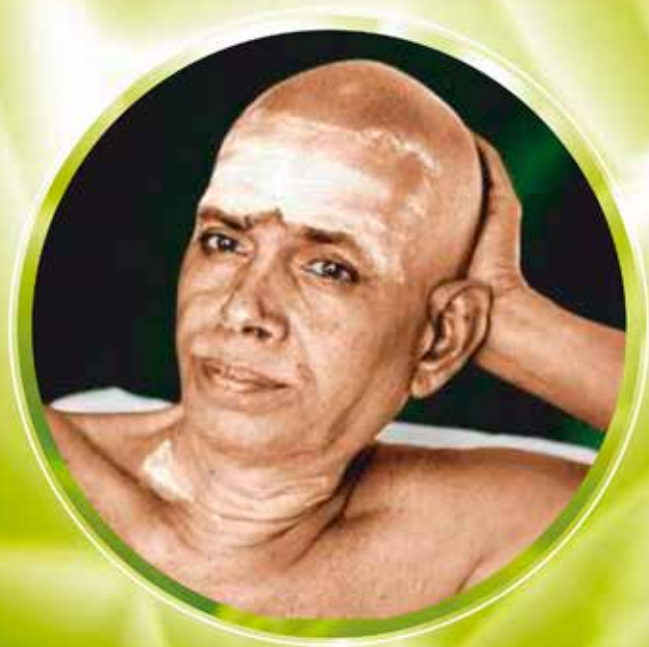


September 2020

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The Ramana way



A Monthly Journal published by
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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*

Are thoughts functional? What are the functions that thoughts perform?

Do thoughts help sustain our body?

Are thoughts necessary for us to breathe? Are thoughts necessary for our hearts to beat and pump blood? Are thoughts necessary for blood to flow in our veins? Are thoughts necessary for our digestive juices to be secreted? Are thoughts necessary for any bodily function? The answer is no for each of these questions. In that case why are thoughts necessary at all?

Do thoughts help us to perform physical functions?

Are thoughts necessary for us to walk, to jump, to skip, to run? Are thoughts necessary for us to move our limbs, fold our arms or legs? Are thoughts necessary for us to brush our teeth, to comb our hair? Are thoughts required to take food from the plate to our mouth, to chew the food, to swallow it? Are thoughts needed for us to turn our head or to bend forward? The answer is again no for every one of these questions. In that case why are thoughts necessary at all?

But then, we may say, thoughts are mental functions. In short, we need thoughts for thinking. But what do we actually stand to gain by thinking? What do we stand to achieve by our thinking? We don't need to think for our bodily functions so what else are we seeking to achieve by using our power of thinking? Do we believe that we can get things done only if we think about how they need to be done?

When I was born, I did not think that my mother would feed me, but she did. I did not think my father would give me shelter, but he did. I did not think my parents would clothe me, nurture me, cherish me, but they did. I did not think I would know that the sky is blue, the grass and the leaves on the trees are green, the earth is brown, Kumkum is red and the pupils of my parents' eyes are black. Yet I came to know all this. I did not think that I would be sent to school, but I was. I did not think that I would

understand what my teachers taught me, but I did. I did not think I would recognize A,B,C and the remaining letters of the alphabet but I began to recognize them. I did not think I could put letters together to form words, yet I did. I did not think I could grasp language and mathematics and science but I did. I did not think a sweet younger sister would come into my life, she did. I did not think she would love me, she did.

I did not think there was a force called 'Bhagavan' that I needed to relate to. It came into my life of its own accord. I did not think that I would get the company of His devotees, yet I did. I did not think I would meet with great sages who were ever abiding in the Self, yet I did. I did not think they would speak with me and bless me, but they did.

So many things happened in my life without my ever thinking about them. Yet, somewhere along the line, I do not even know when, I began to think about thinking. I began to desire things and for some funny unknown reason I began to make a connection between my capacity to think and the power to attain what I desire. Therefore, I began to think about how to attain what I desired. Funnily enough, I failed to notice that there was no real connection between my achievements and my thinking about them. I did not see that very often what I wished for did not materialize despite my best efforts and strangely, many of my wishes did come to be realized with little or no effort on my part. And even more strangely, many beautiful things happened without so much as wishing for them.

I did not recognize that even when I did appear to succeed, there were so many factors apart from and beyond my power of thought that were responsible for my success. I may think that I have studied well and hence done well in my examination. What I do not think of is that if there were no examination system, how could I do well? If there were no books printed, how could I study? If there were no paper and pen or pencil, how would I write? If there was no school at all where would I study? If there was no teacher who would teach me where was the option for me to study and do well? If my parents did not nurture me could I find the facility to study? If my parents were not born, could I be born? If

there were no living beings on earth, where would I be? If the earth itself was still only a part of the sun, where would my success in my examination feature?

When I think of my success due to thinking, I fail to think of the millions of things that have happened in order for me to exist in the form that I presently bear on which my thinking had no bearing whatsoever. Rather, I act like the hero of the nursery rhyme, little Jack Horner. What did Jack Horner do? He sat in a corner and ate his Christmas pie.

Jack Horner was there already when he started eating his pie, he did not create himself. His home was there already, the room was there already which had a corner. There was a stool on which he could sit. The Christmas festival was already a tradition. The pie was already baked for the festival and all the ingredients that went into the baking of the pie were provided by Nature and brought home by his parents. His mother baked the pie using a fire which again was provided by Nature. Thereupon she gave him the pie and our little Jack Horner sat in his corner, eating his pie with hands that he already had and a brain that was capable of coordinating the hand to mouth movement. At this point in the story he put in his thumb and pulled out a plum that was already in the pie. And what did he say? He said, 'What a great boy am I!' Yes, little Jack Horner sat in a corner, eating his Christmas pie, he put in his thumb and pulled out a plum and said 'What a great boy am I!'

Can we achieve something by thinking about it? It is said that if wishes were horses, beggars would ride them. If all that we think about were to happen there is no certainty whether that would render us happier or sadder in the bargain. For thought, by its very nature, is ever changing. What I wanted yesterday I do not want today and what I want today I do not want tomorrow. So perhaps it is all for the best that thoughts do not seem to have the power to get us what we want, else we may be forced to live with what we ultimately do not want. The crux of the matter, however, is that thoughts do not seem to be getting us anywhere at all.

On the other hand, what I think I want does not seem to happen and what I think I do not want seems to happen. This

further makes me think I am sad. And I also think I know when I am sad and when I am happy. So, each thought keeps us firmly enmeshed in more and more thoughts. And this, in fact, seems to be the only purpose that thoughts really serve.

Thoughts serve as a cover, a shield for the ego, the identity which we call 'I'. Dreams, it is said, are sleep protectors. That is what psychology tells us. What then are thoughts? They are ego protectors. It is explained that the main purpose of dreams is to allow us to sleep longer. We have experienced this at times when we would have set an alarm at a time far earlier than our usual waking time. In our dream an alarm will be ringing somewhere and we will be busy trying to trace that alarm to put it off. However, we will actually be continuing to sleep. It is only after a while that we wake up to the thought that the alarm is actually in the waking state and not in the dream at all. But the dream alarm keeps us engaged for a while and that helps to extend our sleep. This is only one instance. There are plenty of such instances that we are conscious of. Psychology says that all dreams are sleep protectors, they help us to extend the hours of sleep.

In the same way if we were to ask ourselves, 'What is the chief function of thoughts?' The answer would be that they sustain our identity, our 'ego'. Without thoughts the ego cannot exist. Ramana says that it is only because of the existence of thoughts that one posits the existence of an entity called the thinker. The very term 'thinker' will cease to be if there is no such thing as a thought. Is it surprising that we believe thoughts are the very basis of our existence and that we cannot survive without thoughts? In a way it is true, for the illusion that is currently seen to be the 'I' will indeed cease to exist in the absence of thoughts.

The non-existent 'I' seems to exist in every thought. When thought is cut away, the 'I' too disappears. Where does it disappear? Where does the shadow go in the light of the noon day sun? Even so in the blazing light of self-enquiry the shadow of the 'I' disappears into the direct light itself. But until the searchlight of enquiry is turned upon it, the 'I' appears to rise with every thought saying 'Mine' 'Mine' 'Mine'. This is mine it says time and again. This is my action, this is my knowledge, this is my experience,

these are all my thoughts. And as long as our attention is happily engaged with thoughts the fact that there is no thinker hiding behind remains well hidden.

Thoughts, by creating duality and further, multiplicity, keep our attention so fully engaged that we have no time to wonder about the reality of the thinker. Besides, duality gives reality to an object and objects become either desirable or fearful. Happiness thereafter is seen to be hanging on attainment and avoidance. Thus, thoughts draw us deep into the whirlpool of illusion, so deep that we do not even know we are in the whirlpool until it completely swallows us.

