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# The Ramana way



Ramana Bliss

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Ramana Maharshi Centre  
for Learning  
Bengaluru

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# THE RAMANA WAY

*A Monthly Journal since 1981*

*Celebrating  
Ramana Rasa  
Anubhava*



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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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**Editorial***Dr. Sarada*

There is this human predicament, or shall we call it the human curse? What is it? It is the sense of doer-ship, the self-conscious power of action.

I do not know whether a seed says to itself when it is sown in the earth, 'Now I must start sending down roots into the earth and I must send out a sprout above the earth'. I cannot say whether a seed thinks in this manner because presently I believe I am a human being. Therefore I cannot assert that a seed does not think or that a plant or a tree does not think.

We know that plants have life, that they feel pain and sorrow and joy. But it appears as if they live in the moment and not by thinking about the past or planning for the future. Such planning springs from an assumed power to act. The thought 'I have the capacity to act and to act in such a manner that I can attain my chosen goals.' It is this underlying faith in one's own capacity for action that makes one constantly ponder on the courses of action.

I do not know whether a hungry lion says to itself 'There comes an innocent deer! I will prey upon it.' The lion instinctively stalks its prey. At the same time when the lion is not hungry and the deer are grazing right under its nose as it were, would its mouth water at the sight of the deer? Would the lion be telling itself, 'Hey, my stomach is full right now so I ought not to be killing any of these deer.' The lion simply sits in absolute peace and contentment and the deer are naturally aware that the lion will do them no harm at that time.

In his meditation on the 'Talks' Sri Nandakumar describes how a baby lizard makes numberless attempts to climb a slippery wall, how it climbs and falls and climbs again and sometimes rests and tries all over again. Would that little fellow be thinking, 'I need to do this somehow. I am sure I can make it. I mustn't give up.' Human children are not very different. Each of the motor abilities

they naturally develop is untiringly practised by them to perfection. How do they manage to be tireless? They do so because there is no thought in them at that time of having to achieve a goal, there is no sense of doer-ship.

For the most part it appears as if the trees and the birds and animals live instinctive lives. For the most part it appears as if the river flows to the sea not by choice but by its very nature. It appears as if the wind blows without any thought about blowing. Ramana gives us the example of the sun. The sun shines bright day after day after day. Does he say to himself at dawn, 'This is my job list for the day'? Does he quickly run through it mentally, 'Now I have to rise and bring daylight to one part of the Earth. Later I need to give light to the other hemisphere. I need to give food to the plants by assisting them in the process of photosynthesis. I need to give vitamin D to all the human beings. Further, I need to vaporize the sea waters and allow the waters to rise up to the sky. Only then can it pour down on earth as rain and sustain all life on Earth.'

Does the sun make such plans at the beginning of day? Does the sun write out his diary year after year with a note on all the important things to do? Does the sun ever feel that he is the doer of these tasks or does he ever seek to take a day off because he has worked so hard for such long years? No says Ramana. The sun makes no plans for himself or for those whom he helps. He simply remains as light. By the very fact that he remains as light he does all that he does. Even so, Ramana guides us, 'Become a light unto yourself, then you will be a light to the whole world. Stay in your natural state, abide in the Self,' he says, 'then all that needs to get done through you will automatically get done through you'. Muruganar Swami says of Ramana that he showered grace on every comer just as a tree gives shade, by nature, not by choice. Ganapati Muni also asks of Ramana in his 'Ramana Chatvarimsat', 'O Ramana! May your gracious glance be turned once in my direction so that I may be blessed.' Then he quickly adds, 'But for you, O Chief among sages, benediction is no virtue, for it is only natural to the effulgent heart which you are.' Jagadeeswara Sastri in his 'Ramana Sahasranama Stuti' adores Ramana as 'sarvaramba parityagi', 'one who has renounced all beginnings'.

Every moment of Ramana's life displays the total absence of motive. He does not initiate anything of his own accord. If a devotee makes a request, it would be addressed and completed in the most spontaneous manner. When devotees prayed to him to compose a poem, a song that they could sing while begging for alms, a song that would have the stamp that they were Ramana devotees, he declined. He asked them that when there were already so many marvellous poems and songs on Siva where was the need for one more. Yet, in response to their prayer the queen among hymns, the 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' flowed from him in a torrent of ecstatic devotion as it were. It was completed practically in one giri pradakshina, the circumambulation around Arunachala.

When the words 'karunaiyaal ennai aanda nee' came to Ramana he put them aside saying to himself 'What have I to do with them?' It was only when the words came back repeatedly that he put them down and thus were composed the 'Arunachala Padigam' and 'Arunachala Ashatakam'. Muni says that words wait eagerly for such a one to make use of them. It was conceding the request of the words themselves that Ramana put them down as poetry. The Pancharatnam was composed at Ganapati Muni's request, the 'Upadesa Undiyar', 'Ulladu Narpadu' and 'Anma Viddai' song at Muruganar's behest. Most of the stray verses that later became the 'Anubandam' also came in like manner. What need did Ramana have to start anything? What need did he have to act at all? What was there for him to achieve?

Our plight is quite the contrary. We are constantly driven by the need to achieve something, by the necessity to prove something. As we have lost touch with our own fount of bliss we are thirsty while being neck deep in water. Again Ramana says that our endless pining for something or the other is like the Ganges herself feeling thirsty.

Whatever the reason, fact remains that we are longing for something all the time and to fulfill this longing we are convinced that action is the tool, action is the path. We have been so convinced about this for so long in life that we have forgotten that action may at best be a path to a goal. For us now, action itself

may well be the goal. We are quite dependent on action and would find it difficult to remain without action in one form or the other even for a few minutes.

We feel so lost in the absence of action that if by chance there is some respite we would quickly fill the time with something or the other. If we have absolutely no choice and nothing to do, it would not be long before we fall asleep. Funnily enough, the fallacy is that when we have nothing to do we fall asleep, at the same time, but for the minimum duration of deep sleep which happens involuntarily, we even fill our nights with dream activity.

It is not as if our endless activity happens spontaneously. All our actions are burdened with a heavy sense of doer-ship. We believe that it is we and we alone who are responsible for our actions and thereby for their results. In his supreme compassion, to free us from this pathetic slavery Ramana begins his essence of teachings, the 'Upadesa Saram' by addressing this issue. He tells us lovingly that action is not supreme, it is absolutely powerless, it is insentient.

It is only on account of the order of the Supreme that actions yield results. It is only by the power of the Supreme that we are able to act in the first place. If we are able to accept this teaching then we can lay down the entire burden at his feet and be absolutely carefree. Let He who is the sole Actor, perform all the actions, for me the life of perfect ease. We would become, to use Ramana's analogy, first class passengers in a train of yester years, stretching ourselves in blissful slumber in the certainty that the guard will wake us up at the right station. And what would this gracious slumber be? We would be slumbering in the Self and allowing the Supreme to act out it's script through its instruments that our bodies are. Like true instruments there would be no thought of being an instrument either. No thoughts at all, absolutely carefree existence.

Does it sound good to know that all our responsibilities are taken care of? Does our head feel light? Have our neck and shoulders suddenly lost their tautness? Has our step become like



a dance? Or do we feel foolish? Why foolish? Not because we have failed to remember this truth much earlier. Do we feel foolish, not because we have unnecessarily carried burdens on our head all through this life, but foolish because we are unable to let go of our need for action? If we actually had nothing to do would we feel depressed and worthless?

It is for us to ponder and find out for ourselves whether we are holding on to the sense of being actors and achievers. Is it not sad but true that we are totally unaware of our true worth, the worth of our Self, the worth of being? Instead we lay store only by the value of doing, doing something or the other. We are not alone in this. Paul Brunton asked Ramana whether we would become idiots if we gave up our limited identities. Very often the question is asked, 'What of my duties and responsibilities? Would it be right on my part to put them away and give myself wholly to the pursuit of self-enquiry?'

How well do we remember that our very body is not under our control, that we do not actually know whether our next breath will come or whether we can move our limbs in a coordinated manner the very next minute? What to say then of our duties? A young man said very sweetly, you may drive past the Ramana Shrine in Bangalore which is situated on one of the busiest highways whizzing past in the best of high powered cars. You may reach various wondrous destinations. But if you must enter Ramana's presence, if you must enter the Ramana Shrine you need to switch off the engine, the car must come to a standstill for you to come in.

If we wish to experience the fullest bounty of life, we must be ready to lay down our pretensions of being the doers. There are so many examples that Ramana gives to help us understand this fact. He quotes the instance of the dolls in the temple towers that are sculpted to look as if they are bearing the tower on their shoulders. 'Are they really doing so?' he asks.

