

Editor's Welcome

Om Gurudevaya Namaha

Salutations and Prostrations to the Divine Embodiment of Love, our Beloved Swami Murugesu Maharishi and to the light of our lives, Swami Shankarananda Maharajji.

Prayer is the song of the heart that makes its way to the throne of God even when entangled in the wailing of thousands of souls. Khalil Gibran

Out of this world; amazing; once in a lifetime; divinely awesome.....
Words can't seem to justify the encounters of the divine kind; the heartfelt joy or the spirituality that was experienced during the past three weeks.

The “wow” factor all started with Swami's Mahasamadhi Day. The 24th of September 2011 marked the anniversary of Swami Murugesu's passing to the astral plane. A beautifully decorated Samadhi place coupled with the sweet recital of 108 praises to Swami; made all the hours put into the preparation all worth it in the end. We can only hope that Swami was even a little bit pleased and had we erred in any way, please forgive us, My Beloved...

Navarathri; 9 days of worship dedicated to the Supreme Mother. But why should it be dictated, that there are 9 specific days to worship the Mother in Her three forms? Ma, the very essence of our being, the very reason we are here on this material world. Shouldn't She be worshipped without boundaries or restrictions?

Nevertheless; the 4th day of Navarathri this year, a day that few patiently wait for the entire year, was our chariot procession. Woohoo! Every year different from the last. Each year a different, yet exciting experience. Would this year be better than the last? Beautiful is too inadequate a word to describe Our Divine Mother. The moment of the unveiling; overcome with emotion; do I believe this wondrous sight before me? If our hearts and bodies dance by just a glimpse at Her glorious form, imagine what a meeting with Ma would be like?

Oh Amma, Thank You for allowing me the privilege of this consequential divine act of Yours. I am eternally grateful. Life could not be any better than this....

In Reverence of the Master always
Praneshri



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The Master

***You have come to us in the guise of an ordinary man,
To teach us, guide us, and lead us to our true home by your
blessed hand.***

***With your laughter you dissolve our pain and sorrow,
so we can have a better tomorrow.***

***The spiritual powerhouse which you are, many do not know,
O' what a loss for man for they will not grow.***

Hari Om

Nirvana

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Dedication. If you not going to have it, you are not going to make it.

Swami Shankarananda Maharajji

The Importance of MEDITATION

Nirvana

Meditation, as described by Kriya Master Yogi Ramiah, is described as the scientific art of mastering the mind.

Meditation is that state of mind wherein there are no sensual thoughts or thoughts of objects. It is a state in which there is a steady flow of one idea, of God only. Yogis call it *dhyana*. All worldly thoughts are erased from the mind during meditation. The mind is filled with the glories of God and the Divine Presence.

Meditation is the continuation of the practice of concentration. When the concentration becomes deep and one-pointed, it is called meditation.

Meditation is the only way to attain freedom and eternal bliss. Those who do not concentrate and meditate are slayers of their soul. A body with a starving soul is little more than a living corpse. Meditation is the sharp sword needed to cut asunder the knot of egoism. It is the master key to the kingdom of eternal bliss. It is the most effective way to control the restless mind and focus it on God.

Meditation is food for the soul. Food for the soul is more essential than food for the body.

In meditation you are in contact with the unchanging light of God. This light cleanses the soul which touches it. Meditation is needed to get rid of Maya, the great illusory power of The Lord. Maya plays havoc with the mind. The destruction of the mind means the end of the play of Maya. Meditation is the only way to conquer Maya. The wondering nature of the mind gradually stops through meditation. Peace of mind pervades him whose mind does not wonder.

The first fruits of meditation come in the form of an increase in purity and divine qualities. Regular meditation opens the doors of divine knowledge, it makes the mind calm and steady; and brings us in contact with our source, the Supreme Lord.

The fire of meditation destroys all evils due to ignorance. Then dawns knowledge and divine wisdom; leading directly to final freedom.

If possible, have a separate meditation room under lock and key. Do not allow anyone else to enter the room, keep it holy. You may keep the pictures of your Guru or favourite Deity in your room; keep some holy books in the room such as the Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, Bible, Koran, whichever applies to you.

Keep your meditation room spotlessly clean. The meditation room should be regarded as a temple of God, enter it with a pious and reverent mind. As you

continue with your meditation regularly, powerful vibrations get lodged in the room. In a few months you will feel peace and purity the moment you enter the room. If it is difficult for you to have a separate meditation room find a quiet place in your house which has less traffic and is clean. Use that place for your meditation.

Chapter 6, verses 10-14, in the Bhagavad Gita gives us a description of how to prepare for meditation.

Spread a folded blanket and over this place a piece soft white cloth. If available, use a tiger skin or deer skin.

Face the east or the north. A beginner should observe this rule. In facing the east or north you will be in communion with the Rishis of the Himalayas. You will be mysteriously benefited by their spiritual currents.

You can sit in Padmasana which is commonly used by Yogis. Keep your head, neck and back in a straight line, relax. Alternatively you can make use of a meditation stool; it helps keep the body erect. Close the eyes; focus at the centre of your forehead.

The ideal time for meditation is between the early morning periods from 4am to 6am. At this time the mind is refreshed after a good sleep. It is calm and serene and ready for meditation. There is more *sattwa* or purity in the mind at this time. During this period the mind is like a blank sheet of paper and free from worldly thoughts. The currents of likes and dislikes have not yet started flowing, hence the mind can be easily moulded at this time to charge with divine thoughts.

Yogis, Sannyasins, and Mahatmas start their meditation at this holy period. They send their vibrations throughout the world. You will be benefited greatly by their spiritual currents if you also meditate at the same time.

There are different types of meditation which an aspirant can engage in. Two types are, *eka roopa* and *aropa* meditation.

