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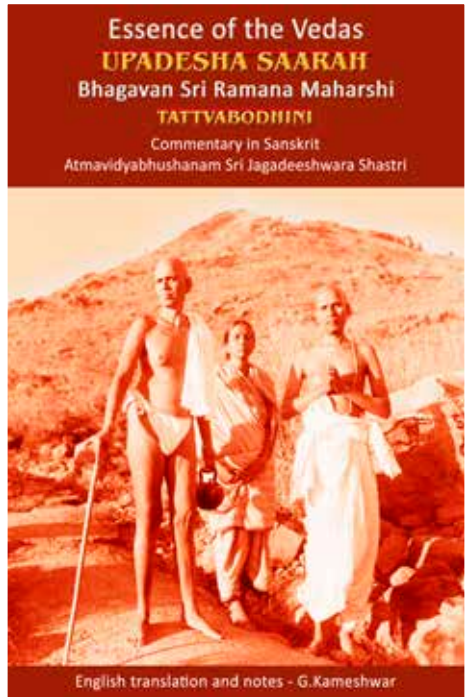
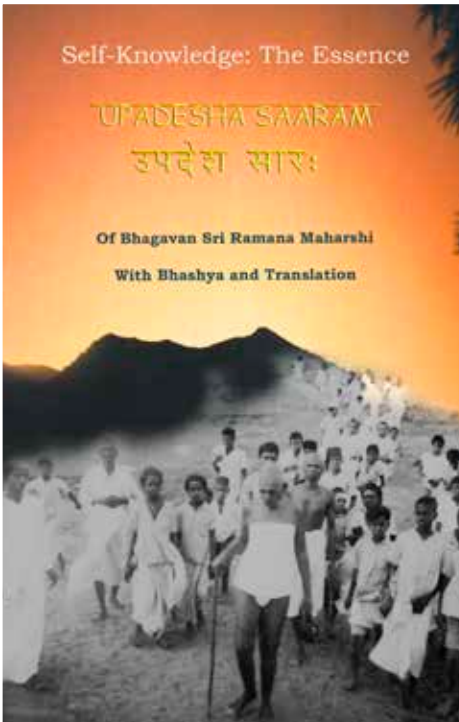
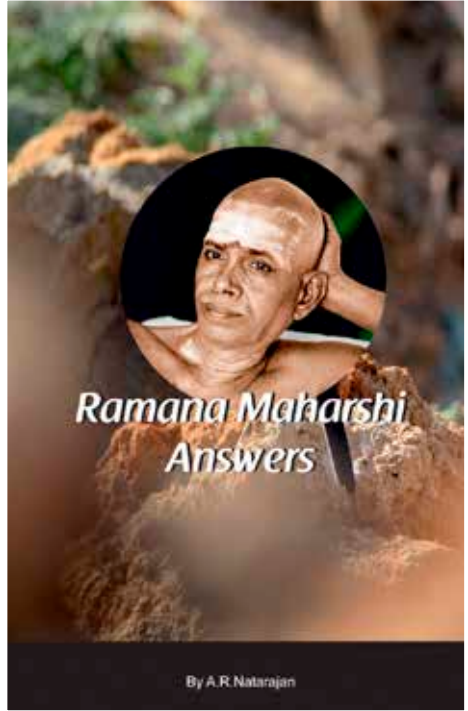
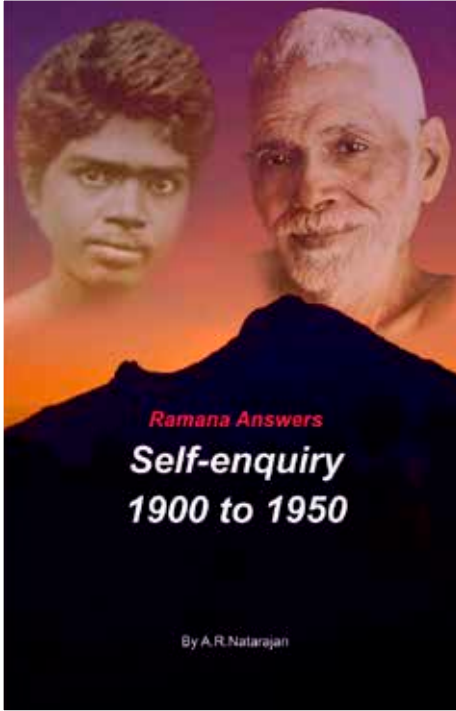
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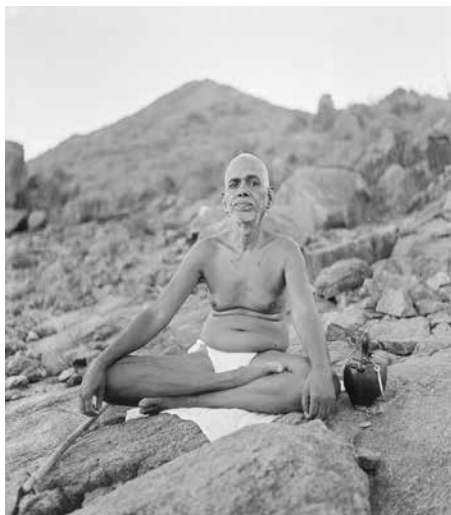
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Publications



THE RAMANA WAY

A Monthly Journal since 1981



Celebrating 'The Ramana Way' - 40 years

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

- Ramana Gita X, 10

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What is the problem with having thoughts? The problem is that they create the illusion of the existence of a thinker. Ramana says that just because you have thoughts you believe there is an entity called a 'thinker'. What happens to us in deep sleep in the total absence of thoughts? Do we cease to exist? If we do not cease to exist then, can our existence be dependent on the presence of thoughts? However, until we consciously experience the total absence of thoughts, we are not truly convinced that thoughts are not necessary for our existence.

Further, until we are able to remain completely free of thoughts in our waking experience, we are unable to accept that thoughts are not even necessary for our functioning. It is for this reason that all spiritual practices aim at taking us to the thought-free state. This is not a newly created state like all our thought experiences that are created from time to time and also disappear from time to time. Pleasure may arise and disappear. Pain may arise and disappear. Anger may arise and disappear. Joy may arise and disappear. Peace may arise and disappear. This is our daily experience. But our Self never disappears and hence, it does not appear either. It is ever present.

However, the experiencing of this ever-present Self, that is bliss and peace, is clouded by the presence of thoughts which create the illusion of dependence on themselves in order to sustain our very existence. There may be a person who we believe is indispensable and also trustworthy. When we realize that the person is actually cheating us, initially we may refuse to face the fact because of the habit of dependency. When we become courageous enough to break with that person, we will feel first a sense of relief that we are no longer being cheated. We need not be wary all the time anymore. We need not live in the fear of any loss. Slowly we will begin to realize that we can very well live without that person. If we function from a mode of surrender, we may recognize that the Supreme force that brought the earlier person to help us will certainly bring us the right person

as and when needed. We will begin to enjoy complete freedom from needs and dependencies.

The same is the case when we begin to remain free of thoughts. We will no longer have any need for them. We will know that everything happens by the Supreme force and not by the power of thoughts. Ramana says that thoughts may continue to exist as a moon does in broad daylight. However, their existence or absence are both of no relevance whatsoever. We need not function in their meagre reflected light when the very source of all light is available to us. If, however, we continue to depend on thoughts instead of turning to and abiding in the Self, then it is like depending on moonlight as the only source of light. It will necessarily wax and wane. Sometimes it may seem to be brilliant and at other times it will be totally non-available. Do we not know this? Have we not experienced this for ourselves, not just with the moon but with our minds as well? Why then do we continue to pin our hopes on the weak light of the thoughts when the all-enveloping brilliance of the Self is every ready to engulf us in its presence? As Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "Should we care for the fleeting see-saws of joys and sorrows instead of 'Being Still' and experiencing the bliss of the natural state?"

Sarada Natarajan

From the Editor's Desk 1986 to 1995

ON LIFE?

It must be remembered that if we wish to participate in the laughter of life, we must also be willing to share its tears. The sight of the magnificent starry canopy may bring thoughts of the sightless, it may be tinged with an awareness of the transience of one's own sight. This awareness is not to create a sense of hopelessness and despair, not to generate in us feelings of fear and self-pity. Rather, our joys and sorrows would be more intensely lived in the awareness of this fragility, in their contrasting and thus heightening each other. It would be like the expert cook who always adds a pinch of salt to heighten the sweetness of desserts and a dash of sugar or jaggery to add punch to salty and spicy dishes. Our greatest joys are often touched with a hint of sorrow and our greatest griefs carry silent echoes of peace.

But we do not really wish to savour our joys, let alone taste our sorrows. So totally caught up in expectations of the future we hardly taste the present joys. So busy comparing experience with the moments past, we push the present back with carelessness. The joy of the present moment is ever clouded over with some fear or anticipation if not comparison. If we would only care to stop and look at our lives for an earnest moment, we are likely to discover that we hardly derive joy from the desires we cling to so tenaciously. There is always something lacking, some lacuna that prevents our cup from being full to the brim. Again, we convince ourselves that if only that bit were filled, we would be happy. And we strive for that. But a thousand lacunae filled still leave us with thousand new dissatisfactions. If one has everything that one could ever want, then one is simply struck by 'ennui' as the disease of boredom is described. One is simply bored because there is nothing new to be achieved, no motivation, no challenge, they say. Then why is it that those with motivation, those with desire, those with goals are also unhappy? Does it not clearly indicate that happiness lies neither in the pursuit of desire nor in its conquest? Yet, we are repeatedly told that happiness is our very nature, our eternal companion. Then why are we ever alienated from it? Because our attention is on all things other than that joy which is here and now.

We are paupers amidst treasure, we are hungry before the banquet that is laid specially for us, we dress in rags while owning the most exclusive boutique in the world. Yes, we long for life and miss it every day, every minute. Life comes to us, as a friend very dear but we turn her out, we are too busy for her. We treat her with scant affection, with only superficial attention exactly as we do even our dearest one who comes to us in the midst of a heavy schedule - say, the day before the final examination. At least for dear ones we make some time - during holidays and vacations, but for life itself we have no time. Why? Simply because we are too preoccupied with living! Indeed a great paradox, but the tragic truth. We are so tense with living that we do not stop to examine the quality of our lives. We do not stop to ask ourselves the questions, 'How much am I giving to life? What am I getting from it? Have I dived its depths to bring up the pearls of rare beauty or am I merely floating on the surface like so much worthless flotsam?'

The pursuit of any knowledge necessitates enquiry into that field. Naturally, to know the self, one must enquire into its nature. The way to Self-knowledge must necessarily be through self-enquiry.

'Sorry, wrong number', declares a friend. 'Once I too was interested in pursuing the question. 'Who am I?' but it does not interest me any longer. I simply want to improve the quality of my life. I want to be a better person, more compassionate, more peaceful, never losing my cool, never getting angry, a happier person. That is enough for me.' What can one say to this? Exactly what the postman will say if a rich man declares, 'I want to make a poor man rich. I have plenty of money with me and he is abjectly poor. I wish to send him a money-order every month'. Then the postman would answer, 'Well sir, give me his name and address'. 'Sorry, I do not have them' answered the rich man. 'Then sir, do you know where you can find him? Do you know of others who can find him? Do you have his photo that we can print in the papers to trace him? Or can you at least describe him accurately?' the postman would ask. If one were to answer, 'Oh! I know none of this. In fact I have never seen him and so cannot even describe him'. The postman would laugh and say, 'Then how do you know he is poor and would like to be made rich? You do not know his face, his name or his place. How can you presume he needs your help?'

Even if he does need help how can you reach it to him without knowing anything about him?' If we cannot send a simple money-order to one whose name we do not know, how can we radically improve the life of a stranger? If we are strangers to ourselves, how can we make ourselves better? If I do not really know who I am, how can I make myself more peaceful and compassionate?

'But', says the protester, 'I am not a stranger to myself. I know who I am. I remember my name and address. Why can't I improve my life?' If we really know who we are why does our identity change in dreams? Why is it that the man chased by a dream-tiger runs for dear life? Why is he not aware that it is only a dream? At the moment of that experience it is taken to be totally real. If the dream identity seems so real while dreaming, the waking identity which appears very real while awake could also be part of a greater dream, could it not? Then who is it that dreams? Am I the dreamer and all this a dream? If one knows oneself so accurately and intimately, why is it that one is never aware of what happens in deep sleep? Why does one have to recollect the joy of sleep only after waking? Why is one not conscious of oneself in deep sleep? Aren't we really cheating ourselves through life, lavishing all our love on one who is a stranger? Can we really claim to know ourselves when our identity is subject to total change in dreams and disappears altogether in deep sleep? What is that common thread which keeps the continuity through these three varied states of waking, dream and deep sleep?

The next question from the doubter, 'Why should one presume there is a common link between the three states? Perhaps the only reality is change'. The proposition is self-defeating for 'change' requires a given entity to start with, a basis. An egg changes into a chick. There is a basis, the first entity in relation to which change is perceived. Also, the first entity is not destroyed in the second but is only transformed. Only an egg can turn into a chick, only a seed into a tree. It is only because there is a continuation of a single entity that one can declare 'The seed has become a tree'. Similarly, it is because of the single entity 'I' continuing in all our three states, that we are able to perceive and register the changes.

If the dream and deep sleep 'I' were totally disconnected with the waking 'I' how could one say 'my dream' or 'I slept'? In fact, after waking, one could no longer remember 'I am Sarada' for 'Sarada' would have become someone else, a new person in dream, and again in deep sleep. How could those new entities know anything about 'Sarada' unless there is a common link? It is therefore obvious that all these are only surface changes, like the moving of a motion picture on a white screen. Just as the movie is only an optical illusion, even so the changing 'I' of waking, dream and sleep is also an illusion. Without knowing the basis, the Self, to be engaged in improving the quality of the illusion is like building tanks to store the water of a mirage.

Would it not be far wiser to understand first the nature of the 'I' and then tackle it suitably? 'I' want to live well without knowing what the 'I' really is. When the absurdity of the situation strikes one with full force, then one will automatically take to self-enquiry. The question 'Who am I?' and the consequent attention to the nature of 'I' -thought and to its source will absorb one totally.

ENOUGH! ENOUGH!

"Enough' - a strange topic for you" remarked a friend, "You never say 'enough' - always 'let's have more ballets on Bhagavan, more music, more of writing'."

"But it is not Sarada who says 'enough'. She is quoting what Muruganar said to her," answered my father. Memories of Muruganar return, memories of silence, of his ever-flowing tears at the very mention of Bhagavan's name, of his being moved beyond words when we sang on Bhagavan. On one visit, an elder cousin reprimanded a younger one for excusing himself from Muruganar's presence on some pretext. 'He had no interest in what was going on', I stated. 'It matters little', came the answer. 'Whether one is disinterested or even totally restless at that time, one must somehow spend the maximum time possible in a jnani's presence. The extraordinary good that comes out of even simply being in such a presence cannot be estimated by us', he explained. 'For sadhakas such a presence is invaluable. When you see a jnani you can concretely perceive what it means to be apart from the body',

he contributed, and added, 'I have had the great good fortune of being with Muruganar on an occasion when he was extremely unwell. Yet it was so obvious that his body's suffering did not even touch him'.

To those who have seen Muruganar this would be quite evident. In fact, even to one so young and unlettered in spiritual lore as I, it was obvious at that time that there was really no 'Muruganar' before us. There was just this form that pulsed love for Bhagavan from every pore. Someone mentioned after going through the book 'Ramana's Muruganar' that almost every article contained reference to Muruganar's tears of joy on hearing Bhagavan's name, I explained that this was not a mere repetition of a single fact, but that it was a continuous experience which is sure to have had an impact on all those who came to Muruganar. Just as it is impossible to speak or write without words, even so it is impossible to think, speak or write on Muruganar without mentioning how he would melt with love for Bhagavan.

It was thus thought right when I encountered my first 'spiritual doubt', if it may be called that, to ask Muruganar for clarification. And so I asked him on our next visit, 'Is it enough if I think of Bhagavan as my Guru and practise self-enquiry?' The doubt arose in the context of mantropadesa by a Guru being stressed by our scriptures. On hearing the question Muruganar was deeply moved. He went red in face and his voice choked with emotion as he said 'Enough! Enough! Cent per cent sufficient'. After a moment's pause he added, 'More than hundred per cent sufficient'. He then stressed that Bhagavan is the only everlasting illumination within us and that His presence is the only existence everywhere and for all time.

How simple the answer seems. An affirmation that the Ramana way is open to anyone who wishes to tread it. An answer that satisfied the doubt at the level at which it was posed. Yet, the words of great ones have far deeper meanings than what we understand from them in the first instance. In relation to the answer when one looks back at the question, it is seen that the question itself was not really understood, let alone the answer. By stressing the all pervading presence of Bhagavan and saying that Bhagavan is the only everlasting illumination within, Muruganar,

it seems, was turning my attention to the very question. He was telling me, without directly spelling it out, that if I firmly believed in and experienced Bhagavan's presence within and without, that would be more than enough.

'Is it enough to consider Bhagavan my Guru?'. 'More than hundred per cent enough, but do you know what it means to consider Bhagavan your Guru?' Muruganar's answer seems to be questioning in return. To accept someone as one's Guru implies investing total faith in Him, in what the Guru says. And what does Bhagavan say? He says that the Self alone is and that the Guru and Self are non-different. If one had total faith in Bhagavan, the moment one hears or reads, the moment one knows what Bhagavan says, those words should become one's own experience. Thus to have total faith in Bhagavan as the Guru means to experience His presence as the Self.

