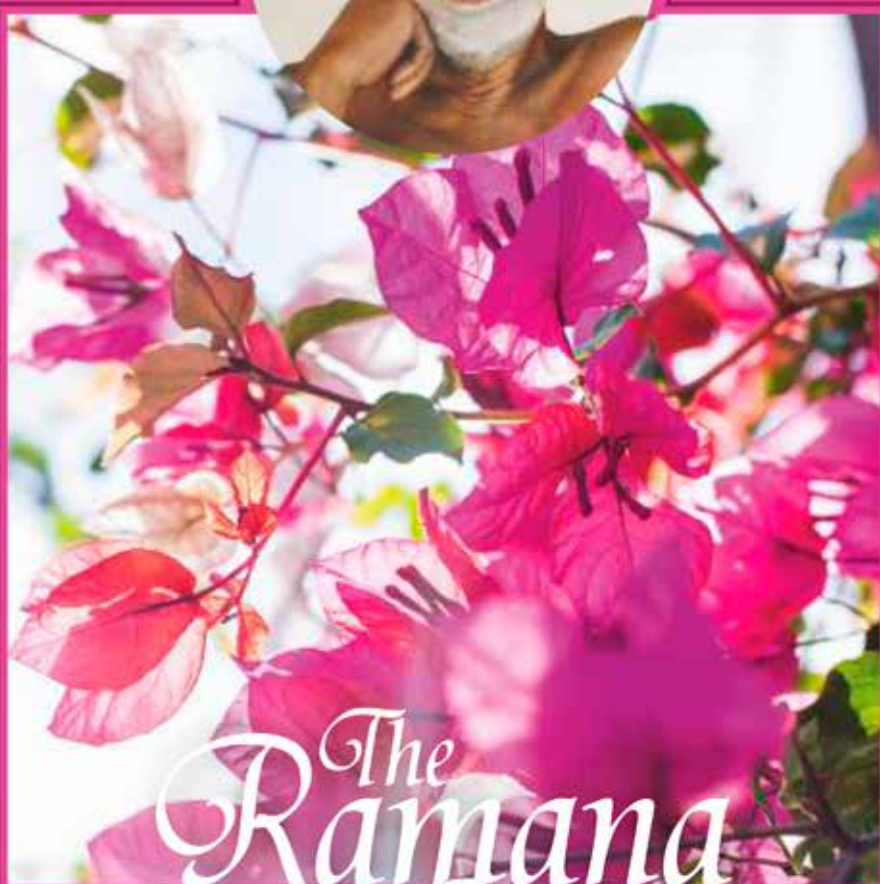


March 2018



The Ramana Way

A Monthly Journal published by
Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning
Bengaluru

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THE RAMANA WAY

A Monthly Journal since 1981



*Celebrating
Ramana Rasa
Anubhava*

Editor: Dr. Sarada

Associate Editor: G. Kameshwar

Assistant Editor: Dileep Simha

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

- Ramana Gita X, 10

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Editorial

Dr. Sarada

Bhagavan Ramana says, 'Be still and know that you are God'. Then he adds 'Know' and not 'think'. Does it not surprise us, this distinction between 'knowing' and 'thinking'? In our understanding 'thinking' is 'knowing'. When Ramana explains that thinking is not our true nature, Paul Brunton is worried that in a state free from thoughts we might be reduced to idiots. Ramana assures that it is quite the contrary. That, which is our natural state, free of thoughts, is the fullness of consciousness. However, our dependence on thoughts is so intense that we are practically in agreement with Descartes, the philosopher who surmised, 'I think, therefore I am'.

As Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "The fear of what would happen if we were to be thought-free is strong and the stark reality of this fear cannot be overstated. It is precisely here that Sadguru Ramana steps in with his direct experience of a state in which the mind is wholly silent; the state in which one is bubbling with joy. Ramana's life itself is the best example of what he is communicating, of what he is teaching. It gives one enough confidence, enough faith to make one give it a chance, to give it a try. The hope that we too may be able to share this beatitude is the starting point of this adventure. It is an adventure for, unless we have the courageous spirit, the determination and strong urge to find out, we can never get out of our old grooves."

When we set out on this adventure we may accept that our existence is not dependent on thoughts since every one of us is aware of our continued existence in the state of deep sleep wherein there is no experience of thoughts. However, we know that state to be one of darkness, ignorance. There is no knowledge in sleep, not even the knowledge of one's own existence. When we awake we are immediately conscious of our thoughts. We also know that our thoughts continue in dreams as well. In fact, we may say that dreams are nothing but thoughts. This being the case, how can we conceive of the fact that knowledge can be divorced from thinking? Yet, Ramana's statement clearly indicates that thinking is not knowledge.

Let us look at some of our experiences. Say we taste something. On doing so we think, 'This is salty and crisp. What I have just tasted are potato chips'. We are satisfied thereupon that we have 'known' what we experienced. But is this 'knowledge' the real experience? That which tasted the chips was the tongue, the palette. The teeth crunched the chips and the throat swallowed them along with some saliva. If there was a sensation of hunger prior to eating the chips there may be a slight satiation of the hunger by some sensations in the stomach after eating the chips. In our infancy, before we have learnt to speak any language if we were to eat something could we name it? Could we then have said that these were 'potato chips'? When we drink mother's milk are we capable of calling it that or of classifying it in our directory of 'knowledge' saying 'I have drunk milk'? But would we not have been aware of the experience nonetheless?

Thoughts are concepts, they are based on learning and memory. They reinforce further learning and memory. However, knowledge is immediate, it is at the very moment of experience, it is independent of learning and memory. In fact, thought captures our attention and diverts it from experience. It may be any experience, thought actually distracts us from it. When we see a beautiful flower we think we know both the flower and the act of seeing it. In truth we know neither. What we know of the flower is only an image or a thought about the flower. How can we say we know what a flower is just because we have captured a mental image of it? Do we know what it means to be a flower that we can declare 'I know what a flower is?' Do we actually know how many petals the flower has and the sepals and pollens and every part of the flower? We may be able to name all of these but that would only be knowledge of the names of the parts of the flower. We, however, confuse this with knowledge of the flower and say, 'I know that is a flower. I know all the parts of the flower'. All that we know are only names, labels and pictures or images associated with those labels.

How can we know what the flower is when we are not even really aware of what seeing is? We believe we know that we are seeing. Yet are we aware of all that is happening within the many minute parts of the eye when we are seeing? Are we aware of how the signals are getting transmitted to our brain and how they are

getting stored there? Are we aware, do we 'know' a single thing of what is happening in our own body at any given moment, in the body which we call 'I'? We do not know, we only 'think' we know. The experience is different from the naming or labeling of that experience. The experience is primary. The labeling is secondary. The experience is natural. The labeling or thinking about the experience is an acquired skill. We confuse this capacity to label knowledge with the very knowledge. It is for this reason that Ramana points out to us that 'thinking' is not 'knowing'.

We think we know but the fallacy is that when we think we do not know. Thinking distances us from experience and hence from direct knowledge. Further, thinking creates an illusion of knowledge and occupies us with further thinking. Hence when Ramana warns us that action is bound to drown us the sea of more and more action what should we surmise? We must understand that as thinking is the first form of action Ramana is also telling us that thinking will merely drown us in an ocean of more and more thinking. Thinking is not knowledge, neither will it lead to knowledge. Thinking only leads to further thinking.

Therefore, the only way to knowledge is to remain with consciousness before thought arises and distances us from knowledge. But how do we get to the point before the rising of thought? Before we know it thought has already arisen. It seems to be impossible to know about its rising before it does so. Ramana says it is possible by getting to the point of the setting of thought. Where thought sets there thought arises as well. Hence, where thought sets there knowledge shines provided another thought has not arisen already. If it has already arisen, then one needs to consciously take it back to the point of its setting by asking 'For whom is this thought?' The answer will come 'For me?' But 'Who am I?'

Certainly I am not the thought, not any thought, for thought is mere commentary about experience. It is not direct knowledge. However, I know myself directly. This means I do not need thought to know myself. On the other hand thought impedes my knowledge of myself, it obstructs my self-awareness by creating an illusion of knowing and not-knowing. Hence, when I ask myself 'Who am I?' I know that I am not thought. This means I also know that I am

not anything that can be grasped by thought or expressed as a thought. When I ask myself 'Who am I?' with this conviction then I will hold on to the question with intensity so that no thought is allowed entry. Then the truth which is beyond the ken of thought will be revealed.

Nonetheless we are curious to know how thought enters in the mind space. Does it enter of its own accord or is it brought in as a special guest, by invitation? If we believe that it enters by its own will then we would have no possibility of controlling it in any manner, would we? We could never strive for mind control if we had no say in the matter. Or perhaps we contend that although thoughts come in of their own accord we have the power to send them out by an effort of our will. We may believe that it may come of its own but it will go if we force it to do so. If this is the case we need to know how we can send out a thought. Can we do so by not wanting to think that thought? The very act of negation would actually affirm it, would it not? If I declare, 'I am not thinking about my hunger' does it not mean that I am actually thinking about my hunger? If I were not thinking about it, then even if another says, 'Are you hungry?' I would answer, 'I don't know. I haven't paid attention to it'.

And that, Ramana says simply, is the key. Attention is the key. Swami Tyagesananda, while talking of Ramana's teachings, gave an example. He said, let us think we are standing on the curb, the platform by the road, watching cars go by. Will we stop any and every car that comes by and climb into it? Or will we climb into any car even if it happens to stop beside us and the driver asks us to hop in? If we do so then we are sure to be literally taken for a ride. And we can never say where we will be dropped by that driver. Even if a hundred thoughts are racing through our minds there is no need for us to pay special attention to any of them. After all, the thoughts are not very different from cars racing past us on a road if we are merely watching. If we pay a great deal of attention to any thought then it would be like hopping into any one car. Then we too would have to race with that racing car. It may be difficult for us to cut the momentum and get off. So Ramana asks us not to run with the running mind.

