

Chinmaya Smrithi



A Bi-Monthly News Magazine of the Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC)

Volume 25, Number 2, March 30, 2015

Happy Ugadi, Gudi Padva and Tamil New Year

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Maha Shivaratri

The auspicious Maha Shivaratri was celebrated all day and into the night at Chinmayam and Chinmaya Somnath on February 17.

Calendar and Upcoming Events

Upcoming Events

- Silver Spring Chapter Spring Break – April 4/5 Weekend – No Bala Vihar Classes
- Jnana Yajna by Swamini Vimalananda – April 1-3
- Spiritual Camp by Swamini Vimalananda – April 4
- CHYK and Swamini Vimalananda – April 5
- Adi Sankara Jayanti – April 22
- Hanuman Jayanti – Friday April 10 at CHINMAYAM
- Launch of Global celebration of 100th Birthday of Swami Chinmayananda – May 8, 2015
- Bala Vihar Graduation Tilak Ceremony – May 16
- Geeta Chanting REGIONAL competition – May 16
- Memorial Day Weekend Spiritual Camp by Acharya Sadananda, May 23-24 at CHINMAYAM. Topic: Munikanda II from Brihadaranyaka Upanishad
- ‘Understanding Marriage – The Joy of Giving’ retreat conducted by Acharya Vilasiniji and Acharya Vivekji at Chinmaya Somnath, May 22-25, 2015

Study Groups

- Please contact Sri Vijay Kumarji by email at vijaykumar@rocketmail.com, if you are interested in forming or learning more about study groups.

Bookstore/Library

- Please contact Sri Vijay Singhji by email at publications@chinmayadc.org to order any books, CDs, DVDs, etc.. Browse online at www.chinmayapublications.com

Next Issue

- Articles for the next regular bi-monthly issue - May 2015, are due by May 1, 2015
- Email submissions to smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org. Submission instructions at www.chinmayadc.org,

Useful Links:

CMWRC – Washington Regional Center www.chinmayadc.org

Central Chinmaya Mission Trust www.chinmayamission.com

Chinmaya Mission West www.chinmayamission.org

Chinmaya International Foundation, E-Vedanta Courses www.chinfo.org

Washington DC – Chantilly VA Chapter website www.chinmayasomnath.org

Washington DC – Frederick MD Chapter website www.chinmayafrederick.org

Washington DC – Richmond VA Chapter website www.chinmayadc.org/ActivitiesRichmond.htm

Please Note

The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of Chinmaya Mission or CMWRC

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Please contact us if you are interested in joining the editorial staff!

News

Pujya Guruji meets Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi



Pujya Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda, met Honorable Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, on January 29th. Guruji invited the Prime Minister to the launch of centenary birth celebration of Sri Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda on May 8th 2015.

Brahmacharini Arpitaji is Swamini Radhikananda



From left to right - Swamini Radhikananda (Brni. Arpita Chaitanya), Swamini Ritajananda (Brni. Richa Chaitanya), Swami Shivatmananda (Br. Girish Chaitanya).

On Maha Shivaratri, February 17, 2015, Pujya Guruji entered Brni. Arpita Chaitanya into sanyasa deeksha. She cast off her yellow robes for orange, and now is Swami Radhikananda. Arpitaji served as an Acharya

at CMWRC before heading to Florida to start a center in St Augustine.

Two New Acharyas – Acharya Rahul and Acharya Priya

Acharya Vilasiniji and CMWRC Executive Committee extended a hearty welcome to the new Acharyas - Rahul ji and Priya ji. Both of them grew up in US (Rahul in Dallas and Priya in Houston) with exposure to Chinmaya Mission from early age. They recently completed the Acharya course and are now settled in Virginia. They have visited Chinmaya Somnath several times and met the sevaks. Acharya Anantji and Ramesh Golla are working with them to see how best they can be involved in the various activities at Chinmaya Somnath. They have also visited Chinmayam a couple of times and will be visiting Frederick chapter shortly.

CHYK News from University of Maryland, Baltimore Count (UMBC) Campus



CHYK UMBC (the new chapter in the University of Maryland Baltimore County campus) had a booth in the Involvement Fest on January 28, 2015. The event is a recruiting opportunity for all registered student organizations on campus. The CHYK UMBC booth was hosted by Sanchari Ghosh, Vani Ravichandran, Nina Beri, and Yuva Veers not pictured, Nirav Shah and Rahul Dharmavartha. With a score of interested UMBC students, the event was deemed successful. Visitors were treated to delicious samosas supplied by the faculty advisor Dr. Nagaraj Neerchal. CHYK UMBC will begin discussions in mid-late February, with the guidance of Gurudev's book, *Kindle Life*.

Obituary – Passing Away of Sri Lakshmana Rao Nimmagadda

Dr. Lakshmana Rao Nimmagadda, an long time member of CMWRC, passed on Dec 8th, 2014. He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Dr. Vijayalakshmi Nimmagadda, his two daughters, Raji and Roopa, son-in-law, Travis, and grandchildren, Pooja Sree and William Lakshmana.

Dr. Lakshmana Rao and Dr. Vijayalakshmi Nimmagadda have been involved with CMWRC since 1980 and were involved with projects in Kilas Niwas/Chinmayam and in India. Both of Dr. Nimmagadda's daughters attended Bala Vihar classes and he actively supported them at cultural events. The family has been donating flowers to the Mission for the last 25 years.

A memorial service was held at Chinmayam on Saturday March 7th.

Annapura Seva Resumes at Chinmayam on March 28th

Starting on Sri Rama Navami, March 28th weekend, Annapura Seva resumes at Chinmayam. Simple,

healthy lunch will be prepared and served from 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM on Saturdays and Sundays when Bala Vihar is in session. The lunches will be free of cost, and entirely supported by sponsorship and volunteer work.



Swamiji in Devi Niwas for resumption of Annapurna on March 28th

Maha Shivaratri Celebration at Chinmayam , Chinmaya Somnath and Frederick

On February, despite snow on the ground and on roofs, the devotees made their way to partake in Maha Shivaratri celebration at Chinmayam and Chinmaya Somnath. Maha Shivaratri was celebrated at Frederick chapter once the Bala Vihar sessions resumed after snow related cancellations.

2015 Geeta Chanting Chapter Competition

The 2015 Geeta Chanting Chapter Level competition was held locally at all three chapters during March 21/22 weekend. The verses from Purushottama Yoga (Chapter 15) resounded in the halls as members and non-members of all ages – small children to grandparents, participated in one of many participation categories – memory, memory & comprehension, reading and reading &

comprehension. The entries for the writing category have started rolling in. The level of participation crossed 400 for the first time!

Up next is the Regional competition on May 17 at Chinmaya Somnath, for children (ages 4-15) who did extremely well in memory category in Chapter competition to compete and earn a chance to represent CMWRC at the National competition in September at Chicago.

Announcements and Flyers

Announcements

- Visit by Swamini Vimalananda, Acharya CM Coimbatore and Director, Chinmaya International Residential Schools: April 1-5
 - Swamini Vimalananda Jnana Yajna at Chinmayam April 1-3 (see flyer)
 - Swamini Vimalananda Spiritual Camp at Chinmaya Somnath, April 4 (see flyer)
 - Swamini Vimalananda and CHYKs at Chinmaya Somnath, April 5 at 4:15 PM
- Hanuman Jayanti at Chinmayam – April (day and time will be announced soon)
- Bala Vihar Graduation Tilak Ceremony at Chinmayam, May 16 at 3 PM
- 2015 Geeta Chanting REGIONAL Competition, May 16 at Chinmaya Somnath, Timings to be announced
 - Children ages 4-15 as of January 1, 2015, who participated in 'Memory' category and scored Diamond Plus or Diamond Star in Chapter competition held March 21/22, are eligible.
 - 2 Winners selected from each of 4 age groups to participate in national competition in September at Chinmaya Badri (Chicago).
- SRI GURUDEV Birth Centenary Celebrations begin May 8th 2015
- Acharya Sadananda Spiritual Camp, Memorial Day Weekend, May 23-24 at CHINMAYAM
- 'Understanding Marriage – The Joy of Giving', Retreat conducted by Acharya Vilasiniji and Acharya Vivekji, May 22-25, at Chinmaya Somnath. See Flyer. Register early.



Chinmaya Mission®
Washington Regional Center



Jnana Yajna

By Swamini Vimalananda

April 1st – 3rd, 7:30 PM – 8:45 PM

Location: CHINMAYAM - 46 Norwood Road, Silver Spring MD

Swamini Vimalananda is a senior Acharya of Chinmaya Mission, a best-selling author and one of the directors of Chinmaya International Residential Schools (CIRS). She travels extensively giving animated discourses in English, Gujarati and Hindi. Her talks are clear, full of wit, making the most profound topic easy to follow and apply in life. She directs the Chinmaya Vision Program (CVP) which is a holistic value based education program for all schools. She has travelled very widely in India and has toured Africa also spreading the message of Vedanta. She is a dynamic speaker and writer. She has authored many books including the very popular book 'In Indian Culture – Why Do We?' and 'Conflicts & Confusions in Indian Culture'.



Sure Mantras for Success

Mantras are not just for chanting, but are also inspirational words which can motivate us to reach the heights of success in our daily lives. This series of talks covers a few such mantras selected from the Bhagvad Gita. Swaminiji will explain to us in her inimitable style how to apply these formulae for success every day.

The Jnana Yajna is free and open to all including children 10 and above, accompanied by their parents

Complimentary Light Dinner will be served 6:45 PM – 7:15 PM in Kailas Niwas

Signup for Bhiksha and Satsang opportunity: swaminivisit2015bhiksha@chinmayadc.org

(Breakfast, Lunch, Afternoon Snacks, Dinner slots available)

For information and Volunteer Signup: swaminivisit2015volunteers@chinmayadc.org



**CHINMAYA MISSION WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER
CHINMAYA SOMNATH**

4350 Blue Spring Dr, Chantilly, VA 20151

(A nonprofit religious organization registered in Maryland)



‘TUNE THE MIND’

An Evening Spiritual Camp, Saturday, April 4th

Swamini Vimalananda

(Acharya, Chinmaya Mission, Coimbatore & Director, Chinmaya Vision Program)

@

Chinmaya Somnath, Chantilly, VA



Swamini Vimalananda is the current Acharya of Chinmaya Mission, Coimbatore and a member of the Educational Cell of the Central Chinmaya Mission Trust (CCMT), with 80 Chinmaya Vidyalayas and Colleges. She also serves as one of the Directors for the Chinmaya International Residential School (CIRS). She has authored many books that include ‘*In Indian Culture – Why do We?*’ & ‘*Conflicts & Confusions in Indian Culture*’. Her discourses in English, Hindi and Gujarathi have captivated the intellectual and faithful alike.

