



# CHINMAYA NEWS

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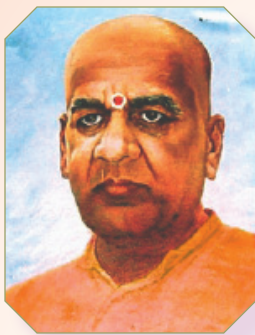
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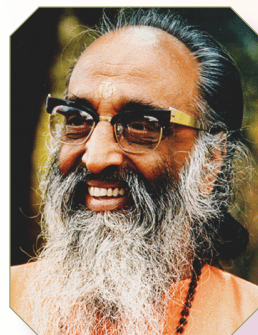
His Holiness Swami Tapovanam

All that is, is God. When this Truth dawns upon one, notions such as “I” and “mine,” which arise out of ignorance, fade away like glowworms upon the rising of the sun. For one who has experienced the highest bliss in the realization of *Brahman*, can there be any attraction in joyless trifles? He who has given up the idea of the limited self, and has realized the oneness of the self and the supreme Self, will no longer think in terms of “I” and “mine,” “he” and “his.”

Source: *Ishvara Darshan*

His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda

The band of different colors in the spectrum is nothing but the same sunlight, dispersed by the prism. The plurality is but the one infinite Self, expressing differently. . . . Thus, when my eyes see, it is Consciousness in me that makes it possible for my eyes to see. Consciousness functions in all eyes of all living creatures. Therefore, this one Consciousness, the Self, looks and sees through the total-eyes. So, too, is every leg that walks or runs anywhere vitalized by life. This Life, or Consciousness, is the same in all of them. Therefore, all . . . are His.



Source: *The Universal Person*

His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda



The Truth pointed out in all the *Puranas* is that there is only one absolute Reality, *Brahman*, from which everything has emerged. In *Ganesha Purana*, that Reality will be indicated by the word “Ganesha,” while in *Shiva Purana*, it will be by the name “Shiva.” Although all deities have a second “identity,” in charge of particular cosmic functions or as various incarnations, their absolute Identity is the same. As it is said, “Truth is One; sages call It by many names.”

Source: *Hindu Culture*

[Click here for Pujya Guruji's Itinerary](#)





## Graceful Aging

by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda

*Continued from CMW News, May 2010*

### The Valor of *Vairagya*: Embrace *Sadhana*

If you read the instructions given for vanaprastha ashrama, you will get frightened—because the two most important practices in *vanaprastha ashrama* are *tapas* and *iksha*. *Tapas* means “penance” or “austerity.” *Iksha* means *atma-darshanam*, or “seeing the Self.” In the summertime, the *vanaprastha* is told to do *panchagni tapas*, for which all the *maharajas* of yore would leave their kingdoms and retire to the forest.

You must read Raja Prthu’s story in *Shrimad Bhagavatam*. He went to perform *panchagni tapas*: He sat in open grounds, from sunrise to sunset, with fire burning on all four sides of him, and the sun was the fifth “fire” above him. In the rainy season, he sat there, still, his bare body under the lashing rain. In the winter, he stood in the icy river, up to his throat in water.

*Vanaprastha*. Isn’t it frightening? Baba re baba! We can barely stand in lukewarm water in the shower much less put one toe into icy waters! A man went to a hotel and his room had a water problem. He complained to the hotel clerk that he had been assured that hot and cold water would be available. The hotel clerk said, “Yes, hot in the summer and cold in the winter.”

Don’t worry, there is hope. In *Tulasi Ramayana*, *Bhagavan Ramachandraji* describes nine kinds of devotion to *Shabari*. You must read this *prasanga* (story). Therein, the sixth kind of devotion perfectly fits *vanaprastha ashrama*. The Lord says, “*Chhata dama sila birati bahu karama nirata nirantara sajjana dharama*.” The *chhata*, or sixth, kind of devotion is to consistently practice more and more sense control. *Birati bahu karma* means withdrawing

from excessive worldly activities. And *nirata nirantara sajjana dharama* means engaging only in that *sadhana* which saintly people follow. To become a saint, you must follow *sanatana dharma*.

When one is in student life, 100% of his time should be devoted to learning and to the service of the guru, according to *guru-kula* tradition. One must study first. Then, as he enters a life of greater activity, he will have to allocate 75% of his time to all his duties: familial, professional, social. With so many duties and responsibilities, one’s personal *sadhana* can only be a small amount of *japa* and *puja*, neither of which can last for hours on end. As a householder, one has to grow annam. So, naturally, one has to work hard, which makes for less time for personal *puja*, *japa*, and meditation—only about 25%. But whatever one is doing can be done with the *bhavana*, or worship of God. This makes life 100% spiritual throughout.

In *vanaprastha ashrama*, *sadhana* should make up 75% of one’s time. *Grhasthas* always complain, “I never get time to do any kind of *sadhana*. And the telephone rings whenever I sit for meditation.” As a *vanaprastha*, you cannot complain, because now your time should be primarily spent in *sadhana*. Keep your 25% to meet people when necessary, to help others should they need it, or to advise your children if they ask for it. Nothing more than this. Stop calling your children everyday to ask how they are and what they are doing. Let them live their lives as they like—and don’t feel insulted if your son buys a sofa set without consulting you!

Don’t go anywhere needlessly. If there is a *satsanga* being conducted, then go. If there is a *puja* somewhere, then go. But don’t say yes to every invitation for every social event.



Some elderly people are so fond of going to all kinds of parties. In old age, countless people spend countless time and money to look younger through makeup, facelifts, and plastic surgery. But remember, in old age, you may be able to trick some people into thinking you are younger than your real age, but you cannot trick a flight of stairs! Learn to withdraw from such activities so you can live a more productive life. Before you complained about never having enough time for *puja* and observing silence, so now, when the time is ripe, be wise and engage in worship alone. Thus you will be graceful in your growth.

### Long for God

Tulasidasji writes that in old age, one should feel sad that his life has passed him by without knowing God. He asks when he will have love for God and dispassion for the world. He asks when, by Lord Ramachandraji's grace, he will get a saintly mind. The interesting point is that such a mind comes only by God's grace! Therefore, invoke God's grace through sincere prayer.

Not only does Tulasidasji pray for a saintly nature ("*santa svabhava*"), but he also specifies that it should be one that is without craving, filled with contentment no matter what comes ("*jatha labha santosha sada*"), and resolute in thought, word, and deed. He asks for a life that is always engaged in serving others ("*para-hita nirata nirantara*"). He says, even if I hear harsh or hurtful words let me not burn in that fire; let my mind be calm. He prays to be free from *abhimana*, or ego, to be free from gossip about others' virtues and vices, to give up all worries originating from body-identification. Knowing that all sorrows steal one's equanimity, he prays, "*Tulasidasa prabhu yahi patha rahi, avichala bhagati lahaungo*": Remaining steady on this path, when will I get unwavering devotion for the lotus feet of the Lord?

As *vanaprasthas*, when we are firmly rooted in the conviction that we must get established in *Brahman*, we will rightly and determinedly live a life that harbors all proper means to achieve this goal. A life that is adorned with such a goal naturally ages gracefully. Accordingly, from the start we must concern ourselves with how to get such a mind that longs for the

right things in life at the right time.

### The Bliss of Sannyasa: Blessed Indeed

Graceful aging doesn't happen in a few days, weeks, or months. It is a long process, but if followed, its rewards are great indeed. In childhood, there is *shiksha* with *samskara-yukta anushasanam* (learning discipline with values). In youth and adulthood, there is *diksha* with *vichara-yukta acharanam* (living with right thinking). And in old age, there is *vairagya-yukta shastra-adhyayanam* (living with dispassion and scriptural study). Now we come to life's most beautiful stage, its culmination—*sannyasa* (renouncing the world and reveling in the Self).

Since early life focuses on studies, and adult life on fulfilling various responsibilities, people feel they have less time to practice spiritual disciplines. In *vanaprastha ashrama*, 75% of one's time is to be devoted to *sadhana* and 25% to worldly interactions. But in *sannyasa*, 100% of one's time should be only for *Paramatma smaranam*.

In *Kaupina Panchakam*, Adi Shankaracharya says about *sannyasa*:

*vedanta-vakyeshu sada ramantah, bhikshanna matrena cha tushtimantah*

*vishokavantah karunaikavantah,  
kaupinavantah khalu bhagyavantah*

Ever reveling in the teachings of Vedanta, and ever content with a beggar's morsel, they roam about free from sorrow (full of compassion). Blessed indeed are these (*sannyasis*), though they wear (only) a loincloth.

Adi Shankara says the most fortunate and blessed, or *bhagyavantah*, are indeed those who have fulfilled their life and now are content with as little as a loincloth to cover themselves. In this picture, Adi Shankara is not referring to an ordinary person who is poor, homeless, or living in forest tribes. *Kaupinavantah* refers to the *sannyasis*, or "renunciates." In modern day, you have seen pictures of women and men wearing something similar to a *kaupina*, or loincloth. With them, it is a sign of passion, but with the *sannyasi*, it is a sign of total dispassion. Indeed, such *sannyasis* are the most fortunate,

for their cloth represents their fulfillment of, and contentment with, life in its entirety. Therefore, as far as worldly life is concerned, the *sannyasi*'s needs are basic, and with whatever little he gets—food, shelter, clothing, etc.—he is satisfied; no more is needed.

Generally, many people, especially the younger generation, pity *sannyasis*. On one hand, they admire and prostrate to *swamis*, but inside they feel, “Aah! Poor thing! *Garib bechara, itni jaldi sannyasa le liya.*” Sometimes people gather their courage and ask, “Swamiji, do you have any regrets about taking *sannyasa*?” When I was in the ninth standard in school, there was a *sannyasi* from Haridwar who used to come to our town. He was a tall, bright, brilliant monk—even now I can clearly visualize him. As I went to school, I would see him on his morning walk, and I would think, “What kind of a life he must have! It must be so boring. He doesn’t go to movies, restaurants—no such fun!” This is what I used to think. Imagine—such a nothing little fellow pitying a *sannyasi*! But now I know what *sannyasa* is.

*Kaupinavantah api*—even though he has completely renounced worldly life and has no possessions whatsoever, he is *bhagyavantah*. This is why people call a swami, “Maharaj.” But which kind of *sannyasi* is called a maharaja? Only “*vedanta-vakyeshu sada ramantah*”—one who ever revels in the Upanishadic declarations. Such a one, with each *mantra*, is transported into its meaning and depth. For us, the least we can do is learn the *mantras* that sing of the song of Self-realization. At least we will be prepared with the right *mantras* to sing when we realize!

Earlier, I thought myself to be this little body, but now I know otherwise. I am the Support of this whole universe; I am the Illuminator; I am everything and I am beyond everything. This is the joy described in the Upanishads. To know it, you have to experience it. When people observe a Self-realized master, they do not understand. It is something like when you

are listening to music with earphones, but the other person cannot hear any sound. You are reveling, but the other person is just watching, for you are experiencing something he does not know.

