

November 2019

The Ramana way



Ramana Bliss

A Monthly Journal published by
Ramana Maharshi Centre
for Learning
Bengaluru

SARVA SEVA

Your opportunity to offer all sevass for a day at the Ramana Shrine Bengaluru.



SEVAS INCLUDED

The sevass included would be

- Vedaparayana
- Puja morning
- Puja evening
- Cleaning of the shrine
- Garden and flower decorations
- Prasadam
- Music offerings of the day (whenever it happens on that day)
- Talk of the day (on days when there are talks)
- Maintenance of the Shrine for the day

Choose your special day/days:

- Your birthday, anniversary or those of dear ones
- A day that is special for you in the Ramana calendar – like Jayanthi, Aradhana etc

Attending the evening puja:

- It would be wonderful if you could personally attend the evening puja of that day with your family and friends at 7.30 p.m. and collect the prasadam. If not, prasadam will be sent to you by post.

Amount: Rs.3000/-

RENEWAL OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR RAMANA WAY

Annual Members whose membership numbers will commence with SA/SB/SC/SD are requested to renew their membership at the beginning of each quarter – January/April/July/October respectively.

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

THE RAMANA WAY

A Monthly Journal since 1981

*Celebrating
Ramana Rasa
Anubhava*



Editor: Dr. Sarada

Associate Editor: G. Kameshwar

Assistant Editor: Dileep Simha

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

- Ramana Gita X, 10

Journal started by:	Sri. A.R.Natarajan, Founder President, RMCL
Printed & Published by:	Sarada Natarajan on behalf of Ramana Maharshi Centre For Learning, Ramana Maharshi Heritage Building, Post office Road, Sanjaynagar, Bangalore - 560094 Ph:(080)23514930, (080)42061951 Direct Fax:23512640
Managing Editor:	Revathi Sankar +919448853748
E-mail:	office@ramanacentre.com, ramanaway@ramanacentre.com
Website:	ramanacentre.com, ramanamusic.com
Printed by:	Aridra Printers, Bangaluru.
Designed by:	M. Muralidhara Hegde
Annual Membership:	Rs. 240/-, Price per copy Rs. 20/-
No. of pages:	52

Contents

Celebrating Ramana Rasa Anubhava

<u>Editorial</u>	Dr.Sarada	5
<u>The New Dawn</u>	A.R.Natarajan	9
<u>'The Talks' as Guidance to self-enquiry</u>	N.Nandakumar	12
<u>Saddarshanam</u>	Master Nome	16
<u>Sri Arunachala Ashtakam</u>	G.Kameshwar	19
<u>Upadesa Saram</u>	Ujwal Jagadeesh	24
<u>Sri Viswanatha Swami</u>	V.Ganesan	27
<u>Power of the Word</u>	Sanjay Lohia	32

Experiences

<u>I Saw the Light</u>	An Excerpt	33
<u>Ramana My Light</u>	Charumathi Neelkanth	36

Moods and Might of Music

<u>How Bhagavan Captured Us</u>	Smt.Sulochana Natarajan	38
---	-------------------------	----

RMCL – Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning

<u>News and Dates</u>	Revathi Sankar	41
---------------------------------------	----------------	----

Editorial*Dr. Sarada*

Who answers to the name of 'I'? I may think that I am the body but Ramana says, "The body does not say 'I'." Does it say, 'I, the body, am I'? If someone were to come and stand before us, look at our eyes and ask, 'Are you the masters of this house?' our eyes would reply, 'No sir, we are servants. In fact we are merely the CCTV system fitted on this house. We make a visual record of what comes within the range of our lenses. We do not even analyse the data that we record. The recording that we make is connected to a processing unit inside the house. That unit analyses and processes the data that we record.'

So the person standing in front of us may turn to our ears and ask, 'Are you the masters of this house?' The ears would say, 'No sir we record the audio inputs coming within the range of our microphones. The processing unit inside the house analyses our inputs'. If the person were to ask our tongue or our skin whether they are the master who can say, 'I own this house' their answer too would be in the negative.

A person may ask our nose, 'Are you not the owner of this house? Do you not keep this house alive?' The nose would answer, 'No sir, I act as windows and doors to the house that allows fresh air to come in and the stale air to go out. There is another unit inside the house that does the pumping of the air, and yet another that processes the air'. If the heart or the lungs were to be asked whether they are the master, whether it is they who answer to the name of 'I', their answer would be in the negative as well. No part of the body, outside or inside, and not the whole of it answers to the name of 'I'. I say 'my body' which means that it belongs to me. But I behave as if the body itself is 'I'!

When we begin to ask ourselves the question, 'Who am I?' we begin to realise that the 'I' cannot be the body as the body is insentient. It does not say anything or do anything of its own accord. The sense organs are merely doorways or recorders of

various pieces of information. The internal organs are again robots who keep the house clean, who carry the food to different parts of the body, get it processed and then throw out the waste. They are, none of them, masters of the house, not even the brain. The brain merely processes all the information received and stores it in appropriate files for the master of the house to access. Sometimes the master remembers the file names and is able to access the files. At other times the master is not able to give the right key word and hence may be unable to access the particular file. Hence there would be no memory of the event.

Nonetheless, the fact remains that the body does not say 'I', it does not think of anything either. Who then answers to the name of 'I'? Who am I? If we were to ask ourselves this question, who is it that answers? Are my thoughts 'I'? Thoughts keep rising and setting continuously in the mind. We try to possess them by saying 'This is my thought' 'It is my thought'. As long as we hold a thought with our attention it stays with us, thereafter it fades away.

After bypassing all the robots that are taking care of the body from outside, if our visitor who has been asking 'Who answers to the name of 'I'? enters within the body he or she would encounter the robots within. These are the various internal organs and the physiological systems related to these organs. When it becomes clear that these too are not masters but again only robots that are performing different duties, the visitor may turn to the subtler beings who seem to be floating around within. These beings are called thoughts. So let's say the visitor goes up to one thought and asks, 'Are you the master of this house? Are you the one who says 'I'? The answer would be, 'No, I am not the master of this house. I too am a visitor like you. Some of us thoughts are frequent visitors. Others are rare visitors. But every one of us comes and goes. We come when the master of the house calls us and leave when the master is done with us.'

Are we conscious of the fact that the body is only that, the body, and not the 'I'? If we are conscious of this fact what would its implications be? For one thing, it is only then that the truly intense enquiry would begin. One would ask oneself with great intensity,

‘So who is the ‘I’? If I am not any part of the body, not the sense organs, not the inner organs, not even any thought, who am I?’

Am I the one who knows the thought? Could be, but to say so would only be one more thought. Any thought regarding the ‘I’ would only be a thought, it would not be the ‘I’. And every thought is only the body, for, what can I think about if I am not the body? To think, I need to be a body about which I can think. I may not think directly about the body but I would be thinking about a person who is embodied. Can one think of any so called subtle experiences if one does not have a body? Can one think of love or anger? Can one think of a mathematical problem? Can one think about spiritual pursuits? Hence, if through self-enquiry one has reached a deep conviction that one is not the body, at that point all other thoughts must cease automatically. Only silence would prevail.

If any thought arises, it would be clear that the thought is for an entity who believes that he or she is embodied. And once more the question would rise within, ‘In fact who is that entity called ‘I’?’ Self-enquiry would no longer be a method, a practice to be pursued by someone. On the other hand that very someone would have come under the scanner. For, even to ask ‘Who am I?’ I need to be someone who is asking. This too would strike the questioner and the further question, ‘Who is the I who seeks?’ would spring up taking one back to silence.

Is there any answer to the question ‘Who am I?’ Can one declare that one is not the body? One may do so to begin with but the enquiry is not about giving ‘oneself’ that answer. It is not about thinking that one is not the body. It is about seeing for oneself through the force of the enquiry that it is so. To declare that one is not the body, one must be a body. But when one sees the truth that one is not the body then one would simply see the truth. There would be no further thought or statement regarding it. It would be a wordless answer in silence.

Does one declare in the enquiry that one is not the mind? One may do so but the enquiry is again not about giving ‘oneself’ that answer. For to say ‘I am not the mind’, I have to be a body

in the first place and I have to believe that I am the mind as well. Without identification to a body there is no such thing as mind. Mind itself is only body identification. And who will say 'I am not the mind' other than the mind itself? If at all we say so, it must be in order to enquire intensely at that point, 'Who am I?'

Since we lose the spirit of enquiry from moment to moment, we practice the question 'Who am I?' again and again to get back to the spirit of enquiry. When we lose the question 'Who am I?' and get caught in the labyrinth of thoughts on account of the force of habit we tell ourselves, 'These are only thoughts. They are my thoughts. They are not I myself. Who am I?'

Can one expect any answer to this question? If one expects an answer, who is the one who has the expectation? If one were to get an answer who could be the one to get the answer? For the whole process is to arrive at the recognition through experience that the so called entity who is asking the question is in truth a non-entity. If there is no expectation of reaching somewhere, can there be fear of not reaching? If there is no expectation of gain, can there be fear of loss? For whom the loss of identification? For whom the gain of freedom? Who am I? We say that the enquiry must be continuous, insistent. If one is truly caught by the spirit of enquiry could it be otherwise? However, as Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "One would do well to add an essential requirement, love for the Sadguru Ramana who instills confidence, removes obstacles, encourages and provides the strength for sustained self-enquiry. Unflagging interest is possible only if one remembers that the best way of showing devotion to Ramana is to follow the path, to have faith in his experience which he is sharing."



THE NEW DAWN**A. R. Natarajan***HANDLING FEAR**

Sometimes the density of fear related thoughts is so choking that one is rendered helpless by their onslaught. A few illustrations from daily life with its problems would help to highlight the tensions which develop if one is unable to handle the same. A friend used to sit for long hours of meditation. He had included self-enquiry as part of it. Recently a new management took over the company in which he is working. In their zeal for computerisation of all departments in their office they started retrenching the old hands one by one. The friend however thought that he was safe because he had twenty years experience backing him apart from his capacity for hard work and loyalty to the management. However the axe fell on him also. His meditation time has now become filled with various forms of fear. The moment he sits for meditation/self-enquiry the fear complex bogs him down. Questions like 'Can I get re-employment? Will my daughter's tuition be affected? Can I pay my wife's medical bills? Can I make remittances to my old father?' keep shooting up. These fears have become obsessive and he has begun to doubt even the efficacy of self-enquiry.

In another situation, an irrevocable sad event happened. A heart attack, totally out of the blue, snatched the life of a lovable person. The unbearable sorrow at this unexpected calamity left a deep mark on his wife. Now she is filled with thoughts of her husband in everything she sees in the house, the office chair he used to occupy, the mat in the puja room on which he used to sit and chant the Vedic hymns, the drawing hall where he used to meet the visitors and so on. The impact of the sorrow is so great that there is fear of having to adjust to a totally different life situation when the husband is no more, when his response of love could no more be felt. The fear whether she can do her job as before, fear of changes in daily life, have come in their train. She wonders whether self-enquiry can help.