“Tune the Mind - Not Too Loose Not Too Tight, But Just Right” – In this set of discourses by Swamini, come see the secrets revealed on how to strike the right balance in life. This often makes all the difference between a life of mediocrity and one of success. You will have an opportunity to participate in a Question-Answer session after the discourse.

TUNE THE MIND - SESSION 1	4.00 – 5.15 PM
TEA-BREAK**	5.15 – 5.45 PM
TUNE THE MIND - SESSION 2	5.45 – 6.45 PM
Q & A, ARATI	6.45 – 7.30 PM
DINNER	7.30 – 8.30 PM

****Tea, coffee and snacks & dinner will be provided.**

Registration is required. Please register before March 27; instructions are provided in the form below. For more information, please contact camp@chinmayasomnath.org.

Registration: \$10.00 per person (Adult & child above 5 yrs). Note: Childcare subject to volunteer availability.

Name(s): _____

Name(s) & age of Children _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Please submit completed registration form with check in favor of ‘CMWRC’ by Mar 27 to Chapter Coordinator or mail to 4350 Blue Spring Dr, Chantilly, VA 20151. Pre-register by email to camp@chinmayasomnath.org

**CHINMAYA MISSION® WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER
PRESENTS...**

Understanding Marriage: The Joy of Giving

**RESIDENTIAL
RETREAT**

CHANTILLY, VA

**FOR ADULTS AGES
25-55**

**\$151.00 PER ADULT
TILL MAY 1**

**\$201.00 PER ADULT
MAY 2 - MAY 15**

CHILDCARE AVAILABLE*

\$108.00 PER CHILD*



Swami
Dheeranandaji



Acharya
Vilasiniji



Acharya
Vivekji

Chinmaya Somnath May 22 - May 25



Understanding Marriage: The Joy of Giving is a unique weekend retreat offered to singles and couples by Chinmaya Mission in Chantilly, VA. Swamiji, Vilasiniji and Vivekji will present Vedanta's wisdom as a guide to enhance harmony and happiness in a marriage. Discourses, Discussions and Activities will fill the weekend.

Participants should be between the **ages of 25-55**, or one partner should be within the age limit. Participants can also stay for a discounted rate at a nearby hotel and all meals will be provided.

Registration closes on May 15, 2015.

**Childcare will be provided for children ages 5-13 for the duration of the retreat each day.*

For more details and to register please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/understandingmarriage>
Contact understandingmarriage@chinmayadc.org with any questions.



Chinmaya Mission West
welcomes you to

VEDANTA CAMP 2015

Conducted by



His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda

Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide



June 15-21, 2015

'Sāndeepany Krishnālaya' Ashram, Piercy, Northern California

Study Text: *Shrī Rāma Gītā*

Arrive: Monday, June 15

Depart: Monday, June 22

The ashram, CMW's headquarters and retreat center, is situated in the serene Redwoods and is a four-hour drive north of San Francisco. This camp is for adults only, and is not a family camp. Seats are limited and get filled quickly, so early registration is recommended.

Registration includes lodging and boarding, and excludes transportation: \$900 per person.

Visit krishnalaya.org/index.php/vedanta-camp-2015 to view details and register.



krishnalaya.org

krishnalaya@chinmayamission.org, (707) 207-5011

Chinmaya Mission West, P.O. Box 129, Piercy, CA 95587



22nd Mahasamadhi Family Camp New Jersey 2015



July 29th to August 3rd 2015



Upanishad Ganga

Ancient wisdom, limitless strength

With

H.H. Swami Tejomayananda

H.H. Swami Swaroopananda

and Acharyas from North America

Camp Highlights:

- Chinmaya Vishwa, bird's eye view of Chinmaya Movement
- Chinmaya Jeevan Darshan
- Meditation / Yoga
- Special Balavihar / Chyk / Sethukari program
- Sumptuous vegetarian food

Location:

DoubleTree by Hilton
Somerset, NJ 08873



Chinmaya Mission Tri-State Center

Our Acharyas: H.H. Swami Shantananda
H.H. Swami Siddhananda

For further information

Write to: msc2015@chinmayavrindavan.org
Website: www.chinmayavrindavan.org
Ph: 609-655-0404

Come discover yourSelf...!!



Submitted by Sirisha Golla

Hari OM!

Jai Gurudev!

Om Sri Ganeshaya Namah!

This is the story of the 'Storytelling Event' that was conducted successfully to the satisfaction of everyone that participated in some capacity. Here is how the Event came to be...

The first contest at Chinmaya Somnath - 4350 Blue Spring Drive, Chantilly 20151 – on 31 January 2015 began with a Prayer to Lord for the smooth conduct of the Event. Organizers set up a simple altar with a picture of Sri Gurudev donated by Acharya Vilasini ji, just the Sunday before the Event. Gurudev now resides in Chinmaya Somnath! It is a very timely blessing for the Success of the very First competition Event for BV families. A colorful 'Storytelling Event banner' that was created the night before the Event incorporated the theme very artistically. It was put up on the wall right next to the picture frame of Sri Gurudev. The setup was now complete. A small

group of organizers, volunteers and judges chanted Opening Prayers in unison.

The idea of this Event sparked in the summer months of 2014. Occasional discussions among the coordinators firmed up the idea into a confirmed date for the Event. The first announcement was made in the first week of December. Since then a team of five, including a High School child, brainstormed and molded the concept into an executable program. Detailed plan was documented with help from online research and resources, taking practical and sound suggestions from all team members - especially from the point of view of the High School Debate Championship competitor, as it applied to the children pre-K through Grade 12, and the Adults. As the Event date came closer, the Event organizers team added another veteran organizer with expertise on volunteer coordination on the execution day, to their team. The team was well equipped to plan and execute all facets of the Event. The team discussed at length and was ready, as ready as they could be, for the big day! A conference call meeting was arranged with all Judges and other

Volunteers to go over the details and answer all questions. The extended team of sevaks was prepped as best as possible. Then it was time to face the day and be in the moment.

The participants and their families started arriving, just about the time they were instructed to come. It was great to see the little ones, all dressed up and ready to share their story. There was so much enthusiasm in the air. Children were fascinated with microphone and wanted to share their story into the mike! Participants were checked-in and directed to the appropriate rooms by runner-volunteers. The resident-volunteers did an awesome job by holding-off in-coming and out-going traffic during the story renditions. Judges did their part by making the participants feel at ease and letting them fly with their presentation. Constructive feedback was provided to each participant as their presentation ended. The audience appreciated storytellers with applause at the end of each rendition. The classroom decorum was just perfect.

Hour by hour, the participants kept coming in and taking their turns and leaving in a timely manner. Judging for the first set of five groups was completed timely. The second set of five groups took their places at expected time and the participant flow was smooth. The Event ended well within the time allotted, four hours! A total of 98 Children and Adults got their evaluations on this day! All volunteers, judges included, were treated to Hot Tea, Upma, Hot Chocolate, Crackers and Saltines. There was a lot of excitement among all volunteers.

Organizers decided prizes for the First, Second, and Third place winners to be \$25, \$15, and \$10 respectively. An announcement for sponsorships fetched \$450+. All awards are covered by the funds raised.

All participants, judges and volunteers will be recognized on February 8th, during morning and

afternoon assembly. Awards will be distributed to prize winners in the presence of BV Session membership families.

The story of Storytelling Event had a good beginning and a sweet ending, with everyone pitching in to help where it was needed. The Event organizers are very thankful for the support received from Acharya Anant Sarma, Ramesh Golla, Director of Chinmaya Somnath, Srinidhi Narayanan and Mani Jagadeesan from Audio team, Raj Pajjur from facilities, Neil mahimtura for the sketch on Certificate of Participation, Mahima Atmavilas and Sudarshan Atmavilas for the Storytelling Event banner, and all the judges and volunteers of the Event. With Sri Gurudev's blessings in the form of Acharya Vilasini ji's gift, we have concluded our first contest at Chinmaya Somnath in the most beautiful way we could imagine. The moral of this story is that Gurudev vitalizes the atmosphere where value-laden stories are in the air.

Hari OM!

Storytelling Event Organizers

Tarun Vippa, Sudha Bhat, Vibha Kulkarni, Saraswati Ramasamy, Muktha Thyagarajan, Sirisha Golla.

