels as if she is not in the body... but outside... waiting for her cute and charming son...

- Swami Nachiketananda Puri

Experience

I was running

I was dripping

My throat was choked

In dark it was difficult to figure out

But something gigantic was chasing me

My whole world was in my throat

My breathing was in my mouth

My legs were numb

My body was heavy

My mind was over powered by mysterious entity

And suddenly I heard a voice deep down

Asking me to stop

Contemplate

Meditate

Something tremendously ensued within

Now there was

No dripping, no running

No thoughts, no ego

No breathing,

Body motionless.

How long I do not know

But one thing I realised

I knew

I encountered 'Myself'.

- Swami Nachiketananda Puri



All Paths Lead to God

“What’s in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet.”

Romeo and Juliet (II, ii, 1-2)

And yet another sees Him as the Deliverer:

The Lord’s Name is the cure of all maladies, the harbinger of deliverance and bliss.

- Guru Arjan



Guru Arjan

A follower of Christ calls out to his father to lead him through life:

“This, then, is how you should pray:” -Jesus, Matt 6:9

“Oh Thou, from whom the breath of life comes,
Who fills all realms of sound, light and vibration.

May Your light be experienced in my utmost holiest.
Your Heavenly Domain approaches.

Let Your will come true - in the universe (all that vibrates)
just as on earth (that is material and dense).

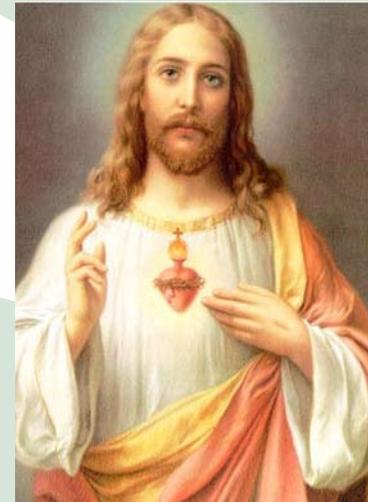
Give us wisdom (understanding, assistance) for our daily
need, detach the fetters of faults that bind us, (karma)
like we let go the guilt of others.

Let us not be lost in superficial things (materialism,
common temptations), but let us be freed from that what
keeps us off from our true purpose.

From You comes the all-working will, the lively strength
to act, the song that beautifies all and renews itself from
age to age.

Amên.

(I confirm with my entire being)



Jesus Christ

“Different people call on [God] by different names:
some as Allah, some as God, and others as Krishna,
Siva, and Brahman. It is like the water in a lake.
Some drink it at one place and call it ‘jal’, others at
another place and call it ‘pani’, and still others at
a third place and call it ‘water’. The Hindus call it
‘jal’, the Christians ‘water’, and the Moslems ‘pani’.
But it is one and the same thing.”

- Sri Ramakrishna

One bhakta pays his obeisance to His Lord Shiva:

**Namo asthu neela greevaya sahasrakshaya meedushe,
Adho ye asya sathvannoham thebhyo karannama
-Rudram prasnam 1.9**

Let my salutation go,
To the God Who has a blue neck,
To the God Who has thousands of eyes,
To the God Who grants us all boons,
And also my salutations,
To His devotees who are His servants.



Lord Shiva

Yet another sees this world as an illusory bridge between man and Brahman:

**Brahma Satyam Jagat Mithya,
Jeevo Brahmaiva Na Aparah**

Brahman alone is real, this world is unreal; the Jiva is identical with Brahman.



‘Allah’

Hear a Sufi seeking ‘Mahabba’- Divine love through **Muraqaba**- watching over and setting one’s heart solely on God, **Visitation**- visiting the tombs of saints, great scholars and righteous people and ‘**Dhikr**’- remembrance of God by direct personal experience of Him through visualizing the holy name, as having been written on his heart.

Prophet’s prayer-

“O GOD, I ask you to grant me the love of You and the love of those whom You love, and grant me, Oh my Lord the love of those actions which lead me to the love of You.”

Another devotee visualizes and praises His Lord Vishnu’s Glory:

**Jagajjalapalam kachad kanda malam,
Sarahandraphalam mahadaithyakalam,
Nabho neelakayam duravaramayam,
Supadmasahayam Bajeham Bajeham.**

I adore Śrīhari, Who is the world-net protector, Who has a moving garland at throat, Who has a forehead radiant-like the autumn-moon, Who is the end for dreadful demons, Who has a blue-sky like body, Whose Māyā (illusion) is invincible, and Who is with the consort Padmā. I adore Him.