In *eka roopa* meditation, the aspirant meditates on a form, for example the form of the Guru or a Deity.

In *aropa* meditation, the aspirant meditates on an abstract concept such as love or divinity.

Our Rishis have given us a marvellous variety of meditation techniques to suit different tastes and natures. That is why we have different Gurus with different teachings. This is our strength, not a weakness, as some critics believe. Today, these techniques of meditation are being sought by followers of other religions. Even a child can easily learn to meditate. Do not worry or think too much about your progress in meditation. Do the practices sincerely and leave the results in the hands of GOD.

Reference: Yoga lessons for children, lesson 23; A guide for initiates, Swami Shankarananda Maharajji.

Know this: when in prayer daily, I pray with you that you are in oneness with God, so that you are spiritually awake, happy, healthy, prosperous and freely expressive

Swami Shankarananda Maharajji

SWAMI SIVANANDA

“Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realize” Swami Sivananda Maharaj.

Swami Sivananda was born Kuppuswamy in Pattamadai near Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu, India on 8 September 1887 in the early hours of the morning, on a Thursday, when the star Bharani was in the ascendant. As a child he was very active and promising in academics and gymnastics. He attended medical school in Tanjore, where he excelled. He ran a medical journal called Ambrosia during this period. Upon graduation he practiced medicine and worked as a doctor in Malaya for ten years, with a reputation for waiving his fee for poor patients needing treatment. Over time, a sense that medicine was healing on a superficial level grew in him, urging him to look elsewhere to fill the void, and in 1923 he left Malaya and returned to India to pursue a spiritual quest.

In 1924, he visited Varanasi where he had the darshan (vision) of Lord Visvanath, Nasik and then Rishikesh, where he met his Guru, Swami Vishwananda Saraswathi. It was Swami Vishwananda who initiated him into the sannyas order and gave him his monastic name Swami Sivananda. After initiation, Swami Sivananda settled in Rishikesh and immersed himself in intense spiritual practices. After years of intense and unbroken sadhana, he enjoyed the bliss of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Swami Sivananda performed austerities for many years but he also continued to help the sick. With some money from his insurance policy that had matured, he started a charitable dispensary at Lakshman Jhula in 1927, serving pilgrims, holy men, and the poor using his medical expertise.

After a few years, Swami Sivananda went on an extensive pilgrimage and traveled the length and breadth of India to meditate at holy shrines and study with spiritual teachers throughout India. During this Parivrajaka (wandering monk) life, Swami Sivananda visited important places of pilgrimage in the South, including Rameshwaram. He conducted sankirtan and delivered lectures during his travels. He visited the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and met Maharishi Suddhananda Bharati. At the Ramana ashram, he had the darshan of Ramana Maharishi on Maharishi's birthday. He sang bhajans and danced in ecstasy with

Maharishi's bhakthas. He also went on pilgrimages to various places in northern India including Kedarnath and Badrinath. He visited Kailash Manasarovar in 1931.

During Swami Sivananda's stay in Rishikesh and his travels around India, many came to him for guidance in the spiritual path. He permitted some of them to live near him and instructed them. Swami Sivananda asked his students to take copies of his short articles and send them for publication. Overtime, large numbers of people started coming to him and his circle started growing.

A prolific author, Swami Sivananda wrote 296 books on a variety of subjects: metaphysics, yoga, religion, western philosophy, psychology, eschatology, fine arts, ethics, education, health, sayings, poems, epistles, autobiography, biography, stories, dramas, messages, lectures, dialogues, essays and anthology. Yet his books emphasized the practical application of yoga philosophy over mere theoretical knowledge. He was known to have said, "An ounce of practice is better than tons of theory. Practice Yoga, Religion and Philosophy in daily life and attain Self Realization".

Swami Sivananda founded the Divine Life Society in 1936 on the banks of the Ganges River.

In 1945, Swami Sivananda created the Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmacy, and organized the All-World Religious Federation. He established the All-world Sadhus Federation in 1947 and Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy in 1948. He called his Yoga, the "Yoga of Synthesis".

The free distribution of spiritual literature drew a steady flow of disciples to the Swami, such as Swami Satyananda Saraswathi, Swami Chinmayananda who went on to found the Chinmaya Mission

and Sri Swami Sahajananda , who was directed by Swami Sivananda to establish the Divine Life Society of South Africa.

His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswathi Maharaj entered Mahasamadhi (departure of a Self realized saint from his mortal coil) on the 14 July 1963, in his Kutir on the banks of the Ganges, in Shivanandanagar.

***Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya Namaha.
Hari Om***

SWAMI MURUGESU MAHASAMADHI POOJA

Hitesh & Hemrisha Ramyad

It all started in the morning when Mel Aka and Avishna decorated Swami's Samadhi place.

At 12 o' clock, the devotees were called to join the abishegam for Swami, which was a life opportunity for us. The prayer started at 4 o' clock in the afternoon with pictures of Swami displayed on the projector. Gurudev called all those people who had met Swami to come to the front to offer flowers to the kalsa. Then Gurudev called all those who helped set up for the prayer to offer flowers to Swami's statue. This was followed by hawan, done by Gurudev. Everybody had the opportunity to offer to the hawan. After the prayer, we had bhajans and kirtans dedicated to our beloved Swami. We were lucky to see more pictures of Swami and even hear Swami's voice on a recording singing *OM NANAH SHIVAYA, SHIVAYANAMA OM*.

After this, Gurudev gave a discourse about Swami, Swami's life and Gurudev's experiences with Swami. Sundrie, Lalitha and Nirvana did a dance with fire pots (which had rosewater, sand and camphor) and the other devotees joined in. The energy was so great that we were shown a photograph, taken by Uncle Dean during the dancing, which proved Swami and Shivabalayogi's presence. What a sight!

