

# *Nachiketanjali*

*...an offering*



Vol: 4

Issue: 3

November: 2013

Price: ₹ 10

*“Do not go to the garden of flowers!  
O friend! go not there;  
In your body is the garden of flowers.  
Take your seat on the thousand petals of the  
lotus, and there gaze on the infinite beauty.”*

*- Kabir*



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*The little girl on the cover page is Harshita, an LKG student of Vedavyasa Vidya Mandir at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram. She is a smart, cute village girl residing in the suburban village, Tirumalagiri and is enthused to dress up as Radha on the festive occasion of Janmashtami on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2013.*

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## Enchanting is this pain

*Sadhana* is a search for Truth, enchanting yet painful. Instantly the question arises 'why the pain'? Sensible enough!

It is but natural that every woman aspires for motherhood. In the process of becoming a mother she doesn't mind bearing the discomfort the whole of nine months and the ensuing labour during child birth. She experiences the pleasure in pain and the moment she holds her child when it is born, all the pain and hardship vanish instantaneously. Similar is the pain of the *Sadhaka*.

Realizing the Self is the ultimate goal for any *Sadhaka*. But many fear it is painful and difficult to achieve this goal. The reason – in the initial stages our search is external. We tend to rely on external resources. Anxiety, aspiring for instant results, anguish and distrust when there are no results ... all these turn out to be hurdles in a *Sadhaka's* search for Truth.

"Will I achieve success? Can I see God? Should I intensify my *Sadhana*?" Such questions storm our minds and our journey becomes painful. To make things worse, a beginner is flooded with suggestions from well-wishers, regarding various patterns of *Sadhana*, which adds to the confusion. Our anxiety increases when we see others making a steadfast progress in their *Sadhana*. This anxiety might lead us to look for other means and we start seeking God in temples and pilgrim places.

A glimpse of the Divine, an experience that we might encounter will strengthen our faith in God and slowly we'll realize that our journey should turn inwards. This leads to meditation, introspection and finally when the time is ripe, the inner journey becomes fruitful and the *Sadhaka* encounters the Divine. He is one with his Self. His pain has transformed into pleasure. He is now enchanted by bliss.

**- Subhadra K.**

# *Silent pal...!*



**D**ear Reader!

I do send SMSs to many people and in return the response I get is very little. I know people are busy in their own world but at the same time I am also aware that no one is discarding it, instead they are carrying SMSs in the mind and caring messages in their heart silently. Therefore I feel that the response is tremendous and what it demands is to get tuned to silence. I know silence is the best medium to convey and care ... I know even silence is the best language to communicate ... I know silence is the potential seed of the golden speech. Though it may or may not play a role of inspiration in one's life, yet surely it has got tremendous potential to flare up anything and everything at any given time.

Dear Reader! I know what READER stands for when it comes to any publication and especially when it is Nachiketanjali, our monthly magazine, where we have simple collection of wits and wisdom, caring minds and pouring

hearts. For me, READER stands for appreciation, encouragement and above all a true friend who cares when needed the most. Truly speaking, without YOU, we are like a 'body without soul'. If silence is the signature of Nachiketanjali then I feel readers are the voice of silence.

Dear Reader! Even though 'silence' is the best communicator I would request you all to communicate and convey your mind, share your intellect and shower your heart because who knows your gesture may bring succor to many broken hearts and probably this might work like a potential seed for a great revolution to transform the society. Therefore if possible please pen your thoughts to charge, to ignite, to flare up fire within and to make our Nachiketanjali more spiritual than never before.

Dhanyavadah!

**- Swami Nachiketananda Puri**



# WHEN DRAUPADI FORGAVE

There is a story of Draupadi in the Srimad Bhagavatam. It is not an oft told story and is an epilogue to the tales of valor of the Mahabharata war. It is a story of transformation by grief and finding release in forgiveness. It is not a comforting story or the kind of story that has a facile resolution. But it's worth telling.

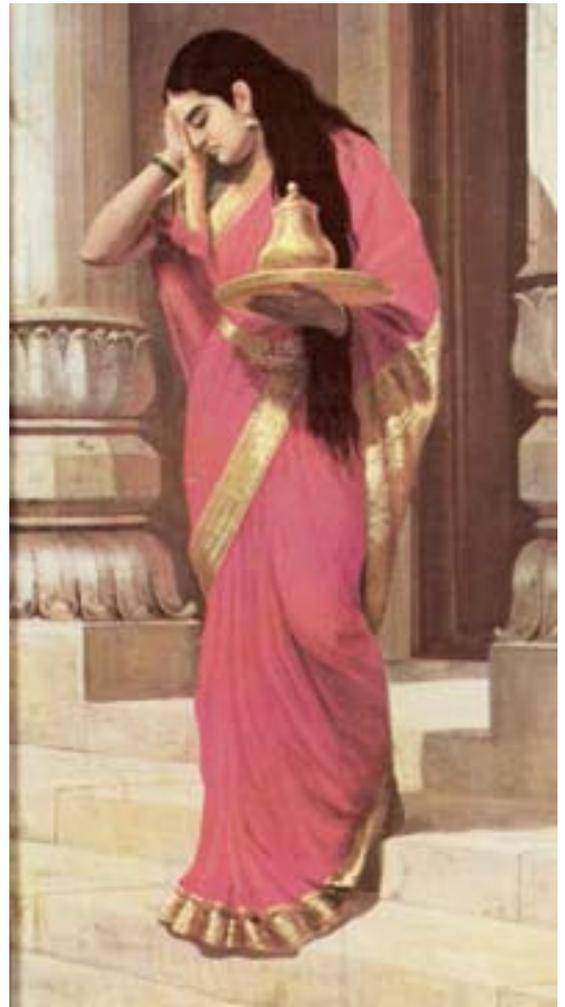
After the conclusion of the battle of Kurukshetra, Draupadi is in the camp with her five children while the Pandavas are away. Ashwattama, the son of Dronacharya, in an attempt to avenge the dying Duryodhana, stealthily attacks the enemy camp- inspired by the sight of owls attacking a crow's nest in the middle of the night. Mistaking the sleeping Upapandavas, the five sons of Draupadi, for the Pandavas, he slaughters them in cold blood. Enraged by this heinous crime, Arjuna and Krishna set forth to capture the killer. Ashwattama in desperation launches the deadly *Brahmastra*, a missile that could destroy the whole universe although he had been warned by his father Dronacharya never to use it, as he does not know how to recall this weapon. Seeing this, Krishna advises Arjuna to launch another *Brahmastra* as he had been taught by Dronacharya to both launch and recall the weapon and thus neutralize the attack.

Krishna and Arjuna then capture Ashwattama and he is tethered and fettered like an animal and dragged to the presence of the wailing and shattered mother. The Pandavas intend to slay him in front of Draupadi to quench her grief. But there is an unexpected denouement. Draupadi on seeing Ashwattama is overwhelmed by his plight, and turns an unlikely advocate for his cause. Looking at him, she does not see in him the murderer of her sons but a deluded Brahmin who is to be pitied, not savaged. She reminds the Pandavas that Ashwattama is the son of their preceptor who taught them the skills of weaponry, the art of both launching and recalling missiles that saved them from imminent ruin and therefore worthy of gratitude. She then appeals to the Pandavas to spare another mother- Kripi, the

wife of Dronacharya, the agony of bereavement as she herself knew how devastating the loss of children could be. Finally she warns them that if they kill Ashwattama, their entire lineage would be destroyed.

While the onlookers assume that grief has made her unbalanced, Yudhishtira applauds her. He explains to the others that her advocacy of forgiveness is righteous, logical, compassionate, balanced, and has sprung from the depths of her heart. These are not the words of a mother ravaged and torn by grief but the voice from the core of being. The Pandavas, therefore, spare Ashwattama's life and let him go in disgrace.

The story is fascinating as Draupadi is the fiery queen of the Pandavas who when the story begins seeks revenge for dishonour- the blood



of her molester to colour her hair, and is often considered the cause of the great war. But grief at the loss of her children makes her realize the futility of revenge and endows her with a blessed sense of clear sightedness. Her forgiveness may seem bizarre. But when the mind and heart come together and compassion is supported by an incontrovertible logic, they point to a road ahead. The destinies of perpetrator and victim are so inextricably intertwined that both are trapped in a cycle of action and retribution. There is a constant reversal of roles and blurring of identities. Forgiveness and letting go appears to be the exit option.

Does forgiveness result in contrition and repentance on the part of the perpetrator? This story has some insights. Ashwattama's life is spared but he is not spared ignominy. The crest jewel that adorned his forehead from birth is seized from him and the tuft of hair on his head is shorn as an infliction of punishment. An enraged Ashwattama seeking the destruction of the lineage of the Pandavas discharges a missile to destroy the unborn child of Uttara. Uttara seeks protection from the almighty Krishna and is therefore saved.

Forgiveness is celebrated in all traditions. In the words of the immortal bard, William Shakespeare -

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd,  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest:  
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

Ashwattama never accepted the mercy shown to him. His rage blinded him and he could never realize how terrible his cowardly act was. It is said that he is condemned to wander as a ghost and never find peace. However if Draupadi had not let him go, she would have not been able to mourn her innocent children consumed as she would have been by a sense of revenge and despair. Forgiving healed her soul and restored her. Revenge is the manic dance of the ego -intense, self absorbed, terrifying. Forgiving may, therefore, be the act of ultimate renunciation.

- *Geetha Ravichandran*



## *Shambho*

**Shambho**

This is where all words fail,  
Each time I spell the adjectives for you,  
They return with no meaning,  
Then all that remains on my tongue,  
Is Your name,  
This is the way I describe you,  
With my breath I express you.  
I see you,  
Solicit you,  
Drenched in inebriation,  
Given elucidation,  
With which to return,  
A glimpse,  
Of your subsistence.

- *Malavika Reddy*



# Pratap Chandra Hazra

Religion helps human beings to evolve from a lower level to a higher nature. As every saint has his past, so every sinner has his future. The history of religion bears testimony to the fact that the *Avatar* appears in every age, and holding the light of *Dharma*, he illumines the path for evildoers, hypocrites, and the poor in spirit. He reestablishes religion which has become corrupt or has declined and he destroys the wickedness of the wicked and thereby demonstrates his redeeming power.

