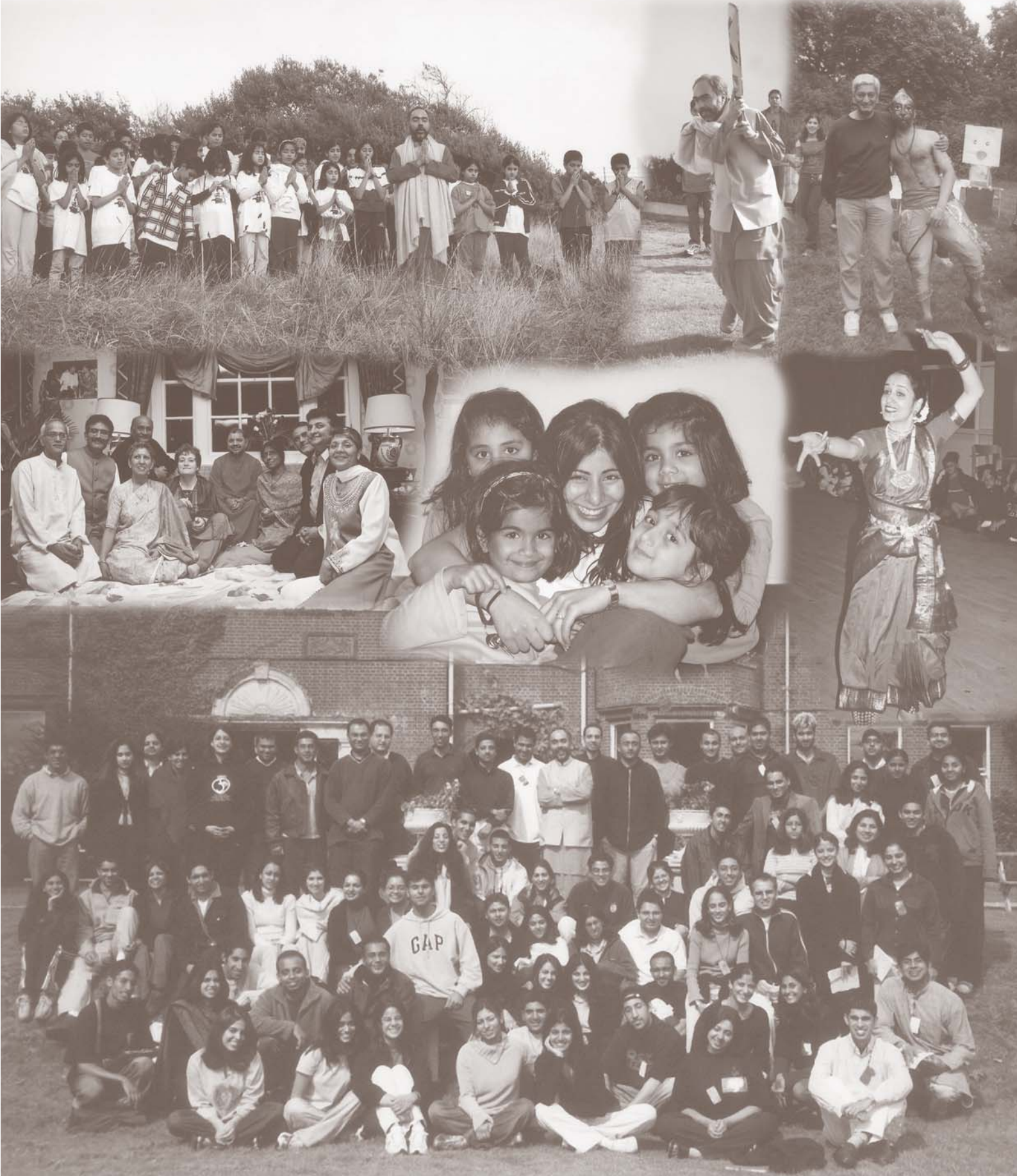


December 2002



Chinmaya

Issue 9





Chinmaya Hari Om!

President's Letter

"Vedanta is the foundation of all theories of self-perfection, though the techniques may differ from place to place and from master to master"- Swami Chinmayananda.

Over the past few years Chinmaya Mission (UK) has experienced an explosion in growth. From one small Yagna a year and Bal Vihar class in St Johns Wood, we now have 3 Bal Vihar centres, 12 adult study classes and 3 CHYK classes in London. A new Bal Vihar centre will start in the Harrow area in early 2003. The Yagnas have now become huge events with well over 1,200 people attending each day. Finding a hall for the next Yagna is proving to be a difficult task.

All this has been achieved under the guidance of Swami Swaroopananda, and with his and Swami Tejomayananda's blessing. Their inspiration has mobilised a small army of Sevaks, who are not only there at the time of the Yagna, but work throughout the year running the Bal Vihars, conducting the study classes, running the books section and publishing Chinmayam! On these young shoulders the UK Mission is built. Most of these Sevaks are young people, with a quest to know of the logic behind our religion, and a desire to identify back with our culture. In the process they are willing to serve so that others may also be exposed to this cause.

As we approach the New Year, we hope that we would have established a permanent centre, from

where all these activities can be supported to grow and expand into other areas. The centre would also be a permanent place where all festivals can be celebrated by the children and youth of the various study classes as well as housing a library and our bookshop. It would also serve as a central administrative office that can support the growing Mission.

Why do we need to establish the Mission; why construct an institution? It was in these very pages I had quoted Gurudev, Pujya Swami Chinmayananda stating, "I am not interested in how many institutions you build; I want each one of you to become an Institution. Then you will create an awareness in the world around you."

In the very early days of the Chinmaya Mission, after each day's Yagna, Sevaks would transcribe Gurudev talk and make copies for all the attendees by the next days lecture. This was the Mission. A group of volunteers who were members of the Mission because they had a thirst for the knowledge and were willing to serve so that others would benefit from Gurudev's Message. Two years later, Pujya Gurudev gave his blessing for a formal mission to be established. The purpose of this was to make available the Truth expounded in our ancient scriptures to the 'maximum number of people'. The Mission was a tool to facilitate the message of Vedanta to the masses.

I have often repeated here the importance of this message. Vedanta forms the very basis of our entire philosophy, culture and so religion. Indeed as every great Rishi and Master has expounded, it is the study of Vedanta philosophy that leads us to realise our true Self.