As long as the thought 'I act' rises up, how can we say there is no actor? When the thought 'I know' rises up, how can we say there is no knower? When the thought 'I experience' remains, how can we say there is no experiencer? In the waking state the thoughts of doing, of being the doer completely camouflage the apparently hidden 'I'. If we are strong enough to cut across the waking entity of doing by not identifying with our actions, if we are ready to stand apart as the witness of thoughts simply allowing them to come and go, we still continue to remain as the knower. The one who witnesses and hence knows that thoughts rise and subside, that knower exists. If through enquiry we burn down every rising thought with the question 'For whom is this thought?', then we become aware of our identity as both the doer and the knower. For the answer comes, 'It is my thought'. I then understand my attachment to the thought as being 'mine'. I see that it is my primary action at the mind level. Further, I recognize that thought is my object of knowledge.

When I further ask 'Who am I?' there is no room for any thought whatsoever, not even for the 'I' and it sinks into its source. But it does not stay there. It rises again. And when it rises again, it once again takes the support of thought. It says, 'I have tasted of my true nature'. I have experienced the truth, it thinks. Further, it goes on to wonder, 'How am I to get back to the truth? How am I to be steadily Self-aware?' Through thought it once again sustains itself as the experiencer of the truth, of the very Self. If these thoughts too are questioned with 'For whom is the thought of experience? It is for me. This too is a thought for me. But who

am I?' then, with such persistent questioning the 'ego-ghost' will take to its heels says Ramana.

Hence Ramana repeatedly points out that thoughts are actually our foes pretending to be our friends. If we are still in doubt, let us ask ourselves, 'Other than serving as a shield, as a camouflage for the illusory 'I' is there any further function that a thought performs?' O yes, they do. Thoughts not only sustain the ego, they also sustain themselves by producing more thoughts. Each and every thought will endlessly multiply and produce thoughts unless cut short by enquiry. So, what does thought help achieve? The generation of further thoughts. They seem to be useful only for that and nothing else at all. As a devotee 'Ramanaschild' picturizes:

We may ask, 'Are not positive thoughts helpful?' We may even have proof to show that positive thoughts can change our environment and control our physiological functions as well. We said we do not need thought to breathe, but it may be proven that in case of any malfunctioning in breathing, a positive thought can set it right. There is growing evidence that while negative thoughts can completely ruin our lives, positive thoughts can truly work wonders. While this is indeed



What are the thoughts we think,
but writing on water,
with ink?

#RamanasChild

true there are a few things we would do well to remember. One is that even the most positive thinker has not been able to think away death. But then, some may argue, there is a possibility that a truly positive thinker may see death also as a welcome, positive event and may remain happy and unfearful at the approach of death.

If such indeed is the power of thought, it is time to ask our second question. The first question was 'What functions do thoughts perform?' We got an answer, 'None, other than sustain

the ego and create more thoughts'. Our second question, if we believe in the value of thoughts is, 'What is the source of positivity in the positive thought?' What is the source of its power? The halogen lamp that lights up an entire auditorium may be truly appreciated until the electric supply continues. If the power goes off what can the lamp do to give light, no matter how powerful it may have been when the current was there? Hence, if we do concede that thoughts are powerful, it would serve us well to enquire as to the source of their power.

We have seen that without thoughts there is no thinker. At the same time, how can thoughts exist in the absence of a thinker? Obviously thoughts derive their power from the thinker. When the thinker is absent, as in deep sleep, thoughts too disappear. They reappear when the thinker rises again. Not only are thoughts dependent on the thinker, they are in fact very embodiments of the thinker. It is for this that we may say the thinker disappears in the absence of thought and also that in itself thought is absolutely powerless as it does not exist apart from the thinker.

What of the thinker? Does the 'thinker' have any reality? None, apart from the Self. That being the case, instead of deriving power directly from the source, why should we be begging of the once removed thoughts to give meaning to our lives? Yet, as Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "Temptations galore may show their silent, poisonous existence to throttle steadiness of self-enquiry." What do we do then? He continues, "Then the solacing presence of Ramana as our friend in ages past, our guru of many lives is felt intensely. His very purpose is to bestow on us his own state of natural happiness. In many ways he keeps helping, through eyes brimming with love, through his silence, through his power to transform. As we grow with the awareness of the natural state, as it becomes steadier, we feel more and more Ramana's presence sporting in our hearts and filling us with overflowing bliss."



THE NEW DAWN**A. R. Natarajan***BASKING IN THE SUNSHINE OF RAMANA'S GRACE***

Let us go back in time to the atmosphere of the Old Hall at Sri Ramanasramam where Ramana spent his time for nearly twenty years from 1927 to 1949. What was that scenario? Upto mid-thirties, the devotees not numbering more than twenty would be spending “many blissful hours at his feet”. The atmosphere would be just like an intimate family gathering during week-ends. Devotees would sit around Raman’s sofa talking with him without any hesitation. There is no doubt that for them, Ramana was their God and Sadguru. But this did not come in the way of their natural relationship with Ramana. After all, the guru walks on earth adorning it only in order that his devotees and disciples should be able to relate to him and avail of his guidance on the spiritual path. Therefore, we find that each of these devotees would regard Ramana in such a way that it was possible for them to relate to him as if he was a member of their own families while holding him in utmost reverence as god incarnate come in the role of a guru.

One devotee would regard him as his own father; another would regard himself as Ramana’s child, and move freely as a child with its parents. These devotees would not hesitate to report all the happenings in their family, like the schooling of their children, search for bridegroom for their daughter, their official problems and family woes. Nothing was barred. Quite obviously this was possible because they could be certain that Ramana would easily identify himself with all their problems. They knew that he belonged to everyone in equal measure. Their problems would be his problems; only without the entanglements to human attachments. Sometimes Ramana would bring home to the devotee the divine law by remarking ‘whether you wish to have your son’s marriage or not it will happen at the time destined for it’. On other occasions he would himself make enquiries and make a success

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

of all that is needed for a marriage even if the time gap was short. One would find him suggesting that someone must accompany a young lady devotee to go to the station and put her in a train. As a result of this freedom a relationship at the human level was maintained parallel to the consciousness of the stature of Ramana as the embodied Self and the repository of all virtues.

Ramana himself is an exemplar of the kind of relationship which one can have with the guru. To Ramana, Arunachala is guru, mother, father, protector, friend all rolled into one. We find in Ramana's compositions all these relationships expressed. At the time of departure from his Madurai home, after his enlightenment, he refers to Arunachala as 'father' for it was his command which was being obeyed. His reporting of his arrival to Arunachaleswara with the words 'Father I have Come' is in line with this. Later, when his mother was on the threshold of death, in his compositions he used the word 'mother' to address Arunachala, for the situation needed the love which only a mother can give. In his 'Necklet of Nine Gems' he uses the combined expression 'Father and Mother'. In Ramana's 'Five Hymns to Arunachala' we find all the human moods and demands on the guru in the fullest confidence in the power of the guru and with the feeling he is the closest comrade on the spiritual path.

At the time of Ramana's Mahanirvana in April 1950, many devotees felt and expressed their misgivings at the thought that such human intimacy would no longer be possible. One of the mourners cried in anguish 'we can no longer see our dear Bhagavan in that beautiful form of molten gold, in which he enchanted and charmed us for decades! We will no longer see those compassionate eyes that gleamed like twin stars dispelling shadows that blurred our visions and understanding. No more that bewitching and enchanting radiant face that fascinated; no more that godly look of grace that solaced our wearied soul'. However, he and other mourners like him were to discover for themselves later, the same bewitchment, the same possibility of establishing an intimate human relationship with Ramana even after he had dropped his body.

For, the glory of the timeless ones like Ramana grows manifold as time rolls on. We find that the attraction of Ramana is felt now more intensely, fifty years after His Mahanirvana. His photographs sell like hot cakes at Sri Ramanasramam and in Ramana shrines. People are seen standing before the samadhi or the vigraha lost in that beauty. The observer can see that they are exchanging something with him, perhaps expressing their needs or seeking his guidance. It cannot be one-way traffic. There must be Ramana's response. Why else will they persist in it? It is a secret between Ramana and the devotees. One cannot overstate the need for such linking with Ramana so long as one is identified with the body. Attachments to Ramana's body, to his deathless form and name would not be binding like other attachments but would free one from all attachments.