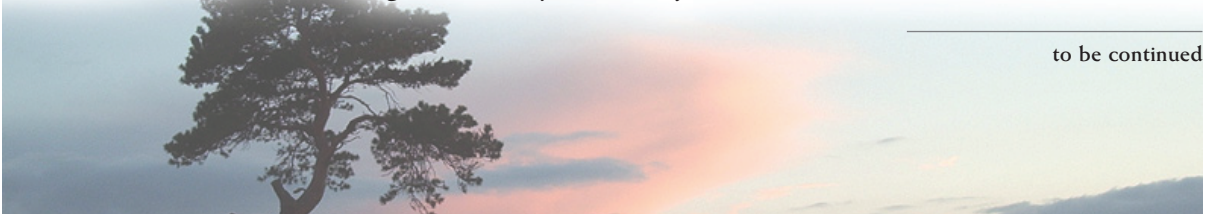
## Compassion Embodied

This word *vishokavantah*, describing the spiritual master, is interesting and important. Truly, he is totally free from grief; he has no sorrow at all. Yet, he is *karunaikavantah*, or exceedingly compassionate to others' sorrows. Someone who has taken the garb of a *sannyasi*, but is still unhappy all the time, can only advise others, saying, “Don’t take *sannyasa*, baba! Look at me!” Such a miserable person has not understood even a particle of the joy of *sannyasa*. For, in fact, *sannyasa* is a state of complete and total bliss.

The *sannyasi* has understood that the whole world is an appearance, and that *Brahman* alone is satyam. When he sees suffering, he knows that it is simply due to one’s wrong thinking and wrong notions. But when addressing people who are suffering, the *jnanis* (“men of wisdom”) do not say, “Your sorrow is *mithya* (an illusion).” No, they are compassionate, and they advise each person at his own level, in order to help him come out of that state and lift his attention to the Higher.

At the time *sannyasa diksha* (initiation ceremony into *sannyasa*), the guru gives a *sannyasa mantra*. The initiated *sannyasi* revels in that *mantra* or on any form (*saguna-rupa*) of the Lord. He chants, “*Om namah shivaya*,” or other *mantra*, and meditates on the Lord in his heart. Whether reveling in *saguna* or *nirguna* (formless), his is the highest state. Adi Shankaracharya says such spiritual masters roam in this world like the spring season. Like spring makes the flowers blossom, so too, such *sannyasis* bring about and sanctify the inner blossoming of all spiritual seekers. *Kaupinavantah khalu bhagyavantah*: Such *sannyasis* are indeed blessed.

to be continued



# 17th Chinmaya Mahasamadhi Family Camp - 2010

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*June 30, 2010*

*Our Beloved Pujya Guruji,*

*Wishing you a Blessed 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday . . .  
Filled with the fragrance of the Lord's Name  
and the blessings of Pujya Gurudev!*

*With Much Love and Hari OM,  
Your CMW Family*



# Guidance on Meditation

by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda



In our times, we find that failures in meditation are reported more often than successes. This is because seekers, in the spirit of our hurried times, dash into the act of meditation without first procuring the required pre-flight attunement of their “machines of flight.” The takeoff never happens!

For establishing a scheme of life most conducive to helping seekers grow into meditative attunement, spiritual masters advise in the most general terms: “Stop remembering and craving for things bygone. Entertain no joy or sorrow as they reach you in the present. Remaining thus, you shall grow into the great glory of your own Self.” Therefore, let us learn to surrender our past unto His feet in love. Let us learn to remain in those sublime heights of divine Awareness, where worries and joys cannot reach to cloud our vision and upset our equipoise.

Be patient. Be steady. Strive continuously, cultivating these qualities. Success is sure. The Upanishad rishis assure for us the experience of the Self. Toward this acme of life, hurry without haste. Hasten slowly. . . .

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Q: How can a householder learn to control his body-mind-intellect equipment so that he can be ready for a higher step? Is there a precise method?

A: The path is the same whether one is a householder or a renunciate. So long as our attention is with the flesh, we discover a hundred excuses to run out into the world of objects, seeking gratification. But when the mind gets hooked onto an inspiring goal or ideal, its nature changes; its attention turns toward the Higher. When your young child

is playing with your new silver-plated pen, the only way to persuade him to give it up is to offer him a piece of chocolate candy!

In a householder’s life, total abstinence is not allowed. But overindulgence and all excesses, such as overeating, overworking, over-anxiety, over-ambition, must be curtailed, including overexertion and oversleeping. Prayer in the morning and in the evening, and daily reading of at least a few pages of inspiring spiritual literature should be a helpful program for both man and wife. If you still find your mind difficult to control on a given day, take only fruit that day. But don’t make it a habit; take to this diet only when you feel that your mind is out of control.

Q: What is the initial step in meditation?

A: Detachment gained through attachment is the only way. Detach yourself from the body-mind-intellect equipment and its fields of activity (objects-emotions-thoughts), and attach yourself to the Higher.

Q: When should I start meditating twice a day?

A: If my child were to ask me, “When should I eat my supper?” my answer would be “Not now, my son.” The very question clearly shows that my child is not hungry. As of yet, I must advise you not to start the evening meditation.

If my son runs to the dining room and demands supper, threatening to stuff himself with cookies if the food is not given, that is when I should say, “Son, it is now time to eat.” When I hear from you that you have started an inspiring session of meditation in the evenings too, then I shall send you permission to meditate!

Q: When you go into meditation, how do you

come out of it?

A: Now, really speaking, do we actually go into meditation? It is not a question of going and coming. It is not a horizontal movement. It is not going from one place to another in time or distance. It is just like the move from the dream to the waking state, passing from one state of consciousness to another.

I, who was a dreamer in the dream, was in the jungle, experiencing a terrible, painful, and agonizing situation. The next moment I wake up and recognize that actually I am in my own bed, in the security of my own home. Now, you could say that I have come from the dream. In fact, where I was lying down, there itself was I dreaming—the jungle was there—the experience of my dream was in my own bed only. I did not go anywhere; I did not return from anywhere. I experienced a movement in consciousness.

When you “go” into meditation, you are simply passing into a different state of consciousness. The mind is quiet, and therefore you are in reach of a higher state. When the mind starts moving again, you “come back.”

Q: Is not the process of classic meditation (chanting, sitting in a certain position) a form of self-hypnosis, in that the mind is stilled because one has deadened it through this process?

A: If we do accept that meditation is self-hypnosis, I will not protest, for is it not self-hypnosis to say that I am not this imperfect, suffering, meager individual; that I am the infinite, joyous, perfect one, enjoying a better state of existence. And hypnosis cannot be permanent. The final experience of the spiritual process is claimed to be a “state” from which there is no return. It is permanent and therefore cannot be the result of self-hypnosis.

If at all, meditation is a process of de-hypnotism. At this moment, we have hypnotized ourselves to be the limited ego-entity, a hapless victim of the vagaries of the body-mind-intellect. De-conditioned from them all, we come to realize the Self Buddha was not the Prince Gautama who went to the pipal tree to meditate. Jesus who walked into the desert is not the Christ who exploded upon the world from Jerusalem.

The process of de-conditioning will look like conditioning: Cleaning can look like an attempt to tarnish the object more than it is, but this is a stage in the process of cleaning. Japa, the postures, the chants, the hymns, the very meditation—all these are finite acts to end the finite acts, to end the finite ego. When the ego ends, what lies behind it becomes self-evident.

Q: How do we know the inner peace found in meditation is not in fact a momentary lull of unconscious energy that overcomes one when the conscious mind has been stilled in this manner?

A: You can know this only by experience. The above examples of God-men show that this state is not a “momentary lull of unconscious energy.” The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Similarly, the final confirmation of the spiritual declaration of the scriptures is in our direct experience.

Q: Why is the concept of God necessary in spiritual life?

A: It is not necessary so long as one is willing to logically and truthfully investigate the BMI and PFT in relation to the OET. Such an inquiry will lead to the “Subject” in us and we will be forced to accept that something other than matter is expressing through matter. This spiritual essence, when in action, is indicated by the term “God.”

Q: Some people dig holes underground to meditate. Is it of any value?

A: *Samadhi* cannot be achieved by digging a hole in the earth and going underground. Whenever and wherever you are trying to quiet the mind, you are in the practice for *samadhi*. Detaching the mind from disturbances within and without, and directing it to rest in Brahman, is *samadhi*.

Q: Swamiji, who are you?

A: “Who am I” is a theme expounded by Ramana Maharishi. To inquire who I am is to search for the Subject. This search is unlike any search in the material world. Scientists, skeptics, and atheists seek truth in the outer world. There is nothing wrong in this, as it



will take them finally to the subjective paths of inquiry. When a modern artist paints an ugly picture, one may feel repelled by its ugliness. However, the artist has been honest in that he is expressing his inner experience accurately. Those who share the artist's mental condition will feel excited and sympathetic at the sight of such portraits of confusion.

The Hindu scriptures deal exhaustively with this subject. This cannot be considered the special glory of the Hindus. They happen to have turned their genius to this theme of investigation for a long period of continuous searching. The West on the other hand has made considerable progress in technology, not necessarily because the West revolted against the Dark Ages of medieval times, [but that it turned] toward the more rational and directly observable aspects of life.

The outer world is as though nonexistent to one who has had no encounter with it. The Niagara Falls for many of us consists of a mental image culled from words or pictures. But to those who have been there, stood in front of them, and intellectually and emotionally experienced their majesty, to them the Falls are very much a reality. The ancient rishis of the Vedic period declare that the objective world has validity because of "Me," the Subject. They turned their attention to a search for the Self, while the West concentrated on learning more about the world of observable phenomena. The science that explains and expounds the subjective world became known as spirituality, a distinct contrast to the objective sciences of modern times.

The Hindu masters made an important discovery through their exhaustive observation of an individual's total performance in his pilgrimage from the womb to the tomb. . . . In the search for "Who am I," who is it that ultimately experiences the joys and sorrows of situations and circumstances in the waking, dream, and deep-sleep states? At this moment, it may help you to pause a little and analyze the knowledge of an experience.

Things are happening all around you. You become conscious of them. What you are not conscious of is not an experience to you. What if at this moment a dear friend of yours in another part of the world gets in an

accident? It has happened, but you have no experience of it. The message arrives at night and only then you become conscious of the tragedy. Therefore, consciousness of a thing is knowledge of the thing.

The knower in each of us is therefore "I," a chain of consciousness of things. Suppose that in contemplative moods of deep meditation you lift your mind away from all experiences of objects. Will you not arrive at a pure state of Consciousness in whose light alone you become "conscious" of things? Think.

This object-less Awareness is your true nature. Light in the world illumines things; the illuminator is someone other than the illuminated. In the light, there are no objects as such. In sunlight, there is no world; however, the world is illumined by the sunlight.

In quiet moments of contemplation when I thus seek the light of Consciousness, bereft of all objects, including my own body, feelings, and thoughts, I arrive at my Self. At this moment we live without knowing who we are—drunken fools or lunatics who have escaped from an asylum. In our present condition we can never maintain a right relationship with the things and beings of the world. Each one of us is conditioned by his or her past conceptions and goes through life running after false hopes, mad ambitions, and futile uncreative ideas. Stop it! Seek and know who you are.

I am indescribable. I do not fall into any category. I am you—you in your purity. Therefore, whenever you are pure, you are Chinmaya. In your confusion you call me "master" or "saint," but I am only you, redeemed from your own confusions.

