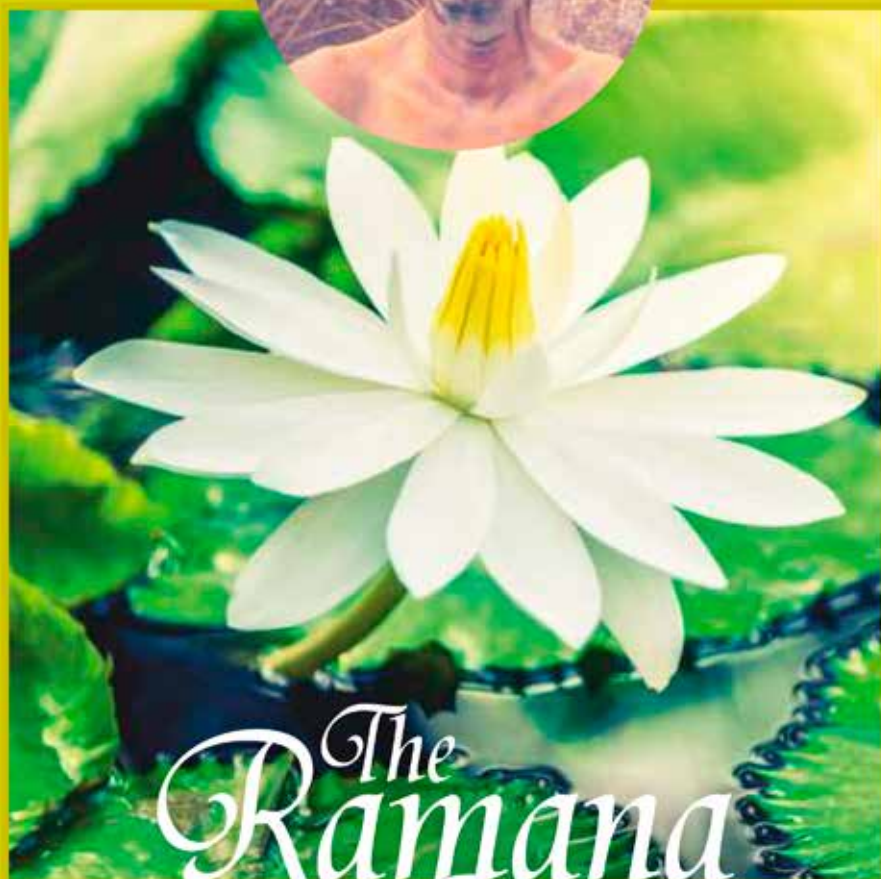


February 2018



# *The Ramana Way*

A Monthly Journal published by  
Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning  
Bengaluru

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# THE RAMANA WAY

*A Monthly Journal since 1981*



*Celebrating  
Ramana Rasa  
Anubhava*

Editor: Dr. Sarada

Associate Editor: G. Kameshwar

Assistant Editor: Dileep Simha

*Brotherhood based on equality is the supreme  
goal to be attained by human society*

*- Ramana Gita X, 10*

Journal started by:	Sri. A.R.Natarajan, Founder President, RMCL
Printed & Published by:	Sarada Natarajan on behalf of <b>Ramana Maharshi Centre For Learning, Ramana Maharshi Heritage Building, Post office Road, Sanjaynagar, Bangalore - 560094</b> Ph:(080)23514930, (080)42061951 Direct Fax:23512640
Managing Editor:	Revathi Sankar +919448853748
E-mail:	office@ramanacentre.com, ramanaway@ramanacentre.com
Website:	ramanacentre.com, ramanamusic.com
Printed by:	Aridra Printers, Bangaluru.
Designed by:	M. Muralidhara Hegde
Annual Membership:	Rs. 240/-, Price per copy Rs. 20/-
No. of pages:	69

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## Editorial

*Dr. Sarada*

When the question 'Who am I?' rises intensely within us, where is there room for any other thought, let alone any other pursuit? But if the spirit of self-enquiry has not captured us then we seek so many things, indeed our seeking is endless. So Muruganar Swami sings,

'ettanayO sArbu maTReEnOrkuLavEnum vittaha mei jnAna aruL  
vENkaTavA  
meittaguNa sAdukaTku unnaiyalAI sArbuErinmai kaNDu  
sAdukkaLai AI SaraN'.

'O Venkata who graces true Knowledge, as others have very many supports, seeing that the sadhus, the sages, have no support other than you, you protect them, govern them. In you I take refuge.'

What does Muruganar Swami imply when he says that people usually have many supports? If the question 'Who am I?' is not rising within us with insistence then we are bound to have a million pursuits and thoughts regarding all of these. Why do we have these numberless pursuits? Only because we believe that our happiness will spring from them. We seek the support of these experiences in order to gain happiness. We seek with the belief that happiness comes from all the objects and experiences outside of us because we have confined ourselves to the imaginary boundaries of a body. And in order to attain these objects or experiences that are outside us we take the support of our own actions.

We believe that action will lead to result. Rather, we believe that result springs from action, result is thus supported by actions. And what are actions supported by? Our actions are supported by our thoughts. Thus for our million actions we seek and find the support of numberless thoughts. When we have good health, we think the food that we eat is the support. When we have ill health, we think medicines and doctors are our support. When we are lonely we feel friends and relatives are the support. When we feel hurt or disturbed by any of the people with whom we are connected we believe that other people are the support or else we feel that solitude is the support.

There is no end to the number of desires that we have and hence no end to the number of supports that we seek. We do not believe that all these so called supports are not apart from the Supreme. We do not see that the food, the medicines, the doctors, the friends, the relatives, everything that we possess and seek to possess is only He, the Self. If we do, then there will be only one single support that we turn to.

It is not surprising that we turn to many supports because we ourselves are not one but many. I hardly recognise that I have many identities and many purposes that are associated with these identities, yet that is the truth. When I say that I am Sarada I believe that I am referring to one person but in fact I am many people rolled into one. There is my body which needs to be kept clean, healthy and good looking too. There are my social roles, as a daughter, sister, mother, friend, teacher, student, boss, subordinate and so on. Each of these roles may be in accord with or in conflict with any of or all of the other roles in which case I may have to be two or more different persons according to the role requirement. And each one may become more or less important to me from time to time. Then there are my likes and dislikes manifesting as various emotions positive and negative. There are also my ideals, my beliefs, my intellectual capabilities and approaches.

When someone tells me I am too fat or too thin, when someone tells me I am looking good, when something that is appealing to the senses is perceived then the 'body I' comes to the fore. When I am with family or friends then the 'social I' comes to the fore. And along with all this there are emotions, I am happy or unhappy about what is being told and what is being perceived. I may be happy that someone is praising the way I look and at the same time I may be sad that they are saying I was looking even better another time. Or they may say that I am looking like someone I dislike, say a famous actress. They may intend this as a compliment but to me it may be just the reverse because of my emotional identity which overrides the physical identity. And each is an independent purpose or goal.

Can we even imagine in how many directions we are moving at any given point of time? And the worst part is that we are not even conscious of many of the identities that we are holding on to.

We ourselves do not know how many masks we are carrying in our make-up kit and which one we may suddenly pull out and pull on to our faces. Some of these identities are gross and we think we can work on letting them go and we sometimes believe we have been successful in dropping identities as well. We may well think, 'I am no longer attached to A, B or C'. Little do we realise that not being attached is also a mask, one more identity. Equally, we are not aware of certain areas of attachment that we may well be continuing to hold on to. Hence though we believe that we know ourselves, this is far from the truth.

Self-enquiry brings all possible identities under a single scanner. It relentlessly cuts away every identity as it arises. This is because in self-enquiry one does not discriminate between one thought and another. One does not weigh the thoughts as good and bad or purposeful and meaningless. One does not seek to reject some thoughts and hold on to others. All thoughts are questioned and attention is reverted back to the core, to the source of the identity, the source of the 'I'-thought.

The first step in self-enquiry is to recognise thoughts as they arise. All thoughts are recognised as what they are, as thoughts and thoughts alone. Just as one sees all the images in the movie as a mere play of light, one sees all experiences as mere thoughts. Pleasure is a thought and pain is also a thought. Happiness is a thought because we think that it arises from certain experiences, it is we who think so and thus it is a thought. Sorrow is also a thought because we think it comes from certain other experiences. Anger is a thought, disgust is a thought, fear is a thought, wonder is a thought. Everything is a thought. That I see is a thought, that I hear is a thought. That I do not see is a thought, that I do not hear is a thought.

Every experience for me is only a thought, merely a thought. When I recognise this, even as a thought arises I ask myself, 'For whom is this thought?' This question reminds me firstly that whatever I am paying attention to at that moment is only a thought, it is not I. However strong my emotion may seem to be at any given moment, it is just a thought. It is not I. It is an image,

gross or subtle, that has arisen in the horizon of my consciousness because I have paid attention to it. It will drop away after a little while, it will pass and another will arise in its place.

As Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "That which is termed the mind is only varied and innumerable thoughts with a core, the centre, the individual. It is the individual's attention to a particular thought which gives life to it. This must be so because given the fact of the existence of an 'army of thoughts' only a particular thought, that to which the individual has paid attention, is on the thought horizon at any given point of time. Therefore, the key to the understanding of the mind lies in keeping the searchlight focused on the individual."

In self-enquiry Ramana asks us to enquire, 'For whom is this thought?' The answer will come, 'For me'. Then Ramana asks us to pose the next question, 'Who am I?' Why not go to the second question directly? Why ask ourselves every time a thought arises as to whom this thought pertains to? This is to strengthen the understanding that all our experiences are thoughts and that these are not I. Every time we ask ourselves, 'For whom is the thought?' and answer, 'For me' we are reminding ourselves that it is I who give life to my thoughts. It is not the thoughts that give life to me. I support my thoughts and not the other way round.

It is to remind ourselves once more that thought and I are different. We get so carried away with each thought that we forget this from moment to moment. If we are not getting carried away by thoughts, it would suffice to ask 'Who am I?' The very fact that thought arises implies that we give more importance to the thought than to the 'I'. We are giving importance to some object that is manifesting in the form of thought. Is it not then necessary to remind ourselves that this object in the form of thought is insignificant for us as it is merely a thought and it is not our purpose to pay any attention to it? Every time we tell ourselves, 'This is my thought' we recognise that it is not I, that it is merely a thought, that it is therefore passing and we need to give no significance to it whatsoever. In this manner when we keep on addressing each rising thought, slowly we will begin to actually



accept that thoughts are all meaningless as they are all only for me and hence I need to pay no attention to them whatsoever.

Of course, this may not typically be in the form of a question, 'For whom is this thought?' It may simply be the recognition that a thought has arisen and this is only a thought, it is for me, it is not I. In this case, the question 'Who am I?' would automatically follow the recognition. Thus Ramana brings our attention into single focus on the only support of all our experiences, which is the 'I'-thought.

When I recognise that all experiences are thoughts, my sorrow and my joy at present are also thoughts, I need no longer look for any supports outside of my own mind. Those who understand that their own minds alone are responsible for all their experiences may begin to work on improving the quality of their minds. They may begin to practise the dropping of negative emotions like anger, greed, jealousy, fear and so on and try to stay with positive emotions like love, compassion, wonderment, acceptance and courage. But here too our supports would be many, they would be the many good thoughts, the many good emotions that we seek to cultivate. One good thought may have been cultivated but we may still have to strive to cultivate the other good qualities.

On the other hand, Ramana takes away the power from any of the thoughts and thus all of the thoughts by repeatedly reminding us through self-enquiry that they are all thoughts. One may make a sword from gold and it could hurt and destroy. One may make an ornament from gold and it may adorn. But the truth is that the support or the basis of both is the gold. Both bad and good thoughts are merely passing images that are sustained by the attention of the 'I'-thought. Without the attention of the 'I'-thought no thought can arise. Thus by asking ourselves the question 'for whom is this?' every time a thought arises, we free ourselves from our dependence on all thoughts at one go. Many different thoughts may seem to continue to arise but none of them would be treated with any degree of significance whatsoever. Multiple identities would also be cut away at one stroke by insistently holding on to this question.

Through this first step of self-enquiry Ramana narrows down our dependence to a single support, the 'I'-thought. He first makes us see that all experiences are in the mind, hence the mind alone is the support of our life and not any of the experiences. Further he reveals through our own enquiry that the mind is nothing but thoughts and all thoughts are dependent on the 'I'-thought, hence the 'I'-thought alone is the support of our life and all our experiences. But who is this 'I'? Who am I? It is this question which takes us to the real support as the 'I'-thought too disappears daily in deep sleep.

Why ask ourselves the question 'Who am I?' Why not simply remain as the Self? Ramana says that if one can do so then surely nothing further needs to be done. In his Arunachala Ashtakam he says, 'If there is no thought 'I' then nothing else arises. However, if other thoughts should arise then asking yourself 'for whom?' 'from where?' get back to the source of the 'I' and abide in the Heart.' One who remains simply as the Self would not ask 'Why not simply remain as the Self?' One who jumps into the water and starts swimming would not say, 'In my opinion we should simply jump into the water and not worry about which end of the pool one should jump from'.

One sees that when thoughts arise they indicate that one is seeking a support outside of oneself. One also sees that if one allows even a single thought to go unattended in a trice it will multiply into numberless thoughts and multiple identities. Hence it is extremely important to go to the source of a thought as it arises. But why not simply drop the thought? Why should one ask oneself 'Who am I?' Is not such a doubt also only a thought? And who is the one who asks this question in the first place? If there is any opinion or any doubt left in the mind there is the presence of an independent entity who has this opinion or doubt. There is therefore a sure need to enquire into who that entity is.

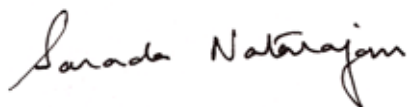
Unless one asks oneself the question 'Who am I?' one may attribute subtle experiences to oneself. One may believe that one experiences the Self or the silence. But who is to experience the Self? Can I as an entity experience the Self? If I were to say

that I have experienced the Self or tasted the Self, would not such a statement merely be a thought as well? Who is to claim the experience? Again in Arunachala Ashtakam Ramana says, 'The thought that I have seen did not arise, how then can the thought that I did not see arise?'

Is not this enquiry also a thought? It is. But it is the only thought that will not allow any other thought. All other thoughts will lead to more thoughts but not so this question. Other thoughts may arise inspite of questioning 'Who am I?' This is due to force of habit and not a fresh proliferation. It is also due to the fact that our attention moves away from the enquiry.

In any other thought based practise, at least two thoughts are bound to be there at the very outset and more too may arise. The two thoughts are that thought to which we are holding on and the 'I'-thought which is its support. For instance I may be holding to the thought that the Supreme takes care of me and I need not worry about anything. Then, there is this thought that I need not worry and there is the I. In course of time, due to the need not to worry, thoughts will become less and less and they may cease to arise altogether. Or there may still remain the thought that I have full faith in the Supreme. In the latter case that thought would still have to be enquired into.

However, in self-enquiry the question 'Who am I?' becomes the only support for us until it establishes us unwaveringly in the source, the Self which is indeed the true basis of all. This is the state which Muruganar Swami refers to when he says to Ramana who is the Self, "Seeing that the sadhus, the sages, have no support other than you, you protect them, govern them. In you I take refuge."



**Forever Is In The Now\****A. R. Natarajan***Introduction**

'Conscious Immortality' while in the flesh is the purpose of evolution says Ramana. Quite obviously it cannot relate to the body. For the body made up of the five elements dissolves into the elements of which it is made when its karmic purpose is done. The longest life is measured in terms of only a hundred years. Ramana would sometimes humorously say that those Yogis who claimed that a body could be perpetuated are not here to report its continuance. Sooner or later the law takes its course. Again Ramana could not be referring to the mind. For mental faculties too decay and wane. Persons with prodigious memories are unable to identify even their own near and dear ones when infirmity and old age take over. Quite obviously, therefore, Ramana must be referring to that which vivifies both the mind and body. It cannot refer to fragmented consciousness, but the fullness of consciousness, that which is always, is eternal, unborn and undying. That which is 'ever there' is timeless. In this state there is no past, present or

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\*An excerpt from the Publication of RMCL of the same title.

future. So when we say 'forever' it is the state which is unaffected by the fluctuating fortunes of life.

Ramana would always emphasise that this state is natural and therefore universal. By necessary implication it is that which can be experienced by each one of us. If only we learn the know-how of discovering it, we could experience that state. One might say that due to the constant movement of the mind, due to constant conceptualisation, we have lost the memory of it. This is something akin to amnesia. We are unaware of our treasure, the loss of which is perhaps not even recognised by us. Triggering of the memory of that which is hidden from us, presently that which is a secret because of our ignorance, is to be achieved by an appropriate method which would enable the experiencing of that state. Once that state is experienced, the joy of it is so overwhelming that it would automatically lure one back to experience it more steadily-to become established in it.

A method means effort. Conscious effort. It is because of this that Ramana used the expression 'Conscious Immortality'. It is a state of alert passivity, where outer actions and thoughts do not disturb that dynamic peace in which one is rooted.

'Forever is in the Now'. What do we mean? The 'now' is not used in the sense of the present tense in contrast to past tense or future tense. 'Now' refers to a 'timeless' quality. It is an unmoving stillness. The flow of life in terms of our relationships to people, ideas and events does not disturb that stillness. And in that stillness the current of vast joy is always the substratum.