Pratap Chandra Hazra's role is very important in the Divine drama of Sri Ramakrishna. Hazra's character displayed nearly every human flaw. He was egoistical, untruthful, greedy, selfish, jealous, mischievous, shrewd and critical. Such a character is not uncommon in society. The Master dealt with this person and also protected others from his bad influence.

Hazra was born in 1846 to Narayan Hazra, a farmer of moderate means. Though Hazra was raised according to the *Vaishnava* tradition he did not have faith or devotion for God. He was irresponsible and never took care of his family. He failed in all his undertakings and finally as a last resort he started to repeat God's name, hoping that God will provide money for him. The first time he met Sri Ramakrishna, he asked him "Does God have ears? I call him so much but I do not get any response to my prayers." Sri Ramakrishna smiled and said "This is why your prayers do not reach God. You are a son of a farmer. You have seen how the peasants irrigate their sugar cane fields, digging a channel from a reservoir. If there is any leak in the channel how can one expect the water to reach the field? Desires are like the leaks in the channel. Your prayers will not reach God until your mind is free from worldly desires."

In 1882, Hazra left home in a spirit of pseudo renunciation and moved to Dakshineswar. Sri Ramakrishna received him cordially and arranged for his room and board in the Kali temple. According to Hazra's way of thinking, religion meant performing rituals, doing *Japa*, studying the scriptures, applying religious marks on one's forehead etc. But after he arrived in Dakshineswar he noticed that the Master did not do any of these things. When he advised the Master how to conduct Himself, the devotees were furious. But the Master said "Divine Mother is conveying Her message through him." The Master showed through this example that one should be open to criticism from anybody.

Hazra developed a superiority complex by practicing a little *Japa*. Though he did not have true scriptural knowledge he created confusion among the devotees by preaching to them. He said a man could not be liberated unless he was born in a Brahmin body. To that the Master said "One attains liberation through *Bhakti* alone. Sabari was a daughter of a hunter. She, Ruhi Das, and others belong to the Shudra cast. They were liberated through *Bhakti* alone". Even though the



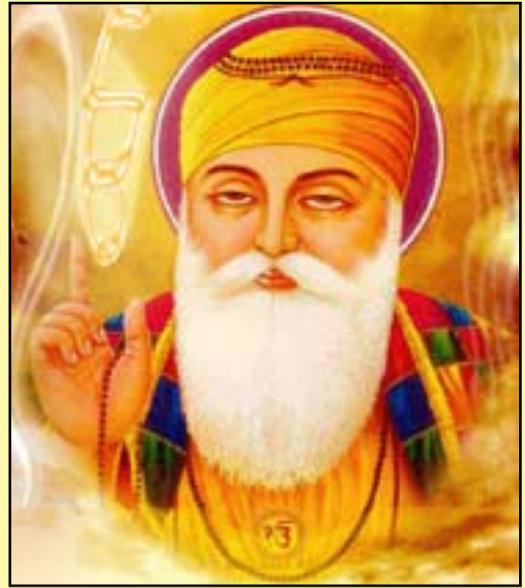
Master was actually Hazra's host in Dakshineswar, Hazra criticized Him in front of others. He was also fastidious, with a mania for cleanliness and piety. Still the Master was his well-wisher and one day said to him "Don't eat too much and give up this craze for outer cleanliness. Follow conventions only as much as necessary. Don't find fault with anyone, it is Narayana HIMSELF who has assumed all these forms. One can worship even a wicked person."

Given the opportunity Hazra would pollute the minds of the young disciples, create confusion in the minds of the devotees and generally disrupt the spiritual ministry of the Master. He would always try to exploit the wealthy devotees of the Master. Referring to Hazra's manipulative behavior, the Master said "Hazra practices Japa and austerities here but in the country, he has his wife, children and land. Therefore along with his spiritual discipline he carries on the business of a broker. Such people cannot be true to their word."

Master's mind was above likes and dislikes. Even-mindedness was one of the signs of an illumined soul. From time to time He scolded Hazra, but He never hated him nor did He harbor any ill feeling towards him. On the contrary the Master showed respect and demonstrated to His disciples how to cope with this type of unmanageable person. The Master needed a religious hypocrite in order to illustrate important spiritual lessons for His disciples. Hazra served that purpose. After much coaxing, Hazra went home to take care of his family. Gradually a great change came over Hazra's life. He began to tire of his egoistical ways. The association and the teachings of the Master slowly worked their effect on his mind. It is said that he saw the Master, Ramachandra Datta and Swami Yogananda in a vision before his death. He passed away chanting the Lord's name.

The blessed death of Hazra proved that the grace of an Avatar can eradicate a soul's evil karma. The Master's infallible blessing created a transformation in his life. What happened in Hazra's life will help create faith in the mind of a faithless person. A person who thinks of God with love or enmity will reach God because the thought of God destroys evil propensities.

**Source: They Lived with God  
by Swami Chetanananda**



*"I am  
not the  
born; how  
can there  
be birth or  
death for  
me?"*

**- GURU NANAK**

# Secret of being happy...



**A** breezy night on Friday, I was heading back home at 9:30 pm, when I was dazed to find a tree fallen across the road, dangerously placed at the top of a steep curve. A senior citizen couple, the owners of the house in front of which the tree fell, was trying to warn motorists off. Youngsters in the throes of partying, people returning from a hard day's work; it would be sure death for anyone turning around that blind curve.

I introduced myself to the couple and began to help regulate and divert the traffic, while trying to contact the GHMC and Hyderabad Traffic Police to send in a crane to move the obstructing tree, at the same time. The HTP crane had broken down and the GHMC Additional Commissioner was unable to reach the concerned people, it being late night.

An exhausting 2 hours later, watching many people despite our warnings almost crashing into the tree several times, I knew that I had to have an alternative plan. Since the tree was half uprooted, trying to move it would be a gargantuan task. Now what?

With a little hope, I asked the elderly couple if they had an axe. They were perplexed as to how I planned to axe down a tree that was almost 20 years old and had a girth of 2 feet. They asked around and finally managed to get an old, blunt axe!

Knowing that I had almost asked for the impossible, with a blunt axe at that, I went ahead and started axing the tree. A few people seeing my enthusiasm also joined in and took turns at hacking the trunk. A few friends too turned up from their partying. So now, with Karthik, Hemanth, Ram, Mahesh, Raju etc, we were about a dozen of us.

Lo and behold, we persisted and finally accomplished what we set out to do. The tree was axed and moved out of the way. The senior couple, cynical at first, told me that I was not just different, but that I did the impossible!

You know what? I had a great weekend! I had calluses on my palms for over a week, but every time it hurt, it made me feel just as good at the same time.

"One of the things I keep learning is that the secret of being happy is doing things for other people" - Dick Gregory

**- Suresh Raju**



# YOGA FOR YOUR HEALTH

## Siddhasana



**D**ear Sadhak! It is important for all of us to know how to perform *Asanas*. This knowledge is most practical and one has to learn yogic intricacy from only an expert Guru. As our *Shastras* rightly put it, only the one who has gone through certain disciplines, is qualified to preach- since his knowledge is now not limited to *Shastras* alone anymore but he has found out the very source deep within.

The posture which I am talking about is very simple but complexities are many. This posture is very useful for *Asana Siddhi* but one should prepare first physically and mentally under expert guidance. Because this posture is not only related to our lower body parts but also to our backbone and head region, it is a kind of awakening that one can experience while performing this simple yet effective *Asana*. Therefore it is important for all of us to understand it properly and then perform it to reap the highest benefits from it.

Books cannot be a substitute for a Guru but '*Pramana*' (having faith in someone else's experience) can be used with great respect, since our sages of yore have been practicing and contemplating since ages to give simple but most effective and best solution for the life. Yogic tools, if used in a scientific manner, learnt from a qualified soul can help one transcend every small barrier to go beyond life. The only reason behind this lengthy explanation is to make sure that one should not miss the essence which is more important than simply working on toning the body. Therefore it is important to know life and our very existence through such practices. I wish you all the best!

**Siddhasana** can be performed anytime. It doesn't need any special time or place. But as I said previously, for everything there is a right time and place and moreover, if it is done with reverence and as a Divine act then it isn't necessary to follow time since all Divine acts happen on their own. That's why in highly evolved spiritual souls whether it is *Mudras* or *Mantras* or postures, they simply happen. We can see that their every action is beautifully synchronized with nature. We can find a kind of rhythm and perfect harmony in their actions. Just as our body reacts in bitter cold

or in scorching sunny weather, in a similar way it happens in them.

Anyway! Let us know more about *Siddhasana*.

- Sit on the floor with legs straight out, place your hands sideways near the hips with palms down and fingers forward.
- Bend left knee, bring your left heel into your groin near the perineum (the area between the anus and the genitals).
- Bend right knee and slide right heel towards the front of your left ankle.
- Lift right foot, position right ankle just above your left ankle, and bring right heel to the genital area.
- Push the toes of right foot between your left thigh and calf.
- Pull gently left toes up between your right thigh and calf.
- Place your hands palms down on the knees, with arms relaxed and adopt hand *mudra* as per requirement.
- Straighten and extend your back and neck, bringing your head up; look straight ahead. You can also use a cushion to raise your hips so that knees and hips will be in one line.

**Benefits:** The *Siddhasana* improves the flexibility of your hips, knees, and ankles, and strengthens the back. The posture is considered the perfect Yoga meditation posture for those practicing celibacy. *Siddhasana* is also beneficial for men with various prostate problems.

The Sanskrit word *Siddha* (pronounced *Siddhah*) means both "perfect" and "adept." In Yoga, an adept isn't just a skillful practitioner but an accomplished Master who has attained inner freedom. Many Yoga Masters in past eras preferred this posture and used it often in place of the lotus posture.

- Swami Nachiketananda Puri



## Birth of an Orator

In February 1893 a young monk visited Hyderabad. He was warmly received in the Nizam's dominions and even Muslim nobles heard Him in rapt attention as He gave His first public speech at Mehboob College. Only seven months later, 'Sisters and Brothers' of America also heard Him captivated by the spiritual and philosophical content of His address at the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago on 11 September.

As we celebrate the sesquicentennial anniversary of Swami Vivekananda the visit of the young monk to Hyderabad assumes historical significance. This is because the denizens of the City of Pearls witnessed His eloquence even before the world discovered Him to be a brilliant public speaker.