'No, no' objects the mind. 'That is surrender. We are not capable of surrendering totally. But we do have faith in Bhagavan's words. That is why we are keen on practising self-enquiry. Has not Bhagavan advocated the practice of self-enquiry? Has he not affirmed time and again that the earnest pursuit of self-enquiry will lead to Self-abidance? It is faith in his words which keeps us at self-enquiry. I am not capable of such total faith that springs from surrender, but I am not faithless either'- thus the mind reasons and says to itself, 'Muruganar has also said that it is more than sufficient if one pursues self- enquiry thinking of Bhagavan with devotion. Why should one read more into what he said than what he actually said?'

Thus thinking, the mind satisfies itself with the pursuit of self-enquiry for a while in a day. What is this self-enquiry that one strives to pursue? The process seems simple enough. Bhagavan has explained that the sense of 'I', one's identity, the feeling that 'I am so and so', exists only in the waking and dream states. Even in dream it often undergoes drastic changes of name, form, circumstance and so on. And in deep sleep, the identity, this 'I' - thought as Bhagavan calls it, is totally absent. However, in deep sleep one is not conscious of the experience that exists when identity ceases.

To consciously observe the dissolution of the 'I'-thought into its source constitutes self-enquiry. Bhagavan has also clearly delineated the methodology for doing so. The means to track the 'I'-thought to its source while remaining alert is to isolate it. The mind is a bundle of thoughts in which each and every thought is linked with or can exist only in relation to the 'I'- thought. Without the connection with the 'I' - thought no other thought can subsist. The 'I'-thought, although it is thus the central thought can also not exist by itself. That is, since it has no consciousness of its own but only reflects the consciousness of the Self, it cannot bear pointed scrutiny. Hence it camouflages itself by constantly associating itself with other thoughts. How to penetrate this camouflage is, therefore, the question. 'By questioning the 'I'-thought, by questioning its locus-standi' answers Bhagavan.

'When any thought arises ask of yourself 'For whom is this thought?' The answer will come 'For me'. Then again ask 'Who am I?' This question will scorch all other thoughts and attention will rest on the 'I' - thought. Repeat this process as often as attention wanders to other thoughts and give attention invariably to the 'I' - thought. Then it will automatically merge in the source, the Self.

This is the process of self-enquiry which one diligently follows. One is happy to pursue this exercise for a few minutes in the beginning and then for more and more time. One is content to think that this will eventually lead one to Self-knowledge. Has not Bhagavan himself declared so time and again? Has not Muruganar also affirmed that it is 'Enough! Enough!?' Am I doubting their words? No, never. There can be no doubt that self-enquiry is the sure means to Self-knowledge. But we must be sure that what we are practising is self-enquiry as taught by Bhagavan.

Where is the hitch? The understanding seems clear. The 'I'-thought must be isolated by posing the question 'Who am I?' What is the mistake we are making? Having understood the technique clearly, we fail to remember the attitude with which the enquiry is to be made. As often as he proclaimed the efficacy of self-enquiry has not Bhagavan repeated that it is not merely a verbal question? To ask the question 'Who am I?' one must really be in doubt about one's true nature. Otherwise, the question has no meaning. Why ask a question if one already knows the answers?

Is it not absurd to mentally ask oneself 'Who am I?' and the very next second to think 'I am getting late for office. Today I can do self-enquiry only for five minutes' or 'This afternoon I must contact my students and confirm the next rehearsal'. Who is the 'I' - that must go to office or conduct rehearsals? If one knows that 'I' then where is room for asking 'Who am I?' If one does not know that, then who is to think of things related to the 'I'? That is why when one seriously enquires 'Who am I?' every other thought becomes redundant, becomes totally irrelevant. If the enquiry is real, it is bound to prevent the rising of any other thought, of any motivation. Only the intense searchlight of attention on the 'I'-thought will remain and then the 'I'-thought will automatically dissolve into its source, the Self. That is why Bhagavan has explained, 'Of all ways this is the easiest', when Muruganar stated 'Lo! Very easy is Self-knowledge'.

That is why Muruganar said so emphatically, 'Enough! Enough'! More than hundred per cent enough'. Thus, self-enquiry is in effect no different from surrender, both resulting in immediate and total Self-attention.

From the Founder's Pen: 1990-1995

Insights

Unhurried and Recollected Life

D: How can the mind be still if I have to use it more than other people? I want to go into solitude and renounce my job as headmaster.

M: What is the undercurrent which vivifies the mind, enables it to do all work? It is the Self. Simply become aware of it during your work and do not forget it... Take your time; keep remembrance of your real nature alive. Avoid haste which causes you to forget.

- Conscious Immortality, pp. 130-132

A visitor to Ramanasramam told Ramana, "I have been meditating for several years. Yet I have to force myself to do it. Please guide me as to how I should meditate." Even persons who used to be practically inmates of Ramanasramam would express their disappointment to Ramana that their meditations often ended in sleep. Wherever we turn in 'Talks' we find this sorry story repeated. A Maharani who is in tears, speaking in a choked voice tells Ramana, "I have all that I want, a human being would want... But... But I... I... Probably my destiny". Another, a Maharashtrian lady, also in tears says, "I know it is impossible to attain 'Mukti' in one life. Can I not at least have peace of mind?". Pannalal, Chief Secretary to the Government of Uttar Pradesh complains of lack of peace and wishes to know if he should abandon his previous sadhana and take to the direct path of Ramana to attain it.

What is the common factor in all these woes of the different seekers, having different backgrounds and varying degrees of spiritual earnestness? It is obvious that they are missing out on the desserts, the fruits of their effort. It is also obvious that they had lost spontaneous interest in meditation, and were hanging on to it for want of an alternative. Having given up a totally worldly life and having lost absorbing interest in it they are in no man's land. Neither do they have the taste of the natural bliss nor does

*These articles have been published in the book 'Insights'.

the sensate life hold its old unqualified attraction. This is all the more sad. For, after years of meditation, after years of effort at an inner life if one is back at square one, or rather thinks he is back, then somewhere along the line he has missed out on essentials. For, in the spiritual field as in any other effort, sadhana if properly directed should produce results. Here it should be in terms of happiness and peace born out of inner and outer harmony.

What exactly has gone wrong? Let us ponder over our life. Is it not always one hurry-burry from jumping out of bed, scurrying to catch the bus or train, social calls on well-wishers and helpers, chats with friends, enjoying T.V. and video and so on? It is an endless list of things we want to do. We find time for gossip too in our daily milieu. Would this not be a far cry from the contemplative and reflective way of life so repeatedly advised to Paul Brunton by Ramana? Should we be caught up in this business of trying to chew too much, of nibbling at different things, of concerning ourselves with 'others'? What are we here for? Why this human chance? Is it for this external whirl?

If only we care to look, we can readily see how loaded we are with purposeless thoughts and actions. Proper management of time is not only a virtue in the field of business but in all walks of life. More so in the spiritual life. It is of utmost importance. It is the thing which matters. This demands a constant look at our daily doings to prune away wastage of time on nonessentials, to find time for the inner life which fortunate karma has opened up for us. Once the heat of mental pressure is off, there would be time for cool headed meditation.

Having found the time, we have to remember constantly, in season and out of season, our essential nature. The forgotten truth that the Self is ever blissful, that it is the fullness of consciousness, has to be recalled time and again. What we are aiming at is to cut at the root of the illusion of separateness, the thought that something has to be done for getting happiness. This process is hastened by repeatedly recollecting the truth of our real nature. Then gradually "false knowledge would end and the memory of the truth would dawn". It is due to our carelessness, our 'avichara', our loss of the Spirit of enquiry, that we have been reduced to this plight. The remedy lies only in regaining what is lost by attention

to the essential truth of our nature, attention to ensure that we do not lapse back to our old ruts.

Then of course there is the need to steer clear of compartmentalizing of meditation, of treating it as a thing apart. It is generally regarded as one of the jobs on hand to be attended to religiously, willy-nilly. This takes the joy out of it. Why not treat all free time as meditative time? Why not utilize the idle time for it? Why not avail of the all-important sattvic moods, which each has a share of every day, to turn the mind within? This alone would dovetail spiritual effort into the life stream. Then the meditative mood becomes a constant undercurrent, pulling us to the magnetic zone of the spiritual heart within.

Often we stultify ourselves with negative thoughts. We literally seem to cover ourselves with such thoughts as 'Self-knowledge is difficult', 'it is not for me', 'it will take time' and so on. Ramana says it is precisely 'the thinking of hindrances that forms such hindrance'. There is really no truth in them. Our essential nature being always the same it has to be so even now. This reminds one of the case of Ramaswami Pillai. Once he searched for a key. After some time he found it. Ramana said "The key was in the usual place. It was not lost. Only he did not remember it. The Self is always there, everywhere. Not being aware due to lack of experience we keep searching for it."

There is also the paramount need for being aware of the presence of the Sadguru Ramana within and without. Though his grace has no preconditions, in practice one becomes aware of it only to the extent to which one has done all one can to work towards understanding of one's true nature. The interweaving of grace and effort gradually opens up the door to the experiencing of Selfabidance, during 'abhyasa', during practice. Until at last, we are always that bliss steadily.

Being Still

A cultured lady, daughter of a well-known solicitor at Madras asked:

What is one to do to be free of thoughts as advised by you?

M: Only to remain still. Do it and see.

It is commonly said that if one were to summarise the teachings of Ramana in a few words it would be 'I am that I am' and 'be still' (*summa iruttal*). The first is the statement regarding the natural state and the other, 'being still', is the method for experiencing and abiding in that state. So we have to dwell on the import of these words. In practice the experience of the natural state takes the form of feeling the ceaseless shining of the true 'I'. The expression 'true' is used in contrast to the false notion we have about it, that it is the body. The shining is without a break. Hence the expression 'I-I', then one is abiding in one's natural state.

Next we have to go into the question of what are the implications of 'being still'. So long as thoughts are there, till the ego is merged in its source, the mind would always be externalised. It will be moving out and can never be one-pointed. This external movement is in turn caused by partial or incomplete action which leaves behind a trail of tendencies (*vasanas*) imbedded in the memory. Pleasure-pain complexes from relationship with objects are in-built. So the question would arise as to how one would deal with the problem which has two parts - the existing load of tendencies and the continuous add-ons flowing from current action. One method, which has been handed over from time to time is to cultivate good thoughts and to negate desires. Seems easy.

So we keep making resolutions to be on good behaviour, to discipline and drill the mind into moulds which are virtuous. Since action is continuous, even if one succeeds in smothering some desires, in getting rid of some unwanted thoughts, new ones, more and varied ones, take their place. We seem to be no better for our effort. This can be quite frustrating if all one's pains do not help in making any real headway in stilling the mind. The solution seems to be elsewhere, does it not? Is this why Ramana said that "there is no need to give up desires, only, one should give up thoughts"? This would not be begging the question. It is meant to emphasise the limitation which springs from the approach of looking at the thoughts, instead of the real source of trouble - the thinker, whose attention has given life to these thoughts.

Some other methods are in practice. There are techniques of concentration, like keeping the mind fixed on the tip of the nose or the centre of the eyebrows. Ramana advised Paul Brunton against

such practices. For, the mind must not be stunned but kept alive to pursue enquiry about itself. Any method which stupefies the mind is retrograde as it would only put the clock back by producing long periods of dullness of mind. What about the control of breath? It is fine. But it is only a temporary aid. Only so long as the mind is held on leash by holding the breath, with which it is connected, the silence will prevail. The old friends, the thoughts, will soon be back in business. Ramana compares it to a brake in a car or the reins to a horse. One cannot obviously run his car with brakes on all the time nor can one permanently keep a horse reined back. As Ramana told N.N.Rajan, we should look for some way which would de-fuse the mind, which would take away the factors which cause the thought-thrust. Ramana gave N.N.Rajan the analogy of a steam engine which cannot move when the steam is let off unlike its coming to a temporary halt by applying the brakes. Hence we must come to the conclusion that the solution is elsewhere.

It is here that the Ramana Way provides the key. If one reads Ramana's advice to different seekers in the 'Talks' we find him tackling the problem from two different angles. The first is paying attention to the first thought 'I am so and so'. The validity of the add-on to 'I am' by the identification 'so and so' is what has to be examined. How does one do it? Intellectually by the analysis of the three states, of waking, dream and deep sleep. The purpose of this analysis is very limited. It is to become pinpointedly aware that this individuality is something which comes and goes. It is not always there. It is sometimes different in dream and is not there at all in deep sleep. It is absent in sleep. If I am 'so and so' can I exist sometimes and be non-existent at other times? Quite obviously not. Hence, there is the need to enquire into the assumption of identification and the consequent superimposition of separateness. If one enquires earnestly, saturated with the spirit which marks all earnest search, one would have started on the road to still the mind. The enquiry about oneself and about the birth of individuality would do the trick. What trick? It would turn the mind inward in contrast to its present outward thrust. Inwardness is the key for an intuned mind is paying attention to its source, which is the fullness of consciousness. It would have escaped from its preoccupation with others, with the second and third persons, instead looking at itself. The mind remains within, plunged in its source, experiencing the feeling of '1-1'.

Should one think that he is temperamentally unsuited for enquiry, then an alternative solution is offered. To surrender one's sense of doership, to recognise that one's power for action and its success is the Sadguru's who is identical with God, identical with the Supreme. If one has that faith, if one can unhesitatingly offer his doership idea at the altar of this faith then the mind will remain silent and intuned. The giving of the general power of attorney to one's Sadguru in the certainty of his omnipotence and omniscience would therefore be an equally effective method. Then too the mind's movements cease. Where then would be the need for a particular desire thinking it is good, or the necessity for cutting off something else as bad? Because what is given is the best in the judgement of the one in whom faith has been reposed. As for success and failures they do not have any special meaning for faith has taken us to a different dimension of life.

Either way, be it self-enquiry or surrender or continuing both along the way, when one succeeds in in-turning the mind the elixir of life would be experienced. Should we trade it for the tinsels of sensuous joys? Should we care for the fleeting see-saws of joys and sorrows instead of 'Being Still' and experiencing the bliss of the natural state?

The Inundation of Joy

M: It is an inundation; but it is very delightful, the loss of ego in the real Self, the destruction of falsehood, the attainment of Truth.

- Talks with Maharshi and Sat Darshana Bhasya p xxi

Our daily experience is three dimensional. The waking hours with their bustle of activity, pulsating with thoughts, with people, full of things which we call life. We hug its joys and go through its sorrows for we know no better. We keep chasing, unendingly, the pleasure of the senses, afraid to look beyond, afraid to adventure beyond the confines of the mind.

Then we have our daily quota of sleep which overcomes us when the exhausted mind and body demand it. We know little or nothing about this state. How can we know of it when individuality and thoughts are absent? All that we know of this experience is indirect, through recollection. On waking we recall its pleasantness

its refreshing quality, its peace. Yet we would certainly not trade our waking for sleep, for where is vitality and vibrancy in it?

We also have our dream experience in which we have all that we enjoy or suffer while waking. However, there is often a confusion of identity. A king may be a beggar in his dream moving from door to door piteously begging for alms. A virile youth may be an ailing heart patient living in constant dread of death, kept alive by a pacer. The solution for dream problems are found within the dream's framework. Neither the king's wealth nor the youth's health can be transferred from the waking person to the dreaming person whose identity is different. Yet on waking we look down on what we have dreamt about calling it 'unreal' in contrast to our waking experience which we are so sure is 'real'. Some go through these three states with their illusory experiences, content or discontent, happily or sour-facedly. Can there be anything more tragic than the ignorance of the ignorant who do not look beyond the immediate and waste the wonder that is life?

For the fortunate the Sadguru steps in. One cannot rationally understand why, among the teeming millions, they have been chosen. Does it matter when we are the recipients of the Sadguru's grace which opens up the gates of knowledge? Ramana is the epitome of the timeless wisdom which he directly experienced. Not only was he reveling in a constant state of bliss but he also broadcast its secret.

What is Ramana talking about in the statement quoted at the outset? What is the joy which inundates when truth is attained? What is the real Self? What is the loss of ego? All this is Greek and Latin to us. For, our experience is confined to a mental framework. What lies beyond or behind is unknown to us. We do not know. Nor have we cared to find out. But then should we not care? Should we not try to find out?

When Ramana refers to the real Self and attainment of it, what is he drawing our attention to? Ramana's use of the words 'real Self' and 'attainment' is for the limited purpose of communicating the idea that one should seek to find out what one really is. One has to become aware of that bliss which is naturally ours. The purpose is to take a good look at our assumptions so that our life may be radically changed, so that we may tap our inner strength.

The first necessity is to cut away from ego's debilitating suggestions, that Self-knowledge is difficult, it needs time, it needs preparatory purification, it requires renouncing of home, of activity and so on. For, impurities and lack of strength of mind and mental dissipations have come about due to 'avichara', out of the failure to enquire who we really are. These are encrustations of the ego which itself will fall 'crest-fallen' once an enquiry about it is afoot. Integral to this step is the remembrance of the essential purity of our nature.

