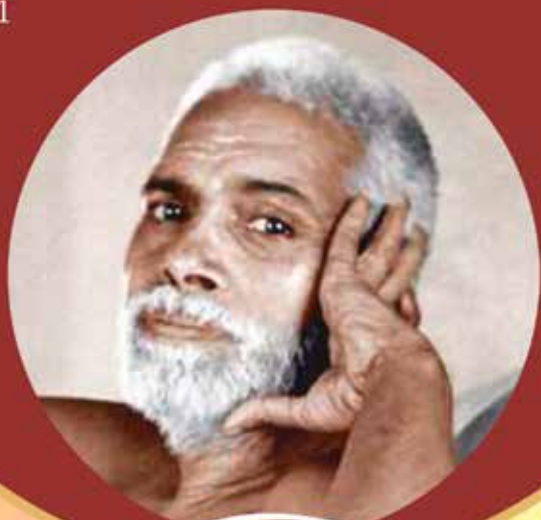


February 2021

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# The Ramana Way

FORTY YEARS



Ramana  
Dance

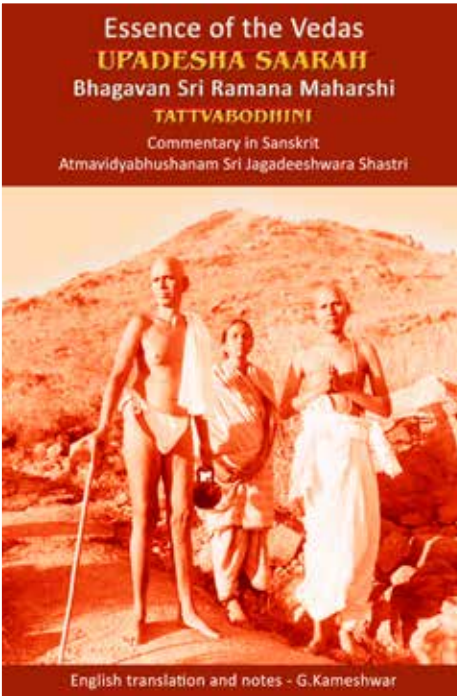
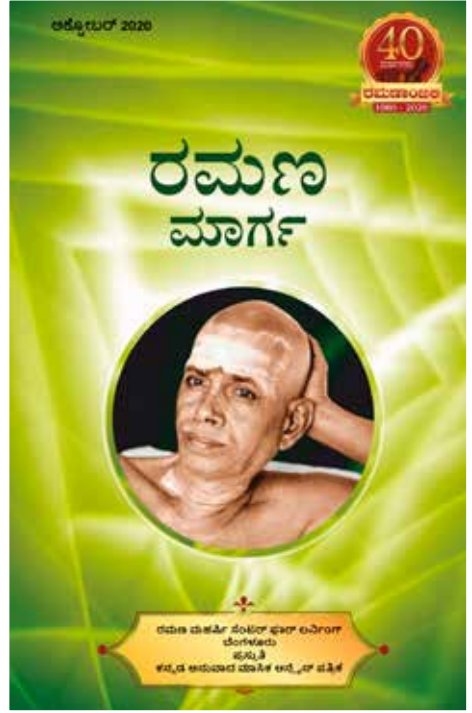
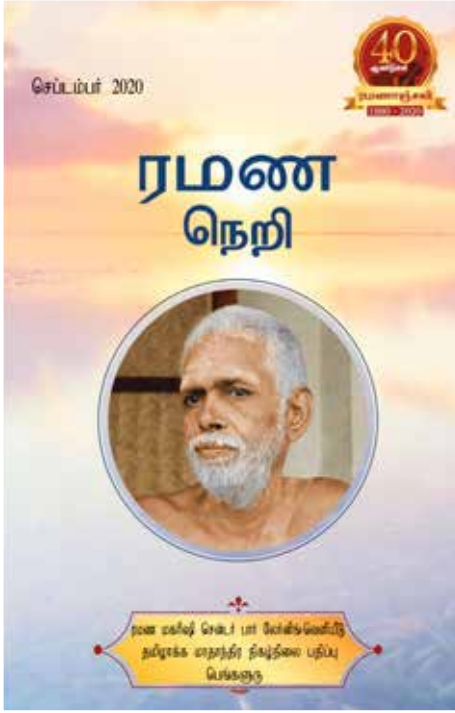


Ramana  
Children Wing



Ramana  
Publications

A Monthly Journal published by  
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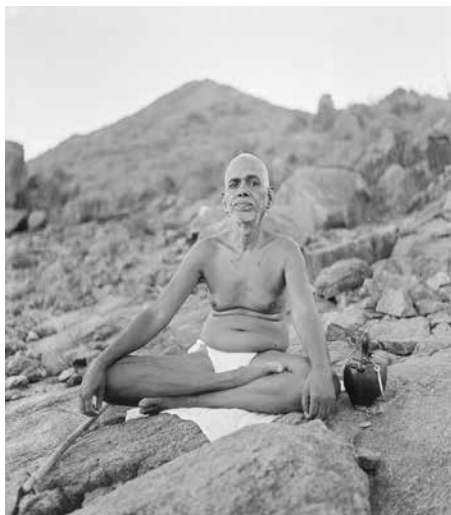


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The book '**Tattvabodhini**' can be purchased from Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning by reaching the number +91-8042061951 or emailing to [publications@ramanacentre.com](mailto:publications@ramanacentre.com).

# THE RAMANA WAY

*A Monthly Journal since 1981*



*Celebrating 'The Ramana Way' - 40 years*

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

*- Ramana Gita X, 10*

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If we have full faith in Ramana's statement of the fact that happiness is our nature and not to be found in any object, then why would desire arise? If desire does not arise, then why would thought arise? If thought does not arise, what further needs to be done?

If we do not have full faith in the fact that happiness is our nature, then desire would arise because of the need to find happiness from outside. Yet, if we have full faith in the fact that the very idea of inside and outside is based on the illusion that one is a given identity, then how would one be able to define that the happiness one is seeking is for oneself? When one is unable to define the one for whom the desire arises, why would desire arise? With no desire arising, wherefrom would thought arise? If no thoughts arise then would we not be in our natural state, the fullness of peace? As Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "The pure mind is quiet because the latent tendencies have dried up for want of attention. The mind no longer has any inclination to move out at all in search of happiness through objects."

If we do not have full faith in the fact that happiness is our nature and to top it up, we have faith in the fact that we are the entity that is limited to our body, then the need to seek happiness in objects would certainly arise. But if we have full faith in the fact that the results of our actions are divinely ordained, then why would desire to attain specific results arise? If desire does not arise, then where would there be room for thought?

If we do not have full faith in the fact that happiness is our nature, neither do we believe that our true nature is not limited to the body, nor do we rest our faith in the Supreme alone as the only efficient Doer, then certainly desire would arise. Desires would arise to find happiness in the world that is 'outside' of us, in the world of objects. There would be no option left but to pursue those desires with our thoughts and to follow up our thoughts with our actions.

If we thus rest our faith in actions to bring us joy, where do we find ourselves? If we rest our faith in the fruits of actions to

bring us joy, where do we find ourselves? Do we find that we are floating on a sea of peace? Or do we find that we are flying free in the sky of bliss? If that be the case then what further needs to be said or even thought about?

If we find, however, that sorrow is our shadow and fear seems to be stalking us all the while, is it not time to question where we are going wrong? Is it not important to try and set our lives straight at the earliest? Is it not time to check whether we are travelling away from our destination rather than towards it? Do we not know where we are going astray? Do we not know that it is merely for the want of faith, in the Supreme, or in the Master, or in our very Self, that we are caught in the grip of suffering? Where then does answer lie? What do we do if our mind is weak, if it lacks the strength to hold on in faith?

Is it not time then, to try and build faith in the Supreme One who is responsible for the entire world? Or else, should we not try to place more and more faith in Ramana's words, of which he is a blazing example, that happiness is our nature, it is the nature of the Self and of the Self alone? Is it not time to question ourselves every time thought moves as to whose happiness is being sought in the first place? Do I know the 'I' who wants to be happy? Who am I?

If only we would try and keep trying, our effort is bound to be supported by the Divine Will, by the Sadguru, by the very Self. This is the promise of Arunachala broadcast to us by Ramana in Aksharamanamalai v.44, and in so broadcasting it, subtly revealing that it is his own promise as well.

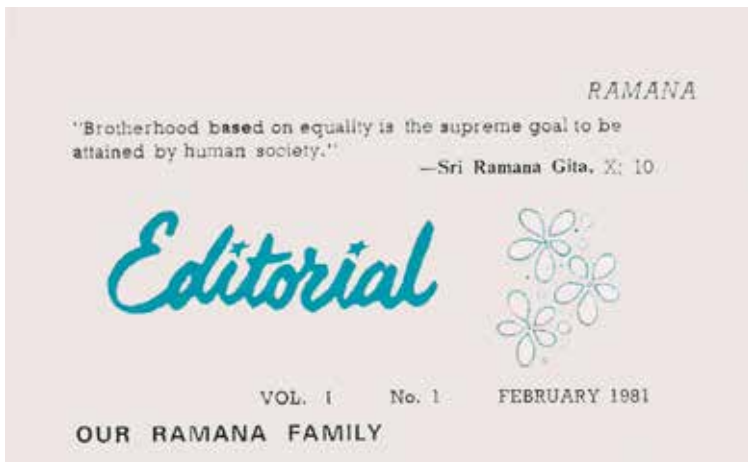
"Turning back the mind's eye, constantly see 'Who am I?'  
'Will be seen' so you said, Arunachala!"

*Sarada Natarajan*



## The Ramana Way – Editorials from 1981 to 1984

*We bring to you excerpts from the first editorial followed by some selections from editorials in the first four years when the journal was called simply 'RAMANA'. \**



"I ran away from my family. But look, now I have been made a family-man with a much larger family!" Bhagavan once joked. Such is the power of the Master's Continued Presence that with each passing year the Ramana family has been growing, and growing.

The new era in the 'Ramana Movement', heralded by the Special grace of Ramana in His Birth Centenary Year, makes us certain that the members of the Ramana family will, in time, be innumerable.

Has not Bhagavan emphasised in Sri Ramana Gita that an ideal society should be built on brotherhood based on equality? In any family for promoting this brotherhood we should look for things which foster affection and unity, we should develop strong bonds of a common ideal. In our Ramana family our purpose is already a common one...

\* The editorials after the first one, have appeared in the book 'Ramana Way in Search of Self'.

Bhagavan has taught us, by His life, that in spirituality the human being comes first. He was extremely human, spontaneous and natural. He would refer to so-and-so as his classmate or enquire about someone's brother or child. Bhagavan would notice if anyone was ill and see to it that they were well taken care of. He would observe people's preferences in food and ask that they should be served more of what they liked...

I offer prayers to our tenderly human Bhagavan that He may make this journal a cementing force for His family.

We often beamingly introduce ourselves as belonging to such and such a family. What can be a matter of greater happiness and satisfaction to every one of us than to belong to the Ramana family! When Bhagavan Himself has lovingly called us His 'family', should we not take every opportunity to proclaim that we belong to it?

When I, with my parents and sister, visited Lakshmi Akka (our dear President of Sri Ramanasramam, T.N. Venkataraman Mama's daughter) at Madurai, she was thrilled. Seeing her excitement, a relative enquired: "Have these people come from your place?" "Oh. Yes". she replied, "They are my relatives, we all belong to the Ramana family!"

§ § § § § §

Once, as we drove along the luscious green valleys and slopes of Himachal, the river Beas travelled beside us. Wide and torrential in its gushing flow in the valley, conjoined with the force of many tributaries, it dwindled upwards into just a forceful stream as we moved towards its source among the high peaks. And then we reached its source, the Beas Kunj. But we were told, deep within the glacial ice the river flowed from some unknown spot till it reached this, its visible source. And I thought that if, perhaps, we had the right attire and machinery, we could enter the glacier and follow the river to its true source.

