



April 2006

# Chinmaya

Chinmaya Mission (UK) Newsletter

Issue 15

Change we must,  
but change what?



# Chinmaya Hari Om!



## Hari Om,

It wasn't that long ago that VCRs (Video Cassette Recorders, for those of you who grew up with DVDs), were the latest gadget. With their remote controls and ability to record programmes in advance, they represented groundbreaking technology. The common joke was that only children seem to know how to programme them to record days ahead, and everywhere parents were helpless dependents on their children to perform such complicated manoeuvres.

Yet these very same people now use a mobile phone and all its variety of technology as if the phone was part of them. From texting and taking photos through to arranging our appointments, the mobile phone is an indispensable tool that accompanies us throughout the day. Without it we feel lost.

The question that springs to mind is how these individuals could be baffled by four buttons on a recorder, and yet be able to efficiently operate a multifunctional piece of equipment with its multitude of buttons and symbols? The simpler machine seemed to have defeated us by creating blockages in our mind. Why was this? Apart from their functions, what were the differences between the mobile phone and the VCR?

Firstly the VCR was not seen as a necessity. It was an entertainment tool that enabled us to have our dinner discussions without missing that must see soap. The mobile phone on the other hand is not only 'a necessity' but increasingly takes over more tasks of our daily lives. Without it we would not be able to check our emails while out of the office, or do our banking. Were we not familiar with this technology, we would be left trailing by an increasingly faster world. Secondly we spent more time with the mobile phone, in fact the whole day. The more we used it, the more familiar we became with it. Our attachment to it was regularly refreshed by the latest slim design or functions. Thirdly the more sophisticated the mobile became, the more attractive it was. While the plodding VCR increased in capability from recording one week in advance to one month in advance, the mobile phone could text, email, surf the net, take photos, play music and the list increases all the time. With it, we could be more productive, more competitive, more free.

All in all we were more attached and willing to learn to use the mobile than we were to the

VCR. I suppose this is true for all things in life. It must be the nature of the mind to be more willing towards something the more attached we are to it. As long as we think of it as a necessary part of our life, see it constantly as a new attraction, and believe it will bring us greater freedom or happiness, we find it effortless to become attached. In fact it is probably more than that. If something is so close to us as to be part of us and so important that it changes our lives, we find we are much happier with it.

This then explains the appeal of our Mission to an increasing circle of people. We devote the best part of the first 20 years of our lives to the study of objective sciences. We spend much of our time in maintaining a healthy body. If our latest piece of equipment is expensive, we read the manual so as not to damage it. Surely if we do all this, we should study the subject that underlies all arts and sciences – the manual of that which is the most precious to us: our lives!

In recognising this necessity, the Mission gives us the opportunity to study the manual of life: the scriptures that reveal the science of Vedanta. Study classes are as important as the mobile phone is to our daily lives. Without them we would be fragmented and overwhelmed by a faster and more demanding world. By participating in the multitude of activities now taking place at Chinmaya Kirti, we become more familiar with our rich culture. Each festival refreshes our bhakti, inspires us to go deeper and higher in our study and contemplation. In this we are very fortunate to have Bramacharini Sumatiji as our resident acharya (see following page). She has introduced ever increasing activities and classes and her work grows further afield as she visits new areas to spread this knowledge. Our revered Swamis also visit us on a regular basis. Each Yagna they hold increases our understanding and their talks and presence bring to us greater freedom and true happiness.

All we have to do is recognise the necessity of these talks and activities and make them part of our daily lives. When we take the inspiration from the different festivals and visiting Swamis, we find that the joy they bring is with us wherever we are. That is truly mobile!

Hari Om

*"The quality of activities cannot be raised, unless we raise the very texture of our thoughts and the depth of our understanding."... Swami Chinmayananda*

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"Live straight and pleasantly cheerful, serving others as much as you can for your satisfaction and joy"



## Profile on Brahmacharini Sumati Chaitanya

*"The most striking thing about Chinmaya Mission is learning to see things as they are. Learning to live with smiles. That's what Chinmaya Mission is about, is it not?" – Brni Sumatiji*

Chinmaya Mission UK has since last year been fortunate to have Brni Sumatiji posted to our London centre. Sumatiji was drawn to the Mission when, working as a young doctor, she by chance went to Swami Chinmayananda's 500th gyana yagna in Bombay. From the moment she saw him, she was captivated and the seed was sown for her to join the Mission as a Brahmacharini. And she has never looked back since.

Sumatiji was initiated by Swami Tejomayananda in 1995 and has since dedicated her work to the Mission. Before arriving in London, she worked for 9 years with the Chinmaya International Residential School in Coimbatore. With her knowledge, she now provides for us an immediate and authoritative port of call for our questions. With unrelenting dynamism, she has transformed Chinmaya Kirti, the London centre, into a place bursting with energy, music and liveliness. From Ramayana talks to bhajan

evenings, festival celebrations to study classes, meditation sessions to courses on practical Vedanta, Sumatiji has transformed the centre into an Ashram, a centre for spiritual thought and activity, self-development and service to the community.

