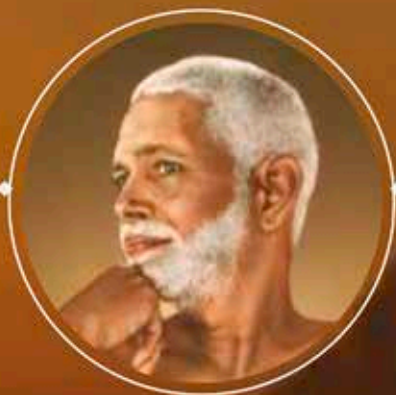


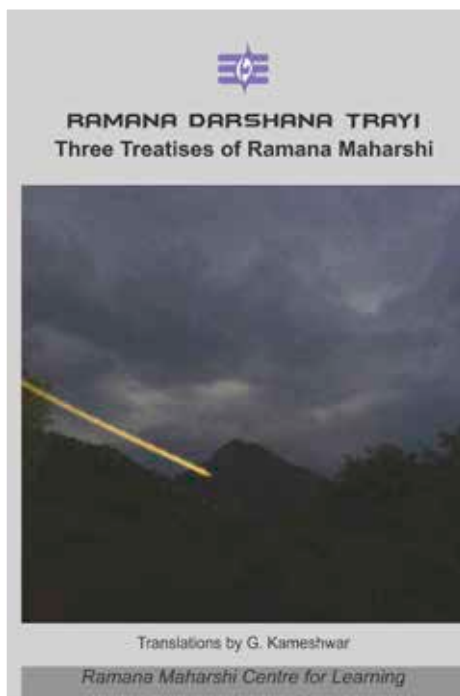
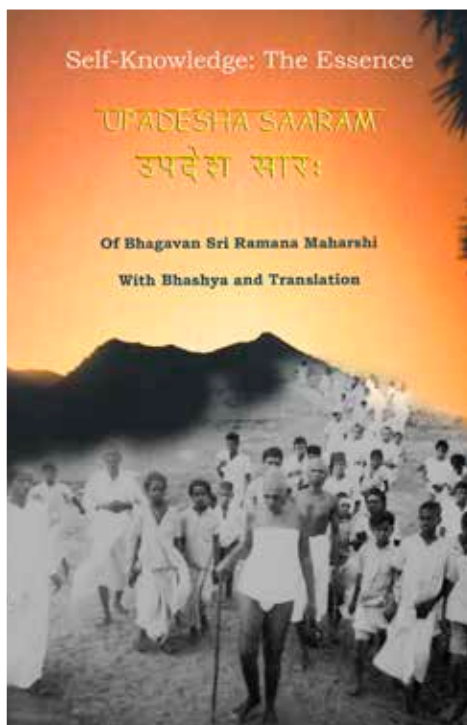
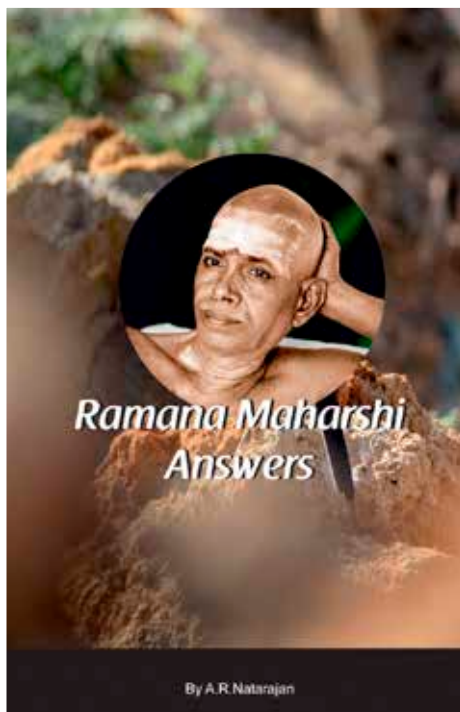
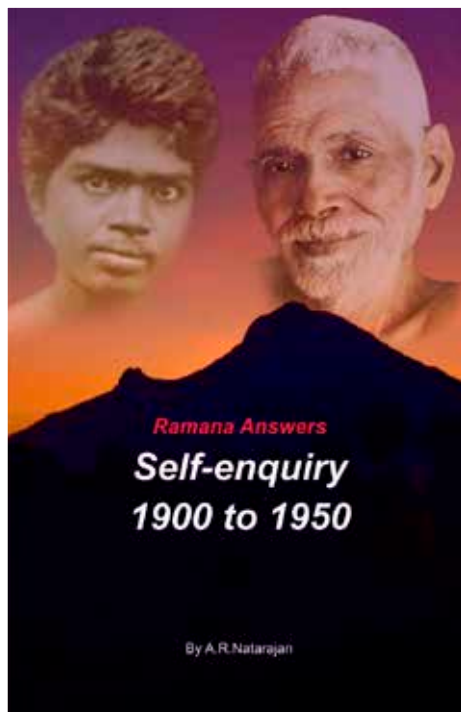
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# The Ramana Way

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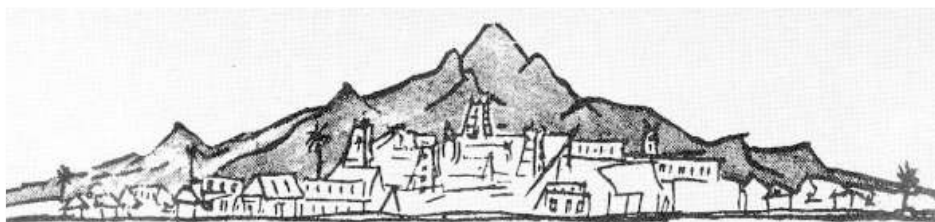
# NEW Publications



# 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**

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**Editorial***Dr. Sarada*

If I do not believe that I am the body, can I say that I am not the body? Or would there be any need to say that I am not the body?

This 'body' is evidently not the physical body because it is not that which declares 'I am this body'. What says 'I am the body'? It is the mind. Thus Ramana brings us to a point of understanding that the mind is not in the body. On the contrary, it is the body which is in the mind. The body for us is only an image of the body, something that we see in the mirror or in photographs. Or something that we give credence to on account of the sense experiences and the sensations that we have through the medium of the body.

If a thought arises for me, it means that I have an identity. This 'I am the body' idea is called the 'I-thought' by Ramana. It is also called the ego, the source of all bondage. It is therefore noted as the only obstacle to our freedom, to our abiding in the bliss of our true nature.

All spiritual practices are therefore aimed at rooting out the ego.

We know that all thoughts are dependent on the ego or the 'I-thought' for their existence. Yet, it is equally true that the ego or the 'I-thought' is also dependent on thoughts. In the absence of any experience, in the total absence of thoughts, the ego also ceases to exist. Hence, spiritual practise is all about being free from thoughts.

It is to be remembered, however, that if the freedom from thoughts is temporary, then the ego is dormant. This happens in states where the mind is lulled, says Ramana. It may be in sleep, in swoon, in intense experiences as well when the mind is numbed, like extreme sorrow, anger or excessive joy. At that point of time, thoughts come to a standstill. Yet, the moment that experience passes the mind rises once again no different than it was earlier.

Hence Ramana repeatedly points out that a temporary lull in thoughts is only a lull. In fact, he asks one to be wary of practices that may lull the mind.

We do find that in his 'Upadesa Saram' - the essence of teaching, Ramana talks of the destruction of the mind as opposed to its lulling. He says that a mind that is temporarily quiet due to control of breath becomes completely destroyed when one meditates on the One, the undivided, the Self.

In a few verses thereafter he says that really speaking if one examines the nature of the mind, it is known to be non-existent. In this Ramana's manner of dealing with the ego may be said to radically different from the customary approach or it may be called creatively new. If we approach the ego with the question 'Who am I?' we would find that there is no such thing as a mind, he says. When devotees approached him to destroy their mind he would say, 'Bring your mind before me and I shall surely slay it.' Or else he would wonder how they could be troubled by a mind that is non-existent. 'Does it have a moustache and a beard?' he would joke. He would also point out that one assumes there is such an entity called the mind because of the presence of thoughts. If one takes away all thoughts then where is the mind? If there is no mind then where is the question even of controlling it, let alone destroying it?

It is not easy for us to accept that there is 'no mind'. It may be possible for us to intellectually state that the body is not 'I' because we can still hold on to a sense of 'I'-ness as being something apart from the body. In fact, this is a comforting thought and we are accustomed to saying to those who are bereaved, 'May his soul rest in peace' or 'May her soul rest in peace'. It makes things comfortable for us to believe that in some subtle form we continue to exist when the body is no more. But what is this 'soul' that we are talking about? What is its nature? What is it likely to be? We do not feel any need to question.

Similarly, when we are on the path of seeking Self-knowledge we are ready to declare 'I am not the body.' But who

is it that is making such a declaration. If I am not the body, who am I? Even when faced with this question we evade it with a quick answer, 'I am the mind'. It is the mind which knows the body. And through the body it is the mind which knows the world. We are happy to recognise that it is so. Yet, to say so is only one more thought for us. It does not translate into intense enquiry.

I do not wonder with intensity that if I am not a body, if I am not any body, gross or subtle, I would not have any boundaries to my being. If I have any kind of boundary to my being, then that would become my body. For what after all is a body for me apart from being a boundary within which I confine myself? My body is not for me any of the physiological elements in it. It is not the skeleton, the bones and the marrow, the sinews, the muscles, the flesh and blood and pus and waste. It is not any of the organs. No, when I think of 'myself' it is only an image and if I close my eyes and 'feel' myself within me, then I am a nebulous sense of being ending in the ends of my body. Is this not how each one of us senses ourselves?

So, if we say that we are not a body, any body, should we not be totally unbounded, absolutely free of boundaries? And if I have no boundary, could there be anything 'outside' of me for me to recognise as 'other'? If there is something 'outside' me then I must necessarily have a boundary outside which this 'other' exists. So in an existence free of boundaries there can be nothing 'outside'. When there is nothing 'outside' can there be anything that is 'inside'? It is not possible because the very term 'inside' is only in contrast to or an antonym of the term 'outside'. If there is no outside there would be no inside either. If there is nothing outside or inside me, who am I?

