



Hari OM
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Detachment, reveling in the concept of God, mental purification, intoxication of spiritual knowledge, unbroken mental peace—all these are gained instantaneously by mere companionship with the good. O mind, constantly remember the Lord of Badri.

The supreme reward for realizing the Reality is the intoxicating joy of experiencing the harmonious Infinite, the Divine, the Changeless, blissful Consciousness. . . . To awaken from your little ego, to unshackle yourself from the flesh, to escape from the prison-house of your emotions, to scale over the fortress around the castle of your intellect, to save yourself from the repeated explosions and constant volcanic eruptions of your *vāsanās*, and thereby to realize that you are the Infinite—these should certainly be intoxicating joys of endless satisfaction. . . . Unbroken peace is joy where there is no restlessness or agitation. Wherever there is agitation or restlessness, there is pain. Therefore, peace is the experience of joy . . . it is essentially a condition of one's own mental structure; it is the undisturbed mind. . . . This may be achieved through direct contact with some living, vital teacher, or through the indirect contact of such teachers' works and declarations.

The knowledge-experience [of Truth] is inexplicable Atman is the only Reality and yet It is fully hidden from us. Hence, many people consider It to be non-existent and untrue. Even though It is the only Reality, It is not available for our sense perception. But to a realized person, to one who knows the Truth, the world becomes non-existent or unreal, and he forever dwells in the experience of the Self. . . . The Truth is a wonder and to find a person who has realized this Truth is also a wonder. And trying to make that which cannot be revealed through words an object of our understanding, is also a wonder. The teacher who is able to explain this Truth to us is also a wonder. A disciple who comprehends and understands this situation is also a wonder. . . . But the fact that most people do not see the Self, that they miss It completely, that they do not understand It—this is the greatest wonder of all.

SPIRITUAL TRAILS

Dive into the Present

by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

Pujya Gurudev taught Kaivalya Upanishad to the students of the Vedanta Course at Sāndeepany Sādhanaśāla in Mumbai in 1967.

A precious excerpt from his talk on verses 9 and 10 was published in Tapovan Prasādin June 1968 and again in February 2006. The edited excerpts are printed herein.

“All that was in the past is Brahman. All that will be also is only Brahman”
(*Kaivalyopanishad*, 9).

The present is not indicated only because the present is not divorced from, and has no existence apart from, the past and the future. The future tumbling down into the past—that tumbling portion, that point of merger, is called “the present.” The present may thus be said to be the future cascading into the past. Really speaking, if you try to capture the present, there is no present—it is ever moving. Time as we know it is either the past or the future. Before we can grasp a moment, it is already becomes the past and the next moment is again the future. Before a thought is recognized, before it has arisen, and before we can even conceive it, it becomes a “past” thought.

In this tumultuous welter, where the future is merging with the past, we stand in a flood of thoughts. If we want to be able to recognize the present, we are to not identify with past thoughts and stop the future from coming into the present. The present is in between the two. The present is the silence between the last thought “thought-ed” and the next new thought to come.

By the time you conceive a thought, it is already in the past. It is only a memory. All thoughts are only memories. The future thoughts that have not yet arisen, but are potentially there due to our *vāsanās*, cannot affect us. In fact, past thoughts cannot touch us either. A potential thought manifesting at a given time alone can affect us—and that, too, it can affect us only when we are identifying with it.

In meditation, when we are detached from thoughts, we reach the present. And if we can reach the present and stay there, the thought flow ceases. That is the Infinite. Therefore, it is said that the content of the present moment is infinite. That is peace. The silence between thoughts is the present.

The present is indicated so clearly in the Upanishads, without even a mention. And by avoiding the very mention of it, the Guru takes us nearer to the reflection of the Truth, for what is not said is sometimes nearer to the Truth than what is said.

It is the future merging with the past that is the present. That threshold at which the future merges with the past to become the present—that marginal line, that frontier line of the ridge, is not seen now because of the constant outgoing flood of thoughts. If I can reach that ridge and stay there, that would be best. In order to reach the ridge and stay there, I have to allow my past thoughts to exhaust themselves, and not allow new thoughts to come. That halt in the thought-current would be the end of the mind, or *manonāsha*. Where the mind is thus annihilated is the experience of Infinitude.

Infinitude is in the present. But we never live in the present; we are always conditioned by the past and the future. To avoid the past and the future, take to karma yoga. It is the method of preparation for the discovery of the contents of the present.

To stay as I am, is the present. This condition is samadhi—*sama* (same) + *dhi* (*buddhi*, or intellect) = no flux. The thought (*saṅkalpa*) takes place because of *vāsanās* (latent tendencies). When the last thought has ended, and a new thought is not yet born, then what am I? Pure object-less awareness. Object-less awareness of pure Consciousness is the present. When I am in the present, there are no thought waves. Since there are no thought waves in the mind, intellect, or body, naturally, there are no objects, emotions, and thoughts either. The entire world thus appears to have dissolved and rolled into me.

“He alone is all that was, and all that will be—the Eternal. Knowing Him, one goes beyond the sting of death. There is no other way to reach complete Freedom” (*Kaivalyopanishad*, 9).

When such a man of Realization looks out, he sees his own Self everywhere. At that point, he is in the Present.

Allow the present thought to die away without even making the exertion of killing it. The next thought may be ready to come, but I have no time for it; I am too interested in being in the present. If this were so, I dive, as it were, between the two waves. Thereafter, at the point where I dived, even if a mountainous wave comes, it does not affect me, for I am one with the ocean. In this way, dive between the thoughts.

Here, “waves” means the wave of thoughts. What does it matter if huge waves come? Once you have dived, you are one with the depth of the ocean. Nothing can touch you. If you want to slip and fall, fall—not on top of the wave so that you get tossed about, but between the waves so that you get into meditation.

When I see my own Self as the Life in all, that great principle of Consciousness is me. It is That alone. For such a one, the world of plurality now appears to him as a dream in himself. On awakening, the dream has rolled into the waker. The pluralistic phenomenal world has rolled back into the waker himself. The Reality is clearly seen (*pashyan*)—not with the eyes, but as an experience.

“Experiencing one’s own Self in all beings and all beings in the Self, one attains the highest—Brahman—and not by any other means” (*Kaivalyopanishad*, 10).

Pure Infinitude—the highest Transcendence is approached, and experienced, not by any other means but meditation. You can reach It only through meditation, through halting the mind, when you realize the merger of the universe into yourself. Thereafter, when you come back to the awareness of the body, mind, and intellect you see the same old world of OET (objects, emotions, and thoughts), but around that chaotic world, there is now an aura of divinity. You recognize everything as an expression of the same mighty Self.

By the experience of Oneness within ourselves alone can we realize the ultimate Reality, and not by any other means. He is the substratum. He is all that was and He is all that will be. He is this Life within me. This universe is an extension of myself. This experience is called the highest Reality, the moment of Realization.

Absolute Truth
by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

Satyam, or Truth, can be defined and experienced at various levels. Mahatma Gandhi reveals in his autobiography, *My Experiments with Truth*, how he experimented with different

levels of truth in his life. We will benefit from Truth only when we are ready to experiment with it, wish to experience it, and are willing to verify in our own lives what we hear about it.

A student attended a discourse by a master. The master said, "Speak the truth." On hearing this, the student immediately left. After a few weeks, the master met the student in the marketplace and asked why he had left during the discourse and not returned. The student replied, "I am trying to follow your instructions in my life. Once I gain mastery in speaking the truth, I will come for the second lesson."

Unlike the aforementioned student, who wanted to live truthfully, many people either are skeptics or have only a scholastic interest in spiritual matters. Without even trying to live Truth, some say, "It is good to listen, but not practical to live." Yet others opine, "Such knowledge is useless and has no practical application. Even if it is practical, I cannot practice it. Even if I can, I will not! Without knowing the Truth, my life is moving along comfortably. I am considered successful and am reasonably happy. What is the use of this knowledge? Why should I know the Truth? Why should I initiate this inquiry?"

Presently, people are more interested in "practical" Vedanta, or such topics as "Vedanta: The Means to Personality Development," "Vedanta and Business Management," "Vedanta for Better Relationships," "Vedantic Tips for Better Health," "Vedanta: The Key to Success," and so on. They are willing to know or learn about Vedanta only if they are assured of being professionals, having better relationships; and acquiring more wealth, power, and fame. People today are completely absorbed in the rat race. But is it not true that even if you succeed in this rat race, you remain a rat?

Knowledge of the absolute Truth has an immensely greater scope than the furthering of worldly gain. Knowledge of Truth transforms the finite individual into the infinite Reality. Such knowledge not only puts an end to our immediate sorrows, but it also destroys all sorrows for all time to come. Becoming successful in the worldly sense, acquiring more wealth, and so on, are only its minor side effects. Yet, we are somehow more interested in the utility of Truth than in Truth itself, because we value material achievements more than we value Truth.

Truth should be known for the very joy of discovering, experiencing, and living It. When Truth is not known, untruth is mistaken for the Truth; the unreal is mistaken for the Real; and the not-Self is mistaken for the Self. We remain immersed in illusions and false notions, far from the Real, from the Truth. This kind of ignorance is not bliss; it is the root cause of all our misery. When the absolute Truth is known, it removes our misery forever, and we gain supreme Bliss.

Who then is suitable and ready for knowing the Truth? This is an acid test that can be used:

- If required, am I willing to do what I do not like to, and give up what I like to do in order to know Truth?
- If I am told that Truth will disturb or put an end to my present way of living and thinking, am I still willing to know It?
- Am I ready to face a truth even if it is discovered to be terrible or bitter?
- Am I willing to pursue Truth—whatever be the cost—even if I have to face death?

If I answer "yes" to all of the above questions, then I stand a good chance of knowing the absolute Truth.

Unpolluted by thoughts of utility, let us begin the inquiry into the nature of Truth at the absolute level.

Truth is Reality. Now, what is real and what is unreal? If we are asked, “Is the world real?” we answer in the affirmative. We are undoubtedly of the opinion that it is so. We hold on to this impression, but how did we determine that the world is real?

In our minds, we have formed a definition of reality, and when the world is tested against the criteria, the world is found to be real. What is this definition and what are the criteria that determine the world to be real? Most of us believe in:

- **Perceptibility:** Seeing is believing. That which is perceived by our senses or experienced by our minds is considered as real. I see the book, smell the flower, taste the food, hear the bird, and feel the pain. Hence, the book, flower, and so on, are real. My experience of them makes them real to me. We argue that if they were unreal, we would not experience them.
- **Utility:** I can read a book and gain knowledge. I can drink water and quench my thirst. I can hear the chimes of the clock and tell time. The book, water, clock, and so forth, have their own functions and utility, and are therefore real to us. On the other hand, unreal objects cannot be transacted. For example, one cannot marry the daughter of a barren woman.
- **Durability:** That which we experience again and again over a long period of time, we consider as real. We see the sun rising each day. We live with the pain of a chronic disease for a lifetime and a nagging mother-in-law for years. Hence, they are real. If they were unreal, they would disappear in a short while or, after being experienced, as the dream does.
- **Majority Opinion:** The majority (as in, everyone we know) takes the world to be real. Therefore, it must be real. If it were unreal, many would have thought it to be so. Over generations, the educated, the rich, the famous, and the powerful have thought of the world as real. We feel that Truth cannot be determined based on the words of a rare few who differ from the majority, even though they speak from the scriptures.

Almost all of us accept the above as the criteria for determining the reality of the world and of ourselves. Based on these standards, we conclude that the world is real. Now let us see if our definition of reality is correct. Do the above criteria always hold true? On delving further, we find that an object may be perceived, used, durable, and considered as real by the majority, yet may be false.

In ancient times, it was believed that the earth was flat, the sun orbited the earth, and it was blasphemous to oppose this erroneous notion of the majority and the Church. Yet, the truth was proven to be different.

We perceive the rising and setting of the sun, the waning and waxing of the moon, the mirage waters of the desert, the blueness of the sky, and so forth. We act based on these perceptions. We wake up when the sun rises and color the sky blue in our paintings, but we know that the sun never rises or sets and that the sky is not actually blue. So what we perceive as true is not true.