The next step in the process of self-discovery is patience and trust in Ramana's timings. The impatience for instant or speedy results, typified by the case of the ladies who requested Ramana to bestow Self-knowledge immediately as they had to catch a train, is often one's undoing. Though for convenience of understanding we say Self-Knowledge is the goal, it is pre-existing. Only the awareness of it is not there. This is what is increasingly fostered and secured through self-enquiry.

The next step is to stay with the experience. The mind, used as it is to doing something or the other, to be active for achievement, sometimes misses out on the 'sattvic' mood of peace when it is on. It comes unnoticed and one has to be sensitive and hold on to it and not lose it due to lack of experience or under the usual impulse of getting on with the job. For here the job is altogether of a different kind. It is the opening up of the heart. The arteries which have been hardened and clogged by many lives lived in exclusive self-concern are being opened up, rejuvenated. Ramana would say that spiritual life is the flowering of love. When the limited idea of looking only for what is good for oneself and the attitude 'What is there in this for me?' ceases, then this expansion of the heart happens automatically.

As we steadfastly pursue self-enquiry we get exposed to the bliss of the Self. For self-enquiry itself makes the mind dead gradually. One might wonder what is gradual death of the mind. Is not the mind's death instantaneous? Does not its sudden death happen the moment the mind merges in its source? It is not so since the thrust of tendencies would be pushing the mind out. However, these spells of merger would purify the mind increasingly, and the mind would be on the way to its ultimate death. Here we

might remember, Ramana has explained to Kapali Sastri that the death of the mind only means its complete purification resulting in its capacity to reflect consciousness fully, without distortions born of limited identification. This stage of going in, enjoying the natural bliss, and moving out again in the world of senses could perhaps be termed 'turiya' or the fourth dimensional experience. For, in this state one has gone beyond the three mental modes which cause the normal three dimensional experience, but has not yet become stabilised in it.

Gradually the dipping in of the mind is almost instantaneous, till it does not rise again. When this happens we are in the fifth dimension, 'turiya atita' a joyous state where contact with objects, activity, thoughts - nothing can disturb that fullness of existence. Then the statement of Ramana quoted in the beginning ceases to be mere words, ceases to be merely intellectual. The bliss of steady Self-awareness becomes one's own experience.

Talk 100 (Excerpt)

Later Sri Bhagavan quoted from Kaivalya some verses and explained:

A

(Kaivalya – approach 1)

The Supreme (Knowledge Absolute; witness; the Self-shining core; the Heart; the Self)

APPEARS TO GIVE RISE TO

the individual [the jiva, the knower consisting of vritti (the mode of mind stuff) and reflected light, in the latent form]

APPEARS TO GIVE RISE TO

the internal intellect and the outgoing mind [buddhi and manas consisting of vritti and reflected light,

as a sprout, this is the antahkarana (the inner organ)]

APPEARS TO GIVE RISE TO

(1) modes taking shape as objects

and

(2) common knowledge

together

APPEAR TO

form the world as we perceive it.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: These suggestions about creation are indicated to make clear that one should turn inward from the outer world and senses and dive deep beyond the inner world of thought and the inner instruments of perception of mind-intellect-ego to rediscover one's natural happiness. Self-enquiry relentlessly helps one let go of the worlds and instruments of perception till the enquiry and enquirer merge in the Supreme.

Q: But all my challenges are in the sensory world. My mother, a great intellect, is coming for a stay and I am feeling weak and dis-empowered about how to give her comfort in our present net of relationships as a family.

A: Turning inward is empowerment. But, it is not empowerment against something. It is empowerment independent of all non-self. Do not sell it short to win a situation or fame in the world. Stay empowered. That is why such empowerment is called as Peace. Bhagavan says that the inward turned self is Peace and outward turned is Power. Be at Peace. Be.

Talk 100 (Excerpt)

B

(Kaivalya – approach 2)

The Self (Pure Knowledge)

APPEARS TO GIVE RISE TO

the jiva (pramatr = the knower)

APPEARS TO GIVE RISE TO

the intellect and the mind (pramana = perception)

APPEARS TO GIVE RISE TO

(1) modes seen as objects

AND

(2) knowledge (phala chaitanya)

The modes of mind take shape as external objects and the light reflected on the modes illumines the objects. Now neglecting the modes of mind, look for the light illumining them. The mind becomes still and the light remains self-shining. The undulating mind (i.e., the mind associated with rajas = activity and tamas = darkness) is commonly known as the mind. Devoid of rajas and tamas, it is pure and self-shining. This is Self-Realisation. Therefore, the mind is said to be the means for it.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Vedanta and Kaivalya teach to hold the light that illumines the modes of the mind and that light is oneself. They are for those mature seekers who have renounced individual karma and are enquiring about the common sorrow or bondage of all. Bhagavan teaches that the same light of consciousness is present between two thoughts. When a thought arises, do not pursue it but ask 'For whom is this thought?' It is for me, the light. Who am I? Hold the light with the light. This will burn all individual karma or ignorance and take one to question the modes of the mind - For whom is the waking state? For whom is the dream? For whom is deep sleep? "Who am I?" will burn all individual karma and the common

bondage of all through the “modes of the mind” till it merges itself and the seeker in the self-shining light of Self Realisation.

Q: You mean to say that Bhagavan, by teaching self-enquiry, has removed the difference between the individual problems and collective problem like birth and death?

A: Yes. Bhagavan teaches that everyone, whether householder or sannyasi is seeking this limitless happiness beyond the mind experienced by everyone in deep-sleep where there is no mind. The difference between helping oneself and serving others is removed. Be.

Talk 100 (Excerpt)

C

(Kaivalya – approach 3)

Pure Consciousness (said to be the Eternal or the Ever-present Witness)

APPEARS TO GIVE RISE TO

(antahkarana)

Inner organ + the reflected light (jiva; pramtr)

APPEARS TO GIVE RISE TO

modes together with the light are said to be prameya = the known;
of these, the objects are gross and the light is called phala chaitanya.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Bhagavan encapsulates this approach in verse 16 of Upadesa Saram. Drishya vaaritam chittamaatmanah chitva darshanam tatva darshanam. Withdrawing from attending to the “seen” and “known” objects, when attention is turned to know itself (Who am I?), there is knowledge of that self-shining light of Pure Consciousness which is knowledge of the Supreme Being. Simple. Direct. Profound. Know yourself. Be the Ever-present, Pure Consciousness. Be.

Talk 100 (Excerpt)

D

(Kaivalya – approach 4 - Gunas)

In the jiva the inner organ (antahkarana) consists of -

Satva (knowledge, light)

Rajas (modes of mind, intellect, mind)

Tamas (gross objects, world)

Similarly for the cosmos:

The Cosmic mind (the Eternal Being)

Satva (Isvara - the Lord of the universe)

Rajas (the individual jiva)

Tamas (the universe).

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Here, Kaivalya perceives the whole creation from the basic division of individual mind and cosmic mind. The Gunas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas representing purity of being, movement - action and inertia - dullness. The individual remains individual only till he or she considers his separate problems and achievements as special. When the individual arrives at the root problems faced by all jeevas like birth, death and ego, the enquirer reaches the rajasic state of "jiva" in the Cosmic Mind. The enquiries now take the enquirer to the one source of individual and cosmic mind. Self-enquiry does not differentiate between the individual and cosmic mind. It burns thoughts arising as individual karma/ ignorance and out of cosmic karma/ Maya. It relentlessly takes the sadhaka to the One Source.

Q: You mean to say that the doctorate I have received and the problems I face are not mine?

A: Even science has learnt that the linguistic ability in humans has evolved over hundred thousand years ago. One energy has constantly worked as the support to bring knowledge of language, engineering, medicine and other branches of learning. How is your doctorate "yours"? All achievements and problems are common. Then one has access to the Cosmic mind and it's empowerment to take enquiry towards liberation.

Talk 100. (Excerpt)

E

(Kaivalya – approach 5 – Maya)

Brahman

IS THE SAME AS

Sat

Being, called

the adhara = the substratum

IS THE SAME AS

Chit (Knowledge) &

Ananda (Bliss)

APPEAR TO GIVE RISE TO

(something) Called visesha (particular) = differentiation by maya

APPEARS TO GIVE RISE TO

(1) the natural (the universe or the world)

(2) artificial (multiplicity of objects)

Maya cannot obscure Sat, but it does obscure Chit and Ananda, making them appear as particulars.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: In Sri Arunachala Ashtakam, Bhagavan says that Maya or Self Ignorance is a power which is not apart from the Self. It depends on the Self for its existence. Here, Kaivalya explains that Maya obscures the knowledge and bliss thus creating a natural world of objects (Ishwara srishti) and a feeling of self-importance for each separate jeeva by which each jeeva creates many artificial experiences (jeeva srishti). The self-importance makes the individual ignorantly take credit for its 'achievements' and suffer pain for its 'failures'. Self-enquiry prevents the enquirer from using the knowledge or bliss element in each thought and makes one seek its Existence element. Each thought depends on the "I" for its existence. By letting go of each thought one let's go of the Maya in each thought which appears to give particular knowledge and particular bliss. Self-enquiry takes the enquirer beyond jeeva srishti (elimination of doership), Ishwara srishti and Maya. By holding the "I", one transcends all thoughts including Maya itself till the Self-Luminous Self stands revealed as the ground, the Brahman.

Q: When liberating Mother Alagammal, Bhagavan describes that Amma's consciousness is experiencing various events in different worlds before merging in the Self. Kanchi Periyavaal once describes that he liberated a jeeva from seven rebirths. Are all these Ishwara Srishti and Maya?

A: Yes. In the Self, the doership of Ishwara and Maya stand absorbed.

Talk 100. (Excerpt)

F

(Kaivalya - approach 6 - snake and rope)

A rope corresponds to

Being; the substratum

in dim light maya illusion

APPEARS

as a snake

the artificial particular

as shown in E.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Here the difference between Ishwara Srishti and Jeeva Srishti is removed. If multiplicity of Srishti (snake) is seen, one cannot perceive the substrate Being (rope). If the substrate Being (rope) is perceived, the multiplicity of Srishti (snake) is not seen. All problems, conflicts, emotions, ignorance and doubts vanish in Self Attention. The Silence of the Self before a single thought is created is felt as the "I-I" here and now. No here. No now. Only the Being - the rope.

Q: From my perspective as a bound individual in a bound, created world, what is the use of Satsang with one who is established in the Ajata or Unborn Self for whom this creation is not?

A: Peace. Absolute empowerment irrespective of circumstance.

Q: In Brahma Muhurtham, when the Prakruti keeps my senses inward turned, I am with the Unborn Self. When Prakruti turns my senses outward, I am helplessly bound. What am I to do?

A: Can the Prakruti be independent of the Self. Practice holding the "I-I" till the Unborn Self is experienced Naturally.

Talk 100 (Excerpt)

G

(Kaivalya - approach 7 - ignorance.)

Sat = Being = the substratum (Adhaara). From this proceeds the particular, namely the Jeeva who veiled by ignorance identifies himself with the gross body. Here ignorance stands for not

investigating the Self. Jeeva is in fact knowledge only; yet owing to ignorance the wrong identity with the gross body results.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: In this approach, Maya or collective ignorance is not posited. The concept of Ishwara is not available as support. As soon as ignorance arises, one becomes the fragmented consciousness that is identified with the gross body. The onus on sadhana to drop this identity on the part of the sadhaka is multiplied in this approach.

Q: In the earlier approach, the concept of Maya covered all Jeeva(s). You also say that linguistic ability was generated nearly fifty thousand years ago and each Jeeva ignorantly claims language as its ability. Nothing of what I possess is "mine". Why is it that in this approach that support is not given? As an off-shoot, why is socialism which recognises common property fails over capitalism, where personal property is valued?

A: There was famine in a country. The capital city was a dairy-farming community. The king had asked each farming family to drop a barrel of milk in a common container for redistribution in the villages. Each family brought water thinking how will one barrel matter. The common pool was water. Finally, individual sadhana to find the Sat is the key. Moreover, any application of the inner-path truth for benefit or governance in the sensory world will always be imperfect to some extent. Turn Inward.

Q: In studying the linguistic ability in humans, it is found that all linguistic ability was loaded at one moment about fifty thousand years ago. What humans use today as language is a miniscule portion of that ability. A boy or girl from a Brazilian forest-tribe cut off from civilization for 20,000 years is able to learn equally well as a modern child. They find that there has been no "evolution" or "change for better" in that inner linguistic ability itself. Here they hit the "I do not know" wall as to the Source of that linguistic ability suddenly opened up in a brain sufficiently tuned by evolution. Is there any answer to that quest in the Self?

A: Whether evolution is studied from the perspective of "gross body of DNA" or "subtle body of linguistic ability and thought" it presumes a change for the better. It is no wonder that the intellect which was studying DNA evolution is baffled when Linguistic Ability enters the field. They were studying a progressive evolution in DNA. Thought

introduces the scope for change for worse too. For whom is this change for better or worse? The Self has no “better” or “worse”. It is.

Talk 100. (Excerpt).

H

(Kaivalya – approach 8 - permeating Self)

Again, the Master illustrated it with the red-hot iron ball (taptayah-pindavat).

A ball of iron + fire together form red-hot iron ball. The World + Chit = (Pure Knowledge) together form the Jeeva = the individual.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: In Ramana Sadguru song, which is part of Sri Ramana Stuti Panchakam, it is said “Pindam meviya naadane Brahmaandam meviya naadanaai kandu ninru kanindul Ekame kaatchiyaa kali kondavan”. “Who is Ramana Sadguru? He is the one who realises that the light of Pure Consciousness permeating the body (like the fire permeating the heated iron ball) is the same light of Pure Consciousness permeating all creation. Ramana Sadguru is the one who realises this vision of oneness and rejoices eternally in that knowledge”.

This approach is the closest to Bhagavan’s teachings. He would not refer to any collective truth. To Bhagavan there is no “other”. Find that light of Pure Consciousness within and you find that Self which permeates all. The Self alone IS. To realise this, Self-enquiry is the direct path.

Q: How can this teaching which employs the highest in Kaivalya and which is very difficult even for sannyasis be taught to the common seeker?

A: Bhagavan refers to the common experience of deep-sleep which consumes all objective experience and where each one renounces everything including one’s own body and yet is in unadulterated happiness. Bhagavan teaches that each one can experience this “no mind, no body” state of Pure Consciousness even in the waking through Self-enquiry.

rUpiNyarUpiNyubhayAtmika cha
 muktistrirUpEti vidO vadanti
 idam trayam yA vivinaktyaham dheeh
 tasyAh praNAshah paramArtha muktih || 40 ||

**Having a form, having no form, and of the nature
 of both kinds,
 Liberation is of three forms, thus, the knowers say.
 The complete destruction of that “I”-notion
 (conception of individuality) that examines
 (ponders) this triad
 Is the Supreme Truth of Liberation.**

N.: By the destruction of the falsely assumed individuality, the supreme Truth of Liberation is known directly. If the Truth is not known by actual direct experience, conceptions of liberation are made within the mind. Reference is made to “with form,” “without form,” and “of both kinds.” Jivanmukti and videhamukti, liberation in life and liberation after death, are sometimes described as with form and without form. Others consider liberation with form and without form as having a vision of God and of seeing God as formless. There is also the definition of liberation in the context of videhamukti, liberation at the time of death. Some consider liberation in the context of when the body drops away, thinking that the realized one remains “with form,” “without form,” or “with and without form.” Those who favor “with form” say, “He remains in some subtle way.” Others say, “No, he merges with the formless, like space.” Still others say, “No, he merges with space, but some subtle essence remains in order to bestow compassion and to do good for other living beings who are still caught in samsara.”

The Maharshi says that, with all these conceptions of liberation, the thing to do is eliminate the false notion of “I.” If the “I” disappears, who is to be with the form, without the form, and with and without the form? If the “I” disappears, what is the

difference between Liberation in life and Liberation after death? If the false individuality is gone, the only Truth that exists is Being, and that is the Truth of Liberation. Therefore, in the final verse composed by the Maharshi in this text, he has summed up the practice and the highest truth regarding Realization. The practice is to discern that individuality is merely a false assumption and is utterly unreal. That is its destruction. The complete destruction of the “I”-notion is the practice. He has simultaneously revealed the Truth regarding Realization, which is “I”-less. By the power of Self-Knowledge, eliminate the false assumption of individuality, and you will know everything that there needs to be known about Reality and about Liberation. It will be self-evident, Self-known, and doubtless, for it is the differenceless state.

Variety and difference are the characteristics of the assumption of individuality. Where there is the “I,” there are “many” regarding “this,” even if the “this” is the consideration of Liberation. Where there is no “I,” there is no difference. From the position of the “I,” one can imagine degrees of liberation, stages within liberation, and kinds of liberation. Where there is no “I,” which alone is Liberation, such imaginings are cast far away.

Liberation while still apparently endowed with a body is referred to as *jivanmukti*. Liberation that is disembodied is referred to as *videhamukti*. Liberation conceived of as *videhamukti* with the retention of some subtle form not physically seen through the senses in order to grace and bless devotees is “with and without form.” In this manner, Liberation can be considered in three different ways, but the Maharshi says that the complete destruction of the “I” that ponders this triad and that conceives of liberation while alive, liberation after death, and liberation after death but still retaining some form in order to benefit sentient beings, reveals the Truth about Liberation. All of these ideas are conceived from the perspective of the “I” and are not true. The “I” is not true, and it is the complete destruction, the obliteration, of that “I”-ness that alone is Liberation.