If we are really keen on bringing to an end this game of meaninglessly running in circles, then we must earnestly look

within. We must begin to recognise the rising of doer-ship in our every action. Further, we must become aware of the subtle sense of doer-ship that is attached to every thought of ours as thought is the primary action. I am busy thinking about the goals of my actions. When I pull myself back a bit, then I may remember Ramana's advice that goals do not give joy, on the other hand they obstruct it because of their transitory nature. The pursuit of external goals only makes one more and more addicted to such a pursuit.

When I recognise that happiness is not in objects but it is my very nature, my need to look for the goals of actions may wane. My attention may begin to turn more and more within myself to find the true source of bliss. Yet, here too there is the subtle sense of being the one who is practising the inward path. It is I who am on the spiritual pursuit. One may then get caught in the web of mental action and a sense of doer-ship with reference to thoughts. It is to prevent this danger that Ramana asks us to enquire, 'Who is the doer? Who am I?' With repeated self-enquiry, as the validity of the very one who is the 'actor' is being repeatedly questioned, attention turns from the goal of action and from the very action itself to the one who is performing the action. Who is that I?

As the enquiry deepens further it takes us back to the source of the actor, of the doer to experience beyond the trace of doubt that there is no such separate entity. Once one has tasted the truth by dipping into the Self the experience will wipe out all trace of doubt. The understanding that the Self alone is consciousness and the source of all will become natural. Actions will then stem from the Self spontaneously. As Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "One remains at the nectarine source, immersed in it; all seeking having ended in discovering one's own fullness."



**THE NEW DAWN\****A. R. Natarajan*

*There is no real Vichara (self-enquiry) without grace, nor is grace active for one without Vichara.*

*-Bhagavan Ramana*

Those whose approach to self-enquiry is merely intellectual may underrate the importance of prayer and surrender to the Sadguru Ramana. One can quote Ramana and say that there are two alternatives, one is to enquire and discover that the ego or the mind originates from the Self and cannot exist apart from the Self. The other is to allow Ramana to strike down one's ego by recognizing his omnipotence and one's own incapacity to push through self-enquiry to its logical extent. Experience on the path would reveal that what seem to be alternatives are really complementary as is being explained by Ramana in the quote at the beginning. To understand the full implication of this statement one has to recognize that grace is active only for the one whose attitude to self-enquiry is not cocky, over-confidence.

If one starts self-enquiry placing exclusive reliance in his own capacity to dive within, then the chances are that more often than not, one would be stranded on the way. Even if one succeeds in being focused on the 'I', in being just aware, not aware of this or that, thoughts may just be waiting in the aisles or be hidden waiting for an opportunity to sprout. So long as long ingrained habit locates happiness in objects, the power of past memories relating to those object related experiences would push one out. Thoughts would crowd in when vigilance wanes.

Hence one would be well advised to travel with a powerful companion, a friend not only in distress but at all times. The presence of Ramana the Sadguru needs to be practiced by invoking his grace. Broadly in such self-enquiry when one is consciously guided by Ramana the steps would be along the following lines. One begins with a prayer which proclaims the omnipotence of Ramana and his role as the Sadguru on his direct path. The

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

advantage would be that one would become humble and prayerful. This would be a head start.

Then one is ready to take on one's own creation, thoughts. Perceiving the mind to be a thought flow energized by the thinker and diving within in search of the thinker's source, mind's true nature as silence is discovered. The mind remains silent and vibrant. Then all thoughts and actions are in that vast silence which remains always as the undercurrent.

This should be the practice and is usually so when the mind is in one of its modes of 'satva' 'equilibrium'. But often the 'rajas' 'activity orientation' of the mind or 'tamas' the attachment to inaction, to laziness takes over. The mind would either be turbulent, willing to give up the self-enquiry at the slightest pretext, or just inattentive allowing thoughts to crowd out the enquiry.

Then one has necessarily to fall back on Ramana's strength. Recalling Ramana's words one might cry out in inner anguish to him.

Boldly seeking the true Self, I am ruined  
Have mercy on me, Ramana.

Or

Seeking you with my weak mind I have come back  
Empty handed, aid me Ramana.  
Look at me, think of me! Touch me! Make me fit!  
Ripen me! Then be my master, govern me, Ramana.

This expression of spiritual hunger is bound to evoke a spontaneous response. The faltering mind's virility and alertness would be restored. The mind would become unfocussed and centered on itself. Ramana's strength would be coursing through it. As long as one's attention lasts, fine. But then old habits die hard. Once again the same appeal for Ramana's aid to stay on course would be needed. Perhaps one could remind Ramana that he is the all powerful one ready to take over the burden of sorrows, worries and thoughts which keep pushing us out. Here again one could mentally repeat one of Ramana's verses in the 'Decad'.

“Ordain that my burden should no more be mine,  
But yours, for what is the burden for you, the all-sustainer?  
I have had enough of carrying this world  
Upon my head, parted from you”

Rejuvenated by such prayers expressive of one's helplessness and dependence on the Supreme Lord, Sadguru Ramana, the mind would be ready to dive into the heart, ready to return to its source. But one cannot say that it is yet ready “to become food unto him”. The dualistic mind is bound to come out of the heart seeking the objects of the world, seen as apart from the Self and regarded as the true source of happiness. What then?

The remedy is the same. More of the same medicine. Prayer and surrender to Ramana. To be rid of this madness for the world and aware of the sovereign fact that Ramana is the only refuge. One may pray with all the intensity of a yearning heart wanting to discover the truth. For this one may take the cue from one of Ramana's verses.

‘Possess me like a ghost, never letting me go until I am rid of this ghost of worldliness’

Then it happens. One remains at the nectarine source, immersed in it; all seeking having ended in discovering one's own fullness.

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

N.Nandakumar

### Talk 65 (Excerpt).

Sri Bhagavan continued:

What does it matter if the jagat is perceived or not perceived? Have you lost anything by your perception of jagat now? Or do you gain anything where there is no such perception in your deep sleep? It is immaterial whether the world is perceived or not perceived.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: One divides life as gain and loss. Usually, one acts as though there is something to gain in the waking state. The sadhaka is told that he has to bring the sleep into the waking state. So, Bhagavan is taking the sadhaka to the ultimate by asking whether anything is lost by the appearance of the world or is anything gained by its disappearance in sleep? When one is indifferent to the appearance or disappearance of the world by the intellect not holding either as "good" or "bad"; "gain" or "loss", the ego does not rise to use the mind, breath or senses and is able to hold the screen of the picture show - the Self.*

*Q: Such detachment from the world as neither good nor bad; neither gain nor loss is of no value to the world of sadhakas, is it not?*

*S: Such detachment is unconditional love.*

### Talk 65. (Excerpt).

The ajnani sees the Jnani active and is confounded. The jagat is perceived by both; but their outlooks differ. Take the instance of the cinema. There are pictures moving on the screen. Go and hold them. What do you hold? It is only the screen. Let the pictures disappear. What remains over? The screen again. So also here. Even when the world appears, see to whom it appears. Hold the substratum of the 'I'. After the substratum is held what does it matter if the world appears or disappears? The ajnani takes the world to be real; whereas the Jnani sees it only as the manifestation of the Self. It is immaterial if the Self manifests itself or ceases to do so.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Are there two selves, one perceiving the cinema show world and another that perceives itself? For whom is*

*this perception of cinema show world? Relentlessly hold the Self and rest when tired till the difference between work and rest is erased along with the doer.*

**Q:** *What do you mean by "rest when tired"?*

**S:** *You see a baby lizard try to climb the wall. It falls again and again in the smooth tile. When it is too tired, it rests. In the inner effort too, one may be too tired to hold the Self when the body is over-exerted or dull, when emotions like anger or hatred or exuberance take over, when the mind is racing or dull; just rest and not resist the world of tired body, emotions, speeding mind or dull mind. Let it be. Like the baby lizard, when energy comes back, hold the Self. When holding the Self is effortless, rest merges in work.*

### **Talk 66.**

A letter was received containing some learned questions pertaining to memory, sleep and death. It looked, at first sight, that they were cogent yet baffling to answer. But when the Master was approached on the subject he disentangled the skein (twists and turns) very nicely, pointing out that all such confusion was due to the non-differentiation of the real 'I' from the false 'I'. The attributes and modes pertain to the latter and not to the former. One's efforts are directed only to remove one's ignorance. Afterwards they cease, and the real Self is found to be always there.