That a voice is heard is true, but what is spoken could be a lie. In a court of law, judgment is determined based on the evidence presented. Even a guilty person can be acquitted if there is insufficient evidence or if he has a resourceful lawyer. Once, a man accused of stealing shoes was taken to court for trial. The judge found him not guilty. The man immediately turned to the judge and asked, “Does this mean I can keep the shoes?” So, what is seen, or shown to us by others or by our own minds, need not be the truth.

The dream world is perceived as real, but the dream-water does not quench one’s thirst

when one is awake. The dreamer can experience lifetimes in a dream and considers everyone in the dream as real, but we know that the dreamer and dream worlds are not real.

It is thus evident that the above criteria cannot conclusively determine the truth. Then, what is the determining factor? Why is the dream unreal, even though it seems real to the dreamer? On waking, the dreamer and his entire dream world are negated. Therefore, uncontradictability is what conclusively determines the reality, or truth, of an object, just as when a person's words get contradicted, he is said to be lying.

King Janaka dreamed that he was a beggar dying of hunger. On waking up, he asked the wise men in his court, "Who is the real Janaka—the beggar or the king?" Both seemed very real when experienced. Sage Ashṭāvakra told him neither the beggar nor the king was real, as each was contradicted by the other. He said, That which remains ever-present in both those experiences alone is real.

A flower is seen and it emits a fragrance that can be smelled, so the flower is taken to be real. But if one touches it and it is found to be made of paper, then the experiences of the eyes and nose get negated by touch. So, which means of knowledge should we believe—sight, smell, or touch? In this case, touch is the determining factor in deciding the reality of the flower. Even though two senses (eyes and nose) say the flower is real, touch proves it to be unreal. Touch is considered the powerful, or authentic, means for determining truth in this case. Therefore, truth is that which gets confirmed by authentic means or does not get contradicted.

A doctor declares a patient dead, but thereafter, the patient gets up and walks out of the hospital. Whose experience is more authentic? Naturally, the patient's, even if the doctor has lots of degrees and years of experience!

In determining absolute Truth, which is beyond the mind and senses, the Vedas are the authentic means. They are declarations of Truth, realized by the great seers in their seats of meditation. Their authenticity can be arrived at through logic and confirmed by our own discovery of the Truth.

The Gita defines Truth as follows: "The rishis have determined Truth and understood what is Real and what is un-Real. That which is un-Real has no non-existence, and that which is Real is Existence alone." The Truth never gets negated or becomes absent. It is not subject to appearance and disappearance. Only that which ever is, and never ceases to be, is Real.

What is that which always is? We see that a tree exists. When it is cut, the logs exist. When chopped further, the sticks exist. When burned, the ashes exist. In and through all the changes in the name, form, and attributes, the is-ness, or existence, of the object is ever present. I am a husband, a brother, a father, a son, and so forth. In and through all of my relations, "I am" remains unchanged. Existence, which is my nature, remains uncontradicted. Hence, Existence is the absolute Truth.

Bhagavān Ādi Shankarāchārya defines Truth as "that about which our thoughts do not change," and untruth as "that about which our thoughts change." For example, all kinds of ornaments—bangles, rings, necklaces, and the like—are made from gold. In and through all the thoughts of gold ornaments—as in, "this is a bangle," "this is a ring," "this is a necklace"—I experience the gold-thought: "This is gold." The gold does not change and hence, in this example, gold is real and the names and forms (bangle, ring, necklace) are only relatively real.

We can define Reality, or Truth, as being "That which has independent existence." Its

existence is not because of any other object, being, or experience. Everything exists because of Existence; without Existence nothing can exist. In *Sat-darshanam*, Bhagavān Ramana Maharshi says, “Can there be a thought of existence of any object without the Existence principle, which is Truth?” Even the concept of non-existence cannot exist without the principle of Existence.

What then do we consider as unreal? The unreal is that which has no independent existence. All gold ornaments and clay pots exist because of gold and clay, respectively. But gold and clay can exist even without the various shapes and sizes of ornaments and pots. Before the ornaments were made, gold existed. When all the ornaments are melted, gold alone remains. The existence of gold is independent of the presence and absence of the ornaments. Similarly, Truth is independent of the presence or the absence of time, space, objects, names, forms, and attributes. It existed before creation and will exist even after the dissolution of creation. It ever exists. All else exists because of It.

To know this absolute Truth as my own true nature is the very goal of human existence. Knowing this Truth, man becomes immortal, fearless, and totally free. The spiritual seeker thus prays in *Ishāvāsyopanishad*, “Truth is veiled by the golden disc of glittering names and forms. O Lord, remove this veil and reveal Thyself to me, a seeker of Truth.”

Mundakopanishad says the path leading to the highest Truth is by way of empirical truth. By following the principles of truth in our daily life, we become fit for gaining absolute Truth.

REFLECTIONS

Chinmaya Ganga, Flow!
by Swamini Radhikananda

With restless fire of youth he climbed
The holy mountain, life's mystery to find;
In that great Forest he found refuge,
Seated at the feet of the spring of Truth.
No comfort can quench, nor pleasure console
The questions burning his thirsting soul.
River of Knowledge from long ago,
Chinmaya Ganga, flow, flow;
On and on it goes, and ever grows
Chinmaya Ganga, flow
Through hunger and cold, delusion's night
Dissolves in the waters of timeless Light,
Reborn! At last, comes Love's reply
Drunk deep in the silence of the Master's eyes -
Oh, glorious Vision! The One alone shines,
Infinite, Eternal, the Self divine!
River of Knowledge from long ago,
Chinmaya Ganga, flow, flow;
On and on it goes, and ever grows
Chinmaya Ganga, flow
Then the Voice of the waters unto him called,
“O Son, my life now you give to all!”

For the song must be sung and the river must flow
To every thirsting valley below—
Till every heart echoes, “I am Bliss ever free!”
And every wave is merged in the Sea.
River of Knowledge from long ago,
Chinmaya Ganga, flow, flow;
On and on it goes, and ever grows
Chinmaya Ganga, flow!
Chinmaya Ganga, flow!
Chinmaya Ganga, flow!

GURUDEV
by Vedika Prakash

Someone asked, “Who is Pujya Gurudev to you?”

Guidance of a father
Unconditional love of a mother
Relation-less relationship with
Umbrella of ultimate Truth
Devouring
Ego
Victoriously

Our First Offering of Bhikshā
by Anjali Singh

In October 1963, during Pujya Gurudev’s yajna in Delhi, my mother invited Swamiji to our house for bhikshā for the first time. It was a formal lunch with lots of people and the meal was set as a buffet for easy serving. We did not have much experience in how to serve a swami and though I was very excited that he was coming home, I was also nervous.

When lunch was ready, we offered a plate to Gurudev first, so that he could help himself! There was a variety of vegetarian dishes, both western and Indian. Swamiji declined to get up from his chair. He asked us to put the food on his plate. So, we asked the waiter to carry each dish to him so that he could choose whatever he liked. We were hesitant to put our choice of dishes on his plate. So, a little wearied by the missed signals, he said “Oh, okay!” and started taking a little of every dish onto his plate, one on top of the other—the baked green beans in white sauce, the spaghetti in tomato sauce, the rice, the daal, the paneer and the vegetables! At the end, when he started mixing everything up with a spoon, my mother and I were both aghast. I exclaimed, “Swamiji! It will become a kichharī!”

He replied, “That’s what happens to all food inside anyway. I am helping the process!” And he started to eat with one hand, while holding the plate with the other. We quickly made some place at the table by removing some dishes and asked Gurudev to sit comfortably! We could make out that something was not right. Either the food was not to his liking, or the way we had served it. There should have been a proper place for him to eat his food, yet he took a bit of everything and ate it, offering it to Lord Narayana.

I particularly remember the green beans because Gurudev spent a lot of time removing the strings of the beans. I remember the pasta because he mixed it with the rice! I remember the chapattis, which I brought in between the meal, because he said, “Don’t you know that chapatti is served before rice? Now I have already eaten rice. Therefore, I cannot have chapatti.” The bhikshā was a fiasco. We did not seem to have done anything right and felt quite embarrassed.

After lunch, I asked Gurudev if he would like to come up to see my room, which was on the first floor. He immediately got up and I took him to my very small room. There was one big sofa—which I also used as a bed—two small bookcases, and a cement slab that was used for my shrine, which had an oil painting of Lord Krishna made by Allah Bux. This painting later became famous because Gurudev loved it so much that he put a print in all the rooms of the Powai ashram. On either side of my Lord Krishna painting were large photographs of Mata Brahmajyoti and another saint, Pinakinji, both of whom I had met before I met Swamiji in 1961. There were also Lord Shiva and Parvatiji behind a Shivalinga, and Lakshmiji, and a brass statue of Lord Krishna from Vrindavan, which I had gotten about a month after first meeting Swamiji—the Guru had come first and the Lord had followed soon after! At this point, there was no picture of Swamiji on my altar. I did not see any copies of his photographs until after 1963.

When Swamiji looked at the big eyes of the brass idol of Lord Krishna, he named the idol “The Great Witness.” He also fed him something that was lying in my room. The naming and the eating ceremony took place at the same time. Swamiji observed everything very keenly and discussed with some of the books on my bookshelf. My favorite author then was Ayn Rand; I gave Swamiji *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged* to read. He later said that he had liked them, but had Ayn Rand known Vedanta, her philosophy would not have fallen short and remained at the ego level. I gave him another book by a French author, whom he criticized severely in a letter written later. I also gave him *The Shoes of the Fisherman*, which he liked.

From then onward, apart from exchanging letters, we began to exchange books. He sent me *The Prize*, which was about Nobel Prize winners, and *Shike* by Robert Shea (parts 1 and 11). He said I would love the latter book, but when I saw two large volumes, I hesitated to start reading them. When I finally did, I could not put them down.

Before he went to Hawaii for the first time, I gave him the book, *Hawaii*, by James Michener. When he came back from his trip, he said that the people in Hawaii were very surprised and impressed that he knew so much about their origin and other things! Swamiji would read many novels. I used to think he was educating himself about human nature and the world through them—until I realized who he was.

During one of his world tours, he sent me a book of Peanuts cartoons. This book proved most useful. It gave me the idea to make philosophical cartoons for the CM Delhi bulletin (1976-79). Gurudev loved those and would often send me ideas for cartoons, sometimes drawing some himself. I had always wanted to print a book of cartoons of Gurudev and his Vedantic teachings. I even made a dummy sample with cartoon samples, but somehow did not find an opportunity to show it to him. After his mahāsamādhi, I changed the style from cartoons to photos with blurbs and the resulting compilation was the book, Say Cheese.

At my first bhikshā, the meal had not gone well, but the rest of the visit was great. If I could have seen ahead then, I would have known that most of the meals, in the many bhikshās for Gurudev that I would be a part of, would be a series of fiascos! It would still not matter to me because all other things would go well. But apparently, this pattern was sealed from the very first time.

I dreaded cooking for Gurudev and even serving him food. In the 1980s, when Pushpa Kamdar, who used to serve Gurudev his meals in Sidhbari, suggested that Uma Shergill and I take over because she was getting on in age, I immediately declined. It was a great opportunity lost, but I had no idea about cooking. Luckily, mahatmas give more importance to the bhāva, or sentiment, behind the offering, rather than the food itself. Otherwise, I would have been at the bottom of Gurudev's list!

Morning Prayer
by Lynne Matous

Holy Spirit, Self Divine,
help me see
beyond my dreaming mind.

Beyond the veiling of my eyes,
help me see
an expanding heart.

Beyond the countless lives in tow,
help me see
the all-encompassing Soul.

Beyond the mist of many names and forms,
help me see
Oneness alone.

SD

by Saakshi and Divya Sutarwala

For us, Swami Dheerananda is a life spark of Chinmaya Bala Vihar. Through his fun tongue twisters, amazing teaching style, and exciting chanting sessions, he has successfully passed on knowledge of Vedanta to thousands of children across North America.