When asked what the most important contribution by the Mission to the world is, Sumatiji replies, *"The Mission is His Vision of Oneness. Through that Vision, we learn how to live happily and spread happiness around. This is something special that Gurudev has done. He has created a system whereby the Knowledge will spread like a chain reaction. And where Knowledge spreads, it will benefit generation after generation. This is the Mission's contribution to the world."* May we all through her words and her example, come to live a life inspired by that eternal message of Oneness.

In this article, Sumatiji explains the importance of Study Classes within the Mission.



***Vedantic tradition. This is not a Chinmaya methodology; it is the most ancient Vedantic tradition of Study."** – Swami Chinmayananda*

### How can attending a study group help one to attain the spiritual goal?

It is said that, Aachaaryaat paadm aadatte paadm shishya swamedhayaa, paadam sabrahmacharibhyah paadam kaala kramena cha. One-fourth of knowledge is acquired from the teacher, one-fourth from one's own reflection, one-fourth from classmates and remaining one-fourth from experience in time.

The knowledge gained through listening, individual reflection and group study bring humility (Vidyaa dadaati vinayam), in the form of acknowledgment of and respect towards the divine vision. A realisation that the cause of sorrow and disharmony is in one's own vision of separateness from the whole, and that the vision of the scriptures, the vision of Oneness alone is the way to permanent happiness.

Humility grants worthiness (vinayaat yaati paatrataam), in the form of need and readiness to live this vision to come to experience it. But, when a sincere seeker tries to live this vision of Oneness, he comes to realise the need to purify the mind because a mind full of likes and dislikes is incapable of consistently and steadily maintaining the vision of Oneness.

Worthiness begets wealth (paatrataat dhanam aapnoti). The seeker to purify the mind starts developing the necessary qualities like non-violence, truthfulness, celibacy, non-stealing, patience, compassion, steadfastness, honesty, purity, contentment, surrender to the Lord, etc.

Enriched with spiritual wealth, the seeker having purified the mind contemplates steadily upon that what he has heard (shravan) and reflected (manan) (dhanaat dharmam).

This steady contemplation on the nature of the Truth destroys the ignorance and the Truth is revealed, ultimately resulting in Bliss (tatah sukham).

Study groups are designed for adults to provide an opportunity to gain a deeper insight into the scriptures, help to assimilate and make it one's own and to transform one's personality in accordance with the knowledge acquired. These weekly sessions of 90 minutes duration follow a graded course specially prepared by Pujya Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda.

He has given His best to us, now by regularly attending the study groups, we give our best to Him. **We Can. We Must.**

– Sumati Chaitanya

***"Please understand that even if we happen to be lucky enough to be at the feet of the greatest Master, that Master can do nothing to any one of us unless we are ready to move in His direction and become one with the Divine. Your own intellectual understanding can pull you nearer to the Truth. When the fascinating beauty of the Infinite Beatitude comes, it naturally sucks you unto itself"** – Swami Chinmayananda*

Details of all our Study Classes can be found on the back page of this issue or on [www.chinmayauk.org](http://www.chinmayauk.org).

## On Study Groups

*"Mere listening to my yagnas will not add to your beauty. These ideas are to be reflected deeply and digested slowly. This process is hastened only when you discuss what you have studied with others. Study groups constitute the heart of our Mission. The ideas gathered by you, when discussed with others, not only become deeply rooted in yourself, but as they become clearer in your own understanding, they also inspire those who listen to you. Thus, each student, while trying to strengthen his own understanding, can become an instrument for the spread of this knowledge. This process is the dynamic STUDY SCHEME followed in the*



## Change we must, but change what?

Do you ever look around and feel that the world is leaping forward? That it seems as if we will never be able to make sense of the chaos of the changing world around us? Swami Chinmayananda said "Continuous change alone is the changeless law". Thinking about this, it makes sense. Cultures change. Global warming is changing our climate. From times of peace, we can suddenly be plunged into war. Technology changes so fast that the iPods of last year will soon be out of date. With the tinsel of science, mankind continues to crown itself, little knowing that tomorrow will bring yet another discovery.

We find ourselves constantly striving to educate ourselves, to adjust our ways to fit into this changing world. And we are never fully satisfied with our current situation – we want more money, more children, more qualifications – all for more happiness. We seek to change the external world so that it may meet our own desires. And with each change that we make, the goalposts move yet again. It can be a tiresome journey.

