



pūrṇa vidyā newsletter 10|22

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Ammaji's Message

Dear Readers,

Mind is a powerful tool and it's the fastest equipment. Memories and perceptions are stored in the mind and it is used to make decisions and make sense of the world. We can say that mind is like a receptacle for the senses. Thus, it is important that we know how we can manage the mind and develop healthy mindsets.

Lord Krishna says to Arjuna in the Gita that mind means "that which waivers". It is nothing but an energy flow of thoughts and thoughts are meant to flow. The thoughts flow towards the objects that the sense organs reveal. Our search for happiness remains in the external world, thus making our mind extroverted.



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Therefore, for seekers, who are in the journey of 'self-enquiry', it becomes hard to restrain the mind and go within. The Gita guides us through tools like: sheer practice, committed repetition and sharpening our discriminating faculty of recognising the impermanence of material pursuits. Material pursuit will pull us away from our higher self while spiritual pursuit engages in higher self which is going inwards. If I sit in meditation, the mind has to turn inwards. Mind is needed for meditation. Only in meditation, what is sitting in the sub-conscious surfaces. Because I am caught in the external world, Gita gives tools on how one needs to step inwards. Our mind is the source of strength to hold noble thoughts and it can also serve as a vessel to hold garbage. Mind embraces that which is disturbing and undesirable too. An individual suffers when his mind is out of balance.

All problems are caused by the desires arising from the mind. A well-ordered mind and body will bring health and happiness. A disordered mind will only bring chaos. There is an order in the system and when we work in harmony with that order health and happiness result. For tranquillity and one-pointed meditation to occur, the mind needs to be still. We need to be masters of our own consciousness. We cannot let the mind wander aimlessly on its own inwardly. We need to do mental purification by doing acts that involve the mind to keep this a sacred space. When the mind is under control, we can smile even when sorrows are heaped upon us and it will not cave in to provocations and be able to respond instead of reacting. May we learn to befriend our mind as it can be our friend as much as our enemy, if we live in self-doubt.

Love and Blessings,

Ammaji



> Part 6

Śiva-mānasa-pūjā – A Mental Worship of Lord Śiva

छत्रं चामरयोर्युगं व्यजनकं चादर्शकं निर्मलं
वीणा भेरि मृदङ्ग काहलकला गीतं च नृत्यं तथा ।
साष्टाङ्गं प्रणतिः स्तुतिर्बहुविधा-ह्येतत्-समस्तं मया
सङ्कल्पेन समर्पितं तव विभो पूजां गृहाण प्रभो ॥ ३ ॥

*chatram cāmarayoryugam vyajanakam cādarśakam nirmalam
vīṇā bheri mṛdaṅga kāhalakalā gītam ca nṛtyam tathā .
sāṣṭāṅgam praṇatiḥ stutirbahuvidhā-hyetat-samastam mayā
saṅkalpena samarpitam tava vibho pūjām grhāṇa prabho*

Another beautiful verse expressing one's devotion through the ritualistic offerings to the Lord. Here, we have the traditional offering as this enters into the sixty-four step.

Chatram cāmarayoryugam vyajanakam: The first offering is a an umbrella, called *chatram*; followed by two fans made with bushy tails of the yak, called *cāmara*. You may wonder why we need to offer them? Is it very hot? Does the infinite need to be protected from the heat of the Sun? Or is it going to be raining to need an umbrella? This is where we need to leave our logical mind and move with the heart. Remember you've both right and left. You need to know what to use when. When I'm sitting as a devotee, engaging in a relationship with the supreme, whom I've invited; my offerings are my expressions of my love. That is precisely what happens when you allow your heart to open up and let the head follow the heart. Because it is the language of love. When you love someone and want to relate to someone, there is no room for logic. Once you've declared that this is my bonding with the divine, then it has its own process of expression, led by the heart; behind which follows the head. Therefore, the umbrella we are talking about is not about a mere 6' wide umbrella, it is a majestic canopy for this amazing, royal divine being seated on this precious gem-studded throne. Just as how the Kings would have had them; what to talk of presenting a canopy to the altar, it should no doubt be splendid. On either side of the altar, are these huge fans held by two attendants, blowing gentle breeze. These are expressions of your prayers, it is a *bhāvanā*.



ādarśakam nirmalam When the infinite sits on the throne, it is really worth seeing the majesty, the glory, and the absolutely astounding presence. And in this love for the divine, you show him himself, by presenting him a mirror. Look this is how I have decorated you, look this is how wonderful you look – such is the *bhāvanā* in showing a mirror, which is another beautiful ritual. Showing a clean, pure mirror.

Vīṇā bheri mṛdaṅga kāhalakalā gītam ca nṛtyam What comes next is not a simple ritual, it is a whole procession. I've brought a whole retinue of of musical instruments; various string and drum instruments including Veena and Mridangam. The music is accompanied by appropriate performance of song and dance. All this musical orchestra, the song and dance is in praise of the divine being.

