



# ***Nachiketanjali***

*...an offering*

***A Journey Into The Spiritual Realm!***

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## *Independence Day Celebrations*



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## Devi Stuti

‘O Devi, we bow before you, who are yourself good fortune in the dwellings of the virtuous, and ill-fortune in those of the vicious, intelligence in the hearts of the learned, faith in the hearts of the good, and modesty in the hearts of the high-born. May you protect the universe!

## Editorial

### From ‘ME’ to ‘WE’

People around the world lack even the basic resources for survival and it is high time we all make the transition from ‘ME’ to ‘WE’. Our souls are related with other souls as we are all members of the large human family. To understand the soul, the ocean provides a wonderful analogy. Each of us is like the wave in the ocean. It is impossible to separate the wave from the ocean. It is part of it. Likewise we are all part of the Supreme Consciousness.

In the vastness of the ocean there is no individual ‘I’. There are waves and tides, but it is all, in the end, ocean. We are all patterns created by Supreme power based on our past karmas. In the end, it is all Spirit. And yet, we all feel quite individual, don’t we? And we think our own very personal, individual thoughts. Our thoughts are triggered through memory, arising from karma and experience. They vary from individual to individual, the themes are different. Yet, it is possible to edit our thoughts with the help of a conscious mind. Small changes in our thought pattern will do the world a lot of good. By purifying our thoughts and expanding our love we can bring a sea change in this world.

It is unfair that one part of our human family should suffer at the expense of another. For instance, we owe our existence to Mother earth and to the farmers for providing us our daily bread. Today, there is a great imbalance, as calamities have ruined their lives. When they are on the precipice of giving away their lives it is our foremost duty to awaken ourselves and share with them with whatever little we have. We might not illuminate their lives, but we can for sure give them a ray of hope. For even a streak of light will make them visualize the brighter side of life.

We are each here to embrace and share our love for God with our fellow beings, for God exists in ME and YOU too. Let us remove all barriers between us and the world and make a smooth transition from ‘ME’ to ‘WE’.

- Subhadra K.

# Life that I Cherish Forever...

**G**opal and Shyam are good friends. Gopal is silent and always cheerful whereas Shyam is talkative and always anxious. Gopal is from a poor family whereas Shyam is from an upper middle class family.

Shyam's parents are not in good terms with each other. They fight and have a difference of opinion on certain issues. One night while going to bed Shyam decides to talk to Gopal the next day.

Gopal says, "It is just a matter of knowing the boundaries of life. Please don't take it to heart and you keep doing your work. Study well and try to get a good job. Have a separate life with boundaries if you want, but never entertain bad thoughts in your mind." Shyam says, "My life seems to be more miserable than yours. If God can exchange my life with yours then it would be the best thing to happen in my life." That was the moment when Lord Yama overheard their conversation and decides to exchange Shyam's life and Gopal's life.

Shyam suddenly finds himself in Gopal's place in Gopal's form. This was the first time he visits his friend's hut. To his surprise he sees all the facilities from cooking to sleeping in one thatched hut. It's evening time. Gopal's father comes and orders him to fetch a glass of water. Shyam looks at him and realizes he is completely drunk. When he is about to fetch the glass of water, he sees Gopal's mother whose body is hardly covered with a torn sari walking in with some vegetables. All of a sudden Gopal's father gets up and starts beating his wife and Gopal with a stick. Mother gets bruises on her body and Gopal gets bruises on his forehead.



In a short while, he sees that his mother is once again back to work. With great difficulty she cooks for all, feeds everyone including her husband and lastly eats whatever little food is left and prepares a place for everyone to sleep. At night the place where three members could sleep with great difficulty gets over crowded with seven members including Gopal's four siblings.

Shyam's soul had spent only four hours in Gopal's house but feels as if he has spent four yugas without food, without sleep and without happiness. He sighs, "How is Gopal able to manage in this house? He is a topper in the university, always happy and cheerful. What a terrible life, but look at his Divine expressions!" He starts crying and requests Lord Yama to give him back his same old life that he would love to cherish forever... but definitely not this life. Lord Yama says, "My dear child, start introspecting. Always ask why this body, why not any other body? Why this life, why not any other life? This will lead you to a higher realm of consciousness. Then one day you will be happy in any situation, anywhere like Gopal."

Shyam wakes up with a jerk and then looks at himself, his bedroom and his watch. It's morning. A very strange feeling passes through his spine. He feels fresh. He gets up and looks at himself in the mirror and to his surprise he finds a fresh wound on his forehead.



*Swami Nachiketanda Puri*



# Srimad Bhagavad Geeta

To understand Bhagavad Geeta, one must know its basic characters. The Great Mahabharata war took place in Kurukshetra between the Kauravas and Pandavas. Kurus are the sons of Dhritarashtra. Dhritarashtra was a blind and selfish ruler. He cared only for his own children's welfare. He did not abide by a King's Dharma. The Mahabharata war was won by the Pandavas. Arjuna who always walked on the path of Dharma won the war. On the other hand, Duryodhana who rejected Dharma was killed in the war. If one wants to win the war that takes place in one's own life, one must follow Arjuna's example.

As discussed in the last issue, one should look at this epic not as an event but as a symbolic truth. Only then will one realize the wisdom of Adhyatmik knowledge.

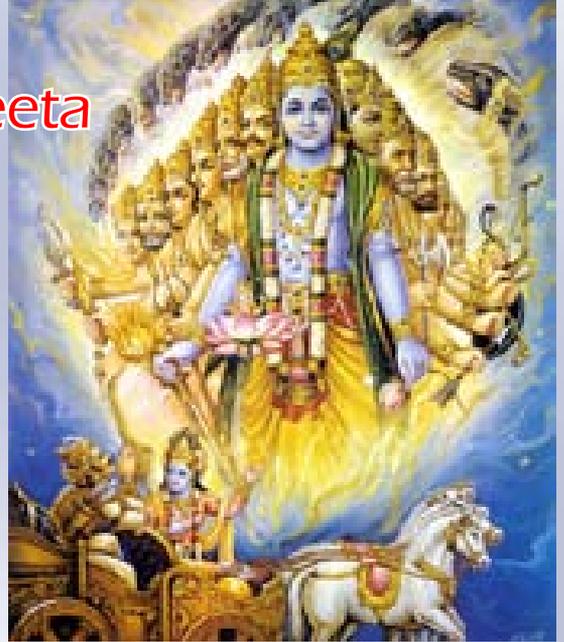
Mahabharata is not a victory of the Pandavas, but a victory of Dharma over Adharma.

Hinduism always gives importance to Dharma. Our sages say *Dharmo rakshati rakshitah* which means if you protect Dharma, Dharma will protect you.

In a marriage ceremony, the priest makes the married couple take four vows- *Dharmecha, Arthecha, Kamecha and Mokshecha*. Dharma has always been of first and foremost importance to self and society.

## What is Dharma?

There is no apt word in English language for Dharma. In other religions, Dharma has limited meaning called religion. In Hinduism (Sanatana Dharma), Dharma has got a vast meaning. Hinduism emphasizes on Dharma. Dharma refers to the right action not the religion. Dharma is an eternal and Divine law. The word Dharma is derived from the root 'Dhr' which means 'to hold'. Dharma means 'that which holds the entire universe.' This eternal law of Dharma



holds the entire universe from the microcosm to the macrocosm.

Maharshi Jaimini defines Dharma as that which is enjoined by the Vedas. Rishi Kanada, founder of the Vaiseshika system of philosophy, has given the best definition of Dharma in his Vaiseshika Sutras: "That which leads to the attainment of Abhyudaya (prosperity in this world) and Nihshreyasa (total cessation of pain and attainment of eternal bliss hereafter) is Dharma".

In Kaliyuga, a Mahabharata takes place in every house, society and nation. One might wonder how this is possible. A Mahabharata in this modern age? One who does not follow Dharma belongs to the Dhritarashtra's race. Dhritarashtra was blind and was in ignorance. Dhritarashtra's wife was Gandhari, though she had a choice to walk on the path of Dharma, she refused and simply followed her husband. Though a wife has to walk with her husband, it does not mean that she should tag along if he chooses the wrong path. A true wife always guides her husband to the right path or she always helps him tread the path of Dharma. Effectively, Gandhari and Dhritarashtra both were leading a path of Adharma. As a result, all their sons also did not follow Dharma. Once a person deviates from the

path of Dharma, he/she becomes selfish, greedy and arrogant. In a nutshell, one becomes blind with ignorance. That is when one develops all the bad qualities in their life. They are called Krura vrittis. And where do all these bad qualities exist? In the mind and that's where conflict arises and Dharma yuddha takes place. Kurukshetra prevails in every human being's mind. All the characters in Mahabharata exist in one and all. But what is important is the change we want to be, the path we choose and last but not the least, the character we want to be.

If one knows how to pick up the pearls of wisdom, the art of imbibing and practicing Bhagavad Geeta can bring a great transformation in one's life.



- Swami Shivananda Puri

## The Shiva Samhita

### Differences of Opinion

**Satyam kechitprashamsanti tapah shaucham tathapare I**

**Kshamam kechitprashamsanti tathauva samamaajjavam II**

**Meaning:** Some praise truth, others purification and asceticism; some praise forgiveness, others equality and sincerity.