Needless to say, that since Ramana is the human embodiment of the effulgence Arunachala, the post Nirvana devotees too must take a leaf from Ramana himself and also from the way in which the old devotees interacted with him. In our present state of desires, fears and attachments, it is necessary to remember the humanness of Ramana in order to be able to feel closer to him. We too would do well to weep on Ramana's shoulders and unburden our sorrows by sharing them with him. Even a mere reporting would be sufficient. One need not assume that only grave problems which cannot be solved by oneself should be referred to him. He bears the burden of the entire universe and certainly our little baggage of problems is no extra load for him. Contrariwise, the auspicious and happy events which are planned or which have happened could certainly be brought to his benign notice. The more we establish such a relationship, the more it is possible for us to feel intensely his presence even in a physical sense. He keeps coming in many ways physically too in accordance with the predilections of the devotees. To a Nambiar he will come in dreams, to someone else he will speak through his eyes, through his smile and through the mental repose in the hour of silence. As long as our 'worldly needs' are knocking at the door this kind of relationship alone can bring Ramana closer. Quoting Sadhu Om's words, Ramana seems to say sometimes "Whom do you want? Is it not me?" For one seems never tired of the lack of depth to one's life or the trivialities to which one clings endlessly.

Of course, side by side we need to keep praying to him for help in our efforts to bypass the thought ridden mind, in our efforts to reach the source of the mind. For the ancient delusions of the mind with its array of identifications stifle inwardness. Sometimes here too one can only pray and cry in anguish to Ramana not to leave his job half finished, not to abandon us midway. Not that he will, but the fear is real. Temptations galore may show their silent, poisonous existence to throttle steadiness of self-enquiry. Then the solacing presence of Ramana as our friend in ages past, our guru of many lives is felt intensely. His very purpose is to bestow on us his own state of natural happiness. In many ways he keeps helping, through eyes brimming with love, through his silence, through his power to transform. As we grow with the awareness of the natural state, as it becomes steadier, we feel more and more Ramana's presence sporting in our hearts and filling us with overflowing bliss. It is a timeless union where I and you has ended and where only the vast silence fills every pore of the body and the mind with joy which transcends the mind.



The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar

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.

Talk 74

Mr. Frydman, the engineer, writes in one of his letters: "Maharshi is with me not only when I think of Him but also when I am not thinking of Him. Otherwise, how do I live?"

Talk 75

Mr. Grant Duff, formerly in a foreign embassy, writes: Pay my respects to Maharshi. He appears to me in my thoughts not only as an answer to my questions but also as Presence....

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: When doership is erased one is in the liberated existence of Constant Presence of God. In talk 481, Bhagavan explains this to Muruganar who asks as to finding Prajna in deep sleep. Bhagavan says, "A king comes into the hall, sits there and then leaves the place. He did not go into the kitchen. Can one in the kitchen for that reason say, "The king did not come here"? When awareness is found in jagrat it must also be in sleep". Self-enquiry removes the need for this support too. It aims not only for erasing the false doership but the false doer too.

Q: You mean to say that self-enquiry removes doership?

S: Yes. There are many answers of Bhagavan related to work and liberation. Bhagavan says that work is not a hindrance to Jnana or liberation. These answers indicate that Bhagavan teaches the removal of doership - all happens by one power, whether I know it or not - is understood by the practitioner of self-enquiry. However, even this thought - "Bhagavan is the real doer whether I think of Him or not; whether He comes as answer or not; whether I am awake or asleep" - also goes a long way to deal with the doership.

Talk 76

Mr. K. S. N. Iyer said that he was not convinced how spiritual life could be reconciled to worldly activities. The Master in answer cited some verses from Yoga Vasishtha. (The original is said to be millions of verses, of which only 32,000 stanzas are now found in the Sanskrit text. It was condensed to 6,000 and called Laghu Vasishtha. The latter has been rendered in Tamil in 2,050 stanzas).

D: Without the mind concentrating on it the work cannot be performed satisfactorily. How is the mind to be spiritually disposed and the work kept going as well?

M: The mind is only a projection from the Self, appearing in the waking state. In deep sleep, you do not say whose son you are and so on. As soon as you wake up you say you are so and so, and recognise the world and so on. The world is only lokah, lokah = lokyate iti lokah (what is perceived is the world). That which is seen is lokah or the world. Which is the eye that sees it? That is the ego which rises and sinks periodically. But you exist always. Therefore That which lies beyond the ego is consciousness –the Self.

In deep sleep mind is merged and not destroyed. That which merges reappears. It may happen in meditation also. But the mind which is destroyed cannot reappear. The yogi's aim must be to destroy it and not to sink in laya. In the peace of dhyana, laya ensues but it is not enough. It must be supplemented by other practices for destroying the mind. Some people have gone into samadhi with a trifling thought and after a long time awakened in the trail of the same thought. In the meantime generations have passed away in the world. Such a yogi has not destroyed his mind. Its destruction is the non-recognition of it as being apart from the Self. Even now the mind is not. Recognise it. How can you do it if not in everyday activities. They go on automatically. Know that the mind promoting them is not real but a phantom proceeding from the Self. That is how the mind is destroyed.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: A great pianist goes through a life of learning and playing complicated pieces of music. Practices all

the complicated music so thoroughly that the ego is free of effort, regret or elation. He realises that all his effort was only to erase the ego. He finally concludes, "simplicity is the crowning glory of art". Here Bhagavan asks us to directly come to that point by saying that destruction of mind is the real work.

Talk 77

The Master, while referring to the Bible for "Be still and know that I am God", Psalm 46, found in the Ecclesiastes. "There is one alone and there is no second" and "The wise man's heart is at the right hand and a fool's heart is at the left."

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Still Mind or SUMMA IRU is "I AM THAT I AM" or Supreme Being or BE. The moment ego arises, it has to be reminded that there is one alone and no second (self) so enquire "Who am I?". When the ego identifies with the sensory body, it has to be reminded the Supreme Being is present as the Spiritual Heart on the right hand side and that Spiritual Heart is the thought-free Self into which the ego dissolves itself and its possessions in the enquiry, "Who am I?". Be Still.

Talk 78 (Excerpt)

The Self is called by different names - Atman, God, Kundalini, mantra, etc. Hold any one of them and the Self becomes manifest. God is no other than the Self. Kundalini is now showing forth as the mind. When the mind is traced to its source it is Kundalini. Mantra japa leads to elimination of other thoughts and to concentration on the mantra. The mantra finally merges into the Self and shines forth as the Self.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Bhagavan is showing how the Self is realised or non-self is eliminated through other paths. The non-self which is appearing to be many is called by one name. When all non-self is agglomerated as "kundalini power" or "God" or "Mantra", there is only the Self and all the worlds consumed by the one. One effortlessly holds the Mantra. The Mantra is absorbed by the effortless Self. The non-self is eliminated. The Self shines forth spontaneously.

Talk 78 (Excerpt) Path of 'Guru and Sishya' - Guru Bhakti.

D: How long is a Guru necessary for Self-Realisation?

M: Guru is necessary so long as there is the laghu. (Pun on Guru = heavy; laghu = light). Laghu is due to the self-imposed but wrong limitation of the Self. God, on being worshipped, bestows steadiness in devotion which leads to surrender. On the devotee surrendering, God shows His mercy by manifesting as the Guru. The Guru, otherwise God, guides the devotee, saying that God is in you and He is the Self. This leads to introversion of the mind and finally to realisation. (Common to all paths) Effort is necessary up to the state of realisation. Even then the Self should spontaneously become evident. Otherwise happiness will not be complete. Up to that state of spontaneity there must be effort in some form or another.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Devotion to form leads to faith. Faith leads to surrender. God manifests as Guru. Teaches that God is present as the Self within. Introversion. Realisation. When God appears as Ramana Sadguru and teaches self-enquiry, the devotee-disciple has found God in the highest form - Sadguru. All search "outside" ends. Self-enquiry erases the ego and takes one beyond all name and form. The thought "Who am I?" - the form of the "Sadguru within" - merges into the Self having taken the sishya beyond all limitations. Hold "Who am I?" till the Self manifests spontaneously.

Q: So Bhagavan himself calls "Who am I?" as the Brahmaastra?

S: He also calls "Who am I?" as the stick used to stir the pyre - pinam sudu tadi - which itself is burnt in the fire.

Talk 78 (Excerpt)

D: Our work-a-day life is not compatible with such (spiritual) efforts.

M: Why do you think that you are active? Take the gross example of your arrival here. You left home in a cart, took a train, alighted at the Railway Station here, got into a cart there and found yourself in this Asramam. When asked, you say that you travelled here all the way

from your town. Is it true? Is it not a fact that you remained as you were and there were movements of conveyances all along the way? Just as those movements are confounded with your own, so also the other activities. They are not your own. They are God's activities.

