

# Sthita Prajna



## Guru Vandana

*Pratah sirasi suklabje  
dvinetram dvibhujam gurum  
Varabhayapradam santam  
smaretannamapurvakam*

Guru Gita verse 53

In the serene hours of dawn, let one meditate on the guru preceptor residing within the white lotus inside the head. This supreme Guru has two eyes and two hands, is peaceful, and is the bestower of blessings and fearlessness. Let one forever remember his name.

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**VOLUME 10**

**ISSUE 3**

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## FROM THE EDITORS :

*Human life is a gift from God. We the children of God have great potential divinity. Through selfless service our hearts will open, the bud of life will blossom, and we will be worthy children of God.* **Paramahansa Prajnanananda**

*In our spring issue “Message of the Master” talks of the role of heredity and culture in yogic evolution.*

*In “Prajnanavani”, Paramahansa Prajnananandaji talks of memory and the aids to help developing a good memory.*

*Rama Katha takes us to the story of Shabari and Rama’s friendship with Sugreeva. Pari prashna answers questions on Gurudev’s childhood.*

*Kaivalya Upanishad our series on Self Knowledge emphasizes on concentration, purity of the mind and complete trust in god, as the key factors for gaining Self Knowledge.*

*Relevant excerpts from some of Paramahansa Prajnanananda’s seminal works, The Universe Within and the Changing Nature of Relationships, continue elaborating on the chakras and balanced mind. The significance of bowing is explained.*

*Practical Spirituality is a feature article on desires and how to overcome them.*

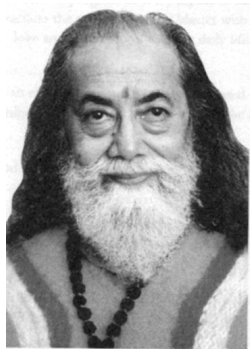
*We bring you the news of the annual Gita programs, the International Intensive Kriya Yoga Seminar. Mahashivaratri at the Gurukulam was of special significance with many monks and Brahmacharis initiations under the direction of Baba Prajnananandaji.*

*We hope you enjoy this issue and those to come.*

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# MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

## YOGIC THEORY OF EVOLUTION – ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE



In the thirteenth chapter of the Gita, the soul represented by Lord Krishna, clearly teaches Arjuna who symbolizes the condition of all human beings that a good environment which is a realized teacher, and following a teachers instructions (such as Kriya Yoga technique) allows a sincere seeker to perceive that the twenty four gross elements are activated only by the soul.

Furthermore every person must also seek good culture, which is the constant search for the indwelling self both in meditation and in all aspects of practical life. Whatever aspect of culture you pursue whether you are an

artist, scientist, factory worker and so forth, you must seek inner self within that activity. Then you will automatically recognize that your body is a precious body, a divine body, not an evil body.

A verse in the Gita says, as fire is obscured by the smoke, as dust covers a mirror or a child remains hidden in the womb of the mother, so the strongest desire and passion surround and obscure Self consciousness and spiritual knowledge. – Gita III::38

If you do not meditate, you will feel that God is very far from you. You will be absorbed in delusion, illusion and error. If you live in delusion you

cannot see your real face. Delusion, illusion and error and strong ambition for worldly objects cover the human mind with darkness, just as a mirror is covered with dust. On the other hand, when you meditate, you will rise from lower centers to the top and realize that you and He are one, and have always been one. With this illumination, you see that your own face which you do not possess, belongs to the soul. You no longer see your face in the mirror-you see the face of God. If you take the advice of your Guru preceptor and practice yoga, it is like cleaning the surface of the mirror. Automatically your real face becomes visible.

Until you meditate deeply, you cannot see the fire that is covered by smoke, or you cannot see the divine living baby covered by the womb of the mother. Spiritual power

removes the veiling power of delusion and brings enlightenment.

With spiritual knowledge, human ignorance, which is like a covering of dust on a mirror, is cleansed. The more you live a spiritual life, the more your power rises into higher centers. Then you can comprehend God. Your third eye would be opened. The ignorance of every human being disappears when spiritual knowledge, the light of God, flashes.

There are three steps of meditation for God realization, *karma*-work, *jnana*-knowledge and *prema*-love for God. The more your delusion disappears and you come up nearer the soul, the more you will perceive the divine movement sensation and hear the divine sound within you. Through this you will find *prema*, love for God and divine ecstasy.

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“Paths are many, but the goal is one.  
Religions are many, but God is one.  
Scriptures are many, but Truth is one.”

– **Paramahansa Hariharananda**

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# PRAJNANAVANI - THE VOICE OF WISDOM

## MEMORY- THE INNER INSTRUMENT



### Developing a Good Memory

Developing a good memory can greatly enhance the quality of your life. Memory is vital to human existence – we live, we work and we move with this memory. Wherever we go, our memory comes with us. One might say that memory is just like your backpack; you carry it with you. Suppose you are a businessman arriving at your office; if you do not have any memory of what you did yesterday, and what you have to do today, you cannot do your business effectively. Unfortunately, one of the biggest detriments of modern times is

that we keep our memory in the computer's hard drive; instead of using our brain, we rely on the computer to store all our information. Hence, we have traded in our God-given human brains for man-made machines. If you ever travel to India, you will likely come across many old monks who are not modernized – by choice. These monks have memorized many scriptures and teachings, and when they speak, the words just flow from them like a sacred stream. During a *brahmachari* training course a few years ago, we had the great blessing to listen to some

talks given by an elderly monk, a Dandi Swami. This monk had no belongings – no clothes, no computer, no books. After listening to his talk, we were all very inspired by his exceptional memory.

### **Techniques for improving memory**

Now I will give you some tips for developing a good memory. The first tip is very simple but one that few people know: Memory is affected by the food we eat. Memory and food are related: good food promotes a good memory. One should eat simple, pure, bland food; food which excites or stimulates too much is not beneficial to the memory. Also a great tip in maintaining the memory is to develop calmness. When the mind is peaceful, one can remember more, if it is agitated, one easily forgets things.

Our memory must be used in order for it to remain in good condition. Thus, it is very important that we begin to rely on our brain more than a notebook or computer. I got my first telephone while I was staying at our Jagatpur Ashram in India. At that time I was not

yet a monk, I was still working at a job. I telephoned a friend of mine, a beautiful, spiritual man, who is a famous dermatologist, and I informed him that I now had a telephone connection. He said, “What is the number?” So I told him and we talked for a few minutes, then we hung up. A little while later the telephone rang. When I picked up the phone and asked who was calling, the doctor replied, “Me.” I asked him if everything was alright, since we had just talked a few minutes ago. He said, “Yes, everything is fine. I did not write your number down, and I just wanted to verify my memory.” It is no exaggeration to say that this doctor has memorized thousands of telephone numbers without ever writing anything down in a notebook. Just think – thousands of telephone numbers. At that time he was in his late sixties. So, a good practice that really works is to quit using your notebook and start using your memory.

Reading something aloud is a memory technique that we frequently give to children but it works just as well for adults.

When you read some text, and then repeat it loudly, three sense organs are working simultaneously. However when you silently read something, it only requires one sense organ. For example, suppose I read a verse from the Gita and chant it out loud: I first have to look at it with my eyes, say the words with my mouth, then listen to my voice with my ears; thus, there are three sense organs working simultaneously. This is a practical and easy technique to improve your memory skills. If you have a child who is unmindful or has attention deficiency or a problem focusing, this practice will be very beneficial to them.

Recalling the names of people you knew in the past is a great way to improve your memory. For example, you can try to remember former classmates and friends from your school days. Or you can also try to remember events that happened on a particular day. Doing this will make your memory more active and dynamic. However, a word of caution to anyone using this technique – do not try to recollect negative memories.

