

E-Vichara

Year 3

Electronic words for an Enlightened world...

1 - Hari Om from Orlando!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

A common misbelief of the modern intellect is that our Scriptures are only philosophical, not practical. Such a perspective is bred in an environment of misinterpretation. And to address and annihilate such misunderstanding, the eternal message of the Divine is shared:

**Dravya-yajnas-tapo-yajna yoga-yajnas-tatha-pare
svadhyaya-jnana-yajnas-ca yatayah samsita-vratah
Srimad Bhagavad Gita - Adhyayah 4 - Shloka 28**

**Others again offer wealth, austerity and yoga as sacrifice,
while the ascetics of self restraint and rigid vows offer study of scriptures and knowledge as sacrifice.
The Celestial Song - Chapter 4 - Verse 28**

How to infuse sacrifice into each and every action is the thought to commence Year 3 of our E-Vicharas...

E-Vichara (June 20, 2011) --- Yes to Yajnas

- Whether appreciated or not, whether accepted or not, whether acknowledged or not everyone is wealthy in their own way (i.e. with materials, with capabilities, with qualities, etc.) - every moment we have the blessed opportunity to sacrifice our wealth and to the extent we decide and plan to offer oneself (resources, time and effort) to that extent we will live a life of charity, live a life of contentment
- All true religions teach the need for austerity - every moment we have the blessed opportunity to sacrifice our indiscipline and the one and only way to actually practice self control is to invoke an ideal (i.e. our family, our community, our Divinity, etc.)
- The contemporary definition of yoga is bettering oneself, the orthodox definition of yoga is cessation of thoughts - every moment we have the blessed opportunity to sacrifice our troubled mind in the fire of 'watching the mind' catalyzing our understanding that we are more than the mind
- We are all experts in exposing ourselves to Self Knowledge and concurrently we are all amateurs in applying Self Knowledge - every moment we have the blessed opportunity to sacrifice our superficial pursuit of Peace by making the time, daily, for deep study of our Scriptures, for deep study of our Self
- Fire is known as a purifier and the fire of Knowledge is known as THE purifier - everyone moment we have the blessed opportunity to sacrifice our ignorance of the Self by dedicating ourselves less to the changing and more to the Unchanging
- These sacrifices are simply an expression of how every moment we have the blessed opportunity to engage in self development regardless of context, regardless of excuse - only sincerity and consistency in living the attitude of sacrifice will protect us from a mundane life and propel us to a mystical life

As you think so you become. So what are we thinking about? To aid us in becoming more spiritual we should think more spiritually. To aid us in thinking more spiritually we should read more spirituality.

"If you lack the courage to start, you have already finished." --- Unknown

Inspire-Love-Be

2 - Hari Om from Ithaca!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Traditionally, the 1st Scripture one studies at the Chinmaya Mission Vedanta Training Courses is **Adi Shankaracharya's Tattva Bodha (Self Knowledge)**. Having been in this situation, upon completing this text

Pujya Swami Tejomayananda had shared that the most important qualities for a seeker are faith and vigilance. We have reflected on both of these qualities many times in our E-Vicharas. Still, the more we think the more we become. And so being vigilant about vigilance is the aim of our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (June 27, 2011) --- Mindful Living

- Many modern speakers, writers and teachers share that one should 'just live in the present' and though this is a seductive message, to actually be true to the present one needs training – by developing the right relationship with the past (learning, not regretting) and the future (planning, not worrying) one tunes to the present
- The key to mindful living is mindful activities – every month we should select a different routine activity (i.e. brushing our teeth, eating breakfast, driving to work, etc.) and strive to engage in this with a single pointed mind
- As we continue to embrace more and more and more activities with mindfulness soon enough we will actually be living mindfully not just speaking, writing or teaching about doing so – the joy of focus and the pain of distraction should be the 'carrot' to urge us to continue this discipline
- A technique to home the mind to the activity on hand is to quietly describe (mentally or verbally) the actual 'movements' involved with the activity (i.e. now i am picking up the phone with my right hand and dialling with my left...) – the difference between conscious thinking and unconscious thinking is the former is controlled and the latter uncontrolled
- Just as we know we are watching a movie or a game or a show so too we should develop the attitude of 'watching' all of our affairs – with the perspective of 'watching' we invoke even mindedness, empathy and enjoyment
- Lucid dreaming is a state of mind where one knows one is dreaming and this state can be triggered by asking oneself "Am I dreaming?" while awake for the tendency is to then do the same while dreaming – in the same way, we should keep reminding ourselves to be mindful and create a support system with others to encourage the same for satsanga (similar company) is infallible

Almost all of us are almost always living mindlessly. And to begin living mindfully demands change! A major reason why we do not change is we do not understand the nature of change. **Knowledge is supremely powerful.**

"Self observation brings man to the realization of the necessity of self-change. And in observing himself a man notices that self-observation itself brings about certain changes in his inner processes. He begins to understand that self-observation is an instrument of self-change, a means of awakening." --- George Gurdjieff

Inspire-Love-Be

3 - Hari Om from Crystal City!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Animals. We love them, we hate them. We study them, we ignore them. **We treat them, we eat them! Why such disparity in our attitudes towards animals? Knowledge (spiritual) is the foundation for our attitudes.** If our knowledge is feeble our vision is feeble. If our knowledge is full our vision is full. **Aspiring to share knowledge on animals, aspiring to share vision for animals** is our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (July 4, 2011) --- Equal to Animals

- Animals are necessary for our survival (i.e. bats control the mosquito population preventing a proliferation of associated diseases such as malaria, etc.) - humans are not necessary for animals to survive and actually threaten the survival of animals (unprecedented numbers of fauna are disappearing from the earth, some forever, as a sacrifice for our greed)

- In a civilized society the less intelligent are protected (i.e. newborns, infants, children, etc.) - humans have evolved from animals and therefore are more intelligent (intellectually) yet we are immature in our evolved role and responsibilities for our present strategy is not to protect the less intelligent rather to prostitute the less intelligent (i.e. torture and kill animals for decorations, designer apparel and dinner)
- We can certainly love animals and animals can certainly love us - in the pursuit of knowledge, preservation and love of animals we should think deeply about being more sensitive to the shock, stress and sorrow an animal must face from originally being in the limitless home of nature (let us never forget we domesticated animals for our own use, this is not a natural evolution) to being in the limited hostel of captivity whether this be our labs, our zoos and even our homes
- In Sanatana Dharma (The Divine Way of Life) animals are considered to be a source of learning, are considered to be our preceptors (i.e. we can learn contentment from pythons, for they accept whatever food comes their way, etc) - we can learn from all animals (i.e. adaptability from polar bears, etc.), we can respect all animals as preceptors
- Many scientists, anthropologists, zoologists, etc. share that humans are animals while vedantins share that humans were animals and those humans still choosing to live like 'animals' may devolve to actually become animals in their next embodiment - empathy need not cease with humans rather needs to continue to animals for real world unity
- Just as humans come in different shapes and sizes and colours, animals are simply an extension of this 'catalogue of life' - imagine being a different animal, how would living be

Finally, Happy Canada Day to our Canadian brothers and sisters. Happy Independence Day to our American brothers and sisters. **Be Happy Everyday brothers and sisters...**

"The greatest obstacle to discovery is not ignorance; it is the illusion of knowledge." --- Daniel J. Boorstin

Inspire-Love-Be

4 - Hari Om from Minneapolis!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Some faiths believe that heaven and hell are places one goes to above or below the earth. And this is decided by 'God' who judges us post death. The **belief of Sanatana Dharma is that heaven and hell are not physical places but mental states. And God does not judge, for this is what makes God, God...accepting, compassionate, content. We are the ones who judge...ridiculously, ruthlessly, relentlessly. And so judgement day is actually every day, is actually every moment, for us.** Judging judgement to be non-judgemental is our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (July 11, 2011) --- Judgement Day

- Have we ever looked at someone's clothes, tasted someone's food, visited someone's Ashram and not compared the same to our own clothes, food, Ashram - what begins as merely entertaining comparisons, stealthily deteriorates to being enveloped by the very same comparisons and we all know there is no peace for the comparison-monger
- Have we ever met someone, worked with someone, listened to someone and not criticized them in one way or another - how sad that we find offering compliments to be a struggle and offering criticisms to be seamless
- Have we ever participated in a dinner, attended a reception, joined a camp and not commented on how the organizers planned for these affairs - even when organizers have noble intentions for their gatherings, the ignoble are habituated to question these intentions instead of questioning their own intentions
- Though the above thoughts are depictions of human nature today, these thoughts are not justifications - if we have not changed tomorrow we have accepted mediocrity, we have strayed from the path of Yoga (continuous growth of joy)

- By sincerely understanding that judgements are thieves of peace for oneself and others, a sincere worker of welfare for oneself and others will cease from such a destructive way of living - whenever judgements come to the mind, come to the lips, come to the hands, tell those judgements to SHUT UP
- Have we ever observed the language of our body, the content of our words, the quality of our thoughts - for those who have, these reflections will come as a mirror, for those who have not, these reflections will come as a myth lost in the mist of self absorption

Judgement can be equated to negativity, to sadness. **Non-judgement can be equated to positivity, to happiness.**

"Friendship is like a book. This book takes years to write yet seconds to burn." --- Unknown

Inspire-Love-Be

5 - Hari Om from a plane 38,000 feet above North Dakota!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

As i write this email i am listening to Bob Marley, looking at the city below and **observing how stealth this mind is in engaging in judgement.** Judgement about yesterday's dinner, comparisons of different airlines, criticisms of passengers. And so, **back by popular demand and sheer necessity is more vichara on judgement through our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (July 18, 2011) --- Judgement Day...Again

- Just as metal can subtly serve different functions (i.e. a knife can kill vs. a scalpel can save) so too thoughts can subtly serve different functions (i.e. judgement of the changing vs. discrimination towards the changing) – we have to be aware of the differing quality of thoughts we entertain (i.e. desire for indulgence and desire for Infinity are both desires yet one binds and the other breaks)
- Judgements, comparisons, criticisms serve a purpose when this is our duty (i.e. a quality control personnel) and when these types of thoughts are a base for growing towards greater joy (i.e. criticism towards doership is a catalyst to embracing surrender) - the key to developing the right contact with judgement oriented thoughts is having a wholesome purpose for oneself and others (i.e. criticism offered in a sincere manner and supported with action is constructive whereas a lack of sincerity and support is destructive)
- None of us want to be judged for this an expression of limitation, of duality – conversely we all want to be accepted for this is an expression of Limitlessness, of unity
- We know education begins at home, we know charity begins at home, why do we NOT know non-judgement begins at home too – if we do not want to be judged we should stop judging (i.e. those who are deeply conscious of their own bodies are deeply conscious of others' bodies too)
- Negative thoughts are mental sentences that never end – when writing, we end a sentence with a change of topic ('COT' as Pujya Swami Tejomayananda says when others are praising him) and the same applies for thinking (i.e. when we are lost in thoughts of criticism, we should find ourselves in thoughts [chanting the name] of the Divine)
- Each and every object, being and situation has a facet that is noteworthy, is worth imbibing – by choosing to focus on the positive we abandon anger (duality) and adopt acceptance (unity)

Spiderman has taught us, "With great power comes great responsibility." What Spiderman has not taught us is how to embrace such responsibilities. **Especially those who are public figures, asked or unasked. With great responsibility comes great judgement, again asked or unasked. And the way to learn to be responsible through being judged** is taught by the Divine through the Guru.

Please read the following message on a moving (literally!) **opportunity to study an unprecedented**

Scripture in the form of Srimad Bhagavad Gita from an unprecedented Master in the form of Pujya Swami Tejomayanandaji from of an unprecedented Ashram in the form of YOUR home!

*Bhagavad Gita Course by Pujya Swami Tejomayananda
Launch on Guru Purnima (July 15, 2011)
Register Today!*

Srimad Bhagavad Gita contains the essence of all our *Upanishads*. Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda conducted more than 500 *Gita Jnana Yajnas*, conveying the teachings of our ancient sages to the modern world. Now, Chinmaya International Foundation carries the work forward by offering a Bhagavad Gita Home Study Course in easy modules so that people can study it at their own pace at a convenient time, in the mode of their choice, whether by post or by email.

This course, authored by Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda and edited by a team of scholars from CIF, offers a complete and systematic study of *Bhagavad Gita* with a step by step elucidation of the verses in the holy text, bringing out their relevance in our daily life.

Each lesson is accompanied by a full-fledged questionnaire which helps to assess one's grasp of the facts offered in the lesson, while giving enough scope for reflection and personal assimilation. Thus the course becomes interactive, clarifies our doubts and guides our understanding along the right direction.

It is to be noted that this course is not a replication of *The Holy Gita*, the famous commentary on the text by Pujya Gurudev.

This is a highly personalised course which eventually helps us to understand the full significance of the matters discussed by Pujya Gurudev in his commentary.

The special feature of this course is its easy flowing style that demarcates the points clearly, while offering a profusion of illustrations from our day-to-day experiences.

This Guru Purnima Day, treat yourself to this *prasada* from the *Guru Parampara* and also offer it as a gift to your friends on the spiritual path.