However, when Swami Vivekananda (he was yet to take the name by which the world knows Him today and still went by Sacchidananda) came for that short visit to Hyderabad from Madras, His state of mind could be described as far from happy as funds for His visit to America were hard to come despite sincere efforts made by His friends and disciples. He had put up at the residence of a Bengali, Babu Madhusudan Chattopadhyay in the service of the Nizam at Khairatabad. On public request He gave a lecture on "My Mission to the West". Undoubtedly, Swamiji with His command over English and mastery over tenets of various religions, Vedanta and spirituality had made a mark. He also visited the palace of the powerful noble, Nawab Khurshid Jah, the brother-in-law of the Nizam for a discussion but declined to take Rs. 1000/- for His trip to America because of His dilemma over the trip.

Thankfully, His letter to Alasinga Perumal - His illustrious disciple in Madras, written during His stay in Hyderabad reveals much about Vivekananda's state of mind, particularly His disappointment over funds for the Chicago trip. In His letter to Alasinga dated 11 February He wrote that He would be going on a tour to see "different sights" in Hyderabad and in a few days he may expect Him at Madras. "It is so very dreadfully



hot here already," He wrote and declined to visit Rajputana as it would be very hot and added "My brain boils in heat." He had earlier planned to visit Bangalore and then proceed to Ootacamund to "pass the summer" and also to find out if the Maharaja of Mysore would fund His trip.

Apart from the heat He also apprehended that His "friends" in Rajputana would not let Him visit Europe. "But this delay at Madras has dashed all my hopes to the ground, and with a deep sigh give it up and the Lord's will be done," He wrote.

He returned to Madras on 17 February. Fate clearly had decreed otherwise and Swamiji could set sail for America from Bombay with the funds that came from people, the Rajas of Ramnad and Mysore and Maharaja of Khetri. Though Swamiji did not visit Hyderabad again the city can pride itself for discovering the great orator in Vivekananda.

- *Jaya Chowdhury*

# Spirituality

The difference between science and spirituality is brought out vividly, albeit succinctly, by the two simple equations:

- 1) Spirit of love = Spirituality
- 2) Split of love = Science

Students! *Bhajans* and *Japas* do not constitute devotion. You must yearn for the love of the Lord. Along with your studies cultivate devotion and spiritual discipline. Spirituality is summum bonum of education.

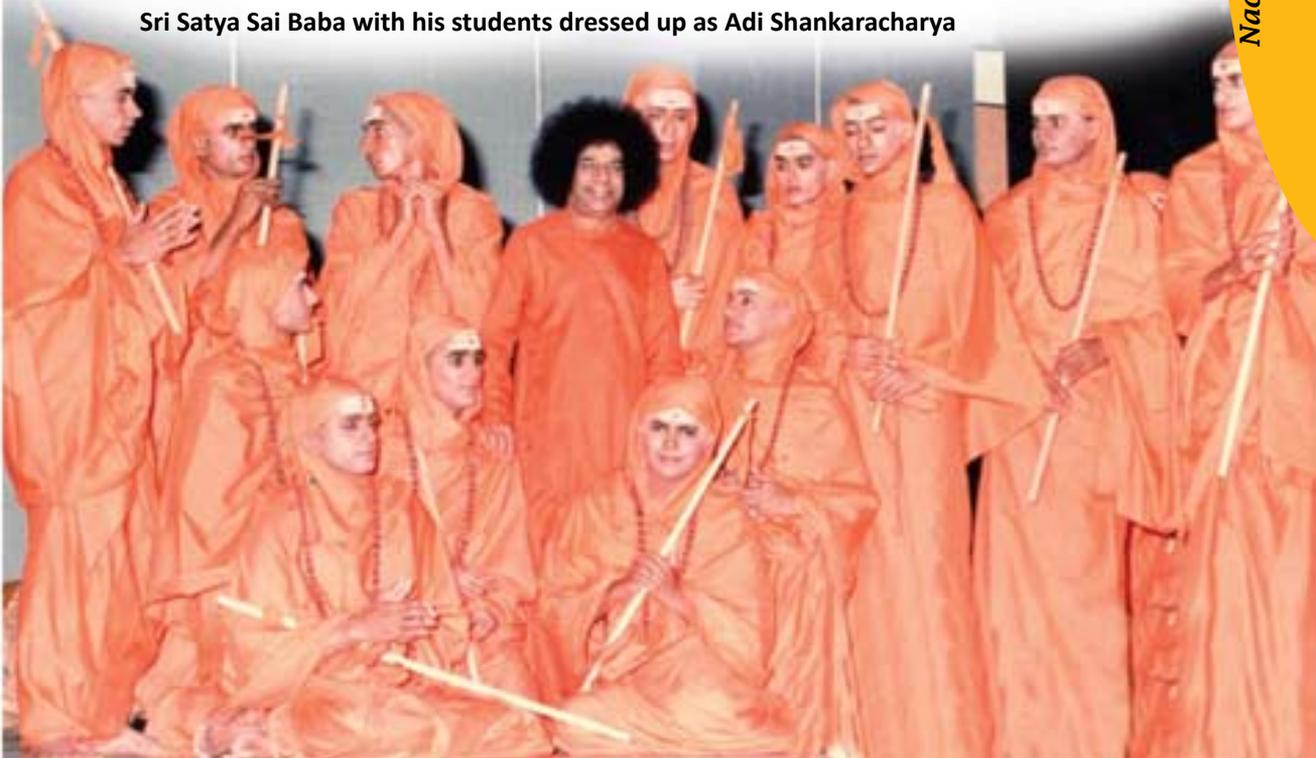
No one among the young men and women today understand the meaning of spirituality. They imagine that spirituality means meditation on God, bathing in sacred waters, and visiting holy shrines. This is not the correct meaning of spirituality. **Spirituality means destroying the animal nature in man and making him realise his Divine potencies ...** Spirituality calls for the recognition of the manifold capacities manifesting in man as emanating from the Spirit and not from the mind.

People today have the wrong impression that spirituality is concerned with the journey from the mundane world to the higher realm and vice versa. Because of this mistaken view, students today are in a state of confusion about spirituality. Spirituality appears meaningless to them. **Spirituality is the realisation of the role of the Spirit in daily life. It is a way of life.** Our entire life is bound up with the Spirit. All the powers of man are derived from the Spirit. It is totally wrong to think that Spirituality is divorced from daily life and that our daily concerns have no relation to spirituality. Nor does spirituality mean leading a lonely and secluded life. **True spirituality calls for the recognition of the oneness of all mankind and to demonstrate the spiritual truth underlying this Divine unity.**

Our entire life is bound up with the spiritual. Whatever one says, whatever one does, whatever one thinks, all of it is related to the Spirit. Spirituality is the expression of the promptings of the Inner Spirit. The good deeds by the external instruments of the body cannot be deemed spiritual.

Compiled from Baba's Discourses  
(S.S.S. Vol XXV - P163/164)

Sri Satya Sai Baba with his students dressed up as Adi Shankaracharya



# The Covert Leash

It is the first time that we have a four legged creature at home and as I began training him to live safely and sanitarly with humans, there is a lot I learnt myself along the way. That animals teach us unconditional love is no myth. Dogs especially have been demonstrating this far-fetched virtue with humans from the time they had been domesticated. A puppy's endearing eyes and a wagging tail that greets is enough to forgive all the mischief he creates when exploring his new world.

One of the things we came to own after bringing home Pluto, is a retractable leash. As the name suggests, the leash is designed for walking the dog in open areas where he can enjoy lots of "freedom on the leash" and at the same time gives us full control of his movements. Our puppy was leashed while walking outside. If I sensed any danger to him or any mischief from him, I could retract the leash to bring him closer to me. His running off to the wrong places naturally results in a strong tug from me. But if he walked obediently, I released a little more of the leash, so he can enjoy more freedom.

There's another dog in the neighborhood that meets us on these walks. A handsome Golden Retriever who is about 10 years old. I noticed that the guy walking him wasn't holding a leash and wasn't struggling like I was. Instead Diego walked in step with the person, neither wandering away nor chasing cats or kids along the way! Well-behaved and wise he seemed! The person walking him did comment that Diego



was as naughty and roving as Pluto when he was Pluto's age. Slowly Pluto learnt to behave on the walks. He enjoyed his few meters of freedom and when he ventured to do things that he wasn't supposed to, the retracting began. This was a training that needed patience both from me and him.

Often, morning walks with Pluto got me more introspective. The leash pulling and retracting assumed an inward suggestion. All the debate is about our human will Vs destiny. Aren't we too on a leash? - The few meters of radius that we are born in, the amount of choices we can make within that. The specific boundaries we are each restricted by destiny. Moreover, the choices we make within our precincts result in either greater restraint in our perspectives and situations or increasing liberty in mind and spirit and ultimately like Diego, who needs no leash anymore.

Assuming a different vantage ... the training on leash is similar to that of practicing self-control to mold a recalcitrant early mind into a sensible free spirit.

Thank you Lord for the lessons and insights you continue to give us through your many instruments and many means.

- Harini N.

“ All the debate is about our human will Vs destiny. Aren't we too on a leash? ”

# Moksha

The other day, in our Vishnu Sahasranama class we were discussing about 'Moksha'. It was an open forum wherein everyone had to put forth their views as to what is Moksha. All the ladies in my class are women who are deeply religious and have the old school beliefs of fearing God than loving Him. So the answers that came up were more religious than spiritual. One said that if we visited temples we would attain Moksha, another said if we did charity, performed Vratas, participated in Karma yoga, did Japa and meditation, we would attain Moksha. Finally one said that by not having attachment to anything or anyone, we would attain Moksha.

This led to discussions about how we ladies immersed in Samsara cannot be detached when our husband or children were suffering before us. According to them, only a Sannyasi could be detached and have time for seeking God and for realizing Him. So the majority decided that in this Janma we can only get Punya in order to try for Moksha in our next. My sister who was beside me said that when we have no control over ourselves in this Janma, how do we know what we will do in the next and that whatever we have to do, we should do it now. I summoned a little courage and told them about Sri Ramakrishna who told that even a house holder can realize God if he/she behaves like a servant. A servant works in a house knowing that this is not her house and all the time her mind is on things which she has to do for her own house and children. Similarly, we should also do our duties and carry out our responsibilities but our mind should always be on God.