More importantly, Ramana does not even ask us to watch our thoughts. Why give it even that degree of attention? By doing so we may learn to become free to a certain extent from the stronghold of thoughts. When we watch our thoughts we would realize that thoughts are not 'I' and hence we need not pay any attention to them. We would have understood that thoughts arise only when we pay attention to them. Therefore, if we turn our attention away from any thought it is bound to drop away. In this approach we recognize that although thoughts appear to come and go of their own accord, they actually become 'our thoughts' only when we pay attention to them. We realize that we therefore have the full freedom to choose our thoughts and to ignore any thought or all thoughts.

By this the degree of significance of all thoughts would get watered down considerably and finally wane to a very minimum. However, they would still be countenanced as having an existence apart from me. I too would seem to have an existence apart from them. If I merely watch my thoughts without enquiring into their source both thoughts and the thinker would continue to exist. By enquiring 'For whom are the thoughts?' and recognizing that they are only my thoughts, the supremacy of the thinker over the thoughts is established. However, it is only when one further enquires, 'Who am I?' that the thinker too dissolves in the source.

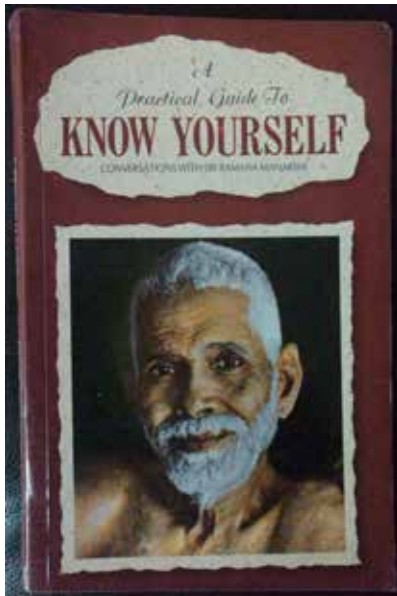
Ramana also gives us an alternative approach, the question 'Whence am I?' or what is my source. When we look at this question, we may think of the source as physical which is like that place in the mountain from which a great river springs. We may also look at it from the perspective of what is the real source of the river. The answer would be that it is the ocean. Although the Ganga may appear to be springing from the Himalayan mountains her real source is the ocean into which she merges at Ganga-Sagar. No matter where she is and in what form she is the nature of Ganga is water whose source is the sea.

In his 'Forty Verses on Reality' Ramana explains through an example that the film that is projected, the one who sees it, the light by which it is seen and the screen on which it is projected "are all He, the one". Then the question arises 'Where is thought

apart from the Self?' Are not all images in the ever running movie called 'mind' only the light of consciousness? Instead of seeing it as the light of consciousness if we see this light as a thought, that means we believe we are perceiving an object. When we perceive an object it means we have already delineated a subject separate from the object. Since we have done so Ramana first guides us to see the primary 'subject' image as the source of light and the 'object' images as further removed from the light.

In actuality it is only the subject who gets divided into both 'subject' and 'object'. This we can understand when we analyse our dream experience. Are not all the people in my dream only 'I'? Once we know this, then, instead of paying attention to a multiplicity of images and getting lost in their mazes, we trace them back to their single source the 'I'. Further, when we ask 'Who am I?' it is revealed to us that the 'I' is not an independent source of light. The Self alone is the light of consciousness, the light of knowledge. When one abides in the source all divisions cease.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Sarada Natarajan". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sarada" and the last name "Natarajan" clearly distinguishable.

Know Your Self**A. R. Natarajan***INTRODUCTION**

What we know is activity, relationships, attachment to ideas. We feel dull, unwanted and out of place when left alone, when there is nothing to do. Aren't we scared stiff when there are no thoughts? For us thinking is natural. We carry a heavy load of purposeless thoughts, purposeless because they have no essential connection functionally to our daily life. There is also the load of the past with its hurts and failures, its experience brought into the present by thinking about those 'ashes of memory'. Escapist thoughts, wafting one away from the reality of the present, occupy the mental horizon. The mind is so crowded that it is like a village bazaar on the shandy day or a small railway platform on a day when trains are running late. There is no elbow room at all. Don't we want to be free from the stifling atmosphere of this mental babble? The answer is 'Yes' and 'No'. 'Yes' for the unwanted thoughts. 'No' for the thoughts we label as pleasant,

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

happy memories, the rosy future. Whether we admit it or not we do not wish to be altogether free of thoughts. If we cannot be rid of unpleasant thoughts we would rather live with them than lose also the thoughts which we like to hug, which we hold dear. The fear of what would happen if we were to be thought-free is strong and the stark reality of this fear cannot be overstated.

It is precisely here that Sadguru Ramana steps in with his direct experience of a state in which the mind is wholly silent; the state in which one is bubbling with joy. Ramana's life itself is the best example of what he is communicating, of what he is teaching. It gives one enough confidence, enough faith to make one give it a chance, to give it a try. The hope that we too may be able to share this beatitude is the starting point of this adventure. It is an adventure for, unless we have the courageous spirit, the determination and strong urge to find out, we can never get out of our old grooves. Nor can we look for a new way of life, a new approach to things which would make each moment beautiful. No radical transformation is possible unless one learns to live in the present, for all experience is in the present. This presupposes an ability to be free of thoughts, a capacity to cut off the mental movements to the past and to the future. We learn the art of living in the present from Ramana. He never tires of affirming that it is possible to do so because our natural state is one of silence. Thoughts are only on the surface when needed but deep down there is the overwhelming silence, the vast space uncluttered by any thought.

By definition the natural state is also one's own state. It is not given and therefore one cannot be deprived of it. If so, the question would arise as to what obstructs our awareness of it. It is our ignorance of our true Self. The solution therefore is in Self-knowledge, in finding out the truth about oneself. Knowing oneself is the thing which alone matters. One's knowledge, however vast, is about objects, about the universe. In contrast one is ignorant about the subject, the seer, about the one on whom the whole world of the seen is dependent. Ramana would therefore emphasise the primacy of Self-knowledge as it holds the key to one's happiness. Why? Because it enables the discovery of one's own natural state.

One might say that one is presently in the habitual state in which primacy is given to thinking. Happiness is located in objects, and one is afraid to be without activity and thoughts. Consequently restlessness is one's lot. In contrast in the natural state, the mind is totally silent, free of thoughts yet super sharp. Thinking and thoughts would be purely functional. There would be no thought hangovers or carry forwards. Happiness would be perceived to be inherent, to be within. As a consequence one would be immersed in peace, a peace which is undisturbed by activity.

For Self-knowledge one has to begin by enquiring about or paying attention to the subject 'I'. Necessarily it means withdrawing attention from the objects, which are its present focus, and turning it on itself.

Before going into the question of what the shifting of attention from objects to the subject means one needs to examine what we take the subject to be. Then the further question of the fallacy, if any, in our assumptions has also to be enquired into. We take ourselves to be a particular name and form or we identify ourselves with the mind. One might ask what is wrong about these notions. Let us examine the three states of daily existence, waking, dream and sleep. So far as the waking state is concerned our assumption might appear to be correct. But what about sleep and dream states? As for the dream state though sometimes the identity remains the same as that of the waking state, it could well be and is often different. A rich and powerful king Somadatta may be Ponniah, a beggar in tattered clothes not knowing where his next meal would come from, and so on. The dreamer is not the one who is awake because the identity is different. As for sleep, the 'I' of the waking state is absent. There is no Shankar or Sridevi to answer since the particular identity is absent. Can we really be that which we are not in two of our daily states of existence, dream and sleep?

The absence of the sense of individuality in sleep would also confirm one's doubt that there is more to us than our assumed individuality. For we cannot be that which comes and goes. There can be no break in consciousness.

The matter could also be looked at from another point of view. The assumption behind the idea that one is the body and or the mind is that both the body and mind are self-conscious. Taking the body first, let us look at its state at the time of death. The body might be perfectly healthy, it might be young yet it is called a corpse the moment the life-force leaves it. Ramana would say that were it not so the body would get up while being taken for cremation or burial and protest. Ramana's reflection on this matter began at the age of twelve when his father died. His father's body was there apparently as if in sleep but there was a difference, making him infer that his father's 'I' had left the body. Reference has already been made to the daily experience of sleep when there is no body consciousness. Ramana would say that the body would then be taken to be dead, but for the divine plan which continues the respiration at a low pace.

Where does the mistake lie in our identifying ourselves with the mind? Operationally our sense of existence is related to thoughts. Only thoughts give one the feeling of being alive, of being vital. The mistake here is that if one goes into the question, 'What is the mind?' it would be seen that there is no such independent entity as the mind. Ramana would drive home this point by his remarks like, 'Show me the mind and I will strike it down', 'Ask her if there is such a thing as mind. If so, what is its form? Does it have a moustache and a beard?' Why are these statements made? It is because that which we call the mind is intangible. It is only the aggregate of thoughts with a central thought 'I am so and so'. At any given time the mind is this core thought and the associated thoughts on which its attention is focused. Thus it would be ever changing. One cannot be that which is intangible and always fleeting.

If one is not the body or the mind what is one's true identity? How is one to find it out? In the Ramana Way the key to everything is to be found in the spiritual heart which is different from the physical organ bearing that name. It is at once the seat of consciousness and the source of the mind. It is the primary energy source which may be seen to manifest through the mind and the body. This energy is transmitted through channels called 'nadis' from the heart to the mind first and from there to the different parts

of the body. It alone is self-luminous. The mind and the body only reflect its light of consciousness. “Just as the dynamo supplies the motive power to the whole system of lights, fans, etc., so also this primal force supplies the energy for the beating of the heart for respiration, etc.”

The mind rises from the heart on waking and subsides into it when sleep overtakes. Since its origin is from the heart, the mind is naturally pure. It is like a wave in the sea of consciousness. However, when latent tendencies are there the mind cannot rest in its source but must perforce become externalized. This is what happens on waking. Then the pure mind first limits itself by identifying itself with a particular body and name and becomes defiled by its contact with objects. For convenience of understanding one might say that the mind comprises of two parts, the pure, ‘I am’, which represents its consciousness content, and ‘so and so’, which is inert and limiting. It is important to emphasise the mind’s consciousness content, for it is this which makes it a bridge back to the heart. Now our attention is almost exclusively on the portion which does not matter, the sense of separate individuality and the other thoughts arising from it. What is needed is to switch this attention on to the ‘I am’ by an appropriate method.