Let not any seeker throw up his efforts in despair and run away from his meditation-seat, even after his millionth failure to quiet the mind! These very attempts, though apparently unrewarding, are slowly eating up the delusions and widening the gateway to Realization. Never give up. Never despair. Strive on! On and on! Every effort you put forth is a step toward the Truth. When you are tired, smile. When exhausted, rest. And then strive again! When dispirited, surrender to Him. Help comes! Help surely comes!

## Chinmaya Dham Yatra 2009

by Subha Varma Pathial

A tour of India's major Chinmaya Mission centers and projects, led by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda;  
Continued from CMW News, May 2010

### Chinmaya Gardens: November 15

We awoke to the chants of the *Veda-putras* (priests in the 16-month residential course) and watched a beautiful *puja*. Walking around the serene ashram, goshala, and temple kept us in a contemplative mood.



The Chinmaya International Residential School (CIRS) adjoins the Chinmaya Gardens *ashram*. CIRS, a shining example of modern education, is a distinctive residential school housing students in grades 5-12, providing them with an academic and spiritual education program par excellence.



The *yatris* were invited to tour the school, which commenced with an address by resident *acharya*, Swami Swaroopananda.



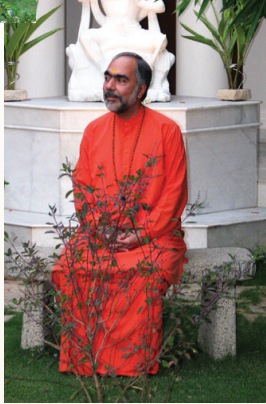
We were guided through the sylvan campus with its state-of-the-art facilities for the 500 students who come from all over the world to study here. It was Pujya Gurudev's vision that children growing up in different parts of the world be given an opportunity to learn inner and outer development in harmony, in order to help the next generation imbibe India's eternal values and become caring, productive individuals.







We chanted the Hanuman Chalisa at the beautiful Hanumanji idol in the *kutir* and enjoyed Swamiji's *satsanga* commemorating Shri Guru Nanak Dev's birth anniversary.



We were invited to attend the CIRS daily arati and sat mesmerized listening to their beautiful *bhajans*.

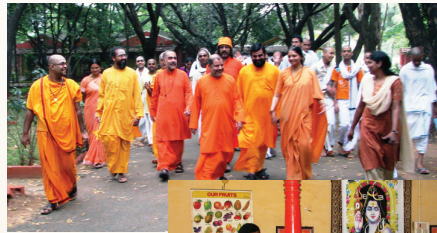


It was drizzling lightly when we went to our CIRS-hosted dinner. The walk back to the ashram was soothing and refreshing.



## CORD Siruvani: November 3

The *Veda-putras* and *acharyas* bade us a fond farewell after breakfast, and we took off to the CORD Siruvani facility.



Dr. Meera Krishnan, CORD Siruvani Coordinator, and her staff impressed us with their efficient and rapid accomplishments of the medical facility, self-help groups, and empowerment programs.







The locals were quite adept in making handicrafts and pain balms. One successful ongoing program teaches the locals how to make paper bags out of used newspapers (among other products) to sell in local stores. This helps reduce the use of high-pollution plastic bags. Dr. Krishnan, a gynecologist by profession, has trained a team of dedicated health care workers who conduct screening exams and educate the locals in hygiene and sanitation. CORD Siruvani has also helped the locals construct toilets, leading to improved habits and fundamental changes in the culture.

#### ☞ CIF: November 4



Established in 1989, Chinmaya International Foundation (CIF), is a research center for advanced study in Sanskrit and Indology, and a cross-cultural forum for the exchange of knowledge. Pujya Gurudev visualized CIF as a bridge between the East and the West, past and present, science and spirituality, and pandit and public.



CIF houses the maternal home and sacred birthplace of Adi Shankaracharya, in Veliyanad, (Kerala), a town 30 km from the city of Ernakulam. Originally known as the Melpazhur Mana, the ashram was renamed by Pujya Gurudev as Adi Shankara Nilayam.



CIF Administrator K. K. Rajan gave us a guided tour. We were all intensely moved and overwhelmed as we stood in the actual birth room of Bhagavan Adi Shankaracharya with Pujya Guruji.



The evening featured *chuttuvilakku* and *melam*. The former is a special *puja* wherein small lamps around the temple are individually lit by devotees in the name of the *puja* sponsor. The first lamp was lit by Guruji. The temple and its premises glowed beautifully with all the lamps lit. The intoxicating tune of *melam* soon had all the participants dancing.



After the special *puja* at the temple, we offered Pujya Gurudev *paduka puja* and went for dinner. Guruji introduced the patrons and *acharyas* of CIF.



Pujya Guruji narrated the little-known story of Father Anthony Ilanjimittam (*Isha Bodhananda*). Once, Pujya Gurudev suggested to Father Anthony to do something for CIF. Time passed and Father Anthony forgot about the request, unaware even that Pujya Gurudev had attained *mahasamadhi*. One day, many years later, he was reminded of the request during meditation. Wanting to carry out what a *mahatma* had told him, he came to meet Guruji, gave a Rs. 10 lakhs donation, and later even more. One of CIF's residential blocks is named in his honor.

The next day we had *satsanga* with Swami Advayananda, CIF's resident *acharya*, during which he gave us an overview of the multitude of CIF's research programs and projects:

- Advanced research at doctoral and post-doctoral levels (near completion is the critical edition of the *Brahma Sutras* with *Shankara bhashya*, English translation, and commentary notes
- *Sukti-sudha*, a compilation of proverbs from Sanskrit literature and *Vada-kosha*, a compendium of Indian philosophical tenets
- Compilation and popularization of Sansk-net, a national network database of Sanskrit classics
- Applied research in the form of Sanskrit and Vedanta home-study courses
- Collection, preservation, digitalization, and publication of rare palm-leaf and other manuscripts
- *Anusaarika* (natural language processing) software for English/Hindi translation that recognizes the right context of speech and gives appropriate suggestions
- The Chinmaya Art of Home Life, a guide for householders and marriage counseling based on Indian scriptures





On our conducted tour of the library, we visited the manuscript room that was lined with original documents from centuries back, and learned about the preservation and archiving processes.



We were captivated by Brahmachari Gagan Chaitanya, and his versatile skills and talents, as he elucidated the past and future of the Easy Sanskrit online course that he developed.



Two young volunteers detailed for us the new CIF website and *Anusaarika* project. Visit [chinfo.org](http://chinfo.org).

The *chuttuvilakku* and *paduka puja* set against a drizzly evening rounded out the evening. In Guruji's *satsanga*, he spoke on the similarities between the lives of Adi Shankaracharya and Pujya Gurudev.



## ☞ CIF to Mumbai: November 5

The pandemonium of packing marked “departure day.” A few children from Chinmaya Vidyalaya Kottayam had come to visit Guruji in his *kutir* and one of them offered him a *bhajan*.



After a group photo with the CIF staff and sevaks in front of Adi Shankaracharya's birth room, we headed to the airport to catch our flight to Mumbai.



We departed from my home after breakfast, and continued our journey to the airport to join the rest of the *Yatris*. After reaching the airport, we found out that the flight was delayed, so while we munched on our lunch in the airport, *Pyareji* (*Pyare Chhabria* from Melbourne) was kind enough to entertain us with his humor, interspersed with Mithai from various sources.



On the airport-to-ashram bus, Guruji was busy reminding the ashram staff to turn on the geysers in each of our rooms so that we don't have to wait to shower. Perfect “Guruji touch!”

We received a warm welcome in Mumbai from the *acharya* and *brahmacharis* of the current two-year Vedanta Course at the

world-renowned Sandeepany Sadhanalaya ashram, also the hub of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide. We were then led to our rooms in the Chinmaya Vihar building.



Established in 1963, Sandeepany Sadhanalaya in Powai, Mumbai was the first institute of Vedanta founded by Pujya Gurudev. The first Vedanta Course commenced with Pujya Gurudeva as the *acharya*.



The two-year residential Vedanta Course in English now commences and concludes at *Sandeepany Sadhanalaya* on the auspicious day of *Ganesha Chaturthi*. There is a gap of one year between each two-year course. The 14th batch is currently in progress.

Pujya Gurudev named the institute after *Rishi Sandipani*, in whose gurukulam Lord Krishna came to study. Pujya Gurudev said, “*Sandeepany* symbolizes the perfect kindling, and the kindling of perfection, in the hearts of men.” In ancient times, the great *Maharishi Sandipani* headed the *gurukula* where spiritual knowledge, scriptural teachings, martial arts, and all aspects of learning were imparted to

the resident disciples. *Gurukulas* were much more than today’s boarding schools. The students remained under their guru’s tutelage, protection, and nurturing for approximately ten years, living as a family.

The Sandeepany Sadhanalaya name was thereafter applied to all other Vedantic institutes of Chinmaya Mission, which were in different areas of India and offered the course in various regional languages.

The evening arati at the Jagadishvara Temple atop the *ashram* slope is stunningly beautiful and a must-see. The chants and *arati* invoke effortless devotion in all with its harmonious display of *diyas*, chants, and bells.



In his *satsanga* at the temple, Guruji spoke on the Ramayana’s *Aranya Kanda*, as this was the ongoing topic of study for the *brahmachari* students.

Later, Guruji outlined the next day’s program for the *yatris* and suggested we attend the morning *Upanishad* class conducted by the resident *acharya* Swami Advaitananda. It was an eventful day and there was more to come.



to be continued



# Easy Sanskrit Online Study Course

Blessed Self,  
Hari Om! Salutations!

Chinmaya International Foundation (CIF), a center for Sanskrit Research and Indology, is pleased to introduce its new “Easy Sanskrit Online Study Course” for beginners interested in starting their journey into Sanskrit. This course covers the salient aspects of Sanskrit grammar and vocabulary, and simplifies intricate details for easy learning. Students do not even need to know the Devanagiri (Sanskrit) script, or the script for any other Indian language for that matter.

So it is truly Sanskrit made easy!

The course covers 13 topics that presented in modules, which students have up to 30 months to complete. A student who completes the full course will be awarded a Certificate of Completion from CIF. CIF is the academic front of Chinmaya Mission worldwide, and is affiliated to Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan (New Delhi) and recognized by Mahatma Gandhi University (Kottayam).

Registration is US\$150. Hurry to register online and become one of the first students to begin this Easy Sanskrit Course!

You can also get your own Easy Sanskrit Self-Study Kit, which includes a textbook, workbook, and interactive CD for only \$75!

Visit [www.easysanskrit.chinfo.org](http://www.easysanskrit.chinfo.org)

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# Vande Mataram

by Varun Khanna

*Continued from CMW News, January 2010*



## ☞ April 18: Cultural Geography of Varanasi

My fourth course here in India was rather moving. I had the privilege of working with Dr. Rana P.B. Singh, who is an excellent writer and a great friend. We did not meet as often as I would have liked over the course of my stay here in Varanasi, but the times we did meet were most fruitful. This course was about exploring and writing about Varanasi. It was not simply to observe and write about what I saw, but to observe, relate what is going on in the present to Varanasi's history, and then write. I couldn't decide what to write about for the longest time. Finally I realized, after a meeting with Ranaji, that lots of western authors come to India, specifically Varanasi, and write about what they see. With a shallow understanding, they ultimately destroy the image of the scene, so I chose to rectify a few of these misconceptions.