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

One can safely assert that self-enquiry alone can tackle obsessive thoughts be they related to fear, love, or hate. One might say that it is the only effective weapon for dealing with a mind ridden with the momentum of such thoughts, for dealing with the take over bids by dominant thoughts.

What exactly is the correct practice of self-enquiry in a nutshell? It is the merging of the ego, the mind, in its source resulting in the experiencing of the natural state. Then inherent happiness brims forth. The steps are to relate thoughts to their centre, the thinker, and the thinker to his centre the spiritual heart. Let's see how it can work in situations like the ones discussed earlier.

The first thing to keep in mind is not to lose faith in self-enquiry by assuming, erroneously, that in such situations it may not be of much use. The next is the need for vigilance against the intrusion of any thought from the word go. If one is not watchful, before one knows one gets so mixed up with fear related thoughts that there is no longer the me and my fear but just fear. If one is attentive as soon as the first thought related to this fear arises one should question 'To whom does it relate?' If not the proliferation of thoughts reflecting aspects of the same fear would crowd in. If one misses the first instance check then at the earliest point of time when one notices a particular fear it is to be questioned in the same manner. Even if this second opportunity is missed and one is in the thick of different thought forms based on the undercurrent of fear, still the only weapon is self-enquiry. For even though the thoughts are many and appear to be continuous they are essentially disparate. Hence each thought can be isolated and dealt with using the weapon of self-enquiry. This would free the 'I' gradually from the myriad fears.

One can recall in this context Ramana's advice to Gambhiram Seshier in 1900-1901. He told him "Even though the mind wanders restlessly, involved in external matters forgetful of its own Self, one should remain alert and enquire 'Who am 'I'?' This is the only way for ending misery and ushering in the Supreme state. For stopping all mental activities born of the ego it is the best means". After advising thus Ramana queries "Can obsessive thoughts arise without the ego?"

Yet again one has to remember that so long as one believes that some thoughts can be entertained because they are preferred thoughts, one would have to live with unwanted thoughts as well. Once any thought is permitted entry into the mental horizon due to lack of vigilance, or because one enjoys that thought, trouble is already brewing. The others labelled 'unwanted' also quickly make their entry unnoticed and soon hog the attention wholly. One gets caught in a mess of one's own making.

It is important not to intellectualize the process, to make it dry and tasteless. For essentially it is enjoyable as the mind is alive all the time; never a dull moment. One would do well to add an essential requirement, love for the Sadguru Ramana who instills confidence, removes obstacles, encourages and provides the strength for sustained self-enquiry. Unflagging interest is possible only if one remembers that the best way of showing devotion to Ramana is to follow the path, to have faith in his experience which he is sharing. Have we not lived long enough with a chaotic mind which we do not understand when a peaceful, silent, and holistic mind is our natural inheritance?



The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar

Talk 59. (Excerpt)

A moulvi asked: How does sleep overtake one?

M.: If the enquirer knows who is awake in the wakeful condition he will also know how sleep comes on. The enquiry arises only to the waking man and not to the sleeper. It must be easier to know the waking Self than the sleeping Self.

D.: I know how I awoke. But I do not know how sleep comes on. I am aware of my wakeful state. For instance if anyone takes away my stick I prevent his doing so, whereas I cannot do so in sleep or in dream. The proof of wakefulness is evident. But what is the proof of sleep?

M.: Your ignorance is the evidence of sleep: your awareness is that of wakefulness.

D.: My wakefulness is known by the opening of my eye. But how does sleep overtake me?

M.: In the same way as sleep overtakes you, wakefulness also overtakes you.

D.: But I do not perceive how sleep comes on in the same way as I know my wakefulness.

M.: Never mind.

D.: Please describe what is sleep, without illustrations. Sleep by itself should be known. I want a real picture of sleep.

M.: Such picture is sleep itself.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: *Letting go of thought should be practiced in the waking state. This should be pursued till one comes upon the blank of sleep consciously. It is then that one is able to hold on to "sleep", consciously, by BE STILL or SUMMA IRU. To the mature seekers, Bhagavan himself has asked, "Where was this problem in your deep sleep?" But, here, Bhagavan is asking the sadhaka to be patient and enquire into his waking "I". To the unprepared intellect, the blank of ignorance is the equivalent of all the "narakas" and "gross punishments" mentioned in the scriptures. All those are experienced as the darkness of ignorance and psychological*

problems. So, Bhagavan is guiding the seeker to first enquire into the waking "I" and the blank "I" or "Maya" will allow itself to be crossed to the mature seeker.

Talk 59. (Excerpt)

D (Moulvi): Is it better to reach salvation, being married, or being a hermit?

M: Whatever you think better.

D: Visvamitra had no fall when in the married state, whereas he had a fall in his hermit life. Does it not apply to others also?

M: Visvamitra was as pure in the hermit life as when he was married. There was no difference. He was as contaminated when married as when he was a hermit.

D: Was he a rishi?

M: When contaminated he was not a rishi.

D: Can he become a rishi even afterwards?

M: Yes. By proper bhakti he could become a good rishi. Repentance and prayer will set him right.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Many times, when householders ask about Sannyasa, Bhagavan would ask, "For whom is this thought?" Some may mistake this as Bhagavan putting aside Sannyasa as sadhana. However, Bhagavan is only asking the householder to do self enquiry here and now and not use Sannyasa as a requirement. Here, the questioner, who comes from a group not in favour of monasticism, asks whether Sannyasa is required at all. Bhagavan shifts our attention to the common requirement of householder and a renunciate - sadhana. For whom is this thought? Who am I?

Q: In the earlier part of the same talk is the Moulvi trying to get knowledge of black arts by asking Bhagavan to describe sleep?

S: Anyone trying to exploit the ignorance of others for selfish gain by knowing that ignorance is only engaging in black arts. Elsewhere, Bhagavan quotes from Devikalottaram which says that anyone trying to get siddhis in black arts will himself stand punished manifold as he himself has to sink into that darkness.

Q: As an engineer, I am using my knowledge and ignorance of others to earn a living. Is this black arts too?

S: That is why it is said to give your all, without expecting results, while working. Instead of exploitation of ignorance, bring light.

Talk 59. (Excerpt)

D (Moulvi): With all your penance for so many years what have you got?

M: I have got what need be got. I see what need be seen.

D: Can all see the same?

M: I see only just what all do. It is immanent in all.

D: Is this the way for seeing It?

M: Method may be anything. From whatever directions the pilgrims may foregather, they must enter the Kaaba only by one route (passage) or all gather only to enter the Kaaba.

D: Please tell me two upadesas on the way to salvation as known by you.

M: What upadesa do I know? Everything is upadesa. Worship of God is the only upadesa.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The questioner continues in line with his belief system which holds that the only penance is seeking forgiveness from God as every man has sinned. Prayer is also for seeking forgiveness from God. Bhagavan is saying that he claims no special privilege over another. In their belief system there are no Gurus or Upadesa. Bhagavan is guiding the ego of the Moulvi that all Upadesa is only worship of God, seeking forgiveness through prayers is also penance and the only way for salvation or kabbah is erasing of the ego. The Jagadguru is guiding a person of a different belief system by showing that he lives by his teaching, "God is immanent in all" - a belief at the root of all beliefs of the Moulvi.

Q: God is both transcendental and immanent in all the major belief systems. Why is Bhagavan highlighting the immanent nature of God?

S: The transcendental nature allows for external worship. Immanent nature of God allows inner worship. All differences in the "outside" drop off. Turn Inward. Varnaashrama Mataateetaaya Namah.

Q: Is the Immanent God pursued in Self Enquiry?

S.: Directly. Even if a thought appears "outside", do not pursue it. Enquire, "For whom is this thought? Who am I?"

ON MOUNA (SILENCE)

Talk 60.

Sri Bhagavan: The silence of solitude is forced. Restrained speech in society amounts to silence. For the man then controls his speech.

The speaker must come forth before he speaks. If engaged otherwise speech is restrained. Introverted mind is otherwise active and is not anxious to speak.

Mouna as a disciplinary measure is meant for limiting the mental activities due to speech. If the mind is otherwise controlled disciplinary mouna is unnecessary. For mouna becomes natural. Vidyaranya has said that twelve years forced mouna brings about absolute mouna - that is, makes one unable to speak. It is more like a mute animal than otherwise. That is not mouna.

Mouna is constant speech. Inactivity is constant activity.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Closing the eyes removes thoughts related to sight alone. Whereas, if the seer is engaged in Self attention, it does not matter whether the eyes are open or closed. One can apply what Bhagavan teaches about speech to any other restraint used as sadhana. The doer must be engaged in seeking the Source. Mind is to be introspective. Mouna is constant performance of one's duty.

Q: My country has been forged by the gun. Guns cannot be taken away. Children die in school shootings. Everyone feels bound by history. How does Mouna help?

S: The thinker attending to the Source is freedom from the bondage of "the past - history". It is constant freedom - from time too. BE.

Q: When the whole country is suffering, what is the use of freeing my "I"?

S: For whom is this thought, my "I"?

Saddarshanam*Master Nome*

Another Q.: The “I” is different from any other ignorance. Here, you are pointing out investigation of the “I.” Would the investigation apply to anything else?

N.: Where does the definition form to create ignorance? Where is the starting place of the definition? The starting place is the “I.” Where does the “I” start? Trace inward in this way. You can use the transcendence of a false definition, or the destruction of a vasana, to spring into deeper inquiry and thus destroy the ignorance, from bottom to top, or from top to bottom.

Another Q.: Why does this “I”-thought seem so powerful? As many times as we have heard that it is just a thought and that thoughts are not real, by now, all of us ought to know that it is foolishness and no longer have this identity of being a mere thought, yet it persists.

N.: What makes you say that it is powerful? I cannot explain an experience that I do not have. (laughter)

Q.: I don't know. I have a tendency to think of myself as an individual, whether as a body or as a mind. By now, I should be past that misidentification.

N.: Who is the one who has that habit?

Q.: It is imagination.

N.: Yes, and the power of it derives from the Reality, as the Maharshi explained in verse one, in speaking of the One that appears as a variegated picture and of a Supreme Lord of immense power. That Supreme Lord of immense power is your own Being. That illusion seems as if it contains power is only a testimony to the power of Reality, so that even a drop, so to speak, of Reality can make the entire illusion seem as if real. The Reality of the Self is so powerful and so immense that a drop of it lent to a notion, which can never

actually exist, can make the merely imagined seem to flourish as an individual being.

Q.: That is why you have said that the ego is the Self seen unclearly.

N.: The power behind all, including the ego, is the same Self. Knowing that the power comes from the Self and not from the ego, can you discern precisely how much power is in this ego?

Q.: There cannot be any.

