

E-Vichara

Year 5

Reflections to change reactions to responses...

1 - Namah Te from Atlanta!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Money makes the world go round...wrong.
Music makes the world go round...wrong again.
Man makes the world go round...definitely wrong.

Love makes the world go round...

Not the commercial, emotional, radical kind of love. The practical love. A love that begins, a love that grows, a love that reaches Love (abundance). And once again we resort to our map to lead us from the limited to the Limitless, Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. And once again we resort to our legend to lead us to the Divine map, our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (May 20, 2013) --- Wheel of Life

- *From God comes Scriptures* - all know every effect must have a cause, few know every cause must have an Uncaused Cause (aka God) - to understand and appreciate living and Life, the Creator has infused these insights into the Scriptures
- *From Scriptures come Righteousness* - the Veda-s (literally Knowledge) teach us how to be out of this world (Brahma) and how to be in this world (dharma) - Scriptures guide us to act in a way to create integration inside and outside (i.e. thoughts-words-deeds and micro-macro)
- *From Righteousness comes Dedication* - when one is internally and externally integrated one discovers purpose and with this discovery comes performance - yajna (dedication) manifests when the intellect directs, the mind processes and the body executes
- *From Dedication comes Success* - dedication triggers self-sacrificing triggering the dissolution of self-absorption - each and every sacred and secular leader has lived beneath an altar, altering society
- *From Success comes Joy* - the real gauge of success is determined by what is wanted and all everyone did/does/will want is independent happiness - the truly successful are those who have evicted vices (burdens), embraced virtues (blessings) and so just keep smiling and smiling and smiling
- *From Joy comes Beings* - each and everyone one of us is physically a human being yet how many of us are metaphysically a human being (Joyous) - a human becoming is fear, a human Being is Freedom

"I want every pracharaka to be busy, so busy that he forgets to breathe!" ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

2 - Namah Te from Washington DC!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

!NEWS FLASH! !NEWS FLASH! !NEWS FLASH!

From Thu May 30 to Sat Jun 1, the **city of Niagara Falls (population 85,000) popularly known for tacky tourism was transformed into the kingdom of Ayodhya (birthplace of Bhagavan Rama) powerfully known for communal peace. Highlights of this miracle:**

*175...devotees intently listened to King Rama's address each evening
60...volunteers sincerely served the needs of Chinmaya Dhara
40...families proactively enlivened the tradition of offering bhiksha
30...thousand dollars were efficiently raised for Chinmaya Mission's global work*

3...days were dynamically filled with satsanga
1...Maha Jnana Yajna beautifully inspired by Guruji

How does one know if they are in the presence of a deep personality? New messages on how to live are invoked directly and indirectly. i have lived with Guruji for over two years and every moment i am in his presence i learn fresh ways to live. A glimpse into this continuous learning is shared through our continuous E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (June 3, 2013) --- The One, The Only...Pujya Swami Tejomayananda

- *Live Gratefully* - one of the greatest sins (self created sorrow) is ingratitude and if we think rightly we will realize, 'What did we expect to manifest in our lives other than sadness with such a miserly vision?' - sans the cause there cannot be an effect and if we think rightly we will realize the unambiguous direction to offer our gratitude (i.e. to volunteers, to parents, to nature, etc.)
- *Live Precisely* - never wasting a dollar, a minute or a word is the best way to create dollars, minutes and words - by being disciplined with our resources, time and effort we learn to discipline our doubts (mind), decisions (intellect) and delusion (ego)
- *Live Fearlessly* - what is achieved by being afraid - the worst that can happen is we will desist, we will disappoint, we will die, so what
- *Live Lightly* - the words of a Master sometimes pull our egos, sometimes push our egos - no victory is worth our conceit, no defeat is worth our cries
- *Live Simply* - if articles, beings and circumstances are not the source of Joy why are we puppets to them - we should test (tapas) our dependence to the abc-s by being 'without' them for this is the only way we can be with them freely
- *Live Devotedly* - every altar less than God (i.e. career, family, service, etc.) will keep us incomplete - study the Creator, love Creation, be Complete

Finally, i am speaking at *The Pentagon*. H O W ? Simple: the hand of God...

"The real test of a Perfect One is not in the jungle or in the cave, but in the marketplace." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

3 - Namah Te from Piercy!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

In 2007 Chinmaya Mission Niagara bought *Dhara* for \$725,000. Every year since, they have invested \$25,000 into the Ashram. As *Dhara's* 6 year Anniversary nears, the outstanding loan is now \$125,000. **How does a city with a population of less than 100,000 reduce a loan by \$750,00 in less than 6 years?**

Many of our Centres are working hard towards purchasing Ashram-s (i.e. CM Alpharetta, CM Portland, etc.). And many of our Centres are working hard towards paying-off loans (i.e. CM Columbus, CM Pittsburgh, etc.).

As a tribute to all those hard workers dedicating themselves to the upliftment of individuals, families, communities, societies...humanity, we offer this E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (June 17, 2013) --- Raising Oneself to Raise Funds

- Pujya Swami Chinmayananda had shared he would choose *1 Rupee from 100,000 people over 100,000 Rupees from 1 person* - we should create a plan whereby many can contribute a moderate amount leading to a grand total (i.e. a \$2,500 donor level AND a \$25,000 donor level instead of ONLY a \$25,000 donor level)

- Individuals need to be educated as to what their donations will be used for, what impact their offering will create, etc. - we should be transparent in sharing reference points of the value of people's support (i.e. \$500 will maintain the Ashram for 1 day)
- Humans are emotional creatures (and too often moody!) moved by matters of the heart - we should connect to people's feelings by having experienced personalities (i.e. dynamic senior Acharya-s) communicate the need to give for the welfare of the present and successive generations (a.k.a. do it for the kids)
- As time moves forward our minds move downwards understanding only the perceived, obvious, base (i.e. donating towards a building vs. just land) - we should engage the minds of the masses with ritualism producing a sense of 'actual return' (i.e. sponsoring bhiksha-s, puja-s, murti-s, etc.)
- The more rarely one asks for help the more seriously one's plea is heard - we should seek support only when needed (contrary to some institutions whose constant soliciting devolves into counterproductive nagging) creating a spirit of passionate asking and an equally passionate spirit of giving (i.e. annual Guru Dakshina Ceremonies, biennial Fundraisers, etc.)
- By being generous an amplified generosity is reciprocated - we should build, establish and preserve connections to individuals, families, communities and societies forging an expansive network of support (i.e. investing resources, time and effort to be part of the celebrations of others)

More important than any of the practical points shared above is **understanding and appreciating the only giver is the Lord. We should simply remember the Divine, we should simply work for the Divine. With such high thinking and simple living we will naturally make others aware of the same and then we should ask for help. If the Lord wishes to give, we will get. If the Lord wishes not to give, we will not get. So what! We have the Lord, no?**

"We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope." ~ Martin Luther King

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4 - Namah Te from Piercy!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Oh the outdated Russian game of chess...

CORRECTION:

Ah the ever-fresh Indian game of chaturanga (the original name of chess)!

Chess is much more than a game. Chess is a model of our lives. How? Think? Bur how to think? Sigh...let us learn to think through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (July 1, 2013) --- Chess Rules

- *Manage Time* - in chess, whatever player runs out of time, loses - in living, we are born with deadlines, keeping which in mind we have to do what is important right now for we do not know when our time will run out
- *Manage Resources* - in chess, pieces are engaged in many areas of the board - in living, we have many responsibilities (dharma-s) in many directions and we have to be aware of all of these for this is the nature of living whether accepted or rejected
- *Protect the Valuable* - in chess, whatever player's king is captured, loses - in living, God (the King) is unambiguously most precious, understanding and appreciating this fact how can any priority be more of a priority
- *Think before Acting* - in chess, once a piece is touched, that piece has to be moved - in living, to act without thinking is self-destructing, is society-destructing whereas to think before acting is self-constructing, is society constructing so think, Think, THINK

- *Empathize with All* - in chess, the player who anticipates more fully, wins - in living, by identifying (Loving) with every entity we meet (human, animal, plant, stone) we slowly lower the inner flag of fear and quickly raise the inner flag of Freedom
- *Be Responsible* - in chess, unlike any other game/sport/competition/etc., there is no luck - in living, we are responsible to be responsible

i encourage each and every one of you to learn how to play chess and start playing! And watch how we begin to learn about living and start living...