We were named Saakshi and Divya by Swamiji—names he said he carefully thought out so that when he said “SD,” it could be Swami Dheerananda or Saakshi-Divya. We have always seen Swamiji as precise and thoughtful, with a reason for doing everything. We hope to gain his attribute of presence of mind someday as we continue to strive to live up to the names he gave us.

Once, we had the privilege of traveling to Africa with Swamiji. He made the trip that much more entertaining, as always. Flying over the Serengeti in a hot air balloon was crossed off the bucket list, but the thrill was having him with us.

We have had many opportunities to play games with Swami Dheerananda and we all know that he is very competitive! We always laugh when he says he only plays games that start with C, which include carom and cards—two games at which he never loses! Winning against him in any game is a challenge never completed. He pushes us in everything we undertake, be it in a simple game of “Go Fish” or in a chance to develop precision in carom. He has taught us to never give up and to take on challenges that seem far beyond our reach.

Everything Swamiji taught us has stayed with us, because of the precious importance it has had in our lives. He taught us the meaning of the Brahmārpaṇam prayer, which made us revere all aspects of receiving food, and realize the strength of prayer. He also taught us the 108 names of Pujya Gurudev and these have enlightened us to no end. Each name continues to help us grow in becoming better people in this world.

Swamiji once explained how the best way to calm oneself is simply to chant the Lord’s name with the movement of one’s tongue and no sound. Time and again, this technique has helped us refocus in any task undertaken and cool down our buzzing mind. All that he has taught us so far has gone a very long way, indeed, in helping make us who we are today.

All in all, Swami “D” has been a big part of our family and our lives. He is someone who guides us in life, shares our joys, and directs us through our sorrows. He has given us easy and fun ways to grow in Vedanta, and never ceases to make us laugh. He has touched the lives of many here in Ottawa and other places in the world. From our birth until today, we are deeply grateful to him for leading us onto the right paths in life, and for his continuing guidance and support at CM Ottawa’s Chinmaya Bhārati center.

Which Is Greater, My Love?
by Chetana Neerchal

The flowers in
Spring's arms
or
the dewdrops on
petals?

The sparkle
in a clear night sky
or
the glisten of
a fresh sun on
a dewy bare branch?

The fragrance
of memories
scattered around
April's bylanes
or
the heat of
unborn desires
awaiting summer?

The pain of
worldly pleasures
or
the pleasure
from worldly pains?

My fascination
for You
or
how You
abide with me?

The hope
with which
I wait for You
or
the peace
I feel when You
fill my pen and heart?

News

CBCC Global Launch

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The birth centenary celebrations of Pujya Gurudev were launched to a flying start in Erunakulam, Kerala, with a grand three-day program on the Ernakulathappan grounds, May 6-8, 2015. In addition to the specially invited acharyas and dignitaries, thousands of devotees from the world over assembled in the city to participate in this milestone event.

Devotees gathered on the morning of May 6 for the Ganapati Homam and Lakshmi-Nārāyaṇa Pūjā, which were performed by Swami Sharadananda and Brahmachari Yajna Chaitanya. The invitees who spoke thereafter included Dr. B. M. Hegde (Former Vice-Chancellor, Manipal University), Dr. Lakshmi Kumari (Director, Vivekananda Vedic Vision Foundation), and M. P. Veerendra Kumar (Managing Director, Mathrubhumi).

The formal inaugural ceremonies commenced in the evening when Swami Vivikatananda (CM Regional Head, Kerala Region) welcomed Chief Guest Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, invited dignitaries, and all devotees. Former President of India Dr. Kalam lit the inaugural lamp, addressed the gathering, and launched Chinmaya Mission's new "Home for the Homeless" initiative. He address included the reiteration of salient points from Pujya Gurudev's speech at the United Nations on "Planet in Crisis": 1) purify the mind, 2) bring harmony to the society, 3) bring relief to the poor and suffering, and 4) get rooted in morals in the face of violence and chaos.

Kerala's Chief Minister Oommen Chandy also graced the occasion and addressed the gathering in Malayalam. The inaugural ceremonies concluded with a Mohiniyattam performance by Gopika Varma and her Chennai dance troupe, and a vote of thanks by Suresh Mohan (CBCC Launch Convener).

The second day began with a Gāyatrī Homam, and speeches by Dr. Alexander Jacob (Director General of Police), M. P. Bhaskaran Nair (President, Devaswom), Tony Chammany (Mayor, Cochin Corporation), and N. T. Ramesh (social worker). Later in the day, Swami Advayananda (President, Chinmaya International Foundation) gave a talk, after which representatives from various Hindu organizations were honored in the Yati Pūjā.

A welcome with pūrṇa kumbha and a pāda pūjā were offered by Chinmaya Mission āchāryas to the 16 invited sannyasis. The Acharya Sangam that followed was impressive and some of the sannyasis spoke briefly about the remarkable work and contributions of Pujya Gurudev. Among the speakers were Swami Prakashananda (President, Sivagiri Mutt, Varkala) Swami Muktananda (Anandashram, Kanhangad), Swami Poornamritananda (Mata Amritanandamayi Ashram), Swami Vishnupad (Art of Living), and Swami Prajnanananda (Vazhur Ashramam). In addition, Champat Rai (International General Secretary, VHP) offered words about Pujya Gurudev.

The evening featured a flute recital by Himanshu Nanda (Director of Music, Chinmaya Naada Bindu). O. Rajagopal (former Railways Union Minister of State) and P. R. Subrahmanya Rajha (Chairman, Ramco Group) offered felicitations. The day ended with the screening of the movie On a Quest.

The sacred and joyous day of May 8 commenced with a solemn mass Guru Pādukā Pūjā with thousands of participants. Swami Sharadananda (CIF) led the enthralling puja with perfect precision. Thereafter, devotees heard from Anil Sachdev (President, SOIL) about his experiences with Pujya Gurudev and heard words of felicitation from Venugopal Govind (Senior

Managing Partner, Varma & Varma).

The mass Gītā chanting session began at 3:30 p.m., during which the entire grounds reverberated with thousands of people chanting in tune, led by CM āchāryas. Free books of Gītā verses had been distributed to all Mission devotees and many had been invited personally through home visits. The entire session was relayed live on the Sankara TV and Bhakti Sagar television channels. The chanting concluded with an archanā to the accompaniment of the Gītā Ashṭottara-shata-nāmāvali, composed by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda.

The highlight of the three-day celebrations was the august presence of Pujya Guruji. In the final evening program, he gave a benedictory address and spoke about Pujya Gurudev inspiring and transforming countless people around the globe. Guruji also released two books: the CBCC Mananam issue on the Mission's vāṇaprastha sadan, and Yours Forever (a compilation of Pujya Gurudev's devotees' anecdotes, letters, and experiences).

Swami Mitrananda spoke about the Chinmaya Sandesh Vāhini. Swami Vivikatananda delivered the vote of thanks. The lights were dimmed at 7:30 p.m. sharp, when Pujya Guruji lit the Chinmaya Jyoti to the accompaniment of drums and fireworks. The Jyoti was taken in a procession, along with Pujya Gurudev's pādukās and vastram, with an ornate umbrella held aloft, as assembled devotees cheered or reverently stood with choked emotion. The Jyoti was placed in the Chinmaya Sandesh Vāhini and the historic yatra was launched. The three-day celebrations filled everyone with reverence and jubilation, and concluded with a lively and colorful laser light show.

Sannyāsa Dīkshā

Report submitted by CCMT

On the sacred day of Shri Chinmaya Jayanti, May 8, 2015, at Chinmaya International Foundation (CIF) in Veliyanad, Kerala, five more Chinmaya Mission brahmachārins were initiated into sannyāsa āshrama:

Brahmachari Navaneet Chaitanya: Swami Durgeshananda (CM Gurgaon)

Brahmachari Pavan Chaitanya: Swami Nirbhayananda (CM Mumbai)

Brahmachari Shekhar Chaitanya: Swami Prananda (CM Bhubaneswar)

Brahmachari Shivdas Chaitanya: Swami Keshavananda (CM Rewa)

Brahmachari Shravan Chaitanya: Swami Atmeshananda (CM Aurangabad)

Brahmacharini Sushmita Chaitanya: Swamini Atmikananda (CM Angul)

In his announcement letter to CM centers and acharyas, Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda wrote, "May the grace of God and the blessings of our entire Guru Paramparā lead them to the ultimate goal of Self-realization. May we all be blessed to benefit from their dedicatedsevē offered at the holy feet of Pujya Gurudev."



CBCC Commemorative Coin
Report submitted by CCMT

Central Chinmaya Mission Trust (CCMT) is pleased to inform that two Indian rupee coins commemorating the birth centenary year of His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda were released by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi on May 8, 2015, in recognition of Pujya Gurudev's life, work, and vision. The Prime Minister also spoke at length on the contribution of Pujya Gurudev and Chinmaya Mission, and the resulting cultural rejuvenation among the masses, especially the elite classes and youth. [Watch](#) the video.

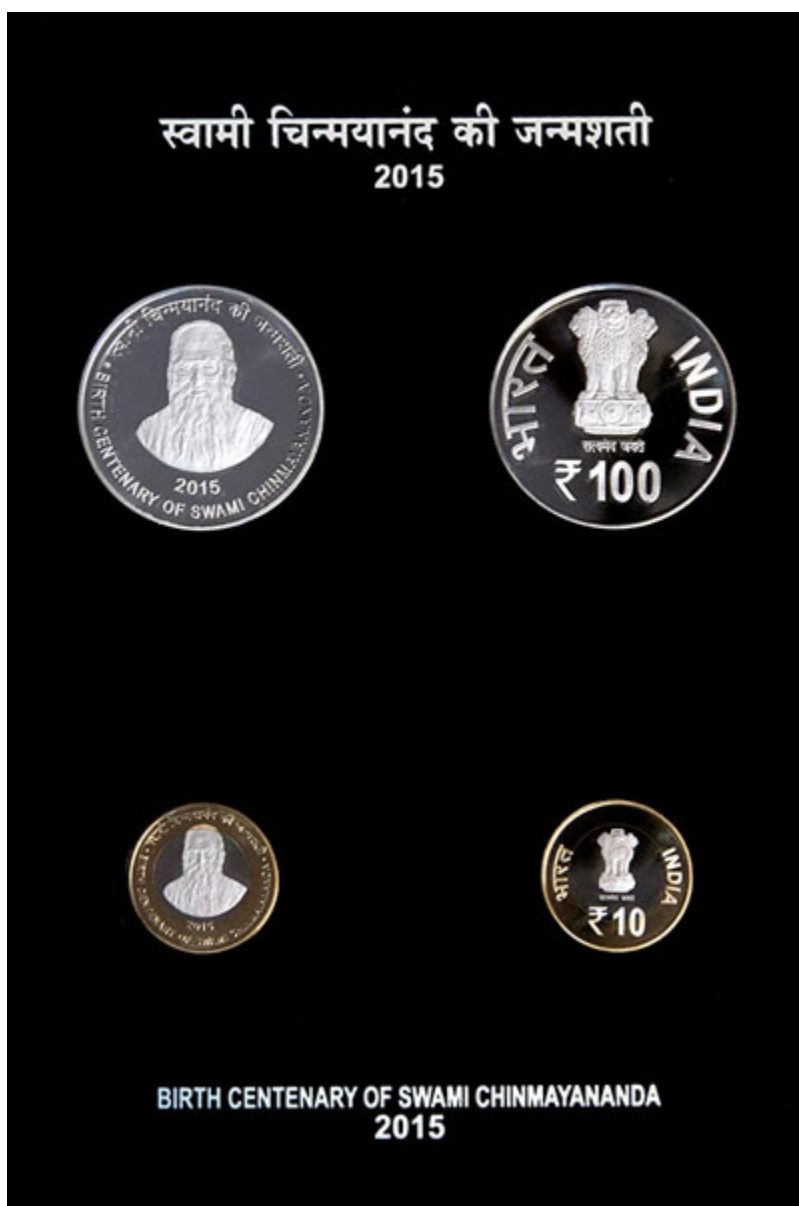
The first coin is a Rs. 100 coin that is a collector's item and will not be in public circulation. The second coin is a Rs. 10 coin, of which approximately 25 million coins will be in public circulation. Further details will be shared when available. CCMT is grateful to the Government of India's initiative of honoring Pujya Gurudev in this manner. For CBCC updates, and Chinmaya Mission news, events, and announcements, stay tuned to:

Website: [chinmayamission](http://chinmayamission.org)

Facebook: [chinmayamission](https://www.facebook.com/chinmayamission) [swamichinmayananda](https://www.facebook.com/swamichinmayananda) [swamitejomayananda](https://www.facebook.com/swamitejomayananda)

Twitter: [chinmayamission](https://twitter.com/chinmayamission)

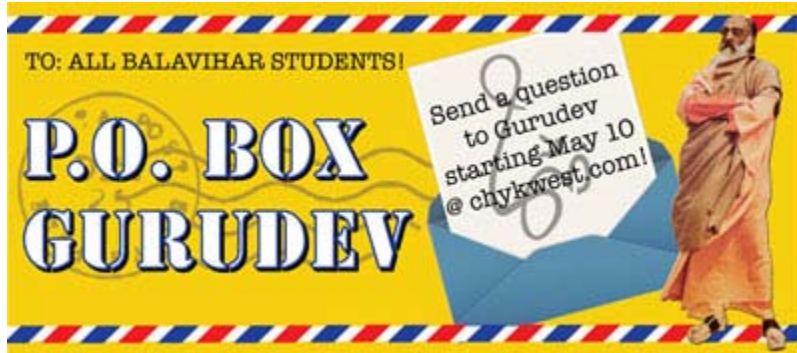
YouTube: [chinmayachannel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)



P.O. Box Gurudev
Report submitted by CHYK West

CHYK West is pleased to introduce “P.O. Box Gurudev,” an exciting CBCC initiative for Chinmaya Bala Vihar students across the country. The “P.O. Box” is a text box on the CHYK West [website](#), where BV students can ask a short question related to a spiritual topic and receive a response from a CM āchārya, along with a related title of a CM publication for further details, if applicable.

P.O. Box Gurudev went live on Sunday, May 10 and will be open every weekend until December 2015. The initiative is aimed at kindling children’s curiosity in spirituality to lead them to inner harmony and lasting happiness. Questions? Contact [Reena Patel](#).



Commencing CBCC with Glory and Grace in Houston
by Padmashree Rao and Vinod Sharma

“Unto Him, Our Best” is the global resolve and promise of CM members as Chinmaya Mission worldwide enters the milestone birth centenary year of tribute to Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda, May 8, 2015-16. Inspired by the CBCC motto, Chinmaya Mission Houston (CMH) offered its best during the three-day event, May 8-10, commemorating the birth of a rare modern sage, a fearless Guru who galvanized the globe with his powerful logic of spirituality and singing of the Lord’s Song. It was a birthday celebration where dedicated action and unabashed devotion united at the altar of blissful Knowledge. The spirit of the Bhagavad Gita shone in every heart through every aspect of the festivities that featured Chinmaya glory, precision, and beauty.

On the evening of May 8, a life-size image of Pujya Gurudev was placed just outside the doors of the Shiva temple to signify Pujya Gurudev’s promise to wait to receive his disciples and devotees at the portals of eternal Truth. Pujya Gurudev gave beauty and grace to the multitude of decorations—flowers, candles, banners—to perfectly complement the beaming blue skies and glowing green grass in the courtyard.

In the Chinmaya Smṛti hall, invocation prayers were chanted and the fearless transformation of Balakrishnan Menon into Swami Chinmayananda was highlighted. As the chanting of the Guru Stotram and Chinmaya Ashtakam energized the hall, Acharya Gaurang Nanavaty (CM Houston) lit the akhaṇḍa jyoti—the oil lamp that will remain lit and illumine the spiritual journey of CM devotees throughout the CBCC year. In his address to the devotees assembled, Gaurangji said Pujya Gurudev’s extraordinary intellect, deep conviction, and fearless quest for Truth gave this world the Chinmaya Mission.

Devotees were thrilled to hear one of Pujya Gurudev’s timeless video talks. In the Bhagavad Gītā talk presented, Pujya Gurudev described the process of setting and facing challenging goals. He dramatized how, like Mother Ganga making her way to the ocean, a determined seeker must learn to jump lightly over small hurdles, rush with strength over big obstacles, and skirt around mountains of seemingly unending challenges, all the while never losing sight of the goal to merge with the Highest.

The rest of the evening was a unique birthday party with 1,000+ CMH family members. The special jayanti song for Pujya Gurudev, composed by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda, sung by the children of the Chinmaya Choir, and danced to by an energetic flash-mob, delighted everyone with devotion and cheer. The evening ended with fireworks, which formed an awe-inspiring backdrop above Pujya Gurudev’s image.

The morning of May 9 welcomed a happy Chinmaya army to a well-organized 5k walkathon. It

was a walk to symbolize the Chinmaya family's courage and fortitude to fight against all negativities and progress on the path of universal spirituality. More than 1,000 people came to Eldridge Park to walk and enjoy fun activities that included a tug of war and laughing yoga. Offering laughter as flower petals, and cheerful thoughts as fragrant incense, the CMH family made the walkathon a grand offering to Pujya Gurudev.

The next day, on May 10, the centenary celebrations took on yet another hue of devoted joy and gratitude. The day began with the offering of a Guru Pādukā Pūjā. Gaurangji said one of the highest tributes to Pujya Gurudev, and a most meaningful inheritance for the next generation, is the regular study of the Bhagavad Gītā. He added that by reading just two verses of Gītā every day, one can begin an unending personalized tribute to Pujya Gurudev.

CMH devotees were invited to the special screenings of *On a Quest* in May and June. Since May 10 was also Mother's Day, all mothers were wished with a tender poem written by BV student, Elisha Thakare, and the CMH family conveyed its deep love and gratitude to Acharya Darshana Nanavaty (CM Houston) and prayed for her good health.



On a Quest Touches Viewers in Los Angeles by Sonal Ladva

The Laguna Hills Mall Cinema was abuzz on the morning of April 11, 2015 as CM Los Angeles (CMLA) and community members gathered for the premiere screening of the much-awaited *On a Quest* movie on the life of Pujya Gurudev.

The lobby was filled with kurtas, saris, and churidār-clad attendees, and the hallway featured beautiful posters of the movie. Long-time Mission devotees were seen in the lobby greeting each other with anticipation and eagerness to see the life of their Guru unfold onscreen.

The screening received support from academicians, as well as members of various spiritual and service organizations, such as Brea Bharat Sevashram Sangha, Vedanta Society, BAPS, Ekal Vidyalaya, and SSY.

Prior to the screening, a brief inaugural ceremony was held during which prayers were offered at the altar of Pujya Gurudev that had been lovingly set up by dedicated volunteers. Lead volunteers, Kshama Punj and Shalini Petrine, as well as the Chinmaya Swaranjali group, chanted hymns in praise of Pujya Gurudev. Shobha and Ashok Naimpally, who had hosted Pujya Gurudev at their home during his first visit to Southern California, lit the (electric) lamps at the altar.

CMLA acharyas, Swami Ishwarananda and Acharya Mahadev Parameswaran, acquainted the audience with Pujya Gurudev's life, and CMLA President, D.V. Pillai, offered inspiring words, saying, Pujya Gurudev was one of the "best sons that India has produced."

Long-time member Mukta Patel was invited to officially inaugurate the screening of the film—

and what a film it was! The two-hour movie detailed the journey of a young Balakrishna Menon from atheist to spiritual master. The movie unfolded at a fast pace, revealing different facets of the life of young Menon—from curious child to fiery student, union leader to provocative journalist, and social reformer to freedom fighter—who believed India was free, but Indians were not.

When he set off to Rishikesh to meet the ochre-clad so-called holy men, he said, “Religion is the opium of the masses. I’m going to expose those drug peddlers!” When he met the great master, Pujya Swami Sivanananda Maharaj, he said to him, “Why is there so much evil and injustice around? If this is the best that God can do, then I’m not impressed!” His discussions with the master set the tone of the changes to come on his now deepening quest in a different direction.

The movie was filled with credible punch lines, and despite the fast changing pace, retained continuity in narrative. Siddhartha Nuni, the cinematographer who has worked on movies such as Life of Pi and Lucia, debunked the thinking that biopics are boring with his masterful picturesque strokes of Sidhbari and pre-freedom Lucknow. Director R.S. Prasanna’s casting of the young and old Swami Chinmayananda was brilliant in allowing the audience to forget that it was a story being retold and not the spiritual leader himself.

The movie concluded with Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda advising a seeker, “Start walking and the path will appear.” One of the more moving moments was his answer to the question, “How do you feel walking in his (Swami Chinmayananda’s) shoes?” Smiling with a humility that brought tears and shame for all that we take pride in, Pujya Guruji replied, “I am not in his shoes. I am at his feet.”

The audience came out deeply touched. Several were moved to tears. Others were stunned into silence. Many were left with a quest to know more. Everyone was all the more appreciative of Pujya Gurudev’s immeasurable wealth of contributions to humanity. Swami Ishwarananda aptly said, “See this movie not as entertainment, but as enlightenment.”



Swamini Vimalananda's Talks in St. Augustine
by Swamini Radhikananda

Chinmaya Mission St. Augustine hosted a successful and lauded series of lectures by Swamini Vimalananda (CM Coimbatore), April 27-30, 2015. The evening talk on Monday at the Hindu Society of Northeast Florida was attended by more than 125 people. The remaining three-night talks at the Chinmaya Govardhan ashram were standing room only. The older children who also attended were equally enthralled by Swaminiji’s lively and animated talks.

Swaminiji spoke on “Mind in Harmony” at the local temple and brought home the message of how much time, money, effort, and training we put into keeping the body clean, healthy, fit, and strong, yet from childhood onward, we give little or no attention to keeping the mind pure, healthy, strong, and fit in order to face life with balance. She said this is why we continue to suffer and therefore, we have a great need to include spiritual teachings in all family upbringing and education from childhood onward.

In her talks on “Gītā in Everyday Life” at the Chinmaya Govardhan ashram, Swaminiji stressed that it is the fulfillment of what we sometimes consider to be the less important things in life

that truly brings us a sense of inner fulfillment, joy, and longing to reach the Supreme.

The programs were organized by resident acharya, Swamini Radhikananda, and Acharya Vilasini Balakrishnan (CM Washington DC), with the help of several out-of-town CM devotees, who also enjoyed informal satsangs with Swaminiji.

The response from all who attended was overwhelmingly positive. Local devotees gained a new inspiration to increase their spiritual efforts and the activities of Chinmaya Mission, and look forward to Swaminiji's next visit.

On May 8, at CM Atlanta's mass Guru Pādukā Pūjā, TV Asia interviewed Swaminiji regarding CBCC and aired the interview on May 17.



Children Enchant with Gītā Chanting at Chinmaya Prabhā by Shalini Konde

Pujya Gurudev once said, “Opportunities in life come to all of us almost all the time. They come in streams, in hosts, and knock at our doors. We are either out or sleeping in. Be awake. Be alert. Be prepared to make use of them.” Truly, one of such glorious opportunities comes every year in the form of the Gītā Chanting Competition at Chinmaya Prabhā. This year, CM Houston (CMH) conducted the event on May 2, giving children a beautiful opportunity to offer a memorable gift to Pujya Gurudev as part of the centennial celebrations.

Prepared, alert, and enthusiastic, over 120 children, ages 4-18 years, captivated the audience with their skillful chanting of Shrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, Chapter 15. The competition began at 8:30 a.m. with a Vedic ārti, followed by the Chinmaya Mission Pledge. Acharya Gaurang Nanavaty (CM Houston) encouraged and congratulated all the participants, saying, “Just as listening to the national anthem increases patriotism, listening to and learning the Gita increases love for the Lord. You children who learn the Gita are indeed winners in life!”

The judges who listened to child after child struggled to distinguish who was ahead in terms of memory, pronunciation, tune, and overall presentation. From the youngest participant to the oldest, the spirit of chanting was such that it must have truly enchanted Lord Krishna Himself! When the competition concluded by noon and the results were announced, the overwhelming feeling was one of genuine victory for all. The special day concluded with a sumptuous lunch for all the attendees.