The expression 'now' has also to be understood from another angle. It is to say that it is not a post-dated cheque, not something that one has to wait for on life's end. It is that which can be experienced in this life itself, 'in flesh and blood'. To use Ramana's expression, "It is Here and Now".

Ramana has provided us with a straight and easy path for the discovery of one's own natural state of eternity. The focus of attention in his teachings is on the mind and the spiritual heart. On the basis of his own direct experience, for which there is scriptural authority, Ramana locates the seat of consciousness at the right of the chest and terms it the 'Heart'. This centre of intelligence

is also the source of the vital force and the mind. All thoughts in their seed form are imbedded there. The current of consciousness is pumped to the mind and from there to different parts of the body, through channels termed 'nadis'. The primary source of consciousness is only the heart. The mind and the body reflect it as secondary and tertiary sources of consciousness. The heart is like "the dynamo, the mind the electric switch and the body the bulb'. The mind and body are not independent sources of intelligence and without their linkage to the heart within they would be inert and lifeless.

Next, one has to have an in-depth look at the mind. For, until we learn to operate directly and intuitively from the sunlight of pure consciousness the heart, ours is a mental word. What is the nature of the mind? Are there two-the individual and his mind? Or, is the individual himself the mind? All along the assumptions of most spiritual practices is that individual and the mind are separate. For one is seeking to control the mind. This would mean there is the individual, the thing controlled and the act of controlling. Is it not? Ramana says that the basic fallacy is in this assumed division. That which is termed the mind is only varied and innumerable thoughts with a core, the centre, the individual. It is the individual's attention to a particular thought which gives life to it. This must be so because given the fact of the existence of an 'army of thoughts' only a particular thought, that to which the individual has paid attention, is on the thought horizon at any given point of time. Therefore, the key to the understanding of the mind lies in keeping the searchlight focused on the individual.

What would such a searchlight reveal? It would reveal addiction to movement from thought to thought like the wind which is constantly blowing. This situation arises because of the thought-thrust and weight of the tendencies embedded in the heart. They keep sprouting depending on the outer circumstances. Attention of the individual is on these thoughts which are in constant flux and is never therefore single-focused. It is scattered. Where does the solution lie? So long as we keep paying attention to individual thoughts, or as Ramana would say, so long as we "run with the running mind", we are foredoomed. For unless one tackles the thinker to whom thoughts relate, one would only be substituting

thought 'A' for thought 'B', desire 'C' for desire 'D' and so on. You can never switch off thoughts unless you learn to pay attention to the individual and not to his thoughts.

We might say that self-attention is what is required. Ramana says that this is achieved by questioning the truth about the individuality, in order to find out the true import of the 'I'. This attention would be like 'letting off steam from a steam engine'. The thought momentum will come to a grinding halt so long as attention stays fixed on the 'I'.

This weapon in the armoury of self-attention should be supplemented further by what may be termed as 'source consciousness'. The quietened mind's attention has to be turned inward to its pure source. This is achieved by querying "Whence this I?". Then the individual current of consciousness merges in the universal current of consciousness, the heart, like a river merging in the ocean. The mind is then restored to its natural condition. As Ramana would say, "Our minds are now resting in outward objects. The mind resting in its source is its natural condition".

There is a gradual transformation as one gathers strength in inwardness and inherence in the heart. The thought tortured mind becomes tranquil. Its workaholism, result orientation, anxieties and fears drop off like leaves from a tree in autumn. The mind would have found its moorings in its original state. Joy inundates spontaneously. Life blossoms forth in all fullness.

The in-turning of the mind to its source is the way. But a mind fattened by ceaseless thoughts, a mind habituated to externalization would evade one's effort. Hence it is important to remember that the mind is essentially like ether. It is a pure reflection of consciousness. It has therefore the capacity to absorb and retain in memory whatever object or matter its attention is bestowed on. All that we take in through the senses is food for the mind. A photographic negative, a blotting paper type of absorption, takes place. So the input is important. It is in this context that the statement "What we think that we become" is made. If the mind's attention is given to purposeless thoughts, negative thoughts and so on, the mind becomes coloured and polluted by them.

While the body has a system of throwing out the junk

food excessive inputs, the mental garbage remains imprinted in memory. Garbage in is garbage out. The mind which is like a white cloth gets dirtied. These thoughts weaken and enervate the mind. The importance of not paying attention to non-functional thoughts, to thoughts other than those required for performance of one's duties, arises in this context. Time is the most scarce commodity and the frittering away of mental energies would be tragic for the time allotted by karma is limited and uncertain. It is true that turning the mind inward is like putting it through a washing machine. But what happens is that the load of useless and debilitating thoughts makes the in-turning, which is so necessary, difficult and tardy. Hence the need for caution.

Spiritual in-turning is always a hurdles race. The scriptures warn that there will be many obstacles in the path of the virtuous. For, the mind is used to its ego-centric ways. So the see-saw of positive and negative thoughts, steadfastness and listlessness, courage and diffidence goes on. One of the common complaints to Ramana used to be, "I am not pure", "I am too weak", "My circumstances are against me", and so on. The surest way to handicap oneself, Ramana would say, is to think one is handicapped, 'for it is not true'. Why is it not true? Because one is essentially pure. Thoughts of impurity, good, bad and the like relate only to the content of the mind and not to its core. The very purpose of fixing the attention on the 'I' is to cut at the sovereignty of the innumerable thoughts over us.

Self-attention stops conceptualization as it takes place by freezing the thought movement. Thus it provides a means to bypass the clogging and deadening of the mind by a glut of thoughts. In this context Ramana would stress the need to lead a 'recollected and unhurried' life. The recollection is of the strength giving fact that the mind is of the nature of consciousness and therefore fresh and unsullied. Unhurried because an over-busy schedule of our own making leaves no time for such reflection.

Our result oriented mind wearies too soon, forgetting that the 'harvest will come in due season'. The results will be there but intangibly. The mind will be more in equipoise, less concerned with its little world of anxieties and fears. One would be considerate,



more giving and loving. All this cannot be measured, but flowering would be there in gentleness, true humility and humaneness. Ramana would also remind us that one should have the faith that the timing of 'fruits' is best known to God. You do your best and "leave God's business to God". In any walk of life it is only the truly courageous, who remain undaunted by situations and reach the cherished goals.

The Ramana path is suited to contemporary life with all its endless stresses and strains. There is hardly much time for spiritual practice as such. The time which can be allotted to meditation is often minimal. Circumstances do not permit many to find peace through a cloistered life, to withdraw from the world, from one's duties and avocations to find the truth. But the self-attention which Ramana teaches can be practiced amidst all this din and battle of daily existence. Self-attention for however short a time acts as an undercurrent of peace which stays through the working hours. All 'idle' time, during transport or when no urgent work is on hand, can be used for promoting our attitude of inwardness.

In the rough and tumble of earnest spiritual practice, it is the grace of Ramana which can pull one through. His living presence is there as the inner guru, "and we are surrounded on all sides by the nectarous flood of his grace". One has to be constantly in tune with it, 'practising his presence', by being aware of it. Our body-idea is so deep rooted we can of course derive strength and inspiration from his lustrous and powerful eyes, from his gentle smile, from his exemplary life. His sacred words, his clarification to seekers could be constantly referred to and reflected upon. For he has given an 'open' book, a teaching which can be understood and practiced without any kind of previous preparation or scriptural background. All that is needed is the yearning to discover the truth about oneself and the determination not to throw up one's hands until one attains it. The attainment being Self-knowledge, given vigilant awakefulness and the firm faith in Ramana's guidance, one is bound to experience that state of the spacious and free mind, that state of natural happiness.

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## The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar



### Talk 12:

A man asked the Maharshi to say something to him. When asked what he wanted to know, he said that he knew nothing and wanted to hear something from the Maharshi.

M: You know that you know nothing. Find out that knowledge. That is liberation (mukti).

*Guidance received: In deep sleep one knows nothing. In self enquiry too one should put aside the known thought (knower knowing something) and come to knowing nothing (apart from the Self) by enquiring, "Who am I?". When one is effortlessly aware of this "nothing apart", the real Self shines consuming the "knower of something".*

### Talk 13. (Partial Excerpt).

There were many visitors at the time in the hall, including some ladies with their infants. The place resounded with noise. At length silence prevailed. Suddenly Maharshi, who seemed to be looking at infinite space, was heard to say softly, "Monkey"! A little baby was then discovered in the doorway with a large monkey standing on his hind legs, who with both hands was fondling the

child not hurting it in the least, both being at peace with each other in Maharshi's presence. When Maharshi's voice was heard the monkey jumped away adroitly and disappeared.