I identified several "problems" in India that western authors wrote about, distorting the true meaning behind the acts. Then I went around observing situations, interviewing people, and understanding the significance of the circumstances. I wrote as much as I could about what I found. It was a moving and changing experience, to say the least. Kashi is such a vast city, and I knew from the start that I would not be able to do it justice in just two months of writing. People often research for over 10 or 15 years before writing about it! Varanasi has, indeed, given me a lot in the way of spiritual uplifting and self-development, and I only pray that I can give back even a fraction of what I have gained here.

## ☞ April 25: Ayurveda Studies at BHU

My study in Ayurveda at BHU (Banaras Hindu University) was probably one of the coolest

courses I have ever taken. It involved buying a book by my professor, Dr. Ram Harsh Singh (apparently many or most of the professors at BHU write their own books), and then reading as much of it as I could, asking questions as I went along. So as I finished each chapter, I would take detailed notes and then write the questions that arose. After each chapter, I would go to Dr. Singh's office and ask him my questions, which he would answer. He is now a retired professor, practicing Ayurveda instead of teaching, which means he can always be found in his office. So I went there as many times as I could and asked many questions. He strongly suggested that I apply for BHU's Ayurveda program in the future.

## ☞ April 29: Adventure in Chennai

I returned to Noida on the 26th via overnight train, and left home yesterday at 8 a.m. to get to Delhi Airport for my 10 a.m. flight to Chennai. My dad's office is in Chennai and one of his chief helpers came to pick me up. After I checked into the cool and luxurious Green Park Hotel, where my dad stays when he visits, we went to my dad's office. He must get an awesome reception here as CEO. Even the respect given to me as his son felt like a scene out of a Bollywood movie.

It felt awesome to be in my dad's shoes for a while, though I didn't do the work he did—just like attending BHU was more special for me because it was my dad's alma mater.

Later, after retiring to my hotel room, I realized how luxuriously we live in the States and in classy places like the Green Park Hotel. This is because only a few days ago I was in Varanasi, with no electricity, running water only half the time, no gas, and a temperature that was way hotter than Chennai. It occurred to me that after my experiences in Varanasi, I could never



get used to living in such luxury. Just knowing that there are people in the world with nothing but a piece of cloth to bunch up as a pillow when they sleep at night outside, on bare ground, in the heat of summer . . . with such memories, it is hard to live in such luxury. Our worlds are little bubbles of security, especially for kids of successful parents, because the kids themselves were simply born into such luxury, they never have to work for it and may never experience what over 95% of the world is going through. And without this experience, they cannot know what is going on—yet these are the people that run the world! We always talk about helping people on the streets, helping the poor, saving the world—but do we really know what we are trying to save?

Of course, the problem is not the luxury, but the thanklessness with which we live in it. We complain about food, clothes, people, dorms, classes, TV, politics, weather, facilities—everything. If we could just adopt an attitude of gratitude for our circumstances, life would be so much more beautiful and meaningful. Truly, it is hard to adopt this attitude without knowing what we could be living in, but maybe this means each of us should make a trip outside our little bubbles of security. Gratitude is the key to living a meaningful life, I think, but nobody can give you gratitude; you have to feel it. I think if you step away from your security bubble, wander outside your comfort level, and observe the real world, gratitude will naturally enter your being.

I finally went to one of the friends I made at Veda Vijnana Gurukulam a couple of months ago: Arvind Agraja. He lives in Chennai, so today I took a taxi to his house. When I got there, I saw that Bharat Agraja was also there, as were a few of the other students from the Gurukulam. They were apparently finishing a Sanskrit weeklong program. It was great to see them; we talked for a couple of hours and had lunch.

On leaving, I asked the taxi driver to take me around Chennai and we went first to Marina Beach, one of the biggest beaches I have ever seen. There had to have been over a thousand people within sight range—it was something like walking into a carnival. In India's big cities and crowded places, the street vendors have a knack of finding their way into the center of attention, and their stuff is always entertaining.

I entered the festivities and walked all the way to the ocean (a ten-minute walk); it was a short but enjoyable experience.

I asked the driver to go to our next location, but he took me to the hotel instead—perhaps because he was satisfied (and I was exhausted) or because he didn't know English and I didn't know Tamil, so we couldn't communicate very well. I used hand gestures to get my point across and it seemed to work.

### May 5: Road to Pondicherry

I woke up on the 30th morning and got ready by 5 a.m., but we (my dad's two main co-workers and me) decided to leave at 6 a.m. for Pondicherry. The coastal drive was quite beautiful. We stopped at Mahabalipuram and I was told that there used to be an ancient civilization here (not that there's any scarcity of these in India). But this one was different.

We visited the ruins of an ancient temple that used to be along the coastline. This temple was amazing to explore and literally, it was just us three at the site. I walked around it, inside it, through it, noting the many pieces of architecture, tools, and devices, including once-functional stone water tanks. Though the site was at least 1,500 years old, it was so detailed in its architecture, so precise in its measurements, so thorough in its understanding of the laws of mathematics and physics. How did ancient civilizations do this without computers and calculators, without any machinery to do the sculpting? I am always fascinated and amazed at the ability and potency of ancient artists and sculptors, who worked entirely with their hands and entirely out of inspiration. Even in today's India, sculptors prefer their hands to machinery, and on the streets you can see them sculpting their small stone idols and figurines.

In today's society, we have become so dependent on machines to do everything for us—wash our clothes and dishes, do our calculations, and even write! We depend on computers for everything. Our brain's functionality has either diminished or we have stunted it ourselves by using machines as supports where we don't need them. It's like being born with fine legs, and then being given crutches at the age of 3, before your legs

become fully grown and developed. Then, by the time you're 13, you can't walk because your legs' growth is stunted!

Our next exploration site was Panch Rath. This site is something of an architectural anomaly. There are 5 huge stones, the size of small huts, carved into the shape of *raths* (chariots). They don't look like chariots to me, but perhaps they did in ancient days. They are huge structures that look like little homes or temples, and what sets this site apart from the others is that each rath is made of one stone only. How and why sculptors did this, who knows. But one thing is for sure—these works are genius. These pieces are flawless. There is also one random stone elephant (which is the size of an elephant). Compare this with what we call Stonehenge . . . I don't need to say more.

We ate some fantastic South Indian food for breakfast and continued our journey. When we got to Pondicherry at 11 a.m., I felt like I had entered another world. The streets were all well-kept, with barely any litter, and everything was so . . . Western. We made our way to the International Guest House of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, where I was to be staying. I found myself in my room in no time. My coursework was officially done and I had finally disembarked at Pondicherry.

The next morning, I went to go see sunrise at the beach, a two-minute walk away from my residence. I relaxed at the beach, toured the area, including Sri Aurobindo Ashram. Pondicherry is like the California of India—a coastal place with warm weather, cool people (everyone wears shorts, even at meetings), new ideas, innovations, etc... I really like this place.

I probably won't be writing much more until I leave Pondicherry. I'm on vacation.

### May 17: Finishing Touches

Well, it's almost over. I'm back in Noida; vacation's finished. The schedule before going back home is kind of crazy; I'm going to another residential camp to learn how to teach spoken Sanskrit and leaving India on the 29th. I have two days to pre-pack now, and the day that the camp ends, I will come home for about an hour to grab my bags and run to the airport! So right now, I'm in pack-till-you-drop mode.

### May 30: Homebound

I'm in the airplane, on my way home. They say there's no place like home, and they're right. Having been away for so long, I can honestly say that I'm ready to return. As much as I loved India and getting in touch with my roots, having learned and gained so much, home is home, no matter what.

The current time in Chicago is 1:45 a.m. The current time in New Delhi is 12:15 p.m. The estimated arrival time in Chicago is 4:31 a.m. The airplane is at an altitude of 11,582 meters, at 959 kmph ground speed, and it's -47°C outside. I've been in the airplane for over 12 hours, watching movies, reading, sleeping, and writing.

### May 31: Reflections

I am honored to have been given the opportunity to explore and discover for myself the land that gives me my roots and my culture, the land from which I draw my strength and values. I saw and learned much, but also realized that there is almost an infinite amount left yet to discover. It warrants many, many more trips to this land in the future. I have a clearer picture of who I am and why I am this way; I have less tension about who I want to be and where I am going in life.

Being in India has taught me that there is so much more to life than just waking up in the morning, going to school/work, eating food, doing homework, partying, and sleeping. There is so much to be discovered wherever we go, in whatever we do, and whenever we do it. I have learned that if there is work to be done, then there is no better time to start than now. I have learned that there is no use worrying about what will happen in the future, for that is not in our hands, but what is in our hands is what we do now. I have learned that many people talk, but nobody listens; our character lies in our actions alone.

There is nothing more I can say about what I have learned. The time has come to stop talking, and start acting; the time has come to change the world. The question is not, "Does the world want to be changed?" but rather, "Am I ready to change the world?" And to be ready, one must change oneself.



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# Vedanta 2010



With the blessings of His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda, Head of Chinmaya Mission worldwide, Chinmaya Mission West (CMW) is pleased to announce its one-year, residential Vedanta Course at CMW's headquarters, the ashram of Krishnalaya in Northern California, amidst the serene Redwoods.

This residential, full-time course, without any holidays, will be conducted in English.

## ELIGIBILITY

This Course is open to sincere seekers between the ages of 20 and 70 years.

## REGISTRATION

\$12,000 (covers registration, lodging, boarding, and books; payable in installments)

## DATES / ACHARYAS

The course will commence on August 7, 2010 and conclude in August 2011.

**Full-time Resident Acharya**  
Acharya Smt. Sharada Kumar

**August 2010**

Pujya Gururji Swami Tejomayananda

**August-October 2010**

Brahmachari Prabodh Chaitanya

**November-December 2010**

Swami Ishwarananda

**January 2011**

Swami Shantananda

**February-March 2011**

Swami Ishwarananda

**April-May 2011**

Brahmachari Prabodh Chaitanya

**July 2011**

Acharya Smt. Sharada Kumar

**August 2011**

Pujya Gururji Swami Tejomayananda



## TO REGISTER

Complete the online form at  
[www.chinmayamission.org/piercy](http://www.chinmayamission.org/piercy)

All applications received will be reviewed. Eligible candidates will be asked to schedule a personal interview, the details of which will be provided at a later date.