In the award ceremony the next day, when Gaurangji honored the winners, he shared a special email written by winner Rohith Narra. The teenager dedicated his success to his teachers, saying that his victory came after nine years of participation. He said this year, he concentrated on giving his best and did not focus on the result, and thus learned how this attitude contributed to his success.

Vashi Banavalikar, a four-year-old who just missed participating in the formal competition because of the age cut-off was nevertheless determined to learn the verses of Chapter 15, and so he did. He memorized 14 verses, marched onto the stage on Sunday morning, and enchanted everyone with his chanting until the acharya had to request him to pause!

Indeed, Pujya Gurudev's rich legacy of teaching the Gītā and of related chanting programs shone throughout the day's award ceremony. Each year, preparation for this day starts early. CMH conducts Gītā chanting classes for children from February onward to prepare them for the annual event and teachers pour their hearts into this auspicious endeavor.

This year, the winners will head for Chicago in September to participate in the national competition, which will be followed by the international chanting competition at Chinmaya Vibhooti in Kolwan, India in December. The winners were:

Group A (ages 4-6 years)
First Place: Pranav Sriram
Second Place: Saumya Kabnur
Third Place: Sanvi Sudarshan

Group B: (ages 7-9 years)
First Place: Shanaya Kabnur
Second Place: Aditi Chaubal
Third Place: Siddharth Satish

Group C (ages 10-12 years):
First Place: Mihir Gundamaraju
Second Place: Meghana Prabhakaran
Third Place: Rachit Mukkamala and Ayush Manoj

Group D (ages 13-15 years)
First Place: Rohit Narra
Second Place: Mythreyan Ganesh and Arushi Das
Third Place: Bhavya Kethireddipalli

Group E (ages 16-18 years)
First Place: Yuthika Gundamaraju
Second Place: Shravya Arra



"Spotlight for Siruvani" at CM Niagara
by Namrata Vakkalagadda

CM Niagara hosted a weekend spiritual retreat titled, "Spotlight for Siruvani," at its Chinmaya Dhara ashram, April 3-5, 2015. The retreat was organized by the participants in the third

“Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra” as a fundraiser to benefit CORD Siruvani. When the CIY III group had visited Siruvani, Tamil Nadu and learned about the activities of CORD Siruvani that are led by Dr. Meera Krishna, the group had pledged to raise \$25,000 to help build a new health facility for the surrounding villages.

The retreat topic was focused on rediscovering inner potential through discourses on select verses from the first six chapters of Shrīmad Bhagavad Gītā. The retreat was conducted by Acharya Vivek Gupta (CM Niagara), assisted by Dev and Gina Singh, and Sachin Phagu. It was open to ages 16-40 years, and attended by a total of 35 CHYKs and CSKs from seven CM centers in North America. It was one of the largest CHYK retreats held at Chinmaya Dhara. Many Junior CHYKs from Niagara Falls, London, and Toronto (Canada) also attended and enjoyed their experience with the CHYKs and CSKs.

In line with how CORD Siruvani volunteers offer respite to the villagers they serve on a daily basis, various cultural performances were presented during free time and almost every camper performed at least once. The presentations ranged from Bharatnatyam and Kuchipudi dances, to spoken word, to Indian and western vocals, to a skit on issues girls face in India’s rural areas. A CIY III yātrī who was not able to attend the retreat participated by sending a video of her performance.

The retreat also featured a few special events. Holi was celebrated on Saturday afternoon in the park next to the ashram. Hanuman Chālisā was chanted for 108 minutes to celebrate Hanuman Jayanti. An outing to Niagara Falls was arranged “to experience the ever-flowing Om of Nature.” A surprise Skype call with Dr. Meera Krishna was coordinated by Vivekji and others, so that all the campers could meet her and hear first-hand about the activities of CORD Siruvani and her vision for the new health facility.

Before the retreat began, the total donations raised for the new facility was approximately \$12,500. By the end of the retreat, \$25,120 had been raised, along with the hearts and minds of campers, who treasured the blissful experience gifted to them by the grace of the Lord, and the blessings of Pujya Gurudev and Pujya Guruji.



CM Atlanta Celebrations in May by Aaditya Vashishat and Vansh Sharma

CM Atlanta’s memorable and grand celebration for Pujya Gurudev’s birth centennial was held in conjunction with the year-end Chinmaya Bala Vihar program at the Chinmaya Niketan ashram. This year, in lieu of individual class presentations, 55 BV students, and several parents, offered a 17-scene musical, “Unto Him, Our Best,” on Pujya Gurudev’s life and teachings. The actors all participated with great love and enthusiasm, and learned much about Pujya Gurudev’s life over a span of three weeks. The costumes and props for the drama and dances enhanced the impressive direction. The final scene of Pujya Gurudev enjoying a bhajan with Bala Vihar children and addressing them was a particular highlight of the program.

The event brought together CM members to “stand as one family” and left everyone eager to participate in more such programs in the future. As part of the BV year-end celebration, every student received an award for class attendance and/or participation in competitions. In addition, various parent volunteers received an award for their help throughout the BV year.

By Pujya Gurudev's grace, the event concluded successfully and the prasādam of a grand feast was served to all.



Diversity Showcased at CM LA's Annual IndiaFest by Renu Chokshi and Aparna Rastogi

Another brilliant cultural showcase put together by Chinmaya families was presented at the annual IndiaFest event of CM Los Angeles (CMLA) on the evening of April 18, 2015. IndiaFest, a uniquely integrated program featuring presentations by groups representing different states of India, ranges in performances from cultural dances, to live music, to colorful skits—each in worship of regional and universal deities.

The evening began with a Vishu Pūjā in honor of the New Year celebrated in several states of India with much fanfare and vigor. It created a beautiful ambiance that flowed through the rest of the evening. Resident Acharya Swami Ishwarananda welcomed the families to the special celebration and recognized the selfless sevā of CMLA volunteers.

The cultural segment, enthusiastically organized by Mission families representing seven states in India, was enjoyed by all. From Team Maharashtra's Lokmanya Tilak, who narrated the significance of Ganesha Chaturthi; to Team Tamil Nadu's beautifully decorated palanquin and folk dances in honor of Lord Muruga; from Team Karnataka's superbly enacted skit honoring Goddess Shāradāmbā in Shringeri; to Team Uttar Pradesh's wonderfully and tightly scripted act on the life of Lord Rama; from Team Andhra Pradesh's daintily choreographed dance in honor of Lord Balaji; to Team Gujarat's colorful and toe-tapping garbā and rās performances in poetic praise of bāla Krishna—the evening was filled with color, music, talent, and joy. The grand finale featured a grand depiction of Lord Ayyappa's abode in Sabarimala. Having displayed the unique cultural diversity that is the heritage of all Indians, all the teams came on stage together as the Hindi song, "Mile sur merā tumhāra to sur bane hamārā," played. The program was presented before a robust audience of 550 people who appreciated and applauded the performers' talents and efforts.

The showcase of diversity certainly carried forward into the rich and varied dinner feast that

followed the program. The food served featured the cuisines of the seven states of India that were highlighted in the program. Most of the food was cooked at home by volunteers. With such variety, people happily struggled to select which dishes they wanted to eat, and even the most health-conscious ones found it hard to resist such delectable dishes.

The event, which is getting larger in scope and size with each succeeding year, was enjoyed thoroughly by all.



CM Bakersfield Seminar on Mindfulness by Anil Mehta

Chinmaya Mission Bakersfield and the Bakersfield Memorial Hospital held their 11th annual seminar on mind and body health on May 16, 2015. This year's theme of "Mindfulness" was introduced by Dr. Anil Mehta with words on the stress of modern life and the helpfulness of living mindfully.

Dr. Ravi Goklaney, a local psychiatrist and educator, discussed the problems of reactive stress and depression, as well as chronic stress and depression. Reactive stress is situational, and due to financial and personal loss. This can be helped by mindfulness and regular meditation. Chronic stress and depression has a congenital component, and can be aggravated by situational problems. This requires medication and counseling; mindful meditation can be an adjunct in therapy.

Barbara White, Spiritual Director of the Center for Spiritual Living, Bakersfield, said most stresses are due to regrets of the past and anxieties for the future. She said living mindfully in the present helps solve many stressful situations. Quoting from an article about the practice of mindfulness and meditation by the CEO of Aetna, and this information is offered to all Aetna employees, she pointed out that under this CEO's leadership, the company's income and stock value appreciated significantly.

In his presentation, Swami Ishwarananda (CM Los Angeles) said this knowledge of mindfulness is ancient and described in the Upanishads as "contemplation." Swamiji spoke about the pancha koshas, or the five layers, of human beings. Each layer, he said, is subtler than the previous

and more pervasive; the grosser is controlled by the subtler. These layers cover our perception of the Self, which is our true nature. Mindful living and meditation is the way to contact one's inner Self. Swamiji led everyone in a beautiful guided meditation session on Nature.

The seminar concluded with a panel discussion moderated by Stafford Betty, Professor of Religious studies at Cal State University, Bakersfield, and a lively Q&A session. Attendees said they left the seminar feeling informed and uplifted.

May 8 Celebrations in San Fernando Valley by Madhu Sharma

CM Los Angeles's Chinmaya Bala Vihar chapter in San Fernando Valley celebrated Pujya Gurudev's jayanti on May 10, 2015 at the local temple in Northridge, where weekly classes are held. The students and parents chanted the opening prayers and Guru Stotram, followed by an archanā with the chanting of the 108 names of Pujya Gurudev. Everyone offered indebted gratitude and humble prostrations to Pujya Gurudev, seeking his grace and blessings. The students later chanted Maṭṛ Stavanam as a token of love and respect to their mothers, and offered tilak, rice, and flowers at their feet. The event concluded with ārti and prasād.

Swami Ishwarananda (CM Los Angeles) graced the Chinmaya Bala Vihar year-end celebrations on May 17. The event was emceed by two students from the senior class and commenced with a welcome dance. The highlight of the program were the emcees' presentations on the worldwide birth centenary celebrations of Pujya Gurudev, including the pādūkā pūjā, the Chinmaya Jyoti Yātrā, the On a Quest movie, and the release of the commemorative coin.

Students presented their alphabet values, skits on "Kubera's Feast" and "Pippalada's Boon," the symbolism of Shivarātri, and a Lord Shiva story highlighting the glory of Guru. In addition, the students shared their personal experiences on how Chinmaya Bala Vihar has transformed their life. The year-end celebrations came to a close with the singing of birthday wishes for Swami Ishwarananda on his 50th birthday; BV Coordinator, Madhu Sharma, also sang her two original compositions in honor of Swamiji's birthday. All students, parents, and sevaks received prasād from Swamiji after the event concluded.



Chinmaya Bala Vihar in Fresno by Sudha Bhatt

CM San Jose's Fresno satellite held its third annual "Bala Vihar Day" on May 17, 2015 to mark the year-end of the 2014-2015 Chinmaya Bala Vihar year. Each BV class presented items based on what they had learned during the year. The children, with the help of their teachers, had prepared various items and presented an excellent show for their parents. Chinmaya Study Group sevak, Ashok Bhatt, reinforced the importance of Vedantic teachings and thanked parents for their support, urging them to continue their commitment to Bala Vihar and active participation in Study Group.

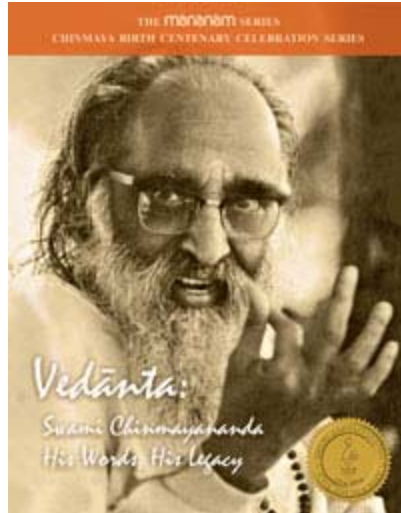
The year-end program began with the chanting of invocation prayers and Guru Stotram. The Bhagavad Gītā chanting group recited the verses they had learned. This was followed by the cultural program. The pk-kg class chanted the daily prayers and performed a dance to abhajan. Students in grades 1-2 chanted Madhurāshṭakam and demonstrated Sūrya-namaskāra. The grades 3-4 class offered a puppet show on Matsyāvatāra. Students in grades 5-6 conducted a quiz on the 24 Gurus of Lord Dattātreya and chanted a portion of Mahishāsūramardini Stotram. The grades 7-12 class chanted Gītā Dhyānam and presented an interactive game show based on the Mahābhārata. Some students spoke on their experience of attending Chinmaya Bala Vihar every Sunday. Before the event concluded with dinnerprasād, every child received a Chinmaya Bala Vihar Certificate of Participation.