Another significant aspect of the mind which needs to be taken note of is that though the mind consists of thoughts only the first thought, ‘I am so and so’, really matters. Without the individual’s attention the other thoughts cannot appear on the mental horizon and when such attention is withdrawn they disappear. Also, there is no inter-relationship between the other thoughts, but the thinker, the individual is “equally and essentially connected to all other thoughts”. Therefore, when one is tackling the mind, when one is seeking to control the mind, attention has to be paid to this core thought; all other thoughts despite their bewildering variety are merely chaff.

*** To be continued ***

The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar

Talk 20. (Excerpt)

D.: What does Maharshi think of the theory of universal illusion (Maya)?

M.: What is Maya? It is only Reality.

D.: Is not Maya illusion?

M.: Maya is used to signify the manifestations of the Reality. Thus Maya is only Reality.

D.: Some say that Sri Sankaracharya was only intellectual and not realised. Is it so?

M.: Why worry about Sankaracharya? Realise your own Self. Others can take care of themselves.

Guidance received: Just "Who am I?", "Realise your own Self", "Hold your Self", "Know your Self" is even more direct than, "For whom is this thought? Who am I?" as a thought like "Maya" or "Sri Sankara was only intellectual", etc has to be posited and then the Self is held. In "Hold your Self", even Maya is not posited. Summa Iru - body, word and thought stilled - is Atma Vidya.

Talk 20. (Excerpt)

D.: Was not Jesus a Perfected Being possessing occult powers (siddhi)?

M.: He could not have been aware of his powers (siddhis).

D.: Is it not good to acquire them, such as telepathy, etc.?

M.: Telepathy or radio enables one to see and hear from afar. They are all the same, hearing and seeing. Whether one hears from near or far does not make any difference in hearing. The fundamental factor is the hearer, the subject. Without the hearer or the seer, there can be no hearing or seeing. The latter are the functions of the mind. The occult powers (siddhis) are therefore only in the mind. They are not natural to the Self. That which is not natural, but

acquired, cannot be permanent, and is not worth striving for. They denote extended powers. A man is possessed of limited powers and is miserable; he wants to expand his powers so that he may be happy. But consider if it will be so; if with limited perceptions one is miserable, with extended perceptions the misery must increase proportionately. Occult powers will not bring happiness to anyone, but will make him all the more miserable! Moreover what are these powers for? The would-be occultist (siddha) desires to display the siddhis so that others may appreciate him. He seeks appreciation, and if it is not forthcoming he will not be happy. There must be others to appreciate him. He may even find another possessor of higher powers. That will cause jealousy and breed unhappiness. The higher occultist (siddha) may meet a still higher siddha and so on until there will come one who will blow up everything in a trice. Such is the highest adept (siddha) and He is God or the Self.

Which is the real power? Is it to increase prosperity or bring about peace? That which results in peace is the highest perfection (siddhi).

Guidance Received: The sage may have occult powers but they do not corrupt the consciousness as there is no ego which is claiming possession. True education should aim at Peace rather than merely increasing prosperity. Erasing the ego is the highest occult power.

Talk 20. (Excerpt). Peace. Silence.

D.: But common people in Europe and America would not appreciate such an attitude (peace is Happiness) and would desire a display of powers and instructions by lectures, etc.

M.: Lectures may entertain individuals for a few hours without improving them. Silence on the other hand is permanent and benefits the whole of humanity.

D.: But silence is not understood.

M.: It does not matter. By silence, eloquence is meant. Oral lectures are not so eloquent as silence. Silence is unceasing eloquence. The Primal Master, Dakshinamurti, is the ideal. He taught his rishi disciples by silence.

D.: But then there were disciples for Him. It was all right. Now it is different. They must be sought after and helped.

M.: That is a sign of ignorance. The power which created you has created the world. If it can take care of you, it can similarly take care of the world also.

Guidance Received: Shanti is best "shared" in Silence rather than as "communicated" through words. To be Silent in the Omnipresent Dakshinamurthy one needs to understand that the entire creation is created and operated by ONE POWER. This teaching that all actions in all universes are by that ONE POWER is embedded and implied in the Silence of Dakshinamurthy, the Sadguru. All powers are absorbed in that ONE POWER and that is absorbed in SILENCE. "Silence is unceasing eloquence".

Talk 20. (Excerpt).

D.: What does Bhagavan think of the "lost soul" mentioned by Jesus Christ?

M.: Think what there is to be lost. Is there anything to lose? What matters is only that which is natural. Such must be eternal and cannot be experienced. That which is born must die; that which is acquired must be lost. Were you born? You are ever existent. The Self can never be lost.

Guidance Received: Once Seshadri Swamigal asks Ramana Maharshi as to why he remains thought free when he could hold Arunachala Nama within, in worship. Ramana Maharshi replies by asking whether there is a difference or separation between the worshipper and the worshipped. In self-enquiry this unreal separation is removed and there is no sin for the individual soul to commit or get lost. The Self alone shines without even the slightest Viyoga between the worshipper and the worshipped.

Talk 21.

Mr. Ellappa Chettiar, a member of the Legislative Council of Madras Presidency and an influential Hindu, asked: "Why is it said that the knowledge born of hearing is not firm, whereas that born of contemplation is firm?"

M.: On the other hand it is said that hearsay knowledge (paroksha) is not firm, whereas that born of one's own realisation (aparoksha) is firm.

It is also said that hearing helps the intellectual understanding of the Truth, that meditation makes the understanding clear, and finally that contemplation brings about realisation of the Truth.

Furthermore, they say also that all such knowledge is not firm and that it is firm only when it is as clear and intimate as a gooseberry in the hollow of one's palm.

There are those who affirm that hearing alone will suffice, because a competent person who had already, perhaps in previous incarnations, qualified himself, realises and abides in peace as soon as he hears the Truth told him only once, whereas the person not so qualified must pass through the stages prescribed above, before falling into samadhi.

Guidance Received: The scriptures appear to say contradictory things. That is only because they address sadhakas of different spiritual maturities. Moreover, one should not get into arguments as to which statement is true. One should keep practicing one's sadhana to make oneself spiritually ripe. The direct method to ripen oneself spiritually, without getting involved in apparently contradictory statements/ thoughts, is the quest for the True Self. Irrespective of one's spiritual state of maturity, "Who am I?" starts to move one from the darkness of self-ignorance to the light of Self-Knowledge, directly.

Talk 22. (Excerpt)

D.: Is it not killing life to prepare meat diet?

M.: Ahimsa stands foremost in the code of discipline for the yogis.

D.: Even plants have life.

M.: So too the slabs you sit on!

D.: May we gradually get ourselves accustomed to vegetarian food?

M.: Yes. That is the way.

Guidance Received: The Self-Luminous Self exists by itself. A body or any non-self depends on "another" for its existence. To argue whether eating plants or vegetarian food is also killing life is kutarka or vitiating argument. In the area of sadhana (spiritual journey) one should consume, or, provide to the body, that food which creates less attachment to the body. That energy from sattvik food too is to be used for spiritual effort like right living and Atma Vichara which will lead one to realise the Self-Luminous Self. The truth that there is no non-self and everything, including the stone slab outside and bone within, is full of life - the Self - is realised.

How does Bhagavan say that Jnani is not affected by the food he eats?

S: In the Jnana where stone slabs too are full of life, "eating" is itself eaten by that Jnana. A completely surrendered one too does not "eat" or "do" and will not be affected by "energy generated" or "result of action".



Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi's

Sri Arunachala Navamanimalai¹

The Nine-Gems Necklace of Arunachala¹ (Part 9)

G Kameshwar

(Verse-9)

*ammaiyu mappanu mAyenaip pUmiyilAkkiyaLit
tammaki mAyaiye nAzhkaTal veezhntuyAnAzhtitiTumun
nenmana manni yizhuttun patatti liruttinaiyAl
cinmaya nAmaru NAcala ninnarut citramennE*

Word split and meaning:

ammaiyum appanumAy: Becoming mother and father

enaip pUmiyil Akki aLittu: Giving birth to me in the world, and then providing (caring/protecting) for me

ammaki mAyai en AzhkaTal veezhntu: Falling into the deep ocean of that world(liness) Maya

yAn AzhtitiDumun: Before I drown

en manam manni: Rising firmly in my mind

izhuttu un patattil : dragging me to your feet, your presence

iruttinaiyAl : As you placed me

cinmayanAm aruNAcala: Oh Arunachala, of the nature of Consciousness

nin aruL citram ennE: Oh the wonder of your Grace!

Verse rendering:

As my mother and father
You gave birth,
And provided for me
On this earth;

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

And ere I fell and drowned
 In deep-sea Maya world rat-race;
 Rising in my mind, you hauled me,
 And on your feet / in your state, you did place!
 Arunachala of Consciousness form,
 Oh the wonder of your Grace!

Prose rendering:

Oh Arunachala of Consciousness-Form! As my father and mother, on this earth you have given birth to me and provided for my care. And before I fell and drowned in the bottomless ocean of worldliness-Maya, you rose in my mind, pulled me, and placed me in your own feet; you absorbed me in your own Self. Oh, how can I describe in words the wonder of your Grace, your compassion!

Notes:

Bhagavan commenced the Navamanimalai, hailing Arunachala as:

*acala vuruvil acchakti yodingida Ongum
 arunAcalamenRaRi.*

Meaning: Having subsumed/absorbed 'That Shakti' (Mother Goddess Parvati) in his 'Stillness' Form, Know, that he rises as Arunachala mountain!

[Whereby Arunachala is Shiva (Male), in whom 'Shakti' (Female) is absorbed, and rises as the Arunachala mountain (Neuter).]

And then, in the fourth verse of Arunachala Navamanimalai, Bhagavan referred to Arunachala as:

peN AN ali uru naNNA: (You) Who have transcended the different forms of male, female and neuter

In the very next verse (Verse 5), Bhagavan appeals to the 'Mother' aspect of that gender-transcending Arunachala. Praying for Arunachala's liberation-granting glance, he says:

*tAy cicuvukku ARRun nikaraRRa nalanukku nEr Anatu
 uNTO, nikazhttu vAyE*

“Tell (me), is there anything comparable to the unequalled good that a mother does to (her) child? Lord, by your Grace, accomplish that goodness.”