The individual does not become liberated; the individual does not become realized. Realization is Liberation from the individual; it is not liberation of the individual. Understand like this, and you will find this Liberation in yourself.

saddarshanam drAviDa-vang-nibaddham
maharShiNA shree ramaNEna shuddham
prabandham utkrShtam amartya vANyAm
anUdya vAsiShTa munir vyatAneet|| 41 ||

**Saddarsanam composed in the Dravida language,
By Maharshi Sri Ramana pure,
The composition excellent (highest, best), in the
immortals' language
Spoken afterward by Vasishta Muni was composed.**

sattattva sAram saraLam dadhAnA
mumukshu IOKAya mudam dadAnA
amAnuShashshree ramaNeeya vANimayUkha
bhittir muni vAg vibhAti|| 42 ||

**Giving honestly (straight-forwardly, sincerely) the
Essence of the Truth of Being (Existence),
Giving joy to the world of seekers of Liberation,
The divine (not a man) Sri Ramana's (delightful,
agreeable) voice,
The rays of Light, as a wall-like surface (as a
fragment),
the Muni's speech (words) shines.**

N.: Dravida is Tamil. The language of the immortals is Sanskrit. Muni and Vasishta Muni, here, refer to Ganapati. Ganapati says that what he has written is like a reflecting wall that catches the original Light of the Maharshi's teachings. The word for "a wall-like, reflecting surface," can mean "like a fragment." So, a fragment of this Light is in Ganapati Muni's own words. Thereby, he gives all credit to the Sadguru, recognizing the Maharshi as the original Fullness and all the Light. Extolling the text, he says that it reveals the essence of the Truth regarding Being in a very straightforward and honest manner, making it the ideal text of the highest instruction for those who seek Liberation. The Maharshi's Truth is the clearest of the clear.

He humbly indicates that the words he has used to translate this into Sanskrit act like a fragment of the glorious Light of Sri Ramana, like a reflecting medium that shines with the Light from the original, which is Sri Ramana, His Voice and His Silence.

He calls the Maharshi's voice, "the divine." "Amanusa" literally means "not a man" and can mean "divine." He addresses the Maharshi as not being a man. The Sadguru should never be mistaken to be a person. Those who follow his teaching are awakened from their own personhood. You are not men and women. You are That. The teaching makes this abundantly clear. You are not a body. You are not a mind. You are not any form whatsoever. You are That, the eternal Absolute. From where could such Knowledge come, except from One who abides as That, and as That alone? So, he says that the Maharshi is not a man. This does not mean that he is of a nature different from us, but it would be absurd to think that he is a man. That which is called, "God," that which is realized as "Brahman," that which is known as the "Supreme Self," is He, in all its perfect fullness, and He causes us to realize the same.

The comments given here are to be considered as reflections of that Light.

Thus the Saddarsanam Svaticavaram.

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

In the Temple of Being, the Space of Consciousness,

Om Sri Ramanarpanamastu

This completes Master Nome's reflections on Bhagavan Ramana's 'Forty Verses on Reality'. Once again thank Master Nome and SAT – Society for Abidance in Truth, California for sharing this invaluable commentary with readers of 'The Ramana Way'.

-Editor

Shri Arunachala Ashtakam

G Kameshwar

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

(Verse-6 Continued... Part 3)¹

Verse-6

uNToru poruLaRi voLiyuLa mEnee
 yuLatuni lalatilA vaticaya catt
 ninRaNu nizhanirai ninaivaRi vOTE
 nikazhvinaic cuzhalilan ninaivoLi yATi
 kaNTana nizhaRcaka vicittira muLLun(g)
 kaNmutaR poRivazhi puRattumor cillA
 ninRiTu nizhalpaTa nikararuT kunRE
 ninRiTa cenRiTa ninaiviTa vinRE.

Verse rendering:

*Aye, there exists One substance/reality,
 (namely) You
 Who are, in reality,
 Consciousness-Effulgence-Heart alone!*

*(And) In you,
 As non-distinct from you
 Exists
 A wondrous/indescribable power!*

*And from that (power)
 By the light of consciousness
 Manifests,
 Via the (reflected) light of the mind-mirror
 A swarm of atom-like shadowy thoughts
 in the swirl of predestiny;
 And like a lens projected movie-picture;*

¹ The previous part was carried in the Jul-Aug 2021 issue of Ramana Way

Inside,
 (in one's mind),
And outside,
 by way of the eyes and other sense-organs;
The world-picture is projected, seen,
 In the manner of moving pictures
 on a (cinema) screen!

O Mountain of Grace!
Whether they (these pictures)
 Stay, as appearance,
 Or go away,
They exist not
As apart from thee!

Prose rendering:

Oh yes, there exists One substance/reality; (namely) You! You, who are, in reality, Consciousness-Effulgence-Heart alone! (And) In you, there exists a wondrous/indescribable power, which is non-distinct from You! And from that (power), by the light of consciousness, there rises a swarm of atom-like shadowy thoughts, whirling in the swirl of prArabdhA karma (predestiny), manifesting (are illumined) by the (reflected) light of the mind-mirror. And thereby, like a lens projected movie-picture, the world-picture is projected, seen (by the mind); both, inside one's mind, and outside, by way of the eyes and other sense-organs. This is in the manner of moving pictures on a (cinema) screen!

O Mountain of Grace, whether they (these pictures) manifest, or cease to be seen, all this is, in reality, not distinct from you, who are the sole reality/existence (just as movie pictures, which do not exist as different from the screen on which they are projected).

Notes:

This is a very profound verse, where Bhagavan is sharing His direct experience of the great secret that underlies all existence and experience. In this one verse, Bhagavan has stated

the essence of all Vedanta. For the great benefit of all seekers, Bhagavan Himself has provided a detailed explanation of this verse, which has been recorded in 'Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi'.²

(In the April-2021 and the July-Aug 2021 Issues of Ramana Way, we saw the first and second part of the above explanation. In the current issue, Bhagavan's explanation concludes.)

Bhagavan Ramana explains:

... Now, what is this 'I-thought' (the ego)? Is it the subject or the object, in the scheme of things?

Inasmuch as it witnesses all other objects in the waking and dream states, or at any rate we think that it does so, it must be considered to be the subject. On realising the Pure Self, however, it will be an object only.

Whose is this 'I-thought' (the ego)? This investigation forms the *vichara*. 'I-thought' and 'this'-thought are both emanations from the same light. They are related to *rajoguna* and *tamoguna* respectively. In order to have the Reflected Light (pure *satva*), free from *rajas* and *tamas* it must shine forth as 'I-I', unbroken by 'this'-thought. This pure state momentarily intervenes between sleep and waking. If prolonged it is cosmic consciousness, or even *Isvara*. This is the only passage to the Realisation of the Self-shining Supreme Being.

Again there are two kinds of experiences in deep sleep as recollected after waking, that is, "I slept happily, unaware of anything". Happiness and ignorance are the experiences. Thus we see the Power modified as (1) *avarana* (darkness) and (2) *vikshepa* (diversity). The mind is the result of *vikshepa*.

(Note: Here ends the explanation of Bhagavan that is given in 'Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi'. 'vacanAmRitam'³, the Tamil translation of 'Talks' contains some additional information, related to the cinema projection analogy, as below.)

2 Talk 323, dated 7 January 1937

3 'Vachanamritam' is the Tamil rendering of 'Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi', done by Sri Viswanatha Swami

In a regular cinema theatre, we see that many things are needed for projection of the film. This includes the projecting machine, the person operating the projector, the film-roll, the cinema projector lens, the projector-bulb needed for lighting etc. All these are outside the screen on which the movie is projected. However, here (in the world-theatre), there is just one all-capable power, wondrous and indescribable, which functions as all these different items and projects the whole *jeeva-Ishvara-jagat* (living beings, God, world) scene on the underlying substratum of *chaitanya* (Consciousness) from which this power is non-apart.

The same fact has been expressed by Bhagavan, clearly, concisely, in the first *venpA* of his composition ‘*uLLatu nARpatu*’ ...

*nAmulakam kANTaLA nAnAvAn cattiyuLa
vOrmutalai yoppa lorutalaiE – nAmavruc
cittiramum pArppAnum cErpaTamu mAroLiyu
mattanaiyumU tAnA mavan*

*Since we perceive the world,
The notion
That there must be some Primal Substance
Endowed with varied power,
(One, that has the power
to appear as many)
Is surely acceptable to all.*

*This scenery of names and forms,
The one who sees this scene,
The screen on which all this is seen,
The very light which illumines all these,
Truly all of this is He!⁴*

4 Translation adapted from ‘Ramana Darshana Trayi’ by G Kameshwar, published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, 2016

Keen self-attentiveness is the key

- Like sinking wanting to see something that has fallen in water, sinking within restraining speech and breath by a sharpened mind it is necessary to know the place where the ego, which rises before, rises. Know.

- Verse 28 of *Ulladu Narpadu*

- Leaving the body like a corpse, not saying 'I' by mouth, investigating by an inward sinking mind where one rises as 'I' alone is the path of knowledge. Instead, thinking 'not this, I am that' is an aid; is it investigation?

- Verse 29 of *Ulladu Narpadu*

- Just as pearl-divers, tying stones to their waists and sinking, pick up pearls that are found at the bottom of the ocean, so each one, sinking deep within oneself with *vairāgya*, may obtain the pearl of oneself.

- Paragraph 11 of *Nan Ar?*

The Loving Glance

Lakshmi Subramaniam

A Telephonic Interview with Smt. Lakshmi Subramaniam

How Bhagavan gave us this interview is a sweet story. It is in a way also the record of one whose life journey was across three T's - Tindivanam, Tiruvannamalai, Tippecanoe - Mullangudi Sitaraman Rajagopalan, 86, who passed away in USA on January 4, 2021. 'Maybe the young boy who studied at the American Arcot Mission High School, Tindivanam, and had darshan of Ramana Maharshi at Tiruvannamalai, did not expect to become a permanent resident of the United States in more ways than one - his green card arrived just a few days before his death, and his cremation as per Hindu custom was at the Tippecanoe Memory Gardens...' Was a note from his son, Swami.

What his son wrote on twitter, became the seed of this interview. Sri Swami noted, '... my father passed away in the US two weeks ago. Yesterday was his Subha sveekaram. He wanted us to mention that he spent his childhood in Ramanasramam in the 1940s in his obituary and it was mentioned so...' In answer to a question from our associate editor, G.Kameshwar, Sri Swami wrote back, 'In his last year, he spoke a lot about Tindivanam where they went to school, Tiruvannamalai, Arunachaleswara, how he and his sister were dropped to Ramanasramam every Saturday at 9.00 am and picked up at 5.00 pm, what songs they were taught etc.' Then he added, 'His memory was not so good, but his sister, who is 90 years old and lives in Delhi remembers many more details.'

And that is how we got the interview with Smt. Lakshmi Subramaniam who sweetly shared her memories of Bhagavan's silent magnetic presence and his loving glance.

S: Hello!

L: Hello ...

S: Namskaram amma, I am calling from Ramana Kendra in Bangalore.

L: Ah... yes, please, tell me ... very happy to hear from you.

S: Kaaji gave me your number. Do you know who Kaaji is?

L: I know ... I know ... of course I know him very well... I only brought him up till he was eight years old.

S: He is my sister's husband's online friend. That's how I got your number. He said that you are his father Rajagopal's elder sister and that his father and you have seen Bhagavan when you were young. I wanted to ask you about that.

L: Good... are you a Ramana devotee?

S: Yes. We run a Ramana Centre at Bangalore. It is called Ramana Maharishi Centre for Learning.

L: There is one Ramana Centre in Delhi too.

S: Yes, there is a Ramana Kendra in Delhi also. We used to live in Delhi till 1977 and were closely associated with the Delhi Kendra. Now, I wanted to speak with you about Bhagavan.

L: Certainly. It is a great joy to listen to someone speak about him or to speak about Bhagavan.

S: When did you see Bhagavan?

L: Funnily enough, we used to live in Tiruvannamalai, for more than seven years from maybe 1942 or 1943 to 1950. I completed my higher secondary schooling there. Even my eleventh grade I studied at Tiruvannamalai. My father was working as a health officer there.

S: Oh, I see. What was his name?

L: My father's name was Seetharaman. My entire family lived there.... My parents and my brothers and sisters... Only my elder brother was studying in Madras at that time.

We used to live somewhat close to the temple... I forget the name of that area... about half an hour's walking distance from the temple. The government had given a 'Traveller's Bungalow' for my father as our residence. We used to stay there.

My mother loved Tiruvannamalai... in fact, she was almost mad about the place. My brother had issues with his eyes, he couldn't see properly. When he was a small child, he didn't have any problem in his eyes. But after a few years this problem developed. Then someone told us to go to Tiruvannamalai and do pradakshina around the hill for him to be cured. Since then my mother was eager to go to Tiruvannamalai. We lived in Tindivanam at that time. Normally my father used to get a transfer only once every two years. By sheer luck, within two weeks of my mother wanting to go to Tiruvannamalai, my father got posted there. My mother was extremely thrilled and happy at the turn of events.

Before we came to Tiruvannamalai, many treatments had been tried for my brother's eyes. But there had been no effect. In fact they had adverse effects. One unbelievable incident happened as soon as we went to Tiruvannamalai. We had been asked to go around the hill. After doing the pradakshina, we came back home and went to bed. The next morning my brother woke up shouting and calling out to my mother. She ran to him and so did all of us, worried. To our amazement he was actually shouting that he could see clearly.

S: That is wonderful.

L: Sadly, my brother is no more now. I wish my brother had lived for some more years. But when he lost his wife, he became totally dejected. They were very close to each other. He was 87 years old and in good health. One day he complained of breathlessness and soon died that's all. Kaaji is his son.

S: Yes. As I told you it was he who gave me your phone number. From what you told me I understand that your brother miraculously regained his lost eyesight the very next day after all of you came to Tiruvannamalai, isn't it?

L: Yes. I was in the ninth standard then. He was in sixth grade. My mother used to constantly wail that his eyesight had gone. As I told you, one day someone had come home, maybe it was my maternal uncle... I don't remember. He suggested that my parents take my brother to Tiruvannamalai and go around Arunachala Hill. My mother wanted to go immediately. But my father did not get any free time from work, plus there were a lot of kids at home. We were ten siblings at home. My younger siblings were really small children and the last one was still a baby. So my parents could not leave us and go.

Therefore, when my father got transferred to Tiruvannamalai, my mother cried with happiness. She said 'See how Bhagavan has showed the way!' She told my brother that it is by God's will that he will get his eyes. Until then my brother could not see. The very day we reached we went around the hill. After going around we slept that night. My brother woke us all up early the next morning shouting and screaming that he could see. We couldn't believe it. It was such a great miracle.

S: True. It surely is.

L: My father retired in Tiruvannamalai after four years of service there, but my mother refused to move out of Tiruvannamalai. She had actually prayed for my brother's sake that she would do giri pradakshina for 48 weeks. So, for almost a year she would go around the hill every Tuesday along with my brother. Tiruvannamalai itself is a huge presence in our lives.

Later, when I couldn't go there physically, I kept the picture of Arunachala on a stool and went around the stool thinking of Arunachala.

S: Just thinking of Arunachala and doing the pradakshina is enough.

L: Yes

S: Even if you don't have the photo, it is alright. Just thinking is enough. *Smaranath Arunachalam*, they say. In Chidambaram seeing the Lord is mukti, Chidambaram Darshanam gives liberation. As for Tiruvannamalai, thinking of Arunachala itself will give one mukti.

L: Correct, correct. To see Chidambaram is mukti, to think of Arunachala is mukti...

S: And it is said 'To be born in Tiruvaroor is mukti'.

L: Yes. My native place is Tiruvarur. I, my elder brother, and one of my sisters were born in Tiruvaroor. Rajagopal was born in Mannargudi.

S: Oh, were you born in Tiruvarur?

L: We had three houses in Tiruvarur. Tiruvarur is called Kamalalayam. My grandmother lived there for most of her life. She never wanted to leave Tiruvarur. She always used to chant Kamalamba... Kamalamba... Kamalamba... She used to sing very well. She was uneducated, but even then she used to write in Tamil very well. She used to write letters to her sons. I have stayed in Tiruvarur for many years.

We went to Chidambaram when my father was transferred there. My father has been in many places—Chidambaram, Tindivanam, Velur—he was transferred to many places, even to Andhra Pradesh. This was before India got split into many states. He never stayed in one place for more than two years. He could talk in Telugu, Kannada, etc. Even my mother could speak in

Kannada. My father asked for a transfer to Chidambaram for my grandmother's sake. Because she always wanted to go there. So my father requested a posting of minimum of five years in Chidambaram. The government obliged. My elder brother finished schooling and college when we were there.

My grandmother used to stay with us in Chidambaram. She was a great devotee of Sivagami amman. She has written many songs on Goddess Sivagami. She was very talented—she could sing, draw rangoli intricately and she used to teach dance also. She was my father's mother. She used to be called the singing grandmother.

My mother also loved Chidambaram. She would get up at four in the morning, have a bath in Sivagangai, the temple pond, and would go around the temple complex in her wet clothes. Sometimes she would take me along with her as her escort.