No effort is needed to remain as the Self.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: However complicated a problem presented may be, whether applying the mind and intellect or in the sensory world, real action or solution is only the ending of the false ego struggling with the problem. For whom is this complicated problem or situation? The real Self is ignored by the ego engaged in complications. This knot between consciousness and the inert body is the root of all problems, complicated or simple. Stop blaming the problem. Stop blaming others. End the ego. For whom is this thought?*

**Q:** *What happens to my son with Down's syndrome?*

**S:** *The Self alone is. Even when one takes life as God, world and individual, when the ego is erased, one sees the life energy current called God carrying trillions of beings in its wake. Without judgement and expectation (of life current or the son) one is present for the co-traveller.*

**Talk 67.**

A visitor, Mr. K.S.N.Iyer of the South Indian Railway, said, "There is a trifling halting-place in my meditation. When I ask myself, 'Who am I?' my reasoning proceeds as follows; I see my hand. Who sees it? My eye. How to see the eye? In a mirror. Similarly to see me, there must be a mirror. 'Which is to supply the place of the mirror in me?' is my question."

M.: Then why do you enquire, "Who am I?" Why do you say you are troubled and so on? You could as well remain quiet. Why do you rise out of your composure?

D.: Enquiring thus helps me to concentrate. Is concentration the only benefit?

M.: What more do you want? Concentration is the thing. What makes you come out of your quiet?

D.: Because I am drawn out.

M.: Enquiry of "Who am I?" means finding the source of 'I'. When that is found, that which you seek is accomplished.

(The gist of Sri Bhagavan's words seems to be that one should make a concerted effort and not give it up baffled, with a defeatist mentality.)

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: As soon as REASON or INTELLECT arises as "I see my hand.. mirror in me" one should transcend that intellect by enquiring "Who am I?" instead of expecting a mirror inside me. Inside me, everything is "I". Even the blank of concentration is to be transcended by holding the "I". Bhagavan says that deep sleep is full of consciousness. One can experience this directly by holding the "I" through the "blank of concentrated mind". This too is transcended in the effortless, Self - Luminous Self.*

*Q: What is the assurance that the terrible turmoil faced by my innocent near one will be resolved by abiding in the "I-I"?*

*S: Abidance is the real assurance that no turmoil or a jeeva in turmoil will remain without coming to this ever-present substrate. All else is not even a passing cloud. Abide.*

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**Saddarshanam***Master Nome*

rUpodbhavo rUpa-tati-pratishtho  
 rUpAshano dhUta-grhIta rUpah |  
 svayam virUpah svavicAra kAle  
 dhAvatyahankAra pisAca eshaha || 25 ||

**[Its] birth (springing from) is of form, based on a mass of form.**

**[It is] a feeder on form, one that has given up and grasped form,**

**Itself formless. Upon (at the time of) inquiry into itself,**

**It runs [away], this ego-ghost.**

N.: For an ego-notion to seem to be, there must be some belief in a form. It is “based” on form, “springs forth” from a belief in a form, and “it is a feeder on form.” That is what seems to give it substance. Otherwise, it starves. It has “given up and grasped form.” This false sense of identity of “I” has been associated with one form after another, letting go of one only when it grasps another. Feeding on form, as it were, to give it substance, it then goes to another form. It moves from one thought-form to another thought-form and from one body to another body. “Itself formless,” is the character of the ego, Sri Ramana says. No one has ever seen the form of an ego. One sees the forms that are artificially appended to it due to delusion, but the ego, itself, is not seen. It is seen neither with the eyes nor with the mind. It is just a vague, background assumption that is parasitical, as described.

“Upon inquiry into itself,” if that very “I”-sense that seems to be individualized turns inward to look at its own individual existence, its individuality “runs away.” The ego is just “a ghost.” This description assumes that you know that ghosts are not real. It is just a ghost, having no substance and having no life. Whenever you inquire, it runs away. If your inquiry is continuous, it runs away continuously. Such continuous inquiry becoming steady

Knowledge, the egoless state is also steady, and gone is the attachment to any kind of form.

“Based on a mass of form,” the ego notion cannot stand alone. Remove its trappings, and what is there?

No one has ever seen an ego at any time. One sees the forms that are its guises. Its springing forth, or its birth, has no actual birthplace, but it is of form. The subtlest form is the assumed individuality, which is so vague that it must immediately start feeding, for, otherwise, it will starve. It feeds on form. It is “based on a mass of form,” which is the world of its experience. It is a “feeder on form” that “has given up form and grasped form.” One form of experience follows another. All the forms pertain to the individual. The Maharshi has said that the ego is like an inch worm, going from twig to twig, leaving one twig only when it has found the next twig, grasps it, lifts up its hind legs, and brings the back legs to meet the front again. It thus sticks from twig to twig. What would happen if the twigs were removed from the inch worm? It would cease to move, and it would fall. If the forms of the various misidentifications and attachments with which the ego dresses itself are removed, what happens to the ego? This “feeder on form” is an illusory creature that goes where there is something to eat. If there is nothing put out for it to eat, it starves and runs away.

We can do more than starve it of its attachments and its definitions. Sri Ramana says, “itself, formless.” To inquire, we are told to find the “I”-thought. It is to find its absence and to realize the real Existence behind it. It is not intended that we, in our minds, latch on to the word or the idea, “I.” The instruction means to trace back the forms, which are the objects of experience, to this “I”-notion, which is the conception of existing as an individual. It is so nebulous, in a whirlpool of forms, surrounded by a cyclone of forms. Casting the forms aside, we inquire as to what is at the center. Like the cyclone, it is hollow. There is nothing at the center. Getting to the center, inquiring into itself, it runs away. It is an ego-ghost. It is not a real thing, and it is not actually alive. It does not know, and it does not exist. With the misidentification with the body, it gives itself a semblance of being solid. Remove

the misidentification and similar attachments, and the solidity is gone. Make the attempt to so much as thoroughly look at it, and it vanishes. "It runs away," says Ramana. Trace this "I"-sense in you, and you will understand what he means.

Q.: To look at it thoroughly means to examine everything that composes it, such as attachment.

N.: The attachments are the forms upon which it feeds. They come afterward. What is at the center? To what are those forms appended? One should stop feeding it, that is, not entertain attachments and various forms of misidentifications and not entertain samskaras and tendencies. You should also discern by inquiry. Is it the individual who inquires? That could be inferred from "svavicara-kale," upon or at the time of, inquiry into its own self. It appears as if the individual commences the inquiry, but he will not survive it. Only the real Existence, which alone knows and is unborn, will survive. So, in a very deep, profound sense, the inquiry begins and ends only by the power, by the Light, of the Self. It is born of Knowledge. In a more casual sense, we can say that the individual, whose real nature is nothing except pure Consciousness, though he does not know that, starts the inquiry. He looks at himself. He turns away from the forms upon which he has fed, looks at himself, and is gone. When he is gone, you are awake. The dream is over.

Q.: Forever? It is not a temporary disappearance?

N.: If the ego's disappearance is temporary, he is not gone. He is just sleeping.

Another Q.: He finds Bliss.

N.: Bliss is where Being is and is the same as Consciousness. It is experienced in direct proportion to the absence of egoism. The ego feeds on various forms for the purpose of acquiring happiness, but, by feeding, it only makes suffering, which is the reverse effect of what is wished. For Bliss, the ego must dissolve. There is no such thing as a happy ego.

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## Shri Arunachala Ashtakam

G Kameshwar

### Verse-3

ninnaiyA nuruvena veNNiyE naNNa  
 nilamishai malai-yenu nilai-yinai neetA  
 nunnuru varuvena vunniTin viNNOk  
 kuRavula kalaitaru moruvanai yokku  
 munnuru vunalara vunniTa munnee  
 ruRu caruk karai-yuru venavuru vOyu  
 mennaiyA naRivuRa vennuru vERE  
 tiruntanai yaruNavAn kiriyena viruntOy

*Word split, and meaning:*

*ninnai:* Of you

*uru ena eNNiyE :* thought as being with form

*yAn naNNa :* I sought to attain

*nilamishai :* on this earth; high over the land

*malai enum nilaiyinai:* standing as the Hill

*neetAn :* It is you

*un uru aru ena unniTil:* On thinking/meditating upon your true form (nature) as being formless

*viN nOkku uRa:* in order to see the sky

*oruvanai Okkum :* like a person

*ulaku alai tarum :* wandering all over the world

*un uru:* Your nature (form)

*unal aRa :* without thoughts

*unniTa:* if one thinks/meditates

*munneer :* the sea (literally 'three waters' : Sea is the combination of river waters, ground waters, and rain waters)

*uRu :* to touch, come in contact with

*carukkarai uru ena :* like a sugar form ( doll) dissolves

*uru Oyum :* One's form will cease/perish

*ennai yAn aRivuRa :* When I inquire about my 'self'

*en uru vERu Etu :* Where do I have a distinct form?