At the end, Anna (Seelan) did arti, which was followed by supper.

Just to let you know that Swami does not come in His full form, but comes as a ball of energy around us.

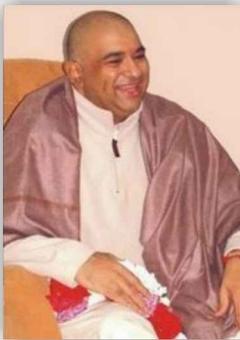
No prayer is complete without padio for Gurudev. This is the sacred ritual of washing the Master feet and absorbing the energy of the prayer. Gurudev went into Samadhi which allowed Swami Himself to join us and express His enjoyment of the prayer. Swami even said that the atmosphere was good and the night was beautifying and full of energy.

The Life of

SRI HARIDAS ARCHARYA

Brother Haridas was born in Chatsworth, South Africa on 1 May 1963. He was raised in Tongaat and attended Tongaat primary and secondary schools after which He completed a teaching degree and higher diploma in Education, qualifying Cum Laude. During 1984 He was initiated into Vedanta by Dr Gurudewa, lecturer of Hindu Studies, and received His first training in Sanskrit and Vedic literature. He was given recognition by the Jihar Swami of Thrivy as Sri Sadhak Haridas Acharya, preferred to be known simply as *Brother Haridas*.

During April 1982, at the age of twenty, Brother Haridas was blessed with His first spiritual experience at the While absorbed in a deep concentrating on the light resulted in his and spiritual awakening. It experience which initiated Brother Haridas to heal that same year, He foundation of the Shree the help of his late uncle in the rendering of Rama bhajans as a service communities. This Tongaat Vedanta society, Society. Brother Haridas initiated the formation of the Tongaat Hindu Forum in 1995, which aimed to bring all Hindu organizations together under one concern that could counter proselytization of Hindus and also provide a forum for the education of



Tonga at Kavady festival. state of meditation and *naanum* symbol, a flash of complete transformation was that spiritual certain *siddhis*, allowing spiritually. In September of commenced the Ram Bhajan Group with Subramoney, specializing Hanuman, Muruga and to devotees of the nearby institution grew into the now known as the Vedanta H i n d u s .

This institution also boasts a Devi Samaj, a Women's League which deals with various issues impacting on today's women, and using the ancient principles of the Veda and Upanishads to provide moral and ethical guidance in addressing the challenges faced by modern women. In addition, this organization has a sector which focuses on the study and scientific research of Vedanta and its relevance in post-modern times, and on ethical developments and dialogues in relation to the

The Bhagavad Gita tells us that he who eats too much or too little, or who sleeps too much or too little, is not a yogi

modern human rights culture, ensuring it is not in conflict with fundamental ethics. The youth wing of this institution is engaged in many social welfare, youth and anti-alcoholism programs which network with other youth organizations to promote spiritual values. The institution also has its own printing press which has been used for the publishing of several articles on Hindu thought and culture as well as a magazine which documents courses given at various conferences.

Brother Haridas was the National Chairperson for Social Justice and Work for National organisations, to address social issues of poverty, violence and AIDS through conferencing and workshops aimed at promoting spiritual values and philosophies. The seva projects ran in conjunction with the Mahatma Ghandi Phoenix Settlement and took care of sixty AIDS orphans, running a clinic in conjunction with the Department of Health, and an agricultural scheme in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture. The building of homes is being conducted through skills development by training locals in building skills to replace shacks with concrete homes, with all materials being produced and sponsored by the Phoenix settlement.

In addition to all this, Brother Haridas was also the coordinator, trustee and secretariat of a craft-development initiative in contract with the Indian Government, whereby crafted products were marketed and sold via the tourist trade. He also participated in national and international conferences; in the World Parliament of Religions with Dr Pallo Jordan, Minister of Arts and Culture; the All India Conference in Delhi during 2005; as well as many local university conferences on the issues of ethics, metaphysics, religion and social transformation.

In His aims and objectives as a spiritual master, Brother Haridas worked to take the ancient universal spiritual tradition of the Bharatia people and make it relevant to modern times in order to benefit the people in the sciences of yoga and towards a better way of life. He found that the spiritual knowledge of the past had not been interpreted with this intention and needed a fresh interpretation without altering the core principles of Vedic text. On His journey, Brother Haridas has witnessed much envy and marginalization. Sadly, many found His ideas challenging and were unable to understand the spirituality He advocated. His greatest spiritual contribution had been to create a system that has brought together Hindi, Telegu and Tamil traditions, removing the sectarian elements of the Vedic tradition and allowing for multicultural development in the process. As a spiritual master, Brother Haridas has been widely accepted by different organisations. . Much of the

religious development that took place in Tongaat was instituted by Brother Haridas' organization, though this is not commonly known. It is also not well known that He designed the framework for the ten-day chariot festivals along the lines of the Tirupathi temple.

Brother Haridas' training centre is situated in Sunlark Drive, Suncrest, with satsang centres in Tongaat, Verulam and Phoenix. Brother Haridas left the following message for today's society:

We must forget institutional thinking and behaviour. We have to go back to the fundamental spiritual laws that govern us. These laws are what bind the spiritual tradition. Everybody belongs to the family of God. These laws govern mental behaviour, the wholeness of being, therefore, giving to a person the fullness of life by which they can attain happiness and peace. So, instead of having belief, doctrine and dogma, we must go back to these fundamentals and apply them to our lives to transcend all institutional, racial and religious boundaries.

Regarding our future, Brother Haridas taught that as long as humanity continues with its current religious trends, religion will become the source of the greatest wars the human mind can conceive and the greatest terrors the human condition will ever face. He warned to prepare ourselves for the new age, the inevitable course that the world is going in a negative direction, predicted by every religion. In order to survive the decay in the world, people will have to become spiritually strong.