Today the Chinmaya Mission spreads this Knowledge in the vocabulary of an intelligent and dynamic individual. One who is very much part of this world and has the ambition to succeed in the material world. One who has a keen intellect but also questions the values that measure this 'success'. Vedanta provides the answers. This individual also questions the various branches in Hinduism and the complexity of the apparent contradictions of the different teachings of every teacher. Chinmaya Mission provides the answers. This is perhaps the greatest function of the Mission in the UK today.

There are a number of great Missions established by great Masters that are in the UK today. Each one have over a number of years established and then expanded the beacon that contains the Light of Knowledge from our ancient scriptures. Many also serve to hold together a specific community, or peoples with a common set of beliefs.

The Chinmaya Mission's goal, "to provide to individuals, from any background, the wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to become positive contributions to society", aims to reach out across all communities and creeds.

As Swami Swaroopananda once said, "Chinmaya Mission should never lose sight of our main activity, which is "Gyana Dhana - the distribution of Higher Knowledge to all". This philosophy reinforces the external practice of rituals and gives a purpose and a goal for realisation. Today, the youth rejects religion as the visible rituals that only serve to differentiate between societies. These different rituals are mistaken for religion and then rejected. The Chinmaya Mission, with its focus on the philosophy therefore reaches out to all, and more importantly allows every individual to follow his or her own path of Sadhana, with a greater understanding.

This greater understanding of our own respective religious practice has been a key reason why, in such a short period of time, the Mission has attracted so many. It also highlights the great need for such an institution. The Sevaks have shown this by their presence in study classes and by their work for this movement.

What is needed now is a structure that will not only enable this work to grow, but to continuously expand and spread. Spread this Knowledge that forms the basis of all religions. It is the common thread that binds all the various aspects of Hinduism, and provides the answers sought by today's student to the seemingly different and contradictory messages from different beliefs.

Included with this issue of Chinmayam is a blue flier that gives brief outline of the activities of the Mission in the UK. Many of you have seen this distributed at recent Yagnas. Please take time to read it, and I would ask you to fill in the last part and send it in. Any donation you generously send is an investment. This investment will help establish a structure that will ensure the continuation of the spread of Vedantic Knowledge to all, which in turn will continue to attract more people, enabling them to become positive contributors to this movement.

Hari Om
- Rupin Vadera

"Mere performance of rituals without understanding their meaning and significance is superstitious living...On the other hand, learning the entire philosophy and keeping the knowledge to ourselves is to be like a donkey carrying gold on its back." - Swami Chinmayananda.

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Chinmaya Mission (UK)
Signal House, Lyon Road Harrow,
Middlesex HA1 2AG UK
Tel: +44 (0)20 8861 2625
Fax: +44 (0)20 8427 5169
email: info@chinmayauk.org
web: www.chinmayauk.org



A new group of sincere American students gathered in San Francisco to meet weekly to read and study the Gita. They waited for swamiji's annual return to the United States and began to help organise his tour schedule, including his outdoor talk on a Sunday afternoon in Golden Gate Park. Swamiji seemed to be more inspired in the outdoor setting, similar to the set up in India. The discourses were light and cheerful, but he challenged the audience to look towards a deeper reality.

The Americans knew they could not ignore or challenge their heritage, but they asked themselves how they could integrate East and West. Several had set an ideal of somehow combining the materialism of the United States with the spiritual wisdom of India for the best of all possible worlds. When Robert Holbin wrote swamiji in June 1968 of this idea, swamiji replied with detailed comments on the priorities for the Americans if they were to succeed in their spiritual ideas.....

Dear Robert,

I received your letter yesterday. It was a joy to hear from you in this quiet mountain retreat.....

To serve as a bridge between the East and West, the individual must have an inconceivable height, and his arms must have the widest imaginable embrace. Remember your geography: he will have to stand in the middle of the Pacific Ocean to hold California and Madras together or stand in the mid-Atlantic to hold New York and Bombay in the embrace.... Supposing

Mr. Holbin acquires the necessary height to stand safely in the Atlantic, and let us hope that he has cultivated an embrace sufficient to hug both Boston and Badrinath—still, remember, Mr. Holbin, that the entire traffic has to run over the crossroads of your shoulders.

When an individual has grown to such a height and such an arm's length and has lost his head in the heights of meditation, he becomes the All Pervading because

where the Ego has ended the Spirit alone exists. The Spirit needs neither the Eastern spirituality and its values of life, nor the Western materialism and its all annihilating missiles of death and disaster. In the Eternal Heart, there are no continents, there are no peoples, there is only love. Cultivate such an all-embracing love which seeks no distinctions, sees no differences, knows no East and West—and you will bring the whole universe into your palm.

Complete the study course, sincerely and seriously. Absorb the lessons until they become the very essence of your spiritual existence. Live every word conscientiously. Even though some ideas may look impractical and absurd, live them all. Live the ideas without any compromise. You can. And you must. It is urgent. Perhaps you don't see how urgent it is. A wonderful civilization is

Life survives. It has a tenacity and a larger purpose than modern man has ever suspected.

slipping into a devastating destruction. The symptoms are obvious: You are a people who have no control over your passions, who are living in an atmosphere of hatred and mutual incriminations, who are sinking into a tribal levels, despoiling your culture and shattering your civilization. This destruction is a tragedy. In the psychological cataclysm that is taking place in America, saner islands of quiet and peace are to be discovered, so that some can hold their hands together and form at least Noah's Ark!

Life survives. It has a tenacity and a larger purpose than modern man has ever suspected. The Roman and the Greek civilizations were wiped out because of their own excesses. Yet, life did not cease. India may rot, America may decay, Europe may be blasted, Asia may be wiped out, but life will survive. The world and its continents are only platforms on which mere individuals for a few hours flicker, dance and jump about making what they call history. But if this good old globe of ours so consistently moving around its own axis once a day—moving now at an angle



to the vertical—if it were to take into its head to straighten itself, the existing continents would get submerged and equal amounts of new land would rise from the ooze of the sea. Thus, life will continue.

Man, as he is today, has no control over himself. He has been given a freedom to evolve and, in this attempted evolution, he is also allowed to do some mischief. A very considerate, old, generous heavenly Father loves all these childish pranks of man, and apparently even allows man to spread his chest in his empty vanity!

But let us not, at least in our saner moments, forget that at our level of consciousness today we are not masters, neither over ourselves nor over our world. Vedanta points the way to self-mastery: a great grand path, an expressway to the Higher Consciousness.