For more information:  
[prabodh@chinmayamission.org](mailto:prabodh@chinmayamission.org)

(707) 207- 5011

## TEXTS

**His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda:** Mandukya Upanishad, Tattva Bodha, Essence of Shrimad Bhagavatam and Ramayana  
**Swami Shantananda:** Dakshinamurti Stotram, Sat Darshanam  
**Swami Ishwarananda:** Shrimad Bhagavad Gita  
**Brahmachari Prabodh Chaitanya:** Upadesha Sara, Atma Bodha, Drg Drshya Viveka, Panchadashi Ch. I, and Upanishads (Ishavasya, Kena, Katha, Mundaka)  
**Acharya Sharada Kumar:** Taittiriya Upanishad, Vivekachudamani, Vedic Chanting, Sanskrit, Sahasranamavalis, Bhajans



# Global CHYK Camp 2010

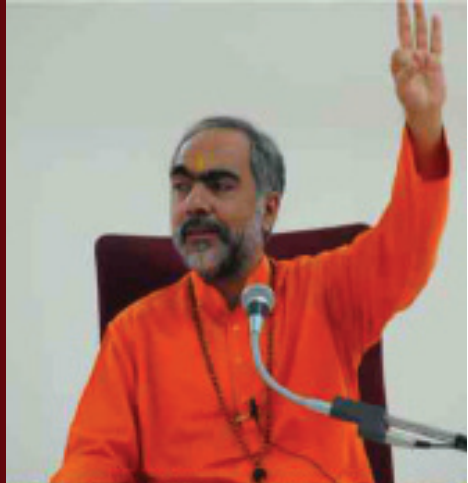
Inspired by  
Swami Swaroopananda

Date:  
24<sup>th</sup> Dec 2010  
to 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2011

Venue:  
Chinmaya International  
Residential School  
Coimbatore,  
Tamil Nadu,  
INDIA

Cost:  
US\$250

For further information:  
[take-the-big-step@gmail.com](mailto:take-the-big-step@gmail.com)  
or your local Chinmaya  
Mission Centre



Take the  
**BIG P**  
**E**  
**T**  
**S**

**Taittiriya Upanishad**

All great achievement demands that we take a  
**Big Step.**

To do this, we require  
**courage,**  
direction and a deep understanding of ourselves.

The Taittiriya Upanishad was taught to students in the  
Vedic age to give them this clarity and to ensure that every  
step they took once they left the Gurukula was a  
**Big Step** in the right direction.

This timeless and profound knowledge is now available to us –  
all we have to do is to **step forward** and be available for it.

Start the change this December...

Take the Big Step



*MLCM:*

## *My Life Is Chinmaya Mission*

*Ready for the newest CM catchphrase? “MLCM”: My life is Chinmaya Mission. CHYK West-initiated, this blog website reveals the significant impact Chinmaya Mission continues to have on countless lives.*

I used Skype and Tokbox from Miami to attend a CHYK class in Chicago, and every moment felt surreal. MLCM.

- Puja Sabnani

I can’t listen to music without thinking of a deeper meaning. MLCM.

- Shivam Gosai

The videos I post on Facebook of my friends and I are from Chinmaya Bala Vihar, for Bala Vihar. MLCM.

- Hema Karunakaram

I had a prolonged discussion with my parents on the Vedantic significance of the movie *Avatar*. MLCM.

- Ramesh Cheruvu

Last night, I was out until 2:30 in the morning— not partying, but working for Guruji’s visit with my *acharya*. MLCM. -Puja Sabnani

I can’t read a book without thinking deeper. MLCM.

- Shubham Satishkumar Patel

My Saturday afternoons feel empty and awkward without Chinmaya Bala Vihar. MLCM.

- Janani Naidu

CHYK camps and Mission activities. MLCM.

- Puja Sabnani

For the past week, I have had the tune of *Bhaja Govindam* stuck in my head! MLCM.

- Supriya Nair

Sangeeta Aunty poked me on Facebook and I screamed with excitement. Sangeeta Aunty was my Bala Vihar teacher. MLCM.

- Sandhya Simhan

I am going to attend the *Gita Jnana Yajna* tonight on Chapter 15 by Pujya Guruji. He is in Hyderabad until Shivaratri. MLCM.

- Anupma Dubey

It is only befitting that the Saints won the Superbowl Championship! MLCM.

- Bhavana Shivakumar

My roommates and I read the jokes and horoscopes from the *Chinmaya Udgosh* magazine that CIRS (Chinmaya International Residential School) has subscribed for us. MLCM.

- Namrata Dayana

One time, while walking through the airport, I saw Pujya Guruji waiting to board his plane. I went and offered *pranaam*. Now, whenever I walk through the airport, I actively search for anyone wearing orange. MLCM.

- Puja Sabnani

I regularly watch Pujya Gurudev’s *Bhagavad Gita* discourses with my family members. Very inspiring! MLCM.

- Ramchandra Khedkar

I plan 95% of my work vacations around various Chinmaya Bala Vihar: My mom (Tamil language

teacher) and I (student teacher) just fought over who gets to take in candy for our kids this week. MLCM.

- *Janani Naidu*

I just came back from *Holi* celebrations at the CM Columbus ashram. A high school-er told me, “I love *Holi*! It’s the one time of the year my parents let me dye my hair!” LOL. MLCM.

- *Bhavana Shivakumar*

On my dresser in my college dorm, I have only three things that never get put away: A family photo, my keys, and the framed Chinmaya Mission Pledge I got from my Bala Vihar teachers when I graduated from high school. MLCM.

- *Sandhya Simhan*

I love seeing the number of MLCM fans increase per day.

- *Namrata Dayana*

Yesterday, my parents were listening to a lecture, and Pujya Guruji was singing a *bhajan*. I have no idea how or why, but I knew all the words and sang along. MLCM.

- *Devina Jagota*

My kids want to dance in the car to Krishna *bhajans*. MLCM.

- *Reshma Khemlani Dadlani*

Sometimes Swamijis come in my dreams. I can’t help but think this is a great blessing. MLCM.

- *Puja Sabnani*

I’m taking a class in the Fall on Psychology and Spiritual Development. When I first approached the professor, he refused to let me in, saying an undergrad couldn’t be interested in understanding how people apply spirituality in their lives. I told him about CHYK. He let me into the class immediately and asked to borrow my *Self-Unfoldment* book over the summer. MLCM.

- *Sandhya Simhan*

## *A Place to Just Be*

by Anjali Madhok (Grade 8)

“ANNE-JOLLY MAD-HAWK?” calls the substitute teacher. She’s taking attendance, and failing at pronouncing my name. Not a huge surprise—it’s rare that I meet someone who gets it right the first time.

“It’s Uhn-julee Mud-oak,” I instinctively correct her. People have been mispronouncing my name for as long as I can remember. Ironically, the name “Anjali” is one of the most popular baby girl names in India, it’s sort of like the “Sarah” or “Sally” of America.

After ten years at Breck School, with mostly the same kids in my grade, even they have learned that it’s unusual to have a teacher who says my name right the first time. By about second grade, when the teacher said my name wrong, I didn’t even bother to correct her, the rest of the class would cover for me.

“It’s UHN-JULEE,” they would say, rolling their eyes as if it were a well-known fact. My name could sometimes bring me unwanted attention when I was younger, though now I’ve grown accustomed to it. So much so, that whenever a teacher looks at the attendance list, pauses for a few seconds, and makes a puzzled face, all I have to do is raise my hand and say, “That’s me.”

It’s little things like this that can sometimes make me feel out of place here in the United States. People don’t go around discriminating who I am, or that I am Indian, but sometimes I feel like I’m almost too different from the rest. From my name, to how I look, to how I act, there are days when I feel as though I’m that puzzle piece that just won’t fit anywhere.

And it’s not like when I visit India that I’m suddenly “back home.” People there can tell that I’m not one of them either. Although my family looks Indian when we visit, the way we carry ourselves sets us apart from the locals. We have been cheated and treated unfairly because people can tell

that we are from the United States.

“What? Twenty dollars per person? But you’re only charging a few rupees for those people!” my dad once exclaimed on a visit to India, interspersing bits of Hindi into his sentences.

“Sorry, sir. Tourists, twenty dollars; citizens, seven,” replied the man behind the dirty counter in a thick Indian accent.

It was hard to believe that behind this man, this gate, and the never-ending rows of security lines laid the Taj Mahal. Although my parents were slightly disappointed that they were charged so much that day, I think it got to me the most. It just didn’t seem right. *We’re Indians too, though, I thought, What makes us so different from the citizens here?*

Even at my relatives’ homes in India, I can always feel that something is a little off. For example, when I spend time with my cousins, things aren’t exactly ideal. Unlike the cousins I have in the United States, we don’t just start chatting things up right away. Typically, it begins with being shoved into a room with only them as company. Somehow, our family thinks that will help us “bond.” Next, we end up spending time with each other. This consists of me attempting to use my Hindi skills as they struggle through their English. There’s only one way I can describe this situation: awkward to the maximum. I always feel like I’m “The American” in India. So if I’m American in India, and Indian in America, then where exactly do I fit?

The one place on earth where I’m completely accepted is at Chinmaya Mission Twin Cities in Chaska, Minnesota. Despite the half-hour drive each way, it is well worth having a place where I perfectly fit.

When I was very young, my mom started Chinmaya Mission classes in Minnesota. One of my earliest memories is from when I was two years old, seated on a green, fuzzy carpet. Golden yellow lamps glowed in our cool basement. Ten children—I was one of them—sat in a circle as my mom told a story related to the *Gita*. Since that

launch, we have expanded into our own center and now have around 160 families.

The Mission is a place for kids to learn about Hinduism, Indian culture, and themselves. It also has study groups as well as teaching and service opportunities for older kids and adults. Although I do enjoy and appreciate these parts, the main reason I love it so much is because I fit in so perfectly. At school, people typically honor that I’m Indian, but I still feel a little too different every so often.

“Can you speak Indian?” people have asked me countless times.

“No, but I can speak Hindi,” I always reply.

I adore the center simply because it’s the one place I can just *be*. I can be myself without having to worry about what I’m saying, doing, or thinking. All of the times when I wasn’t accepted in India or America melt away when I’m at the center.

You don’t have to be Indian to understand this. We all wish we had a place where we could just be, and especially being an eighth grader, at a time when image is everything, I’ve never appreciated it more. People make judgments about us based on the littlest things—from the things we say to the type of shoes we wear. And, sure, we can’t help making judgments, but isn’t it nice to just have a place without any of it?

We have all been categorized at some point or another. “Oh, you’re the athlete, so you’re an expert at all sports and know everything there is to know about exercise,” some people may have decided for you, or, “You’re a girl, therefore you like everything and anything that encompasses pink, flowery things.” My category just happens to be, “You’re the only Indian in the grade, so you know all about Hinduism and diversity.”

A lot of the time, categories are not fun, especially when we have to live under them for most of our lives. I’m lucky I have one place free of categorizing. Hopefully, we all have that special place, whether it’s someone who helps you feel free, or something



you do that helps you forget about your “category.” I believe that it’s important for everyone to have a place where they can belong and be uncategorized.

Sometimes at the center, because I know everyone will be okay with it no matter what, I go a little overboard on the whole acceptance thing. I once walked down the hall with a friend and asked her if she ever felt the need to “just wiggle her body,” and proceeded to do a funny dance move. A woman in her mid-forties happened to see us and just laughed kindly. If I had done that anywhere else, I would have been guaranteed to get a weird look. . . .

My friend Arista, who also comes to the center, once reminded me, “We have a whole family here—a couple hundred siblings and parents and grandparents and cousins.”

Throughout my years of middle school, the center has given me something I haven’t been able to find anywhere else—a place to just be, where I can be myself without having to worry about judgments, where I am accepted without question. It is a snippet of a perfect world—a world where everyone is simply accepted . . . where words and actions can freely twirl through the air and bounce off our shoulders. Of course, it’s unreasonable for me to expect the whole world to be as perfect as this, which is why having one place like this is perfect enough for me.

## *"Dear God" Letters*

*Letters from children, submitted at chinmayakids.org*

☞ Dear God,

Hello! I want a wish from you. Please bless me. I want to become a doctor, so please bless me to study properly.