Swami Shankarananda was one of the first to be initiated by Brother Haridas some twenty years ago. This reminds us that Brother Haridas started His spiritual journey at a very young age.

Unfortunate for those who never met this Divine Soul in person, Brother Haridas left His body too soon. Mahasamadhi was attained on the 12th of October 2008, in the early hours of the morning. Those who received Brother Haridas' final blessings are entrusted to continue this sacred work and the Gayathri Peedam wish only the best for the continuation and support of these teachings. May Mother Gayathri shower all disciples with Her choicest blessings.

Reference: Sriharidasarcharya.blogspot.com

On the road to Enlightenment with Patanjali



As we trod the pathway on the journey to Self- and God-Realisation, God hands us many tools; the eight-fold path of Yoga is one of them. Patanjali helps one to understand the various concepts of Yoga and eliminates confusion. By steady study of these yoga sutras, its application will take you to bliss.

The next two verses for discussion are from book one:

Verse 16:

Tatparam purusakhyaterguna vai trsnyam

After obtaining that highest renunciation and knowledge of the true (absolute) Self, you will no longer be distracted by influences of the attributes of your nature from within and without.

The ultimate renunciation is when one transcends the qualities of nature and perceives the soul. Clear intelligence of the head and heart will lead to this.

Renunciation begins with an attempt by anyone who wishes to disentangle himself/herself from habits such as smoking or drinking coffee. First we cut down, then we stop, but the desire persists in the mind. When that mental desire has faded away, years later our body cells may spontaneously rekindle attachment. Later still, we find we become attached to the idea of ourselves as *non-drinkers of coffee*. This is a self-conscious virtue. Gradually, we may become totally indifferent to coffee, but coffee nevertheless still exists in the mind.

This sutra relates to the ultimate freedom achieved through supreme detachment. Here, phenomenal nature ceases to exist for us, as the gunas are transcended. By transcending the gunas, we unlock that which binds us to nature. When this is achieved in all our involvements, the soul is fully perceived.

Verse 17:

Vitarkavicaranandasmitarupanugamatsamprajnatah

Meditation with wisdom is accompanied by logical reasoning, reflection on thoughts, bliss and the experience of pure being.

Through practice and detachment, 4 kinds of awareness develop - do you know what they are?

Do some research and give Mel Aka your answers for the next edition of Akhanda Sadhana.



SCHOOL JOKES

**KID'S
CORNER**

Knock Knock

Who's there !

Major !

Major who ?

Major answer didn't I !

Knock Knock

Who's there ?

Marcus !

Marcus who ?

Marcus a book in the Bible !

Pupil: I didn't do my homework because I lost my memory

Teacher: When did this start ?

Pupil: When did what start !

Pupil (on phone) : My son has a bad cold and won't be able to come to school today.

School Secretary: Who is this ?

Pupil: This is my father speaking

CRAZY DEFINITIONS.....

Magic Eye

What teachers have in the back of their heads

Metronome

Musical elf driving a mini

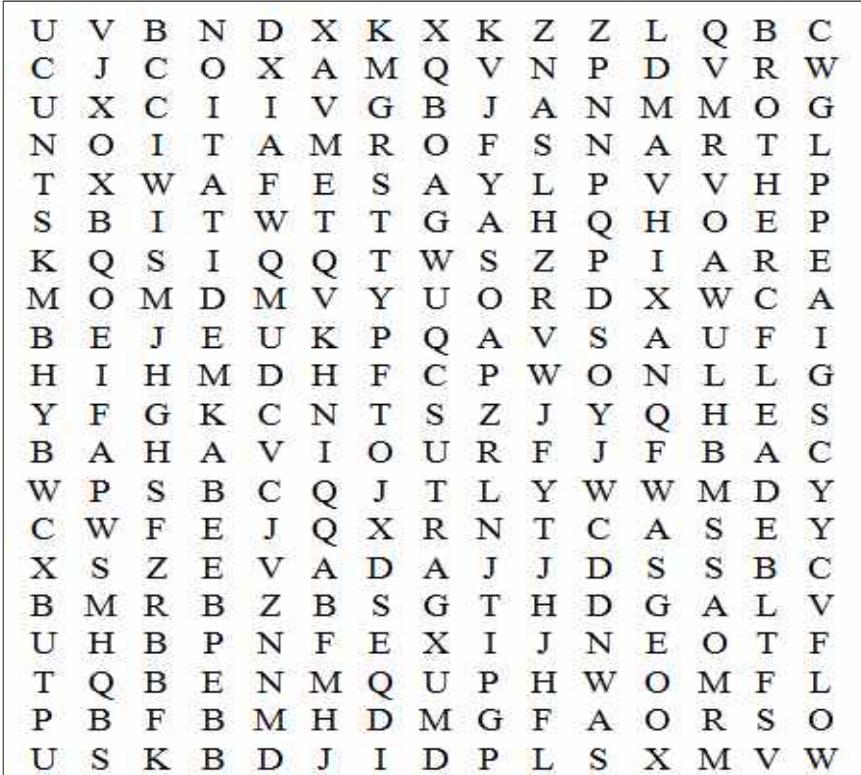
Mittens

What you get when a cat swallows a ball of wool

WORDSEARCH

A big CONGRATULATIONS goes to Sejal (again) for being the first to complete the wordsearch in September!! Well done, young lady. Keep up the good work 😊

Transform



- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------------|
| 1. Sutra | 4. Brother | 7. Behaviour |
| 2. Yoga | 5. Samadhi | 8. Transformation |
| 3. Practice | 6. Pushpam | 9. Flow |

Can you find secret word number 10?