"Guru and God both appear before me. To whom should I prostrate? I bow before Guru who introduced God to me." --- Kabir

Inspire-Love-Be

6 - Hari Om from Calgary!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

This past Weekend i had the **great fortune of being part of Chinmaya Mission Calgary's Rocky Mountain Retreat in Canmore. The cohesion of Nature - mountains, trees and respectful humans, in Canmore is indescribable.** i am trying to describe what i experienced and am failing again and again. During this Retreat we had a session of Q & A. One of the **questions was one that we all have and one we will continue to have - How to practice detachment? The answers given to this universal and undying doubt is offered through our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (July 25, 2011) --- Real Independence

- Be peaceful - only when we are full, complete, joyous will we not depend on articles, beings and circumstances (abc-s) for the same

- We believe the source of joy is beyond us, go about helter skelter projecting that joy is in abc-s and then attach ourselves to these apparent sources of joy - through Self Knowledge one Realizes that the nature of our Nature is Joy so the question of being dependent is out of the question
- Be practical - why do we think a crying man can help another crying man
- Contrary to what we believe, the true Lover of a single being or all beings is the one who is not demanded to do so nor has expectations in doing so - by developing inner strength through the 3-Rs (reading, (w)riting and reflection) we are enabled to support ourselves and others
- Be patient - other than in spiritual circles the idea of detachment is simply apathetic, antagonistic, alien
- Sincerity and regularity are pivotal in practicing independence especially amongst and with dependents - detachment is an attitude not an action, still we have to be intensely careful about not hypnotizing ourselves into believing our indulgence is facilitated by independence when there is a great chance this not

Controlled by technology or controlling technology? And more so, **why the infatuation with technology?**

"The cause of your misery is not in the life outside you, it is in you as the ego. You impose limitations on yourself and then make a vain struggle to transcend them." --- Ramana Maharshi

Inspire-Love-Be

7 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Apologies for being tardy in sharing this E-Vichara. Though **apologies are most potent sans excuses**, still i am going to share the reasons for this late message: 1 Master and 900 seekers. **Pujya Swami Tejomayananda and 900 devotees from all over the world gathered in Chicago late last week to remember and celebrate the Life & Teachings of Pujya Swami Chinmayananda leading up to His Mahasamadhi Day (August 3, 1993). Endless satsanga naturally lead to endless learning** and glimpses of this are shared through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (August 1, 2011) --- Satsanga is a Way of Life

- Reluctance to engage in that which is good for us is only before the action, never during or post the action (i.e. exercising in the morning, etc.) – reflection leads to reminding which leads to Realization
- Each and every facet of the universe has pluses and minuses (i.e. choice can be overwhelmingly satisfying or overwhelmingly stressful) - by focusing on the positive aspects of abc-s (articles, beings and circumstances) one is insulated from the corresponding negativities
- Though empathy appeals for time, by offering our total attention, even for a short period of time, to one in need, the quality of connecting with another is achieved within the construct of quantity (limitations) - sincerity is sincerely one of the most pivotal qualities of one seeking Joy
- The ego is so unimaginably integrated into our Being that we justify our a-spiritual thoughts, words and deeds (i.e. claiming to not desire results when we are actually slaves of expectation, etc.) – the one truly independent of results is the one who is silent when not recognized and equally as silent when recognized
- We are an immature society who lead family lives based on desire and then presume that spiritual teachers and spiritual literature will immediately change desire to discipline – spirituality is 'caught' not taught
- Jnana (knowledge) demands effort whereas Vijnana (wisdom) demands effortlessness - meditation is that sadhana which turns us towards the Self most potently and so to internalize knowledge thus revealing wisdom, meditation is elemental

"Exercise your mind regularly with new ideas; it needs to be kept as fit as your body." --- Unknown

Inspire-Love-Be

8 - Hari Om from Washington DC!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

On July 16, 2010 one of the **grandest movies ever imagined was offered to the world. This creation has claimed four Academy Awards, has earned a billion dollars and has demanded a decade to envision.** And i have given everyone 1 full year to watch, think and learn from this cinematic presentation of the mind. Now, it is time to investigate, inquire and internalize. **For the next month (1/4 of the movie each week) our study will be of I-N-C-E-P-T-I-O-N through our E-Vicharas...**

E-Vichara (August 8, 2011) --- Initiating Inception

(In order of scenes so follow along!)

- *(Dominic and Saito discussing at a table)* --- Those rare ones who believe there is more to life than meets the eye and actually pursue this are considered to have 'radical notions' by the mundane masses - the ones who reflect on the precarious nature of living soon enough rediscover Life and nothing is radical about this pursuit nor is anything more radical than this pursuit
- *(Dominic and Saito discussing at a party)* --- A thought is most resilient and contagious often never letting us go - we need to practice being the observer of thoughts rather than the owner of thoughts or else our lives will be diseased with sadness
- *(Dominic and Mal discussing in a standoff)* --- We wake up when we die in a dream for the varying states (waking, dreaming, sleeping) are only varying states of mind (active, unclear, dormant) - similarly, we Realize when the ego dies, in any state, so let us mark our ego relentlessly
- *(Dominic and Mal discussing in a standoff)* --- Pain is a relative concept, being impotent to the pure minded and potent to the impure minded - real beauty, strength and efficiency is through self development (i.e. self study) not sense development (i.e. sense indulgence)
- *(Dominic and Saito arguing in a room)* --- When we know an illusion we are masters of that model and when we believe in an illusion we are slaves of that model (i.e. a adult versus a child seeing 'waves' on a hot road) - if knowledge is power then Self Knowledge is All Powerful and our Spiritual Masters then are the real Kings not heads of state
- *(Arthur and Ariadne discussing in warehouse)* --- Time is a relative concept, which moves slower (i.e. while waking, complaining, etc.) and faster (i.e. while dreaming, enjoying, etc.) based on the state of mind - the mind is man and by mastering the mind man masters himself, man masters mankind, man master maya

"Meditation is like peacefully swimming in an ocean of knowledge and understanding everything." --- Unknown

Inspire-Love-Be

9 - Hari Om from Chantilly!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

The **mind is a most magnificent entity which can make or break an individual, a family, a community, a nation, a civilization.** And this power of the mind is powerfully taught through I-N-C-E-P-T-I-O-N (when i write I-N-C-E-P-T-I-O-N like this we are more in awe!). Let us continue to **engage in inception of I-N-C-E-P-T-I-O-N (Part 2 of 4) through the 'compound' of our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (August 15, 2011) --- More Inception!

- *(Dominic and Eames in restaurant)* --- If we want an idea to be internalized by another, imagination or empathy is needed - we all know we reject complex ideas and accept simple ideas so why do we lie to ourselves/others by chasing the complex

- (*Inception Crew and Dream Assistant in basement*) --- How do we definitively know we wake up from a dream and not into a dream - the mind regularly proves it's capacity to create a dream universe, dream population and dream subject
- (*Dominic, Eames and Saito on roof*) - An idea can change every aspect of a person ("*Change your thoughts, change your life.*") - when we gain knowledge (sacred or secular) we can never revert to ignorance (i.e. once i know a rainbow is an optical illusion i am not disappointed when i try to touch a rainbow, which we all still try do anyways hahaha!)
- (*Dominic and Ariadne in warehouse*) --- The moment we identify/Love Freedom more than slavery is the moment the ego/vasanas/*Mal* (mal means dirt in Hindi, wrongly in Latin and bad in French) finally fade away - the spiritual path is about merging the limited ego with the Limitless Self and to do so, *All We Need is Love...for the Divine*
- (*Inception Crew in warehouse*) --- Positive emotion trumps negative emotion each and every time (i.e. be independent vs. do not be attached) - from our intimate personal experience we all know Love is a more potent 'teacher' than force is so let us stop justifying otherwise and focus on the long term (i.e. police officers scare society to abide by the rules while Spiritual Teachers inspire society to abide by the rules)
- (*Dominic and Ariadne in elevator*) --- Do we truly want to overcome our vices ("*The main reason why we are unable to overcome our anger is that we secretly love getting angry.*" --- *Swami Tejomayananda*) - only we can forgive ourselves and in turn others (*You can spend your time alone, re-digesting past regrets, oh. Or you can come to terms and realize you're the only one who can't forgive yourself, oh. Makes much more sense, to live in the present tense.*" --- *Eddie Vedder/Mike McCready*)

So have you begun studying the movie?

"*You can tell whether a man is clever by his answers. You can tell whether a man is wise by his questions*" --- *Naguib Mahfouz*

Inspire-Love-Be

10 - Hari Om from Boston!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

With the **onset of September there is no greater period of change that North American society embraces** (i.e. students return to schools, sevaks/sevikas return to Centers, summer returns to hibernating, etc.). This is the **real 'New Years'**. And as all these changes are about to take place how will we as individuals embrace the same? **The mind hates change! By learning to embrace the mind we learn to embrace change. Insert I-N-C-E-P-T-I-O-N. We continue to study the mind through the movie (Part 3 of 4) through the E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (August 22, 2011) --- Whole Lotta Inception

- (*Dominic and Ariadne in warehouse*) --- Living with the unreal is impossible - our pursuit of peace will be eternal as long as we are dependent on the changing for joy
- (*Dominic and Ariadne in warehouse*) --- We choose to forget the Real - why are we so serious about the temporary (i.e. idam vritti or the fleeting 'this' thought) and so temporary about the Sublime (i.e. aham vritti or the foundational 'I' thought)
- (*Dominic and Ariadne in warehouse*) --- What if we do not know we are dreaming - by accepting that vices are part of who we are we covertly succumb to a life sans virtues, sans development, sans Freedom
- (*Dominic and Ariadne in warehouse*) --- Our guilt defines us, empowers the ego to control us - the past serves the purpose of teaching us to live intelligently in the present, proactively for the future
- (*Dominic and Ariadne in warehouse*) --- Only by confronting the regrets we hold onto can we let go and grow - to rediscover the ever present Self we have to learn to unlearn

- (*Eames and Arthur in warehouse*) --- Think big and equally important 'act big' ("*Musn't be afraid to dream a little bigger darling*" --- *Arthur*) - everyday we should exercise the mind by thinking of parallel universes, thinking of noble achievements, thinking like a child

This past week my flight from Washington DC to Buffalo was delayed by 2 hours. During this precious time i reflected on how quickly the summer has passed. And that the **flight i was about to take was to be my 30th for 2011...i am overwhelmed by the Love all of you have expressed towards me to include me in your study of Vedanta. i humbly offer my gratitude** to all of you for the endless opportunities you have created for me to rediscover Bhagavan. i Love Life, i Love all of you...

"Detachment is the sole security from all sorrows in life." --- Unknown

Inspire-Love-Be

11 - Hari Om from Atlanta!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Urgency. An underlying theme of I-N-C-E-P-T-I-O-N is urgency. The urgency to move within the layers, the urgency to move through the layers, the urgency to move out of the layers. This **needs to be the underlying theme of our lives too. An urgency to be Free. Sans this urgency we will be lost to limitations forever. Appreciating this need, we complete (Part 4 of 4) our 'job' on the message of I-N-C-E-P-T-I-O-N and now ride the final 'kick' which is this E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (August 29, 2011) --- Total Inception

- (*Arthur and security guard in stairwell*) --- Life (Eternal, Aware and United) and living (temporary, inert and divided) are a paradox - more paradoxically, through devoted living one discovers Life
- (*Dominic and Ariadne in hospital*) --- How do we know what is real for when the mind is immersed in a experience that becomes 'reality' (i.e. watching a movie, being in a dream, giving in to rage, etc.) - Real does not change, ever, and only That which illumines the mind is Real
- (*Dominic and Ariadne in hospital*) --- *Mallego* wants us to remain identified with limitations for this is the only way *Mallego* can survive - maya cannot bear inquiry, appreciating which, if we sincerely seek to Know Thyself all facets of our present identity/responsibility crisis (i.e. not knowing what to do as a spouse, as a sevaka, as a seeker, etc.) will fade away
- (*Dominic and Mal in kitchen*) --- We having creeping doubts about the existence of the Divine as well as the promise of joy from abc-s (articles, beings and circumstances) - by choosing abc-s and not the D (Divine) we drown in our doubts only to perish
- (*Dominic and Mal on train tracks*) --- Who do we know who has experienced death, who do we know who has experienced reincarnation, who do we know who has experienced Enlightenment - we hypothesize a few, if any, yet this does not matter for true faith is tested by surrender ("*Don't you want to take a leap of faith? Or become an old man, filled with regret, waiting to die alone?*" --- *Saito*)
- (*Dominic and Ariadne in kitchen*) --- The most subtle, universal and dangerous inception has been performed on us, believing we are separate from all - we cannot lose ourselves in such duality or else we will be lost in limbo forever...

September 1 is Ganesha Chaturthi...Ganapati Baba Moriya! September 1 is the Inauguration of the 15th Vedanta Course...our **humble prostrations to those 76 fearless seekers.**

"Change allows us to exit the comfortable and enter the improved." --- David Cottrell

Inspire-Love-Be

12 - Hari Om from Montreal!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

The discourse is too far! There is not enough time!! i do not believe in the message!!! Familiar? This is our mindset when the idea of religion...yoga...self development arises. **Enough. We are all most blessed by the opportunity Srimad Bhagavad Gita (Gita), Pujya Swami Tejomayanandaji (Guruji) and the Chinmaya International Foundation (CIF) have collectively created for us...the *Bhagavad Gita Course*. Infusing the message of the Divine in the monotony of our day** is the curriculum of our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (September 5, 2011) --- Go through Gita...Grow through Gita...

- Anthropologists are estimating that Gita is over 6,000 years old, one of the most ancient Scriptures of any religion – powerfully, Gita is also one of the most applicable sciences considering this Divine Song is studied in countless countries in countless languages and by countless people of countless faiths
- The challenges Prince Arjuna faced on the battlefield, bhaya (fear) leading to shoka (sorrow) leading to moha (delusion), are the same challenges we face at home, at work, at school, etc. – just as honesty is an eternal virtue, our limited ways of thinking are eternal vices and Gita is the 'map' to navigate past these 'storms' onto peace
- Guruji studied Gita under Pujya Swami Chinmayananda from the early 70's and has been teaching the same since the mid 70's – this equates to shraavanam (listening) of a Master for 2 decades, mananam (reflection) on the Message for 4 decades and sharing all of this purified, simplified, divinized wisdom with us in the format of an 15 month study
- Guruji can only be in one place at one time and this is often only for a few days leaving a longing for more satsanga (noble company) – Guruji's teachings can be embraced continuously if we choose so (i.e. at 6.00a before meditation or 12.00p during lunch or 9.00p before studying or anytime and all-times)
- CIF has the ideal that no excuse should prevent or even inhibit the study of our Scriptures which is why the Gita Lessons are emailed to one's inbox or mailed to one's postbox - some spiritual courses demand that one commit to the organization and/or commit one's paycheck to the organization whereas the *Bhagavad Gita Course* is open to all and for less than \$10 a lesson directed to a registered non-profit charity engaged in sustaining our Vedic Culture
- In the fields of psychiatry, commercial aviation, real estate, many objective sciences, ongoing education is required to be able to continue to engage in that profession and so how much more important is ongoing education in the subjective science of Vedanta (i.e. some Chinmaya Mission sevakas/sevikas are being encouraged to participate in a CIF Home Study Course to be able to teach Bala Vihar, Study Groups, etc.) - the *Bhagavad Gita Course* is truly an expression of Sanatana Dharma in that the answers to the questions for each lesson submitted by students are actually assessed and responded to by a Chinmaya Mission Acharya, samvada (dialogue) 2011 style!

Pujya Swami Chinmayananda had/has a vision of "ghar ghar mein Gita" (Gita in every home). **Taking the *Bhagavad Gita Course* is a means to living this vision at an individual level. And at a societal level, we can spread the word about this opportunity at our Temples, Centers, Ashrams, Philosophy Departments, Deepavali Gatherings, etc.** With ghar ghar mein Gita (Gita in every home) there will certainly be ghar ghar mein gita (joy in every home).

On August 25, 2011 Pujya Swami Dhyanananda (Resident Acharya of Chinmaya Mission Uttarakashi – *Tapovan Kuti*) attained Mahasamadhi (the physical death of a Saint). **We remember those who have passed by remembering how they lived. Please read the following pertinent question asked of Swamiji and the practical answer shared:**

Excerpt from *An Interview with Swami Dhyanananda*

Published in Tapovan Prasad

Q. Please give a message to us as sadhakas.

A. As far as I'm concerned, Gurudev has given enough Knowledge. Through his BMI chart he has made it clear that essentially we are Eternal and Ever-full beings. However, in order to remove the obstacles in us, because of which at this moment we are unable to recognise the Divine Presence in us, he gave us also the field to do selfless service. It is not a means to improve the world; it is a means for self unfoldment. So, if any work is done by any sadhaka in the Mission, as a dedicated service to Sri Gurudev, his spiritual unfoldment will surely take place; the Knowledge gained earlier, that I am that Divine Entity or Being, will come alive. It is only by doing service to the master that the knowledge gained by our study and listening will be fulfilled. The knowledge given by Gurudev and the shastra is not to gain anything, but to get rid of the obstacles, the impediments. I am convinced that unless one knows this clearly, even selfless service cannot be done. May Gurudev's grace take us to the Final Goal.