Remember, negative experiences from the past should be buried and never received. On the other hand, memories that are happy and positive should be remembered and shared with others.

There is a story in the Mahabharata about a newborn girl who was abandoned by her parents and raised in the hermitage of a great *rishi* named Kanvo. Two vultures that were hovering in the sky were the ones that initially discovered the baby. The female vulture swooped down and covered her with its wings, to protect her from the sunlight; then the male vulture flew to a nearby hermitage and began pulling on the clothes of a meditating *rishi* urging him to come and help. The *rishi* became both the father and mother of the child, and she lived with him in the hermitage. The years quickly passed and in time that little girl transformed into a beautiful, young woman. She married a prince and thus began preparations to live in her husband's palace. The morning she left, the *rishi* stood in the gateway of the hermitage



watching her disappear down the pathway, his heart overflowing with love. For many years it had been his joy to watch this angelic child frolic in the woods surrounding the Ashram.

Suddenly he began to call out, "O trees, O plants, O creepers, she is going to her husband's palace; you should bless her. Like a loving mother and father, you have sheltered her under your shade and provided for her needs, and she, in turn, has so graciously cared for you. You are one family, and through God's grace you all grew healthy and strong. So bless this child that her life may be filled with love and peace." And it is said, as that young woman walked down the pathway, the trees bent down and touched her head, blessing her, and a gentle shower of leaves and flowers softly fell upon her.

Although this story may appear to be just fiction, it actually happened. The young woman who married the prince gave birth to a very famous son, Bharata for whom the country India was named. You may be wondering what relevance this

story has in regards to our topic, but if you contemplate it for a moment, you will see it deals with the memory. In the story, the *rishi* was recollecting the days of the young lady's childhood and he was also invoking the trees to do the same.

### **The Higher Purpose of Memory**

We know that memory is a constitution of our mind which is useful for our day-to-day worldly living, but it serves an even greater purpose in our spiritual life – to remember our true Self within, to remember God. Chanting or singing the name of God is a practice used by many spiritual seekers to remember Him. In Kriya practice, the disciples are told to remember God in every breath; in doing so, there will be a continuous remembrance.

In the same manner, we should also remember that this creation is mysterious and beautiful, and even though there are many things here that we love, it is only a temporary abode and one day we will have to leave. Do not think that remembering this life is transitory will make you

unhappy or sad. This will not happen if your attitude is right. If you are spiritual, it will inspire you in a positive manner by motivating you to give us much as you can while you are here. Those who do good work on Earth will receive a promotion when they leave, and they will continue to do good work on a higher plane. So, remember God. Remember who you really are. Remember this world is a beautiful creation and we can contribute something good and positive to it. Remember time is passing; therefore we should never waste our time. And above all, remember your divine

potential and boldly go forward in your life, forgetting all negative memories of the past.

Repeat this prayer from the depths of your heart :

“O God, out of Your infinite kindness, You brought me to this world. I will try to live a better life, contributing goodness everywhere. Everyday I will adorn my face with a smile; it will serve as an invitation to my friendship and love. I will always strive to make myself better, which in turn will inspire others to do the same.”

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## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

- April 1 : Birthday of Lord Rama
- April 2 : Mahasamadhi Day of Swami Brahmananda Giri
- April 13 : Hanuman Jayanti
- April 26 : Birthday of Jagadguru Sankaracharya
- May 6 : Buddha Purnima
- May 10 : The Birthday of Swami Shriyukteshwar
- May 17 : The Foundation Day of Prajnana Mission.
- May 27 : Birthday of Gurudev Hariharanandaji
- : Birthday of Swami Gurupremanandaji

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# IN GIVING WE RECEIVE

**Paramahansa Prajnanananda**

(Excerpt from a talk in Bangalore printed in Deccan Herald)

**Dec 6, 2011**

*It is in giving we receive* – the statement contains a concept that at first may strike us as counter intuitive. This is because we normally expect to get something from others without having to give them anything in return. While we ourselves like the idea of getting a free lunch for example we would rather not be the ones providing others the free lunch.

We forget that whatever we may do we will reap the result and that the result will come back to us many times over. If you plant a seed, that would grow into a tree bearing many fruits. Similarly just doing a little good work could give us many good fruits. However a few bad deeds may also bring us many bad fruits.

*What goes around comes around* is the law of life. We expect everything to go well for us but do we ever reflect if the things we do are in the spirit of goodness.

Life consists of relationships that are all about

give and take. Whatever you give you receive accordingly. *A man reaps what he sows-* (Galatians 6:7)

But we hear many who say, “I have done so many good things in my life and why are bad things happening to me? “Remember, when you sow a seed, it takes some time for a tree to grow and bear fruit. The result of what you do now may become evident much later in life depending on the circumstances. With some things we do, the result may be instant while with some other things the result may not be apparent for quite some time. Just like planting spinach seeds could give you some spinach in a few weeks but an apple seed will take a few years before bearing fruit.

When you help someone in trouble out of genuine desire to be of assistance, you experience inner fulfillment at that moment. Here the result is instant. When we wonder why we are not receiving the benefit

of our good actions, we must remember that what is happening to us could be the result of our past karma that we no longer remember.

Ultimately we do reap as we sow, and whatever we do good or bad will eventually come back to us in this life or another. St. Francis said it is in giving that we receive. If we understand this law of life we should not invite any bad impressions into our minds by entertaining negative thoughts about others.

Nothing is permanent. We live in this ever changing world and we should accept whatever comes our way without being worried, agitated, or emotional. If something has

happened and you can change it then go ahead and do it. If you cannot do anything to change it then accept it. Even when something bad happens we should try to maintain a positive attitude and remember that we are experiencing the fruits of our past karma. We should be grateful that our negative karma is being exhausted through our suffering and we would be free from some bad karma.

Do not get too excited at your good fortune. You should remind yourself that you have just enjoyed the return on your karmic investments and now must reinvest in your karmic savings account by doing something good.

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Matru Ashram Foundation Day

# **PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY**

## **ENDLESS DESIRE**

Jyothi Bathina

The day before Thanksgiving, I went to work with the children in a small town in California to get their stories published. I knew the children were poor and disenfranchised, but I had no real idea how they lived. Their teacher offered to give me a tour of the area after our session and I happily agreed. It was a heart-wrenching half hour of driving through wretched poverty and untenable living conditions. It was hard to believe I was in the United States in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We traveled over unpaved dirt roads through narrow lanes where scruffy children squatted and played in the dirt surrounded by stray dogs and puppies. Two or three families crowded together into tiny shacks and whole families took shelter in outhouses that were being used as homes. The town was rife with crime, drug wars and gang violence. I returned home sickened by the terrible cruelty of such poverty and its effect on these young hopeful minds. I found it hard

to give thanks for all I had when I knew so many had so little.

The next day we drove to the bay area for a family thanksgiving. We gathered for the bountiful feast and ate till we were nauseous. The women sat around an iPad admiring the jewelry worn at a recent wedding. I found the whole thing repulsive. I was angry at the consumption and the greed, angry at women who bought \$50,000 pendants and matching Coach Bags for every occasion and angrier still at the women who spoke of them with admiration.

I thought of the children in their shacks and felt physically ill. When I left the party it was with a sense of outrage and moral superiority. I would never waste my time drooling over jewels, or longing for designer bags. I would never spend obscene amounts of money on matching accessories. I was a good person. All I wanted was to help the less fortunate, to make a difference.

A week later, when my moral indignation had subsided a bit, I thought carefully about its source. I turn my nose up at those who crave jewelry and fancy clothes. I scoff at women who spend their days planning outfits for the next party. But was I really so different?