*Guidance received: "Suddenly Maharshi, who seemed to be looking at infinite space (samadhi), was heard to say softly, "Monkey!" Till one is indifferent to both samadhi and sensory action and allow them to come and go naturally in the indifferent, still consciousness which is realised as one's nature (sahaja), one should practice self enquiry.*

### **Talk 13. (Excerpt)**

D.: How long will it take for one to get that (Grace of the Master)?

M.: Why do you desire to know?

D.: To give me hope.

M.: Even such a desire is an obstacle. The Self is ever there, there is nothing without it. Be the Self and the desires and doubts will disappear. Such Self is the witness in sleep, dream and waking states of existence. These states belong to the ego. The Self transcends even the ego.

*Guidance received: The solution (real Self) pre-exists the ego and its desires and doubts. Even a hope giving or hope holding implicitly denies the ever-present Grace of the Master, the Self. It pre-exists the ego and its three experiences of waking, dream and deep sleep. Each time one enquires, "For whom is this thought? Who am I?" one takes the ego (and all its possessions including waking, dream and deep sleep) to its pre-existing Source - the Self.*

### **Talk 17. (Excerpt).**

He (Mr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz) wanted to know if it was right to kill animals such as tigers, deer etc., and use the skin for Yoga posture (Asana).

M.: The mind is the tiger or the deer.

D.: If everything be illusion, then one can take lives?

M.: To whom is illusion? Find that out! In fact everyone is a "killer

of the Self (atmahan)" every moment of his life.

*Guidance received: One should stick to the root error of ego forgetting its source and raising by "killing" or "forgetting" the Self. One should avoid intellectual arguments however important they may appear. For whom is this thought of "ahimsa"? Who am I? The root of all himsa, that of killing or disturbing that which is gentler than the gentlest (Atma), is absorbed in the Self.*

### **Talk 18. (Excerpt).**

D.: There are six centres in the body and there are corresponding centres in the world.

M.: Yes. What is in the world is in the body; and what is in the body is in the world also.

D.: Is the sacredness of Benares a matter of faith, or is it externally also real?

M.: Both.

D.: Some people are attracted to one place of pilgrimage and others to another. Is it according to their temperaments?

M.: Yes. Just consider how all of you born in different places and living in other lands are gathered here today? What is the Force which has attracted you here? If this is understood the other Force is also understood.

*Guidance received: If one understands that "what is in the world is in the body; and what is in the body is in the world also", one is inward turned. The pilgrimage places are indeed spiritual centres. However, faith is also required. What is it that pulls me to Tiruvannamalai? It is the power of the place and my faith. In fact, what is present in the world is present in the body. What is "power of the place" is present within me as "faith". When the sadhana is external, both are essential. For whom is this faith which has helped in all sadhana? Who am I?*

### **Talk 19.**

Mr. Grant Duff asked: Where are memory and forgetfulness located?

M.: In the mind (chitta).

*Guidance received: Memory is birth and forgetfulness is death. Both are located in the mind. When the mind is transcended and eliminated through the quest, "For whom is this thought? Who am I?" the Self shines by itself without dependency on memory or birth and eliminating the apparent hindrance of forgetfulness or death.*

### **Talk 20.**

Mr. Evans-Wentz: Is solitude necessary for a Jnani?

M.: Solitude is in the mind of man. One might be in the thick of the world and maintain serenity of mind; such a one is in solitude. Another may stay in a forest, but still be unable to control his mind. He cannot be said to be in solitude. Solitude is a function of the mind. A man attached to desire cannot get solitude wherever he may be; a detached man is always in solitude.

D.: So then, one might be engaged in work and be free from desire and keep up solitude. Is it so?

M.: Yes. Work performed with attachment is a shackle, whereas work performed with detachment does not affect the doer. He is, even while working, in solitude.

*Guidance received: Solitude cannot be found in places or times or by aversion to work. It is to be found in detachment. If one feels, "I am in deep solitude in this place", one opens up the possibility for disturbance. Real detachment and real solitude are only in erasing the ego. Solitude is not a possession of the ego. When associated with another thought, am I in solitude? For whom is this thought? Who am I?*

### **Talk 20 (Excerpt)**

D.: They say that there are many saints in Tibet who remain in solitude and are still very helpful to the world. How can it be?

M.: It can be so. Realisation of the Self is the greatest help that can be rendered to humanity. Therefore, the saints are said to be helpful, though they remain in forests. But it should not be forgotten that solitude is not in forests only. It can be had even in towns, in the thick of worldly occupations.

D.: Is it not necessary that the saints should mix with people and be helpful to them?

M.: The Self alone is the Reality; the world and the rest of it are not. The realised being does not see the world as different from himself.

D.: Thus then, the saint's realisation leads to the uplift of humanity without the latter being aware of it. Is it so?

M.: Yes. The help is imperceptible but is still there. A saint helps the whole of humanity, unknown to the latter.

*Guidance received: When Gandhiji tried to read some pages before a judge to earn money for himself and his family, he could not even go through the few pages. When he integrated the Indian Consciousness into one to seek freedom from the British Consciousness, he could work tirelessly the whole day including giving three-hour speeches. One's ability to "help" depends on the expanse of the Consciousness within. To identify with the limitless Self beyond all "others" including all worlds and all individuals is the best "help" the "I" can "do" to "others". For whom is this thought of helping others? Who am I?*

### **Talk 20. (Excerpt)**

D.: If there be a hundred Self-realised men will it not be to the greater benefit of the world?

M.: When you say 'Self' you refer to the unlimited, but when you add 'men' to it, you limit the meaning. There is only one Infinite Self.

D.: Yes, yes, I see! Sri Krishna has said in the Gita that work must be performed without attachment and such work is better than idleness. Is it Karma Yoga?

M.: What is said is given out to suit the temperament of the hearers.

D.: In Europe it is not understood by the people that a man in solitude can be helpful. They imagine that men working in the world can alone be useful. When will this confusion cease? Will the European mind continue wading in the morass or will it realise

the truth?

M.: Never mind Europe or America. Where are they except in your mind? Realise your Self and then all is realised. If you dream and see several men, and then wake up and recall your dream, do you try to ascertain if the persons of your dream creation are also awake?

*Guidance Received: Karma Yoga involves 'Motiveless work' which merges each individual act into the Universal Work of Ishwara leaving the Consciousness within free, as "all this is my work automatically going on". Love of the particular merging into the Motiveless, Unconditional, Universal Love of Ishwara is Bhakti Yoga leaving the Consciousness within to experience, "all this is my love - Unconditional, Universal". Both these posit the Omnipotence of Ishwara - the one Self at the core of all non-self of "all work" or "love of all". To know that God in "all" erases the need for Karma and Love of a specific "another". This posits Omniscience Consciousness within who knows that "all this is only 'I' - all this is my own dream made of me". Atma Vichara merges Omnipotence and Omniscience into Omnipresence. There is no "other" to help, love, dream about or liberate. Only absorb my dream into my Self. I Am. The Karma Yogi and Bhakti Yogi too will arrive at the Self by their surrender to the Universal.*

## Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi's Sri Arunachala Navamanimalai<sup>1</sup>

*The Nine-Gems Necklace of Arunachala<sup>1</sup> (Part 8)*

*G Kameshwar*

(Verse-8)

*puvikkut pongiTum puvicchor pungavan  
purikkuT puNNiyan cuzhikuT cuntaran  
RavaRkkuc cuntaran^ catikkuR pannanan  
talattiR punpulan cazhakkir tunpuRun  
tavikkuT tun^ciTum paTikkuT tannuLan  
tazhaikka tanpata menakku tantanan  
civakka cinmayan^ cezhikka tanmayan^  
cekattiR Runnucem poruppu cemmaLE*

Word split, and meaning:

*puvikkuT* : In this world

*pungavan purikkuT* : Among the cities of Almighty God (Shiva)

*pongiTum puvicchor* : (the one) spoken of as the 'surging place'

*cuzhikuT puNNiyan* : In (the city of) cuzhi, the person of virtue

*cuntaran tavaRkku* : To Sundaram of high penance

*cuntaram catikku* : To Chaste Saundarya

*uRpannam*: (I was) born

*cekattil cinmayam civakka* : So that, in this world, Consciousness may blaze

*tanmayam cezhikka* : And Reality (Self) flourish

*tunnu cemporuppu cemmaLE* : Rising as the Red Hill, O Lord of high eminence!