- Srihari Stotram[1]



Lord Vishnu



Acceptance

A rarity among people



When we go to a place, we just get awestruck by its ambience and more particularly with the presence of people staying there. I was fortunate enough to visit Nachiketa Tapovan, before Swamiji shifted to Ashram at Kodgal, Mahboobnagar. It was always a learning experience for a rustic like me. Whether it was taking some legal reference during purchase of land at Kodgal for constructing Ashram or for that matter during the meeting called prior to launching of Nachiketanjali it was always the same with him. The way he used to involve people, listen to them patiently and help them come out with ideas had surprised me time and again. He would never condemn anyone's idea nor make any sarcastic comment about any suggestion given by people around him. The hidden secret slowly started unfolding in my mind. He always let the people open up completely and this was possible by reposing immense confidence and of course acceptance of people he believed in. It is the rare quality called as 'Acceptance'. On most of the occasions, we mistake acceptance for consent.

Acceptance is a tendency that is on decline. We accept people if they act according to our will and wish. If they are not behaving as expected, we simply dump them. Let us accept the fact we all are human and mistakes are bound to be made. The levels of acceptance are diminishing day by day. It is giving rise to conflicts among parents and

children or wife and husband. The root cause lies in our minds as we are ignoring to accept things as they are. It is leading to skirmishes ruining the family and society at large. Acceptance we can say is imperative in every walk of life. It is the state of mind on how we look upon things in our life. It plays a major role in human relations. Man cannot lead a solitary life and is ever dependant on others. The man who always carries non-acceptance with him, cannot strike rich while dealing with others, as the very beginning will act as a tumbling block.

When two people with different mindsets meet, it is the rule of thumb that both should reach a level of understanding that ends up in a successful deal. This comes purely through accepting each other fully. Human relations are nothing but forms of acceptance. As long as one accepts they continue. A relation whether deep or superficial, shows your level of acceptance towards that particular person. It is said: "birds of a feather ruffle together", and similarly people with better acceptance levels will cherish a long lasting relation. We are calm and cheerful in the company of people whom we like most. The comfort levels with them makes this happen. On the contrary, we behave oddly around people who have disturbed or troubled us at some point of time. It is the level of acceptance towards people, who helped us or troubled us, knowingly or unknowingly that leaves an indelible mark on our minds. It becomes a yardstick to assess our levels of acceptance with them. The panacea to have an equivalent acceptance is, just accept the people as they are and don't try to add your own colors. If added, the others would lose color and will lose their own identity as well. World becomes the people of one kind without diversity, and in such event the world becomes boredom for us in no time. Let us accept people as they are and if they are really influencing us and making us lose our own character and individuality, we can decide the other way. But let us first learn to accept.

- M. Koti Rajasekhar

Words Unspoken

My mother always told me that it is important to watch words before speaking. She often told “Watch your words, spoken words can never be taken back.” I hardly comprehended the meaning of what she said. I wondered if it really was necessary that I spoke carefully. But one day, I decided to practise what she told me. I started watching my words before I spoke any of those. And I felt a sense of discomfort and alienation.

I tried to comprehend the reason for it. I was doing the right thing, then why did I feel as if I were betraying myself? It was important to know if the words I spoke were the ones I would ever want to take back.

I couldn't find an answer to this question. Over time, I realized that I was being too polite and that not a single person was displeased with my speech or me. However, I was displeased with myself. Eventually, I did not like the way I spoke or the way I lived. Once, my friend had offended me with her words. She spoke words that were hard for me to digest, that were irrelevant and demeaning to my self-respect. Yet, I seemed to speak nothing. My mother's words were so deep rooted in me that I seemed to have forgotten how to speak for myself, from my heart. I went home crying and

Pleasing everybody need not really be a part of your life. Pleasing yourself, speaking for yourself is important for you to live with no regret.

told my mother about how this friend of mine blamed me for no reason and spoke words that were very difficult for me to take. My mother simply replied “Child! I asked you to watch your words, not to forget speaking for yourself. By ‘watch your words’, I meant you should watch the way you deliver the message you intend to. But I did not mean that words you watch should never be unspoken. Watch your words and speak them

in a way that does not make you regret for what you have spoken. Watch your words for yourself, not for others.” I did not quite understand what she meant by all this. Was I meant to speak but not speak? How is that possible? It is possible, I realized. I just had to speak for myself, from my heart and not from my mouth. I learned then, that I just have to speak what I intended to speak and not the words that merely came from my anger because anger never really spoke for me. It merely spoke for itself and when the anger of mine vanished, I would be left with a heavy heart and the blame that would kill my conscience. However, I was not doing justice to my conscience if I spoke nothing on my behalf, if I spoke nothing I intended to. I was not deceiving anybody but my conscience, which I chose not to. Therefore, today, whenever I am angry and I want to speak, I hold back. However, I make it a point to speak for myself, for my feelings when the anger in me has subsided.