We all seem to be searching for something. The housewife seeking attention, the musician seeking fame, the researcher seeking solutions, the politician seeking power, the educator seeking to spread literacy. We want seemingly different things yet at bottom they boil down to the same thing. We are seeking fulfillment, seeking satisfaction, seeking happiness through various avenues. Everything we do is ultimately selfish and is designed to bring us satisfaction. For one, this may be jewelry, for another world peace. But ultimately, it is desire that drives us and desire that causes us grief and unhappiness. If I go running to school district after school district, implementing book projects and putting on book launches, it is because this gives me satisfaction. I have a desire to work with children, a desire

to publish their work, a desire to see them flourish.

If my friend runs from party to party, buying new outfits for each one, and flaunting them on face book, she is also driven by her desire, to see and be seen, to enjoy life, to be young and beautiful and admired. You may argue that one desire is far superior to the other as I did. But in all honesty, desire is still desire. It can never be quenched and continues to feed itself, burning as a constant fire within and compelling us to act, to do, to strive.

Not that this is a bad thing. If the alternative is sloth, then action, even that fueled by desire, is infinitely preferable. For most of us, moving from selfish action to more universally beneficial action is a laudable goal. It is after all karma yoga, worship through duty and action and service. However, in order to move past even this type of desire and the constant need for action, we have to rise above desire itself. We have to stop searching for ways to quench desire and start seeking a desire less state. How do we do this? Is such a goal even attainable in this day and age?

I try to envision what a desire less world will look like. Criminals will no longer steal, politicians will no longer exploit and manipulate, and wars will no longer be fought. These are all good things. On the other hand, art and music will cease to exist, service will come to a halt, and the world will stand still. How can this be good?

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna, "Perform action without being attached to the fruit of your actions." But can we act without being fueled by desire, which in turn breeds attachment? Won't we all end up sitting in our prayer rooms and meditating on the oneness of being?

Perhaps the challenge to those of us who are nowhere near liberation is not to eliminate all desires but to become aware of them. Certainly there are different levels of desire. There are those desires that while gratifying us, cause harm to others. Theft, war, revenge, is all fueled by such desires. The next level of desire is that which only gratifies us. Material possessions, fame, power,

wealth, come under this category. At a slightly higher level is a desire that while gratifying us, also benefits others. Community service, charity, scientific research, artistic endeavor, creative pursuits, all come under this category. Finally there is the desire less state where we want nothing. Since I am not even close to approaching that desire less state, I can only examine the desire that lies behind each of my actions and judge which category it falls under. I can immediately squelch any desire that harms others, and try my best to move from selfish desires to selfless ones. And if I continue this practice, day by day, hour by hour, desire by desire, perhaps I will ultimately reach that state where I will want for nothing and realize that all I want is already within me. In the meantime, I must learn to be tolerant, to not turn my nose up so quickly at what seems to me to be selfish, and understand that we are all in this together, in a desire driven world, we are each learning and moving forward, one desire at a time.

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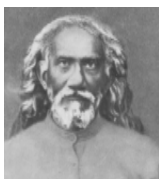
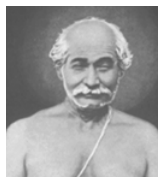


*“To renounce the world is not easy. Wherever man is, the world clings to him.”*

**Mahavatara Babaji**

*“Behold the light in yourself with a concentrated mind.”*

**Lahiri Mahasaya**



*“Control of the senses by Karma Yoga or Kriya Yoga is preferable to indifference to the senses.”*

**Swami Shriyukteshwar**

*“Forbearance is the best policy in life.”*

**Sanyal Mahasaya**



*“Do not be attached to the passing dreams of life. Live only for God and God alone.”*

**Paramahansa Yogananda**

*“My only teaching is : Love all.”*

**Swami Satyananda**



*“Anger is the greatest enemy of man.”*

**Paramahansa Hariharananda**

*“To attain enernal happiness, one must go within.”*

**Paramahansa Prajnanananda**





# MYTHS AND METAPHORS

## RAMAYANA



*Sri raghavam dasaradhatmajamaprameyam  
sitapatim raghukulanvaya ratna dipam.  
ajanu bahum aravindadalayatasham  
ramam nishachara vinashakaram namami*

Salutations to Sri Rama, the son of Dasaratha, the jewel of the Raghu lineage, of long arms and beautiful eyes like the lotus petals, the husband of Sita, and the destroyer of the rakshasas.

### The Story of Shabari

On their way Rama and Lakshmana came to the Ashram of Shabari near the lake of Pampa. Shabari was a young tribal girl who ran away from home on her wedding day unable to tolerate many animals being slaughtered for her wedding feast. She reached the hermitage of Matanga Rishi and spent her time serving him. When the monk was old and about to leave his body, he taught her to pray and meditate and said one day she would see God incarnated as Rama and to wait for Him.

She took the words of her Master very seriously. So, expecting that God will come to her any day, she cleaned the roads in the forest that led to

her hermitage. This is metaphorically cleaning our mind and making it pure as God comes to only those who are pure. She collected fruits everyday, so she could offer them to him and waited for him each day. She became very old but still did not stop cleaning the road and bringing the fruits and waited patiently. This is patience.

When Rama with Lakshmana stood at her door she recognized who Rama was. In great joy she offered him some fruits. Sri Rama accepted her hospitality. She washed the feet of the brothers and said to Rama, "I have no more desire to live. The purpose for which I was waiting is fulfilled today. I am thankful and I am in bliss.

Lord, I am of low caste not educated or of high intellect. The only thing I have is my love for God. Your grace and compassion are boundless that you have accepted my offering.”

Lord Rama assured her that devotion is the only thing he needs. All scholarship and other skills are subsidiary to pure love. Without that pure unconditional love all other practices are useless.

Then, Sri Rama with great love enunciated to her the nine types of devotion as-service to the saints and sages, listening to the stories of those who experienced divine love, apprenticeship in the service of the teacher, singing the glory of God, chanting the name of God, regulated life style and following a chosen ideal, perceive God’s presence in the universe, being content and not pointing at others faults, to be pure and simple and dependent on God. He added, “Shabari, these are the nine types of devotion and if one follows even one of these with consistently I am pleased. You have followed all these nine steps consistently, until the end. There can be no one higher

than you in spiritual attainments.”

In great joy, Shabari fell at the Lord’s feet and through the inner fire of yoga she burnt herself to ashes, her breath merging with Sri Rama. Shabari is the symbol of patience. She waited all her life patiently with complete trust and surrender and her patience fulfilled her life.

### **Friendship with Sugriva**

From there Rama and Lakshmana continued their journey and reached a mountain name Rushyamuka. On the mountain lived a king named Sugriva in exile with his four ministers. Looking at Rama and Lakshmana dressed as ascetics but holding bows and arrows Sugreeva was scared and sent his foremost minister Hanuman to get information. Hanuman took the form of a Brahmin brahmachari and approached them and bowed down with deep love and devotion. Lakshmana and Rama looked at him and asked, “Who are you?” With tears in his eyes Hanuman answered, “It is easy for an individual to forget “Who am I?” But I know who you really are. How could you forget who I am and you are

asking me? A child might forget the parent but the parents could never forget the child.” A beautiful conversation followed and Rama said to Lakshmana, “this person is a master of language and grammar. He is conversing in such a polite way using such befitting and precise words of wisdom. He is also a self-disciplined person.”

The name of Hanuman comes from *hana dhatu* – to kill, eliminate or destroy. *u* means with strength or knowledge. What is to be eliminated or killed with strength and knowledge? *maana* means pride, ego, vanity and limitation or respect. Hanuman is one who has destroyed ego, vanity and pride. Hanuman is an ego less person.