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<sup>1</sup> English verse rendering is an attempt by this author. The explanatory notes derives primary information from the Tamil treatise, "Arunachala Stuti Pancakam – Upadesha Noon Malai – Urai" – By Srimati T R Kanakammal, published by Sri Ramanasramam



*talattil punpulan cazhakkil* : In this world, ensnared in the useless, unreal, vile senses

*tunpuRum tavikku* : Misery experienced; distress

*tun^ciTum paTikku* : In order that it is extinguished

*tan uLam tazhaikka* : Making my heart bubble with bliss

*tan patam enakkut tantanan* : He gave me his own state

Verse rendering:

Among sacred cities of Shiva  
In this wide world  
Known as the 'surging city' Chuzhi  
Of sacred swirl,  
To the man of virtue, Sundaram  
Of penance high  
And chaste lady Soundarya  
Born was I.

In order that in the world  
Consciousness blaze  
Reality-Self flourish;  
And to totally erase  
Misery, malaise,  
Of my vile senses  
Of worldly ways;  
(And)To make my heart brim with bliss  
The Great Lord gave me His own place;  
Rising as the Red hill Aruna  
His Highness, He, of Eminence, Grace!

Prose rendering:

In this world, among the very many places sacred to Shiva, there is a place famous as 'Surging place'. This is the sacred town of *Thiru Cuzhi* (also known as Trishulapuri). In this place, I was born to Sundaram Iyer, a person of high penance and virtue, and his wife Soundarya (Azhagamma). The most munificent Lord

Arunachaleshwara, who stands as the Red Hill Arunachala; whose purpose is to spread the splendor of Supreme Consciousness and for the radiance of the Self to flourish; that Lord Arunachala of supreme eminence and grace, in order that the distress and misery arising out of my low down senses may be erased; and in order that my heart may be weighed down by a flood of bliss; He (Lord Arunachala) gave me his own state.

Notes:

Tiruchchuzhi is famous for the rising of waters in the Bhuminatheswara temple tank during the Tamil month of *Masi*. This tank, known as Trishula Teertha, is said to have been created when Lord Shiva hurled his trident (Trishula) on the earth so that the waters of deluge could be drawn in and the earth saved. It has been noticed that in the month of *Masi* (February-March), the water level in the tank starts rising some ten days before the full moon. It is said to rise about 12 inches every day till the full moon day and then falls at the same rate every day for the next ten days. This rising of waters has led to Tiruchuzhi being well known as '*pongiTum puv*' (the 'Surging City').

There is a story behind the composition of this verse. During the time Ramana was staying in Virupaksha cave in Arunachala hill, there was a devotee by name 'Ishwara Swami', who used to be with him. Ishwara Swami was quite adept in Tamil poetry and would often have a game of poetry writing with Ramana. He would write a verse and request Bhagavan to write a counter verse, and so it went. Bhagavan would often oblige him, and any number of verses were composed in this manner, almost all of which have been lost in the annals of time.

Once, Ishwara Swami read a verse composed by the famous Tamil poet Ottakoothar (contemporary of Kampan, the great emperor of poetry). The poem was in praise of a Sinhala King, in gratitude for all the gifts bestowed by the King to the poet. The verse was composed with a fascinating formation of words and metre. As soon as he read it, Ishwara Swami was keen that Bhagavan should compose a verse in the same metre

and form. He conveyed his request to Bhagavan, saying that if Ottakoothar could compose such a beautiful verse in appreciation of the munificence of a mere King, should not Bhagavan write a verse in the same metre, in praise of Lord Arunachala, explaining what a supreme gift the Lord had bestowed him with. Bhagavan accepted the request and composed a verse in the same metre, which was then included as a 'gem' in the nine-gems necklace of 'Shri Arunachala Navamanimalai'. This is that verse (Verse 8 of Navamanimalai).

Indeed what mortal King can compare to the Supreme Sovereign of all Creation, Lord Arunachaleshwara, who bestows his own Kingship to a sincere devotee; who, by himself, gives boons unsought... In Aksharamanamai, Bhagavan says the Lord Arunachaleshwara has '*kELAdu aLikkum kEdu il pugazh*' (verse 22), i.e., unstained fame as one who gives even without being asked to. He also tells Arunachala – '*nontiTAtu untanai tantu enaikkonTilai*' (verse 62) – i.e., you painlessly finished me and gave me your own place in exchange. Such is He, Arunachala, who bestows his own Self, His Bliss, to the devotee. All the riches of all the universes do not amount to a drop in the ocean of That Bliss which Arunachala bestows to his devotee. Glory to Arunachala!



**Aksharamanamalai***Dr.Sarada*

*tAnE tAnE tattuvam idanai  
tAnE kATTuvAi aruNAchalA*

The truth shines of its own accord, without any support. It does not require anything other than it. That is the simplest definition of the truth that Bhagavan is giving us. For all the other things we need to depend on something or the other. Everything is relative to something else or the other.

Every one of our senses require the proper functioning of our body at the physiological level. They also require an external factor to make them possible. There should be light, even if our eyes are quite intact if there is no light outside we cannot see. If there is a vacuum outside, we cannot hear sound. So each of the sense experiences is dependent on something external to us. What we say is 'I' is tAnE tAnE tattuvam, it is the truth by itself, it is not a relative truth.

We see that the body and the senses are dependent on something external to this I. What else do we call our own self? We could call the breath the 'I' since it is pervading our entire body. Because of the breath we are alive. Even that breath is dependent on internal and external factors which are not under our control. We cannot breathe without oxygen outside and internally our organs should be in such a condition that the breathing happens. People with asthma understand the difficulty in breathing.

Yet, that which is called I, Bhagavan defines it as 'tAnE tAnE' it is by itself, not dependent on any external factor. Should we say that it is our thoughts that constitute our true nature? But we find that our thoughts are dependent on two aspects - one is the perception of the objects based on which the thoughts arise. Without an object where is the thought? So the thoughts are dependent on perception of objects apart from the self. They are also dependent on memory. If I forget everything I know till this moment, I cannot

think about anything. It is only because I have a factor called memory which in turn is embodied in this organ called brain and its functioning that I can think. Based on the functioning of the organ the capacity to remember varies, the memory varies, the capacity to think and analyse varies. This is because though the brain is not the mind, though it is not the thinking faculty, it is the organ which allows the thinking faculty to express itself. Just as the light bulb is not the energy with which we see, but without the bulb we may not see the light over here. So there is an organ on which our thinking faculty and its expression is dependent.

So what is it that shines on its own accord as our self? What is it that is I? That which is not dependent on anything else? Thus when we enquire and turn within ourselves, Bhagavan says 'tirumbi aham tanai dinam ahakkaN kAN'. We can interpret it as 'turn within' because we are now focused on external things so 'tirumbi' is 'turn within'. This division of external and internal has been created by us, but as long as it is valid the turning within becomes necessary as a practise to make us understand that we are not dependent on something external.

Obviously all our experiences are dependent on external factors other than the experience (anubhava) of our own existence. This anubhava of our own existence is not dependent on any other factor. That alone exists by itself, tAnE tAnE...

When we are continuously and constantly turning within to see the I, Arunachala has assured that it will be revealed. This is Bhagavan's promise. It will be revealed. How to see it? Always (dinaam). Always, but not with a sense of boredom. The first reaction of the mind when asked to do something constantly is boredom. But it has never got bored of thinking. All the time it is churning out thoughts after thoughts. One thought leading to another. Constantly the mind is chattering and is never bored. But when asked to meditate for a few moments it is bored. We have never questioned this fallacy in us.

Siva Prakasam Pillai writes in 'Ramana Pada Malai' – 'Bhagavan says do not be concerned about the business of others

(external)'. Be involved with yourself. Do the enquiry joyously. In that lies true freedom. Whenever I am dependent on anything then I am bound to it. When I recognise that my existence which is the fullness of bliss is not dependent on any external factor and it cannot be disturbed by any external factor by the presence or absence of any external factor, what a great freedom it is! So it must make us joyous to get back to that freedom. All of us long for freedom at some level or the other. All of us long for peace. Bhagavan has promised us that.

If that pursuit, if turning within fails to give us happiness what can we say but, 'deeramil ahattil tEDi undanai yAn tirumba vuTREN'.

'Arunachala I do not want to run away. I want to experience that bliss you are offering to me. But when I turn inwards I do not have courage. I am searching within but without sufficient courage.' What courage? To surrender all at his feet. To recognise that all else is meaningless.

Is it acceptable to us? How worried we are if somebody does not listen to us, if we are not recognised by the world. Are we ready to be free of our own dependence on the world? Are we ready to recognise in actual fact that neither are we dependent on the world, nor is the world dependent on us? Both are fallacies. It is very obvious the world is not dependent on us. The world existed beautifully before me and will do so after me. None of our actions play any major role in the existence/non existence of the world. Even if we believe that we are acting and producing some results, these are not of any major consequence. Nothing stops because of our non actions. Nothing happens because of our actions. We believe that our actions create happiness for others and ourselves. First of all when we cannot create happiness for ourselves how can we give happiness to anybody else? How come that so many of us are in a continuous state of action day in and out to create happiness but nobody is in a steady state of bliss? We have never asked ourselves these genuine questions/real questions?