Event Summary – Maha Shivaratri at Chinmayam

Ananya Krishnan and Andrea Beri

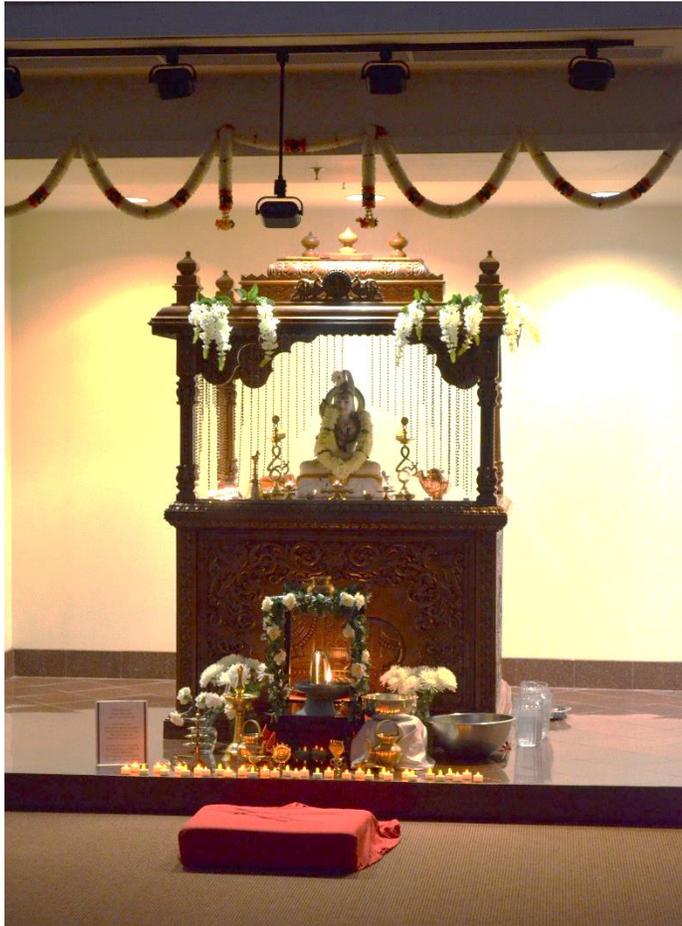
Maha Shivaratri is an occasion of prayers and celebrations for Hindus. The festival of Shivaratri takes place on the 13th night/14th day of the Magha (February/March) month of the Hindu calendar. There are different legends that explain the significance of Shivaratri and why people pray to Lord Shiva on Shivaratri, the most well-known being the story of Shiva becoming Neelakantha (the blue throated one). In this story, the Devas and Asuras churn the Kshira Sagara Ocean in their quest for amritam, or the nectar of immortality. As they churn, various objects emerge from the ocean. First, Goddess Lakshmi emerges and Lord Vishnu takes her as his consort. Next, Kamadhenu, the divine cow emerges and is also taken by Lord Vishnu and given to holy sages. At this point, the devas and asuras are horrified as the next item to come out of the ocean is some deadly poison known as halahal. In great fear that the halahal will destroy all creation, the devas and asuras prayed to Lord Shiva to save the three worlds from destruction. Lord Shiva decided to swallow the poison to prevent it from spreading and destroying all of creation. As he swallowed the poison, Lord Shiva held it in his throat and it turned blue. So every year on Shivaratri, devotees recall Lord Shiva's selfless act of saving the world and pray to Lord Shiva with devotion and gratitude. Other stories include Shivaratri being the day Parvati and Shiva got married and at midnight, Sadashiva, the formless God took the form of a Shivalinga so we stay up the whole night and do Shivalinga Abhishekam to pray to Lord Sadashiv. So it is considered an auspicious day for women because they pray for their husbands and sons, and unmarried women pray to have an ideal husband with the qualities of Shiva. Another story describes how a hunter unknowingly showers a Shivalinga with bilwa leaves all through the night and Lord Shiva appears and absolves him of all sins. Similarly every Shivaratri, devotees pray to Lord Shiva through the night to erase all their sins.

As always, Chinmaya Mission planned a grand celebration on this auspicious event. On February 14th and 15th, during

common-time, Bala Vihar students kicked off the celebrations by speaking about Lord Shiva and the significance of Shivaratri. All members also wrote kind and thoughtful sentiments inspired by Lord Shiva on paper bilwa leaves.

On Tuesday, the actual date of Maha Shivaratri, the festivities got even better, with the Chinmaya building surrounded by snow. This was such a peaceful setting that made it seem like the prayers took place in the Himalayas, or Mount Kailash itself. The puja started in the early hours of the day, and devotees traveled in the snow to the Mission to participate in a quiet morning Manasa Puja. Snowy roads were cleared quickly, so many more devotees appeared at the evening Manasa Puja, which celebrated Lord Shiva and all his glories. The pujas were followed by a beautiful program by the Bala Vihar kids. The Chinmayam Shloka Class chanted the Stotra Parayanam, and other Bala Vihar students offered dances, stotrams, and bhajans, offering their praises and thanks to Lord Shiva. Then the evening proceeded with the Lord Jagadeeshwara Puja, and devotional chanting of the Nirvana Shatkam. Throughout the night, the Chinmayam building had a very spiritual and peaceful mood. The celebration concluded with Maha Prasad and the tradition of the conch-blowing by Swamiji at midnight. Finally the night came to a beautiful end as Hema Bhatt's singing group performed peaceful bhajans as the devotees trailed out. Over the course of the day, over 100 members attended the Maha Shivaratri celebrations, making it a successful and jubilant Shivaratri celebration.









Spotlight on Acharya Pramilaji

Interview by Megha Karthikeyan

This past month, I had the privilege of interviewing Acharya Pramilaji for our Spotlight interview. She spoke to me about the process of becoming an Acharya as well as other components in Chinmaya Mission. I am very grateful for her taking the time to answer my questions.



1. What encouraged you to become an Acharya?

Acharya Pramilaji was influenced by Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda, who asked her “to go to Chinmaya Mission and do [the] Dharma Seva course, [which is] a 4 ½ month course.” He told her that after the Dharma Seva course, she was to move on to the Bhramachari course. She says, “I asked him first that I want to study the scriptures. I asked him what I should do. He didn’t believe [it] at first. He said after Dharma Seva class I should teach a study group, which I did, and then when you are ready, go to

Brahmachari course. I was very passionate and since the first day I met Gurudev, I knew I had to do it. Guruji taught me what else I wanted.” Pramilaji follows the Guru Shishya Parmapara and says “I have to be an expert in all scriptures like Vedas, Bhagavad Gita, and other texts. It was almost like a post grad class. Before I came here, I was interviewed three times by him before I became an Acharya.” To be an Acharya, one has to have a commitment, and has to be qualified. After all the courses, study groups, and interviews, Pramilaji became an Acharya in the Springfield Center.

2. What do you think is the hardest part of being an Acharya?

Pramilaji says, “It is not hard, it is Gurudev’s grace; I love it. My nature is only one; I am not a quality seeker. I am a real spiritual seeker. So, I don’t get too much involved in politics.” She knows why she went to become an Acharya, and knows what spirituality is. Pramilaji says, “I am a simple person. From the heart I teach. There is only plus-plus, no minus. What I wanted I did. In three days coming from Nepal, I started going to school. I wanted to have a higher education in this country. Whatever I did, I am very happy in my life. Especially Gurudev’s Grace.”

3. What is your favorite scriptural text?

Pramilaji doesn’t have a favorite scriptural text because she enjoys everything such as Prakarna Grantha, which is Tatva Bodha, the first course to study Vedanta. She has taught Bhagavad Gita and says “right now I teach Upanishad at my home [on]

Saturday mornings. I teach Bhagavad Gita in [the] center. I teach the Bakthi Vedanta in the Devi Group. I love everything. It depends on what people want to learn from me.”

4. Why do you think Chinmaya Mission is important for Indian American youth?

Pramilaji believes that Chinmaya Mission greatly benefits Indian-American youth “because, as our Gurudev said, we have to make the art of living. There is so much confusion, loss, pain. Young people don’t have direction after coming to America. [Children in] India [also don’t have direction], but at least they have family learning and the culture is like that.” She believes that children should also be disciplined; they should know what to do and what not to do. Pramilaji does not want children to get lost in this American culture. She believes that “in the beginning, it is very important to have Balavihar. They learn so much [like] Gita chanting. They have less time to goof around in the world and they [grow]”. She believes that the knowledge that kids receive from Chinmaya Mission will forever be with them. “I love Chinmaya mission because of the Balavihar class! Other teaching is fine, but when I see children...there is less chance that they will go astray and get lost in this country. Our Samskara is so strong that the children will be universal citizens.” Pramilaji believes that if you are a good person, no matter where you go, people will love you. She tells me, “When you are passionate nothing stops you.”

Spotlight: Anil Kishore

Interview by Thara Konduri



Anil Kishore and Family

The “Spotlight” series will provide us an opportunity to learn about the Acharyas and many Sevaks of Chinmaya Mission. Sitaram uncle approached me with the idea the doing the “Spotlight” series, I was very excited as this provides me an opportunity learn more about the people I have seen and come to respect over the many years I have come to the mission. It is a great pleasure indeed to start this series with Anil Kishoreji!

Anil uncle was the Director of Bala Vihar, back when I started in Chinmaya Mission as a Madhuram student, when I was 3 or 4 years old. I would see him make speeches on the stage about Bala Vihar. Then when I was 6 years old, I became a student of Hindi Paathashaala and saw Anilji manage everything there as well! Anilji, in my mind, is a jack-of-all-trades at the mission – he simply does what needs to be done when it needs to be done, and does it all beautifully and quietly –getting kids to line-up well for common-time away from the fire-lane; stepping in to make announcements when needed; making youngsters feel comfortable to open up to him; opening up mission every Sunday morning so

language classes can start – we have yet beat him once to the door in all these years! As I sit down to write this, I realize it is the seva of such volunteers that keeps our beloved Chinmaya Mission humming.

Below are the questions I posed Anilji and his responses. My sincere thanks to Anilji for agreeing to be the first sevak to be highlighted in the “Spotlight” series and for making the Q&A effort so effortless! Dhanyavaad Anilji, Hari Om!

1. What inspired you to become a teacher?

[Anilji] -- How can you not teach children who want to come and learn about our cultural and religious heritage? I did not know I could teach. Swamiji asked me to teach Hindi as a substitute in 1998 when our Hindi teacher had to go to India for a long time. I was to substitute in her absence, and I never left. It was fun, I found the children to be loving, caring and at the same time very willing to learn, we just to make it fun to keep them engaged!! As I started teaching Hindi, I quickly learnt the beauty of this seva, especially when you see them learn and grow from what you have taught them. I also started to teach Bala Vihar and it became a time to look forward to the fun activities with the Chinmaya family every weekend.

I have the blessing to have Anilj Uncle(and Aniket Uncle and Amol) as my Chinmayam teacher. He is amazing because he understands the pressures and stress our age group has and knows exactly how to get us to focus and complete our work, without it feeling like a chore. We do the class summaries because we want to do it for our amazing teachers and we participate in class, because they make it so much fun!

2. What are some responsibilities you have that many people may not know or aware of?

[Anilji] -- No responsibilities, just seva for Chinmaya Mission at my Guru's feet. Now I mostly teach, the main purpose of Bala Vihar. I also serve as a mentor for our youth wing CHYK. They bring change, new ideas, new roles to Bala Vihar.

Anilji "practices what he preaches" and is an amazing role model to all of us on 'selfless dedicated service' by doing what is needed quietly and simply.