CM activities began in Fresno, CA in 2012 under the guidance of Swami Bodhatmananda (CM San Jose). Sudha and Ashok Bhatt (devotees from CM Bakersfield), currently drive 260 miles every Sunday to help support the activities, which are being excellently administered by Chitra Kandaswami and conducted with the help of a growing number of local volunteers. Acharya Uma Jeyarasasingham (CM San Jose) has also been actively guiding and supporting the group, and has conducted two training sessions for the BV teachers.

Chinmaya Bala Vihar in Fresno has grown from 2 teachers and 8 students to 12 teachers and 50+ students in a span of three years. The teachers and parents recognize the importance of imparting Pujya Gurudev's vision to children and adults, alike. The BV classes are currently held in a rented space at the local temple, every Sunday, 3:00-4:30 p.m. Based on their grades, the children are divided into five groups, with two teachers per class. The simultaneously held Chinmaya Study Group for adults is facilitated by Ashok Bhatt and attended by 12-15 parents. With the sincere and tireless efforts of all organizers and participants, local devotees in Fresno hope for continued growth and success by the Lord's grace and Pujya Gurudev's blessings.



Features



Vedanta: Swami Chinmayananda, His Words, His Legacy

Edited excerpts from Vedanta, CBCC Mananam Series (editing notations excluded)

CMW News is pleased to offer in this sacred milestone year of the birth centenary celebrations of Pujya Gurudev, His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda-ji Maharaj, a series of feature articles showcasing excerpts from the CBCC Mananam series of books. Our humble and unending prostrations of worship and adoration at the holy feet of our revered Guru, who is, and will ever remain, the Love of our hearts, the Light of our understanding, the very Fulfillment of our lives. Hari Om Tat Sat.

His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda walked, talked, and lived Vedanta. Many called him a living scripture. His teachings encouraged all seekers on their journey of Self-discovery. His vast legacy of Chinmaya Mission programs, projects, publications reveal the innumerable ways for spirituality to become manifest in our daily lives. He reached out to men and women, young and old, of global cultures and faiths, and taught them the beauty and relevance of Vedanta in their lives. To his disciples and devotees he said, “The farther I go, the nearer shall I be to reach each one of you. This is a promise!”

His Holiness Swami Chidananda of Divine Life Society said, “He will live through you, work through you, and his mission will go onward and onward, progressing by leaps and bounds through you. Just as a son makes a father immortal, tradition makes the Guru immortal. . . . Never be discouraged by the seeming death of the great Master. He is always with you. His presence is always there. Fearlessly, all of you go on the path he has shown you. Now, the Mission is in the hands of worthy disciples. It will prosper manifold.”

All the excerpts that follow are Pujya Gurudev’s words . . .

Stories We Live For

Bhagavad Gītā is like a Hindu lady. She will not come to the sitting room and say, “Hello,

honey. How are you?” She will only stand behind the door and clear her throat. Only the sound will come. The fellow is so faithful that he will come and say, “Yes?” He may be in an international conference, but the world can wait. She cannot. It is only after they have been married for an entire lifetime and the children have grown up that she will exhibit her glories, her beauty, and her attitudes. This is why the grandfather and grandmother appreciate each other completely. Similarly, Mother Shruti is very shy. You have to court her more and more. And she must become convinced that you are really devoted and faithful. Then only will she open up more of her beauties and glories. So, study both chapters eight times in small quantities, three verses a day.

*

A young would-be disciple, after a long journey to the Himalayas, found a famed master and asked to become his student. The master said, “Very well. First, let me offer you a cup of tea after your long journey.” The master went to the stove, brought the teapot and a cup, and began pouring. He kept pouring and pouring, even when the cup was overflowing. The young man exclaimed, “Master, the cup is already too full!” “You are right,” said the master, “just as you are. Until you empty yourself, I cannot teach you.”

*

Some drunken men got into a boat one moonlit night and started rowing. They rowed the entire night. Early in the morning, now sober, they found that they had not moved an inch. What went wrong, they wondered. They realized they had forgotten to raise the anchor. Just as an anchored boat cannot move, a mind attached to worldly things cannot move into the depths of spirituality.

On Sadhana

Sadhana refers to the spiritual practices that a spiritual student adopts for attaining Self-realization. All these practices are used for the process of cleansing the mind and intellect and exhausting one’s *vāsanās*. All spiritual practices are done so that you are able to see *Om* as clearly as you can see me now. This is the entire spiritual journey from *jīva* to *īshvara*—from stone-man, to animal-man, to man-man, to God-man.

Our spiritual practices are like a photographer adjusting the objects, the lights, the film, and the lens, etc. in order to click his ideal photograph. Until the final click takes place, however, he is constantly busy arranging and adjusting. Neither can we expand our sadhana into That which is beyond the mind, nor can we experience That which is behind the mind until the final click has taken place. Clicking is turning within to face the inner Self and that is all. This turning inward is the total mechanics of religion, including studying scriptures, going to temples, and making pilgrimages. These are all means to make the mind turn within.

If we put too much emphasis on the environment and on outer problems, an entire life can be wasted in simply adjusting the objects. Clicking does not take place by just preparing the camera. So, how can we progress spiritually? Clicking is the transformation that must take place within oneself. The drowsy, worried, tense individual who continues his prayers for years in the meditation room, but refuses to smile, can never progress. Divinity seeks shelter in a cheerful mind.

*

To help the mind to turn inward, we practice introspection. The best way to introspect is to keep a spiritual diary. At the end of the day, sit quietly and reflect, and ask yourself, “What

were my actions like today? Was I truthful? Kind? Or was I selfish and brash at times? How strongly did I react?” This is called introspection. When you practice this for a while, you begin to be able to detect certain ways of thinking. The moment you detect your weaknesses and want to eradicate them, in that very moment those weaknesses begin to die. You cannot change what you don’t acknowledge. Detection is called apprehension. As soon as you apprehend a weakness and defeat it, substitute its opposite—a virtue—in your personality. As you continue this process in your daily life, you will find the new virtue growing and becoming part of your character. So, introspect daily, detect diligently, negate ruthlessly, and substitute wisely. Becoming aware of your thoughts through self-analysis is an essential practice for any sincere seeker.

Presently, your mind is like a house that has been standing in neglect for who knows how many years or lifetimes. Cobwebs are all over the place! Because of the debris, you can hardly get into the house; everything you touch is dusty and musty. In a way, this is the condition of the mind when we are not aware enough to know what we are thinking and doing. Anxious thoughts, jealous thoughts, resentful thoughts take over the mind, just as the weeds take over around a neglected house. So, the weeding has to start by planting new seeds, new thoughts—thoughts of truth, kindness, generosity, and optimism. Always be on the lookout for what is good. Once these seeds are planted, they need to be nourished through prayer, service, and study of the scriptures. This is where the three yogas come in.

But spiritual practices should not be merely at the body level. Bring more and more of your conscious mind into your sadhana. Just as you have a spirit of renunciation over toys that have been given away, similarly, develop renunciation over worldly things in your meditation hour.

Three obstacles in the form of thoughts stand in the way, or create a veil, between us and pure Consciousness:

1. I don’t know.
2. I can’t understand.
3. I have no experience.

We can remove the “I don’t know” obstacle by listening (*shravanam*) either directly to a spiritual Master or indirectly through the scriptures. We can remove the obstacle of “I can’t understand” by reflection (*mananam*). We can remove the obstacle of direct experience by meditation (*nididhyāsanam*). By the sustained and sincere practice of meditation, we cross the last phase of the veiling power and experience union with pure Consciousness, which supports not only us, but the entire universe. Hasten slowly, but be steadfast and regular in your meditation. Meditation is a noun (a state of Being) and not a verb (doing). True meditation is 24/7. Keep the mind quiet, alert, and vigilant—no matter what the outside circumstances. This is one of the greatest sadhanas.

*

Suppose a person has no *vāsanās*, and thus, no desires, no agitations, no selfish activity. We worship such a person as a sage or prophet, a Christ, a Buddha. He wants nothing, expects nothing. He functions in the world expressing his infinite love for mankind. Thus, the PFT of such a person is released from the entanglement of the BMI, and he comes to awaken and realize the Timeless.

Vāsanās are created through the contact of the BMI (our equipment for experiencing life) with

the OET (our fields of experience)—in other words, our transactions in life. Since we developed these *vāsanās* during these transactions, then, logically, they can be ended only through contact with the world outside; they cannot be ended by suddenly running to live in a cave in the Himalayas. So, we have to exhaust the *vāsanās* now and here, where we have developed them.

*

In daily life, certain attitudes are to be harmonized—doing your duty in the spirit of *karma yoga*, allowing your heart to discover love of God in the spirit of *bhakti yoga*, and on a higher level, in the spirit of *jñāna yoga*, understanding that “I am not the doer.” The eternal I am, is the Reality. I am the detached witness which illumines my experiences. I am the eternal Self.

A true *karma yogi* is one who understands that:

1. His concern is with action alone.
2. He has no concern with results.
3. He should not entertain the motive of gaining a specific fruit for a given action.

These ideas do not mean that one should sit back and remain in inaction. The work itself is your reward. Get drunk with the joy and satisfaction of a noble work done!

Some people have an endless need to give love. Yet, wherever their love lands, the object of their love collapses under the very weight of their love! Because such people have so much love to give, they continually give it to the world, and the things and beings in the world continually collapse. Nevertheless, they cannot but love. Just as a rose cannot stop wafting its fragrance, the lover in the emotional person cannot but beam love everywhere. The world, no doubt, will never be able to return that love fully. Thus, the lover feels disappointed. However, you can turn your love toward God, who is all love. He alone can receive all the love we give and return a larger love to us.

The intellect-oriented individual starts inquiry from the intellectual standpoint. Such a person wants to know the nature of the Reality and how It expresses Itself through us. As he studies the scriptures, he gathers understanding, a new clarity, and the mind becomes more and more calm and serene. The more the intellectual inquirer understands the greater State, the more the PFT loses its importance and relevance. The inquirer becomes more and more Self-centered, instead of selfish-centered, in all activities.

Act on, in the living present. This is not readily possible unless we have strong faith that the Lord is the real Conductor and Accomplisher. We are actors in His drama. We are His servants executing His will in the fulfillment of His plans. The fruits are His and ours is only the action. The more we get aligned with Him, the more shall our actions be in line with His will, and this, we shall fulfill His plans more effectively.

*

You can enjoy your life if you make dharma the basis of all your actions. Dharma means not merely righteousness or goodness, but the essential nature of a thing, without which it cannot retain its independent existence. For example, a cold, dark sun is impossible, for heat and light is the dharma of the sun. Similarly, if we are to live as truly dynamic people in the world, we can do so only by being faithful to our true nature.

*

Remember that whatever you have been given in life, wherever you find yourself today, is exactly the right place for you. Never question the Lord's wisdom and where He has placed you, where you were born, the parents you had. The Lord, in His infinite wisdom, knew exactly what you needed for your spiritual evolution.

*

We need not congratulate anybody for our progress or success in life except ourselves. We need not condemn anybody for our falls and failures in life except ourselves.

*

Sincerity, regularity, and faith are the cornerstones of the spiritual temple. The installation therein is the *Ātma-vichāra* and the priest is detachment. The only puja in this sacred temple is *viveka*. The *ār̥ti* is the burning of the ego. The *prasād* is Liberation.