"He who depends on chances and situations to be happy is a samsari." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

5 - Namah Te from Piercy!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

One day in Kailasha a group of sages were in satsanga. Mother Parvati was overlooking this gathering from afar. And suddenly she saw her husband, the God of Gods, prostrate to one of the sages. In a state of wonderment she approached Bhagavan Shankara and asked, "Who do YOU bow down to?" And Lord Shiva joyfully answered, "The Guru."

Guru Gita, the introduction to which has been narrated above, shares **endless insights into the endless nature of the Guru. For the most sacred day of Guru Purnima, we reflect on the five kinds of Guru-s as taught by the Adi Guru (original Teacher), courtesy of our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (July 15, 2013) --- Guru

- **Gudhah (hidden)** - a Guru is one who is established in the Scriptures and the Infinite - once one realizes differences are only apparent, with the vision of Oneness, this Guru has no want nay no need to reveal their transformation and guides the world from the background simply by their presence
- **Drdhah (firm)** - the difference between a devotee and a disciple is discipline - this Guru is strict in all ways with his/her students to protect them from being beaten down further by fear, sorrow and delusion
- **Pritih (loving)** - unlike society Vedanta is clear in defining Love as identification (i.e. a greedy personality identifying with a bank account, a mother identifying with a child, a seeker identifying with a mind, etc.) - having traversed this spiritual journey known to be as sharp and narrow as a 'razor's edge', having been on the other side of the razor, this Guru knows the challenges of being a seeker and without break, gently lifts his/her students from the ocean of mundane existence through encouragement, encouragement and encouragement
- **Mauna (silent)** - even qualifying Reality as pure Existence-Awareness-Joy is limiting - since the Indescribable cannot be described this Guru remains quiet and inspires his/her students by living fearlessly, mindfully, lightly
- **Susamahitah (gracious)** - one can only give what one has - God's grace is indiscriminately, abundantly, thoroughly with all and this Guru has realized this fully enabling them to direct the minds of his/her students to realize the same creating a tradition (parampara) of blessings and blessers
- Selfishness is a deluding, destructive, dreadful death while living - a Guru is selfless, a Guru teaches selflessness through the above five expressions, a Guru is our Self

"All those who climb the tree of samsara fall into the ocean of hellish sufferings. Obeisance to the Guru, who uplifts all of them." ~ Guru Gita 1.57

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6 - Namah Te from Piercy!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Last week 800 seekers from around the world gathered in Ann Arbor to remember the life, work and teachings of a rishi of modern times, Pujya Swami Chinmayananda.

The 20th Chinmaya Mahasamadhi Camp was filled with intense learning and immense Love. As an overview for those who did not attend and a review for those did attend, we reflect on messages from this transformative experience with our teleportation enabled E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (July 29, 2013) --- Pictures from the Mahasamadhi Camp

- *Why judge when we can accept* - guiding hundreds of people to sit, eat, sleep, etc. in a limited space is a great challenge with much space for discomfort, inefficiency, error - we are habituated to criticize rather than compliment and in doing so we consciously, confusedly, childishly invoke sorrow in turn evoking sorrow
- *Being happy is easy* - we are highly impressionable beings often victorious, often vicious on account of external influences - being in satsanga is the simplest technique to learn to be independently happy as was seen by the endless smiling faces during classes
- *The future is the young* - a method by which businesses are appraised is the *Going-Concern Value* which factors in how long the business will last - when the young are respected they become respectful, when the young are empowered they become powerful, when the young are believed they become unbelievable and how our young adults were treated at the Camp is an intelligent investment
- *Vision on the fundamental, focus on the functional* - every article, being and circumstance we come across has a form (rupa) and name (nama), facets needed to live in the world - every article, being and circumstance is also comprised of existence (asti), awareness (bhati) and joy (priyam), facets we need to begin to 'see', the *Saddarshanam* (Vision of Reality), to live fearlessly in the world
- *More honour creates more humility* - in an environment of perpetual helping comes perpetual admiration - understanding and appreciating the more seriously we take praise the more seriously we will take ridicule, when we are being recognized formally and informally (i.e. whether at a banquet or at a breakfast) with every clap, cheer and commendation one remembers the ceremony less and the Creator more
- *Believe in grace* - we have strange notions that God's grace is/will be strange (i.e. make one powerful, etc.) - the grace of God makes the imperfect (i.e. our efforts to celebrate Him) perfect

For all those new to the E-Vichara, at the end of each email there are several links leading one to several mediums to keep satsanga alive. Check them out. And as soon as i return to Niagara i shall begin to populate the podcasts and webcasts once again.

Finally, on August 10, 2008 Pujya Swami Tejomayananda added the letters *A c h a r y a* before my name. These 5 insignificant alphabets have made the past 5 years of my life significant...FILLED with roaming, rigour and reflection. i do not deserve these noble responsibilities, hence my unambiguous belief in grace...

"The path of true spiritual progress is meant for those heroic ones who can laugh at their obstacles, worries and even failures." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

7 - Namah Te from Piercy!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Stop...i wrote STOP! And think...**think about all that is important in your life. Really think. What is the foundation for this importance...**

i thought. And thought and thought and thought and **realized the foundation for all that is important in my life. That foundation is Bharata** (reveling in Light/Knowledge), or popularly known as India.

Although Bharata has always been free, none can bind the brilliant, as a tribute to India being free of oppressors for 2/3 of a century, we revere our Motherland by offering remembrance of the reasons why we Love Her with our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (August 12, 2013) --- The Most Important Things in Life are...Freedom

- **Culture** - from dressing in a dignified manner enhancing one's beauty to being in tune with food by eating with one's hands, Indian culture is refined - just as we travel from country to country to explore the differences of the world, one can experience the same and more by traveling state to state in India where the differences are organic not political
- **Family** - my parents, my sisters, my wife have all been raised to think and act for shreyas (long-term peace) creating relationships with themselves and their societies that are sound environmentally, financially, academically, etc. - the most important ashrama (stage of living) is grhastha (holding a home) for the rookies, retired and renunciates depend on the married and this is a classical Indian social system encouraging one to be responsible by working to support immediate and extended dependents not just for preyas (short-term pleasure)
- **Leaders** - the greatest barrier in our lives is our lack of belief in ourselves yet there have been countless personalities in Indian history who were different, who did believe in themselves (i.e. Abhimanyu, Shukha Dev, Bhagat Singh, etc.) - these role models directly and indirectly inspire us to be more than our bodies and minds and so there will be countless personalities in India's future who will believe in themselves
- **Guru-s** - we overplay the idea of our minds being independent and so underplay the impressionability of our minds and to reconcile this immaturity the Guru (guide to fearlessness) is revered in India through and through - just as maya (spiritual ignorance) makes the impossible possible (i.e. apparently limiting the Limitless), so too my Guru, Pujya Swami Chinmayananda, has made the impossible possible (i.e. transformed me and millions of others from being purpose-less to purpose-full)
- **Religion** - in Sanatana Dharma (Infinite Integration) every facet of living whether the degree of awareness of a stone, the mind's activities in sleep or the presence of multiple dimensions, is observed, studied and deduced to encourage intelligent living - depth is often a cause for practicality to concede yet the way of the Veda-s (Divine Knowledge) upon which India is built is most thoughtful in embracing the form to lead one to the Formless
- **Ideals** - India has practiced the ideal of contentment and so mutual respect forever, never coveting a neighbour's wealth, never charging a neighbour's border, never converting a neighbour's religion and still rulers, nations and religions have turned to India, become jealous by the presence of inner and outer richness, and acted in the most unbecoming ways, even having the audacity to attack another's Mother - with every abduction, every invasion and every conversion, India has displayed the highest resilience by getting up again and again and again, proudly

Jai Hind...