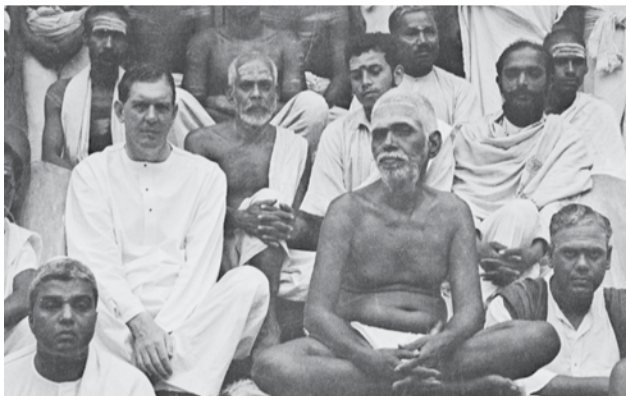
D: Such idea will lead to blankness of mind and the work will not progress well.

M: Go up to that blankness and tell me afterwards.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The work done by a public transport like train or bus is claimed as 'my work'. Similarly, the activities of 'work-a-day life' are of the public transport called God through the energy called Prarabdha. The sadhaka feels that there will be a useless blank consciousness if such surrender were possible. On the other hand, such surrender allows the sadhaka to treat sadhana alone as true work-a-day and the peace of blank consciousness as immediate-limitless-remuneration. Bhagavan is hinting that that blank consciousness seen by the still self is no useless blank. It has consumed the creation and is seeing everyone and everything as pure Satva - no ignorance. For whom is this Darshana of the whole creation and the creator as blank consciousness?

Q: Is this blank consciousness the "shuddha satva" referred to in the verse "Na Karmana"?

S: Yes. Major Chadwick translates this "shuddha satva" as "pure in the heart" (within) and "Brahmaloka" (outside). Talk 511



Saddarshanam*Master Nome*

**ahamkritim yO lasati grasitvA
 kim tasya kAryam pariShiTam asti |
 kincid-vijAnAti sa nAtmanOnyat
 tasya sthitiH bhAvayitum kshamakah || 31 ||**

[He] who shines, having swallowed (consumed,
 caused to disappear) the ego,
 For him, what is left remaining to be done?
 He knows not anything other than the Self.
 Who is able to conceive of his state?

N: This exceedingly profound, glorious verse composed by the Maharshi succinctly describes himself, Brahman, Realization, and the means of realizing.

“He who shines” is the sage of realized Knowledge, yet such a one has consumed the ego, and all that remains of him is the Self. It is the nondual Self that shines. No individual shines. The ego has been consumed. When the ego appeared, there was something to be done. When it was seen that the something to be done was to get rid of this very ego, that was the last thing to be done. For one for whom the ego has disappeared entirely in the Knowledge of the solitary Existence of the Self, One without a second, what remains to be done?

With the Realization of the Self, everything is accomplished. With the Realization of the Self, the Perfect Fullness, which is the utmost Perfection and the final goal of all accomplishments, is found to be ever-existent. So, what remains to be done? He does not have a body. He does not have a mind. So, what remains for him to do? There is no goal for him to reach, for he, himself, is the goal. There is no happiness to attain, because he, himself, is Bliss. There is nothing for him further to know, because he is Knowledge, itself, which is pure Consciousness. So, what could possibly remain for him to do? The peace of such a one as Sri

Bhagavan is entirely complete. If the ego disappears, you abide as that very same One, without the least trace of individuality and with nothing further to accomplish. The purpose of life is thus fulfilled, and even life is transcended.

Sri Bhagavan says, “He knows not anything other than the Self.” If there is individuality, there is something else to know. When it is realized that there is no individual, there is no differentiation, and there is nothing else to know. If we say, “He perceives,” he perceives himself only. If we do not have that idea, he is just himself, One, without a second. In either case, who is able to conceive of his state? His state is pure Being. Whatever idea may be conceived concerning it, Being is more than that.

Who can conceive of his state? Expressing devotion, we can loosely say, “He is wise. He is peaceful. He is free. He is glorious. He is illuminating.” We can describe him in ever so many ways, but what really is his state? If his state is the state of Brahman, pure Being, who can conceive it, much less describe it? Just as it is impossible to have a concept of yourself, but, rather, all your concepts deal with what is not your Self, so it is impossible to really conceive of Sri Bhagavan. If you dive deep, silently, to understand him, you disappear. Then, there is the perfectly full Knowledge of who he is, of who you are, which is one and the same thing, for Being is indivisible, but nothing can be said about it, and nothing can be thought about it. The real Knowledge is, thus, silent.

“Who is able to conceive of his state?” The Self alone knows the Self. No other exists to know the Self. Should we suppose another, it cannot know the Self. Knowledge belongs to the Self alone, and it is inconceivable, as Being is inconceivable. So, Sri Ramana says, “Who is able to conceive of his state?” (silence)

Here, Sri Ramana elucidates, at once, who he is, his state, the state of Self-Realization, and the very nature of the Self.

“Having swallowed, having consumed, or caused to disappear, the ego,” what shines? The Self, the eternal Existence, the One described as being unborn and imperishable, the Infinite

and the Eternal, shines. "For him, what is left remaining to be done?" Having lost his ego, he is no longer "he," but only the Self. The Self has nothing to do, and, for the Self, there is nothing to be accomplished. For the individual, there is something to be done, and that something-to-be-done-impulse does not vanish until he vanishes. When he vanishes, there is nothing more to be done, whether such would be of a spiritual kind or of any other kind. Being non-ego, he is a non-actor, a non-doer, and a non-thinker. Who would do? What would be done? How could it be?

"For him, what is left remaining to be done?" The egoless state is the supreme accomplishment. It is Self-Realization, attaining which life's purpose is fulfilled. There is, then, nothing left to be accomplished. It is the Perfect Fullness and the true finality.

"He knows not anything other than the Self." For one who has realized the Self as the Reality, it alone is the Reality. There is no second reality. For one in whom the individuality, or ego, has subsided, there is no "I." If there is no "I," there is no "this." Who would know what? "He knows not anything other than the Self." If He can be said to know anything, he knows the Self as existing everywhere; not just as all-pervading, but as that which alone exists. If we do not conceive of him as knowing, but realize his nature for what it is, there is not anything other than the Self. Knowing and doing simply do not apply.

"Who is able to conceive of His state?" Can you say what Sri Bhagavan's state is? The ego-less state is Sri Bhagavan's state. What is his state? Being beyond thought, how could anyone conceive it? That state, which is the state of Sri Bhagavan, is the state of the real Self. This is the innate State. If, through Self - Knowledge, you entirely abandon the ego-notion, this state, alone, is your state. Whatever other state you ever imagined that you had vanishes into the nonexistence that it is. Can you conceive of this? Of course not, but you can realize it. All that is necessary for this Realization is the inquiry into the nature of "I" and, thereby, the realization of the perpetual egolessness of your real Being.

Upadeshasaram

Ujwal Jagadeesh

vindatlha jlvastu daivikah

One can be aware of the divinity here and now

“Tomorrow never comes happiness is here and now. Happiness is here and now” sang the happy grasshopper rejoicing in the beauty of the summer. Meanwhile the ants were busy working saying “No time, no time, we must prepare for the winter”. The busy ants found some time to warn the grasshopper of its deadly error “Winter bitter will soon come along. No food anywhere. You will be left hungry with your song”. Many winters have gone by, however, we see that the Supreme power which is taking care of the whole universe is taking care of the grasshopper too.

The picture of a dreary future made the ants completely forsake the joy of the now. Ants lived only to survive the winter. But the grasshopper lived truly and tasted the summer’s bounty. But what if some calamity destroys the ant’s store? Tomorrow is unknown. Plans may misfire. Goals themselves may change. Or even when fulfilled they may yield no joy and the purpose one is seeking may still seem far. But of course, if the ants had really enjoyed their work and not bothered about their future, their present would have been lovely too and the future is automatically taken care of as well.

Long ago there lived two sadhus in a forest hermitage who were immersed in tapasya (penance) for many years under a tree. One day Narada Maharshi was passing by that way. The first sadhu realized the presence of the great one and offered his salutations. Receiving the blessings from Narada, the sadhu asked the sage where he was heading. Narada replied “I am on my way to Vaikunta, to have darshan of Lord Vishnu”. The sadhu with great joy requested Narada to do him a favour, to which Narada gave his assent. The sadhu said “Can you please find out from Lord Vishnu, when I am going to attain liberation?” Narada agreed and

started to move ahead. The second sadhu fell at the sage's feet and expressed his great joy at being in the company of the wise one. He too requested Narada "If you find it appropriate in the presence of Lord Vishnu, please do ask the same question of the first sadhu on my behalf too". Narada again nodded in approval and went ahead on his journey.