If I am not a body, any body, who would remain to say 'I am not the body'? Hence, when we declare that we are not the body we continue to presume that we are an entity that is not the physical body but a body that is subtle. It is for this reason that the mind is termed 'subtle body'. Ramana brings out into broad daylight all our hidden identities. He brings out the fact that when we easily declare that we are not the body, we actually imply that



we are the mind. With this we happily bring our enquiry to a halt. But Ramana does not let us rest there, he goads us to the further enquiry, 'What is the mind?'

We are not too shaken by the enquiry into the nature of our mind. Here too we have a ready answer. 'Mind is thoughts,' we say. Once again we are happy with this thought! For, we do not take the enquiry deeper. If the mind is thoughts then what happens to the mind when there are no thoughts? Does it become temporarily non-existent? When are there no thoughts? In our daily experience of deep sleep there are no thoughts. What happens to the mind at that time? Does it disappear and appear again on waking? We would like to believe that this is so. Yet, can that which disappears from time to time be said to have a real existence?

Why do we call a dream a dream? Why do we say on waking, 'O, that was only a dream'? Is it not by the simple fact that it has passed away, that it does not exist any more? If something passes away we call it a mere dream. By the same criterion should we not call the mind a mere dream because it passes away every night? Who then am I who am witness to this passing dream called mind? Who am I?

The body is merely in the mind. So the body is not except in the mind. The mind is merely some passing shows of thoughts, different shows each day, in fact each minute, which pass away. So the mind is not except in its recognition. Who sees these thoughts? Who knows these thoughts? Who am I?

As Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "'I am' is the substratum of all action, and thoughts. It is like a screen on which a movie is projected. The waking state comes and goes 'I am'. The dream state comes and goes 'I am', the deep sleep state comes and goes, 'I am'. In all states of one's daily existence it is the unchanging bed-rock because of which alone perception of changes in one's body and mind becomes possible. It is the fullness of consciousness."

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sarada Natarajan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the bottom right of the page.



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

The feeling of existence is universal. 'I am' is the expression of one's awareness of it. Ramana Maharshi points out that it is only because of this core feeling that one says 'I am acting' 'I am thinking' 'I came', 'I went' and so on. This 'I am' is the substratum of all action, and thoughts. It is like a screen on which a movie is projected. The waking state comes and goes 'I am'. The dream state comes and goes 'I am', the deep sleep state comes and goes, 'I am'. In all states of one's daily existence it is the unchanging bed-rock because of which alone perception of changes in one's body and mind becomes possible. It is the fullness of consciousness.

However one mentally limits this fullness of consciousness by linking the 'I am' to a particular name and form, 'I am Natarajan', 'I am Prasanna' etc. Once 'This' is added then consciousness which is total is taken to be fragmented. Further associated limitations, 'I am a father', 'I am a husband', 'I am a student' 'I am a doctor' and the like fragment it even more. Instead of an integrated and holistic perception of life one would compartmentalize life as 'Personal life', 'Working life', 'Social life'. This may result in one being wholly different in the roles which he has to play in life. One might be very considerate as a father, but one may be a sloppy worker, and heartless towards suffering in society. Based on this possibility we have a caricature by an outstanding comedian Charlie Chaplin in his film 'The Great Dictator'. In that film the dictator ruthlessly massacres millions of Jews without batting an eyelash but is the very embodiment of love when it comes to his own pet cat.

A conversation which Ramana had with a visitor will help one to recognize that all these add-ons are not the essential me since my feeling of existence would remain unaffected even if they are removed.

V: If you have seen God I would like you to help me see God.

---

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

R: You say 'I wish to see God'; First tell me who you are.

V: My name is Devadatta Sharma.

R: That is your name. Who are you?

V: I have already told that I am Sharma. I am a Brahmin.

R: That is the indication of your caste. Who are you?

V: I am a lecturer in a college.

R: That is your profession. Who are you?

V: I am a human being.

R: That is your birth-womb. But who are you?

V: I am a man

R: That is your gender.

V: It looks as if I do not know myself.

Ramana would repeatedly focus one's attention on the need to find out the 'I' consciousness and remain as that whatever may be the dynamics of changing circumstances.

Even if one escapes total identification with the body, with a particular name and form, one is likely to be caught in the second limiting trap of thinking that one is one's mind. This is because operationally it is thought and action which make one feel alive. Let us suppose that one is able to take time-off from the continuous, non-stop momentum of thoughts. Then one is likely to feel lost. Would he not? Because of one's identification with the mind and the related fear of being without thoughts one has to live with the endless grind of thoughts, preferred thoughts, unwanted thoughts, functional thoughts, purposeless thoughts, and psychological thoughts. Thoughts! Thoughts! Thoughts! With their back and forth movements. The disease of pollution of thoughts can be quite choking. But unless one adopts the panacea of self-enquiry, the Ramana way to Self-knowledge, one would have lived his life in vain. For, the beauty of a silent, spacious mind would never be experienced by him.

According to Ramana one can free oneself from the bondage of self-imposed limitations only through self-enquiry. Ignorance, a false notion about oneself alone obstructs one's awareness of the truth. Ramana says this ignorance will remain as long as one does not enquire about one's own true nature. This enquiry is

termed self-enquiry. One begins by sowing an attitude of doubt about one's assumptions by enquiring 'Am I really what I have assumed myself to be?' What has hitherto been taken for granted is questioned 'Who am I?'. The focus of enquiry, as the name itself suggests, is the 'I', the individual, the subject. One needs to be gripped by the question 'What is the 'I' consciousness in me?' Ramana points out its importance when he says, 'Can knowledge of everything without Self-knowledge, be true knowledge?'

To emphasise the need for such an enquiry Ramana used to narrate a story which is worth recalling. Once a bridegroom's party was to detrain in a small station. The train reached ahead of time. A stranger who happened to be at the station at that time saw in this an opportunity to enjoy the marriage feastings. He was the first to greet the bridegroom's party when it alighted. So they thought he was an important member of the bride's household. When the bride's party arrived a little later they saw this imposter intermingling with the marriage party. They assumed that he was an important member of that group. The imposter had a jolly good time throwing his weight about. At last vexed by his behaviour the bride's father started enquiring who he was. Once the imposter knew that an enquiry was afoot he took to his heels. Similarly the superimposed limitations can last only so long as one does not enquire, intensely, and single-mindedly on the question 'Who am I?' In the searchlight of enquiry the falsity of these encrustations would be revealed.

One's success or failure in this enquiry would depend on whether it is done in the true scientific spirit, which implies total involvement, an open mind, eagerness to discover and a spirit of adventure. Regarding the attitude towards self-enquiry it is exactly the same as to scientific enquiry.

When one is practising self-enquiry many facts would get exposed. First one would readily see that there cannot be much to the notion of taking the 'I' to be the body and limiting it. For the body's changes from boyhood to youth, to middle-age and old age are visibly there. The cells are in a continuous process of change and restructuring.

It is tougher to disassociate oneself from the mind. For attachment to one's ideas, to the belief that success depends only on one's efforts, psychological attachments are firmly rooted. But if one enquires one finds that there is a break in the continuity of mind in deep sleep. In deep sleep both the thinker and his thoughts are nascent.

By implanting doubts about one's assumptions self-enquiry gives an inward direction to the mind. By looking away from the Self by paying excessive or exclusive attention to thoughts one fails to face the 'I' or the centre of the mind. The term centre of the mind is used because the thinker is common to all his thoughts. They surface and subside depending on the thinker's attention. As a process in self-enquiry one is vigilant to the birth of thought by questioning 'To whom is this thought'. 'To me'. 'Who am I?'. When this enquiry commences and is continued with firm resolve one is freed gradually from the tyranny of uncontrolled thoughts.

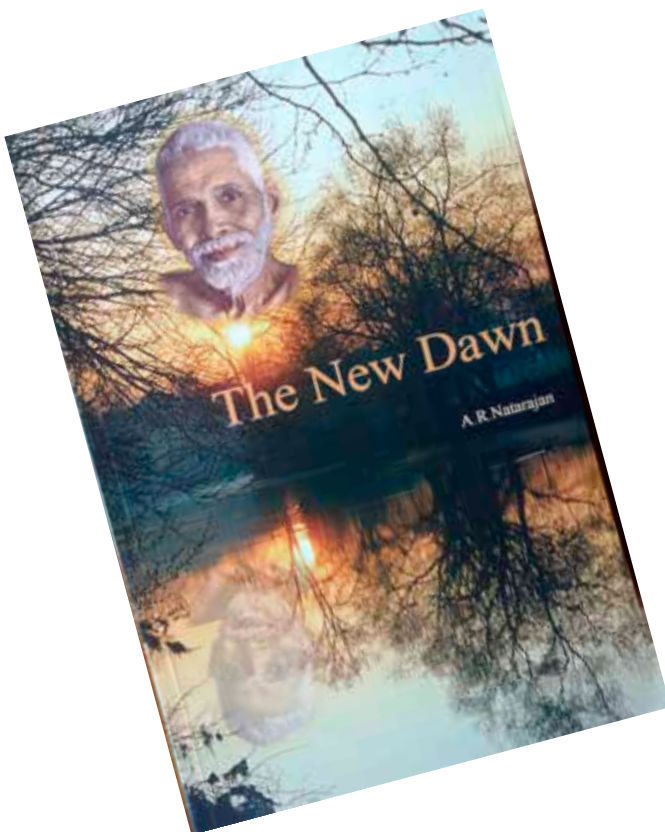
Further since the 'I' too is only a thought which rises on waking and disappears in deep sleep when one succeeds in focusing his mind on it, when one is face to face with 'I', then the 'I'-thought too drops automatically. Only the fullness or consciousness remains.

During the practice of self-enquiry the mind's outer movement wanes and its inner movement strengthens. The straying of the mind would become less and less.