>>> **Sāṣṭāṅgaṃ praṇatīḥ stutirbahuvidhā:** Followed by the dance, music, etc is the eight-fold *namaskāra*. There is a verse that describes the eight-fold *namaskāra* as follows -

उरसाशिरसाचैवमनसावपुषागिरा
पद्भ्यां जाणुभ्यां कराभ्यां प्रणामोष्ठाङ्ग उच्यते

*urasā śirasā caiva manasā vapuṣā girā
padbhyāṃ jāṇubhyāṃ karābhyāṃ praṇāmoṣṭāṅga
ucyate*

A *namaskāra* done with the eight limbs – chest, head, mind, body, speech, feet, knees and hands, is called *sāṣṭāṅga-namaskāra*. The devotee who is sublimated and has visualized the infinite being, has made his offerings and done his final *namaskāra*. *Namaskāra* is that salutation in which all that is here is you. There is nothing that is not yours, O Lord. There's no I minus you. That's the whole attitude.

Saṅkalpena samarpitaṃ tava vibho pūjāṃ gr̥hāṇa prabho: All these offerings have been offered by me mentally, in my thought-system, please accept this mental worship Oh Lord!

आत्मा त्वं गिरिजामतिःसहचराःप्राणाः शरीरंगृहम्
पूजा ते विषयोपभोगरचना निद्रासमाधिस्थितिः।
सञ्चारः पदयोः प्रदक्षिणविधिः स्तोत्राणि सर्वागिरः
यद्यत्कर्म करोमि तत्तदखिलं शम्भोतवाराधनम्॥४॥

*ātmā tvam girijā matiḥ saḥacarāḥ prāṇāḥ śarīraṃ
gr̥ham
pūjā te viṣayopabhogaracanā nidrā samādhisthitiḥ
sañcāraḥ padayoh pradakṣiṇavidhiḥ stotrāṇi sarvā
giraḥ
yadyatkarma karomi tattadakhilaṃ śambho
tavārādhanam (4)*

ātmā tvam: In the fourth verse we see *ātmavam*. You are the soul, you are not my soul mate but my soul. You are not different from me. Without you how can I even move, how are my activities possible! Minus you, where is me and my will-power! Living life is the expression of powers because life itself moves by power.

Tradition speaks about three-fold powers – *icchāśakti* – the will to desire; *jñānaśakti* – the will to know; *kriyāśakti* – the will to act. These three-fold powers really make up the day to day life? The body-mind-sense complex made of the five elements is nothing but your creation and therefore *ātmavam* – that which remains as omniscience, that which abides in the consciousness. This verse therefore begins with the word *ātmā tvam* – ‘You’ are the *ātmā* – that is ‘You’ because it is not confined within this body. In fact this body sits in consciousness; and so the consciousness within is none other than ‘You! Lord Śiva!’ – the omniscient

Girijā matiḥ: The Goddess *Śakti* or *Pārvatī* is the mind. In fact all activities begin in the mind alone. Before anything is physically manifested, the first creation is in the thought system. The first blue-print happens only in the mind, then on paper and then only it comes to life in brick and cement, is it not. Imagine the power of the mind. It is unbelievable. We cannot fathom. Therefore, the power of the mind to think, belongs to the very goddess, and so the verse describes this with the words – *girijā matiḥ*.

Prāṇāḥ saḥacarāḥ: The life force, *prāṇa* propels the very physiological system, through all the thousands of *nāḍīs*. The physiological system includes the circulatory system, the gastro-intestinal system, and all other systems responsible for the functioning of the body, everything is because of the *prāṇas*, all these are your attendants – *saḥacarāḥ*. These are the smaller power that work to make this unit a complete creation of its own.

śarīraṃ gr̥ham: The body is the very home. The body is the abode of the Lord.

Pūjā te viṣayopabhogaracanā: From within this home, in whatever way I engage with the external world, the entire engagement is an offering unto you.

>>>

Because all that is there is one omniscience, one power, one consciousness; I serve the supreme, in keeping with the universal dharma, the cosmic harmony. Thus, my life experiences become my pūjā unto the Lord. my whole life is an offering unto you, unto the cosmic harmony, unto the cosmic ritual. How is that possible? By keeping with the universal dharma. Dharma is not a human social order or social law, it is the universal cosmic justice which supports life in every form.

Every form is supported by universal justice whether it is an insect or a tree or the sky or the ocean. We have no choice but to conform to and align with respect to this *dharma*, otherwise we will be punished.

Nidrā samādhisthiḥ: If my very life is a an offering unto you; then the best part of my day which my sleep also is an offering unto the Lord. So my sleep is like the state of *samādhī* for the Lord. I become one with Him.