N.: If we do not inquire, the ego seems as if a powerful creature with many arms and legs, capable of doing wondrous feats, and making the impossible seem possible. When we turn to look at it, asking, "Who is this fellow? Where exactly was he born? Let me investigate the matter," he starts to disappear. He loses all of his "arms and legs." His form becomes very difficult to find. His doings shrink to nothing. His power becomes nonexistent, and everyone says, "At last! We are done with this nuisance of the ego." (laughter)

Q.: It is just confusing the real "I"- am-ness with the "I"-am thought.

N.: It is but the vaguest of assumptions, the merest imagined supposition. That one vague assumption, which is an unreal differentiation, becomes the basis for the entire samsara, with all its permutations, for however many eons it seems to last. With the dissolution of that one assumption, inclusive of all of its attendant tendencies, which are the ideas built upon it, the entire samsara vanishes without a trace. You find that there was nothing to it. This is comparable to awakening from a dream. If the doubt is, "But the dream seemed so real," the answer is, "Yes, but whose power was it?" If the doubt is, "It seemed so large," the answer is, "Yes, but whose immensity was it?" If the doubt is, "It lasted so long," the answer is, "Yes, but whose eternity was it?" When you wake up, there is not a trace of the dream.

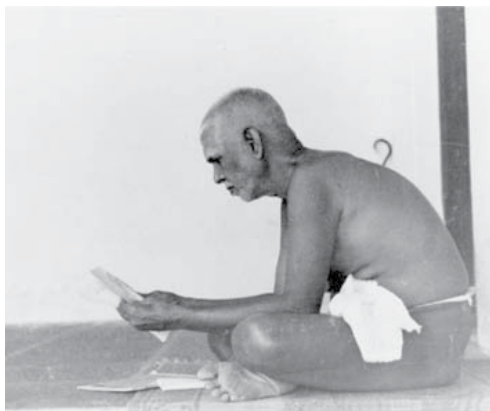
Q.: When I am dreaming, the power in it is the Awareness. What I am seeing is myself, in any form, even if it be a dream. Nothing is real except "I."

N.: If the “I” is known for what it is, in its utter formlessness, the dream is over.

Another Q.: When I first try to seek it, there is an assumption that it is actually connected or that it has a place from which it comes. As I try to trace it back to find the place where it starts, there is a gap. In that gap, there is not actually a start. I cannot find the start of the ego-“I”, and there is no start of the real Existence.

N.: That is right. The real Existence does not start and does not perish. The “I” seems to rise and fall, and, with it, everything else seems to rise and fall. Searching for this “I,” it becomes nebulous. You are looking for the missing link. Though one can discuss how the ego evolves after its supposed start, there is this missing link. You must become very certain about how missing it is.

The inquiry should be pursued extremely experientially. Where in your Consciousness does “I” form, coalesce, rise up, or become born? Where is the “I?” From where does it start? Before anything else rises with it, before anything else is appended to it, where is the “I”? If you think, “I think that I am,” where could that sense of “I,” the assumption of individuality that is a bare nebulous supposition of “I,” the assumption of existing as some kind of entity, start? Did it start? (silence) Such inquiry should be continued until the Knowledge of the egoless Self is perpetual and utterly unbroken.



Shri Arunachala Ashtakam

G Kameshwar

Eight Verses on Arunachala Of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

G Kameshwar

Verse-2

kaNTava nevanenak karuttinu NATak
 kaNTava ninRiTā ninRatu kaNTEn
 kaNTana nenRiTak karuttezha villai
 kaNTila nenRiTak karuttezhu mARen
 viNTitu viLakkiTu viRaluRu vOnAr
 viNTilai paNTunee viLakkinai yenRAI
 viNTiTā tunnilai viLakkiTā venRE
 viNTala macalamA viLankiTā ninRAi

Word split, and meaning:

kaNTavan evan ena: Finding out who it is that saw
 karuttin uL nATa: Seeking inside the mind
 kaNTavan inRiTā: The seer not existing
 ninRatu kaNTEn: I saw that which remained (standing)
 kaNTanan enRiTā: To say that I have seen
 karuttu ezhavillai: Thought did not rise
 kaNTilan enRiTā: To say that I did not see
 karuttu ezhumARu en: How can thought rise?
 paNTu: In former days
 nee viNTilai viLakkinai enRAI: since you explained, without speaking
 viNTu itu vilakkiTu: To explain this with words
 viral uRuvOn Ar: Who has the capability?
 viNTiTatu: Without speaking a word
 un nilai: your (true) state
 viLakkiTā enRE: Indeed for explaining
 viN talam acalamAi: As the unmoving (hill), (spanning) sky and earth
 viLankiTā ninRAi: You stood, resplendent

Verse rendering:

Seeking the seer
Within the mind;
Finding no seer
I saw 'That'

Which remained, standing;

To say that 'I saw',

The thought arose not.

Then, to say that 'I saw not',

Wherefrom would arise the thought?

Who, indeed,

Can explain

'That', with words;

Since even you

In days of yore

Explained 'That'

Only without words?

And so,

Just in order to explain

Without speech,

Your (real) state;

You stood, shining,

Earth to sky

As the hill, so still.

Prose rendering:

(Upon seeing the Arunachala hill) When I searched inside my mind, seeking the seer, I saw no seer; and saw only 'That' (the Self) which remained, standing. Now, (there being no one within), there arises no thought that says that I saw (the Self). Therefore, how can there arise a thought that says that I did not see (the Self)? Who can express this state of Self-existence by words, when even you, in olden times, explained that only by silence? It is only to reveal your real state without speaking a word that you stood, resplendent, extending from earth to sky, unmoving, as the hill.

Notes:

In the first verse, Bhagavan, speaking of his coming to Arunachala, had said:

*"Look! There Arunachala stands as if an insentient Mountain. Yet, mysterious is the way it works, beyond all human understanding. From my unthinking childhood, Arunachala had shone as an immensity in my awareness. But even when I learnt from someone that it was Tiruvannamalai, I did not realise its real meaning. However, when it stilled my mind and drew me to itself and I came near, I saw that it was stillness absolute!"*¹

Now, He continues the narration. He says that he wanted to find out who it was who saw this Arunachala, and so he turned his attention inwards, and sought the seer existing inside his own mind. And to his amazement, he found that there was no individual 'seer'! And instead, he saw only 'That' (the Self) which remained, standing.

In this first part of the second verse, Bhagavan describes the entire process of self-inquiry, from start to fruition.

In this context, we may take reference of verse 30 of *uLLatu nArpatu*, composed by Bhagavan.

*nAnA renamanamuN NATiyuLa naNNavE
nAnA mavanRalai nANamuRa - nAnAnAt
tOnRumonRu tAnAkat tOnRinunA nanRuporuL
pUnRamatu tAnAm poruL*

*Who am I? The mind thus
Seeking within
And merging in the heart,
'I' subsides,
Hanging down its head,
One 'I'-I' appears by itself.*

¹Prose translation: By Prof K Swaminathan, 'Five Hymns to Arunachala and Other Poems of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi', published by Ramana Kendra, New Delhi, 1977

*Even though that appears thus,
 (that) Is not 'I'.
 That is the consummate Truth,
 The Self,
 Which is the real thing!²*

Bhagavan says that when he sought to see 'Who am I', looking inside his mind, the individual 'I'-self will fall, and the non-dual 'I'-I throbs forth. This is the real Self.

The same reality is also conveyed by Bhagavan in his composition *upadEsha untiyAr* (also Upadesha Saram, in Sanskrit)³, using almost the very same expressions as in *uLLatu nArpatu* verse quoted above. Here, he also states that this is what is known as *jnAna-vicAra* (self-inquiry / Knowledge-inquiry).

*nAnen RezhumiTa mEtena nATavuN
 NanRalai cAyntiTu munteepaRa
 jnAna vicArami munteepaRa*

*nAnonRu tAnattu nAnAnen RonRatu
 tAnAkat tOnRumE yunteepaRa
 tAnatu pOnRamA munteepaRa*

*nAnenun cOrporu Lamatu nALumE
 nAnaRRa tookkattu munteepaRa
 namatinmai neekkattA lunteepaRa*

*Where does this "I"-notion rise,
 When sought att®entively,
 Lo! "I" falls in expiry,
 This is self-inquiry.*

*In place of "I" destroyed,
 Throbs "I"- "I" luminous,
 One, Self spontaneous,
 Heart-Fullness-Consciousness.*

2 English translation, taken from 'Ramana Darshana Trayi' – by the author, published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bengaluru

3 Refer verses 19,20,21

*This is the real substance
That the term "I" does imply.
Eternal, it does not die,
Even in sleep devoid of "I".⁴*

It may be seen that Bhagavan has explicitly stated that this is *jñAna-vicAra* (self-inquiry / Knowledge-inquiry). And in explaining the process of self-inquiry, he has used almost the very same expressions in *upadEsha untiyAr* as in the *uLLatu nArpatu* verse quoted earlier, viz., seeking the self inside the mind, the individual self dropping away, and the real Self shining forth.

*** To be continued ***

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



⁴ English translation, taken from 'Ramana Darshana Trayi' – by the author, published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bengaluru

Upadeshasaram

Ujwal Jagadeesh

avyaya abhava ApUrna cit sukham

There is nothing but Immutable, unborn, all-pervading Blissful Awareness.

In the preamble of the booklet 'Who am I?' Ramana says "As all living beings desire to be happy always, without misery, as in the case of everyone there is observed supreme love for one's self, and as happiness alone is the cause for love, in order to gain that happiness which is one's nature and which is experienced in the state of deep sleep where there is no mind, one should know one's self. For that, the path of knowledge, the inquiry of the form 'Who am I?' is the principal means."

Ramana has declared time and again through his life and teachings that the infinite treasure of Self-knowledge belongs to one and all, it is the flood of natural happiness. All beings are searching for happiness. Not the happiness that passes with the passing of the event. Not the happiness that is ever pursued by the shadow of fear and uncertainty. Not the happiness which plays musical chairs with its partner sorrow. The mind is in search of eternal happiness.

This quest of our mind, Manasa was depicted in a dance ballet "Purushottama Ramana" presented by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning during the centenary celebration of Ramana's Enlightenment.

Mind personified as Manasa says:

"I have looked for it in the physical world in adorning the body, in its beauty and splendor. Happiness fades with the fading of the body, fades when other sorrow overwhelms even in the presence of youth and beauty. Yet being Manasa in search of eternal happiness I looked elsewhere.

I searched in relationships. This happiness is dogged by the sorrow of separation. Is the same true for every relationship? This happiness fades, it is hounded by anxiety, it is wounded by the moments of indifference, it is crushed by prejudice and pride. Oh! It fades, fades, fades... So I Manasa in search of eternal happiness had to start searching all over again.

I searched this time in art and culture, in knowledge and adventure. I searched high and low. In places new and old. Everywhere I seemed to find, I found only to lose, time and again that seeming happiness, happiness little or more, but happiness always sure to fade, to pass, and never to stay.