*aruNa vAn kiri ena iruntOy iruntanai:* Existing as the celestial hill  
 Aruna, you ever exist (you alone are)

*Verse rendering:*

Believing,  
That you have a form,  
When I sought  
To attain you;  
    Standing  
    In the form of a mountain  
    Highness/eminence on earth,  
    Indeed, it was you!

Were one to think/meditate  
Upon your true nature  
As being formless;  
'tis akin to someone  
Wandering all over the world  
Seeking to see the sky!

But when one  
    *Without any thoughts*  
Dwells/meditates  
    On your true form/nature,  
Then  
Like a sugar doll dissolves  
    Coming in contact with the sea,  
One's form ceases to be!

When I inquire and realize my true Self,  
Where remains any form, distinct, as mine?  
Existence, as Aruna,  
    The Hill divine,  
You alone  
Eternally are.

*Prose rendering:*

*"O Arunachala! Believing that you, like me, are an entity with form, when I sought to attain you; Indeed, it was you, standing there, in the form of a mountain, highness/eminence on earth! Then again, if one were to think of you, meditate upon you, as being formless; it would be like the case of a person who is wandering*

*all over the earth, looking for the sky. (However) When thinks of you without thinking (one dwells/meditates/focuses attention, on you, keeping oneself free of all thoughts), one's form (as the mind) perishes totally, like a sugar-doll dissolving upon coming in contact with the sea. When I inquire and realize my true self; where exists any distinct form for me? 'Existence', as Aruna, the divine hill, you alone, eternally are. (And 'I' have no form or existence as distinct from you, O Arunachala).*

**Notes:**

This verse of Ashtakam explains the whole process of Sadhana.

The first part of this verse is about Upasana – meditation. In 'Ulladu Narpadu', verse 4, Bhagavan says – '*uruvam tAn Ayin, ulaku param aRRu Am*' – '*If one is a form, then world and God are also forms*'. To begin with, the seeker thinks of himself as having a form. And so, he thinks of God, Arunachaleshwara, also as having a form. The seeker (Ramana) tells Lord Arunachala, that when he set out thus to realize Him, he found that Arunachala was in the form of a great hill.

Here, there is a consummation of sadhana, a realization of the Supreme, as a '*saguNa sAkAra brahma*', wherein God has a form, high and eminent.

Bhagavan also mentions that it is quite pointless to meditate on Arunachala as being formless, for it is akin to someone wandering all over the earth, seeking the sky. Indeed, there is still a '*bhAvanA*' – 'thought' here, of Arunachala as being formless, from whom the seeker is distinct. There is '*bheda bhAvanA*', as in the case of meditating on 'God with form'. And there is the added problem that the meditator has nothing to grasp or focus on.

Thus, the meditation on God with form, does lead to realization of God, having the form meditated upon. Here, there is a consummation of sadhana, a realization of the Supreme, as a '*saguNa sAkAra brahma*', wherein God has a form, high and eminent. In verse 8 of Ulladu Narpadu, Bhagavan says – '*Ar ep peyar iTTu evvuruvil Ettinum, atu ap poruLai pEr uruvil kAN vazhi*' –

*Whoever worships That  
 By assigning That any which name  
 Conceiving That as any which form,  
 That indeed is the right way  
 For seeing That nameless-formless  
 As endowed with the worshipped name and form*

However, the same verse concludes, with Bhagavan saying, - 'Ayinum, tan uNmaiynai Orntu, am meyporuLin uNmaiyl oTunki onRutaLE uNmaiyl kANal uNar'.

*Know  
 That to realize the true nature of one's Self,  
 And to merge as one with That Reality,  
 Is alone vision true!*

The Ashtakam goes on to show the ways of attaining this. For realizing the Self, Bhagavan points out two paths.

First, he explains the path of Yoga. He says:

*"When one thinks of you without thinking (one dwells/ meditates/focuses attention, on you, keeping oneself free of all thoughts), one's form (as the mind) perishes totally, like a sugar-doll dissolving upon coming in contact with the sea."*

This is the consummation of the path of Yoga. The 'Samadhi Pada' of Patanjali Yoga Sutra begins with defining Yoga, as follows.

- 1) 'yOgascittavRttinirOdhaH' – 'Yoga is the restraint of thought.'
- 2) 'tadA drAshtuH svarupE-(a)vasthAnam' – 'Then the seer abides in its own self'.

Thereafter, the Yoga Sutra-s explain the nature of thoughts and means of restraining them. And finally, when the thoughts and its very seeds are all erased, the yogi achieves *nirbeeja samAdhi*, where no samskara whatsoever remains. This is the complete dissolution of the mind, the dissolving of the 'sugar-doll in the sea'. The Self alone exists.

After explaining the path of Yoga, Bhagavan explains the path of Vichara – Inquiry. He says – ‘*ennai yAn aRivuRa en uru vERu Etu*’ – “When I inquire and realize my true self; where exists any distinct form for me ‘Existence’, as Aruna, the divine hill, you alone, eternally are. (And ‘I’ have no form or existence as distinct from you, O Arunachala).”

To summarize, in this verse of Ashtakam, Bhagavan explains different types of Sadhana.

First is the path of Upasana with *bhEda-bhAvanA*, where God is realized as a form; next is the path of Yoga, where the mind is completely stilled, and the seeker’s mind dissolves in God, like a sugar-doll in the sea; and then the path of Vichara, where the seeker inquires and realizes that only God exists, and that he, the seeker, has no distinct existence, apart from God...

An interesting revelation conveyed by Bhagavan in this verse is that the supreme object that is beheld by Upasana, is the same as what is attained by Yoga or Vichara. At the end of all sadhana, there is no ‘*shunyatva*’ – void or non-existence. There is a positive, eternal, divine, ‘existence’. And that ‘existence’, is seen by Ramana to be rising high in the form of the divine hill having the name Arunachala.

Om tat sat, Arunachala!



Scan the adjacent QRL in your Mobile QR code scanner App to listen to Ashtakam verse 2.

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## Ramana is the Way of Ramana

*Shyam Sunder*

Becoming can never transform itself into Being. Becoming, the expansive and enclosing activity of the self, must cease, then there is Being. This Being cannot be thought about, cannot be imagined; the very thought about it is a hindrance ...

One is absolutely nothing, but we can't face that, therefore we have image about our self. 'In the eternal 'Now' thought has no place.' Time and thought are the same. Time and thought are not two separate entities.

"God cannot be deceived by outward genuflections, bowings and prostrations. He sees if the 'individuality' is there or not."

"True namaskara is only the giving up of the 'I'-sense."

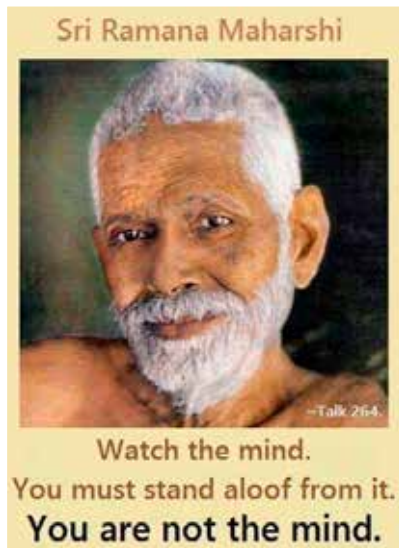
-Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Understanding comes swiftly, unknowingly, when the maker of the effort is passive; only when the maker of the effort is silent does the wave of understanding come.

"What exists is the one Self, not the seer and seen."

Mental 'seen' (scene) keeps on changing constantly and automatically. Formless mental seer (ego) depends on it. Where is mental seer (ego) in the absence of mental seen? Only the existence-consciousness-bliss is.

"If you hold this feeling of 'I' long enough and strongly enough, the false 'I' will vanish leaving only the unbroken awareness of the real, immanent 'I', consciousness itself."



You are that which remains.

You are always that.

"To be the Self that you really are is the only means to realize the bliss that is ever yours."

"To cease to identify yourself with the mind is all that is required."

"The world is a projection of yourself. The world cannot be transformed till you are."

"What is mind after all?

It is a projection of the Self,

See for whom it appears and from where it rises."

-Sri Ramana Maharshi.

"The ego is the source of thought. It creates the body and the world."

-Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Egoistic mind may desire or try to be self-luminous but it is egoless state of being.

Egoless state of heart.

No I-thought.

"The Self is self-luminous without darkness and light, and is the reality which is Self-manifest."