STUDY TIPS



- Study for the sake of assimilating and applying knowledge. It is much easier this way than forcing yourself to memorize.
- Apply what you learn to your daily life.
- Be consistent, set aside time everyday to study. Set up a realistic timetable for study and stick to it.
- All study and no play makes Jack a dull boy, so set aside time for play too (after you have studied).
- Think what if! What if I don't study? I may fail. My parents and teacher will be sad. What if I do very well? My parents will be exhilarated! I get promoted with my friends. Use these as motivating factors to study.
- If you are not clear about a topic, ask your teachers, parents or friends. Clear whatever doubt you may have about the topic as soon as possible. Do not be afraid to ask.
- Do your homework. If unsure, ask.
- Do past years' examination papers.
- Form a study group and study with friends.
- Be positive. Treat each failure as a learning experience, a stepping-stone to a higher ground. Thomas Edison failed countless times before he invented the light bulb.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AUM

Prinandani Lingeswari

Why does the world 'Aum' have such significance for Hindus?

If you listen carefully to the distant sea waves, you will hear them chanting 'Aum'. The roaring, gusting, howling winds, are always chanting 'Aum'. Even when you press a sea-shell against your ear, you'll hear it uttering it 'Aum'. 'Aum' represents the sound vibrations of the universe.

The three letters that make up the word 'Aum' are 'A, U, MA'. No set of alphabets, in whatever language, is complete without these three letters. And no musical notes are complete without them either. So without 'Aum', there is no reading, no writing and no music! Imagine what a sad world it would be without these!

'Aum' has been used by great sages, saints and yogis in mantras and in meditation. When chanted continuously, it brings us deep relaxation, comfort, blessing and peace and tranquillity. Numerically and alphabetically, 'O' is a round ring. A ring signifies

Neither beginning nor end; it is forever continuous, representing infinity. One doesn't know where it starts and where it ends. Just like God who has no beginning and no ending. Like-wise, God has neither birth nor death.

The letters of the word 'Aum' when rearranged spell 'UMA' 'U, M, A' who is Mother Shakthi, is the Goddess of Power and Creative energy. If you look closely at a picture of Lord Shiva, you will notice that Shakthi occupies his left half, signifying that He is both Mother and Father in One. The Tamil 'Aum' is unique in that our left ear is the shape of this 'Aum'. Our heart, which is the centre of energy and activity, is also on our left hand side. In a photograph, the woman always stands on the left hand side of her husband, which is why we refer to the wife as our 'better half'.

The syllable Aum is used both at the beginning and end of reading of the Vedas. It is the most comprehensive, non-personal, universal symbol of holy sound and signifies the supreme infinite

divine reality. It is mainly an auditory or sound symbol, representing in a nutshell the four cosmic planes the gross/physical body, the subtle/psychic body, the potential/causal body, and the Absolute Atman of the supreme infinite divine reality, both macrocosmically and microcosmically.

When Aum is uttered mystically, the inarticulate humming sound that lingers, represents the Absolute, beyond the world. Hence, Aum which is symbolic of the entire existence, is considered as the fitting designation or signifies the infinite supreme divine reality. Aum is thus held to be the holiest universal sound and name.

Aum, being the universal cosmic sound, the totality of all sounds, is called Pranava Aum. The Pranava Aum denotes Nada, the Primal sound or soundless sound from which creation issued forth.

By the mystic repetition of the divine cosmic Aum, one is lifted up spiritually, mentally and emotionally as one is attuned to the cosmic mind. This is why, the Aum is considered the holiest mantra for sacred repetition, and is therefore added at the beginnings and conclusions of all other mantras.

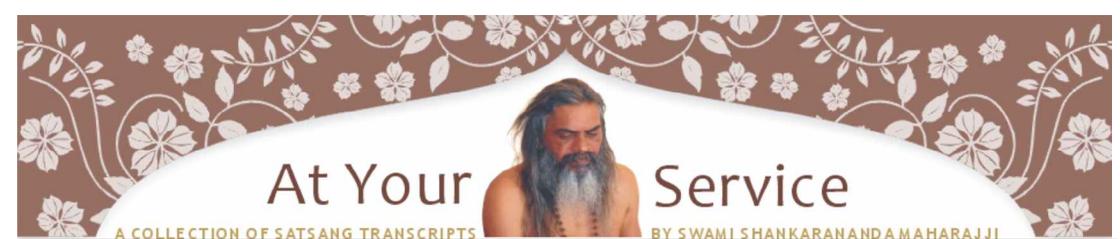
Let us chant this mystical sound syllable 'Aum' and feel the great power of this cosmic sound resonating in our very being!

Hari Aum

WITHOUT OXYGEN IN SPACE, HOW DOES THE SUN BURN? Fire is a chemical process in which oxygen reacts with another substance, such as carbon or wood. The sun's heat is produced by nuclear fission.

Hydrogen atoms, the sun's dominant element, whirl around the sun's gaseous core. When they collide with sufficient force, a larger atom is formed. Four hydrogen nuclei fused together create a single helium nucleus. When this reaction occurs, more than 4 million tons of matter per second is converted into energy, which can reach 27 million degrees Fahrenheit in its core and is the source of the sun's light. Scientists estimate that the sun's nuclear fission will continue for at least another five billion years.





At Your Service

A COLLECTION OF SATSANG TRANSCRIPTS

BY SWAMI SHANKARANANDA MAHARAJI

The Divine Power of Swami Murugesu

You know that tomorrow is our master, Swami Murugesu's samadhi. Four years ago he took samadhi at four-fifteen in the afternoon. We will be having bhajans and kirtans in memory of Mahagnanavatar Murugesu Maharishi Gayathri Siddhar.