If you study the spiritual texts, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata there are two personalities who are the sons of the wind God. They are known as the *vayuputra* or *pavana putra*. The wind outside is the breath inside. Son of wind means breath control

through which one gets lot of strength. Hanuman also represents the human mind. Mind is like a monkey jumping from one branch to another. But you can see that when Hanuman is sitting near Rama Hanuman is peaceful. That means when mind is in God conscious state mind is calm and quiet. When it is not then the mind is restless.

Hanuman took Rama and Lakshmana to Sugreeva and they made a pact of friendship with Sugreeva with fire as the witness. Sugriva means a person with a good voice. Good voice does not just mean a person who can sing nicely but a person who can think of god, speak of God and sing of God. An ear is good when it is fond of listening to the glory of god and a mouth is good when it can speak of God.

This section of Ramayana is known as the Kishkindha Kanda. It is the fourth stage of the spiritual growth.

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## PARIPRASHNA

**Swamiji, Can you speak to us about your childhood.**

I grew up in a village in a nice big family. We were eleven brothers and sisters together and had very loving parents. We were taught how to share with each other and how to love each other right from our childhood.

My parents were very spiritual people. They taught me how to pray and meditate. Prayer and meditation, singing and became a part of our childhood. My parents spent a lot of time in puja and rituals chanting and meditation and I had the opportunity to observe what they were doing. My childhood was more motivated by my mother from whom I learnt many inspiring spiritual stories. I learned discipline early on from my father who was a strict disciplinarian. My brothers and sisters were also very loving, and I learned many things from them. I consider all my family members as my good friends and also teachers.

**What kind of play or games were you interested in as a child?**

As a child I was different from the other children. While the others were fond of play, I liked to spend my leisure time praying. I liked to spend time with my parents while they were doing puja. My Parents prayed to Mother Kali and Mother Durga and I learnt many prayers from them. I liked making images of the deities with clay and decorated them with pieces of cloth. Prayer, loving God, learning new things and wanting to learn more were my childhood favorite pastimes.

**What qualities of your mother influenced you?**

My mother taught me how to be humble and how to serve. She served every member of the family from morning to night without fatigue or grumbling. Her family was not limited to a few members. She considered the whole village to be her family. She was very

kind and helped anyone in the village who was in need. She was soft spoken and was like a flower with beauty, purity and tenderness. My mother had a strong impact on my life and I will never forget her contribution to my growth.

**What qualities of your father influenced you?**

My father was very strict, punctual, and had a well planned lifestyle. All these qualities greatly influenced me. As he was a good astrologer, he knew my future. He provided the right environment for my spiritual growth more

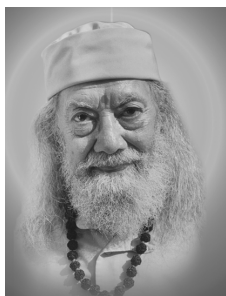
than for my other brothers and sisters. So he is also my Guru and my guide. My father also taught me astrology and palmistry. He also had good knowledge of traditional and modern medicine, and taught me how to help people with this knowledge.

I was a shy and introvert and was not very communicative. My father taught me how to be a public speaker. He also taught me how to examine my own faults and how to eradicate them. My father has helped me a lot in my spiritual path.

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## **BIRTHDAY OF GURUDEV PARAMAHAMSA HARIHARANANDAJI**

**May 27, 2012**



The Birthday of Gurudev, Baba Hariharanandaji will be celebrated at all Ashrams and centers around the world with special worship, prayers and meditations.

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## VALUABLE VOLUMES



IN THIS ISSUE WE HAVE EXCERPTS FROM  
*THE UNIVERSE WITHIN* AND *THE CHANGING  
NATURE OF RELATIONSHIPS* BY  
PARAMAHAMSA PRAJNANANDA

### MANIPURA CHAKRA (From *THE UNIVERSE WITHIN*)

The *Manipura chakra* or the navel center is located behind the stomach in the spine of the human body. *Manipura* in Sanskrit means jewel center. The presiding deity is Surya, the sun. The sun is the ultimate source of all activities and the cause of life on this planet. The moon shines by reflecting the sun's light and has a strong influence on the mind. In a similar way, food which is directly affected by sunlight also has a strong influence on the mind. People chant mantras like the Gayatri to get the divine illumination of the sun. The two sense organs controlled from this center are the eyes and the feet. The eyes are active in sensory perception from the very moment of our birth. We become very quickly attached to names and forms, even as

infants. We smile at those we recognize, and burst into tears when confronted with the unknown or strange. And even as we grow, we tend to make judgments based solely on appearance, always seeking out that which is pleasing to the eye. The beauty industry thrives on this tendency, luring us to spend small fortunes on products which will make us more pleasing in others' eyes. Fashion as well, depends on our slavery to the sense of sight, as does the fitness industry, the entertainment industry, the tourism industry and almost every consumer based market in the world today. If, instead of being attached to names and forms, we were able to see the beauty of God in every thing, all these multi-million dollar industries, as well as their dire

byproducts such as eating disorders and depression, would disappear overnight.

It has been scientifically observed that the eyes of a restless person or a mentally depressed person move very quickly and blink frequently. In the desperate urge to drink in more and more stimuli, we become confused and mentally anxious. The eyes of those who meditate blink less. They have a detached look. By gradually controlling the mind through meditation and deep breathing, we are able to gain detachment from the sights which surround us, thereby avoiding sensory overload.

By focusing on the navel center during meditation we can gain control over this restlessness of the eyes, and direct our vision toward higher things. In effect, we learn to turn our vision inward to the immense beauty within and the profound spiritual truths to be found there. When we do look at the world, we learn to see beauty everywhere, in God's creation, in the people around us, in the situations which confront us. We learn to appreciate our surroundings without becoming overly

attached and can enjoy the world without becoming its slave.

The feet as well, lead us into all kinds of situations. The urge to move here and there, never sitting still, is merely a physical reflection of the mind's inability to focus and remain calm in one place. People travel all over the globe on the mistaken assumption that traveling thousands of miles will somehow bring us happiness. Or there are those who cannot stay at one job for very long, they need change, excitement, variety and are soon bored with their current environment. They drift from job to job, town to town, constantly seeking an elusive fulfillment. On a more basic level, we may have noticed how many people are simply unable to sit still. Their legs are moving even when they sit on a chair. They tap their feet or shake their legs constantly in a nervous need for motion. Meditation enhances the ability to sit in one position for an extended period of time. When the mind is tranquil, then so is the body.

Meditating on the *Manipura* develops our ability to remain still, to direct our

every movement for a useful purpose. Rather than looking everywhere for satisfaction and finding it nowhere, we are able to progress in any direction we choose with the concentration and energy gained from this center.

### **Food and Temptation**

There is a story in the Hindu epic Ramayana, which illustrates the power of food on the mind, and how it can lead to temptation. They say the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. This story proves that old adage to be true.

There was once a great sage called Vibhandaka, who underwent strict austerities and engaged himself in deep meditation in order to achieve realization. One day, tempted by the beauty of a celestial nymph, he lost his concentration and self-control and had a child, whom he named Rushyasruna. Having learned from bitter experience that the hidden desires of the mind could cause spiritual downfall, he decided to raise his son far from the lures of the world. Rushyasruna grew up in the forests under the strict guidance of his father. He was always engaged in meditation, study and other

spiritual practices. He was brought up totally unaware of life's luxuries, including delicious food and drink and the beauty of women.

At this time, there was a severe drought in the nearby kingdom. The distressed king consulted his advisors, who said there would be rain if the young saint Rushyasruna who possessed great spiritual wealth and purity, entered the kingdom. No one knew however, how to get him away from the strict supervision of his father. The problem was solved when a beautiful courtesan named Jarata offered to undertake the task. She asked the king for a luxury yacht, equipped with a great variety of delicious foods, and beautiful damsels dressed in the finest clothes and jewelry.