*

Lift your mind into a sattvic mode and continue your activities. You can reach the Highest while living in the world and continually contacting external challenges. Meet them. Continuously remember Him and act on in life. Remember Him as the absolute, infinite Reality, as *Om* or *Īshvara*, as the very Existence in us all. Your mind is with Him, so you are "meditation in action."

*

During the day, watch your actions and see how you really act. Stop worrying about your day at the office or your friend's behavior as you are driving. Get tuned with Him as you act in the world outside. You have to make a hotline between you and Brahman. You need not declare it outside; only remember Him. It need not be "*Om Tat Sat*" just because that is in the book. You can say, "Krishna Krishna," "Shiva Shiva," "Hari Om"—whatever comes in your mind that is associated with the Higher. Repeat those words as often as possible.

*

Religion is a happy and intelligent blending of philosophy and ritual. If the two aspects are not synchronized properly, there can be no religion. Unfortunately, however, human beings commit the error of taking only the ritualistic aspect and calling it religion, and then attributing its decadence and failure to religion as a whole. True religion knows no failure because ritualism here means far more than the mere physical performance of ceremonies. Ritual also includes all modes of practical religion, applicable to the mental and intellectual levels of our personality. It therefore includes rites, ceremonies, and duties practiced externally; devotion cultivated by the mind; and subtle discrimination and meditation undertaken by the intellect.

*

All experiences we go through are the purely unavoidable "treatments" prescribed by Him for our own inner purification. Let us learn to meet them and live them in sheer joy and humble surrender. If our spiritual seeking is truly progressing, it must bring more joy and cheer within and without us. People around us must also feel by contagion our gurgling joy and peace within. A husband and children are not really obstacles to the spiritual seeker. Have devotion unto Him. Surrender to Him your ego and desires. Learn more and more of His glories from scriptural study.

On *Jñāna Yajñas* and Camps

To be successful, the entire team must have one single inspiring ideal, and at that altar, everyone must readily surrender personal vanity and greed.

*

(1st Chinmaya International Camp, Mumbai, 1984)

These camps are meant to set you on the path of recreating yourself. In this, nobody can help you. You have to do it yourself. A camp tries to create a healthy situation wherein you can try to deliver yourself from your own inner weaknesses. The great maternity ward is open. Come in and deliver yourself from your own ugliness. Come out of the camp fresh and beautiful.

*

(3rd National Gita Camp, Jamshedpur, 1974)

The evolutionary path is an uphill struggle, in ourselves, with ourselves. Therefore, seekers of spiritual life must have a few days of intense study and *abhyāsa* in a camp—where similar hearts, under the inspiring guidance of a teacher, in protected surroundings where the usual tussles of life do not reach and teasing temptations do not distract. Such a spiritual holiday camp is a retreat. In such a camp, we arrive to live naked of our ego and its vanities, to rest our minds from the furious hurry of passion and lust, to uplift our hearts through deep meditation, to participate in scriptural study, to get involved in group discussions, and to thus learn to create and live a life of love and mutual reverence.

*

(12th Spiritual Camp, Poughkeepsie, New York, 1981)

Learn to live these nine days in a spirit of total selflessness. Each one should come to consider that he or she is here to serve all others. In this sacred attempt to serve all, you will not default ever, even at your own dire discomfort. Try. Experience the rewarding joy that such a way of life can provide. Consciously live all these nine days in the camp in a steady attitude of devotion unto Him, who is the Core of every living being. All those who can live in this creative attitude of dedication and divine inspiration can certainly expect solid results, even though this is a session of a mere nine days. May Shri Gurudev Swami Tapovanam's blessings be ever upon you.

On *Sāndeepany Sāadhanālaya*

We must rediscover our religion. Restore its health with our immortal philosophy. Prune its overcrowded and ugly extensions. And through an ardent reeducation we must rediscover a cure for the alien idealisms from which our culture is, at the moment, suffering. For this, we must rediscover a team of stalwart hearts, educated fully in the divine contents of our scriptures—a team of workers who go out with a Christian zeal, Buddhist compassion, Islamic daring, and spread the right understanding among the people. They must be equipped with a thorough knowledge of the scriptures, a firm moral integrity, an honest faith, and a fiery zeal to help the country to rediscover its own head and heart.

A modest attempt in this line is being made with *Sāndeepany Sāadhanālaya*. We propose to start it by November 1959 in Bombay, on the banks of Powai Lake.

*

On Tapovan day, January 9, 1963, *Sāndeepany Sāadhanālaya* shall come to light.

This *Sāadhanālaya* stands for the revival of our glorious culture—a culture that will run as a golden cord, binding us all as one people of divine nobility and spiritual brotherhood.

On Vision of the Mission

Learn to have an ideal, to keep a vision. Discover it in yourself. No one else can give it to you. True heroism is to live true to your ideal. The world may threaten you. But the true hero

stands defiantly, firmly rooted in his or her own convictions. Even a single individual can inspire an entire population. One who has a vision rises to the highest. And where there is a vision, when even one person has developed and cultivated this courage, this heroism to live up to the vision, then the mission cannot die. Such a mission can serve the society, the community, and the world.

*

Remember, self-development is the urgent need. When you meet the other members of your center, tell them that the next program of action for the Mission is your improvement, not their improvement. The world can wait, India can wait. You must improve. We are only interested in our inward strength. Study scriptural texts, but also look at yourselves. See how far you have improved. Look within. Capitalize on your knowledge. Take the path of endless patience, infinite love, and boundless sacrifice.

On Guru

The declarations of the scriptures, one's own logical thinking, and the Guru's explanations are the three main sources of knowledge available for a spiritual seeker. All these give but an intellectual appreciation of what Truth is. It has to be confirmed in one's own direct and personal experience that "I am this Self." Then alone, a healthy, intelligent seeker's skepticism will end. For this direct experience, the seeker will need repeated encouragement from his Guru—hence the Guru's importance to spiritual seekers.

The day dedicated to the Guru's worship is *Guru Pūrṇimā* day. Let us all prostrate to Shri Swami Tapovanam. His grace is sure and unfailing.

*

To students of Vedanta, the Guru is the embodiment of their Goal. The Guru is nothing but pure Consciousness, absolute Bliss, and eternal Wisdom. Anyone who can elicit a continual feeling of faith and devotion in us is our Guru. If we expect a Guru to transform us to Godhood by a touch, we shall wait in vain. Self-redemption must come ultimately from within us. The external props, such as temples, idols, and gurus, are all but encouragements. They must be intelligently used to help build inner perfection. With inner purity, the student comes to be guided more and more by the intellect. In fact, the real Guru is the pure intellect within, whereas the purified, deeply aspiring mind is the disciple. When we come to deserve a Master, he shall reach us. Stick to your spiritual practices. Be good, kind, and sincere. Refine life's motives by building upon the enduring values of love, mercy, charity, and purity. Through constant remembrance of the Lord, rise in spirituality.

*

In Hinduism, the Guru's grace itself is God's grace, since the Guru is none other than the Lord Himself manifesting to help the disciple. When the Lord's grace comes, it first reaches man with a stern vehemence, almost shattering in its impact. The fiery touch of the Lord's grace, when it descends upon His devotees, is invariably felt by the seeker more as an avalanche than as the refreshing shower of divine mercy. Spiritual grace must necessarily reorient the heart and burn away its negativities before the Spirit can radiate its sway upon matter.

*

God is the mango tree. I am the mango in the basket before you. Why not call the basket of mangoes a mango tree? Nobody does. The saint is the fruit in front of you. God is the tree in the garden that produces the fruits.

*

A thousand learned pandits in a hundred years can perhaps bring about only what a true Guru can accomplish with a smile, a wink, for the devotees around him. The spiritual journey is not a revolution, but an evolution.



Announcements

CBCC Movie: On a Quest <https://www.youtube.com/user/ChinmayaChannel>

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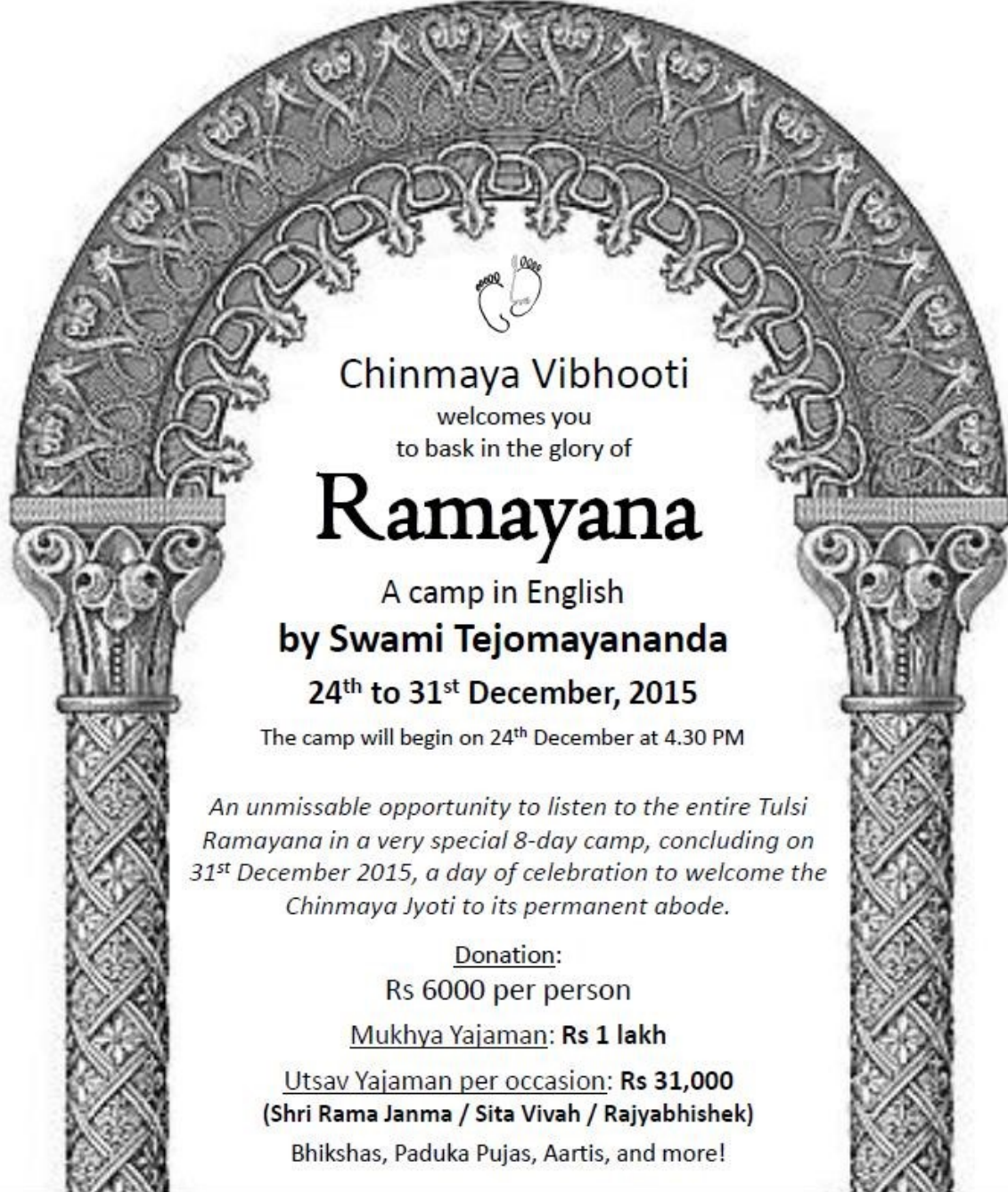
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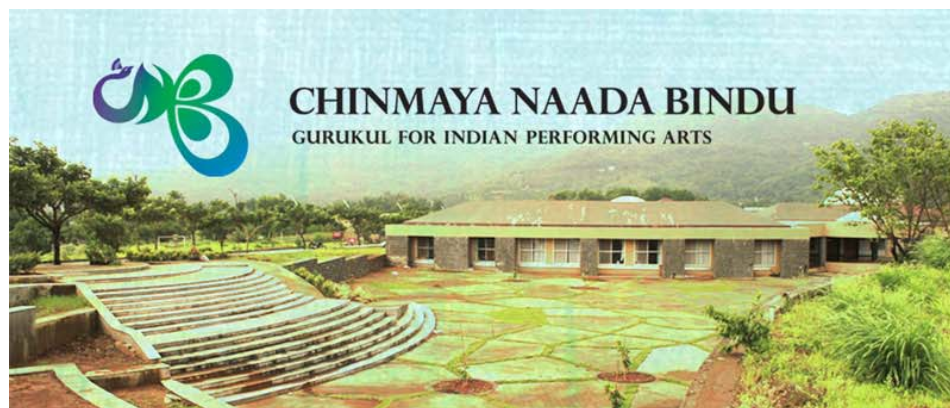
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Vedic Chanting - Temple Pujas - Meditation &
Pranayama - Film screenings / discussions - Guest
lectures - Guided cultural excursion - Nature hike
FINAL SHOWCASE PERFORMANCE

An exceptional Gurukul learning experience!