-Sri Ramana Maharshi.

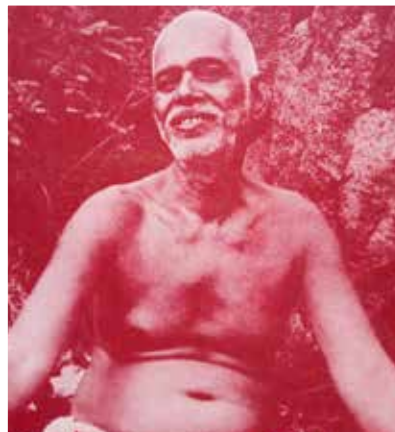
It is only as it is.  
It can't be defined.  
The best definition is  
'I am that I am'."

Constant existence feeling  
with arising thoughts

Or

Constant existence feeling  
without arising thoughts. It  
happens after practice.

O Arunachala!  
When I met you  
I found me.



## Some Moments of Vichara

*G.Kameshwar*

(This is in continuation of the article carried in the previous issue. In that, a Satsangha in the form of a Facebook post and related comments were shared. The post was by Mr Jay Shankar, where he shared a short selection from the book 'Atma Vidya in Adhyatma Ramayana', written by this author, published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning<sup>1</sup>).

The selection from Adhyatma Ramayana was as follows:

### ***Rama to Hanuman:***

*O Hanuman,  
I will reveal to you the true nature  
of Atma, Anatma and Paramatma,  
(Self, Non-Self, Supreme-Transcendent-Self).*

*O Hanuman,  
Consider the sky.*

*Just as the sky is seen as three,  
One, the wide endless sky;  
Second, the sky that is touching the surface of  
waters,*

*Such as the sea, lake, river, pools.  
Third, the reflection of the sky in these water-bodies.*

*In like manner, O Hanuman,  
Is Consciousness.*

*That too is seen as three,  
One, the all pervading consciousness,  
beyond which there is nothing.  
Second, the consciousness that is distinct from*

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<sup>1</sup> 'Atma Vidya in Adhyatma Ramayana: Selections on Self-Knowledge from Adhyatma Ramayana' by G Kameshwar, published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, 2018

*But particularized with the Buddhi, intellect,  
Third, the reflection of consciousness  
In Buddhi, the faculty of awareness.*

This post was followed by a conversation in the form of comments. The conversation was among friends of the author, classmates from engineering college. Here, in this second part of the Vichara, we continue with sharing some excerpts from the comments that followed the post)

\*

Comments, continued:

**Shankar:** Question.... Is *samharam* (conquest / destruction) love & empathy?

**Muralidharan:** Dear **Shankar**... The answer to the question from me is that it is an unsettled debate in my mind for very long. Mum is the word!

**Sathiya:** Hey **Shankar**, **Muralidharan** I know the meaning of samharam, but is there a specific thing that you both are referring to?

**Shankar:** Sathiya not specifically... but my Q...is war empathy? Is war for Dharma empathy and love?  
Thus, is destruction also love & empathy?

**Kamesh:** Hi **Shankar**! Mahaperiyava has spoken about this. I recall the general gist of it, but not the exact words or where I read it. So, we can speak offline on this.

**Vaitheeswaran:** Hi **Kamesh** - I have/ had a similar Q on Sathya's on Samharam. Would be keen to know what Mahaperiyava had to say on this.

**Kamesh:** Dear **Vaitheeswaran**

Best as I remember, it was like this...

Anbu (love/affection) is constant, towards all. Shatru samharam (enemy conquest) may well be done. But one should not hate the shatru. One should have anbu towards all, including the shatru

**Sathiya:** Hi **Kamesh!** That's a fantastic answer! "*May well be done*" has hidden in it the point that the decision to do or not is situation-dependent. Also, when the decision is taken outside the ego, karma doesn't touch you. (There is a statement by Bhagavan Ramana to that effect.) Also, the Anbu factor mentioned by Mahaperiyava implies that there is no residue in the actor's mind. I feel that this whole approach is not just for this question but also applies to any conflict resolution issue.

**Muralidharan:** :( These approaches seem to be at variance with the way shown by Jesus. Jesus advocates a certain logic in begging for pardon of the ignorant wrong doers. I was inspired by Leo Tolstoy's reading of Jesus where he condemns the ways of the church but very strongly brings out the logic of Jesus on nonviolence. Of course, that is just a point of view and is one side of the debate within me, the other side of the debate too remains valid.

**Sathiya:** Dear **Muralidharan!** I feel we need a holistic approach here. Each and every decision/action (non-action is also an action) done by an individual is violent to some other beings in the universe. It is unavoidable. This is a fundamental point to grasp. The right question to ask is - How does one decide/act with Love? Also worth noting is that when it comes to taking a life or not, in almost all situations Love will decide non-killing to be the right choice. BTW as I hinted earlier, one should never try to define all exceptional situations where killing is allowed - that is pointless and will only create trouble.

**Muralidharan:** I am not truly able to appreciate the extreme position taken by you Sathiya, please reread '*the fundamental point to grasp*'!

**Sathiya:** Here's the excerpt from Sri Ramana that I alluded to. It is from 'Talks with Ramana Maharshi', Talk number 17. Here goes:

(‘D’ refers to Mr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, an English research scholar of Oxford University, who had come on a visit,

with a letter of introduction from Paul Brunton. 'M' refers to Ramana Maharshi.)

D.: God being immanent in all, one should not take life of any kind. Is society right in taking the life of a murderer? Can the State do so either? The Christian countries begin to think that it is wrong to do so.

M.: What is it that prompted the murderer to commit the crime? The same power awards him the punishment. Society or the State is only a tool in the hands of the power. You speak of one life taken away; But what about innumerable lives lost in wars?

D.: Quite so. Loss of lives is wrong anyway. Are wars justified?

M.: For a realised man, the one who remains ever in the Self, the loss of one or several or all lives either in this world or in all the three worlds makes no difference. Even if he happens to destroy them all, no sin can touch such a pure soul. Maharshi quoted the Gita, Chapter 18, Verse 17 - "He who is free from the notion of ego, whose intellect is unattached, though he annihilates all the worlds, he slayeth not, nor is he bound by the results of his actions."

D.: Do not one's actions affect the person in after-births?

M.: Are you born now? Why do you think of other births? The fact is that there is neither birth nor death. Let him who is born think of death and palliatives therefore.

**Sathiya:** Dear **Murali**, let's postpone the discussion to f2f someday we meet.

*\*\* To be continued \*\**

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## Ramana My Light

*Charumathi Neelkanth (Challimma)*

'After my marriage, as my husband was studying for his M.A. he told my parents not to send me to their place for a year. I had just completed my SSLC with good marks and my parents-in-law thought it a good idea for me to continue my studies as well. However, my father-in-law's elder brother, Appu Sastri, who was residing in Tiruvannamalai, said, 'If you are not taking her with you then let her come and stay with us for a year, be visiting the Asram and learn cooking.' So saying they took me to Tiruvannamalai.'



'Everyone would tease me', she laughs, 'they would say 'When the way of the world is for everyone to go on a honeymoon after their marriage you were taken to an Asram!' But what a golden opportunity it gave me of being in Bhagavan's presence for a whole year. We would go to the Asram early in the morning at 6.00 a.m. when the Vedic chanting started. Once the chanting was over we would return home and finish the cooking and go back by around 8.30 to spend another couple of hours there. Everyone would sit in meditation during those hours and I sat as well. By then I was grown up enough to know that when the elders are seated somewhere one cannot get up and run around' she sweetly chuckles again. 'Yet, that is what ripened the mind, believe me'.

'During that period Bhagavan was operated on His arm for sarcoma. A doctor from Bengal came and performed the operation. Our doctor was with him during the surgery. I went off

with the doctor to the Asram and was sitting at the doorstep of the room where they performed the operation. When the door was opened after the surgery and seeing Bhagavan everyone began to weep that such an event had happened, I too thought with great sorrow 'Why should this happen to you Bhagavan?' Then I heard a voice, I do not know whether I alone heard it or everyone heard it, 'eduvum naDakardu sarirattuku daan, AtmAkku illa'. 'Whatever happens is only for the body, not for the Atma' so the voice said.'

'In those young years of mine when I had no knowledge of what was meant by the words 'sariram (body)' or 'Atma (Self)' I distinctly heard these words in the divine voice. I caught hold of those words and held firmly to them in my life.' Again with a laugh she continued, 'Even when I was scolded I would apply these words to myself. Till today these are the words that I live by'. I interrupt her narration spontaneously asking, 'What more is needed?'