Ardently wish to embrace the whole universe. Never plan to make a crazy quilt of the world by bringing together the spiritual experience of the East and the material wealth of the West. This cannot be done.

Where one is, the other cannot be. Study the lessons. Study yourself.

Start the pilgrimage. Reach the goal. Thy Own Self

Chinmaya



Every time I sit down to write this column, I think, 'How can I start if off, so that I capture people's attention and can give them a brief picture of the success of CHYK and how we are moving forward?'

Usually, I come up with some kind of joke or comment to get you reading the column before I go on and on about how great CHYK is and how much work we are doing etc...

But this time I won't do that because I am absolutely exhausted and because most of you will have seen the work being done and the progress being made, and do not need me going on and on about it.

I am exhausted because for the passed year, the Chinmaya Mission and CHYK has undergone 'exponential growth'...and in the last three months we have been witness to:

- **Our largest ever Yagna by Swami Swaroopananda with over 1000 people attending EVERYDAY**
- **Our best ever (subjective I know but hey, this is an editorial!) CHYK Camp**
- **A giant BV Camp with 120 attendees (where most teachers and Sevaks are CHYKs)**
- **A series of Sevak Workshops by Swami Swaroopananda**
- **Regular attendance by 30 CHYKs at our 2 CHYK Classes,**
- **Swami Chidatmananda's series of Bhikshas, Study Classes and Talks on Yoga Vasistha**
- **An absolutely massive Hindu Youth Festival (Over 9000 People!) and**
- **Diwali being celebrated at the House of Commons for the first time ever (with CHYKs being invited).**

And the reason I don't need to go on at length about all these events (other than the fact that they are covered below) is that it was YOU that made them happen. It was the Yagna spirit of all the Sevaks (New and Old) that made these events so successful and it is this Yagna Spirit that will make every single one of our members, 'institutions in themselves' (see CHYK Class article) and will carry the Chinmaya Mission forward as the Face of Knowledge-based Spirituality in 21st Century Britain.

Hari Om



CHYK Camp 2002 Creates a Storm!

When recently asked to do a write-up on CHYK camp for the third year running, I panicked, not knowing how to describe camp without gushing and repeating praise from previous years! Then I picked up my pen and thought to myself, this is the perfect opportunity to display what camp was about - how to perform through any storm!

Each year when I leave camp, I wonder to myself how the next camp can possibly better the one just attended, and the following year I get to find out! This year's camp with Swami Swaroopananda, Operation: Storm 2 Perform, proved to be a roaring, sorry, Storming success, right from the army mission theme through to the lectures, discussion groups and activities.

The chosen venue, Gaunt's House in Dorset, was classic and spectacular, what with its long corridors, massive staircase, ballroom, library, and even wooden swings hanging from huge tree branches in the fields! A far cry from the dull army barracks we expected when we first read the Army Survival Kit camp manual on the coach!

It was great to see so many new and young faces, feeling so much a part of something they had only just been introduced to. Unity and solidarity are not sentimental notions; they mark the very essence of CHYK camp. Although we all have our own past experiences, and therefore our own perspectives, it's amazing that the vibe at camp each year is so powerfully positive.

The mention of power brings to mind Swamiji's lectures, largely based on Dharma, or Duty. The focus on relationships of all kinds captured everyone's attention, and we all left the lecture hall ready to face any storm (especially those stormy relationships!). As an attendee of previous camps, I have to say that this year the content of the lectures was definitely a degree higher than previous years. It was nice to see that in us, Swamiji found an audience responsive and enthusiastic enough to go deeper into the subject. Definitely a promising sign for future camps!

Each year I stock up on Swamiji's pearls of wisdom, and this year they were flowing in abundance! Some of my favourites:

"The essence of Dharma in living is that you take from the world, but see that you also give back to the world - so that it becomes a mutual exchange."

"Marriage is about sharing, which is sacrifice, not compromise."

"There is no such thing as an ideal partner - we should aim to cultivate the ideal partnership."

However, camp is not just about impressive words. It is about gaining the highest kind of knowledge. To quote Swamiji,

"The knowledge that reveals to you your true self is the highest Dharma."

With ammunition like that, how can we not strive to perform?

It is purely due to the hard work of the CHYK Sevaks that camp is packaged so beautifully and comfortably, rather than just being a military-like exercise of listening and taking in information. They make camp an experience, an interaction, a family. (Even camps with an army mission theme like this one!)

That familial feeling was present at CHYK camp from the first one I attended, it is still present today. Since it turns out that it is, in fact, impossible to describe camp without a gushing cascade of praise, I'll simply end by saying that I have long since decided to attend CHYK camp every year until I'm 30! (And then I'll just have to start lying about my age to attend even more!)

About this year's Operation Storm 2 Perform, I'll just say that we've all heard about 'the calm before the storm,' but this year's experience has left us with a calm after (the) Storm (To Perform!) This isn't a calm of inaction, but rather a calm of knowledge, humility and duty. Tools to Perform with!

Hari Om!
Trishna
Gulrajani





Get Connected - The Diwali Extravaganza

In the last Issue of the Chinmayam I briefly write how Hindu Youth UK, were planning this years Hindu Youth Festival, called 'Get Connected - The Diwali Extravaganza'. After last year's event at Roundwood Park, and so that the views and needs of Hindu youth all over the country would be represented and catered for, a 'Mobi-Fest' concept was introduced, whereby there would be three festivals, one in the North, one in the Midlands and one in the South of England.

The first event, in Preston was undoubtedly a winner, but nothing could have prepared us for the overarching success of the London Event. Here are some facts:

- 8 fully themed 'Zones' covering Health and Vitality, Culture, Kids, Food, Chat, Spirituality, Careers, Chill Out and a Stage with live acts throughout the day.
- Over 9000 people attending over one weekend.
- Alexandra Palace converted into one giant Diwali Celebration
- Innumerable MPs and VIPs attending, both formally, such as various Mayors and Three Secretaries of State, and informally (I was eating Chilli Paneer next to Meera Syal in the Food Zone).
- Non-sectarian event with members of over thirty Youth groups working together, showing a united face of Hinduism and building bridges between their own organisations

Every Zone was a plethora of knowledge, packaged in an irresistibly attractive manner. Health and Vitality contained everything from Yoga demonstrations, Ayurveda workshops and even free Cholesterol and Blood Pressure Testing (not recommended after eating the Chilli Paneer provided by Jashan in the Food Zone).