3. Who was your first guru and what did he teach you the most?

[Anilji] -- I never met Gurudev, so my first guru is our own Swami Dheeranandaji. He has been the guiding light, the inspiration and the one who motivated me to be a teacher at Chinmaya Mission. He has his special way to make people feel their best and therefore produce their best. Swamiji blessings take us all a long way, he makes everyone feel special. Swamiji never ceases to bring up good ideas knowing that you can make them work. He is very open to suggestions and discusses everything practically. In his blessings, everything else becomes automatic. As Bala Vihar director, Vilasiniji was and continues to be my mentor and Swamiji the guide who steered me to do my best. When I think globally, I became better in many things I do not just Chinmaya seva because of their trust and confidence in me.

Anilji's last statement is so true! I too find myself becoming a better person for coming to the mission routinely and I know I am improving in everything I do because of what I learn at Chinmaya Mission.

4. What has Swami Chinmayananda taught you the most?

[Anilji]-- I never met Gurudev. Unfortunately when we started coming to the mission initially, we were "reluctant" members and not too involved. As we

became regular members and Mission became a part of us, Gurudev had left us. Over the years afterwards, his teachings flowed to me as I started to attend Geeta classes and read for my teaching assignments. I saw the most effective representation of Vedantic teachings in Gurudev's work. In so many books that I had the blessing to read, I realized it is really Gurudev who influences each one of us do our duties for our common goal through his commentaries, examples and witty delivery of lectures.

Even though Anilji never met Gurudev, everything Chinmaya Mission is today is because of Him. All the Vedantic teachings and books that we discuss and learn from to this day, is from Gurudev. Gurudev will always have a direct influence on all of us. Anilji is the amazing teacher and sevak he is today because of the devotion and teachings of Gurudev.

5. What do you enjoy the most out of being our teacher?

[Anilji] -- Looking and experiencing His glories through inquisitive minds, open minds and minds that want to learn. Enjoying the sense of accomplishment in seeing the youth flourish in Vedantic knowledge they get from the Mission and be our competent leaders of tomorrow. For they too will spread the seed of Vedantic knowledge for future generations.

Anilji feels immense satisfaction being a teacher because he is able to pass on Vedantic knowledge to the next generation, who may also eventually pass on the same knowledge to others. He is introducing the youth to the beautiful Vedantic knowledge that his life has changed and flourished so much with.

6. What is the most inspirational piece of advice you have ever heard? From whom?

Anilji says that "All the work you do is for Him." There are no rewards, as none should be expected when one does seva. "The seva that you do is for him and

for him alone.” The Holy Bhagavad Gita repeats this idea many times and has moved Anilji.

7. Why do you particularly like teaching the Chinmayam Class?

Anilji particularly likes teaching the Chinmayam class because the kids are older and have started to develop their own thoughts and opinions. There is two way communication in the class and Anilji has the chance to be a mentor to students who hold much potential.

8. What is your biggest piece of advice to kids around my age (13-17)?

[Anilji]—Never underestimate your own capabilities. You are Gurudev’s children, he has bestowed upon you the best knowledge of knowing yourself. He has given you the art of living through Vedantic scriptures. Always do the right thing and face the problems with the teachings of our scriptures. You can only shine!! Stay focused and keep on taking strides in all your accomplishments. Never forget that it is HE who would guide you as long as you have taken refuge in Him. Do not wander away from the spiritual home at CM as you seek new endeavors, know that you have a congregation that supports you in every way. As you grow older, join CM activities to bring back the wonderful things you have learnt to the youngsters who can learn from you and move on.

I am fortunate to have Anilji as my Chinmayam teacher and each and every week he imparts to us that we are capable of doing everything we set our minds to. He draws important concepts that are relevant to our daily lives when we study the Geeta – along with Aniket Uncle and Amol, they make it all come together and make sense to us, the teenagers. I sincerely appreciate that.

9. How has the Chinmaya family changed over the years, from when you started to now?

[Anilji] -- It has been a fortune!! I did not know I would be so close to the Chinmaya family. After raising two children who went through the Bala Vihar program, teaching and directing Bala Vihar, mentoring youth, and most of all making some of my best friends at the mission I couldn't ask or expect more. Having a wonderful guru, teachers and a holy place that I can call my second home is certainly a blessing. How much more you can ask ? No one can get all this in ONE place and Chinmaya family brought the best through these years. I feel blessed, Hari OM, Hari OM.

I sincerely agree with Anilji! Being part of the Chinmayam family is a true fortune, and sevaks like Anilji make it the blessed place that it is! Hari Om!

Swamiji's BalaVihar Common Time Messages

January – February 2015

Usha Konduri

Swamiji continues to bring us more valuable lessons to contemplate in the past few months. It is important to ponder the messages behind Swamiji's stories because they can unconsciously or consciously help with daily life. I enjoy the way Swamiji delivers his messages because they are in the form of stories that not only engage you, but also stimulate your mind to ponder the meaning and significance.

In January, Swamiji told us about a skillful doll maker (gudiya-waala) who made three dolls that looked identical, but in fact were totally different. He took them to the king and asked if anyone in his kingdom could identify how the dolls are different. He stays as a royal guest in the palace while the king engages his ministers to identify the differences between the three dolls. The ministers took the doll home one by one each day, to observe and find the differences. They came up empty until the seventh day, when an old minister takes it home. At home, his granddaughter was thrilled to see the three dolls, took two of them and placed them on one lap each and started playing. His grandson, who was playing with marbles, takes the last doll and put a marble in the doll's ear – to his surprise, the marble came out of the other ear! The minister was very surprised and put a marble in another doll's ear – this time, the marble came out of the doll's mouth; in the third doll, however, the marble never came out. What does this mean?

The story of these three dolls can represent various things. Swamiji explained (after giving us a week to consider) that we all listen, but how we use and absorb what we hear is important. In a classroom, a teacher will teach the 'marble' which the student 'doll' will get inserted into their ear. One student will clear the information from their head—as soon as it gets into the ear, it will go out, consequently not learning anything. Another student will share what they hear with everyone. He/she is spreading knowledge to other people and

therefore reflecting on what he/she shares. The last student will listen and when the teacher tells the absolute truth to something, wisdom dawns on them and it will stay with them forever. The three dolls not only represent the types of students but also different phases of learning. During our life, sometimes we gather a lot from what we hear, and at other times maybe not so much; and then there are times when we hear things that change us and make us better people as a whole. It is important to always be alert and vigilant, so we can increase the percentage of time we are ready to absorb and internalize what we are hearing/learning.

In February, Swamiji shared a personal experience he had in 1993. He was visiting an old friend when all of a sudden his friend started intensely observing a stone nearby. He then wanted to lift the stone to put it on a table. As he struggled to move this large stone, Swamiji and some others helped him carry it to a table where his friend was particular in its placement and said in a picky manner, "Not upside down." They were all confused because they couldn't seem to figure out how there was a top or bottom to this stone. His friend began smiling at the stone once it was set down, ignoring everyone around him. Three days later, when Swamiji returned to the same spot, he saw his friend working on the exact same stone, eyes bloodshot, drinking tea, and eating samosas. The stone had been transformed to a beautiful Krishna! Swamiji complimented his friend for his beautiful creation, but his friend replied, "the Lord was already there, all I did was remove what was covering the beautiful Krishna."

Swamiji gave us a perfect example of how we must chisel, hammer, and remove the selfishness, ego, and ignorance, which cover the divine light that is within each of us!

Sundaram Times – News from Chinmaya Somnath

Submitted by Vibha Kulkarni

THE Sundaram Times

Sundaram A2, Jan 2015

Chinmaya Somnath

SAINTS OF INDIA

In This Edition-Pavan

In Sundaram A2 we learned about Swami Chinmayananda, Andal, and Mirabai. They were all saints. Swami Chinmayananda established the Chinmaya Mission. Andal was devoted to Vishnu. Mirabai thought Lord Krishna was her husband. That is what we learned in Sundaram A2. We enjoyed learning about the saints.

Swami Chinmayananda

-Anshul, Arjun, Arnav, Ishaan and Aditya* (*editor)

Swami Chinmayananda was born on May 8th 1916 in Ernamkulam, Kerala. His mother, Smt. Poothampali Mankre Amma was an orthodox and spiritual lady who spent a lot of time deep in prayer. In his childhood, Balan (the birth name of Swamiji) was blessed by Swami Chattambi Swamigal who was visiting his house. Young Balan did very well in school and graduated from Maharaja's College. After college, he began a career in Journalism and worked for Nehru's paper. He visited the Swamis who lived in Himalayas when he was working on an article for the newspaper. The young Journalist thought the Swami's were fraud and amounted to nothing good. He quickly changed his mind when he saw their service to the people. Swamiji decided to turn to religion and founded the Chinmaya Mission. He wrote several books – commentaries on Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads and other sacred texts.

THE Sundaram Times

Sundaram A2, Jan 2015

Chinmaya Somnath

Andal

- Aaron, Apurva, Asrith, Viswajit, Yashvi and Nikhil V* (*editor)



Andal by Apurva

Andal was born in Srivalliputtur. She was found in under a Tulasi plant in the garden of a big Vishnu devotee, Visnuchitta. Visnuchitta took care of Andal with great love. Andal was believed to be an incarnation of Goddess Lakshmi. Andal used to make fresh flower garlands everyday – her father took these garlands to the temple to adorn Vishnu. Andal used to wear these garlands before her father took them to the temple with the hope of marrying Lord Vishnu. Andal was the only woman among the twelve Alwar saints of South India. She is often compared to Mirabhai for her love and devotion to her Lord and also because of her songs and poetry.

THE Sundaram Times

Sundaram A2, Jan 2015

Chinmaya Somnath

Mirabai

-Aneesh, Navya, Varun, Gouri and Kapil* (*editors)*

Mirabai was born in 1504 AD in the village Kurkhi, in the Merta district of Rajasthan. Her father's name was Ratan Singh. Her mother died when she was ten. One year later her grandfather died. As a child she was a very quiet girl. One day a saint came from Vrindavan. Her mother took very good care of the Swamiji. Mira always paid attention to what the Swamiji was saying to her mother. She was only five when the Swamiji said Mira had some super natural powers. When the Swamiji was leaving he gave Mira a small idol of Krishna. Then Mira asked her mother "who is my bridegroom?" Mira's mom said it was lord Krishna. Later her uncle planned a wedding with prince Bhojraj, the eldest son of Rana Sanga. Mira felt that she was leaving the bridegroom her mother had shown her. Mirabai did not do any chores in her husband's house, she used to spend her time singing songs about Krishna. One day, Emperor Akbar came to listen to her. He admired Mirabai's songs and left her his necklace. Rana was very upset about this, and asked Mira to drown herself in the river. When Mira got to the river, she heard Lord Krishna's voice asking her to go to Vrindavan. In Vrindavan, she meets Swami Jiva Goswami and spends her time singing songs about Krishna. Many people flock to Vrindavan to hear Mirabai. In the end, the Rana comes to Vrindavan and asks Mirabai to forgive him.