Students will stay in our fully functional Ashram @ Chinmaya Vibhooti, Kolwan (near Pune), INDIA





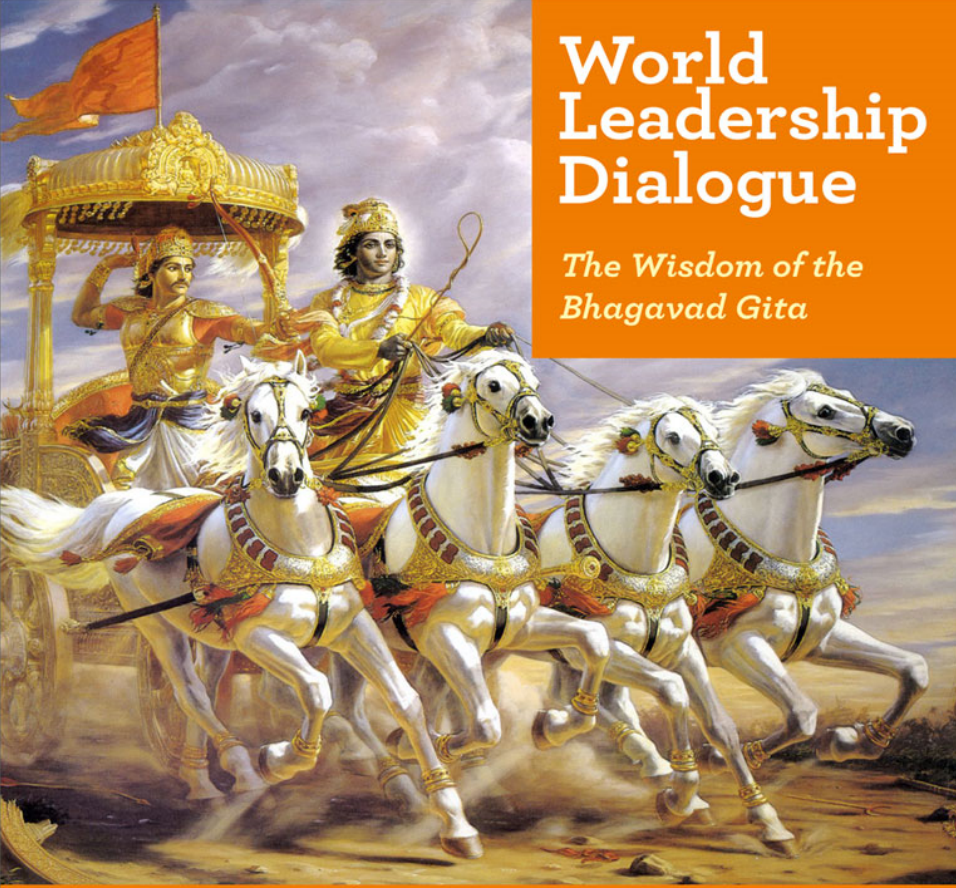
Foreign Residents: Full 21-day Intensive - US\$ 975/-
DEW workshop only - US\$ 90/-
Residents of India & SAARC Countries contact via email

+91 96898 89153 reachus@chinmayanaadabindu.org
WWW.CHINMAYANAADABINDU.ORG



SOIL World Leadership Dialogue





World Leadership Dialogue

The Wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita

10th-13th December, 2015
Chinmaya Vibhooti Ashram, Kolwan, Pune, India

ABOUT THE DIALOGUE

India has been known for its great wisdom, traditions and cultural heritage. The Bhagavad Gita is at the centre of this precious knowledge. Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji's powerful videos, books and commentary on this precious scripture continue to inspire millions. His teachings transform our vision to discover the true purpose of our lives, help us to build strong character, develop our competence to think holistically & innovatively. They make us realize our 'gifts' & our 'calling', teach us to leverage our strengths towards our purpose and above all, enable us to discover and realize our potential as 'Inspired Leaders' in all the roles that we perform. Although many people have been transforming their organizations based on this model of 'Inspired Leadership', we do not have enough research being done to understand how the knowledge enshrined within Bhagavad Gita has enabled individuals and organizations to benefit from this vast reservoir of knowledge and wisdom.

WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE

- Youth - Students
- Business Leaders
- Leaders of NGO / Voluntary Organizations / Civil Society
- Leaders in Government
- Academicians and Researchers
- Concerned Citizens from all Walks of Life

WHAT WILL IT INCLUDE

- Open Space Sessions
- Panel Discussions
- Research Findings
- Improvised Theatre and Story-Telling
- Dance, Drama, Music

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

During Conference – Nominate delegates and volunteers, provide event management support

Post Conference – Publish proceeds, initiate projects to take the movement forward after the conference

In order to bear the boarding & lodging expenses, participants may offer donations as per the following:

Representatives from Industry/Media/Business Rs.10,000/- per person

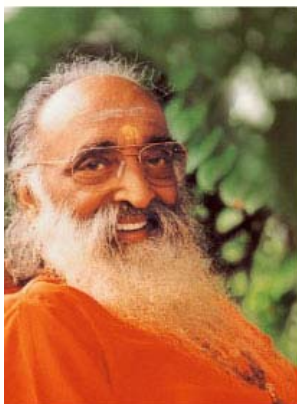
**Representatives from Education/Government/NGO/
Chinmaya Mission Members/Self Employed/Individuals** Rs.5000/- per person

Students Rs.2500/- per person

The cheque to be in favour of “CCMT A/C CHINMAYA VIBHOOTI”

To be sent at “Chinmaya Vibhuti Ashram, Post Kolwan, Taluka Mulshi, Pune, Maharashtra 412108”

For further details contact : Trishna – 9011050610, Pallavi – 8800374111, Mili - 9313901182



ABOUT SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA

Swami Chinmayananda was a special son of Mother India. His presence on planet earth between 1916–1993 enabled millions of people to experience true joy that cannot be described in words. He tirelessly shared the knowledge of Vedanta through his talks on the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads. This empowered many people to 'get' inner wealth by transforming their vision and their lives. His efforts have culminated in a world- wide organization with 300 centres, 90 schools, colleges, hospitals, old age homes, orphanages and rural development wings, all of which contribute to make our world better.

The Chinmaya Mission is celebrating 100 years of His life in 2015 - 2016. As part of these centenary celebrations, the Chinmaya Mission in partnership with School of Inspired Leadership, CeNext, Mahindra, Kaipa Group, NHRDN and Pragati Leadership have organized a Global Conference from December 10 to December 13, 2015 at the Chinmaya Vibhoothi Ashram at Kolwan, Pune.

SCHEDULE

Time	Topic
Day 1: Thursday, 10th December, 2015	
11.00 - 15.30	Participants' Registration · Lunch · Exploring Vibhooti Ashram & ChinmayaJeevan · Community Building Exercises
16.00 - 18.00	Eternal Relevance of the Message of the Bhagavad Gita. The First Plenary Session
18.00 - 19.30	Evening Walk
19.30 - 20.30	Depiction of the Message of the Gita through Performing Arts
Day 2: Friday, 11th December, 2015	
07.00 - 08.00	Meditation Session followed by Breakfast
09.00 - 10.10	Prayers Panel Discussion: Understanding and Living the Values Expounded in the Bhagavad Gita
10.10 - 10.45	Question & Answer Session
10.45 - 11.15	Break
11.15 - 13.00	Research Paper Presentations
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 16.00	Open Space Conferences on Four Different Sectors 1. Education: Educating Tomorrow's Leaders & Transforming Today's Leaders 2. NGOs: New Models for Pro-active Collaboration with Governments and Citizens 3. Business: Aligning Corporate Goals with Society's Expectations. A pre-requisite for Sustainable Performance 4. Government: Bringing Back Government for the People
16.00 - 16.30	Break
16.30 - 18.00	Plenary Session with Reports from Parallel Sessions and Q&A
18.00 - 19.00	Evening Walks and Aarti in Groups
19.00 - 20.30	Bhagavad Gita - talk by Guruji followed by Performance through Performing Arts
20.30 - 21.30	Dinner
21.30 - 22.30	Dialogue in Groups for Forming Partnerships to make this a Global Movement
Day 3: Saturday, 12th December, 2015	
07.00 - 08.00	Meditation Session followed by Breakfast
09.00 - 10.10	Prayers. Panel of Different Generations and Sectors
10.10 - 10.45	Question & Answer Session
10.45 - 11.15	Break
11.15 - 13.00	Research Paper Presentations
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 16.00	Open Space Tracks on the following Themes: Family and the Gita · Performing Arts and the Gita · Healthcare and the Gita · Politics and the Gita Education and the Gita · Business and the Gita · Media and the Gita
16.00 - 16.30	Break
16.30 - 18.00	Plenary Session with Reports from Parallel Sessions and Q&A
18.00 - 19.00	Evening Walks and Aarti in Groups
19.00 - 20.30	Talk on the Gita by Guruji followed by Performance through Performing Arts
20.30 - 21.30	Dinner
21.30 - 22.30	Dialogue in groups for forming partnerships to make this a global movement - People have offered ideas on a wall of
Day 4: Sunday, 13th December, 2015	
07.00 - 08.00	Meditation Session followed by Breakfast
09.00 - 10.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Paper Presentations • Closing Session • Key Take Away and the Way Forward • Blessings by Guruji • Vote of Thanks • Celebrations

Speakers/ Facilitators	Profile
Spiritual Organization	
Swami Tejomayananda	Chinmaya Mission - Worldwide Head
Swami Nikhilananda	Chinmaya Mission - Regional Head
Swamini Vimalananda	Chinmaya Vidyalaya - Head
Swami Ishwarananda	Chinmaya Mission West - Director
Swami Swaroopananda	Chinmaya Mission UK, Australia and Far East - Regional Head
Swami Chidrupananda	All India Chinmaya Yuva Kendra - Director North Zone
Padma Bhushan Pandit Vamadeva Shastri (David Frawley)	American Institute Vedic Studies - Head
Industry Representatives	
Anil Sachdev	School of Inspired Leadership - Founder & CEO
Ajay Piramal	Piramal Group - Chairman
Rajeev Dubey	Mahindra & Mahindra Group President (HR & Corporate Services), CEO (After Market Sector)
Ravi Chaudhary	CeNext Consulting & Investment - Chairman
D Swaminathan	Manipal Health Services - Executive Chairman
Arun Waklu	Pragati Leadership Institute - Chairperson
Prasad Kaipa	Celebrated Author and Management Advisor
Education	
Vishnu Karthik	The Heritage Schools - Associate Director
Pranjal Bajaj	Student - Cambridge University
Indira Parekh	Flame - Founder President, Professor
S Ramnarayan	Indian School of Business - Professor
Dr. Snehal Shah	Former Chair School of Inspired Leadership, Management Advisor & Researcher
Anne Stadler	Community Organiser and Winner of 3 Emmy Awards
Geeta Chandran	Natya Vriksha - Chief Functionary
Debashish Chatterjee	Indian Institute of Management - Lucknow - Professor
NGO	
Pramodini Rao	Chinmaya Naada Bindu - Director Faculty
Ramaa Bharadvaj	Angahara Dance Ensemble - Artistic Director
Anshu Gupta	Goonj - CEO

More speakers and facilitators have been invited and information will be shared in future updates .

OUR PARTNERS



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