The Careers Zone hosted a number of Stalls with the likes of Price WaterHouse Coopers and Ernst and Young while also having hourly presentations from Keith Vaz MP talking about Careers in Politics to a Chelsea Pro-Footballer talking about Ethnic Minorities in Sport.

The Chill Out Zone, was an area where attendees could sit, relax and introspect in a Mandir environment with Meditation workshops being run throughout the Day. The Highlight of the Culture Zone was a Mock Wedding (Mandap and all!) but there were plenty of other events such as Dance Classes and Rangoli sessions.

By far the most popular zone was the Kids Zone, where Parents could leave their children to be supervised by Sevaks from the Sai School, The Hare Krishna Movement and of course Chinmaya Mission Bal Vihar Teachers.

The Chat Zone was in a separate room and consisted of 30-minute lectures, discussions and workshops from speakers from the Vivekananda Centre, to CHYKs from the Chinmaya Mission as well as a host of other organisations.

And in the spirit of Brahman, the Spirituality Zone was All-Pervading, and consisted of a Poster Exhibition jointly designed and printed by the Hare Krishna Movement and the Chinmaya Mission.

The Event truly was a marvel - I was on the Organisers Committee and none of us could believe quite how well it all turned out - as one of the organisers said after the first day, the fact that the event was such a hit was 'proof of God'!

And it was a success on so many levels: We actually targeted and brought in the Youth - by far the majority of the 9000 attendees were teenagers and Young Adults, though many families came as well. The atmosphere was of a Mela - everyone eating, watching shows, taking part in the workshops and demonstrations and generally hanging out and enjoying the atmosphere - but the difference was that the whole event was pervaded by a Spiritual undertone. All the acts and events were of a Hindu Nature and the decoration and posters all contained information on Hinduism and Spirituality. The event brought Spirituality to the masses and presented it in an enjoyable, appealing and extremely palatable way, without losing its Religious Integrity.

And lastly, the Hindu Youth Groups, who have always concentrated on their own development and growth, came and worked together - the dividends of which will be immeasurable in the Future. Hindu Youth UK is fast being considered as THE credible, non-political, representative body of Hindu Youth across the country on all levels from that of the local community all the way up to the House of Commons.

The Chinmaya Mission was involved at all levels, from the initial vision of CHYKs on the Executive Committee, to CHYKs being Zone Co-ordinators, having Bal Vihar teachers in the Kids Zone, CHYKs running discussion groups in the Chat Zone and contributing to the spiritual-intellectual content of the Spirituality Zone to simply providing volunteers to help with the Stewarding - everywhere you looked, there was a CHYK face.

The Chinmaya Mission feels proud to have been such an intrinsic part of Get Connected 2002 and we will continue to firmly support and promote the activities of Hindu Youth UK.

For more details of the event, please visit www.hinduyouthuk.org

CHYK Class

Since this year's CHYK Camp, CHYK Study Class is positively bursting at the Seams. We have 30 regular attendees in two classes: intermediate and the beginner's; and it feels like every week I get another phone call from someone new who has heard about the Mission and wants to join.

It really is heartening to see so many people enjoying and benefiting from these classes and seeing the positive spiritual growth not only in myself, but in all those who attend.

Swami Chinmayananda said:

Do not rush out to improve the World. Chinmaya Mission is not there for you to look out into the World; not even so that you may look into the organisation as a whole and see and study the organisation's total growth; but rather, it is there that each one of you might develop internally. Do not keep thinking, "How far have we done work outside?"

Only self-improvement is important. We want the chastest of the chaste for the Mission. We want sincerity and constant introspection. We are not interested in how many buildings and institutions we possess as a Mission. Instead, we are interested in how far each individual has become an institution.

If you want to live Gurudev's words, then Study Class is essential. The Details are below:

Time: 7:30 pm - 9pm every Wednesday
Venue: Francis Holland School, Ivor Place, London NW1 6XR.

<http://www.streetmap.co.uk/streetmap.dll?P2M?P=NW16XR&Z=1>

The closest tube station is Baker Street and it is opposite the Mumtaz (Indian restaurant).

There are 2 Classes that run simultaneously

– Basic - Text studied is 'Self Unfoldment' by Swami Chinmayananda

– Intermediate - Text studied is 'Art of Man-making' by Swami Chinmayananda

chyk@chinmayauk.org
www.chinmayauk.org



Chinmaya Efficiency in Action

Year 2002 marked the 51st year of the Chinmaya Mission and the Ninth year that Swami Swaroopananda has been coming to the UK. And the three and a half weeks that Swamiji spent in London this year were a landmark event: in years to come, 2002 will always be remembered as a turning point in the history of CMUK.

But on the surface this does not seem the case. 2001, the 50th anniversary of the Chinmaya Mission saw our largest ever Yagna; a Maha-Yagna on the Hanuman Chalisa, where attendance peaked at 1500 people (not including the countless number we had to turn away at the door because the venue was bursting at the seams) with people sitting in the aisle, corridors and hallways. We even wired up TV's and speakers in the closed rooms upstairs so people could sit and revel in the atmosphere, even though they could have watched Swamiji on their TV's at home (the Yagna was broadcast on Cable television). Book sales reached around £16,000 for the week and for months afterward, Bal Vihar Classes, CHYK Classes and Study Classes continued to swell.

Not only that, but CHYK Camp had a very high attendance (92 with a waiting list of 30) and in terms of organisation, theme, venue and overall experience, CHYK Camp 2001 was the best yet.

So why have I singled out 2002 as a landmark year? There is no doubt that 2001 marked a giant leap forward for Chinmaya Mission UK; in previous years we used to congratulate ourselves for having 400 people come to a Yagna and for selling £2000 worth of books: 2001 made us realise that by aiming for the moon, even if we missed we'd still hit the stars.

But in 2002, we did it the Chinmaya Mission way.

We had only (!) 1000 people attending the Yagna - but this 1000 attended everyday; there was no drop off as is usual on the weekdays. But crucially, we had 1000 people listening to the **Logic of the Geeta**, which is the very crux of the Mission. We had a team of dedicated Sevaks running the Yagna: everything from selling books, to cleaning up, to manning the car park was done in the attitude of Seva, with dedication and without complaint in true Yagna spirit.

Furthermore, we had the highest ever attendance of morning classes on Saddarsanam (about 150), indicating that the type of attendee we were attracting were interested in, and genuine seekers of the Truth.