Thus, it is essential to understand what ‘watching words’ means because words unspoken remain unspoken and unheard forever. The message you want to give is essential, but watch your wording because words spoken cannot be taken back. Words spoken remain words spoken forever. Pleasing everybody need not really be a part of your life. Pleasing yourself, speaking for yourself is important for you to live with no regret.

- Ramya Manasa



Maya

According to Indian Philosophy, “Maya” is the illusion. It is the limited, purely physical and mental reality in which our everyday consciousness has become entangled. It is also called as the “grand illusion” of materialism. You can also say it is the false consciousness of materialism. Due to attachment to Maya, they have forgotten the Father, the Cherisher of the World.

I have recently heard a very beautiful story in which Narada asks Sri Krishna about “Maya”.

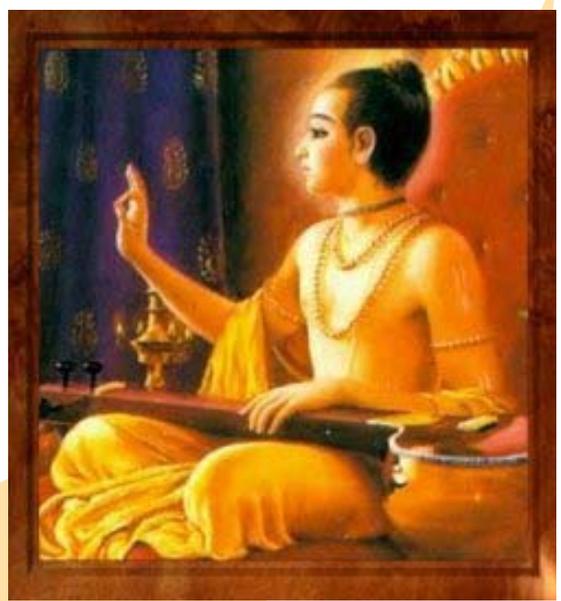
Narada was on a very interesting discussion with Sri Krishna. And while they were walking, he asked the Lord, “My Dear Lord, can you please explain to me the secret of this magic called Maya?” Sri Krishna hesitated, because to understand Maya is to understand the whole of life.

So the Lord replied, “Of course. Let’s sit down here in the shade and I shall tell you everything. But first, Narada, it’s terribly hot; would you get me a glass of cool water?” “Right away,” Narada promised, and he set out across the fields. The sun beat down, and though he was a good walker, the little line of thatched cottages on the horizon that marked the nearest village seemed no closer as he strode along. The heat grew unbearable. Narada’s throat became parched, too; he began to think he would ask for two glasses of water, and drink the second himself. Finally he reached the village and ran to the nearest house.

The door opened - and there stood the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. She smiled up at Narada through long, dark lashes, and something happened to him that had never happened before. All he could do was hem and haw. Finally he blurted out, “Will you marry me?”

The couple settled down to a life of connubial bliss. After a while, children began to arrive.

Narada’s became a very animated household. Somebody was always being bathed or



dressed; there were meals to get and people to be provided for. Narada and his wife became engrossed in their private little world, quietly building their dreams. Years passed. The children grew very strong and handsome, got married; in time, grandchildren arrived. Narada became the patriarch of a great family, respected by the whole village; his lands stretched to the horizon.

He and his wife would look at each other fondly and say, “Don’t you think being grandparents is the greatest thing on earth?” Then a great flood came. The village fields became a raging river, and before Narada’s helpless eyes, everything that he loved and lived for- his lands, his cattle, his house, but especially his beloved wife and all their children and grandchildren- were swept away. Of the entire village, only he remained.

Unable to watch the destruction, Narada fell to his knees and cried for help from the very depths of his heart. “Krishna, Krishna!” At once the raging floods disappeared, and there was Sri Krishna, standing casually on the fields where they had walked what seemed so many years before. “Narada,” the Lord asked gently, “Where is my glass of water? It has been half an hour you left for a glass of water.....”

- Krishna Kumari

Snan Purnima Yatra



Lord Balabhadra



Lord Jagannath



Goddess Subhadra

Snan Purnima Yatra is a very sacred festival in Puri Jagannath Mandir and is held on the full moon day of the month of Jyeshtha (June). This festival is known as 'Devsnan Purnima' or 'Snana Yatra'. There is a general belief that devotees wash away their sins with the darshan of the Lord on this day and no wonder thousands of pilgrims throng this holy pilgrim place on this occasion. According to Skanda Purana, King Indradyumna started this ritual when he installed the wooden deities.