Absolutely tired I ceased all seeking, all searching, all longing and thus when all else ceased, within, by itself rose a flood of happiness. This flood of happiness, what is it? And how did it happen? Could it be true? And then a voice replied gently 'This alone is true. Joy-bliss is one's own nature. It resides in the Self. No, it is the Self. It is the Self.'

'Know truly who you are, you will find it', continued the gentle inner voice 'for it is your own nature, your very Self. Know who I am?'

Who am I? Surely not the body which changes every moment from birth to death. Surely not this body. Why? Woman may change into a man and man to a woman.

Learned and ignorant, rich and poor can interchange. Mind itself changes its likes and dislikes, its ideals and ways. And in deep deep sleep it ceases all together.

Where then do I go? What is it that remains and returns on waking? What is it itself unchanging observes every change. Who am I? What is it that remains when all else is gone?

'I' - 'I',

The Abiding silence of peace

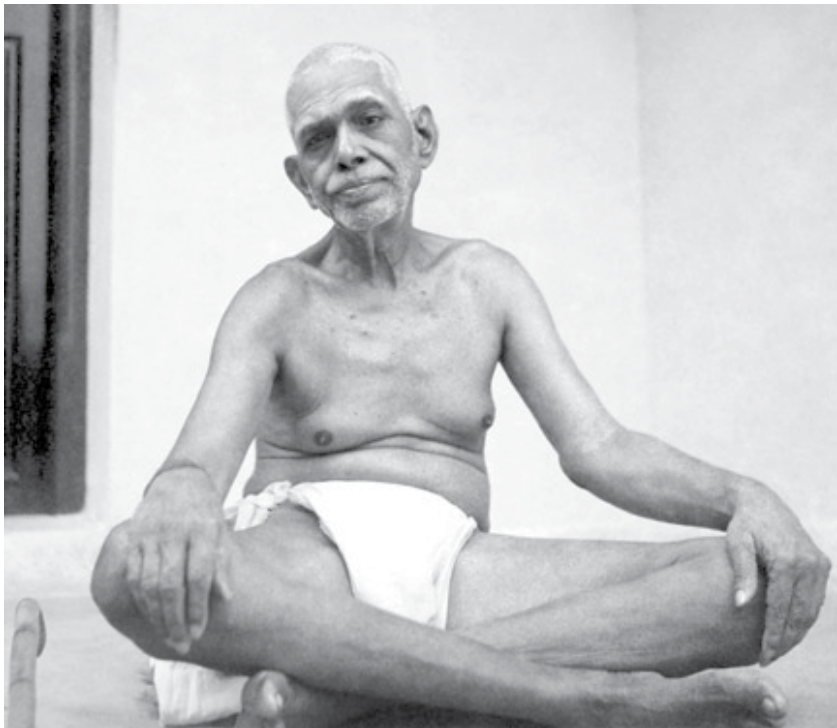
The Eternal expanse of Love.

A boundless flood of bliss, of bliss, of bliss”

Ramana points out the path to attain the limitless eternal bliss. By the quest as to what my real nature is, when there is vision of the Self, there is nothing but Immutable, unborn, all-pervading Blissful Awareness.

*kim svarUpam ityAtma darshane
avyayAbhavApUrNachit sukham*

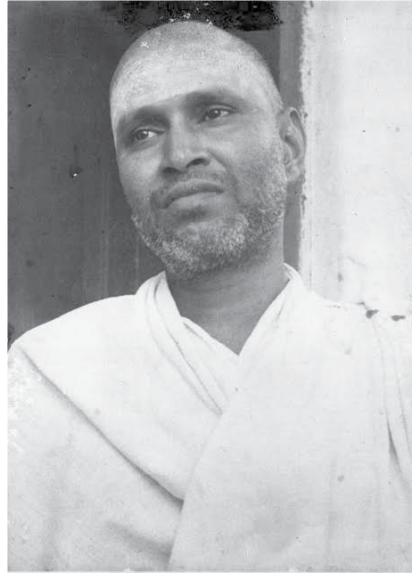
A conscious bliss ensues when one abides as the Self, by enquiring “What is the true import of ‘I’? This bliss is indestructible, spontaneous and limitless.



The Inspiring Life of Sri Viswanatha Swami

V.Ganesan

I walked along with Swami. He took me into the inner pradakshina. I did not know it till then. When we move with such people, we do not ask ordinary questions. Questions like 'where are we going', 'where are you taking me....' never even arise in our minds. That is their power. He himself out of kindness said, "This is inner paadai or foresh paadai (route) which Bhagavan told us about. Bhagavan himself has taken me on this path. Come, and there is a place where the entire hill is hidden by a small hill. You have to walk around the small hill. At that time the complete Arunachala is hidden."



He held my hand, "Come carefully" he said. "Be alert". At a place he stopped, "Now look. There are two peaks – one is Mother peak (Apeethakuchaambal)." Viswanatha Swami said "This is Mother's sannidhi". Then he took me a little further, and said, "This is Father peak. Bhagavan took me here and showed me this. Only if Amma blesses (grace) one can see Father. Do namaskaram here".

'Amma will show father peak'. It was all so real. 'Now prostrate here.'

So every time I go on the inner path, I prostrate. And then it does not stop there. He took me further on the inner path. At one place, after Adi Annamalai the Mother peak becomes so prominent,

and then the Father peak goes inside. We reached a particular place, Viswanatha Swami said “Keep looking at Father and Mother. At one place the Mother peak completely hides the Father peak.”

Viswanatha Swami shed tears holding my hand. I got scared. “Bhagavan took me here and cried. Ambal’s grace. This is the most mystic place in Arunachala. I have spent days and nights at that place. Pray at this place.”

I am sharing all this. These are no interesting episodes. These are all life changing experiences. One other day, at the same spot Puri Shankaracharya asked Bhagavan a doubt. Hara Gouri samyoga.....yoga uchyate. When he was at Dwaraka peetham he had this doubt. He wanted to know the meaning of this. He was not satisfied with others answers. He wrote to Bhagavan. Vadhyar Sundareshar used to bring in the letters to Bhagavan and also write the replies as per Bhagavan’s instructions.

Bhagavan replied, ‘Ask him to come here, he will understand’. Ask Shankaracharya to come here. Bhagavan never used the words understand or knowing. He used the word clarity. Understanding and knowing is not enough, one should have clarity.

When Shankaracharya comes, Bhagavan says ‘why the doubt – the mind and Atman dissolving in each other is Hara Gouri Samyogam’. That is why Viswanatha Swami said that is the most sacred place. And then in those days when people came, I would take people around the hill and few on top of the hill too. One day when Viswanatha Swami asked where I had been to I proudly replied that I had taken all these people on top of the hill.

Then he asked if I had seen Arunachaleshwara Paadam. I had always understood that I possessed the unconscious good ego. I was very proud of having taken the devotees on top of the hill.

But I had never seen the holy feet of Arunachaleshwara. Because the highest point, where the deepam was lit, I would take devotees there, do namaskaram, sing the Aksharamanamalai, offer prasadam and come back. But I had never seen the feet of Father.

Viswanatha Swami said that Bhagavan had once many years ago asked him the same question, to which Viswanatha Swami replied that he had never seen the feet. Bhagavan said 'Go and see, the rock next to the Deepam rock has huge foot prints of Appa'. Viswanatha Swami immediately ran up even as the night was setting in. Because his Guru had asked him to do so. And he rolled and rolled on the feet. You will get emancipation only by holding on to the holy feet.

Then Viswanatha Swami said there are 2 springs inside caves on Arunchala to which Bhagavan had referred. One is called Lily pond (alli sonai), and the other the (kuninju kudichaan sonai) crawling and drinking water cave.... crawling in like a lizard. These never become dry. Viswanatha Swami said – they are nectar.

During Bhagavan's lifetime, Viswanatha Swami and Kunju Swami searched for and found the Lily pond, but after many searches all around Arunachala they could not find the other one. So, with disappointment, they told this to Bhagavan.

Bhagavan said, "Is it so, looks like only Siddha Purushas can make use of it."

Why Viswanatha Swami told me this was because he did not want me to search for it. It is wonderful to live with old time devotees.

Then Bhagavan guided further. 'Viswanatha, go and do tapas in Pachchai Amman Temple'. This is far away from Ramanasramam, at the eastern foot of the hills, very secluded. In those days nobody would go there as cheetahs and panthers would visit the place. It was intense thick forest. Our immediate reaction would be how to survive, what to eat, as it was dangerous, risky and far away from the town. Bhagavan continued, 'While going take beaten rice (Aval) and jaggery'. Even Viswanatha Swami had this thought as to what to do about food. But how would he eat raw beaten rice? So Bhagavan told him to tie it in a cloth, put it in spring water in the night. Morning, eat it with jaggery. The depth of care Guru takes on us is immense. And then Bhagavan continued, "this is for the body. For the mind: forget time, space and possessions. Keep silent. Report to me."

Whenever I think of this I cry. How kind the guru is, how much care they take. The tapas has to be intense, uninterrupted. When I was in the office, Viswanatha Swami came one day and stood outside. As I turned and saw him, I prostrated and asked him the reason for his coming. He said 'As I was coming to see you Ganesa, I saw the tank (Pali Tirtham), sat on the steps and looked at the water. Bhagavan was swimming there, who was a champion swimmer. Bhagavan was floating there because I had never seen him swim before.'

Endlessly for hours Bhagavan could float and meditate. Viswanatha Swami saw Bhagavan and came to tell me. An ignorant seeker has to be encouraged.

There is another incident about a lady in Delhi. The whole family was deeply devoted to Bhagavan, 4-5 girls all of them devoted. The father insisted that they worship a photo of Bhagavan at home. Even when they were given in marriage the father had insisted that they carry a picture of Bhagavan with them. So, this lady (one of those girls) was having a picture of Bhagavan with her but not exhibiting it because her husband was not a devotee. She kept the picture in a particular room so that her husband does not feel disturbed. Unfortunately, one day the husband discovered it and flew into a rage. He took the picture, took it to the roadside, stamped on it and put it into the dustbin. The lady was severely shocked. She immediately took her purse, went to the airport, came to Chennai and reached the Asram completely shattered. She was continuously crying; I did not know how to handle her. Though I arranged for a room, took her to the shrine. But it was almost night, I had no clue how to handle her. Viswanatha Swami came in, immediately understood. 'I will take care of her' he said. For 3 days, Viswanatha Swami took her to the temple, pacified her. But she was terribly afraid of her husband. Swami told me, 'We will deal with that later'. Viswanatha Swami asked me to go and pray that everything should be alright.