Even CHYK Camp, despite having lower numbers (76), was better than last year because of the depth

that Swamiji took the lectures. Swamiji always told me that if I thought his lectures were better or deeper, it only meant that I was more attuned to his words; but there is no doubt in my mind that Swamiji read the audience, saw how receptive they were, and decided to plunge deeper, taking the philosophy to levels never before seen at Camp - the talks were so profound that we are in fact transcribing them to be released worldwide as interactive study material.

And this year we were the Global pioneers. Every year, CHYK UK takes the title and theme of the Camp from Australia and we try to build on their hard work and dedication - this year we did it ourselves. Everything from the title, theme, even the gimmicks came from Swamiji talking to and interacting with London CHYKs and the result was a camp that completely blew away even the most seasoned camp-goers.

2001 may have marked the upward surge of the Chinmaya Mission in the UK, but 2002 showed that it was real and sustained, that we have actually grown and that we can make Chinmaya Mission a dominant force as the face of Hinduism in Britain today and do justice to the 42 years of Gurudev's life that he devoted to rebuilding the Temple of Truth that is Hinduism.

In 2001, we showed London that the Chinmaya Mission was at the forefront of Hindu organisations in the UK - in 2002 we proved it to ourselves, through the dedication of our workers, the success of our events and the un-ending and seemingly limitless flair, skill and dynamism-born-of-divinity of our Swamis.

The title of this year's Yagna was **'The Logic of Devotion and Efficiency in Action'** and I think it perfectly sums up the Mission in 2002.

The **Logic** upon which our Mission is based has always been in the heart of our Sevaks. However, after our success in 2001, a **Devotion** that was always somehow lacking has begun to develop. A Devotion and faith that Gurudev's hand always guides us and that if we work diligently and honourably, focussed upon Him and His vision, then the Yagna Halls will fill themselves. And when this faith in Gurudev's ever-present will, combines with the knowledge that His Logic is the foundation upon which we endeavour to construct our lives, the result is an irresistibly vibrant flood of Activity, evident in the two Yagnas and two camps that we have held this year. And the key to 2002, and what differentiates it from any previous year, is that we are beginning to see that if we employ this formula correctly by applying the Logic that we study and soaking it in

Devotion towards Gurudev, an **Efficiency** routed in divine dynamism manifests within us and there is nothing we cannot accomplish.

We may not yet have rebuilt the Temple of Truth, but the activities over the past year have made me believe that the cement in the foundations of CMUK that has been poured with the water of Gurudev's grace and hardened by our resolve to carry out his work, is firm, and the Temple of Truth that we will create over the next 50 years will be a lasting and fitting legacy to Gurudev's and Swamiji's work.

– Milan Samani



Swami Chidatmananda



Swami Chidatmananda arrived in London on September 28th 2002 for a weeklong visit in transit to India. He had just completed a 6-month tour of the US, encompassing 25 cities and 18 States. After such a taxing and exhaustive tour and because Swamiji's parents were travelling with him, it was agreed that we would not organise a formal programme for Swamiji. Instead we would take him and his Parents around England, showing them various historic cities and sites of interest coupled with a 3-part discourse on the Vedic text, Yoga Vasistha at people's homes.

Sunday was spent at Ziaji's cottage in Taplow, a beautiful, picturesque village in Buckinghamshire. Swamiji spent the morning visiting Henley and Windsor Castle, both of which are nearby and the afternoon was spent informally relaxing and talking with Swamiji (topics as varied as the Vedantic viewpoint of Euthanasia to the state of India's Cricket Team were discussed) in the beautiful sunshine of Ziaji's garden. I am sure all those who attended agree with me when I say it was wonderful to be able to spend time with Swamiji in such an informal way, in such a peaceful environment.

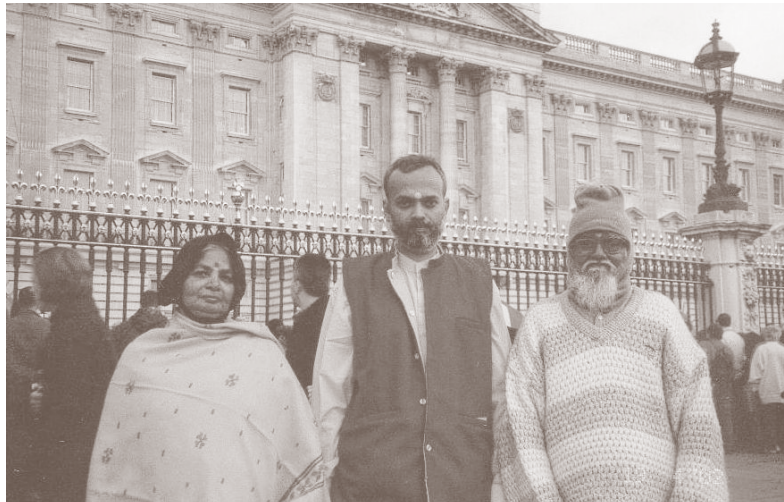
Due to some Mission members working in the Military, Monday morning was spent in a guided tour of an air-force base, learning the history of the air force and its role (which included many Indian Soldiers and Pilots) in World War II. In the evening, Swamiji attended the Northwood Study Class and initiated a fascinating discussion on the three Gunas.

Tuesday marked the beginning of our tour of the UK and saw us visiting the colleges and cathedrals of Oxford. In the evening, Swamiji inaugurated a new study class in St John's Wood with a fantastic talk on the **ABC of Freedom** and the virtues of the Geeta. Swamiji has the unique ability to manipulate and play with words and their meanings and Tuesday's talk was no exception - how can we be Free...? Well we must drop:

Frustration
Reaction
Expectation
Ego

Only then can we free ourselves from Agitation, Bother and Compulsion.

Swamiji was so impressed by the architecture and atmosphere in Oxford that Wednesday's trip to Warwick castle was replaced with a trip to Cambridge, although he didn't trust my aquatic skills enough to let me take him punting on the canal! The evening was spent at CHYK Class, where a packed classroom were in fits of laughter as



Swamiji explained the Art of Right Contact, answering questions that had not yet been asked and enlivening and enlightening the crowd in a way that only he can.

After all that long-distance driving, we decided that Thursday would be a more relaxed affair. The morning involved a trip to the Barrett Law School, where Gandhiji studied (it being Ghandhiji-jayanti the day before) and in the afternoon, we took a tour of Lords Cricket Ground (hey, he may be a Swami but he's still Indian!).