Many months later Narada Maharshi again appeared in the forest where the two sadhus were immersed in tapas. The first sadhu seeing sage Narada with great curiosity ran to him and asked about the reply of Lord Vishnu. Sage Narada told "Lord Vishnu has blessed that you will attain liberation at end of three more births". The sadhu feeling highly dejected, sobbing bitterly said "Three more births to be taken, even after so many years of arduous penance?" Narada Maharshi now started moving slowly towards the second sadhu wondering what his reaction would be to the answer from the Lord.

The second sadhu delighted in the coming of Narada Maharshi and offered his salutations. He gave a seat to the sage and asked him to explain in detail the glory of Lord Vishnu whom he had seen in Vaikunta. After a long chat, Narada asked in wonder "Are you not curious to know the reply of Lord Vishnu for the question you had asked last time" The second sadhu replied in great humility "I believe if you have got a reply from the Lord, you will surely tell me. Kindly tell me what the message from my Lord is". Narada after contemplating, slowly lifted his head up; saw the lush green shade of the tree under which they were seated and said "The Lord said you will take as many births as the number of leaves on this tree; after which you will attain liberation."

The sadhu's face turned bright and tears of joy started to flow from his eyes. With great wonder and exhilaration he cried "I will attain liberation! Did my Lord say I will attain liberation after all those births! Did He say I am worthy of liberation! I will be liberated!" He started dancing in celebration. Narada was stunned to see this response. Soon a strong wind of grace blew and took away all the leaves from the tree under which the sadhu was rejoicing. The sadhu was liberated at that very moment.

Ramana in his song of Appalam says that the sadhana – practice should be done all the time, tirelessly and happily. The very thought that ‘practice is difficult and liberation can be attained later only after many years of tapasya’, distances us from it. Ramana reminds us that we are the Self which is ever liberated, which is untouched by the opposites of bondage and freedom. If one turns attention to the Self which the basis of all thoughts and abides there, one can be aware of the divinity here and now.

bandha muktyatltam param sukham |
vindatlha jlvastu daivikah ||

The one who is aware of his divinity, while in the body, is in a state of bliss beyond description, transcending bondage and liberation. This is here and now.



Prapatti Ashtakam

G Kameshwar

**Prapatti Ashtakam
(Sri Ramana, the Refuge)
Brahmasri V Jagadeeshwara Shastri**

Ramanacharanatirtha Sri Nochur Venkataraman brought to light the existence of a detailed Sanskrit commentary in Sanskrit on Bhagavan Ramana's Upadesha Saram by Sri Jagadeeshwara Shastri. He guided Sri G.Kameshwar to work on an English translation of this. Sri Kameshwar has earlier translated into English Ganapati Muni's commentary on Upadesa Saram which has been published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning. Now, in the 125th birth year of Sri Jagadeeshwara Shastri, Sri Ramana has made in readiness the publication of his Sanskrit commentary entitled 'Tattvabodhini' and an English translation of this being brought out after one and a half years of total dedication to the work by Sri G.Kameshwar. The work has been guided by Sri Nochur Venkataraman as well as great scholars like Sri Krishnamurthy Sastrigal and Sri V.Subramaniam.

Herein opens out one more amazing opportunity to be guided through the sacred caves of Upadesa Saram leading directly into the Heart. The commentator, Sri Jagadeeshwara Shastri, is the adept guide who, with great love and reverence for the tour he is taking us on, no doubt shows us again some of the well famed spots but he very gently takes us also to hitherto unexplored regions, suddenly revealing new treasures and new beauty making one hold one's breath as we watch them coming to light.

In this issue of the 'Ramana Way' we are bringing a translation of Jagadeeshwara Shastri's 'Prapatti Ashtakam'. This is a small glimpse into the book 'Essence of Vedas Upadesha Saarah – Tattvabodhini Commentary of Jagadeeshwara Shastri'. It also indicates the fact that the book contains more than the commentary on Upadesa Saram, it carries this Prapatti Ashtakam and new insights into the life of Jagadeeshwara Shastri in his life sketch by Sri G.Kameshwar.

-Editor

Prapatti Ashatakam

*AvartapuryAm janitam prapadyE pANDyadEshE vihRtam prapadyE
shONACalaprasthacaram prapadyE bhikshum taptah-kleshasaham
prapadyE*

To Him, born in Avartapuri, I surrender;
To Him, who sported in Madurai, I surrender;
To Him, who sauntered in the highlands of Arunachala, I surrender;
To Him, the mendicant monk, I surrender;
To Him, who endured the pains of penance, I surrender.

*AbrahmakeeTAntasamam prapadyE jitArishadvargamaham prapadyE
sarvajnatAsArabhRtam prapadyE nisseema-kArUNyanidhim prapadyE*

I surrender to Him, to whom, from Brahma to an insect, all are one;
I surrender to Him, who has conquered the enemies six;
I surrender to Him who bears the essence of Omniscience;
To Him, who is a treasury of infinite compassion, I surrender;

*asmAtprapancAdadhikam prapadyE vishwAdhikOktErvishayam
prapadyE
kAlagrahagrAhabhayAnupatyai kRtAntashikshAkRtinam prapadyE*

To Him, who transcends this Creation, I surrender;
To Him, who is the object of the Vedic utterance
‘vishwAdhika’ (beyond the Universe), I surrender;
To Him, who,
 In order to rid (his devotee of) the fear
 of the seizer-alligator Time,
 Taught a lesson to Yama,
I surrender.

*vinEtumArtim vishayAdhvajanyAm vijnAnamUrtim dadhatam prapadyE
kandarpa-darpajwaravAraNAya kAmAri-leelAvataram prapadyE*

For warding off the distress that arises from the path of the senses,
 To Him who bears the form of Knowledge, I surrender;
For warding off the fever caused by the conceit of lust,
 To Him, the enemy of Kama, who has come down in port,
I surrender;

*AjanmavarNivratinam prapadyE kunDeebhRtam danDadharam
prapadyE
brahmAsanadhyAnaratam prapadyE brahmAtmabhUyam yatinam
prapadyE*

To him, who, right from his birth,
Has been firm in the vow of celibacy, I surrender;
To Him, who bears a water-pot and holds a wooden staff,
I surrender;
To Him, who is ever intent on Dhyana, seated in Brahmasana, I
surrender;
To Him, the ascetic who is One with Brahman, I surrender.

*haram prapadyE vijaram prapadyE svatantratAyAs sadanam
prapadyE
amEyasAmarthyavaham prapadyE vishuddhavijnAnivaram prapadyE*

To Hara, I surrender; to the one who ages not, I surrender;
To the home of Self-reliance I surrender;
To Him of boundless power I surrender;
To the greatest , purest, *Jnani*, I surrender.

*daurbhAgya tApatraya karma mOha santApa-hantAram-aham
prapadyE
yathArtha-sankalpam-apEtapApam-avApta kAmam vishucam
prapadyE*

To Him, who is the destroyer of distresses
Caused by bad-fortune, threefold-ills, destiny, and delusion,
I surrender.
To Him,
Who is of right resolve;
Who is free of vice;
Who is of aim attained;
Who is of immaculate purity;
I surrender.

*manah prasAdam bhajatAm dadAnam mugdhasmitOllAsimukham
prapadyE
vyathamashEshAm vyapaneeya mOdapradEna nAmnA ramaNam
prapadyE*

To Him

Whose face, lit up by his innocent smile,
Gives peace of mind to His devotees,
I surrender.

To **Ramana**

Who is so named,
As He removes all distress
And grants delight,
I surrender.

*shivam prapdyE shivadam prapadyE gurum prapadyE guNinam
prapadyE
madeeya-hRtpadmajusham prapadyE sharaNyameesham sharaNam
prapadyE*

To Shiva I surrender;

To the giver of auspiciousness, I surrender;

To the Guru I surrender; To the virtuous one I surrender;

To Him who fills my heart-lotus, I surrender;

To the Protector Lord, my sole Refuge, I surrender.

*prapattim ramaNasyaitAm tanvatAm tattvadarshinah
tatkratunyaAya-rasikAh tattadRsha-phalAptayE*

May all who have a sense/taste

of the truth of the aphorism

– ‘He becomes that which he meditates upon’
(‘tatkratunyaaya’),

Surrender thus to Ramana,

the knower of ‘That’ (Reality);

For attaining the fruit of being like ‘That’.

The Present and the Presence

Alan Jacobs

Alan Jacobs was always completely absorbed in love for Bhagavan Ramana and in the truth of his teaching. To say, therefore, that he became 'absorbed' in Bhagavan on the 25th of July 2020, when he dropped his 91 year old body, would be mere rhetoric. It could not be otherwise. We at the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bangalore, have had the singular joy of his being with us on more than one occasion and of his addressing the devotees as well. The first time he came was when our Founder President, Sri A.R.Natarajan has personally invited him over. Alan Jacobs refers to this visit with great affection.