"Feel nothing, know nothing, do nothing, have nothing, give up all to God, and say utterly, 'Thy will be done.' We only dream this bondage. Wake up and let it go." ~ Swami Vivekananda

Inspire-Love-Be

8 - Namah Te from Washington DC!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

As Adi Shankaracharya was completing His mission to spread the teachings of Vedanta to every part of Bharat, his primary disciples in their devotion to Him **requested for parting advice to continue their spiritual journeys. As a blessing to them, and all of us, He elucidated *Sadhana Panchakam* (Five Verses on Spiritual Practices). One of the most enlightening yet most elusive of the forty sadhana-*s* is *aharahargarvah parityajatam* (continuously renounce pride).**

E g o, an enemy NEVER allowing us to be at rest. **Strategies on how to out-shake the one who is perpetually shaking us is the reason we have called this emergency meeting in the form of the E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (August 26, 2013) --- We Need Every Weapon

- We are infatuated with thinking of ourselves causing indiscernible tremors in our lives and others (i.e. being judgemental, being standoffish, etc.) - by praying for the safety, success and satisfaction of others we actively practice humility (not thinking less of oneself rather thinking of oneself less)
- To depend on praise as a source of happiness is a dangerous way to live for in time praise will end and one will be left incomplete once again and again and again - when one is not praised one falls from an apparent state of security and worse is when others are praised and/or we are censured for then we crash into a real state of insecurity
- Just as there cannot be fear if there is no fear thought so too there cannot be arrogance if there is no arrogating thought - whenever we are praised we should be fast and furious to change our thoughts in the direction of the higher (i.e. remembering the Divine) or else the praise thoughts will settle and solidify to become part of our already seemingly indestructible sense of doership
- One who believes they are the doer must endlessly work for this is the only means to endlessly achieve for this is the only means to traces of quietude, truly a tiresome fate most of us have created for ourselves - to even be able to work leave alone to be able to achieve, is the contribution and cooperation of endless parties (i.e. nature, beings, society, family, Guru), understanding and appreciating which we tune into endless quietude when working and when resting
- The fruits of our actions is a strong pull towards the superficial (i.e. acknowledgement) when our focus is not on our actions - if we can learn to lose ourselves in our actions we will begin to receive greater fruits for those actions without even caring
- All the work that is being engaged in regardless of direction, depth and dedication is God's work - who can do God's work other than God and if we remember this 'me' disappears and He reappears

The Creator has created every aspect of creation other than the ego (the sense of separation). And this is all He wants. The **reward for bringing in the ego DEAD is infinite, constant, unconditional Joy! In this hunt we need every weapon and so i pray to all of you to bless me to be strong just as i pray for your strength...**

"Why should tools worry about how the technician is going to solve his problem and do his job? Be a mere tool in His hands" ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

9 - Namah Te from Boston!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

A few weeks ago i had the opportunity to give my sister and brother-in-law **a gift which my wife and i wish someone gave us...an explanation of what was happening at our Marriage Ceremony!**

So many of you reading the above thought would have **experienced the same concern, the same confusion and finally the same complacency** to the rituals being performed at your Wedding Celebration. And so many of you reading the above thought who do not have this intimate experience would **have a fear of this unknown...**

Enough submission. Enough suspicion. Enough...

As my gift to all those who will be **engaging in the purifying sadhana (discipline) of Matrimony, and especially to all our CHYKs all around the world, the philosophy of our 'typical' Vivaha Samskara** is explored in a series of our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (September 9, 2013) --- Understanding Marriage - Part 1

- *Milni* (meeting) - the bride's mother welcomes her soon to be son-in-law reminding him to welcome her daughter in the same way - elders from both sides of the family exchange garlands acknowledging their decades of dedication to be the 'cause' of the physical/mental personality of the bride and groom who naturally are the 'effects' of these sacrifices
- *Deva Puja* (worshipping the Divine) - the Controller of challenges (Bhagavan Vighneshvara) is invoked to remove challenges during the ceremony if aligned with dharma and to instill challenges during the ceremony if not aligned with dharma as well as to remind the couple to live dharmically forever onwards - the Universe (Nava Graha) is invoked to bless the ceremony as well as to remind the couple to be a blessing, not a burden, to the Universe
- *Vara Puja* (worshipping the groom) - the groom is regarded as the 'best' to signify the important role and responsibilities he is to engage in with his new family - the soon to be son-in-law is fed a mixture of butter/honey/yogurt symbolically encouraging him to be the best by being strong/sweet/serene
- *Kanya Pravesh* (entering the girl) - the groom and his family have travelled a far distance (*barat*) to unite with the bride and her family yet they are only allowed to do so when they are prepared (purified) through the prior practices - the bride is carried by her family to the four pillared altar (mandap) symbolizing the four Veda-s, reminding the couple they are marrying a family not an individual and encouraging the couple to live under the protection and peace of the teachings of the Scriptures
- *Jaya Mala* (garland of victory) - with the bride and groom now in front of each other they exchange garlands expressing they accept each other unconditionally (no beginning nor end) - the exchange symbolizes the couple is united physically and mentally ending separation (ego), engendering victory (Oneness)
- *Granthih Bandhan* (tying the knot) - the bride's veil and the groom's scarf are tied in a sacred knot to remind them they are to no longer be alone (selfish) on this journey of life rather they are to be together (selfless) - this sacred knot is a catalyst to cutting away the ever limiting 'knots of the heart' (ignorance, desire, action)

To be continued...

Do you understand marriage? Does the person next to you understand marriage? Is this alright? Please pause to reflect on the amount of inner and outer damage taking place in the hearts of endless individuals, endless families, endless communities, endless societies by a lack of understanding of this enlightening training in Love.

"Keep your thoughts clear and chaste, so that your actions will ever be beautiful, dynamic and beyond censure." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

10 - Namah Te from Pittsburgh!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

This past week i had the fortune to speak at *Brock University, Carnegie Mellon University, Western University and Bell Canada*. The **most fascinating aspect of these experiences is the diversity and degree of frivolous ideas that are revolving around Sanatana Dharma! And the most fun aspect of these experiences is trying to break the false and make the true...**

Continuing with this aspiration, we continue to **engage the philosophy of our 'typical' Vivaha Samskara**, brought to you by our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (September 23, 2013) --- Understanding Marriage - Part 2

- *Kanya Danam* (offering the girl) - next to offering knowledge (vidya danam) the most transformative charity one can offer is a daughter in marriage for through this discipline (sadhana) parents are encouraged to give without excitement, to give without expectations, to give without ego - a child is not raised by a family rather is raised by a community and the groom is reminded of the incalculable investment of resources, time and effort into the sacred gift of a bride he and his family are receiving
- *Mangala Phere* (circling the auspicious) - the couple walk around the divine fire (agni devata) four times, each round sharing the evolving intention of their coming together as dedication to their personality, dedication to their family, dedication to their community and dedication to their Divinity - each round the brothers of the bride offer rice to her conveying their encouragement of her inner/outer prosperity which she then offers to the groom encouraging the same development (sahadharmacharini) and together they offer the rice to the sacred fire which acts as an agent/witness of the Creator to acknowledge these intentions
- *Shila Rohan* (ascending a rock) - the groom leads the bride to place her foot on a rock (shila) symbolizing their Love too should be unchanging and therefore Infinite - the groom is also reminded that the strength of their relationship is guided by the bride who is none other than an expression of Divine Strength (Divya Shakti) or in casual terms she 'is his rock'
- *Pani Grahana* (holding hands) - just as a single finger is weaker than a group of fingers, a single hand is weaker than a group of hands and so the bride's father joins her hand with that of the groom's signifying that she is now stronger - as the couple begin their journey, these very hands are to be used in prayer to stay together, these very hands are to be used in service to grow together
- *Sapta Padi* (seven steps) - the couple again journey together by taking seven steps symbolizing the purpose of their relationship, the same purpose as religion, to become virtuous - the steps (verbs) represent to support responsibility, to grow health, to nurture prosperity, to cultivate understanding, to raise family, to invoke balance and to live Love
- *Vaamang Sthapana* (establishing on the left) - the bride changes her seat to the left of the groom to be closer to his heart, to be a catalyst to empathy - the general behaviour is that males are more left-brained, females more right-brained and by this change in seats the couple is encouraged to be more balanced in thinking

To be continued...