On the previous day of Snana yatra the images of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, Goddess Subhadra along with the image of Sudharshana are brought ceremonially from the inner sanctum of the main temple in a procession to the Snana mandap. On this auspicious day 108 pots of holy water are fetched from the Golden well. The holy water is drawn from this well only once in a year. During the entire process, all of them cover their mouths with a piece of cloth so as not to contaminate the water even with their breath. Then all the pots filled with water are preserved in the Bhoga mandap. The priests purify the water with turmeric, whole grain rice, sandal paste, flowers and perfumes. The filled and purified water pots are then carried from the Bhog mandap to the bathing platform in a single line. This ritual is called the 'Jalabhisheka'. This

Abhisheka is accompanied by blowing of conch shells, kirtans and chanting of vedic mantras by priests. In the evening the deities assume the special elephant form which is known as 'Hati Veshha'. Lord Jagannath and Lord Balabhadra are dressed up as elephants and Goddess Subhadra as Lotus.

After Snana Yatra the deities are supposed to catch a transcendental chill and do not return to their pedestal. They are kept in a special sick room called the 'Ratan Vedi' inside the temple. They stay away from the public view for a period of 15 days. This period is known as 'Anabasara'. During this period the deities are offered only fruits and water mixed with cheese and Dasamula medicines as a cure for cold and fever. The deities are treated by the Raja Vaidya – the King's physician. During all these days the daily rites of the temple remain suspended. Due to the sacred bath with 108 pitchers of water the colours of the images fade out. The Daitas repaint the images with new colours and on the 16th day the deities appear in their new forms for public view. The festival of the first appearance of Lord Jagannath to His devotees is called 'Netrotsav' (festival for the eyes) or 'Nava Yauvanotsav' (festival of the ever new youth). In 2011 this festival is celebrated on June 15th.

Living with a Divine Soul...

Unconditional Love

In Tapovan, there are always a few underprivileged students who are pursuing either graduation or post graduation. Swami Nachiketananda and Swami Shivananda Puri would take care of all their needs. All of them used to stay at Tapovan and commute to their respective colleges. The total expenditure for their studies- books, tuition fee, clothes, including purchase of mobile phones along with a pocket money of Rs.500 was met by Swamiji. Cooking food for them and packing it everyday and many a time dropping them in their respective colleges was done by Swamiji with great love and care. Snacks were kept ready when they arrived from college, as He opined that they would be tired and hungry. I doubt if their parents would have taken care of them as they were looked after by Mataji and Swamiji.

When they excelled in their studies they were ecstatic. If the students wanted a computer or any other infrastructure, it was made available to them. There was no compromise when it came to their studies. Somebody commented that they were being spoilt as all their demands were being met instantly. Swamiji felt that this youth should not develop a complex due to their economic backwardness. He wanted to take proper care and give unconditional love and support to them.

Swamiji and Mataji spent money on them not from the funds of the organization, but from their bhiksha. One day I asked Him if they ran out of money, how they were going to support these youngsters. His spontaneous answer was that they would beg for them.

He wanted to see them settled down in their career and adopt good values. He said that the seed of spirituality planted in them would

manifest itself someday. The help that was offered to the yuva members was never associated with the expectation that they would later work for the organization out of gratitude. They wanted them to be good citizens of India and do good to others in their own way.

A tree, as we know offers food and shelter without any expectations. I imagine Mataji and Swamiji as the banyan tree which offers shade unconditionally, especially when we are tired from the hot sun and seek refuge in the shade, offered by it. No matter if we throw stones while partaking of the food the tree never refuses us.



Swamiji with young Nachiketans & Volunteers

Some of the boys and girls have settled in big corporations like Mahindra and Wipro. He feels happy for their achievement. By seeing all this we need to imbibe Swamiji and Mataji's qualities as they have silently taught us to have relationships, but be in them like water on a lotus leaf. They made us realize spiritual values by living them. Practical knowledge as we know is far superior to dry literature.

- Vasundhara P.

Swami Ranganathananda said "We are on the road of developing into an age when we start growing spiritually and live a value-oriented life. Our tiny ego, caught up in the meshes of our genetic system, can detach itself from this system and expand in love and concern. That is what is called spiritual growth."

- Swami Ranganathananda

Better late than never!

June 5 is observed as World Environment Day. Since times immemorial, we have always placed earth on a high pedestal, treating it as Mother. Rig Veda (3-55-14) describes Nature as Mother Prakriti and Yajur Veda (18-30) describes Earth as adorable immortal Mother. Earth in the Vedas is Prithvi Devi and it is widespread, very kind and gracious Mother. She is soft as wool and is like a milch cow which does not kick (Rig Veda 5-44-11, 2-44-11, 10-5-7 and 10-18- 10). Prakriti has invisible and subtle form and her gross form is the visible universe. Both visible gross Universe and invisible subtle Nature are His Grandeur. The fact that we use flowers and leaves to propitiate God is enough to demonstrate the closeness between the Almighty and Nature.