Docking at a distance, she waited for his father to leave and then approached Rushyasruna. The beautiful women fed him delicacies he had never tasted in his life. They returned each day, bringing him new and tasty concoctions to tempt his palate. Having eaten this rich food, the young man gradually developed body consciousness and then attachment to his body. One



day, the courtesan invited him aboard the yacht. Once he was aboard, they set sail for the kingdom. The moment he set foot on the ground, the rain came pouring down, ending the terrible drought. The king asked the young saint's forgiveness for the ruse and offered him his daughter in marriage.

The old sage Vibhandaka accepted the inevitable, realizing once again that however far we may run from temptation, unless we cultivate inner strength, we cannot resist the lure of the senses. Food is one of the strongest of these lures, tempting us like the bait tempts the fish, all the while containing an iron hook within.

### **We Eat Food and Food Eats Us**

The eyes and the feet are controlled by the *Manipura chakra*, which is the digestive center. Therefore the food we eat has quite an effect on our tranquillity. Our food is used in three ways. The majority is excreted, while some is used to nourish the body. However, of what is used, a subtle part influences the mind. If we eat a lot of yogurt, for example, or meats, our minds will be dull and lethargic, since

most of our energy is used in digesting heavy proteins. On the other hand, if we drink too much coffee or other caffeine-filled drinks, our minds will be nervous and agitated.

Not only what type of food we eat, but in what manner we eat it also influences the mind. That is why in ancient times, sages warned that we must look carefully not only at the cleanliness of the dishes, and the freshness of the ingredients used, but equally carefully at the person preparing the food. They firmly believed that the emotions of the people cooking the food seeped into the preparations themselves, so that the consumer would be affected by the chef's anger or sadness or joy. In this age of fast food and dining out, such a careful approach is next to impossible. Although many more people are turning to vegetarianism for the same reasons, the fear of contamination as well as the influx of hormones released by frightened animals at the time of their death, eating out is still an integral part of modern life. Even if one is a vegetarian, one must be careful about the quality and the quantity of the food they eat.

## **The Deluded Saint**

There was a wandering monk who did not have any attachment for belongings, who was always travelling staying with people who invited him accepting their hospitality. Once he stayed with a rich man for a couple of days. On the second day at midnight he was awakened by the jingling sound of a bell. On waking up and investigating he found out that it came from a small bell that was tied around the neck of the cow which was in the yard. He thought it would be nice to have the bell to use it in his worship. The thought became so overpowering that he went out into the yard secured the bell and hiding it in his bag sat down to meditate. His mind was so agitated and restless that at first he could not concentrate but as he tried harder he became focused and realized what he did. He was ashamed and surprised how being a monk he could do such a thing as stealing which he had never done before. As he searched for an answer for this strange behavior on his part it became apparent to him that it might be the effect of the food he had taken. He returned the bell to its place and

next morning as he was leaving, he called the host aside and asked him by what means he earned his money. The rich man became silent for some time and then confessed that his means were not honest or respectable. Taking food that is not earned in the right way and not prepared with a clean mind can cause such effects.

Food and mind are causally connected. Food can make the mind calm and tranquil or restless and agitated.

When I say food eats us, I am referring to the various diseases caused by food consumption, whether due to contamination, unwholesome foods, or overeating, which in turn eat away at the body and its health. While some foods cause cancer, others cause heart attacks and high cholesterol. Every day, the list of unhealthy foods gets longer. The safest bet given modern circumstances, is to offer our food to God before we eat. The tradition of praying before meals was originated not only to give thanks to God for what He had provided, but also to ask Him to receive the food and make it safe for consumption, assimilation and better health.

## **The Fire of Illumination and Elimination**

Fire has two qualities. It is a source of light to others while being illumined it self and it burns resulting in heat and energy which eliminates and destroys things. The navel center symbolically is the place of food and drink. One can get brilliance in mind and body from the digestive fire and at the same time the unwanted things are eliminated from the body through digestion and combustion. The digestive fire in Hinduism is considered to be sacred, and the *Bhagavad Gita* (15-14) states that God Himself burns as the fire in the navel center, so what we eat is nothing more than an offering to Him. If we eat in that spirit, accepting food as a gift, choosing healthy and nutritious food, prepared in a clean and tranquil environment, and offering it back to the Giver, then we can come to no harm. By developing the navel center, we can enjoy the food we eat and its effect on us will be wholly beneficial.

## **The Creative Knot**

The *Muladhara*, *Swadhishtana* and *Manipura chakras* together make up what

is called the *Brahmagrandhi* or the creative knot, as all creative activities are accelerated through these *chakras*. But this knot becomes a barrier for spiritual evolution. We have to penetrate or cut this knot in order to evolve and go higher spiritually. We need four things to be able to do this. We have to have a strong desire, firm determination, immense patience, and sustained self-effort. If our desire for spiritual evolution is strong enough, then nothing can stop us. If we analyze a day's activity we can observe how much time we spend in each *chakra*. We need to strive for balance in the *chakras*, neither ignoring them completely nor spending inordinate amounts of time on any single one.

While trying to evolve, we sometimes come across failure. At this point, many people lose their patience and decide that whatever method they are trying is not for them and try something else. This is a disease of the modern mind. We need to have the patience to pursue our efforts and be successful. Keeping the goal in sight is extremely important and determines the benefits we gain from our endeavors.

## The Inner Pilgrimage

For example, people go on vacation to beautiful resorts or mountain hideaways. They spend a lot of money, take time off from work and go away, hoping to relax and enjoy themselves. They indulge in strenuous activities like mountain climbing or skiing or hiking and end up being more exhausted than when they started. Even on weekends, people fill their itineraries with “fun” activities, and end up dragging themselves to work Monday morning, barely able to function.

In India, until recently, people took time off for pilgrimages rather than holidays. Even now, even those who can ill afford it, save money and take time off to visit holy shrines in places like Tirupathi or Puri or Kedarnath in the Himalayas. In India, shrines and temples are usually close to the sea or high atop a hill. People climb these hills to reach the temple. A trip to places like Kedarnath or Amarnath in the high Himalayas is quite strenuous and involves a lot of climbing but at the end of the climb pilgrims are

rewarded with the vision of the temple and the holy vibrations of the sacred place. So call it a holiday or a pilgrimage, the process is the same. The result however is entirely different. While tourists come home tired and spent, pilgrims come home with rejuvenated strength, a peaceful mind, and the satisfaction of having attained their goal.

Only if the goal is fixed will we progress on the path of liberation. The spiritual journey is a continuous journey that we can stick to only if we have a fixed purpose, patience and effort. After having conquered the three lower centers, we have to put in some extra effort in order to penetrate the knot and proceed upwards. In meditation, when we concentrate and go from the *Mulādhāra* to the *Swādhistāna* and then the *Manipura*, we gradually gain control over the senses and go past all three to the *Anāhata* or heart center. While concentrating in these centers, one experiences spiritual energy and the play of divine consciousness there.

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# LIFE'S ESSENTIAL RELATIONSHIPS

(From *THE CHANGING NATURE OF RELATIONSHIPS*)

## THE BALANCED MIND

The body is given to us for our own growth and evolution and the opportunity to fulfill many of our desires. As the body is the product of our past karma and the genetic transmission of our parents in this life, the same logic applies to our mind. We must use discrimination between the seen and the seer. We have already established that the mind is an object which constantly changes direction. Once we bring calmness over our mind, we are able to exercise control and discipline.