"A true friend is discovered not by searching outside for a right person to befriend, but by your growing to be the right person to deserve a friend." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

11 - Namah Te from Flint!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Religion is the combination of philosophy (knowing) and practice (doing) for Peace (Being). If either part is missing the purpose of religion cannot be fulfilled. This is beautifully depicted in a Vedic Wedding Ceremony.

Yet most of us focus on only the philosophy and call ourselves 'spiritual' or focus only on the practice and call ourselves 'ritualistic'. **What both parties should call themselves is incomplete.**

We complete our **engagement of the philosophy of a 'typical' Vivaha Samskara**, as explored through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (October 7, 2013) --- Understanding Marriage - Part 3

- *Sindhur Dharana* (wearing vermillion) - the groom gently ornaments the parting of the bride's hair with red turmeric powder, at a literal level signifying she is married, at a implied level signifying she is loyal - turmeric is an antiseptic agent and is put on the forehead to remind the couple to be pure in mind towards each other enabling them to grow together
- *Mangalya Dharana* (wearing auspiciousness) - the groom gently ornaments the neck of the bride with a sacred necklace, worn close to her heart, offering her a source of protection against negativity, including himself - happily married women then offer guidance to the newly married woman on how to be even happier for happiness is the secret to relationship management
- *Ring Ceremony* (exchanging bands) - the bride and groom gently ornament each other's left hand ring fingers with wedding bands symbolizing a union whose 'end' will not be found just as a circle's 'end' will not be found - back in the day a belief existed that a vein ran from this unique finger straight to the heart and so the established band is a 'direct' reminder of one's spouse who is to be established in one's heart
- *Ashirvada* (blessings) - the couple, together, prostrate to the presiding Acharya, to the performing priest, to their proud parents for grace and guidance to live an exemplary life just as they have - the couple then turn to their family and friends seeking their good wishes and the family and friends offer this by bringing flowers close to their hearts and then showering these flowers on the couple
- *Doli* (carriage) - the wife symbolically leaves the household she was raised in for another household where she will further be raised and so the wife throws handfuls of rice over her head and falling behind her to ensure Peace and prosperity in the household she is leaving behind - the wife's brothers carry her in a palanquin, symbolically from her home to the husband's home, reminding her of how special she is and they are always behind her ready to lift her up
- *Grha Pravesham* (establishing a home) - the wife worships the house by placing her sanctified feet/hands on the outside floor/wall signifying she and the house are one thereby becoming her home too - the wife enters the home right foot first reminding herself to keep right thoughts, right words and right deeds establishing herself as a blessing to all in the home and from then onwards all in the home are to worship her...

yatra naryastu pujiyante ramante tatra devatah - Where women are worshipped, there the Gods reside.

"The devotee, who has his mind and senses under control, is not enslaved by pleasure or pain - for him his home is as good as the cavern in the Himalayas." ~ Swami Tapovanam

Inspire-Love-Be

12 - Namah Te,

i hope this email finds everyone well...

The past few weeks i have had to drive from Niagara to Pittsburgh to Flint. And from Niagara to Pittsburgh to Baltimore. **As i passed through 2 countries, 6 states and 3,000 kilometres i realized that i was in the**

middle of 'nowhere' so many times...eating at vintage diners, napping at random stops, getting lost on the backroads...

All of these uniquely normal experiences make for great adventures, make for great reflections. Both are shared through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (October 21, 2013) --- Diaries of Sattvic Road Trips

- Whenever we are at home, at work, at school we get lost in our apparent responsibilities (i.e. watching the news, calling distant friends, organizing family parties, etc.) whereas when we are driving our only responsibility is to be safe - with the physical world unable to interfere with us we can focus on real responsibilities (i.e. listening to discourses, practicing japa, offering prayers)
- Whenever we are at home, at work, at school we are distracted by many outlets (i.e. typing, eating, sleeping, etc.) whereas when we are driving our only distraction and so only outlet is where the mind takes us - with limited extrovert pulls the mind can be guided within and during this 'research and development' period we realize much about living and Life
- Whenever we are at home, at work, at school we are interrupted by many people (live and virtual) whereas when we are driving our only interruption is our own company - with no one around we need not speak and when we are not speaking we learn to listen more to sounds and silence
- On long road trips we have the opportunity to observe changing weather patterns encouraging the mind to be like a time-lapse camera (long term thinking) rather than a still camera (short term thinking) - when we practice being an observer we develop the habit to accept and destroy the habit to judge
- With many (Infinity) cars around we can think about what others are thinking during their particular drive, with no (One) cars around we can think about what living would be like if we were the only ones around - in both of these exercises (sadhana-s) we grow out of being self-absorbed and learn to empathize with the mysterious ways of the Creator
- Only when the mind is available can we understand and appreciate how fortunate we are to drive in America with roads that are well planned, well maintained and well organized - only within such a conducive driving environment can we tune in to the majestic natural environment around the roads of America...available outside of metropolitan cities!

In Baltimore i was lucky to be able to experience *Pearl Jam* live in concert for the 10th time.

"We have to achieve happiness and peace, not by renouncing the world, but by remaining fixed in the thought of the supreme Self, by possessing unbreakable faith." ~ Swami Tapovanam

Inspire-Love-Be

13 - Namah Te from Iowa City!

i hope this *journal* finds *humanity* well...

November 13: *Day 3 of the 12 day Tour of Iowa-Indiana-Illinois. On Day 1 i had the opportunity to address 75 physicians and nurses at the Webster City Medical Clinic on Delivering Bad News with Compassion. On Day 2 i had the opportunity to address 75 professors and students at Des Moines University's Medical School on Integrating Patient Compassion with Balanced Living. With no formal medical training, i reflected a great deal on what scripture, logic and experience have taught me about this field. i learned a great deal about these subjects through these opportunities. Specifically (through our E-Vichara)...*

E-Vichara (November 4, 2013) --- Intravenous Vedanta (IVV) - Part 1

- Each and every being whether human, animal, plant or stone experiences hardships, none is exempted from the ways of the world - each and every being whether human, animal, plant or stone

experiences these hardships differently, naturally then perspective is fundamental in receiving bad news, in sharing bad news

- 'The ability to suffer with another' is the Latin root for compassion - the degree and scope of identification with a being/s is a gauge of Love and so the way to understand and appreciate how a patient (note: wherever patient is written this includes the patient's family/friends) *feels* is to visualize ourselves as a patient
- A patient wants to *feel* they have **importance** and this is created by being patient with them - creating the time to know the subjective aspects of a patient creates a connection and a connection facilitates communication
- A patient wants to *feel* they have **potential** and this is created by being positive with them - the typical sentiments towards the medical scene are quite debilitating (i.e. illness, tests, pain, etc.) and so caregivers should regularly remind patients of their purposes (i.e. family, society, Divinity, etc.) for this clarity raises their performance through their challenges
- A patient wants to *feel* they have **opportunities** and this is created by being practical with them - whether ill or not none wants to be in a state of the unknown hence caregivers should educate patients about how they will recover or not, encouraging patients to adapt accordingly
- Just as the quantity of medications to be administered depends on the need of the patient so too the balance of IPO to be administered will depend on the need of the patient - just as the reactions to the medications administered depends on the quality of the patient so too the reactions to the IPO administered will depend on the quality of the patient and we cannot control either, we can simply engage in our responsibilities to the best of our ability and this is the appropriate response to any and every reaction

In the coming weeks we shall continue to explore how to carry the teachings of Vedanta to our 'heart'...

"Prayer has strength, unbelievable indeed, until we start praying." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

14 - Namah Te from Merrillville!

i hope this *journal* finds *humanity* well...