Mirabai by Navya

Silver Spring Chapter, Sunday AM: Chinamyam Class Summaries

Submitted by Anil Kishore

October 26, 2014

Abir Muhuri

As a continuation of Chapter 11 (29-38), we discussed the lessons of a new Lord Sri Krishna. In these verses, he is no longer benevolent and reassuring of doubts. Krishna introduces us to the concept of his vision, which is that the destruction of the worlds is inevitable, catalyzed by the opposing armies. A great metaphor for this is, "We are hurdling towards the flame." To summarize this idea of a chaos, Manogna excellently compares this to the idea of entropy in thermodynamics (all objects tend to favor toward disorder).

After introducing Krishna's main theme, our class discussed the reasons behind the chaos and how Arjuna (or we) can take advantage of it. One of the reasons that chaos perturbs is that it is unexpected. Aniket compares this to a branch falling in his new yard. We tend to favor what is expected and normal. Nevertheless, Krishna also highlights that chaos can at times be expected, and as such, we should take advantage of it. The Lord explains his status as the "mighty world-destroying time" who determines that warriors are bound to die in the end (the future is set in stone). Arjuna is merely an instrument for killing the warriors. However, this instrument can either help or hinder.

Arjuna's action as an instrument to achieve a "pre-determined fate" can be both positive and negative. The positivity is in that there is no pressure since the outcome is known and uncertainty will not cause anxiety. However in the same vein, there is negativity, since the task at hand may not be approached with an authoritative and responsible

outlook. Seeing oneself as merely an instrument may prevent one from actually taking initiative and putting one's best foot forward. In either case, the "goal" is the fulfillment of the ego.

As expected, Arjuna is once again heavily conflicted. Krishna's goal shifts to become an adviser, leader and encourager. In summary, he states that avoiding a righteous task is bad even if it is hard. He recognizes Arjuna's character as being overwhelmed and consoles him to not worry. Arjuna's "scared" situation seemed to be highly relatable to the class. We shared moments when we've felt scared at first, but eventually felt better. The take-home lessons were the following. Don't let the moments come to you, just face the task straight on. Procrastinating can often be a silent problem, and our fears only intensify the effect. Change is inevitable and only makes us afraid because we don't think of the big picture.

With the aforementioned problems, we moved to solutions. A stellar quote was offered in class that described what self-surrender is. It read, "Self-Surrender is the technique of keeping oneself in a mood of tireless enthusiasm and inspiration." Hard circumstances or a lack of proper guidance in a new situation may impede this. One also shouldn't lose enthusiasm for a task they already love. Finally, for new endeavors, the consequence of not trying in the first place prevents us from knowing the possible benefits in the end.

October 19, 2014

Anuj Mehta

We began today's class by reading and discussing Chapter 11 in our Geeta books. After analyzing the text further, the class came to the understanding that the previous chapter, in which Krishna is declaring his power, feeds into this chapter, in which he reveals his cosmic form. Following a comment about Arjuna praising Krishna, the question of why Arjuna is doing so was raised as a re-cap of last class. The answer we came to was that Arjuna was in dire need of help, and was confused about how to proceed with the war. We supported this claim with the discussion of all the aspects Arjuna must consider, such as his attachment to his family, the chance gaining the reputation of "family-killer", and his responsibilities as a big piece of this conflict. We concluded that through all this, Arjuna is chipping away at his ego.

Next, we read the commentary on verse 8 and interpreted the lines about poetry. We discussed how it is easy the overarching contribution of one small piece of a machine, but it requires higher intellectual functioning to see the reverse. We used Swami Chinmayananda's example of reading a poem, requiring the ability to read, understand, and compare to other works of poetry. This led to the discussion of moments when we had sudden realizations of how something worked, and this realization led to consistent understanding or success. For example, a student shared how he rarely missed a serve after it clicked one day. This parallels Arjuna's development of vision as we are now reading in Chapter 11 that Krishna reveals his form. Arjuna has been devoted up to this point to be able to see this divine, perpetual form.

Finally, we read the commentary of verse 20, and took away from it that each human sees the world based on his or her disposition and character. We

concluded the class with the analogy of the toymaker. The toys he places on the shelf are distinct, individual beings, perhaps lions, dolls, or boats. However, once slammed and morphed together, they become a new, never-ending form. This form displays everything in that realm existing together. On the contrary, when space is present and these forms are viewed with distinct perspectives, active discrimination is encouraged.

November 2, 2014

Siri Neerchal

Today's class began, after opening prayers, with a discussion of the last five verses (51-55) of chapter 11, in which Krishna, having shown Arjuna his Universal Form, tells him that he can once more see this form through sadhana. Most of the class was unclear on the meaning of sadhana; we learned that sadhana is "spiritual practice" – working with the intention of learning and bringing oneself closer to one's spiritual goal. This led to a discussion of the entirety of chapter 11, in which Arjuna was to see the characteristics of Krishna detailed in chapter 10. Arjuna, like most of us, is not satisfied with a mere theoretical description; he wants a direct experience.

In the Universal Form, Arjuna sees himself, both armies, and the entire battlefield. Krishna tells him that enmity is only possible if one sees another as a separate entity from oneself. We likened this view of "many in one" to an idea expressed by the artist Michelangelo: a stone already has a statue within it, which the artist simply uncovers. As a class, we identified Arjuna's problem as not as fighting, but rather, against whom he is fighting and Krishna's objective in showing Arjuna his Universal Form as attempting to induce in him the realization that he should not see the Kauravas as enemies, and therefore should not be afraid of fighting them,

because they, like him, are simply parts of the entire universe. This point prompted a discussion of the difference between having fear and being scared, which was relatively short, as the class quickly reached a general consensus. Fear is necessary for self-preservation, while being scared is not, and often clouds one's judgment and results in detriment and hindrance to oneself.

Chapter 11 concludes with a description of what Arjuna, or any seeker, must do to be able to see the Universal Form, which segues into Chapter 12, which explains bhakti yoga – the path of devotion.

November 16, 2014

Amitha Anmalsetty

On November 16, 2014 we broke into 4 groups and talked about 10 words that describe students, athletes, child, human-being. One group said the 10 things that describe students are attentive, determined, honesty, cautious, studious, dedicated, sincere, and responsible. Another group said that the ten things that describe a child are respectful, studious, kind, honest, happy, funny, conscientious, active, open, and hard working. The third group said the 10 things that describe athletes are hardworking, determined, team player, good sport, ethical, cooperative, courageous, athletic, attentive, and risk-taking. The last group said the 10 things that described human being are alive, compassionate, ambitious, dedicated, respectful, social, happy, humble, careful and independent.

We also discussed Chapter 12 Verses 12 & 13. Verse 12 says “‘Knowledge’ is indeed better than ‘practice’; meditation’ is better than ‘knowledge’; ‘renunciation of the fruits-of-actions’ is better than ‘meditation’; peace immediately follows ‘renunciation’”. Verse 13 is about how peace is the ultimate goal. My comments about this verse would be that, some

things are better than others, but in the end, it is peace that is the ultimate goal. Verse 13 says “He who hates no creature, who is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from attachment and egoism, balanced in pleasure and pain, and forgiving”. This verse explains a lot about what we should strive to be so that we can be a true human being. We then asked some people what they're favorite verse was. One person said they're favorite verse was Verse 15 of Chapter 12, “He by whom the world is not agitated (affected), and who cannot be agitated by the world, who is freed from joy, envy, fear and anxiety-he is dear to me”. We discussed whether agitation is a good thing or a bad thing. We also had a discussion about complaisant v. contentment.

In this discussion we talked about whether too much contentment can bring us to complaisance. Also, we discussed whether too much complaisance would be a good thing or bad thing. We also talked about foundation being the major point in how our personality is.

November 23, 2014

Sandhya Piratla

The class began with a lengthy conversation on the meaning behind chapter 12 verse 15, which states: He by whom the world is not agitated, and who cannot be agitated by the world, who was freed from joy, envy, fear, and anxiety— he is dear to Me. As we began this conversation, a few questions began to emerge, such as, what is meant by agitating the world? Does Lord Krishna mean agitation in a good sense, or a bad sense? One brought up that it could go in both ways. Let's take, for example, Mahatma Gandhi and Adolf Hitler. Hitler agitated the world and made many miserable, and Mahatma Gandhi also agitated the world, but improved lives, instead of spreading misery.

As we thought about this, another question popped up: how does agitation affect us personally? Take, for example, a court case where you are being questioned at court by the other side's lawyer, and that lawyer starts to agitate you by asking difficult questions. By doing this, he flusters you so much that you start giving the wrong answers. When looking at this, we saw that when one is being agitated by the world, he tends to become more reactive, so much that he starts agitating the world right back. However, when he is able to remain cool and calm and take things in stride, then he won't be agitated by the world and in turn agitate the world. This thought led to an interpretation of the verse, saying to not let yourself be agitated by the world because if you do get agitated, it will lead to a negative cycle of agitation.

Next, we moved into chapter 12 verse 16, which states: He who is free from wants, pure, alert, unconcerned, untroubled, renouncing all undertakings (or commencements)—he who is (thus) devoted to Me, is dear to Me. We then started to discuss the “renouncing all undertakings” part of this verse by reading the commentary. The commentary states that renouncing all undertakings does not mean to not undertake anything and just be idle, like how it is commonly interpreted. The deeper suggestions of the statement says that for any definite beginning of a new action, one must have an ‘egoistic claim’ that's he has begun it himself, for the purpose of attaining a certain goal which will fulfill a specific desire, or give a positive profit. Then, after beginning this new undertaking he must renounce that egoistic claim. It is also important to remember that even though one might have a certain goal, all the factors that play into the success/failure are not in his control. He should relinquish his idea that everything is in his control.