I hope all of you can be here for that. Swami Murugesu was a small man but when you touched his feet, you felt nine thousand volts of electricity go up your spine. To those who didn't know Swami Murugesu, it is very rare to find a being of that simplicity who was also a Maharishi, a really great saint, who taught by inspiration and vibration and hardly a single word. He was a great master and teacher and he has promised me that tomorrow afternoon at four-fifteen, his presence will be very strongly felt here in the shrine. You just need to meditate on the energy of this glorious and beautiful human being, Gayathri Siddhar Swami Murugesu Maharishi. He was a saint who had knowledge of every aspect of life. No question was too difficult for him. Every question asked of him was answered in a very simple and understandable way, so that all devotees whether educated or not, would understand Swami Murugesu.

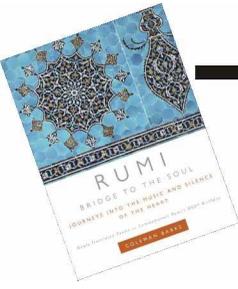
The beauty about Swami Murugesu was that whenever South African devotees went to Sri Lanka, Swami would give a discourse every evening in English - with all the Sri Lankan devotees sitting there not understanding a word, but they would continuously nod their heads in deep concentration. That really used to make me think: "They are so focused on Swami yet they don't understand..." When the discussion was finished they would ask questions in Tamil related to the discussion. That is the brilliance of this great master. He would talk to you in a language you might think is foreign and yet you ask him a question and he would respond.

Swami's blessing was given with a lot of energy, force and thunder behind it. I remember a Buddhist monk who was visiting South Africa through the South African Sai organisation, and a lady who was there, brought him here because she knew him well. And when I took him to my room he saw the photo of Swami and fell flat on the ground and said, "This is the man who cured me. He is from Sri Lanka. Am I right?" I said, "Yes!" The monk was critically sick and everyone he went to said he was possessed. The normal Indian trend was to throw ashes or something. But when he went to Swami he was asked to buy soap. So he bought the soap and Swami asked him to hold it in his hand for a few minutes. Afterwards Swami took the soap away from him and he never got sick again. This is the power of Swami Murugesu.

Very little is known about him. There are no disciples other than myself in the world. I am his only disciple for he did not want to have disciples. All his life he was looking for a disciple and he found a disciple in South Africa. And he always said that the luckiest people in this whole world are in South Africa. That was his line. There was a bond between us that was something else. At one time he was so frustrated about this bond that he asked me not to come back to Sri Lanka. He sent a very nasty fax telling me that I shouldn't come back to Sri Lanka. But somehow I was notified that Swami was going to India so I went to India and waited at the airport. He was surprised to see me when I met with him there. He realised he could not get rid of this 'fly' so he asked me to come back to Sri Lanka. He was testing me. That is how masters test you.

Hari Om.





RUMI

Bridge to the Soul

Coleman Barks

Book Review

Rumi's poetry, says Coleman Barks, is a bridge between the mystery of being human and the mystery of the Divine; his work builds an intricate, earthy and ethereal bridge of friendship, natural resonance, meditation and music. These ninety new poems journey into the inner languages of the heart, soul and silence.

EMPTY

Come out here where the roses have opened.
Let soul and world meet.

The sun had drawn a fine tempered blade
of light. We may as well surrender.

Laugh at the ugly arrogance you see.
Weep for those separated from the friend.

The city seethes with rumor.
Some madman has escaped the prison.

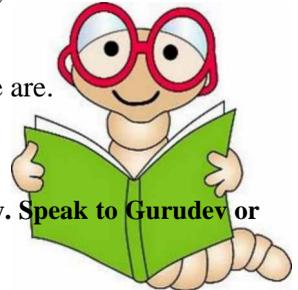
Or is a revolution beginning?
What day is it?

Is this when all we have done and been
will be publicly known?

With no thinking and no emotion,
with no ideas about the soul,
and no language,
these drums are saying how empty we are.

ISBN 978 0 06 133816 8

***All books are available in the Gayathri Peedam Library. Speak to Gurudev or Lalitha about your annual membership!**



THE CHRONICLES OF PUGLANANDA

Guruji, please enlighten me on the significance of the Arthi and why do we use different types of Arthis?



The Arthi evolved from the worship of fire. Fire worship is one of the oldest rituals in Hinduism and is still practiced today. Fire represents life. Every aspect of life in this world is sustained because of fire, because of the sun. The Gayathri mantra (the most powerful mantra) is in fact a mantra in praise of Savitur, the sun, so in the Hindu pantheon fire plays a very important role. Now back to the question about why we turn the Arthi lamp. Many of us who perform Arthi know that it is generally done in a clockwise direction at the end of a prayer. This has a very simple meaning. After worshipping the chosen aspect of God, devotees turn the Arthi lamp to signify that they offer their fire to God. When I say they offer their fire, I mean they offer their life to God and will let God be the central aspect in their life. They do this in a clockwise manner because it is believed that clockwise is positive and anti clockwise is negative. The different types of Arthi lamps used can symbolize many ideas or philosophies but the basic understanding is that we should offer our love and life to God and let God be our guide.

GURU MANTRAS

We sit in prayer on a daily basis reciting various mantras for peace, prosperity and health, but have we ever wondered what these ancient sanskrit words mean?

Our new section *Mantras* will attempt to help each person understand the significance of the sounds recited during prayer.

“... words are symbols used to convey the reality and meaning of **that** which they define. By conscious devotional utterance, intonation and chanting of a sacred word (Mantra) a divine vibration is awakened within the being...”