'Thereafter I went back to Madras to stay with my parents. When the news came that Bhagavan was seriously ill, my father rushed home from his office to take me and leave immediately for Tiruvannamalai. I was yearning to go with him. My husband was visiting us then and was to leave for Hyderabad only that evening. I pleaded saying 'Let him leave when he has to, I will go with father.' I could not see why I had to stay behind and see him off. But my mother insisted that people would find fault with us if I went away on the day when he was leaving. She did not allow me to go and have the last darshan of Bhagavan.'

'This is one of the great sorrows in my life.' She begins to weep at the thought. I console her saying, 'But you have seen Bhagavan so often'. She holds back her tears and says, 'Yes. I would go even when he was ill. Whenever something disturbed me I would go and sit in his presence. After sitting for a short time a feeling would arise in my mind 'Nothing at all has happened, why did you worry about this trivial thing?' 'adukapparam enna jayikkaravaale illa' She sweetly used the expression, 'Thereafter no one could conquer me' meaning to say that she was literally 'on top of the world'.

*\*\* To be continued \*\**

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## Ramananjali – 40 years

### RAMANANJALI 40 – A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME

Excerpts from a Report on the ‘World Tour’ of Ramananjali in  
1980

Published in July 1980 issue of ‘The Mountain Path’

The Voice of Ramana in Europe, Canada, U.S.A

‘Ramananjali’ – Ramana Movement

An Excerpt from the July 1980 issue of ‘The Mountain Path’ –

The Ramanasramam Journal

A Feast of ‘Ramana Music’

A vivid resume

By

Kumari Sarada

### WE ARE OFF

On the night of 15th May, the rehearsal in Bombay was on in full swing, a few devotees and friends participated enthusiastically, despite the late hour. At 3.00 a.m., we were off to the airport. All our hearts were filled with joy and excitement that we had got this unique opportunity of singing and spreading our Master’s glory. We were waved off by equally joyous friend-devotees, the momentous tour had begun!

*[Our hosts on that momentous occasion were Sri V.Subramaniam and Smt.Ramani Subramaniam who were then in Bombay.]*

### A FITTING START – GENEVA

At Geneva, the first halt in Europe, Dr.Prasad, President of the Indian Association, and its members, gave us a cheerful welcome. For the first time, the Association had been able to get the beautiful ILO Auditorium, in the most picturesque setting. Dr.Prasad exclaimed: “It is purely Bhagavan’s Grace!” The two-hour programme on 17th May in the packed hall made a fitting beginning for this ‘musical offering’ to Sri Ramana. In the introductory speech Sri A.R.Natarajan emphasised the uniqueness of

Bhagavan's teachings. Devotees had come even from great distances, and it was a thrilling experience for us to see so many faces known to us, beaming with smiles of fulfilment!

Though the weather at Geneva was chilly, we were kept warm by the affection of our hosts and friends. As we left we carried with us, in particular, fond memories of the affection of the Naryanans and the enthusiasm of Sarvasri Khosla, Thapiyal, Sethuram, Verma, Menon and Mani.

*[Sri Narayan and his family continued to be friends of the Ramana Family and organized yet another Ramananjali program at Geneva in 1988.]*

### **“INSPIRED PERFORMANCE” –PARIS**

The next halt was Paris and there, Le Centre de Relations Culturelles France-Indien, headed by Sri Mahesh and Madame Bernard, along with Lalith Kumar Rao and Shobini Rao, had made excellent arrangements. As a labour of love, Shobini Rao had, for the first time in her life, undertaken to cook for 24 people. She dispelled her doubts thinking it was Bhagavan's work and it was his responsibility to see that it was done. The food thus cooked with love and dedication to Bhagavan was indeed nectar to all.

The concert on 19th May at Salle Adyar was a memorable one and received enthusiastic applause inducing the artists to more and more joyous and lively renderings. For the largely French audience their lack of understanding of the language and style proved no bar to appreciating the inspired music.

After the concert, a towering Frenchman (who turned out to be a famous character actor) approached all the members of the group congratulating them. Then coming to V.Ganesan he asked with earnest admiration: “This music is really wonderful. There is something special about it, but I cannot place it.” Ganesan's face lit up: “Yes, you are right; this element is called ‘devotion’, it's very special to this group”.

‘Tiffin’ supplied considerably by the Thiru family, filled our hearts with thankfulness for the warmth with which it was given. Sri Khadar, Sri Asari and Sri Ramthirth were all extremely helpful during our stay in Paris.

*[Madame Bernard too invited us to Paris again in 1988. That visit was filled with miracles by Bhagavan and his care from start to finish.]*

### **“WELCOME RAMANANJALI” – LONDON**

Our next stop was London. We had not been able to obtain entry permits to U.K. before departing from Bombay due to shortage of time. Anxious well-wishers had warned us that we would most probably be bundled off in the next flight from London and would not be allowed to enter the country. Even as we landed at the Heathrow airport, the loudspeaker was announcing a welcome to the Ramananjali group. Sri N.V.Raman, First Secretary to the Indian High Commissioner, was himself waiting to take us in. Yet another ‘impossibility’ made possible by Bhagavan for us!

*[How did Bhagavan make this happen? In an apparently most natural and casual manner like all his miracles. Before Ramananjali left on the tour Smt.Sulochana Natarajan was wished well by her relatives. One among them was her cousin’s wife, Smt.Radha Ramani. She mentioned that her uncle was working in the Indian High Commission in London. Just before leaving India a request was made to her through a long distance call, as there was no mobile technology in those days, to ask her uncle whether he could get us an entry into U.K. There was no time to get back to her about the end result of the request. But we knew when we were welcomed on landing at London and Sri Raman was himself there to receive us.]*

Sri C.J.Barai, a devotee, had toiled night and day to make the visit a success. Attending to his work from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., he would spend all the remaining time in arranging for the visit. Many were the sleepless nights spent by him in planning for the trip. His son, Dilip Barai, was also very kind and helpful, even taking time off from work to help us find our way around London.

**\*\* To be continued\*\***

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## Ramana's Song of Grace - 36

*Revathi Sankar*

When the body is there, there are so many complaints, so many thoughts about I, me and what not. When there is no body, in sleep, after death, we see there is peace or there is silence. But for that sake is it possible for us to sleep all the time or once for all give up our body? Bhagavan in this verse of Pada Pancharatnam gives us the clue as to what we have to do for finding the silence while alive and awake in the body.

The first instructions given to Siva Prakasam Pillai about self – enquiry in 1901 was 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 the ragas used in Pancharatnam. We are meditating now on the second kriti which is the Goula raga. The second charana of the song goes like this

*UnOduTRa uravozhiyumenDRu uRaippOn pAdam vAzhgavE  
nAnAren vichArattalenRallOn pAdam vAzhgavE*

Tamil

*dehadim bereta bandha kaLevudendu hELvana pAdakE jaya  
nAnyArendu vichArsidAgenda dEvana pAdakE jaya*

Kannada

Meaning –

Blessed be the Feet of the One who says, 'The connection with the body will be destroyed by the 'Who am I?' enquiry'.

After a very difficult, arduous journey to Tiruvannamalai, Ramana reached the Arunachaleswara temple and he never left

Tiruvannamalai thereafter. He stayed there for 54 years living in different parts of the temple and later on the Hill and at its base. During that stay, he stayed in the thousand pillared hall and Vahana Mantapa of the temple. He describes later that he remembered sitting under one chariot and then when he woke up from dhyana, he used to be in some other place. This reveals that he never used to be aware of his body.

Because of the disturbance caused by the urchin boys in the thousand pillared hall, Bhagavan moved to the Patalalingam, an underground shrine in that very hall, and was absorbed in the Self. There too he never paid any attention to the body. Even though there were scorpions, snakes, ants and so many other creatures eating up his thighs, he was untouched by what was happening in his body. Later Seshadri Swami noticed what was happening and had him lifted up from there and taken care of.

For some time Bhagavan was sitting under the Illuppai tree. There Ratnamma who was serving in the temple as a devadasi saw this vibrant boy and took a vow to serve him food every day. He never identified himself with his body.

If there is awareness of body, then there will be thoughts about various aspects. This is what Bhagavan Ramana says and he has demonstrated it to us.

When there is pain in the body, the doctors give us pain killers and make us sleep and hence the body cures itself. We don't have the thought of the body and hence no thought of the pain too. Hence Bhagavan Ramana says without going to the outside world, when we ask the question 'Who am I?' to ourselves, the attention is turned away from the body and goes to the Self. So Bhagavan Ramana says self – enquiry is the answer for all questions and doubts. If a question can be an answer, then we should surely hold on to the question.