When he came later, I well remember how he quietly watched us preparing for the National Seminar that he had come to participate in. As always on such occasions there was much activity and great excitement at the Centre. He then said with a beautiful twinkle in his eyes, 'This is not a Ramana Centre. It is a Ramana Industry'.

As I listen to his lecture of which we are carrying some excerpts in this and successive issues as a homage to him, I can hear the absolute conviction. It has the crystal clarity of thought of one who has walked the path of, to us his expression, 'very persistent, courageous, heroic, determined sadhana'. And again, as he continues, seeing this effort, Bhagavan the inner guru enters. Having entered, he has claimed Alan Jacobs as his very own.

-Editor

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri
Ramanaya

First of all, it is a very great joy to be here again in this Centre, to be in the presence of Sri Bhagavan Ramana, which due to the



efforts not only of the founder, but his wife and daughters, this wonderful institution breathes Bhagavan in every pore of its being.

I owe them a debt because I was fortunate enough to enjoy the friendship of A.R.Natarajan who was a mentor and guide and gave me some very vital advice which affected my life in a very great way.

The talk is entitled 'The Present and the Presence'. Well the words sound very similar – 'present' and 'presence' and in a way although they sound similar, very subtly they interweave. So together, step by step as one body, we can first of all consider exactly what we mean by the present. What we first need to recognize, there is only one moment. There is only one moment. The whole of the past is dead as far as we are concerned. It is usually only a confused memory, possibly inaccurate, probably inaccurate, distorted by us. The future hasn't arrived and it exists only in the fantasy of our own imagination. So therefore, it is essential that we dwell for a moment, on the present moment, the eternal here and now.

At every moment our consciousness, awareness, acts, gives light, which lights a screen, a screen of consciousness. And on this screen moving pictures come and go, sounds appear, it's similar to a dream. And we can say that life is a magical cinema show produced and directed by dear mother Maya.

But to fully enter that present moment we need to invoke the Presence, the presence of essential 'I-am-ness'. The way that the master, Bhagavan gives, if we feel 'I-am-ness', if we are in touch with our essential feeling 'I Am Here Now', then that is synonymous with the Self or Bhagavan. So, if we feel this eternal feeling of 'I am' at any moment in the spiritual heart, the doorway on the right side of the chest, the feeling 'I Am Here Now', alive, aware at this moment in the present. Just for a moment if we freeze, and we keep perfectly still, and we don't move, not even the eyes, the eyeballs....if we do that for a moment ... we start to feel our awareness arise up. And this is an indication of our 'presence'. It's an indication of our presence in the present. So, the presence of the I am, being here now, combines with the present moment

the eternal now. They both come together, there is a marriage between the presence and the present. And when we feel the two together, we are in oneness, in unity, with what is appearing on the screen of our consciousness awareness, and our own presence of the immortal Self, the essential 'I-am-ness'.

Bhagavan, he told us often, 'Get into the heart anyway you can and choose the way that is easiest for you'. Now our problem is that our conscious awareness is stepped down. It's clouded, it's veiled, attenuated by the vasanas, this egotism, this mistaken identity, to feeling that I am the body and not the essential Self. These, all these latent tendencies that we have acquired not only in previous lives but in this life, brings down our consciousness to a reflected level. Its mirrored by the egotism, and you all probably know, this is known as chidabhasa. So, these vasanas are acting as a thick veil or an occlusion. They are a dark cloud covering the great force, the great power, of our pure consciousness awareness, the immortal Self.

So, we have to realise that we are in ignorance living as ajnanis. While the jnani, as Bhagavan was the supreme example, in my view the supreme example of any jnani who has ever walked on this planet, the jnani has tremendous power of pure consciousness awareness. It is purified as he demonstrated over and over again. His powerful gaze, when it was focused on a questioner would actually give that fortunate individual an inkling of the real Self. It would invoke what he was striving for, he had a taste, he knew what he was aiming. He could read their thoughts, he could see their inner condition, he knew the exact right words to choose in answering their question in order to aid them on their quest.

But our consciousness awareness, I speak for myself, is impure, the cause of our wanderings perverted, chattering minds and subconscious vasanas. So, we never actually feel this eternal presence in our present except at those moments when we make a special effort to collect ourselves and actually be in the present moment, the essential 'I-am-ness', the here and now of the eternal presence. That is why a very persistent, courageous, heroic, determined sadhana is absolutely necessary so as we are

to clear these vasanas and purify ourselves and attain the real permanent state of living in the present with the full power of the presence.

Now once Bhagavan our inner guru sees that we are making this great effort, the grace enters. He said over and over again that there is no effort without grace and there is no grace without effort. The two are interlocked. So, as we proceed on this great sadhana, on this great adventure in consciousness, we are prompted by him as the inner guru. We find the way of self-enquiry and the way of surrender best suited for us and which we are most comfortable with. And the necessary adjustments are made gracefully and gradually. If they happen too quickly the full power of the absolute consciousness might be more than the nervous system could take.



So, it does take time depending on the maturity of the devotee and what has happened in previous life and how much sadhana he has done in this life. Bhagavan himself said when this happens it is like an elephant entering into a thatched cottage. So, we have to have this preparation and must never worry about progress he said. The real progress is when you don't think about progress. And then gradually, gracefully at the right time all the necessary adjustments made, you would come closer and closer to the Self.

One can reach the surface. One may feel some pulsation which is an indication that you are moving in the right direction. And one gets all his encouragement from him. So, grace intervenes. And when the nervous system is fully prepared by the sadhana, the vasanas are cleared one by one and the mind drops into the heart and we are now in full harmony with the presence, the one eternal moment of the present.

*** To be continued ***

My Favorite Verse

Sri V.S.Ramanan

We are continuing our homage to Sri V.S.Ramanan, the former President of Sri Ramanasramam, by carrying once again his articles in the 'Ramana Way' during the year 2008.

24th July, 2008

Sri Ramanasramam

Dear Sarada,

As I was pondering on some of my favourite verses of Bhagavan the 104th verse of Bhagavan's "Arunachala Akshara Mana Malai" came to my mind and reminded me of my love for it.

anbODun nAmamkEL anbartam anbarukku
anbanAyiDa aruL aruNAcala

Let me be a loving servant
of the devotees of those devotees
Who hear your Name with love,
O Arunachala!

You may ask me why this verse is so special to me. Of course because it speaks of the glory of Bhagavan's Name. His Name is so magnificent and powerful that even the servant of those devoted to His devotees gets the benefit of its liberating energy.

The second and more intimate reason for this verse being one of my favourites is that Bhagavan has given me the role of being a servant of all his devotees. How can I not wonder at his boundless grace, which has assigned this role to me? I therefore constantly meditate upon this verse of his.

Affectionately,
Sundaram

Power of the Word

Sanjay Lohia

Vasanas

- Even though vishaya-vasanas [inclinations or the seeds of desires to experience things other than ourself], which come from time immemorial, rise [as thoughts] in countless numbers like ocean-waves, they will all be destroyed when svarupa-dhyana [self-attentiveness] increases and increases.
- As long as vishaya-vasanas exist in the mind, so long the investigation who am I is necessary. As and when thoughts arise, then and there it is necessary to annihilate them all by vicharana [investigation or vigilant self-attentiveness] in the very place from which they arise.
- There are not two [classes of] mind, namely a good [class of] mind and a bad [class of] mind. The mind is only one. Only vasanas are of two kinds, namely subha [good or agreeable] and asubha [bad or disagreeable]. When [a person's] mind is under the sway of subha-vasanas it is said to be a good mind, and when it is under the sway of asubha-vasanas a bad mind



Bhagavan's Clue for Freedom from Thoughts

Chadalavada Vijaykumar

I was going through my old diaries I stumbled upon one of my notings on RMCL discussions which occurred in June 2007 ...

I am a regular visitor to RMCL Mehkri circle since 1999 and regular participant in weekend satsangs and talks by various devotees of Bhagavan, the regular speakers were Sri A R Natarajan, Sri K. G. Subbaraya Sharma sometimes Swami Virajananda and many others and of course you.

During one of the weekend talks, I asked Sri ARN a question on the death of the mind... I asked him how can anyone survive without the thoughts. He gave a reply by engaging me in a conversation which is still etched in my memory...

ARN: What do you feel or what comes to your mind if you see an apple?

Me: It's colour and taste.

ARN: Good. What comes to your mind if you listen to your favourite film song?

Me: I will recall the movie, the hero, heroine and may be other songs from the film.

ARN: Yes. But what comes to your mind or how will your feelings be if you remember someone close to you who has passed away...