Not only does the world change, we also evolve in outlook, approach and emotions. With the passing of time all relationships are transformed. The main culprit is the swerving nature of the mind which has an enormous influence over our life.

The body is a physical entity that can be touched and seen, smelt and tasted but the mind is subtle and much more difficult to separate from our inner self. Our body is only lento

us for a lifetime, but the mind makes a continuous journey with us, from life to life.

The human mind takes an impression of every little thing, and carries the heavy weight of memories, emotions and interactions, which occurred long ago, and continue to influence our present life. Even though the precise memory might have receded, and we cannot remember why such a thing happened, we look at it with the same mind.

The mind is much more useful than the body, but we must learn to use it properly and bring it under control. When an emotion stirs up in our mind, it is expressed by a thought. If a person is rash and impulsive, there is an immediate reaction. Only through meditation, by maintaining some distance over our emotions and thoughts, can we bring balance and harmony into our life. Physically we might grow, but it is more important that we mature emotionally and intellectually. Animals are instinctive, but human beings should always be rational.

The scriptures tell us that the mind is like a piece of clothing, which we can choose to keep dirty or clean. Clothes are nothing but threads, arranged in a certain way. The mind is a bunch of desires interwoven together, which criss-crosses our personality, and runs in all directions.

While the body itself is inert, with little life of its own, the mind is a bundle of activities, constantly jumping from one emotion to the next, from one thought to another. Even while we try to sleep, the mind plays on in our dreams. The mind is tricky and loves to play; its aim is to regulate our physical and emotional being. Any emotional dysfunction always has the mind as a source. We misunderstand our mind due to its strength. Mind can, with rigorous discipline, become a well-trained servant, but has a tendency to be a very bad master.

If we do not keep our mind in a state of balance and harmony, we will never get the inspiration, or the encouragement needed to maintain healthy relationships.

The mind is the crucial instrument that determines our

relationships with the world outside. If, to begin with, we cannot have a healthy relationship with our own mind, how can we aspire to have a happy, healthy relationship with others? Our relationship with the external world is a reflection of our state of mind. A rose is always there, but if the mind is depressed, the beauty of the rose will go unseen. Negative thoughts and emotions infect our mind with debilitating weakness. The mind is at the root of all suffering and unhappiness.

Yogis view the mind as a child that must be kept clean, and nourished with inspiring thoughts. Meditation is the best way to rest the mind; it is even more beneficial than sleep itself.

The mind should never become a burden, it is just a useful tool to enhance our passage on earth and make it more enjoyable. We must live intelligently and now allow negative emotions to disturb the harmonious rhythm of our flowing thoughts, to draw us away from the real goal of our journey.

*‘The body is the chariot  
and the soul is the charioteer.’  
The Upanishads*

The body is the chariot, the soul is the driver, the senses are the horses and the mind is the harness. It is of paramount importance that we are aware of the goal of our life. If the goal is clear, we will reach our destination faster. A balanced mind can train the senses and guide them firmly with a light hand, not with excessive force. Horses, like the senses, need good management; they should be fed with measure, but not starved.

The mind shows the senses the way, so that just as

in the case of well-trained horses they can find their way home, even in the dark, by stepping gingerly over obstacles. The senses need to be properly regulated. With discipline, a well-kept carriage, a strong harness, perfectly schooled horses and an enlightened driver, we will be sure to reach our destination. The relationship between the body, the senses, the mind and the soul is a determining factor in reaching the goal.

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Smruti Mandir, Bhisindipur

## GREETING OTHERS :

### OPENING THE HEART AND SOUL

(From *MYSTICISM OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS*)

When we see someone, we get up from our seat, walk towards the person and receive him or her with a smile. This is known as *abhivadana*. In the West, people greet each other with a hand shake, hug or kiss. A common Indian practice is to fold the hands and bow.

Folding the hands (putting two hands together) is a symbol. It symbolizes that “you and I are one.” The two hands together make the beautiful posture or *mudra* (position of hands) symbolizing oneness or unity. Two hands together also show that every one of us has two aspects, body and soul, and the body and soul are united together just like two hands. The *mudra* is a symbol of yogic philosophy that we all are united in God. Furthermore, on two hands there are ten fingers, which symbolize all the ten sense organs existing and working together for your service.

The Taittiriya Upanishad declares: *atithi devo bhava*, “Consider the guest as God.” It means that we should have

the attitude that all our sense organs, mind, intellect and everything belong to God as guests.

In India people fold the hands to greet a person, keeping the folded hands near the middle of the chest or near the midpoint of the eyebrows. Keeping the hands in the middle of the chest symbolizes “my heart” – I greet you in my heart, I love you in my heart, I bow to you from my heart, I receive you from my heart. This is the integration of the heart and hands. It is not just an emotional expression, for the hands symbolize action. It is the symbol of love and action together.

In yogic practices, it is a well known fact that the midpoint of the eyebrows is the place of the soul. It is the soul center and the *ajna chakra*. Holding folded hands near the midpoint of the eyebrows is a complete welcome or greeting. It means that I greet you from my heart, from my soul, from my body, from my life.

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## **STORIES TO LIVE BY**

### **GRANDMOTHER AND THE MYSTERIOUS CABBAGE**

One day my grandmother in our native village was introduced to a strange vegetable that she had neither seen nor heard of before. Its name was cabbage. My grandfather had just returned from a trip to Calcutta with two big cabbages for her to cook. Unfortunately before he left to do some errands he forgot to explain what this vegetable was and how to prepare it.

Grandmother has seen nice white heads of Cauliflower before and she assumed cabbage was pretty much the same. So carefully she started opening the leaves of the cabbage –first one layer, two layers, and three layers and soon all the cabbage leaves were spread out in front of her. “Hmmm” she thought while inspecting the leaves hoping to find at least a remnant of the vegetable. “Perhaps this cabbage is not a good one, let me try the other one” Before long both the cabbages had been completely dissected and the leaves examined but not

even a trace of the anticipated vegetable was to be found. However grandmother was not too disappointed. She was relishing the opportunity to break the news to grandfather that he has been cheated. Instead of buying a nice tasty vegetable he has wound up with a basket full of leaves. As soon as my grandfather entered the house, he was confronted by my anxious grandmother, standing there with her arms crossed and smiling.”What is that strange vegetable that you brought home?” she said with a sense of delight.”I am sorry to inform you that when I opened it to prepare it for you, I discovered there was nothing there. You were tricked.”

Grandfather thought “Oh God!”Then he asked, “Have you thrown it away?” “No, no, I kept it to show you that this nice cabbage that you brought is nothing more than a bunch of leaves.” Then she ran quickly into the kitchen and brought the basket with the leaves.

Now it was the grandfather's turn to smile. Looking at the basket he laughed "It is a good thing that you did not throw the leaves away. The *leaves* are the cabbage."

### **REFLECTION**

Searching for God is much like the example of a

cabbage. First you remove one layer, then another layer and then another layer. Where is the cabbage? Everything is the cabbage. Similarly in spiritual life, one who goes back to the source the origin – discovers that God is in all and I am in all. All are in me and I am in everything.

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## **MAHASAMADHI DAY OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA GIRI**

**April 2, 2006**

As we observe the 6<sup>th</sup> Maha Samadhi day of our beloved Swami Brahmanandaji, let us intensify our Kriya practice in his loving memory.

A beloved disciple of Gurudev, a sincere and silent seeker of Truth, a humble and loving teacher known for his simplicity and compassion, Swami Brahmananda Giri, devoted his life to Gurudev for over three decades. His sincere

service to kriyavans in particular, and to humanity at large, still inspires all of us.

A humble monk of profound wisdom, Swamiji toured many Kriya centers in India and in Europe spreading the message of Kriya Yoga. Swamiji was active as the vice president of Prajnana Mission until his physical departure on April 2, 2006.