Sañcāraḥ padayoḥ pradakṣiṇavidhiḥ: When I move about, with my feet, every step that I take, is a circumambulation. There is nothing secular about it, everywhere I put my foot is the Earth and her powers. The Earth is nothing but you, the omniscient, the element is you and therefore when I walk, it is your circumambulation. I'm circumambulating you, oh Lord!

Stotrāṇi sarvā girāḥ: My speech, the words that I utter, are all nothing but your praise. All speech is your Praise. How many of us do that! How many of us live in gratitude of the Lord! Am I living with an attitude of gratitude, of humility! If I am, it will be an expression of my alignment with the dharma. I feel this cosmic justice is fair to me. I always feel deprived. I feel I am born a sinner. I feel I don't have enough, I feel a lack, inadequate. I feel inferior, at a loss, frustrated. These feelings is what we are addressing.

Yadyatkarma karomi tattadakhilam śambho tavārāadhanam: When you perform a *pūjā* from within your soul, holding the image of the Lord as *Śivaliṅga*, offering prayers and concluding with glorification a great *namaskāra* what would be your next outpour? The next outpour can only be one thing and that is, all that every act of mine is an offering alone. So whatever has been in my experience, whether it is my thought system or my activities or my speech, everything is an expression of my worship to the Lord.



A Global Satsang with Ammaji

for Purna Vidya's
Gita Group Study Members

Q How do I know what my individual dharma is? Yama and niyama are certainly a necessary foundation. But how do we find our duty, our role in the great cosmic dharma? How can we find our purpose in life? How do we know our personal duty, our individual dharma? If we are not like Arjuna, obviously born in a kṣatriya family? How do we know what we have to do to keep or protect the whole cosmic dharma?

A There is one challenge in the western mind with regards to dharma, because in the Indian model we talk about varṇa-dharma and āśrama-dharma. The way Vedic society was structured is that you're born into a family where you know your duties and your duties are defined by your profession. Your profession is defined in society by the family in which you are born. So if you're born as a kṣatriya, in the warrior class, then you know what a warrior is supposed to do.

Now, this privilege, maybe we don't have in the Western world. The family lineage is not how you pick up your career; you choose your career early in life, or you keep choosing your career when you're not clear, some are clear in their teens, some are not clear until their 40s, some change their profession. These possibilities are available in today's world.

However in Arjuna's time, his duties were clear as a kṣatriya, as a professional. The duty that was clear to him was a little bit obnoxious at that time, he wasn't able to rise to it, he found a lot of problems with it. Not all of us may be born into a clan which has a defined profession, but as individuals playing different roles and responsibilities, we all have duties, don't we?



We call it 'duty' and consider it as 'duty' – there's nothing more here. If you are a doctor, you have the duties of a doctor. If you're a psychologist, you have specific duties that you're supposed to fulfil. It is clear cut, you know, as clear as a crystal. The key is in the choice of your duties. In the Indian system, ancestry tells you this is what you do. That's all, but the doing has to be done by you.

We are all mothers. We are all fathers. We're all students. We're all children of our parents. We are all citizens. We are all neighbours, right? We are all disciples, we are all teachers. We all have so many roles we play, every role carries its responsibilities.

When a child is crying, the mother cannot expect the baby's older brother to go and look after it. No, your instinct will tell you this is my duty.



You're not going to say well you know it's dad's turn, not mom's turn. I don't care whose turn it is, I jump in. So this duty in mind always rises to the need of the moment. Whatever is in front of you, what is the need, what is it I can do in my stage in the drama of life! Rising to that, choosing to rise to it, and to not ignore and not to neglect that duty is very simple, that is duty. Nothing big about duty. And so, when we do our duty, when we align with what needs to be done, with the script, as I just mentioned, you fall in line with the cosmic *dharma*. Why? Because it is duties that bring you peace, when you can come to the need of another life form; whether it is pouring a mug of water in the summer at the roots of a tree standing outside your house, feeding an animal or lending a hand to the needy. We begin our lives with minimum duties. Until we grow so much that it's no more a duty to do it. Oh, I've got to put a mark to this tree every day I that I pour water, then duty becomes a headache. I have to cook every day, I have to work, it's my duty, headache. When duties are no more headaches, then duties become expressions of love. Unconditionality in giving any service cultivates the heart of a giver, which is full, which is ready, which is happy and is looking for opportunities.

When such freshness, and joy are there, then you don't even need duties afterwards. You've broken into the next realm of existence, understand. So it's really a personal journey in recognizing, in intuiting. This is the language of my highest self-divinity within; to be able to fill all empty pots, fill them to the extent possible every day.