When we hold on to the question, without trying to find or give an answer to it, then one day there is hope of finding the Self, with the grace of Bhagavan Ramana at whatever time he allows it

to happen. So every moment the questioning has to happen by surrendering the ego which rises up every moment. By enquiring always, there will be peace and happiness in the process of doing so itself. If the process itself is so beautiful, then what about the end result? Ultimately, both are the same, there is no difference.

Bhagavan Ramana, I pray to you to give me the thought of enquiry and allow me to recognize that every time this ego arises, I have to enquire.

Lord Ramana

Thank you Bhagavan

Your attention seeking Child :) ????



## How Bhagavan Captured Us

*By Smt. Sulochana Natarajan*

At Salem we found a house that was ideally situated near ARN's office, the club where ARN used to play tennis daily and the Ramakrishna Math. One Sarada Vidyalaya was coming up in Salem. I went and met the headmistress and offered my honorary services. So on week days the school bus would come and pick me up.

Our schedule at Salem was – ARN would go to office and I will go to Sarada Vidyalaya – in the evening ARN would go for his tennis. After that both of us would go to the Ramakrishna Math. One Swami Desikanandaji was the President then. He had had Darshan of Bhagavan Ramana and had great devotion for Bhagavan. Daily evening we would sit and meditate, read the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, Bhagavad Gita, Bhagavan's Talks and have spiritual discussions. This was our daily schedule for the whole of almost a year and three months duration of our stay at Salem. ARN was deeply drawn to Bhagavan's path of self-enquiry and was striving to practise it.

While we were at Salem Swami Yatiswarananda visited the Salem Ramakrishna Math once. We went to the station to pick him up and after his stay of two days we also had the privilege of dropping him at the station when he left and of seeing him off there. One Tiruppugazh group with Salem Jayalakshmi's sister was singing once a week at Ramakrishna Math. That was how I got familiar with Tiruppugazh which paved the way for later recording of Tiru Arunai Tiruppugazh in Ramananjali.

At Salem I learnt Sanskrit from one great Pandit for a few months. Even in Sanskrit I used to adopt the same system of studying. I used to conjugate every word by making columns and studying the different aspects of each word in detail and becoming thorough with it. My love for Sanskrit manifested in later years in my setting to music all the compositions of Ganapati Muni on Bhagavan and all of Bhagavan's Sanskrit compositions as well.

There were many celebrations in the Ramakrishna Math during which I used to sing Bhajans. This unconsciously began to cut away my fear of singing in public and to build my strength in devotional music presentations. I also lapped up the perfect manner in which events were organized at the Math. Till date I strive to follow that method and sometimes wonder whether we can touch that degree of perfection.

Swami Desikananda was very affectionate towards us. One Subbu, a sadhaka, was our friend. He was a great Ramakrishna Bhakta and he too would join us in our evening satsangs and discussions with Swamiji. During one of the sessions he asked whether being a sadhaka meant that one should desist from eating Badam Halwa. Thereafter 'Subbu's badam halwa' became a humorous example often quoted by Swamiji. In that period I had the privilege of personally offering worship to Guru Maharaj, Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda during the Jayanthi celebrations at Sarada Vidyalyaya. A frequent visitor to the Math was Swami Chidananda from near Trichy where he had set up an independent institution in the name of Sri Ramakrishna and started schools and colleges as well.

The daughter-in-law of Sri Devaraja Mudaliar (author of 'Day by Day with Bhagavan') was a Principal in one of the schools in Salem. One evening she met us at the Ramakrishna Math. In the course of conversation mention of Bhagavan naturally came up and she then told us about her father-in-law. She said he would be very happy to meet us and that she would bring him to the Math some time. This became a momentous meeting indeed.

We met Devaraja Mudaliar and planned a trip to Tiruvannamalai along with him. In 1957 July with Devaraja Mudaliar in our car we went to Sri Ramanasramam. During the whole journey Mudaliar was full of anecdotes from Bhagavan's life. This was our first hand exposure to the glory of Bhagavan's life from one who had literally bathed in that Ocean day in and day out, day by day.

The first meeting between ARN and Sri TNV (T.N.Venkataraman), President of Sri Ramanasramam was also



momentous. In fact, in Tamil there is a saying that they caught on to each other like cotton and fire. This deep bond of friendship grew stronger with every passing day and year as it were till TNV Mama (then Swami Ramanananda) attained the lotus feet of Bhagavan in December 2007. A few days before Swamiji's passing, ARN himself had a premonition of death and was hospitalized for a few days. He recovered with full strength to attend Bhagavan's Jayanthi and the Samadhi function of Swami Ramanananda who dropped his body just the day after Jayanthi that year. ARN himself left in January 2008, not very long thereafter.

Mudaliar introduced ARN to TNV as Class I ITO from Salem. Bhagavan was to make full use of ARN's good offices for the benefit of Sri Ramanasramam and the Ramana Movement. The immense goodwill and respect that ARN earned during his service on account of his love for all, his spontaneous courtesy and his readiness to go out of the way to help anyone in need, brought him a huge circle of well wishers. Indeed, such was the natural charm that Bhagavan blessed him with that people would respect him wherever he went. This respect translated itself into help wherever it was needed for the Asram or in later years for the Ramana Centre.

During that visit to the Asram we went for Giri pradakshina with Mudaliar. This too was memorable and filled with narrations of anecdotes from Bhagavan's life. After some years Mudaliar started living at the Asram itself. If we go straight from Cow Lakshmi's Samadhi westward, the corner cottage was where Mudaliar stayed for some years. Whenever we visited the Asram, he would loving invite us for tea at his cottage in the evenings.

*\*\* To be continued \*\**

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

### 359. NIRATANKAH

Fearless.

Fearlessness comes from non – dependence. When the seeking mind ceases to seek, when it is aware of its own natural fullness, there is no fear. This fearless quality in Ramana was particularly noticed in the early years when the cheetahs and wild animals used to roam about the hill. Once in Pachai Amman temple when a devotee Rangaswami Iyengar was having a bath in the temple tank, a cheetah came to drink water. The devotee was blissfully unaware. Ramana spoke to the cheetah and asked it to leave which it did. Another instance of Ramana's fearlessness is his total coolness even when poisonous snakes moved close to him or even on his body.

*Om nirAtankAya namaha*

### 360. NISPRAPANCAH

Not bound by the world.

One's relationship with the world is through the mind. What binds one to the world is the false notion of separate individuality, which leads to a series of attachments linking one to the world. For the one whose mind is dead, like Ramana, the perception of the fullness of consciousness, which includes this world, is always there. The objective world is in the subjective consciousness. Hence such a one is not bound by the world.

*Om niSprapancAya namaha*

### 361. NIRAMAYAH

Free from disease (of worldliness)

Throughout his life Ramana's body was subject to many ailments, be it asthma, pain in the joints, and so on. It suffered for months on end from sarcoma. Having accepted the cross,

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

having accepted the burden of devotees' bad karma, Ramana let his body pay the toll. This attribute therefore really relates not to the body but to the disease of worldliness in the form of poverty of heart, miserliness, prejudices and attachments which are the hallmarks of worldly people. In another sense, one may say that since Ramana did not identify himself with the body, he was ever free from the diseases that racked it.

*Om nirAmayAya namaha*

### **362. NIRMALAH**

Free of tainted vision

People look at the world with jaundiced eyes. Their innate tendencies, ambitions and greed lead to a myopic and blinkered vision. In contrast, the vision of gnanis is pure for their minds are pure and uncontaminated by worldly pulls.

*Om nirmalAya namaha*

### **363. NISCALAH**

One with a silent mind.

It is only those whose minds are merged in their spiritual heart who can be free, naturally, of mental movements. When Ganapati Muni queried about the hallmark of a gnani, Ramana told him that it is the silence born of freedom from mental tendencies. Such ridding of tendencies happens naturally as one dips within repeatedly.

*Om niScalAya namaha*

### **364. NITYAH**

Permanent

Ramana is timeless for he was always rooted in the Self. The timeless Ramana took up the human bondage in order to provide the modern man with an infallible tool for combining work and wisdom. The direct path based on Ramana's own experience is a beacon light for functioning in freedom through life.

*Om nityAya namaha*

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**News & Events***Revathi Sankar*

43rd National Seminar – talks by Vani Vasudev, Venkatesh Deshpande, Ujwal Jagadeesh and G.Kameshwar .