Thursday Evening was the first of the three-part talk on Yoga Vasistha, the 32,000-verse epic on the discussion between Rishi Vasistha and Rama. Swamiji picked selected verses from the six 'chapters' and once again displayed his immense clarity of thought and wit in relaying the profound Vedic concepts.

Friday daytime was spent in visiting the city of Bath and the evening saw part 2 of the Yoga Vasistha talks. It was at this stage of

the talks where the philosophy became really profound, with Swamiji explaining and expounding upon the existence of the world in thought, using simple bullet points; yet not letting the audience get bogged down with intellectual intricacies and always keeping the discussion practically relevant.

The final talk on Saturday culminated with an exact definition of Self-Effort and how important it is to strive with noble values and higher ideals. Swamiji logically deduced and relayed that with the Grace of the Guru and God, no obstacle is insurmountable. Again, Swamiji's razor-sharp mind gave us a 6-point plan to eliminating any pain or suffering in our lives:

1. Create Pure Vasanas (tendencies)
2. These are available through study of the Shaastras (so come to Study Class!)
3. Reject Likes and dislikes
4. Become single-pointed, disciplined and focused
5. Through the purity that the discipline brings, a Dharmic awareness is awakened
6. Through this awareness, we can drop modifications of the mind. Once these are dropped, any pain or suffering also ceases.

Swamiji left on Sunday morning after a brief but enlightening visit. Every Swami in the Chinmaya Mission has the ability to balance relevance with profoundness in their discourses and that is what makes them so unique. This skill is particularly visible in Swami Chidatmananda and his stay here enriched all who came to hear him speak.

Next year's plans have not yet been confirmed but 10 Mission Centres in the US have already made a formal application to re-host Swamiji next year and we have made it clear that we would not allow Swamiji to visit the US without a stopover in the UK so watch this space....

Tapes of Swamiji's 3-part discourse on Yoga Vasistha are available entitled:

'Eluding the Illusion - from Yoga Vasistha' by Swami Chidatmananda.

– Milan Samani



Early Inspirations-Junior CHYK

A Teenagers View of the Bal Vihar and Junior CHYK Camp

I ran out of the school gates as quickly as I could. I went home, had a shower and ate some dinner. I then watched a little television before I had to leave for the camp. I arrived in Northwood first and I got front seats on the coach next to the driver. Oh! How lucky was I. Ok, let me put that into reality. School finished at 17:15. I literally had about 10 minutes to get from school to home to Northwood and you know how it is when you're in a rush. There's always a Learner in front of you and yes he is going to Northwood and yes he does have to drive at 3mph! Anyway I think we arrived at the coach stop with about 4 microseconds to spare. I clambered onto a peaceful coach, sat down and had a relaxing 5-hour ride. Oh no wait! I got onto the kids coach, was lucky enough to sit down just before being fired at by some sort of confectionary missile and during the ride I learnt the entire chorus from one of Nelly's songs, it was all good fun mind you!

After the journey, which turned out to be an overnight Air India flight we arrived at Osmington Bay, Dorset, our base for the weekend. As this was my second time here I pretty much knew where I was going. Or did I? It was quite late, upon arrival everybody went straight into the dining hall and ate. I met the St John's Wood Junior Chyks there and amongst all of us we just couldn't wait for Milan (our team leader's) 3am Vedanta discussion class. After

dinner we all met in the main hall and were organised into the various groups and clothed using different coloured T-Shirts. I was really exhausted so I decided to retire to my chalet however for the more lively there was the option of a mini nightclub which basically consisted of sitting under the gazebo and listening to the same Nelly album as on the coach.

We woke up the next morning and had a really relaxing meditation given by one of the Sevaks. It was by far better than waking up to Chris Tarrant on capital. After breakfast we had a workshop with our team leader Milan. It was based on leadership. We defined what makes a good leader and his qualities. As the camp was on Lord Ganesh I felt it was a more than appropriate topic. After this, Swamiji gave an inspiring talk on leadership qualities which we should all cultivate. The day passed so quickly - one activity after another! We built a raft for Lord Ganesh to float on into the sea using only 2 planks of wood and some nails. We had numerous team building exercises, one of which included building a bridge using old barrels and rope. In addition, we had junior Chyk sessions with Milan and Swamiji, all of which we all found extremely beneficial and we were given the opportunity to ask any questions we had to Swamiji. At sun down on Saturday we all gathered in the main hall for the camp concert. Each group performed their own play, dance and in our case a skit from one of our previous classes. It was amazing to see how the team leaders were able to organise so many kids

to perform so well in the space of literally a few hours. Well done! After this we all went outside and sat in front of a campfire and sang songs and bhajans with Swamiji. We were supposed to sing traditional campfire songs like "Kum Ba Ya" and "Old McDonald" but instead we'd thought we would enlighten the camp officials with "The Hanuman Chalisa" and a Sanskrit birthday song. I felt that these were far better.

Sunday came quickly and after the intense rock climbing session we joined the entire group and we marched down to the beach carrying Lord Ganesh on his raft. Next we placed him into the sea along with any obstacles that we had written down and watched him float away. We all then sat on the beach for about 15 minutes with Swamiji. After that the camp slowly came to a close and we headed back to the coaches. On the return journey we all had time to reflect on the success of the camp, from the highly challenging pioneering games to the relaxed, informal discussion sessions with Milan and the question and answer sessions with Swamiji all of which were enjoyed. In my opinion this had been a very well organised and insightful camp into the theme of leadership. In reality the journey that once seemed to be an overnight Air India flight had transformed into a Trans-Atlantic Concorde and we (unfortunately) reached Northwood in no time.

Krishna Majeethia

How Much do you know? Test your Intellect!

Clue:

- Truthfulness
- Non injury
- Union Between God and self
- Consciousness
- Brahmin, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas & Shudras form the _____.
- Pure state of mind or behaviour
- Deity of intellect
- Desires and innate tendencies
- An integrated personality is one with an integrated _____
- The righteous flow of the universe
- Every action has a reaction - the law of _____

C	R	Q	H	B	S	U	N	Z	M	D	Z	G	L	C
C	A	H	I	M	S	A	W	M	W	J	N	U	I	S
S	H	T	C	I	A	C	B	E	A	Y	H	I	G	R
A	J	O	R	P	Y	V	E	T	M	E	M	P	Q	U
T	G	X	L	T	A	J	N	S	R	B	V	W	A	Y
Y	L	I	J	I	M	K	D	Y	A	Z	A	D	S	G
A	Y	G	I	K	N	Y	F	S	K	S	S	G	W	O
M	M	G	Q	L	I	O	H	E	O	T	A	K	K	E
X	L	W	C	J	H	G	A	T	J	C	N	E	R	L
J	G	S	P	O	C	A	Z	S	K	X	A	Z	Y	D
D	H	A	R	M	A	F	M	A	X	Y	S	D	H	F
U	B	T	L	V	E	C	W	C	M	R	R	Q	T	L
I	L	V	A	H	H	P	Q	S	O	A	I	E	W	N
O	Y	I	N	P	W	B	M	S	M	F	T	E	D	R
I	R	C	G	I	V	I	O	L	U	S	E	P	B	X



What a Camp!