We should take time to do Japa and look within us and realize God. My sister opined that it is easier said than done - how many of us long to see God, how many of us cry to see God, how many of us love God the way we love our children? Only when we have that kind of desire to see God will we be at peace--be never affected by worldly things and will go into Samadhi (like Sri Ramakrishna) whenever we utter the name of God. There will be no 'I'. Just like we strive to have better lives, just like we strive to get good marks in school, we

should strive hard to progress spiritually. Yogin Ma, Balaram Basu and many other devotees of the Master were householders. We should take their example and get inspired by them.

When we go to a temple many of us are distracted by watching other people, even at home we chant the Stotras or Mantras mechanically while our mind is elsewhere; this shows our interest in God. We expect Him to be at our beck and call and grant every wish. Do we ever feed Him with love; do we ever thank Him for awarding us such a lovely life or for always being there for us? We think of Puja as a chore, we get tired beforehand thinking of festivals and the workload it entails. We think of God only in need. I can assertively state that none of us would like to be treated like this? When will we realize that He is in all of us and that we are abusing ourselves whenever we abuse Him? Money, power, love etc. do not show how successful one is in life, it will only ensure that this cycle of PunarJanma (rebirth) will continue till you understand why we are born- 'to realize God', to become one with Him. There is a God in all of us, let us realize Him, let us at least make a beginning, so that we will be ahead in our next birth. Let us cry for God, let us long for Him! Think of Him as our father, mother, spouse, child and that there is no life without Him, life starts with Him and ends with Him. "Sri Ramakrishna Arpanamastu"! My life is yours!

- Gayathri N.



# A Magic Carpet of Pure Love – *His Holiness Sri Swami Jayendra Puri*

*“Satsangatve Nissangatvam  
Nissangatve Nirmohatvam  
Nirmohatve Nischalatattvam  
Nischalatattve Jeevanmuktih”*

*Sloka 9, Bhaja Govindam by Adi Shankara*

“In holy company, one experiences non-attachment

In a state of non-attachment, one arrives at a state beyond confusion

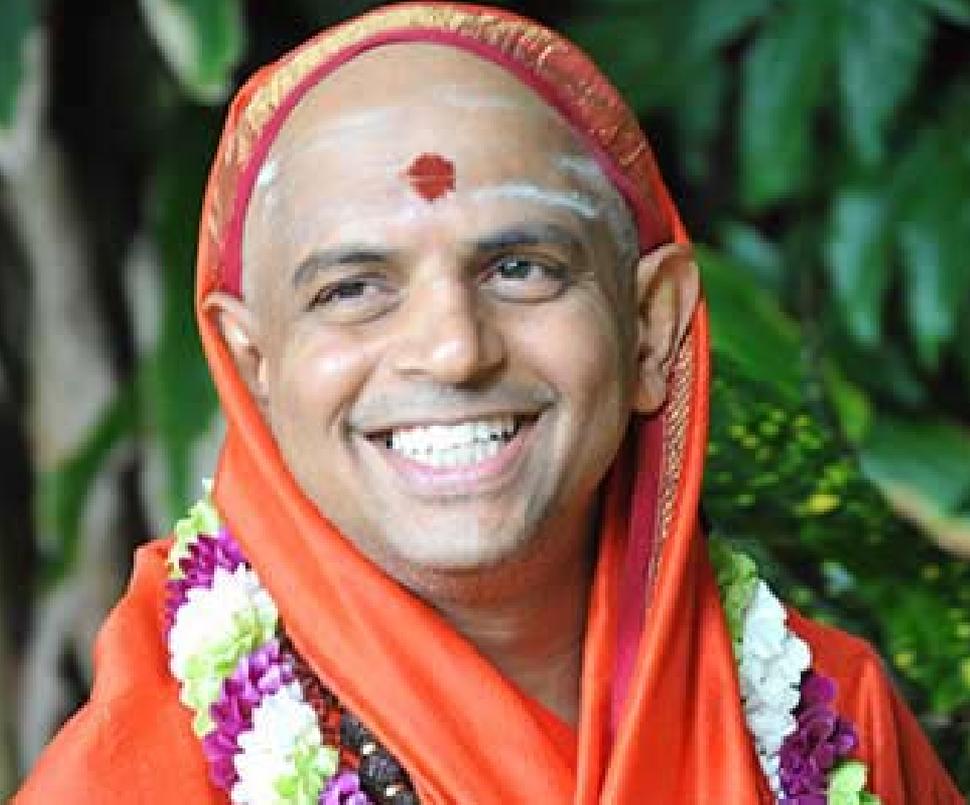
In a state beyond confusion, one experiences motionlessness

In a state of motionlessness, one attains living freedom”.

The power and potency of Divine company of sages and saints is to be experienced directly. Every passing desire is fulfilled and the apparently unstoppable monkey mind experiences an effortless slowing down and before you know it, so much of the accumulated unnecessary, repetitive, negative thoughts disappear in the holy presence of our Masters. Some even arrive at a state of unmistakable stillness at the first glance of a Master. There are still others who experience profound peace and joy. The rest of your life is never the same again. The transformation is magical and palpable! It is man’s greatest fortune to have the *Darshan* of sages and saints.

Bangalore is blessed to have one of the greatest living saints, His Holiness Sri Swami Jayendra Puri. In a quiet and welcoming part of the city is Sri Rajarajeshwari Nagar where none other than

Sri Swami Jayendra Puri



our Divine Mother, Sri Rajarajeshwari Maa, waits in silence to bless us. The Mother's matchless beauty and grace cannot be missed; even less the love that flows from every pore of Her being. The hallowed place of the Divine Mother is Sri Kailash Ashrama Mahasamsthana. One of the rarest saints, His Holiness Sri Sivaratna Puri Swamiji- affectionately known as Sri Tiruchi Swamigal, was led to this place in 1960 in the most beautiful way to build this Ashram. His Holiness Sri Swami Jayendra Puri is the direct disciple of Sri Tiruchi Swamigal and the present Maha Mandaleshwar of Sri Kailash Ashrama. Like His Guru, Swami Jayendraji is the living and loving presence of the Divine, and anyone who walks into the sacred space is moved by the overwhelming love of Sri Rajarajeshwari Maa and the same pure love of Swami Jayendraji.

The unique beauty of the birth of this Ashram can be read here: [http://srikailashashrama.org/about\\_srikailashashram.htm](http://srikailashashrama.org/about_srikailashashram.htm)

Sri Tiruchi Swamigal's Guru was Sri Shiva Puri also known as Nepali Baba. If you have been touched by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, you may be familiar that His Guru was Tota Puri. Tota Puri and Sri Shiva Puri were Guru Bhais who had the same Guru, Sri Raj Puri. What a grand lineage!

Here is a poem dedicated to our revered Swami Jayendraji.

The earth is grander than the highest heavens  
 For on it walks ineffable beauty as You  
 Every inch of You is pure Love, Swamiji  
 What tenderness in Your gaze  
 Such compassion in Your voice  
 Logic has no power in Your presence  
 Lifetimes disappear before You turn Your head  
 You destroy malice in less than a moment  
 At Your Feet rest all the universes  
 A magic carpet of pure love we  
 never dreamt of.

Thank You sincerely, precious Swamiji!

- *Abir & Anisha*



## Time Vs Life

**U**nveiling the amazing layers of infinite creation is only possible if life goes on, dropping the concepts of birth and death. Strong expression of contentment for one's own life that results in service to mankind is the only virtuous phenomenon that continues to live for the times ahead, masking the concept of uncertainty with perishable bodies. LIFE clearly confirms that it is less lived in one's own body but lives forever in the hearts of others.

Just as an older sibling learns to share and care for a younger brother or sister, all of us born on the same planet, under one sky should learn to share and care for each other. We should not keep ourselves completely occupied by our zeal for exploring higher luxuries. Hard work should only result in upliftment of our consciousness to greater levels, not to bring luxury for one's own life through materialistic objects. Simple living and higher thinking not only keeps our life pleasant but also balances the expression of life around us making our world a wonderful place to live in. We need to constantly work on maintaining this balance. Together we can work for making a healthy happier society. May we not run for wealth to satisfy the never-ending wants. Realization is the only path to experience humanity. At any point of life man can realize, look back on his deeds and choose to change for a better peaceful future. It's never too late. But the sooner, the best opportunity to cherish the gifts we possess, for time never stops.

- *Padmaja Raju*



# Maha Deepam



*Karthigai Deepam* is one of the oldest festivals celebrated in Thiruvannamalai (Arunachalam), during the Tamil month *Karthigai* that comes during November-December each year. This festival begins in the *Uthiradam* (Star) day in the month of *Karthigai* and closes with the *Bharani Deepam* lit at the Arunachaleswara temple in the early hours of the tenth day. A huge lamp, *Maha Deepam*, is then lit on the peak of the holy hill of Arunachala around 6.00 pm, coinciding with the rise of the Full Moon. A specially designed huge brass vessel is used for the lamp, which holds more than 1000 liters of ghee and an immense wick made of woven cloth fibres; and the flame is visible for several kilometers around the hill. Lakhs of devotees come to Arunachalam to witness this grand event and the town reverberates with the holy chants of Arunachala Shiva.

This practice came into existence following a dispute between Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma who each considered Himself superior to the other. Lord Shiva appeared as an endless column of light (*Jyothisthamba*) and announced that whoever sees the beginning or end of the flaming light would be declared supreme. Lord Vishnu took the form of a boar and delved deep into the earth but failed to find the beginning. Humbled, He returned and accepted defeat. Brahma took the form of a swan and flew skywards to reach the end, but did not succeed either. Not willing to accept defeat, He requested a flower (*Mogali*) and the celestial cow (*Kamadhenu*) who said they have been travelling down from Shiva's head for several thousand years, to be witness to His false claim of having seen the beginning of the light. While the flower backed Him, the cow showed assent with its head, but shook its tail indicating that it is not true. Lord Shiva denounced this

falsehood and declared that henceforth Brahma will have no temples on earth; the flower will not be used in worship; and not the face but the tail of the cow will be honored for upholding truth. Lord Vishnu would be revered on earth as He upheld truth and humility.