Environmental legislation in India is epitomized by the Environment Protection Act, 1986 and other legislations like the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. We do not have legislation for management of solid waste as such. Solid waste management services are provided by the Civic Bodies as per the provisions of the respective Corporation/Municipal/Panchayat Acts under which they are constituted. However, to address the growing problem of solid waste management, a National policy for Municipal Solid Waste Management, titled the Municipal Solid Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, was notified in 2000 with an implementation schedule as given in Table 3 (Ministry of Environment and Forests, 2000). The Civic bodies have the responsibility to enforce these Rules. As per the Rules a wide spectrum of functions are to be undertaken by them. The major functions include:

- Prohibiting littering of street
- Organizing house to house waste collection

- Conducting awareness programmes to disseminate information to public
- Providing adequate community storage facilities
- Use of colour code bins and promotion of waste segregation
- Transport of wastes in covered vehicles
- Upgradation of the existing dump sites and Disposal of inert wastes in sanitary landfills

As per the Rules, the citizens are responsible for

- Segregation of wastes at source
- Avoid littering of streets
- Delivery of wastes in accordance with the delivery system notified by the respective Civic body.



These Rules give a direction to the entire process of Solid Waste Management. A lot has been said and we all know as regards the ills of plastic. Yet, we find it the most convenient option available to us. In the absence of a full-fledged legislation, the Courts have interpreted law in consonance with the need for environment conservation. In various cases, the Courts have recognized the right to a clean environment

as a part of the right to life- a fundamental right guaranteed by the paramount legal document of our country, the Constitution and have gone to the extent of placing human rights and environment on the same pedestal. The State can interfere with eco-unfriendly activities even when there is no specific law empowering the State to do so, under the provisions of Article 162 of the Constitution. All these show the importance of environment conversation. Effort at the level of society drives State to act in the positive direction. Therefore, the need of the hour is that we make collective efforts to address the problem at least now, as it is better late than never!

- Neethika Gogula

Till the Last Drop

This is the story of two very good friends—milk and water. They were staying together in a cook's house in Rajasthan. One day, the cook took both milk and water and put them on the gas stove.

The two friends started conversing—

Water: “Dear friend, I always believed that I was worthless, since there is so much water everywhere and people keep wasting it. But today, after getting mixed with you, my value has increased. People shall buy me at the same price as you.”

Milk: “No, my friend, I am really grateful to you. People keep mixing me with other things and I can never retain my original form. But when I am mixed with you, I have increased in volume without any changes in my true form. It is because of your great quality that this miracle has happened. I am grateful to you.”

Water: “No. No my friend, you have honored me greatly by increasing my value. I am indebted to you. Today, I promise you that I will never let any bad times or difficulties come in your way. I will give away my life for you...”

Just then, the cook lit the stove and the milk started to burn. The water realized that its friend

was in trouble, and started burning instead. Soon, all the water evaporated.

The milk, now very sad at the loss of its friend, began trying to escape from the container to look for its friend. That very moment, the cook saw the milk trying to escape and spill out of the container after getting boiled.

He immediately took a pot full of water and mixed it in the container saying, “O milk, please do not go anywhere. I have got your friend back with you. If you spill out of this container, it will be a very big loss for me.” And so the two friends were together again.

This is True Friendship—when one friend cannot stay without the other. They are desperate to be with each other despite all odds.

Even true devotion is like this—when both God and His devotee cannot stay without each other. When tears start pouring out of the devotee's eyes, overwhelmed with love and longing, we say that Bhakti has reached its peak.

This thirst for God's grace and love is not quenched till the last drop has flowed down, and the devotee becomes One with the Almighty.

- translated from KALYAN magazine, Gita Press, Published in Gorakhpur.

- Mamta Agarwal



इदमलङ्कारोऽपि इदमर्थः = विदितम्

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(Contd from previous issue)

अन्ते अस्माकं भिक्षुकः स्नानं समापयति। तीरं आगच्छति। मम लिङ्गं कुत्र अस्ति इति अन्वेषणं करोति। सर्वत्र लिङ्गानि सन्ति! एकं लिङ्गं नाशयति, तस्य अधः पश्यति, धनं नास्ति। पुनः अपरं लिङ्गं नाशयति, तस्य अधः पश्यति। तत्र अपि धनं नास्ति। तदा एकः भक्तः एतं पश्यति। 'किमर्थं भवान् लिङ्गस्य नाशनं करोति भोः' इति पृच्छति। एषः भिक्षुकः किं वदति? भक्तस्य पुरतः लिङ्गं नाशयति चेत् भक्तः ताडयति। अतः धनस्य अन्वेषणं त्यजति।

मम धनपात्रं नष्टं इति रोदिति (रोदनं करोति)। एवम् एकं श्लोकं वदति -

At the end, our beggar completes the bath. (He) comes to the shore. 'Where is my Lingam?' he searches. Lingams are everywhere (all over). (He) destroys a Lingam, sees underneath it. Money is not there. Again, breaks another Lingam, sees underneath (that one). There also, no money. Then a devotee sees this person. 'O man! Why are you doing destruction of the Linga?' (he) asks. What does this beggar say? If (he) destroys the Lingam in front of the devotee, then devotee beats him. Therefore he gives up the search for (of) money.