When thinking about the Balvihar camp there is so much I can tell you, but I am going to limit myself to my few favourites, the games we played, the morning marbles and our time with Swamiji.

One of the types of games we played was problem solving. We had to work together and get ourselves through a spider web using each hole only once. We tried to place alphabets on a 7 post shape, not letting any consecutive letters touch. In the rope game, we had to get over the rope without touching it, while it kept getting higher, each person had to get over before it raised in height. These games were not easy, they made you use your mind a lot and work together as a team, this made it a lot of fun.

In the morning, Didi Lakshmi would put marbles into a cup and make us count how many marbles she put in. We had to listen carefully and concentrate very hard on how many marbles were going in. We also had to have our eyes closed, this taught us to listen and concentrate, a great way to start the day off.

Swamiji was joining in the fun. He was playing cricket with us. He would hit the ball and someone else would run for him. He hit the ball over the roof, a few Uncles and Aunties had to go on the roof to get the ball and then they fielded from up there. We had so much fun and laughed a lot.

Another special time during the Balvihar camp was our sessions with Swamiji. He sang Bhajans with us and taught us many new ones. He said all the prayers with us and He told us many stories which had good morals. One of the morals was that you have to believe that God is really there and eating what you are offering Him. This means that everything you do, you are doing for God, not just the statues in the Mandir. God is really everywhere.

I had the best time at Balvihar Camp. I am really looking forward to next years camp already. Thanks to all the Gurus and Swamiji for all the time and effort they put into making the camp so much fun.

Roshni Mahtani
Senior Balvihar,

Junior CHYK - 13-17 year olds



Bal Vihar - 4-12 year olds





The 3 Doshas, Vata, Pitta and Kapha are seen to operate very clearly throughout Nature. In an eco-system Vata is expressed as the wind and movements of the water currents; sunshine and fire are the expressions of Pitta; and Kapha is the gross structural matter represented as earth and water.

These 3 Doshas appear in varying proportions in different parts of the eco-system and depending on the predominance of any 1 or 2 of these Doshas in a particular region a corresponding climatic effect is established which results in geographic zones such as deserts, tropical or temperate forests, savannahs, marshlands, etc.

However, when these Doshas increase or decrease significantly, different phenomena are experienced depending on which of the Doshas is unduly disturbed: large increases in Vata can result in tornadoes; heightened Pitta may cause heat waves or forest fires. And major floods or snowstorms may occur when Kapha Dosha is abnormally high.

Similarly when bodily Doshas increase or decrease significantly, abnormal states are also experienced by the body and also by the mind. Increased Vata produces agitations, dryness or windy (flatulent) conditions of various sorts; fevers, rashes, flashes of anger are manifestations of raised Pitta; and congestions water-logging, heaviness, etc occur when there is too much Kapha in the system.

Disturbance in the Dosha balance creates a sense of un-ease in the individual. When the imbalance is minor perhaps only the sense of well-being is diminished; but the greater the imbalance, the worse and more lasting is the feeling of un-ease. Ultimately, as the imbalance increases unchecked, major symptoms begin to manifest, and this state in western terms is called a Disease.

In Ayurveda the condition of un-ease is well recognised and is readily treatable by recognising and re-balancing the disturbed Dosha. At this early stage, simple measures such as change of foods and lifestyle, yoga, herbs, may be all that is required to relieve the condition. .

Good Health according to Ayurveda is a State of Balanced Doshas.

Balance in this Ayurvedic sense does not mean establishing equal quantities of each of the 3 Doshas in an individual; but re-establishing in the person his unique proportion of the 3

Doshas that fosters the normal, healthy function of each Dosha. For example a feeling of heartburn or acidity is often easily recognised as a state of increased Pitta. Therefore reducing the intake of Pitta-rich foods such as chillies and spices and replacing them with cooling foods such as steamed vegetables, salads, mung and rice could relieve the burning sensation within a few days.

Measures such as these, taken at this early stage, can greatly reduce the chances of the condition progressing to a full blown ulcerative state if the symptoms were left untreated.

In fact Ayurveda is first and foremost a Preventive Form of Medicine, emphasising the importance of keeping the Doshas balanced. Then just as a balanced table does not topple over easily when pressure is applied, so also a balanced Doshic Individual is one whose resistance and stability is enhanced and thus he is relatively immune to sudden or gradual stresses,

ranging from emotional, seasonal and physical changes in his environment to exposure to allergens and pathogens (bacteria, viruses, etc.)

Thus while modern medicine focuses on destroying pathogens from outside the body by use of medicines such as antibiotics, Ayurveda focuses on balancing the body's Doshas.

The means used in Ayurveda are mostly Sattvic, natural and non-invasive, which translates to minimal or no side effects for the individual.

Thus, Ayurveda addresses the root cause of the disease and the body is made stronger against future infections.

Some Symptoms of Unbalanced Doshas

Vata	Pitta	Kapha
Dry or Rough Skin	Rashes, Inflammations and skin problems	Oily Skin
Constipation	Inflammatory Bowel Diseases	Slow digestion and heaviness
Tension Headaches	Migraine Headaches	Dull headaches
Fear and Anxiety	Anger and Hostility	Clinging and emotional

Ziaji Rawji

Vision for the New Year



*New beginnings are not for us to look back with regrets
But rather to look back with joyful anticipation
To do what we have never done before
To be daring and confident
To be more loving, more forgiving and more sharing;
To be compassionate like never before*

Let us Make it happen!

*No more shall we Justify our weaknesses and
be weak about our perfections
No more shall we Glorify our inadequacies and
inadequately express our glories
Let us graciously be humble and
humbly be gracious.
We are Great if we Believe we are;
We are divine when we know we are.*

Let us Make it happen!