November 20: *Day 10 of what has transformed into a 14 day Tour of Iowa-Indiana-Illinois-Ohio. Day 7 i escaped a tornado in Peoria! Day 13/14 i will now be in Cleveland. i continue with what scripture, logic and experience has taught me about Delivering Bad News with Compassion & Integrating Patient Compassion with Balanced Living through another entry into our E-Vichara...*

E-Vichara (November 18, 2013) --- Intravenous Vedanta (IVV) - Part 2

- One whose focus is to be inclusive is one who is noble is one who is an *aryan* - Adolf Hitler distorted this thoughtful word by operating with the strategy of exclusivity whereas many involved in the medical field are validating this thoughtful word by tending to those who they do not know, those who can cause them to be ill, those who can inflict harm to them
- Romantically many share: 'it is better to burn out than to fade away', this type of thinking is derived from an immature (short term) love for a mature (long term) Love would aspire to give and give and give as long as possible - to be able to give and give and give as long as possible one has to be strong physically, mentally, etc. as long as possible
- A single patient can command and demand every hour of the day from a caregiver and if a caregiver succumbs to this 'outlet' other patients, caregivers, medical systems suffer - by using time as a parameter for how much to give (i.e. 15 minutes with an anxious patient, 60 minutes with a depressed patient, etc.) balancing looking after others and looking after oneself becomes more clear
- When a caregiver has too many demands on them, a typical secular solution is to withdraw from some of these demands in which case both the patient and caregiver settle for less - a sacred solution to

such a circumstance is to train oneself to be more efficient (i.e. being systematic in how to make rounds), to be more effective (i.e. being fully focused on the patient) and by living *yoga* (continuous improvement) balancing looking after others and looking after oneself becomes more clear

- As a caregiver gives more of themselves in service more people look at them and the more one is looked at the more one is judged - by learning to validate oneself by oneself (independence) in the form of trying one's best one frees themselves of being validated by others (dependence) in the form of commendations and criticism for then balancing looking after others and looking after oneself becomes more clear
- Only when a patient is aware they are not well do they seek a caregiver and caregivers are not immune to being patients as well - awareness may be the first step towards treatment yet treatment is not possible without the second step, action

"Any attempt at rebuilding a community or nation or world is to be started with a careful gearing up of the individual himself." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

15 - Namah Te from Minneapolis!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

A revolution is beginning. i am not referring to the one against the *Hunger Games*. i am referring to the one in the mind. Every time a thought passes that an a-b-c will bring us joy, we focus on the thought. We repeat the thought. We possess the thought. And from here the mind begins the revolution against us...

To quell this revolution we need a drop. ONLY a drop. A *bindu* (particle) of *Amrta* (Joy). In the coming weeks we will explore insights from *Amrtabindu Upanishad* hoping to extract and administer this drop as guided out by our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (December 2, 2013) --- Silencing the Revolution - Part 1

- The truth is our nature is Infinite and this will never change - why then do we believe we are small, why then do we seek the little, why then do we settle for this falsity which will ever change
- *Upa-ni-shad* is a vision to humbly approach a Master with determination to destroy ignorance - one embraces an Upanishad only when one has understood and appreciated there is more to living than eating, working, marrying there is more to us than the body, mind, ego
- In the tradition of Sanatana Dharma we commence every experience (i.e. studying the scriptures, beginning a roadtrip, eating a meal, etc.) with a prayer for this prepares us for the experience - we pray: may all that enters the mind make us stronger, may we make use of this strength, may we remember those who are strong, for we know when we are strong within there will be peace without
- We live almost entirely at the mind level ever lost in the play of judgements (i.e. tasty and tasteless, friend and enemy, good and bad, etc.) - the mind gives realism to articles (i.e. if we are not thinking of an article the article is of no substance to us) and articles give realism to the mind (i.e. if there were no articles the mind would be without a field to flow to such as in sleep)
- A pure mind is one that is responsive, regulated and refined compared to an impure mind which is delicate, distracted and dull - the sattvic mind is 'closer' to the Self and so is content oriented, accepting, responsible whereas the tamasic mind is 'farther' from the Self and so is context oriented, blaming, irresponsible
- A stilled body becomes a catalyst for a stilled mind and only then do thoughts of relevance, thoughts of Reality rise - in this honest state we come to understand and appreciate how incomplete we are, we come to understand we are engaged in a rage of desires-thoughts-actions-thoughts-desires yet there is still no rest, there is still no Realization

We will end this revolt. Let us be patient as we await further guidance from our Upanishad...

"A devotee who can call on God while living a householder's life is a hero indeed.

God thinks: 'He who has renounced the world for My sake will surely pray to Me; he must serve Me. Is there anything very remarkable about it? People will cry shame on him if he fails to do so. But he is blessed indeed who prays to Me in the midst of his worldly duties. He is trying to find Me, overcoming a great obstacle, pushing away as it were, a huge block of stone weighing a ton.'

Such a man is real hero." ~ Shri Ramakrishna

Inspire-Love-Be

16 - Namah Te from Bengaluru!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

This Saturday 25 CHYKs from all over North America will be coming together in India for *The Chinmaya Inspiration Yatra II* (poster attached). **20 days of exploring Ashram-s and Mandir-s, Shastra-s and Sadhu-s, Brahman and Bharat.**

Though our **movement will be outward in direction our motive will be inward in direction - to master the mind.** Hence we begin at the *Sadhanalaya* (the abode of discipline) aka the *Shodanalaya* (the abode of purification). We continue our electronic yatra through *Amrtabindu Upanishad* for the same reason. Yatri-s the E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (December 16, 2013) --- Silencing the Revolution - Part 2

- *Yatha drishti tatha srishti* (as is one's vision so is one's creation) - every expression of creation has begun with a thought and every expression of destruction will too
- The mind is incessantly involved in labeling abc-s catalyzing our forgetfulness of D (Divinity) - whenever we are involved with the superficial we are tired and tiring, catalyzing further superficiality within and without
- Our nature is satta (Real), sukha (Joyous), shobhana (Beautiful) and thoughts 'steal' and project this nature onto abc-s - who said we are our thoughts
- When we mature to become serious about Happiness we mature up to our responsibilities - just as thieves living in our homes would be completely unacceptable, we have to invoke the same intolerance for the thieves (i.e. anger, jealousy, greed, etc.) living in our minds
- Sadhana (practice) is how sadhaka-s (searchers) connect to the sadhya (Joy) - a steady and sincere engagement to outer discipline (i.e. japa, dana, puja, etc.) creates a critical quietude (cq) in the body, mind, intellect necessary to engage inner discipline (i.e. listening, reflecting, contemplating)
- Meditation is a noun not a verb, is our Self not our system - when the limited self (ego) is directed (contemplation) to the limitless Self (Meditation) the limited comes Home and never leaves

"The study of the Upanishads is futile and cannot bring about any spiritual awakening in one who has not made the heart pure." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

17 - Namah Te from Kolwan!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

A shastra is a mirror to our personality. A yatra is a mirror to our personality. For the past 10 days, 25 young sadhaka-s (searchers of Joy) have been connecting to many many many sadhu-s (sources of Joy) within The CIY II.

A universal theme in the comic world is finding oneself. Whether this be *Batman, Neo or Wolverine*, their journey though without has been within. Our potential too is extraordinary. And we continue to study how to rediscover this through the *Amrtabindu Upanishad*, through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (December 30, 2013) --- Silencing the Revolution – Part 3

- Contemplation is the highest vocation in life demanding constant purification/preparation/practice – through this discipline one reunites with one's Centre/Self/Life
- *Avicharakrto bandhah vicharena nivartate* (not reflecting limits and reflecting frees) – in some fields others can fill in for us by proxy (i.e. voting, rituals, etc.) whereas in the field of the mind only we live out our conflicts only we live out our calmness
- We fail to rise to our potential for we keep falling for the fascinations of kamini (pleasures), kanchana (possessions) and kirti (positions) – once we ingest these poisons we suffer the pangs of judgement, insecurity, fear (i.e. Hiranyakashipu, Kamsa, etc.)
- Real renunciation is of the hallucinations swirling in the mind that we are incomplete and can only be completed by abc-s – every experience of succumbing to abc-s acts as a catalyst to engage in the same experience again creating an impact on the mind to feel even more incomplete
- A Guru shows us a pure mind is powerful, a pure mind is peaceful, a pure mind is possible – just as a Guru is patient, perseverant and peaceful in training us we need to be patient, perseverant and peaceful with training the mind
- We must begin our renunciation by holding onto acceptance (God's world) and letting go of likes/dislikes (ego's world), especially of our own opinions – we subjectify our bodies, minds, intellects and so come to believe this is the only reality when these are only a relativity

Soon we will be on a 30 hour train ride to the villages of Siruvani. And then we will adventure to *Adi Shankara Nilayam* where our yatri-s will be in silent seclusion for 30 hours. Thus we will meet next somewhere in North America.