"Ammaji, what about my empty pot?" Relax, you have no empty pot. If you think you do, somebody will come and fill it. Why do you bother? Learn to live with some empty pots also, it's okay. But if you continue to fill, the Universe has a basic equation – the more you give, the more it gives you, so that you can give more. And therefore you're always going to have more than what you require. Always understand, duties are only a starting point, less-than duty is a problem. Less-than duty is selfish living. Duty is the minimum basic frame platform for us to mature into adults. Moving into the spiritual from adulthood, requires this leap, this extra leap that we just talked about.



Āyurvedic Yoga ♥

Namaste dear Sadhakas, in the last three editions of the newsletter we have dealt with the diverse effects of the pitta-doṣa. The next three editions are dedicated to vāta-doṣa. Here we will examine the respective modes of action of excess vāta at the different levels. We start again on annamayakośa, the gross, physical level and then move on to the subtle levels across prāṇamayakośa (energetic level) to manomayakośa (mental level).

Physical imbalance caused by vāta

Vāta, the wind, is dry and cold. Perhaps you still remember: vāta is generated from the elements air and ether (space) and controls everything in our body that has to do with movement: our motor movement, but also our breathing, blood circulation and excretion. If vāta manifests too much in our body, which happens with increasing age and especially in winter, we often notice this as dryness and restlessness.

Very often we then suffer from bloating (moving air) or constipation (dryness) and not only does our skin become dry, but our joints also lack nourishing lubrication. Our body becomes stiffer and more awkward as a result, which is particularly noticeable in the lower back. Other physical symptoms can be muscular restlessness, such as hyperactivity, tremors, uncontrolled movements or cramps. Fortunately, there are numerous āsana that we can use to calm an elevated vāta-doṣa.

The harmonization of vāta

Stillness or silence is the main goal of āsana practice. However, the transition to this deep relaxation must be gradual, gentle and slow. Forced silence merely suppresses vāta and then later erupts on a deeper level.

The gentle movements of mindfully performed sun-salutations (see *sūrya-namaskāra* instructions in previous 2021 newsletters) generate a gentle warmth and allow for the transformation of restlessness into dynamic stillness.

All āsanas that can give us rest and nourishment are very suitable for balancing the vāta-doṣa. These are primarily grounding āsanas such as *tadāsana*, *uttānāsana* or *utkaṭāsana*, where we can feel ourselves in firm contact with the ground. In principle, all forward bends as well as *paścimottānāsana* have a very calming effect (Newsletter July 2022).

The conclusion of each āsana practice should always be an extensive *śavāsana* of 20 to 30 minutes. If you have tension in your lower back, placing a rolled-up blanket under your knees can be very helpful.

The most important thing in practice is a caring and mindful attitude towards ourselves. :)

1.) TADĀSANA (MOUNTAIN POSE)

This posture stands as an āsana in its own right. The two following āsanas (all standing positions) also begin and end with it.

- Stand steady with feet parallel, about hip-width apart. Stretch the soles of your feet by briefly lifting your toes while inhaling and while the exhaling lowering them back to the floor. The whole foot is now in firm contact with the ground.



- Take your time to feel this solid connection to the earth. Please close your eyes.
- Breathe in and tense your leg muscles, breathing out your sacrum relaxes towards the floor. With the next inhalation, vertebrae after vertebrae lengthen upwards and the chest, neck and head also rise effortlessly.
- Exhale and relax your shoulders and arms. Feel stable and upright while standing.
- With each exhalation feel the effect of gravity, the ground that carries you. Relax into the connection with the earth without losing your uprightness...

2) **UTKAṬĀSANA** (POSE OF THE CHAIR)



- From *tadāsana*, while inhaling, raise your stretched arms over your head. The insides of your upper arms approach your ears.
- Exhaling, relax your shoulders and neck and slowly squat down. Imagine you are sitting down to a chair. The pelvis remains neutral, the entire torso is long and the chest wide. Only go as low as you can maintain the extension of your entire spine.
- Remain in this position with deep, even breathing.
- Breathing in you create length in your spine and

feel the strength of your legs. Breathing out you feel your stability and the firm contact with the ground.

- Remain in *utkaṭāsana* as long as you can remain in stillness. Then come back into *tadāsana* mindfully and feel the effect.

3.) **UTTĀNĀSANA**



- Begin in *tadāsana*, then, inhaling, raise your straight arms to the sides above your head.
- Exhaling, lower your arms over your side again and, keeping your back straight, bend forward from your hip joints.

- Bring your arms along, hands towards the ground
- As you breathe in, keep your legs actively tense and push your seat bones up. As you exhale, allow your shoulders and arms, neck and head to relax. Feel gravity aid relaxation and stretch your lower back.
- Each exhalation is an invitation to sink deeper, to sink into stillness.
- If you like, stay with your eyes closed as long as you feel comfortable. When you want to release the pose, bring your arms back up to your side and come back to standing with your back straight.
- Please do not practice if you have sciatica pain! If your back muscles are weak, you can bend your knees a little when bending forward and straightening up: this protects the lumbar spine!