Me: Sad. I will recollect his or her association with me and I may become emotional.

ARN: That is natural isn't it? Now... Recollection of an apple and the film song ...thoughts are fleeting...it comes and goes automatically, these recollected thoughts will not affect you at all. But recollection of the death of someone close, the thoughts will linger for a longer time and it does affect you for sometime.. Eventually you will get over it ... Isn't it?

Me: Yes Sir.

ARN: Why? Have you analysed?

Me: No

ARN: There are two categories of thoughts, one is functional which are required for your day to day activities/survival... The other category is psychological thoughts... The former category is fleeting... It will do its job and go away automatically and it never bothers you but the latter ones linger on... It affects you at the emotional level... Do you get it?

Me: Yes sir.

ARN: Bhagavan has given us a beautiful clue to come out of these thoughts whether they are functional or psychological/emotional. The functional thoughts are never a problem even otherwise but emotional ones latch onto us. Bhagavan does not distinguish between various thoughts. He says thoughts come alive when I-thought comes in contact with other thoughts. Have you followed?

Me: So far so good Sir.

ARN: Hold onto I-thought and search for its source... It has emerged from some source. Then once it merges in the source, these thoughts will not bother you.

Me: But Sir how can I live without thoughts? How can I survive?

ARN: No no, thoughts may be there but they will not affect or bother you. The hold of thoughts or the bondage of thoughts on you is gone. That is death of the mind. Hope I answered your doubt.

Me: Yes Sir. But requires tremendous efforts to reach that level.

ARN: Seek Bhagavan's grace. It will be fine.

I liked the way ARN Sir made such a complex subject easy and felt like sharing this.

Sri Ramana Ashtottaram

Viswanatha Swami

47. ABHAYAPRADAHA

Bestower of fearlessness

Separativeness, the feeling that one is apart from 'others' is the cause of fear. It is only when one sees nothing as apart from the Self that fearlessness is possible. Ramana bestows this state on those to whom he is the refuge.

The greatest of fears is the fear of death. Ramana had faced and conquered that fear as a boy of 16. Hence Muruganar Swami, sees Ramana as Siva who kicked away the Lord of Death to protect His devotee Markandeya. Muruganar writes that Yama told Ramana Siva 'I will not touch your devotees' devotees' devotees'.

In this context we have the beautiful picturizing by Rajammal in her painting of the scene at Virupaksha where the fearless Ramana made all manner of living beings unafraid. Hence, the snake and mongoose and peacock, the dogs and the monkeys, the tiger and the cow all gathered together in his presence. Ramana Dasa Sadananda's song also paints the same picture in words.

Om AbhayapradAya namaha

48. DAKSHINASYA NIBHAHA

Equal to Daksinamurti

In ancient times Daksinamurti taught the sages Sanaka and others through silence. Devotees of Ramana also received their instructions in a like manner from him. Ganapati Muni praises Ramana by saying that he reminds one of his father Daksinamurti. Muruganar's reference to Bhagavan as one who bestows Samadhi without sadhana but merely by his presence is also apposite.

Viswanatha Swami recalls that one Sivaratri the devotees requested Ramana to explain to them the meaning of Adi Sankaracharya's 'Daksinamurti Stotram' and he agreed. The night of vigil passed in absolute silence with none being aware of the passage of time. In the morning one of the devotees asked

Ramana, 'You had said you would be expounding the meaning of Daksinamurti stotram. To this Ramana replied, 'That is what I have been doing'.

Another touching episode is when Dr.TNK wished to take a photograph of Ramana in the famous posture of Daksinamurti. Ramana conceded to his request and sat on a rock accordingly. Then he told Dr.TNK, 'I do not recall whether I should fold the right leg over the left or the other way'. Dr.TNK told him he would take one each of the poses.

It is interesting to note that the house in Madurai where Ramana attained enlightenment, 16, Chokkappa Nayakan Street is on the road that leads out of the South Tower of Madurai Meenakshi Temple which has a beautiful relief of Dakshinamurthi adorning it.

Om DakShiNAsya nibhAya namaha

49. DHIRAHA

Courageous

Facing all events with equipoise is courage in the true sense. Individuals are never free from perturbation. The pure seer Ramana is the embodiment of clarity and steadfastness. In his 'Jivanmuktananda Lahari' Adi Sankara praises the state of one who is calm in all situations, due to the grace of the Guru.

We know how Ramana was unmoved in the presence of wild animals or when snakes passed over his body. Once Rengaswamy Iyengar visited Ramana in mid afternoon during the Pachaiaimman Koil days. After prostrating to Ramana Iyengar left for a bath in the temple tank. Unknown to him Ramana came to the tank and quietly told a leopard that had come to drink water from the tank to go away and come later as the devotee would be afraid. There is also the humorous episode that occurred during the Virupaksha Cave days when a leopard visited them. The devotees locked themselves inside the iron grill gate to the Cave leaving Ramana outside. From inside the safety of the locked cave they started issuing threats to the leopard that eventually went its way.

Om DhIrAya namaha

How Bhagavan Captured Us

By Smt. Sulochana Natarajan

The three years that followed were filled with simple joys. We stayed near the Ramakrishna Math and would go for Arathi frequently. We would also visit the Asram very often. Every month we would have a special puja and a little satsang at home on Punarvasu day, the birth star of Bhagavan. One of Bhagavan's devotees, Kalyanam would come home to chant the Vedas on that occasion. After that we would have a little meditation and reading and finish with offering some naivedyam to Bhagavan. We did not offer ashtottara puja to Bhagavan then and as I recall, there was no ashtottara puja either at Ramana Bhakta Sabha at Chennai or at Ramana Kendra at Delhi. In the latter, the offering of ashtottara puja became a daily practise once Bhagavan's shrine came up in 1972.

One of my vivid memories is the starting of 'The Mountain Path', the Asram journal. Ganesan came to Bangalore to collect funds for the magazine. He trusted that ARN could help in a big way to garner support and he returned with redoubled faith in Bhagavan's ways and in ARN's love for Bhagavan.

We used to visit Sri Ramanasramam very often. Then there were only two guest rooms in the Asram, Morvi 1 and 2. Whenever we stayed there, Sri T.N.Venkataraman, the President of the Asram, would visit us daily in the morning on his way to the Asram. Manavasi thatha would come and sit in the easy-chair of the Morvi verandah and teach me songs. In the Asram, I was allowed to sit inside the Nirvana Room along with Devaraja Mudaliar for Tamil parayanam. I loved Vedaparayanam and would never miss it, so much so, in a few months time I could chant the entire parayanam along with the vedic scholars and students. Sri Devaraja Mudaliar would accompany us during Giripradakshinams and regale us with incidents about Bhagavan. Whenever a bhajan session was held at Chalam's place, we would happily join. Souris would be lost in meditation throughout the session.

On some of our trips we would take our 'Jeeves', Mani Mama, along with us. He would prepare a bucket full of fruit salad. We would take it to the Asram, offer it to Bhagavan and serve it to the devotees in the dining hall. Soon after the feeding of the poor was over baby Sarada would wander about freely all over the Asram. Mani Mama would follow her, feeding her dal-rice as she looked with awe and delight at the peacocks and monkeys roaming around the Asram. She was particularly exultant when she saw cows or Lakshmi's statue at her Samadhi.

This was the time that Bhagavan blessed me with an opportunity to read the entire gamut of Ramanasramam publications. One by one, as a principle I completed reading all the English publications. ARN was a voracious reader and a man of gifted memory who would also remember all that he read, whereas I was neither; but as a principle I made it a point to get familiar with Ramana literature. At that time it was not too difficult a task as the number of publications was not large as it is now, and age, time and energy were in my favour. This discipline of reading was certainly of great help in my spiritual practice too.

Every time we visited Sri Ramanasramam Nagu Mami (the first lady of the Asram, the President's wife) would insist on our having hot hot dosais in their house at least on one evening, so much so I must confess that dosai is my favourite dish till date. Not once could we 'escape' from her hospitality (as we put it in Tamil). She was extremely affectionate.

From 1958 itself at Chennai we would attend Ramana Bhakta Sabha's Sunday satsangs that Prof. K.Swaminathan was conducting. When we started visiting Sri Ramanasramam also frequently we came to know many of the old devotees and they in turn would narrate some incident or the other relating to Bhagavan. This was indeed a rare treat for us.

From 1960 June to 1964 February we were at Bangalore, visiting Sri Ramanasramam literally every two months. By Bhagavan's grace the second baby Ambika was born on 27th March 1964 at Chennai. Of course, before leaving for the

confinement Guruji, Swami Yatiswarananda blessed me a lot. I came to Bangalore with the children at the end of May 1964.