In memory of the Lord's glorious manifestation to dispel the ego of Brahma and Vishnu and grace the world, a huge lamp is lit on the peak of the Holy hill each year on the day He appeared as a column of light.

For spiritual seekers, this event has special significance. Our ego sense and arrogance is the cause of all unhappiness and unrest in the world. It is because of the ego sense that the Divine spark in our hearts eludes us. Not outside circumstances nor even God, but our own ego comes in the way. Instead of tackling this ego sense directly, we try to search for the cause of our unhappiness in the worldly things that are manifested and imagined by this ego. Incapable of going inwards, we vainly search and wander externally.

The supreme reality, the Divine spark in our hearts, represented by Lord Shiva is nameless and formless and all pervading with no beginning or end, but we are bound by the body and have learnt to see the Lord also as a body or a symbol. The ultimate truth is beyond words, thoughts and imagination and cannot be experienced by the limited mind and intellect (represented by Brahma and Vishnu). Man however has an exalted view of the powers of his mind and intellect, but only when these are totally surrendered to the Divine Will and the ego completely destroyed that the ultimate truth is revealed and real happiness and peace are experienced.



The blazing mount that was Lord Shiva solidified in the form of the Holy hill, and also took the form of a Linga, a symbolic representation of God (in the Arunachaleswara temple) to be accessible for worship. The Lord is believed to be present in 3 forms in Arunachalam; as the Hill, the Linga, and as a *Siddha purusha* residing on the Hill in human form.

It was in Arunachala that Shiva is believed to have taken the form of Linga for the first time. The Supreme Lord controls the entire creation and each one of us too; He is everywhere, all pervading and also resides in our hearts. As Brahman, the ultimate truth, He is nameless and formless while He is also the manifested creation and the world. Man with his gross intellect and limited ego and body sense, cannot grasp the all pervading reality and needs a name and form to aid his worship. So the Lord took the form of a Linga to grace mankind.

Lord Shiva lives on Mount Kailash, but in Arunachala the Hill itself is Lord Shiva. Among the 5 *Panchabhutha* temples of Shiva in South India, representing the 5 basic elements of nature, Arunachala represents fire. Constant remembrance of Arunachala gives *Moksha* – that is the command of God!

When Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi surrendered to Lord Arunachaleswara, it is not to the externally manifested Hill or Linga but to the supreme and all-pervading Divinity in his heart. In early times, Lord Arunachala was known only within India, but after Ramana came to Tiruvannamalai, His fame and glory spread across the world.

This year, Maha Deepam will be celebrated on 17 November 2013. Details can be found on websites related to Tiruvannamalai, Arunachaleswara and Ramana Maharshi.

***Compiled by Sreedevi from a transcription of Sadguru Sri Nannagaru's discourses & some references from the web***



# CHILDREN LEARN MORE FROM WHAT YOU ARE THAN WHAT YOU TEACH

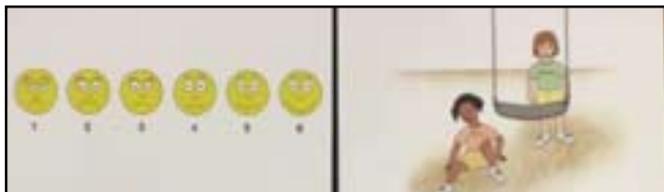


## How do Young Children think of right and wrong ?

- **ABSOLUTES:** Things are always good or always bad. It is unimportant whether the act was intentional or unintentional.
- **HOW MUCH PHYSICAL DAMAGE WAS DONE:** The greater the damage, the worse the perception of the act.



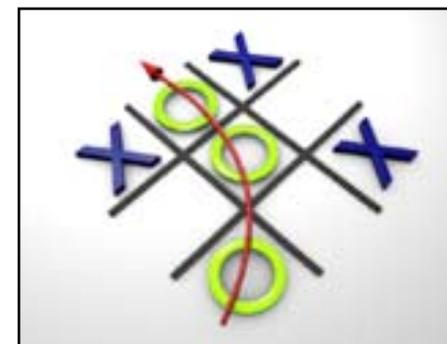
- **WHETHER AN ACT WILL EVOKE PUNISHMENT:** If an act will be punished then it is wrong.
- **RULES:** Rules should never be broken. Breaking Rules is viewed as wrong.
- **THEIR OWN PERCEPTION:** Children have difficulty taking another person's view point.



## How to Help Children Develop

### Moral Thoughts and Actions?

- **DEAL WITH PROBLEMS APPROPRIATELY:** If a moral issue is involved, make the child understand the reasons why her action was wrong and help the child to decide how to right the wrong.
- **DISCUSS MORAL DILEMMAS:** Stories that emphasize that people make mistakes. We are not always right or always wrong.



- **ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO CHANGE THE RULES:** In their favorite game, emphasize that if all players agree then it is OK to change the rules.
- **PRAISE MORAL BEHAVIOUR:** Make it a point to comment on the helpful nature of the an act.



Compiled by Neeru Mamtani

Article source: Sandra Crosser, Ph.D

# Reflections

KRISHNA

**B**efore working at Nachiketa Tapovan, we had only ever seen one other Indian school: a private school whose amenities were substandard compared to the 750 rupees per month tuition. 40 students would cram into a tiny classroom at 9 am and remain there until 5 pm, some having to climb over benches and desks just to reach the door. Mobility within the classroom was practically impossible, although maybe that was a blessing for students attempting to avoid the teachers' sticks. In other words, before reaching Nachiketa, our opinions of the Indian education system were skewed in an incredibly negative direction.

But when we stepped through the gates at Nachiketa, we began to develop a deeper understanding of the hope present in many parts of the Indian school system. Nachiketa felt like a haven, a sanctuary of learning where students are able to expand their minds and explore their interests without the threat of corporal punishment. They receive food, clothing, books, medical care and for some, housing, all for free. That first day, the biggest difference we noticed between Nachiketa and our other school was that the students were happy. They had the chance to simply be kids, even as they engaged in the learning process.

I have spent most of my time teaching in Nachiketa's tenth class data entry operations course, working with five exceptional and vibrant students. Of course it was difficult attempting to teach basic computer tasks with only 2 computers to practice on, but these passionate students found time to practice on their own, playing music for us and practicing typing for us well after class ended. Yet, my favorite parts of this experience were not the ones in which we talked about different types of Excel charts or the difference between horizontal and vertical scrollbars. Rather, my favorite parts were learning about the students' animal nicknames for each another, or the times when

we would all laugh until we couldn't breathe because (for example) one student hid behind the cupboard doors proclaiming "The king is gone!" These students have passion. They have a love for life that is infectious. They have personalities that have blossomed in such a welcoming environment. They have goals that anyone would admire. And I am positive that this is not exclusive to these five 10th class students.

In my educational psychology course at Duke, we learned about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Essentially, Maslow put on paper what is probably obvious to most people: before a child can learn, he or she must be healthy, safe, loved. Before a child can move forward in her development, her basic needs must be met. Nachiketa does just that—feeding those who need food, clothing those who need clothes, loving those who need compassion, giving play time for those who have extra energy, providing medical care to the sick. Nachiketa educates the whole child, and other schools should follow its admirable example.



**Katherine Congleton**

Duke University

3rd Year BA in Public Policy Studies

## *Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi on her experience of Self-Realization*

**“As** soon as the *Sahasrara* was opened the whole atmosphere was filled with tremendous Chaitanya. And there was tremendous Light in the sky. And the whole thing came on the Earth - as if a torrential rain or a waterfall — with such tremendous force, as if I was unaware and got stupefied. The happening was so tremendous and so unexpected that I was stunned and totally silent at the grandeur.

I saw the Primordial Kundalini rising like a big furnace, and the furnace was very silent but a burning appearance it had, as if you heat up metal, and it had many colors. In the same way, the Kundalini showed up as a furnace, like a tunnel, as you see these plants you have here for coal burning that create electricity. And it stretched like a telescope and came out one after another, Shoo! Shoo! Shoo! Just like that.

And the Deities came and sat on their seats, golden seats, and then they lifted the whole of the head like a big dome and opened it, and then this torrential rain complete drenched Me. I started seeing all that and got lost in the Joy. It was like an artist seeing his own creation, and I felt the Joy of great fulfillment.

After coming out of this beautiful experience I looked around and saw human beings so blind and I became absolutely silent, and desired that I should get the cups to fill the Nectar . . .”

**Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi**  
**Opening Of The Primordial Sahasrara**  
**Sahasrara Puja, Paris, France — May 5, 1982**





# *Meaning of Diwali*

**D**iwali is a holiday of joy; it is the time when we gather with loved ones, celebrating our family, our friends and the prosperity God has bestowed upon us. However it is also a holiday that is widely misunderstood and misrepresented, especially in the West. I have heard that in the West, Diwali is referred to as “The Indians’ Christmas” and that it is celebrated with frivolity and decadence. Let us talk about what Diwali really means, about why we celebrate it and about why we worship Goddess Lakshmi on this day.

## **Celebration of Light**

There are three main aspects of this holiday called Diwali. The first is the celebration of light. We line our homes and streets with lanterns; we explode fireworks; children play with sparklers.

However, Diwali is not a festival of light in order that we may burn candles, fireworks and sparklers. Sure, these are wonderful ways of expressing our gaiety. But, they are not the only or true meaning of “light.” Diwali is a festival of the light which dispels the darkness of our ignorance; it is a festival of the light which shows us the way on our journey through life. The purpose is not to glorify the light of the candle, or the light of

the firecracker. The purpose is to glorify the light of God. It is He who bestows the real light, the everlasting light upon the darkness of this mundane world. A candle burns out. A firework is a momentary visual experience. But, the candle of a still mind and the fireworks of a heart filled with bhakti are Divine and eternal; these are what we should be celebrating.

We decorate our homes with lanterns; but why? What is the symbolism behind that? Those lanterns signify God’s light, penetrating through the ignorance and sin of our daily lives. They signify the Divine light, shining its way through this mundane world. A home bathed in light is a home in which anger, pain, and ignorance are being dispelled; it is a home that is calling to God.