Enjoy grounding contact with the ground whenever you can! Let yourself be carried!

In the next newsletter you will learn how to ground your restless vāta-energy through breathing.

We look forward to you! :)

> Text and photos by Nina;

Support: Helga, Gela, Judit, Kerstin and Birgit

Caution!

An important rule to benefit from your yoga practice is to listen to your body and always practice mindfully and without feeling pain. Every human body is anatomically different and therefore every posture should be practiced from this perspective.

If the āsanās are practiced without a teacher and thus without the possibility of a professional adjustment, the risk of injury can be greater. If you are unsure whether any of the āsana offered are good for you, we wholeheartedly advise you to speak to a certified yoga teacher or doctor before practicing that āsana.

10 Purna Vidya Mobile App



PurnaVidya Mobile App is now available in the Google/Android Play Store. The mobile App is an easier way of staying connected with Ashram programs and Ammaji's teachings.

- ✓ **The App** has been developed to keep all interested sevaks with information necessary in terms of courses, retreats, articles and PDF-Books, access to various audio and media material.
- ✓ **The features** and navigation in the App are very user friendly and best explored by the sevaks.
- ✓ **Login** can be created manually or signed in through an existing Google email account.

*With Guru's blessings, PurnaVidya is now in the palm of your hands!
We wish you an enriching spiritual journey ahead.*

>>> <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.purnavidya.mobileapp> <<<





Upcoming Workshops / Satsangs in November 2022 with Ammaji



"My Yatra - Sadhana Pancakam"

A Satsang for Sevaks

1st Saturday 5th Nov, 2022; 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. IST

Join with Zoom Meeting ID : For Sevaks Only | Passcode : For Sevaks Only



"Workshop on Youth for Parents and Teachers"

"Part 1"

A Satsang for Vedic Heritage Children

2nd Saturday, 11th Nov, 2022; 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. IST

Join with Zoom Meeting ID : 892 6178 0444 | Passcode : Heritage21



"The Wise Person"

Bhagavad Gita Workshop with Ammaji

3rd Saturday, 19th Nov, 2022; 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. IST

Join with Zoom Meeting ID: 865 9548 2491 | Passcode : Gita#001



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Purna Vidya Foundation



Dec 3
Saturday

GITA JAYANTI



Program Schedule

8.00 am - 9:00am
Puja at the Altar

9:00 am - 12:30 pm
Bhagavad Gita Chanting by
Swami Siddhabodhanandaji,
Ammaji and Arulji

12:30 pm - 1:00 pm
Gita's Message - by Ammaji



The Bhagavad Gita is the most sacred Hindu scripture that has influenced millions of people for thousands of years. Gita Jayanti is celebrated as the day when the teachings were given by Lord Krishna to Arjuna.

**All are Welcome to join us in the recitation
with your own Bhagavad Gita Pocket book
In the Ashram or In the Live Streaming**