There we used to get up at five in the morning. Sometimes we would bathe right away, sometimes my younger brother Rajagopal and I would go off to the temple just like that too. There used to be a large flower garden there. We would pluck flowers and then give them to the temple priest. The priest would welcome us and give us a glass of coconut water to drink. Then we would have Nataraja darshanam. I love Natarajar and Chidambaram.

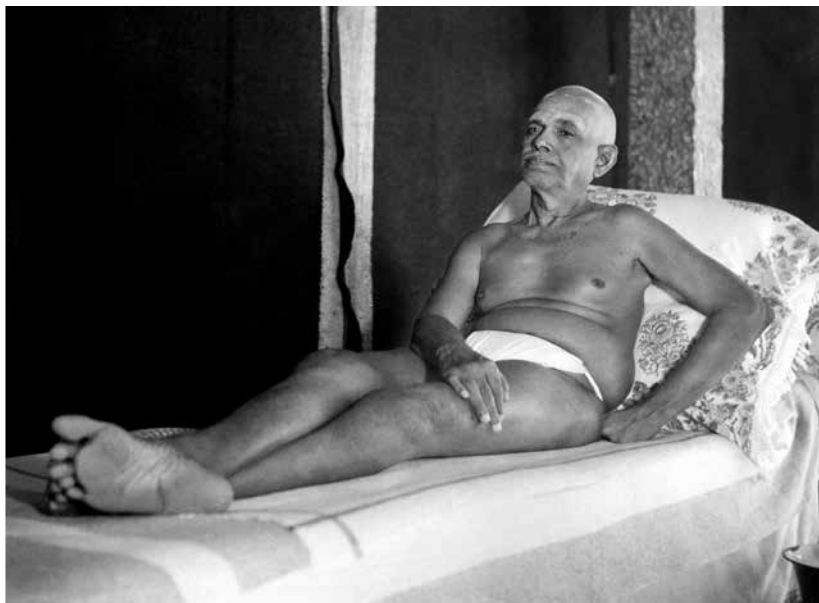
After that, we came to Tiruvannamalai. The fact that my brother got his eyesight in Tiruvannamalai is a miracle. Now many discoveries have been made and there is great progress in the health and medical field, etc. But in those days with no great medical facilities, his eyesight was only going from bad to worse and not getting better. So without any surgery just getting cured by going around the hill was a great miracle.

S: Very true. When did you see Bhagavan?

L: I have seen Bhagavan when I was young. But he never spoke to us. In fact, he never used to speak to anyone. If anyone goes up to him and asks a question, he would answer. I have seen that. Of his own accord he wouldn't address anyone and talk to them. That too I have observed.

During those years there were a lot of foreigners at the Asram, more than Indians. The ladies used to wear white sarees with a simple coloured border. They used to squat on the floor very sweetly, just like us. There were no chairs in the hall. I found

them and their attire very charming and I too had a desire to wear a saree like that. But my mother would say that we don't wear such white sarees. 'You just wear the long skirt and blouse and the traditional half-saree and come along with me', she would chide. So I would go along quietly.



When we went to the Asram, we would always sit there for two or three hours. If we went at nine in the morning, we would be there till 12 in the afternoon. Not once or twice, we have been there to see Bhagavan very many times. But I have not seen him talking.

I remember, when we, my brother and I used to go to see Bhagavan, he always knew that we would come. We could see a light in his eyes, '*kannula oru palich teriyun*'. We could say it was a light of recognition.

S: Ah...

L: He would smile ever so slightly.

S: Very touching.

L: It was very beautiful, his smile, like that of a child.

S: Yes indeed.

L: Have you seen him?

S: Oh, no I have not seen him. My mother has seen him sometime in 1948 or 1949. She must have been around 12 years old at that time.

L: We lived there in Tiruvannamalai till 1950; after that, we moved to Madras. I used to love to go visit Bhagavan. I used to feel bad if I didn't go and see him. But my mother was traditional, she would scold me saying, 'Is this the age to say I am going here, I am going there, I am going to see the Swami, and so on?' My father wouldn't object though... because there was always a peon who could accompany us. In fact he would say, 'Let the children go. It will serve as a walk. It's good for them.'

S: Did your brother also come with you to the Asram regularly?

L: Yes, he always used to follow me wherever I went. My brother never used to go anywhere without me. I used to hold his hand wherever we went. He lived with me for 40 years... My brother came to Delhi when he was 20 years old and took up a job here. Then he has stayed with us. After marriage also he stayed only with me. Later on, he moved to Bombay when he changed his job. My brother's wife died two years ago. He died six months ago.

S: Yes. I learnt about it. Your daughter Gowri has also written a note about him saying, 'He was my mom's younger brother and lived with us until he got married and had 2 children of his own. Have fond memories of riding with him pillion on his Vespa, him singing joyously, even if out of tune and his own crazy lyrics.' Before your brother passed away, apparently, he had instructed his son Swami (Kaaaji) to say in his obituary column that he was a Ramana devotee. So his love for Bhagavan was obviously very deep. Did you and your brother visit Bhagavan after school every day?

L: No. We used to go to the Asram on the weekends when the peon was free to take us. My mother would never send us alone.

S: So you would go with the peon?

L: Sometimes our mother would also accompany us when she had the time. But it was very difficult with the baby. So mostly she would not come.

S: So would you go and simply sit in front of Bhagavan?

L: Yes: We would sit quietly. But we would somehow know that he acknowledged our visit.

S: Were you okay to sit quietly for so long?

L: Yes. There were generally a lot of activities that happened around... there would be people telling slokas. Someone will be reading a book. But we would simply sit quietly.



S: Did you not feel restless? Were you not conscious of the passing of long hours?

L: Not at all. Bhagavan's face shines with such brilliance, we would be watching that.

S: So you would simply sit quietly seeing his face?

L: Yes. Every now and then he would see us. With so much love. We have enjoyed such quiet moments in his presence. Every time we go just his look on us would make us believe that he has blessed us.

He never talked. People would come and just sit in front of him.

Sometimes he would sit under the tree outside the hall and people would gather around him there. We would also sit there under the big tree. There used to be one white peacock. No colours at all, pure white.

He would stroke the peacock and the cow that came to him. At times the cow would come with a





calf. If we were lucky, we would also get to stand next to him and stroke the peacock and the cow. Even then he would not talk to anyone. But a lot of people used to come to him to ask questions and clear their doubts.

My elder brother who was studying at Madras has also visited Bhagavan a few times. He used to say that his teachings were very difficult to understand. Unlike others, he doesn't prescribe or say directly 'do this or do that.' He doesn't tell what is the benefit of doing puja or yoga or taking sannyasa, etc. So my brother always said, 'It's very difficult to understand him'. But my brother was also a devotee. He had immense faith in God.

S: I have heard that Bhagavan used to talk very softly. Is that right?

L: Yes. He used to speak very softly. He was very succinct in his speech. He would finish saying everything in one sentence. Sometimes people will ask questions like what is the relation between the body and the soul... and some long questions they would ask. I can't even repeat such questions... He would finish answering everything in one sentence.

S: ha ha ha

L: We also had great bhakti for Bhagavan. Even now we have his photo in the house. There was always a jothi, a divine light in his eyes. When he sees you, it will be like someone you know very well is seeing you. Such familiarity would be there. When he looks at us like that, my brother and I used to feel very happy. We would tell each other very happily, 'Hey Bhagavan has seen us.' When he saw us, we would do namaste to him with our hands. He would notice us doing that.

In the weekends, my brother and I used to go up the hill to Skandasram too. It used to be quite a difficult trek in those days, an hour's climb up to Skandashram. But we were young then. So it was relatively easier to climb. We never went alone. A peon always used to accompany us. I remember at Skandasram, there was a sort of a big hall built there. There was a big potrait of

Bhagavan placed there as if he was sitting on a peacock. It was a very realistic painting, when you saw it suddenly, you would think that he was actually sitting there on a peacock.

S: Ah!

L: The belief is that Bhagavan is not different from Lord Muruga. At Skandasram we were not allowed to go inside. We would peek in through the grill door. Near the hall on the mountain there was a small pit, just the size of a plate other side. We could put our hands into it. But people used to stand guard and stopped anyone from misusing it. It was a very sacred spring. So we used to take a sip of it with bhakti, with love and devotion, and sprinkle some water on our heads. Because it was sacred we were not allowed to put our mouths directly to the spring and sip or drink the water. They wouldn't let you take the water home either.

S: That water is very sweet.

L: Yes... it is sweet... but not as if you have mixed sugar in it.

S: No, no...

L: It would taste like any mountain spring, naturally sweet and tasty. Maybe like tender coconut water... You would love drinking from it. But they were strict about the usage of the water. No unnecessary wastage was allowed. Recently my daughter visited Tiruvannamalai. I have four daughters and all of them have been to Tiruvannamalai. But I heard from my daughters that Skandasram is not open to the public these days.

S: Yes, the government has made some rules regarding that now.

L: Why?

S: The government has taken up the task of reforestation there. And the locals tend to light fires on the hill with dried grass and wood. So, I think for safety's sake the government doesn't allow people to go up these days.

L: We used to go there every Saturday, without fail.

S: Did your mother also climb up the hill to Skandasram?

L: Yes, yes, why not? My mother was not too old. Must have been less than 45 years of age at that time. I was born when my mother was only 17 years. There was always a baby in the house at any point in time. One of us would go, either I or Rajagopal would accompany my mother. My maternal uncle would scold us about

this. But he was also deeply devoted to Bhagavan. He regularly used to come to Tiruvannamalai once a month, either on a Saturday or Sunday, depending on his schedule. He used to sit in front of Bhagavan and chant Kandasashti Kavacham 36 times.

S: That's marvellous.

L: For my uncle, Murugan was the only God, he would not worship any other God. We used to tease him about it. 'Don't you see all the Gods are one?' he would ask.

S: Oh! Would he say that?

L: 'In my mind I see only that one God', he would say. And he saw Bhagavan as Murugan only.

S: A lot of people saw Bhagavan as the incarnation of Lord Muruga.

L: Yes, my uncle used to say, 'Bhagavan appears as Muruga to me'. There is a photo of Bhagavan when he was young, with his hands on his hips. My uncle worshipped a picture of Muruga just like that one. He gave that picture to me and it is with my younger daughter now.



He was very devoted to Bhagavan. When Bhagavan dropped his body, none of us noticed the shooting star that appeared in the sky at that time, but my uncle saw the jothi, the meteoric light, merging in Arunachala.

S: Was your uncle in Tiruvannamalai then?

L: Not at Tiruvannamalai. Now, where was he then...? (She thinks) I am not sure. Was he at Madras then?

S: Oh, he was elsewhere then, not in Tiruvannamalai?

L: But the jothi, the meteoric light was seen in the sky.

S: Yes, many people saw it from many different places.

L: True, people saw it from many places and all over Tamilnadu. I think my uncle was in Madras then. He was thrilled that he saw that divine light; he kept saying for many days thereafter 'I saw the

jothi! I saw the jothi!' But he was also very sad that Bhagavan had dropped his body.

S: True.

L: He was sad that he won't be able to see Bhagavan anymore. There were mixed feelings

Before his Mahanirvana Bhagavan had a major operation done on his hand, a cancer operation. But he refused to take any anaesthesia during the surgery. He simply said that he didn't want any chloroform and asked the doctors to do the surgery just like that. He simply sat through the entire surgery like that. Of course, we didn't see him during the surgery. He had a big bandage after that, that's all. My father never used to come much. My mother was the one more interested to go to temples and other spiritual places.

These days Bhagavan's videos are being shown on TV.

S: Yes, yes, they are showing clips from the film footage that is available.

L: It's nice to see him walking in the videos. That is how he used to walk. Bhagavan used to eat peanuts often. And he used to eat those very quickly too. Even we have taken some for him a couple of times.

S: We can see how swiftly Bhagavan eats the peanuts, as you are saying, in one of the film footages of Bhagavan.

L: It is very nice that even now we can see all the places he lived in.

S: Yes. I am very happy to have talked to you, amma.

L: Can you please send me one photo of Bhagavan Ramana?

S: Sure. I will definitely send you one.

L: By God's grace, all of us are doing well. I am very happy to have talked about Ramana Bhagavan.

S: Me too amma. Thank you so much.

SIGNIFICANCE OF BHAGAVAN RAMANA

Professor S.K. Ramachandra Rao

We, in this country, have a custom of going on pilgrimages. The kshetra and the tirtha have a peculiar relevance to us and we make periodic visits. Especially when there is a concern that is deep in our hearts we make a pilgrimage. We visit a shrine in order to come back purified. The purpose that a kshetra fulfils is the eradication of some of the dirt and stains that the mind would have acquired during the rest of the time. Even so, the tirtha, the kshetra, has a negative import. It cleanses the individual. It rids the individual of stains that he has acquired. They also say that several tirthas and kshetras are conjointly existing in a saint. A saint is a veritable kshetra of kshetras because he not only cleanses the sins, the dirt and the stains, but he enthuses the individual on the path of spiritual progress. The saint, therefore, is the best among the kshetras-kshetranam uttamam. His teaching is the kshetra that is always present, everywhere present. We are today embarking on a pilgrimage into 'Ramana Tirtha' and we hope not only to get rid of the stains but to have our path chalked out in a clearer way.

This Ramana Tirtha, is an enquiry into the significance of Ramana's teachings to us in our everyday life and with reference to the aspirations that we all have. A great mind must be able to nourish the essential things in life and Bhagavan Ramana did this in his life. He did not encourage any other thought and the attention was focused on the essence. He did not encourage any other discussion. He pointed out only to the essential fact of our life, the 'I' in everyone. The discovery of its true import is phenomenal for the individual. Artha in this sense is substantiality, existence. So this should be nourished in the individual by the atma vichara. Bhagavan Ramana did just this. This is the significance of the Ramana Tirtha.

It is only in sleep (sushupti) that there are no thoughts. But in sleep we don't know that we are sleeping. We are not aware of the 'I' that sleeps. It is only when we wake up that we recall its

blissfulness. It is, however, involuntary in character. We don't really retire to our home, where the thoughts cease to exist altogether. The thoughts only exist at a lower level. The thoughts don't bloom into awareness, but they are there ready to come up, so that the sleep could be disturbed, transformed into a dream state. The call for mauna in the Upanishads and in Bhagavan's teaching is 'You actuate the sushupti state while you are awake'. In jagrat if you are able to experience sushupti the 'I'-ness is gone, the ego is gone. But you are not gone. You are there. But 'Yourhood' is gone and this is all that one could and need achieve in this life.

Bhagavan Ramana had a practical approach to problems and he said 'An individual wants to be happy and this is how all philosophies start'. 'Sukham me bhuyat – Dhukham na-bhuyat'- there is an inborn, untaught, urge. Bhagavan says 'You are moving away from your original intention. In your whole life you are looking for something that you have lost during the day and locating it in the night.' This is no way to gain your end at all. Gain that, having got which the stress would not be there. Having got it, an individual should be able to say that he would have nothing more to aspire for, nothing more to think of, and nothing more to bother about. This is not elsewhere, this is not outside you. This is deep inside you. This is hidden inside you. Because it is there you want to be happy. If this source of the 'I' is not there. If the root of the 'aham' is not there, an individual would not want to be happy at all. It is the root of this 'aham' which is itself happiness. Therefore, the simple teaching is, you get to know what is the source of that 'I'.

The mantra that he taught, the mahavakya that he taught is a mahavakya which is more relevant to us than 'Aham Brahmasmi' 'Tatvamasi' or 'Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma' because they depend on certain sravana, manana, nidhidhyasana, certain samskaras, certain adhikaras. Whereas, the mahavakya taught by Bhagavan Ramana which characterizes his doctrine of the Mahayoga is just this. You try to understand who you are. 'Naan Yaar?' 'Who am I?' is the mahavakya that he gave us. Can there be anything which is more pertinent, more valuable? This 'Naan' must be the subject of enquiry, because we don't know who we are. We think we are this, we are that, we identify the 'I' with the body, the world with the objects outside. But that is not the 'I' at all and there is always the my and mine attached to the 'I'. 'I' is always characterized by an objective reference, the association with the object thought of

and the thought that thinks of the object. This is what we normally confuse for the aham.

But on close reflection, which does not require any erudition, which does not require any adhikara, it would be noticed that the 'I' is more constant than the my and the mine, etc. The my and the mine come and go. They are related to the objects outside. They are bound to time. They are bound with space. But that which is common to all of them, the 'I' which focuses itself in various moods and modes, this 'I' is something that is continuous, something that goes on, not only goes on throughout our waking life, throughout our dream life, but it goes on throughout our sleep life also. Because, if there was a gap in this 'I' we would not go to sleep and get up the same persons. There would be a break in the continuity of the individual. The 'I' has continued to exist, without the my and mine. So 'I' should be the focus of our attention.

In atma vichara the mind must be turned inward. Instead of the mind's natural habit of turning outward the mind is turned inward. And what do we get when the mind is turned inward? That which is beyond the mind. 'Manasa veditavyo'. Without the mind we have no instrument for atma vichara at all. We should learn to discern the aham beyond the mind's ken, beyond the mind's reach and this is a moment of enlightenment. This is indeed sat-darshana or the vision of truth. It is the result of atma-vichara or the search for this 'I', the enquiry 'Who am I?' Bhagavan Ramana pointed to this as the shortest, safest and the most reliable method and because it is 'mahajana-parigrahita' - it is possible for all people - it is within the capacity of all people, this yoga is rightly called the maha-yoga.