*Dear Ekta,*

*Hari Om. Glad to hear that you want to become a doctor. You must have heard this: “God helps those who help themselves.” Therefore, do your*

*best and leave the rest. What is best WILL come to you. Lots of Love . . .*

☞ Hi, God. How are you ? I am fine. I want to see you and play with you. Please tell me, where can we meet? I won’t tell it to anyone. Also tell where you live. Everyone says that you live around everyone. Is it true? Please tell me, where can we meet? I won’t leak it to anyone. This is a secret between us both only. You don’t tell it to anyone and I won’t tell it to anyone. Okay? Tell me fast. Please send it to my e-mail id. Until then . . . bye.

*Dear Chinmay,*

*Hari Om. I live in every heart, so if you wish to see me, develop love for all. Be friendly to all. Loving all is loving me, hating others is hating me. Lots of love . . .*

☞ Dear God,

I get angry easily. I am disrespectful to my parents. Help me.

*My dear Anita,*

*Hari Om. When anger comes, neither ‘become’ angry nor struggle to push away the anger. That is, neither be angry with your parents, nor be angry with the anger. When anger arises in the mind, love the anger by recognizing and acknowledging it.*

*Anita, if you can do this, you will see the wonder of the wonders. Your love and acceptance of the anger will act like ice water on the burning flames of anger. Try it. Lots of love . . .*

☞ Dear God,

We want to give you a Friendship Band.

*Dear Shveta and Raveena,*

*Hari Om. Friends always! Lots of love . . .*

☞ Dear Lord,

Please give me knowledge.

*Dear Shyam,*

*Hari Om. You have plenty of knowledge already. The more you use this knowledge for good purpose, the more you will discover within you. Lots of love . . .*

☞ Dear God,

I like you very much. I miss you very much. Please come to Earth and visit me.

*My dear Archana,*

*Hari Om. I love you, too. I am not away from you. I am seated in every heart. Love all and you will see me in every smile. Lots of love . . .*

☞ Dear Saraswati Mata,

Hi and how are you? I would like to become a best buddy of yours. Will you be my friend?

*My dear Sandhya,*

*Hari Om. I am fine and hope you, too, are doing well. To be my best buddy is to love learning—be it through books, teachers, parents, or any other good source. Lots of love, Your Friend*

## *My Mother's Day Gift*

by Vandana Bapna

Perhaps one of the most stimulating and rewarding Mothers' Day's gifts I received was on May 9, 2010: A deep debate with my children on the concepts of independence and detachment. Having attended Chinmaya Bala Vihar and Vedanta classes for over a decade, independence and detachment had become key words in our vocabulary. What amazed me was the variety of perceptions that each of us had regarding these two concepts. I soon realized my own need for clarity and began to summarize my thoughts.

Some youth understand a result of independence as a hearty disdain for others: "Now, I am grown up and self-sufficient. I don't need anyone. I can take care of myself.

I don't want any suggestions, guidance, or interference." Yet it is impossible to be completely independent while functioning as the BMI because each person's contributions affect the individual as well as society. Additionally, this perception of independence strengthens the sense of separateness and enhances the ego, its competitiveness, and overall stress levels. Modern psychological research has shown that a lack of deep social connections can lead to depression and anxiety.

Thinking back to my childhood, I marvel at how each stage of life was revered in society. The children received nurturing, love, and education. Young parents provided for their children and elders. Elders shared their wisdom and love as emotional and moral pillars for the community's younger generations. Everyone had the opportunity to contribute to the whole. Each family member may have been far from perfect, but all lived together as one family, with love and respect, setting aside individual differences and wants.

True independence is freedom from dependence on anything or anyone for happiness. While acting in the world, a truly independent person joyfully embraces his duties and voluntarily gives his best. Free from expectations, there is detachment from the fruits of actions. Serenity and poise thus become the hallmarks of the independent and the detached.

It seems that being independent and detached requires one to be full of love and joy, to give freely, without the need to replenish or expect in return. From this perspective, independent beings naturally bring about unity and *yajna* spirit in the family, community, country, for their acts of goodwill are free and flowing.

We all are on our own journey. Peace of mind and contentment are the litmus tests that will reveal if we are treading on the right path.



# Questions

Roshni Jhanjee (Age 13)

Teacher,

From where comes the strength of ants?  
They carry objects many times their size.  
Yet at the end of their arduous journey,  
It is with redoubled vigor that they rise.

Student,

From where comes the strength of a man  
Who risks his life to save his friends?  
It comes because he thinks only about others;  
He does not think of his own ends.

Teacher,

Why does the beauty of nature endure?  
Human features and faces soon wrinkle and fade;  
The beauty of nature seems everlasting;  
The beauty of humans goes, the beauty of nature stays.

Student,

What is the difference between body and soul?  
Many humans have only beauty of body and skin.  
But the beauty of nature represents with pure joy,  
The beauty of the Spirit that is found within.

Teacher,

From where comes the patience of a rock?  
It endures all happenings with ease and grace.  
While we seethe with impatience at certain events,  
The rock stands still, regardless of  
event or day.

Student,

From where comes the patience of the Enlightened One,  
Who knows that all things shall pass in time.  
Only he is able to enjoy fully the situation around him;  
We, the impatient, do not hear the bird's call or the wind's chime.

Teacher,

From where comes the generosity of a tree?  
It always provides cheerfully for others.  
We greedily demand and take, thinking only of ourselves,  
And therefore create much unhappiness and bother.

Student,

From where comes the generosity of the one  
Who is selfless and heartily glad to give and help?  
His will be true Happiness  
Which comes not from the objects on the store shelves.

O noble Teacher,

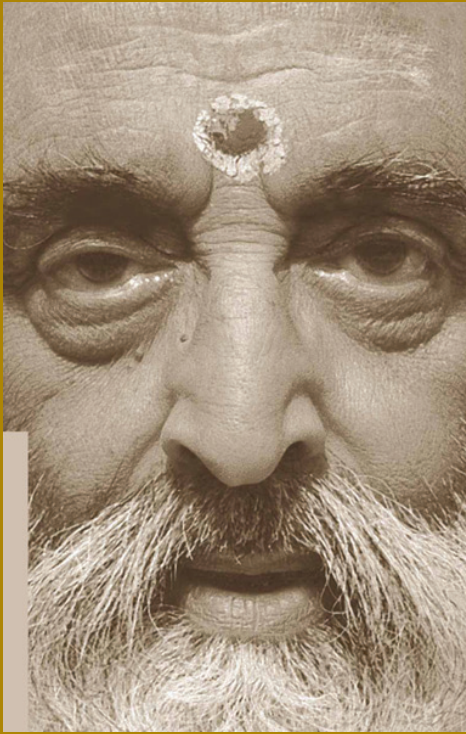
How can I be strong as a perseverant ant,  
And as patient and enduring as a rock?  
How can I have the everlasting beauty of nature,  
And a selfless soul that shows itself through action, not talk?

O Little Student,

You can obtain all these qualities and more,  
If you seek diligently all that is Eternal and Unseen.  
Keep a pure mind, attentive senses, and a  
devoted heart,  
But, above all, listen to me!







*In the silence of Meditation*

*There I Claim!*

"Make me always ready  
To come to You,  
With clean hands,  
And straight eyes,  
With firm steps  
And head held high."



Demand Astakam | 8

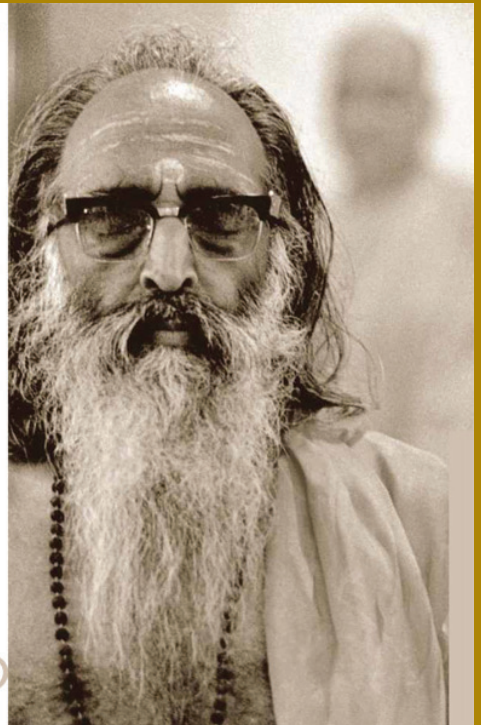
*In the silence of Meditation*

*There I Know!*

"As the fading lotus,  
When my life fades,  
My spirit will reach you,  
Without Shame,  
Without fear,  
In an effortless abandon of Love."



9 | Demand Astakam



*· Designed by Renjith (CHYK)*

# Dharma Sevak Course 2010

## August 7-20, 2010



Conducted by  
**Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda**

Text for Study: *Tattva Bodha*

### Registration

Includes lodging and boarding, and excludes transportation: \$1,200 per person. Due to CMW's one-year residential Vedanta Course, seats for DSC are limited; first-come, first-served. Register online [here](#).

### Deposit

Your place will be reserved and confirmed when your minimum \$100 per person deposit (\$103.30 via PayPal) is received. Cancellations made 60 days prior to the course qualify for a full refund of the deposit, less any applicable credit card/PayPal charges.

### Cancellations

Cancellations within 14-60 days prior to the course qualify for a 50% deposit refund. Within 14 days of the course, no refund will be issued.

### Transportation to/from Piercy/SFO

The nonstop chartered bus departs from SFO on Saturday, August 7, at 2 p.m. Meet at Arrivals (lower level) of the North Terminal, United Airlines, Door #5 before 2 p.m. The chartered bus departs from Krishnalaya on Friday, August 20, at 5:30 a.m. and reaches SFO ~ 11:00 a.m. The additional charge is \$90 roundtrip. If you will be driving to/from Piercy, directions are on the Krishnalaya website.



To get more information or to register  
(online registration is available), go to [www.chinmayamission.org/krishnalaya](http://www.chinmayamission.org/krishnalaya).  
For specific questions, e-mail [info-krishnalaya@chinmayamission.org](mailto:info-krishnalaya@chinmayamission.org)  
or call (707) 207-5011.



## CM Austin's New Property

by Subhash Vora

CM Austin recently acquired eight acres of land in the heart of Austin, Texas. The property is in a central and convenient location that will allow Chinmaya Mission to serve the community better. CM Austin hopes to start construction as soon as possible and move into this location by August 2011.

and more from all parts of India, were potent reminders of the unique Oneness in diversity! It was indeed a divine sight to behold and cherish.



## Chinmaya Chitrakoot Inaugurated

Report submitted by CM Dallas

CM Dallas CM Dallas-Forth Worth (CM DFW) was blessed to celebrate Pujya Gurudev's *jayanti* with the inauguration of a new 21,000 sq. ft. property in Irving, Texas. The new center, blessed by Pujya Guruji as *Chinmaya Chitrakoot*, is the sister *ashram* of *Chinmaya Saaket* in Dallas and *Chinmaya Mangalam* in Melissa.



The ceremonies, conducted under the guidance of Purohit Anant Padmanabhan and resident *acharya* Brahmachari Uddhav Chaitanya, commenced with the symbolic cow (a beautiful cutout) entering the building. The *Ganapati puja* was followed by a *Shri Rama puja*, *Navagraha puja*, and *Guru puja*, in the midst of which *Purusha Suktam*, *Rama Ashtottarashatanamavali*, *Chinmaya Ashtottarashatanamavali*, and Vedic chants. The *yajamans* carried the *Rama Parivar* deities and Pujya Gurudev's *padukas* in a ceremonial procession replete with embellished umbrellas and the blowing of the divine conch, thus symbolizing their *grihapravesha* into *Chinmaya Chitrakoot*.