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## **MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES THE SPIRITUAL PATH**

ENTER THROUGH THE NARROW GATE, FOR WIDE GATE IS THE GATE AND BROAD IS THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION, AND MANY ENTER THROUGH IT. BUT SMALL IS THE GATE AND NARROW THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO LIFE AND ONLY A FEW FIND IT.

***MATHEW 7:13-14***

MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ENTER THROUGH THE NARROW DOOR BECAUSE MANY I TELL YOU, WILL TRY TO ENTER AND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO

***LUKE 13:247***

THROUGH INITIATION THE MASTER PURIFIES THE BODY OF THE DISCIPLE, OPENS THE KNOT OF IGNORANCE AND BONDAGE AND IMPARTS THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ABSOLUTE.

***YOGINI TANTRA***

HE WHO HOLDS EQUAL IN BLAME AND PRAISE, WHO IS SILENT AND CONTENT IN EVERYTHING IS DEAR TO GOD.

***BHAGAVAD GITA 12:19***

FOR LOVE OF MONEY IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF ALL KINDS OF EVIL. SOME PEOPLE EAGER FOR MONEY, HAVE WANDERED FROM THE FAITH AND PIERCED THEMSELVES WITH MANY GRIEFS. ***1 TIMOTHY 6:10***

AMONG THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE, A FEW STRIVE FOR PERFECTION AND OF THOSE WHO STRIVE AND SUCCEED SCARCELY ONE KNOWS ME IN TRUTH.

\*\*\* ***BHAGAVAD GITA 7:3***

# ATMA-VIDYA

## PURSuing SELF KNOWLEDGE

### KAIVALYOPANISHAD

#### Mantra 7

*uma sahayam parameshvaram prabhum  
trilocanam nilakantham prashantam  
dhyatva munirgaccati bhutayonim  
samasta sakshi tamasah parastat*

#### Substance

When men of meditation with the help of Uma, meditating upon the all pervading supreme Lord go into the world of the elements they live like the peaceful three eyed Nilakantha, as the witness of all beyond the darkness.

#### Commentary

This mantra creates a little confusion or little difference in opinion. Simple translation refers to Lord Shiva and his wife Parvati. So there is a form. Some commentators say it is meditation on the form of Lord Shiva with blue throat, three eyes etc together with Parvati. So it is form and formless together.

We have seen that the meditation has two aspects. One with eyes closed and senses withdrawn to experience the truth and the other with eyes open to be in the world and see

that truth in everything everywhere. Then your life is really spiritual meditation has no beginning and no end. It is a continuous process. Ordinarily people do their meditation in front of the teacher and pray in the temple but once they come back to work they are not in that state. A serious seeker should not feel the difference there should be no difference. In the previous mantra we have seen that with the eyes closed we go to the state of *nirguna* without attributes and with eyes open we see the *saguna* with attributes that help to perceive that one presence of God and there is really no difference. *Ishavasya midagam sarvam* says the Upanishad. All forms are his

We will understand in a little different way considering the inner meaning. Meditation can be of two types- one is with the eyes and all the senses open

and another with the eyes closed and the senses withdrawn.

Sant Kabir said,

*ankh na mundu kan na rundhu* –I will not close my eyes, I will not close my ears

*kaya kasht na dharu-* I will not torture my body

*pheri nayana me tere rupa dekhum-*With open eyes I will see you

*jaha taha niharu-*where ever I look

*santo sahaja samadhi bali* –dear one, natural Samadhi is better

*uma sahayam* - Uma is ordinarily understood as parvati the wife of Lord Shiva. One name of Shiva is *soma* – *saha uma* is *soma*. God and his energy cannot be separated. We will look at a new meaning of *uma*. *a-u-m* makes *Om*. *u-m-a* consists the same letters in a different order. *u-a-m* is pronounced as *vam* which is the *bija mantra* of Shiva. *uma* is knowledge and *uma* is also sound. *uma sahayam* means with the help of knowledge. When you come down with eyes open with the help of knowledge, strength, and divine sound you will see *parmeswaram-* the supreme

Lord manifested everywhere. Uma can also understood as the *maya shakti* of the Lord and unless one overcomes that one cannot get the experience of the divine.

Let us look at the words *trilochana*, *nilakantha*, *prashanta-* literally they mean, three eyed, blue throated and calm which are the attributes of Lord Shiva. According to the mythological story when the Gods and the demons churned the ocean of life using a snake as the rope to get treasure along with the treasure poison came out of the snake and Lord Shiva swallowed the poison and contained it in his throat without swallowing it or emitting it to protect the creation and as a result his throat became blue. Living a balanced life without complaining or spreading havoc is the life of *nilakantha*.

Now *trilochana* or the three eyed one, is one who uses the third eye .what is the third eye? The Lord is described as having three eyes – the Sun, the Moon and the fire. The third eye is the eye of the fire of knowledge. *Jnanagni dagdha karmanam-* says the Bhagavad Gita. When the *jnana netra* or the eye of knowledge is opened one goes beyond the name and

form. This meditation could also be taken as the meditation on *Vishva rupa* – if the eyes are the Sun Moon and fire, the throat is the sky or the *akasha*, and the wind becomes the breath. That is why we have *namo brahmane namaste vayu. Padosya vishva bhutani* says the purusha sukta- the feet are the earth.

Vishva rupa is again the formless aspect. It is further said such men of meditation go to bhuta yoni- the source of the origin of all beings

In the Bhagavad Gita chapter II – 56-57, Arjuna raised some questions about the qualities of a person who is realized and in the state of *samadhi*, which is not too much out of context here.

He asked how does a man of realization see, walk, talk or behave?

It appears contradictory. How can one established in *samadhi* be walking and talking. That is why we talk of two aspects of meditation. Meditation with eyes closed is easy but with eyes open you see things you like and those you don't like. In this world how does a man of meditation live?

The last lines of the mantra say men of mediation

when they go to the manifested world look at everything like a witness or *sakshi*. Let us look at this word *sakshi*. Suppose two people are quarrelling and you wanted to stop the quarrels – can you be a witness. They did not stop and later went to court. If you are called in as a witness can you be a witness? No. First you were a witness but when you went to stop the quarrel you became a mediator. A witness is one who only watches without getting involved. Witness is one who watches being detached. *sakshat vikshate iti sakshi*- only seeing with no involvement or reaction is witnessing. *samasta sakshi tamasah parastat*- he remains as a witness all the time in the light beyond the darkness . Even being in the world he is unaffected by it.

In spiritual life there is an equation that is of *sa* and *aham*. *Sa* is he or that and *aham* is I. Previously what I thought God to be, now I experience that I am that. We will now see some *mantras* that have *sa* , *sa* ,*sa* or he, he, he and later some *mantras* will come which use *aham* , *aham* – I , I.

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**MAHA SHIVARATRI**  
**INITIATIONS AT THE GURUKULAM**  
**Feb 20, 2012**  
**DIKHAS AT THE GURUKULAM**

*“Danda kamandalu dharana matrena nara narayana bhavet”* -Just by holding a *danda* and *kamandalu* a human being attains godhood.

In a most auspicious, sacred, grand ceremony, Brahmacharya and Sannyasa dikshas were performed at Hariharananda Gurukulam with sixteen initiations into Brahmacharya and thirty three initiations into the glorious path of Sannyasa on, Mahashivaratri day, Feb 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

With Paramahansa Prajnananandaji in residence, the Gurukulam was busy and colourful with the Brahmacharis, Brahmacharinis, Vanaprasthis and Monks in white, yellow and ochre colours who have come together from India and abroad for the *dikshas* on the Mahashivaratri day. It was a great global reunion of all brahmacharis and swamis of all our ashrams after the last initiations on the Mahashivaratri day of 2009.