Finally, we moved into a discussion of chapter 12 verse 19: To whom censure and praise are equal,

who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded, full of devotion—that man is dear to Me, and focused on the meaning behind the silent and homeless qualities. Homelessness, in this sense, does not mean one who is homeless, but is saying that one shouldn't depend on where he lives and the possession/material shackles in that home to be happy. With the silence quality, Lord Krishna is not talking about those who are physically silent but let their minds run loosely. The Lord is saying that those who practice mental silence, reflecting on actions and keeping their minds organized, are dear to him.

December 7, 2014

Nishant Carr

We began our class discussion with a brief review of chapter twelve, verse fifteen: one who does not agitate the world, nor is agitated by it, is dear to the Lord. This verse discusses the importance of a cool and collected mind. We concluded our review with a brief debate about the pros and cons of being either a disturber or a disturbed person.

We continued to the main focus of our class, chapter 13. Arjuna desires to learn from Krishna about Prakrti (Matter), Purusa (Spirit), Ksetram (Field), and Ksetrajna (Knower of the Field). Krishna explains to Arjuna that one's body is called the Field, Kshetram, and one who knows the Field is called Kshetrajna.

We were placed in groups and tasked with combing through the text to find all thirty-one parts that make up the Field. All of us were wrong in one manner or the other, but we finally arrived at complete list with the help of our teachers. They are listed below:

- space, air, fire, water, earth

- egoism, intellect, unmanifested impressions (vasanas)
- the ten sense organs
- the mind
- the five objects of the sense organs
- desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, body, intelligence, fortitude

However, our true self is none of these thirty-one parts. If we know something, we cannot be that object. So, if we know what space, air, fire, water, and earth are, we can know that we are not those objects. The Kshetrajna cannot be the Kshetra.

Therefore, Krishna continues to tell Arjuna what he isn't, so that Arjuna can begin to know himself, or reach closer to his true self. Krishna lists the qualities of a person, or the elements of Knowledge. While these are not your true self, they are needed to achieve self-realization. By popular demand, we include one of Swamiji's metaphors. These qualities are like the "Chennai Express"; they are not themselves "Chennai", but only the means to get to Chennai.

The thirty-one parts that make up our functioning body are not our true self, because we are able to know them. Even the thoughts, emotions, and feelings in our mind are not our true self. However, by adhering to the proper qualities, we can begin to understand our true self.

December 14, 2014

Chapter 14: The Gunas (The Three Moods)

Thara Konduri

There are three gunas that are all present and prevalent in a person that influence their actions, but

they are in different proportions. The term guna means the 'attitude' in which the mind functions.

The three gunas are:

Sattva: unactivity

Rajas: activity

Tamas: inactivity

After identifying the gunas and discussing what they meant, the class was split up into three groups. Each group was assigned to a guna, and had to read through pages 4-20 and search of adjectives that described the gunas.

Here is what the class found:

Sattva-

- Purity
- Source of Knowledge
- Introspective
- Having a reflective mind
- Good action
- Consciousness
- Liberation
- Healthy
- Permanent happiness
- Rises up ladder

Rajas-

- Greed
- Unnecessary Exertion
- Activity w/ purpose.
- Passion
- Thirst
- Pain of detachment
- Multiplicity of actions
- Possessions
- Bondage
- Egoism
- Restlessness

Tamas-

- Sleep (excessive)
- Inertia
- Dullness
- Shrouding Knowledge
- Heedlessness
- Laziness
- Ignorance
- Darkness

From the text itself, the three gunas “influence the mental and the intellectual caliber of every individual and these influences provide the distinct flavor in each personality.” Leading one’s life with Sattva, is living for a higher cause, reaching an intellectual level above the average person. A predominantly rajasic life is one that is filled with attachment and selfishness, only preoccupied with the fruits of one’s actions. Lastly, a predominantly tamasic life is a very ignorant and unmotivated one, a person having no inner stimulation to achieve more or accomplish something. The beauty of the Gunas is that every person exerts these attitudes at some point, but one must try to slowly change the proportions so that we are more Sattvic and live for a higher cause. To attain this, one begin to focus inwards, to aid self-observation and understanding of our actions and their root-cause. Once aware of our actions, one can try to change them to be more Sattvic. The ultimate goal however is to transcend all three gunas to attain true liberation.

January 11, 2015

Usha Konduri

It was great to see all of our Chinmayam members back in class on the first class of the New Year! We all started out with our usual opening prayers and

Geeta verses. Then we began a warm-up discussion on the three gunas. It was a bit of review from the last classes. In a nutshell, we came up with sattva being goodness, harmony, and doing dharmic things, rajas being what makes people do things and the incentive behind actions, while tamas is going the opposite way of rajas and being lazy and not doing much. The important thing to remember is that everyone has at least a little of all three gunas within them.

Aniket Uncle then prompted a question to us along the lines of: “Are people screwed if they are majority Tamasic?” and “How do you get out of being Tamasic?” We discussed possible options such as trying to be more active but realized they weren’t effective answers whatsoever. So we turned to the book for help. For the majority of class we looked at verse 16 of Chapter 14 and then discussed it. Swami Chinmayananda identifies the difficulty of someone becoming Sattvic and pure even if he/she is already too bad at present. Since actions are reflective of thoughts and the present thoughts of someone tamasic is negative, then their actions are negative. So the real issue is transforming someone tamasic (or in a lethargic state) to get he/she’s mindset to change for the better. This is very challenging as mindsets are usually developed at a young stage. An easy way to understand this is to think of a tree. When it is very young, its trunk is easy to bend and very flexible. But the older it grows, the harder the trunk becomes making it firm and more unbendable. Just like this Swami Chinmayananda says that from childhood important practices should be enforced such as respecting elders, going to school, following the rules, etc. Altering the type of actions for the better is helping the thoughts become more positive. It is important to keep important values at hand and practice them.

As we were reading, we came across an important quote by Swami Chinmayananda that reads:

“negative actions in the outside world fatten the wrong tendencies of the mind”. Some examples of this that we came up with were cheating on a test, then not getting caught for it but still doing well. This can prompt one to continue cheating since they are facing no self-harm. The negative tendency is being expanded in the cheater’s mind. Another example is doing something that everyone else does, even if it’s bad. One thinks that since everyone does it, there’s no reason why he/she shouldn’t do it either.

Swami Chinmayananda sums it all it up by saying that only bad thoughts can produce bad actions just like seeds of weed produce only weeds. This particular phrase jumps out at me because it explains that thoughts must be pure in order to lead a Sattvic life and re-emphasizes what Swamiji tells us about the correlation between thoughts and actions.

January 25, 2015

Atman Panigrahi

We began class by briefly reviewing the previous chapters that we covered, touching upon The Cosmic-Form Divine and The Path of Devotion. After this introduction, we began our study of Chapter 15: The Supreme Spirit. As we proceeded through the first few verses of the chapter, we focused on the concept of pride. Gurudev describes it as an “erroneous estimate of one’s own importance,” which prompted a significant amount of discussion: is this an accurate depiction of what pride is? If so, how does it apply to our lives right now? We determined that there are both positive and negative aspects of pride: it is valuable to have a “ballpark” or exact estimate of one’s abilities and positive attributes, but beyond such recognition, any acknowledgement of personal ability becomes detrimental.

When consumed by pride, we tend to overstep our capabilities, get stuck in the present, harm those around us, and grow attached to ourselves. One relevant example that the class came up with was Japan losing in World War II: they overestimated their own strength, but in their pride they also underestimated the United States, leading to Japan’s demise. In Gurudev’s commentary, he mentions that pride “brings about...heavy responsibilities...” In order to connect this in a meaningful way to our lives, we thought of an example involving the United States. Because of the USA’s pride as a world superpower, it has increasingly gotten involved in international affairs, taking (in some people’s views) an unnecessary responsibility to serve as a global “watchdog.” The same theme can be found in Disney films: villains often try to preserve their power, creating excessive stress and responsibilities on themselves to maintain a sense of pride. Our realization of this concept led to discussion on the attachment of oneself to one’s image of grandeur. For instance, when individuals engage in service, they may initially have selfless intentions – but as they rise up the ranks to lead a service organization, they grow attached to the idea of being a leader or helper, not actually being a leader or helper. This prevents them from cultivating positive qualities. Aniket Uncle provided a scientific connection to further this example of attachment to one’s image: the conservation of energy dictates that energy is constant. Thus, the more energy we expend on preserving our image, the less energy we have available to devote to our actual task at hand.

To relate these lessons to ourselves we did a short activity in self-reflection: each student identified 5 good virtues and 5 things to improve about him/herself. Through this task, we were able to objectively monitor our importance and identify insecurities and areas of confidence and overconfidence in ourselves. One common theme we discovered in sharing these

strengths/weaknesses was misuse of time. Many students procrastinate, but for different reasons: to avoid challenges, or because they feel they can rely on their last minute ability to get work done. We hypothesized that the cause of any type of pride, and the root of many vices and flaws, is an attachment to actions and images irrelevant to our actual duty. To actually improve ourselves, we must attach ourselves to an ideal higher than our flaws, and utilize contemplation to help lift us from a negative to positive state.



Saints of Maharashtra – Sant Namdeva

Nirmala Limaye

Namdeva was cotemporary of Jnanadeva. He was considered as the originator of Vittal Sampradaya. Although Jnanadeva started the Wari (pilgrimage). It was Namadeva who spread fame of Pandharpura. He was born in 1290 A.D. to a tailor named Damashetti in Narasingpur. At his birth, a Brahmin predicted that he would write thousands of devotional songs. Contrary to the prediction, Namdeva led a lawless life killing 84 horsemen. One day, he went to Amvadhya Temple as was his usual custom. He heard a young mother saying to a child “my dear son I cannot buy milk as your father was killed by a marauder”. After hearing this, Namdeva was repentant and went back to Amvadhya & entered the temple, slit his arm and offered his blood on the deity. The priest stopped him and kicked him out of the temple.

Namdeva then went to Pandharpur, prostrated in front of Vittla and spent many months in repentance. He devoted his time standing on a step of the temple devoting his mind totally to Vittalbhakti. He started singing Abhangas which he wrote (that step is known as Namdeva’s payari -step). After many months he came to realize God. He would bring food to the Lord and He ate it. When he went into ecstasy, he told others that the Lord ate his food but they thought that he has gone mad. Although very pious, he became egoistic. During this time Jnaneshwara visited Pandharpur with many other saints.