"Prayer is not a 'spare wheel' to be pulled out when in trouble, rather is a 'steering wheel' that directs the right path throughout." --- Unknown

Inspire-Love-Be

13 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

When was the last time you wrote a letter? When was the last time you did not check your electronic mail (email) for a day? When was the last time you clicked on Save Now instead of Send? A loooooooooong time ago...if ever. The use of email is as pervasive as oxygen. **The young, the old, the literate, the illiterate, the rich, the poor, are all 'breathing' emails.** Yet humans did not create oxygen. This is a naturally present element which humans naturally interact with. Conversely, humans did create email. And since this is **not natural, humans need to learn to interact with email, to not be incarcerated by email. With this introduction, you, me and emails is the Subject of this E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (September 12, 2011) --- Email Etiquette

- The aim of technological development is a balance of efficiency and effectiveness (i.e. a microwave can heat up food/drinks much quicker than a stove) - if only efficiency is achieved or only effectiveness is achieved than technology has not reached its mark (i.e. if a microwave was quick but did not heat up the food/drink or if a microwave heat up the food/drink but was slow)
- Email is extremely efficient in saving time, infrastructure, trees, etc. still email can never be as effective as a samvada (physical dialogue) - this is the essence of why living in a Gurukula (Monastery with a Spiritual Teacher) can never be replaced by a webcast, by a cd, by a book
- Everyday we send/receive 10s (based on one's role/responsibilities this 10 can be X 10!) of emails and keeping up with this volume demands dedication, determination and direction to deliver and not be defeated - ideally, we should devote (meaning no talking, no eating, no watching, etc.) certain periods of the day for certain amounts of time to address emails (i.e. 30 minutes in the morning, 30 minutes in the day and 30 minutes in the evening)
- When we think we should be clear, when we speak we should be clear and when we write we should be clear for all are an expression of each other - questions should be underlined, important points should be emboldened, the subject should be transparent, recipients in the To: Cc: Bcc: should be limited, chains should be focused, essentially presence of mind should be invoked through engaging in emails
- Though email is a legitimate means of communication (i.e. messages on Facebook are not) in the banking world, real estate world, spiritual organization world, etc. if another/others have not replied to an email needing a reply, we should be proactive (make a note of a follow up date as soon as the initial email is sent) in reminding that person/people to reply and if still no reply is received, follow up with a phone call/s - in the same way we should be diligent to reply to all emails needing our attention in the order of emergency, administrative, personal, not just ignore the email and pretend like the other person/s will not care/notice (a.k.a. apathy)

- Whenever we write an email, actually whenever we do any action, we should empathize with all potential recipients in regards to the necessity of the email, the content of the email, the frequency of emails (i.e. despite the E-Vicharas being conducive to self development, these are only regularly sent to those who sign up to receive these, not everyone i just feel like sending these to) - when we think twice about our email culture, sending/receiving emails will increase in quality, decrease in quantity and peace will prevail

Excuses in any field are weak and a sign of weakness. In the context of our E-Vichara our excuses tend to be:

Sender: *"No one replies to my emails sob sob sob."*

Receiver: *"Everyone keeps sending me emails wah wah wah."*

"One thing you can't recycle is wasted time." --- Unknown

Inspire-Love-Be

14 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Ekam sat vipraah bahudhaa vadanti (Truth is one, the wise call It by many names). The free person is the one who accepts ALL religions. The chained person is the one who accepts ONLY A religion. *Four Agreements* is a book on personal growth rooted in the Toltec Philosophy. A philosophy uniting all great (sadly this adjective has to be used as some religions no longer focus on empathy rather focus on apathy) religions whether we accept this or not. **Insights into this ancient way of thinking are shared through a modern means, our E-Vichara. And so we begin, for each agreement, an E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (September 19, 2011) --- First Agreement

- *Be impeccable with your word* – truth is applicable to thoughts, words and deeds, all the ways we interact with the world
- Our thoughts have a stealth capability to make us believe our lies – if we are not honest with oneself all else is an expression of deceit
- When we are dishonest at the individual level we invoke weakness in the form of fear, frustration, fatigue, etc. – when we are dishonest at the communal level we invoke weakness in the form of cheating, corruption, chaos
- We engage the untruth for this is easier to face, initially, yet if we pause to think about the future, the untruth is far harder to face – as soon we are aware of deception we have to openly acknowledge this, whatever be the consequences, for we all know they cannot be as poisonous as allowing deception to ferment
- The gross is simpler to control than the subtle (i.e. in meditation, stilling the body comes before still the mind), appreciating which let us resolve to never share that which is false (i.e. exaggeration, gossip, harmless lies, etc.) - when we practice speaking the truth, we will cultivate the courage to demand the same and slowly the supply will manifest
- How sad we have to make an agreement to be truthful – why oh why do we lie i cry...

"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony" --- Mahatma Gandhi

Inspire-Love-Be

15 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Ekam sat vipraah bahudhaa vadanti (Truth is one, the wise call It by many names). Fascinating how true religion teaches one and all to be truly ego-less. Yet in our interpretation and practice of religion we only become more egotistical, losing ourselves to names, forms, ignorance. Let us find ourselves by continuing with our study of the Toltec Philosophy shared through *Four Agreements* and explored through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (September 26, 2011) --- Second Agreement

- *Don't take anything personally* - the only wealth we have is peace of mind for this is regulated by ourselves whereas all other 'forms of wealth' (i.e. articles, beings and circumstances) are regulated by external parties
- Each and every one of us has inadvertent lapses, mean moods, bad days and in such states of mind what we communicate is tainted, is not meaningful - whether one is the giver or receiver of such communication, letting go of the experience is an exercise in detachment
- Just as being in the world (practical) and being worldly (possessed) are totally different so too being serious about life (passionate) and taking life seriously (pitiable) are totally different - only when we are serious about Joy will we cultivate the light heartedness to discover Joy
- When we cannot laugh at ourselves, others laugh at us and when we can laugh at ourselves, other laugh with us - which do we want
- Each and everyone one of us makes mistakes through wrong thinking, wrong speaking and wrong acting so why not forgive ourselves and others for such mistakes and evolve beyond mistakes - by practicing empathy we invoke Enlightenment
- We do not ever fully know the history, the background, the condition of another and expecting them to align with our perspective is an expression of egoism - only after exerting to understand another should we give value to their thoughts (i.e. internalizing what an intoxicated person says is a drunk idea whereas internalizing what a Guru says is a divine idea)

*"A car's windshield is so large and the rear-view mirror so small for our past is not as important as our future." -
-- Unknown*

Inspire-Love-Be

16 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Ekam sat vipraah bahudhaa vadanti (Truth is one, the wise call It by many names). *Be impeccable with your word. Why? Honesty is a catalyst to growth. Don't take anything personally. Why? Peace is our most valuable asset. Does this wisdom only apply to such and such religion? NEVER. Wisdom applies to each and every human being.* Appreciating the insights of the Toltecs as presented through *The Four Agreements* we continue to invoke wisdom through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (October 3, 2011) --- Third Agreement

- *Don't make assumptions* - at a fundamental level we are One yet we do not believe this and so we need to tune into each other (empathy) rather than out of each other (apathy)
- Since we have differing knowledge, differing attitudes, differing thoughts why would we assume anyone, leave alone everyone, understands us - the ego makes us believe that all have the same perspective as we do

- Understanding others' actions is complicated, understanding others' words is challenging, understanding others' thoughts is complex - when we do not understand others' communication, the ego inhibits us from seeking clarification (i.e. we believe we are smart, we believe we are slow and worst of all we believe we are superior)
- Often we make assumptions about the intention of another, add our own projections, and we have a completely distorted scene (i.e. that person voted with me or that person voted against me, that person greeted me or that person did not greet me and on and on and on) - the one who lives freely will clarify any assumptions, will cut any projections and tune into others' real intention creating solitude
- Almost all of the Scriptures of Sanatana Dharma are in the form of a samvada (dialogue) where a disciple shares doubts with a Guru who shares thoughts on those doubts - this means of communication has effectively existed for millennia and we need to engage in the same, especially since a great deal of our communication has shifted to an electronic format where intentions, feelings, gestures cannot be gauged
- Whenever we are in doubt and even when we are not in doubt, let us think before we act for the wise act and fools react - a simple, "Can you please clarify?" can transform a potentially agitating circumstance into one of peace

An ideal way to not make assumptions is to PAY ATTENTION! And a great way to learn is to do the same.

"Courage is very important. Like a muscle, it is strengthened by use." --- Ruth Gordon

Inspire-Love-Be

17 - Hari Om from Pittsburgh!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Ekam sat vipraah bahudhaa vadanti (Truth is one, the wise call It by many names). **The problem is not religion. The purpose of religion is self mastery. The problem is interpretation. We lie, we magnify, we ratify. And in the end we cry. WHY! DEFY!! TRY!!!** Read the words of *The Four Agreements*, reflect the wisdom of the Toltecs and realize the message of our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (October 10, 2011) --- Fourth, Final and Foremost Agreement

- *Always do your best* - is a bhashya (commentary) necessary
- When we do our best we are immune to failure (inferiority complex) and success (superiority complex) - our best is determined by effort (ourselves) not eulogies (others)
- An objective best (i.e. the smartest, coolest, prettiest, richest, healthiest etc.) is based on limitation (i.e. the bmi, the abc-s, etc.) while a subjective best is based on intuition ('the heart') - when we depend on limitation we drown in the limited and when we depend on intuition we rise in the Infinite
- Only when we know ourselves can we know what our best is - each and every day we have to engage in svadhyaya (self study) otherwise we are living 'ghosts'
- Our svadhyaya should encompass introspection, detection, negation, substitution and emancipation of our vices - when we are the best we will earn bliss (*"You have the right to work only and never to the fruits."* --- Sri Krishna / *"Do your best and leave the rest."* --- Swami Chinmayananda / *"Don't worry be happy."* --- Bobby McFerrin)
- External enemies can take a life, internal enemies can take lifetimes - external enemies only require a better strategy for victory, internal enemies only require the best strategy for victory

"It is not easy to find happiness in ourselves and it is not possible to find it elsewhere" --- Agnes Repplier

Inspire-Love-Be

18 - Hari Om from Bentonville!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Aarti, buying, cleaning...eating, fireworks, garbha. What happened to d? What happened to Deepavali? What happened to DEVELOPMENT? **When religion is divorced of philosophy this devolves to ritualism. When religion is married to philosophy this evolves to reformation. We all 'celebrate' Deepavali. Do we though?** In the coming days the whole world will be fascinated by Deepavali and so before we do let us focus on Deepavali through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (October 17, 2011) --- Deepavali is...

- *Deepavali is* a row of lamps all having been lit by an original lamp just as you and i are all lives enlivened by the original Life - when our 'Builder' is the same only our frescoes (equipments) can be different not our foundation (Existence)
- *Deepavali is* when Bhagavan Vamana (the Infinite) placed His foot on the head of King Bali (finitude) - though the ego is only an illusion, this causes delusion in we come to believe we are limited and so, separate and only by revering the feet (wisdom) of the noble will we entertain and then embrace Limitlessness and so, unity
- *Deepavali is* when Lord Rama, the embodiment of Delight, returned home with His family and friends, embodiments of duty and devotion and discipline, after transcending Ravana, the embodiment of desire - as long as we depend on articles and beings and circumstances (abc-s) for Delight we will be 'homeless' for we can only return Home by depending on duty and devotion and discipline
- *Deepavali is* the marriage of Bhagavati Lakshmi with Bhagavan Narayana symbolizing that virtue and service can never be apart - the one with virtues naturally chooses service and the one who serves naturally invokes virtues
- *Deepavali is* when Lord Krishna (selfless action) transcends Narakasura (selfish action) freeing 16,000 captive maidens (hidden potential) - with an ideal we grow out of our ordinary selves into extraordinary selves discovering capacities and capabilities we never thought possible
- *Deepavali is* a New Year and like all New Years, an opportunity to reflect on where we have come from and where we are going - reflecting on our past we should be moved by appreciation for all the entities responsible for our welfare (i.e. the sun, bees, sanitation engineers, parents, Guru) and reflecting on our future we should be moved by dedication to give back to all the entities responsible for our welfare (i.e. living in harmony with nature, spreading culture, offering Guru Dakshina)

Let us make this Deepavali different. 99.9% of the readers of the E-Vichara HAVE what they need. We do not need sweets/nuts/fruits, just check our fridges. We do not need clothes, just check our closets. We do not need candles, just check our garages. **WHY GIVE WHAT WE DO NOT NEED?**

What we DO NEED is service and virtues.

"We tend to forget that happiness doesn't come as a result of getting something we don't have, but rather of recognizing and appreciating what we do have." --- Frederick Koenig

Inspire-Love-Be

19 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

**sarvopanishado gavo dogdha gopala nandanah
partho vatsah sudhir bhokta dugdham gitamrtam mahat
Srimad Bhagavad Gita - Dhyanam Shloka 4**

**All the Upanishads are cows, the son of the cowherd is the Milkman,
Partha is the calf, the man of pure intellect is the enjoyer and the supreme nectar of Gita is the milk.**
The Celestial Song - Meditation Verse 4

Lord Krishna extracted the import of our Upanishads and 'translated' this message in such a way that Prince Arjuna could understand, in such a way that we could understand. **Any vigilant teacher, secular or sacred, will appreciate that the present generation of students (young and old) are inundated by technology, by media, by society. Knowing this, the means of teaching has to change. Knowing this, the message of teaching does not have to change!** In 2011 i have been fortunate to facilitate Teachers Training Workshops in Columbus, Washington (DC), Toronto, Niagara and Bentonville. Every time i 'teach' i learn what qualities are demanded to be an authentic teacher and these are shared through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (October 24, 2011) --- Commit, Create and Communicate for Chinmaya (Knowledge)

- **Commit** to the ideal of teaching (i.e. someone taught us, investing in society, to learn more, etc.) - when we have clarity about our role and associated responsibilities (i.e. understanding the lesson, planning around teaching, being cheerful, etc.) as teachers there is no lapse in effort and if there is a lapse in effort we need to think about whether we are mature enough to teach
- vidya danam maha danam (charity of knowledge is the greatest charity) - a gauge of a successful teacher is whether a love for learning has been instilled in a student
- **Create** the habit of reflecting over all experiences for one evolves from a student in a classroom to a *student of life* - only when we have developed this habit will we be a catalyst for a student to develop the same (i.e. to inspire, be inspired)
- Preparation (i.e. for a 1 hour class: 3 days before, read the lesson for 30 minutes, 2 days before, reflect on the lesson for 30 minutes, 1 day before, [w]rite the lesson for 30 minutes and the day of, review the lesson for 30 minutes) enables creativity and creativity enables learning through fun - empathy is epic in the field of teaching and so if we cannot bring students to knowledge we have to bring knowledge to students (i.e. through movies, music, sports, etc.)
- **Communicate** for this is the foundation of living (i.e. embracing, emailing, expecting, etc.) - we often have these magical notions that the Divine will manifest in a surreal form to punish the selfish and protect the selfless when in actuality the Divine re-establishes dharma through the communication of Scriptures, Sages and Satsanga
- At the physical level, actions speak louder than words was true, is true and will always be true so why don't we believe this (i.e. being punctual, being presentable, being personable) - at the verbal level, respect cannot be commanded, can only be earned and the way to earn respect is to respect

And let us remember to make this Deepavali different. 99.9% of the readers of the E-Vichara HAVE what they need. We do not need sweets/nuts/fruits, just check our fridges. We do not need clothes, just check our closets. We do not need candles, just check our garages. **WHY GIVE WHAT WE DO NOT NEED? What we DO NEED is service and virtues.**

"Those who are genuinely busy will never have time to tell you how busy they are." --- Unknown

Inspire-Love-Be

20 - Hari Om from Merrillville!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

It is 11.11p. Today i awoke at 5.15a, taught Guided Meditation, facilitated a Satsanga, spoke on Mindful Living, worked and studied all day, went to 2 Bhikshas, ran 5k and had my computer power adapter catch fire...i am tired. **The E-Vichara is not written and needs to be. What to do? CORRECTION! What to do is not a valid question. There is one and one option only: write the E-Vichara. Thoughts on piercing through pressure forms the slogan for our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (October 31, 2011) --- Always Be Cool! (ABC!)