We know that to meet life as it reaches us, with success and efficiency, we must discover something to depend on, and that we should seek that in ourselves, not outside. But to become a master of our circumstances is not a matter of accident, a lucky coincidence which we might blindly stumble upon. It is a deliberate choice – a path of self-unfoldment, which if we start walking, will teach us that to see the change we desire in the world, we must first change ourselves. The teachings of our scriptures reveal to us this path of self-unfoldment, guiding us:

- ... **TO STUDY AND CONTEMPLATE** upon the eternal values contained in our scriptures
- ... **TO REINFORCE** them through sincere seva (service) to our world and devotion to God
- ... **TO PREPARE** ourselves for the knocks and disappointments of modern life
- ... **and finally TO BE HAPPY** in the face of all change: content and complete.

We doubt whether we have the strength to change. Yet, is it not told to everybody that there is a possibility for everyone to rise in every situation? A useless luxury-loving prince, Siddhartha, became 'The Prince of Compassion', Sage Buddha. A carpenter's son lived for 20 years in the desert and returned as Jesus Christ. How? An ordinary third grade university student reaches the feet of Ramakrishna Paramhansa and a mighty, enchanting personality, Swami Vivekananda, is born. You may say 'Oh! that's all

an accident'. Swami Chinmayananda says, **"Why not such accidents happen to every one of us? It is just that we are not available for them. We do not study the shastras and therefore, we do not know how to grow through their use".**

### TO STUDY AND CONTEMPLATE ...

The purpose of any study is to seek knowledge. Scientists strive to know the secrets of Nature. Through their efforts, science has conquered Nature, mankind has gained mastery of the outer world - from the depths of the sea to the surface of the moon. While scientists try to understand: "What is the world?", the study of a spiritual seeker is to understand "Who or what is man?". This is the science of the spirit. And it is in our scriptures that the science of the spirit is spoken of.

The knowledge of which the sages speak in our scriptures grew out of their analysis of man and his experiences with the world. It is this self-analysis and introspection which is the beginning of any enquiry into Self-Perfection. In our study of the scriptures, what is required is a scientific re-evaluation of our own life and how we can re-adjust our instruments of the body, mind and intellect to bring forth greater success and happiness in our lives. And this re-evaluation should be done, not just by reading, but also be reinforced by healthy questioning and discussion with like-minded individuals. Thus, in our study groups, we can begin to cultivate new ways of thinking – to let our old natures be drowned in the new. Only by thus assimilating an understanding of the scriptures do we make our knowledge intimate and our own. And with this newly gathered understanding, we give ourselves the power to grow.

### TO REINFORCE ...

However, we must seek to go further than merely striving to understand the sacred texts, which any professor can. Swami Chinmayananda says: **"After exposing ourselves to the idea, the next stage requires a terrible amount of heroism. It is not only study, but we must get committed to the philosophy. How many of us are ready to get committed?"**

Equipped with knowledge, the real development in our personality occurs when we express that knowledge through devotion and service to the world around us. Through service, we channel our physical energy to reach out to the millions who are hungry in so many ways, not just physically but also intellectually. We reach out to others with the consolation that they, like us, can live in the dignity for which we were born. And through devotion, we channel our mental energy, allowing our minds to melt in the contemplation of the loving form and infinite qualities of the Lord. In developing this single-pointed love, we come closer to experiencing the identification of our self with the Self that enlivens all.

In this way, devotion and service enable us to bring our minds and bodies to act consistently in tune with the intellectual convictions we gain through our study. In other words, we reinforce our ways of thinking into a way of life. Only with this integrated personality, can we bring out the best in us - the excellence in our work and love in our hearts which results, creates a revolution in our own personality and a change in the very destiny of the world around us.





## TO PREPARE ...

Does this mean that obstacles will cease to come our way? That our problems will disappear?

Swami Chinmayananda says: *"If an individual says there are no problems, he is already dead while living. An individual has problems, the society has problems. Problems are natural in life."*

To face any problem or situation is the expression of life - from the unicellular organism to man, everyone has problems. Yet, it is not because of the situation that we get crushed or succeed - the situation may be the same to everyone. It is our ability to face the problem that matters.

It is the systematic development of an integrated personality - through study, contemplation and reinforcing - that enables us to face the challenges of life - with a smile! Challenges become mere interesting steps towards the peak that we have kept in mind - methods by which we may round the sharp edges in our character. This way life becomes enriched. Without obstacles in the path of the river Ganges, there would be no beauty to

her. She faces obstructions, sometimes leaping over rocks, other times winding around mountains - but remaining ever determined to reach the ocean - her destination. When we act with this determination, life gathers a momentum of its own and the sky is the limit - we become prepared to face all challenges with excellence on our part.

