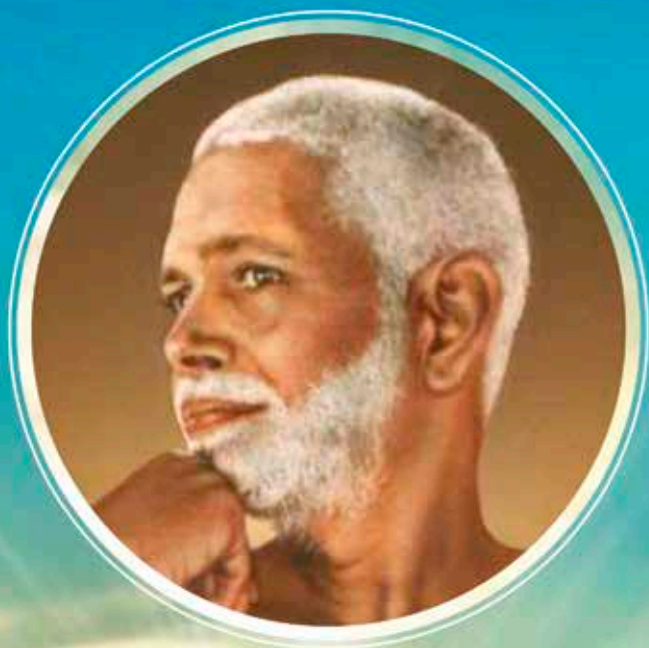


June 2020

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The Ramana way



A Monthly Journal published by
**Ramana Maharshi Centre
for Learning**
Bengaluru

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We request members for the quarter and those who have not renewed last year to kindly send in their renewal amount of Rs.240/- at the earliest.

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*

I want to get back to work. Do I want to get back to work or do I want happiness (which I now believe I will get only if I am back at work)? I want the lockdown to end. Do I want the lockdown to end or do I want happiness (which I now believe I will get once the lockdown ends)?

I want to succeed in things that I do. Do I want success or do I want happiness (which I believe I will get when I succeed)? I want to achieve a few things. Do I want achievement or do I want happiness (that I think comes from achievement)? I want people to appreciate what I do. Do I want appreciation or do I want happiness (as I believe I will be happy if people appreciate me)? I want to feel that I have done things well. Do I want my own appreciation or do I want happiness (as I believe I will make myself happy by doing things well)?

I want people to like me, to love me, to respect me. Do I want the love of dear ones or do I want happiness (which I believe I will gain when people care for me)? I want to gather a lot of knowledge. Do I want knowledge or do I want happiness (that I believe I will gain with knowledge)? I want to sing well. Do I want to sing well or do I want happiness (as I believe that I will be happy if I am a good singer)? I want to be a good dancer. Do I want to be a good dancer or do I want happiness (being which I believe I will gain happiness)?

I want economic welfare. Do I want economic well-being or do I want happiness (that I am certain comes from economic well-being)? I want good health. Do I want good health or do I want happiness (that I am sure comes from physical well-being).

I want my mother/father/sister/brother/child/spouse to do well and be happy. Do I want the happiness of my people or do I want my happiness (that I believe springs from the happiness of my people)? I want everyone to be happy in this world. Do I want the happiness of all beings or my own happiness (which I believe stems from the happiness of all those around me)?

The list can go on and on as we are well aware, the list of our desires. It may appear to be short at times, the list may seem to be limited. But does it ever really end? Why is it that we have an endless list of desires? This is because we have linked our desires with objects and circumstances that are external to us. Any need, any desire of mine appears to be related to an event or a circumstance. And since circumstances are ever changing it is not possible for the happiness that stems from that event or circumstance to remain constant.

Yet, if we were to introspect and wonder why we want anything at all in the world, what answer would we get? Ramana says the answer is simple enough. What we desire from any object, circumstance or event is only happiness, the happiness which at that time we are convinced comes from that object or event. We have hooked our band wagon to some object or circumstance and we convince ourselves that we will reach our goal of happiness on gaining that object or circumstance.

If we write down any desire of ours that might have arisen at any point in our lives and ask ourselves 'Why did I want this?' the immediate answer may appear to be different for each of our desires. For instance one may say that when one was ten years old one wanted a toy, the company of a friend, to do well in class. If asked why one wanted to do well in class one might reply 'It was because my parents wanted me to do well'. But, why did I want to do what my parents wanted me to do? It was in order to please my parents of course. Yet, why did I wish to please my parents? I wished to do so because at that point in my life pleasing my parents gave me happiness.

Later in life why did I want a job? This too could be because my parents wanted me to find a job or because the family needed money or again because I felt I would be successful and worthwhile only if I had a good job. But if I again pursue the answer with another question like 'Why did the family need money?' The answer to that would be 'To fulfil our needs'. But why did we have to fulfil our needs? The answer to such a question would either be that we would be extremely unhappy if we couldn't meet those needs

or it would be 'in order to be happy'. If I had wanted a job in order to be successful then the question would be 'Why did I want to be successful?' The answer would obviously be 'In order to be happy'.

No matter what the desire is if we really look deep enough for an answer, if we pursue the question 'why' to its final logical point the answer would invariably be 'Because it gives me happiness'. Hence Ramana points out to us that it is happiness and only happiness that we are seeking in everything that we do or do not do. Some things we do in order to be happy and some other things we refrain from doing, also only in order to be happy. Sometimes we may do things to prevent unhappiness as we are certain we cannot be happy in an unhappy situation.

Happiness is all that we want. This is the truth. We imagine we want a million things but it is not so. We want only happiness. We don't want money or possessions, we don't want friends or dear ones, we don't want health or wisdom, we don't want knowledge or success. We want only happiness. Whatever else we may appear to want is only in order to gain happiness.

Don't we know this already? Why is it so important for us to reiterate to ourselves that it is only happiness that we are pursuing all the time? If we do realise that it is happiness alone that we are constantly seeking then would not our dependence on events and circumstances wane? If we are unable to get happiness in 'A' avenue would we not quickly move to 'B' or 'C'? Would we not be vigilant to whether the horse we are betting on is actually winning the race or not? Are we ready to keep betting on a losing horse knowing full well that it can never win?

For a lifetime we have been chasing object after object, seeking circumstance after circumstance, wooing one dream after another in the full faith that there lies our happiness. Have we failed to obtain all those objects, reach all those circumstances? Have we not fulfilled a single dream in our lives? Yet, despite few or many successes our mind dwells only on the failures. There is hardly any silver lining.

Let us say we believe that getting a lottery of one billion rupees would make us happy. Let us imagine that we have won the lottery too. Perhaps our cup of joy seems to be full and overflowing for a day. Let us say further that we invest the billion very wisely and decide we are going to live in material comfort and bliss for the rest of our lives. But a sudden change in the world scene makes all our investments tumble down, the share market does a nose dive and we are left practically penniless. What happens to our bliss? What if we continue to be materially well off but there are setbacks in our own health or that of a family member? What if some emotional turmoil crops up?

What, on the other hand if nothing untoward happens? What if, after pursuing objects for the sake of getting happiness through them, we have actually been blessed with material, physical and emotional well being? Such an instance would indeed be the rarest of happenings but let us imagine that it does happen. Perhaps some of us may have at some time been blessed or may be even currently blessed with a period of heightened well-being. Do we feel satisfied? Do our minds stop seeking altogether because everything has been attained? Can any one of us declare that we seek absolutely nothing more from life? Why do desires still rise in the mind if all our goals have been reached?

Even for those of us who by abundant grace believe that we are blessed, greatly blessed, does life seem absolutely complete? Do we find that we have nothing at all to ask for, no seeking that remains? It is not the case, isn't it? True, we are relatively happier. When sorrow comes we may be capable of wiping our tears and walking on. But why is there still a longing for something, for anything that remains in our lives?

Somewhere, somehow, we continue to believe 'If only... then I would be happy'. That 'if only' could even be 'If only my meditation would go well' 'If only my mind would not waver' 'If only I could have intensity about my self-enquiry' 'If only I did not have negative thoughts' then 'I would surely be happy'.

Our objects and goals may change. That is seen as a natural psychological process. Once basic survival needs are

met then people move on to desiring the fulfilment of social, cultural, emotional and spiritual needs. Yet, no matter how exalted the object, as long as we link our happiness to it so long it is impossible to experience an unbroken state of joy. This is because says Ramana, happiness is not in any object or circumstance, it is the nature of the Self.

Therefore a wise person will be perceptive, perceptive to the fact that in their own life and in the lives of billions of people living around them in the world and in all the lives of people who have lived upon this earth so far, not a single person has experienced an unbroken state of joy through objective or external experiences.

A wise person will not take long to look at Ramana whose eyes radiate bliss at all times. Looking at Ramana one would wonder 'What is the source of this joy that draws even the beholder into its orbit?' Owing nothing, seeking nothing, starting no endeavour whatsoever is Ramana, who is clearly monarch of the entire universe in his pinnacle of peace.