Then the mind will be silent, alert, total. Its potentiality in this state cannot even be comprehended by the present de-energised mind. Thoughts will surface as and when required and subside when their purpose is over. All seeking, the various activities of the greedy mind wanting 'more' be it wealth, or power, or name and fame, would come to a halt. What can add to one's cup of happiness which is overflowing? Having discovered the elixir of life, inherent happiness, one enjoys life as a sport, living each moment in all its fullness.

This knowledge about the 'knower' which is revealed through self-enquiry bridges the gap between the scientist and the humanist. For the life which pulsates in everyone is the same. When all differences are seen to be mind-made accretions, there is a harmony and peace beyond words.

On this path of self-enquiry Ramana is the guru, or the guide. As a teenager he discovered the essential truth about oneself, and his awareness of this truth never wavered thereafter. This guidance of the enlightened one comes in multifarious ways through interchange of ideas with other practitioners of the path, through his recorded replies to more than thirty thousand questions and his accessibility to all whose minds are turned inward in eager search for truth.



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

N.Nandakumar

### Talk 35

An educated visitor asked Bhagavan about dvaita and advaita.

M.: Identification with the body is dvaita. Non-identification is advaita.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: When I identify with a body - sensory, thought or ignorance - I am immediately imprisoned in a world of similar objects - sensory, thought or darkness. I and my world form the dvaita. The mere freeing of Consciousness from identifying with a body - sensory, thought or ignorance - frees it from all worlds. The Adviteeya Vastu - the Self - alone is.*

### Talk 36

An aristocratic and distinguished lady visitor from the North accompanied by her Private Secretary arrived at noon, waited a few minutes and asked Maharshi soon after he returned to the hall after lunch:

D.: Maharajji, can we see the dead?

M.: Yes.

D.: Can the yogis show them to us?

M.: Yes. They may. But do not ask me to show them to you. For I cannot.

D.: Do you see them?

M.: Yes, in dreams.

D.: Can we realise the goal through yoga?

M.: Yes.

D.: Have you written on yoga? Are there books on the subject by you?

M.: Yes.

After she left the Master observed: "Did we know our relatives before their birth that we should know them after their death?"

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED : With a partial understanding of the "past" about relatives, the world and oneself, one always wants to know about the "future". The present moment is expended in this incomplete and*

*fruitless endeavour instead of treating the life of the relative, world or oneself as a period between birth and death, Bhagavan asks us as to where the relative or the world or the body was in deep-sleep? Did we know even the past or future in deep-sleep? This cycle of sleep-waking-sleep is based on a deeper sleep called "Ignorance of the Self". For whom is this partial knowledge of the past leading to partial and infructuous enquiries about the future?*

### **Talk 37**

"What is Karma?" asked someone.

M.: That which has already begun to bear fruit is classified as prarabdha Karma (past action). That which is in store and will later bear fruit is classified as sanchita Karma (accumulated action). This is multifarious like the grain obtained by villagers as barter for cress (greens). Such bartered grain consists of rice, ragi, barley, etc., some floating on, others sinking in water. Some of it may be good, bad or indifferent. When the most potent of the multifarious accumulated karma begins to bear fruit in the next birth it is called the prarabdha of that birth.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: When one considers oneself to be the sensory body, one has to understand Prarabdha, Sanchita and the result of barter of karma with other sensory bodies called Aagaami Karma. However, when one considers oneself to be the "I" thought, all karmas are the same - thought arising from within. "For whom is this thought? Who am I?", takes one beyond Prarabdha, Sanchita and Aagaami into the Self.*

### **Talk 38**

When one of the present attendants came the first time to Bhagavan, he asked: "What is the way for liberation?"

Maharshi replied: "The way already taken leads to liberation."

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: It is a direct assurance to the attendant that he has come to the right sadhana. Moreover, the Jnani sees everything as the Self. In that Mowna Sannidhi, there is no judgement about the sadhana undertaken by the sadhaka. Whatever is the spiritual task already taken up it is supported and deepened in Bhagavan's Presence. That deepening brings about the necessary change in*



*sadhana and sadhaka automatically. The quest, "For whom is this present sadhana?", also takes one to the Mowna Sannidhi of the Self.*

*Q: You are saying that the present moment, the present sadhana is already filled with Grace. How will the modern intellect moving at the incredible pace of its genius ever be satisfied by the present moment when it is so dissatisfied with the slow moving sensory world?*

*S: Self Attention is faster than the fastest intellect. The intellect appears so fast only when it is moving amongst finite objects and finite spaces. Self Attention is infinite speed. It will entice the furious-paced intellect into its infinite vastness, slow it down and still it.*

### **Talk 39 (Excerpt)**

Conversing with R. Seshagiri Rao, a visitor, Maharshi remarked that a Self-Realised sage (Atma Jnani) alone can be a good Karma yogi. "After the sense of doership has gone let us see what happens. Sri Sankara advised inaction. But did he not write commentaries and take part in disputation? Do not trouble about doing action or otherwise. Know Thyself. Then let us see whose action it is. Whose is it? Let action complete itself. So long as there is the doer he must reap the fruits of his action. If he does not think himself the doer there is no action for him. He is an ascetic who has renounced worldly life (sanyasin)."

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Karma Yoga is Motiveless Action that has merged into Existence-Consciousness. One does not even say that the one power which makes all galaxies dance is the power that is typing these words, broke the 100 m record, is discovering new applications of Pranayama, is making human knowledge grow in a variety of fields and is taking morals and ethics to the next level. For one who has erased all doership and is merged in the Self Luminous Self, each action is absorbed and completes itself in the Light of the Self which does not have a motive or an aversion to action.*

*Q.: Why is it that one does not express that the one power that makes the galaxies dance makes each breath and each step of progress possible?*

*S: If an individual can drop the bondage of doership and merge in the Self Luminous Self, why would Ishwara, who is infinitely intelligent, be bound by it?*

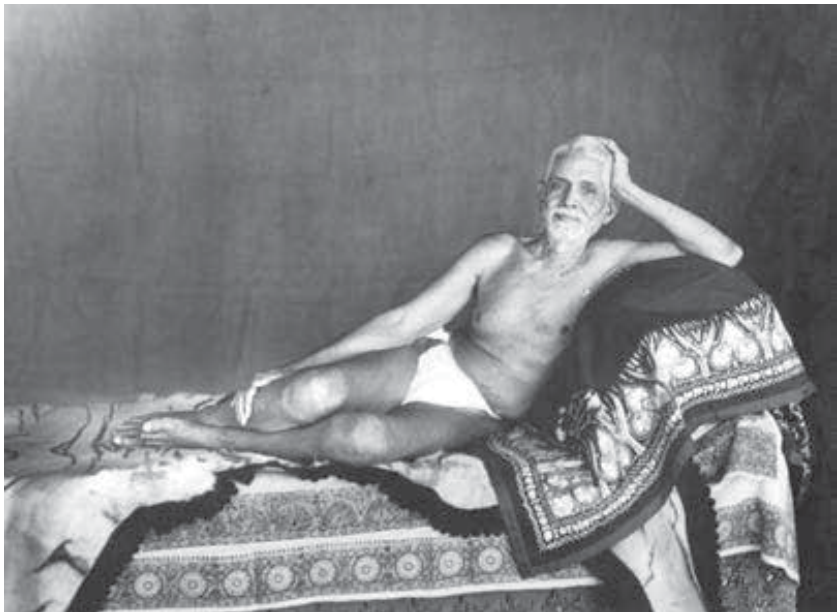
**Talk 39. (Excerpt)**

D.: How did the ego arise?

M.: It is not necessary to know it. Know the present. Not knowing that, why do you worry about other times?

Maharshi said in reply to a question: "Is the world within you or without you? Does it exist apart from you? Does the world come and tell you 'I exist'?"

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED : The present moment and the ego raise and set simultaneously. But, it is the ego - the "I" - that interprets the world "mine". For instance, when it does not raise and identify with one sensory body, there are no other bodies to be separated in the sensory world. Similarly, when the incoming and outgoing breath is removed of the "I", there is no "mine" or inside/ outside and that one "prana" absorbs "earth" and "water". In the same way, Bhagavan is asking the Consciousness not to rise as "I" and separate itself from "mine". The whole creation, including space, is within that Consciousness without division. Is the world within the undivided Consciousness or outside? "For whom is this thought?" takes one to that undivided Existence-Consciousness which envelopes all objects and shines as the limitless, Self Luminous Self.*



## Excerpts from 'Ramana Darshana Trayi'

G Kameshwar

*In recent years RMCL has been focussing more on reprints of existing publications. The mantle of contributing to new material has now fallen on Sri G.Kameshwar whose translations have been published as this work 'Ramana Darshana Trayi – Three Treatises of Ramana Maharshi'.*

*The present work is an English song rendering of Arunachala Aksharamanamalai, a song rendering of Upadesa Saram, both of which can be sung in the same tune as the Tamil original, and a free verse rendering of Ulladu Narpadu. As each of these three poems of Sri Ramana Maharshi is in itself potent medicine to cure all ills, these lyrical translations are undoubtedly invaluable treasures to those who wish to savour them in the English language.*

*We are now continuing G.Kameshwar's translation of 'Ulladu Narpadu' from the publication 'Ramana Darshana Trayi'.*

- Editor

### uLLadu nARpadu – Forty Verses on 'That Which Is'

#### Treatise

In the radiant Lord,  
     Sanctum sanctorum  
     That shines within the mind,  
     Giving radiance to the mind,  
 How indeed is it possible for the mind  
 To get the measure of the Lord?  
 Think. (22)

This body does not assert itself as 'I'.  
 'I did not exist during deep sleep'  
     No one avers thus.  
 After one 'I' rises  
     All this rises.  
 Wherefrom does this 'I' rise?  
     Discern this with a sharp mind. (23)

The inert body does not say 'I'.  
Existence-Reality-Consciousness rises not.  
In between the two,  
Corresponding to the extent of the body  
There rises one 'I'.