And then, in the eight verse, he speaks of his physical parents:

*puvikkut pongiTum puvicchor pungavan
purikkut puNNiyan cuzhikut cuntaran
RavaRkkuc cuntaran^ catikkuR pannanan*

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

And then, in the final verse, he combines all these, and hails Arunachala, of the form of Knowledge-Consciousness, as his mother and father who gave birth to him on this earth, provided for his care, and saved him from being drowned in the ocean of worldliness-Maya, by rising in his mind, and drawing him to His (Arunachala’s) own feet, merging him in His own Being!

Thus we see, in this beautiful string of nine gems of Arunachala, Ramana express the transcendent nature of Self-Realization, as the non-difference of Dance and Stillness, Siva and Sakti, Chidambaram and Arunachala, Personal and Impersonal God, Mother and Father, Gender and Beyond, Individual and Supreme Self, Bhakti and Jnana... All this as a sublime soliloquy prayer to that wonderful mother-father Arunachala, of sat-cit-Ananda cinmaya form, who has saved him from being drowned in the bottomless ocean of worldliness-Maya, by raising him to His very own state.

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya!

(With this concludes this offering of translation of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi’s composition, ‘Arunachala Navamanimalai. Om tat sat)

Saddarshanam*Master Nome*

**bhUtam bhaviShyacca bhavati svakAIE
 tadvartamAnasya vihAya tattvam|
 hAsya na kim syAt gata bhAvi carcA
 vinaika sankhyAm gaNanEva IOkE|| 15 ||**

**The past (the having been, the gone) and the future
 (the to become) are the present (being) in [their]
 own time.**

**Relinquishing the Truth of what is presently existing
 (the present),**

**Will it not be laughable, repeatedly thinking over
 (discussion) [what is] gone [and] will be,**

Like counting without the number one, in the world?

N.: “In the world,” indicates that this is an example. We cannot count without the number one, which is the very unit of which all other numbers are composed. It is the starting place. All the other numbers are just so many ones combined. Likewise is it if we ignore the basic existence and consider what will be and what has been.

If we regard this verse as a statement about time, it serves some purpose. Obviously, thinking of, or discussing, the past and the future without relation to the present, or, without dealing with what the present life is, thinking of the far past and past lives or the far future and future lives, would be laughably absurd. It would be missing the most important ingredient.

If we interpret this verse in terms of what is existent, ‘what has been’ and ‘what will be’ have, as their common denominator, the present Existence. It is within the present Existence that there is knowledge of the past or future existence.

“Relinquishing the Truth of what is presently existing,” is the key to a profound comprehension of what Sri Ramana reveals in this verse. What is it that is presently existing? What is it that is like the number one in his analogy? To go on repeatedly thinking about the past and the future, and it does not make any difference how near or remote the past or future is, and to be thinking, “I was,” or “I will be,” without knowing the fundamental “I am”—would it not be absurd? Repeatedly thinking about what is gone and what will be would be like counting without the number one and would be missing something so important.

If we would interpret the verse as referring to dealing with time, the next verse would not follow very well. Muruganar has wisely arranged the Maharshi's verses, and Ganapati Muni has translated them into Sanskrit. The composition of the verses is supremely wise, and the arrangement of them is quite particular. Some aspects of the preceding verses would be ignored and the next verse would not cogently follow if one would think that this verse is about time, such as being about the present moment, in contrast to past moments and future moments. Something deeper is being indicated. It must pertain to our own Existence. If one thinks that he is in the present moment and simply divests his mind of expectations of the future and memories of the past, he will still have the duality of “I” and “this” and everything else Sri Bhagavan just negated. There will still be the ego-notion, and there will still be the misidentification with the sheaths. There will still be the idea of “I am the body.” There will still be the mistaking of the names and forms of the world to be existent. So, the “one” to which Sri Ramana refers must be something other than the present moment and must be, rather, what is presently existing.

So, there are two ways of understanding this verse. The first is the ostensible meaning, and the second is a deeper, indicated, more profound meaning. The first is that the past and the future are present in their own time. What one experiences is the present and never actually the past or the future. Even memories of the past and anticipations of the future occur in the present moment, which is the well-known “now” moment. When one relinquishes the now-moment, which is a shift of that to which one is paying

attention, the mind can wander to memories and to anticipations and is filled with the clutter of thought. Consequently, taking that into account, if the aspirant keeps the attention on that which is present, he eliminates much of the clutter of thought, and, to that extent, he has an advantage. If one takes that approach, though, it is limited in scope for several reasons.

Upon deeper examination, that which is referred to as “being in the now moment” is a corruption of the usage of “Being” into meaning mental attention, and the “now moment” actually pertains, not to the abstract moment of time, but to the present set of circumstances that are perceived through the senses. This is something contained entirely within the conjuring of the five sheaths. Consider the similarity to the experience in a dream. In a dream, the “now moment,” or the present moment, is no more real than the past moments or the future moments of the dream.

Similarly, that which is “here” in the dream is no more real than that which is “there” in the dream, no matter which direction the “there” might be - in front, behind, to the sides, upward or downward.

Moreover, this sacred text deals with Sat-darshanam, the revelation of Truth. Whatever might be the temporary benefits of shifting the mental attention to the present time or the present circumstances, it would not offer Liberation, because it would still be in accord with the same misidentification with the body and the same objective orientation that one is trying to abandon. The purpose of spiritual instruction is the undoing of the present preconception - no pun intended - on “present.” If our interpretation of the instruction is at the same level as the preconception, no great benefit is gained. Rather, we should lose the preconception, so that our experience merges with the significance of the higher instruction. Therefore, there must be a deeper way of approaching the verse.

This verse appears in the middle of the text, and the text is not written in an ascending or descending order. It is Sat-darshanam, the revelation of Truth, from beginning to end. All of it is at the highest, indeed, the supreme, level. So, why is this verse

placed here, if the next verse utterly negates time entirely? There must be another way of understanding the text.

The word for “the past” means “the having been” or “the gone.” The word for “the future” means the “to become,” and the word for “the present” is “the present being.” So, we may read the verse in this way: “The having been, or the gone, and the to become are the present being in their own time. Relinquishing the Truth of what is presently existing, will it not be laughable, repeatedly thinking over what is gone and what will be, like counting without the number one in the world?”

The Maharshi has given the analogy of counting without the number one. The number one is the basis from which all other numbers proceed, and it could very well be said that all other numbers are nothing more than collections of the same one appearing many times over. In the first verse, the word “eka,” one, is mentioned, and, in verse fourteen, Sri Ramana proclaims it to be the innate Self. Counting without the number one is analogous to leaving off the Knowledge of your Existence and trying to determine what was or will be. An example of this is thinking that you came from the Absolute as an origin, which is what was. Another example of this is an assumption that you will be realized in the future, that you will reach or merge with Brahman in the future, which is the supposition of what will be in the future. What is it that is presently and, therefore, always existent?

Because this is Sat-darshanam, the Maharshi's emphasis must be upon the non objective Existence. If it were just upon the moment, it would merely be paying attention to time, which is not Reality. If one attempts to only pay attention to the present moment, the best one can hope for is the clearing away of certain thoughts, while certain other thoughts remain, and the misidentifications remain intact. However, if we take this deeper approach and focus upon what is it that is actually existing, which is what we always are, always were, and always will be, the verse makes much more sense. We are not to worship time; we are to worship the Self.

*** To be continued ***

Upadeshasaram*Ujwal Jagadeesh****nAham ekasat******They are not the Consciousness which is 'I Am'***

Long ago a wealthy patron invited a monk to a banquet. The monk arrived dressed in his beggar's robes. The host, not recognizing him, chased him away. The monk went back to his cottage, changed into his ceremonial robe of purple brocade, and returned. With great respect, he was received into the banquet room. He was given a comfortable chair around the dinning table. Various kinds of delicious dishes were served with great respect and hospitality.

Then the monk stood up and put his robe on the cushion of the chair. He then started placing the food and pouring the soup on the robe, as if feeding it. The host astonished by this act asked the reason for this conduct. The monk replied, "I expect you invited the robe since you shoed me away a little while ago" and left.

This story may seem amusing but it reminds us of the great importance that we give only for the appearance. We value the packaging more than the product within. Salt will not become sweet by calling it sugar. So the name and the packet are not really of greater significance than the essence.

If we ask ourselves if we are the clothes that we wear, we quickly come to a conclusion that the dress that we wear is not us, because we can change our dress any time we want. A new dress may become old, a dress can get torn, a torn dress can be mended again. None of the above happenings to the dress will actually affect us. Also, the dress belongs to us and we can possess many dresses. We agree that with or without any of these attires we exist independently.

However, we have been wrongly identifying ourselves with the five layers of dresses that we are wearing. The five layers of clothing are called the Pancha koshas, five sheaths. They include the outer most or the grossest layer our body which contains the five sense organs, Annamaya Kosha; the second layer is the breath, the vital force, Pranamaya Kosha; the third is the mind, manomaya kosha; fourth is the intellect, Vigjnanamaya Kosha and fifth is the joyful ignorance of sleep, Anandamaya Kosha. If one disrobes oneself of these five sheaths what is left? Then, Who am I?

Ramana answers this question asked by Sivaprakasham Pillai which has been compiled in the booklet "Who am I?" The gross body which is composed of the seven humours (dhatus-tissues), I am not; the five cognitive sense organs, viz., the senses of hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell, which apprehend their respective objects, viz. sound, touch, colour, taste and odour, I am not; The five cognitive sense organs, viz. the organs of speech, locomotion, grasping, excretion and procreation, which have as their respective functions, speaking, moving, grasping, excreting and enjoying, I am not; the five vital airs, prana etc, which perform respectively the five functions of in-breathing, etc, I am not; even the mind which thinks, I am not; the nescience too, which is endowed only with the residual impressions of objects and in which there are no objects and functionings, I am not.

If I am none of these, then who am I?

After negating all of the above mentioned as 'not this', 'not this', that awareness which alone remains – that I am.