Orientation classes were held for those to be initiated from the 15<sup>th</sup> of Feb through the 18<sup>th</sup>. Baba Prajnananandaji, talked about spiritual sadhana, the Guru disciple relationships and the goal of the life of Brahmacharya and Sannyasa. There were also classes on spirituality, Ashram management and team work by Swami Shuddhanandaji and Ashram Monks and Brahmacharis. The instruction and interacting of the students and the teachers and the question and answer sessions were a great learning process for preparation for the new life.

The two day ritual on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> was a beautiful, powerful and sublime experience. Preparatory rituals for those to be initiated started on the 19<sup>th</sup> beginning with worship and fire ceremony followed by other rituals. After a night long vigil spent in meditation, prayer and devotional singing the ceremonies continued on the

20<sup>th</sup>. The *dikshas* were performed with all details of the authentic Vedic procedures and included some thread ceremonies, *abhishekas* (holy anointments), a few fire ceremonies, *mantra dikshas*, receiving the new coloured clothes, *danda*, *kamandala* dharana, and finally ending with the new initiates receiving their new life and names from the Guru. Assisted by other monks the Paramahamsaji conducted most of the ceremonies personally attending to each and every initiate.

The day ended with the new initiates visiting Guru

Mandir, Karar Ashram and Jagannath temple along with the Guru and mahaprasad sevana. It was a day of great rejoicing and the blessings of God and Gurus were felt in abundance.

The Maha Shivaratri celebrations continued late into the night and early hours of the morning at our Deva Mandir.

Another great milestone in the history of Kriya Yoga it was a great spiritual event that has enriched our spiritual treasure with the addition of sixteen Brahmacharis and thirty three monks into the Giri order of our great lineage.

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# AROUND THE WORLD

## INDIA

H a r i h a r a n a n d a Gurukulam was a scene of intense activity with Baba Prajnananandaji in residence. Many Swamijis from other Ashrams visited our Ashram and met with Baba and sometimes satsangs were held.

Besides our regular Ashrams programs, Baba Prajnananandaji was also an invited speaker at many spiritual events held in Puri and also in Bhubaneshwar and Cuttack.

He was the keynote speaker to address the huge gathering of over ten thousand people at the annual convention of the devotees of Sri Nigamananda Saraswati held at Birtung.

Baba had also participated in The Gita parayana event held at the Tirupati Mandapa at Bhubaneshwar with Gajapati Maharaja presiding.

Another significant religious event was the Convention on "Awareness of Jagannath culture" that was held in Puri from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> of Feb attended by several

monks from all over India in which Prajnananandaji took an active part.

### **Calcutta Program Jan 1-3**

The annual Calcutta program was well attended with several initiations and satsang.

### **Gita Jnana Yajnas at Cuttack and Bhubaneshwar, Jan 7-12**

The Gita Jnana yajnas by Paramahansa Prajnananandaji held at Bhubaneshwar and Cuttack drew large audiences'. The unique metaphorical interpretation of the Gita and the question and answer sessions at the end of each lecture were especially enlightening. The venue for initiations at Bhubaneshwar was the Shivananda Ashram where several people were initiated into Kriya Yoga.

### **The 14th International Intensive Kriya Yoga Seminar.**

The annual IIKYS had inspiring talks by Baba and the many invited monks and guest speakers who enlightened the audience. The question and answer sessions were especially educative. Daily guided meditations enhanced

the practice of the many kriya disciples.

The Students of Balashram thrilled the audiences with their performances of music, dance and drama. There were also other cultural programs by renowned artists. The Seminar was attended by many disciples from home and abroad.

### **Saraswati Puja Jan 28**

Saraswati puja was a grand event at the Gurukulam with worship and fire ceremony at the Deva mandir.

The Children of Balashram were blessed to celebrate Saraswati Puja in the divine presence of Baba Prajnananandaji at the Balashram.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Foundation day of Hariharananda Matru Ashram at Arua, Jan 29-31**

The third foundation day of Matru Ashram was a grand three day event filled with many activities from 29 of Jan, ending with the main foundation day celebration on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January with Paramahansa Prajnananandaji presiding.

Matru ashram has been involved in conducting special satsangs for women to educate

them in importance of the role of women in the family and programs for children of the village schools to promote and spiritual values.

The program included competitions for children of Balashram and other schools of neighboring villages in various fields to promote a healthy competitive spirit and to encourage learning from each other.

A special satsang exclusively for mothers was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> with Swami Gurukrupanandaji presiding. Swami Manyanandaji and Swami Divya Swarupa Chaitanya of the Divine Life Society were the guest speakers. Hundreds of women and children from Arua and the neighboring villages attended the meeting. The talks of the Swamis and the Brahmacharinis were inspiring and educative.

The actual foundation day on the 31<sup>st</sup> started with an early morning nama *kirtan* through the village of Arua and later a fire ceremony and meditation at the Ashram. Many mothers of the village joined our Brahmachrinis with great enthusiasm.

There was a special satsang in the evening with Baba Prajnananandaji presiding. Swami Brahmananda Saraswati was the chief guest and the speakers included Smt. Manorama Mahapatra, retired professor of Economics, who was also the editor of the reputed News Paper 'Samaj' and Smt Sulochana Dash, also a retired professor of Ravenshaw College in Cuttack. The talks focused on the great role of mothers in building of strong families and a strong nation with right values. The efforts of Matru Ashram to educate women along these lines were greatly appreciated.

A special Souvenir, *Matru Prerana* was released in this connection which highlights the activities of the Matru ashram and has inspiring articles from home and abroad on women's role in social and spiritual fields.

### **Bhumi Puja for a Smriti Mandir at Bhishindipur**

**Feb 2**

Paramahansa Prajnananandaji was at our Bhishindipur Ashram in W. Bengal for the ground breaking ceremony for a temple to be

erected in memory of Gurudev Baba Hariharanandaji and Swami Narayana Giri on the Ashram grounds. The temple is designed to have three sections- the center one dedicated to the Gurus and with deities of Mother Kali and Lord Krishna on either side.

### **Punyatithi of Swami Gurupremanandaji, Feb 5**

Special worship and meditation at the Samadhi site and a Sadhu Bhandara marked the 3rd anniversary of Mother's punyatithi day.

### **Amrakantak Program**

**Feb7-9**

Our beautiful Ashram in Madhya Pradesh in close vicinity of the holy river Narmada celebrated its foundation day. Resident Swami Paripurnananda Giri along with Swamis Shuddhananda Giri, Samarpananandagiri and Arupananda Giri conducted the three day event with many disciples participating.

### **EUROPE**

### **The following retreats are held in Europe**

March 7-12 – Higher Kriya Retreat, Tattendorf Austria

## AMERICAS

**The following retreats are held**

April 18- 22 Higher  
Kriya Retreat

May 4 - 6 – Denver  
Retreat.

May 11- 13 Midwest  
Retreat –Kriya Vedanta  
Gurukulam, Joliet

May 26-May 30  
Gurudev's Birthday Celebration  
Seminar, Homestead FL.



## BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

**For available Books on  
Yoga, Philosophy & Spirituality.  
Please visit our websites.**

For **India** – [www.prajnanamission.org](http://www.prajnanamission.org)

For **USA** – [www.kriya.org](http://www.kriya.org)

For **Europe** – [www.kriyayoga-europe.org](http://www.kriyayoga-europe.org)

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**E-mail : [seva@prajnanamission.org](mailto:seva@prajnanamission.org) / [missionprajnana@gmail.com](mailto:missionprajnana@gmail.com)**