The feeling of individuality, the sense of 'I' in every one of us, is much like this gigantic river. So much is it the very core of our daily existence: wide, wild, gushing, torrential, an insurmountable



force. Without this feeling of 'I' there is no existence, no world for us. It is because 'I' exist, that I cognise the world and everything other than 'I'. And it is this 'I' which permeates our entire existence - things and people exist for me only in relation to me. Every thought is linked with the 'I'- thought even as the river is fed by many tributaries.

Let us pause a minute and move inward, towards the source. Let us strip the 'I'- thought, this feeling of 'I', of all its relations and see it in its utter nakedness. Let us for a moment observe the 'I', just the 'I' - not as we are wont, with 'I think', 'I want' or 'I see', 'I feel' or 'I' anything.

Yes, we observe just the 'I', now not the huge river fed by related thoughts, but by itself, a smaller, gentler stream. What is this 'I'? Where is its source? To track this 'I' to its true source we must don the special attire of eternal vigilance, of constant, joyous attention and we must use the special machinery of self-enquiry given to us by Bhagavan. Through attentive and persistent self-enquiry we can follow the 'I' back to its source, the Heart, and abide there.

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"Through attentive and persistent self-enquiry we can follow the 'I' back to its source, the Heart, and abide there." When such a statement is made, many doubts may arise... What is this 'I'? Why is it thought that it has a source, which, in turn, is identified as the Heart? What is self-enquiry, and what attentive and persistent self-enquiry?

Why should anyone ask 'What is this 'I'?' After all, each one of us have been living with ourselves all our lives. It would be ridiculous to suggest that we don't know ourselves. I, for instance, know quite well enough that I am Sarada, having a particular form and a particular way of thinking. Funny though, what happens to this form, this name and this thinking in my dreams. I am a different person! And, what happens in deep sleep is more alarming. I seem to disappear altogether! But when I awake, there I am again, saying 'I slept well'. It is these experiences of dream and sleep in my daily existence which make me wonder whether I can be all that sure about knowing myself.

One thing, of course, is common to both my waking and dream personality - I am aware of my existence and I am identified with some name and form (though they may be different in waking and in dream). At all moments I know, I am aware, that I exist. So, I can confidently say that I know this much of myself - 'I' is a feeling of existence and, almost simultaneously, it is a feeling of identification (I exist as someone).

But there is still that problem of deep sleep. What happens to me then? Certainly there is no feeling of identification then. In fact, even the feeling of existence seems to be absent. No, not quite, for, there is a recollection of existence when I say, 'I slept well'.

So, I can surmise that 'I' is the feeling of existence (not even the feeling of identification which disappears in deep sleep). Yet, I am not satisfied. After all, this is only a surmise. Where does this feeling of 'I' disappear when I am fast asleep? Why is it that I must only recollect my existence in sleep? Is there something more to 'I' than I am aware of?

This question is the beginning of self-enquiry - the attitude of questioning our own nature, our own identity. Who am I? This puzzle, a genuine attitude of doubt, is the first step of self-enquiry. And the path of following up this puzzle is the process of self-enquiry. A process it is, which Bhagavan has given to us on the basis of His own experience. The intense fear of death, in that sacred July, drove inward the mind of the boy Venkataraman. He enacted death and enquired about its nature, 'Who is it that dies? 'Do 'I' die with death?' And the enquiry brought in a flash the awareness of the Truth, which stayed ever as a stable experience in Bhagavan. And this experience He translated for us into the method of self-enquiry. So, let us too now sow this seed of doubt about our own nature.

§ § § § § §

## From the Founder's Pen: 1981-85

## The Silent Mind

**THE POWER OF SILENCE**

Dakshinamurthi, Lord Siva, as a youthful Guru, has been the symbol from time immemorial of the potency of a silent mind. His exposition of the truth, the 'Brahma Tatva', to elderly disciples was in silence. These disciples had mastered the scriptures but not their essence. Their doubts were set at naught in the vast and all-pervading silence of Dakshinamurthi. Again we have reiteration of this power of a silent mind in 'Kaivalya Navaneetam' which narrates the story of Tatvaraya. An ardent disciple of his composed a 'bharani' on him. When this was read out in an assembly of scholars, all of them objected protesting that a 'bharani' could only be on a hero capable of killing a thousand elephants. Thereupon, in order to bring home their folly to the learned disputants the disciple took them to Tatvaraya. In his presence the silence was simply overwhelming. The whole day passed, the night came and some more days and nights and yet all were lost in that silence. Not a single thought occurred to any one of them till Tatvaraya himself broke the silence. With one voice, all assembled declared 'there is nothing equal to the silent power of a Sad-Guru for such is his silence that the 'rutting elephants', the minds of each of us, have been quietened.' The glory of Dakshinamurthi, the story of Tatvaraya, seemed utopian ideals to be hungered for.

Ramana has metamorphosised everything by his incessant teaching of a straight path to a silent mind. His life itself is constant testimony to the validity of the power of the silent mind embodied in Dakshinamurthi and Tatvaraya.

Paul Brunton carefully jots down a series of questions which he wants to put to Maharshi Ramana. Full of doubts and queries he enters the hall where the Maharshi is seated on a couch, gazing fixedly with open eyes through space. 'The Maharshi' s body is supernaturally quiet and pin drop silence prevails throughout the long hall'. The minutes mount to half-an-hour and then it becomes a whole hour. There is not a ripple and absolute peace prevails.

Another hour goes by. One by one, the questions drop away. Brunton does not care whether they are asked or not. 'He is only aware of the steady river of peace flowing near and penetrating the inner reaches of his being'.

In Maharshi's presence, this language of silence was a common occurrence, though it was most potent in the twilight hours of the evening. We have the case of a 'Sivarathri' at Sri Ramanasramam. A sadhu came there about eight at night and requested the Maharshi to expound the meaning of the 'Hymn to Dakshinamurthi'. The sadhu and the others sat and sat. Ramana was poised in stillness, with no consciousness of the body. 'Eight hours passed in peace, in silence of Being' and the persons present could understand the meaning of silent communication.

Ramana would seldom answer questions straightaway. A penetrating silence would precede a cryptic reply going to the very root of the matter. This was so from the time he broke his virtual verbal silence to clear the doubts of Ganapati Muni on the true meaning of austerity, of tapas, in 1907. Often there would not be any need to reply for the doubt would be dissolved by the mere silent presence. When needed, just a few words would suffice. The benediction of the silence was felt by all in Ramana's presence.

## LOST AND FOUND

Ramana would repeatedly point out that the mind's natural state is one of silence. It is only because of this that such strenuous effort is being made by everyone to control the mind when it is wayward or turbulent. Such efforts for a quiet mind can be compared to medication to get rid of a head-ache. Because health is natural and ill-health is not, even a mild ailment such as a head-ache is something we want to get rid of straightaway. Similarly, since silence is natural, looking for ways and means of attaining it is inescapable.

The loss of our natural state of a restful mind and our happiness in discovering it again is illustrated by Ramana through stories which highlight the point. The first is the case of a woman

wearing a necklace but imagining that she has lost it. Initially she searches in obvious places where she could have kept it. Then she searches every nook and corner of the house. Thereafter she proceeds to various friends and relatives and anxiously enquires whether she has left the necklace in their house when she had visited them. Finally a friend points out to her that she is wearing the very necklace which she had been frantically looking for. She had 'created her own anxiety about the loss and happiness at finding it'. One is unaware of the truth of one's inherent peaceful nature. Hence, means must be found to achieve the silent mind.

Another illustration referred to by Ramana is the case of ten foolish men who were to cross a river in spite. All of them had crossed to the other shore safely. However, to check up, they started counting. Each one counted the others leaving himself out and said 'I count only nine; sure enough we have lost one, who can that be?' So, they all agreed that one was lost but could not find out who it was and concluded that the 'missing' man was drowned. One of them burst into tears and the rest followed suit. Seeing the ten men weeping on the river bank, a sympathetic passerby enquired for the cause. On hearing the story he counted and found that all the ten were before him, and could guess what had happened. In order to bring home the fact to each one that no one was lost, he said 'Each of you count for yourself, but one after the other serially - one, two - while I will give you a blow that all of you may be sure that you are included in the count and included only once. The tenth 'missing' man will be found'. Even at the very thought of finding their lost comrade, the ten men were very happy and excited. The passerby gave a blow to each of the ten in turn. 'Ten' said the last man as he got the last blow in his turn. Then, they looked at each other and shouted 'We are now ten'. They thanked the passerby heartily. Having stated this story, Ramana would point out that the tenth man was always there and was never lost. When the tenth man was properly counted, he was not a new man. Their grief was due to their ignorance and mistake in counting. Their joy was none the less real because they had found the 'lost', tenth man. Peace of mind has to be striven for because we are ignorant of the truth in our present state, that peace is our very substratum.

There is yet another illustration given by Ramana to underscore the same point. A man goes to sleep, in the old hall at Sri Ramanasramam. He dreams he has gone on a world tour, travelling in different countries and crossing continents. After many years of strenuous travels, he returns to India, reaches Tiruvannamalai, enters Sri Ramanasramam and walks into the hall. Just at that moment, he wakes up and finds he has not moved an inch, but has been sleeping where he lay down. He has not returned after great effort but had always been in the hall. Similarly, having lost the awareness of the mind's inherent peace one has to find it again by appropriate effort.

### **THE FRIEND AND THE FOE**

All are seeking the silent mind. It makes no difference if one is 'worldly' or 'religious' for this purpose. Seekers plagued by visitation from the innumerable unwanted thoughts which disturb their meditation keep asking questions about it. Those addicted to work also look for ways to handle the grip of a single thought obsession. To escape from its harassment, they take to sleeping tablets and tranquilisers. Otherwise, their minds are tension ridden with sales charts, growth rates, and so on. If there is no work, such persons are at a loose end unable to handle the leisure. There is a case of a person on leave from his office, sick with terminal cancer, ringing up his personal assistant to send files to his home for he felt completely lost without them. The seeking of jobs by those who are already one foot in the grave is also because of the fear of not being able to flush out the thought legions unless they involve themselves in some work or the other, unless their mind can be engaged.

It is the mind which makes the person. It can either be a friend or a foe. We can understand its being a friend, when it is supple, moving in desired directions and working without distraction. When its energy is fully available to us in action, we get things done the way we want them done. But often it is like a rebellious or a pampered child. It is flitting from thought to thought in utter dissipation, pre-occupied with day dreams, utopias or obsessed with negative thoughts and so on. At such times we become operationally useless. The friend the mind can



be quite treacherous, tripping one along the way. Just when one is feeling confident about being able to manage the mind it takes one for a ride. The search for a solution is therefore going on, but seemingly endlessly. If in spite of a spate of sound advice on the subject, one is often back in the nursery class when it comes to mind control, it is time one had a good look at fundamentals.

Ramana says that the fault is in our approach, in our foolish expectation that the mind would commit suicide. He would say that the desire to control the mind, the thought of mastering it, is still part and parcel of the mind itself. Such a thought, however keenly felt or worked for, cannot deliver the goods, because it is still within the frame-work of the mind. 'The mind is simply fattened by more thoughts in that direction'. As Ramana picturesquely puts it, 'It is the mind which is the thief pretending to be a policeman'.