*vigrahendriya prANadhi tamah
nAham ekasat tajjaDam hyasat*

The body, the senses, the vital force and ignorance, all these are insentient. They are not the Conciousness which 'I Am'.

Power of the Word

Sanjay Lohia

The Heart – ‘Centre everywhere and circumference nowhere’*

- You are and it is a fact. Dhyana is by you, of you and in you. So you are the centre of dhyana and that is the Heart.
- The Heart is not merely the centre but the Self. Heart is only another name for the Self.
- Heart is no conception, no object of meditation. But it is the seat of meditation.



*A phrase coined by Sri Viswanatha Swami

Mother Azhagamma – A study¹ (part 33)

G Kameshwar

(Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya!)

Continuing the story of Mother Azhagamma's grand-nephew, Viswanathan, who went on to become one of the great sage-devotees of Bhagavan Ramana, attaining the supreme state of Self-Realization...)

In the previous article of this series, we saw a letter written by Viswanatha Swami, a few months before he dropped his body.

In that letter, he wrote:

"What is there to write and communicate? Sankara says in his Sarva-vedanta-siddhanta-sara-sangraha which I studied in my teens: "Silence, Silence, and again Silence; Silence, Silence and nothing more." Silence is where jnana and bhakti meet. There can't be any talk in profound jnana or bhakti.

Yet, Sankara has written so many commentaries and composed so many original works and hymns in praise of all deities, to draw to the center various persons in various stages of spiritual development. Dakshinamurti taught in silence; Sankara condescended to help through reasoning as well; and Ramana is Dakshinamurti and Sankara in one form. He is Arunachala in human form. Words are inadequate to describe him. Those who are fortunate to enter into the Spirit of Arunachala by Divine Grace are saved, i.e., they no longer exist as individuals. They are once for all lost in Bhagavan. To be lost is to be saved.

¹ A journey that started based on a presentation made by the author, during the Annual Seminar of Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bengaluru, in Jan 2009

"All ego gone, Living as That alone,
Is penance good for growth, Sings Ramana, the Self."
— Upadesa Saram, v.30

After all this, how am I to sign my name?

Love to all of you.

Sri Ramanasramam, 30 August 1979

*

In the letter above, one can clearly see that Viswanatha Swami was firmly established in the Supreme state of Self Abidance.

Viswanatha Swami has said that this Supreme State was bestowed on him by Bhagavan Ramana, at the time of His *Maha-Nirvana*.

Describing the last days of Bhagavan's body, Viswanatha Swami writes²:

"More than a year before his *Maha-Nirvana* Bhagavan had quoted and rendered into Tamil verse a sloka from *Srimad Bhagavatam* (Skandha 11, ch. 13, sloka 36). The verse means, "Let the body, the result of fructifying karma, rest or move about, live or die; the sage who has realized the Self is not aware of it, just as one in a drunken stupor is not aware of his clothing."

Late in 1949, Bhagavan picked up and expounded on a verse from *Yoga Vasishtam*: "The *Jnani* who has found himself to be formless pure awareness, is unaffected though his body be cleft with a sword. Sugar-candy does not lose its sweetness even when it is broken or crushed."

On one occasion during the last months, Bhagavan asked an anxious attendant: "When we have finished a meal, do we keep the leaf- plate on which we have eaten it?" On another occasion he told the same attendant that the *Jnani* rejoices to be relieved of

2 "The Maha-Nirvana of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi" – pocket book published by Sri Ramanasramam, fifth edition, 2017

the body by death in the same way that a servant rejoices when he lays down his burden at the place of delivery.

With a look of compassion, he consoled a devotee, saying: "They take this body for Bhagavan and attribute suffering to him. What a pity! They are despondent that Bhagavan is going to leave them and go away. Where can he go and how?"

When one of his attendants entered his room, Bhagavan greeted him with a smile and asked, "Do you know what *Moksha* (Liberation) is?" The attendant looked at the Master in receptive silence, so Bhagavan continued: "Getting rid of non-existent misery and attaining bliss, which is the only existence: that is the definition of *Moksha*!"

Even during his last days, when he was unable to come out of the room, Bhagavan continued to give *darshan* to hundreds of devotees, morning and evening, reclined majestically on his couch, like Bhishma on his bed of arrows. Bhagavan would not consent to have the *darshan* cancelled even on days when his condition was critical, so it went on right up to the last evening.

The news of the rapid deterioration of Bhagavan's physical condition spread and hundreds of devotees came to Tiruvannamalai to have a final *darshan*. In the queue that filed past his room there were men and women, rich and poor, learned and simple, from all parts of India and abroad, all united in their devotion to this Divine Personification.

On Wednesday evening, two days before the *Maha-Nirvana*, Bhagavan gave a peculiar look of grace to everyone who passed before him in the queue. It struck some of them that it might be the parting look of Bhagavan, and so it proved to be, for during his last two days Bhagavan had not the physical energy to turn round and look at the devotees. Whether his eyes were open or closed, his mind was always clear and he was able to talk to his attendants whenever it was necessary.

On Thursday morning, when a doctor brought Bhagavan some medicine to relieve congestion in the lungs, Bhagavan told him that it was not necessary and that everything would come right within two days. That night Bhagavan directed his attendants to retire for sleep or meditation and leave him alone.

On Friday morning, Bhagavan said “thanks” to an attendant who had just then finished massaging his body. The attendant, who did not know English, blinked with surprise, so Bhagavan smiling, explained to him the meaning of the English term. It is probable that, when about to leave the physical plane, Bhagavan intended thus to express his thanks to all who had served him.

That evening there was a vast gathering of devotees and all had *darshan* of Bhagavan. Many stayed on at the Ashram after *darshan*, as Bhagavan's condition was critical. At about sunset Bhagavan asked his attendants to raise him to a sitting position. They raised him up as comfortably as they could, one of them gently supporting his head. One of the doctors began to give him oxygen but Bhagavan motioned them to stop it with a wave of his right hand.

There were ten or twelve persons, doctors and attendants, in the small room. Two of them were fanning Bhagavan. Hundreds of devotees were anxiously waiting just outside. A group of devotees seated on the temple ramp opposite the little room began chanting with devotional fervour the Hymn to Arunachala, composed long ago by Bhagavan, with the chorus ‘Arunachala Siva’. Bhagavan's eyes opened a little and flashed for a moment. From their outer edges tears of ecstasy rolled down.

The last breaths followed one another softly, smoothly, and then, with no premonition, no shock, the breathing stopped.

Bhagavan had receded into his Reality, the Heart of the Universe. The extraordinary peace of that hour overwhelmed everyone in his Presence, felt more now than ever before. It was the transcendental glory of Bhagavan, the Luminous Self, that prevailed. Bhagavan Ramana proclaimed in silence:

"Unveiled, here I am, effulgent in my eternal reality."

*

Of that zenith moment, when he attained the Supreme State of Self-Abidance, Viswanatha Swami writes³:

"The climax of my spiritual experience in the proximity of Bhagavan was during his 'last' moments. As I stood in that small room along with a very few others, everything became shadow enveloped by one indivisible Pure Awareness, the one and only ever-present Reality. And so there was not the least feeling of any separation from Bhagavan or the least vestige of sorrow on that account. Not only that, there was a positive ecstasy and elation of spirit which is nothing but the Natural State of the Self."

*** To be continued ***



3 Mountain Path, Vol 13, 1976, Editorial 'Awareness Absolute'

At All Times*Dileep Simha N*

Sri S.K. Narayana Rao was ever immersed in the remembrance of Bhagavan Ramana. He had written a song on Ramana in Kannada saying, 'O Ramana, My Lord and Master, may your radiant presence ever adorn my heart temple' which was recorded in Ramananjali's first Kannada album. And Ramana who, like Arunachala, is famed for not only giving unasked but also for giving with no hesitation or fear, gave abundantly of his presence to the devotee.

Narayana Rao was one among those who took an active part in the Birth Centenary Celebrations of Bhagavan Ramana in 1979 -1980. He was then teaching in Mandya and came with a contingent of participants from there. One of the girls in his team won the All-India prize for the High School level in elocution. Later, when Sri Narayana Rao shifted to Bangalore, for some time he served at RMCL as the manager. When age did not permit him to travel so far, he continued his service in the best manner, by simply remaining ever in the thought of Bhagavan. He would then make it a point to attend all the important events at RMCL along with Smt. Sarooja Narayana Rao. After a while even that became a physical impossibility. Then he learnt of the opening of the south Bangalore Centre at Padmanabhanagar, he eagerly attended the inauguration and shared his reminiscences of meeting Bhagavan Ramana.

Narayana Rao also composed an eka sloki on Bhagavan, which is a single sloka condensing Ramana's life. This devotee who had Ramana's thought as his constant companion merged into that eka chintana on Wednesday 13th December, 2017. His

family members took some of his ashes and scattered them on Arunachala. Here we bring you a record of his reminiscences as narrated to Sri Dileep Simha.

-Editor

I had visited the South Bangalore RMCL Centre at Sri Nandakumarji's residence at Padmanabhanagar. From there we went to Sri S.K.Narayana Raoji's residence near Kamakya Theatre, BSK III stage. After a warm reception, all three of us settled down in their living room. I enquired about his first Darshan of Bhagavan, to my enquiry he narrated:

"In July 1949 at Salagame, Hassan, one of my municipal school friends invited me to his house for an evening satsang, stating that one Sri Ramachandra Swamiji from the Himalayas would be gracing the satsang. In the evening, when I went Swamiji was singing devotional songs (Devaranama). Following the satsang, Swamiji started meditating and I was offered coffee by my friend. After Swamiji's meditation, I was introduced to him. Swamiji invited me for an evening stroll. We both walked on the Salagame Road, where the current ISRO – MCF (Master Control Facility) is located. After the walk, I enquired about the Swamiji's next program. Swamiji said that he was going to Tiruvannamalai to have darshan of Bhagavan. To this, I enquired whether Ramana was a devotee of Swami Sivananda. Swamiji was surprised and asked, 'Don't you know Ramana Maharshi? He emanates spirituality!'