THE GREATEST TEACHER THE WORLD HAS SEEN

Professor K. Swaminathan

Ernest Lehrs, the German scientist-philosopher, in his book 'Man And Matter', cites again and again the simple wisdom of the child in Hans Christian Andersen's tale of the emperor's new clothes. The child sees the naked truth hidden from his sophisticated seniors. Stories of Buddha, Jesus and St. Francis appeal straight to children and child-like minds, and their interest

spreads even to grown-ups who are too busy getting and spending to notice the sun and stars.

Saints and sages, who are the most normal people we know and who prefigure the evolutionary possibilities of the race, fill us with deep joy, for they are faithful photographs of our own inmost selves and patterns of the future outward perfection of all mankind. No wonder, Sri Ramana, clad in his koupina (loin cloth), had the air and authority of a solar emperor and his name still ahs the news-value of a cinema star's.

While at school at Madurai, young Venkataraman read the Periapuranam, a verse account of the sixty-three Tamil Saivite saints. Thereafter, he often went to the great temple at Madurai and prayed to Siva to add him too to His line of devotees. At sixteen, like Markandeya, he conquered mortality by meditating on the death of the body and thus realized the immortal Self. Then he was drawn to Tiruvannamalai, where he stayed for fifty-four years, shedding the light of his benign influence on all alike.

When Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni, the great Sanskrit scholar, was living with Maharshi early in 1908, "something like a meteor appeared at dawn, touched Maharshi's forehead, retreated, and came again and touched him six times." Again on the night of April 14, 1950, as Maharshi cast off his body, a bright meteor shooting over the asram was seen by all and sundry all over South India.

In the Golden Jubilee Souvenir, published in 1946 to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Maharshi's arrival at Arunachala, and in the two books Self-Realisation and Maha Yoga, which describe his life and teachings, we get a wealth of views and impressions whose variety reflects the differences of the several writers and the freedom of approach which the Sage not only permitted but welcomed in his devotees and disciples.

Swami Siddeswarananda, M.Oliver Lacombe, Prof. S. Radhakrishnan and Dr. C.G. Jung, among others, bring out authoritatively the traditional aspect of Maharshi's achievement and show how he represents the culmination of the Advaitic thought. The detailed description of the jivanmukta as found in the Upanisads, the Gita, Vivekachudamani and other religious classics was fully borne out by the experience and behaviour of

Sri Ramana. His apt and telling expositions of advaita Vedanta brought its truth home to the simplest folk.

To a question on the relation between karma yoga and nishkama karma, he gave an answer in the manner of a Zen master. Without uttering a word, he walked up the hill, picked up a stick and fashioned it into a walking stick. He gave it to a passerby. Then he said, "The making of the walking stick is karma yoga. The gift of it is nishkama". The Sage did not make it or take it for himself. Similarly, the making and eating of appalams served as an allegory and a sacrament.

Apart from his spoken, acted and written teachings, the simple human friendliness of Bhagavan showed the utter soulabhya, the easy accessibility, of the ultimate Truth when it graciously chooses to embody itself in human form.

Bhagavan was not merely a yogi or a teacher or a saint. He was a Seer, a being comprehending and transcending all these lower categories, and he succeeded in being a friend of every one - sinner or saint, prince or peasant, old or young, learned or ignorant, man or woman, cow, dog, monkey or peacock.

Many years ago, J.C. Molony, I.C.S. noted how his hound preferred the hermit's company to his own. Hundreds of quite ordinary (human) visitors to the asram were treated like intimate friends by Maharshi who took the most sympathetic interest in all their personal affairs: the train they came by, the food they ate, the marriages and deaths, the appointments and promotions that occurred in their families. No one felt that he was unimportant or unwanted. Women and 'harijans' (outcastes) were no less welcome than learned Brahmins to his charmed circle.

If the good teacher is a friend who joins you where you are and leads you up from that point to the mountaintop of Truth, then Maharshi is the greatest teacher the world has seen because he refused to stretch us on a Procrustean bed of creed or conduct. He did not merely concede as a matter of formal politeness, but convinced every one of his devotees and disciples that there are as many distinct ways of reaching the goal as there are unique human individuals.

In his conversation with children, birds and animals, one noticed the outflow of a more active, spontaneous grace because,

no doubt, these unspoilt creatures were more at home in his world of integral joy.

Although in intellectual discussions, Maharshi took his uncompromising stand on Sankara's advaita Vedanta and disclaimed any originality, still he popularized it if he did not invent, a technique of self-enquiry which renders easy and aseptic that essential operation which destroys the mind and releases the spirit from its entanglement with the world and the flesh.

All questions that trouble the seeker are reducible, and should be reduced, to the one question, "Who am I?"

Ultimately, the question "Who am I?" will lead to the discovery and realization of the Self, the winning of the egoless state in which there are no questions and no answers but only silence, only the calm joy of pure being.

Bhagavan has no creed of his own because he is egoless. What we can learn from him is the application to religion of the strictly scientific temper and the method of tentative, disinterested enquiry. All beliefs are to be held only tentatively, never bigotedly, because all beliefs will one day be consumed in the fire of the experience of the Self.

By the steady, disinterested, impersonal use of the question 'Who am I?', the devotee of the seer slowly develops into his disciple. The guru without is slowly merged in the guru within. The knot of the mind, the ego-sense, which binds the real Self to the world and the body, is worn out or cut off and the joyous peace of pure being is attained.

The primary ignorance consists in the identification of our Self with the body. This can and should be got rid of by the tentative acceptance and systematic practice of Bhagavan's method of inquiry, and the result may be seen for oneself by any honest experimenter.

All earlier systems of meditation and spiritual practices are superseded and transcended by this final, all-comprehensive and all-powerful technique of Sri Ramana.

"Self-reliance as commonly understood is ego-reliance and it worsens bondage. Reliance on God alone is true self-reliance because He is the Self."

All the free will that we need and ought to enjoy can be exercised in the process of experiment and enquiry, in the infinite variety of the applications of the question "Who am I?"

"The best way for one to serve the world is to win the egoless state. If you are anxious to help the world but think you cannot do so by attaining the egoless state, then surrender to God all the world's problems along with your own."

Not only when the moon shines brightly and the nightingales divinely sing, not only in the hushed presence of a mighty Seer, but all the time and everywhere, we should know the feeling that "the unplumbed, salty, estranging sea" of samsara is a mere surface phenomenon and that we, mortal millions, are not so many separate floating islands but "parts of a single continent", all rooted in the solid and life-sustaining Ground of Being.

The Dance in the Heart - Ramananjali Nritya - VI

Ujwal Jagadeesh

**Interview with Dr.Ambika Kameshwar by Ujwal Jagadeesh -
Part 2**

Ujwal: Namō Rāmana Ambika Akka, you are now a teacher touching the hearts of thousands of people. You have been guiding students and upcoming facilitators or young teachers. Through the methodology of Theatre Arts for Holistic development you have been training students to inculcate the basic life skills and also you have been guiding Ph.D Research Scholars.

What has learning Art taught you in life?

Dr. AK: My story of learning has been an amazing one which I keep sharing again and again. Some experiences even if we are going over them hundred-million times, each time it takes a new dimension, each time it reveals a new truth and it amazes the person themselves who has taken the journey.

It is wonderful to recognize that all is God's Grace. God has blessed us with these gifts whether we are deserving or not. Yet he has given. So what becomes our primary responsibility is to take care of the gift, nurture the gift and make it personal - so personal that it becomes universal. This is what the Art teaches us and allows us to experience it, or Be It .

As far as artistes are concerned, as one matures in the journey one recognizes that the Art is so much greater than the Artist. This is the core of my belief, my existence, my experience and my expression, and everything that I do revolves around this thought. Different exposures are given in order to chisel the



personality and to be made ready to offer it to the Master. Each has different capabilities and talents it has to be honed to be offered to the Master.

U: Please share your experience learning from various teachers including your mother, your friend and structured learning under Meenakshi Akka, stalwarts like D.K.Pattamal Amma and other senior Vidwans. Also, what do you think are the qualities that a teacher or Guru should have.



Dr. AK: In the artistic space, I and my sister Sarada Akka were exposed to the learning of Music first. I started learning music when I was 5 years old and Dance when I was 6 years. We started learning music under my mother Smt. Sulochana

Natarajan, an All India Radio artiste and wonderful singer. She was amazing as a guru and the qualities she contained were the absolute love and connect. The first qualification a teacher should have is the immediate connect with the students. When that connect is established the transfer of knowledge or learning becomes natural. Basically the parental connect between a guru and a sishya is very special

Second quality was her expertise and qualification which were very high. A guru's expertise should be sharpened constantly. Updating themselves so that the transfer of knowledge is deep and vast.



My mother was also non-compromising with the discipline of the Art. I too do give a lot of freedom to my disciples, but the boundaries are firmly established. When a stronger base is established then the further explorations become easier.

With Music inputs from my mother, life decided to bring dance too. Later dance and music became like my two eyes. God's Grace included me into the orbit of dance. My first Guru was Kalarani, a dear friend. She was learning under a Senior Guru in Delhi in Vazhavor Pani. As we were very close the sharing

happened very naturally. I also had inputs in creative dance under B. K. Sharma and Narendra Sharma at Delhi. Later I was brought to Bangalore, to explore under Kumari Meenakshi, who had been a teacher in Rishi Valley School, steeped in Pandanallur style of Bharatanatyam. Circumstances brought me to a more structured and stronger direction under Meenakshi Akka. I was also trained in Kuchipudi dance.

I got an opportunity to learn music for short spells under Rukmini Rajagopalan and Dr. S Ramanathan and for a very long spell of 9 years under D.K. Pattamal. They were doyens of music. I could see the grace of Saraswathi Devi as D.K.Pattamal. As far as the music learning goes I think understanding the way in which the rendition has to happen by such senior personalities who lived that music is very special. It was not the learning of technical nuances, that happened automatically, but to see how they related to that technical nuance was more important. Learning from Rukmini Akka and Ramanathan Sir were very different. Ramanathan Sir would enjoy his music thoroughly whereas Rukmini Akka had a very serious approach to the clarity of the rendition. DKP was so beautifully humble, she lived the fact that Art is greater than the Artiste. A common thread among these great vidwans was their love towards the Art. I do think it is a very great blessing for having these interactions.



U: We have a speech of D.K.Pattamal Amma during one of your programmes that has been documented. She remembered “when I was 3 months old, I was taken to Bhagavan Ramana’s presence at Ramanasramam. Bhagavan asked for a little honey

and put it on my tongue. I seemed to have relished it and Bhagavan said ‘Is it tasty!’ My father would recollect that it is that blessing of the great one which has made me sing so sweetly”. Amazing is Bhagavan’s plan who brought DKP as your teacher and in turn blessing us with his music through you.

Dr.AK: T Indeed how can we ever describe His Grace. Today, I am able to look back at my experiences, personal research, various workshops in folk styles, exposure to attending concerts, interactions with artistes and the influence of my grandparents who were great rasikas as well, which has made me ready for the purpose of my life.

U: What were topics you had chosen for your research?

Dr.AK: My first research work on Natya was for my Master of Arts in Sanskrit, I had taken Natya as my Specialization. It was on the 6th Chapter of Natyasastra, namely Rasa – “na hi rasAdarthE kashchidarthah pravartate”, without Rasa there is no meaning which ensues or comes forth.

The research in M.Phil was on ‘Gati Prachara’, the 13th Chapter of Natya Shastra. It explains about the various gaits of the characters which brings about communication. I presented this research in Kuppaswami Shastry Research Institute, Mylapore inside the campus of Sanskrit college affiliated to Madras University.

My PhD was on Natya Abhinaya which gave a holistic approach to communication in Natya through the fourfold aspects Angika (movement), Vachika (word), aharya (costumes, makeup and props) and Satvika (the expression of internalized states). I received my doctorate in 1998.



I always believed that there is a higher purpose for everything that was given. I got inputs from various sources for my chosen purpose. I knew that Art was something we can do much more with. But I did not have the clarity until I met the special children at the Ramana Maharshi Academy for Blind. The administration was planning an Annual Day. They approached me and my sister to take it up. There my journey of change over from normal format to including people with differing abilities and taking it forward began. I recognized the largeness of the task in hand. The way I had to structure the Art and its teaching was different. My approach was initially very individualized for every child. So, much of research was needed to bring it to a structured format.

After my PhD I got an opportunity to do my post doctoral research, as a Senior Fellow of the Government of India, on Application of Natya for the holistic development of everyone, with one chapter dedicated to people with special needs. That completed my academic learning journey. But the practical experience journey was continuing with performing, world tours, singing and dancing. After my marriage with Kameshwar, I moved to Chennai. Around

the same time my co-sister had started Spastic Society of India, Chennai (Vidya sagar now). I volunteered to teach dance and music to the children with intellectual challenges at her centre. I also did a few courses to empower myself in aspects of special needs.

After all these inputs, finally it led me to structure the methodology of Theatre Arts for Holistic Development (TAHD). I registered RASA – Ramana Sunritya Aalaya in 1989, It is now 32 years old. I realized that as an individual I can do this much, but for this purpose to be taken



forward I need more people. I need a team to work with me. It is named after Bhagavan , as He is the force behind it.

U: You spoke about the various research works that you engaged in. You also emphasized the importance of swAdhyAya (self-learning), what do you think are the merits and demerits of swAdhyAya vis-a-vis learning from a Guru?

Dr.AK: In spiritual practice or any learning in the world, one needs to have a dedicated effort of practice. The Guru gives us the path and we have to follow the instructions as best as the Master allows. The Guru is not different from the Self and the path is also given by the Guru. SwAdhyAya, is also blessed by the Guru. It is initiated from within by the Guru. There is nothing else in this world except the Master's doing. That said, importance of swAdhyAya is mentioned in all Upanishads and also in Bhagavat Gita. The first chapter of Taittreya Upanishad speaks about the swAdhyAya

Rtam cha svAdhyAya pravachane cha.
satyam cha svAdhyAya pravachane cha.
tapah cha svAdhyAya pravachane cha.

Practice the right path, the truth, approach to tapas or penance, self-control etc. The very next words after svAdhyAya are pravachane cha, that is , it has to be practiced and propagated too. So in that sense this applies to every single learning point in manifestation motivated by the Guru without and within as well, this has to be the practice.

Even while learning under the Guru swAdhyAya is happening, otherwise the change or transformation may not happen. Even in my journey the adhyapakas and AchAryAs (NATyAchAryAs and SangeethAchAryAs) of course played a huge role in shaping me. But Master also made me do a lot of self-learning – reading, viewing, recreating it for yourself, for practicing in different ways. Guru in the form of an adhyApaka – teacher - is also present in the form of the book, as the author of the book, as the performer you are witnessing, or as your practice. SwAdhyAya and Guru are not two different entities. It is the same force, one motivating from within and one from without. These two meet at some time and the expression of learning takes its appropriate accurate form

U: I remember Bhagavan's word to H.C.Khanna who was insistent on Bhagavan's oral assurance that he is his Guru. Bhagavan said "The outer Guru is saying that the Guru is within". This assurance satisfied Khannaji and also made him have the experience of the Guru shining within. Bhagavan also says "For a true disciple the work is within."

There are so many compositions from the Ramananjali Repertoire that you have adapted to the Bharatanatyam Margam format. You have also composed new songs including Pushpanjalis, Swarajathis, Shabdams, Varnams and Thillanas for dance. Every RASA Day, the theatre presentation by hundreds of Special artistes which happens every year, you write and compose songs based on the stories of great sages and saints like Arunagirinathar, Ekanath, Bhagavan Ramana and many others.



You have been a part of the Ramananjali Ensemble from the day of its inception. You have been a part of audio recordings of more than 1000 songs and more than 300 live performances including the world tours. What has been your experience working with senior Music directors in the Ramananjali recordings? And how has it influenced you in composing dance items, music for dance dramas and theatre productions?



Dr.AK: The influence of various music directors who have contributed to Ramananjali Music has been phenomenal. A variety was allowed by the Master's grace in Ramananjali Music with different directors coming up with different approaches to the similar kind of devotional songs on Bhagavan and Bhagavan's own compositions. While each approach was special and different, there was a common thread of embellishing the songs with the right kind of music , in order that the best communication of that content gets done. I think every approach has made my music what it is today. I clearly see it as the variety of inputs at the same time the common thread. Singularity or oneness in multiplicity is very surely present and very clearly visible.





U: Master Ramana has not only blessed you with great art but also numerous awards. You were awarded Kalaimamani in 2004 and recently with Sirippu Kalaimamani.

Dr. AK: Awards just make us feel the work is larger than us. It is a reaffirmation that you are on the right path. It is of course a pat on the back but surely comes with a responsibility that we should do further justice to the calling. We should be more grounded and carry on the work. We have to be grateful to the gift given by the Master, surrender and pray to the Master to make us capable to nurture it.