Pujya Gurudev's grace and blessings flowed throughout the day, starting with perfect weather in an otherwise unpredictable springtime in the DFW metroplex. Festive decorations at the entrance welcomed all devotees, who were thereafter seated by *sevaks*. Center stage at the altar were *Shri Rama Parivar*, Lord Ganesha, Lord Hanuman, Pujya Gurudev's *padukas*, and Lord Krishna. Adorned with *pushpam*, *tulasi*, and a *toran* of fresh mango leaves, the multitude of additional symbols of auspiciousness, such as banana plants, rice, jaggery, soaked yellow *mung*, coconut, *akshata* ornaments for Sitaji,





As with any *grihapravesha*, the *shanti havans* for Lord Ganapati, *vaastu*, and *navagraha* were also performed. The premises were further consecrated by performing *puja* in all eight directions, breaking a white gourd to ward off evil influences, and sprinkling sacred water in all the rooms. During this time, members inside the hall chanted *Guru Paduka Stotram*. *Naivedyam* was then offered to the Lord and a sumptuous *mahaprasad* was served to all in the spacious dining hall.

With Pujya Gurudev's blessings, the local community from all parts of the DFW metroplex now has one more place to call a haven and home. Located centrally in the DFW metroplex, with easy access to three major highways, the airport, and the surrounding suburbs, *Chinmaya Chitrakoot* has 2.75 acres and plenty of promise for growth. It is now poised to be humming with activity and will soon be home to the divine picture of *Shri Rama-Bharata Milapa*.

## **A Unique Contest to Engage and Enlighten Canada's Youth toward India**

by Bina Sutarwala

The India Journal of Canada published on June 1 an article on CM Ottawa's "Awakening Canadians to India" Contest [edited for print herein]:

"It gave to the world its very own 'zero,' introduced it to 'yoga' and 'Ayurveda,' but India is much more than just a handful of achievements. A unique endeavour of its kind, the Chinmaya Mission has launched a Canada-wide contest, 'Awakening Canadians to India,' encouraging Canadians between the ages of 13-18 [years] to understand [India's] rich culture and heritage. The nonprofit organization with 300 centers in India and abroad resolves to communicate to the world that India is also a scientific, rational, subtle, and advanced subcontinent.

"This one-of-its-kind contest, started in March this year, will test young Canadians on their knowledge of the famous 500-page book, *Awakening Indians to India*. The contestants will go through the closed book exam of

multiple choice and essay questions. The Grand Prize is two round trip tickets to India. The final exam will be held on September 18 in Vancouver (BC), Edmonton (AB), Niagara (ON), Ottawa (ON), Montreal (QC), and more. The last date for registration is August 18. For more information on exam centers, application forms, rules and regulations, and additional prizes, visit [chinmayaottawa.com](http://chinmayaottawa.com).

"Chinmaya Mission plans to weave Canadian youth and Indian heritage to ensure a blend of fun and learning. The contest is also aimed at catapulting more than one million Canadians of Indian descent to understand India, the country which gifted the world not only the Pythagoras Theorem and Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore, but also bred entrepreneurs like Sabeer Bhatia (creator of Hotmail), L. N. Mittal (CEO of steel behemoth Arcelor-Mittal), renowned economist Amartya Sen and astronaut Kalpana Chawla, to name a few.

"The registrants are excited to appear for the exam. Registrant Anisha Baksha said, 'This contest . . . is a lifetime experience for me. . . [to help me] understand the different significances of India that I never knew about, . . . as well as my culture and religion. I am very excited to participate in this!'"

India has been considered an exotic land, the land of magic and mystery, but the true charm of the country runs beyond the wonder of ancient traditions. It lies in the careful balancing of its heritage with the ever-changing present. Apart of India probably resides in every Canadian's lifestyle, whether through yoga, food, literature, or meditation. Not only does this contest create awareness about India, but it also encourages other communities to engage in activities to help younger generations get attached to their roots.

The contest is now a rage with many westerners and kids of Indian descent. The children have started to feel that they should also know about their country, just as their fellow Canadians know about Canada. This contest has not only given them an opportunity to learn more about India, but has also instilled a sense of pride in their culture and a better understanding of India's traditions and progressive future. The contest prizes have become secondary and learning primary.

# *Chinmaya Kedar Utsav 2010*



## The Ah! Wisdom Book

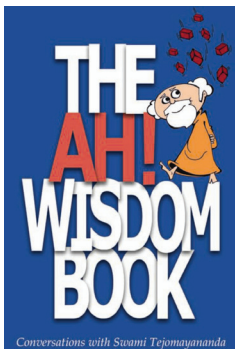
by Nanki Singh

CCMT Books Division recently released *The Ah! Wisdom Book: Conversations with Swami Tejomayananda* and sold 15,000 copies in three days. This compilation of personal anecdotes and stories with Pujya Guruji, submitted by over 300 devotees worldwide, is filled with profound teachings and comical cartoons.

Though the book was to be a surprise gift for Pujya Guruji on his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday on June 30, due to his recent heart surgery, it was presented to him on May 30 to read and enjoy during his recuperation. He received ten copies as a sneak peak, not a release. The India release took place on June 30 and the book will be USA release will take place at the *Chinmaya Mahasamadhi* Camp.

Devotees gathered for the presentation to Guruji in his *kutir*. CCMT's CEO, Narain Bhatia, ceremoniously blew a conch and the wrapped ten copies were given to Guruji as a gift from all devotees of Chinmaya Mission worldwide. Guruji took some time to unwrap the gift as everyone sang the CM birthday song for him.

He was surprised and intrigued as he read the title aloud and the description of *Conversations with Swami Tejomayananda*. He read the preface, the first story, and a cartoon story, and heard various details about how the publication came to be. He was so appreciative, surprised, and touched that he choked up thrice, and in conclusion said that 15,000 copies seemed too few.



*The Ah! Wisdom Book* is a novel, fun, and practical presentation of 73 stories (19 illustrated). At the end of each story is a brief Vedantic explanation based on the works of various spiritual masters. The full-color book is palm-size with 196 pages. Here is an excerpt:

*People were eating heartily at a lunch bhiksha where Guruji was invited. When dessert was served, one person noticed a basket of ripe fruit on the side table and thought, Why are they not giving these ripe bananas to Guruji? He went to the basket and plucked a banana.*

*It broke.*

*Everybody laughed.*

*The whole basket of fruit was made of plastic!*

*"Guruji, did you know . . . ?" asked the unfortunate man.*

*"I was not tempted," chuckled Guruji, "because I knew it was not real."*

*When does attraction for the world come? When there is the false notion that the world is real. The person who thinks the mirage in the desert is water will run toward it. But a person who knows the truth, sees the mirage as an illusion, and will not be attracted to it.*

## Jivansutrani in CM Calgary

Report submitted by CM Calgary

CM Calgary hosted Acharya Vivek Gupta's (CM Niagara Falls) *jnana yajna*, May 3-7, 2010, on select *sutras* from *Jivansutrani: Tips For Happy Living* by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda. With contemporary examples and stories, Vivekji expounded on how many of us live life without questioning what true happiness is, and detailed ways to implement spiritual teachings and have peace of mind in the midst of the many trials and tribulations of daily life. He also spoke on taking charge of one's life, setting interim goals without losing sight of the ultimate Goal. He emphasized how it is important to work to one's highest potential, be alert to material temptations, and have harmonious relationships in all fields.



The one-hour morning meditation session was attended by 12-15 seekers and the evening talks by 50-60 devotees. The evening discourses commenced with *bhajans* and concluded with a brief Q&A session. Vivekji also had sessions on setting up CM Calgary's Bala Vihar classes, in which he spoke to the members on Chinmaya Bala Vihar and its mission in detail. With enriching experiences throughout the week, CM Calgary looks forward to welcoming Vivekji again.

## CM New York's May 8 Celebrations

Report submitted by CM New York



Chinmaya Mission New York (CM NY) observed *Shri Chinmaya Jayanti* and Mother's Day on May 8 in Manhattan, and on May 9 in

Long Island and Queens. The children of the Manhattan Chinmaya Bala Vihar made beautiful lotus flowers with paper and wire as special gifts for their mothers.

During the CM NY Manhattan celebrations, the sevaks organized a book fair that consisted of a variety of Chinmaya Publications, including children's books. The display was tasteful and befitting as an observance on *Shri Chinmaya Jayanti*.

The Bala Vihar children performed *Guru Paduka Puja* under the guidance of Acharya Krishnamoorthy, with the chanting of *Guru Stotram* and 108 names of Pujya Gurudev. The children also offered prostrations, flowers, and sweets to their mothers in their *Matr Puja*, which included Acharya Krishnamoorthy chanting *Matr Stavanam*.

## CM Los Angeles Celebrates Tamil New Year

by Nimmi Raghunathan

CM Los Angeles celebrated the festival of *Vishu*, the new year of Tamilians and Malayalis, with prayers and music at the *Chinmaya*

*Rameshwaram ashram* on April 15, 2010. In a traditional Kerala setting of *vishukanni*, the devotees dressed in *mundu* added to the lively and spiritual ambience.



Words of insight on the import of the occasion came from resident *acharya* Swami Ishwarananda, who pointed out that *vishu* means "to enter." He exhorted everyone to enter the New Year evoking God, explaining that it should not even be just that day, but each day. Each day's *puja* and conversation with God should not be one of beggary or a presentation of a list of desires; rather, it should be gratitude for everything received with a sense of contentment. Swamiji pointed out that the word *puja* conveys the same: *pu* from *purnatvam* (fullness) and *ja* from *jayate* (birth of). Feeling complete naturally means the strong tugs of desire have died down. Swamiji quoted the Gita in saying, "The one who is deserving, not desiring, is a *jnani*."



Swamiji explained the meaning of the "*purnamadab*" *shanti mantra*, pointing out that all prayers are directed to one supreme Lord. Swamiji urged everyone to resolve on the New Year to engage in prayer daily, in a spirit of surrender.



The evening began with the chanting of *Lakshmi Ashtottara* and featured the *vishukanni* set before a large mirror that reflected articles of prosperity, such as flowers and fruits, including a large and prominent jackfruit reminiscent of Kerala.



The day also marked the fourth anniversary of the *Devi puja* that has been conducted without a break each Sunday at CMLA. Swamiji thanked members of the *puja* committee with a token of appreciation for organizing the event.

In the evening, members enjoyed a Carnatic music recital by Bala Vihar student Swati Narayanan, accompanied by Anand Rajan on violin and Kaushik Vasan on *mrdangam*. At its conclusion, everyone received “*Vishu Kainectam*,” a tradition where a coin was given to each devotee by Swamiji and fruits were handed out by Acharya Mahadev. The event culminated in a Kerala feast that was prepared by Mission members and shared with all.

## CM Princeton’s Spring Festivities

Report submitted by CM Princeton



CM Princeton organized a classical music concert featuring Shri U. Srinivas, India’s Padma Shri mandolinist, on April 25, 2010. Divine music filled the concert hall and brought tears of joy in the audience. The event

also featured CM Princeton’s local *Chinmaya Swaranjali*, a musical group of youngsters.