This is  
The knot tying Consciousness and inert,  
Bondage, individual, subtle body, ego,  
This world, mind;  
Know! (24)

Manifesting by grasping a form  
Sustained by a form,  
Feeding, by holding to a form,  
It flourishes much.

Leaving a form  
It will grasp another form.

On search, it flees,  
The formless ego ghost.  
Know! (25)

When ego manifests,  
Manifests entirety.  
When ego is not,  
Neither is entirety.  
It is verily the ego  
That manifests as the entirety.

Therefore, the search  
As to what is this,  
Is verily the renunciation of the entirety.  
Know thus! (26)

The state when 'I' rises not  
Is the state where we exist as 'That'.

The place where 'I' rises  
Without seeking that,  
How is one to achieve

The destruction of individuality,  
Where 'I' rises not?

Without destroying the 'I'-notion  
How is one to remain in that Self-state?  
Do tell! (27)

The rising 'I', the place where it rises,  
Like looking for an article that has fallen  
into a pond,  
Diving,  
With a sharp mind  
Restraining speech and breath,  
Seeking within,  
One must know.  
Know! (28)

Without mouthing 'I',  
By mind seeking within,  
Wherefrom does 'I' rise? Seeking thus  
Is verily the way to knowledge.

Instead,  
'I am not this',  
'I am that';  
Such contemplation  
is but an aid.  
Can it be inquiry true? (29)

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.  
Even though that appears thus,  
(that) Is not 'I'.  
That is the consummate Truth,  
The Self,  
Which is the real thing! (30)

---

**Saddarshanam***Master Nome*

“For those who know well the root thing of fate and effort, there are not, indeed, fate or one's own activity (free will).” In light of this, consider what becomes of “your life”? It vanishes. If neither a “you” nor “your life” are any longer imagined, where is suffering? Where is bondage? Where is limitation? Would anyone who understands the significance of this verse ever again have the doubt, “Oh! Why is this happening to me?” The “me” is excluded, and the doubt is set at rest.

Q.: When I inquire deeply, the experience becomes space like and peaceful. There is also a wave of bliss, but it seems to come to someone. Someone seems to experience the bliss, which makes me question if that is really Bliss or if that is just a nice state of mind. After the experience is not a bad state, for it is still very peaceful. Later, there is a very intense experience of bliss. There is nobody left to experience it, at some point, but there still is somebody who knows about it.

N.: As “he” forms again, does the wave of bliss recede?

Q.: Yes, and he is left saying , “That was great!”

N.: When he starts to report on it, does the bliss increase or decrease?

Q.: It decreases. Then, there is this idea of what happened.

N.: And when it becomes a memory, does the bliss increase or decrease?

Q.: The answer is obvious now. It is like the question, “Who is buried in General Grant's tomb?” (laughter)

N.: The formation of an ego apparently brings the experience to a conclusion. It is not Bliss that comes and goes. It is the “I”- notion that comes and goes. Now, you think of Bliss as the wave and you, as an ego or experiencer, as the solid shore. It might be better to think that the Bliss is the shore and that there are mere “I”-waves rising and falling. When you form the notion of the individual, the Bliss seems to diminish. It becomes obscured. It does not really

go away, but it becomes obscured in your experience. When you then set the Bliss as an object in relation to that “I” and report on it to yourself in your mind, the Bliss substantially reduces. That is, further limitations are imposed upon it.

First, the notion of “I” arises. Then, the experience is relegated to the objective sphere, even though Bliss is really the subject, who is of the nature of Consciousness. The Bliss, of the nature of Consciousness, which is your own Being, is relegated to the position of being objective. Once it becomes objective, it falls to the past and becomes a memory. The only further stage of obscurity would be forgetfulness. “I,” an “object,” “memory,” and “forgetfulness” are layers of limitation. In forgetfulness, multiplicity is projected in illusion, and one wonders whether that experience really happened or not, with doubts of whether it was real or just imagined, even though, in the experience, there was no imagining at all. In the deep experience, one’s own activity, or one’s own effort, has dissolved.

Q.: The experience is unmistakable. There is no questioning or wondering occurring at that point.

N.: One kind of questioning would actually deepen the bliss: “Who am I?” because it would dissolve the remaining seed of the individual who later attempts to stand apart from the experience to look at it. That questioning, which is of a nature of continuous Knowledge, precludes the rising of the “I”-notion. Consequently, it precludes the objectifying of the experience. So, experiential Knowledge would be timelessly present and would not be relegated to the past. Since Bliss would be identical with your own Being, by virtue of Self-Knowledge due to inquiry, you could not forget it, any more than you could forget your own Existence.

Q.: I can see the point in the evolution of this wave. As soon as it starts to appear like a wave, that should be the first indication that there is somebody surfing it or experiencing it.

N.: One can tell that this is Santa Cruz. (laughter) [ed.: Surfing is a popular water sport in Santa Cruz.]

Q.: It is like being caught up in a wave, riding it for a while, and, then, the wave peters out, and I swim back out and look for another wave.



N.: Maybe you should take up snorkeling and remain submerged. (laughter)

Q.: Continuous bliss. No waves. It looks like a wave as soon as there is an idea that there is somebody in Bliss.

N.: Yes, but you need not time the inquiry for the wave. (laughter)

Q.: I sense that is when the objectification must start. There is some idea that bliss is occurring, because it must be occurring for someone.

N. When there is the notion of “I,” Bliss will be seen as an occurrence, rather than the abiding Being. It will be considered as an event that occurs, rather than That which exists. It will be considered as something objective that happens to you, rather than actually being your Being. In the scope of considering delusion, it is the “I” that is rising, and not the Bliss. When Sankara speaks of “waves of Bliss” in some of his stotrams, he is referring to the utter inundation of Bliss upon Bliss in one's experience. He does not mean that it is something that comes and goes.

Q.: That was my misinterpretation.

N.: Bliss does not come and go; the ego-“I” comes and goes.

Q.: Yes. I have this notion of an individual that is being “blissed.” I am mistaking that for Bliss, itself.

N.: Bliss, itself, is of the nature of Being. The Maharshi says that if it comes and goes, that is not actually Bliss or Ananda. That which comes and goes is not what the scriptures refer to as “Bliss.” The very same scriptures, such as the Upanishad-s, and the Maharshi's own instruction, point out that all happiness is really of one kind. So, how do we reconcile the two statements? Happiness, in whatever way it appears, is of one kind, and, if it comes and goes, that is not the real Bliss. What is meant by “Bliss” is steady and identical with Being. If it comes and goes, the experience of the limitations superimposed upon the Bliss is not real. The bliss, or the happiness, you experience is of the real essence. It is the limitations that are false. The inquiry should not stop until there is no coming and going of Bliss. Bliss is identical with Being and Consciousness. When you think that bliss is receding or disappearing, it means that misidentification is occurring. It is the

equivalent of saying that your Being is diminishing, or that your Consciousness is going elsewhere, but Consciousness does not go elsewhere, and Being does not cease to exist. Being does not increase and diminish. Sat-Chit-Ananda, Being-Consciousness-Bliss, is declared, again and again, to be Brahman. It is not that two-thirds of Brahman remain, and one-third of the Self is lopped off and lost on the beach somewhere. (laughter)

Wherever there is Being and whenever there is Consciousness, there is Bliss. As Being-Consciousness is everywhere at all times, so, too, is Bliss. Limitations are imagined, and the Self is thought to be an ego. Consciousness is thought to be a mind, the individual experiencer, and Bliss is thought to be either elsewhere or diminishing and increasing, as if going up and down in waves. All that is needed to deepen and establish the experience of Bliss as permanent is continuous Knowledge of your Self. For this purpose, there is inquiry. Since inquiry is not mental in character, it offers no interruption, even in the midst of the deepest experiences of Bliss. Far from interrupting, it deepens and shows the permanence of Bliss. It shows how innate Bliss is. It swallows up any remaining seeds of differentiation. So, surf's up! (laughter)

Q.: I am going to try the submerging approach and stay out of the stormy seas. (laughter)



## Aksharamanamalai

*Dr. Sarada*

**tupparivillA ippirappenpayan  
oppiDa vAyEn Arunachala**

Bhagavan asks us what meaning there is to this life without the spirit of self-enquiry.

Anything in life is meaningful to us because we are able to accept an entity called 'I', because we are able to assume some knowledge about ourselves. It is only because I assume I am Sarada that I can move ahead from there and do anything further, I can perform actions related to Sarada. Anything that pertains to Sarada is valid only so as long as Sarada is valid.

Each one of us can assume that we are leading a valid and meaningful life provided we accept the validity of that entity which we take to be 'I'. If that entity seems to be only an illusion then what becomes of the entire life or its meaning? That's why Bhagavan says that without the spirit of enquiry there is no meaning in this life, there is no meaning in this world. It is like gifting away life to somebody else. Once the spirit of enquiry enters our lives sometimes it may initially feel as if the meaning has gone out of our lives because enquiry has come. Because all that we took to be meaningful earlier, becomes meaningless at that point. If I am asking myself 'Who am I?' then everything seems to be meaningless. That is why Bhagavan says, before talking about self-enquiry he says, I do not have the courage to do self enquiry, that's why I am returning to my limited entity.

So convince me that the real meaning in life is enquiry. I seem to think that other things are meaningful, assuming that I am a human form is meaningful, that it gives me some happiness. That is why I do not have the courage to do self enquiry, that is why I do not have the courage to get back to the Self, my true nature. So, please come and give me the courage. Because if I go away without

having this courage then my life would have been meaningless. So give me the courage to enquire into my true nature. Give me the courage through self enquiry to abide in the source.

**tUymanamozhiyar tOyumun mei aham tOyave aruLen Arunachala**

And when that happens then I will recognise that you alone are the Supreme, nothing else exists.

**deivamenRunnai sArave ennai sEra ozhittAi Arunachala**

I recognise by this abidance which happens through the process of self-enquiry that I am not Supreme, you alone are. I surrender to you, I take refuge in you as the Supreme. And when I do so you completely destroy the sense of 'I'. So until we surrender who is God? Until we recognise Him as the Supreme who is the Supreme? We ourselves, because we have so much faith in our own thoughts, our own sankalpas, in our own actions. We believe that they are the source of joy to us. And then we recognise that it is not so. It comes with a recognition that He alone is the supreme.