Having learnt Physics, I had heard that Radium emanates Alpha, Beta and Gamma particles. I wondered how someone can emanate spirituality. So, I expressed my desire to see him. Swamiji promised to take me along with him on his visit to Tiruvannamalai. I was wondering, how I could go, not having any leave to my credit at that time. Then I learnt Swamiji would be leaving for Bangalore and was going to Tiruvannamalai later only.

It was the day after Ganesh Chaturthi in August, when my father had been to Badravathi to see his brother. I got an express postal delivery from my friend which said Swamiji was in Basavanagudi at his sister and brother-in-law's house in Bangalore and would be travelling to Tiruvannamalai. I explained the contents

of the urgent letter to my Ajja and Ajji (grand parents) and said I was going to Basavanagudi, Bangalore. And even before they could understand and concur, I quickly escaped from there.

I arrived on the 28th morning at Sri T.G. Krishnamurthy's residence at Surveyor Street, the house of my friend's brother-in-law and met Swamiji. Eagerly, I asked him, 'When do we plan to leave and how?' To this, Swamiji said, 'Ramana has plans'. Swamiji was not keeping well and I learnt he was a Sai Baba devotee too.

Swamiji had a Biksha offer from Sri M. N. Krishna Rao, Dewan, at his Basavangudi Residence. Sri Channaya Reddy, a Judge, also accompanied Swamiji for the Biksha. Seeing Swamiji's health, Sri M. N. Krishna Rao offered his car as an arrangement to drop Swamiji to the Railway station. Swamiji agreed. We were accompanied by T.R.G Krishnan, whom I learnt was a frequent visitor to Tiruvannamalai.

On the way to the station, Swamiji was meditating. To me it appeared he was in the sleep state. I enquired what meditation is. He did not explain but went on meditating. We embarked in the Madras mail on 31st night and that was my first journey on a broad gauge train. We reached Katpadi – 141 miles at 2:00 a.m. The connecting train from Katpadi to Villipuram was at 5:20 a.m. in the morning. At about 8:00 a.m. we reached Tiruvannamalai.

We had breakfast in Tiruvannamalai – Madras Idly – a first experience for me. Later Krishnan went to purchase stamps. Then we walked the country road about 3 miles to reach Ramanasramam.

It was September 1st, Thursday, 9:00 a.m. I saw the Ramanasramam Board and the huts, Morvi Guest House and the New Hall. Kumbabishekam of the Mathrubhutheshwara temple was over. I felt Krishnan felt at home as he went to enquire about food. I wore a Dhoti and towel and sat in front of the Master. Many foreigners were present in and around the asram. Next to Bhagavan was the Rotating Library Shelf. The attendant said "Velilae Po" (sit outside), I went and sat near the opposite window and Bhagavan was exactly opposite to me. I sat till lunch. Suddenly, Bhagavan slowly rotated his shaking head towards me and looked into me, he gave me his Nayana Deeksha.

That night, we slept on the sand opposite to Mathrubutheshwara Temple as it was quite warm. Next morning when I woke up, I saw Kunju Swamy and Bhagavan going towards the Bathroom. All stood up and so did I. The bathroom is right next to the NiRvana room, which has the Gandhi Portrait.

I had the morning bath and started Giri Valam along with Krishnan. On the way he got me Coffee and we completed the Giri Pradhakshina. During the Pradhakshina we saw Adi Annamalai temple, had Pancha mukha and Iduku Pillayar darshana.

At 10:30 a.m. when we returned, Swamiji enquired where we had gone. B.M Naidu and T.G.R Krishnan left Swamiji and me behind at the Asram and went to Narsapur in Andhra Pradesh. Swamiji expressed that he didn't have money and it was Ramana's will to take care of it and Baba's call to take him wherever he should. At 12:30 a.m. that night Swamiji and myself walked to the Railway station to catch the train to Chennai, however we missed it. Next day N. Rao suggested that we take the bus instead and made the reservations next to the driver like VIPs. We went to Mylapore, Madras and met B.V. Narasimha Swami, then a devotee of Baba. B.V.N had a call from Baba and Bhagavan had approved of his going there. BVN asked Swamiji, 'Who is this young person?' After I was introduced he said, 'At your young age you are fortunate to see Bhagavan.' There I read some books on Brahma Sutras and Bhagavad Gita. BVN graciously told me that I could write to him regarding any doubts that I may have. He gave me a Baba Photo and Vibuthi.

Swamiji and myself walked from Mylapore to Thambaram via Egmore to reach Central Scientific Company and introduced ourselves and confirmed the orders placed by N. Rao for scientific equipments with the company. The company officials booked a 2nd class ticket to Swamiji for Narsapur. They gave me 8 rupees to buy a ticket to Bangalore. Upon reaching Bangalore, I immediately left for Hassan to meet my Grandparents and narrated the details of the entire trip to my family.

In this apparently natural yet a truly miraculous manner Bhagavan arranged for me to have his darshan, gave me his Nayana diksha and transformed my life."

Our 'Elder Mother' – Periyamma

Uma Sripathy



We love Mami very much. When we came to RMCL in 1998, everyone was calling her Mami. We were not sure what to call her, whether we also needed to call her Mami. Whenever we went near her we would wonder how to address her. Once Mami called us and said 'Everyone addresses me according to the different relationships like atte, mami, and so on. But no one calls me as Periyamma – the elder maternal aunt. I have always wanted to be a Periyamma, so, call me as Periyamma.' Periyamma became 'Perima' and we all called her Perima till the end. That was a feeling of more than a mother to all of us. She was also happy and we were all happy too.

As I told you earlier, in 1998, when we first came to RMCL it was during the International Seminar. Preparations for the exhibition were underway and the corridor of Chowdiah Memorial

Hall was being decorated beautifully. I was so awestruck when I saw the photos, the flower decorations, they had done it really wonderfully. I was also pondering about how they would keep all these things after the event, how they would store them and so on. Then I got to know that Perima was the person in charge of the entire exhibition.

She would personally supervise everything being placed in the respective trunks after the event. She would store everything in an organized way and she would also arrange them according to the theme every year, like the theme of the music program of that year, or according to the concept of the ballet. Once she had arranged the exhibition of Arunachala Giripradakshina. It was really wonderful and still stays in my mind. By seeing all this we learnt how to organize events. If we do anything today, it is only because of Perima that we are doing little bit of what she used to do. We have got inspired by her and we are able to execute our duties at RMCL now.

The Deepam Festival at Shrine was very special for Perima. Every year she used to make all the arrangements herself. Once she called us for help. Earlier Ramaiah and Siddappa used to help her. We used to come only in the evening for classes, so we couldn't help at that time. Later, after we joined RMCL full time as staff, Perima called us once to help. Natarajan Mama also asked us to go and work with her. We were all happy to work with Perima. We were curious and eager to look at all the decorative items which she had under lock and key. When she opened the cupboards, we used to ask her where she bought those decorative items. It used to be real fun, when she used to explain it to us. She would say, 'This, I bought it when I was a child, this is from Chennai, this is a glass item so be careful, this one I have kept since 18 years', like this she used to explain each and every aspect of the items in detail. We used to feel very happy to see all that. After a few days she asked us to do the decorations for Deepam. She helped us learn how we should take up every aspect. She showed us every detail. Now we are doing it every year for Deepam. This time I will really miss Perima when I do the decoration for Deepam.

For Seminar also, every time she used to have a theme for the Seminar. She would not talk much but she would keenly observe all the work that we did, all the activities in which we took part. She used ask as to who did this and she would always say, 'Very nice.' Even when she was very busy she used to encourage us, praise us for what we had done and then go for the next job. Likewise she used to love us so much that she used to call us to see what special dress she was wearing. We used to go and see how Perima had got ready for the day which was always special. Each day was special and special days were very special. Mama used to ask us, 'Did you see Amma today?' We used to run and see her how she used to wear perfectly matching earrings, nose ring, long chain, sari pin, hair clip, coat, sleeveless coat for winter, long coat, blouse, the keychain. Everything matching including the cotton in her ears!

Now we may say it is a trend, sleeveless trend, brocade blouse trend but Mami has not left any stone unturned in the name of trend, she followed all trends without even knowing that it was a trend. Maybe the trends just followed her. It was natural to her, her creativity. We can say that our costume section has improved also because of her. The embroideries which she used to have done on her saris and blouses were so perfect, even a small thread would not come out of it. We asked her where she had all these done. She would say it was from Pasha in Guttahalli. She had a specific place and a person for every job. If it was blouses it was one person, if it was coats it was another. If it was wrought iron there was a special store she had for that. If it was embroidery there was Pasha.

She used to conceive of the design according to the occasion without repeating any of those in a year. Temple towers (Gopuram), peacock, deer, cow, all different designs but according to those occasions. If it was Prani Mitra day, she used to wear a sari with animals or birds embroidered on it. At the same time she followed the colours for each day. When they released the Varatudi CD, I felt really happy. Everybody would ask us as to how we all used to match always, wear the same colour dresses. We used to say Perima has taught us to wear each colour significant for the particular day of the week, so we all match always. We have

learnt it so much that we try to follow the same even for dance programs. We are happy to say that we have grown so much in our knowledge, understanding and right attitude because of Perima.

When I came here I used to feel afraid of everything. I would hesitate as to what job I should do. I didn't know English, or even Kannada too well. I was afraid as to what I would speak, whether I would say the right thing. But Mama and Perima used to prepare us for everything. Today it is because of Mama, Perrima, RMCL, Sarada akka and Ambika akka surely that I can speak so much also. For Inter- school Competitions when I went to schools, I was taught how I should speak to the school authorities, how I should explain things to them. Even till date, there are competitions held in Chennai, Bangalore and Tiruvannamalai. Perima used to give importance to chanting and encourage children to participate in the competitions in Chennai. And in Tiruvannamalai, Aksharamanamalai chanting and storytelling competitions have been conducted. For many years we have been holding many innovative competitions and today we see that many of these type of events are in vogue. Actually I would like to say that we, RMCL are the trend setters for all kinds of Competitions. Perima spearheaded the competition events. Later Sarada akka took over.

We too used to learn songs because of the competitions. A new cassette was given to the students every year. So we used to learn all those songs since we were only the judges at the intra school level. And Aksharavarnamale also we learnt because of this. As always I was hesitant to speak today. But then I thought I have to share what I know about Perima, I have to tell what I know about her to others. How did Perima manage to do so much? She would clearly say in almost every sentence of hers that it was by the Grace of Bhagavan. I also pray to Bhagavan to allow us to follow her discipline and her perfection in organizing work and events.