This point is dramatically brought home in a real-life story which happened in Madurai during Ramana's school days. Once a notorious thief warned the owner of a house in West Veli Street, Madurai, that he would burgle his house on a particular night. Being thus fore-warned, the owner took all precautions by seeking full police protection. Policemen literally besieged the house to make certain that the thief would not escape. The dare-devil thief came notwithstanding the police cordon but as he was about to leave with the stolen goods, an alarm was raised. In order to escape, the thief joined the chase by the general public shouting most loudly 'thief, thief, catch him, catch him', and thus, he managed to disappear. In the incident the thief by play-acting as a policeman managed to elude capture. Ramana would say that similarly the mind would not come under control but would escape through a variety of disguises unless one makes determined enquiries about its nature.

## ON THE TRAIL OF THE MIND

The dual characteristics of the mind - the essential consciousness aspect and the accretions, the world of thoughts, would have been noticed. The consciousness in the 'I' is the scent to which one must hold on for the journey back to the source. This is the clue which should not be lost sight of. Ramana cites the analogy of a dog tracing its master by his scent. 'The master's scent is the infallible clue for the animal, nothing else such as the dress

he wears, his build or stature, etc. To this scent the dog holds on undistractedly while searching and it finally succeeds'. If one holds on to the consciousness aspect of oneself then the quest must lead one to the pure mind.

How does one hold to the consciousness in the 'I'? The movement of the mind is twofold - the inner movement the return to the source which is either involuntary, when sleep overpowers, or is voluntarily achieved by practices which turn the mind inward. What prevents this inwardness of the mental movement is the second aspect of the mind, namely, the outward thrust of the mind caused by latent thoughts in the mind. The very vastness of these thoughts is frightening. They represent the whole weight of the past. Since every action leaves behind a memory mark, it is just waiting in the wings to reappear when the circumstances are appropriate for the repetition of the wanted experience.

So, the first step without which one cannot proceed at all is to arm oneself with a technique which sterilises the past and renders it impotent. For achieving this, Ramana suggests an approach which leaves all desires, all thoughts severely alone. He would say 'Do not run with the running mind.' For, any effort in which the attention is paid on the thoughts themselves, good, bad and indifferent, is no better than shadow chasing. It is said that when a child tries to catch a shadow by running after it and is distressed at not being able to do so, the mother prevents it from running. Similarly one should closely look into the essence in any thought formation and not deal with the shadow, the rest of the thoughts. In this light, it is only the thinker, it is only the individual, who matters. Shifting the mind's attention to its core, to the first person, is what is to be attempted. The second and the third person thoughts would no longer have the power to damage, since the attention of the 'I' is not cast on them. An analogy would serve to highlight this point. To say 'do not have desires' is 'like asking one to take medicine without thinking of the monkey'. Sure enough the dominant thought would then be the monkey. Instead Ramana's method gives a positive turn by saying, 'drink the medicine thinking of the elephant'. In other words it is like advising who has to 'abandon the east' to 'go west'.

Care is needed not to bestow attention on any particular thought. The danger in paying attention to any thought 'even if it be to deny it, to recall a memory even if it be only to reject it is that one runs the risk of investing it with fresh strength'. When someone complained that he was unable to prevent the rush of thoughts, Ramana said that all that needs to be done is to catch hold of the leading thought, the 'I' -thought, giving thereby no chance to other thoughts to distract you'. This was the basic tune of Ramana from the early days of his spiritual ministration. An early seeker said in dejection, 'What can I do? If I reject one thought, another thought takes its place' - Ramana promptly advised, 'cling to the 'I' - thought - when your interest keeps you to that single idea, the other thoughts automatically vanish'. The past in the form of the thought power flowing from vasanas, the inherent tendencies, is pulverised by inattention. Those thoughts just wither and fade away. 'Thought grows with thought as fire with fuel. When attention is withdrawn thoughts die like flame without fuel'. True, to begin with they distract and one has to repeatedly bring the attention back to the thinker. Soon one is off the outward mental movement. The shifting of attention to the subject does the trick.

The advantage of keeping the thinker in focus, instead of thoughts, should be apparent, for we then deal with the root of the tree instead of its branches and leaves. A single life giving thought is held firmly without bothering about other latent and surface thoughts. The phrase 'life giving' is used advisedly for one perceives that the other thoughts, however strong, cannot operate till the individual gives them attention, consciously or unconsciously. When one holds on to the 'I' for inspecting it, one is on the trial of the mind. Attention to the single thought which waters the entire thought structure opens the door to an understanding of the mind.

**Talk 88.**

The same gentleman asked: What is the significance of Christ in the illumination of St. Paul?

M.: Illumination is absolute, not associated with forms. After St. Paul became Self-conscious he identified the illumination with Christ-consciousness.

D.: But Paul was not a lover of Christ then?

M.: Love or hatred is immaterial. The thought of Christ was there. It is similar to Ravana's case. Christ-consciousness and Self-Realisation are all the same.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Paul was a persecutor of Christians as he believed that Christ had violated the laws given by Moses. Bhagavan is explaining the mystery of how a hater of Christ gets "converted". Love or hate, Paul was always thinking of Christ. So much so that even his Self realization is identified by him with Christ. It is said that Ravana, Kamsa and Hiranyakashipu all received liberation. When one thought is so held, it finally consumes the love or hatred that was the medium and the devotee or hater. All three - the deity, love and devotee merge in the illumination of the Self. One need not judge other devotees or haters of God.*

**Talk 89.**

M.: Karpura arati is symbolic of the burning away of the mind by the light of illumination, vibhuti (sacred ashes) is Siva (Absolute Being) and kumkuma (vermilion powder) is Sakti (consciousness). Vibhuti is of two kinds: Para vibhuti and apara vibhuti. The sacred ashes are of the latter class. The para is what remains over after all the dross has been burnt away by the Fire of Realisation. It is Absolute Being.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: One should understand the significance of the symbols and remember sadhana towards the absolute being. Those who focus between eyes keep the apara vibhuti between the eyes. Those who want simpler reminders about sadhana apply vibhuti all over. Seeing vermilion reminds the sadhaka of the Sakti that is the support of all effort. Bhagavan used his acts of leaving a leaf plate clean after eating, donning a clean dress, perfection in*

*cutting vegetables, perfection at all work etc, as symbols of turning inward and holding the Self.*

### **Talk 90.**

Again, the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Ghost is the Holy Trinity in Christianity) was explained:

God the Father represents Isvara

God the Holy Spirit represents Atman

God the Son represents Guru

Isvaro gururatmeti murti bheda vibhagine vyomavad vyapta dehaya dakshinamurtaye namah:

Meaning that God appears to his devotee in the form of a Guru (son of God) and points out to him the immanence of the Holy Spirit. That is to say that God is spirit, that this spirit is immanent everywhere and that the Self must be realised, which is the same as realising God.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The whole journey of life is captured in this talk. A limited consciousness identifies with a limited body and performs and learns from its identity with innate Nature like a salmon traveling thousands of kilometres to its source to fulfil its nature. As it finds human nature, it learns that there should be one power behind all of Nature, called God. It learns that a transformation of identity from an infirm devotee to an unshakable devotee is the only transformation required to find the true happiness in life. As it matures in devotion, Life or God takes the identity of Ramana Sadguru and teaches that one is not the limited body or the limited identities taken on by the mind but is indeed that Immanent Spirit. One practices self-enquiry and, dropping the limited identities, merges with the limitless Self. Bhagavan teaches that this is the Paramount Duty of a human being. Like the salmon innately driven to fulfil its goal, like that pigeon which flies across the globe in seven sleepless days, one cannot find true happiness without identifying with this Limitless Self, one's very nature. All limited roles may appear and disappear like various notes of music in this fundamental, changeless Shruti note of Identity with the Limitless Self.*

### **Talk 91.**

A Bengali visitor asked: How is the mind controlled?

M.: What do you call 'the mind'?

D.: When I sit down to think of God, thoughts wander away to other objects. I want to control those thoughts.

M.: In the Bhagavad Gita it is said that it is the nature of the mind to wander. One must bring one's thoughts to bear on God. By long practice the mind is controlled and made steady.

The wavering of the mind is a weakness arising from the dissipation of its energy in the shape of thoughts. When one makes the mind stick to one thought the energy is conserved, and the mind becomes stronger.

D.: What is the meaning of the strength of the mind?

M.: Its ability to concentrate on one thought without being distracted.

D.: How is that achieved?

M.: By practice. A devotee concentrates on God; a seeker, follower of the jnana-marga, seeks the Self. The practice is equally difficult for both.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: When a Persona is given to that power behind the whole creation, one calls that omnipotent power as God. The same persona for an omniscient power is Guru. The omnipresent transcends persona and is the Brahman. To the one seeking God, the sadhana or spiritual effort is to withdraw from dissipation of that one power through thought. Whenever thought arises implying that there are two Gods, one has to withdraw the mind from the thought and fix it in the One Thought. To those seeking the omniscient, understanding that knowledge causes and erases action, the one power appears as the Guru and teaches Jnana Marga or Self Enquiry. Here, the sadhana is to withdraw attention from raising thought and fix it in the Self. One has to perform sadhana till the omnipresent - the one beyond persona, identity and effort - reveals itself.*

### **Talk 92. (Excerpt).**

A visitor said: Some say that one should practise meditation on gross objects only: it may be disastrous if one constantly seeks to kill the mind.

M.: For whom is it disastrous? Can there be disaster apart from the Self?

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: What is Consciousness? If one removes whatever consciousness is aware of, what is left is Consciousness alone. What is the Self? When, holding the Self, all non-self is let*



*go of, what remains is the Self. To experience the Self, can the Consciousness be a non-self? Hence, fullness of Consciousness that is aware of itself as the eternal Self is Consciousness-Existence. All disasters are consumed and transcended in the Self. This Consciousness-Existence has consumed all gross, subtle and causal worlds and exists as the Supreme Being. For whom is the fear to destroy the mind?*

### **Talk 92. (Excerpt).**

Unbroken 'I-I' is the ocean infinite, the ego, 'I' thought, remains only a bubble on it and is called jiva, i.e., individual soul. The bubble too is water; when it bursts it only mixes in the ocean. When it remains a bubble it is still a part of the ocean. Ignorant of this simple truth, innumerable methods under different denominations, such as yoga, bhakti, karma..... each again with many modifications, are being taught with great skill and in intricate detail only to entice the seekers and confuse their minds. So also are the religions and sects and dogmas. What are they all for? Only for knowing the Self. They are aids and practices required for knowing the Self.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Karma, yoga and bhakti margas too try to remove the false feeling, "I am separate from the rest". When one works without looking at the result, which will be of the same plane as the work, one's mind becomes finer and finer till one comes to the first 'work' springing from consciousness - the raising of the "I" thought. When this 'work' is held without expecting 'result', one merges in the ocean of "I-I". When "love of the Supreme" is held, love unifies all fragments of the mind till "I" and "all the rest" alone remain. One flits in identity between "bubble" and "rest of the ocean" till the "I-I" reveals itself. One asks "What is the cause for my happiness?" and even the answer "Grace" does not arise. The "my" and "Grace" merge in the "I-I". In Yoga, one begins by merging one's breath with the atmosphere "outside" till "outside breath" is no more and the sensory plane is transcended. With that pure mind, one feels the opening and closing of mind as 'breath' and merges the outgoing mind in the inward-faced till all "outward mind" is no more. With this pure mind, one feels the raise of the "I" as the "raise of Mukhya Prana". This Prana is taken inward to merge in the Mukhya Prana, the ocean of "I-I" till there is no "outside the Self" anymore. Bhagavan says hold the "I" and take it to the Source, directly.*

When you think and speak about spiritual matters, be sure that it is entirely experiential and completely wholehearted. What we are speaking of, what you are thinking about on your own, and what you speak among each other should be born of actual experience guided by the light of inquiry. Be certain that your aim is steadily that of Self Realization, until your experience is consistently just this Self-Realization. Then, your words are words of Truth, and even your thoughts sparkle with the reflected light of the real interior experience, which is your real Abode.

Q.: It is covered over by that which is not. Sri Bhagavan says that, if you believe in the world, you cannot believe in the Self.