We do not have courage. 'Oh!Arunachala let it happen. Otherwise I will not be able to take that search to its point of

fulfilment. I give up.' What is Bhagavan revealing through his life? Bhagavan faced death at the age of 16. He stayed with it, did not run away until he could recognise the meaning of life and death. But we are not ready to stay with the question 'Who am I?' 'You have told me Arunachala that it will be revealed, but I do not have the courage. Please give me the grace to remain in the search until the answer is revealed by that very grace. So which is the true prayer? Bhagavan is teaching us here to ask for courage to pursue the enquiry until we are steadily able to abide in the Self. Of course Bhagavan is the kalpataru. He is the one who is fulfilling all our desires.

Everything is happening by the divine force. Many forces are working together to fulfill its command. We need not pray for all that is happening in the world. Bhagavan has well laid plans for each of us. We only need to pray that we need not remain in this confusion that things are happening by our effort.

We need not remain in this confusion that we are limited entities. So 'O Ramana! O Arunachala! Bless me to get back to my true nature, to have the courage to hold on to the search at all times until I am unwaveringly abiding in the heart which is you, which is your true nature.'

You have told me at the very outset this beautiful mantra that you are the heart, you are the Self 'Arunachalame aham'. So help me to have the courage, to get back to my true nature and abide ever at your feet. '

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

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## Ramana is the Way of Ramana

*Shyam Sundar*

Am I divided into seer and seen? In fact projected seer and projected seen both depend on 'my' being HERE AND NOW.. Hence Self abidance practice every time.

Everyone is feeling the existence so all are living on the same level but due to desire of rising above that common level various problems are being created.

I am non-self if I am connected with mental scene every time. I am in the way towards Self If I am all the time connected with existence feeling in the heart.





## Conversations with Sri ARN

*Chadalavada Vijaya Kumar*

It was a bright sunny day with clear blue sky and cool breeze, a typical day in Bangalore during February, the year was 2007. I decided to visit RMCL, Mekhri Circle around 11.30 am. No one was there except the gardener and the caretaker. I sat quietly and meditated. The noise of traffic outside the hall receded gradually and I felt the silence ....may be after half an hour or so. I heard some one whispering to the caretaker. I turned and saw the familiar cheerful face of Sri A.R.Natarajan. He had dropped in to give instructions to the care taker regarding some seminar which was to be held there.

He told me to hold on for five minutes and he came over to chat with me. It started with casual chat then suddenly the topic of our discussion became very intense but it was a very exhilarating 20 to 25 minutes of talk. I would like to share the gist of the talk in question and answer format, which I had jotted down in my old diary.

Me: Sir, how are you?

ARN: Fine. You prefer to come during this time?

Me: Yes Sir. I prefer silence.

ARN: How is your practice of meditation/ self-enquiry?

I was waiting for a chance. I latched onto it.

Me: It's going on Sir, but I feel I am struck at one point.

ARN: It happens, do not worry but keep pursuing ....

Me: Yes Sir, may I ask a question?

ARN: Sure, go ahead I have 10 to 15 minutes to spare.

Me: Sir, theoretically I have understood Ramana's teachings but how can we be without thoughts? We require thoughts for our day to day activities isn't it? Even Ramana while teaching he would have had thoughts, right?

ARN: I will come to Ramana later but yes you do require thoughts for day to day activities. You can broadly categorise thoughts into functional thoughts and para psychological thoughts. The former is for day to day existence does not really trouble you but the latter one requires attention these are thoughts relating to fear, anger, greed, jealousy etc. where one is affected.

Me: Agreed Sir, but still these are thoughts. Are we not supposed to go into a thoughtless state?

ARN: Okay, I will explain it in a different way. Look we have body, we have mind, right? These are the facilities given to us but we are not body or mind. Okay? Now what is mind? It's a bundle of thoughts dependent on I - thought / first thought on waking / Ego ..Right? Now this ego is a knot between body and Self isn't it?

Me: Yes Sir ...

ARN: Along with body and mind take this knot or ego or I - thought also as a facility given to you. Then your perception changes. That ego is not you. It draws power from the source then it misguides to take body as you. That is where all of us go wrong. Ramana says you catch hold of this fellow and keenly observe gradually it will lose its grip on you. Got it?

Me: Oh okay Sir now I am getting it ....

ARN: Now once the grip is loosened then use thoughts as and when required. In Ramana's case he uses thoughts as and when required then it vanishes without leaving a residuary memory. He is free always.

Me: I got it. But it requires lot of practice.

ARN: Yes of course but no harm in trying. I suggest once in a way come to Satsang, it's good. I know you like silence. All the best.

That ended my very fruitful conversation with Sri ARN.

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## Experiences with Ramana- 2

*Janaki Murali*

### **What is happiness?**

How do we define happiness? How do we find happiness, or look for happiness?

What exactly is happiness?

I posed this question to one of the devotees at the Ramanasram, Tiruvannamalai. He said, 'Happiness is a term of reference inside you. Look at a child, he knows what is happiness, he likes a certain sweet and rejects another. He cries when he is not happy. Nobody taught the child what is happiness.'

The devotee saw my puzzled face and qualified his statement, 'Find out what makes you unhappy, which will tell you what happiness is.'

So, I tried to understand what makes me unhappy. 'I am physically unfit; I don't spend enough time with family and friends... there were so many more such silly recurrent thoughts going over and over and over in my mind in an endless loop.'

I'm sure, you all have your own unhappy thoughts – a litany of complaints against life, which gets more negative by the moment, hour and day. Often, we assuage our anxieties with, 'I will be happy, once I get this.'

But, honestly, will we be happy? For, the next thing in our bucket list will start its recurrent loop. For, we aren't happy with what we have or possess. We want more, our wants keep growing.

In Talks with Ramana, a devotee asked Bhagavan, 'What is that higher happiness?'

Bhagavan replied, 'To be free from anxieties. Possessions create anxieties such as their safeguarding, their utilization, etc. Non-possession does not bring any anxieties in its train... Divestment of possessions is the highest happiness.'

Instead of wanting more and being unhappy with our present situation, what if we concentrated instead on what makes us happy. For example, instead of complaining about the rains, floods, fallen trees and traffic woes – how about marveling at the ozone rich air in the morning; cherishing the sparkling raindrops on the fresh green leaves on a rain swept afternoon; and thrilling to the sound of the Koel on the tree outside our window? The situation is the same, but we see it differently and learn to find happiness in what we have.

In Talks with Ramana, Bhagavan explains, ‘Your nature is bliss. Ignorance is now hiding that Bliss. Remove the ignorance for Bliss to be freed.’

Bhagavan further qualifies this: ‘The mind is by nature restless. Begin liberating it from its restlessness; give it peace; make it free from distractions; train it to look inward; make this a habit. This is done by ignoring the external world and removing the obstacles to peace of mind’.

‘Find out whence the present problem arises and there is the solution also. You will discover that there is no birth, no present trouble, or unhappiness etc. All is That: All is Bliss.’

Of course, training our mind is not easy, it requires regular practice. But, this requires only 15 minutes each day. I try to get some quiet time during the morning hours, but if I’m busy rushing through my morning chores, I try to catch some time in the lazy moments post lunch. And, if all has failed, there’s always the solitude of the night, before I go to sleep.

Once we make it a practice to look inwards for happiness, all that makes us unhappy quietly fades away.

Bhagavan says, ‘Pleasure consists in turning and keeping the mind within; pain is sending it outward. There is only pleasure. Absence of pleasure is called pain. One’s nature is pleasure – bliss (Ananda).

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## Ramana's Song of Grace - 23

*Revathi Sankar*

We are talking about the songs praised by different devotees of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. We have been talking about one of the two first devotees who have taken instructions from Bhagavan Ramana, Siva Prakasam Pillai.

Siva Prakasam Pillai's Pada Malai has been set to music as Ramana Pada Pancharatnam – a unique musical piece which has been set by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan on the lines of Saint Tyagaraja's Pancharatna Kritis. Smt. Sulochana Natarajan has very carefully selected the verses from Pada Malai and set the ragas of Nattai, Goula, Arabhi, Varali and Sri which are the same as Pancharatnam. We will be meditating on the same.

The first charana of the song goes like this

*VAmpol kaimAr onDrum vEnDAm vaLal pAdam vAzhgavE  
tEn pOI inikkum tiruvAkkuLLa dEvan pAdam vAzhgavE*

- Tamil

*Agasadante Enu paDeyade ellava nIDuva pAdake jaya  
jEnante sihi mAtugaLaDuva dEvana pAda bALali*

-Kannada

Meaning –

Blessed be the munificent One who, like the sky [that showers rain], does not expect any reward. Blessed be the Feet of Him, the Lord whose speech is like nectar.