- Yogiraj Shri Shri Lahiri Mahasaya

GURUR BRAHMA,

GURUR VISHNU,

GURUR DEVO MAHESHWARAH

GURUR SAAKSHAAT PARA-BRAHMA,

TASMAI SHRI GURUVE NAMAH

The Guru is Brahma (The God of Creation)

The Guru is Vishnu (The God of Sustenance)

The Guru is Shiva (The God of Annihilation)

My Salutation to such a Guru, who is verily the Supreme God

Avahitabyah sarvabhya devatabyo namaha - salutations to all gods and devas present

Asatho ma sadgamaya - take me from untruth to truth

Tamaso ma jyothir gamaya - take me from darkness to light

Mrtyorma amrtam gamaya - shower me with your divine nectar

Om tat purushaya vidmahe - let me meditate on the great purusha

Mahadevaya dheemahee - greatest god give me higher intellect

Thanno rudra prachodayaat - let god rudra illuminate my mind

LET'S RECYCLE!!



Practical everyday recycling

To begin with, ask your family to make a commitment to make recycling a way of life. As sanatana dharma is a way of life, so is recycling! Start with these practical steps:

1. *Find a convenient, local drop-off site:*

Find your nearest community recycling drop-off centre. You need to know what material each centre accepts. Don't leave unwanted material there, they are not dumpsites!

2. *Separate your recyclables:*

If you have started with paper and plastic, well done to you! Watch out for glass bottles and cans too. Food and beverage containers that are rinsed and shaken dry deter flies and bees and stop smells.

3. *Drop off your recyclables:*

Once you have collected enough recyclable material, plan a trip (avoiding unnecessary use of petrol) to drop it off at your chosen drop-off site.

Before you throw anything into a rubbish bin, **THINK FIRST**, *Does this really need to go to a landfill site?*

60% of household waste can be recycled, by only 12 % is! You can help to change this! Create a habit of automatically placing recyclable material in dedicated bags or containers kept close to your kitchen. Another environment saving tip: chip and chocolate packets are made from laminate and foil which cannot be recycled. This means this garbage goes to the landfill. We are doing God's work all the time, so be careful of these products when it comes to saving the planet!

Tree of the Month

CROSS BERRY

The Cross-berry can adapt to any kind of climate which means it can live in a rainy area or dry area. The tree is multi-stemmed and is very dense. In an open field it can be a slim tree with a big crown. The bark is grey-brown and is quite smooth (nice to climb!) the leaves are big and rough to touch. This is so because the leaves have coarse hairs on them. They won't hurt you though. The most outstanding feature of this tree are the flowers! This species of Grewia is rare because it has pink, purple and mauve flowers, whereas most Grewia trees have white or yellow flowers. Flowering occurs throughout spring and summer. The fruit looks like 4 berries bunched together to make a cross and they are reddish-brown when ripe.



18 TAMIL SIDDHARS

Edaikkadar

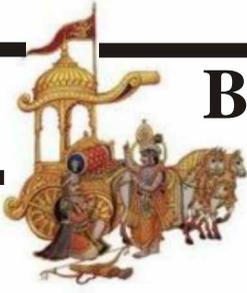
Sri Idaikadar is considered an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. It is said that once, while out with the grazing goats, he was blessed by a Siddhar with immense divine powers. It is said that he and his goats survived famine. Upon foresight of the difficult times ahead, he built a house with walls of grain and fed his goats plants that survived without water. The planets visit him and when fed on grain and goats milk, they fall asleep. By changing the position of the planets, the Siddhar assures that rain commences, saving the land from famine. His famous works include Idaikadar gnyana soothram 70 and Idaikadar Kanida Nool.

Machamuni

In the Encyclopaedic dictionary authored by T.V. Sambasivam Pillai, a strange story is told. "Machamuni is a Siddhar. He was the child brought up by Pinnakeesar. He is also Pinakeesar's disciple. There is a story that once Lord Siva was preaching Uma Devi and she fell asleep during the discourse. However, a fish was listening to the lecture. Later on that fish was transformed into Siddhar Machamuni by Lord Siva."

Although it is a story, it is very interesting indeed. Machamuni mentions about the Shiva Tandava witnessed by Siddhar Patanjali's in one of his songs. Hence, it can be said that he had lived in the period when Siddhar Patanjali's witnessed the Shiva Tandava in Thillai. Thillai is the other name of Chidambaram and is one of the 5 dance halls of Lord Shiva.

In the book " Agastyar 12000 ", in the fifth Kandam, Siddhar Agastyar says that Machamuni had taken lessons from Kaga Bugandar. He also says that he donated all his wealth to poor people on attaining spiritual salvation. Machamuni attained samadhi at Thiruparankundram.



BHAGAVAD GITA

The Divine Song of God

What are righteous character traits?

Man has many divine qualities and virtues, but many of these are either hidden or dormant. The Geeta directs us to *chapter 16*, Verse 1:

*Abhayam sattva samsuddhiih jnana yoga vyavasthitih;
Danam damasca yajnaca svadhyayastapa arjavam.*

Fearlessness; purity of heart; steadfastness in knowledge and yoga; almsgiving; control of the senses; *yajna* (or sacrifice); study of the Sastras; austerity and uprightness.

Total absence of fear, inner sanctity, constant endeavour and meditation to acquire truth, complete self-surrender, subduing of the mind and the senses, conduct of *yajna*, offering sacrifice to the fire of self-restraint as well as to the fire of the senses, offering *pran* and *apan* as oblation to each other, and last of all, the process of worship that entails sacrificing oneself to the fire of knowledge which is achieved by the inner workings of the mind and senses.

“Meditation upon the Self, is the discipline that prompts one towards the identical Supreme Spirit.”

Verse 2:

*Ahimsa satyamakrodhah tyagah santirapaisunam;
Daya bhutesvaloluptvam mardavam hriracapalam*

Non injury, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, control of the internal organs, absence of vilification (backbiting), kindness to creatures, non covetousness (non-greediness), gentleness, modesty, freedom from restlessness....