N.: Yes, but his words do not place emphasis on the supposed reality of a covering but are instruction to remove the covering, so that, even now, you abide blissfully in that immortal Knowledge of Reality.

Q.: So, how do I get there?

N.: Who am I?

Q.: How do I dissolve the belief in a world if I don't dissolve the belief in perception and come to the conclusion that perception is an impossible illusion?

N.: The belief in the perception and the belief in the world depend upon the belief in yourself. Who gives them that belief?

Q.: It is all made up.

N.: If you know at heart that it is entirely made up, it can never afflict you again, but it ceases to exist from that moment on.

Q.: The world is made up, and perception is made up. Seeing that is seeing that which remains.

N.: What does remain?

Q.: The Self. No differences in That.

N.: Well, I could say, "Stay still. Abide in the differenceless state," yet the instruction would be redundant because, if it is differenceless, there is no need to stay put. There is no one to stay put in it.

Q.: Unless I imagine there to be.

N.: Well, no, that has already been ruled out if it is differenceless.

Another Q.: What if the idea is that one is a body in the world?

N.: I am “with form,” is just a “play of maya.” To merely verbally reinforce, by a series of echoes, your “voice” of the same old illusion would be a waste of breath. To say that you are a body, when truly you are not, is completely unnecessary. To say that you are not a body, while still retaining the belief that you are a body, is also entirely unnecessary. The Truth is that you are the bodiless Self. You should know that and speak from there.

Q.: It is weird because the belief in a body is a temporary thing.

N.: All illusion is temporary. During the time of believing one is the body, does he actually become a body?

Q.: That is the meditation. That is really powerful. It highlights how flimsy is the belief in a body, no less so than the assertion that I am not a body. The assertions of being a body and not being a body are the same.

N.: The Knowledge of differenceless-ness, the Knowledge of bodiless-ness, is not an assertion. It is simply the plain fact. If a person asserts that he is not the body, while believing that he is the body, in order to gain a better social standing with those who are bodiless, I suppose, (laughter) it is silly because he is saying that he is not the body, while he is thinking that he is the body, even though, in truth, he not a body. Of course, the opposite, which is to say that one is a body, is completely absurd ignorance.

Q.: The first more complex assertion reflects deeper ignorance piled upon ignorance.

N.: Considering that there is no usefulness in making false statements, such as, “I am the body,” when you are not, or by saying, “I am not the body,” when you think you are even though you are not, we do not have to be concerned with all that, do we? If there is a sincere desire to realize the Truth and if there is the understanding that the Realization of the Truth is of the Self, that it is a matter of our own experience, for the sake of our own happiness, no one will negate his better knowledge by the denial of what he knows to be true. Of course, no one will egotistically assert it, either.

Q.: In my meditations, I find that it is good to ask, "Am I a body?" The idea that I am a body is not always in the forefront of my mind, but it is assumed.

N.: Yes. You can never be harmed by a meditation that discerns you are not a body.

Q.: I am not really located in a body, but there is a concept that I shoot in and out of the body.

N.: Even if you have the concept that you go in and out of the body, still, the "I" must be bodiless to go in and out of this form. We should know what this "I" is, in itself, and abide there. As for making statements of "this is real," "that unreal," "with form," "without form," "many and one," and so on, no one ever attained peace by mere "proclamations of the mouth." Peace is a matter of direct experience. The experience is that of pure Knowledge. It is Self-Knowledge, which is the Knowledge in which one's identity is established as, or abides as, That. Saying one thing or another is really insignificant and is just maya, or an "echo of maya."

Q.: Is this the reason for the Maharshi's silence in answer to some questions?

N.: The Maharshi's Silence is exceedingly profound. It can be interpreted in a variety of ways, even simultaneously, and, still, it is beyond that. In that Silence, there is no scope for illusion and for delusion of any kind, such as the "I am the body"-notion, and for egotism of any kind. Assertion of anything is absolutely meaningless before his Silence. Likewise is it for complaints, doubts, and dualisms of all kinds. Everything is utterly annihilated in the Silence. One thing remains, but, to know That, you become absorbed.

### Eight Verses on Arunachala Of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

(Verse-5 Continued... The first part was carried in July 2020 issue of Ramana Way)

#### Verse-5

*maNikaLIR caraTena vuyirtoRu nAnA  
matantoRu moruvanA maruvinaI neetAn  
maNikaTain tenamana manamenun(g) kallin  
maRuvaRak kaTaiyanin naruLoLi mEvum  
maNiyoLi yenappiRi toruporuT paRRu  
maruvuRa lilainizhaR paTitakaT TinviN  
maNiyoLi paTanizhal patiyumO vunnin  
maRuporu LaruNanal loLimalai yuNTO*

*Verse rendering:*

*Like a thread  
On which is strung  
A cluster of gems;  
It is indeed you alone  
Who exist  
As every single soul  
And in every single 'knowing',  
(every single) belief/religion.*

*Like polishing a gem,  
If the mind is polished  
On the grinding-stone of the mind  
Until it becomes flawless;  
Then  
Your Grace-Radiance glitters forth.*

*Thereafter,  
Just as the color/sparkle of a flawless gem  
Is untouched by that of any other object,  
No attachment touches (the flawless mind).*

*If the resplendence of the Sky-Gem (Sun)  
 Falls on a photographic plate  
 Can any object (photographed)  
 Make an impression (on the plate)?  
 O Aruna mountain of goodness-radiance!  
 Other than you  
 Does any thing exist?*

**Notes:**

This beautiful verse of Bhagavan reveals the real nature of all existence, and the means of realizing that.

In Part 1, we explored the first part of the verse, where, using the analogy of gems strung on a thread, Bhagavan says that from the point of view of Absolute Reality, true and eternal, Arunachala is the sole Existence.

Let us explore the next part.

Here, Bhagavan says that the mind is to be polished in the grinding stone of the mind, like a gem being polished. Once polished, the mind shines flawlessly, with radiance of Arunachala. Bhagavan clearly positions 'mind' as the core issue. The unpolished mind is one that is dull, filled with desires and Vasana-s. When the mind is purified, then it becomes like a polished diamond. And a rough diamond needs to be cut and polished before it can be made flawless. As a diamond is one of the hardest materials, only a diamond can be used to cut a diamond. And after cutting, one needs to polish the diamond. For this one needs a polishing wheel of iron, coated with diamond powder. In like manner, mind alone can purify the mind. Only the mind itself can cut and polish the mind. On the flip side, it must be understood that the mind can do the opposite too. It can make itself rougher, duller, dirtier.

The Amritabindu Upanishad declares:<sup>1</sup>

*mano hi dvividhaM proktaM shuddhaM chAshuddhameva cha.  
 ashuddhaM kAmasa.nkalpaM shuddhaM kAmavivarjitam.h*

..1..

<sup>1</sup> Amrita Bindu Upanishad, Translated by Swami Madhavananda , Published by Advaita Ashram, Kolkatta



*mana eva manuShyANAM kAraNaM bandhamokShayoH .  
bandhAya viShayAsaktaM muktyai nirviShayaM smR^itam.h*  
..2..

*yato nirviShayasyAsya manaso muktiriShyate .  
ato nirviShayaM nityaM manaH kAryaM mumukShuNA*  
.. 3..

*nirastaviShayAsa~NgaM sa.nniruddhaM mano hR^idi .  
yadA.a.ayAtyAtmano bhAvaM tadA tatparamaM padam.h*  
.. 4..

*tAvadeva niroddhavyaM yAvadhR^idi gataM kShayam.h .  
etajj~nAnaM cha dhyAnaM cha sheSho nyAyashcha vistaraH*  
.. 5..

1. The mind is chiefly spoken of as of two kinds, pure and impure. The impure mind is that which is possessed of desire, and the pure is that which is devoid of desire.
2. It is indeed the mind that is the cause of men's bondage and liberation. The mind that is attached to sense-objects leads to bondage, while dissociated from sense-objects it tends to lead to liberation.
3. Since liberation is predicated of the mind devoid of desire for sense objects, therefore, the mind should always be made free of such desire, by the seeker after liberation.
4. When the mind, with its attachment for sense-objects annihilated, is fully controlled within the heart and thus realises its own essence, then that Supreme State (is gained).
5. The mind should be controlled to that extent in which it gets merged in the heart. This is Jnana (realisation) and this is Dhyana (meditation) also, all else is argumentation and verbiage.

The same truth is expounded by the Gita.

*uddharedAtmanAtmAnaM nAtmAnamavasAdayet .  
Atmaiva hyAtmano bandhurAtmaiva ripurAtmanaH ..* (Gita 6.5)

One should uplift one's self with the mind; one should not lower the self. For, one's mind is verily the friend of one's self, one's mind is verily the enemy of one's self.

Explaining this verse, Sri Madhusudhana Saraswati says:<sup>2</sup>

*AtmanA*, with the self, with the mind imbued with discrimination; *ut-haret*, one should lift (*haret*) up (*ut*); *AtmAnam*, one's self, from that sea of the world in which it is drowned; i.e., one should bring about its establishment in yoga by totally giving up attachment to objects. But *na avasAdayet*, one should not lower, drown in the sea of the world; *AtmAnam*, the self, through attachment to objects. Hi, for; *atmA eva*, one's mind, verily; is the *bandhuh*, friend, benefactor, cause of Liberation from the bondage of the world; *AtmAnah*, of one's self; not so anyone else whosoever, because even a friend in the world becomes a source of bondage on account of love. *AtmA eva*, one's mind verily, not anyone else; is the *ripuh*, enemy, the perpetrator of evil, because like a silkworm it enters into the cell of bondage of the sense-objects; *Atmanah*, of one's self. Since one is oneself the maker of even an external enemy, therefore the emphatic statement, 'one's mind is verily the enemy of one's self', is reasonable.

This very truth is what Bhagavan expounds in this verse, saying :

*Just as a gem is polished on a grinding stone, if the mind is polished on the grinding-stone of the mind itself until all flaws are removed, then the mind shines with the luster of your Grace, O Arunachala.*

In continuation of this Bhagavan says:

And just as a flawless gem's sparkle is unaffected, untouched, by the color or shine of any other object in its vicinity; so also, attachment to any external object cannot approach or touch the polished mind. If sunlight falls on a photographic plate/film, can any object (photographed) make an impression on that film anymore?

Praying for Bhagavan's Grace, let us try and explore this in the next part.

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya!

<sup>2</sup> Verse translation and commentary taken from the book Bhagavad Gita, Gudartha Dipika, by Madhusudhana Saraswati. Translated by Swami Gambhirananda, Published by Advaita Ashram, Kolkatta

"When the mind melts with love and reaches the cave of the heart in which the benign Supreme dwells, the eye of consciousness will open and you will know the truth, for it will become manifest."

- Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

Yes.

Say Absolute consciousness or Ramana it is same.

"Find the seer and the creation is comprised in him."

- Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

"Sink deep within and abide as Self.

That is God as being."

- Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

"If you give up all else and seek Him alone, He alone will remain as the 'I', the Self."

- Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

We think about seen but we experience seer(self).

Yet we think about seer(self) and experience seen.

So truth remains unrealized.

I am I myself without having any interest in duality.

Enough.

There is no myself, yourself, himself, herself, themselves etc only Self, existence, being, (not time to time).

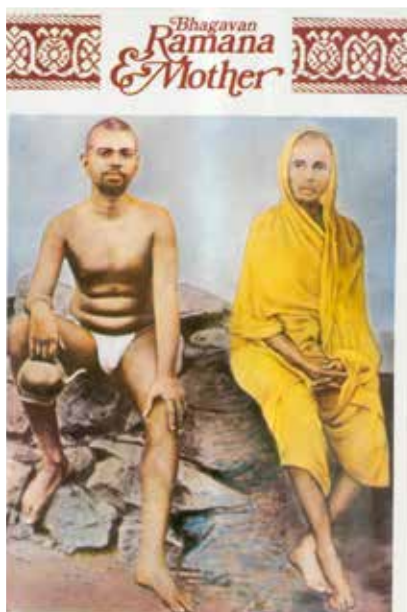
"There is no moment when the Self is not."