## **A Fresh Start**

Diwali also marks the New Year. For some, the day of Diwali itself is the first day of the New Year and for others the New Year’s Day is the day following Diwali. But for all, this season is one of heralding in the New Year. In the joyous mood of this season, we clean our homes, our offices, our rooms, letting the light of Diwali enter all the cor-

ners of our lives. We begin new checkbooks, diaries and calendars. It is a day of “starting afresh.” On this day we clean every room of the house; we dust every corner of the garage, we sweep behind bookshelves, vacuum under beds and empty out cabinets. But, what about our hearts? When was the last time we swept out our hearts? When did we last empty them of all the dirt and garbage that has accumulated throughout our lives?

That is the real cleaning we must do. That is the real meaning of “starting afresh.” We must clean out our hearts, ridding them of darkness and bitterness; we must make them clean and sparkling places for God to live. We must be as thorough with ourselves as we are with our homes. Are there any dark corners in our hearts we have avoided for so long? Are we simply “sweeping all the dirt under the rug?” God sees all and knows all. He knows what is behind every wall of our hearts, what is swept into every corner, and what is hidden under every rug. Let us truly clean out our hearts; let us rid ourselves of the grudges, pain, and anger that clutter our ability to love freely. Let us empty out every nook and cranny, so that His Divine light can shine throughout.

### **Maha Lakshmi**

The third, and perhaps most important, aspect of Diwali is the worship of Maha Lakshmi. Maha Lakshmi is the Goddess of wealth and prosperity, bestowing these abundantly upon Her devotees. On Diwali we pray to Her for prosperity; we ask Her to lavish us with Her blessings. However, what sort of prosperity are we praying for? All too often, we infer wealth to mean money, possessions, material pleasures. This is NOT the true wealth in life; this is not what makes us prosperous. There is almost no correlation between the amount of money we earn, the number of possessions we buy and our sense of inner bliss and prosperity.

It is only God’s presence in our lives which makes us rich. Look at India. People in small villages, in holy towns, in ancient cities have very little in terms of material possessions. Most of them live below the Western standards of poverty. Yet, if you tell them they are poor, they won’t believe you, for in their opinion they are not. This is because they have God at the center of their lives. Their homes may not have TV sets,

but they all have small Mandirs; the children may not know the words to the latest rock and roll song, but they know the words to Aarti; they may not have computers or fancy history text books, but they know the stories of the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and other holy scriptures; they may not begin their days with newspapers, but they begin with prayer. If you go to these villages you may see what looks like poverty to you. But, if you look a little closer, you will see that these people have a light shining in their eyes, a glow on their faces and a song in their hearts that money cannot buy.

On Diwali, we must pray to Maha Lakshmi to bestow real prosperity upon us, the prosperity that brings light to our lives and sparkle to our eyes. We must pray for an abundance of faith, not money; we must pray for success in our spiritual lives, not a promotion at work; we must pray for the love of God, not the love of the beautiful girl (or boy) in our class.

Additionally, we worship Maha Lakshmi who is the Divine symbol of purity and chastity. Yet, in our celebration of Her, we frequently indulge in frivolity and hedonism. How can we worship Her while engaging in the opposite of what she represents? We must re-assess how we pay tribute to this holy Goddess!

So, on this holy day, let us fill our entire beings with the light of God. Let us clean out our minds and hearts, making a true “fresh start.” Let us pray to Maha Lakshmi to bestow the Divine gifts of faith, purity and devotion upon us. With those, we will always be always rich, always prosperous, and always fulfilled. Let us celebrate Diwali this year as a true “holy day,” not only as another frivolous “holiday.”

**- Swami Chidananda Saraswati**



# Your Spiritual Mirror

**W**hat happens when you look at your reflection? Do you see all beauty and perfection of your physical being or do you find fault with aspects of your face or body? If you look deeply into your own eyes, is there a sense of peace or inklings of turmoil? If you focus on one feature do you find it intriguing or disappointing?

When you have a positive experience looking at yourself do you rejoice and claim that for yourself, or do you believe it is just an excellent mirror? And when you find aspects that do not please you, do you then consider how to accept them or improve them, or do you blame the mirror for being a poor reflector?

Now consider the possibility that all of life, every person you meet, every situation in which you find yourself also offers you a mirror to see your own reflection on an inner level ... a reflection beyond the physical- The reflection of your innermost emotional life, your soul's yearnings, your deepest beliefs and patterns of being, your conscious and

unconscious thoughts. How would you see that reflection? Would you be able to see it as a gift, an opportunity to know yourself better? Would you be able to honor the parts of you that you find appealing and seek to transform those that do not serve you?

Or would you instead compliment or blame the mirror?

When you meet someone who challenges you emotionally through his behavior or words, whose actions perhaps cause you to reflect on your feelings, be it anger, sadness, discouragement, rejection, or joy, then you are being given a look into that mirror. Perhaps a part of you is present in that person that you are seeing. Or perhaps the person you have attracted to you is here to show you the feelings about yourself and your life that you still need to understand or release in order to live more abundantly. You can only see what is already there within your own self, already operating or not, but nonetheless present on the same level.



When someone upsets you because she is not being kind to you, what part of you has also behaved unkindly to another? If a friend annoys you with trivial habits, where is the judge in you that trivializes your own life? Do you stay open to the possibility that the casual stranger who genuinely smiles at you and makes your morning more blessed is also the part of you that can bring the gift of simple love to another?

If we live in the spiritual belief that we are all one, all connected, there is no doubt that each of us reflects something in another. We cannot be separated, we cannot be apart ... we can only demonstrate what is. And the universe acts as a huge reflector of that reality.

To every situation, to every person you meet or are with, you bring yourself ... your own unique history, belief system, patterns of reacting and concepts of the world. This is your filter, your perspective and no-one, no-one has the exact same – (total) perspective that you do. When you are in awareness of that perspective, that filter and all the myriad emotions and responses you carry with it, you can live in conscious choice ... transforming your life as you desire.

Your soul is constantly providing you with opportunities to see that filter through the situations that you may take personally or that create drama in your life or a strong response or judgment. When we live without awareness we see these situations as simple situations, haphazard, perhaps coincidental, that occur randomly in our lives. That is when we blame others, become angry at the world, or try to reason through what went wrong or why something happened to us. But as we understand that the outer world is merely a reflection of our inner world we realize that people and events do not happen to us, they happen for us as we drew them to us for our higher good, for our understanding, for the evolution of our consciousness.

So the next time you look into life's mirror, ask yourself, what do I truly see here? Where is this in my own life, heart, behavior, self abuse or neglect? What do I see here about me that I need to claim or release? And you may begin to be grateful for the abundance of expansive life that this spiritual mirror offers.

*- Lucille Ann Meltz*

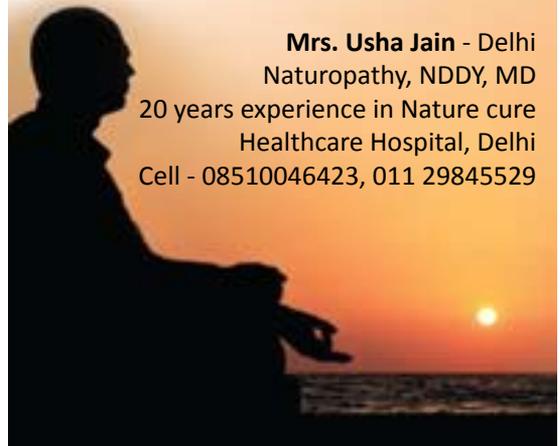
# Naturopathy

## **KNEE PAIN**

*Here are some Naturopathy tips sent by Mrs. Usha Jain for pain relief*

- \* Hot and cold fomentation
- \* Exposure to morning sun for 30 minutes for absorbing Vitamin D
- \* Avoid proteins like dals etc.
- \* Red oil massage: After oil massage cover the area with cloth for at least 2 hours. To make red oil, a glass bottle with 3/4 sesame (til) oil is to be taken. Mouth of the bottle should be tied with a cloth and the bottle covered with red cellophane paper. Place it on a wooden base in the sun from 7am to 5pm. This bottle is to be stored always on a wooden base after it is charged by the sun and left with the red cellophane paper on it. Thus charged, the oil is now ready for application. The charging lasts for 6 months after which it can be recharged in the same way.

**Mrs. Usha Jain** - Delhi  
Naturopathy, NDDY, MD  
20 years experience in Nature cure  
Healthcare Hospital, Delhi  
Cell - 08510046423, 011 29845529



# Ganesh Chaturthi



In the same way, when God comes to visit, won't you do the same, only with a hundred times more devotion and dedication?

The day when God leaves, there is a great fanfare to send Him, just like there is when He is brought home, in expectance that He will come back next year. The crying and sadness on the people's faces when their 'Bappa' goes away is another act that signifies their genuine love for God.

In many other places we see people keeping the idol of God for the sake of keeping it and then they immerse Him in water in a day, relieved that another great headache has left them. But in Mumbai, I would go to school hearing that Ganesha was still there in my friends' houses for 5 or 7 or 9 or sometimes even 11 days.

Also, some of us might leave Ganesha at home, and go to see a movie or go shopping. In Mumbai, it is considered a sin to do so. Isn't it true that when a guest comes to our house, you stay with them and spend time with them? Especially, since it is someone who comes once in a year, from very far away, and with so much love. Back there, people would lovingly make Prasad for Him in the morning and in the evening, and also give *Aarathi* and sing *Bhajans*.

The Almighty created us with love. Can't we return a small bit of love to Him when He personally comes to our house? The idol and the *Pooja* are just a facade. Whether you truly love God within you is what matters.

Just think, how much *Punya* we might get if we prayed to the Gods in our shrine with the same amount of love that the Maharashtrians show to Ganesha during Ganesh Chaturthi. Forget *Punya*. Think of the inner peace that we will attain through this.

Ganapathi Bappa Morya !  
Pulchya Varshi Laukar Ya !

(Oh! Great Lord Ganapathi, Come back soon next year!)

**N. Rohan C. Govind**  
Class 9,  
GT Aloha Vidya Mandir,  
Chennai



I know you all might be thinking that it is a bit too late to write about Ganesh Chaturthi, but as you read on, you will find out what the article is actually about. Recently, we, i.e., my family, brought an idol of Lord Ganesha to our house. But from the past two years since I moved to Chennai, I felt something was amiss. We had all the *Bhajans*, the *Poojas*, the story of Ganesha, and we even had- for the first time in years actually- our whole family together celebrating in their own houses, after which we would all gather in one house in the evening.