As the calendar year comes to a completion, **i pray to God and Guru for their continued grace and guidance on all the readers of the E-Vichara, for 2014 to be filled with prosperity and Peace. Joyous New Year!**

Signing off for 2013...

Inspire-Love-Be

18 - Namah Te from Cleveland!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

When one searches for points of interest in Cleveland one will come up with *The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Cleveland Browns, Cleveland Thyagaraja Festival* and hopefully, *Chinmaya Mission***.**

This Weekend a team of sevaka-s/sevika-s came together to initiate the study and sharing of *Upadesha Sara, Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Upanishad Ganga* and *Victorious Youth* with women, adults, kids and young adults from all over Cleveland.

And what is the purpose of such efforts? Simple: to strengthen the mind. The same purpose as *Amrtabindu Upanishad*. The same purpose as our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (January 13, 2014) --- Silencing the Revolution – Part 4

- A thought is when Awareness is directed towards an article - contemplation is the effort to not direct our awareness to articles and Meditation is when there are 'no' thoughts, is being established in Awareness, is our Nature
- To train ourselves to be free from the dependency of thinking of articles we should chant Aum, listen to Aum, be Aum - Aum is the purest expression of the Infinite with only a minimal form, with only a minimal name
- The Truth is beyond all concepts and we can tune into the Truth by living with a vision of non-judgement especially with ourselves - though we are ever of the nature of Existence-Awareness-Joy we will not benefit from our nature unless we know this is our nature
- We have endless projections of who is/are the greatest though in reality the greatest is only the One/Ones who have the intimate knowledge that they are Infinite - our Scriptures cannot describe such a Sadhu (expression of Love) yet our Scriptures try endlessly for the more we read such descriptions, the more we reflect on such descriptions the more we purify our minds, the more we rediscover we are Sadhu-s
- The subject of art is beyond logic, the subject of history is beyond perception, the subject of Enlightenment is beyond all means of knowing (i.e. inference, assumption, etc.) other than faith - a catalyst to invoking faith is to be intensely aware of the changing nature of all
- We can only become what we are not and what is the Infinite not - bondage and Freedom are both just concepts, we can never be bound and we can never be free, we can just Be

With this we complete our exploration of how to 'silence the revolution' transpiring within the mind as guided by *Amrtabindu Upanishad*...**actually this is only half! We will continue our exploration of the remaining half of this wonderful Scripture sometime in the future.** Stay tuned for this.

"Success in life lies in one's own bosom, and not in the world outside and religion provides access to it." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

19 - Namah Te from Pittsburgh!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

How are your resolutions for 2014 going? Gone. We shall leave the matter at that then hahaha!

Why oh why do we keep pursuing joy and why oh why do we keep passing joy? Perhaps we have not thought about resolutions enough. So let us resolve to start!!! BOOYAH our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (January 27, 2014) --- A New Year, A New You!

- *We need Serenity* - often Serenity is shared as a want yet we can only want that which is different from us - our forgotten nature is Serenity and so the search for Serenity is a need just as we search for oxygen for the body, just as we search for sleep for the mind and needs cannot be bypassed
- *For serenity we need Evolution* - though our nature is Serene we do not believe this, instead believing fear, sorrow, delusion, etc. are normal - as humans our bodies are almost perfectly evolved and now the field of evolution is the mind where we need to grow up to grow out of the belief that we are finite
- *For evolution we need Energy* - for any form of evolution (i.e. financial, political, social, etc.) to manifest, energy is required to change from the weaker state to the stronger state - the more subtle the evolution we need is (i.e. mental compared to physical), will naturally demand more quality and quantity of energy

- *For energy we need Discipline* - energy that is not controlled is only energy in theory not application (i.e. if the water flowing over Niagara Falls is not harnessed for hydroelectric purposes, the kinetic energy that is intrinsic to Niagara Falls is just for photographs) - when one practices discipline at the deed, word and thought level one conserves and creates energy giving more meaning to one's deeds, words and thoughts
- *For discipline we need Direction* - dedication pulls sacrifice - only when we have a reason to live do we live (i.e. Mahatma Gandhi compared to Mohandas Gandhi) so what is your reason
- *For direction we need Serenity* - the fundamental force that every being (human, animal, plant and stone) who has ever lived, is living or will live is the need to return to Serenity - only when we are serious about happiness will we be able to move up towards the Infinite instead of helter skelter around the finite

In this new calendar year, let us **'plant' S E E D D S in our personality and watch ourselves grow!**

"The greatest waste in the world is the difference between what we are and what we could become." ~ Ben Herbster

Inspire-Love-Be

20 - Namah Te from Orlando!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

This morning as i ran by the Tolomato River in St. Augustine i had to stop...beside me were **two dolphins calmly surfacing, calmly diving, calmly surfacing, calmly diving...**

In this moment i was moved by gratitude that:

1. i was not in the North East (hahaha!)
2. i woke up early in the morning

The morning is different. We have all heard this. Yet, we have all ignored this. Why? Perhaps we do not know how different the morning is. Let us end our ignorance by knowing. Good morning, you have tuned into our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (February 10, 2014) --- What's the Story Morning Glory?

- Every facet of the Universe is comprised of the guna-s (qualities) of sattva (calmness), rajas (aggressiveness) and tamas (laziness) - our outer environment can affect our inner environment whereas our inner environment does affect our outer environment
- We humans are the only beings who have a choice to live following the sun, all other beings live by the sun whether trees or the owls that live in the trees - foolishly our 'new' sun is electricity and this is causing humans to live shorter lives (perhaps on account of a disrupted Circadian rhythm), to live sadder lives (perhaps on account of a disrupted family life)
- The sattvic time of the day is approximately 3.00a - 9.00a when our outer environment is quiet, is fresh and so conducive to a focused, to a hopeful inner environment - during this period of sattva we should engage in all work that is intellectually intensive (i.e. studying, planning, contemplating, etc.)
- The rajasic time of the day is approximately 9.00a - 9.00p when our outer environment is active, is energized and so conducive to a exerting, to a interacting inner environment - during this period of rajas we should engage in all work that is mentally intensive (i.e. exercising, exchanging, serving, etc.)
- The tamasic time of the day is approximately 9.00p - 3.00a when our outer environment is slow, is tired and so conducive to a indiscriminate, to a selfish inner environment - during this period of tamas we should engage in all work that is physically intensive (i.e. sleeping, preparing, reading, etc.)

- When we flow with our metaphysical nature we will flow with our physical nature and when we stop fighting ourselves we will stop fighting others - no one reading these words is a 'night person', such a claim is simply justification of a life of inner/outer himsa (violence)

As the manifestation of Bhagavan Shiva approaches i **challenge everyone to spend less time in laziness and more time in calmness. How? Beginning the day after Mahashivaratri, every month sleep 5 minutes earlier and awake 5 minutes earlier. In a year, 5 minutes will have created 1 hour. In a year, calmness will have created contentment...**

"Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it." ~ Rumi

Inspire-Love-Be

21 - Namah Te from the middle of the Caribbean Sea!

i hope this email finds everyone well...

Sochi, Russia...

Women's Ice Hockey - Gold Medal Game: *Team Canada is down 1 goal to Team America with only a few minutes of play remaining. In the end Canada tried harder leading to victory.*

Men's Ice Hockey - Semifinal Game: *Team Canada is up 1 goal over Team America with only a few minutes of play remaining. In the end Canada continued to try hard leading to victory.*

Some may think sports is a waste of money. Others may think sports is a waste of time. From their perspective they may be right. **i would like to offer another perspective: sports may be a source of learning. Let's play with our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (February 24, 2014) --- Never Give Up

- We will never sacrifice if we are not dedicated (i.e. to a team, to a nation, to an ideal, etc.) - what are you dedicated to
- The most universal reason we sleep so much is we do not have a better reason to wake up - to make our dreams come true we have to be awake (i.e. athletes who train decades to compete for minutes)
- Challenges are the Universe's means to bring out the best in us - if a challenge is a catalyst to selflessness (i.e. passing the puck for the sake of a better shot) we have evolved and if a challenge is a catalyst to selfishness (i.e. taking a poor shot for the sake of fame) we have devolved
- What did we ever gain by giving up, what did we ever lose by trying harder - the worst that can happen to us is we will lose yet we will have improved our skill set (i.e. personal bests), the worst that can happen to us is we will die yet we will have improved our mind's purity
- For any achievement to manifest Ishvara krpa (God's grace), Shastra krpa (Scripture's grace), Acharya krpa (Teacher's grace) and Sva Krpa (Own grace) are needed - when we try our best we bless ourselves (i.e. 'getting in the zone', etc.) and then the other three sources of blessings begin to flow
- A real winner is one who never takes winning for granted (i.e. the tears of joy in the eyes of the Canadian players) - a real loser is one who ever takes winning as an entitlement

"Strength does not come from physical capacity, it comes from indomitable will." ~ Mahatma Gandhi

Inspire-Love-Be

22 - Namah Te Everyone,

i hope this message finds everyone well...