You are deivam, I am not the deivam. You are Supreme, not I. This which I take to be I is incapable of doing anything at all. Literally what does this I achieve? First of all we do not know what it is. But even taking that the assumption with which we are working is valid, then what? Does this entity achieve anything by itself? Without the form the mind cannot do anything. It is constantly holding on to the form, it is dependent on the form even to have experiences, in itself it is a non-entity, an illusion. But does the body belong to the 'I'? Can we control anything in this body? Can we make the blood flow? Can we make the digestive process work? Are we in control of anything with regard to this body that we can declare we have done anything through this body?

We may say we have thoughts and these are our own. What do we do in the thoughts except going on smelling more and more of the same things, going round and round in the same circles? What does the thought do? Does it actually achieve anything? Is not thought merely a plan or a recall? If we take this body to be

the truth then the action is the physical realm over which we have no control. In the mental realm we merely keep thinking about it. We have this habit of thinking that by thinking the action is happening. Because I think I have to come to shrine, I have come. But by thinking I will not come to shrine. Physical action has to happen. The body has to move and be alert only then it can come. And even if I do not think I must come, I may still come here or be brought here without my volition. Not everything happens as per our volition, does it? So action happens. By the Supreme force all actions happen in this world. Just like the actions within the body. All the actions in the world also happen automatically whenever they have to happen, each in its time. The Supreme Artist has painted an action scene which itself is a non -action.

Do we have even the power to think? Suddenly if the mind becomes dull or the brain stops functioning through which this I is identified with the body, then even these thoughts are not possible. The 'I' is so linked to the body that only with the correct functioning of the body it can function. Its identification is so strong. And over the body we have no control, so how can we say that we have control over our thoughts?

We do not make a simple enquiry into this physical existence of ours, not self enquiry, but just enquiry into this biological existence. Even such an enquiry as to what is making the body act will surely humble us. Through self enquiry we recognise there is only That, there is only that immense power. Then we are able to say, 'You are everything. You are the Supreme.'

By Bhagavan's grace even when there is this small experience that He alone is, then everything subsides, then there is a wonder of experience that this bliss was ever present, was ever available to us. We recognize that He is the great treasure of grace which has not been found by our effort but it is always there. Bhagavan says that if the Self is not always there, if it comes it will go. Whatever comes, goes. The body comes and goes, our thoughts come and go. Every experience comes and goes. There is no experience which is constant. What comes always goes. What is only remains. So Bhagavan says tEDAduTRA nar tiruvaruL nidhi ahattiyakkam teertaruL Arunachala.

And by its own grace it becomes revealed. Bhagavan keeps reminding us of the availability of the grace. Nonetheless self-enquiry is very important. One may wonder why there is a need to enquire when the Self is that treasure which is ever attained. When it is not got by searching then why search? It is as a concession to our dependence on action that Bhagavan allows us to search. Our sense of doership is so strongly innate in us that Bhagavan knows we will find it next to impossible to remain doing nothing. It is for this reason that he allows us to practice self-enquiry.

In any other sadhana the Self is attained at the end, the Self is the goal of the sadhana. Bhagavan asks us to enquire 'Who am I?' When I enquire thus I don't think at that point of time that I am going to reach anywhere. I do not think I am not going to reach anywhere either. When I ask 'Who am I?' obviously I am not going to get an answer that I am somebody who is going to reach a goal. Bhagavan has not indicated that Self is attainable or an object of attainment. By giving us the sadhana of self enquiry he does not contradict the truth. He only asks us to become vigilant to that which clouds the truth. Similarly we say surrender to the truth completely. Surrender everything. Then who will do the sadhana? If you recognise every thought is coming from the Self, then where is your sadhana over there? When every thought is dependent on I and I itself on the Self then nothing is different.

But every moment the protectiveness of that grace is allowing us to pay attention to that which is clouding the truth. It is allowing our attention to come to the clouding and thereby it disappears immediately. As and when the confusion arises the grace allows us to ask for whom, from where and by asking these questions it takes our attention back to the Self very naturally. Every moment our readiness has to be there to receive, to experience the truth.

In Ramanayam we know Sabari offered fruits to Rama. She waited every day for Rama. She was not told when he would come. Yet, every day, every moment she waited as if that was the day, that was the moment of Rama's arrival. Such was her love. For us the Self is available now. We do not have to wait for it till tomorrow. Sadly though, we act as if it will come to us only hundreds of years later.

Bhagavan has not asked us to wait for many janmas, many more births to experience the Self. He has said it is ever present, hence it is there even now. If I miss it 'now' the next 'now' is available. There is no Anubhava in the past or future. Search is futuristic. The goal is tomorrow. But the bliss is now. The Atma sukha is now. In our daily experiences also the sukha is experienced now. All experience is in the now. Joy is always in the now. Sukha is the glimpse of the bliss which is ever shining within us. But we confuse it for an objective experience. In now there is no past or future, there is no present. It is that complete anubhava in which the incompleteness caused by the movement of the mind is not there. Such is Arunachala, the treasure of Grace revealing itself unsought. It is the tEDADuTRa tiruvaruL nidi.





## Ramana is the Way of Ramana

*Shyam Sundar*

"Atma is always there, at all times and all places. Instead of looking at the Self which is real and permanent if one looks upon the body etc.as one's own self, it is suicide."

-Sri Ramana Maharshi

Killing one's body is not suicide, taking oneself as body is suicide. Hence no one should be taken as body. Everyone is basically Heart, Self and the existence itself.

I am eternal.  
I am as I am.  
I am where I am.  
Where can I go?  
Be as you are.  
Then where can you go?

"The source of everything is one's own Self, and if one realises the Self, one will not find anything different from the Self."

- Sri Ramana Maharshi

As I thought or as mental I, I watch I feeling in the heart. I myself do not live as I feeling in the heart. If it is made possible with the help of Self-abidance practice, there is found no thought which creates illusion of the varieties of the things.

It is good to meditate-

Not outside but constantly I am going inside the heart.  
Actions go on under supervision of supreme power.

Self means-

No mind no thought.  
No thought no time.  
No time no memory,  
Only the what is.  
'Be as you are.'  
You are what you are, not what you should be.

A seeker always asks- What is the Self?

Ramana says- When 'I' is kept up as the 'I' only it is the Self.

It means 'I' is Self, Self is 'I'. Enough. Why should we think about I when I means Self?

"When there are no thoughts at all, what remains is only the Self."

So simple. We need not take 'Who am I?' as something too difficult.

....what remains is only the existence.

Here I is for existence, not for a thought - I thought.



## Through the eyes of an eight year old

*Pattabirama Ramanatha*

*(Continued from the November issue)*

### SOME MEMORABLE INCIDENTS

1 *Thaathaa's* (Manavasi Ramaswami Iyer) family was truly a music family. His daughter Lalitha Venkataraman was a veena exponent, another daughter Ramani was proficient in violin and another was an artist painter. Once, Lalitha Venkataraman was invited to give a series of recitals in Sri Lanka and on her way back, she visited Tiruvannamalai. On this occasion she rendered a full recital in front of Bhagavan in the meditation hall. Unlike usual veena vidwans, she used to sing along with her veena rendition, as she had a very melodious voice that blended magnificently with the instrument. I remember this occasion because, she sang the *saranagathi* song with so much melody and *bhava* that I understood why *thaathaa* spent hours and hours to teach my sisters how to bring the *divine bhava* into the song.

2 On another occasion, I was with my friends at the Ashram office. My friend Ramanan's father Sri Venkataraman, who later was ordained as *Ramanananda*, was opening a book parcel that had just arrived. He told *Chinna Swamigal*, the then *Sarvadhikari*, that it was in a foreign language, French. They decided anyway to submit it to Bhagavan to see and we faithfully followed them into the Main Hall. Bhagavan looked at it and just kept it by his side without a word. Just at that moment two foreigners walked into the Hall for Bhagavan's darshan. One of them happened to be a Frenchman and he translated the chapter on Bhagavan contained in the book, for all of us to hear. All of us know that Bhagavan never ever believed in miracles and told everyone that what is bound to happen will happen anyway without our volition. But for the youngster that I was, this was truly a miracle happening in front of my eyes.

3 Our family used to go on *Giri Pradakshinam* once or twice in a month. On one occasion, *thaathaa* was accompanying us. Noticing that my sister Swarnam was boisterously running here

and there, my father chastised her, saying “*Swarnambale, sonnathai kETkum swabhaavam unakku illavE illaiyA* **ஸ்வர்ணாம்பாளே, சொன்னதைக்-கேட்கும் ஸ்வபாவம் உனக்கு இல்லவே இல்லையா**”. Just as *thaathaa* heard these words, something like a lightening must have struck him. He fell totally silent for the next hour or so and just as we crossed the Adi Annamalai village, he made my sisters sit down on a low horizontal branch of a tree and started teaching them a new song. Yes, he had composed a song “*sonnAl ketkum swabhaavam, SoNaadreesarEy, saTRum umakkillai yEnO?* **சொன்னால் கேட்கும் ஸ்வபாவம் , சோணாத்ரீசரே , சற்றும் உமக்கிலை ஏனோ**”. *SoNaadreesa* was another name for Lord Arunachaleswara and the composition was in the form of a *nindaastuthi*, a form of rendering the words as if to insult the God, but actually in praise of Him. *Thaathaa* told my sisters that they should learn it just now and sing the song in front of Bhagavan in the evening. They struggled alright but finally they sang the new song for Bhagavan. He enjoyed the song and asked *thaathaa* a question. Why do you want to give respect to *SoNaadreesa* when you are “insulting” him? In the place of “*satrum umakkillai yeno* **சற்றும் உமக்கில்லை ஏனோ**” you can say “*satrum unakillai yeno* **சற்றும் உனக்கில்லை ஏனோ**”. It was spontaneous and brilliant; *Thaathaa* was very pleased and happy.