**Kechiddanam prashamsanti pitrukarma tathapare I**

**Kechitkarma prashamsanti kechitvyragyamuttamam II**

**Meaning:** Some praise alms giving, others laud sacrifices made in honour of one's ancestors; some praise action (Karma), others think dispassion (Vairagya) to be the best.

**Kechidagruhastakarmani prashamsanti vichakshanaaha I**

**Agnihotrakam Karmam tatha kechitparam viduhu II**

**Meaning:** Some wise persons praise the performance of the duties of the house holder; other authorities hold up fire-sacrifice etc., as the highest.

**Mantrayogam prashamsanthi kechitti tranusevanam I**

**Evam bahunupayaamstu pravadanti gu muttaye II**

**Meaning:** Some praise Mantrayoga, others the frequenting of places of pilgrimage. Thus diverse are the ways which people declare for emancipation.





## *Sri Ramakrishna's Amrita Dhara*

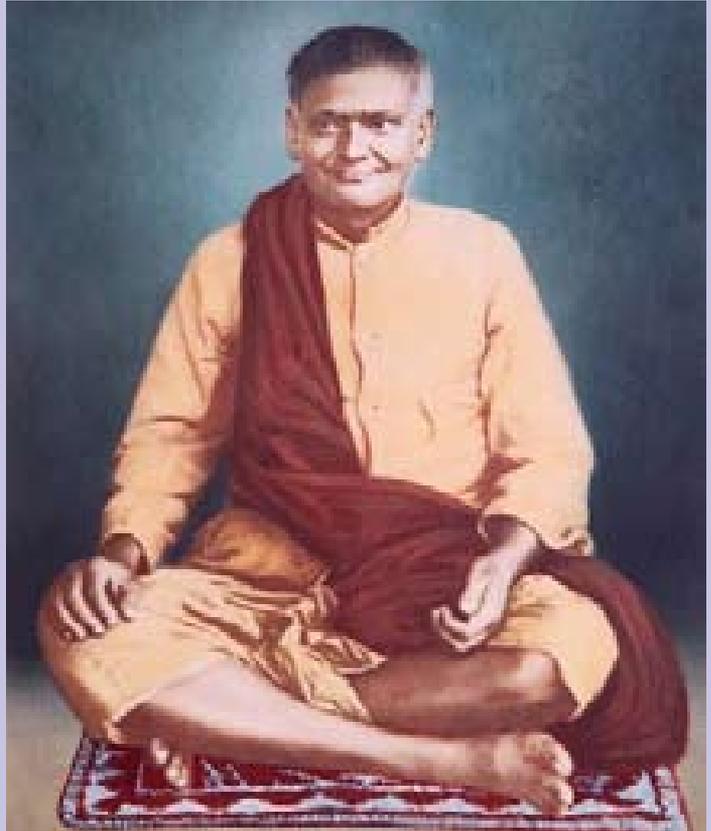


*Direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna - Swami Subodhananda*

Subodh Chandra Ghosh was born on 8 November, 1867 in Calcutta. His family owned the Siddeshwari Kali Temple in Thanthania. Every evening, his mother Nayantara would tell him stories from the Bhagavata, Ramayana and Mahabharata. His favorite pastime would be to read the biographies of holy people and observe how their lives were transformed.

Subodh was a simple and sweet boy and was a guileless Divine child. Sri Ramakrishna used to call him Khokha- "little boy". He was a brilliant student and his father said that if he would get good marks in his eighth grade he would get him married. He vehemently opposed the idea of marriage and fervently prayed to God that he should do badly in his examinations. He actually did get bad marks and had to move to another school where M was the headmaster.

His father Krishnadas was closely associated with the Brahma Samaj and it was through the journals of the Samaj that Subodh was introduced to Sri Ramakrishna. Once he knew about Him, he had a great desire to meet Him but did not know how to reach Dakshineswar. One morning in August 1885, he along with his friend Kshirod Chandra Mitra started out to visit the Master and managed to reach their destination with great difficulty. Once in Dakshineswar he did not know how to approach the Master and asked his friend to go forward. Sri Ramakrishna then called him and said "I knew you would come. Well, the Divine mother sends here those who will attain spirituality. You belong to this place." Subodh asked, "If I belong here, why



did You not call me earlier?" The Master replied, "Look, everything happens at the right time." He then asked him to come on Tuesday or Saturday. But Subodh was apprehensive as he had come without permission and felt his parents would not allow him again. But on the following Saturday Subodh and his friend fled from school to Dakshineswar. Sri Ramakrishna took the boys to the stairs leading to the Shiva temple and told them to stick out their tongues. He wrote something on their tongue and then asked them to meditate. The magic touch of Sri Ramakrishna awakened Subodh's latent spirituality. He felt a current rush through along the spinal column to his brain. He lost all sense of personal identity.

Subodh lost all interest in studies and preferred to be in the company of Sri Ramakrishna and spend time in meditation, prayer and japa. He



could not stay and serve the Master like the other direct disciples in Cossipore garden but ran away from home at every opportunity to meet Him. After the Master's demise he went mad with grief and was inconsolable. It soon became unbearable for him to stay at home and he left on foot to Varanasi without a single paisa in his pocket.

Later he joined the Ramakrishna Monastery at Baranagore. As he was the youngest among the disciples he was known as Khokha Maharaj. He was very fond of travelling and went on several pilgrimages with his brother disciples. He was among the first group of trustees of the Belur Math appointed by Swami Vivekananda in 1901 and later became the Treasurer of the Math and Mission. His love for Swamiji was second only to the love for his Master. Sometimes when Swamiji would become so serious that none of his brother disciples dared approach him, it was left to Khokha Maharaj to go and interrupt his mood. He was also extremely devoted to Holy Mother.

Swami Subodhananda shouldered several famine and relief works during his life time. He sometimes even resorted to begging to help poor patients with food and medicine. He was fond of talking about the Master and taught people from his own experience.

He was self reliant and did not accept personal service from others. His personal belongings were almost nil. Towards the end he suffered from various ailments including diabetes and blood dysentery. He was fully conscious and cheerful till the end. The night before he passed away he said, "My last prayer is that the blessings of the Master be always on the Order." His end came on 2nd December 1932. He remained the same joyful little boy throughout his life – the ideal model of a Divine child of Sri Ramakrishna.

- Geetha K.

## Shreechakra



**Chakra pooja** or Yantra pooja is the worship of a deity in a diagrammatic form.

The worship of Devi in Shreechakra is regarded as the highest form of the Devi worship. Originally Lord Shiva gave 64 Chakras and their Mantras to the world, to attain various spiritual and material benefits. For His consort Devi He gave the Shreechakra and the highly coveted and the most powerful Shodashakshari mantra, which is the equivalent of all the other 64 put together.

It is said that in the beginning God, who was one, wanted to become many and enjoy Himself. As the first step to creation He created Devi – the total cosmic Female force. For the male part, out of His left He created Shiva, out of His middle He created Brahma and out of His right He created Vishnu. That is why many regard the Devi as more powerful than the Trinities and hence She is called Parashakti or Paradevi – Para meaning beyond.

Brahma created the universe. Vishnu controls and runs the universe. Shiva along with Shakti is engaged in the eternal dissolution and recreation of the universe. The Bindu in the center of the Shreechakra is the symbolic representation of the cosmic spiritual union of Shiva and Shakti. Apart from that the Shreechakra also embodies countless number of deities and represents the whole of creation. Hence by worshipping the Devi in Shreechakra one is actually worshipping the highest ultimate force in the Tantrik form.

*Source : Astro Jyoti*



# Disappearing Daughters

***“Man endures pain as an undeserved punishment; woman accepts it as a natural heritage.”***

The Indian society, since a long time, has kept the women-folk at the back seat. It seems to have set a fixed role for its women members. In the male dominated Indian society, the word ‘woman’ has been used as a reference for a kind of decorative piece in the household of man. Generally, the women here live in a world in which they do not even have the rights and the basic control over their own mind and body.

When the media claims that the Indian woman has finally “arrived”, that there is a noticeable change in her status, and that she displays a new confidence, one doesn’t know how one should react to this – Should we Believe? Disbelieve? Applaud? Be cynical? Or conduct a reality check?<sup>1</sup> This is because for every fact that would display signs of improvement in the status of women in India, there would be a dozen more reasons pointing towards the flip side of this view.

The harsh truth is that although an Indian woman is traditionally regarded as an honourable and dignified personality, who is most often than not also equated with Goddesses, the Indian society has yet not recognized woman as its bonafide member. She is still a second grade citizen, inferior to the much revered ‘men’, which can well be proved by the very commonly used statement ‘yeh mat bhulo kit tum ek aurat ho’ (forget not that you are a woman).<sup>2</sup> She has been a neglected and discarded soul and continues to be exploited, battered and molested by man, who is supposed to be supreme.