It is not as if we do not know the answer, the reason for this. We know that it is his steady abidance in the Self that draws the whole world and us to Ramana. We know too that Ramana tells us this kingdom of bliss is ours as well for the asking. We ask yet do not ask. We seem to seek yet do not really seek. As long as we still prefer to hold on to some objective experience or the other our attention is engaged in that. We would remain unaware of the bliss radiating from our own being.

Therefore, when habit rises within us in the form of thought let us question it. Every time a thought prompts us to want something, to seek something let us ask 'Do I want that object, that experience or do I want happiness? If it is happiness that I seek I must seek myself and not the object as I am the source of bliss. I must seek myself by pulling my attention back from the object and the circumstance. I must ask myself 'Who is thinking of this object?' The answer will come 'It is I'. But then, 'who am I?' Do I know who I am? If I did would I continue to wander around like a beggar seeking one thing after another? If I don't know who

I am then is it not time to find out and revel in the bliss of the Self instead of wasting more time on pursuing mirages?

Even more ironical, if I do not know who I am, for whose sake am I busy trying to make real one mirage after another? For whose sake these objects of happiness? Whose success? Whose achievements? Whose goodness? Whose love? For whom the perfect circumstance that is being sought? For me? For someone else whom I do not know? Why then give away my whole life to this seeking? Let me first find out whose happiness I am seeking. Who am I?

What happens when through the intensity of self-enquiry the very mirage of the one who seeks dissolves? All beggary, all seeking ends forever. Then? Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "As mental fetters are lifted the sunshine and joy of love blooms. Our shrivelled hearts open up giving meaning to life. As we move inward on the trodden and un-trodden path to the source, from mind based life to heart based life, we feel light and free... It is natural to be happy. It is equally natural to love without the boundaries created by the mind. Ramana would say that the experience of the Self alone enables one to understand love to be one's essential nature."

As Ramana says in his 'Song of Self-knowledge':

"When the mind free of thought turns inward,
Annamalai appears as my own Self,
True, Grace is needed; Love is added,
Bliss wells up."



Sarada Natarajan

THE NEW DAWN**A. R. Natarajan***LOVE: UNIVERSAL-PARTICULAR**

It is natural to be happy. It is equally natural to love without the boundaries created by the mind. Ramana would say that the experience of the Self alone enables one to understand love to be one's essential nature. Then you see with loving eyes, hear with loving ears, feel always in love, (not fall in and out of it), what you smell is love, what you taste is love, love percolates through the senses fills the mind and heart.

Ordinarily love is mental, dualistic and particular. I love someone, some things and I hate some others, would rather not have anything to do with the person. Because now love is centred on 'I' and 'mine', based on attachments, based on the feeling of the other's dependence on us, on mutual need. Mother's love for her infant, helplessly dependent on her or that of a chaste wife for her husband who is the centre of her home, are cited as the best examples of individualized love. But all love is love though labeled a particular and universal. Love is common to both. It is heart based. Certainly love is many splendoured, unmatched in its beauty.

Where then is the difference? Attachment based love is by its very nature exclusive. It excludes from its ambit all that is not regarded as one's own, as belonging to one's family, one's social and spiritual circles and so on. Mind always puts brakes on the widening of this base. Superimposed is the society's value system and its permissive or prudish ways.

In contrast stands Sadguru Ramana's universal love which is surprisingly at the same time particular as well. Each and everyone could have his share of it. Monkeys would bring their babies to have his blessings in very much the same way as a human mother would. 'Nondi' the lame monkey tended by Ramana was not only welcomed back by his tribe but also made its chief. Normally they would excommunicate those who had been looked after by humans.

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

Ramana had a thorough knowledge of the habits, behavioural patterns of monkeys and was very sensitive to their needs. Consequently the monkeys could identify themselves with him and feel that he was one of them. Cow Lakshmi would have full freedom to come to Ramana at any time for being caressed or consoled.

Subbaramayya, the author of 'Ramana Reminiscences' would be in continuous correspondence with Ramana reporting every little detail of his household. While at Sri Ramanasramam he would talk freely with Ramana as one would with one's own father. So too would the 'Diarist' Devaraja Mudaliar who would refer to himself as 'Ramanachei' or Ramana's child.

There were no exceptions. When N.N.Rajan's wife was stricken by small pox, Ramana would ask for a daily report and suggest certain palliatives which would make the suffering more bearable. Ramana would take total and evident interest in what concerned his devotees, the marriage of their daughters, education of their sons, their official problems and the like. That very interest would be a balm to their hearts. Ramana's love was all embracing, available to each and every person individually and belonging to everyone in equal measure.

There was no question of any mental blocks for his mind was always merged in its source, the heart, wholly rid of dualities and the mind's desires and fears. The point to be remembered here is that universal love does not preclude individual expressions of it. Would this not make it clear that one need not be scared of losing all that one holds dear, love for the wife, sons and friends. On the contrary the removal of expectation from it, of give and take from it, would be to make it more joyous and harmonious.

Unfortunately we are likely to put aside this glowing example of Ramana as a thing apart, as being possible only for enlightened ones like him. One might push aside the example by assuming that this is not possible for lesser mortals with their attachments and social taboos. This is a faulty perception of facts. There is no truth in it. Why? Because if you are really on the Ramana path and are practising it earnestly then gradually your heart would be expanding in love as waning attachments give us

more and more of what we may call universal-particular love. Here perhaps we could remember Ramana's advice to Humphreys, the first Western devotee, that regular practice of self-enquiry even if be for fifteen or twenty minutes would result in power all round, though unconscious power but always there as an undercurrent and expressing itself in growing detachment and love of all life.

How would it show itself? For instance there might be an enlargement of the family circle by including devotees at Sri Ramanasramam, Ramana Kendras and generally all Ramana devotees. It may take the form of non-egocentric service to the families of your household employees, to the impoverished people around, in active expression of love to those outside your own circle. And love is something which grows on you. One would not know when the fetters of love loosened. Often one is unaware of its growing fullness. As mental fetters are lifted the sunshine and joy of love blooms. Our shrivelled hearts open up giving meaning to life. As we move inward on the trodden and un-trodden path to the source, from mind based life to heart based life, we feel light and free. Our people look so wonderful for they are seen then with a radiant heart freed from memory of experiences and expectations. Does it seem too much like having the cake and eating it? But that is how it is. Love's vastness will take in its sweep particular love as an expression of universal love which is overflowing in the heart.

The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar

Talk 68 (Excerpt)

Sattvic mind is surmised of the jivanmukta and of Iswara. "Otherwise," they argue, "how does the jivanmukta live and act?" The sattvic mind has to be admitted as a concession to argument. The sattvic mind is in fact the Absolute consciousness. The object to be witnessed and the witness finally merge together and Absolute consciousness alone reigns supreme. It is not a state of sunya (blank) or ignorance. It is the swarupa (Real Self). Some say that mind arises from consciousness followed by reflection (abhasa); others say that the abhasa (reflection) arises first followed by the mind. In fact both are simultaneous.

The Professor asked Sri Bhagavan to extend His Grace to him although he would soon be a thousand miles off. Sri Bhagavan said that time and space are only concepts of mind. But swarupa (the Real Self) lies beyond mind, time and space. Distance does not count in the Self.

The lady with him was most reluctant to leave the Master and return home. The Master said, "Think that you are always in my presence. That will make you feel right." They left after dusk.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: While analysing creation, much effort is made to see the chronology or sequence of events. This leads to the intellect arguing cause and effect for creation and solution of problems. Bhagavan removes all that by pointing out that rising of consciousness and rising of world is SIMULTANEOUS. "No chronology" is the erasing of time and space. Subject merely witnesses the object. With Self Enquiry, that object is also merged in the Swarupa. In all paths this merger with "Who am I?" is the final question. In self enquiry, this is the only quest. Bhagavan is giving the lady the sadhana to agglomerate all space and time into one by thinking, "I am always in Bhagavan's Presence". Through that lady, Bhagavan is giving us all "Namo Ramana" as Taraka Mantra.

Talk 69

There were reports of the above said Professor's University lectures in the Hindu. The lecturer had emphasised the necessity for birth control and discussed the various possibilities of making the man feel his responsibilities so that birth control might be automatic. The Master, on hearing it, casually remarked. "Let them find out the method of dying." [Here death refers to that of the ego (ahankar).]

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: In Ekanma Panchakam, Bhagavan says, "Forgetting the Self, rising as the ego and thinking 'I am the body' one takes countless births. Finally, killing the ego and realising the Self is to wake up from this dream of bodily journey in world". Turn inward making the sensory body and world a mere dream of thought and thought forms. As each thought arises, do not follow the thought and make it real. Enquire "Who is the dreamer?" Who am I?

Talk 70

Sri Raju Sastrigal asked Sri Bhagavan about nada, bindu and kala.