'My money vessel is gone' he weeps. This way, (he) utters a Sloka -

'गतानुगतिको लोकः, लोकः न पारमार्थिकः।

गङ्गासैकतलिङ्गेषु नष्टं मे ताम्रभाजनम्॥'

The world follows the leaders ((the first time) goes). The world does not go after 'the ultimate meaning (thing)'. In the sand-Lingas of Ganga, my copper vessel is lost!



Summer Camp



Vijaya A. & Madhavi engrossed in Arts and Crafts



Treasure hunting campers

Since the year 1999, Nachiketa Tapovan has been organizing summer camps for children of different age groups. The camp helps children improve their personality, teaches them moral values and makes them aware of our age old cultures and traditions. This year 47 children took part in the summer camp and the children were divided into 6 groups.

Everyday the camp would start with chanting various slokas and remembering the Almighty. This was followed by yoga which was aimed at body and mind relaxation.

Next was probably one of the most awaited event that the children always waited for and which was thoroughly enjoyed by them- the games session. Each game was unique by itself and required the campers to use high concentration levels and strong will.

The group discussions helped the campers provoke their mind and put forth their points of view. The topics given to the students were very challenging and also had a message which can be practiced in their day to day lives.

The arts and crafts session helped the campers explore the creative side in them. It also helped them make beautiful stuff from household wastes like key-chains, newspaper bags, pen stands, jotting pads etc. Whether it was making the murmura chat or arranging the flowers in ikebana pattern the children had lots of fun during their sessions.

The children were totally immersed while singing the Hanuman Chalisa taught by Sri Ravi Ganesh guruji. The campers participated in these



Volunteer Navita helping with the quiz



Chief Guest Smt. Vijaya Raman



Campers immersed in treasure hunt

sessions with total devotion and the session made them feel as if they were witnessing the entire Ramayana.

The day would conclude with another interesting session of games in which the campers took part with lots of zeal.

Apart from these activities, every day different groups would perform various tasks like karma yoga, filling up the notice board with interesting information and decorating the puja place.

Unlike the regular camps these camps are definitely unique in all aspects.

Valedictory function was held on the final day of the Summer Camp, 8th May 2011. Parents of the campers were invited to see for themselves



Sri Ravi Ganesh chanting Hanuman Chalisa

the achievements of their children, in a short span of one week. Power point presentations were given on the various programmes and the campers gave performances which were very impressive. Prizes were given away to the campers for their participation and best performances, by the chief guest Smt-Vijaya Ramam who has been with L.V. Prasad Eye Institute since its inception and is currently the secretary of Lasya Priya, a research oriented institute and a non-profit organization for the development of Indian arts and culture. Nachiketa Tapovan thanks her for spending her valuable time with us and also Sri Ravi Ganesh and all the volunteers for making the camp a great success.



Skit by Ma Sarada Group



Experiment by Meera Group

Ashram at Jadcherla
Temple construction in progress



Sponsor Options

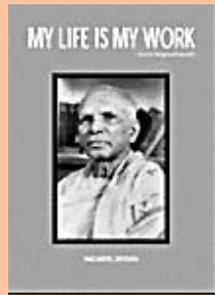
Anna daanam maha daanam; vidya daanam mahattaram.

Annena kshanika trupthihi yaavajjeevanthu vidyaya.

Vidya Mandir at Nachiketa Tapovan is currently able to accommodate a family of about 170 children who receive all-round nourishment from man-making education to milk-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)	₹ 5200/year/child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 4200/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 700/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	₹ 800/2 pairs
Dinnerware (Steel Plates & Glasses)	₹ 5000/ 50 sets
Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)	₹ 5000/term
Medicines (For needy people)	₹ 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. First edition of this book was released on 1st March 2006 followed by the second edition on 11th July 2006 and 3rd edition on 22nd November 2007. The Books are available at Nachiketa Tapovan at Kavuri Hills and Ramakrishna Math, Hyderabad for a subsidized price of Rs. 250/-.

Nachiketa Bala Vahini:

Bala vahini plays a great and important role in a child's life. Bala vahini is meant for kids of 5 to 15 years age group. As we have a proverb in telugu which says "mokkalai vanganide manai vanguna," children need to be given the right knowledge of life and its management in this very age. Whatever they learn during 5 to 15 years is going to be the foundation of the child's life. So through Nachiketa Bala vahinis, we are going to impart spiritual knowledge to children through many fun filled activities like chanting, games, yoga, story and acharasamhita (child watches his everyday actions performed) and children will be made to understand about our rich culture, heritage and its scientific aspect etc. So through various activities, Nachiketa Bala Vahini will help your child to manage his life with great understanding and realize his role in the society.