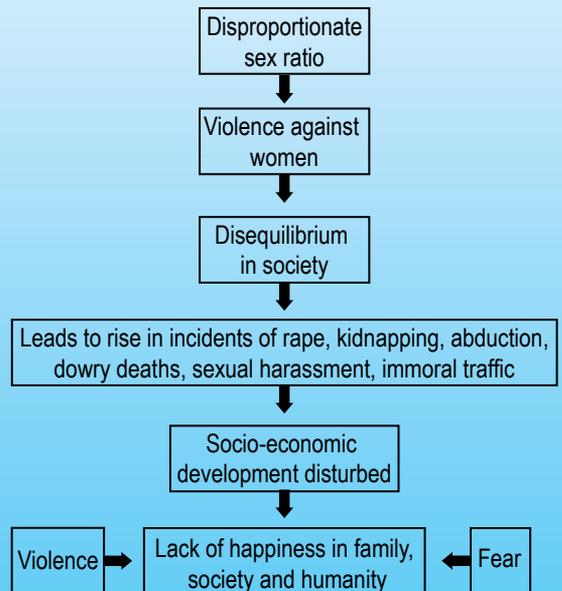
In short, women in India continue to be the passive victims of patriarchal institutions where they have very little choice but to go for what is demanded from them.

While dealing with the fact of sex-selective abortions in India, the first thing that comes to our mind is to find out the reason behind the much

dreaded act. And when it comes to finding out the reason, the ‘mindset’ factor takes precedence over all. The considerations in the minds of the people for an inherent bias against the women folk and which also enable and perpetrate the elimination of the female foetus can be attributed to various factors like the ones mentioned below:

- Carrying the family legacy forward
- Greater demands in upbringing a girl child
- Biases related to inheritance of property
- Burden of dowry, etc.

The following flow diagram is a holistic representation on the impact of declining sex ratio on the society:<sup>3</sup>



“In the state of nature...all men are born equal, but they cannot continue in this equality. Society makes them lose it, and they recover it only by the protection of the law,” said Charles de Montesquieu. Thus, because of the bias of the society, the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 (PC&PNDT Act) had to be enacted. Section 3A of this Act prohibits sex selection, before and after conception. Section 4 provides for the regulation



of prenatal diagnostic techniques<sup>4</sup> for detection of genetic abnormalities, by restricting their use to registered institutions. The Act allows the use of these techniques only at a registered place for a specified purpose and by a qualified person, registered for this purpose, and provides severe penalties for contravention of the same.

The Act has proven to be a useful tool in control of sex-selective abortion. But, female foeticide continues to exist in various garbs as the implementation of the law has not been reviewed. There has been a gross misuse of reproductive technology in a society characterized by a strong bias against the female child. But, any law can only be effective if the people are willing to abide by it. However, it cannot be left to the discretion of the people. Law for betterment of the condition of the society needs to be enforced with an iron hand. Same is applicable for the present Act.



Let all those who think of daughters as a burden look at the present society where it is the girl child who mostly supports her aged parents. Let them remember that a girl is not less than anyone else. The Saint of the Gutters was a woman. It was a woman who challenged the mighty British Empire courageously. It was a woman who made India feel proud after many years in the Olympics. All of them would have not been able to bring glory had it not been for their parents. Cheers for these women and their parents who have set an example for the entire nation. Our society can claim itself to be progressive only if it recognizes and accepts the progress of women. Strong individual and societal commitment alone can end the problem related to the girl child.



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- 1 <http://www.hinduonnet.com/mag/2008/02/10/stories/2008021050050300.htm>
- 2 Srivastav, V.P.(2005). *Handbook on Crime against Women*, p.279 : Delhi, Indian Publishers' Distributors
- 3 Source: Goel, Aruna; Kaur, Manvinder; Sultana, Ameer (2006). *Violence Against Women: Issues and Perspectives*, New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd.
- 4 *Examples of Pre-natal diagnostic Techniques can be aminocentesis and ultrasonography.*





## Your mind should be only on the target

In America, Swamiji was watching some boys. They were standing on the bridge trying to shoot at egg-shells that were floating on the river, but they always missed the target. Swamiji took the gun and aimed at the shells. He fired twelve times and every time he hit an egg-shell. The boys asked Swamiji: 'Well Mister, how did you do it?' Swamiji said 'Whatever you are doing, put your whole mind on it. If you are shooting, your mind should be only on the target. Then you will never miss. If you are learning your lessons, think only of the lesson. In my country, boys are taught to do this.'

The more this power of concentration, more the knowledge acquired, because this is the one and only method of acquiring knowledge. Even the lowest shoemaker, if he gives more concentration, will make shoes better; the cook with concentration will cook a meal all the better. In making money or in worshipping God or in doing anything, the stronger the power of concentration, the better the thing done. This is the one call, the one knock, which opens the gates of nature, and lets out floods of light.

How has all the knowledge in the world been gained but by the concentration of the powers of the mind? The world is ready to give up its secrets if we only know to knock, how to give it the necessary blow. The strength and force of the blow come through concentration. There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, more the power brought to bear on one point; that is the secret.

- Swami Vivekananda

# THE JOURNEY THROUGH CONSCIOUSNESS

## The Myth – Dialogue with Death

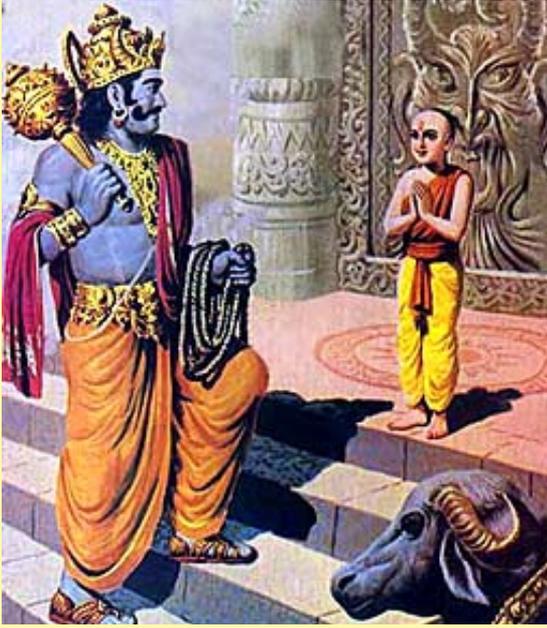
The Upanishads are considered ageless because they describe realities that do not change. They are "elements of an immutable landscape, the very bedrock of reality". Out of hundreds of these documents, one in particular sums up the essence of the Upanishads. As Eknath Easwaran puts it; "Katha Upanishad is lyrical, dramatic, practical and inspiring. It embraces the key ideas of Vedic tenets and presents them in the context of a mythic adventure that everyone can relate to- the story of a young hero who ventures into the land of death in search of immortality".

The serendipity of our organization also being named Nachiketa Tapovan offers a chance to note that those who come here are gently trained to develop the passion, desire and idealism of Nachiketa, the young hero of the Katha Upanishad. In this short series we present the quintessence of Katha Upanishad much of which comprises of excerpts from Sri Easwaran's practical and delightful commentary on this scripture, titled "Dialogue with Death".

Nachiketa, a teenager is given away to "Death" by his father Vajashrava in an impulsive fit of anger. Like for many of us for whom central questions arise when we experience some deep loss or tragedy in life, this becomes the moment in Nachiketa's life. "Why am I here?", "What happens after death?" "How should I live?" Like Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita, he stands for each one of us who have a deep drive to know what life is about and why we are here.

In Hindu mythology, there is a great deal of personification. Forces of nature and of the mind are represented as Gods, Goddesses and demons; states of consciousness become





unearthly realms. So death is personified as Yama, the Controller, for it is he who administers the central law of the phenomenal world; that whatever comes into existence must someday pass away. The inward journey into different states of awareness through meditation is depicted as Nachiketa's sojourn to Yamaloka, the abode of the Lord of Death.

Nachiketa waits for Yama for three days and three nights, in meditation, with a resolve not to rise again until he has found the Eternal. When at the end of the three days, he comes face to face with Yama, the latter offers Nachiketa three boons. Nachiketa chooses forgiveness, ever-present vitality, and immortality.

**Forgiveness:** Nachiketa asks for his father's heart to be free of anger. There is great practical wisdom in this boon. The gates to the deepest consciousness can never open without an all forgiving compassionate heart. No matter who has wronged us or how seriously we have been wronged, there should be no bitterness in our hearts.

**Ever-present Vitality:** Now that Nachiketa's personal relationships are in order and he is at peace with the external world, Nachiketa asks

Yama to teach him the Fire sacrifice. This is not an external ritual but the secret of the most vital function, the Prana. Fire is a perfect symbol of Prana because where Prana is abundant; there is fire – intense enthusiasm, vitality, drive, resoluteness, the capacity to see right through the end without being distracted. Those who have this fire can achieve anything they choose.