Join Zoom Link

Meeting ID: 820 9706 8869; Password: Gita03Dec

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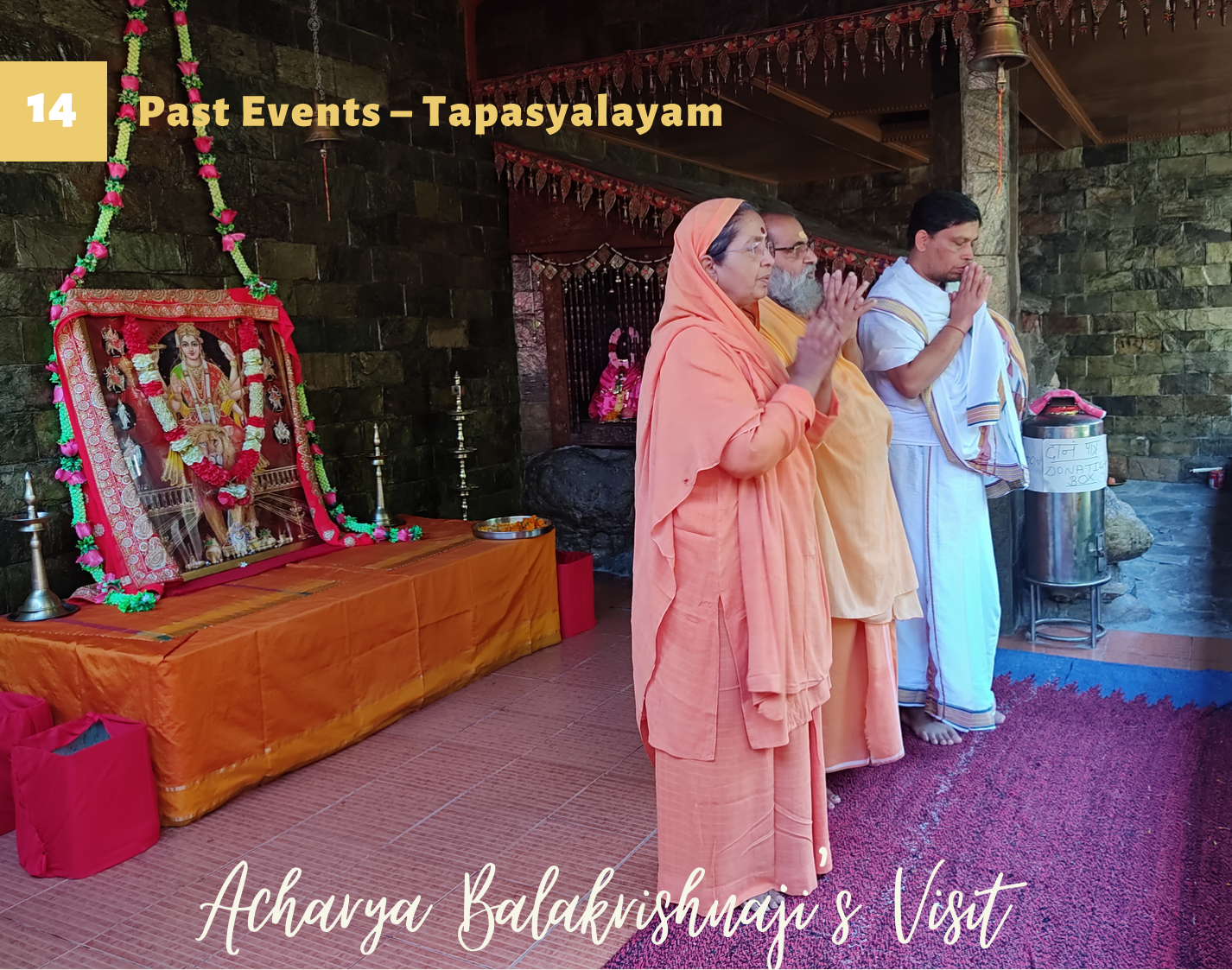


Ammaji's Satsang for Ecuador Group



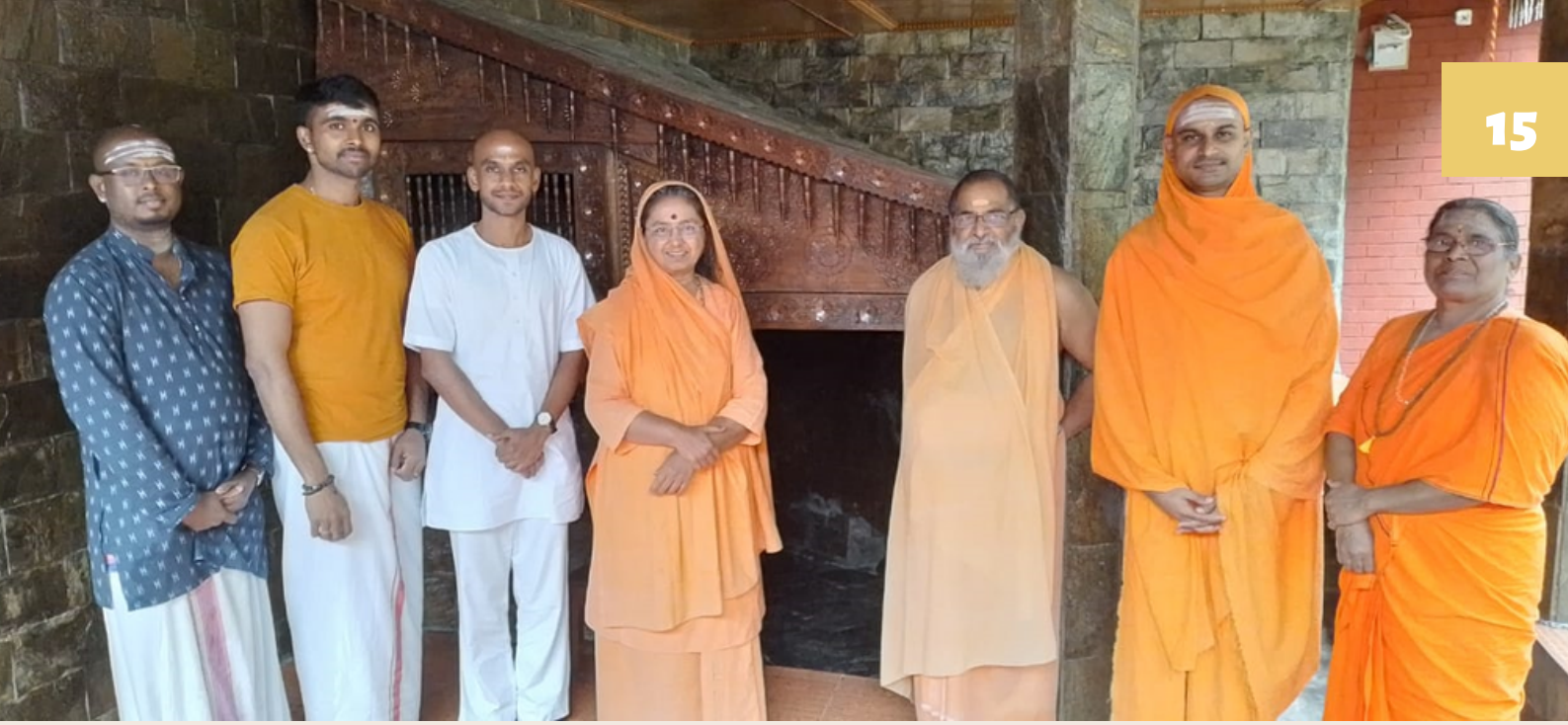
A group of seekers from Ecuador guided by Govinda ji came to the Ashram to join Ammaji's Satsangs on the Sacred Culture of Himalaya to prepare for a pilgrimage from Gangotri to Tapovan.