He liked Namadeva’s bhakti but wanted to make him aware of his ego. One day when all saints gathered, Muktabai asked Gora Kumbhar -a pot-maker to test whose pot is unbaked. Gora went with his tool and declared that unbaked pot was that of Namdeva, who then became very sad and asked Jnanadeva to

initiate him. Jnanadeva sent him to Visoba Khechar. When he went there, Visoba was lying with his feet on shivlinga, which irritated Namdeva. He asked Visoba to remove his feet to which he replied “I am too old to move them, please help me to do that” Namdeva immediately moved his feet away but wherever he moved, he saw another shivlinga appear under his feet. He realized him to be the person Jnanadeva asked to go. Visoba initiated him as his disciple and made him see the Lord in everything. Namadeva became a true saint. Once he ran after a dog that snatched his roti and he told the dog that he needs milk to go with it.

When Jnaneshwara came to Pandharpur, he made plans to visit the north India on a pilgrimage. With many saints they visited many places including Punjab where Gurugrantha-Saheb was being written. Namdeva wrote 80 Abhangas, which are still part of that great Dharmagrantha. After returning to Alandi, Jnaneshwara decided to take samadhi, he asked Namadeva to come so, he came and wrote Abhaga’s to describe the occasion.

When Namadeva returned to Pandharpur, he wrote hundreds of Abhagas. Although Jnaneshwara initiated pilgrimage (wari) it was propagated exponentially by Namadeva among the working class and spread Bhaktimarga and started Vittal Sampradaya.

His abhangas described pure ananya bhakti and devotion. His panting for God is similar to a bee panting for honey in the flower. He states further “people call me Lordless, fallen, poor, afflicted; who can get me out of this except you, my Lord.

You obliged me to this samsara. I know thy wiles, I will take any measures to change this. I am chakora bird vying for your grace. My mind waits tenderly as a little bird in the nest waits for mother bird to come home or as a fawn is saved by mother deer by forest fire. My only resort is thy feet. Rescue me from ravaging river of desires. You are the only one I pine for day and night. I know I am ocean of sins. But I am going to tie a rope to your and my feet so that you can never escape.”

Namadeva used to plead tearfully, at times cajoling, blaming the Lord for forsaking him, at times calling him mother. Such were his powerful abhangas. He perpetuated insistence of namsmarana as the easiest and simplest way to reach the Lord. He says “I will perish if I stop praising your name or do not meditate at your feet. Hanuman and Pralahada were saved by chanting your name. Any one regardless of caste, creed or gender can chant your name. Namadeva states that the Lord is in every being, who has no anger or jealousy and has forgiving mind. A saint who does not vie for material riches, has no honor or dishonor. He is a yogi who thinks jewels and stones are alike. Mere namasmarana has great purifying power. All life’s sins are washed away by chanting His name. You can reach Him if you live in company of saints who will relieve of all suffering because they are ocean of mercy.”

Namadeva is as famous as Narada in terms of bhakti and namasmarana. Namadeva states further that the power to realize is present in all of us just as a baby who clings to the mother needs no teaching to suckle. It is innate ability. We do not need eye to see the Lord or go to a temple to see Him indicating His omnipotence. No wonder that his abhangas became very popular with large masses.

It amalgamates Vashnavism and Saivism and includes Advaitic philosophy in a subtle way. He would stand on his step and do samkirtana in ecstasy.

Namdeva’s Abhangas were handed down by mouth to mouth. So, it is difficult to authenticate the authorship, however the writing in Granthasaheb is authentic and other abhangas appear very similar in the writing style. Even to this day people in Maharashtra sing his abhangas.

Namadeva passed away in 1350 A.D.

PS: I am indebted to Gurudev Ranade. Guidance is taken from his book “Mysticism in Maharashtra”

“On a Quest” – My Experience

Vijay Kumar

Hari Om all

With the blessings of Gurudev, I was fortunate to be in the audience during the screening of “On a Quest” in New Delhi.

The biopic was shown at Siri Fort Auditorium Complex, New Delhi on 8th February, 2015. My brother Dr. Reghu Nath, a sevak at the Delhi Chinmaya Mission had bought a few tickets earlier.

We all know that how difficult it is to put your experience in words. Here I will make an attempt. Even before the show started, I was so thrilled to see all Swamijis, Swaminis and other Acharyas and sevaks of Chinmaya Mission, New Delhi. My brother introduced me to all those we came across. I was so glad to meet Swami Mitrananda, the man behind the entire project and Swami Chidrupananda, Acharya of NOIDA. The resident Acharya of Delhi, Swami Nikhilananda was not there because he had to leave for Goa due to the sad demise of his beloved Mother. We also met and talked to Swamini Gurupriyananda and Swamini Gangananda.

Speechless! Spellbound! Touched! Uplifted! Overwhelming! Inexplicable was the experience of watching 'On a Quest', produced by Chinmaya Creations on the life and mission of Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda. The two hour documentary cum drama directed by noted Director R.S. Prasanna brings to life the journey of the young atheist Balakrishna Menon as he transforms from being a fiery revolutionary, skeptical academician, questioning journalist into a seeker with an ardent Quest for the Truth and finally becoming a visionary Master carrying the message of the Rishis to the masses across the world. The entire project was led

by Swami Mitrananda, Acharya of Chinmaya Mission, Chennai and director of All India Chinmaya Yuva Kendra, from start to finish including the writing of the script.

It is the 1940s in Lucknow. A young college student questions the imperial colonization of the education he receives at the University with his professor, only to be silenced for the moment, and a revolutionary is born. Swami Chinmayananda's biopic, On a Quest, attempts to capture the many facets of his life: from his ideal childhood spent with his pious mother and father in Ernakulam, Kerala to a young college student in the politically charged student campus of Lucknow University, from a freedom fighter who worked in the enemy den to a student union leader on the run from the British, from days of torture spent in jail, working as a journalist idealistic about the new nation that he wanted to free from the scourge of superstition and poverty, the oppression of caste and class to his spiritual reawakening.

The cinematography, by Siddhartha Nuni, is one of the strong points of the film. The scene in Rishikesh and Sidhabari, one of the many picturesque locations in which the film was shot, is brought forth in beautiful long shots. Creating the 1940s, more than 70 years later, is not an easy task, but the production of the film lives up to high film standards. Director R.S. Prasanna and Anand Krishnamoorthi have done an excellent job and faced well the challenge of directing first time actors.

The dialogues are crisp, and the editing makes sure that the plot doesn't slack. The film shifts character easily from one stage to another, using the plot device of a young "free thinker" in the present

who seeks to learn about Swami Chinmayananda's life. We move from the charged atmosphere of pre-Independence India to the austere landscape of the film when Balan (Gurudev's name, during his early years- a short version of Balakrishnan) decides to follow his spiritual quest. Most important, however, is the fact that the biopic captures the essence of a free thinker's spiritual journey, a tall task that is told simply, even for the uninitiated.

Sandeep Hebbar, a recent Sandeepany vedanta class graduate, with an uncanny look- alike of Gurudev, was the best fit to act as Gurudev. Thota Tharani, a famous art director, who never acted in any films agreed to enact "Gurudev" of the later years. Rajeev Venkat, who acted as Swami Sivananda was among the audience, and Swami Chidrupananda called him on to the stage to be introduced. We were glad to see him. We found that Shri Karthikeyan, who acted as Shri Tapovan Maharaj, was in fact the great grandnephew of Tapovan Maharaj himself!. He was so passionate and eager to do the role, that, when his office did not give him leave to act in this film, he resigned his job. It is remarkable fact that all 140 actors in the film were acting in a movie for the first time in their life. R.S. Prasanna, the director, an alumnus of Chinmaya Vidyalaya, found himself directing this film, as if guided by HIS hand. The grace of the Master was evident in every turn. All the actors being amateurs, found themselves acting with professional skill, with just a week's training!

I was told that the shooting happened at the following sites: Chennai Fim City, Chinmaya Heritage center, Chinmaya Vidyalaya, and Thamaraipakkam Ashram, in Chennai, as well as at Adi Sankara Nilayam, CIF, in Ernakulam, in Chinmaya Vibhooti in Kolwan, and also in Gurgaon, Rishikesh and Sidhabari Ashram.

The work on the film was a transforming experience for all who participated in it, and rightly so, for it was the story of Gurudev, who transformed

thousands, (and still transforming....) all through his life and beyond...The person working on the color correction has said that he was an atheist, but found great peace and joy working on this film. Each devotee felt the divine touch in some unique way.

Here are a few dialogues I liked in the film:

"India is free, but are Indians free?"

"Keep trying, you will find Him"

"Knowing to read and write, having a degree- That makes you merely literate- not educated"

And lastly.. This is really at the end of the film....

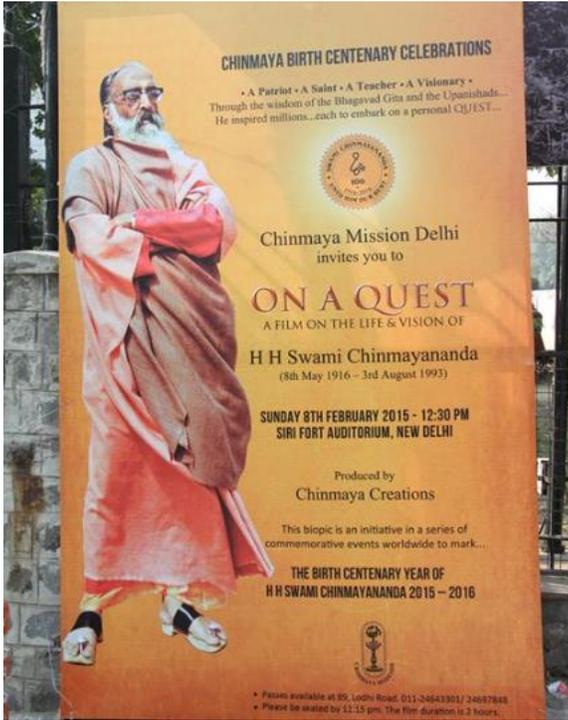
"Start walking, and the path will become clear"

In short, The film is a cinematic tribute to the life and teachings of this great Vedantic Master of the 21st Century, our beloved Gurudev- Swami Chinmayananda, who awakened not just the Indian masses, but all of humanity, across the globe, to the glory of the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and the beauty of the Indian culture.