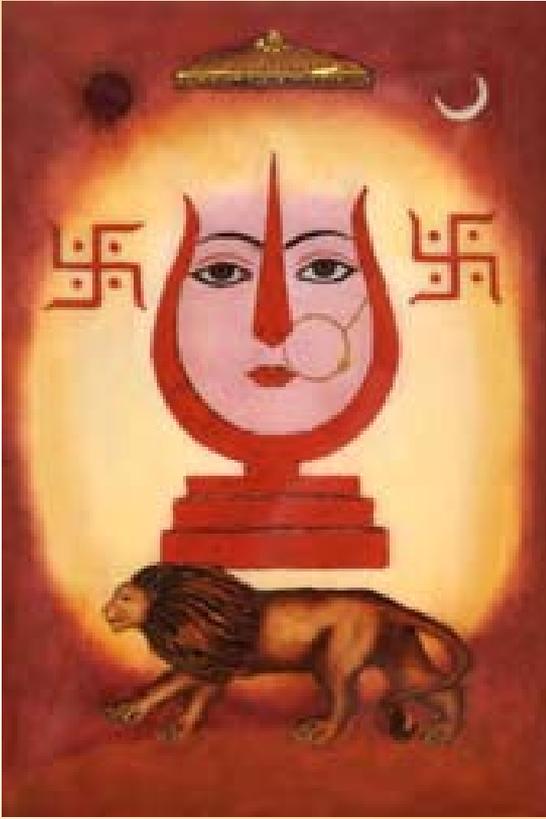
**Immortality:** At this stage, with the secret of Prana at hand, when the desires are unified and the will is invincible, every human capacity is deepened. A person can have anything he or she desires. Yama's offer to Nachiketa that he can have whatever he wants is no work of magic, but a practical and real possibility. Nachiketa declines Yama's offer of material success and prosperity; he insists on seeking nothing but the Ultimate Truth.

Yama is finally pleased to have found an ideal student who has passed his tests!

*- Harini Nandakuru*



## 'Jai Dadi Ki'



**O**m Ganeshay Namah!

Om Hanumante Namah!

In the quiet town of Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan, there stands an ancient temple of immense splendor and beauty. Devotees from all over the world throng by the millions every year, their hearts overflowing with devotion. One who enters this temple with a pure heart never goes out empty handed, so it is believed. This temple, the earthly abode of Rani Sati Dadi is the place where such myths and legends come alive as miracles in the lives of devotees and believers.

This is the story of Rani Sati Dadi - as the woman chosen to fulfill a destiny from her previous birth, and as the Goddess worshipped today as the very embodiment of that strength, courage and love.

It all started during the epic war of the Mahabharata in the field of Kurukshetra. Abhimanyu, the young son of Arjuna, was entangled in the Kauravas' Chakravyuh and died fighting bravely. As was the custom in those days, Uttara, Abhimanyu's wife wanted to become

a Sati by sitting in the funeral pyre with him. But Lord Krishna forbade her from doing so, as she was pregnant with her son Parikshit. The Lord promised her that she would be able to fulfill the Sati custom in the Kaliyug by becoming a Maha Sati.

Thousands of years passed. It was Kaliyug, time for the Maha Sati to be reborn.

In a small village named Dokava in Rajasthan, Uttara was reborn as Narayani. She was the daughter of Gursamalji, a respected man in the Dokava village. Her birth was celebrated with a lot of pomp and ceremony, for she truly was a Divine child. By the age of five, Narayani had read and mastered all the Holy Hindu Granths, Puranas and Vedas. While reading the Mahabharata, Narayani remembered the promise of Lord Krishna through Divine vision - that she would be a Maha Sati in this birth.

Meanwhile, Abhimanyu was also reborn as Tandhan in the small town of Hissar. His father, Jaliram worked as the Nawab's Diwan in Hissar.

Years rolled by and Narayani grew up to be a beautiful, graceful girl. It was time for her to be married. When her parents started looking for the perfect bridegroom for her, she guided them to send a message to Jaliram's house in Hissar, for Tandhan was destined to be her partner in this lifetime. Tandhan and Narayani were soon to get married on an auspicious day, which we now call 'Mangsir Nawami'.

As it happened, the Nawab's son Shehzada and Jaliram's son Tandhan had grown up together as good friends. One day, Shehzada came across a beautiful white horse that belonged to Tandhan. Looking at the powerful figure and beauty of the horse, Shehzada was overwhelmed with greed. But Tandhan refused to part with it. Shehzada insisted, but Tandhan was adamant.

Now, this matter became a thorn in Shehzada's pride. He decided to take the horse by force. He sneaked into Jaliram's house in the darkness of the night and tried to steal the horse. Terrified, the horse began to neigh loudly and woke up all the members of the household. There was great

commotion and chaos. Tandhan came out to the stable and saw the thief running away. Not knowing the thief's identity in the darkness, he threw a large spear at Shehzada, piercing his chest that killed him instantly.

When the family recognized the thief as Shehzada, they were struck with fear. The Nawab's vengeance at his son's death would strike hard upon them. The entire family fled to Jhunjhunu overnight, to escape the Nawab's wrath.

Days turned into months and soon, a year passed by. It was time for the 'Gauna' of Narayani and Tandhan, when they would get ceremonially married and go to Tandhan's home.

The destined marriage took place with a lot of pomp and festivity and Narayani got ready to travel to her father-in-law's house with Tandhan and the baraat. This was the delicate moment the Nawab had been waiting for, to avenge the death of his son, Shehzada.

The newly wed couple was crossing a dense forest. Along with them was Rana, a devoted sevak. During the Mahabharata, Rana had been Abhimanyu's favorite warrior in battle, and he prayed to be reborn so he could serve his master again and again.

As the baraat crossed the forest, they heard a thundering sound and saw clouds of dust rising in the distance. Immediately, they realized that something was wrong. It was the Nawab's army coming to attack the marriage party.

A fierce battle raged through the day and it was almost dusk. Suddenly, there was a loud cry of pain. It was Tandhan. He had been attacked from the back and his head decapitated. Seeing her husband's headless body lying on the floor, Narayani was stricken with fury.

Evoking her Divine powers, she took the form of Maa Durga, the embodiment of Shakti or power. Wielding the most terrifying of weapons in her hands, she attacked and routed the Nawab's army single-handedly. Soon, the battle was over.

Narayani had defeated the Nawab, but lost her husband Tandhan. She asked Rana, her sevak to gather sandalwood from the forest for the funeral

pyre. This would be her last journey with her beloved husband, on the path of Sati.

Tandhan lay in the lap of Maa Narayani as she sat on the funeral pyre. Dressed in a bright red bridal dress, Narayani gave a Divine darshan to Rana with a Swastika on her right hand and a Trishul in the left.

Rana was moved to tears with devotion. As he had been a loyal sevak for so many lifetimes, Narayani blessed him, saying that his name would always be taken before hers. As burning flames consumed the funeral pyre, Gods and Goddesses from heaven showered flowers and blessings at the wonderful sight.

In minutes, the wood turned to ashes. As per Narayani's instructions, Rana gathered the ashes in a Kalash, a brass pot and buried it near a Kair tree in the village of Jhunjhunu. This was the sacred spot where the temple of **Rani Sati Dadi** was built.

**Rani-** after her faithful sevak Rana, **Sati-** as she had fulfilled Lord Krishna's prophecy and turned Maha Sati and **Dadi-** as she watches over all with love and care. This was the origin of her name- Rani Sati Dadi.

The day of 'Navami' is considered one of the most auspicious days, even more than the birthdays of Lord Rama and Lord Krishna. This was the day when Narayani was born, got married to Tandhan and also became a Maha Sati.

Today, after over 715 years, the sacred flame in Rani Sati Dadi's temple in Jhunjhunu still burns brightly. It is a symbol of Rani Sati Dadi's love for her devotees, which is a source of Divine strength and courage in their hearts.

***Request:** If there have been any shortcomings or errors in this story, please excuse them as human errors on our part. This story has been interpreted and translated from Hindi.*

This story was compiled by:

*Padma Sultania  
Sunita Sultania  
Mamta Agarwal  
Avinash Agarwal*



## Stones of Virtues

Love, kindness, patience, respect, honesty, etc. - these are the traits that identify a good person. Any thing good about a person are known as his Virtues. Virtues are the DNA of our personality and the blueprint of our soul. Virtues ultimately guide an individual to respect the society they live in.

Goodness in people is not of rampant existence these days. Modern stressful lives have sucked out all the goodness in us making us all survival beings. We want nice people around us in times of difficulty and perhaps be a lending arm to someone in need. There is no set time for being kind and polite to your fellow people. Being nice makes you happy and being helped selflessly makes you feel blessed.

But if you take out a little time everyday and work on yourself and your virtues, life will seem a lot easier to deal with everyday. You will accept every passing day of your life as a gift and accept it as it comes.

This may all sound picture perfect, a dream world and a snap of your fingers will bring you back to reality, marooned in our concrete jungles



with no real guidance to this picture perfect dream world. Stones of virtues is one such powerful tool that will help lay the foundation of a good moral being to stay happy and content in our modern day lives.

**Every stone in this bag represents a virtue:**

- **Honesty**
- **Trust**
- **Love**
- **Humility**
- **Patience**
- **Courage**
- **Clarity**

Take one stone out everyday and work on it. Or rather let it work on you. Your thoughts and actions should nurture this virtue the whole day. You will encounter different situations in your life. Each of these virtues would help you face these difficult moments in the rightful manner.

Get all the goodness in your life by imbibing some or all of these virtues in your daily life. These virtues would make you stronger with every passing day until you realize your inner strength.

Life would not only become easy to face but also a wonderful place to live in.

*- Purvvi Bagaria*



# *Gatam, Gatah*

## **“Gatam Gatah”, “Past is Past” – Its role in emotional well-being.**

These words are too banal to receive a ‘second’ thought (pun!!). Or are they really? Do we, as human beings, really internalize this simple reality? A rational mind would counter “Oh! Everyone knows this”.