14 Past Events – Tapasyalayam



26th Sept. 2022 Acharya Balakrishnaji stay at Tapasyalayam, on his return from the Glacier Trek became the most memorable event of the year. Unannounced, he reached his favorite ashram on Ganga bank to be with Swamiji and Ammaji. His visit was cherished by one and all in the ashram as it also marked the first day of Navaratri at Tapasyalayam.





Swamini Shivapriyananda and students, Malaysia

Arsha Vidya Family Visits Purna Vidya

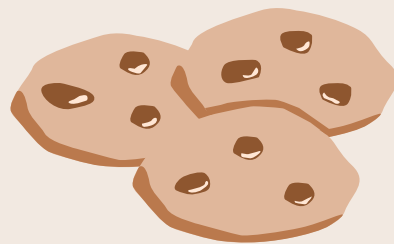


Swami Siddhananda, Chennai



Every Year Navaratri at Tapasyalayam is time for retreating into one's Sadhana and Prayers to MaGanga for ten days. But this year Navaratri was unique, as many devotees and disciples made their way to Tapasyalayam to experience Divinity on Ganga Bank and share their generosity through charities for the village-women and children.





Our Sri Swamiji's purva-ashrama eldest brother, Sri Manjunathan Embrathiry visited Tapasyalayam with his family and brought much joy to the Tuition children of the ashram, offering them gifts and chocolates for their entire stay! It was a memorable time for oe and all.



Swami Divyanandaji's Satsangs

Participating in the Navaratri Celebrations at Tapasyalayam, Swami Divyanandaji and Swami Muditavadananandaji added many special moments for the students and priests through the Satsangs and Bhajan sessions. During the Satsangs, Swami Divyanandaji shared his precious memorable years of his life in the Himalayan Glaciers, and answered many profound questions of the devotees in his inimitable way.





Navaratri in Coimbatore



Purna Vidya Foundation's Navaratri Pujas were beautifully performed by Sri Arulji, as is done every year. Prayers for the devotees and disciples of Purna Vidya across the globe were conducted in both the ashrams with great fervor and Divine mantra chants and invocations for the ten day celebrations. Many villagers participated from the vicinity and enjoyed the blessings of Goddess Lalitha-Tripurasundari through the Sri Cakra Pujas and recitations.



*let's extend our gratitude
and support the Ashram!*



Gift A Day



Dear Well Wisher,
Hari Om!

we are pleased to announce Gift-a-day campaign for supporting the Ashram's one day expense. Mark a birthday, anniversary day, etc. as your annual support to ashram's sustenance and receive the blessings of prayers at our Lord Vanalingesvara and Ma Ganga Temples.

With Ammaji's wisdom, unconditional love, tireless effort of sharing the sacred teachings, let us extend our gratitude to Purna Vidya by offering to support the cost of running the Ashram for at least one day.

Sponsor 10,000 INR for one day

Thank you all for your generosity and support.

For any additional information

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There is only one Giver - the Lord, as everything we have in life is given by Him! We can only be instruments in sharing with others, what has been given to us! Share and discover the joy of giving!

-Swamini Pramananda (Ammaji)



One Month in Tapasyalayam: A Seeker's Paradise

A visit to this place is never an ordinary visit. I came to this place wanting to have an experience of Navratri in the Himalayas. Instead, what I got was a lot more than what I had bargained for. From the exuberance of Navratri, through the depths of Vedanta and arriving to quiet moments of reflection and contemplation immersed in the rocks, rivers, mountains, forests and blue skies, this was my journey over the last four weeks. This place has a unique quality of raising questions within you but at the same time settling you from within.