Pujya Gurudev’s *jayanti* was celebrated on May 8 at the *Chinmaya Vrindavan ashram*, with *bhajan* performances by Swami Siddhananda (CM Philadelphia) and the *Chinmaya Swaranjali* group. The lively program was so enjoyed by all that it lasted over three hours and included devotees who could not keep themselves from dancing.



One of the year’s most anticipated programs is CM Princeton’s annual Chinmaya Family Camp, conducted in the Pocono Mountains over Memorial Day weekend. Each morning starts with yoga and breakfast, and is complete with spiritual classes, recreation, and evening festivities.

This year’s recreational activities included rock climbing, swimming, tennis, cricket, zip lining, volleyball, art, and everyone’s favorite antakshari. The evening fun activities, which always involve all the campers collectively, included a bonfire, *bhajans*, and *raas*.



CM Princeton’s annual Chinmaya Gita Chanting Competition was held in May, with participants of all ages and an audience of 500 persons. The kindergarteners worked as hard as the adults in preparing for a wonderful and successful program.

For children uncomfortable with chanting, an essay contest was organized. The topics given were challenging and the evaluation system was scientific, using a rubric to determine the winners.



## Second Purohit Course

Report submitted by Chinmaya Gardens

Chinmaya Vaidika Vidyapeetham commenced its second *Purohit* Course with an inauguration by Pujya Guruji on June 18, 2010. Conducted at the Chinmaya Gardens ashram in Coimbatore, India, the resident *acharya* of this Hindu priest-training course is *Brahmachari* Bhasa *Chaitanya*. The course aims to instill in the students that a *purohit* is one who leads others on the path of the good by keeping others' interests before his own. Students will be taught *puja vidhis*, *shodasha samskaras*, Vedic chanting, Sanskrit, and Hindu culture.

To support and sponsor this training program, mail your donation to Chinmaya Gardens, Nallur Vayal Post, Siruvani Main Road, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu 641 114 India. Questions: chinmayagarden@gmail.com, (91-422) 261-5637, (91) 936-046-1566.

## Tender Voices Chant the Gita

by Padmashree Rao



Catch them young and they can quote chapters and verses, that too in a language only a few in the world speak today! At CM Houston, a three- or four-year-old, sitting on the lap of an elder, can neatly recite *Bhagavad Gita* verses that most adults cannot—as easily as older children can clearly pronounce tongue twisters. The awe-inspiring enthusiasm and can-do attitude of children in different age groups was a befitting homage on May 8, Pujya Gurudev's *jayanti*. The tender voices sang the Lord's ageless song to celebrate the life of our beloved Pujya Gurudev, in the presence of resident Acharyas Gaurang and Darshana Nanavaty. The *Gita* Competition helps imbibe a spiritual outlook early in life

and helps shape the spirit of public speaking and leadership among participants. At CM Houston's *Gita* Chanting Competition, every year the singing voices get younger. Over 85 Chinmaya Bala Vihar students (grades KG-12) participated this year. It was team effort that made the day's events flawless, with organizers and parent volunteers working in rhythm to the Lord's Song, offering a beautiful gift to Pujya Gurudev.

In his opening address, Acharya Gaurangji told the children that everyone who learns the *Gita* is a winner and the true competition is in bettering oneself. He added that he and Darshanaji shared the dream of having Chinmaya Bala Vihar students learn all 18 chapters of the *Gita* before they graduate high school. This year, the Bala Vihar students put their hearts into learning the 28 verses of *Gita* Chapter 8. Judging divided the participants into four categories. The youngest group memorized ten verses and the meanings of select and assigned Sanskrit words. The intermediate groups learned the whole chapter and explained some verses, while the older group summarized the chapter. The audience watched spellbound with appreciation.

This year's winners are:

Group 1 (Grades KG-2): Yashwanth Arra, Mihir Krishna, Gundamaraju, Pranav Konduri

Group 2 (Grades 3-5): Avantika Joshi, Varun Nayak, Bhavya Kethireddipalli

Group 3 (Grades 6-8): Sumedha Rao, Harsha Kethireddipalli, Ragini Konde

Group 4 (Grades 9-12): Gaurav Nayak, Monica Sirigiri, Krishna Narra

## Chinmaya Jayanti at Chinmaya Ganapati

Report submitted by CM Minneapolis

Exciting Mission events were hosted at CM Minneapolis in May, beginning with *Shri Chinmaya Jayanti* celebrations on May 8, with a *Guru paduka puja*. Mission members then volunteered their time to weed and plant flowers in the center's beautiful gardens.





The annual CORD USA walkathon took place on May 15 at Lake Harriet in Minneapolis. The event had an outstanding turnout and was enjoyed by all.

Brahmachari Prabodh Chaitanya (CM San Jose) conducted a *jnana yajna* entitled, “The ABC-s of Vedanta,” May 24-28.



Enthusiasm filled the air on the Chinmaya Bala Vihar Annual Day, May 23. The event featured a play (“I’m So Stressed”) performed by more than 100 Bala Vihar students. The memorable performance was followed by the center’s first graduation ceremony. The three graduating high school students were blessed by their teachers, awarded plaques, and presented with a Chinmaya Mission shawl.

Per Vedic tradition, *Shikshavali* of *Taittiriya Upanishad* was chanted by the adult chanting group and the meaning of *diksha* was explained. The graduates then lit lamps from the *diya* in front of Pujya Gurudev’s picture at the altar. In turn, a student representative

from each grade lit a lamp from a graduating senior to symbolize Pujya Gurudev’s saying: “Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit.”

## CM Portland *Gita* Chanting Competition

Report submitted by CM Portland



CM Portland successfully conducted its Third Annual *Bhagavad Gita* Chanting Competition. Chinmaya Bala Vihar students, Grades KG-11, participated. The students memorized and recited verses from *Gita* Chapter 9, which they had been learning throughout the year in the weekly assembly. Of the 39 students in the Preliminary Round, 26 were chosen for the Final Round. In total, there were 14 winners, chosen from five grade groups.

Visiting *acharya* Swami Chidatmananda (CM Hyderabad) awarded the certificates and prizes and applauded everyone’s efforts in his address, complimenting the parents for their encouragement. Swamiji reminded all about the far-reaching benefits of memorizing and reciting the *Gita*—that it not only enhances memory skills, but also develops concentration, confidence, and diction. The Somayajulu Family graciously sponsored the prizes.

## CM Atlanta’s *Seva* Day: May 8

by Madhav Durbha

CM Atlanta (CMA) celebrated *Shri Chinmaya Jayanti* on May 8 at Stone Mountain Park, offering the day of *seva* as the picnic hosts of the Bhutanese community of Atlanta. The community service project helped network a platform for the local Bhutanese and Indian communities. A perfect blend of excellent



# 8<sup>Th</sup> Chinmaya Dharma Sevak Course

**Course Acharya**  
**Swamini Vimalananda**

Assisted by:  
Brni. Sandhya Chaitanya  
& Br. Gopal

Venue:  
**Chinmaya Gardens,**  
Coimbatore

Dates:  
**28<sup>th</sup> July**  
to  
**7<sup>th</sup> Sept**  
**2010**

Divine Days in the presence of  
**Pujya Guruji**  
**Swami Tejomayananda**  
(Head of Chinmaya Mission)



**Course donation:**

Rs. 7500 per person  
Rs. 6000 (below 40 years)  
Rs. 3000 (below 25 years)  
Rs. 12000 (ac room)

**Salient Features:**

• Experience the joy of Gurukula living • Learn the fundamentals of Vedanta • Learn Sanskrit • Learn to conduct and be firmly grounded in spiritual practices • Celebrate auspicious occasions like Ganesh Chaturthi & Janmashtami.

**CONTACT Sri Sureśan**

Chinmaya Gardens, Nallur Vayal Post, Coimbatore - 641114  
0422 - 2615637 (t) / 2613493 (f), 09360461566, chinmayagarden@gmail.com

# CIF'S CORRESPONDENCE VEDANTA COURSE

THE CHINMAYA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION (CIF) IS PLEASED TO INVITE ALL SPIRITUAL STUDENTS TO ENROLL IN ITS PROGRESSIVE HOME-STUDY PROGRAM FOR VEDANTIC STUDIES.

## OBJECTIVE

The primary aim of these courses is to provide clarity and depth in a seeker's Vedantic studies. Each course covers, in a series of 24 detailed lessons, various central Vedantic concepts as taught in introductory texts such as Vivekachudamani, Atma Bodha, Tattva Bodha, Vakya Vritti, and Panchadashi.

## LEVELS

CIF's one-year correspondence Vedanta Course is offered on two levels, Basic/Foundation and Advanced. While students must have general Vedantic knowledge before opting for the advanced course, CIF's specific basic course is not a pre-requisite to sign up for the advanced course, which provides an in-depth understanding of principal Vedantic concepts.

## ABOUT CIF

Established in 1989, CIF is a research center for Sanskrit and Indology, recognized by the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala, India. Swami Chinmayananda visualized CIF as a bridge between East and West, past and present, science and spirituality, pundit and public. CIF is located in Kerala, India, at the maternal ancestral home and birthplace of the Advaita Vedantin, Adi Shankara.

## REGISTRATION

Students may choose to enroll at any time during the year in either a postal correspondence course or an online correspondence course (lessons are sent via e-mail).

E-COURSE: US\$100; POSTAL COURSE: US\$175  
VISIT [WWW.CHINFO.ORG](http://WWW.CHINFO.ORG) TO REGISTER  
OR GET MORE DETAILS.



*O Noble Teacher,  
How can I be strong as a perseverant ant,  
And as patient and enduring as a rock?  
How can I have the everlasting beauty of nature,  
And a selfless soul that shows itself through action, not talk?*

*O Little Student,  
You can obtain all these qualities and more,  
If you seek diligently all that is Eternal and Unseen.  
Keep a pure mind, attentive senses, and a devoted heart,  
But, above all, listen to me!*

- Roshni Jhanjee (Age 13)



weather, beautiful venue, tasty food, live entertainment, and sports proved to be a great recipe for an outstanding event.

The program began with a prayer and a message about service, peace, and harmony that was sent by Pujya Guruji and delivered by resident *acharya* Geetha Raghu. On behalf of the Bhutanese community, Narad Nepal thanked CMA for hosting the event. Ralph Parker,

a renowned local community leader, spoke about the challenges facing the Bhutanese immigrant families and the help, resources, and opportunities available to them.

CMA volunteers served a delicious homemade lunch, after which the recreational activities began—volleyball, cricket, badminton, board games, hiking, and Nepali and Indian songs and dances by local artists. The event concluded with a prayer.

Resident *acharya* G.V. Raghu said, “We have a growing Bhutanese immigrant community in Atlanta. We organized this picnic as a way to extend our welcome to this community. We are very pleased with the level of response and commitment. The spirit of Chinmaya Mission was seen in everyone at the picnic. We look forward to more such community service projects in future, with the goal of making a positive difference in as many lives as possible.

## Chinmaya Mission Niagara welcomes you to *Shri Radha-Krishna Murti Sthapana*

Conducted by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda  
August 21-22, 2010  
*Chinmaya Dhara Ashram*

Sponsorships available:  
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