4 My father used to encourage us the youngsters to read some small 4/5 page booklets on Arunachala and other *kshetrams* in front of Bhagavan. On one such occasion, there was a passage reading “*aayiram naavulla AadisEshanaal varnikkappaTTa* **ஆயிரம் நாவாள்ள ஆதிசேஷனால் வர்ணிக்கப்பட்ட**” which I playfully rendered as “*aayiram naavulla Aadiseshanaalum varnikka mudiyaata*’ **ஆயிரம் நாவாள்ள ஆதிசேஷனாலும் வர்ணிக்கமுடியாத**”. Bhagavan said immediately that this is also appropriate and one can say like this also. I felt blessed.

5 As a youngster, I had no means of understanding things like, the rope and the snake, the post and the ghost, concepts when the elders were discussing it. We used to playfully say “what is bound to happen *will* **“happeney” happen** amongst ourselves. However, one small philosophical quote of Bhagavan

was stuck in my memory. It goes like this; “*vaNDi seluvaan sumai, vaNDi veyyaadu, tan talai koNDu nali kondathevar kothu*” **வண்டி செலுவான் சும்மை, வண்டி வையாது தன் தலை கொண்டு நலி கொண்டதெவர் கோது**. Even for a young boy, the message was crystal clear in its simplicity and hence the indelible memory. The meaning is simple: When the cart is carrying the man and his baggage, why would the man carry the baggage on his head inside the cart? In a broader philosophical sense, it means that all of us mortals “believe” that WE are driving the whole world with all its trials and tribulations and we are responsible for everything. The subtle message is, that there is a need for LETTING GO of our ego to get liberation.

My childhood experiences with Bhagavan and the Ashram as narrated above have remained indelibly written in my memory and from time to time, I have been sharing some of them to like-minded groups interested in Ramana Maharshi and his teachings, in Sydney.

## SEVEN DECADES LATER

As a young 8 year old boy, my association and memories of Bhagavan and Asramam were purely on a physical and experiential level. Ramana Maharshi and his teachings are far more subtle and divine for a child to understand. By no means I am a philosopher. If at all, I can boast of myself only as an ardent ELEMENTARY grade student, struggling with understanding the profound messages contained in our Vedas, *Upanishads and scriptures* in the last 20 years after retirement. I am therefore not competent to discuss or to elaborate on the profound messages of Bhagavan. However, I wish to share below some of my tiny interpretations and observations on Bhagavan’s life and his messages as observed by me now.

### “WHO AM I”

This is the most central teaching of Bhagavan. With this ultra simple *vichaara*, he wants us to go to the very root of who we are, where we are heading and what is the ultimate goal of

human existence. I see a great parallel to this *vichaara* in the question Adi Sankara put to the apparently dumb boy from Sri Bali (Gokarna) “Who are you?” The boy (later ordained as *Hastaamalaka*), who had never spoken a single word from birth till that day, spontaneously answers the great master in 12 verses, that he is not this body or the senses but is the one and only pure consciousness, the Atma. This expounds the supreme principle of *Advaita* in a majestic explanation that “I am the Atma, which is the eternal consciousness (*Nityopalabdhisvarupah Aham Atma*)”, as the elaboration of “*thou*” in the *Mahaavakya*, “THOU ART THAT (*Tat tvam asi*)”. As someone described Bhagavan’s message in a cryptic phrase *Deham Naaham Koham Soham* (This body I am not; **Who am I?** I am HIM), I am truly reminded of *Hastaamalakeeyam* whenever I contemplate on this *vichaara* and I consider this to be THE MOST DIRECT AND SIMPLE show of direction for God-realisation by Bhagavan.

## DIVINITY OF MOTHER

In his mid-morning walks within the Ashram, Bhagavan used to visit the goshala to feed the cow Lakshmi. During the construction time of the *Maatrubooteswara* temple within the Ashram, he would invariably visit the site, where the stapathi building the temple would be waiting to give an update on the progress. The devotees would be watching all these from some distance away and we would not miss these events whenever we were in the Ashram. Whenever I go through *Maathru-panchakam* of Adi Sankara, describing what all trials, tribulations and love that a mother goes through bringing up the child, I am reminded of the abundant love, respect and reverence Bhagavan showed towards his mother. Allowing his mother to stay with him (even though as a sannyasi, he should have no special consideration for keeping her with him), treating her as another devotee when he stayed at Skandasramam/Virupaksha cave and giving her the eternal peace by keeping his hands on her head and heart during her passing away, Bhagavan showed his eternal reverence to his mother, also by naming the deity *Matrubooteswarar*.

**UPADESA SAARAM**

This is the crowning glory of all of Bhagavan's gifts to the world. It is the very essence of all Vedic knowledge and Upanishadic truths. We remember that Bhagavan wrote this work at the instance of Muruganar to reproduce the words of Lord Shiva Himself, while imparting the secret of Self-knowledge gaining which man attains liberation, to the mis-guided rishis of *Darukavana*, for whom mere rituals were supreme till then. In just 30 cryptic verses, Bhagavan conveys the quintessence of the entire gamut of Vedas and Upanishads to us in the most simple but profound form for easy assimilation. I have been reading the *bhashyams* on it by various gurus and every time I find a new insight into the mystery of Self-knowledge. Starting with the *Karma yoga*, Lord Siva in the garb of Bhagavan, takes us through *Bhakti yoga*, *Dhyana yoga* and ultimately to *Jnana yoga*; in other words from the known path of action, which is commonly understood by all to the unknown path of knowledge, which is the most complicated concept to fathom. That Bhagavan himself translated this original work in Tamil into Sanskrit, Malayalam and Telugu languages without losing its beauty and content is another miracle. It is but my observation that as one ascends from ground upwards, more and more things become visual and ultimately from such an immeasurable height, the entire universe becomes apparent. Bhagavan, the *Jeevan Mukhtha* stands at the pinnacle of this universe, *Vishva*. Otherwise, how does a boy who has not finished his basic elementary education wield mastery over so many languages and offer the very essence of all Vedas on a platter for us?

OM NAMO BHAGAVATHE RAMANAAYA !





## Insights - From the RMCL Diary – 2004

*Chadalavada Vijaya Kumar*

Generally after attending the Workshop conducted at the Ramana Shrine at Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning (RMCL), Mehkri Circle, Bangalore, one tends to attend the various talks on Ramana's teachings held at Shrine or at Heritage Centre at Sanjaynagar in the Auditorium to know more about the Master's teachings and the experiences of various speakers and devotees who gather to attend such talks. Some classes were also arranged during weekends for us to know about Bhagavan's teachings.

RMCL had arranged for classes in Kannada on Ramana's teachings by Sri K.G. Subbaraya Sharma on every Saturday at 6.30 pm in 2004. I used to attend till 2005 end. Later on due to severe back pain I discontinued. Sri Sharma ji was an extremely patient teacher and he used to take his own time in order to make us understand the teachings of Bhagavan. He used to teach us from Ramana Gita, sometimes he used to take 2 to 3 sessions to teach one verse from Ramana Gita and most importantly he used to encourage us to ask various doubts and he loved to clarify these in his own inimitable style. We were hardly six or seven participants. All of us were regular. There was one young student who was doing his engineering course. He was very enthusiastic and a very cheerful person. He used to ask so many questions. Sometimes the entire session went in answering his doubts but we did not mind as the answers were always useful to us as well.

I have the habit of jotting down interesting points. I recently came across one such noting in my old diary pertaining to this boy's questions and answers by Sri Sharmaji. Q & A were in Kannada. I may not have the exact translation but the gist of the Q&A is given here, which was over a period of two to three days. The boy's name was Uday, I forget the second name. He was from Dharwad. His innocence and enthusiasm comes out in these Q&A sessions, which I felt like sharing.

Uday: Sir, why should I know myself?

KGS: Interesting question. What do you do? Are you a student?

U: Yes. I am doing the Mechanical Engineering course in BMS, Bangalore.

KGS: Good, why are you studying this course?

U: To gain knowledge in Mechanical Engineering and then get a job, use my knowledge and apply what I have learnt.

KGS: Okay... Do you pray?

U: I do not believe in formal prayers nor am I ritualistic like my parents, but as soon as I get up and before I go to sleep I close my eyes for few minutes, that's it.

KGS: Forget your parents, let's talk about you. You say you pray twice in a day but to whom?

U: I do not know, but I do believe that there is some unknown force somewhere out there. So I pray to that unknown force.

KGS: You say "I pray to some unknown force". Don't you think you should try to find out about the link between "I" and the unknown force?

U: Why should I? I am a part of this Universe/Nature... so whatever happens to Universe/Nature... it will happen to me...

KGS: If you do not want to know it's okay, but being born as a human being, all of us are gifted with our intellect, which can be used for not only our survival but also introspection as to what is the link between the "I" in us and its source. Tell me what is the source for electricity?

U: Water or Wind or even Solar ... But why should I bother about it?

KGS: All of us living in the City get electricity without any hindrance, we do not bother about its source etc, we simply assume it is available but the fact remains that there is a source. Similarly, we are simply assuming that the "I" that we call ourselves exists at all times. But it is there during our waking state and it vanishes during deep sleep. Should we not bother to find out about this "I" and its source? I mean, it's okay if one is not interested to find out, but are you not curious about the nature of this 'I'?

(Sharmaji was referring to "I" as 'Nanu' or ego)

U: Yes, but I am afraid that I will lose my identity...

KGS: Now the cat is out of the bag! Do not worry. Nothing of that sort will happen. You can lead a perfectly normal life... you can do your meditation/self-enquiry here in Bangalore at your home... You need not go to Himalayas ....

This Q&A went on for days and finally Uday was convinced that we need to find out the link between the ego and its source.

We lost touch with Uday but years later I learnt that he has settled down in USA, he is married and he continues to be a staunch Ramana devotee ...