- The person speaking the loudest is certainly heard the most yet the person speaking the most intelligently is listened to the most - why do we raise our voice when we ourselves do not respect those who raise their voice
- Whenever a circumstance is falling apart, the ego looks in every direction to lock blame onto someone instead of absorbing the circumstance, instead of accepting blame - why can't an unpleasant circumstance just be sans blame being involved
- Being overwhelmed is being unable to carry all of one's objects, emotions and thoughts - why have so much 'weight' in the first place
- A mind's nature is to create 'reasons' to reject responsibilities - why act on the instructions of such a rogue
- Only a personality that is calm, cool and collected lives by vision and not sight (yah pashyati sa pashyati) - why ever let go of the lighthouse that is our ideal
- In moments of high tension our real character or lack thereof is conveyed (i.e. Mahatma Gandhi chanting Ram while dying vs. Duryodhana ignorantly speaking to Dronacharya in Srimad Bhagavad Gita's Chapter 1) - why so serious

Always being cool is synonymous with patience.

"A man who dares to waste one hour of life has not discovered the value of life." --- Charles Darwin

Inspire-Love-Be

21 - Hari Om from Peoria!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

This past month, approximately a billion people around the world were given an extra hour of time on account of Daylight Saving Time ending for 2011. Time: a relative measurement, an elusive entity, an abstract idea.

Regardless of how many interpretations of time there are, what is definitive is a moment passed is a moment that will never ever return. What would you do with an extra hour is the schedule for our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (November 7, 2011) --- Time on Trial

- **With an extra hour we could organize** our physical desks (i.e. where our computers are), our virtual desks (i.e. where our emails are) - when our outer world is organized less time is demanded in 'looking' (i.e. keys, etc.) and more time is offered in 'executing' (i.e. driving, etc.)
- **With an extra hour we could exercise** for a healthy body is a magnet and an unhealthy body is a drain, one attracting time and the other dissipating time - every individual and every society fundamentally needs to unlearn that exercising takes time and start learning that exercising makes time
- **With an extra hour we could plan** our day, our week, our month, our year, our decade, depending on the present evolution of our planning - each and every visionary (i.e. Adi Shankaracharya, Swami Chinmayananda, Sam Walton, etc.) was a planner so why are we inert to following the same guidance
- **With an extra hour we could study** religion, for 95% of those reading these thoughts have a great deal of secular knowledge yet not a correspondent peace of mind - by listening (live or recorded) to the teachings of an Acharya (one who guides by exemplary living) for 15 minutes a day we will be inspired to use time (live) rather than let time use us (die)
- **With an extra hour we could seek** to resolve the inner conflicts we have about the ideas religion shares which are initially radical to what society preaches - the ones who have invested in themselves through reflection, clear all inner conflicts and so clear all outer conflicts and that my friends is truly radical

- **With an extra hour we could serve** the neighbour, we could serve the neglected, we could serve the nation - the more time we give to others the more time the Divine gives to us to invoke and evoke Joy

What did i do with the extra hour? i wrote emails until 2.00a became 1.00a.

"A table, a chair, a bowl of fruit and a violin; what else does man need to be happy?" --- Albert Einstein

Inspire-Love-Be

22 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

shri guru charana saroja raja nija manu mukuru sudhari I
Hanuman Chalisa - doha 1

With a serene mind, purified by the dust of the lotus feet of the Guru.
The 40 Verses on Hanuman - couplet 1

Hanuman Chalisa - heard by billions, sung by millions, taught by thousands, understood by hundreds, lived by few. Why such attrition? An attitude for complacency - why learn? An attitude against change - why learn! This summer i had the indescribable blessing of listening to Pujya Swami Tejomayananda sing, teach and most meaningfully, live Hanuman Chalisa. We often use the phrase 'indescribable' in an exaggerated sense, we do not mean this. When describing the grace of the Guru even the word 'indescribable' is inadequate and as a thinker and a writer, i mean this! Insights into the insights shared on Hanuman Chalisa are shared on this edition of E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (November 14, 2011) --- Ashta Siddhi an Applied Science

- Whenever we think of the ashta siddhi (8 phenomenal powers) we tend to drift to the epic Ramayana and Lord Hanuman manipulating His body while flying to Lanka – the ashta siddhi of the body can certainly conquer the outer enemy of wickedness but the ashta siddhi of the mind, more potently, can conquer the inner enemy of selfishness
- (*Anima* the phenomenal power to be imperceptible) --- The defining characteristic of a personality in tune with religion is humility - by learning to say 'good work', by learning to say 'I'm sorry', by learning to say nothing we become a catalyst to raise others
- (*Mahima* the phenomenal power to be immense) --- The defining characteristic of a leader is the ability to lead oneself - every circumstance naturally manifests 95% of people as followers and we must be aware of the need to lead
- (*Laghima* the phenomenal power to be weightless) --- The defining characteristic of a free mind is how sincerely and how regularly one smiles - by starting to take Happiness seriously we stop taking the ego seriously and the net profit is a minimal 'crying footprint' and a minimal 'carbon footprint'
- (*Garima* the phenomenal power to be weighty) --- The defining characteristic of one living in balance with Life is a balanced mind - every facet of the universe is changing and to fight change is to be inert and to flow with change is to be intelligent
- In a religious context, a frequently asked question is 'whether Lord Rama actually lived, whether Mahabharata actually took place, etc.' and the unhesitatingly given answer is 'yes' - more important than the articles, beings and circumstances of religion is the desideratum, the message of self mastery which you and i need to find ways to execute not excuse and practicing any of the ashta siddhi is the ideal means to transform from human to Hanuman

And i have not forgotten how to count hahaha! We shall **complete our exploration of the ashta siddhi when we meet next week from my 'heart' through the internet to your 'heart'.**

"Come out into the universe of Light. Everything in the universe is yours. Stretch out your arms and embrace it with love. If you ever felt you wanted to do that, you have felt God." --- Swami Vivekananda

Inspire-Love-Be

23 - Hari Om from Houston!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

ashta siddhi nau nidhi ke data I
Hanuman Chalisa - doha 31

Granter of the eight phenomenal powers and the nine forms of wealth.
The 40 Verses on Hanuman - couplet 31

Hanuman Chalisa - heard by billions, sung by millions, taught by thousands, understood by hundreds, lived by few. Why such attrition? An attitude for complacency - why learn? An attitude against change - why learn! We continue to learn what real power is through Hanuman Chalisa through E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (November 21, 2011) --- Ashta Siddhi an Aid to Solidarity

- External power (i.e. muscles, media, ministers) is dependent on external factors (i.e. age, bias, voters) and so is illusory – internal power (i.e. inspiration, love, peace) is dependent on internal factors (i.e. knowledge, vision, thoughts) and so is Infinite
- (*Prapti* is the phenomenal power to gain all that is desired) --- There is no substitute for hard work (arpana buddhi) – when we work hard we invoke joy (prasada buddhi) and this is all that we desire
- (*Prakamya* is the phenomenal power to gain access to all) --- We all play countless roles encompassing countless responsibilities whether we like this fact or loathe this fact – by accepting these roles and responsibilities people will accept us and allow us to be near and dear to them
- (*Ishitvam* is the phenomenal power to rule over all) – The influence of association (satsanga or dussanga) must be respected for one to grow – through reforming oneself all those around oneself are fated to reform (i.e. when Mohandas Gandhi 'grew' to become Mahatma Gandhi, enslaved Indians 'grew' to become emancipated Indians)
- (*Vashitvam* is the phenomenal power to control all) – how do we want to be taught, how do we want to be treated, how do we want to be tested – when we give Love we receive Love
- To evolve from treating Hanuman Chalisa as a devotional song to be sung as a hobby on Tuesday evening or Saturday afternoon into an ideal to be habitually lived demands remembrance - neatly write down all 7 phenomenal powers (join laghima and garima) with their explanation and keep a copy of this on the bathroom mirror, kitchen refrigerator, passenger-side dashboard, office desk and computer casing with the aspiration to live a different phenomenal power each day of the week (anima on Monday, mahima on Tuesday, laghima-garima on Wednesday, prapti on Thursday, prakamya on Friday, ishitvam on Saturday and vashitvam on Sunday)

"Unselfishness is God. One may live on a throne, in a golden palace, and be perfectly unselfish; and then he is in God. Another may live in a hut and wear rags, and have nothing in the world; yet, if he is selfish, he is intensely merged in the world." --- Swami Vivekananda

Inspire-Love-Be

24 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Chinmaya Prabha...CHYKsGiving...The Game of Life...80 Young Adults from around the World...priceless. Granting access to what all those in Houston were privy to is the authority of our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (November 28, 2011) --- The Game of Living

- Like Existence, like Energy, Life is uncreated, is undestroyed, IS – as such, Life is not a game, cannot be a game, whilst living is
- The one and only **purpose** of living is to know Life = to know Thyself = to know Joy – all other purposes given priority to this purpose can be translated quite simply as blah blah blah, blah blah
- We often succumb to preconceived notions that religion is not applicable to our health, to householders, to the 'have-s' – the **field** for living is all places and all times (i.e. our samskaras [purification rites] begin in the womb and conclude in the tomb)
- Whether accepted or not, you, me and all of humanity are **players** – if we are not playing well, associate with those who are (satsanga) and if others are not playing well, lead by example
- Dharma or the **rules** are fundamental to the game being played smoothly – the first and foremost rule we all have to play by is being truthful for if we are not truthful we destroy the game for one and all (i.e. the rampant corruption ravaging all nations)
- What happens during a game, we, with our limited understanding of the purpose, field, players and rules, frequently question, frequently revolt, frequently suffer - a Guru is one with full understanding of the purpose, field, players and rules and so is ever efficient and effective and to be adept players we need to have faith in the insights of this umpire

"You have enemies? Good. That means you've stood up for something in your life." --- Winston Churchill

Inspire-Love-Be

25 - Hari Om from London!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

What is culture? Dancing, singing, cooking, etc. What was culture? Satsanga. Why the disparity? Distraction. With our distracted minds we have lost the purpose of our culture. Our visionary sages, the Rishi-s, built families, built communities, built nations upon our samskara-s (rites of passage). And **if our families, communities, nations are disintegrating, we need to study our samskaras, we need to save our samskara-s to invoke and evoke integration at all levels. We have 16 prominent samskara-s and we will be exploring all of these for the last month of 2011's E-Vicharas...**

E-Vichara (December 5, 2011) --- Significance of our Samskara-s

- A samskara is an action well done and only that action which cultivates purity of mind is worthy while an action that does not purify the mind is purposeless - each and every samskara revolves around satsanga for satsanga connects (sanga) us to Joy (Sat)
1. *Garbhadana* is when a married couple invoke the desire to raise a child - this desire is based on Love (controlled) and not lust (uncontrolled)
 2. *Pumsavana* is when the physical body and physiological systems of the 3 month old fetus are developing - satsanga is encouragement for the parents to be strong and so naturally the child to be

3. *Simantonnayana* is when the mind and intellect of the 5/6 month old fetus are developing - in this last of the prenatal samskara-s the father parts the hair of the mother symbolizing the opening of her mind (well being) and the opening of child's mind (healthy future)
 4. *Jatakarma* is the first of the childhood samskara-s for this is when the child eats independently for the first time (umbilical cord is cut) - as soon as the child is born, the father symbolically feeds the child with sugar, butter and yogurt invoking sweetness, strength and serenity, respectively, in all of the child's experiences
- Though these traditions are not directly applicable to everyone reading these thoughts, the vision of these traditions is most definitely applicable - unless the educated learn and teach these traditions, these traditions will die and so while we are alive let us ensure this remains a hypothetical

"I heard and I forgot. I saw and I forgot. I did and I remembered it forever." --- Benjamin Franklin

Inspire-Love-Be

26 - Hari Om from Mumbai (and specifically from Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, my 'birthplace')!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

The most intimate, immediate, illuminating Knowledge is of the Self. We are Infinite. We feel finite. Why? **We are looking at ourselves with our eyes. We are not looking at ourselves with empathy. To be able to 'see' what cannot be seen with the eyes we need purity.** And purity is the purpose of our samskaras, the purpose of our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (December 12, 2011) --- Growing with Samskaras

- Our Rishis were truly Seers in initiating satsanga even before a child is born (prenatal) - more important than vitality in the body is nobility in the mind
5. *Namakarana* is naming of the newborn after 11 days, a name which will unconsciously be their favourite amongst all names (i.e. we may not hear other names being called but we always hear our own) - a name cannot be disassociated from the respective qualities and so a divine name triggers remembrance of divine qualities (i.e. Rama reminds us of compassion)
 6. *Nishkramana* is when the 4 month old child is taken by the father to the Temple for the first time - during this darshan (homage), symbolically the child is introduced to his/her Original parents and encouraged to seek Them, while the parents are introduced to their Divine child and encouraged to serve him/her
 7. *Annaprashana* is when the child's digestive system and teeth are matured enough to be able to eat solid food for the first time at the age of 6 months - water and plants are worshipped during this satsanga not only because these parts of Mother Earth will sustain the child but we are what we eat and when we ingest that which is pure we invoke that which is pure (i.e. peace)
 8. *Karnavedha* is when the child's ears are pierced with a thin gold wire which is then looped and cut, at the age of 7 months - Sushruta, a master of Ayurveda, has expounded that this samskara achieves the purpose of stimulating a nerve in the earlobe connected to the brain inspiring mental well-being
- A healthy body encourages a healthy mind, a healthy mind encourages a healthy intellect, a healthy intellect encourages healthy seeking and healthy seeking encourages Happiness - each and every one of our samskaras is a simple, succinct, striking reminder to live as a seeker and not as a wanderer

This week i have reached a milestone on my journey to the Divine...i have been asked to speak at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, the foremost institution of Vedantic studies. i bow my head and mind low to the feet of my Guru, Pujya Swami Tejomayanandaji for this joy instilling opportunity...