Viswanatha Swami had also given me a clue that her husband is a troublesome person, who thinks that Bhagavan's picture is another man's picture. After three day, in the evening a horse cart

came into the Asram with an angry man and the person demanded where his wife was. I got very scared. I was not sure what would he do because at that moment Viswanatha Swami had taken his wife around the hill. And if at that time they both walked in.....I was not sure what would happen. I was really terrified. I was receiving him..... and then Viswanatha Swami and his wife entered the Asram. A miracle happened....the man went and fell at Viswanatha Swami's feet.....it was an anticlimax for me. But the lady had written to him, about how noble a person Viswanatha Swami was. The man had actually come to take her home to Delhi because her son was crying all the while. Afterwards Viswanatha Swami would discuss with me the details about the picture being thrown away etc. But that was the greatest moment of my life, we can talk philosophy, we can give advises, but to take a problem on oneself and dissolve it amicably to the satisfaction of everyone is amazing.

*** to be continued ***



Power of the Word

By Sanjay Lohia

Bhagavan: Guru's silence is the loudest upadesa.



*Bhagavan's most potent words are his silence.

(Sanjay Lohia)

I Saw the Light

Excerpts from an article 'The Other Chandralekha' by Siddharth in 'The Hindu', Sunday August 13, 2000. The article also contains Cartier Bresson's recollection of the light that was seen when Bhagavan Ramana dropped his body on 14th April 1950.

I was 21 when I first met her. It was 1971, I think... Chandralekha (or Chandra as she is known to her friends)... Chandra lived alone, in absolute simplicity, in an old house off Edward Elliotts Road (now Dr. Radhakrishnan Road) in Mylapore. There was no furniture in the house barring a few planks of wood, balanced on bricks, which served as bookshelves. She lived on the reed mats on the floor....

We were once walking through the splendid woods of the Theosophical Society in Madras when Chandra cried, "Look at that tree!" If memory serves right, it was a sturdy pipal tree, not yet grown to its full magnificence. She ran towards the tree and put her hands around it, her cheek clinging to the trunk. As always I was startled by her response. Then she said, "How wonderful it is to hug a tree." Seeing my discomfiture, she beckoned with a wave of her hand that I should follow her example. I did so, feeling self-conscious and a little foolish. "It is a great feeling!" I lied. Since then, whenever I am alone in the midst of trees, I look around for a proper tree to embrace. And I feel very good. I am now convinced that trees have sacred energies that flow into us when we embrace them, energies that are spiritually restorative....

Religion and Chandra do not mix well, although an undefined sense of the sacred permeates her. She is spiritual without admitting it, keeping a distance from all that is formally religious. The aesthetic within religion attracts her, whether it is music, temples, statuary, brassware or the flicker of oil lamps. For the rest she is generally suspicious... In the 1950s, the Sankaracharya of the Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt visited Madras. It was an event of utmost significance to his devotees. Large crowds thronged the streets. At that time Cartier Bresson, the legendary French photographer, was in Madras visiting Chandra. When he

heard of the Sankaracharya's visit he decided to be on the streets photographing the event. Chandra accompanied Cartier Bresson to T. Nagar and they ensconced themselves at a point where they hoped to get a good view of the seer as he went by. There were thousands on the street, many waiting for hours. A sudden hush indicated that the Sankaracharya's palanquin was approaching.

In a few minutes he was there. But when he realised he was not adequately visible to his followers on the street, the Sankaracharya decided to disembark from the palanquin. But the sea of heads still blocked him from people even a few feet away. So he climbed on to the top of the palanquin, from where he was easily seen now. Cartier Bresson had positioned himself on one side of the road to take pictures. Chandra, who stood a little away, heard a gasp from beside her as soon as the Sankaracharya emerged on top of the palanquin. She turned to see a frail man with his arms raised towards the Sankaracharya. His eyes had welled with tears and soon they poured down his face. Chandra watched him in awe, overwhelmed by the emotion of the man, who was obviously a devout believer. The tears continued to flow down, and Chandra continued to watch. Later that evening, when Cartier Bresson asked her if she believed in the Sankaracharya, she replied, "I do not know if I believe in the Sankaracharya, but I believe in the man who stood beside me, tears in his eyes."

Chandra went thrice to Tiruvannamalai when Ramana Maharishi was alive. On her first visit she thought the place was batty. Her father was not religious, and she had not been brought up on a religious diet. She was put off by people who referred to Ramana as Bhagavan. When she asked Baba (as she called the poet Harindranath Chattopadya) why people insisted on calling him Bhagavan, he said, half-jocularly, that human beings were only subhuman or inhuman or half-human, while Ramana was fully human and, therefore, rightfully a God, a Bhagavan. On her second visit, she responded to the ashram more positively. It was Karthikei and the hill, Arunachala, was lit with hundreds of earthen lamps. She was drunk with the beauty of the evening and could think of nothing else.

On the third visit Chandra had gone with Baba, Cartier Bresson and Bresson's Indonesian wife. Ramana was dying. He had a cancerous growth on his arm that was meant to be very

painful. They sat many hours close to Ramana, hardly 10 or 15 feet away. The ringside seats were possible because Harindranath Chattopadya was a well known figure at the time. Chandralekha was there to spy. She wanted to unravel the "mystery", unmask the Bhagavan who was apparently serene although, according to the doctors, he should be writhing with the lacerating pain shooting down his arm. But Ramana lay with utter quiet and peace, as if to confirm his own notion that one could live without the body. She was hoping to catch him flinch or sigh, but he remained motionless and peaceful. Chandra continued her spying game each time they sat near him, hoping to catch a tell-tale sign that betrayed him. But there was none. On the odd occasion when Ramana's eyes met hers, they shone with compassion and kindness. She began to reluctantly accept that there was a mystery here, something she did not fully grasp, akin to transcendence.

On her last night at the ashram they had finished supper and Chandra was standing outside their cottage catching some air. She remembers the evening vividly, "I was gazing at the stars and saw a long trail of light crossing the sky. I called out to Baba to come and see. Baba and Cartier Bresson ran out to look. They both saw the trail of light. Baba asked what the time was. Cartier Bresson said it was 13 minutes to nine. "He is dead now," said Baba. They rushed to the ashram. The doctor said that he had breathed his last at 8.47 p.m.. The papers carried the news the next day that hundreds of people had seen a light in the sky. It is there on record. But I actually saw it."

In the 1970's I was living in Paris when Sadanand Menon, a friend from college days, came visiting... Together we went to see Cartier Bresson, who was living on Rue du Rivoli, just a few metres from where I then lived, on Rue Saint Honore. On that visit, Bresson was keen to have news of Chandra and the designer, Dashrath Patel, another close friend of Chandra's. When we left, Sadanand took a picture of the photographer, something that Bresson rarely permitted. I knew I would return to see him again to ask a question that was on my mind that evening. A month or so later I was back to ask Bresson if he had seen the light in the sky in Tiruvannamalai. Cartier Bresson was quick and emphatic, "Of course I saw the light! It was unbelievable. But of course I saw the light!"

Ramana My Light

Charumathi Neelkanth (Challimma)



I finally enter Chalimma's room after going to the other end of Chennai as I have wrongly heard the address she called out over the phone. She smiles sweetly and says, 'Naan ungala romba sutta veccutten' 'I have made you go round in circles'. Then she says, 'I don't know much about Bhagavan. I will tell you whatever I remember'.

'I remember I had come to the Ramana Shrine at Bangalore in 1984. My husband was working there then.'

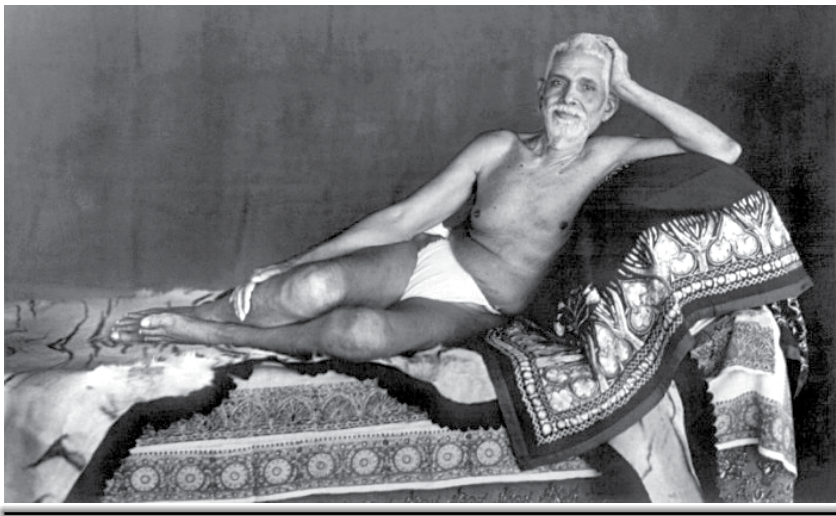
'Wonderful, I said. When did you see Bhagavan?' Her face lights up and she begins a vivid narration of what she 'does not remember much about'.

'I was 9 years old when I had my first darshan of Bhagavan. My father had just left for the railway station in our village to take the train to Tiruvannamalai. I would always sleep only beside my father. In fact I would stay as close to him as possible all the time. That night I suddenly woke up calling out 'appa' to find that my father was not beside me. I asked where he was and I was told he had left for the station. Without a second thought I said I cannot be separated from my father and I began to run towards the station. One of relatives quickly shoved a couple of change of clothes for me into a bag and followed me to the station.'

'So I adamantly accompanied my father to the Asram. This was in 1942. I was born in 1933.

The next day we were at the Asram. My father took me to Bhagavan's Hall. He sat down lost in meditation. He had told me, 'You too should close your eyes and sit quietly'. But what did I know then of bhakti or jnana or of any other path? My attention was grabbed by the dancing peacocks, the scampering squirrels and the gentle cows. I ran off to watch all of these. Before leaving the Asram my father took me to Bhagavan and said, 'This is my daughter. Please bless her'. Then Bhagavan looked at me. In this way I got the invaluable blessing of His glance of Grace.'

*** to be continued ***



How Bhagavan Captured Us

By Smt. Sulochana Natarajan

On ARN's return after successfully completing his course, I joined him at Chennai where he was posted. Our family shifted to 33 Tirumalaippillai Road in T.Nagar – a big house in front of the then Chief Minister Sri Kamaraj's house. In this particular house we stayed from 1953 January to 1956 June. Many significant events happened during that period.

I started attending Hindi classes under one teacher Smt. Saraswathi Ramanathan. All the system which I am now following in documenting Ramana Music started only then. I was never aware of that capacity of mine until then. I used to put every word to conjugation and study systematically. I appeared for Madhyama Exam and stood State Second. I used to walk up alone to the class and likewise come back also on my own which was a great surprise to the family as I had never gone alone anywhere until then.

My elder sister-in-law, Smt.Rajalakshmi, became the first blessing of 'Lakshmi' in my life in my own individual capacity as she recommended to ARN that some 'pocket money' should be given to me every month. 'Nataraja, after marriage she should not be in a position to ask her parents to fulfil her little needs. You better give her some pocket money'. I started getting Rs.10/- pocket money every month which was a big amount then. Towards the end of the month my mother-in-law would run short of money for her household expenses and used to take a loan of Rs.2/- to be returned on the 1st of next month. She was so sweet that she never asked me to give her the money except as a loan!