*The World needs us and we need the World.
We are one big family;
The big picture alone must we see
No more you and me
Let there be only us.
Let us Beautify the world with Love.*

Let us Make it happen!

*Love is Beautiful, Love is Happiness,
Love is Wonderful, Love is God.
Love Alone is.*

*Love is Contagious, spread it around
Love is Magnificent, flaunt it around,
Love is Graceful, share it around
Love is enchanting, Chant it aloud*

*We have love. Discover it.
We are loved. Believe it!
We are love. Know it!
Let us make LOVE happen!*

Swami Swaroopananda



Current Events

For general information on study classes please e-mail: info@chinmayauk.org or call 020 8861 2625

Study Classes

Monday

St Johns Wood - Adult Devi (Ladies) class.

Time: Monday 9:15am - 10:30am

Text: Geeta Chapter 6 by

Swami Chinmayananda

Level: Beginners

Contact: kanchan@wadhvani.org

020 7722 5869

Northwood - Adult study class

Time: Monday 9:00pm - 10:30pm

Text: Vision of the Geeta by

Swami Tejomayananda

Level: Beginners

Contact: rupin@hanuman.be

07785 921 000

Harrow - Adult study class

Time: Monday 8:00pm - 9:30pm

Text: Self Unfoldment by

Swami Chinmayananda

Level: Beginners

Contact: rameshpattni@hotmail.com

020 8866 8522

Tuesday

St Johns Wood - Adult study class.

Time: Tuesday 7:30pm - 9:00pm

Text: Bhagavad Geeta by

Swami Chinmayananda

Level: Beginners

Contact: Chris Varma

07771 546 407

Wednesday

Baker Street - Chyk (Youth 18-35)

(Francis Holland School, Ivor Place, London NW1 6XR)

Time: Wednesday 7:30pm-9:pm

Text: Self Unfoldment by

Swami Chinmayananda

Level: Beginners

Contact: chyk@chinmayauk.org

07957 568879

Baker Street - Chyk (Youth 18-35)

(Francis Holland School, Ivor Place, London NW1 6XR)

Time: Wednesday 7:30pm-9:00pm

Text: Art of Man-Making by

Swami Chinmayananda

Level: Intermediate

Contact: chyk@chinmayauk.org

07801 845 096

Nottingham University - Chyk (youth 18-35)

Time: Wednesday 6:30pm-8:00pm

Text: Self Unfoldment by

Swami Chinmayananda

Level: Beginners

Contact: vishva100@hotmail.com

07939 154 964

Thursday

Harrow - Adult Chanting class

Time: Thursday 7:00pm-9:00pm

Contact: smitasamani@hotmail.com

07961 177 106 (after 6pm)

Harrow - Adult study class

Time: Thursday 7:30pm - 9:00pm

Text: Bhaja Govindam by

Adi Shankaracharya

Level: Intermediate

Contact: smitasamani@hotmail.com

07961 177 106 (after 6pm)

Saturday

St. Johns Wood - Adult study class

Time: Saturday 11:00am - 12:30pm

Text: Self Unfoldment by

Swami Chinmayananda

Level: Beginners

Contact: suresh@wadhvani.org

07775 523 222

Harrow - Youth / Adult Sanskrit class

Time: Saturday 11:00am - 12:30pm

Level: Beginners

Contact: ballu_ji@yahoo.co.uk

07968 366 676

Harrow - Youth / Adult Sanskrit class

Time: Saturday 11:00am - 12:30pm

Level: Intermediate

Contact: ballu_ji@yahoo.co.uk

07968 366 676

Sunday

Northwood - Adult study class

Time: Sunday 11:00am - 12:30pm

Text: Vision of the Geeta by

Swami Tejomayananda

Level: Beginners

Contact: rupin@hanuman.be

07785 921 000

Bal Vihar(5-12 yrs) and Junior Chyk(12-17 yrs) Classes

Northwood

Time: Sunday 11:00pm-12:00pm

Contact: Madhavi

madhavi@hanuman.be

07980 597 810

St Johns Wood

Saturday 11:00pm-12:30pm

Contact Kanchan:

kanchan@wadhvani.org

020 7722 5869

Edgware

Saturday 2:30pm-4:00pm

Contact Madhavi

madhavi@hanuman.be

07980 597 810

Topics Covered:

Junior Bal Vihar (Age 4-7): Spiritual Alphabet, Garden of Life Series, Bala Ramayana, Bala Bhagavatam

Senior Bal Vihar (Age 8-11): Bala Bhagavatam, Bala Ramayana, Garden of Life Series, Introduction to Hindu Culture, Why Do We?

Junior Chyks, Beginners (Age 11-13): Introduction to Hindu Culture, I love you letters, workshops

Junior Chyks, Intermediate (Age 14-17): Kindle Life, Art of Living

All classes: Guru Stotram, Hanuman Chalisa, Bhajans and Chanting. Bal Vihar and Junior Chyk Classes recommence January 2003

Silent night, Holy night...

White snow adds charm to Christmas and brings the special meaning to the coming of the Messiah. Yet it symbolises more, the purity of heart. The sky is dark, decorated with countless twinkling stars. Amongst them with the special glow shines the bright star of Bethlehem - the leading light that brings the wise to greet the Lord.

He is born at midnight; neither 24 nor 25 of December, in the poverty of the manger, in the middle of nowhere. And yet His aura shines and leads humanity for almost two millenniums. A miracle, a wonder, or a deeper meaning on subjective level?

The dark night is being lit up by the glorious light of the star of Bethlehem. It is midnight, the time in between the day and the night - when one thought has died and next is not yet born. At this moment of silence between the two thoughts the pure consciousness shines on its own accord.

The divine baby is born surrendered by love and caring, around Him special aura of love and beauty. When lower desires and tendencies in us are replaced by the noble, we celebrate the Eve of Christmas. When darkness of ignorance is dispelled by the light of consciousness, in the pure heart (white snow), the Lord is born. He brings with Him joy, love and sharing to the world. The lights are sparkling, bells are ringing, hearts are singing.

May Christmas be in our lives every day, every moment. Let's clean up our minds from jealousy, anger, dejection, fear... Let's turn the poor looking manger of our heart into a magnificent rich mansion of high values supported by the divine principles of purity, compassion, mutual love and respect. Let's hold the divine child in the loving embrace.

May the light of consciousness disperse the darkness of ignorance bringing wisdom and endless joy. May we forever rejoice in His glory singing His song divine in word, thought and deed.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas

Visit our website www.chinmayauk.org