But I realised this year, that I was missing the continuous singing of *Bhajans* on loudspeakers, live telecast of the 30-foot-tall Ganesha sitting 20 kilometres away from my house, and most of all the positive vibrations throughout Aamchi Mumbai. Yeah, you got it, I stayed earlier in Mumbai.

A great change I did notice was the change in the amount of enthusiasm. There are many festivals which are celebrated in Chennai with great excitement. The absence of that enthusiasm that I saw and experienced in Mumbai in this one festival left a gaping hole in my festive mood in Chennai.

The people of Mumbai really deserve a note of appreciation for the amount of love and happiness they show to the God that they bring home. To them it is not just an idol that they have to bring and worship to get *Punya*. To them, it is an embodiment of the Lord, who has come as a guest to their very home, and obviously when a guest is coming home you clean up the house the previous day, make something special to eat, etc.

# BUNDI UTSAV

20-21 November 2013

This annual function at Bundi is celebrated in the month of November. The city virtually comes alive to festivities with several cultural performances by well-known artists.

Sir Rudyard Kipling's destination Bundi in Rajasthan is the first destination, in the Hadoti region (named after the Hada kings) comprising of Bundi, Jhalawar, Kota and Baran that is accessible from Jaipur by road. Set in a narrow encircling gorge, the palaces and fortress of Bundi have a fairy tale like quality about them. Few other places in India have such a picturesque location. Isolated and independent, the entire township appears like a miniature painting, frozen in time. The ethereal beauty and grandeur of Bundi architecture is vividly brought out in the "Palaces of India".

"Bundi Utsav", a pageant of resplendent heritage of the much esteemed Hadoti has made the place even more famous. An extraordinary effort to present the culture, folklore, traditions and craft of the region along with the artistes from the adjoining areas for the guests to see and believe in the treasure that lies ahead to explore and savour. The programme includes: a colorful Shobha Yatra, Arts & Crafts Fair, Ethnic Sports, Cultural exhibition, Deep Daan, Folk/Classical Music & Dance Programmes, Sight Seeing, Traditional Rural Sports, Turban competition, Bridal Attire, Musical Band Competition, Folk/Classical Music & Dance



Rajasthani dances depict the culture of Bundi

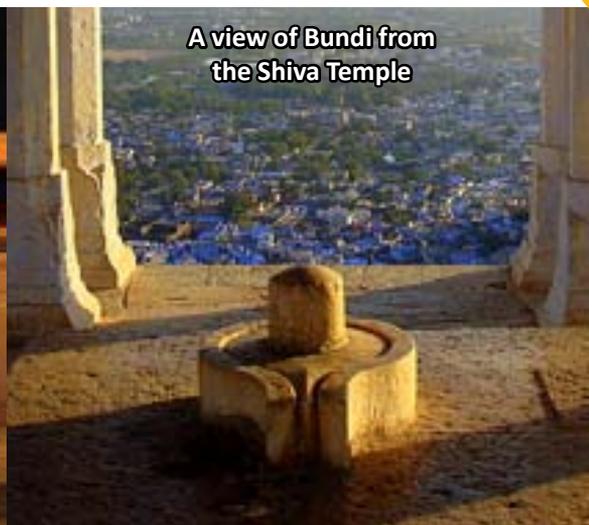
programme & sparkling fireworks display etc. The small township of nearby Keshorai Patan wears the look of a little 'Pushkar' on the night of the full moon in the month of Kartika. Early in the morning, the banks of the river Chambal witness a colourful scene of men and women, clad in fantastic costumes mirrored in the crystal clear waters of the river. Women float lighted diyas (lamps prepared by them from flour dough), into the river and seek boons with prayers. The temple and the scenic beauty arrest the attention of visitors and speak of its grandeur and glory in silence.

The historic city Keshorai Patan is set ablaze with the scintillating cultural displays in the soft caress of the moonlight during the annual Bundi Utsav due soon. The soft silver deluge flooding the banks of the auspicious chambal presents an exotic setting for the aspiring tourist. The villagers dress up to exhibit the folklore and the beautiful season once again rises up to greet yet another festive moment.

*Compiled from Rajasthan Tourism*



A dancer performs for the utsav



A view of Bundi from the Shiva Temple

# First Impression... Best Impression



act badly in front of others, this is fine as long as it is in front of a friend or a relative. But if the same happens in front of a stranger, what will that person think?

Another example of good impression I can give you is my father. Lately I have seen him meeting clients. He always wore a suit and a nice pair of shoes so that he could impress the clients. You might be thinking why I told you this? It is to express that character is not the only one which effects the impression. Your attire and looks also apply. If you were my father's client and you see my father show up wearing shorts and a sleeveless T-shirt, you might not think he is the perfect guy for the job. The impression we give should not give anyone second thoughts. We should impress people, like the articles in this magazine impress you.

Keep impressing!

- Suraj Saka,  
class IX  
GT Aloha Vidya Mandir,  
Chennai

It is said that first impression is always the best impression. In fact it so happens that whenever we meet a person for the first time we act nice and be polite just to impress them. Do you know why this happens? Whenever we meet a person for the first time, our mind interacts with a new character. We know that the character of a person varies from each individual, so we have to input the character of the person into our brain. Until we meet the same person again, we keep thinking about his or her behaviour, personality, body language, looks, attire, etc., till we can make an outline of what kind of person he or she is. This shows that, that person has made an impression on us, but at the same time, we are conscious how we act or behave in front of them, because we want to make an impression too, and a good one. For example, I have a friend in school who gets good marks, but he is very naughty, yet, never have I seen him get scolding from a teacher. How does he manage to do this? He just impressed the teachers by getting good marks and acting polite in front of them for the first few months when we joined our school last year.

So, as I was saying, whenever we give a good impression to others they start liking you. But if you create a negative vibe when you first meet a person, they will have bad feelings about you. They will start having second thoughts about being your friend. I have seen lot of people who



# इवलङ्करोति दिङ्ङोत = विरुपु थरुदु

*Krupalu Ogeti, Samskrita Bharati, Hyderabad*

*email:okrupalu@sanskritam.net*

## उपपदविभक्तिः

Can you relate gouri-Sabda with nadi-Sabda above.

Lastly, let us look at an अकारान्त-नपुंसकलिङ्ग-शब्दाः, for example, वनम्.

वनम् (मम गृहस्य समीपे एकं वनम् अस्ति।)

वनम् (मम माता प्रतिदिनं वनं गच्छति।)

वनेन (वनेन वातावरणकालुष्यं [atmospheric pollution] न्यूनं भवति।)

वनाय (सर्वकारः [government] वनाय (वनरक्षणाय) बहु धनं व्ययीकरोति [spends]।)

वनात् (वनात् तिन्निणी [tamarind], कपित्थानि [velaga-paLlu], बदरीफलानि [local cherries rEgipaLlu] च प्राप्नुमः।)

वनस्य (वनस्य विस्तारः [expanse] न अधिकः।)

वने (मयूरादयः [Peacock and the like] वने यथेष्टं [as they wish] सञ्चरन्ति।)

वन! (भोः वन! सदा रक्षितं [protected] भव।)

As an exercise, write Sanskrit sentences in all the vibhaktis for: ग्रन्थः, लता, कर्तरी, पुस्तकम्.

\* \* \* \* \*

(Continued from last issue)

### Vibhaktis in order:

Let us look at ईकारान्त-स्त्रीलिङ्ग-शब्दाः, for example, नदी.

नदी (तत्र नदी प्रवहति।)

नदीम् (जनाः प्रातः नदीं गच्छन्ति स्नानार्थम्।)

नद्या (नद्या अस्माकं ग्रामे दुर्भिक्षं [famine] नास्ति।)

नद्यै (नद्यै नमः।)

नद्याः (महिलाः नद्याः घटेन जलं आनयन्ति।)

नद्याः (नद्याः नाम गोदावरी।)

नद्याम् (नद्यां मीनाः तरन्ति [fish swim]।)

नदि! (हे नदि! अस्माकं पोषणं कुरु।)



## Teacher's Day Celebrations

Swamiji and Mataji graced the occasion of Teachers' Day celebrations at Zilla Parishad High School, Kodgal on 5th September 2013. It was a delight to see many enthusiastic children come on stage and perform beautifully. The Principal anchored the programme and infused tremendous energy in the villagers who had gathered to see their children perform. It was awe-inspiring to see a Government School excel not only in extra-curricular activities but in academics as well. Many prizes were awarded to the students who excelled in academics and sports. Parents were thrilled to see their children perform on stage.

Mataji addressed the children and said that their performances were flabbergasting. She encouraged children to develop more inquisitiveness in order to hug a better life in future. She also promised to guide them by conducting special programmes to enhance their concentration levels. Though the programme was prolonged from 12:30 pm to 4:30 pm it was great fun to be in their company. The Management deserves appreciation for boosting enrolment of many local children into this school.



Students & Teachers at Zilla Parishad High School, Kodgal



Lord Ganesha at Ma Yoga Shakti Peeth

## Ganesh Chaturthi

On 9th September 2013, Ganesh Chaturthi was celebrated at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram on a grand scale. Mataji personally made an eco-friendly Ganesha and *Puja* was performed at Ma Yoga Shakti Peeth at the Ashram. Volunteers and villagers from surrounding areas participated in the festivities. Later Mataji addressed the gathering at the Ganesh pandal at Gairan Tanda. She explained the significance of celebrating Ganesh Chaturthi in such a lucid way, that every one from children to adults understood the prominence of the festival. They promised to spread the aesthetic flavour of our unique culture. Mataji stressed on delivering what ever best we can for the benefit of the society.

## Run for Nation



It was a very special day. Shadnagar was fully charged with more than 5000 energetic youth. The occasion was 'Run for Nation', a programme held at Shadnagar, which gave the opportunity to youth from different colleges to assemble under one umbrella called Swami Vivekananda. The venue appeared like a sea of youth, who like Swami Vivekananda would roar and go the length and breadth of India to spread moral and spiritual values. There was only one slogan echoing in every heart and space 'Swami Vivekananda ki Jai'.

On 11th September 1893, Swami Vivekananda addressed Parliament of Religion and became

an epitome of Universal Brotherhood. His message was simple yet most relevant for the world.