M: They are in Vedanta terminology prana, mana, buddhi (the life-current, mind and intellect). In the Tantras nada is said to be subtle sound with tejas - light - in it. This light is said to be the body of Siva. When it develops and sound is submerged, it becomes bindu. To be full of light (tejomaya) is the aim. Kala is a part of the bindu.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: In tradition, Vedic or Tantra-Agamic, life is studied as a continuous, connected wave. For instance, water, sound and light in our world travel as waves. When consciousness attends to this wave of sound within, the attending or observing consciousness also takes that continuous wave form. The inner sound of respiration, blood flow or Mantra is observed as NADA. Bhagavan is saying that the NADA has light. How can any wave be continuous when there is a break between the observer and the observed? The fullness of light in the NADA (BINDU) is best observed by knowing the fullness of the light within the observer.

Talk 71

Chronological Sequence of the Master's Stay in Different Places at Tiruvannamalai

1896. Arrived at Tiruvannamalai and stayed in the temple premises, beneath the tree, in the interior of the underground cellar, Pathala Lingam, sometimes in the gopurams, etc. (Mowna Upadesa - Dakshinamurthy)

1897 (early), removed to Gurumurtam. Stayed in the shrine and in the adjoining mango grove (18 months). (Mowna Upadesa - Dakshinamurthy surrounded by very few)

1898 (September) in Pavalakunru. (Mowna- Upadesa to Mother about all circumstances being determined by Ishwara - Mowna helps merger with that One)

1899 (February) on the hill in caves, the mango tree cave and Virupaksha cave. (Verbal written instructions on Self Enquiry through Gambiram Seshayyar and Sivaprakasam Pillai)

1905. Stayed in Pachaiaimman Koil for six months during the plague ravages. Again on the hill. (Strength to Ellai Amman - Goddess of the City - when illness visits)

1908. January, February and March in Pachaiaimman Koil. Again on the hill. (Takes the Ramana Nama given by Arunachala - Ramana Stuti Panchakam & Arunachala Stuti Panchakam)

1916. Skandasramam. (Merging mother with Arunachala - Ramanasram begins with temple to Arunachala as Matrubhuteshwara)

1922. The Ramanasramam site on the southern slope of the Hill. (Ganges of Self Enquiry guided by Arunachala Ramana brought down to the plains - Self Enquiry for All)

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Bringing the Ganges from Siva's locks down to earth, effortlessly.

Self Enquiry for All.

Q: Your narrative gives the impression that a price has to be paid when it is all effortless and free..

S: One has to pay the full price, without making a fuss about it - effortlessly.

Q: Instead of suffering in the sensory and emotional worlds, one pays the price by letting go of thought and offering the ego by "Who am I?" Is it not?

S: The Direct Path.

Q: How is the inevitable price of sensory world and emotional world paid by the one practicing Self Enquiry?

S: Acceptance.

Talk 72

Mr. K. S. N. Iyer, a railway officer, asked about japa.

M.: The utterance and then remembrance and later meditation are the successive stages finally ending in involuntary and eternal japa. The japakarta (doer of japa) of that kind is the Self. Of all the japas, 'Who am I?' is the best.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: When Japa becomes involuntary or effortless, the japi is consumed. The effortless Self has the automatic Japa (all of creation) as it's body to witness. Bhagavan says that here "witness should be seen as sannidhi - Presence". "Who am I?" absorbs the Triad of "involuntary ajapa Japa", "the act of witnessing" and "the unaffected-witness-Self" into that Sannidhi, the Self which has nothing outside it to witness.

Q: If the whole creation is only the Sannidhi, is there no Prarabdha Karma for anyone?

S: Such awareness is Jnana. That is why Bhagavan assures that there is no Prarabdha for the Jnani who finds that no one has Prarabdha.

Talk 73.

Mr. Ekanatha Rao, the engineer, asked, "What about the despondency of not obtaining any encouragement from the Master - much less his Grace?"

M.: It is ignorance only. The quest must be made as to who is despondent and so on. It is the phantom of the ego arising after sleep which falls a prey to such thoughts. In deep sleep the person was not afflicted. Who is afflicted now while awake? The sleep state is about the normal one. Let him search and find out.

D.: But there is no incentive for want of encouragement.

M.: Does not one find some kind of peace while in meditation? That is the sign of progress. That peace will be deeper and more prolonged with continued practice. It will also lead to the goal. Bhagavad Gita - Chapter XIV - the final verses speak of gunatita (one who has transcended the gunas). That is the final stage. The earlier stages are asuddha satva (impure being), misra satva (mixed being), and suddha satva (Pure Being).

Of these, the impure being is when overpowered by rajas and tamas; the mixed being is that state in which the being - satva - asserts itself spasmodically; the suddha satva overpowers rajas and tamas.

After these successive stages there comes the state transcending gunas

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The whole creation is viewed as Purusha and Prakruti. The Prakruti is a mixture of the three Gunas - satva, rajas and tamas. Purusha is beyond all Gunas - Gunatita. Sadhana is to drop Gunas and merge into the Purusha. To the modern intellect, doubt about Grace is Tamas. Bhagavan asks the sadhaka to move to Satva directly by asking whether such doubt existed in deep-sleep or full Tamas. The sadhaka seeks a thought based support (Rajasic support) before moving to Satva. Bhagavan comes to the aid and says that the peace experienced in meditation is sign of progress. For whom is the doubt? For whom is seeking progress in meditation? For whom is the thought-free blank? Self enquiry takes one across claiming even Suddha-Satva as a possession. Purusha - the Self - alone IS.

Saddarshanam*Master Nome*

satyA sthitir nAhamudeti yatra
 taccodaya sthAna gaveShaNena |
 vinana naSyet yadi tanna naSyet
 svAtmaikya rUpA kathamastu niShThA || 27 ||

**The Real State (True Abidance) is where “I” does not arise,
 And that, without the fervent search (inquiry) for the place of emergence,
 Is not destroyed (will not perish). If that is not destroyed (does not perish),
 How may there be abidance, of the nature of Oneness of the True (own) Self?**

N.: From the Maharshi's teachings and from one's interior inquiry, or direct experience, it is evident that the real state is “I”- less. That which comes with the “I” is a mere illusion. This means that every other state in which you ever seem to be immersed is not real. Your real state is the “I”-less state. Not only is this the case upon Realization, but it is the only real state for all, at all times.

Sri Bhagavan says, “Without the fervent search for that place of emergence” of that “I,” the “fervent search” signifying intense inquiry, “it will not be destroyed.” There is one thing that the ego cannot stand, and that is an intense, fervent inquiry into its own nature or into its source. The inquiry into its nature and the inquiry into its source amount to the same thing. If the ego is not destroyed, how may there be abidance? We cannot simultaneously realize the Self and retain the ego. Realization of the Self means that no more false states are imagined and just your real, innate state, remains. This innate state is truly ego-less.

The Maharshi describes the nature of that abidance as “the Oneness of the true Self.” Oneness indicates no differentiation and no second “I.” One's own Self is One only; there is never a

second “I.” No “I” arises. This is the real state. To realize it, all that is necessary is an intense inquiry, a “fervent search,” into the very root, or source, of “I,” which is into the place where it seems to rear up.

The real state, the true Self-abidance, is that in which “I” does not arise. There is no hint of duality in that state, so there is no entering it or exiting it. Abidance is not an activity. It is not something done at one time and not done at another. “Abidance” signifies that your identity is known as That, only That, always That, without exception. That is the true Abidance in which there is no assumed individuality.

The Maharshi instructs, “And that, without the fervent search for the place of emergence, is not destroyed.” Unless you search for the “I,” inquiring, “From where does it come?” and “What is its nature?” the imagined “I,” which is the jiva, will not be destroyed.

Elsewhere, the Maharshi has said that inquiry into the Self is the one means to transcend all the duality that one is trying to get over. Every other approach includes, as a supposition, those dualities. All of them, be they activities of the mind or the body, are based on “I.” How else to make the “I” perish except by seeking its nature and finding its nonexistence? Otherwise, one will go on assuming that it really is. If that assumption is not destroyed, if the “I” does not perish, how can there be abidance?

The nature of the abidance is the Oneness of the true Self. The sense of a separate identity must vanish. It vanishes by examining it to know what it is. No matter what you do in the name of spirituality, no matter how you practice, no matter what the experiences may be, in the end, for Self-Realization, you must come to the Knowledge of your Self. You must know the nature of the “I” and find the “I”-less true “I,” your real Being.

The state of Self-abidance is Being, free of the assumption of individuality. If individuality is assumed, inquire directly into the assumed individuality. Unless that is done, this Self-abidance will not be your own Realization. If this inquiry into your own nature is accomplished, there is no unrealized state.

Q.: In the morning, when one wakes up, everything is just perfect. Then, there arises a kind of vague dissatisfaction. At that very moment, it would be wise to examine this and make a fervent inquiry into the nature of the one for whom there is dissatisfaction.