Bhagavan is like a rain showering cloud who never expects anything from anyone because there is no other for him. He is the Sadguru who keeps giving us even without us asking, kELAdallikum. He not only gives us what we ask for, he also gives us the highest, his own state to us.

There is an incident in Bhagavan's life. Once there came a sinner to Bhagavan's Sannidhi. People were just moving away from him. Everybody shunned him because of the amount of sins

he had committed. When he came to Bhagavan after realizing his mistakes, Bhagavan with his most loving look gave him the assurance to ask what he wanted to.

To the astonishment of everybody, when the sinner asked Bhagavan for a way out of his sinful past, Bhagavan asked the sinner for Guru Dakshina. Bhagavan never asks for anything from anyone. So the devotees gathered there were amazed. The sinner agreed to give Bhagavan whatever he asked for. Bhagavan asked him to give away all the results of his good deeds. The sinner believed he hadn't performed any to give the results of his good deeds. However, Bhagavan was insistent. So he said that even if there was any kind of good deed he had done without his knowledge, he had given away all the fruits of it to Bhagavan.

Bhagavan didn't stop there. He asked for more. He said 'Now give me the results of all the sin you have committed'. The sinner was taken aback. He was not at all willing to do so. How could he give the results of his bad deeds? He was deeply disturbed. Bhagavan said, 'You better take care of yourself if you don't wish to give me the fruits of your sins also as guru dakshina'. The devotee didn't have any other option except to give away the results of his bad deeds as well. When he did so, Bhagavan told him, 'Now there is no good or bad in you. You are totally pure, totally free.' A vast peace swallowed the man and pervaded the whole atmosphere. Bhagavan gave him the experience of fullness at once and without expecting anything or fearing about any bad things occurring to himself.

How will anybody accept a bad thing? I would never want any bad to come to me. But Bhagavan is such a one who never sees bad or good, himself or in others at all. Everything is one for him. With his sweet honey like voice he asks us to go within and find the truth for ourselves and hold on to it. The best service any individual can give to the society is to Know Oneself.

Oh! Lord Ramana

Thank you Bhagavan  
Your attention seeking Child :)

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## Amma to Us

*Shankaranarayana, Geetha Kulkarni*



### **Shankaranarayan Sir**

Amma, Sulochanaji, was a perfectionist. She wanted every act or every activity in an orderly manner, not in a haphazard or a half-hearted manner. So I followed her foot steps and I was recognizing a systematic way in all her activities. I followed her and wanted to make myself involved in Puja also in the same kind of orderly fashion, with great neatness, everything clean and tidy. I observed that and followed her implicitly. So she also liked me doing the puja and she used to appreciate my puja.

At the same time she wanted to give me some suggestions. But she did not want to tell anything to such a senior person as me. So she used to point out these aspects to the youngsters at RMCL who were invariably there. She would tell them that such and such a thing should be done like this, such and such a thing should be clean and neat, overflowing should not be there in oil lamps. All those things I felt that she was actually telling me, as it was I who performed the puja. Such was her thoughtfulness that she would not tell me directly because I am senior person. So I followed that without any embarrassment. She is Mother, Azhagamma to me.



### **Geetha Kulkarni**

When I came to RMCL 29 years back, Amma showed me her love just like a mother. She made me sit next to her with Natarajan Sir and Sarada akka and gave me food. I stayed in my sister's house since we had shifted to Bangalore only then. She said until you get a house and stay on your own, you have to have lunch with us only. She insisted and gave me all the love just as a mother would. I wonder at this because we were practically strangers to one another. They didn't know me at all. I was a new comer, but she was a mother to me the first day itself. Now since 29 years, she is a mother to me.

When I wake up in the morning, I have a list of people who I remember every day, who are close to my heart, remember to show gratitude to them all. Amma is one of them. So, every day I used to eat with them. Amma used to prepare Badam Halwa very well. Whenever she prepared it she used to bring it and also tell me Geetha I have kept Badam Halva in the kitchen so please share it with everyone. It is not that I had to respect her for her age. It is the love which she showered on all of us that made her a motherly figure to all of us. So I am blessed to work with such a beautiful person for 19 years. Likewise Natarajan sir also, the whole family treated me so well.

She used to love flowers. At the shrine, during all the festivals, she insisted that we buy new vases, every step had to have similar vases. She would instruct me very wonderfully about



the combination of flowers and the colors. During the Seminars also she used to tell us where the vases needed to be placed and which flowers needed to be changed for the third day. The Seminar used to be conducted for three days then. And how many vases needed to be kept for how many tables. She used to be particular about all these things.

She was at the hospital when she got her knee operated. When we went to see her at the hospital, she gave chocolates to everybody, that also she gave it in a box with Bhagavan's sticker on it. So she was such a perfectionist.

Garden was another love for her. Whenever she went to the Shrine, I also used to go to the Shrine sometime; she used to say to the gardener why have these plants been placed here instead of there. Likewise when she went to Holland, when Poorna was born, she sent greetings with flowers only even from there. She was so fond of flowers.

She never showed any sign of being the boss or boss's wife. She used to work with us like any other co – worker. This will be a lifelong memorial day, not only today. When Amma was there, then also I used to remember her. The amount of love they have showed me and the food they have fed me will keep me indebted to Amma and Natarajan sir always.

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## Sri Ramana Sahasranama Stuti<sup>1</sup>

### 296. DOSAGNAH

One who is aware of faults.

Ramana was omniscient. He knew each person's mind with all its flaws. For instance, he was aware that his exemplary attendant Madhava had a secret desire to be the head of an institution. Hence when an offer of headship of an institution at Kumbakonam was made to him, Ramana encouraged him to accept it. Though he was all knowing, Ramana would not grudge or look down on any one. He would always stress the strong points.

*Om doSagnAya namaha.*

### 297. DOSANASANAHA

Destroyer of faults.

For those who practice in the presence of Ramana, faults gradually get corroded and the mind becomes pure. His look has the power of destroying the ego. Once the ego is destroyed or merged in its source, the mind becomes a pure reflection of the Self.

*Om doSa nASanAya namaha.*

### 298. DVADASARNA MANUDHYEYAH

One who is meditated on by the mantra consisting of twelve syllables, "Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya".

A staunch and an early devotee of Ramana, T.K. Sudaresa Iyer, writes as to how the mantra came to him. Before coming to Bhagavan he used to repeat the mantra 'Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya', to invoke the presence of Lord Krishna. This has 12 syllables. After becoming a single minded devotee of Bhagavan he wanted a similar mantra on him. "It struck me intuitively that 'Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya' might be an exact parallel to 'Om

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<sup>1</sup> Thousand (1000) Names in Praise of Ramana- Sanskrit composition by Sri Jagadeeswara Shastri. English Translation and Commentary by Sri A.R.Natarajan

Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya' since it also had twelve syllables". When he reported this to Bhagavan he approved of his using it for his japa or meditation. Bhagavan had specifically recommended to another ardent devotee, Smt. Kamakshi, to use this mantra as it was most efficacious.

In the book of worship 'Sri Ramana Ashtottara' we have an abridged version 'Om Bhagavate namaha'. Bhaga stands for plenitude, courage, renown, beauty, knowledge and dispassion.

*Om dvAdaSArna manudhyeyAya namaha.*

### **299. DVDASANTA STHALA STHITAH**

One who resides in Madurai.

The reference is to the period when Ramana was studying in Madurai. It was there that he had the death experience in mid-july 1896, which made him steadily Self-aware thereafter. The scriptures mention six chakras beginning with Muladhara. The place of the presiding deity of these sources of power is called dvAdaSAnta. The city of Madurai has many names but this one is the most significant. The city must have received this name because the principal deity worshiped is shakti, or power in the form of Goddess Meenakshi.

*Om dvAdaSANTA sthala sthitAya namaha.*

### **300. DURVIGAHYAH**

One of immeasurable depth.

Measurement is possible only when the mental yardstick can be used. How to know one who is the fullness of consciousness beyond the comprehension of a limited mind?

*Om durvigAhyAya namaha.*

### **301. DURADHARSAH**

One who cannot be conquered.

Ramana was a true hero having conquered his five senses. As the master of his senses, he had no expectation, no fears.

*Om durAdharSAya namaha.*

**News & Events***Revathi Sankar***RMCL's Ramana Natya Shishirotsava 2017**

Leading Young Dance Gurus performed with their students

Gurus Smt.Rupa Hemanth, Smt. Padmini Achchi, Smt.Lakshmi Rekha, Smt.Poorna Suresh, Smt.Rashmi Thaper and Sri Vincent Poul performed Bharatanatyam and Guru Smt.Sampada Pillai performed Kathak















**RMCL's Ramana Natya Shishirtosava 2017**

Artistes of RMCL performed the dance ballet 'Ramana Vijaya'

Sri Lakshmipathiah, Deputy Registrar, Societies Presided over the event. Sri Prakash Raj, Coordinator HSSF was the Chief Guest and Sri Sai Venkatesh of Sai Arts International was the Guest of Honour.

