Well, let’s step back a moment and observe the emotionally stable beings surrounding us. What makes them calmer and more composed than the rest of us? What makes them think clearer in desperate times of need? What makes them react better at the spur of the moment? These people are all around us in every walk of life. They do not come with any special educational degree; neither do they come with a professional title. They could just be as simple as the common man.

How do they do it? Do they consciously control it? Are they born with this trait? Or is it plain laziness that creates such an external perception? It could be all the above. One might wonder–

How does the concept of “past” play into the emotions of present and future. The key thing to note is that “past” or “gatam” also encompasses the most recent fraction of second past. For the quantitatively oriented mind, if the number 0 is the absolute “NOW” (to the millionth of the second),  $-1/\text{millionth}$  of the second is also “past”, just as well as the millions and billions of years before that. While the human mind cannot discern the instantaneous portions of the past second, it meanders uncontrollably in the past hours, days, months and years.

Is it possible that an emotionally stable and evolved individual is actually able to voluntarily or involuntarily perceive, and more importantly RECOGNIZE that instantaneous past fractions of seconds? Is it possible that once you are able to time-slice to the fine degree of the “past second”, you are in much better control of yourself and thereby, the situation surrounding you?

Maybe this deserves a second thought!!!

*- Vinodh S.*





# Breast Cancer

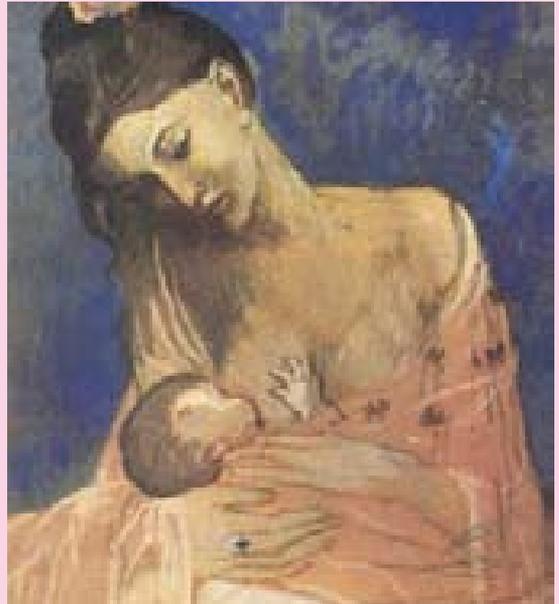


October is the 'Breast Cancer Awareness' month. The following passage highlights some significant details regarding the risks, methods of diagnosis, and treatment on the disease. Breast Cancer develops from a cancerous cell which develops in the lining of a milk duct or a milk gland in one of the breasts. It is a common cancer in women above the age of 50 years. In the United States of America, **one in eight** women develops breast cancer. In India **one in twenty two** women develops breast cancer. This considerable difference may be due to lack of diagnosis. Currently, the incidence of breast cancer in our nation has been rapidly increasing.

There are several risk factors which contribute to this rising statistic. The risk of developing breast cancer increases with age as the probability of obtaining the cancer doubles with every ten years of age. One's family history and whether they are childless or had their first child above the age of thirty years may also play a role. Lifestyle factors, such as obesity and excessive alcohol intake, early onset of periods and a long term use of hormonal therapy, are all determinants of a candidate's risk of developing breast cancer as well.

For women in their thirty to forty years, family and genetic history can also influence the occurrence of breast cancer among the population. About one to two in twenty cases of breast cancer are caused by faulty genes such as BRCA1 and BRCA2 which can be inherited. These genes mostly affect women in their thirty to forty years.

There are certain conditions under which one should consult a specialist. If they have three close blood relatives who had developed breast or ovarian cancer at any age, two close relatives who developed breast or ovarian cancer under the age of sixty, a close relative who developed breast cancer under the age of forty, a male relative who had developed breast cancer or a relative with bilateral breast cancer- it is strongly recommended they see a doctor.



**Types of Breast Cancer:** There are two types of Breast Cancer:

1. Non-invasive and carcinome *in situ*- ductal carcinoma is the most common type of non-invasive breast cancer.
2. Invasive- grows from a duct or lobule into surrounding tissue, spreads by the lymphatics and blood.

**Signs and Symptoms:** The patient could be asymptomatic or could show outward signs. The most common ones include a palpable lump, thickening of skin or a dimple in the breast. Less commonly you see a change in the size or shape of a breast, discharge or bleeding from the nipple, inversion of the nipple, change in color of the areola and redness or pitting of skin. All these can also signify a problem. However, sometimes these signs could be benign also. So consulting a specialist immediately would be the best thing.

**Screening for breast cancer:** It begins with a standard bilateral screening mammography starting at the age of 40 as per the majority



of guidelines. There may be a small benefit between ages 40 and 49. High risk patients with strong family history should start earlier- 10 years before the age of the first degree relative. To exemplify, if a relative was diagnosed at 40, the candidate should begin screening at the age of 30. The benefits of screening include a decreased breast cancer mortality and morbidity from breast cancer.

**Diagnosis:** The diagnostic work up includes a mammography consisting of a digital mammogram and ultrasound scan of the breast. After this, an MRI of the breast is taken. Once breast cancer is suspected, mammography should be done and followed up by a biopsy. If biopsy is positive for cancer cells further workup is needed for staging of cancer before the treatment is planned.

**Treatment:** There are several treatment options for breast cancer, the first one being **Surgery** which consists of a **lumpectomy**- the removal of solely the tumor, or a **mastectomy**, which involves removal of the whole breast with the lymph node sampling. Other options include **hormonal therapy, chemotherapy** and **radiation therapy**. Which treatment a patient should



receive depends on many factors. These include the age of the patient, menopausal status, hormone responsiveness and the expression of Her2 receptors. It is recommended that patients learn self-examination of the breast and practice doing so once a month. They are also recommended to maintain a high fiber and low fat diet, exercise regularly, undergo an annual mammogram and medical checkup.

- *Dr. Rohini, MD., Medical Oncologist*



As a part of Nachiketa Tapovan's Cancer Awareness Program, Dr Rohini, U.S. returned Oncologist is offering free Cancer Awareness, Consultation and Counseling sessions on Saturdays from 6 p.m - 7 p.m at Nachiketa Tapovan, Kavuri Hills. To avail, please call 91 8008882828, 91 9849168937.

If you are interested in arranging an awareness session at your organization or institution, please contact us at 91 8008882828, 91 9849168937 to let

us know your preferred dates to host the event.

If recognized early, Breast cancer can be cured. Encourage your friends and family to get screening mammograms and you can help by volunteering for the cause!



# Festival of Lights

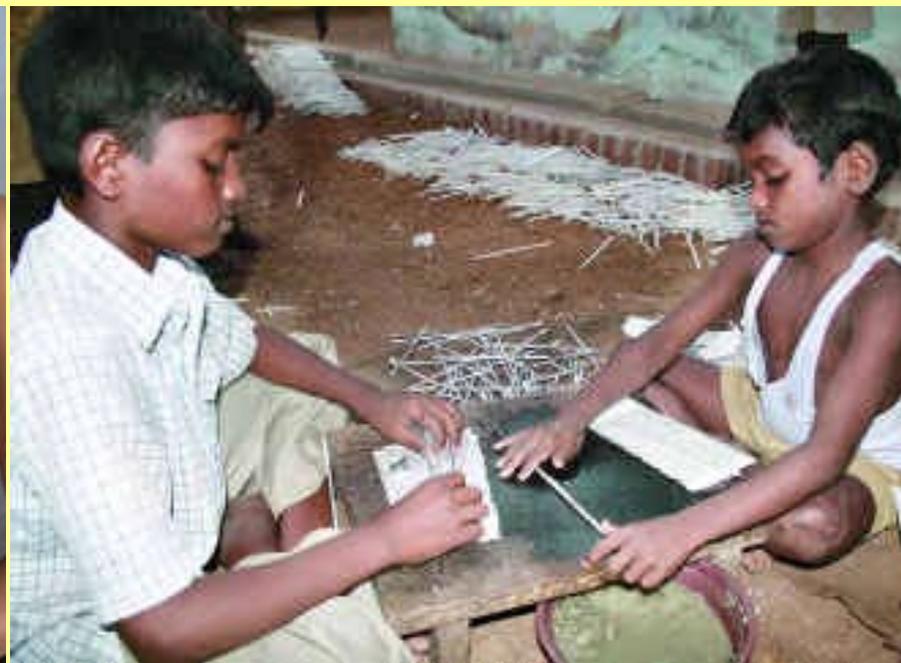


Little hands, Gleaming eyes,  
beaming smiles, what joy and fun!



Let us stop the tragedy  
behind our celebrations!

Let us give these hands a  
pen to hold instead!



ବିହାରୀ ବାବୁଜୀ  
ତାଳାବୁରୀ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠା  
କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟ

**An appeal to our readers -** If you are celebrating this Diwali with fireworks, please look for the **No Child Labour Used** mark on the boxes which is “**NCLE**” or “**NCLU**”.