I was in tears most of the time. Those who have been with Gurudev may have great stories and incidents and experiences to share. These can be conveyed to the new generation through words or through books. However, with the current technology, visual media is the best in today's time. We can, and we must do this, because few years from now, you and I will not be there.....

Now those here in U.S, have to wait until it gets released here. Have patience. I have added few pictures here from that day in Delhi... February 8th, 2015.. Thank you and Hari om...

Outside the gate

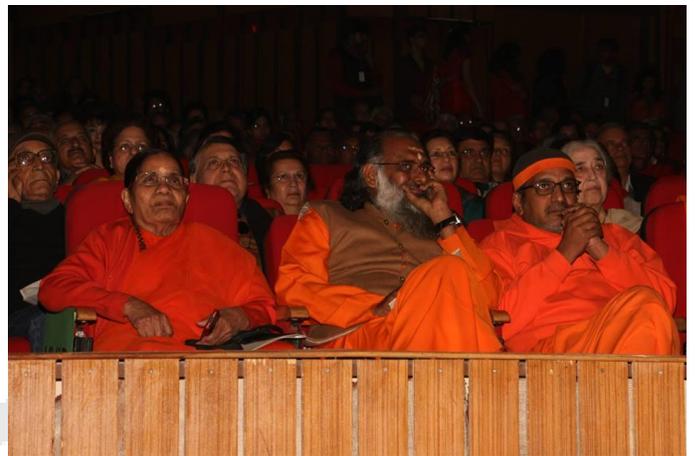


Swami Chidrupananda from NOIDA chatting with guests



Swamini Gangananda, Swami Chidrupananda and Swami Mitrananda

Entrance to the Auditorium



A view of the Audience. Approx 1100 attended the screening in Delhi



I and the World – Kshetra and Kshetrajna

Science and Vedanta

Acharya Sadananda

[Editor's Note: Acharya Sadanandaji concluded the Jnana Yoga and Self Realization series with November 2014 edition. In January he started a new series on "I and the World". This is 2nd in the new series.]

Universe can be thought of consisting of essentially two things; the subject I and the object, the world. The subject cannot become an object and vice versa. I am a conscious entity and the world is an inert entity. In fact, I am the only subject in the world, and from my reference everything else comes under an object that can be known through a pramANA or means of knowledge. From your reference, you are the only subject and everything else is object of knowledge. We need to examine the tools available to analyze the subject, I, and the object, this, and their limitations as means of knowledge. The science, as we know, deals with the world of objects or objectifiable entities. We are in the era of science, and have been brought up with the mentality that only the facts verifiable by the scientific tools are valid science and the rest are subjective and can be dismissed as beliefs or dogmas. We need to examine the validity of this statement also, scientifically. We will establish that Vedanta is an absolute science while all other so-called object sciences are only relative real.

The word science is derived from the root 'scier', meaning to know. Hence science really means knowledge which reveals a fact or truth. In Sanskrit, 'vid' means to know, and 'Veda' means knowledge. Combining these two statements we can say that Veda means science. Vedanta means that which reveals the ultimate knowledge or absolute truth. From this, it follows that Vedanta is the ultimate science. This is not a fanatical statement but a statement of fact, as in 'Light travels at 299,792,458 m / s'. This is not an opinion or belief but just plain fact, whether one believes it or not. We will examine here why Vedanta is the science of absolute.

Epistemologically, the word 'knowledge' without a qualifier, cannot be defined. The qualifier objectifies the knowledge as in knowledge of Chemistry or knowledge of Physics, etc. It is always knowledge of something. It can be knowledge of physical or phenomenal world, or knowledge of some subtle entities such as emotions, thoughts, intellectual concepts, etc. The former can be considered as the knowledge of gross entities that can be known via sense input, while the later can be called the knowledge of subtle entities and can be known without the need of any sense input, or can be inferred indirectly from the sense input. For example, I can have knowledge of a force, which is subtle, when work is being done. Any action involves a force. We know that there is a life-force (praana Shakti) by the expression of life activities. What exactly is life, even doctors cannot define it as it is imperceptible; but yet they can certify whether one is alive or not by examining life's grosser expressions. In essence, from action we can deduce the driving force for that action. A change of state, for example, involves a driving force, even though the force itself is imperceptible. Hence Vedanta says one becoming many involves a driving force, which it calls as maayaa shakti or force of maayaa. The point here is that all forces can be inferred from the change of state, although they are imperceptible.

Pure knowledge without any objectification cannot be defined. In fact, any definition involves objectification. Conversely, only objectifiable entities can be defined. Vedanta says all objectifiable entities are inert or conversely only inert things can be objectified. Hence all knowledge that we are familiar with are knowledge of objectifiable entities, and therefore knowledge of qualifyable entities or of inert entities. Science, in common parlance, means only knowledge of objectifiable entities, or inert entities, either gross or subtle. For example, Physics, Chemistry, Astronomy, Biology,

Medicine, etc., all pertain to objectifiable sciences or sciences of grosser entities that are measurable or quantifiable by sense input data using objective tools. Even when we are examining or quantifying living beings using objective tools we are only examining either body parts which by themselves are inert, or activities at grosser level to deduce that they are living beings. Subtler sciences such as Psychology, Philosophy, Logic, etc., are not amenable directly by sense input, and therefore are not ascertainable or quantifiable by objective tools. One can infer to some extent by the behavioral trends but they remain somewhat speculative and not assertive. A philosophy or even logic can be built based on axiomatic statements. For those who are familiar, there is the famous Gödel's incompleteness theory for axiomatic systems. It states that all mathematical systems are axiomatic, and although self-consistent, they remain incomplete and therefore cannot be proven. Vedanta says pure knowledge is infinite and therefore cannot be defined. Even the word infinite is only to negation of its finiteness.

There are many infinities that we are familiar with during our studies. For example we say two parallel lines meet at infinity. This is one-dimensional infinity since they are separated by a finite distance. Another example is, we say the pi has infinite series, but has finite value. Thus, these are finite infinities which in a way being defined. The absolute infinity which Vedanta calls it as Brahman cannot also be defined. Vedanta states that pure knowledge which we said cannot be defined is Brahman- satyam jnaanam anantam, brahma.

Analysis of How knowledge Takes Place

In the knowledge of every object, three aspects are involved; a) the subject knower, b) the object known, and c) the means of knowledge that connects the two. These, in Sanskrit, are called pramaata, prameyam and pramaana, respectively. Pramaa means knowledge and knowledge that is falsified later by a better or stronger pramaana is called bhrama or false knowledge. Thus, using pramaana, a pramaata can know a prameyam. Let us take a simple example – I want to know if there is chair in the hall. To gain that knowledge, I need to go and see. I, the conscious entity, is the knower or pramaata, the

chair is the object of my knowledge, prameyam, and the means of knowing or pramaana is perception that involves the sense of sight. For the pramaana to operate my eyes should be functioning, and my mind should also be present, in addition to any other secondary requirements such as sufficient light in the room, for me to see. Suppose, if the room is pitch-dark, I would not know if there is a chair or not, since I cannot see anything. Then, the existence of the chair in the pitch dark room is indeterminate, that is, it may be there or it may not be there. In fact, the probability that the chair exists or not is 50%. The uncertainty, here, is due to the inability for the pramaana (sense of sight) to operate. Thus objective knowledge can be established only if all the three, the knower, known and the means of knowledge, are operating. Without the knower and the means of knowing, the existence of the object cannot be established.

Hence Vedanta ascertains that existence of an object is established by the knowledge of its existence, which requires a pramaata or a conscious entity. If I or no other conscious entity is present in that room to ascertain the existence of the chair in that room via direct or remote instruments of perception, the existence of the chair or any other object remains uncertain, with only 50% probability. It may or may not exist.

Suppose there is some other person (conscious entity) establishes existence of the chair in the room. From my point, the existence of a chair still remains as indeterminate unless he tells me the fact. Even then, my knowledge is not based on direct perception but on the validity of his words, called loukika shabda pramaana. I can validate his words by directly seeing its presence or absence. Thus from my reference, I become the only subject to establish the existence or non-existence of an object, that includes the other beings. I have to establish the other person's existence first before I can even validate his perceptual observation.

Thus, the fundamental requirement even for objective sciences that involve only objectifiable entities that use objective tools is that there must be a conscious entity to make the knowledge assertive or in technical jargon to make it deterministic than just probabilistic. In the above

example, the existence of the chair in the hall cannot be established until I establish by a pramaana or means of knowledge. Until then, the existence of a chair remains as 50% probability. In Sanskrit, the word for indeterminacy is anirvacaniyam. There is a famous example of Schrodinger's cat problem that one can find in Google that proves the above fact that without consciousness ascertaining the existence of an object, the existence of the object remains only as probabilistic and not deterministic.

Suppose I ask, while you are in the pitch dark room, is there a gaabaubu in that room? You cannot answer that question even if the room is lighted. You will first ask, what is gaabaubu or how does it look like, or what are its attributes? Name or naama and attributes (starting with ruupa or form, etc.) go together in defining an object. If I do not know what is gaabaubu I cannot say it exists or does not exist. Naming involves knowing; and without the knowledge, existence of any particular object cannot be established. When I see a new object for the first time, I will have knowledge of the existence of an object with some attributes that my senses measure. I may not know what it is if I have not seen any object with similar attributes in the past. When my teacher tell me that this is gaabaubu, now I have the knowledge of gaabaubu with name and attributive content stored in my memory. I can re- cognize the object later if I see any object with similar attributes. Thus cognition and recognition from memory go together, in the knowledge of an object.

In addition, even if the conscious entity or pramaata is present, the knowledge of existence of the object cannot take place unless the pramaana or means of knowledge operates. In the above example, if my sense of sight is not operating or if mind is elsewhere, then I still would not know whether the chair is there or not, even when the room is lighted. For example, in the deep sleep state, the existence of any object, nay the whole world is indeterminate or anirvacaniyam, since the instruments of perception, the senses and the mind, are folded or essentially not functioning. Thus, even though I am there and objects may be there, there is no knowledge of their existence. The objects here include the grosser objects like room, bed and my body, etc., but also the subtler

objects like mind and the thoughts. Hence, without the mind present, no knowledge of the objective world takes place. Therefore to summarize, any knowledge or science involves the subject I, the object this, and the connection between the two via a pramaana or means of knowledge. All three must be present for science to operate.

We will next analyze the objective sciences, objectively.