We took baby Ambika to the Asram to Guruji. He with his usual love and affection put honey on Ambika's tongue with a silver spoon and blessed all of us greatly.

We were at Bangalore till end of February 1965. The entire period of about 9 years from 1956 when we received initiation from him, whenever we were in the company of our dear Guruji we have been very very fortunate in receiving full blessings and love. Guruji used to advise me to learn driving, to go to the club to play badminton/tennis. He used to jocularly tell "You are an old woman in a modern garb".

We would attend his Sunday lectures. Throughout the lecture he would have his eyes meditatively closed and never used to open his eyes during the talk. From the starting moment till we dispersed the whole atmosphere would be highly spiritually charged; our minds never wandered. Such was the satsang.



News & Events

Revathi Sankar

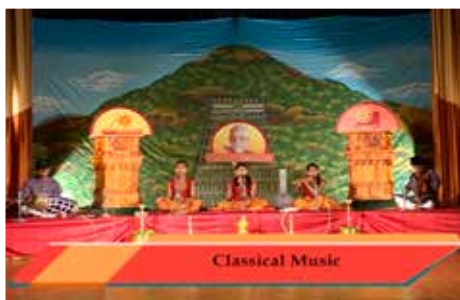
For Pournami celebrations in June Ranjani and Mangalam Akka from the USA, Amrith Ramanan and family from Nairobi, Aparna Kannan and family from Mumbai, Sujatha and Devi from Chennai and Dr.Kalarani Rengasamy from Madurai joined the chanting making it an international event as it were



Bhagavan Ramana's 'Appalam Song' was presented as a dance by artistes of the Ramana Centre Ujwal, Revathi, Uma, Vincent and Ashwini.



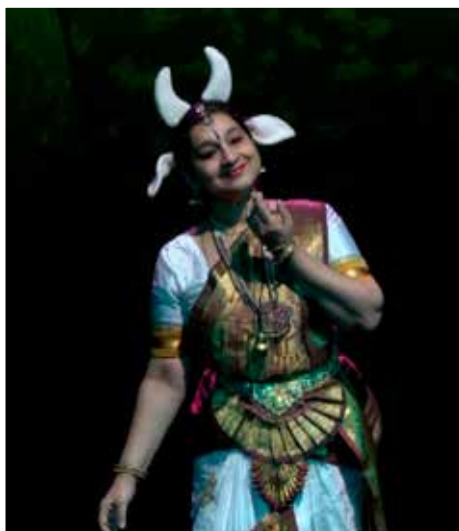
Clippings from Ramanotsavam and our TV serial Ramana Holey were also shared for Pournami Celebrations.





This year Cow Lakshmi Day fell on the 2nd of July. Ramana Centre's Online Celebrations were held in the last Saturday of June. We had video clips from our dance drama 'Jnana Neri'.

There were sharings by Nandakumarji, Venkatesh Deshpande, Dr.Kalarani, Ujwal Jagadeesh and Dr.Sarada. Musical offerings were made by Radha, Vallabh, Prathiba and Revathi.





A video clip of Sri K.V. Subrahmanyam's lullaby to Cow Lakshmi rendered at Sri Ramanasramam by Smt. Susila Ramanan, Dr. Ambika Kameshwar and Dr. Aruna Ramkumar was also shared.



Guru Poornima was celebrated online with a special video talk by Ramanacharanatirtha Sri Nochur Venkataraman followed by the chanting of Aksharamanamalai by several devotees from across the world and Ashtottara puja to Bhagavan.

17th of July, Bhagavan's Enlightenment Day was celebrated jointly with Ramana Kendra, Madurai. It was inaugurated by Sri Somasundaram with a sharing on self-enquiry in Tamil by Dr.Kala Rani Rengasamy, Dr.Sarada and Sri N.Nandakumar. With Ramananjali music by Dr.Ambika Kameshwar, Smt. Radha, Revathi Sankar and Ujwal Jagadeesh, the celebration concluded with a vote of thanks from Sri Rengasamy. A chanting of Aksharamanamalai for 24 hours in turns by more than thousand devotees concluded the occasion.



Kannada Online Satsang was started every Sunday. Smt.Uma Ashwath did Kannada reading and Kum.Uma Sripathy gave an introduction to the video sharings. Smt.Ashwini Balaji, Smt.Sapna Ganesh and Sri Ujwal Jagadeesh did the chanting.



Sri Muruganar Anniversary was celebrated by the singing of Muruganar's songs in Kannada by Smt.V.Radha and Kum.Revathi Sankar.



Video clips were shared depicting Muruganar's first meeting with Bhagavan and other incidents from Muruganar's life including the composition of Upadesa Saram by Bhagavan.

YOUR DATES WITH RAMANA**DAILY AND WEEKLY ONLINE EVENTS**

We at Ramana Centre, Bangalore are happy to announce one single sign-in Google Meet URL for all the Online Self Enquiry Sessions and Satsangs of the Centre.

This we believe will ease the sharing of URL to all like minded Ramana devotees to join our scheduled online events as listed below for each week The URL is also available on our website www.ramanacentre.com

URL: <https://meet.google.com/kwx-bdoa-gtf>

1. Daily Morning Self Enquiry satsang *Time: 5:30am Duration: 15min*
2. Daily Night Self Enquiry satsang *Time: 9:30pm Duration: 30min*
(9:30pm - 9:45pm Q&A, 9:45pm - 10:00pm Self Enquiry)
3. Thursday Evening Self Enquiry satsang
Time: 7:00pm Duration: 1hr Conducted by: Sri Nandakumarji
4. Friday Evening Self Enquiry satsang *Time: 7:00pm Duration: 1hr*
Conducted by: Dileep Simha and Dr. Sarada Natarajan
5. Saturday Evening satsang *Time: 6:30pm Duration: 2hr Conducted by: Dr. Sarada Natarajan*

Ramana Music by Radha, Revathi, Prathiba, Savithri, Jaisriram, Poorna Sharings by Nandakumarji, Venkatesh Deshpande, Dr.Kalarani Rengasamy, Ujwal Jagadeesh and Dr.Sarada

Chanting by Sapna, Ashwini, Uma, Vallabh and Vaibhav

Self-enquiry by Dileep Simha Ashtottara Puja by Subramaniam

If you have any queries or concerns regarding joining the Satsang, please contact: **Uma: 9538472026**

SPECIAL ONLINE EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

1st September – Aruna Vijaya Day (pournami)

29th August to 1st September – Aruna Vijaya Offering – Parayanam of Aksharamanamalai by joining online during the days of Bhagavan Ramana's journey to Arunachala and premiere of online production.

12th September launch of Ramananjali Awards 2020

Ramana Every Day

RMHC - Ramana Maharshi Heritage Centre - Sanjaynagar

RMS - Ramana Maharshi Shrine - Mekhri Circle

RSCS - RMCL Satsang Centre at South Bangalore

RSCR - RMCL Satsang Centre at Rajarajeshwari Nagar

To register for Online sessions contact

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

Online and On site Self Enquiry sessions

Thursday: 7:00 pm to 8.00 pm at RSCS

By Sri Nandakumar ji

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

By Dileep Simha and Dr. Sarada

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

By Sri Nandakumar ji & others

(Chanting and Self-enquiry)

Online Satsang

Chanting, Reading, Music, Talks, Puja

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

Every Sunday 7.00 pm to 8.40 pm Kannada Satsang

Every first Sunday 11.00 am to 12.30 pm Tamil Satsang

Online and On site Music and Dance classes

[Contact - Uma (9538472026)] at RMHC

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

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

On site Talk

By Sri Sridhar Guruji,

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

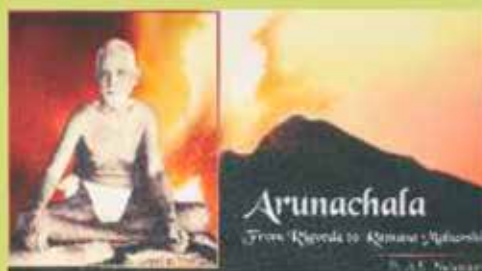
Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

114. If, in a cinema show, the diffused [projected light] merges with and disappears in broad daylight, the cinema scenes that shine in the projected light will disappear. Similarly, if the unreal and impermanent mind – light merges with and is lost in the light of pure consciousness, eternal reality, the false scenes comprising the *triputi* [the seer, the seeing and the seen] will cease once and for all.
115. If it is asked, 'When the prime entity is only one, why do all teachers and religions soften their stance and accept initially that it is beneficial to say that the prime entities are three?' the answer is : 'Unless it is agreed that the three entities are real, the *jiva*, being whirled about by externalised attention [*suttarivu*], will not be able to accept that One, the reality'.



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.