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## Ramana's Song of Grace - 28

*Revathi Sankar*

Ramana Nama, the name 'Ramana' is called the taraka naama. Whenever we are in difficulty, just chant the Ramana Nama and it will get us through the problem. Likewise meditating on his feet is also one more solution for us to get over any kind of problem. So we now meditate on verses of Ramana Pada Malai by Siva Prakasam Pillai which are filled with the teachings of Bhagavan Ramana as taught to him by Ramana himself.

Let us pray to Bhagavan and meditate on the Ramana Pada Malai by Siva Prakasam Pillai. Siva Prakasam Pillai's Pada Malai has been set as Ramana Pada Pancharatnam – a unique musical piece which has been composed by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan on the lines of Saint Tyagaraja's Pancharatna Kritis. Smt. Sulochana Natarajan has very carefully selected the verses from Pada Malai and set the ragas of Nattai, Goula, Arabhi, Varali and Sri which are the same as Pancharatnam. We will be meditating on the same.

The fifth charana of the song goes like this

*kaDavut seyaluru ellAm enDru gatipOn pAdam vAzhgavE  
keDupadu ahamE vEralavenDru kiLapOn pAdam vAzhgavE*  
- Tamil

*Ishana kAryavE ellavu enuva guruvina pAda beLaGali  
keDupudu ahamE berallavendu karuNisO pAda beLaGali*  
- Kannada

Meaning –

Blessed be the Feet of the One who says that all is the work of the Lord. Blessed be the Feet of the One who says that the ego and nothing else is the whole trouble.

Bhagavan begins his Upadesa Saram with the verse 'karturAjjayaA prApyatE phalam' – saying 'By the order of God, we reap the fruits of our actions'. There also Bhagavan says it is God

who does everything and not us. We never realize that we are not the ones who are doing any action. There are so many stories where we see that God comes in various forms and helps devotees.

I remember two stories at this juncture, one is Bhagavan's story and the other is Nandanar.

When Bhagavan was in Virupaksha Cave, Ganapathi Muni came to him, got the first spoken Upadesa and Muni gave him the name Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. For having got a Guru, in gratitude he composed 1000 verses in praise of Devi Uma within a stipulated period as a vow. Due to various impediments on the last day he still had to complete more than 400 verses. The whole night he sat in Bhagavan's presence and dictated the verses to four scribes who were his disciples. By the time one could write the first line of a verse, he would dictate the first line of the next verse to the second scribe and so on till the fourth after which he would come to the second line of each verse in turn. In this manner he finished the work that night.

All the while Bhagavan Ramana remained in silence. After everything was over, Bhagavan Ramana asked Muni, 'Has everything that I spoke been noted down properly?' Muni replied, 'Yes Bhagavan all that has come by your grace has been noted down correctly'.

This is an instance through which Bhagavan reveals to us that everything is done only by him. Bhagavan is so wonderful that he gives glimpses of this every now and then to his devotees.

Similarly, Nandanar, a great devotee of Siva yearns to have the darshan of Siva. But he is an outcaste and will not be allowed to go to temples. He works as a bonded labourer in his owner's land where the owner doesn't give him any holiday at all for him to visit the Siva temple. Nandanar repeatedly pleads with the owner that he cannot wait any longer to have the liberating darshan of Siva at Chidambaram. The owner makes a plan for Nandanar so that he doesn't take leave and go to the temple as he doesn't want to lose the yield. The owner asks Nandanar to plough the land, sow seeds, water them and then harvest the yield by morning, in which

case he can go to the temple according to his wish. Nandanar never even thinks twice as his aim is only to go to the temple and see his Lord Siva. The owner laughs at Nandanar as he accepts to do according to the owner's desire which is practically impossible. But to the surprise of the owner, the crops are ready to go to the market the next morning. He finds that Nandanar had left to visit Siva at the very moment the owner said he may go. In the meantime Siva himself had done all the work which was to be done.

Here too it is very very clear that the Lord alone does everything, we are just lifeless puppets in his hand. But then the puppet starts thinking that it is the doer and the one who is playing the role is someone else. This is the problem says Ramana. The puppets forget the doer and act as if they are the doers. Bhagavan says just remember that the doer is the Lord and no problem will arise. Bhagavan bless me with the remembrance of your doership, so that my doership vanishes.

Oh! Lord Ramana  
Thank you Bhagavan  
Your attention seeking Child :)



## How Bhagavan Captured Us

*By Smt. Sulochana Natarajan*

*Smt.Sulochana Natarajan had written a series of articles in this journal in an autobiographical manner also covering the biography of her husband, A.R.Natarajan, the Founder President of RMCL. These articles were discontinued after her merging in Bhagavan in August 2016. The articles of other devotees on their interactions with her were carried in the journal during thereafter until October 2018. We now return to Smt. Sulochana's articles on popular demand. To get back into the feel of her mode of writing we will be carrying the earlier articles for the next few issues and then continuing the biography as she has narrated it to her daughters Dr.Sarada and Dr.Ambika Kameshwar.*

October 2010

ARN was a bright student throughout and joined the Indian Revenue Service after passing the All India Competitive Examination at the age of 24. In later years he sometimes rued the fact that he had missed out on the prime ranking IAS because he might have been able to be of more service to Ramana's cause had it been so! But could he know better than Ramana Himself? For, there can be no doubt that ARN's placements in Salem, Bangalore and Delhi and then again in Bangalore and Delhi for one more stint as part of his service in the Revenue Department played a key role in enabling his deep association with Ramanasramam and the Ramana movement as a whole.

ARN gave himself as wholeheartedly to his work as to Ramana (in fact he was whole hearted about whatever he took up, believing firmly that in Ramana's Way there was no dichotomy between work and worship and every moment was spiritual practices if one lived with the right attitude). He had a fulfilling career, getting all his due promotions. Through his career Bhagavan gave him an opportunity to serve many, an opportunity which ARN made full use of. Throughout his life he helped many people and many institutions. Practically no one who came to him

with a need went away empty handed, no one's problem went unaddressed. He retired as the most senior Member Board of Direct Taxes in the year 1985 at the age of 58.

After the day of his retirement he never stepped into the Income Tax Office again. He looked at that chapter of his life as done for good. There were rare times when he would say with a smile, 'There may not be a single person in the thousands working in the department at that time who would not have been helped by me in some manner or the other during my tenure there. But how many of them have cared even to keep in touch? Not even half a dozen. Who are those who are really bonded with us at all times? Only those with whom we share love for Lord Ramana!' ARN chose not to take up any other job after his retirement. Perhaps he had been waiting in a way to lay down that load and 'enjoy servitude' to Lord Ramana as he wrote in one of his articles.

Nov 2010

Going back to take up a parallel thread and story which alone completes the picture of how Bhagavan captured our entire family as it were, ARN decided to take me as his bride when he was 25 years old. Bhagavan must have chosen to make me ARN's partner way before ARN himself chose me. And for this partnership in His servitude, Bhagavan placed and prepared me as I can see with my very limited vision, from the very time of my birth. I was born to Smt.Dharmambal and Justice K.S.Venkataraman, I.C.S., on 4th November 1936 at Guntur in Andhra Pradesh. I do not know whether this accounts for the soft corner that I always carry for the Telugu language and some of the greatest supporters of Ramana Music till date have been the Telugu people.

My paternal grandparents were a pious couple, but they passed away even in my father's infancy and early childhood and I have never seen them or interacted with them. Their piety would certainly have given me some 'brownie points', that is to say, added to my merits if at all such 'merits' can play a part in bringing me to Bhagavan. For, as Sadhu Om Swami sings in one of his compositions, I cannot claim that it is my own good deeds in past

births nor even the penance of my forerunners which can in any way account for the Supreme Fortune of coming to Bhagavan. And yet, it is part of His script that my grandparents were very pious and righteous.

My maternal grandparents were Gandhians and well soaked in Karnatik Classical music. My maternal grandmother, Smt.Valambal Raghavier, was practically a child prodigy in Karnatik Classical Music at the turn of the 20th Century. She was a vidushi, a musical scholar par excellence, a violinist and a veena player all rolled into one. All these she was without having any formal education. I grew up with her for a few years and I must admit that my admiration and love for her are undimmed by time. I had my first music lesson under her at the age of four. My parents had the deepest passion for Karnatik Music and so did my uncles.

I grew up on a rich diet of Karnatik Music, 24 hours a day and 365 days in a year. Looking back at my life, the planning of the Master of Proper Placing was undoubtedly meticulous in keeping me constantly neck deep in Karnatik Music as a preparation for the work to be done in Ramana Music.