The E-Vichara is about learning. Not just from Scriptures and Sages rather from society too.

In our past E-Vichara we **learned to always work harder** through *Olympic Ice Hockey (matches)*. In our present E-Vichara we will **learn to cry for the Creator** through *My Sweet Lord (music)*.

Released in 1970, i am sure we have all heard this moving melody 100's of times. And i am sure we have moved our bodies to this rhythm 100's of time too. **Yet have we moved our minds to the meaning 100's of times? Let's dance with our E-Vichara...**

E-Vichara (March 10, 2014) --- My Sweet Lord

- *My sweet Lord* - The nature of the Lord is infinite, constant, unconditional Love and nothing is more attractive than Love - understanding and appreciating this Truth, every circumstance the Creator provides for us is for our welfare whether we feel this way or not
- *I really want to see You, really want to be with You* - In the science of Advaita Vedanta (The Philosophy of Love) seeing is being (i.e. when the dreamer 'sees' the waker the dreamer is being the waker) - the difference between a searcher and a seeker is the former's strategy to find Peace is extroverted (i.e. through articles, beings and circumstances) and the latter's strategy to find Peace is introverted (i.e. through Divinity)
- *I really want to know You, really want to go with You* - The Lord is the embodiment of each and every virtue (i.e. consideration, charity, care, etc.) yet in our ignorance we prioritize valuables over values - our relationship with our Creator is initiated through satsanga (being with those who have already nurtured this relationship) and once this relationship is initiated we live pursuing the Guru, the Scriptures, the Knowledge, for this is the path to knowing the Creator, this is the path to going to the Creator
- *Really want to show You Lord, that it wont take long my Lord* - We believe the Lord is far from us both in space and time yet if we believe the Lord is Infinite the Lord is beyond space and time, the Lord is here and now - through a steady and sincere dedication of our thoughts, words and deeds to the Creator we will disprove our belief that Enlightenment is for another lifetime
- *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare* - 'Assuming' forms and names is how the Infinite expresses compassion for without forms and names our limited iOS (*inner operating software* in the form of a mind/intellect/memory/ego) would not be able to grasp the Limitless - no expression of the Infinite is better nor worse than another rather each expression is simply different for the needs of our iOS is simply different
- *Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnu Gurur Devo Maheshvara, Gurur Sakshat Param Brahma Tasmai Shri Gurave Namah* - the Guru is an ambassador of the Lord and to believe any less is to believe less in the Lord - all that we have learned while living has been facilitated by a teacher, whether how to bathe through our mothers, or how to play through our friends, so why do we still have the ego to question the role of a Guru...

In our future E-Vichara we will **learn to believe how special we are** through *Kung Fu Panda (movies)*.

"A true devotee never comes to demand anything from the Lord except love for Him." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

23 - Namah Te from Portland!

i hope this message finds everyone well...

Today my mother and father left for Bharat to be part of Chinmaya Mission's Vedanta Course in Sidhabari, Himachal Pradesh. For 2 1/2 years they will be exposed to the vision of the scriptures and sages. During this period of intense sadhana (developmental discipline) the **vision of the scriptures and sages will become their vision.**

And what is this vision? **Perpetual betterment (pb). With such a vision the whole universe changes! Every experience becomes a teacher!!** Especially movies hahaha!!!

Kung Fu Panda - a fun animated feature OR a serious message on fundamentals? Depends on your perspective. **Let us grow up from looking at the Universe with eyes (sight) to looking at the Universe with the mind (vision), through the lens of our E-Vichara...**

Special E-Vichara (March 24, 2014) --- Kung Fu Panda

- Master Oogway never had expectations of any of his students for there is no charge for awesomeness - if one honestly loves their responsibilities one's focus will not be on reciprocity
- Po's indiscipline is communicated by his constant clumsiness - the sentiment a healthy seeker feels towards a Master is wanting to be near (attracted by the expression of Love) yet experiencing fear (resistant to the expression of discipline)
- Po knows growth comes through pain and so never gives in to the hurt and insult he experiences - to fulfill one's dreams patience and perseverance are demanded
- When Master Oogway calls for Master Shifu the latter ceases all he is doing to reach the Master and when Po remembers Master Shifu is hurt he climbs the stairs of the Jade Palace faster than ever - the greater an ideal pulls us the greater we will push ourselves
- When Master Shifu meets Master Oogway his instinctive reaction is to ask if something is wrong - we have become overly objective in our relationships where functionality now comes before fundamentals
- The feather of the messenger became the instrument by which Tai Lung broke out of prison - often we avoid certain articles, beings, circumstances believing we are changing our destiny when we are actually facilitating our destiny
- Master Oogway shows Master Shifu the difference in the reflecting capacity of disturbed waters and calm waters - when our mind (vision) is rattled even our eyes (sight) cannot see clearly
- When Master Shifu tells Master Oogway that Tai Lung has escaped from prison he smiles for he knows there are no accidents - those who have faith in the Divine are fearless
- Master Shifu continuously belittles Po without having tried to understand him - when one lacks inner peace they become a blaming personality, they become a bullying personality
- Master Shifu chides Po for thinking he can understand and appreciate the secrets of Kung Fu without training - engaging in selfless actions enables us to engage in Self Knowledge for our personality becomes ready for assimilation
- The Universe decides the Dragon Warrior not power as Tai Lung expected - we keep comparing ourselves and others based on miserly measures like the experience of pleasure, possessions and position instead of the experience of Love for living
- Po eats when he is upset - if the mind is not integrated to an ideal the mind will have free reign to be distracted
- Master Oogway teaches what was and what will be will be - the present is creative for action is not possible in the past nor the future
- Tigress shares victory is achieved by finding an opponent's weaknesses and making those one's strengths - real victory is when we reflect on our own vices and transcend these by practicing the opposing virtues
- Mantis shares who is he to judge a warrior by their size - how many more times do we need to be shamed by our judgement of others based on their appearance
- Master Shifu shares his pride in Tai Lung blinded him to what Tai Lung was becoming - though we feel attachment is intrinsic to Love this is a lie and this dishonest way of living hurts us and others in a most lasting way

- Master Oogway teaches Master Shifu there is no good news nor bad news, there is only news - in the Creator's world there is not the duality of a better creation and a worse creation, there is only one creation
- Master Oogway asks Master Shifu to reflect on his illusory notion of control - farmers can engage in all the right processes to grow a fruit still the growth of the fruit is beyond their efforts
- Master Oogway asks Master Shifu to believe - a Guru guides us to become independent even of the Guru by helping us realize the Guru is ever with us
- Po tells Master Shifu what hurts most is knowing he is ordinary - only one who has transformed from the ordinary to the extraordinary can do the same for another and so obeying a Guru is solid sign of strength
- Though initially Po needed to visualize food to train, near the completion of his training he did not need to eat the last dumpling - when we tune into inner joy our outer needs are quietened
- Master Shifu teaches Po that a true hero is known by humility - villains are those who believe they are experts independent of the grace of God and guidance of the Guru
- Tai Lung intelligently tries to break the faith of the people by spreading fear - faith and fear are antonyms so which do you live by
- Po's father shares the secret ingredient to his Secret Ingredient Soup is nothing just as the Dragon Scroll is blank - the only one who needs to believe one is special is oneself

"In one drop of water are found all the secrets of all the oceans; in one aspect of You are found all the aspects of existence." ~ Kahlil Gibran

Inspire-Love-Be

24 - Namah Te from Raleigh!

i hope this message finds everyone well...