## American Gandhi - Martin Luther King

Like men, even nations lose their identity and lie deep in the realms of time. They regain their true nature when unearthed by a few people who dare to change the present and lay a new path on the foundations of the past for the future generations. United States of America is known as one of the best democratic countries in the world today. But even a country of such repute suffered many disparities, fights, civil wars and struggles. The African American Community ('Negroes' as they were called until 1970s), was not treated as human beings till the early 20th century. They used to work under the whites as slaves and were never allowed to realize that they are also humans and deserved freedom and enjoyment as much as the whites in their own country. In 1862 Abraham Lincoln the then President of USA revoked slavery but the whites that were dominant, disobeyed him and ran a parallel government during his regime. Lincoln succeeded in the internal war, but died to the bullets of the whites. Martin Luther King born on January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia was one such great personality who fought and laid his life for the rights of African Americans. Martin Luther King became a martyr when he was felled by a bullet.

M.L.King's ambition was to study medicine and law, but he could not. He did graduation from Theological Seminary as wished by his father. He was fascinated by the writings and principles of Gandhiji at this time. He took a doctorate in Philosophy from Boston University.

He was appointed as a Pastor at Montgomery Baptist Church. Works of the American writer-philosopher Thoreau influenced him very much. He resolved to fight for the civil rights of the African Americans in the USA and followed the path of non-violence like Gandhiji. He led the movement at Montgomery that went for about a year in protest against the orders passed by the Government for allocating separate seats for blacks and whites in public buses. He could not digest the disparity shown by the rulers and he did raise his voice for the blacks who were a neglected lot and was on the path of protest till his death. Unfortunately, the black leaders themselves did not support him. Supporters of racism did not like his move to involve people of all races in his struggles. King continued his struggle for equal civil rights for the blacks in the United States of America. As a result, the blacks in America could secure due rights on the basis of equality. Even the white race appreciated his efforts. He conducted his peaceful movement by establishing the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Impressed and inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's path of non-violence, he visited India in 1959, when he said,

"Since being in India, I am more convinced than ever before that the method of non-violent resistance is the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for justice and human dignity. In a real sense, Mahatma Gandhi embodied in his life certain universal principles that are inherent in the moral structure of the universe, and these principles are as inescapable as the law of gravitation."

Between 1960 and 1965 the reputation of King touched new heights of glory. His non-violent methods of protest attracted even whites and they also supported his struggle. Protests against racism in hotels drew thousands of students on to the roads and King also participated with them in the open protest and got arrested. He conducted a grand public meeting at Washington and delivered the famous lecture "I have a dream" and concluded the speech by saying I have presented the soul of the nation before the Court of Morality. Heeding to his protests, the Imperial Government enacted the Law of Civil Rights in 1964 and revoked racism in employment and Public Offices. King was conferred Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. At later stages, like Gandhiji, he was also criticized for his non-violent methods of protests as some of his supporters expected quick results. King got world wide support for his struggle and in 1965 Government granted equal rights to all including black Americans and a new law called "Voting Rights" was brought into force. He criticized America for its intervention in Vietnam War. For resolving the Economic Crisis he called for revolutionary changes in the society. He went to Memphis in support of Scavengers. On April, 4th while he was standing in the second floor balcony of Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, MLK was shot dead with a bullet of a white man in 1968. The entire world mourned the death of King, who was also known as the "American Gandhi". As a mark of respect to this great martyr, American Government declared every 3rd Monday of January as a national holiday.

- M. Koti Rajasekhar



*Did you know that the UN has declared 2nd October, Mahatma Gandhi's birthday as 'The International Day of Non-violence'?*

## A few gems from the Father of Our Nation

Hand picked from **My Experiments with Truth** An Autobiography

The heart's earnest and pure desire is always fulfilled. In my experience I have often seen this rule verified. Service of the poor has been my heart's desire, and it has always thrown me amongst the poor and enabled me to identify myself with them.



One should not eat to please the palate, but just to keep the body going. When each organ of sense subserves the body and through the body the soul, its special relish disappears, and then alone does it begin to function in the way nature intended to do.

Any number of experiments is too small and no sacrifice is too great for attaining this symphony with nature...



The true connotation of humility is *self-effacement*. Self-effacement is *moksha* (salvation), and whilst it cannot by itself be an observance, there may be other observances necessary for its attainment. If the acts of an aspirant after *moksha* or a servant have no humility or selflessness about them, there is no longing for *moksha* or service. Service without humility is selfishness and egotism.



To see the universal and all-pervading Spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself.



# A Step towards Spirituality

When I say XYZ is a spiritual person, the picture of XYZ in our mind is that of a sadhu/ a rishi who has renounced everything material and is away from the mainstream world. But that's not true. A spiritual person need not necessarily be a sadhu. Even a common man like you and me could walk the path of spirituality. All we need to do is to base our material life on the foundation of spirituality.

Spirituality is nothing but finding peace and happiness. Every person born on earth yearns for peace and happiness.

So we get busy seeking money, prestige, power and position hoping to get peace and happiness. We do work hard and get the money, position and luxury we aim for, but only to discover that our hunger for these material things has increased. The sense of satisfaction that we get from our achievements quickly fades and makes us hungry again. So how do we bring everlasting peace and happiness into our lives?

The answer to this is Spirituality- the limitless joy and peace that is our birthright. A person who understands spirituality experiences this real unending joy. We experience spirituality when our mind is completely purified and quiet.

We all have spiritual experiences all the time. Spirituality is about recognizing these spiritual experiences and consciously seeking these experiences in life. It's about growing this tiny spark that's inside each and every one of us to become a more dominant force in our everyday life. We need to nurture the seeds of divinity within us and work towards experiencing bliss. All we need to do is look beyond the outward happiness, peep inside and seek inward happiness.

The Indian saint Tulsidas said: "Spirituality is like a lake of immortal nectar. Bad company distorts the path that leads us there. Rumors spread by bad company are like tigers and cobras



inhabiting the path that lead us there. Worldliness and day to day domestic concerns are like impassable mountains. Ignorance and ego are like a dense forest. Our mind which causes doubt and destructive reasoning is like a tumultuous river one must cross in order to reach the lake. This lake of spirituality is unreachable for those who are not endowed with the power of unshakable faith, for those who are not blessed with the company of wise people and for those for whom God is not the dearest one."

Anyone who wants a sip in this lake must make a conscious effort in this direction and resort to the company of saintly souls. We need to renounce the concepts of "I" and "Me", and recognize the divinity within and when we put "You" before "I" we become transformed souls. When our souls are transformed, it is easy to find the company of wise people/saintly souls and be associated with them. These saintly souls help us in understanding our true nature and guide us to overcome the obstacles to reach our ultimate goal of peace and happiness. Let's wake up and identify the factors that give us peace in the true sense and extend our hand towards it. Let us extend our hand towards spirituality and some kind soul will hold our hand and guide us through the entire journey. Ultimately spirituality is about enriching our experience of life and to see a greater sense of meaning and purpose in life.

I have begun my journey towards spirituality in the company of all saintly souls at "Nachiketa Tapovan". Every one at Nachiketa Tapovan selflessly works towards a great cause. This is just the beginning of my journey, but the satisfaction and joy is immense. I just can't comprehend what it would be like to have a sip in the lake of spirituality. I seek your best wishes and blessings in my journey and wish everyone around also gets a handful of the spiritual nectar.

- *Shyamala K.*

# Practices leading to Spirituality

- ✓ **Follow a daily meditation practice.** Through meditation we develop the ability to minimize mental and emotional stress. Everything positive in our life increases and everything negative recedes.
- ✓ **Exercise daily-** that includes yoga and pranayama- breathing exercises.
- ✓ **Rise up during the Brahma Muhurtham time** (an hour before sunrise) and devote this time to your daily Sadhana.
- ✓ **Do Mantra Japa.** Mantra japa- Repetition of a mantra checks the mind from wandering and generates spiritual potency. It increases our power of concentration and improves our memory.
- ✓ **Be plain and simple** to be identical with nature.
- ✓ **Love every living being.** This love should be based on the fact that all living beings have souls, though all souls may not have reached the same state of spiritual growth.
- ✓ **Purity, Self control, detachment, truth and non-violence** are considered the five virtues of spirituality.
- ✓ **Drop your ego-** give up the need to control, need to be approved and need to judge people and things around us.
- ✓ **Follow a vegetarian diet.** Spiritual growth happens when we move away from our animal nature into the more human nature. The animal instincts become more powerful every time we eat meat.

Religion is not spirituality and so being religious does not imply you are a spiritual person. As Sri Sri Ravi Shankar tells us "Religion is the banana skin and spirituality is the banana. The misery in the world is because we throw away the banana and we are holding to the dry skin." Every religion leads us to spirituality. Do not cling to the banana skin but enjoy the fruit within.

## Where are our Role Models?

I have never written in a publication before but a disturbing article in a news paper made me to ponder and pen this article.

The article was published on the eve of the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. It carried a full page on how he was a womanizer, the photographs published were the famous ones, where he takes the support of Abha and Manu when he went for his walks and his "Experiments on truth" was distorted in a totally degrading manner. It is shameful and distressing to see such a man of noble character being maligned in this manner.

If this is the outcome for our revered people then where do we look for our Role models??

Young and old alike need some role models to emulate and walk in their footsteps; in earlier times we lived in a joint family system where the elders through their words and actions guided us. They were our role models, they told us stories of Rama and Krishna, Aesop's fables, Panchatantra etc. We had special moral science classes in school and our text books carried stories of heroism, character, and idealism based on real life like Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Bhagath Singh and others who set moral standards for our lives.