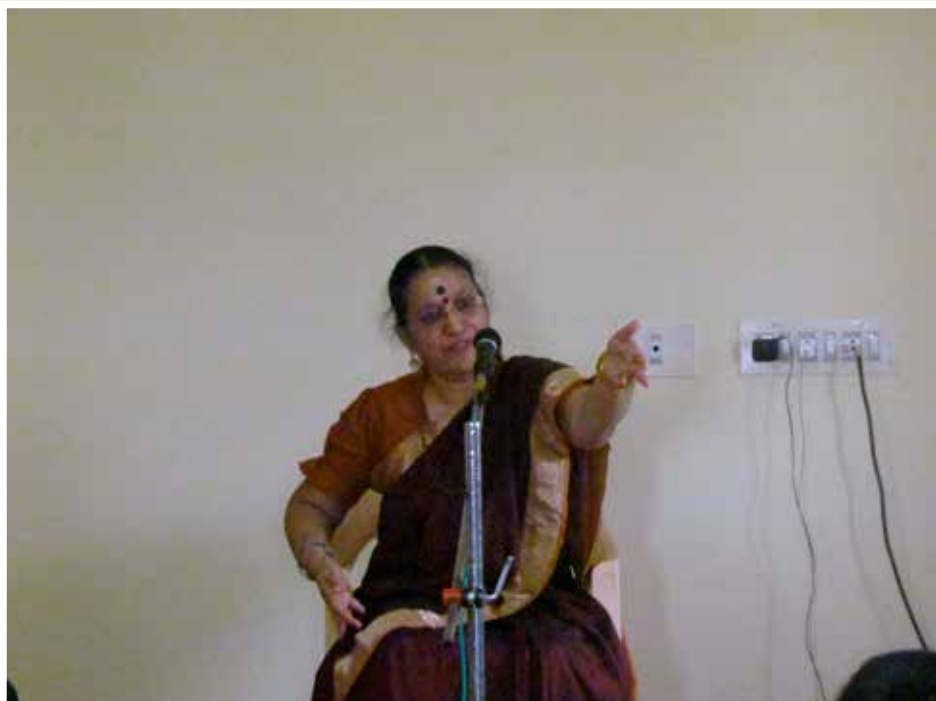
Tiruvannamalai Workshop at AARN. Watching sunrise, puja, discussions, talks and rendering of Aksharamanamalai English and Tamil by G.Kameshwar and Ambika Kameshwar at Sri Ramanasramam.















Ramana Music at Laldas Venkateswara Temple.

Ramana Jayanthi at Ramana Shrine. Ramana Tiruvembavai led by Smt.V.Radha .









Offering of Ramananjali during Ramana Jayanthi at Sri Ramanasramam







## Special Programs in February

### *At Bangalore, Ramana Shrine Mekhri Circle*

#### **13th Mahasivaratri Cultural Festival**

7.00 p.m - Buds and Blossoms – Young artistes of RMCL & Japamalasara

9.00 p.m. - Vedic Chanting led by Sri H.S.Suryanarayana

11.00 p.m. - Ramana Music by Sri H.S.Thyagaraja

12.00 midnight Special abhisheka

1.00 a.m. Ramana Nritya by Srinivasan Rajendran and Trou[e

2.00 a.m. Ramana Nritya by Artistes of RMCL

3.00 a.m. Special abhishekha

4.00 a.m. Aksharamanamalai

5.00 a.m. Special abhisheka

#### **18th Father's Day – Celebrating Sundaram Iyer**

11.30 a.m. - Ramananjali Devotional Music Feature by students of RMCL

### *At Bangalore, Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium, Sanjaynagar*

#### **20th Special Talk by Sri Nochur Venkataraman**

6.30 p.m. - Ulladu Narpadu

### *At Bangalore Udaya Ramanashree School Auditorium, Rajajinagar*

#### **17th 2.15 p.m. - National Seminar and Cultural Festival – Kannada**

Talks by Swami Adityananda, Chinmaya Mission

Sri S. Shadakshari, Ramanashree Prathishthana,

Sri Sri Sri Jayendra Puri Mahaswami

7.00 p.m. Dance Ballet 'Ramana Vijaya' by Artistes of RMCL

### *At AARN-Tiruvannamalai*

#### **10th, 11th - Self Enquiry Workshop – English**

### Special Programs in March

#### *At Bangalore, Ramana Shrine Mekhri Circle*

9th to 11th 11.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. Laksharchana

10th 11.00 a.m. Vighraha Sthapana Day and Ramana Sahasranama Homa

#### *At Chennai*

24th, 25th Self Enquiry Workshop - English

26th Ramananjali, At Chrompet, Ramanalayam

**SARVA SEVA** - An opportunity to partake one day of full services offerings to Master at the Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle.

Register for your special events such as birthday or anniversary. Check out the last page for details.

**Once Again Continued Telecast of Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning's Serial**

**'Sri Ramana Leela' on Sri Sankara TV**

**Every Saturday and Sunday from 1.30 pm to 2.00 pm**

**Extended till 27th August 2017**

**New – Watch on RASA Web TV ([www.rasawebtv.com](http://www.rasawebtv.com))**

**Friday 8.30 pm to 9.00 pm – Ramana Oli**

**Saturday 7.30 pm to 8.00 pm – Ramana Rasanubhavam – Talks**

**Sunday 8.30 pm to 9.00 pm - Ramanotsavam**

## Ramana Every Day

**RMHC - Ramana Maharshi Heritage Centre - Sanjaynagar**

**RMS - Ramana Maharshi Shrine - Mekhri Circle**

**RSCS - RMCL Satsang Centre at South Bangalore**

**RSCR - RMCL Satsang Centre at Rajarajeshwari Nagar**

**Self Enquiry session - English** by Sri. Nandakumarji (080-42094073)

Thursday: 6:00pm at RSCS

Friday: 6:30pm - 7:30pm at RMHC

Saturday: 6:00pm at RSCS (Special Talk by K.G. Subraya Sharma)

Saturday: 11:00am at RMS

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

Everyday: 6:00am at RSCS (Chanting, Meditation and Walk)

**Self Enquiry session - Kannada** by Sri. Dileep Simha (9448374818)

Tuesday: 6:30pm - 7:30pm at RMHC

**Music and Dance classes** [Contact - Uma (9538472026)]

Monday - Saturday: 5:00pm - 7:00pm at RMHC.

**Yoga classes** [Contact - Vanaja Rao (9900601012)]

Monday - Wednesday - Friday: 6:30am & 6:00pm at RMHC

**Talks - Kannada** by Sri. Sridhar Sarma, disciple of Sri Nochur

Saturday 4:00pm - 5:30pm at RMS. [Contact Usha Sankar (9663284111)]

**Talks - English** by Dr. Sarada Natarajan

Sunday: 11:30am at RMS

**Bhajans** - by Smt. Radha, Revathi, Uma and Ujwal

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

**Parayana** of Bhagavans Sanskrit Composition by Ms. Savithri

Saturday: 11:00am - 12:00pm at RMS

**Talks, Parayana and Puja** by Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30pm at RSCR

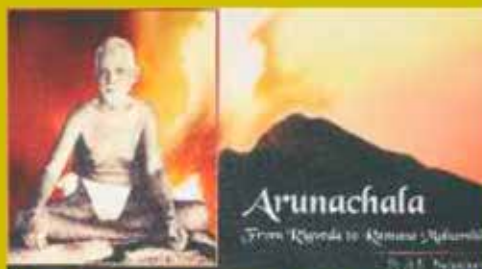
## **Guru Vachaka Kovai in English**

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

### **Investigation into Truth**

52. If one corrects one's gross vision, transforming it into the eye of jnana, and if one attentively views [the world] with that eye of truth that is wholly jnana, then the world which was previously seen as the form of the five elements, beginning with space, will be only the Brahman that is entirely consciousness.
53. If one corrects one's defective vision, transforming it into the form of true jnana, the Supreme, and if one then sees with that jnana vision, the world that appeared as a sea of sorrows will exist as a sea of supreme bliss.



### **ARUNACHALA FROM RIGVEDA TO RAMANA MAHARSHI**

This book covers a vast panorama of over four thousand years from the Rigvedic seers to Ramana Maharshi. Arunachala, the seemingly insentient hill, and the golden hued Ramana are embodied fire of Knowledge. The purpose of this book is to rekindle in every human heart this smouldering fire now doused by ignorance.