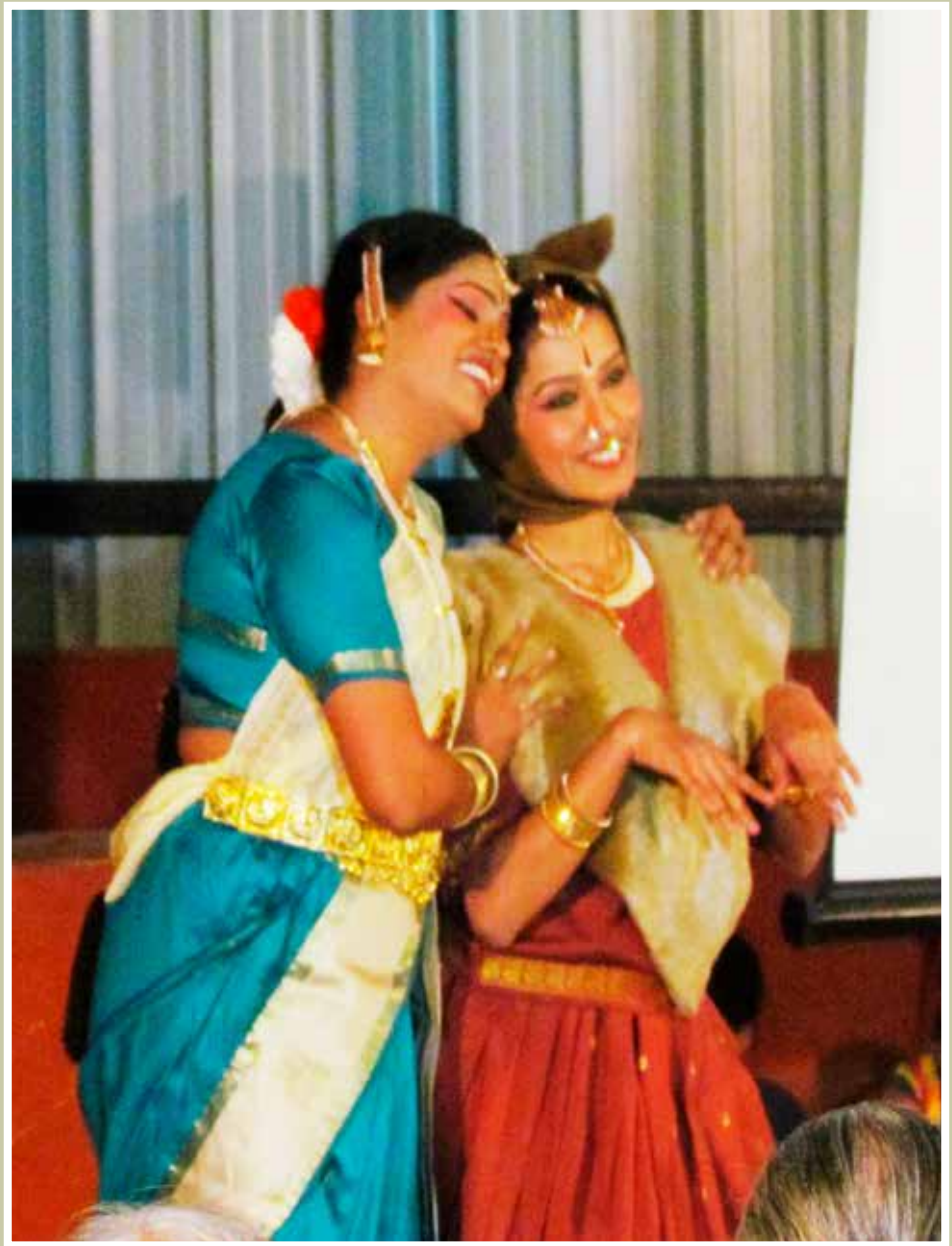
News & Events

Revathi Sankar

Ramana Jayanthi celebrations at West Bangalore chapters of RMCL.









Ramana Jayanthi celebrations at South Bangalore chapters of RMCL.

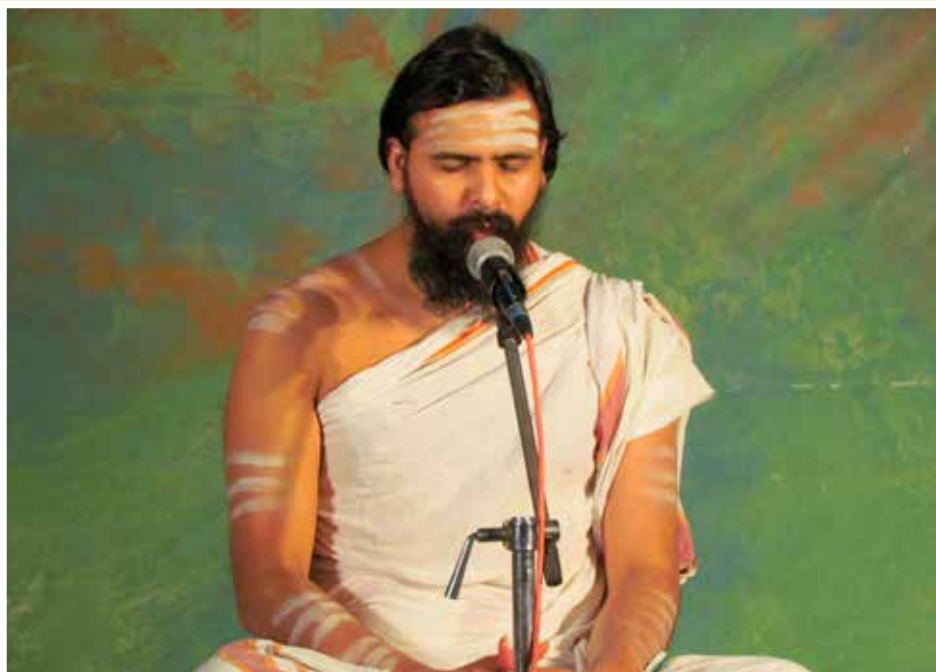


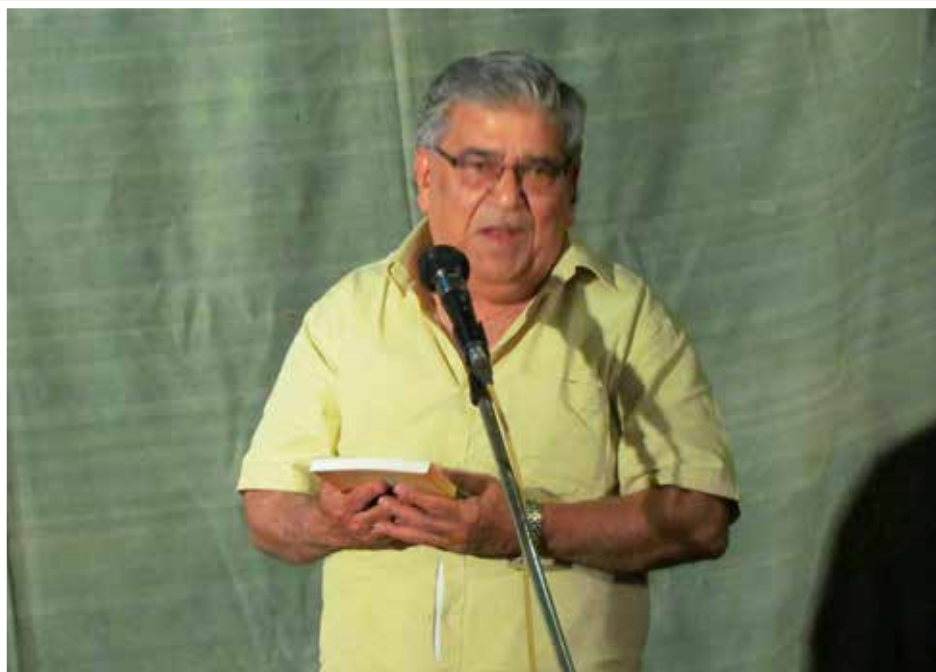




The Kannada session of the National Seminar and Cultural Festival was held on 26th of January at Ramana Maharshi Shrine.







The Kannada session of the Seminar continued on the 17th of February at Ramanashree Sabhangana, Vijayanagar.