Role models have an astounding effect on the lives of young people, it is important for role models to be responsible in instilling good values for future generations. The media plays an important role in either promoting or harming the process of imparting of culture to the society. But it is profit ridden and has developed its own code of ethics of "anything goes and anything sells". As a result, children are exposed to unwanted things and sensational events that are detrimental for their healthy growth. This is a scary fact as it can manipulate the children to their way of thinking.

So, it is our responsibility as parents not to expose their young minds to such irrelevant issues and to intelligently guide them to decide what is good and bad.

- Jalaja Kumar



## ACT SEVEN INTERNATIONAL

There comes a time in everyone's life when we just need to sit back and reflect on life and I recently had such an opportunity. On a personal invitation I attended a program organized by **Act Seven International**. The stage was all set to welcome the young artistes. The next couple of hours moved many a heart, for our beliefs were shaken. Things really started to happen. There I sat, sublimely aware of the magic that was happening all around me, just outside of my limits of perception.

Tiny tots were guided on to the dais and for the next couple of hours they stole the lime light, dancing to the music and exhibiting their skills. Is it not common, you might ask? Yes, it is for us normal human beings. But here that was not the case. The performers were either physically or mentally challenged or orphans. "God has no faith in us normal human beings... but He has faith in these special children. The reason is, He thinks, 'I have given every thing to the normal people, but I am not sure that

they will utilize what is given to them. But I am sure these special people will create wonders ... They'll be happy with what is given to them'. This is clearly seen in the performances of these children today..." The truth in these words from the speaker reflected on the faces of the special artistes. As I intently watched each and every performer, I was amazed by the radiance, determination and the happiness spilling out from them and spreading in the surroundings. "Never give up, never surrender", seemed to be their motto. Every performance sent across a message of the abundant grace God has bestowed upon them.

Our integrity is a measure of how we act. Someone with great integrity acts with unshakeable belief in themselves and with the spirit of doing great things that are designed to help those who need them on this planet earth. It is the greatest gift that we can give as we exist in this universe. It is our reason for being here. This was Sri Rajaji's belief and Act Seven was built on this belief.



Performances of Special children



Mohini with Rajaji

*Mohini Nagapurkar, a muscular dystrophy patient was in dire need of a wheel chair. Given her financial constraints, she could not afford to buy one. She approached Act Seven International Organisation dedicated to the cause of physically and mentally challenged people and within a month, she was provided with a wheel chair free of cost.*

Act Seven International has set out on a great task with their slogan 'Reaching the Unreached'. It is a voluntary organization pioneering the latent talents of people with disabilities- Mentally challenged, Autistic, Hearing Impaired, Physically challenged, Visually Impaired and other disabilities with a penchant for Art and Culture. Founded by Sri Yem. R. Rajaji the 'Act Seven International Art & Cultural Trust' has

tapped the latent art and cultural talents of the differently abled people and provided them a platform to showcase their inherent abilities.

Let us learn to act and provide people with special abilities an opportunity to lead a normal life not through sympathy but through empowerment. Let us enable them to fly into new horizons by instilling hope in their hearts. We can for sure support their cause by participating with a passion to serve the cause of multitudes of specially abled people. Any little help will go a long way in bringing the rays of hope into their lives.

'They are ready for us, so now we have to be ready for them.'

I owe my gratitude to the organization for making me witness the true meaning of Life.

For your kind act please contact:

**Smt Swayamprabha**

Sec.Gen: 91 9948932888

E-mail: actseven.org@gmail.com

*Balakrishna hails from a middle class family. Cerebral Palsy did not come in his way of doing MS-Office, Web Designing and DTP. He is preparing "Samgnana Sarvasvamu" a Telugu book by concising vast information from newspapers and magazines since 1979 till today. He is looking for support to bring out this book. He has won many awards for his outstanding performance in poetry.*



Smt. Swayamprabha with Balakrishna and his mother



Sri Rajaji

## Shraddhanjali

Sri Rajaji's sudden demise in a car accident on 24th August 2011 came as a shock to the organisation and all his well wishers. Nachiketa Tapovan expresses its deepest sympathy to his family and hopes Act Seven Organisation would fulfill his dreams by carrying on the good work.



**Subhadra K.**



# इकलकेरुतु इइइउतु = नुनएतएतु

*Krupalu Ogeti, Secretary, Samskrit Bharati, Hyderabad.  
email:okrupalu@sanskritam.net*

## Kati Santhi

**R**ecall the numbers which we studied earlier. Look at these questions.

ग्रहः कति सन्ति?

Look at the answer to this.

ग्रहः नव सन्ति।

The word कति stands for 'how many'.  
The answer for this is a number. Here,  
the answer says that there are 9 planets.  
Remember that ग्रहः is plural for ग्रहः

Similarly,

शिवस्य कति नेत्राणि सन्ति?

शिवस्य नेत्राणि त्रीणि।

Siva's eyes are 3, aren't they? (नेत्रम् –  
नेत्राणि)

नारायणस्य कति अवताराः सन्ति?

नारायणस्य अवताराः दश सन्ति।

Narayana's incarnations are 10.

मानवस्य कति नासिकाः सन्ति?

मानवस्य नासिका एका अस्ति।

We know that question is always in plural. However, since man's nose is only one, the answer is in singular. (You might have noticed that एका is different from the number एकम् which we studied earlier. This is feminine form and we will talk about this later.)

Now answer the following:

१) रुचयः कति? (रुचिः – रुचयः)

२) पाण्डवाः कति?

३) गीतायाः अध्यायाः कति?

४) भवतः / भवत्याः सोदराः कति?

५) भवतः / भवत्याः गृहस्य कति प्रकोष्ठाः सन्ति? (प्रकोष्ठः - Room)

(To be contd in the next issue)



The end of the year is just a few months away, and the festive season is dawning. It's time to eat, drink, play, shop, holiday, celebrate, pray and make merry!

## Questions to ponder

- This time, let us ask ourselves THESE QUESTIONS before we begin the festivities-
- Does this festival harm the environment in any way?
- Is there any eco-friendly way to celebrate this?
- How will this festival be celebrated in the year 2020?
- How is this festival affecting other living beings?

## 'Green' Tips

Here are some simple ways by which you can infuse the 'Go Green' spirit into your festivities!

- Community Celebration instead of individual celebration will use up lesser resources like paper, fire crackers, expendables, will have a limited duration and of course, result in more fun and memories! Decide on a time and venue for your community celebration. Make it an occasion to infuse freshness in relationships.
- Traditional lighting using earthen lamps and diyas will drastically cut down electrical consumption and also enhance the beauty of your house. Get your colony to observe an eco-friendly hour on the festive day.
- Think twice before you light crackers. If you can't avoid them totally, cut down the length of fireworks time.
- Go for eco-friendly crackers made of recycled paper.
- It is preferable to buy metal or stone idols which can be worshipped every year. Some people sprinkle water to symbolize immersion. Otherwise, buy idols made of unbaked clay only, and those not painted with chemical colours.
- Cut down your Shopping List. Stick to purchasing only materials that you really need.
- Win Win situation! For presents, consider gift certificates, cash and checks.
- Make it a point to carry your own bag while you go shopping.
- Loudspeakers should be avoided in residential areas. Your devotion is for God. Let Him alone hear your prayers!
- Encourage food-stall owners in fair grounds to use biodegradable materials for serving.
- Avoid one-time usage by purchasing recyclable material. Dispose off used materials by giving it to under-privileged people.
- Temporarily abandon your gadgets and gizmos! Be a part of the traditional milieu.
- Use natural colors in making rangoli, or for the purposes of worship.
- And most importantly, Spread the Word! Think Green!!



## Green Home Idea

Flowers and other biodegradable materials used for worship can be composted or spread on the top soil, rather than disposing them off in garbage.

Please send your green ideas to nachiketanjali1@gmail.com



## GREEN UPDATE

Nachiketa's Go Green thanks all who participated in our Wealth Out of Waste(WOW) initiative. We were able to collect and recycle 1450 kg of waste and generate ₹ 7,200 during Aug-Sept. 2011.



# Alchemy!!



I have always been fascinated by the idea of 'Alchemy'... Alchemy is an ancient tradition, the primary objective of which was the creation of the mythical "philosopher's stone", which was said to be capable of turning base metals into gold or silver!!!

It was so magical, mystical, beyond the grasp of logical understanding that it has always held a tinge of romance and mystery for me!!!

Until a few days back, the above was my understanding of 'Alchemy'... and then I had the privilege of reading a beautiful article about converting a stone into God by the process of consecration... I thought to myself that this is really what is mystical, magical and above all of 'real value'...

The other day, I was sitting with Nachiketananda Swamiji and we were talking about various topics when He instructed us that we should use our energies, resources and our very lives to make true and honest men and women, who will help in nation building and transform the society in such a way that our world is a better place to live in, for ourselves and more so for the generations to come!!

Now, 'That' I realized was 'true' alchemy... To be able to convert ordinary men/women like ourselves into extra-ordinary people who are able to realize their Divinity and make a positive difference to everyone.

-

*Gautam Vir*



## I was asked to write about the 'Benefits of Writing'

Some write to make money.

Some write to fill papers to submit.

Some write to move other people.