True non-violence is salvaging of the soul, for degrading the soul is violence.

Truthfulness is not speaking what is apparently real or pleasing. The Self alone is true; He is the Supreme Truth. This is the truth we have to fix our eyes on. Some other attributes of a righteous person are abstinence from anger, surrender of whatever one has, renunciation of desire for the rewards of good as well as of evil action, absence of fickleness, avoidance of undesirable acts that are contrary to the aspired-for goal, feeling of mercy for all beings, non-attachment to objects even when the senses are associated with them, feeling of tenderness, shame at straying from the object, and keeping away from futile effort.

Verse 3:

*Tejah ksama dhrtih saucam adroho natimanita;
Bhavanti sampadam daivim abhijatasya bharata*

Maturity, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, freedom from malice, absence of haughtiness. These, O! Son of the Bharata dynasty, becomes effective in one born with the destiny of a Divine nature.

Glory is the property of God alone and one, who acts by virtue of this Divine magnificence, partakes of it. The treasures of divinity are forgiveness, steady temper, innocence, hostility against none and total rejection of the feeling of conceit.

God has sent you to me, and I shall never fail you...Even when I am gone my help will always be given to devotees all over the world, if they keep in tune. Never think for a moment that when I am physically absent from you all, I am not otherwise with you. I shall be just deeply concerned for your spiritual welfare when I am no longer in the body as I am now. I shall always be watching over each one of you, and whenever a true devotee thinks of me in the silent depths of his soul, he will know that I am near.

-Paramahansa Yogananda quoted in the SRF calendar, August, 1993.

BUTTER BEANS WITH TOMATOES

Ingredients

- 3 cups canned butter beans
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 carrot, chopped finely
- 2 large tomatoes
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- pinch of sugar
- 1-2 garlic cloves, minced (or as per taste)
- about 1/2 tsp dried oregano and thyme (or use double of the fresh herbs)
- salt to taste
- few sprigs of cilantro to garnish

Method

In a skillet add about 1 tsp oil and sauté the onions and garlic with salt. When slightly soft, add the carrots. Chopping them small helps to cook it faster.

Add the tomatoes, the dried herbs and the tomato paste

Add about 1/2 to 3/4 cup water and cook it in high heat. We want the tomatoes to get mushy and well cooked without any raw smell. In fact it gets aromatic with the herbs - esp. Oregano

When most of the water has been absorbed, add the beans. Make sure to rinse the canned beans in cold water first.

Add the sugar (or more if required). The sugar is to balance any tart/sour taste from the tomatoes and cutting down the acidity. Add the cilantro and give it a toss until well stirred with the tomato mixture. Make sure to be gentle since the beans can disintegrate.

POETRY

My Gurudeva, leading us to Lord Shiva

As I stare into His divine eyes, I hear the calling of God's name.

Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva

Waiting for an answer to the long awaited question, "Are you ready to reach the abode of the Lord?"

Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva

"The Lord is awaiting for the arrival of His children."

Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva

"Come to me my Beloved Shiva," He sings, drawing all into His enigmatic divinity.

Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva

Absorbed with the Lord; the only thought on His mind; He urges all to become elevated with the name< SHIVA.

Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva Shiva

My Gurudev, the very essence of Lord Shiva

ABC of Hinduism

Extract from *The Science of Self Realisation* RE Davis

METAPHYSICS 'The things after the physics,' the title of Aristotle's treatise on first principles, so-called because it followed his work on physics. The branch of philosophy that investigates the nature of first principles of ultimate reality, including the nature of being and cosmology.

MYSTICISM Spiritual discipline practised to extreme unification of one's attention and awareness with God or ultimate reality by contemplative meditation. The experience of such realisation. Belief in the existence of realities beyond ordinary powers or perception which are accessible by subjective experience, as by intuition.

27

Music is to poetry what attainment is to spirituality.

Swami Shankarananda Maharajji

Gayathri Peedam Calender 2011

October

- 12 Pournami
- 15 Mahanavagraha at 2am
- 23 Newlands- Hamper Distribution
- 26 Swami Murugesu Janastami; Deepavali;
Mahaluxmi Pooja
- 29 1 day trip to JHB
- 30 AGM - Stanger

*Please note that all dates are subject to change. For updates, please visit our website :
www.gayathripeedam.com

November

- 5+6 CrystalTherapy Workshop (R2 500pp only 6 places available)
- 6 Skanda Sashti
- 10 Pournami
- 11 Gurudev leaves for India
- 12 Babaji's Birthday Pooja
- 20 PARK DAY
- 25 Gurudev's arrival from India
- 26 Healing at Kloof Hall
- 27 Crystal Healing Workshop-Stanger

December

- 1 Gurudev leaves for India
- 3 Mahanavagraha 3am
- 10 Pournami
- 24 Christmas Eve Service
- 31 Gurudev's return from India
New Year Service

Kriya Yoga Classes

Monday: Verulam 7pm

& Umhlanga 6:30pm

Wednesday: Stanger 7pm

& Cowies Hill 6:30pm

Thursday: Stonebridge Hall; Phoenix
6:30pm

Saturday: Verulam 6am (Advanced)

Sunday: Verulam 6am (Prana Mudras)

*Speak to Kailashdeva, Prananda or Lalitha
for more information



*Be steadfast in Yoga, O Arjuna.
Perform your duty and
abandon
All attachment to success or
failure. Such evenness of mind
is called Yoga.*

Once you have realised your Self, then God-realisation is inevitable. You are going to enjoy God-realisation. But without Self-realisation, God-realisation is not virtually impossible, it is just impossible.