Is it not a good, relaxing news in itself?

Thought is not problem, desire is problem. If we can live without desires there is no difference between Self and us. Stillness happens spontaneously.

*We are celebrating the 40th year of publications from Ramana Maharshi Center For Learning, and will be carrying book extracts. The first publication was Bhagavan Ramana And Mother by Sri A.R Natarajan.*

- Editor.



by

A.R. NATARAJAN

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FOR LEARNING

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**FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION**

We all know that Ramana was born with a constant awareness of the glory of His father, Arunachala. We also know that it was in response to His father's call that He left for Tiruvannamalai where He became one, and non-separate, from His father immediately on arrival. However, very little is known about the extraordinary beauty of Ramana's relationship with His mother Azhagammal and His role as her Sadguru and bestower of her liberation.

The need to know more about the Mother cannot be overstated. There is something unique about every aspect of Bhagavan's life and this is more true of His bonds between Him and His mother. Though His mother attained Mahasamadhi in 1922 itself, Ramana's phenomenal and photographic memory enabled Him to recall, even decades later, every little detail about her. Such is the divine plan, that these recollections of Ramana have been fully recorded by Devaraja Mudaliar, Suri Nagamma, Krishna Bikshu and Kunju Swami, so that posterity could know about and enjoy the tender and heart-warming incidents.

The sole and sufficient reason which Ramana gave for shifting from Skandasramam, situated in the heart of Arunachala, to the Mother's shrine was that the same power which had brought Him to Arunachala had also brought Him to the Mother's shrine at the foot of the hill. On the 1st of September 1939, the construction of the beautiful temple for the Mother commenced with the full blessings of Ramana. The date has its own significance for it was on the 1st of September, 1896 that Ramana had come to Arunachala. The construction was spread over ten years from 1939 to 1949.

Throughout this period, He took keen interest in all the aspects of the construction and would walk around, with torch in hand, at night, giving appropriate instructions. During the ceremonies connected with Kumbhabhishekam or the dedication of the Mother's temple in March 1949, Bhagavan fully participated in all the events connected with it. Thus, he demonstrated as it were the true stature of His mother, as the universal Mother.

The temple of Grace of Ramana is situated adjacent to that of the Mother. It serves as a constant reminder to us of what they meant to each other and brings out in clear focus that divine relationship between the Mother and the Son, who had become inseparable.

This book is a homage to unique Ramana and Mother Azhagammal. The holy atmosphere of Virupaksha Cave, Skandasramam and Sri Ramanasramam is sought to be re-created by making the narrative simple and having a profusion of photographs in colour and black-and-white, including some rare ones to make the presentation beautiful visually also.

BANGALORE

AR NATARAJAN

DATED: 27TH MAY 1982

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Prof. K Swaminathan, has given many useful suggestions, with his usual clarity and promptness.

Sri V. Ganesan, the Managing Editor, 'The Mountain Path', has taken very keen interest and made available several rare photographs which have not been so far published.

Sri S. Thyagarajan and Sri C. Sudarsanam have patiently gathered material from various sources.

In designing the layout of the book, Sri M. Muralidhara Hegde of Ms. Roopadhwani (P) Ltd., has done an excellent job. Kumari Sarada has also made effective contribution in this regard.

Ms. Modern Process Printers are again responsible for the fine quality of printing.



## SALUTATIONS

*"Kausalya gave birth to Rama, the protector of the sages; Devaki to Sri Krishna, the teacher of Yoga; Renuka gave birth to teacher Parasurama, a life-long celibate, and Maya Devi to Buddha, who gave refuge to all beings. Mother Mary gave birth to the 'son of Man', who bears the burden of sin of all devotees. Likewise, for the welfare of the world, for removal of the darkness of ignorance, for the casting away of all ill-conceived notions, for the realisation of the Truth, Your mother gave birth to You, endowed with all these excellent qualities. To her, to Saundaryamba, the beloved wife of Sundara, our salutations. Salutations to her samadhi and to the Lord Mathrubhutheswara, installed on it. Salutations to her worshippers and salutations to the devotees of Ramana".*

- KAVYAKANTHA GANAPATI MUNI



## Chapter 1

### HAPPY YEARS

Azhagammal was born at Pasalai, a village near Manamadurai, in Tamil Nadu. Even during her childhood, she was married to Sundaram Iyer of Tiruchuzhi. Sundaram Iyer was a very successful lawyer in the local court. Theirs was an open house

#### *Mother's birth place*



in which guests were always welcome. Azhagammal would not hesitate to serve the guests in the middle of the night.

Azhagammal learnt from the elder ladies at Tiruchuzhi hundreds of devotional songs pregnant with Vedantic meaning. In those days, when formal school education of women was unknown, she learnt music and received spiritual instructions from them. They were only too ready to teach

Azhagammal for she would serve them willingly and well. She learnt 'Dakshinamurti Stotram' among others and would recite it regularly. From one venerable old lady Tulasamma, she also received Upadesa of the sacred mantra 'Aham Brahmasmi'.

Her first child Nagaswami was born in 1877. On 30th December 1879, on the Ardra Darsana Day, sacred for Siva





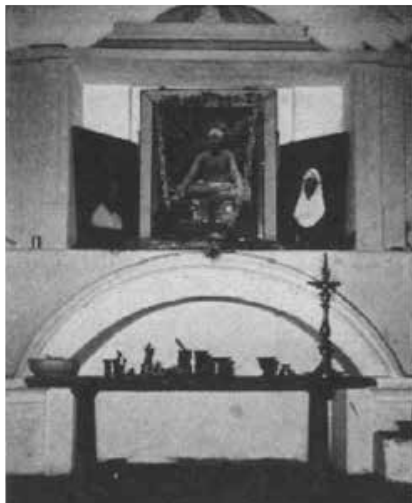
*Sundaram Iyer*

as Nataraja, her second son Venkataraman was born. During her pregnancy of Venkataraman, she had tremendous burning sensation all over the body, which did not respond to medical treatment. Juice extracted from bilwa leaves, considered sacred for worship of Siva, alone could relieve her.

She had plenty of milk and Venkataraman fed on it even upto the age of five. Venkataraman and Azhagammal were so generous that in this feeding, a motherless child, Meenakshi, from the neighbouring house, would also partake.

She would cast aside all distinctions when it came to the question of giving food. Her warmheartedness in this regard stood out throughout her life. There was a social taboo against the inter-dining of Muslims and Hindus, but Azhagammal would gladly provide many a meal for a Muslim friend of Venkataraman

- Sab Jan.



*Birth of the Birthless, Birth Room where Bhagavan was born*

In these happy years, a third son Nagasundaram and a daughter Alamelu were also born to her.

## The Dance in the Heart - Ramananjali Nritya

Ujwal Jagadeesh

*pranamya sirasA devau pitAmaha maheshwarau**nATyashAstram pravakshyAmi brahmaNA yadudAhRutam ||*

*"I shall relate the scripture of Natya as uttered by Brahma, saluting to pitAmaha (Brahma who is the creator of Natya veda) and Maheshwara (Siva who taught his graceful dance through one of his ganas named Tandu hence called Tandava)."*

This is the first shloka of Bharatha Muni's Natyashastra. Surprisingly we see in the first verse of Sri Ramana Chatvarimshat, Forty verses in Adoration of Sri Ramana, Ganapathi Muni mentions Lord Brahma and Lord Siva saying "The katha – Utterances (which includes the life and teachings) of Ramana, the treasure of Compassion who resides in Arunachala removes all afflictions. The utterance of Ramana are equated to the Vedas spoken by Lord Brahma, who rides on a swan and the Silent teaching taught by Dakshinamurthy – Siva who mounts on a bull."

Bharatha Muni explains the purpose of the origin of Natya Veda is to establish Dharma in the world which was otherwise tormented by Adharma. Brahma grasped the essence of the four Vedas and created the fifth Veda called the Natya Veda, which was entertaining yet simple and an accessible path to all beings for attaining the Supreme knowledge.

Muruganar Swami too sings of Ramana as the one who like a mother feeds us the butter of Self-knowledge which he has prepared by churning the Ocean of Vedas and Upanishads. Ramana himself sings of the path to attain Self-knowledge as simple and available to even the most ordinary human being.

We can see an amazing connection between Ramana's life and Natya. Natya is described as a mirror or a close imitation of the day to day activities of people, that which is the nature of the world, interwoven as it were with happiness and sorrow.

In Arunachala Pancharatnam Ramana says “As on a screen a wondrous picture, On You, fair Mount, is all this world Formed and sustained and then withdrawn. Ever as 'I' in the heart you dance. Hence are you called the Heart”

Chidambaram is the heart of the Universe, where the Dance of Lord Nataraja is beheld, so also is Arunachala. When Bhagavan Ramana was residing in Virupaksha Cave in Arunachala Hill, a Deekshitar from Chidabaram who was coming every day was persistent with a request that Bhagavan should have darshan of Lord Nataraja at Chidambaram. Ramana composed the first verse of Arunachala Navamanimalai “Although motionless, Lord Siva, in the golden hall of Chidambaram, dances in front of his consort, Goddess Parvathi, who stands still and serene. In his Still-Motionless form at Arunachala that parashakthi- Parvathi, having been subsumed/absorbed, in himself as the Non-dual Reality. Know that he rises resplendent as this Arunachala mountain.”

Ramana was born on December 30th 1879 at Tiruchuzhi on the Ardra Darshana festival day when Lord Siva revealed his cosmic dance to Sage Pantanjali, Sage Vyagrapada and other sages. There is a legend that Gautama Maharshi, who was agitated after cursing his wife Ahalya for a mistake she had committed unknowingly, came to Tiruchuzhi to behold the cosmic dance of Siva. Already upon approach to the sacred town, his equanimity began to return. One Ardra day after he had performed long and arduous penance, Lord Siva as Nataraja granted him the vision of His cosmic dance. Meanwhile Ahalya, sanctified by the touch of Lord Rama's sacred feet, regained her state of purity and was united with her husband.

Ramana was born as the second son of Azhagammal and Sundaram Iyer in Tiruchuzhi when the procession of Lord Nataraja was re-entering the Bhuminatha temple. It is the very day when Lord Siva appeared as an endless column of light amidst the great Gods. Sadhu Om Swami sings of Guru Ramana as “the walking Arunachala Siva, the hill of Knowledge”. The Hill of the holy beacon manifested as Ramana, naDamAdum Daiva, which means both ‘the walking Lord’ and ‘the dancing Lord’.

Ramana came to Madurai to his uncle's house with his brother Nagaswami after the death of his father Sundaram Iyer. Madurai the place where Siva Dances in the Velliambalam, the Silver stage. Madurai was ruled by a King Rajasekara Pandya who had mastered all Arts and knowing how painful it is dance on one leg continuously, he prayed to Siva to switch to the other leg. The Lord heeded his prayer and danced on his left leg, lifting up His right. It is in Madurai Ramana read the wonderful stories of 63 devotees who sang and danced the glory of the Dancing Lord, Siva. "ADi pADi aNNAmalai kaithozha, ODi pOgum nammElai vinnaigaLE", "all difficulties will run away if one sings and dances in salutation to Annamalai", sings Appar, one of the 63 Saints.