My sister-in-law was in the family way and the traditional function of 'Poo choottal' or what can literally be translated as the flower adorning function was celebrated on a grand scale.

In 1954 May ARN was posted as ITO Madurai. We went to Madurai and took up a flat near OCPM High School Tellakulam

where I had studied upto II Form. The flat was also near the present Lakshmi Sundaram Hall where we have given several Ramana performances in recent years organised by Ramana Kendra and Ramana Mandiram in a grand manner. My uncles and Pechupatti were staying in Chokkikulam.

Having lived in a joint family all my life I was afraid of staying alone the whole day long after ARN went to office. So my mother sent me a girl helper from Tanjore to be with me and help in the household work as well.

We were at Madurai only for 5 months. Every Friday we used to visit the Temple of Goddess Meenakshi in the evenings. On the way back we used to purchase fresh hot coffee powder from one Narasu's coffee shop. They would roast the seeds in front of our eyes and then grind the coffee powder. From Narasu's we would go to the Temple, then go to the Railway Station and get our dinner from IRR room and come back. On Sunday afternoons we would go to my uncle's house for special lunch.

The time had not come for Bhagavan's entry in our lives. Although I had had darshan his presence in my life too was dormant until then. We did not get to know about the existence of Ramana Mandiram Madurai.

As it was delivery time for my sister-in-law, ARN took some extra days off during Dasara holidays. We went to Chennai via Tanjore where my mother had the arranged the dolls in a grand manner like every year. We were in Chennai on time, 2 days before the delivery.

Umesh was born on 3rd October morning at Isabel Hospital under Dr.Madhavi Ammal. After Umesh's birth ARN was again posted back to Chennai. Perhaps the baby had colic pain in the first few months, which I am told gets aggravated in the evenings. From 6 to 7 every evening the child would cry unless he was carried walking. I had the good fortune of performing this task. During this hour I would recite all the slokas that I had learnt then and sometimes I would sing songs as well. In later years

Umesh has been a great spiritual force in our lives. He is also the significant link with the Sringeri Jagadguru Sri Abhinava Vidya Teertha Swami from whom practically every member of my in-law's family and baby Ambika as well received gracious initiation.

In those years I also completed my Rashtra Bhasha examination with the 1st rank. It seems for many years thereafter my Hindi teacher Smt.Saraswathi Ramanathan would refer to me as an ideal student and an example for all her students. Knowledge of Hindi was of great help to me in ARN's long stint at Delhi. I could train Sarada who did not learn the language with such ease as Ambika did. I could also work on the Hindi songs of Ramananjali with felicity. The Ramana factor as always had its subtle and beautiful influence on our lives unknown to us.



News & Events*Revathi Sankar*

On the second day of the Gnananjali Festival held in September at Narada Gana Sabha, Chennai, a dance feature 'Arunagiri Ramanan' was presented by leading young Bharatanatyam gurus Smt Divyasena S, Smt Nandini Suresh, Smt Padmalakshmi Suresh, Smt Sindhu Shyam, Smt Utra Ramesh, Sri Ujwal Jagadeesh and Revathi Sankar along with their disciples.









Bharatanatyam offering by Smt.Veena Nidhi and Smt.Shrilaxmi Mandar

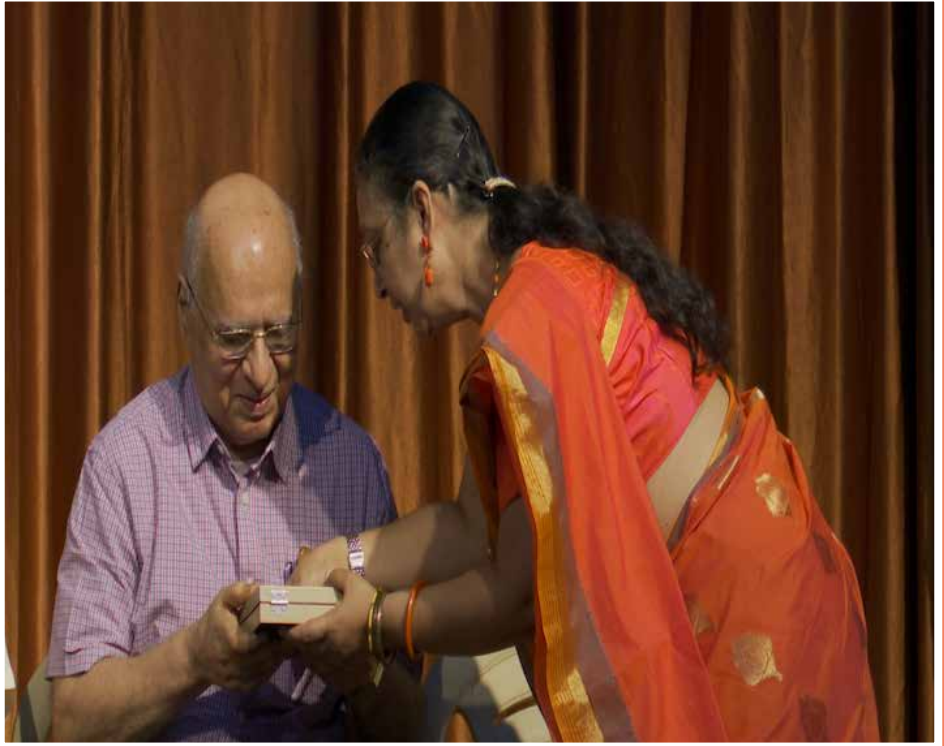




40 years of RMCL and Renovation of Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium
Honouring our founder Secretary Sri S.Krishnaswamy

Honouring the current Governing Body members who were present on the occasion: Sri Dileep Simha, Dr.Ambika Kameshwar, Smt.Geetha Nair and Sri Venkatesh Deshpande represented by Sumeeth.

Dr. C. Somashekar and Dr. Manu Baligar were the guests of honour.





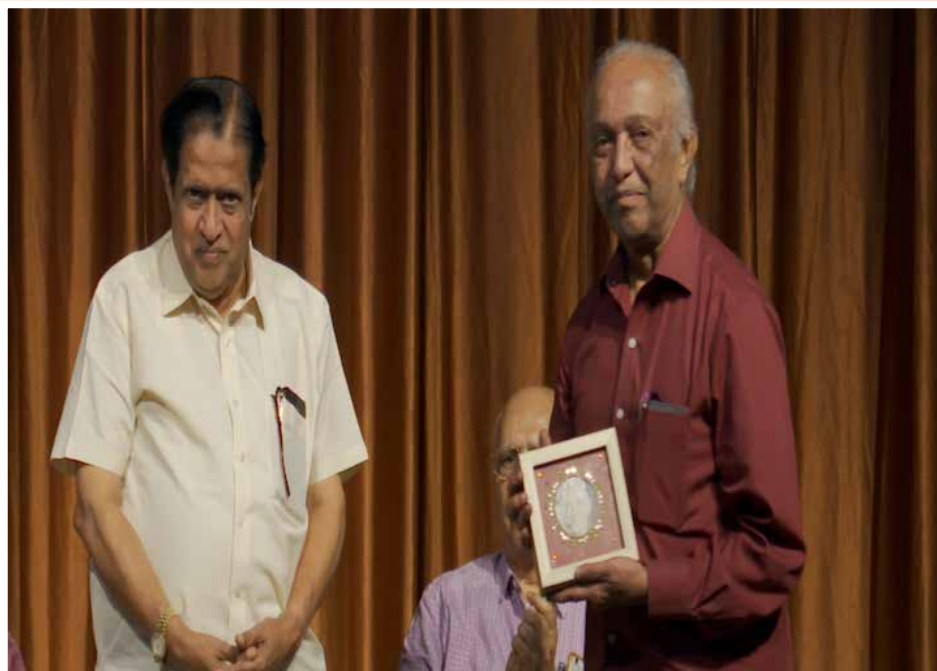


Honouring those who have been associated with RMCL from the very founding of the Centre:

1. Sri K.Sankar who typed the memorandum of our society, was the first librarian and rendered many other services...
2. Sri B.R.Shivaram – the ‘voice’ of RMCL – the Master of Ceremonies for its major programs over decades...
3. Sri M.V.Lakshmikantha – our auditor from the first balance sheet filed till now ...
4. Sri Shankaranarayana – a nonagenarian who served as accountant and now performs daily puja both at the Shrine and at the Meditation Hall at Sanjaynagar...
5. Lokachandran – who began as our Sarathi and now, heading a school in Tamilnadu, still renders services every weekend in any area the Centre requires...
6. Subodh – who came all the way from Bihar as a young lad to be our day and night caretaker at the Ramana Shrine...

Pujya Sri. Sri. Sri. Jayendrapuri Maha Swamy blessed their services and gave the benedictory address.