N.: That would be a good moment to inquire. Every single moment that comes after that moment is also a good moment. (laughter) One of the beauties of Self-inquiry is that, for it, you need not wait for an opportune moment. It can be before, during, or after any kind of experience. Inquiry does not depend on the outer experience or the state of mind. It has its beginning, its cause, and its end, or goal, in you. There is no particular time and no particular place for it.

Q.: I cannot really inquire into what is thought of or occurs during sleep at night, but I assume that there is some misidentification going on.

N.: Perhaps, but, because of what you are describing right now, it is generally advisable to inquire throughout the waking state. If you inquire throughout the waking state, the effect of your inquiry will continue in dream and in deep sleep, because what you inquire to know does not pass through the states but is actually beyond the states. It is the "space" in which those states revolve. Identifying with that "space," even while apparently in the waking state, you transcend the dream and the deep sleep states, as well.

Another Q.: Reflecting upon continuous inquiry, it seems that, when Realization occurs, all ignorance is burned up. At that point, continuous inquiry would be possible. Before that, continuous inquiry would be more difficult.

N.: If continuous inquiry is possible only upon Self - Realization, and, if, in Self-Realization, no further inquiry is needed, what are you saying? (laughter) Why is continuous inquiry not possible now?

Q.: Obscuration occurs in the mind.

N.: What prevents you from inquiring to free yourself from the obscuration and thus clarify your knowledge? What prevents

you from dissolving that very mind and even realizing the mind's nonexistence, as well as the unreality of the obstruction?

Q.: I guess that there is nothing, but what if there is another obscuration lurking somewhere or left behind?

N.: The same principle applies.

Q.: It seems that, if I blow away a sheath, there is another that follows.

N.: The purpose of the instruction about the sheaths is to indicate, even now, in Reality, you are none of that.

Q.: It is said that inquiry can annihilate everything. The laser like Consciousness burns up everything in its way.

N.: Yes, it is as sharp as a laser and as broad as space itself. It does not make a difference if there are tendencies stacked upon each other, under each other, behind each other, spread out in an array, or if a herd of them is wandering through the mind. (laughter) You must still know the real Self by Self-inquiry.

Q.: What you are saying is so, because the Truth is real, and all that other stuff is not.

N.: The Truth is real. You are the Truth. The capacity to realize the Truth is never diminished. In practical application, an inquiry into your Self is so revelatory as to the liberated nature of the Self that it may not be possible to verbally or mentally enumerate all the tendencies, thoughts, ideas, and false assumptions from which you become free simultaneously. Therefore, descriptions, be they mental or written, point in the general direction, selecting a few examples.

Q.: The essence of inquiry, then, is non-mental, because we are transcending every mental aspect. Therefore, there must be the clear recognition that everything one has ever wanted is really to be found in that inquiry.

N.: It is in the Knowledge, which is That which the inquiry reveals. It is in your Self. Everything you ever wanted is in your Being. All that you ever wanted, no matter what it was, up to the loftiest goal of Self-Realization, is your Self. All that you have wanted is just your Being.

Another Q.: The ego seems to exist. With the belief that the ego is real, any kind of form that springs forth after the ego arises is tainted with that same misconception, so that the form now is also real.

N.: Unless you unravel it. You can unravel it all at once, or you can unravel it piece by piece. If the object drops off first and the nebulous subject is still assumed, you would still be proceeding in the right direction.

Q.: The experience hinges on that one little point. That apparent separation, or apparent differentiation, falls apart as I get close to what is really real.

N.: All that is required is the light of inquiry to remove the shadow of illusion. It is not a real illusion; it is a shadow of illusion. Once the assumed differentiation is taken to be real, assumed to be an "I" that supposedly exists, there are all kinds of questions and doubts about how to be free, how to realize, or how to abide as That. Sages, such as Ribhu, say, "Abide as That, in That, as That." From the position of the individual "I," how could this be possible? In an earlier verse, the Maharshi said,

"This is not an easy bhava." How are you to abide as the Self, if the "I" is supposedly differentiated? Only by inquiring, as instructed by the Maharshi, in such a way so that the "I"-sense perishes, so there is no one left to abide in such or as such. It is just a manner of speaking to say, "You abide as the Self." The "you" is the Self, the Self is the Self, and the abidance, or Knowledge, also, is just the Self. So, we could say, "Self, Self, Self," but no one would understand what we are talking about.

(laughter)

If wisdom is not firm, penetrate into this “I,” because the Knowledge of Being is as firm as Being, itself. Unsteadiness is a superimposition born of the ego, which rises and falls. The only thing to be done, therefore, is to inquire into this ego.

Q.: The steps in this inquiry seem to blend together. The sequence of questioning, “There is a thought. For whom is the thought? It is for me. Who am I?” is very helpful. However, the more I inquire, the less there is that much definition to it, and it becomes a single blend of such inquiries.

N.: It is a single introspective current. Steps, aspects, and stages of development are enumerated and described for purposes of spiritual instruction, so that the seeker gets a good grasp of the direction in which to head and how to meditate. The inquiry is not, though, actually divided into particular steps, any more than the current of a river is divided into particular steps or stages as it blends with the ocean. It just needs to go in the right direction, and, when it arrives at the destined goal, it has lost its individuality. The river, every drop of it, ends up completely in the ocean, but there is no river in the ocean.

Q.: That metaphor describes the experience very well. I may think that I am a river on the way, but once I get to the ocean, the experience is otherwise.

N.: It is just one vast expanse of water. There are no individual drops in the ocean.

Shri Arunachala Ashtakam

G Kameshwar

Verse-4

iruntoLi runaiviTut taTuttiTa Reyva
 miruTTinai viLakkeTut taTuttiTa IEkA
 NiruntoLi runaiyaRi vuRuttiTaR kenRE
 yiruntanai matantoRum vitavita vuruva
 yiruntoLi runaiyaRi kilareni lannO
 riraviyi naRivaRu kuruTarE yAvA
 riruntoLi riranTaRa venatuLat tonRA
 yinaiyaru maruNamA malaiyenu maNiyE

Word split, and meaning:

Iruntu: Existing

oLir: Shining (Consciousness)

unai viTutti: leaving you

deivam aTuttiTal: Searching for God

viLakku eTuttu: taking a lamp in hand

iruTTinai aTuttiTaIE: verily, seeking darkness

kAN: Know that

iruntoLir unai: In order that you, who are Existence-Radiance

aRivu uRuttiTaRku enRE: Only to reveal; to make yourself known

matantoRum: In all beliefs (religions)

vitavita uruvAi: As different-different forms

iruntanai: You exist

iruntu oLir unai: You, who exist and shine thus

aRikilar enil: If they do not know

annOr: such people

iraviyin aRivu aRu: those who know not the Sun

kuruTarE Avar: They are but without eyesight

maNiyE: O Gem!

inaiyaru aruNamAmalai enum: Known to all as Aruna, the peerless, great, mountain

enatu uLLattu: In my heart

iranTaRa onRAi: As the Non-dual One

iruntu oLir: Stay and shine

Verse rendering:

*Discarding you
Who are Existence-Effulgence
And searching for God
Is but the search for darkness
With a lamp in hand;
See.*

*Only, in order
To make yourself known
You exist
As forms different-different
In every which creed.*

*Yet
If they know not
You, the Existence-Effulgence
Then they are but the blind
Who know not the Sun.*

*Exist and shine
In my heart
As the Non-dual One
O Gem
Known (to all)
As Aruna
the peerless mountain great!*

Prose rendering:

“See! Leaving you, who are the Existence (Being), Effulgence (Consciousness), and wandering around searching for God is but the same as taking a lamp and searching for darkness. Indeed, it is only to enable one and all to know you, that you, who are pure existence-effulgence, manifest yourself as the very many forms of all the different religions/beliefs. Despite all this, if people do not know you, the Radiance-Being, then they are but the blind, who know not the Sun!

O self-radiant gem, known to all as Aruna, the great mountain that has no equal; do exist and shine in my heart, as the One without a second.

Notes:

The Self – is Brahman – is Arunachala. The Self is God. The Self is the Heart. The Self is of the nature of eternal existence and consciousness-effulgence. It is the radiance apart from which there is nothing shining. It is that Light which never sets. Bhagavan says in Aksharamanamalai :

*rAppakal illA veRu veLi veeTTil
ramittiTuvOm vA aruNachalA*

*Come - Let us delight, where there is no 'day-night',
In the heart home space, Arunachala!*

In that Effulgence, where there is no day-night, how can there be darkness? Can there be any God, that is separate from the Non-dual, Existence-Effulgence, Self? Ignoring the Self, and seeking a God outside, is like carrying a lamp and searching for darkness.

How is one to know the Self? The Self is beyond the reach of the mind. It is that, 'failing to reach which, words turn back along with the mind.' (*yatO vAchO nivartantE; aprApya manasA saha – Taittiriyā Upanishad 2.9.1*). Then how is it to be known?