Writers write because they have to. Period. It's who they are, it's what they do. For them writers, writing is not merely an art of a meager form of expression. It's a gulp of fresh air, a breath of life. It's the opening of the windows to their soul, letting caged birds fly out as full-fledged ideas. And letting whiffs of wind come in, bringing with it hatchlings of unnamed, unfulfilled emotions like specks of dust. It is these that grow, evolve and blossom in the lonely nest of a writer's mind- to take flight as birds of tomorrow.

There are no benefits of writing. Nobody writes to benefit from it. And if they do, they kid themselves. Writers write to write. Writing is its own reward-and its own punishment.

Some write to make money.

Some write to fill papers to submit.

Some write to move other people.

Then there are those who write because they have been sentenced to a lifetime of it- for it is in this impenetrable jungle of an unmovable silence that it all begins to come together as one sound- the rustling of a pen scribbling on paper. And the words etched across the page.

You could call that a benefit of writing, yes.

*- Avinash Agarwal*



## *Inviting writers for Nachiketanjali!*

**A** humble and ardent endeavor of Nachiketa Tapovan is our monthly magazine, "Nachiketanjali". The magazine offers an arena to showcase reflections and expressions of truth, values, spirituality, viewpoints and concerns of every day existence.

We're looking for true, original, personal essays or poetry that befits the pulse of the magazine. Articles can also relate to topics on Philosophy, our cultural heritage, great Indian personalities and our great epics.

This is a wonderful opportunity to discover and share your positive ideas, dreams and reflections. As they say "Pen is mightier than the Sword" and is a great medium for motivating others, affecting positive change and building self-confidence.



### **Please note ...**

- Articles selected and published will receive a gift subscription of Nachiketanjali for one year. They can keep it or gift to a friend
- Please encourage your friends or children to write too
- We particularly encourage young writers to participate
- Please keep the article under 300 words for one column and 500 words for one page
- Any number of Articles are accepted
- Please include your full name, address, date of birth and contact info
- Please send your articles to **nachiketanjali1@gmail.com**
- The Editor does not accept responsibility for the author's views.
- If you would like to mail in, our address is:

#### **"Inviting Writers-Nachiketanjali"**

##### **Nachiketa Tapovan**

Plot # 70, Phase 1, Kavuri Hills,  
Madhapur, Guttalabegumpet,  
Serilingampally  
R.R Dist, Andhra Pradesh.

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*We thank our patrons for joining Nachiketanjali's Patron Scheme:*

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# Events and Celebrations at Tapovan

## Varalakshmi Vratham



Varalakshmi Vratham was celebrated on 12th August, 2011 by the Resident Volunteers of Nachiketa Tapovan



## Independence Day Celebrations



The month of August was a time of festivities and celebrations in Tapovan. This year, the Indian Independence day celebrations commenced on August 11th with a fun event for the school children in Vidya Mandir. The little ones in the pre-primary section tried their little hands at coloring the Indian Flag whereas the 1st and 2nd graders busied themselves with collage making on the same theme.

The middle grades were engaged with a Quiz by the staff on India and its glorious history and culture.

Students from the higher grades participated in a group presentation on different freedom fighters like Rani Laxmi Bai, Gandhiji, Netaji and Nehru. It was a delight to see all the children participate in one event or the other.

On August 15th, Dadaji (Swamji's earthly father) and Mataji together hoisted the flag to the energized rendition of the National Anthem sung by the children and staff. Sweets were distributed and prize winners of the August 11th events were announced. The audience was entertained by a wonderful dance performed to a patriotic song and two other patriotic songs sung by the children.



## Krishnashtami



Celebrated to mark the birth of Lord Sri Krishna, the festival of Janmashtami is popular amongst the young and old alike in India. This year it was celebrated on the 22nd of August. The children from pre-primary to grade 3 were pure delight, donning the attires of Krishna and Gopikas. It was hard for the judges to pick the winners for the Fancy Dress Competition. The girls from 7th and 8th grade performed the 'Ras leela' with a lot of grace. Tapovan was transformed into a mini Brindavan with the special attraction of the children breaking the 'utti' or 'matka' (pot) filled with beaten rice and Jaggery. This ritual reminds one of the deeds of Lord Krishna in his childhood days when he used to break the pots of butter and milk that were carefully stored in the 'utti' by his mother Yashoda. Prasad was distributed and prizes were given away for the winners of the Fancy Dress competition.



## Ganesh Chaturthi

Ganesh Chaturthi was celebrated on 1st September, 2011 by the Volunteers and children of Nachiketa Tapovan. Puja was offered to an eco-friendly Ganেশa. Beautiful floral Rangoli Patterns were made by the volunteers. After puja the childhood of Ganेशa and the significance of Ganेश Chaturthi was learnt through the 'Vrathakatha'. Prior to the celebrations, children of Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir were encouraged to draw and paint various forms of Ganेशa and their creativity was exhibited in our september issue.



Children and Volunteers of Nachiketa Tapovan performing the puja



## Dental Camp

**A** Dental Camp was organised at Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir on 21st August, 2011. Dr. A. Surendra Kumar, Dr. V.K. Raju, Dr. Dharmendra and Dr. Sharat from Aurobindo Trust Dental Hospital (a unit of Aurobindo Health and Educational Trust) offered their valuable services to 100 patients. Treatment will be ensued and procedures will be performed during the next 2 months on a priority basis in a speciality clinic.



Nachiketa Tapovan thanks them for their constant support for a genuine cause.

## A request to the readers of Nachiketanjali

Dear Readers,

Thank you all for supporting our Magazine.

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Ashraydatas are encouraged to become patrons of the magazine by joining Nachiketanjali's Patron's Scheme. Your donation will be deposited in the magazine's corpus fund. We express our thanks by announcing their names in the following issue of the Magazine. Donations received ` 5000/- and over will receive a 5 year subscription of the magazine.

### Nachiketanjali ...an offering. Yes, I would like to

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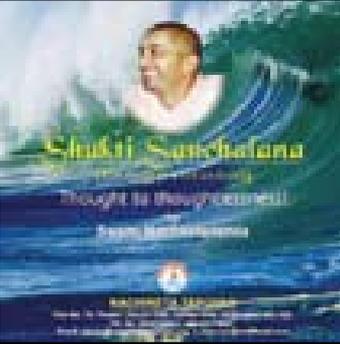
## SPONSOR OPTIONS

*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 210 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.

Sponsor a Child for Lifetime	₹ 1 Lakh
Sponsor a Teacher	₹ 60,000/year
Vidya Daanam (Education)	₹ 5200/year/child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 4200/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 700/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	₹ 800/2 pairs
Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)	₹ 5000/term
Medicines (For needy people)	₹ 5000/month

PUBLICATION



### *A set of 8 'Yogic CDs'*

The CDs comprise instructions given on different yogic techniques based on an extensive research done by Swami Nachiketananda and assisted by other Swamis and volunteers. 'Shakti Sanchalana' is third of the series which takes you into the realms of Supreme Consciousness. All the CDs are available at the Nachiketa Tapovan premises at Kavuri Hills, and also in leading bookstores.

*Cost of each CD is Rs. 20/-*

*None can teach you, none can make you spiritual.  
There is no other teacher but your own soul.*

**– Swami Vivekananda**

*With best wishes from*

***Griha Constructions, Chennai***



## Nachiketa Tapovan Ashrama

**“The poor, the illiterate, the ignorant, the afflicted- let these be your God. Know that service to these alone is the highest religion.”**

– Swami Vivekananda

### An Appeal

Dear Patron,

Mahboobnagar District, the second largest district in Andhra Pradesh, is situated within a 2 hr drive from Hyderabad. It is known to be one of the most backward areas in education and health in the state. In an effort to change the lives of the rural population, largely comprising of tribal communities in this region, Nachiketa Ashrama project in Kodgal village has been undertaken.

Our efforts are towards making the rural people self-reliant.

- ❖ We want to realize this by providing
  - ✓ Free vocational training,
  - ✓ Free basic education and
  - ✓ Free medical dispensaries
- ❖ The ashram will also be home to spiritual activities
- ❖ It will also serve as a retreat to all those who seek spiritual rejuvenation

To work towards our endeavor, we need your help in the form of generous donations towards the following projects:

- ❖ Drip irrigation
- ❖ Solar Power project
- ❖ Laying of roads
- ❖ Rain-water harvesting
- ❖ Construction of the compound wall
- ❖ Herbal garden
- ❖ Construction of Vidya Mandir-Free School

We look forward to your generous and valuable support and contribution.

Yours in the service of Motherland



Swami Shivananda Puri



# Nachiketa Bala Vahini

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We provide children tools for a joyous living and help them blossom to their full potential. Bala Vahini provides value education, awareness and appreciation of our ancient Indian culture and heritage. We also teach yoga and pranayam to energize their mind and body.



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## *Invitation*

*We cordially invite you to attend our celebrations*



**Diwali**

25th October 2011

at 4 p.m.



**Diya Sale**

15th September - 25th

October 2011

**Venue:**

**Nachiketa Tapovan,**

*Plot No. 70, Phase I, Kavuri Hills, Hyderabad.*



# Krishnashtami Celebrations

*With best wishes*

***Hotel Sri Brindavan***

*Nampally Station Road, Hyderabad*

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