Nataraja Murthy, the Dancing Siva represents the five activities of the Supreme namely the Srishti – Creation, Sthithi – Preservation, Samhara – Dissolution, Tirobhava- veiling and the last one being Anugraha- Grace. Vishwanatha Swami in the dhyana Shloka to Ramana Ashtottara writes about this flood of grace as follows "He was born with the constant remembrance of Arunachala and is united with it by the Flood-tide of its grace. Rooted in the heart he is uplifting the world with his majestic and constant penance. Therefore I salute Ramana the shining light of this world and beyond"

Once Ramana was drawn to Arunachala, he never moved. Ever abiding in the Self he acted. In words of Vishwanatha Swami, he danced the dance of stillness "rachitAchala tANDavAha"

Ramana became available as the Loka Mahaguru, the world master, to all seekers of truth. He showed the world the meaning of total acceptance of the choreography of the Supreme director through his total surrender. He spread the glory of Arunachala, the Self to all beings through his every movement and silence. Muruganar Swami in is poem "Ramana the Magician" writes:

Both male and female, far yet near,  
Mountain-huge and atom-small,  
Pure Awareness he, whose sidelong glance  
Has made me see

The Truth invisible  
 And hear the dancing music of his Feet,  
 For he has caught within his heart  
 And carries in his cosmic dance  
 This midget! What extravagance  
 Of grace to hold me in this bliss,  
 Both mine and his  
 Together and apart!"

In the earlier days of Ramana in Arunachala at Virupaksha cave, Sathyamangalam Venkatarama Iyer composed a set of five songs on him. Among them Kummi Paattu – a dancing song was one. It is recorded that M. V. Ramaswami Iyer and others, 'all crazy chaps', according to Bhagavan, actually danced around Bhagavan in rapture as they performed Kummi Paattu and other songs of Ramana Sthuthi Panchakam.

This craziness in devotees to rejoice in Ramana in every way led to the beginning of Ramananjali Nritya, 40 years ago at Ramana Maharshi Centre for learning, Bengaluru. The seed of Ramananjali Nritya was sown at Delhi in 1974 when Dr. Kalarani Rengasamy performed one Ramana song in her debut dance concert (Arangetram) in Delhi under the guidance of Guru Smt. Renuka Raghunathan, a student of Sri Vazhavur Ramaiah Pillai. The song chosen was Muruganar swami's "tEnum pAllum titikum..." for which music was composed and also sung by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan in the performance. Later around 1974 Guru Smt. Yamini Krishnamurthy in her dance programme as a fund raiser for Ramana Kendra, Delhi, performed dance to a song on Ramana by Muruganar Swami "Naliyaade en uyirai".

Kalarani also had shared her knowledge of dance with young Sarada and Ambika. This knowledge they employed in



the dance presentations at school and family functions. Inspired by the dance learnt, Sarada and Ambika with Hema Srinivasan performed the Hindi translation of Kummi Paattu “GavoNacho” and a Telugu translation of Muruganar’s song to the bee messengers “Tummedalara” as a part of the Ramananjali performances all over the world during 1980.



It was in Bangalore that the seed of Ramananjali Nritya sprouted when Dr.Sarada and Dr.Ambika started learning dance under Kumari Meenakshi of Vishalakshi Art Centre. Kumari Meenakshi being the mother of the Ramana Dance Movement presented a full-fledged dance program ‘Ramana Vaibhavam’ based on Ramananjali songs in a special Jayanthi Celebration at Chowdiah Memorial Hall, in January 1981.

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THE MOUNTAIN PATH

April

## FULFILLING ACHIEVEMENTS

The Bangalore ‘Ramana Centre’ — *Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bangalore* — is marching ahead in triumphant strides by fulfilling one after another landmarks in the ‘Ramana Movement’.

KUMARI MEENAKSHI of Veena G. Visalakshi Art Centre, deserves praise for her original and creative choreography of songs on Sri Ramana and by Him, in *Ramana Vaibhavam*, dances by girls. The skill of Kumari Meenakshi as a dance teacher was evident in *Ramana Suprabhatham* which was danced by KUMARI AMBIKA, with great feeling. KUMARI SUMATHI’S ‘*Arunachala Siva*’ will be long remembered.



Through these years many stalwarts of dance like Swathi Mahalakshmi, Swapna Sundari, Padmini Ravi, Chitra Visveshwaran and many others have contributed to the Ramana Dance Movement. A huge repertoire of songs for dance including Pushpanjalis,

Swarajathis, Varnams, padams, javalis, bhajans, numerous thillanas and also folk numbers have blossomed in Ramananjali. These songs have been presented not only in Bharathanatyam but also in Kuchupudi, Kathak, Odissi and Mohiniattam classical dance styles.

Ramananjali Nritya has now expanded to various dance feature on different themes inspired by the life and teachings of Ramana. Also more than 125 dance drama presentations have been produced by Ramana Maharshi Centre.

Siva is described as the one dancing adorning himself with the eight- fold forms namely the five elements, Sun, moon and all living beings. All creatures including the snakes, squirrels, peacock, tigers, dogs, monkeys, children and adults danced in bliss having been drawn to the presence of Ramana. Similarly many children are drawn to Ramana through dance classes and competitions conducted at RMCL.

Once Ramana draws us near him, he slowly reveals his true form. Sadhu Om Swami in one of his compositions writes:

“Arunagiri Ramana, Behold who he is.  
 Ever within you ‘I-I’ that which dances is Arunagiri Ramana!  
 Who is it that Dances? Who is it that is of the form of  
 Awareness? Behold!  
 As one (without a second) He dances. The One who is the  
 Supreme Awareness! Behold who he is!”

Ramananjali Nritya now has a unique set of songs called “Atma Darshana” which connects the basic lessons in Bharathanatyam to the divine purpose of dance, which is to ‘Know oneself’.

Muruganar Swami wrote the story of Siva appearing as a mendicant before the misguided Rishis of Daruka Forest. Siva destroying the pride of the Rishis danced his Ananda Tandava on the back of the dwarf demon Muyalagan. These rishis then bowed before the Lord and begged for his instruction. At this crucial point in the telling of the story it occurred to Muruganar that Sri Ramana alone was qualified to give this instruction, this led to the creation of Upadesha Udiyar or Upadesha Saram by Ramana which is the essence of instruction.

Ramana who is Lord Nataraja has come not only to reveal the beauty of his cosmic dance as every atom but also to make us one with the Lord Himself. He expounds the path to reach it in his Arunachala Ashtakam – verse 7:

“Until there is the ‘I’-thought there can be no other thought. When other thoughts arise, ask ‘To whom? To me? Where does this ‘I’ arise?’ Thus diving inwards, if one traces the source of the mind and reaches the Heart, one becomes the Sovereign Lord of the Universe. There is no more dreaming of such as in and out, right and wrong, birth and death, pleasure and pain, light and darkness, O boundless ocean of Grace and Light, Arunachala dancing the dance of stillness in the dancing Hall of the Heart.”

Ramana as the Sadguru and dear companion in the path of sadhana, blesses our every effort towards him in the Heart. He is the Rasa – the essence that gives life to all art-forms. He is the one who fills us with joy when we dance. He slowly and steadily reveals his dance of Stillness in the heart as ‘I’-‘I’. This is the purpose of Ramananjali Nritya.

Why do I love to Dance? Because God is the movement.

Why do I love to Dance? Because God is the Dancer true.

He dances the dance of the Universe, without form, space or time too.

Ramana says God’s power is the stillness ever dancing in the heart

As ‘I’-‘I’, ‘I’-‘I’, ‘I am’.



## Caught Young – Ramana Bala Kendra

*Ramana Bala Kendra (RBK) was started by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning in 1981 January. It was announced at a function at Chowdiah Memorial that interested children could join, and schools could send in their students as well. At that time RMCL did not have its own premises, not even a rented space. Satsangs would happen in the homes of devotees and it was proposed that the Bala Kendra could be conducted at the home of Sri A.R.Natarajan. A teacher, Sivakamasundari, from KECS, a neighbouring school, motivated nearly 100 students to join! The very first session was, therefore, full of excitement. Children had to be divided into batches and taught different subjects simultaneously. Bhagavan thus changed the plan from a simple sloka class to a variety of subjects, story telling, dance, music, crafts, drama.*

*The venue too had to be shifted. With the kind permission from the school authorities, the class was shifted to the school itself. Sri C.Sudarshanam and Sri Muralidhara Hegde joined the team as teachers. Soon thereafter, RMCL too took a space on rent having a hall for puja and a dedicated space for a library. Sri The children of the Bala Kendra had such great love for Bhagavan that they were practically at the Centre every other day!*

*Sri C.Sudarshanam introduced the greeting of 'Namo Ramana!' which became a hallmark not only of the Bala Kendra but of RMCL too.*

*A page from the Mountain Path of April 1981:*

1981

ASHRAM BULLETIN

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## RAMANA BALA KENDRA

To encourage and develop interest mainly in students between the 6th standard and 10th standard in schools, in Sri Ramana's teachings and in Ramana Music, RAMANA BALA KENDRA has been started in Bangalore on January 17, by RMCL, Bangalore.

The response, it is reported to us, has been unbelievable, revealing the wealth of talent we have among students! In one school—KARNATAKA EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL SOCIETY, BANGALORE—alone, over hundred children have joined this RAMANA BALA KENDRA. The excitement with which the children greet each other: 'Namo Ramana' and the enthusiasm with which they chant Sri Bhagavan's *Upadesa Saram* are indeed thrilling. Their syllabus consists chiefly of 'Ramana Music', Ramana Painting and the narration of Sri Bhagavan's story. Classes are held once a week.

We wish devotees in other cities, particularly in district headquarters, should start such RAMANA BALA KENDRA in their own towns. Details of how RAMANA BALA KENDRAS are to be conducted can be had from:

Smt. Salochana Natarajan,  
40/41, First Floor, 2nd Cross,  
Lower Palace Orchards,  
BANGALORE-560 003.



RAMANA BALA KENDRA, BANGALORE: A Section of the young students who so joyfully sing and dance the glory of 'Ramana'; also paint and narrate enthusiastically the incidents in Sri Bhagavan's life.

## Continued Presence!

# Savithri Krishnan

*Savithri was possibly the youngest student of the first batch and so intense in her 'Ramana Studies' that she earned the title of 'Ramana Bala Junior' at the conclusion of the first year's course. Here is a beautiful account from her about the Ramana Bala Kendra experience.*

- *Editor*



Bhagavan's poet-devotee Sadhu Om Swami sings –

Varamondru Ramaneshan thandaan vaazhvil,  
**Thaanaga** varamondru Ramaneshan thandhaan vaazhvil...

*(meaning Bhagavan granted me a boon in life, unsolicited, Bhagavan of his own accord granted me a boon, rather a treasure for life).*

The Kannada version of the song runs thus –

*Namagondhu nidhiyanthe labhisidha Ramana*

*Jeevanadhi namagondhu nidhiyanthe labhisidha Ramana...*

**‘Thaanaga’**(of his own accord) deserves a special mention as it squarely applies to me, or for that matter, to all of us at Ramana Bala Kendra (RBK), as we were very young when HE entered our lives, and I for one was only in the 2nd standard when I joined RBK. We obviously did not have the maturity to consciously choose a Guru or any Spiritual school. Therefore can only attribute his entry in our lives through His coming to us, rather than we going in search of Him!

Samskaras are said to continue from one’s previous births. A devotee apparently not convinced of this fact is concerned & asks about the continuity of his acquaintance with Bhagavan beyond this birth, worried that he will land in hell owing to his bad karma. Bhagavan’s repartee nailed it once and for all (including us!)- “Even if you go to hell, I would follow you there too!”

What greater assurance do we need that Bhagavan is continuing to be with us, his devotees, from our previous births. Bhagavan is no different from Lord Shiva, and did Lord Shiva not make a timely descent to remind Sundaramurthy Nayanar, originally a servitor of Lord Shiva at Kailasa, of his hallowed past?