Bhagavan says – *iruntoLir unai aRivu uRuttiTaRku enRE matantoRum vitavita uruvAi iruntanai*” - “Indeed, it is only to enable one and all to know you, that you, who are pure existence-effulgence, manifest yourself as the very many forms of all the different religions/beliefs.”

At a deeper level, these words are suggestive of another meaning. The word ‘*matantOrum*’ (*matam tOrum*) literally means ‘all religions/beliefs’. However, the word ‘*matam*’ also means ‘knowledge’ or anything known by the mind; any distinctive piece of knowledge. And so ‘*matantOrum*’ can also be understood as ‘all thoughts’, as objective knowledge is of the form of thoughts.

This brings to mind the statement ‘*pratibOdha veditam matam*’, of Kena Upanishad (verse 2.4). In the *vAkya-bhAshya* (commentary) of this verse, Sri Shankara Bhagavatpada explains –

“‘In every thought it is known’ – this repetition of words indicates that thoughts are the way to know the Self. [*pratibodha* which means in each thought, is understood

according to grammar as “*bodham bodham prati*” this repetition of the word “*bodham*” (thought) implies “in each thought.”]. “In each-each thought” this repetition shows that with every thought there is invariable concomitance (of the Self). All thoughts which come from the intellect are like heated iron – because they are pervaded by the Self which is eternal consciousness, they also are of the nature of reflected consciousness; and the Self which is reflected in those thoughts is different from them, the way fire is different than the iron that it pervades; but those thoughts in which the Self is reflected are the way to grasp the Self – (thoughts are the way to understand the consciousness, because consciousness is what illumines thoughts). Therefore, that inner Self which is known through the reflected consciousness in each thought alone is Brahman.”¹

Thus, the way to know the Self, which is beyond the reach of the mind, is to see its immanence in all thoughts, which are but reflections of the Self. And so we may understand the teaching - *iruntoLir unai aRivu uRuttiTaRku enRE matantoRum vitavita uruvAi iruntanaI*”, as - “*Indeed, it is only to enable one and all to know you, that you, who are pure existence-effulgence, exist as diverse forms of every-which thought*’. Thus, with every act of knowing, we can infer the existence of the consciousness that illumines it. And that is the way the Self/God, out of great compassion, makes Himself knowable.

The Sun is known by its reflection in our eyes. Similarly, the Self is known by its reflection in thoughts. Being unaware of that is like the blind person, who cannot see the Sun. It is reflective of the darkness of *ajnAna* – ignorance. It is the zero-awareness of deep sleep.

Bhagavan concludes by praying to Arunachala as being that Self-effulgence. He prays – “*O self-radiant gem, known to all as Aruna, the great mountain that has no equal; do exist and shine in my heart, as the One without a second.*”

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya!

¹ Translation taken from, “From the talks of Swami Bodhatmananda, Resident Acharya 16th Vedanta Course Sandeepany Sadhanalaya’ (June 2015).

Ramana is the Way of Ramana

Shyam Sunder

Who am I?

Relax and abide as your own self in the heart without making enquiry a matter of the mind which is a bundle of thoughts.

Greater "I" reveals Itself when smaller 'i' disappears into existence feeling, when sugar is dissolved into water.

"Consciousness is always Self-consciousness.

If you are conscious of anything you are conscious of yourself.

Unself-conscious existence is a contradiction in terms.

It is no existence at all.

It is merely attributed existence, whereas true existence, the Sat (being), is not an attribute, it is the substance itself.

It is the reality.

Reality is therefore known as Sat-Cit, being-consciousness, and never merely the one to the exclusion of the other."

-Sri Ramana Maharshi

Do I think about existence or I experience it without any hurdle?

Experience of 'I am' is extremely important, why do I not stick to it? Existence is avoided as mind becomes seer and seen, thinker and thought. Man is always absorbed in this self-contradictory duality and forgets that if he is conscious of anything he is essentially conscious of himself.

"Do not think that you are. Be."

-Sri Ramana Maharshi

Can I stop thinking about me and begin to realize 'my' existence which is not 'mine', which is existence-consciousness-bliss in fact?

'Path - There is no path.'

'There is no reaching the Self.'

Ramana is the Ramana way because Ramana is existence-consciousness-bliss Himself.

Where can He go? He is everywhere.

One should not be against I-thought.

'I' automatically leads to heart and merges there without effort of renunciation. Self is realized fully, not in parts.

"The 'I' is always there in deep sleep, in dream and in wakefulness.

The one in sleep is the same as that who now speaks.

There is always the feeling of 'I'.

Otherwise do you deny your existence."

-Sri Ramana Maharshi

No. We cannot deny our existence but we are absorbed in arising

thoughts which take us away from ourselves without going anywhere.

Yet we should always remember that we cannot deny our existence.

Arising thoughts are there of course, but I myself desire pleasure as well as security.

I become active externally forgetting that I cannot deny my existence.

Obviously I don't know the power and result of Self abidance practice which needs attention only that I cannot deny my existence.

'I say, know that you are really the infinite pure being, the Self(heart) absolute."

"You are always the Self (heart) and nothing but the Self (heart)."

"The only way to be rid of your grief is to know and be the Self (heart). How can this be attainable?"

"To be the Self (heart) that you really are is the only means to realize the Bliss that is ever yours."

"Call it by any name, God, Self, the Heart, or the seat of consciousness, it is all the same.

The point to be grasped is this, that heart means the very core of one's being, the centre, without which there is nothing whatsoever."

-Sri Ramana Maharshi

Ramana My Light

Charumathi Neelkanth (Challimma)

“Bhagavan would always have a squirrel or a peacock or a dog near him. He had great love for Lakshmi, the Cow. I only recall that I have visited the cowshed and stroked her. She was very gentle and would not butt anyone. She would sometimes lick me as well.”

“My youngest brother was like my own child. There is only a year’s difference between this brother and my first son. When we were seated in Bhagavan’s Hall one day my mother and the other elders had left for some reason. It was I who would always have my



baby brother seated on my lap or would be carrying him around. I continued to stay in the Hall thinking I would leave when everyone was leaving. Just before leaving from the Hall I prostrated to Bhagavan along with my little brother. Bhagavan turned to the attendant and said, ‘Give a fruit to the child’. The attendant gave him a banana. I don’t know why, my brother at once threw the banana on Bhagavan. I felt miserable that he had committed such a big blunder. I thought it was a sin to have not just discarded what Bhagavan had given to him but actually to have thrown it at Bhagavan was an act of utter irreverence.

But Bhagavan looked intently at my baby brother and then turning to the attendant said, ‘You have been unaware of what has to be offered to God.’ Upon hearing this, the attendant smilingly gave an apple to my kid brother which he accepted joyously. Bhagavan smiled and continued to tell the attendant ‘God did not accept the first offering. He said I don’t want it and gave it back to

me.' I was amazed to hear Bhagavan speaking these words. It was not as if I paid attention to the import of the words at that time. It was as if it was the first time that I heard Bhagavan speaking, the sound of his voice rang in my ears for the very first time. To hear him speaking in person, directly was an indescribable experience.

'Can you describe Bhagavan's voice?' I ask.

"So soft. It was soft as cotton. It was as if it rose from the softest cotton. No one in this world has that voice. His speech used to be so soft."

"I am indeed fortunate, blessed. But the suffering that the body undergoes now is difficult. I think this must be on account of the karma, my doings in my previous births. In this birth, I have seen Bhagavan, heard His voice, received His guidance. When there is pain in the body I shout 'Ayyo! Appa!' but immediately I also recall that He said we are not the body. He has said 'Keep the mind focused, ekagra, focused on a single thought.' But where does this mind stay focused. Even if one is trying to remember Him the mind wonders whether the milk has been taken off from the stove or whether it will boil and spill over! This is called 'samsara', the bondage with the world. I tell you it is very difficult for ladies to be free from this bondage."

For a moment her mind dwells on the difficulty of dealing with the mind. Then it goes back to her days at Tiruvannamalai. She continues. "When I stayed for a year at Tiruvannamalai after my marriage, I would want my hair plaited. My 'elder' mother-in-law, as we refer to my husband's paternal uncle's wife, with whom I was staying in Tiruvannamalai, was very orthodox. After having her bath she would not touch anyone else. Besides, she was usually very busy with puja and parayana, chanting many of Ganapati Muni's works. As I had told you her husband was the adopted son of Ganapati Muni. So I would run along to T.N.Venkataraman's house. Alamelu Athai, as everyone addressed Bhagavan's sister, the way TNV did, was my favourite. She would lovingly plait my hair for me. I would go to the Asram along with her and TNV's wife Nagalakshmi and other ladies. They would speak of many things and I would simply listen. What did I have to say, being a young girl?"

*** To be continued ****

Submissions to Ramana

Poorna Sooraj, Suchitra

Editor's Note:

We bring to you two poems. One simple, the other apparently not so simple. One bright, the other seeming to grope in darkness. And yet, both are submissions to Ramana. Both are sure of His Power, His Light that transcends all limitations.