*(To be continued)*

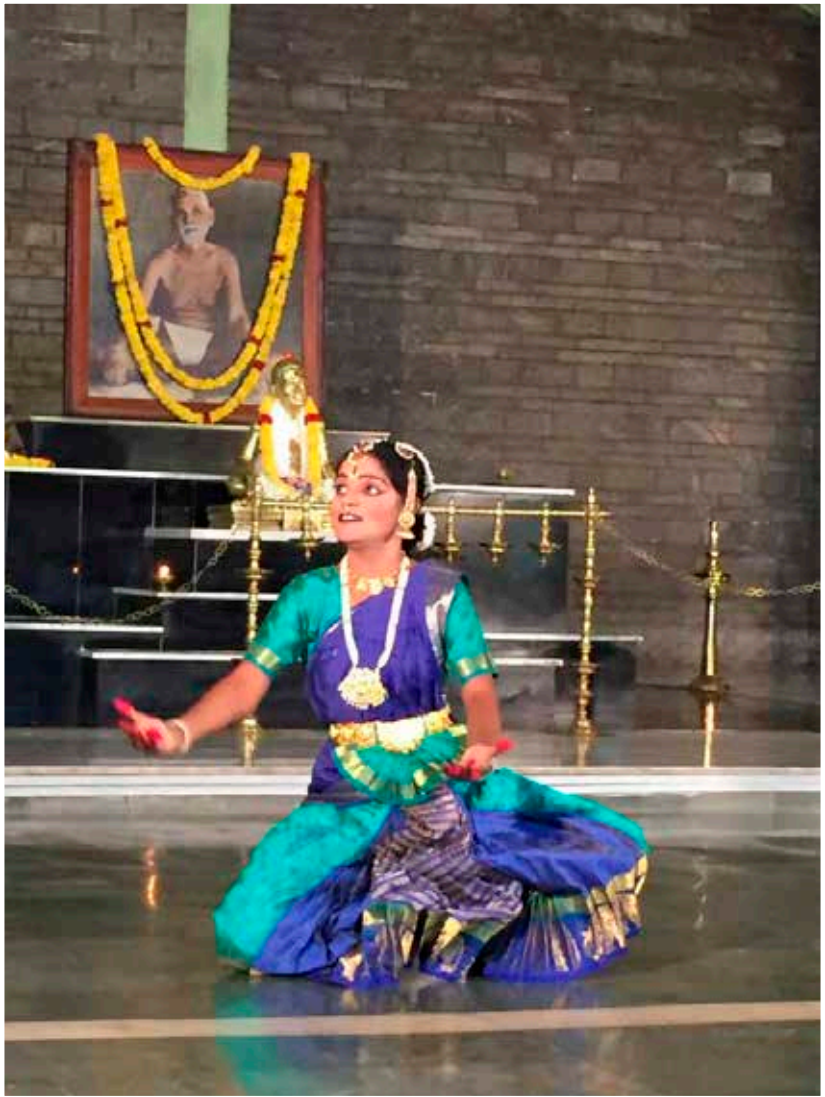




**News & Events***Revathi Sankar***Ramana Events in October**

At Ramana Shrine, Bangalore

14th October: Navaratri Cultural Festival - Ramana Nritya by Smt.Ashwini Balaji, Smt.Ranjitha Mukund and Kum.Bhagyashree Chandrashekar.









24th October: Pournami Cultural Festival - Ramana Nritya by students and artistes of RMCL





At Keshava Kalpa and Air Force Association

17th and 18th October: Ramana Nritya by students and artistes of RMCL











At Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium

19th October: Vijaya Dasami Cultural Festival - Ramananjali Sangitam & Ramana Nritya by students & artistes of RMCL





**Ramana Events in November**

At Ramana Shrine, Bangalore

18th November: Ramana Sangeetham Day – Dedicated to the Founder of Ramananjali Sangeetham, Smt.Sulochana Natarajan.

Smt.V.Radha gave a concert of Ramananjali Sangeetham accompanied by Sri Narasimhan on the mridangam and Sri Shashank on the violin.



Sri G.Kameshwar spoke on the significance of the day and paid a touching tribute to Ramana Sangeetham and Smt. Sulochana Natarajan.



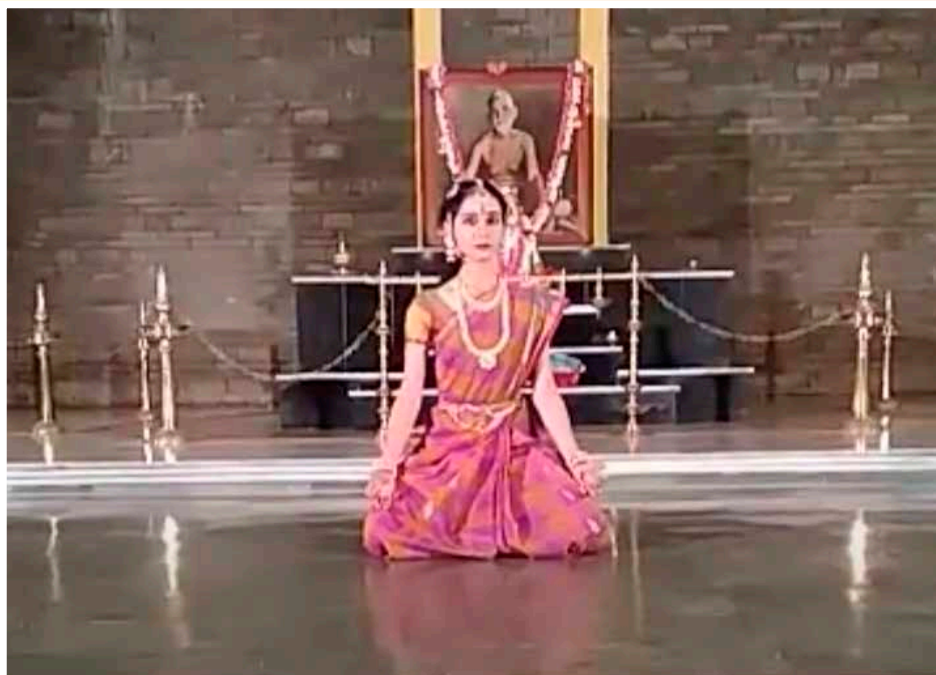


23rd November: Karthigai Deepam was celebrated

With lighting of the Eka deepa, the Ramana Nritya and the Giri pradakshina round Arunachala Ramana.



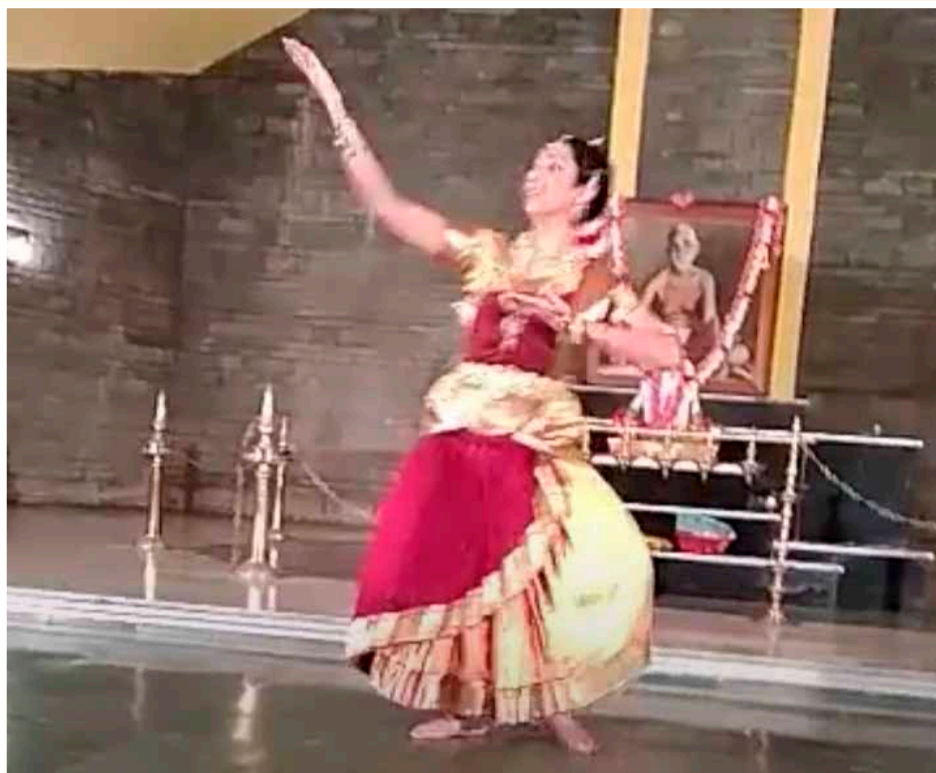














### Special Programs in December

#### *At the Ramana Shrine*

##### **8th, Saturday - Shrine Anniversary Celebrations**

06.30 p.m. 'Nitya Ramana' – a dance drama by Artistes of RMCL led by Dr.Ambika Kameshwar and Dr.Sarada

##### **9th, Sunday**

10.30 a.m. Self-enquiry, Sahasranama Puja,  
Talk by Sri G.Kameshwar, Maha Prasadam

06.30 p.m. Deepotsavam – Lighting of lamps  
Ramana Music Devotional Concert  
By Dr.Ambika Kameshwar, Vocal Support Smt.Poorna Sooraj

##### **Ramana Jayanthi Celebrations**

30th, Sunday

10.30 a.m. Ramana Tiruvembavai by Smt.V.Radha  
And artistes and students of RMCL  
Sahasranama Puja, Maha Prasadam

### Special Programs in January, 2019

#### *At Ramana Shrine*

##### **20th, Sunday**

6.45 p.m. Pournami Celebrations - Sangeetham  
Ashtottara Puja, Aksharamanamalai and Valam

##### **26th, Saturday and 27th, Sunday**

10.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m.  
National Seminar and Cultural Festival

#### *At Rajarajeswari Nagar, Nimishamba Temple*

##### **6th, Sunday**

6.30 p.m. Ramana Jayanthi Celebrations  
'Nitya Ramana' dance drama by artistes of RMCL

#### *At Ramana Kendra, Chennai*

##### **23rd, Wednesday**

6.30 p.m. ARN Day, Musical Feature by Dr.Ambika Kameswhar

## 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



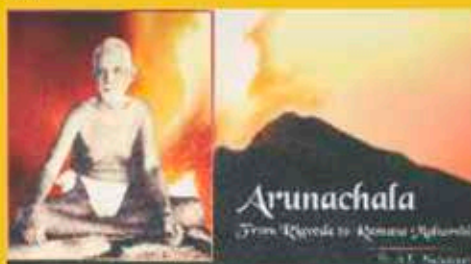
## Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

### Investigation into Truth

72. People of the world will pine for the thoroughly dubious pleasures, tiny as sesame seeds, obtained by laboriously ploughing with their minds the brackish land of sense objects, which are a creation of *maya*. They will not desire the unlimited bliss that is produced by easily ploughing, through consciousness, the truly fertile field of the Heart, the source of the mind. What can one say about the wonder of *maya*?
73. Even at the very moment that the 'I' rises, this lady, the moon – like sense of individuality, is duty bound to carefully conduct herself in a chaste way in the Heart – the space of consciousness – as the legitimate wife of the Lord, the Self that is the sun of *jnana*. If she forsakes the bliss of the Self, which is in harmony with her dharma, and slips from that chaste conduct through infidelity, hankering after worldly enjoyment and wallowing in it, this is just a frenzied act of stupidity caused by beginningless, past karma.



### 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.