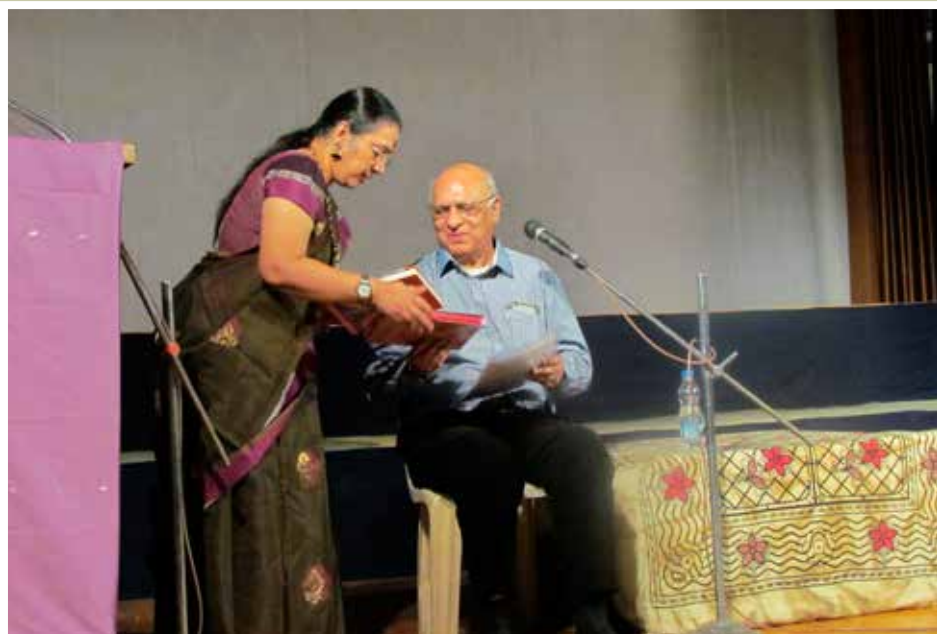




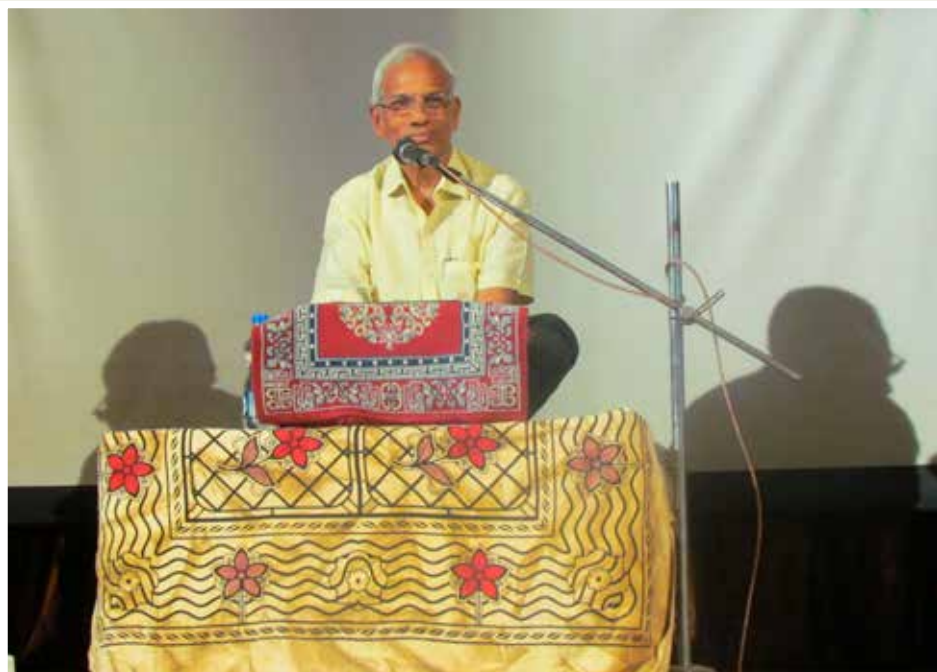


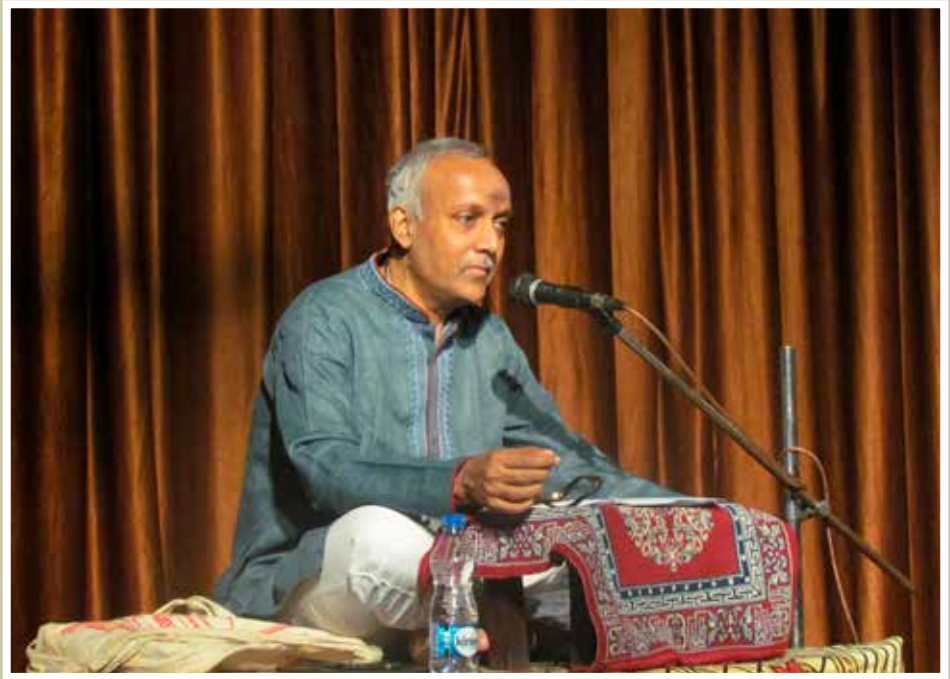


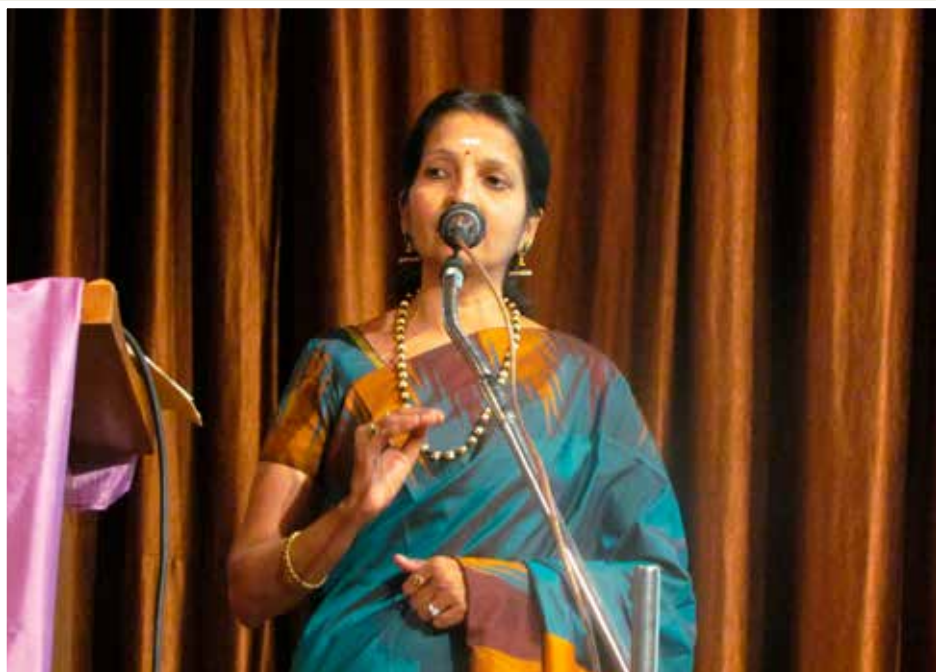
The English session of the 41st National Seminar was held on 27th and 28th of January at the Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium.











The RMCL artistes presented 'Ananya Ramana' at School of Ancient Wisdom as part of the workshop by Meditation and Study Centre.





Special Programs in March

At Bangalore, Ramana Shrine Mekhri Circle

9th to 11th	11.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. Laksharchana
10th	11.00 a.m. Vigraha Sthapana Day and Ramana Sahasranama Homa
	01.30 p.m. Purnahuti and Prasadam
30th	6.45 p.m. Poornima Cultural Festival, Full Circle
	Ramana Nritya by Vincent Poul
	Aksharamanamalai and Girivalam of Shrine

At Bangalore, Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium, Sanjaynagar

18th to 24th	'Ramana Chintana' Mani Shadakshari Memorial Lectures
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At Chennai

24th, 25th	Self Enquiry Workshop - English
26th	Ramananjali , At Chrompet, Ramanalayam

Special Programs in April

At Bangalore, Ramana Shrine Mekhri Circle

1st April	11:30 a.m. Talk by Swami Thyageshananda.
7th, 8th	10.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. Self-enquiry workshop (Kannada)
14th, 15th	Ramana Aradhana Cultural Festival
14th Saturday,	11.00 a.m. Sahasranama Puja and Prasada
14th Saturday,	07.30 p.m. Ramana Pada Pancharatnam
	08.45 p.m. Aksharamanamalai chanting
15th Sunday,	11.00 a.m. Self-enquiry
	11.30 a.m. Ramana Sangeetham – a musical feature
	By Smt.Poorna Sooraj
29th Sunday,	6.45 p.m. Poornima, Full Circle
	Ramana Nritya by Revathi Sankar and Uma Sripathy
	Aksharamanamalai and Girivalam of Shrine

At Bangalore, Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium, Sanjaynagar

27th	Valedictory – Summer Camp 1
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Declaration

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I, Dr. Sarada Natarajan, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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Date : 01.03.2018

Sd/-
SARADA NATARAJAN
Signature of the Publisher



Ramana Every Day

RMHC - Ramana Maharshi Heritage Centre - Sanjaynagar

RMS - Ramana Maharshi Shrine - Mekhri Circle

RSCS - RMCL Satsang Centre at South Bangalore

RSCR - RMCL Satsang Centre at Rajarajeshwari Nagar

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

Thursday: 6:00pm at RSCS

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

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

Saturday: 11:00am at RMS

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

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

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

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

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

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

Yoga classes [Contact - Vanaja Rao (9900601012)]

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

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

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

Talks - English by Dr. Sarada Natarajan

Sunday: 11:30am at RMS

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

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

Parayana of Bhagavans Sanskrit Composition by Ms. Savithri

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

Talks, Parayana and Puja by Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30pm at RSCR

Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

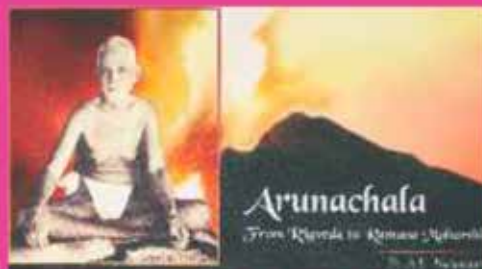
Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

Auspicious Invocation

54. The jnani's vision matures into being – consciousness – bliss, the eye of truth, because the mischievous movements of the ego – mind have ceased completely. Since the nature of the seen is not different from the nature of the eye that sees, to the true jnani the world too is definitely being – consciousness – bliss.
55. The world scene that unfolds like a dream is nothing other than the mind, a deluded perspective. Its true nature will appear as it really is only to the true awareness, the distilled being – consciousness – bliss that shines, transcending the mind – *maya*.



ARUNACHALA FROM RIGVEDA TO RAMANA MAHARSHI

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