"When God solves our problems, we have faith in His abilities; when God does not solve our problems, He has faith in our abilities." --- Unknown

Inspire-Love-Be

27 - Hari Om from Coimbatore!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

We are deep into the Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra (CIY). **The last few days we have lived at Adi Shankara Nilayam, the actual birthplace of Bhagavan Adi Shankaracharya. Who is...**

BHAGAVADPADA ACHARYA SANKARA WAS NOT ONLY A GREAT THINKER AND THE NOBLEST OF ADVAITIC PHILOSOPHERS, BUT HE WAS ESSENTIALLY AN INSPIRED CHAMPION OF HINDUISM AND ONE OF THE MOST VIGOROUS MISSIONARIES IN OUR COUNTRY. --- Excerpt from Sankara, The Spiritual General by Swami Chinmayananda

What does Bhagavan Adi Shankaracharya have to do with us? **His life and teachings are a 'lighthouse' in guiding us to purify the mind, to free the mind. Our samskara-s serve the same purpose. And so we continue** with the 3/4 of our samskara-s presented by the E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (December 19, 2011) --- Samskara-s Create Seekers

- The young and the old often trick themselves and each other into believing growing older means growing wiser yet this is an illusory insight - only when we consciously think about our experiences do we learn from them and so all our samskara-s encourage us to think, think and think more about our experiences
- 09. *Chudakarana* is when the child's head is shaved at the age of 1 or 3, sans a shikha (a tuft/strand of hairs at the upper back portion of the head) - the shikha symbolizes that the only attachment a evolving child should have is to the Guru (means), that the only desire a evolving child should have is to Enlightenment (End)
- 10. *Aksharabhyasa/Vidyarambham* is when the child is introduced to the akshara-s (alphabets) at the age of 5 by being given a golden pen and guided to write the askhara-s on a bed of rice or wheat - this rice or wheat is then cooked (our efforts to understand the message of the Scriptures), offered (the purpose of secular and sacred education is to serve society and know Thyself) to the Divine and received (learning we are Akshara [Indestructible]) as blessings
- 11. *Upanayanam* is when the child transforms into a student at the age of 8 to 12 by being bestowed with the yajnopavita/janoi (sacred thread) and being *upa* (near) *nayanam* (led) to the Guru (the dispeller of ignorance), Gayatri Mantra (the sound symbol which empowers one to cross over sorrow) and God (the Generator-Operator-Destroyer) - the sacred thread 'divides' the body in half encouraging the student to cease from focusing on the genital organ and stomach and to commence focusing on the heart and head
- 12. *Samavartana* is when the student has sincerely learned how to be a responsible citizen in every facet of living (i.e. physically, mentally, intellectually, etc.) and so is ready to enter the ghrastashrama (being a householder) - in this ceremony the student seeks permission from the Acharya to leave the Gurukula and offers dakshina (an expression of gratitude for the sacrifice the Acharya has taken on to teach the student and to support the Acharya's noble service towards other students) showing the calibre of the developed personality
- A student is called a dvi-ja (twice-born) for he/she was given a biological birth by the mother/father and is given a religious birth by the Acharya - the mother/father teach a child how to be healthy, the Acharya teaches a student how to be happy and regardless of which role and which responsibility, our mothers, fathers and Acharyas are the Divine with a form and name

This E-Vichara was to be sent to all of you last week. **In the 2 1/2 years of sharing E-Vichara-s, i have always been disciplined in sending reflections within the limit of the week. This week, on account of lacking a consistent computer and internet connection combined with constant traveling, i have been unable to fulfil this commitment.** My apologies to all. i shall be more disciplined moving forward...

"There is nothing that wastes the body like worry, and one who has any faith in God should be ashamed to worry about anything whatsoever." --- Mahatma Gandhi

Inspire-Love-Be

28 - Hari Om from Siruvani!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

All that is born has to die. **A mind that is pure has to Realize. As the calendar year comes to a conclusion, the exploration of our samskara-s comes to a completion.** Our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (December 26, 2011) --- Solace in Samskara-s

- We often confuse being an adult with the maturity of the body (an unconscious process) when being an adult is about the maturity of the mind (a conscious process) - the samskara-s of Sanatana Dharma infuse the mind with the importance of constant satsanga, seva and sadhana allowing one to evolve not only to an adult but to Ananda
- 13. *Vivaha (visheshena vahana iti vivaha - a distinct kind of upliftment is marriage)* is when a student has evolved into an adult and so is ready to lift-support-uphold themselves, another being, another family, another society, another community, etc. - beautifully, vivaha and dharma are synonyms for through marriage one has the privilege to experientially learn about sacrifice, service and silence, all virtues necessary for Moksha
- 14. *Panchamahayajna* is the first samskara that individuals perform on their own and naturally this is for others - every human being is perpetually being nourished by the deva-s (nature), bhuta-s (creatures), samaj-s (societies), pitr-s (ancestors) and rishi-s (seers) and to perpetually offer gratitude for all we receive is a great sacrifice to these five givers
- 15. *Vanaprastha* is the expression of courage of one who has lived by dharma and so is strong enough to retreat within ('residing in the forest') - only a purified mind can grow past focusing on fortune, family, fame and can grow into focusing on Freedom
- 16. *Antyeshthi* is when the body dies and the dynamic expression of the elements (space, air, fire, water and earth) returns to a static condition - when the body falls, the mind rises and so the only friend at the time of death is our merits, is our thoughts, is our knowledge, all encrypted in the software (mind), not the hardware (body) nor the electricity (Soul)
- The purpose of living is to know intimately, not intellectually, that we were never born and we will never die - the profundity of this purpose can only be absorbed and acted upon by a pure mind, by a mind seeking solace in samskara-s

Studying the samskara-s...check. **What is our next subject?** We shall have to wait until next year to find out...

May the Divine and Guru Parampara bless all of us for a safe and serene 2012. Om Tat Sat I

"A ship on the port is safe, but that's not what ships are built for." --- Grace Murray Hopper

Inspire-Love-Be

29 - Hari Om from Kolwan!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

How often do we hear/read statements along the lines of: *Youth are the future of society! Youth will be the next leaders!! Youth are our only hope!!! Yet, how often do we actually believe these statements? We better start believing. As the teachers in our schools, trustees in our organizations and toastmasters in our governments continue to age, who is going to step up when they step down?* In the business field, an entity is valued within the framework of being ongoing. This logical principle should not apply to business alone rather should apply to every entity (i.e. a university, a undertaking, a union, etc.). And this subtle insight is the foundation for the *Chinmaya Yuva Kendra (CHYK)*. **A demographic with unmatched intelligence, unmatched talents and unmatched capacity. And if given guidance, unmatched potential. 20 of these CHYKs were recently led to Bharat (India) - the land of illumination. 20 Days of listening to Masters, learning at Ashrams (monasteries) and living with guidance. The product of 20 CHYKs for 20 days is beyond calculation. Still, for all those who missed this precious pilgrimage, we share our prasada through the E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (January 2, 2012) --- the Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra: Leg 1 - Jnana

- Sandeepany Sadhanalaya is one of the foremost Vedantic Institutions to have ever existed in the universe - naturally this would be the case considering this Ashram is the brainchild of one of the foremost Vedantic Masters to have ever existed in the universe, Pujya Swami Chinmayananda
- A name (i.e. Acharya) and form (i.e. Ashram) does not make one great, rather the essence of one does and the essence of all great ones, regardless of field, is knowledge of the field (i.e. Wayne Gretzky in hockey, Warren Buffet in investing, Winston Churchill in leadership, etc.) - the essence of all knowledges is Jnana (Self Knowledge) for this frees one from being dependent on any other knowledge
- Pujya Swami Tejomayananda shared the Truth is indescribable, thought not in-experienceable - the Guru teaches us to know the Truth using no equipments (meditation to Meditation)
- Swami Ishwarananda shared the ego is persistent for we are perpetually concerned with our image - when we have faith in ourselves we can drop the ego and hold the Self
- Swami Advayananda shared in worldly pursuits the more we gain the more we lose (i.e. satisfying greed grows greed) - why do we make the choice to pursue artha (finitude) when we can pursue Ananta (Infinitude)
- Brahmachari Samvid shared that bhakti (devotion), jnana (knowledge) and vairagya (independence) will always be protected as long as Srimad Bhagavatam is protected - whenever sad we should read 2 pages of Srimad Bhagavatam

Stay tuned for further insights into the outward expression of our inward journey...

"Happiness is your nature. It is not wrong to desire it. What is wrong is seeking it outside when it is inside." --- Ramana Maharshi

Inspire-Love-Be

30 - Hari Om from Chicago!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

A yatra is an outward expression of an inward journey. By turning within we rediscover true efficiency, true Ecstasy. Every year we should commit to an external yatra. Every day we should commit to an internal yatra. **Reflections from the Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra is the prasada we continue to share through our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (January 9, 2012) --- the Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra: Leg 2 - Vichara

- Chinmaya International Foundation is the birthplace of Bhagavan Adi Shankara - need more insights be shared
- Just as food can benefit the body only when digested so too Knowledge can benefit the mind only when internalized - the difference between thinking (the constant meaningless dialogue the mind is habituated to) and reflecting (the focused meaningful analysis the mind needs to be habituated to) can be equated to the difference in effectiveness of one who is unconscious and one who is conscious
- Swami Ramakrishnananda shared whenever we have a problem we either escape the circumstance, change the circumstance and/or suffer the circumstance - the technique on how to handle problems is Philosophy
- The person with less thoughts is beautiful - knowing this, are our Masters not more beautiful than our models
- Our 'shell', forever limiting us, is the ego and this can only be broken at the altar of the Divine - when limitations (ignorance) are lost, Limitlessness (Infinity) is found
- Once one has a taste of living in an ashram, the false valuations we offer to comfort, entertainment and pleasure is constricted - a genuine student at a genuine ashram learns to not need to physically remain at the ashram for wherever he/she goes he/she continues to 'live in the ashram' carrying and creating the ananda of an ashram everywhere, every moment

On January 13, 2008 i formally began 'teaching' Vedanta. That day at Chinmaya Dhara in Niagara Falls, Canada i shared thoughts on Bhaja Govindam to the adults and Bleeding the Truth to the youth. **Four years of growing satsanga, seva and sadhana are complete. i humbly offer my gratitude to the Divine, to the Guru Parampara and to the people for offering me the opportunity to 'study' Vedanta for four years.** i am moved by the dream of being able to continue to study and share until this instrument is no longer needed...

If i could summarize what i have learned in 2011, this would be encapsulated in the quote the ever present Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji 'gave' to me as prasada after Chinmaya Jivan Darshan...

"Take insults and praises as His prasada." --- Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

31 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Who is an Acharya? One who leads an exemplary life. As seekers, if we follow this lead, we too will be exemplary. The aspiration of the CIY was/is to **connect shishya-s from the West with Acharya-s of the East...in the Ashram-s where shishya-s transformed to become Acharya-s...**Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Adi Shankara Nilayam...**we continue to evolve within through exploring without on our Yatra together through the E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (January 16, 2012) --- the Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra: Leg 3 - Abhyasa

- Chinmaya International Residential School was the 'last' project Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji formally initiated - Chinmaya International Residential School is the 'first' project Pujya Swami Tejomayanandaji formally completed
- To be peaceful in a controlled environment is natural, is easy - to be peaceful in an uncontrolled environment demands practice (abhyasa), is real
- Swami Swaroopananda shared believing a finite path (actions) will lead us to an Infinite destination (our Nature) is a journey that will never end - all bmi-s are impermanent, all abc-s are impermanent and all contact between these equipments and entities are impermanent so where is the question of permanency

- A righteous leader is one in whose kingdom none go hungry and if someone steals for food, the leader should be punished - money belongs to us, not the world's resources and if we believe otherwise, we are thieves
- Nature is most sensual for enjoyment can be evoked sans lust - excessive food eats us (we feel less energized after overeating)
- The tendency of the mind is to devolve from sattva (ease) to rajas (excitement) when introduced to a crowd for some, when immersed in a crowd for others (i.e. mob mentality) - the opportunity cost of succumbing to rajas is peace appreciating which, do whatever it takes to stay sattvic

"You can never make the same mistake twice because the second time you make it, it's not a mistake, it's a choice." --- Unknown

Inspire-Love-Be

32 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Everyone wanting to be happier is a seeker. And Happiness is our nature. Connecting the dots, everyone wants to know their nature. How though? How are we to know our Self? *"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."* (Mahatma Gandhi). **After jnana (knowledge), vichara (reflection) and abhyasa (practice) our focus should be seva (service), our focus is seva through the E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (January 23, 2012) --- the Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra: Leg 4 - Seva

- The Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development in Siruvani is a pure expression of service above self - in this rustic district, tens are helping hundreds and if millions followed suit, billions would be moved
- In our arrogance we proclaim the Divine is Infinite yet still believe we are finite - knowledge triggers service which triggers wisdom which triggers Freedom
- The Divine identifies with all and so is compassionate - only when we forget we are part of the Totality do we devolve from Infinite potential to individual potential
- Hanumanji's golden bracelets do not symbolize material wealth (i.e stuff), rather spiritual wealth (i.e. service) - with empathy as a catalyst, evolving from man to Hanuman is effortless
- Being able to serve is a privilege and each and every being is privileged to be able to support another being/s (i.e. through donating, through teaching, through smiling, etc., etc., etc.) - only through such remembrance can we escape and exorcise the secretive, versatile, justified 'spiritual ego'
- God helps those who help themselves and God helps those more who help others - why focus on ourselves when we can focus on others

"Extending one hand to help somebody has more value than joining two hands for prayer." --- Anonymous

Inspire-Love-Be

33 - Hari Om from San Diego!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Just as a person only dies when we no longer remember the personality so too a yatra only ends when we no longer remember the journey. Together we learned at Sandeepany, reflected at CIF, practiced at CIRS and served at CORD. **The focus of the final leg of the Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra is the same focus as the**

final leg of every jiva's yatra (human's evolution), wisdom. We complete our report of aspiring to abide in ananda by signing off with the E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (January 30, 2012) --- the Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra: Leg 5 - Vijnana

- Chinmaya Vibhooti is a Vision Centre envisioned by Pujya Swami Tejomayanandaji for the older to keep the vision of Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda alight and to alight the vision of Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji for the younger - a vision alight is a vision alive
- Our Masters show us the light (Knowledge), but it is we who have to follow the light to Know the light (Wisdom) - the moment we assume responsibility for our happiness or lack thereof is the moment we evolve from slaves to seekers
- Swami Advaitananda shared *I* is the most selfish one letter word, avoid it - the rudimentary expression of the ego is separation and in separation before you is *I*
- *We* is the most satisfying two letter word, use it - the rudimentary expression of egoless-ness is unity and in unity all vices are vanquished and all virtues are validated
- *Rumour* is the most contagious six letter word, avoid it - if being truthful leads one to the Truth (Serenity) then being untruthful leads one to the untruth (strife) and when was a rumour ever associated with the truth, when was the giver/receiver of a rumour ever associated with serenity
- *Knowledge* is the most powerful nine letter word, acquire it - individuals make societies, societies make nations, nations make worlds and appreciating Knowledge as the most comprehensive catalyst for change, if we connect all the dots, to cure the world of disharmony demands we dedicate ourselves to harmony

i was asked to write a foreword to the reflections of the yatri-s on the 1st Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra that are being collected for their own sustained enlightenment and to share the same with other yatri-s. i share this foreword with all for all have joined us for this yatra....