Living with his Grace

Uma Santosh



Uma S was caught young in Bhagavan's unfailing net of Grace when she joined Ramana Bala Kendra along with her elder sister, S.Geetha, as she writes. She had a disarming sweet smile and was a naturally talented dancer. Here is a glimpse of the impact of those Bala Kendra years on her life ...

vandE shree ramaNarShEh AchAryasya padAbjam |
yo mE darshayadeesham bhAntam dvAntamateetya ||

I bow down at the Lotus Feet of the Master, the Seer,
Sri Ramana who showed me God shining beyond the darkness

I was getting ready to migrate to the United States soon after my marriage and wanted to visit Sri Ramanasramam before leaving India. My husband, an agnostic, who was not religiously inclined reluctantly joined me to visit ashram just two days before our departure to the States. A familiar excitement welled up in me as we were approaching Tiruvannamalai. My husband wondered if the hill was formed due to an ancient volcanic activity. I told him about the hill's origin per our holy scriptures. Once a dispute occurred between Brahma the Creator, and Vishnu the Preserver, over which of them was superior. Lord Shiva to settle the argument, took a form of a column of light, and said that he who finds the top or bottom of this light is Supreme. Vishnu took the form of a boar and tunneled down towards the bottom and Brahma took the form of a swan and flew upwards to find the top of the column. Not able to find the ends, they decided to accept defeat and surrender to Lord Shiva, Who was then convinced to take the form of Arunachala. My husband seemed amused.

It was at around 1:00 PM when we reached the ashram. Mani Mama who approaching the office saw us and welcomed us

with his usual broad welcoming smile. He enquired if we had our lunch and upon realizing that we were just arriving, he immediately asked a devotee in the kitchen to make sure that we were served lunch. My husband noted the warmth in his welcome and said something to the effect that it felt like visiting our ancestral home.

We were then given a place opposite to the picture of Bhagavan having lunch and were treated to a satisfying meal. We walked out of the dining hall and entered the old hall.

Bhagavan worked his magic. My husband felt his grace and sunk into a spontaneous meditation. After I had my usual mental conversations with Bhagavan - that I was off to a distant land in a couple of days, prayed for his grace, etc. I noticed that my husband was still meditating and so left him there and went to the Samadhi hall before they closed for the afternoon. When I returned, he was still there, so I roused him. As we came out, my husband regretted for not having come here on the prior occasions I had invited him to the ashram. We then basked in the serenity of the Nirvana room and met the late Natesan mama who gave my husband a copy of "Who am I" and told him few anecdotes of his time by His holy feet.

We have always made it a point to visit the ashram when we return to India. My son's first visit to ashram was especially memorable. We visited Ashram Gosala, Archives, Skandasram, Virpaksha Cave and did Giriprakashina around the hill. As advised by Bhagavan we walked slowly barefoot keeping to the left of the road since the path on the right is reserved for Siddhas and Rishis. We even sat at a bridge called Bhagavan's bridge just like I have done during my childhood trips with Ramana Bala Kendra.





vAdu seidiDu mAyai tannai vaLaittu ninRu midittavan
sUdu sei pulanODu vanjagach chUzh vinaittogai aTRavan

He wrestled to the ground and trampled Illusion, his challenger;
he did away with the artful senses and the profusion of past karma.

During my pregnancy I longed to visit ashram and missed chanting at Satsangs. For some weird reason I recorded some of his works like we chanted at the RMCL Bangalore shrine and started listening to it during my daily commute on the metro. The timing was so perfect that my journey started with Upadesa Saram and as I got to the last versus of Aksharamanamalai, it would be the time for me to get off at my destination.

It almost felt like I was in midst of my dear friends at Satsang in the Shrine in Bangalore.

uttama stavAt uchcha mandatah
chittajam japa dhyAnam uttamam

Better than hymns of praise is the repetition of the Name; better low-voiced than loud;
but best of all is mental japa which is called meditation.



Then in 2003 Ramana answered my prayers of Satsang in Washington DC. A newsletter from our local temple had announcements regarding Bhagavan's Aradhana celebrations. When we got to the celebrations, we were invited by smiling friendly faces like there was already familiarity. We learned that devotees planned to meet for regular Satsangs and we happily joined and started taking turns to host. We basked in the company of His blessed devotees. My experience from the Ramana Bala Kendra days returned.

Bhagavan reunited us with our extended Satsang family, and we got to host several great devotees during their visit to the States. We have enjoyed the talks and melodious recitations of Bhagavan's compositions by Sundaram Mama, Susheela Maami, Shanta Maami, Ganesan Anna, S. Rammohan, NandakumarJi, and many more.



In 2009 we were blessed by an incredibly special soul who came into our life in the form of Watson. We thought we were rescuing a dog from the shelter, but it ended up being the other way around. He became a favorite of all devotees and he would join us and remain silent throughout the Satsang.

He has visited The Arunachala Ashram in New York and participated in Satsang events in New Jersey. He passed into eternity on January 6, 2020 - Vaikuntha Ekadashi day.



My introduction to Ramana Bala Kendra started by tagging along with my older sister; I was not allowed to go home after school on my own. Thus started my spiritual journey albeit in mechanical mode. Then came rich and fun filled experiences in way of learning about Bhagavan 's teachings and works: Upadesa Saram, Aksharamanamalai, Upadesa Undiyar, Ulladu Narpadu, Ramana Gita etc. We got to enact the life story of Bhagavan and His devotees through story, music and ballet. I was blessed with the company of many great devotees who had spent time with Bhagavan like Kunju swamy, Sampooramma, Kanakammal,

Natesan mama, Sundaram Mama, Dr. Shantha mami, Mani mama, Ganesh anna, etc. I have great memories of visiting ashram several times during a year.



We visited Nova Scotia Arunachala Ashrama with my son to participate in Ramana's Children's Camp. My experience of Ramana Bala Kendra came back when I saw the children learning about Sri Bhagavan's teachings through story, song and dance and meditation. They were involved in many services like setting the table, stacking firewood, helping in kitchen, and tidying up the Ashrama grounds.





I told them a story about Bhagavan assisting the kitchen staff. The kitchen staff sometimes felt quite frustrated because they were confined to the kitchen and could not spend time with him. Bhagavan being aware of this showed compassion to satisfy the longings of the kitchen staff by working with them. He not

only gave instructions and suggestions but also assist the cooks many times. His concept of zero waste and use of all edible parts of fruits and vegetables is well known and is relevant even today.



Coincidentally Nova scotia Ashram also has a cave on the hill right behind the ashram which also got the name Skandasram. We hiked up there and when they saw His picture in the cave, the children started to sing the songs they learned that day.

We taught the kids to perform a drama skit “Nondi Monkey”. It was lot of fun and I relived the joys of my Ramana Bala Kendra.



I will always be indebted to AR Natarajan Mama, Sulochana Mami, Sarada akka and Ambika akka and to all peers (old and young) for sowing the seed and nurturing spirituality in me and my family.



pOTRi en manak kOyil uTRiDu puNNiyat tiru mEniyAi
pOTRi nin mugam pOTRi nin manam pOTRi nin padam aiyanE

Praise to you, blessed Being within the sanctuary of my heart!
Praised be your Face! Praised be your Heart! Praised be your
Feet, Lord Ramana Sat-Guru!

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Arunachala Ramanaya

How Bhagavan Captured Us

Smt.Sulochana Natarajan

Life at Delhi continued in a manner not very different from any other life. There were ups and downs. Children's schooling, friends, the Delhi Gymkhana Club was one part of life. The weekend Satsangs at Ramana Kendra, some meetings with Professor Swaminathan at his home, sometimes visiting other Ramana devotees, visits to Ramakrishna Math, Swamijis from Ramakrishna Math coming home and visits to Sankara Vidya Kendra and the temple of Saradambal and Chandramouliswarar formed another part of life. They seemed to be two parallel streams.

ARN believed that the children should have a well rounded upbringing. He himself was interested in reading books and magazines. He introduced the children to the Gymkhana Club library and they spent several happy hours there and brought home books to read as well. A favourite shop in 'Khan Market' not very far from our home, was the book store that was visited frequently by them and in later years a book lending library too that came up there. From here the children borrowed popular comics ranging from Phantom and Mandrake the Magician to the Archies.

The children probably picked up the 'comics' habit during their summer vacations when they spent time at my elder sister-in-law's place at Chennai as she and her husband would visit their lending library practically every day. Time at their 'Athai's' home meant fun with cousins, plenty of delicious food and snacks and comic books to read. Bhagavan's grace is so amazing that His presence and teachings would be experienced by the children in all that He brought into their lives. Even if they were not conscious of it at that time, in later years they would recall the beautiful lessons that they learnt from each and every experience and from all the reading that they got an opportunity to do.

At Delhi Gymkhana Club both the children learnt swimming and Ambika learnt tennis as well. About Modern School, I had already mentioned that it was renowned in Delhi as one of the best schools. It matched our approach to education well. At 'Junior School' which the children first joined, there were several 'extra curricular' activities. There were sports, which Sarada never

enjoyed much, but there was also music which made her happy because the teacher lionized her as she was already learning Carnatic classical music. In addition there was painting which she adored and clay modelling which she enjoyed.

For Ambika everything was fun always. She would enjoy everything that she did. She had the opportunity to be chosen for the dance events and began to be trained under the senior dance teacher, P.C.Sharma to participate in dance dramas right then. Later, in Senior School, she went on to be trained by the world-renowned choreographer, Narendra Sharma. For Sarada, formal dance training never fell into place. She only trained for a few dances with Kalarani, a very dear friend from Ramana Kendra. In fact, Kala was like another daughter for us and Sarada and Ambika were like daughters for Kala's parents, Guruswamy and Seetha. The three would spend every Saturday together either in our house or theirs until the last couple of years of our stint at Delhi when both Kala and Sarada became more intensely involved in their respective academic pursuits. In this way Bhagavan gave the necessary training in dance to Ambika and an overall background to Sarada.

Sarada was very shy at school and would hardly talk with anyone. She had many staunch friends though, and they would speak to her for hours and she would listen. She may have conversed with her friends but she would not answer any question in class though she knew every answer for fear of having to speak in front of people. But the strange part is that when the school had a story telling competition she took part happily and went up on stage and spoke and received a commendation certificate as well. It was her joy in telling stories that in later years allowed her to slowly overcome her shyness and begin to speak in public, finally leading to her becoming very natural as a speaker. I recall how this happened.

It was in the 1980s, the early and momentous years of the Ramana Movement at Bangalore. We had a Harikatha program about Bhagavan's life by Bhadrakiri Sant Keshav Das, very renowned for his musical discourses. He composed some beautiful hymns on Bhagavan and Arunachala and enthralled the audience with his rendering as part of the story. When we returned home Sarada said that the singing was fantastic indeed but she felt Keshav Das ji had made some factual errors in the

narration of Bhagavan's story and this was making her unhappy. Bhagavan, however, would always say that right and wrong are a matter of perspective. Probably because of this, Sri K.Natesan, a senior devotee of Bhagavan and of Ganapati Muni, immediately told her, somewhat sharply 'Well, if you know the right facts about Bhagavan's life, why don't you yourself begin to speak in public about Bhagavan's life?' Though she felt this was an indication not to judge any presentation, I felt it was a clear indication from Bhagavan that she should start talking in public.

I believed that when senior devotees of Bhagavan or sages and saints said something, it was always a blessing. I began to repeatedly persuade her to start speaking about Bhagavan. She refused saying she was too shy. So I told her that she could first narrate Bhagavan's story to me alone and then start speaking to others. Even for this she was too shy and told me the story only in a dark room. Bhagavan's grace worked at the right time as always when we started Ramana Bala Kendra at Bangalore and Sarada was forced to keep one batch of children engaged while Ambika and I taught dance and music to other batches. She started telling them the story as she had narrated it to me. She soon became very comfortable talking to children and slowly this expanded to others as well.

Yet, as I said Sarada was quite happy telling stories right from when she was a child of three and later in Delhi she would put together small presentations of skits with our neighbours' children. In fact, we would have mini variety events from time to time at our home conceived and put together by Sarada where all the children and the elders too at times would make presentations of music, dance, drama and perhaps mimicry and fancy dress. I think she was inspired by such regular events happening at their school.

All these activities at school meant that the school hours would be long, from 8.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. and by the time the children came home it would be nearly 4.30 p.m. I therefore met the Principal, Sri M.N. Kapoor and put to him my request that the school hours should be reduced so that we as parents could have more time with the children. I was keen on teaching them Carnatic classical music which was like my own life breath and a great passion for everyone in our family. In addition I also wanted them to learn Tamil as it was their mother tongue and also the language

in which Bhagavan has composed the Five Hymns on Arunachala, the Upadesa Undiyar, Ulladu Narpadu and other works. Sanskrit was easy for them as it was similar to Hindi and they had Sanskrit as one of the subjects in school too but Tamil needed special time and attention. Sri M.N.Kapoor told me that he was thrilled by my request but unfortunately not in a position to accede to it. He said that practically all the parents were actually approaching him to extend school timings and finish all the homework at school itself under a teacher's guidance. He was in fact worried even in those days that parents seemed to be having little or no connect with their children.

Bhagavan fulfilled my desire to teach Tamil to the children when, on one of our visits to Sri Muruganar at Ramanasramam, the children sang some songs in Sanskrit to him. He enquired whether they could sing one of his compositions on Bhagavan also. I said that their Tamil was not that good and Swami's compositions may be difficult for them but I would certainly try and teach them some before our next visit to the Asram the following year. However, on returning to the room ARN insisted that I should teach them at least one song right away when such a great devotee of Bhagavan had made a request. I selected two simple songs from Muruganar's Ramana Sannidhi Murai and taught it to them which they sang to Muruganar the very next day. He was in ecstasy on hearing Bhagavan's glory. I am sure this blessing from Muruganar put them on the path to learning Tamil through Ramananjali music.

Gradually Ramana Kendra and Bhagavan began to play a larger and larger part in our lives and all other activities began to get pushed into the background. This happened in two ways, one by the entry of Ramana Music as an increasingly powerful force in my life and the other with Ramana Kendra acquiring a land on lease from the Government in the prestigious Lodi Road, Institutional Area. With this ARN became very actively involved in the plans to build a meditation hall and in the fund raising activities as well. The pull of the inward life also became subtly but surely stronger.

71. SADBHAKTA VRNDA PARIVRATAHA

Surrounded by seekers of Truth

Ramana was the centre of a band of earnest seekers of truth. Sri Ramanasramam at the foot of Aruna Hill was like Kailas itself as the incomparable Ramana was in the company of those who were devoted to him and were sincere to the core in the pursuit of truth. Praised by thousands of sages He is like the vast ocean say the Vedas. These words would be an appropriate description of him.

Ramana asks, 'When the flower blossoms, does it have to send out an invitation to the bees? They come of their own accord.' Even so we find that those with spiritual ripeness sought Ramana and came to him. It may be the devadasi Ratnamma who was drawn to the lustre of the Self emanating from this young sage even when he was in the underground Patala lingam and thereupon bringing food to him. It may be others like the Keerai Patti 'grandmother of the greens' on the Hill, or Mudaliar Patti or Echamma who would feed him every day. Those like Uddandi Nayanar, Annamalai Tambiran and Palaniswami felt impelled to serve him and take care of his bodily needs. It may be Gambhiram Seshier or Siva Prakasam Pillai who came to slake their spiritual thirst and in the answers to their questions, written by Ramana on slate, sand or on bits of paper, found the perennial fount of bliss not only for themselves but for all humankind for all times.

It may be Mastan and Akhilandamma walking several miles to drink the ambrosia of the Self that he embodied. It may be the young Ramanatha or Sunderasa who were simply irresistibly drawn to his presence. It may be Humphreys who had a vision of him and sought him out to find God radiating terrifically from him. Each devotee is a sadbhakta, a pure and true devotee, as Viswanatha Swami, himself one, has described them in this name extolling Ramana. The list of Ramana's devotees may itself fill several volumes. Some of their lives, which are purifying to hear of, have been chronicled by Sri V.Ganesan in his book 'Ramana Periyapuranam'.

In the very second verse of Ramana Chatvarimshat Ganapati Muni describes Ramana thus, "Who is the master and

guide of the whole group of learned scholars beginning with Ganapati, who is the repository of all the highest virtues, whose beatific effulgence is hidden by the sheath of the gross body, like the blazing sun hidden behind the clouds.”

Om sadbhakta vRnda parlvratAya namaha

72. GANESHA MUNI BHRNGENA SEVITANGHRI SARORUHAHA

One whose lotus feet were sought by the honey-bee Ganesa Muni.

The attribute Muni to Ganapati Muni indicates his ardent tapas, ceaseless penance. His extraordinary intelligence, and the breathtaking beauty of his divinely inspired poetry which marked him out. By his twenty-first year he had been bestowed, by an assembly of renowned poets, with the title ‘Kavyakanta’ and was generally regarded to be a honey-bee because of his poetic excellence and the power acquired by his repeated utterance of sacred mantras. Not only did he enjoy the limitless beauty of Ramana but he invited all his disciples and the rest of the world to partake of it.