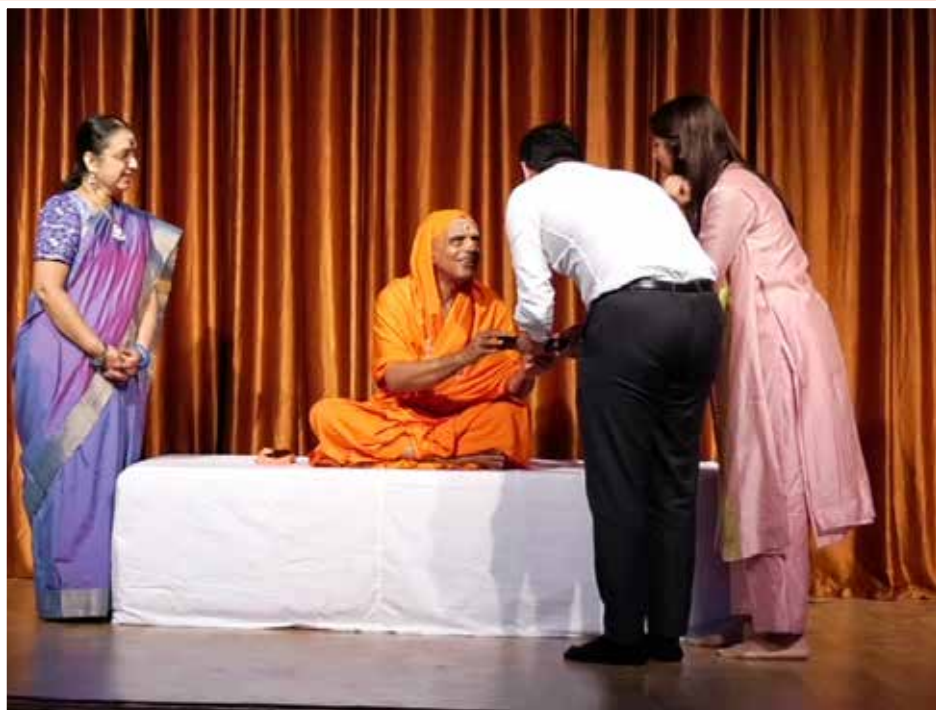


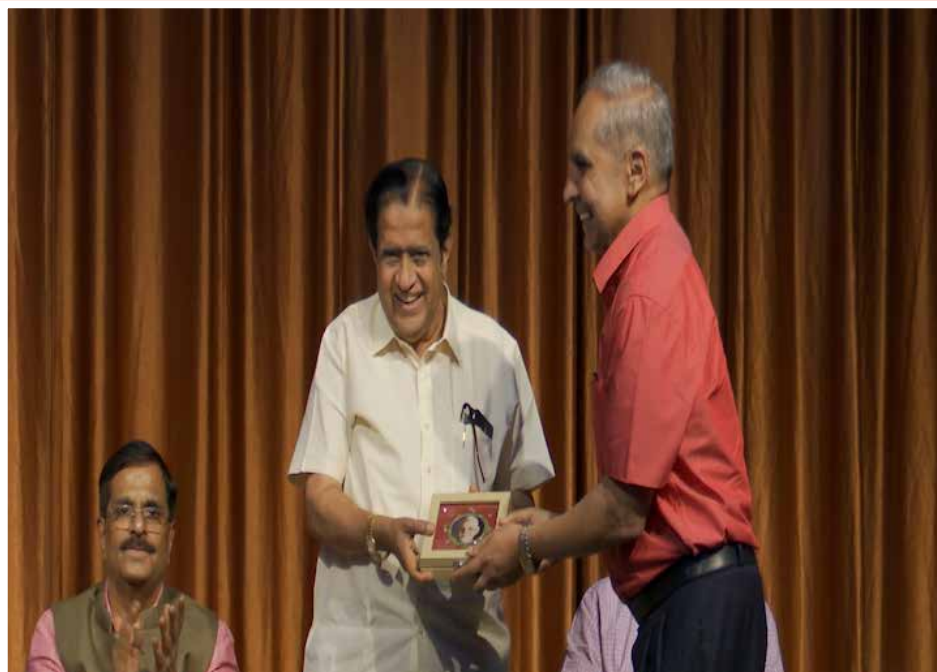




Our thanks to some of our major donors for the renovation project:
Sri Shadakshari, Veerendra Shadakshari and Aruna Shadakshari from Ramanashree Group of Companies.
Sri Ravindra Pai and Smt.Kiran Pai from Century Builders
Our thanks to our consultants –
Sri Niranjana Babu – who has kindly consented to be the Vedic Advisor of our Centre,
Smt.Vani Vasudev for Architecture and Interior Design, Sri S.Suryanarayana for Structural changes,







Our other consultants

Sri B.S.A.Narayan for Air-conditioning...

Sri Ravi Shankar and Murugan for Sound and Lighting,

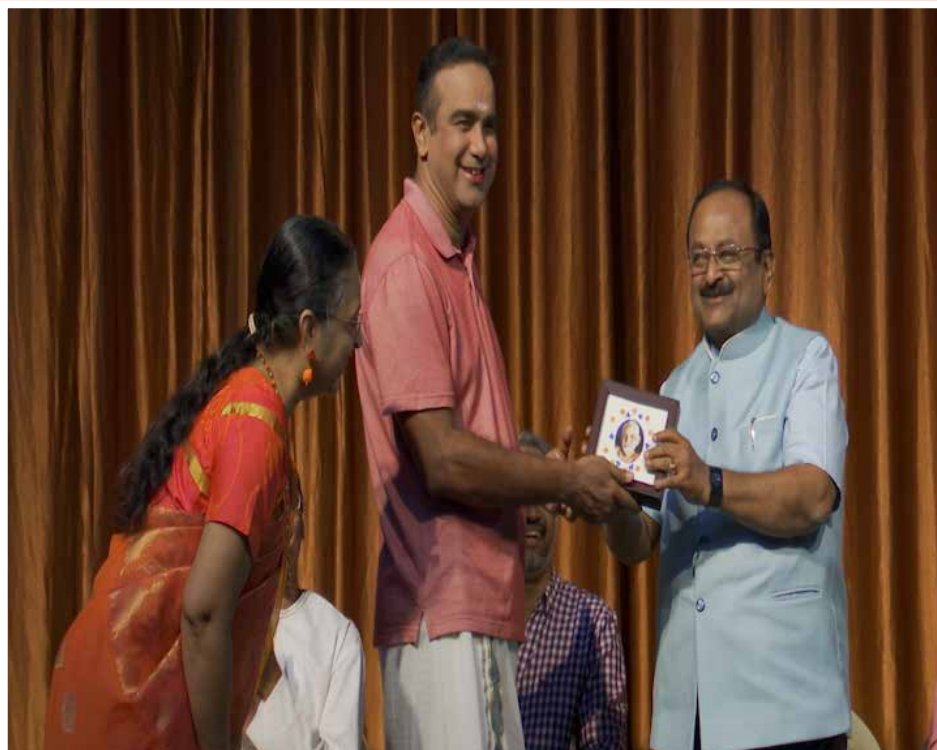
Sri Sai Dipak for Acoustics,

Our man of all tasks - Altaf

Our project manager Subramaniam

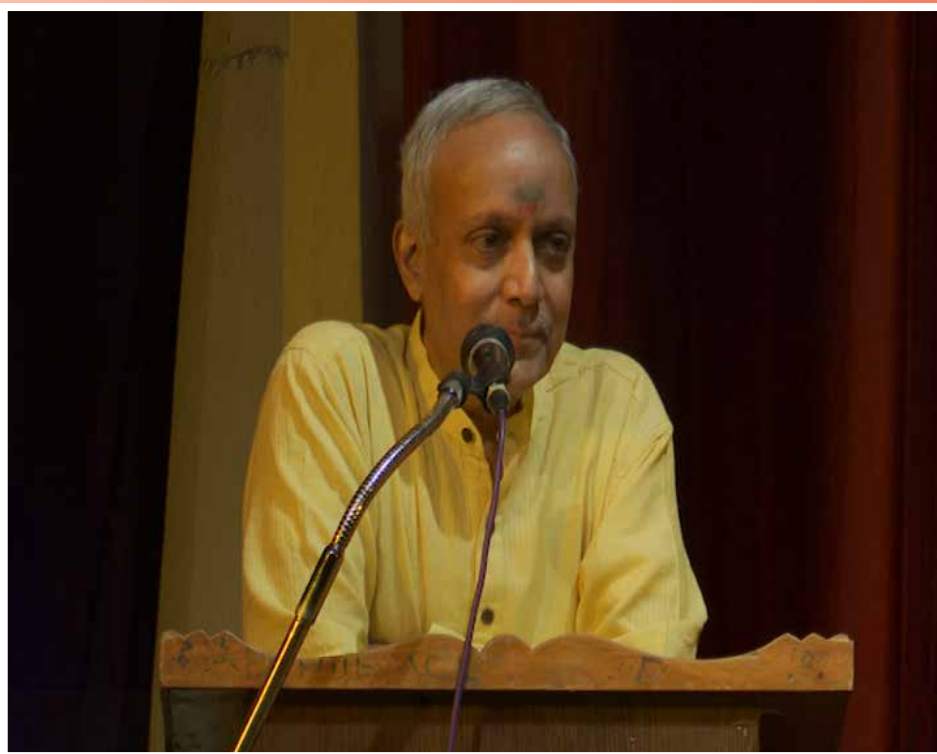






Some glimpses of Arunachala Ramana – Gnana Kaanda, the second part of the mega theatre production with narration by Sri G.Kameshwar, presented by Dr.Sarada and Dr.Ambika Kameshwar with artistes of RMCL.



















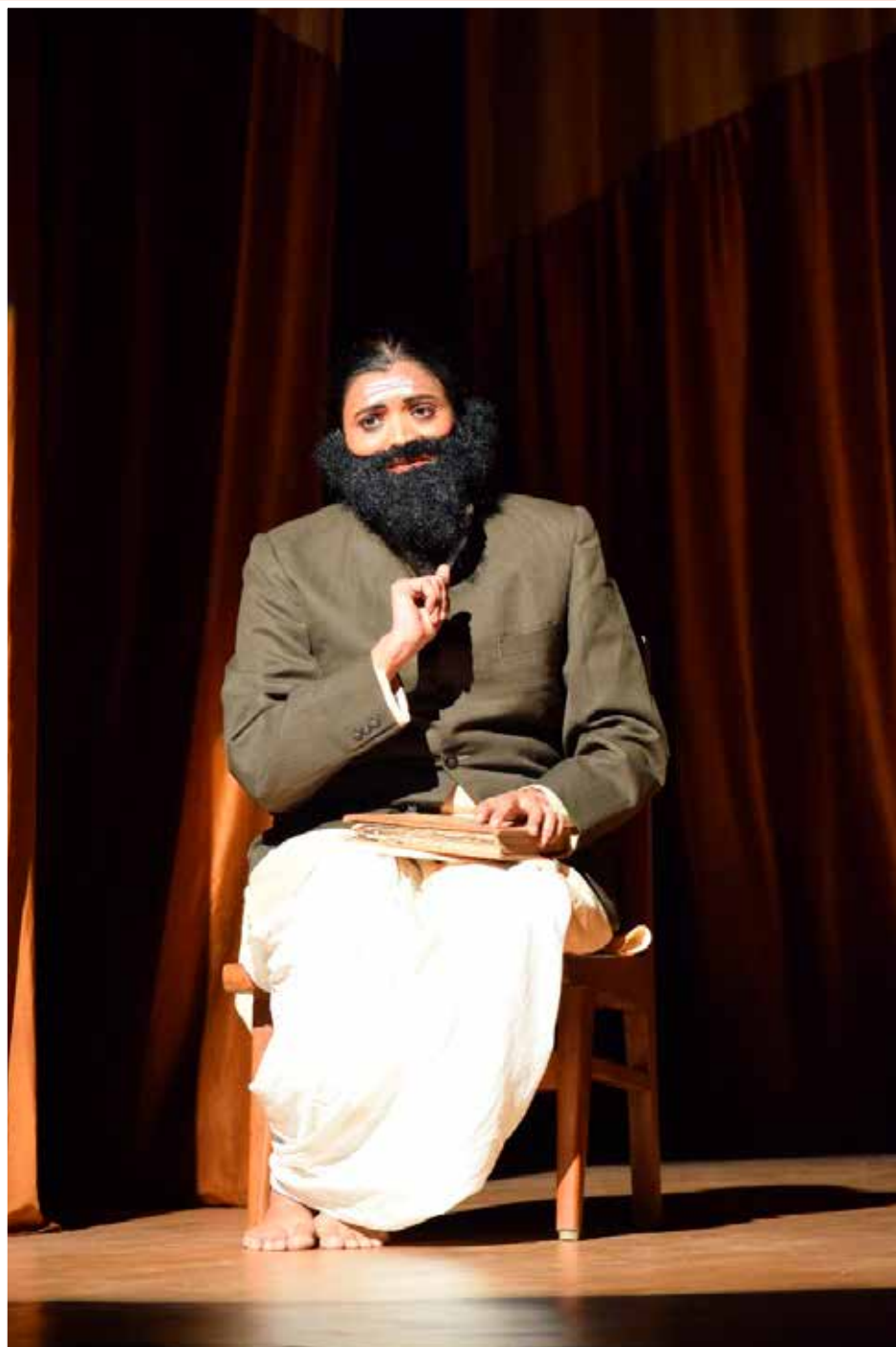














Dr. Lakshmi Rekha Arungraced the prodction as the guest of honour



Bharatanatyam offering by Smt.Veena Nidhi and Smt.Shrilaxmi Mandar



40 years of RMCL and Renovation of Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium

Honouring our founder Secretary Sri S.Krishnaswamy

Honouring the current Governing Body members who were present on the occasion: Sri Dileep Simha, Dr.Ambika Kameshwar, Smt. Geetha Nair and Sri Venkatesh Deshpande represented by Sumeeth.