A vacation is a break from the responsibilities of home. A yatra is a break from the redundancy of vacations. ENOUGH seeking fulfillment in abc-s. ENOUGH escaping the suffering of the mind. ENOUGH believing one is limited...

Every being has drifted from Home seeking, escaping, believing. In this endless drift into the ocean of mundane existence, every being is drowning, every being is dying. Repairing Home is the only hope any being has at being repaired, at being relieved, at being Rama...

By participating in a yatra one learns to adapt, endure, renounce, all qualities a seeker needs. By surrendering to a yatra one learns to learn. One's whole understanding, whole vision, whole plan revolves around being purer in thought, word and deed. One learns invoking purity is invoking Peace. This is living...

Such an expression of Divinity is no longer a yatri, they are a yatra. A walking, talking, rocking yatra on which vacationers from all around cannot resist evolving to yatri-s...

A person dies only when no longer remembered. A yatra ends only when no longer remembered. Remember every moment. Realize every moment. Radiate every moment...

Inspire-Love-Be,

a yatri to the dear yatri-s of the 1st Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra

Thank you for believing me, thank you for supporting me, thank you for being with me on this yatra...

"For, under these countless separate skins, there beats a single Eternal heart." --- Ashok K. Banker

Inspire-Love-Be

34 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Vitamin A for the eyes. Vitamin D for the bones. Vitamin E for the skin. **Vitamin W for the...? Our well being is the prescription of our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (February 6, 2012) --- Make Sure you Take Vitamin W(alking)!

- Each and every day for each and every person the outer world spins 'faster' causing our inner world to spin faster - just as a body untrained to change quickly falls, so too a mind untrained to change quickly falters
- The gross is easier to control than the subtle (i.e. ice vs. water) and controlling the grosser is a means to controlling the subtler (i.e. a calm body encourages a calm mind) - knowing the nature of an entity (i.e. the acceleration and braking of a vehicle) raises the chances of us using that entity rather than being used by that entity
- *Going for a walk* is a catalyst to 'slow' the world down and catch our breath - taking a step back from the outer world is taking a step forward into the inner world
- *Going for a walk* is an ideal opportunity to ask all the questions we are too busy to ask ourselves (i.e. What is life? Who are we? Am I happy?) - sincere questioning is the map to reaching true understanding
- *Going for a walk* is a way to rediscover the simplicity, beauty and grandeur of nature - by tuning into nature we tune into the possibility, into the philosophy, into the palpability of Infinity (Oneness)
- *Going for a walk* is a universal exercise for the body, mind and intellect - now stop reading these words, get up and go for a walk

"A human being is a part of a whole, called by us the Universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty." --- Albert Einstein

Inspire-Love-Be

35 - Hari Om from Columbus!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

**suhrnmitraryudasina madhyasthadveshyabandhushu
sadhushvapi ca papeshu samabuddhirvishishyate
*Srimad Bhagavad Gita - Adhyayah 6 - Shloka 9***

**To the benevolent, friend, enemy, indifferent, mediator, vindictive, relative,
righteous, unrighteous and all others, He who is of the same mind, excels.
*The Celestial Song - Chapter 6 - Verse 9***

Fascinating that the greatest source of happiness and the greatest source of sadness for all of us reading this E-Vichara is people. **We cannot live with each other, we cannot live without each other. Yet there ARE humans, check, Divinities, for whom there is only JOY when relating to beings.** Not only beings, but articles and circumstances too. **How they have learned to be even minded amidst the evil, the eccentric, the Enlightened, etc. is examined in our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (February 13, 2012) --- Origin of Psychology

- Only when we believe differences are real do higher and lower manifest, likes and dislikes manifest, happiness and sadness manifest and so the 'game' goes on and on and on - fundamentally all are One (advaita), functionally all are different (dvaita) and knowing the difference releases one from all vices
- **Suhr** is one who is altruistic without any expectation of reciprocation - being even minded with the generous is effortless and should inspire us to be the same
- **Mitra** is one who is kind out of affection - being even minded with friends is natural though we should be vigilant that they have chosen to be affectionate, they can choose to be unaffectionate and we should not be overwhelmed by either choice
- **Ari** is one who is mean without reason - being even minded with enemies is testing and we should treat interactions with such personalities as a test being aware that hidden behind such meanness is confusion waiting to be cleared
- **Udasina** is one who is indifferent to one's gain or loss - being even minded with the neutral is complex for we are constantly demanding closure (i.e. you are my friend, you are my enemy) and we should learn to let go of this 'control complex' allowing us to live and let live with such personalities
- **Madhyastha** is one wanting gain for one and the other - being even minded with welfarists is revealing of our base nature, constantly demanding defeat of another (i.e. you are my friend not hers) and we should substitute this possessiveness with the understanding that his welfare is my welfare

We will meet next week to continue to explore other personalities, to explore our own personality...

"A brahmana has no wealth equal to unity, equality and truthfulness; character, firmness, amiability, gentleness and withdrawal from works (desires) of all kinds." --- Bhagavan Veda Vyasa

Inspire-Love-Be

36 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

**suhrnmitraryudasina madhyasthadveshyabandhushu
sadhushvapi ca papeshu samabuddhirvishishyate
Srimad Bhagavad Gita - Adhyayah 6 - Shloka 9**

**To the benevolent, friend, enemy, indifferent, mediator, vindictive, relative,
righteous, unrighteous and all others, He who is of the same mind, excels.
The Celestial Song - Chapter 6 - Verse 9**

*"People are people so why should it be, you and I should get along so awfully. So we're different colours and we're different creeds and different people have different needs." (Depeche Mode) **Are we a colour (rupa)? Are we a creed (nama)? No. We are Consciousness (Chit) expressing through colours and creeds. When we know this we will adapt to the needs of others creating Peace within and without.** Continuing our aspiration to understand combinations and permutations of colours and creeds is the continuation of our aspiration to be even minded, mediated by our E-Vichara...*

E-Vichara (February 20, 2012) --- the Source of Human Resources

- **Dveshya** is one who retaliates from hurt - being even minded with the calculating is humbling for a sincere 'sorry' can prevent any retaliation and should there be retaliation, sincere 'forgiveness' can cure this cancerous game
- **Bandhu** is one who is supportive on account of relation - being even minded with relatives is purifying for practicing awareness through imposed attachment leads to independence
- **Sadhu** is one who is righteous on account of living by the Scriptures - being even minded with the noble is enlightening for one's eyes are opened to the theory and application of one's potential

- **Papi** is one who is unrighteous on account of not living by the Scriptures - being even minded with the ignoble is challenging for the influence of dussanga (bad company) is seductive and the only way to not succumb is to remember Peace (long term) over pleasure (short term)
- **Cha** is all others on account of the unrivalled diversity the Creator is capable of - being even minded with everyone else is reality for each personality we interact with is a unique blend of sattva, rajas and tamas and we should learn to be Gunatita (beyond the affect of the guna-s)
- When we project joy on articles we get addicted, when we project joy on beings we get attached yet when we project joy on the Self we get Ananda (Joy) - the one and only way to insulate oneself from the anger and affection of the negative and positive is to know thy Self

Sorry. This E-Vichara was to be shared with everyone last week. Reason? **This past weekend 35 CHYKs from all over North America and myself gathered at Chinmaya Dhara in Niagara and fasted for 40 hours to raise funds for CORD Siruvani. We expected \$5,000. We raised \$12,850.67!!** Reasons?? **This past Weekend 20 CHYKs from 10 Cities and myself gathered at Chinmaya Dhara in Niagara for the CHYK West Northeastern Regional Conference. We discussed, we learned, we grew.** And so this week everyone will receive 2 E-Vichara-s!!!

"Be tender towards the faults of others, be strict towards your own." ~ Swami Tejomayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

37 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

You are quietly sitting at a religious discourse. The Acharya is passionately sharing how we are more than just the body, we are Brahman! All of a sudden, a few rows in front of you, someone clenches their chest and collapses to the floor. WHAT DO YOU DO...?

Being blessed to be in the company of gatherings of seekers on a regular basis, i recently completed Emergency First Aid - Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation - Automated External Defibrillator training, should **i ever be faced with the same emergency (the body needs to be saved until we realize Brahman hahaha!). During this course i could not resist connecting the instructions to the insights from that Course (Vedanta).** And naturally i could not resist sharing the same through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (February 27, 2012) --- First Aid for Oneself

- *Our safety is most important* - only when we have strengthened and fortified our bodies and minds can we ever think of serving others to follow suit
- *Life over limb* - when we inculcate a macro-vision we inculcate even mindedness at the body level (i.e. smiling with/without the sun) and at the mind level (i.e. smiling with/without recognition) for we know smiling is most precious
- *A first aider is simply one who takes charge of an emergency scene and gives first aid* - Lord Krishna has taught that an aryan is a master of circumstances and an aryan is a slave of circumstances, the former is able to help others and so help himself/herself and the latter is unable to help others and so unable to help himself/herself
- *The objectives of first aid are to Preserve (life) / Prevent (the illness or injury from becoming worse) / Promote (recovery)* - on the path to Peace too are 3 Ps important: Patience (to endure challenges) / Perseverance (to excel challenges) / Prostration (to enjoy challenges)
- *The qualities of a first aider are Competence, Confidence and Compassion* - for a seeker too are the same 3 Cs important: Competence (through karma yoga one purifies the body and mind) / Confidence (through bhakti yoga one invokes the grace of the Divine and guidance of the Guru) / Compassion (through jnana yoga one understands we are all One)

- *To gauge the well being of someone who is disoriented check the dilation of the eyes, flow of speech and motor skills - to gauge our inner growth we have to check the purity of our thoughts, the warmness of our words and the selflessness of our deeds*

“This life is short, the vanities of the world are transient, but they alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive” --- Swami Vivekananda

Inspire-Love-Be

38 - Hari Om from Portland!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

A couple of weeks ago, 40 CHYKs from all over North America came together in Niagara and fasted for 40 hours. **Why? To evoke charity: \$14,050.98 was raised for the villagers of Siruvani! To invoke discipline: not eating for almost 2 days!!! How did all this happen?** Read on to find out courtesy of our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (March 5, 2012) --- Purpose for Discipline

- A purpose does not create potency rather unleashes potency – all of the potency we need and want is already with us and we simply have to invoke this
- The difference between a Master of Joy (the Guru) and a miser of Joy (us) is the Master has learned from his/her experiences, observations, studies and lives accordingly whereas we keep looking around for sources to learn from and reasons to live accordingly
- A Guru and a Gurukula become pivotal to one's growth when we are 'blind' to our own revelations and want/need to 'see' a personality live Joyfully - a disciple is one ready for discipline
- Why do we justify indiscipline when every achiever, secular or spiritual, has lived by discipline, consciously or unconsciously - there is no substitute for hard work
- Intrinsically every being wants to grow to Infinity for this is our Nature - we fear death for we are Sat (Existence), we despise ignorance for we are Chit (Awareness), we escape sorrow for we are Ananda (Joy)
- Finding purpose is an active pursuit not a passive experience - if any higher purpose raises us than the highest purpose, to raise others, would raise us the highest

“All life is a truth that can be fully realized only when false notions of a separate self, whose destiny can be considered apart from the whole, are once forever annihilated.” --- Bruce Lee

Inspire-Love-Be

39 - Hari Om from Frederick!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Previously on the E-Vichara: *Finding purpose is an active pursuit not a passive experience - if any higher purpose raises us than the highest purpose, to raise others, would raise us the highest...*

Once we have found purpose, what are supposed to do? Invoke discipline, revoke lethargy, evoked by our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (March 12, 2012) --- Discipline for Purpose

- **Consume less** - *articles* are incessantly demanding our energy (i.e. digesting excessive food), our attention (i.e. shopping without a list), our identification (i.e. this is MY home!)
- By focusing on a purpose we slowly rise from drowning in a life of procurement (yoga) and protection (kshema) - being able to retain one's peace with lesser articles is a sign of authority and being unable to retain one's peace with lesser articles is a sign of addiction, so let us test our retention of peace
- **Talk less** - *beings* are incessantly demanding our time (i.e. with complaining), our patience (i.e. with small talk), our quietude (i.e. with fearing silence)
- By focusing on a purpose we slowly create a 'shield' whereby we prevent beings from intruding on our peace - a catalyst to creating this shield is practicing hibernation (only speaking when needed) supported by silence (not speaking at all)
- **Sleep less** - *circumstances* are incessantly demanding our efficiency (i.e. sleeping too much), our effectiveness (i.e. sleeping poorly), our sadhana (i.e. sleeping irregularly)
- By focusing on a purpose we slowly regulate our sleep instead of sleep regulating us - with training we can raise the quality of our sleep triggering a reduction in the quantity of our sleep triggering an overall awesomeness the untrained can never understand

"The heights by great men reached and kept, were not attained by sudden flight, but they, while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night." --- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Inspire-Love-Be

40 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

*Too many rooms to clean? Too many meetings to attend? Too many emails to read? **Too many of us relate to these facts of life.** What to do when there is just too much to do? Relax. Regroup. Review the same facts of life armed with revelations from the storehouse we call the E-Vichara...*

E-Vichara (March 19, 2012) --- Too Much To Do!

- If being overwhelmed by the amount of work one has to do leads to greater inefficiency, this emotion is utterly suffocating - cease from brooding over how much has to be done and just do
- If being overwhelmed by the amount of work one has to do leads to greater efficiency, this emotion is utterly salvaging - continue to think over how much has to be done and plans to raise oneself to take on the same
- When we are intensely aware of how much we have to do, we cultivate empathy towards others facing the same challenge - in empathy, we grow up from imposing our demands (i.e. instead of asking someone why they have not replied to an email, allowing them to reply when they can) and then even ourselves (i.e. instead of sharing thoughts verbally, sharing thoughts mentally)
- Everyone reading this sentence has a different capacity of how much they can do - expecting others to be as efficient or inefficient as we are, is living in 'make believe'
- We can only do our best and doing so we enable ourselves to be insulated from all criticisms and compliments - think, what else could we have done
- Work never ends which means purification never ends - keep working and keep on creating chances for others to work (i.e. Bhagavan Rama delegating opportunities to the endless personalities in Ramayana)

"He who believes that fall is an antecedent to rise will never give way to despair." --- Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

41 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Puma (ritualistic worship), is an effective sadhana (spiritual discipline) to purify our mind. Employing our body, speech and mind, we perform puma for inner development. Physical action like offering flowers and ringing the bell, vocal actions like chanting mantras and singing hymns and mental actions like feeling the presence of God, constitute the procedure of ritual. As we sincerely do it day after day, our devotion to the Lord further increases and flows as an undercurrent all through the day's activities. We shall in fact find that God is within us at all times. --- Pujya Swami Tejomayananda

Whenever i ask adults and young adults if they have 'formally' learned how to engage in puma, the almost unanimous response is, "No". This is followed up by, "All we know is what we have observed from sitting in puma-s with our elders." Naturally my **follow up question is, "How will this tradition continue if you have not learned how to engage in puma and so are unable to teach the same to the next generation?"** After a **sombre period of silence, the almost unanimous response is, "We do not know"**.