Ramapriya Memorial, Krishna Prasad Memorial and Seshappa Byndoor Memorial lectures were delivered by Dr.Sarada, Dr. Ambika Kameshwar and Vedabrahma Sri K.G.Subraya Sharma











Sri Shadakshari received a token of thanks from RMCL for paving the path, the road and renovating the toilets at the Shrine, the was declared open by Kumari Sudhishna and Chiranjeevi Adish. Smt.Aruna Satish and Sri Veerendra Shadakshari spoke on the occasion





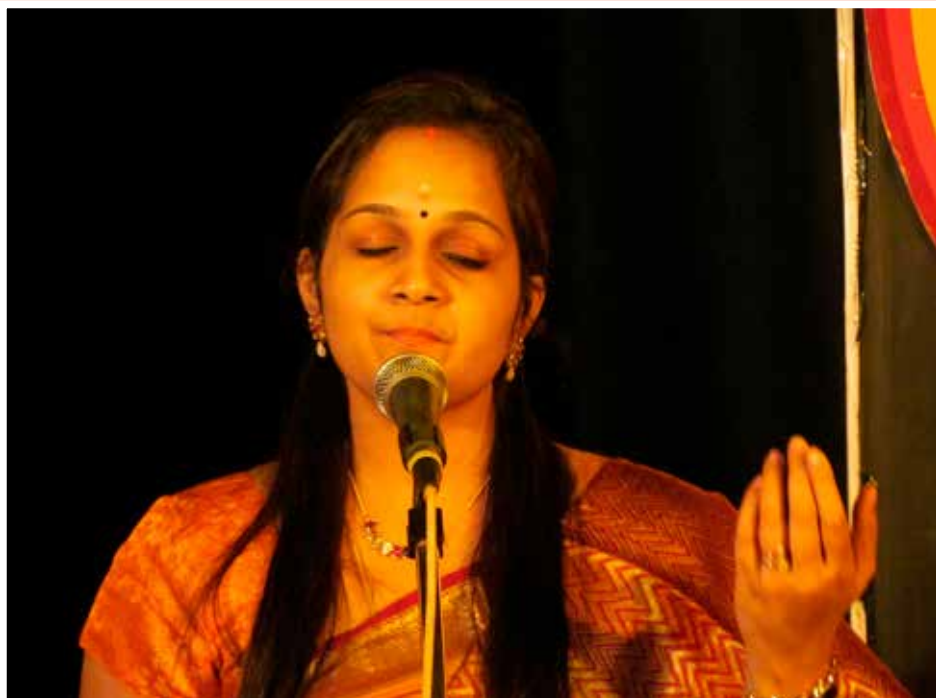




A Ramananjali musical feature was presented by Smt.Poorna Sooraj on 'Panchakshara Panchanaada'.

Smt.V.Radha concluded the festival with her musical offering of Ramananjali songs.









The RAISE presentation of Manjunatha Higher Primary School featured a hundred children. Sri Pramod GL, Advisor, EVRY India, Sri Kannan Sundervel, Principal, Navodaya School and Sri Devanand of Samartha Bharatha were the guests of honour on the occasion.







Natyopasana 2020 – the dance students of RMCL presented the theme 'Atma Darshana'. Ujwal Jagadeesh presented the dance feature.









### March Ramana Dates with RMCL

#### At Ramana Maharshi Shrine, Mekhri Circle

09 Monday 6.45 pm **Pournami** and  
Commencement of **Laksharchana**

10 Tuesday 10.30 am and 06.30 pm **Sthapana Day** and Laksharchana  
continues

11 Wednesday 10.30 am and 6.30 pm Laksharchana continues

12 Thursday 10.30 am Laksharchana concludes

#### 18 Wednesday **Mani Shadakshari Memorial Day**

**'Bhagavan Ramana Maharshigala Aksharavarnamale kuritu Sangeetha  
Rasa Sanje'**

4.00 pm Prayer by Kumari Sudhishna and Chiranjeevi Adish

4.05 pm Welcome address by Kumari Diya Shadakshari and Sri Veerendra  
Shadakshari

4.10 pm Puja to Sri Ramana Maharshi in Kannada by Sri Hiremagalur Kannan

4.40 pm Ramananjali Music led by Dr.Sarada Natarajan

5.10 pm Tea break

5.30 pm Talk by Dr.Veena Bananjay

6.00 pm Devotional Music on the concept of Aksharavarnamale by  
Dr.Vidya Bhushan

8.00 pm Mahaprasada

#### At Chennai

14, 15 Saturday, Sunday **Self enquiry Workshop**

10.00 am to 5.00 pm at Rasa Cultural Centre, Greenways Road

Faculty – Sri N.Nandakumar, Dr.Sarada, Dr.Ambika Kameshwar,

Sri Venkatesh Deshpande, Sri Dileep Simha. Guest Speaker – Sri

G.Kameeshwar

#### At Arunachala

28, 29, 30 Saturday, Sunday, Monday **Self-enquiry Workshop**

At Aruna Apeetha Ramana Nilaya, Tiruvannamalai

30 Monday Ramana Maharshi **Summer Camp-1** commences At Ramana  
Maharshi Heritage Campus, Sanjaynagar

### April Ramana Dates with RMCL

#### At Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle

07 Tuesday Pournami 6.45 pm

14 Tuesday Ramana Aradhana Celebrations Sahasranama Puja and  
Ramana Pada Pancharatnam 11.00 am and 7.00 pm

**At Sri Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium, Sanjaynagar**

16 Thursday 6.00 pm Summer Camp Valedictory

**At Ram Mandir, Rajajinagar**

13 Monday 6.30 pm 'Sri Ramana Leela' dance drama

**Special Dates at Chennai**

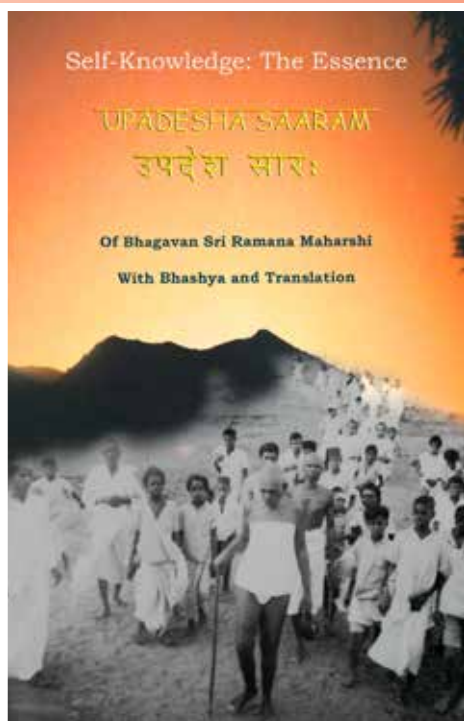
12 Sunday Arunachala Ramana 'Tirupeyar Kaandam' 6.00 pm at Narada Gana Sabha, Chennai

14 Tuesday Ramana Aradhana - Ramana Pada Pancharatnam 7.00 pm at Ramana Kendra, Alamelumangapuram, Chennai

**Special Dates at Sri Ramanasramam**

20 Monday Bhagavan Ramana's 70 Aradhana

21 Tuesday Ramana Pada Pancharatnam

**BOOK OF THE MONTH FOR MARCH (Avail 30% Discount)****A valuable insight into  
Upadesa Saram**

English translation by  
G.Kameshwar of the Bhashya by  
Ganapati Muni and of its Hindi  
translation by Swaroopananda  
Saraswathi of Dwaraka Peetha

## 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, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 5:00pm - 7:00pm at RMHC.

**Yoga classes** [Contact - Uma (9538472026)]

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/Venkatesh Deshpande/Dileep Simha

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 and Smt. Ratnamma

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

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

Thursday 6:30pm at RSCR

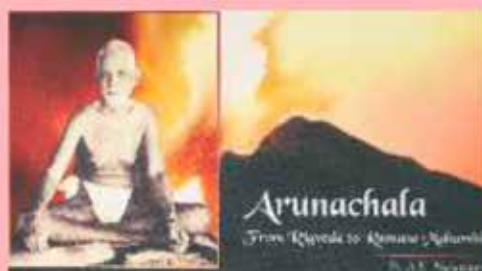
## Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

### Investigation into Truth

102. The deeper intention of the scriptures in describing the sequence of creation in different ways is not to proclaim the correct theory of creation but to promote enquiry into the Supreme Reality that is the primal source of creation. This is the real purport behind the *sastras* [scriptures] that describe the details of creation.
103. Self, the conjuror, abides without change in the state of turiya, and through the power of his *maya* he remains hidden from the view of those who are infatuated by it. He throws the rope of the avasthas into the space of the mind, making the experiencers who are attached to those states climb the rope. Through them he sports, manifesting a strange and changeful magical show.



### **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.