I often wondered where exactly does spirituality lie. Is it in visiting the ancient temples of this land where even the silence of Shiva overwhelms and the majestic Trishul of 'Devi' and its fantastical folk-lore also overwhelms. For the 9 days of Navaratri we sat for Pujas and prayers with mesmerising Vedantic chants in the backdrop of Maa Durga and Himalayas that transport you to another dimension, is that spirituality? Is it in celebrating festivals in remote mountain villages, sitting with the locals, eating with them, invoking their gods and watching them descend from the heavens, dance, celebrate and bless the people who have made this land their home? Is it found by spending time in nature, taking walks in the forests, is it about taking dips in sacred rivers, mystical waterfalls and streams or climbing to unattainable peaks. Is it found in silent meditations or by immersing yourself in Vedantic knowledge or is it found in silently serving people. Is it in the mountains across Maa Ganga that every time I look there, it feels as if the mountains are as much aware of me as I am of it, is it in the legendary stories of great Rishis and Munis who walked on this land once upon a time or in Ammaji's stories of Maa Ganga and all the non-physical and celestial beings that allow us to share this sacred land with them.

Is it one of the above, a few of the above or none of the above? Where and how do I find God's blueprint? The more I look, the more I find and the more I experience but the more I experience, the lesser I understand and even lesser I know.

All I understand is that if spirituality is everywhere and in everything; in all of the above mentioned and more; I only realise that because of these mountains and this land. This land, these mountains and the beings here will open themselves up to you either in the humblest way possible or they can give you a shock of a lifetime. Whatever you need, whatever you are ready for, you will receive here. They will open up to you given that you come here not as a conqueror of mountains, peaks and paths but you come here as a seeker. For me, this land, the air, the water and this space is a medium between the physical world and the realm of gods and beings of all nature. No wonder they call this place the land of gods, 'Dev Bhoomi'. In this Dev Bhoomi is a small corner on the banks of Maa Ganga where the divine feminine has made her presence felt in the most powerful way. She heals, she transforms, she cares, she nurtures and she clears all obstacles that stand between you and your growth. For some she comes in the form of a river, for some she comes in the form of nature, for some in the form of Goddess Maa Ganga in a temple. To me, she came in the form of Ammaji. Maybe that's why someone called this little corner in the middle of the mighty Himalayas as a Seeker's paradise.

> Vishal Kulkarni, UK



Festive Fun Heritage Satsang: Navaratri and Deepavali Special

A special online event with Purna Vidya Children took place on Saturday 8 October 2022 to understand the significance of Navaratri and Deepavali celebration.

Children participated along with their parents. Purna Vidya faculty also participated in this event. We shared important episodes and stories related to these festivals from the Itihasas and Puranas.

With regards to Navaratri, we discussed :

- The story of Mahishasura-vadha
- Lord Rama's victory over Ravana
- The Story of Goddess Uma
- The Pandavas worship of the Shami tree

With regards to Deepavali :

- Return of Lord Rama to Ayodhya after defeating Ravana
- Emergence of Goddess Lakshmi from the milky ocean
- Lord Krishna's and Satyabhama's victory over the demon Narakasura
- Balipratipada - a celebration in honour of the beloved King Bali's return to the Earth
- How other religions celebrate Deepavali and why.

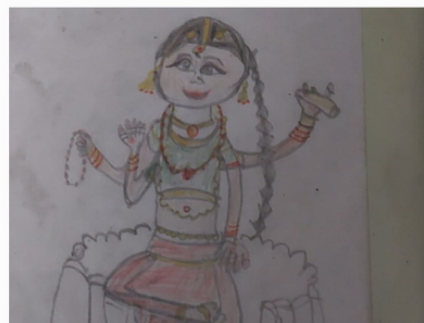
Children enjoyed a Kahoot Quiz about the Festivals. The session concluded, with a reflection of our rich heritage and culture. Although the manner in which they are celebrated can be varied and many, the spirit behind the festivals conveys the message of devotion, oneness, and victory of goodness over evil.



Niharika



Shivaradhya Surampadi



Shivaradhya Surampadi

26 Message from Editorial Team

Namaste Dear Friends!

There are several ways to develop healthy attitudes in the mind. Some of them are: taking responsibility for emotions, purity of intention, resolve, discipline and self control and being able to grow in the face of problems. Meditation is one of the best ways to train the mind. If unwanted thoughts surface, let it be so. Connect with the present and practice letting go of the unwanted thoughts. Know that we are responsible in managing our emotions and accountable for harbouring pleasant and miserable feelings. We must always remember to respond than react. For purity of intention, we need to be dharmic and be focused.

*"The mind
has a mind of
its own. We
need to
harness it
well!"*

(Ammaji)

We hope that you have enjoyed this volume of our newsletter.

We warmly welcome your feedback and contributions through

purnavidya.newsletter@gmail.com



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