Aspiring to keep the Puma Parampara (tradition) alive, **a universal Puma Vichy (guideline) has been simplified and systemized for our understanding. Why? This is how we learn, this is how we remember, this is how we practice, through simplicity and systemization. The Puma Vichy has been systemized into 9 sections and simplified with 3 steps each.** And so we begin exploring all the sections and steps in the Philosophy of Puma through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (March 26, 2012) --- Atcham Puma Vichy: Proclaim

- *Atcham Man gala Achaeen* (auspicious action): By remembering the name of the Divine, we remember the form of the Divine and in turn remember the qualities of the Divine - as we think so we become
- When we commence any endeavour positively, the chances of the continuation and completion of the endeavour to be positive is raised - pep rallies, corporate cheers, birthday greetings and endless other examples employ the same logic of puma
- *Atcham Shania* (conch): A conch is blown as a call to oneself and the community to turn one's attention towards the Divine - our relationship and responsibility to the Divine takes precedence over ALL relationships and ALL responsibilities
- Engaging in puma, like giving to charity, is for the benefit of oneself - still, by inviting others to join in, we share our privilege
- *Atcham Dinah* (lamp): Just as the light from a lamp dispels darkness so too the 'light' from Knowledge dispels ignorance - just as ships depend on the guidance of a lighthouse to be safe, so too let java-s depend on the guidance of the Lighthouse (Brahman) to be saved
- Symbolically, the container of a lamp is the body, the wick of the lamp is the mind and the oil of the lamp is the ego - only when a mind is alight with Knowledge is the purpose of the body being realized and can the ego be exhausted

Our next step is *Purify*...

"Criticism is like a boundless sea. Once you get into it, you can hardly get out of it." --- Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

42 - Hari Om from Merrillville!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Puma (ritualistic worship), is an effective sadhana (spiritual discipline) to purify our mind. Employing our body, speech and mind, we perform puma for inner development. Physical action like offering flowers and ringing

the bell, vocal actions like chanting mantras and singing hymns and mental actions like feeling the presence of God, constitute the procedure of ritual. As we sincerely do it day after day, our devotion to the Lord further increases and flows as an undercurrent all through the day's activities. We shall in fact find that God is within us at all times. --- Pujya Swami Tejomayananda

Symbols: a form of creation, a form of communication, a form of concentration. **The Infinite is beyond the scope of all forms, all names. The mind's only scope is forms, is names. Being practical, being analytical, being honest, without a symbol one can never appreciate the Infinite.** If one can never appreciate the Infinite, one can never know the Infinite. If one can never know the Infinite, one can never BE Infinite (Joy). **Are we pathless then? No, the path is Puma. We continue our exploration of a simplified universal guideline on worship to grow from the finite to the Infinite, a purpose no different than our E-Vichara...**

E--Vichara (April 2, 2012) --- Atcham Puma Vichy: Purify

- *Atcham Banyan Shudder* (outer purification): A natural string is tied around one's wrist to remind oneself of the beginning-less and end-less connection with the Divine - a wedding ring attempts to symbolize the same with another being yet the difference is every worldly relationship was created in time (a beginning) and will be uncreated in time (an end)
- Sandalwood paste is applied to one's forehead as a cooling agent for the skin and more intimately as a catalyst to invoke a cool mind – the one with a cool mind is the coolest
- *Atcham Achaeen* (drinking water): Pure water is drunk thrice while chanting the name of the Divine for purity applies outside and even more so, inside - our thoughts affect the universe (quantum physics) and if we can remember the Divine before every input (thinking, hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting, smelling), every output (thoughts, words, deeds) will glow with Divinity
- A temple is the body (designed in the shape of the Divine), the body is a temple (literally the home of the Divine) – cleanliness is next to Godliness not for the sake of cleanliness rather to create a conducive circumstance to tune into God
- *Atcham Pranayamah* (conscious breathing): We breathe in, retain and breathe out while mentally chanting Aum to invoke purity at a subtle level (gaseous-air) in addition to a gross level (liquid-water) – being disciplined with breathing is a temporary impetus to be disciplined with thinking
- With each inhalation and exhalation our breathing is reminding us of who we are (if we listen to our intake of air we create a so sound and upon the release of this we create a *ham* sound) - *So-ham* means He am I

Our next step is *Protect...*

"The greatest obstacle to discovery is not ignorance; it is the illusion of knowledge" --- Daniel J. Boorstin

Inspire-Love-Be

43 - Hari Om from Seattle!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Puja (ritualistic worship), is an effective sadhana (spiritual discipline) to purify our mind. Employing our body, speech and mind, we perform puja for inner development. Physical action like offering flowers and ringing the bell, vocal actions like chanting mantras and singing hymns and mental actions like feeling the presence of God, constitute the procedure of ritual. As we sincerely do it day after day, our devotion to the Lord further increases and flows as an undercurrent all through the day's activities. We shall in fact find that God is within us at all times. --- Pujya Swami Tejomayananda

The smiley face, the American flag, the cross. **In whatever direction one turns, we see idols.** The smiley face is just designed code. The American flag is just stitched polyester. The cross is just carved wood. **In whatever direction one turns, we see ideals...**

Just as we studied how a **Yatra is an outward expression of an inward journey, so too an idol is an outer expression of an inner ideal.** Our dissection of a simplified universal guideline for worship deepens with the aspiration that **our understanding of the relationship between rituals and philosophy deepens, encouraged by our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (April 9, 2012) --- Atha Puja Vidhih: Protect

- *Atha Shri Vighneshvara Dhyanam* (invoking the Lord of challenges): We remember the expression of the Divine in the form of Vighneshvara for as we think so we become – Vighneshvara is not the Remover of obstacles rather is the Lord of challenges for He takes challenges when we are being righteous, He gives challenges when we are being unrighteous
- Our greatest challenges do not come from articles (i.e. computers, etc.) nor circumstances (i.e. weather, etc.) rather come from beings (i.e. our family, our friends, our peers, etc.) - Vighneshvara has ears as large and as fine as a sieve with the ideal being we do not control what we hear (i.e. sometimes satsanga, sometimes dussanga), yet we do control what we listen to (i.e. only satsanga) and so if we think of Vighneshvara, we will think like Vighneshvara and not create challenges for ourselves
- *Atha Shri Maruti Dhyanam* (invoking the Lord of fearlessness): We remember the expression of the Divine in the form of Maruti for as we think so we become – Maruti has the power of the wind and just as wind purifies wherever present so too Maruti purifies wherever present
- A mind filled with purity is a mind released of pollutants (i.e. fear) - if we think of Maruti, we will think like Maruti and should challenges arise we will excel these
- *Atha Shri Sadguru Dhyanam* (invoking the Lord of wisdom): We remember the expression of the Divine in the form of Sadguru for as we think so we become - guru is any article, being, circumstance which removes some sort of 'darkness' (i.e. a management guru teaches one how to know others), whereas a Sadguru is a Being who removes the 'darkness' of who we are (i.e. a Sadguru teaches one how to know Oneself)
- The Sadguru is a conductor between i (jiva) and Infinity (Brahman) - if we think of Sadguru, we will think like Sadguru and appreciate all challenges are a means to growing

Our next step is *Invoke...*

i have had to deeply resist the urge to interrupt our reflection on Puja Vidhih to write on Pearl Jam (invoking the lords of rock & roll), considering i am in Seattle, their hometown!

“You who wish to celebrate the birthday, seek first whence was your birth. One’s true birthday is when one enters that which transcends birth and death - the Eternal Being. At least on one’s birthday one should mourn one’s entry into this world (samsara). To glory in it and celebrate it is like delighting in and decorating a corpse. To seek one’s self and merge in the Self – that is wisdom.” --- Ramana Maharshi

Inspire-Love-Be

44 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Puja (ritualistic worship), is an effective sadhana (spiritual discipline) to purify our mind. Employing our body, speech and mind, we perform puja for inner development. Physical action like offering flowers and ringing the bell, vocal actions like chanting mantras and singing hymns and mental actions like feeling the presence of God, constitute the procedure of ritual. As we sincerely do it day after day, our devotion to the Lord further

increases and flows as an undercurrent all through the day's activities. We shall in fact find that God is within us at all times. --- Pujya Swami Tejomayananda

Why engage in sadhana? How to think Divinely? Where does Bhagavan live? So many questions about Puja! We are trying to answer some of these through our study of the philosophy of a simplified universal guideline for worship shared through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (April 16, 2012) --- Atha Puja Vidhi: Invoke

- *Atha Sankalpah* (intention): The hands are clasped and the purpose of worship is shared with oneself, with others, with the Omniscient - with a purpose, a potency until then unavailable, becomes available (i.e. sincere parents sacrificing for an infant, etc.)
- The highest purpose of puja is to *just Be* - as a catalyst to tune into our Nature, we engage in worship for knowledge, independence, devotion, wisdom, humility, etc., all Divine qualities naturally guiding us to the Divine
- *Atha Dhyanam* (focusing): With the eyes closed the mind is directed to focus on the name of the Divine which directs the mind to focus on the form of the Divine which directs the mind to focus on the qualities of the Divine - the more the mind is able to focus the more the mind is able to 'manifest' the object of focus (i.e. studying for an exam, watching the sun set, remembering a loved one, etc.)
- When we sincerely reflect on the Divine we inductively question where the 'source' of the Divine is and astonishingly discover the Source is us - this focus is a well thought out step/preparation for creating a 'conduit' for Bhagavan (Brahman expressed) to 'emanate'
- *Atha Avahanam* (invoking): We touch our heart with one hand, we touch an icon of Bhagavan with the other, symbolizing the invocation of the Infinite from us to our altar - if we sincerely believe God is Infinite how can we or any be excluded
- The mind is limited and so the field of the mind naturally is limited too (i.e. names and forms) - through an idol (limited), an ideal (the Lord) is to be worshiped with the body, speech and mind for this is the ONLY way to gain 'access' to the Infinite

Our next step is *Welcome...*

"If we can change ourselves, we can change the world. We're not the victims of the world we see; we're the victims of the way we see the world. This is the essence of compassionate listening: seeing the person next to you as a part of yourself." --- Dennis Kucinich

Inspire-Love-Be

45 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Puja (ritualistic worship), is an effective sadhana (spiritual discipline) to purify our mind. Employing our body, speech and mind, we perform puja for inner development. Physical action like offering flowers and ringing the bell, vocal actions like chanting mantras and singing hymns and mental actions like feeling the presence of God, constitute the procedure of ritual. As we sincerely do it day after day, our devotion to the Lord further increases and flows as an undercurrent all through the day's activities. We shall in fact find that God is within us at all times. --- Pujya Swami Tejomayananda

Ramakrishna Paramahansa was once asked by Narendranath (later, Swami Vivekananda), *"Do you see God?"* Ramakrishna Paramahansa's response, *"I see God more clearly than I see you."* **How can this Master make such a claim? This Master knows God lives in each one of us, God IS each one of us...**

Having proclaimed we are engaging in puja, purified the objects and subjects involved with puja, protected the outer and inner environments for puja and invoked the Divine to our altar of puja we have

reached the middle section of our puja. And so we continue to reflect and relate to the philosophy of a simplified universal guideline for worship guided by our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (April 23, 2012) --- Atha Puja Vidhih: Welcome

- *Atha Asanam* (seat): A new, fresh, soft piece of cloth is offered for the Divine to rest on for a comfortable entity is slower to leave than an uncomfortable entity and we want Bhagavan to be at our altar as long as possible - the greater our altars in life the greater our efforts in life (i.e. a sports team in the season vs. in the playoffs vs. in the Olympics)
- After journeying we just want to sit down freely (imagine what one wanted to do after one went for a run, a hike, a drive, etc.) and so does Bhagavan - we have all been taught to treat others as we want to be treated, naturally the same applies to God and more, infinitely more for the Infinite
- *Atha Arghyam* (washing hands): A spoon of water is offered to wash the hands of the Divine for the condition of our hands often conditions how we feel (think about how agitated we were the last time our hands were sticky) - though the body is different than the mind, a clean, healthy, strong body becomes a catalyst for a clean, healthy, strong mind
- The water to wash Bhagavan's hands is offered onto a plate different than where Bhagavan is residing for who wants to remain in the water used to clean oneself - each and every offering (i.e. asanam, gandhah, dakshinah, etc.) is placed near the heart and then offered for all God really wants is devotion not dravya (materials)
- *Atha Achamanam* (drinking water): A spoon of water is offered for the Divine to drink not to purify as is the logic for why we perform achamanam - does the Ever-Pure need to be purified
- The water for Bhagavan to drink is offered onto the plate where Bhagavan is residing for this water is to be digested not disposed (like the water for arghyam) - the awareness encouraged to engage in Puja is moving at the physical, mental and intellectual levels

Our next step is *Beautify...*

"To do the job, even if circumstances are not conducive, is our gift to Him who is the sole Lord of all circumstances." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

46 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Puja (ritualistic worship), is an effective sadhana (spiritual discipline) to purify our mind. Employing our body, speech and mind, we perform puja for inner development. Physical action like offering flowers and ringing the bell, vocal actions like chanting mantras and singing hymns and mental actions like feeling the presence of God, constitute the procedure of ritual. As we sincerely do it day after day, our devotion to the Lord further increases and flows as an undercurrent all through the day's activities. We shall in fact find that God is within us at all times. --- Pujya Swami Tejomayananda

Practice and game, theory and application, philosophy and rituals. **Without the former the latter is meaningless. Without the latter the former is meaningless. With the integration of the former and latter there is meaning in all directions.** We are aspiring to understand and so appreciate the background of a simplified universal guideline for worship (vidhih) **through a simplified universal guideline for reflection (vichara), OUR E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (April 30, 2012) --- Atha Puja Vidhih: Beautify

- *Atha Snanam* (bath): Water and remembrance is offered to the manifestation of the Divine to bathe for this is a intimate opportunity for us to be closer to the Divine - just as important as using clean, warm water to bathe the Lord, is using clean, warm words to bathe the Lord
- After an initial rest period (*Welcome* - sitting, washing hands, drinking water, etc.) naturally one wants to increase the intensity of rest by bathing - we all know how fresh the mind becomes when the body is freshened
- *Atha Vastram* (cloth): A new, fresh, soft piece of cloth is offered for the Creator to wear and be comfortable for a comfortable entity is a gracious entity - all that has been/is being/will be offered is a creation of the Creator, understanding which, appreciating which, we will be offering a cloth made of the most precious fabric, humility
- Though Bhagavan is the most beautiful in the most ways, we aspire to make Bhagavan more beautiful - in our aspiration we ever fail in making The Madhura (Beautiful One) madhura and ever succeed in making the mind madhura
- *Atha Gandha* (sandalwood paste): The Lord's head, hands and feet are anointed with the naturally fragrant sandalwood paste reminding us that all the Lord's thoughts, words and deeds are for our welfare - if we can keep this 'fragrance' (understanding) with us, even during times of great difficulty we will 'enjoy' (appreciate) the grace of the Divine
- When the equipments are made cool (as shared earlier sandalwood paste is a cooling agent for the skin) these equipments become eligible, empowered, enlightened to bring calmness to the collective - equipments used to serve are the most fresh, are the most beautiful, are the most fragrant

Our next step is *Offer* ...