Nachiketa Tapovan is launching Bala Vahini on Sunday 10th July 2011. Henceforth, Bala vahini will be held on all Sundays in a year from 10 am – 12 noon. Interested participants can enroll themselves by filling applications which are available at Nachiketa Tapovan at Kavuri Hills. Seats are limited, enroll as early as possible. We also offer to train people who are interested in conducting Bala vahinis in their respective areas.



An Appeal

Dear Atman

“When a person really desires something, all the universe conspires to help that person to realize his dream.” This is truer when a selfless desire is pursued by a group of ardent seekers. This was proven by the multifarious growth of Nachiketa Tapovan from a humble hut into a 3-storeyed building in Kavuri Hills and onto a 40 acre spiritual haven in Gairan Tanda in Jadcherla with His blessings and your good wishes.

Imparting literacy, combined with love, care and cultural values to children from impoverished families was in the fore front ever since the inception of Nachiketa Tapovan. Whether this objective has been accomplished or not, can be well illustrated by the progress being made by the children of Vidya Mandir who are winning accolades in all areas from academics to vocational skills to arts to yoga and chanting Vedas. The Vidya Mandir at Nachiketa Tapovan, Hyderabad is not satisfied with giving just breadwinning education but is striving to create a learning platform for each child to receive a man-making education. Thanks to the donors, well wishers, volunteers and teachers who are making this endeavor successful.

Nachiketa Tapovan's efforts to extend the same education to children from the rural areas of Gairan Tanda in Jadcherla, Mahaboobnagar are in full swing, with plans to start classes from June 2011. If Nachiketa Tapovan, located in the heart of HiTec city known for its sprawling growth, is benefiting 170 children, it is needless to mention how many will be benefited by another such Vidya Mandir in the rural areas far placed from technology, comfort and convenience.

The Vidya Mandir being constructed is planned to cover an area of 50,000 sq.ft. around an extensive central play ground. The building will have two floors, the ground floor consisting of spacious classrooms (750 sq ft) and the entire top floor rooms devoted to laboratories like math Lab, Science lab, language lab etc. and a library. The two floors will enclose a copious 10 ft. verandah. The facility has been planned to provide character building education up to X class (progressively) under the S.S.C. board. However, materialization of this progressive project into a reality requires additional monetary and human resources.

Estimated cost of this project is ₹ 3.8 crores

In this time and age when people are far removed from truth and true spiritual values, the way to build a happy and healthy society lies in strengthening the spiritual base of the country and Nachiketa Tapovan has been trying to achieve this by exposing the children of Vidya Mandir to our great heritage contained in Upanishads, Epics and Puranas. We hereby fervently appeal for generous donations. Please participate in this Vidya Dana Yaga being performed to benefit the underprivileged children and thereby strengthen the cultural and spiritual values of our nation.

It may kindly be noted that donations to Nachiketa Tapovan are exempted from IncomeTax 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. We acknowledge the generous contributions made by donors.

Yours in the service of Motherland

Swami Nachiketananda Puri



Workshops

To me the very essence of education is concentration of mind, not the collecting of facts. If I had to do my education over again, and had any voice in the matter, I would not study facts at all. I would develop the power of concentration and detachment, and then with a perfect instrument I could collect facts at will.

-Swami Vivekananda

Personality Development Camp

On the 21 April 2011, a camp was conducted at Nachiketa Tapovan for the students of Obul Reddy School, Jubilee Hills. About 90 students availed of this camp wherein Mataji Shivananda Puri taught the children the Chaitanya Kriya, organized games helpful in improving concentration and discussed with them about the importance of yoga, awareness and the gift of life. Smt Vandana talked to students about the Nachiketa Go Green club to evoke environmental awareness and remind them of the imminent need to conserve resources. Annapurna of Nachiketa Tapovan was happy to serve lunch to the students.



Mataji addressing youth

Effective Teaching Workshop for Teachers

A four day workshop was conducted for the teachers of Suma Niketan from 18th to 21st of April at Nachiketa Tapovan by Smt. Hima Bindu. There were 18 teachers who were divided into 3 groups of 6 each. On the first day, the teachers got to play games that helped them relax, open up and tune to the environment. Mataji conducted a two hour session on "Mind management and Social responsibility" for the teachers. Group discussions on the methods of teaching effectively and inter actively formed a predominant part of the workshop. Case studies were conducted comparing learning in privileged and underprivileged students. Free lunch was served by Nachiketa Tapovan on all the 4 days. Teachers went back all refreshed and rejuvenated by the workshop for another year of teaching.