Dr. C. Somashekar and Dr. Manu Baligar were the guests of honour.



Honouring those who have been associated with RMCL from the very founding of the Centre:

1. Sri K.Sankar who typed the memorandum of our society, was the first librarian and rendered many other services...
2. Sri B.R.Shivaram – the ‘voice’ of RMCL – the Master of Ceremonies for its major programs over decades...
3. Sri M.V.Lakshmikantha – our auditor from the first balance sheet filed till now ...
4. Sri Shankaranarayana – a nonagenarian who served as accountant and now performs daily puja both at the Shrine and at the Meditation Hall at Sanjaynagar...
5. Lokachandran – who began as our Sarathi and now, heading a school in Tamilnadu, still renders services every weekend in any area the Centre requires...
6. Subodh – who came all the way from Bihar as a young lad to be our day and night caretaker at the Ramana Shrine...



Pujya Sri. Sri. Sri. Jayendrapuri Maha Swamy blessed their services and gave the benedictory address.

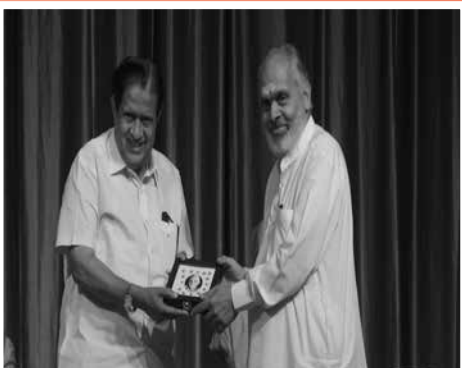
Our thanks to some of our major donors for the renovation project:
Sri Shadakshari, Veerendra Shadakshari and Aruna Shadakshari from
Ramanashree Group of Companies.

Sri Ravindra Pai and Smt.Kiran Pai from Century Builders

Our thanks to our consultants –

Sri Niranjan Babu – who has kindly consented to be the Vedic Advisor of
our Centre,

Smt.Vani Vasudev for Architecture and Interior Design, Sri S.Suryanarayana
for Structural changes,



Our other consultants

Sri B.S.A.Narayan for Air-conditioning...

Sri Ravi Shankar and Murugan for Sound and Lighting,

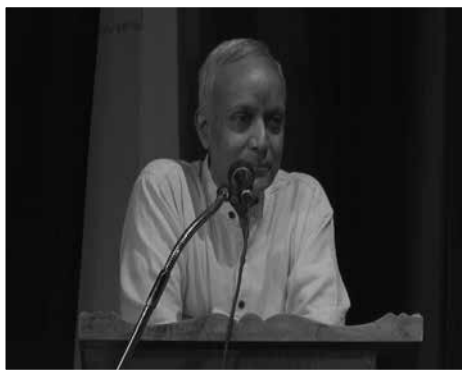
Sri Sai Dipak for Acoustics,

Our man of all tasks - Altaf

Our project manager Subramaniam



Some glimpses of Arunachala Ramana – Gnana Kaanda, the second part of the mega theatre production with narration by Sri G.Kameshwar, presented by Dr.Sarada and Dr.Ambika Kameshwar with artistes of RMCL.





Dr. Lakshmi Rekha Arungraced the prodction as the guest of honour



Special Programs in November

At the Ramana Shrine

Every Sunday Satsang, 10.45 a.m. Chanting, Self-enquiry, Bhajans by Smt.V.Radha and Sri Venkatesh Murthy, Talks:

3rd November Talk by Sri Dileep Simha

10th November Talk by Sri Subramaniam

17th November Talk by Sri Venkatesh Deshpande

24th November Talk by Sri N.Nandakumar

11th, Monday

06.45 p.m. Pournami Celebrations – Samskrithi Seva

07.30 p.m. Ashtottara Puja, Aksharamanamalai and Valam

16th, Saturday 06.30 p.m.

Ramananjali Sangeetham Day – a tribute to Smt.Sulochana Natarajan

Talk by Dr.Sarada, Ramananjali Sangeetham by Smt.Radha, Maha Prasada

At Ramana Maharshi Heritage Campus

16th and 17th Saturday, Sunday

Self-enquiry workshop

Special Programs in December

At the Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle

Every Sunday Satsang, 10.45 a.m. Chanting, Self-enquiry, Bhajans, Talks

1st December Talk by Dileep Simha

8th December Talk by Subramanyam

15th December Talk by Venkatesh Deshpande

22nd December Talk by N.Nandakumar

7th December, Saturday

Shrine Opening Day Celebrations

06.00 p.m. Sahasra Deepotsavam

06.30 p.m. A Ramananjali Musical Feature by
Dr.Ambika Kameshwar and Smt.Poorna Sooraj

10th, Tuesday

05.30 p.m. Pournami Celebrations – Karthikai Deepam

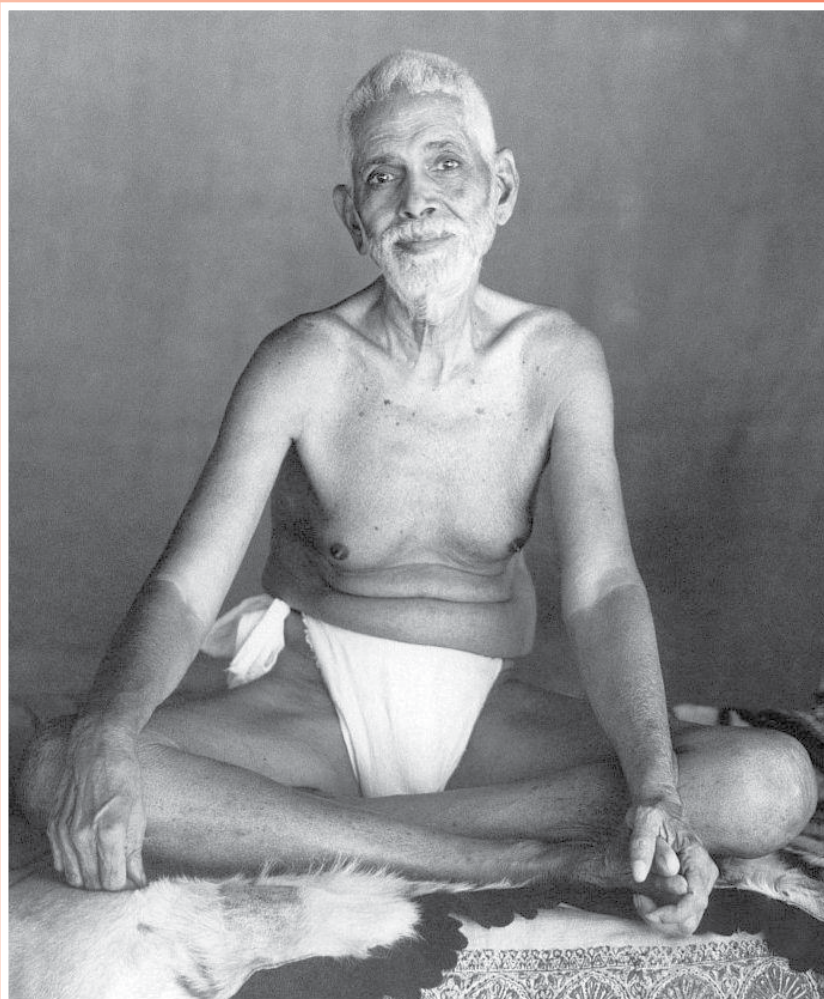
06.30 p.m. Ashtottara Puja, Aksharamanamalai and Valam

At the Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle**29th, Sunday Ramana Jayanthi Celebrations 10.45 a.m**

Chanting, Self-enquiry by Sri N.Nandakumar, Talk by Dr.Sarada
'Ramana Tiruvembavai' by artistes and students of RMCL led by
Smt.V.Radha

30th, Monday Ramana Jayanthi Celebrations 11.00 a.m.

Ramana Sahasranama Puja and Maha Prasada



Ramana Every Day

RMHC - Ramana Maharshi Heritage Centre - Sanjaynagar

RMS - Ramana Maharshi Shrine - Mekhri Circle

RSCS - RMCL Satsang Centre at South Bangalore

RSCR - RMCL Satsang Centre at Rajarajeshwari Nagar

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

Thursday: 6:00pm at RSCS

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

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

Saturday: 11:00am at RMS

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

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

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

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

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

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

Yoga classes [Contact - Uma (9538472026)]

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

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

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

Talks - English by Dr. Sarada Natarajan/Venkatesh Deshpande/Dileep Simha

Sunday: 11:30am at RMS

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

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

Parayana of Bhagavans Sanskrit Composition by Ms. Savithri and Smt. Ratnamma

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

Talks, Parayana and Puja by Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30pm at RSCR

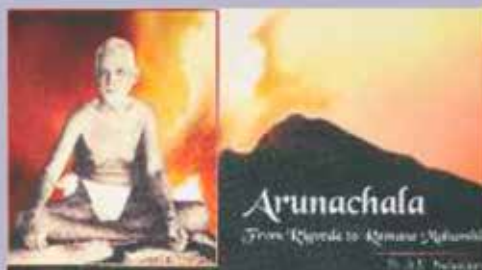
Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

94. The Self abides motionless because of its all – pervasive fullness. Because the apparent connection between the Self and the mind – limitation seems to exist on account of ignorance – which is the *jiva* – perspective, the reflected consciousness that rises as 'I' - the Self too appears to have experienced movement through the motion of the mind. But the movement of *samsara* that comprises birth and death, bondage and liberation, and so on, is only for the *jiva* and never for the Self, the transcendental reality.
95. If it is asked, 'How has the Supreme Self, the one without a second, come to possess the limitation of the mind, the form of ignorance?' the reply is, 'The limitation has attached itself only through the deluded *jiva* – perspective. In truth, it is never attached itself to the Self, consciousness'.



ARUNACHALA FROM RIGVEDA TO RAMANA MAHARSHI

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