Recently an innovation consulting firm consulted with me on how they can train employees of a high-end hotel chain to integrate empathy into their service.

Empathy...the heart of giving. Giving...the heart of living.

Each and every being is wealthy. Some with values, some with valuables. And based on what we have we can give our physical self in the form of resources, we can give our mental self in the form of time, we can give our intellectual self in the form of effort.

The former is easy to give. The best is to give all. Let us begin giving by learning how to encourage giving through our E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (April 7, 2014) --- The Resonance (Vowels) of Earning Humility

- **Ask** - we humans are busier than ever and the tragedy of this lifestyle is we get lost in our individual affairs, we lose track of our collective affairs - the intelligent understand and appreciate that to get back on people's radars one has to start by simply **asking** them for support
- **Educate** - we humans tend not to move unless we need to physically and mentally - by **educating** people about the need, the insight, the efficiency of a cause this causes people to move to support the same
- **Inspire** - we humans are experts at taking for granted that which is distant (i.e. our ozone, etc.), that which is nearby (i.e. our family, etc.), that which is within (i.e. our Soul, etc.) - reminding people about how rich they are, how lucky they are, how fortunate they are **inspires** them to share the same creating more riches, luck and fortune for those who are distant, for those who are nearby and most importantly for those who are within

- **Optimize** - we humans are habituated to follow only that which is tangible (i.e. parents taking their children to cultural classes so they can be on stage and a picture can be taken to show friends vs. parents taking their children to religious classes where they learn about being even-minded and so can actually practice being even-minded) - the government does not need funds, the banks do not need funds, social work does need funds so by giving donations to social work we reduce our income tax, by giving loans to social work we raise our interest received and these resources are then **optimized** and offered to the society we are living in, not funneled into a private pocket living off of us
- **Understand** - we humans constantly expend ourselves with our constant expectations of others, specifically that they should think and speak and act like the ideal reference point, ourselves - by **understanding** that support can only be encouraged not enforced we create inner peace which catalyzes outer prosperity
- **Yearn** {i feel y is more like a vowel than a consonant} - we humans are quick to share we want whatever we want yet do we actually want this/that/etc. (i.e. we want a new phone, we want a new supervisor, we want to be Free, etc.) - the **ONLY** one who gives is the Giver, NOT you and i, and by **yearning** for support the Creator WILL guide the generous to us

"Charity is an attempt wherein I try to expand and bring into the ambit of my life, all others around me and grow to consider the other man's needs and requirements as important as my own personal needs. To live seeking an identity thus, with at least those who are immediately around me, is to live away from the suffocating selfishness and the throttling grip of my body-consciousness." ~ Swami Chinmayananda

Inspire-Love-Be

25 - Namah Te from Bolivar!

i hope this message finds everyone well...

Have you been listening to discourses for decades?

Have you been reflecting on books for years?

Have you been contemplating on Life for months?

Have you been growing every moment...

How do we know if we are growing? Simple: the quality of the antah karana (inner doer). Our inner operating software (ios) functions as the doubts of the mind, decisions of the intellect, remembrances of the memory and ownership of the ego. We need to know if these functions are growing more efficient, growing more effective, growing more enlightened so let us initiate a scan with a special program - the E-Vichara...

E-Vichara (April 21, 2014) --- Measuring Maturity

- **Simplifying** - we tend to be lost in the illusion of control and this causes us to imagine we have more options than actually exist (i.e. the expectation that we can change another person/s) - for mature personalities living becomes less grey enabling them to follow the dharmic path unshaken by the hardships that come with this path of most resistance
- **Intensifying** - we tend to be lost in believing we are our thoughts and this causes us to 'be' endlessly distracted, bored, tired, etc. - for mature personalities they understand and appreciate that they have a mind rather than are a mind and this allows them to direct the mind fully in every experience without any 'leakage' of thoughts
- **Managing** - we tend to be lost in stress, frustration, bitterness 'caused' by our actual responsibilities and our imagined responsibilities - for mature personalities they are aware that more work is holistic training to offer more resources, more time and more effort from oneself to others and so an opportunity to develop selflessness

- **Pausing** - we tend to be lost in the chase of articles, beings and circumstances for we project these will complete us and our pursuit yet is there anyone around us who has transcended this path of least resistance - for mature personalities they reflect before thinking, reflect before speaking, reflect before acting and realize that Joy is not to be found rather is to be rediscovered as their own Nature
- **Loving** - we tend to be lost in believing we love others and even have the courage to share the same when what we are actually experiencing/expressing is attachment which is nothing but a calculated exchange we have justified to ourselves, justified for ourselves - for mature personalities they are steadily and sincerely releasing themselves from dvaita (separation) catalyzing their release from expectations empowering them to practice empathy in every relationship
- **Equalizing** - we tend to be lost on the endless wave of good times and bad times forever trying to gain balance when this is just not possible - for mature personalities they make themselves grand enough to absorb all labels (i.e. cold temperatures, cold attitudes, cold performances, hot appearances, hot words, hot streaks, etc.) encouraging them to tune into the Changeless

Simple...

And with this E-Vichara we celebrate the completion of 5 years of E-Vichara-s! 5 years of reflecting together!! 5 years of realizing together!!! In Vedantic tradition teachings are given freely. No price can be tagged to the guidance an Acharya offers to seekers to live more thoughtfully, to kids to try their best, to workers with materials for their classes, offices, etc. Still, out of gratitude and fulfillment the student seeks to give back. **This offering – dakshina – is to express understanding and appreciation of the Acharya's dedication and sacrifice and is used to further the sharing of Knowledge.**

On June 22, 2009 i sent the first E-Vichara through the social media of email to approximately 90 subscribers. **5 years later through the Giver's grace i have been able to reach...**

- 10,000's of readers through the discussion forum of Chinmaya International Foundation
 - 1,000's of viewers through recordings on YouTube
 - 100's of followers through messages on Twitter
- And much much much more through discourses, discussions and dialogues**

Now i want to **share through one of the original channels of social media: a book.** When i was studying in India at Chinmaya Mission's Residential Vedanta Course from 2005-2007 i had written a commentary with illustrations on select verses of *Bhaja Govindam* entitled *Bleeding the Truth*. i wrote this for my own reflection. i wrote this as a birthday gift for Pujya Swami Tejomayananda. **i wrote this for the youth and CHYKs around the world who i felt would like a modern spin on an ancient classic. This is attached for you.**

At the time i did not receive much support to have this published for greater outreach. Probably, rightfully so. Yet over the years many of you have shared the E-Vichara should be published as a book. Or i should write a different kind of book...even an old man i used to exercise with at the local gym told me the evolution of my reaching out to people is a book. And so i have **commenced the writing of *Strength to Strength: The Art of Growing*. This book will highlight how we can integrate the Divine in our daily affairs. i hope to have this completed and ready for any daring reader (hahaha!) by October 23, 2014 (Dipavali).**

And now i humbly ask for your support. Already you have given me so much in the form of content for a book by allowing me to learn below you, by allowing me to learn beside you. **To make the context (printing costs, distributing costs, etc.) of a book a reality please give what you feel the E-Vichara is worth in funds:**

- if the E-Vichara is worth as much as 1 sticky note, give \$0.01 for each year of this idea --- 5 years X \$0.01 = \$0.05
- if the E-Vichara is worth as much as 1 online game, give \$0.10 for each sharing of this idea --- 220 messages X \$0.10 = \$22.00
- if the E-Vichara is worth as much as 1 wedding gift, give \$1.00 for each hour of writing this idea --- 440 hours X \$1.00 = \$440.00

Only a few have offered their support...i pray more will by:

Credit Card

CanadaHelps --- <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/chinmaya-mission-niagara-canada/>

Check (made out and mailed to)

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

My gratitude to all of you for the past, present and future.

"Do not educate your children to be rich. Educate them to be happy. So when they grow up, they'll know the value of things, not the price." ~ unknown

Inspire-Love-Be,

Vivek

I Aum Tat Sat I
I Peace is the Truth I