This 'Run for the Nation' programme held at Shadnagar was meant to imbibe the great qualities of Swami Vivekananda.

Mataji addressed the gathering and in her short speech of 5 minute duration mesmerized the audience. She started off by saying "I am also a youth ... a youth like you ..." There was a thunderous applause as the youth could connect well with her. The highlight of the programme was an example quoted by Mataji, "Once a foreigner asked Swami Vivekananda, 'can't you wear a proper clothing to look like a gentleman'? And Swamiji replied, 'in our culture it is not the clothing but character that defines a gentleman' ..."

We hope this gesture from organizing committee, youth and elite group from Shadnagar will trespass the regional boundaries and will march on to inculcate Swami Vivekananda's message of tender values and powerful energy to the next level to see a healthy and prosperous society.



Swamiji addresses the gathering



Youth motivated by inspiring talks

## Vanamahotsavam: The Green Print

**G**reat response! Whenever we have done plantation, we had rains in this area which ensured us that God is taking care of this wonderful project. So far we have completed planting more than 33,000 saplings in Mahaboobnagar District.

Firstly, I would like to thank our Collector Garu for supporting this noble cause. Without his intervention it would have been a difficult task to see a single green patch. Second person who comes to my mind is Sri Nageshwar Rao Garu, DFO. His technical help and going an extra mile is greatly appreciated and commended by me. He has been a great motivator and supporter of the

“green” cause. And last but not the least without Mataji’s Divine intervention it would have been highly impossible to even move one inch ahead. Though she is slowly waning away physically, we have always found her physically fit, mentally strong, emotionally balanced, intellectually sharp and spiritually elevated and probably because of her inner energy we were able to get charged and work round the clock. Every worker in the Ashram whether it be a volunteer or young Nachiketas like Sekhar, Heeru or Suman, they all have experienced her motherly love.



**Swamiji & Mataji planting a sapling**



**Volunteers planting saplings**

## Birthday Celebrations of Swamiji & Mataji

**V**eda Vyasa Vidya Mandir students, teachers and volunteers of Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram celebrated with great enthusiasm, the Birthday of Swami Nachiketananda Puri and Paramahansa Swami Shivananda Puri. The Ashram wore a festive look as LKG, UKG & class 1 students ran to greet Swamiji & Mataji with balloons in their hands. They danced all the way singing the Birthday song which echoed in the 40 acre Ashram land. Every student was eager to be the first to present their small but invaluable gifts made by their own creative hands. It was an outpour of love and it was a spectacular sight to watch them gift flower bouquets, greeting cards painted by them and other creative works. They performed a beautiful dance and Swamiji was elated.



**A student greeting Swamiji & Mataji**

The children were served delicious and nutritious food which was specially cooked for them by Swamiji. They ate to their hearts content in a very orderly way which was the best Birthday gift for Swamiji and Mataji. After the sumptuous meal the children left reluctantly. They wanted to hang around and drink the nectar of the motherly love of Swamiji and Mataji. Every bit of it!



**Prasad is served to the students**

The efforts put in by the teachers and staff of Veda Vyasa Vidya Mandir, in making this a spectacular event, is highly commendable.

# Events & Celebrations

## Teacher's Day Celebrations

On 5<sup>th</sup> September 2013 Teacher's Day was celebrated at Nachiketa Tapovan, Kavuri Hills. Sri Shraavan CEO of Vignan Engineering Colleges graced the occasion as the chief guest. Vidya Mandir students felicitated their teachers with great respect. Cultural programs were performed by the students and at the end of the program, students organized a game of Treasure Hunt for the teachers. The chief guest was impressed by the students' performances and expressed his happiness for being given the opportunity of providing Intermediate education to Tapovan's ex-students. He said he would gladly welcome more students from the current batch to join his institutions.



Teachers of Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir



Students perform for their teachers

## Felicitations of Nachiketa Tapovan's Teachers by Rotary Club

We are happy to announce that two of our Nachiketa Tapovan Vidya Mandir teachers Smt. N. Jyothi and Smt. D. Durga were felicitated by Rotary Club of Jubilee Hills, on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2013. It was held at Jubilee Hills International Centre. The teachers were awarded mementos and cash prizes for their dedication in serving the underprivileged children who are the first generation learners in their families. Nachiketa Tapovan congratulates them on their achievement.



Sri P. Sambashiva Rao,  
Ex District Governor,  
Rotary Club felicitates  
Smt. D. Durga & Smt. N. Jyothi



Turn around their future!

For ₹ 1 Lakh

Your donation will last a lifetime

*Appeal for Sponsor-a-Child Corpus Fund*

Nachiketa Tapovan runs a free Vidya Mandir for 240 children from poor families. They receive all-round, holistic academic education in English medium (LKG to 10th std.), including **arts, crafts, spiritual and culture lessons**.

Sponsoring a child is a great opportunity to help protect a child in need whilst seeing in return the real effect that your support has. Make a difference in a child's life- the chance to form a lasting, meaningful relationship with a child. All your kindness will add up to a bright future.

- ✓ *Nachiketa Tapovan is working hard to build a CORPUS fund to meet the ongoing expenses and expansion needs at a consistent pace. Donating to a Corpus Fund is a great way to sustain our efforts.*
- ✓ *Interest accruing from the investment made out of the Corpus donations, is only used without touching the principal itself. This way your DONATION remains forever, strengthening the cause and the organization.*

✓ *Being a charitable institution, we earn an interest of 9% annually from a Govt Bank. The annual interest on 1 Lakh will fully support one child's education for one year.*

✓ *Your donation will come a long way by meeting our expenses that include Teacher's Salaries, Uniforms, Educational material, Building Maintenance and Housekeeping, Salaries for support and administration staff, Field trips and Excursions, Celebrations and Extra Curricular activities.*

✓ *At present, we only have 39 corpus sponsorships, help us reach all of our 240 children!*

✓ *Bring hope and light into their lives – as a group or individual or in the name of a loved one.*

✓ *Donors receive annual report card and are welcome to interact with our children.*

✓ **We express our thanks to Corpus Donors by permanently inscribing their names on our recognition board in the school.**



# HOW YOU CAN HELP

*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 240 children who receive all-round nourishment from man-making education to milk-n-meals and basic health-aid in an atmosphere of genuine love. Kind-hearted Well wishers have been the unseen force behind this offering to God. We thank you for your continued support.

## Donations towards operation costs

Sponsor a Teacher (Dance & Music)	₹ 5000/Month
Vidya Daanam (Education)	₹ 6000/year/child
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 5200/day
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 800/day
Vastra Daanam (Uniforms)	₹ 900/2 pairs
Stationery Supplies (Copier Paper)	₹ 5000/term
Medicines (For needy people)	₹ 5000/month
Sponsor a Festival in temple	₹ 3000

## \*Corpus Fund Options

Sponsor a child	₹ 1 Lakh
Anna Daanam (Mid-day Meals)	₹ 60,000/-
Alpa Aharam (Snacks)	₹ 10,000/-

\* With the accrued annual interest the following will be achieved every year, respectively.

- One child's education annually.
- Mid-day Meals for the whole school for one day annually.
- Snacks for the whole school for one day annually.

## Donations within India- Details

Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan". The donations in India are exempt under the U/s 80G of IT Act, 1961. PAN No. AAATN2406K

Donations can be also directed through bank account as below

Bank Name	: Bank of Baroda
Branch Name	: Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad
A/c Name	: Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	: 18090100004093
IFSC Code	: BARBOJUBILE

(Note: IFSC code contains the number "zero" not letter "O")

## Overseas Donations- Details

Donations can be made directly by cheque or DD in favor of "Nachiketa Tapovan". Nachiketa Tapovan has permission to receive donations from abroad under FCRA act

### Bank Information

Bank Name	: State Bank of India
Branch Name & Code	: Kavuri Hills-12655
A/c Name	: Nachiketa Tapovan
A/c No	: 30953215793
IFS Code	: SBIN0012655
SWIFT Code	: SBININBB214

(Note: IFS code contains the number "zeros" not letters "O")

## SUBSCRIPTIONS:

### WITHIN INDIA

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

### OVERSEAS

1 year	₹ 1500 (only in INR)
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## NACHIKETA'S GO GREEN CLUB...

*We convey our thanks to all the participants of WOW initiative. You helped us earn Rs. 26,365/- in the month of September and saved Mother Earth by recycling about 2636 kg of plastic and paper waste material.*

# Invitation

We cordially invite you to attend our celebrations



## Diwali

on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2013

@ Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram  
Kodgal Village



## Karthika Pournami

on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2013

@ Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram  
Kodgal Village



## Children's Day

on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2013

@ Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram  
Kodgal Village, Jadcherla, Mahaboobnagar Dist.

&

@ Nachiketa Tapovan

# 70, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur, Hyderabad-500 081

# Festivals & Events of November 2013



Naraka Chaturdasi



Diwali



Govardhan Puja



Bhai Dhooj



Nagula Chaviti



Children's Day



Muharram



Karthika Pournami



Guru Nanak Jayanti

# *Birthday Celebrations of Swamiji & Mataji*

at Nachiketa Tapovan Ashram - 19th September 2013



*Swamiji receives blessings from his mother*



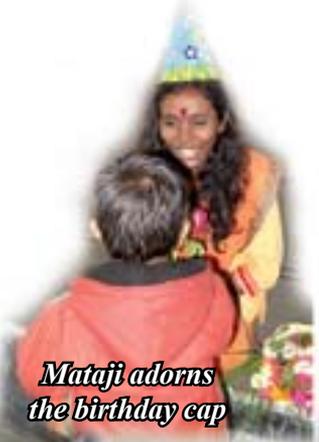
*Excited children run to greet Swamiji & Mataji*



*Swamiji interacts with the students*



*Creativity of the students*



*Mataji adorns the birthday cap*



*A little girl applies tilak*



*Students meditate on the Prayer song*



*Prasad is served to the students*

Nachiketanjali (English Monthly) November 2013, Regd. with the Registrar of Newspaper for India Under No. APENG/2010/34641. Postal Registration No. HD/1139/2013-15

❖ Date of Publication: 20<sup>th</sup> of every month ❖ Date of Posting: 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> of every month



“If there is magic on the planet,  
it is contained in water.”

-Loren Eiseley



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