Be it hell or rebirth, the Master will not let go of the devotee, like a Tiger holding on to its prey. Reminds me of the comment made by Susheela Manni (w/o of former President of Sri Ramanasramam, Sri Sundaram Anna) during one of her visits to Bangalore for the annual National Ramana Seminar that we (the students of RBK) would have well been little squirrels, puppies or any other such pets of Bhagavan, as a consequence of which we are flocking to him so enthusiastically in this birth as well. A similar view was echoed by Mrs. Kalyani Kapali (daughter of Sub registrar

Narayana Iyer, one of the ardent early devotees of Bhagavan) who used to be my neighbour in Bangalore. My siblings and I would often have interesting conversations about Bhagavan with her, and on one occasion she expressed her feeling about us being closely associated with Bhagavan in our previous births.

Be that as it may, I for one, would like to offer fathomless thanks to Sadguru Ramana for so liberally bestowing upon me the three rareties (that of a human birth, thirst for liberation and the protecting guidance of a Jnani) that Adi Shankara speaks about in his Viveka Chudamani.

A page or two would not suffice to write about RBK, for it has been an integral part of my life, having literally grown up with it. Of all the schools in Bangalore, or even among the three or four in our very locality, we feel blessed that Bhagavan chose our school for kick starting the first batch of (RBK) through Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning (RMCL) founded by the most respected dear A.R Natarajan Mama.

It was sheer joy for us to attend the weekly classes that were initially on Wednesday evenings, later rescheduled to Saturday afternoons. The group consisted of students ranging from 1st standard to High school. The course curriculum was very well drafted & commensurate with the assimilation capacity of various age groups. We were divided into two groups - Juniors and Seniors. To make the learning more interesting, Bhagavan's teaching was infused into us through various modes like lectures, story telling, chanting, music, dance, drama, drawing, games (including guessing game!), crafts, collages and what not!



The dedicated teaching staff comprised Sulochana Maami (Music and chanting), Sarada Akka (Bhagavan's Teachings -senior students), Sudarshan mama, also the Manager of RMCL then (Bhagavan's Teachings - both junior & senior students), Ambika Akka (Dance) and Murali Mama (Drawing). The other supporting staff included Srinivasan Mama, Ilangoan Mama et al. Nicky Mama & Kumar Anna would actively & enthusiastically play their roles during our Dramas – lighting, props & photography. Natarajan mama understandably being busy with official commitments would make himself available to RBK during special events & outstation trips.

The entire neighbourhood, in particular the mothers of RBK students would in the earlier years gather near the school and curiously watch the proceedings. Many were awe struck with Maami's pleasing demeanour. I still remember one of my neighbours whole heartedly admiring Maami's beauty! I would like to add at this juncture that Maami's inner beauty far excelled her outer appearance, as the saying in Tamil goes, *Agathin azaghu Moghathil theriyum* (meaning inner beauty expresses itself in the facial appearance). My sincere tributes to Maami. Beauty no doubt is a strong enticer for has not Bhagavan said in the Aksharamanamalai Verse-8, *Oorshutrulamvidaadhu Unnai Kandadangida Unn Azhagai kaattu Arunachala* (To make my wandering mind firm and take refuge in you, please reveal to me your beauty, O Arunachala!).

RBK was more like a co-curricular activity. Though the classes were held once a week (frequency of which increased with the onset of cultural programs), we were constantly engaged in preparation during weekdays for the ensuing class. One such which I vividly remember is learning by rote Bhagavan's Aksharamanamalai. Maami used to teach us 6 verses every week, for us to memorize and present them the ensuing week. My friend Saraswathi and I took this assignment in all seriousness and would learn the verses with the same effort which we students usually put in for academic pursuits. Before presenting the verses to Maami, the two of us would practise among ourselves.

Blessed indeed are we to have had the good fortune of learning several works of Bhagavan with the ultimate Vedantic import

like the Upadesa Saram, Sat Darshanam, Aksharamanamalai at a very tender age. I am reminded of an incident where a devotee, seeing a group of kids chanting Upadesa Saram in Bhagavan's presence wonders if it would be efficacious as they were chanting blindly without knowing the meaning. Bhagavan clarifies that they would be able to appreciate the meaning when the right time comes and that the mechanical chanting too would undoubtedly yield the desired result.

Like academics, we used to have various exams or tests like Essay writing, assignments, chanting, solving crosswords etc. Guessing game was an interesting game in which the participant is required to guess the name of the personality by asking 4 or 5 questions and the replies to those questions would either be a "YES" or "NO", leaving no scope to have follow up questions... To take part in this, one had to be reasonably familiar with the various personalities associated with Bhagavan.

The courseware provided to us constituted quite a few topics covering the entire life history of Bhagavan. Each topic or chapter (which I still have!) comprised a page or two with apt titles such as Birth, Childhood, Awakening and so on. In addition, we also had free access to the Ramana library maintained by RMCL and meticulously managed by Shankar Mama. It had a very good collection of books both on Bhagavan and on other subjects. Myself and Saraswathi would often go there in the evening after school hours and treat ourselves with the plethora of books for an hour or so. Being the avid reader I was, (I continue to be), reading books like Devaraja Mudaliar's 'Day by Day with Bhagavan', Suri Nagamma's 'Letters from Sri Ramanasramam' etc would virtually carry me back to the days of Bhagavan.

On the whole, I would say that it was not just once a week that we would associate ourselves with Bhagavan while attending the class, but all through the week, remembering him in one way or the other. Bhagavan says that he had the constant *sphurana* of Arunachala since his birth. And I may proudly or rather humbly claim that Bhagavan was my constant *sphurana* ever since I joined RBK. My mother would often recall fondly the statement of one of

my RBK mates, S.Geetha, *'Maami, week after week, I would eagerly await the next Saturday – to attend the Ramana class'!*

Though there are several memories, the most memorable is our first trip, rather pilgrimage to Tiruvannamalai. After the first annual day celebrations of RBK during which we staged our maiden drama – “A Ramana Evening” (which ran into the night).



The very next morning we set out, a Bus full to Tiruvannamalai. Having read about the various places associated with Bhagavan like the Skandashram, Virupaksha Cave, Gurumurtham, Pachaiyamman temple etc, it was absolutely thrilling to visit those places.



At that young age some places like trekking barefoot to Skandashram & Virupaksha cave evoked a sense of Deja vu in me which weaned over the years. My first Giripradakshinam at that age evoked a great sense of accomplishment as some of us ( the youngest in the lot, me included) were repeatedly warned to opt out and stay back at the Ashram owing to arduous hike on the then non asphalted stretch (a good bit) barefoot. Persistence pays – it did pay off and the very first Giripradakshinam was successful!





We were fortunate to have had interactions with some of the direct devotees of Bhagavan. Umpteen thanks to RMCL for making this possible. The list includes Annamalai Swamy, Kunju Swami, Sampooramma (a couple of us would often frequent her cottage near the side entrance of the Morvi guest house and relish the *uppu cheedai*, a rice based savory offered by her), Balarama Reddiyar, Lucia Osborne, N.N Rajan, Natesan Mama, Yogi Ramsurat Kumar, members of Bhagavan's family like Swami Ramananda (TNV

Mama in his Poorvashrama), Sundaram Anna, Mani Anna et al.



Ganesan Anna deserves special mention as he has regaled us with several incidents related to Bhagavan. He was a virtual reservoir of anecdotes of Bhagavan and would visit Bangalore often those days, attend our RBK classes, entralling us with interesting anecdotes, especially those involving very early devotees like Keerai Patti, in his inimitable style as a class story teller. Our first visit to two other important places associated with Bhagavan, viz., Tiruchuzhi his birth place, and Madurai where he attained enlightenment, are equally memorable and shall always be cherished.



Alas, so many decades have gone by as if in a trice! Am I even a notch closer to the goal propounded by Bhagavan? Am I making the right use of the *Varam* or the *nidhi* so graciously bestowed by Bhagavan unasked? Well, it is said that if a devotee takes one step, the Guru takes ten steps towards the devotee. Having taken the first step in all sincerity, is there any reason to worry at all. He is known for bestowing grace unasked as mentioned in the Aksharamanamalai, verse- 22, *keladalikummun keldil pughzai kedu shaiyaadarul Arunachala!* Should I fret at all? No - as long as my efforts are relentless and complacency does not creep in!

Heartfelt thanks to RMCL for being the conduit in this (prayerfully the last) birth in re-connecting me to Bhagavan through RBK. Not only RBK, scores of others in Bangalore owe it to RMCL for being the divine bridge to Bhagavan.

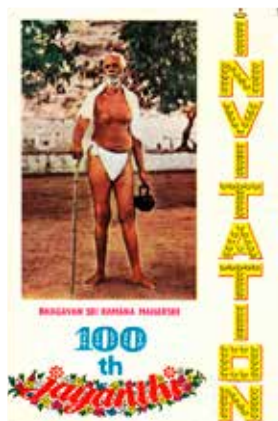
All that shared thus far is only the most nostalgic initial years with RBK... With a journey of so many decades and continuing...the sharing would run into volumes. Thought it fit to pause here and yield space to my fellow RBK mates for them to pen their thoughts. Some of them may supplement or add dimension to what I have shared. Eagerly looking forward to relish their experiences.

# Ramananjali Memoirs

## – From the Archives

*We are bringing to you some memories of the first program of Ramananjali on the 3rd of January, 1980, the birth centenary day of Bhagavan. The three day long event... The puja to Ramaneswara Mahalingam with Ramananjali offering the song... The three hours long program! The first of a kind devotional music with orchestral support...The multi-lingual program, including an English song...The sea of devotees and the upsurge of devotion...*

- *Editor*



1		2	
9:40 a.m. to 9 p.m.	1. <i>Revere Churchmen on Parade</i> at Revere High School.	11 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.	1. <i>Music - St. R. Spary (Wald &amp; party)</i>
9:40 a.m. to 1 p.m.	2. <i>Spary to St. R. Spary</i> at St. R. Spary, 100 West Main Street, Weymouth.	11:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	2. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>
10:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.	3. <i>Weymouth Churchmen on Parade</i> at St. R. Spary.	12:30 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.	3. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.	4. <i>Weymouth Churchmen on Parade</i> at St. R. Spary.	1:45 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.	4. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>
9:45 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	5. <i>Weymouth Churchmen on Parade</i> at St. R. Spary.	2:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.	5. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>
***		6. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		7. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		8. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
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10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		16. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		17. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
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10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		19. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		20. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
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10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		22. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		23. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		24. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		25. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		26. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		27. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		28. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		29. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		30. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		31. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		32. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		33. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		34. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		35. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		36. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		37. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		38. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		39. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		40. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		41. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		42. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		43. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		44. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		45. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	
10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.		46. <i>Revere Music - St. R. Spary</i>	





Bhagavan Ramana's teaching is to discover that the mind is illusory and we need to question every time the mind rises and find the source of the apparent mind, the Self from which everything rises and into which everything sets.

The first instructions given to Siva Prakasam Pillai about self – enquiry in 1901 were documented in the famous text entitled 'Who am I?' Later, Pillai composed a poem called 'Ramana Pada Malai' in gratitude and devotion to the Sadguru. This has been set as Ramana Pada Pancharatnam – a unique musical piece which has been composed 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 now on the second kriti which is the Goula raga. The fifth charana of the song goes like this

*tAvinayalaitaDu manadennun talaivan pAdam vAzhgavE*  
*Avaiyai Isharkku aLittaladuvEnRu aruLvOn pAdam vAzhgavE*  
 Tamil

*horajigiva manava nillisu endu pELuva prabhu pAdake jaya*  
*Ishanige Atma samarpaNe idendu karuNisuvana pAdake jaya*  
 Kannada

Meaning –

Blessed be the Feet of the One who instructs: 'Stop it if the mind goes after sense-objects; This is offering the soul to the Lord'.