True Power

- Poorna Sooraj

As I close my eyes to turn within
Out comes a little creature with a wide grin

And says...,
"It's time for me to disturb you
So that you get diverted true

I will ignite the fire
And cook some unfulfilled desires "

Gathering strength
I turn around...

I grin back at him
to Swim with HIM

And say...

This creature has no power
I can shoo it away past many light hours

One and only Truth is Self
On its Lap I will dwell.

Editor's note:

When Grace reveals its power then Desire flees in a moment. As Ramana says in his 'Forty Verses on Reality' 'tEDinAI OTTam piDikkum' 'If searched for it will flee, the formless ego ghost'.

Is it that Grace is absent for one who is anxious about the ascent? Is the one who is making an intense effort to climb to the peak crossing 'thought by thought' unmindful of the absolute support of Grace? If that were the case would not the climb have been abandoned on account of the weariness? Here too there is the certainty of Bhagavan's love and guidance. At the same time there is an acute awareness of the fiery nature of this search. As Bhagavan beseeches in Aksharamanamalai

"Burning in your fire, before - I burn to ash, you must pour, Your shower of mercy on me, Arunachala!"

Arunachala Ramana Ascent

- Suchitra

The steeper the ascent
 The less obvious your support and assent
 The more incoherent And rebellious, my dissent,
 The more I imagine Your severance and an inglorious descent.
 I know I must Now do it on my own Steam.
 Which is You.
 To pass the time,
 I ask you these irrelevant piercing questions
 In the silence, and hear them echoed back.
 There can be no real answers to ghost questions.
 Old voices speak in my exploding head,
 Arunachala seems a fiery kalis -tongue-red,
 Filling the toughest remnants of the ego with nameless dread.
 They will be Silenced soon, liberated in joy.
 Till then, they can scream like unruly children on a picnic.

The ascent is too difficult, too meaningless, too unglamorous
and I want to give up. I think I'm entitled to.
Roll back downhill to plains
And set up shop there and hawk my flawed mind-trinkets
To unsuspecting passersby.
But I know,
The plains are too far away now and too insipid,
Too noisy.. I've come too far...
From atop the Peak
I can hear you speak,
You are so close...I can hear your gentle smile.
Through the misty veils of madness
You blaze like a floodlit stadium.
Thought by thought,
These weary feet must climb on and complete the
Journey to yours."



*V55, Translation G.Kameshwar, Ramana Darshana Trayi

**On the peak of Arunachala are engraved the Feet of Arunachala, Annamalai Paadam.

Ramananjali – 40 years

“MEMORABLE” – MONCTON

As soon as we arrived in Moncton (Canada), as an introduction to that evening's performance Sri V. Ganesan spoke with feeling and authority, both on Canada Radio and TV, about the purpose and content of 'Ramana Music'. Also that morning, at the special request of our host, Dr.Lakshminarayanan we sang Telugu songs. As Sri Bhagavan's name filled the house, our hosts sat immersed listening with tears in their eyes.

In many ways, the performance of the 29th, in a beautiful auditorium in Moncton, was among the best. A full house gave a standing ovation lasting for several minutes at the end of the 'Ramana Music'. With enthusiastic excitement they plied every one of us with questions and congratulations. Dr.Lakshminarayanan and his wife, Smt.Seetha who were in charge of the whole arrangements were thrilled with the success of the program. They assured us that it would not have been possible but for Sri Bhagavan's grace. The entire program of over two hours was telecast by cable TV. Not only was the evening's program a memorable one, also was the whole constant care of Mr. & Mrs.Lakshminarayanan.

Very memorable indeed was the night drive from Moncton to Nova Scotia. With just a few winks of sleep the whole night, Sri Eugene, Sri Dennis and Dr.Lakshminarayanan drove us to Nova Scotia Ashram through the clear moonlit night, with dark pine trees shining gracefully on either side of the road. In the early hours of the morning we saw the beautiful sunrise over the sea and thought how this trip was likewise a brilliant dawn to the 'Ramana Movement'. Then, seeing the long mountain ranges, Dr.Lakshminarayanana commented with love and pride: "See how long Arunachala is here!" and lo! We were home again, at Arunachala Ashram!

“HOME” – BRIDGE TOWN, NOVA SCOTIA

That day at Arunachala Ashram, Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, was indeed a unique day and a very fulfilling day in our tour. In the presence of the 'long' and 'very green' Arunachala and

Lakshmi and Saraswathi, the Ashram cows, grazing peacefully in the meadows, was 'Arunachala Ramana Mandiram'. There, in the shrine, our program was arranged from 11 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. and many devotees, from as far as 450 miles had flocked to this Ashram to hear Ramana's name and glory. In that atmosphere which inspired all, we could not but help singing with the fullness of our being and with tears in our eyes. So moved were all the devotees that after lunch they requested us to sing some more songs. Even those artistes who were extremely tired came voluntarily and with joy and there was another program for two more hours! We did not just sing – the music seemed to pour forth spontaneously from us. In the evening Ashtottara puja was performed to Bhagavan at the Altar by Sri Ganesan and then another music session till late in the night when Smt. Sulochana Natarajana and Sri H.K. Narayana's voices were at their inspired best. The next morning we left this 'home of ours', its meadow and swallows. We left 'Arunachala' for the second time during the tour with heavy hearts, yet with a deep sense of fulfilment.

From: Yashwant Rau, Dartmouth, Canada.

"May I take this opportunity to convey to you and through you to all those connected with organising the Ramananjali Music Concert World Tour, our deep appreciation and heartfelt thanks for a rare opportunity to listen to the soul-stirring music and bhajans sung at the very feet of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi at the Arunachala Ashram, in Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, Canada. To be truthful I had never seen the like of it in my life either in India or abroad. The concert was attended by over 300 devotees, some of whom had travelled over a few hundred miles to participate in this once-in-life opportunity. How do we thank you for making this possible for the benefit of us all settled in the far-flung corners of the world?"

There were three 'Ramana Music' performances in New York – in the Hindu Temple of North America on 1st June, at Scarsdale Public Library on 6th June and in Columbia University School of International affairs on 7th June. Keshava Kumar, one of the lead singers, excelled himself at the Columbia performance. Each performance was well received and beautiful in its own way.

Ramana's Song of Grace - 36

Revathi Sankar

When there is a problem outside we search for a solution, and we try to find this solution also only outside. Actually the problem itself lies within us yet we tend to search for the answer outside as we are habituated to looking outside for everything. But Bhagavan always reminds us to go within and within only because that is where the solution for the actual problem lies which clears or destroys all problems. That is, when we identify with the Real Self, then there is no problem at all. This is because the problem itself will not be visible anymore since everything will only be the Self.

The first instructions given to Siva Prakasam Pillai about self – enquiry in 1901 were documented in the famous text entitled 'Who am I?' Later, Pillai composed a poem called 'Ramana Pada Malai' in gratitude and devotion to the Sadguru. This has been set as Ramana Pada Pancharatnam – a unique musical piece which has been composed by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan on the lines of Saint Tyagaraja's Pancharatna Kritis. Smt. Sulochana Natarajan has very carefully selected the verses from Pada Malai and set the ragas of Nattai, Goula, Arabhi, Varali and Sri which are the same as Tyagaraja Pancharatnam. We will be meditating now on the second kriti which is the Goula raga. The third charana of the song goes like this

*Anandan tAn mEl mElezhumendRaraivOn pAdam vAzhgavE
nAnuL azhunda azhundavennum nambi pAdam vAzhghavE*

Tamil

*Anadave tA mElmEl ELvudu ennuvana pAdakE jaya
nAnali muLuguta muLuguta emba geLeyana Srl pAdakE jaya*

Kannada

Meaning –

Blessed be the Feet of the One who says that bliss will surge up and up as one dives deeper and deeper into the 'I'.

Bhagavan's teaching is so easy and direct that in the life of Bhagavan we see him giving this teaching to monkeys, squirrels, dogs, and all who come to him seeking happiness. When I was meditating on the above verse I remembered Jackie the dog to whom Bhagavan gave Upadesa.

We read of Jackie who was literally a tapasvi, one steeped in penance. All day he would be seated on an orange cloth that was provided for him, gazing at Bhagavan. Annamalai Swami narrates an incident that happened one evening. The devotees were seated around Bhagavan near the well outside the Old Hall. Jackie was also seated in meditation as usual. Suddenly Jackie heard the barking of a stray dog that had entered the Ashram. He was disturbed and started barking at the other dog. Seeing this Bhagavan told him, 'Jackie, if you look out there you will get disturbed. But if you close your eyes and look within yourself, there will be no other at that point of time'.

Annamalai Swami jokingly continues the narration that Jackie immediately closed his eyes whereas the other devotees gathered there turned to see the stray dog. This was the first Upadesa that Jackie got from Bhagavan, that when you dive deep within yourself, then there is no sorrow, no anger, no envy, nothing other than Joy, pure joy.