"Facing the situation is courage, and the blessings of courage are sublimity, splendour and success." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

47 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Puja (ritualistic worship), is an effective sadhana (spiritual discipline) to purify our mind. Employing our body, speech and mind, we perform puja for inner development. Physical action like offering flowers and ringing the bell, vocal actions like chanting mantras and singing hymns and mental actions like feeling the presence of God, constitute the procedure of ritual. As we sincerely do it day after day, our devotion to the Lord further increases and flows as an undercurrent all through the day's activities. We shall in fact find that God is within us at all times. --- Puja Swami Tejomayananda

Q: How many paths are there to self development? A: As many as personalities exist. Our Veda-s have 100,000 mantra-s! And the composition of these divine teachings evolve from pure ritual (karma kanda) to pure philosophy (jnana kanda) embracing all personality compositions. Similarly, we have evolved in our study of a simplified universal guideline for worship. **What began as a 'distant' Proclaiming we are beginning our Puja is now an 'intimate' Offering of our best. Let us continue our e-evolution as e-voked through our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (May 7, 2012) --- Atha Puja Vidhi: Offer

- *Atha Archanam* (venerate): The Lord is 'actively' remembered (Why? Please read past E-Vichara-s where the reason has been given over and over and over again) by chanting the Lord's name and making an offering (i.e. a flower, a leaf, a grain, etc.) with each name - for each offering the dravya (material) is brought near one's heart to be filled with Love for more important than dravya is devotion
- When the sun's rays typically fall on a piece of paper litter the litter is illumined, whereas when the sun's rays converge (through a magnifying glass, etc.) on a piece of paper litter the litter is burned - though

every word (i.e. Shiva, space, stealer, etc.) can illumine Bhagavan, we chant 1 magnified word (quality of Bhagavan) or 108 magnified words (qualities of Bhagavan) or 1,000 magnified words (qualities of Bhagavan) so the litter that is our mind is burned of impurities

- *Atha Naivedyam* (food): Pure food prepared in a pure environment prepared by a pure mind is offered to the Divine - always remember the rigours of such preparation (service) is an opportunity to engage in self discipline, an opportunity to enjoy in self development and NOT an obligation to the easily pleased One (Ashutosh)
- The nature of the outer and inner universe is the more we give, the more we get (i.e. pollution, Love, etc.) - when we give naivedyam to the Divine, this is transformed to prasada (that which delights!) and given to us
- *Atha Dakshinah* (gift): All we have ever received and not received is by the Grace of God and though no price can be attached this Grace, out of gratitude and fulfillment we strive to give back by making a monetary offering - the most transforming gift from God is a Guru who Guides one to rediscover inner Peace, discover outer prosperity and so dakshinah is always associated with a Guru, enabling him/her to continue to serve humanity in ways none other can
- A attitude of gratitude is a catalyst for knowledge to evolve to wisdom and a attitude of ingratitude is a catalyst to remaining an intellectual indefinitely - dakshinah should always be given according to one's dharma (i.e. service is the responsibility of a student and charity is the responsibility of a householder) and should always be given according to one's capability (i.e. if one has more resources, time and effort than they need, give accordingly to those who do need)

Our next step is *Glorify*...

"Live with the minimum; create the maximum; give everything to the world outside." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

48 - Hari Om from Flint!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Puja (ritualistic worship), is an effective sadhana (spiritual discipline) to purify our mind. Employing our body, speech and mind, we perform puja for inner development. Physical action like offering flowers and ringing the bell, vocal actions like chanting mantras and singing hymns and mental actions like feeling the presence of God, constitute the procedure of ritual. As we sincerely do it day after day, our devotion to the Lord further increases and flows as an undercurrent all through the day's activities. We shall in fact find that God is within us at all times. ~ Pujya Swami Tejomayananda

Who is our role model? A celebrity? An athlete? An artist? A leader? A Guru? **Naturally whoever our role model is, we give our resources, time and effort to tune into the same qualities we admire.** In the penultimate stage of our simplified universal guideline for worship we **focus on the Lord being a king. The King of the outer universe, the King of the inner universe, our King for our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (May 14, 2012) --- Atha Puja Vidhih: *Glorify*

- *Atha Mangala Nirajanam* (auspicious homage): A lamp with camphor is lit and shown to Bhagavan, symbolizing the presence of the Divine Light (Awareness) enables the cognition of any other light (i.e. sun, lightning, fire, etc.) - we are encouraged to practice awareness not for the sake of awareness rather to reunite with our Nature
- When suffering from outer darkness, we bring a physical light to empower us to see more clearly, logically then, when suffering from inner darkness, we need a mental light (knowledge) to empower us to think more clearly - the Guru is one who removes darkness by guiding us to the grace of God
- *Atha Pradakshina Namaskarah* (circumambulatory prostration): One turns in a circle thrice and prostrates to the Lord reminding us of what our highest priority is – if dedication, devotion and

development are truly our highest priority we need to ask ourselves if our resources, time and effort are being directed towards these

- Revolving around Bhagavan thrice teaches us that our thoughts, words and deeds should all revolve around Bhagavan – and prostration must be with all the equipments/ways we interact (body=feet, knees, hands; speech=chest; mind=forehead)
- *Atha Rajopacharah* (royal service): Treating the Divine as a King we treat the Divine with Kingly services (i.e. fanning, singing, carrying, etc.) – Bhagavan and Bhagavan's workers do not need any comforts nor ceremonies, these are opportunities created for seekers and shishya-s to tune to the Higher
- With reverence for the Higher we receive the Highest (Freedom) - without reverence for God, Gita and Guru we are like robots (bound)

Our completing step is *Surrender...*

"He who has experienced the higher refuses to remember and relive the past." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

49 - Hari Om from the Poconos!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Puja (ritualistic worship), is an effective sadhana (spiritual discipline) to purify our mind. Employing our body, speech and mind, we perform puja for inner development. Physical action like offering flowers and ringing the bell, vocal actions like chanting mantras and singing hymns and mental actions like feeling the presence of God, constitute the procedure of ritual. As we sincerely do it day after day, our devotion to the Lord further increases and flows as an undercurrent all through the day's activities. We shall in fact find that God is within us at all times. ~ Pujya Swami Tejomayananda

The purpose of living is to rediscover Life. How? **We are to use the equipments and experiences to go beyond the equipments and experiences (Brahman).**

The purpose of puja is to rediscover Life. How? **We are to use murti-s and materials to go beyond murti-s and materials (Brahman).**

We have been studying a simplified universal guideline for worship for over 2 months now! And now we have reached **the zenith of our sadhana: surrender. We are grateful to the Creator for the opportunity to surrender as taught by the E-Vichara, as applied by the family and friends of the E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (May 21, 2012) --- Atha Puja Vidhih: Surrender

- *Atha Samarpana* (surrender): With hands folded and heart filled one remembers one's Lord offering all thoughts, all words and all deeds to the All Knowing – prayer is fascinating in that before any deed, word or thought is directed to the Lord, the Lord already knows/illuminates the prayer
- Each and every facet of the inner and outer universe has been created and so needs to be attributed to a creator and logically to THE Creator - what apparently separates us from the Creator, what apparently has not been created by the Creator, is the ego and offering this is the highest offering
- *Atha Udvasanam* (farewell): Remembering the Divine resides in our hearts, remembering we have invoked (avahanam) the Divine into the icon at our altar, we gently, slightly, thoughtfully push the icon back returning the Divine to our hearts - if we truly understood and appreciated the ever present Lord in our hearts we would not eat the way we do, we would not think the way we do, we would not prioritize the way we do
- The first step in seeing the Infinite within all is to practice seeing the Infinite within an idol by worshiping the associated ideal of Oneness - to believe we can see the Infinite without a form and name

(Brahman) without practicing with a form and name (Bhagavan) we first have to disbelieve our own form and name

- *Atha Shantih Mantrah* (prayer for peace): With hands folded, heart filled and intellect fastened one prays for the Happiness and health of all - the secret to being happy and healthy is to be a catalyst for everyone's happiness and health
- At the end of the day each and every one of us is responsible for creating the universe we live in (i.e. the media system, the political system, the education system, etc.) - if we all raise the quality of our inner universes we shall all raise the quality of the outer universe so let begin to take responsibility for this reformation by reflection, reflection and more reflection

With *surrender* we complete our Puja Vidhih. My gratitude to all family and friends of the E-Vichara for your participation and support of the E-Vichara. i have learned much about that which has always been around...**funny how we take for granted that which is close to us unless we get knowledge...**

"When the time of judgement comes, we shall not be asked what we have read, but what we have done." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

50 - Hari Om Everyone,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

If we live to 100 years we will do this over 50,000 times. What is this? Brush our teeth. And while we are brushing our teeth where is our mind? Everywhere but our teeth! **Since we are not going to pay attention anyways, why not explore what else we can do while brushing our teeth? Cue the E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (May 28, 2012) --- Things to do While Brushing

- **Use your weak hand** - through voluntary discipline (tapas) one invokes equanimity
- **Close your eyes** - when we are not extrovert, living slows down
- **Feel the friction** - concentration is a catalyst to identifying with Consciousness
- **Reflect on reality** - prove to yourself you are not dreaming
- **Observe the experience** - 'watch' yourself
- **Brush...** - just Be...

"Behind every thought curtain is the pure state of Consciousness." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

51 - Hari Om from Dallas!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

*"You know, the food at the reception was too oily!" "You know, the day is too long for practice!!!" "You know, nobody respects me!!!!" **You know, you should know not to complain!!!! You know, you should know not to listen to complainers!!!!*** A call out of all the complainers and a shout out to all the 'ignorers' is a request made of the E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (June 4, 2012) --- Advice: Ignore Complainers

- Blaming is always sourced from a tamasic (dull) mind - before we ever blame someone we should reflect on their intention and their contribution and our intention and our contribution
- Comparisons devolve into competitions and degenerate into confusions - the only legitimate comparison that can and should be made is between how happy we were yesterday and how happy we are today
- The culture of Sanatana Dharma is to not praise one's own child for if they deserve praise, the world will do so - when we praise our own children we weaken them internally (making them dependent on words) and externally (making them compete with all around)
- Complaining is a projection of our own inefficiencies, insecurities, impurities hence an agenda of the weak - the strong minded focus on adaptation, appreciation, Ananda regardless of how challenging the circumstance may be
- Should we have a genuine complaint, we should express this to the party/parties who can resolve the complaint (extinguish the fire) - even for a genuine complaint, when we express this to a party/parties who cannot resolve the complaint this only intensifies the restlessness within and without (fuels the fire)
- Criticism should always be supported by support (i.e., ideas, effort, resources, etc.) - we all delight in being in the company of the supportive (satsanga) and we all detest being in the company of the judging (dussanga) so let us be vigilant to invite the former and ignore the latter

Our next E-Vichara will celebrate the completion of 3 years of E-Vicharas! 3 years of reflecting together!! 3 years of realizing together!!! In Vedantic tradition, teachings are given freely. No price can be attached to the guidance a Teacher offers to live more peacefully. Still, out of gratitude and fulfillment the student seeks to give back. **This offering – Guru Dakshina – is to express appreciation for the Teacher’s sacrifice and dedication and is used to further the sharing of Spiritual Knowledge.**

Each E-Vichara we write requires approximately 2 hours. Time is invested in thinking of content, writing emails, maintaining contact lists, etc. In the past 3 years this has **translated to over 300 hours just on the E-Vichara. The greatest wealth we have is our peace of mind. And if you feel the E-Vichara has strengthened you in gaining and retaining this wealth then give whole heartedly...how?**

Cheque/Check (please make out and mail to the following address)

Chinmaya Niagara
5743 Valley Way
Niagara Falls, Ontario
Canada, L2E 1X7

Chinmaya Niagara's outreach is far beyond the geography of a city:

- Facilitating family oriented activities in Buffalo, Hamilton, London, Niagara and Toronto every week
- Inspiring self development in kids, youth, young adults and adults in over 25 cities across North America
 - Supporting sustainable development in Sidhabari, Siruvani and Sri Lanka

Please know you are not giving to an individual, you are not giving to a Centre. You are giving to hands and legs working for a movement, a movement working for individual peace and so world peace...

(Chinmaya Mission Niagara is a registered non-profit charity. Your donations are humbly accepted and in turn a tax-deductible receipt will be issued. These receipts are valid for income tax purposes for our American Donors as well)

"One may change one's dress easily, but who can change his heart with the same ease?" ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

52 - Hari Om from Piercy!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

**60 invited CHYK sevaka-s/sevika-s (volunteer workers) from across North America
+6 days of discourses, workshops and presentations
+4 invited Acharya-s from across the World
= The 1st CHYK West Cam-Tra-Con (Camp-Training-Conference)**

Imagine being at Krishnalaya, one of the mainstays of the ever flowing Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji. Now **imagine being at Krishnalaya with Pujya Swami Tejomayanandaji, one of the mainstays of the Guru Parampara. D I F F I C U L T. Well, making the difficult digestible is the fun task we are faced with, from our 1st E-Vichara to our 156th E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (June 11, 2012) --- Pendulum of Development

- **Knowledge** raises one's vision in the secular world and sacred world (i.e. no one wants to be around one who is culturally ignorant and everyone wants to be around one who is religiously evolved) - since the mind is created extrovert, pursuing knowledge of 'stuff' is ordinary and so the one who can guide the mind within is the one who can pursue knowledge of Self, is the one who can be extraordinary
- **Vision** enables one to visualize beyond what meets the eye, beyond what meets the mind (i.e. seeing Oneness in differences, seeing Limitlessness in limitations) - a visionary is one who rises above self absorption and so is free and fitted to lead himself/herself, in turn leading all those around
- **Attitude** is an expression of one's vision, whether right or wrong (i.e. with a wrong vision of Life one has a wrong attitude with living) - a constant right attitude is the sadhana of a sincere seeker
- **Thoughts** make us, thoughts break us, the source of thoughts is our attitude - the quality of thoughts directs the quantity of thoughts (i.e. base thoughts leads to an onslaught of thoughts) and so if we have too many thoughts we should be vigilant about the cause and cure
- **Actions** are what define us - selfless actions are the catalyst to purifying ignorance and selfish actions are the catalyst to protecting ignorance
- Yoga is an ancient yet applicable, authoritatively Hindu yet attractively Universal, message of perpetual self development - if we want to practice yoga we have to get Knowledge

And with this E-Vichara we celebrate the completion of 3 years of E-Vicharas! 3 years of reflecting together!! 3 years of realizing together!!! In Vedantic tradition, teachings are given freely. No price can be attached to the guidance a Teacher offers to live more peacefully. Still, out of gratitude and fulfillment the student seeks to give back. **This offering – Guru Dakshina – is to express appreciation for the Teacher's sacrifice and dedication and is used to further the sharing of Spiritual Knowledge.**

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"When thus we achieve success, it becomes our duty to serve society, because the whole society, the whole universe is one integral whole. To serve others is to recognize the oneness of the universe, the cosmic form of the Lord." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be,

Acharya Vivek

I Aum Tat Sat I
I Peace is the Truth I