It was on the momentous 18th of November, 1907. Believing that his penance would find its fruition only by the grace of a Sadguru and remembering the Brahmana Swami on Arunachala, as Ramana was then known, the Muni ran up to Virupaksha Cave unmindful of the scorching mid-day heat and fell at Ramana’s feet, bathing them with his tears. He poured out his spiritual anguish. Ramana bathed him with his glance of grace and in his soft voice gave him the first spoken upadesa. ‘Find out from where the ‘I’-thought arises and merge at its source. That is tapas. Find out from where the sound of the mantra emanates and merge at its source. That is tapas.” The Muni experienced the truth of these words meditating then and there in Ramana’s presence. That very evening he wrote to his disciples that he had found his Guru who was no ordinary sage. He was ‘Bhagavan, Ramana, Maharshi’. He wrote ‘Let the whole world know him as such’. Muni continued to sip of the Ramana nectar ever after that.

Om gaNEsha muni bhRngEna sEvitAnghri sarOruhAya namaha

73. GITOPADESHASARADI GRANTHA SANCHINNA SAMSHAYAH

Dispels all doubts by his Gita, Upadesa Saram and such other works

Initially some thought that Ramana Gita was only a recasting in modern Sanskrit of the wisdom contained in the ancient scriptures. If, however, one examines the work with care and in depth it would be seen that it contains many secrets which are of great use in one's sadhana. These have been explained in clear and lucid style in the 300 verses of Ramana Gita divided into eighteen chapters. The most important chapters are 'Hridaya Vidya' Chapter V and 'Granthi Bheda', Chapter IX. This sacred work had been recorded by the Muni while he was living near the Maharshi on Arunachala.

Upadesa Saram sets out compactly the Maharshi's instructions on the four-fold traditional paths of karma, bhakti, yoga and jnana. Sri Nochur Venkataraman says that the term 'Upadesa' is used synonymously with the Vedas. Hence this is the essence of the Vedas, of all scriptures. It was originally composed in Tamil, in the Undiyar metre in Ramana Sannidhi Murai at the behest of Muruganar. Subsequently it was translated into Sanskrit, Telugu and Malayalam by Ramana himself. Devotees have also translated this work into various other languages. Its claim to pride of place springs from its systematic step by step exposition of the Ramana Way. It is for this reason that it is now an integral part of the chanting done every evening in front of the shrine of Bhagavan Ramana, the Ramaneswara Mahalingam at Sri Ramansramam. Containing as they do the essence of truth, all the works of Bhagavan have a distinct power of their own.

Om gltOpadEshasArAdi grantha sanchinna samshayAya namaha

74. VARNASHRAMA MATATITAH

Transcended caste-distinctions (varna) and stages of life (asramas).

Caste and stages of life like brahmacharya relate to the body – mind. One who is freed of concepts alone can know this. As the Upanishads say "Those who claim to know do not really know" for such experience is beyond words. We have to recognize that Bhagavan is that limitless truth in which all distinctions cease to exist. When Ramana was questioned about how he would categorize his own 'Asrama' or stage of life, as it did not typically

qualify to be the fourth stage or 'sannyasa' in a formal manner, he referred to the term 'ati Ashrami', one who transcends the four stages of life prescribed by the scriptures. He gave the examples of Jada Bharata and Sukha as 'ati Ashramis'.

Om gltOpadEshasArAdi grantha sanchinna samshayAya namaha

75. RASAJNAHA

Aware of the essence

The embodiment is the Supreme. Without its grace nothing can be understood. The Supreme alone gives life to all art forms. The Upanishad says that one who seeks the Supreme alone can know the essence and therefore true happiness. In his Ramana Sahasranama, the litany of thousand names of Ramana, Jagadeeswara Shastry concludes with the name 'Rasa' – 'Om RasAya namaha' – he who is the essence. It is said in the scriptures that the knower of Brahman becomes, or is verily Brahman itself. The reverse may also be said that as Ramana is the very Self, the essence or 'Rasa', which is itself of the nature of knowledge, he is the 'knower of the essence.'

Om RasajnAya namaha

76. SAUMYAHA

Managalamurti, the auspicious one.

Destruction is possibly only through ugra, anger. Grace is bestowed through 'saumya'. Bhagavan radiated peace and joy at all times. He is the auspicious one bestowing grace even to those who give offence.

Echammal's life was struck by the greatest tragedies. She lost her husband and all her children in quick succession when she was very young. Her sorrow could not be assuaged by visits to holy places and sages or by austere practices. She heard about Ramana and came to his presence. She silently wept in front of him and by his auspicious, compassionate glance all her grief was washed away. She was filled with overwhelming peace which alone is the auspiciousness that every being seeks. In his Sahasranama on Ramana Jagadeeshwara Shastri hails him as 'mangaLAya namaha'.

Om saumyAya namaha

77. ATMAVAN**Self-controlled**

Bhagavan is the Self of all. He is the universal truth. To be ignorant of one's true Self is self-forgetfulness. To abide as the Self is to be Self-aware, and self-controlled.

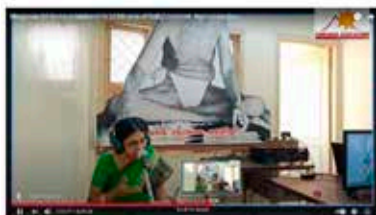
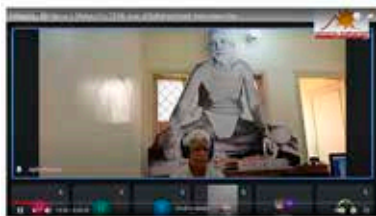
Ramana's life is a very rare phenomenon of one who was not only steadily abiding unwaveringly in the Self but who also communicated this exalted state to one and all who came into presence regardless of all distinctions, be it even between humans and other living beings. It is narrated that often during his early years at Arunachala several monkeys would also gather in his presence and sit in absolute silence. If any monkey chanced to move, he would admonish him asking, 'Um, um... what kingdom is getting stolen from you?' He would indicate, 'Why the need to move? Where is the need for action? Is something worthwhile being stolen from you that you need to act and protect it? Can anything be more worthwhile than abiding in the Self'. It is said that the monkey would immediately imbibe the instruction and return to silence. Even when Jackie, the dog, who would meditate in Ramana's presence, was once distracted by the barking of a dog outside, Bhagavan instructed, 'Jackie, you close your eyes. Only if you look outside, you will be distracted. Close your eyes and look within'. Jackie did accordingly. Such was Ramana's supreme abidance in the Self.

Om AtmavatE namaha

News & Events

Revathi Sankar

125th Enlightenment Day of Bhagavan was celebrated on July 17th by Ramana Maharshi Centre along with Ramana Kendra Madurai. Sri Somasundaram introduced the event which commenced with the chanting of Aksharamanamalai. There was chanting of verses from Upadesa Undiyar and Ramananjali Music by Dr.Ambika Kameshwar and Dr.Vaishnavi Poorna, Smt. V.Radha and Vallabh, Revathi Sankar and Ujwal Jagadeesh.

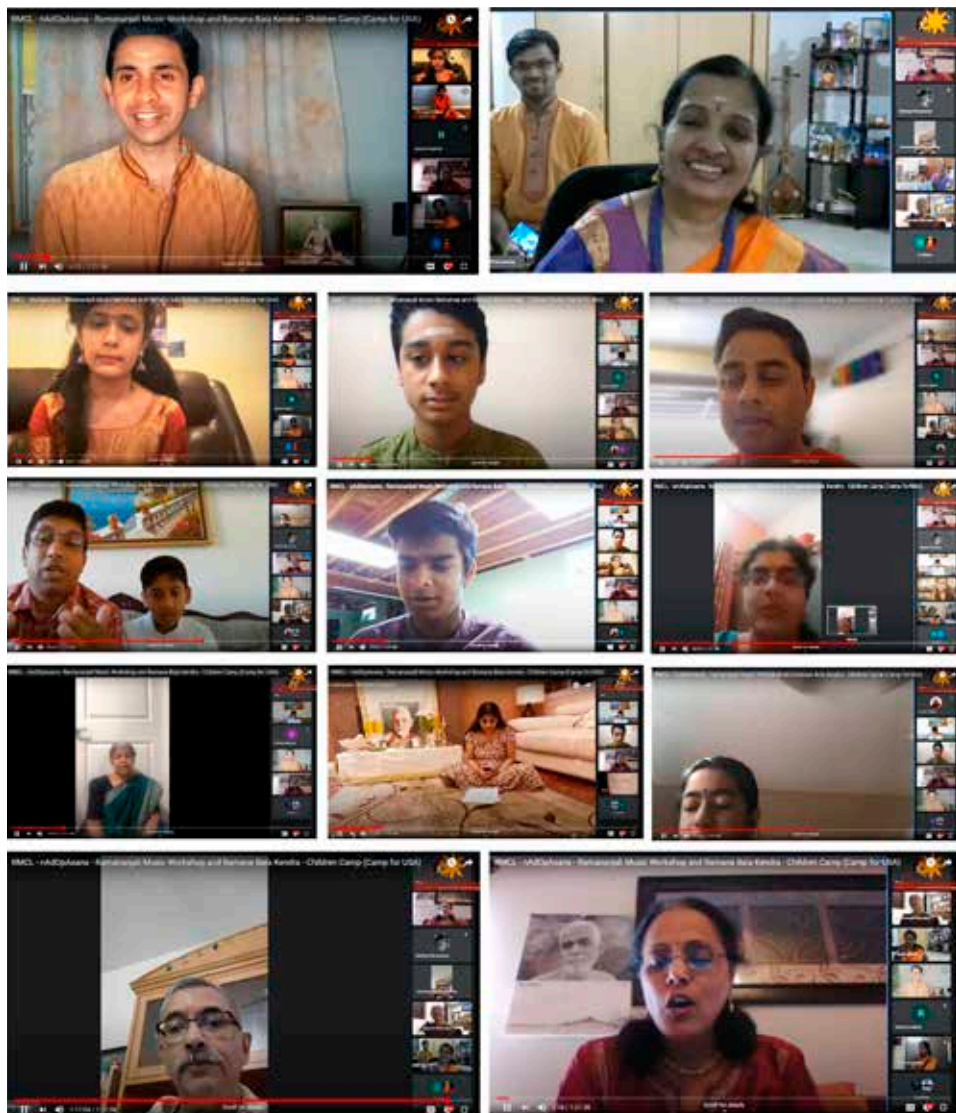


A self-enquiry session was conducted by Sri N.Nandakumar. Talks on the teachings were given by Dr.Sarada, Dr.Kalarani Rengasamy and Dr.T.N.Pranatharthi. The Vote of Thanks was delivered by Sri K.Rengasamy.

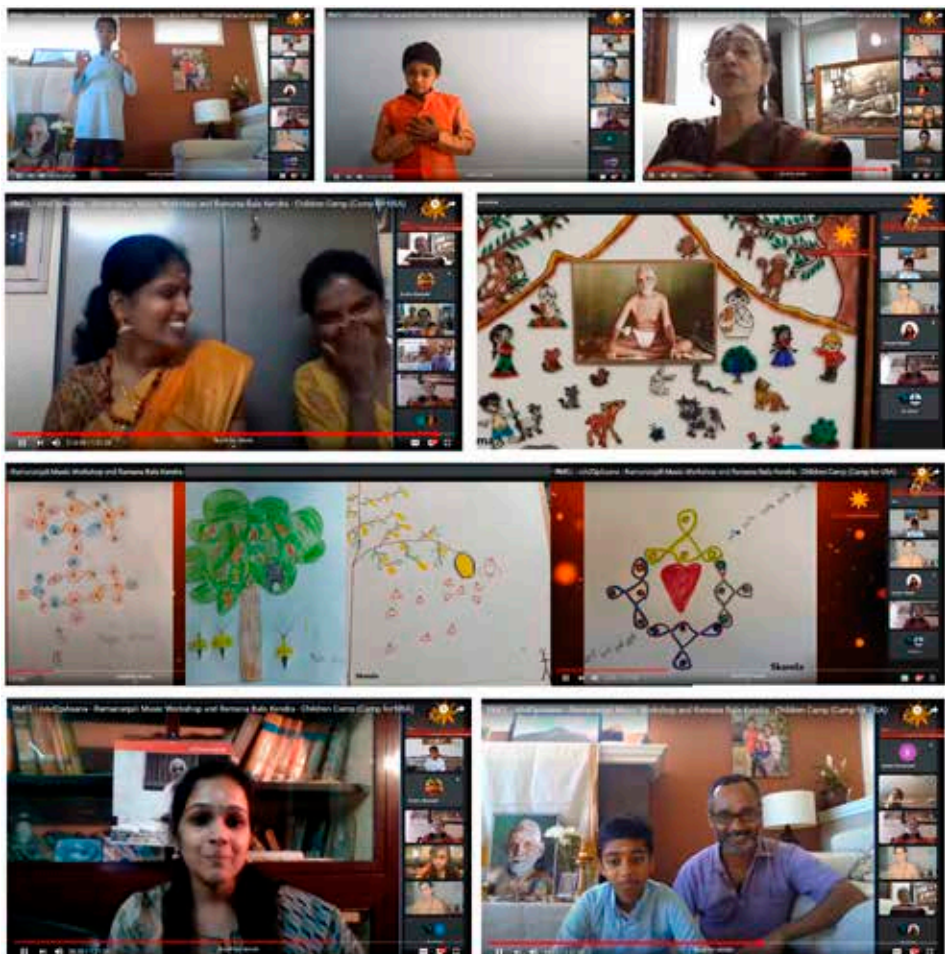


Two workshops, one on Ramana Nadopasana and another on Ramana Bala Kendra, were conducted for the US and Canada.

The gurus were Smt.V.Radha, Ujwal Jagadeesh and Uma Sripathy and the co-ordinator was Smt.Prathiba Sundaresh.



Dr. Vaishnavi Poorna, Deputy Director, RASA, was the Sahridaya Chief Guest, absolutely at one with the participants in love for the art and devotion for Bhagavan Ramana. Dr. Sarada and Sri Venkatesh Deshpande graced the occasion. The drawings of the Bala Kendra students were shared through a video.



Special Dates in September and October

- » 1st September – Aruna Vijaya Day
- » 20th September – Pournami Celebrations
- » 15th October – Vijaya Dasami Celebrations
- » 20th October – Pournami Celebrations

Special Online Dates – September and October

Below are the forthcoming online programs in the coming two months. To know the exact dates and timing of the programs please subscribe to Ramanacentre Bengaluru YouTube channel.

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

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

Features:

- » Ramananjali Cultural Programs
- » Down Memory Lane - The History of Ramananjali

Special Talks and Interviews:

- » Sri K.V.Subramonyam on Ramana Kritis
- » Dr.T.N.Pranatharthiharan on Muruganar's Ramana Puranam
- » Robert Butler on Muruganar's Sri Ramana Guru Prasadam

Ramana Every Day

RMHC - Ramana Maharshi Heritage Centre - Sanjaynagar

RMS - Ramana Maharshi Shrine - Mekhri Circle

RSCS - RMCL Satsang Centre at South Bangalore

RSCR - RMCL Satsang Centre at Rajarajeshwari Nagar

To register for Online sessions contact

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

Online and On site Self Enquiry sessions

Thursday: 7:00 pm to 8.00 pm at RSCS

By Sri Nandakumar ji

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

By Dileep Simha and Dr. Sarada

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

By Sri Nandakumar ji & others

(Chanting and Self-enquiry)

Online Satsang

Chanting, Reading, Music, Talks, Puja

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

Every Sunday 7.00 pm to 8.40 pm Kannada Satsang

Every first Sunday 11.00 am to 12.30 pm Tamil Satsang

Online and On site Music and Dance classes

[Contact - Uma (9538472026)] at RMHC

On site Talks, Parayana and Puja

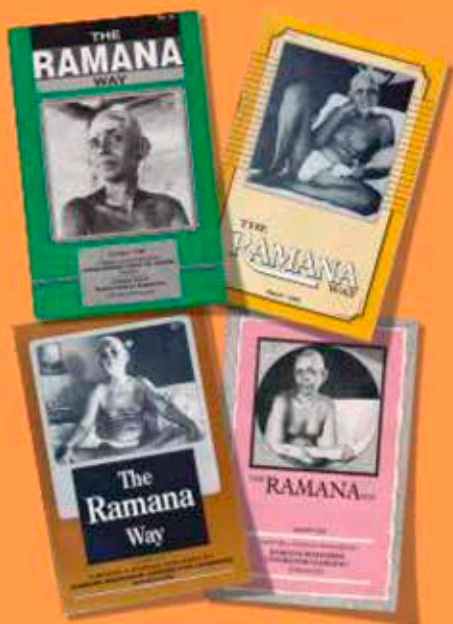
By Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30 pm at RSCR

40 years of The Ramana Way

An immense blessing indeed it has been to connect with Ramana through our journal 'The Ramana Way' month after month for 40 years.

And great grace it is as well to connect through the journal with the devotees of Ramana and practitioners of the Ramana path. Many wait for the journal to arrive at their doorstep on the specified date. Some touching events too have been shared by the readers, how the journal arrived just at a very special joyous moment or when there was sorrow as if to reassure about Ramana's guidance and love. One devotee records how when he was at a crossroad in his career. Out of the blue 'The Ramana Way – Bangalore' suddenly appeared from nowhere in his home and revealed itself to him as well, leading him to Bangalore to a good career, and more, to be associated with the Ramana Centre.



Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar
Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

127. Those who rejoice in the insignificant [and miserable] life of living as a *jiva*, which has arisen through the ego – perspective ['I am the body'], have abandoned as though non – existent the magnificent and transcendental life that exists to be enjoyed as the infinite supreme bliss in the Heart.