Jackie practiced Bhagavan's Upadesa so well that he never worried about anything. Whatever prasadam was served, Jackie would not eat until Bhagavan began to eat his own portion. On such occasions, he would watch Bhagavan's face intently. As soon as Bhagavan put a morsel in his mouth, Jackie would start to eat his own portion. It was as if even to eat something, he would not let go of the Self which is personified as our Bhagavan. When Jackie was suffering from illness, he had a foul smell from his body and was in lot of pain. But he followed the Upadesa of Bhagavan at that time also, to abide in the Self. He did not complain in any manner by whining. In his last moments Bhagavan took Jackie on his lap and gave him mukti.

It is very clear that if we are abiding in bliss always, it is sure that we get joy always, at all times, no matter what the

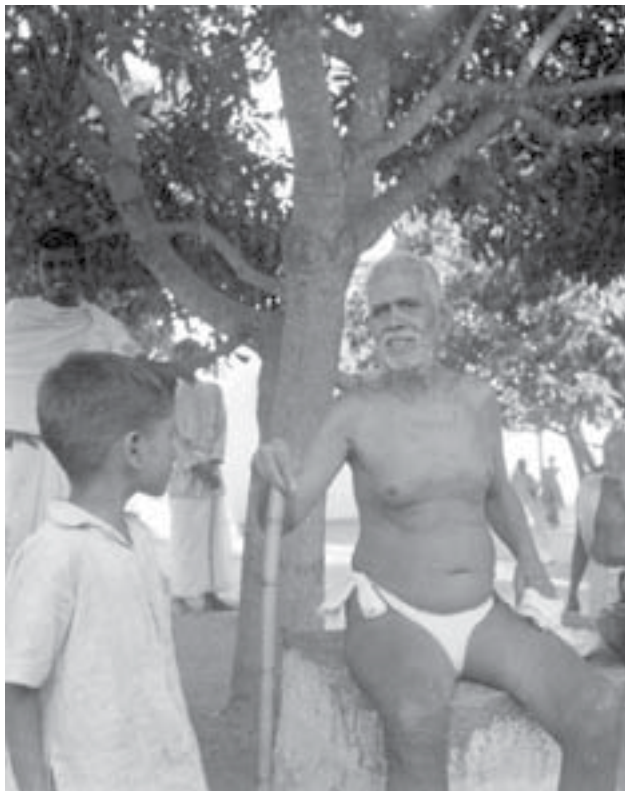
situation is. Joy gushes out when we merge in the Self. When we abide, the result of it is Joy, Pure Joy. So when we are in the presence of the ones who are abiding in the Source, then we will surely experience at least a bit of that Pure, Supreme Joy. Bhagavan always reminds us to go within, go back to the Self, which is our true, natural state.

I pray to Bhagavan to make me also abide in the Self, so that I too experience that Pure Joy, and one day make me also a 'no one' because when true Joy is experienced, there will be no experiencer separate from the Self to experience it.

Lord Ramana

Thank you Bhagavan

Your attention seeking Child :) ????



How Bhagavan Captured Us

By Smt. Sulochana Natarajan

On 8th March, 1957 a son was born to my brother-in-law, ARN's younger brother Thiagarajan, and the boy was named Krishnakumar after the two illustrious great grandfathers – Krishnaswamy and Kumaraswamy. My parents-in-law attended the child's first birthday at Bombay. We couldn't make it. My sister-in-law Seethamma was very meticulous in bringing up her son.

In 1958 summer my parents-in-law came to stay with us. Then it was a joyous family get together when both of ARN's sisters, his brother and sister-in-law had come down from different parts of India where they were staying. Sri Umesh, ARN's elder sister's son was a very bright and active boy, one whom we adults label as 'mischievous'. It was a small flat and all the rooms were naturally open all the time. Little Umesh found the Pooja Room to be the most interesting. He would go over there quietly and mix water with the oil kept there in the lamps. During this short stay ARN's sister-in-law Seethamma and I became very close to each other and were the best of friends.

We were looking for a bigger house. ARN's family friends were building a house in CIT Colony near TTK Road, which they offered for a minimal rent. We took up residence in CIT Colony, Mylapore. I joined a Ladies Club in T.Nagar for learning tennis. I used to walk a few furlongs to catch a bus in front of 'The Grove' in the beginning of Eldams Road. From there I used to go and join ARN in Presidency Club, Egmore, and we used to come back home together.

Weekly twice in the mornings after ARN went to office I used to go to Smt.Rukmini Rajagopalan my elder aunt and great musician, to learn some songs.

In 1958 tragedy struck in our personal life. Our ship sailing on a simple joyous journey was suddenly thrown into a huge storm. ARN lost his younger brother and sister – in – law at one stroke.

Both were drowned at sea at a private beach in Mumbai soon after Ganesha Chaturthi. The emotional turmoil which the entire family had to undergo had its toll on me as well. ARN, however, bore the blow with stoic quietness. He was a man of natural detachment and his close association with the Ramana and Ramakrishna movements in the just preceding two years must have given him the necessary strength.

An unexpected dimension of this tragedy was the coming of Krishnakumar into our lives. This one and half year old child of my brother-in-law came to live with my parents-in-law, and by default, with me and ARN as we were living in a joint family. Krishnakumar thus became my first baby and ARN's as well.

In 1958 November my father, who was then the District Judge of Vellore, got posted to Chennai as Chairman Sales Tax Tribunal. ARN's younger sister Uma Ramamurthy was pregnant at that time. Her Manakappu and Seemantham were done at her in-law's place in January 1959. As it was only a few months after the tragedy at home, my mother represented our side taking with her the things which we had to traditionally gift as 'Seeru'. After Seemantham Uma came and stayed with us for her delivery. Rajalakshmi Akka came down at the time of the delivery. Sowbhagyavathi Radhika, Uma's first daughter, was born on the 1st of March 1959 at Dr.Kalyani Hospital.

In my own life the wonderful bonding with the little one Krishnakumar aroused in me a desire to have the experience of bearing a child. ARN was then of the opinion that we need not consciously give rise to more bondage. We placed our predicament before Guruji, Swami Yatiswarananda. Saying that sadhus of the mission would not normally give advice except on spiritual doubts, he graciously added that he would make an exception in our case. He advised ARN that having taken on the role of a householder; he must play it out in all aspects. 'Have two or three children and give one to God', he said. Looking back I can only wonder at how the Supreme has taken complete charge not only of our lives, but our children as well and even our grandchildren too, to the extent that even the spouses of Krishnakumar and my daughter Ambika are both deeply spiritual and so are their children.

*** To be continued ***

Sri Ramana Sahasranama Stuti¹

365. NIRMOHAH

Free from illusion.

The primary illusion is the identification of oneself with his body. As long as this root identification remains, so long as it is not uprooted, one functions under an illusion about oneself and the world. In Ramana's case this illusion ended in mid – July 1896 when he became firmly aware that he was not the perishable body but he was the imperishable spirit.

Om nirmOhAya namaha

366. NIRUPADHIKAH

Free of attributes.

The first attributes are name and form. The other attributes like thinking one is a father, doctor, music lover and so on are added and cherished. These are not the real 'I' but only adjuncts to the 'I' which can be discarded without affecting the 'I'. Mere changes in attributes without tackling the ego would be futile.

Om nirupAdhikAya namaha

367. NISSANGAH

Alone, free from attachments.

Though Ramana showered more than mother's care on those who came to him as visitors, devotees and seekers, he was free from any kind of attachment. He was equiminded. A king or a pauper, a scholar or an ignoramus, a healthy person or a sick one were all alike to him. This was because he was free from all attachments. Hence, even though he moved in the world and was seen in company he was really alone.

Om nissangAya namaha

368. NIGAMASTUTYAH

Praised by the Vedas.

Ramana was the embodiment of scriptural truths. Such men re – affirm one's faith in the scriptures by their lives which are

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

examples for all humanity. The Vedas are only chanting the praise of such gnanis.

Om nigamastutyAya namaha

369. NIRIIHAH

Free from likes and dislikes.

Likes and dislikes are mental. They are born of tendencies formed in innumerable previous lives and also in this life. But if the content of the mind which constitutes the past is bypassed, by paying attention to the individual to whom it relates, one ceases to be under the sway of likes and dislikes, prejudices and preferences.

Om nirIhAya namaha

370. NIRUPAPLAVAH

Indestructible.

The body is perishable. The Self is indestructible. Those like Ramana are indestructible because they are rooted in the Self. When the ego or the mind dies, when it is merged in its source, one becomes indestructible.

Om nirupaplavAya namaha

371. NITYA SUDDHAH

Ever pure.

The mind is by nature pure for it is the reflection of consciousness. Its impurities are attributes, the add-ons. They cannot affect its natural purity. Since Ramana's mind was always detached, it remained in its state of pristine purity.