Smt. Hima Bindu imparting teaching techniques

Rotary Club of Jubilee Hills

Our special thanks to the Rotary Club of Jubilee Hills for their generous contribution of Rs 75,000 on the 10th May 2011, towards the purchase of uniforms for the children of Nachiketa Tapovan's Vidya Mandir.



A NOTE TO WRITERS:

- You can send articles by email to nachiketanjali1@gmail.com or by post to Nachiketanjali, Nachiketa Tapovan, Plot No.70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, Guttalabegumpet, Serilingampally, Ranga Reddy District. A.P., with your full name, address and contact details.
- Unpublished articles are not returned.
- Your article should be reader friendly with a positive view point.
- No controversial or political issues are published.
- Word limit for an article varies from 300 (one column) to 600 words (two columns). Writers can contact the editorial team for further details.
- The styles of references should be as per the 'Documentation of Sources' given at the end of the *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*.
- Editor reserves the right to accept/ reject articles and edit the selected articles.
- Unsolicited articles are not acknowledged.
- The Editor does not accept responsibility for the author's views.
- Articles received will be published in one of the forthcoming issues.

BOOK REVIEW

We request Publishers to send two copies of their Spiritual, Philosophical and Religious books for publishing a Book Review in our "Nachiketanjali" - monthly Magazine.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Nachiketa Tapovan is indebted to all the well-wishers, donors, patrons and advisors whose immense help and cooperation in multiple ways has helped us accomplish our goals.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

SUBSCRIPTIONS	INDIA	GIFT
Single copy	₹ 10	₹ 10
1 year	₹ 100	₹ 100
3 years	₹ 280	₹ 280
5 years	₹ 450	₹ 450

Requests for subscriptions can be sent by MO/DD/Cheque/Cash in favor of 'Nachiketa Tapovan' (Plus ₹ 30 for outstation cheques). Please include your name, address, phone number and email ID.

AN APPEAL TO PATRONS & SPONSORS

Ashraydatas are encouraged to become patrons of the magazine by joining Nachiketanjali's Patron's Scheme. You can become patrons by donating ₹ 5000/- which will be deposited in the magazine's corpus fund. We express our thanks by announcing their names in the following issue of the Magazine and the patron will also receive a 5 year subscription of the same.

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He needs no other rosary whose thread of life is strung with beads of love, service, charity and renunciation.

with best wishes from

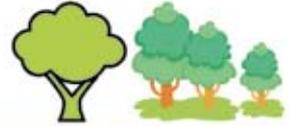
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NACHIKETA'S Go green Club

Recycle the Right way



“India will emerge as the third biggest consumer of plastics in the world by this year end.”

-The Plastic Development Council under the department of chemicals and petrochemicals

LET'S STOP THIS PROJECTION FROM COMING TRUE BY REDUCING, REUSING AND RECYCLING OUR WASTE OUTPUT.

- * Nachiketa's go green is now collecting all your recyclable waste material in collaboration with WOW initiative by the companies ITC and Ramky group.
- * This will help clean up the earth.
- * And also earn some notebooks for Nachiketa Tapovan's Vidya mandir.



Recyclable waste

1.	WASTE PAPER	: News papers, Magazines, Shredded paper, Old / used books, Old Files / Papers/documents, Old diaries and any type of full paper.
2.	KRAFT PAPER	: Cartons & Packing Material.
3.	JUNK MAILERS	: Brochures, Envelopes, Printed manuals, Advertising pamphlets, Any paper or paperboard item etc. Dustbin paper without contamination.
4.	PLASTIC	: Used plastic bottles/containers, Mineral water bottles, Juice and cola bottles, Milk bags (rinsed), Any plastic item with out contamination.
5.	METAL	: Metal tins, Boxes, Any metal items which are useless.

Please Note That:

- * Individual Households can drop off recyclable waste materials at Nachiketa Tapovan.
- * Material will be collected at Tapovan on the **first Saturday of every month**.
- * The material should be kept away from contamination & moisture.
- * Please **DO NOT DUMP/MIX ABOVE ITEMS** along with the Kitchen / Wet waste.
- * For bulk collections contact **9849168937**; periodic pick-ups could be arranged.

70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, R.R.District. A.P. 500 081, Ph: 9849168937, email:nachiketanjali1@gmail.com, www.nachiketatapovan.org

Acknowledgement

We thank one and all for the overwhelming response received towards this initiative from individuals as well as organizations. We are very happy to announce that 820 kg of recyclable waste was collected within barely 3 weeks from the date of announcement. This means that,

- our landfills were spared from 820 kg of waste material
- 820 kg of waste was recycled properly and efficiently
- Vidya Mandir of Nachiketa Tapovan earned some cash





Hotel Sri Brindavan
Nampally Station Road, Hyderabad



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*Whatever you can conceive and believe,
you can achieve.*



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