The five senses play a vital role in our lives, no doubt. But that doesn't mean we should hold on to them always and never move forward, go higher or attain the Truth. It is like how Bhagavan says the pole vaulter never holds on to the pole after he has jumped to the other side. Although the senses help us

in our daily life, when we want to turn within, we have to leave them outside and dive within. Otherwise that itself will become the hurdle, preventing us from diving within.

Every time the mind jumps out giving one reason or the other, we should diligently question to whom is this thought, we get the answer that it is for me. Then who is this I? Who Am I? I, I, I, ..... When this questioning is done continuously, slowly the Self reveals to us its true nature. And that we need to hold on to always. When this becomes natural through earnest and persistent practice, then it is Self-Knowledge indeed. Everything will be wonderful and beautiful.

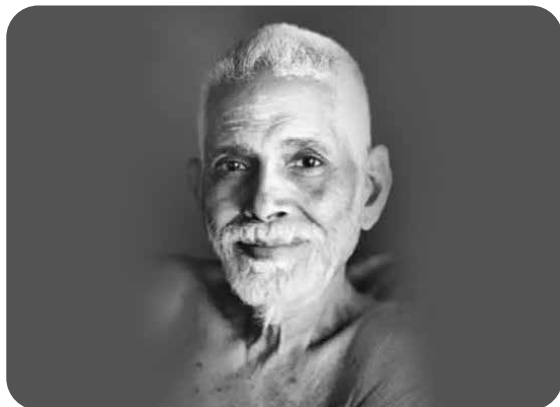
Sadhu Om Swami says as you start diving within, the Self reveals itself more and more making the realization happen beautifully.

I pray to Bhagavan to make me realize the truth and stop this jumping monkey mind which goes from tree to tree. Please make me alert and attentive enough to recognize every time when my senses take over and dominate me, give me the strength to fight them by diving within and be the Self always.

Lord Ramana

Thank you Bhagavan

Your attention seeking Child:) ????



## How Bhagavan Captured Us

Smt.Sulochana Natarajan

It was as if the engine of our train had changed or perhaps the driver had changed. Suddenly the journey of life began to move towards its destination, towards its purpose, with growing clarity.

After the first few months of teething trouble as Delhi, when I returned with the children after the summer vacation the whole scenario had changed. ARN welcomed us into a lovely ground floor flat that had been allotted to us with the most magnificent garden around it. It was a riot of orange with a stately gulmohur tree taking centre-stage. Mani, our family cook was already in charge of the kitchen. We had also found a genial old nurse from Chennai for the children. There was a gardener appointed by the government and every kind of assistance for the house was just a phone call away. I was practically an uncrowned queen. Life began in all its wonder in 27 Meena Bagh. This address would be a beehive of Ramana activities for 12 years thereafter. It was also a great period of spiritual joy for me and the beginning of my magical tryst with Ramana Music.

At the very first Ramana Satsang we had attended, I had sung Manavasi Ramaswami Iyer's 'Saranagathi' which I had learnt directly from him. That song became my signature tune as it were and remained as the undercurrent of my life. At the same time, the Satsangs helped the seed of Ramana Music to be sown deep in my heart, to take root as it were and begin to sprout naturally. In fact, I could say that in the journey through the Delhi years my train moved on the twin rails of steadying and deepening the spiritual quest and the laying of the foundation for Ramana Music. In fact, for every one of us in the family, Delhi Ramana Kendra was the bedrock for the manner in which the Ramana Movement grew in later years at Bangalore.

Of course, Sarada and Ambika entered the Ramana Movement only as 'prasad devotees' along with their dear friend Kala Rani, the daughter of Guruswamy and Seetha. The children would play outside during the talks and promptly come in as we chanted Arunachala Siva for arati and prasadam. Thus Arunachala Siva became their first acquaintance with Ramana Music.

Those were the rails on which our life moved. On the outside, the train passed through different events in life. It was for the most part a ride through beautiful terrain. Right opposite our home, 27 Meena Bagh, New Delhi, was a Defence Services Campus. The best part was that the campus not only had quarters of Defence personnel but also a school called the 'Defence Services Public School' – DSPS as we used to call it. Sarada was admitted there in 1965 July and though she cried a little on the first day, she had a wonderful class teacher Mrs.Rao who soon took the child under her wing and thereafter Sarada was comfortable in the school. Being a dreamer, she did get into a couple of scrapes with some of her teachers for not being attentive in class as she was lost in her own world, but by and large she was a bright student. She was especially good at the English language and a charming story teller even from the age of two and a half years. She also developed a love for drawing and for reading. In the years to come we could rarely see Sarada without a book in her hand.

The Defence Campus had a Grocery Store, the 'canteen', and a small shop with cool drinks, chips etc. run by a genial 'Sardarji' as he was called by one and all. At the corner of the road was a taxi stand. In those days taxis were very cheap in Delhi. Within 5 minutes of your calling them you could get a taxi. The minimum charge was only Rs.10! One can hardly imagine such a figure. But then again, ten rupees was a handsome sum too in those days. The best part was that all the taxi drivers were very trustworthy. We lived in times when people trusted each other and did not fear one another. The Defence Campus also had a daily dhobi facility.

The Meena Bagh flats comprised of blocks of 12 flats each with a huge central garden. That is, in each block there were 3 sets of four flats each forming a square along with the main road as the fourth side. Each of the ground floor flats had a wonderful spacious garden as well. Our flat was one right adjacent to the road and was lined with numerous fruit and flower trees all along the road side. At the back we had a vegetable garden and a drumstick tree as well. Inside our main garden was also a huge gulmohur (mayflower) tree with a hollow where birds, especially parrots built their nests year after year and gave us many hours of joyous watching.



## Sri Ramana Sahasranama Stuti

**379. NIRBHAVAH**

One who is deathless.

Only when the mind is dead, when the mind does not stray from its source the spiritual heart, can one become deathless. Ramana was anchored in the source. Hence, he is deathless, eternal.

*Om nirbhavAya namaha*

**380. NISTULAH**

Incomparable.

Ramana was born with awareness of the glory of Arunachala. He treasured it in his heart even before he could lisp the words father and mother. He became enlightened when he was sixteen years of age. Living at one place, Arunachala, for 54 years he was able to attract thousands of pilgrims. He is indeed incomparable.

*Om nistulAya namaha*

**381. NIGHNAH**

Servant (of God), the humble one.

Ramana had totally lost his individuality in Arunachala. As he says in one of his compositions, body and mind belonged entirely to Arunachala. In this sense he was the foremost servant among the devotees of God.

*Om nighnAya namaha.*

**382. NIJANANDAICA NIRBHARAH**

Firmly established in his own state of bliss.

Ramana was ever enjoying the bliss of the Self in which he was immersed.

*Om nijAnandaika nirbharAya namaha.*

**383. NIGRAHA ANUGRAHASAMAH**

Even-handed in punishments and rewards.

Ramana was the human embodiment of the great God Siva. As such he is the Creator, whose laws govern the universe. The law is even-handed and the fruits of action flow as rewards and punishments in accordance with the karmic law which makes no distinction.

*Om nigraha anugraha samAya namaha.*



## News &amp; Events

## Revathi Sankar

Sri Ramanasramam celebrated the Jayanthi of Bhagavan Ramana with a 24 hour online celebration in which RMCL had the opportunity to participate.

Dr.Sarada presented the theme 'Pujanam, Japah, Chintanam' from Upadesa Saram. We began with Ashtottara Puja offering at Ramana Shrine, Bangalore. Japa was depicted through singing of Ramana's name by Ramananjali, Chanting of Arunachala Aksharamanamalai in several languages and dancing to the chant of Arunachala Siva. Children sang 'Ramana Rhymes'.





The 'chintanam' - meditation began with meditating on Bhagavan's life and teachings, including dramas by children and by artistes of the Centre. The presentation continued with self-enquiry and reading sessions by N.Nandakumar and Dileep Simha. We concluded with an offering from Ramana Pada Pancharatnam.



Jayanthi was celebrated at the Ramana Shrine by an offering of Sahasranama Puja by Sri Subramaniam. V.Radha, Uma Sreepathy and others staff members sang bhajans and chanted the Ramana Sahasranama.

In RMCL's online celebration, Ramana Tiruvembavai was presented by Smt.V.Radha and Ramana Music students. There were also dances by senior students and artistes of the Centre





### Special Dates in March

- » March 10th, Wednesday: Sthapana Day
- » March 11th, Thursday: Maha Sivaratri

### Special Online Dates – February and March

***Ramanacentre Bengaluru – YouTube Channel (Subscribe to get detailed program)***

### **44th National Seminar and Global Online Festival – Ramananjali 40+**

- » Every Wednesday 6.15 pm – Ramananjali Cultural Program
- » Every Friday 6.15 pm – Ramananjali – Down Memory Lane (A video presentation of the history of Ramananjali)
- » 15th and 22nd February – Mondays – Smt.Mahalakshmi Suryanandan on Ramana Rama
- » 27th February – Pournami – Sri Nochur Venkataraman on Ramana Pada Pancharatnam
- » 1st and 8th March – Mondays – Sri K.V.Subramonyam on Ramana Kritis
- » 13th March – Saturday – Robert Butler on Muruganar's Ramananubhuti
- » 15th and 22nd March – Mondays – Dr.N.S.Lakshminarayana Bhatta on Kannada Ramana Geethe
- » 20th March - Saturday – Michael James on Compositions of Sadhu Om Swami
- » 28th March – Pournami – Sri Nochur Venkataraman on Ramana Pada Pancharatnam

## **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**

**To register for Online sessions contact**

**Uma 9538472026 or join on <https://meet.google.com/kwx-bdoa-gtf>**

### **Online and On site Self Enquiry sessions**

Thursday: 7:00 pm to 8.00 pm at RSCS

By Sri Nandakumar ji

Friday: 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm at RMHC

By Dileep Simha and Dr. Sarada

Everyday: 5:30 am to 5.45 am, 9:30pm to 10:00pm (online)

By Sri Nandakumar ji & others

(Chanting and Self-enquiry)

### **Online Satsang**

Chanting, Reading, Music, Talks, Puja

Saturday: 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at RSCS

Every Sunday 7.00 pm to 8.40 pm Kannada Satsang

Every first Sunday 11.00 am to 12.30 pm Tamil Satsang

### **Online and On site Music and Dance classes**

[Contact - Uma (9538472026)] at RMHC

### **On site Talks, Parayana and Puja**

By Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30 pm at RSCR



## 40 years of The Ramana Way

'Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning' was registered at Bangalore as a non-profit society in 1979 inspired by the life and teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi and with a vision to share these in every possible manner. By the very gracious power of those life and teachings, several activities were undertaken by the Centre like Satsangs, Talks and Ramananjali music recordings and programs.

In 1981 February Sri A.R.Natarajan, the Founder President, saw the need for a voice of the Centre, a 'family journal' he called it, which would meditate on the core teachings of Ramana, carry news about the Centre to its members, and also connect them as one family. The journal was simple – an eight-page folder - and simply called 'Ramana'. Ramana the source, Ramana the power that protects, Ramana the object of devotion, Ramana the way and Ramana the sharing.



This monthly journal has completed 40 years of being published, being the voice of Ramana through the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning. By Ramana's grace 480 issues have been published. We celebrate our joy and gratitude.

## Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar  
Translation: David Godman

### Investigation into Truth

123. If one abandons the knowledge of reality that is totally free of individuality, all the many *siddhis* performed with the ego – mind will assuredly be profitless. Therefore, who else but a worthless person – who clings tenaciously to individuality without realising the undivided *Atma – swarupa* that is his true nature – will desire those multiple *siddhis* that cause mental delusion?

Siddhis are supernatural powers such as telepathy, clairvoyance, levitation, and so on.