Om nityashuddhAya namaha

372. NITYA BUDDHAH

Ever enlightened.

Experience of the natural state may be intermittent. When Chadwick asked Ramana whether one can alternate between knowledge and ignorance, Ramana referred him to some verses in 'Kaivalya Navaneetham', a Tamil Vedantic text wherein it is pointed out that this shuttling is not only possible but inevitable so long as the natural state is not steadied by practice. When one is steadily Self-aware he is the ever enlightened one.

Om nityabuddhAya namaha.

News & Events*Revathi Sankar*

The Founding of Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning happened in March 1979. Twenty years later the Panchaloha Vighraha of Sri Ramana was consecrated at the Ramana Maharshi Shrine on 10th of March.

Every year a three day celebration is held on and around the 10th of March.

Sri Ramana Sahasranama Homa and Laksharchana to Bhagavan were performed at the Ramana Shrine on the occasion.



Vincent Paul presented a Bharatanatyam feature on one evening.

Kum.Uma Sripathy offered a garland of folk dances of India on the other evening.



The students of Udaya-Ramanashree school were given value based cultural education as part of RMCL's RAISE program, Ramana Art Form Interventions for Self-Awareness and Excellence.

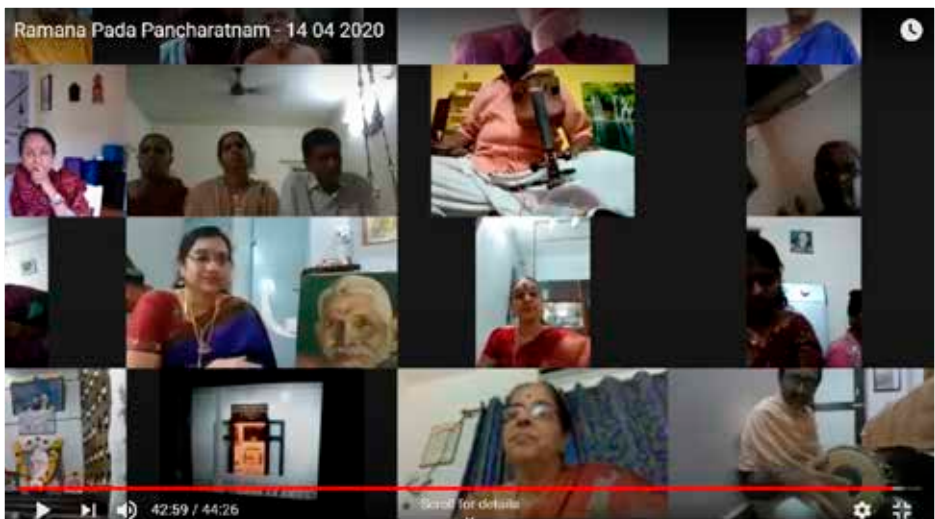
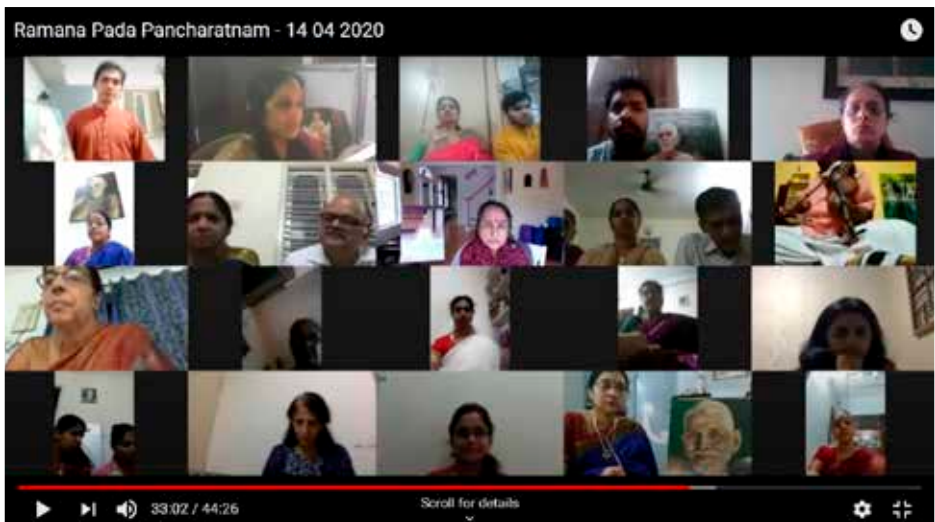
Their performance was heart-warming and a joy to the teachers Veena Sudhindra and Venkatesh Murthy. Smt.Aruna Satish said that she was blessed to take to the children the treasure of Ramana that her parents had given to her.



By the grace of Bhagavan, during the COVID lockdown, supported by devotees RMCL was able to continue activities from the homes of the team members. Ramana has opened a new avenue of sharing his bounty with devotees across the world.

Ramana Aradhana was celebrated by RMCL along with RASA, Chennai with 50 plus devotees from their homes across the world.

The occasion was blessed with the participation of Smt. Susila Ramanan from Sri Ramanasramam. Others who presented the Pada Pancharatna kritis set to music by Smt.Sulochana Natarajan were Dr.Ambika Kameshwar, Smt. Poorna Sooraj, Smt.V.Radha, Sri Ujwal Jagadeesh and Kum.Revathi Sankar.



Pournami Celebrations had the unique privilege of a harikatha by Smt. Shyamala Ramachandran, an old devotee who has had the privilege of being in Bhagavan's Presence for more than a year in her childhood.

Online Satsang was started by RMCL every Saturday with the South Bangalore Centre as base. Sri N.Nandakumar, Dr.Sarada, Venkatesh N.Deshapande, Dileep Simha, Dr.Kala Rani, Ujwal Jagadeesh, Smt. V.Radha, Revathi and others present readings, talks, self-enquiry and music. Other devotees contributed from across the world. Puja is performed at Sri Subramaniam's altar.



Your Dates with Ramana

RMCL has been holding the weekly and monthly programs online.

Those interested in attending the Online Satsangs and programs may please send a WhatsApp message to Uma Sripathy at 9538472026

Weekly Online Satsangs:

Thursdays 7.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. (IST) - Self-enquiry by Sri N.Nandakumar

Fridays 7.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. (IST) – Self-enquiry by Sri Dileep Simha, Talk by Dr.Sarada

Saturdays 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. (IST) – Satsang – Chanting, Music, Reading, Meditation, Talks

Special Dates in June – Online Events:

Pournami Celebrations

Friday 5th June 7.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. (IST) – Special Cultural Presentation, Aksharamanamalai Chanting

Prani Mithra Day – A Homage to Cow Lakshmi

Saturday 27th June 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. (IST) – Special Cultural Presentation

Online Edition of Ramana Way

Those wishing to receive the Online Edition please send a mail to - revathi@ramanacentre.com

Ramana Every Day

RMHC - Ramana Maharshi Heritage Centre - Sanjaynagar

RMS - Ramana Maharshi Shrine - Mekhri Circle

RSCS - RMCL Satsang Centre at South Bangalore

RSCR - RMCL Satsang Centre at Rajarajeshwari Nagar

To register for Online sessions contact

Uma 9538472026

Online and On site Self Enquiry sessions

Thursday: 7:00 pm to 8.00 pm at RSCS

By Sri Nandakumar ji

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

By Dileep Simha and Dr. Sarada

Everyday: 6:00 am to 7.00 am at RSCS

By Sri Nandakumar ji

(Chanting and Self-enquiry)

Online Satsang

Chanting, Reading, Music, Talks, Puja

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

Online and On site Music and Dance classes

[Contact - Uma (9538472026)] at RMHC

On site Yoga classes [Contact - Uma (9538472026)]

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

On site Talk

By Sri Sridhar Sarma, disciple of Sri Nochur

Saturday 4:00pm - 5:30pm at RMS.

[Contact Usha Sankar (9663284111)]

On site Talks, Parayana and Puja

By Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30 pm at RSCR

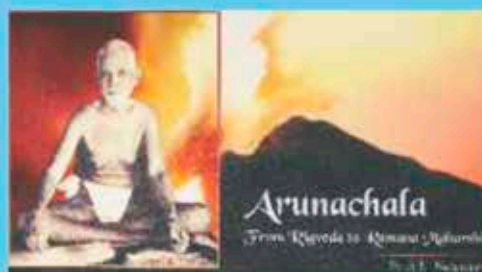
Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

108. The embodied jivas who are subject to the [five] activities in the presence of God – who is without a trace of *sankalpa* – enter upon the many courses of action dictated by their karmically determined destiny and then, [realising the futility of action], turn within and attain liberation.
109. Events in the world do not affect the sun, nor do the four knowable elements [earth, water, fire and air] have any interplay with the limitless ether. [Similarly], it is certain that the actions of *jivas* will not have any connection to the Lord, who is free of the mind. This is his unique nature.



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.