## And finally ... TO BE HAPPY.

And with this unfoldment, we are able to bring a constant cheerful atmosphere to the mind. The relentless changing world of today, instead of being the cause of difficulty, becomes the field in which we strive to act and think in such a way that our actions and thoughts polish our minds and make them more balanced in their poise. Swami Chinmayananda's words remind us:

*"It is meaningless to ask somebody 'when will you be free from your darkness' which is created by your own palms stupidly covering your own closed eyes! All that can be said is 'when you choose to remove the hands and open your eyes, light shall be yours'."*

Through our studies, reflections, work and love, we carve out of ourselves personalities of intelligence and strength. It is this process of self-unfoldment which is the lifting of our palms from our eyes. It is necessary. It is what we strive for, whether we know it or not. And it is what every one of us can achieve, if, every day, we simply take the words of our Guru as the inspiration and guidance for our growth:

*Study diligently.*

*Reflect deeply.*

*Meditate systematically.*

*Transform totally.*

*Inspired by the writings of  
Swami Chinmayananda*

## Self unfoldment - what can Chinmaya Mission offer us?



Having the conviction to change is great. But we will stall and stumble unless we have a practical way to bring it about. Every activity of the Chinmaya Mission provides each one of us, whatever age we may be or whatever station of life we may find ourselves in, with countless opportunities to grow and give expression to the very best in us. Whether it be uplifting bhajans or quiet meditation, stimulating retreats or selfless community service, fun festivals or solemn study, there is something for everyone. Chinmaya Mission UK holds

countless study groups for all levels of advancement and ages, discourses by our resident Acharya, Brni Sumatiji, yagnas and spiritual camps with the Swamis of our Mission, bhajan sessions and talks on the Ramayana, guided meditation and Sanskrit classes, and an endless array of activities for children and youth, all centred at our ashram, Chinmaya Kirti. As you go through the following pages, we hope that you will find or recognize activities and opportunities in which you can involve yourself - and grow.



# Chinmaya Mission News

## Today

*“A day is a unit of our life. If we change the way we live each day, our life will be transformed” – Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda*

Each new day brings with it countless opportunities for us to be our very best; to rise above the mundane and monotonous, and achieve excellence. Our Masters never tire of reminding us that spirituality should not be an aspiration for another place and another time. The teachings are to be lived – here and now.

The Chinmaya Mission provides us with so many events and activities where not only do we learn, but we also get the chance to put those lessons into practice; to serve. The beauty of it is that this Knowledge is for everyone. No matter who you are, studying Vedanta can and most certainly will uplift your life.

Why else would Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda's 3-day yagna at Brent Town Hall in August attract almost 1000 attendees daily? People of all ages and backgrounds came to listen to Guruji's discourses on "Dhanyashtakam: A Life of Total Fulfillment," and the feedback was overwhelming. Although taken from the most revered of scriptural texts, the topics of Chinmaya Mission gyana yagnas are always practical and applicable to all.

Like "Inspiration Technology," the title of the 2005 CHYK (youth) camp with Swami Chidatmananda, which took place at the end of August. CHYK Camps are spiritual retreats where the youth come together to learn and unfold, expressing ourselves through existing talents and developing new skills. This year's camp with Swami Chidatmananda is in Paris



from 14th to 17th April 2006. Titled "Arise Awake," it promises to be another uplifting and energetic experience for the CHYKs.

Speaking of energetic CHYKs, Prithviraj Bahadursingh and Neeraj Nathwani have come forward to run the London Marathon on 23rd April 2006, to raise funds for Chinmaya Mission UK. Here is an example of these inspired youth choosing an activity that they enjoy and which they would like to do well at, and with an attitude of selflessness and service they have decided to dedicate their efforts to the Mission. Let's all dig deep and support Prithviraj and Neeraj, who have been training intensely for the Marathon for the past few months.

It's not just the CHYKs who have been working hard. In November 2005, the Junior CHYKs (teenagers) from all 4 of our Junior Chyk classes (Northwood, Harrow, St. Johns Wood and Hendon) came together to increase awareness in the local Hendon community about the importance of recycling plastic. From designing flyers to talking to local residents and sorting through plastic, this project allowed the teenagers to work as a team, protect the environment and most importantly develop a greater understanding of selfless seva. There is a write-up by some of the participants later in this issue.

*“...by expanding to identify with a larger cause, we shall find our confusions dwindling to nothingness” – Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda*

Inspired by our resident Acharya, Brahmacharini Sumati Chaitanya, the Chinmaya Mission UK family is growing bigger and stronger with each passing day. There have been countless new classes and satsangs introduced since Sumatiji's arrival in July last year. Her Ramayana discourses in particular have become the weekly highlight for so many attendees. The opportunities for seekers to learn are many, but it is for us to develop sincerity and regularity in our studies, as advised by Pujya Gurudev.

Apart from weekly classes, every important festival is celebrated at Chinmaya Kirti, be it Janamashtami, Navratri, Karva Chauth, Diwali or Shivaratri, to name just a few. These special events always include a talk by Sumatiji on the significance of these ancient festivals and their relevance to our modern lives.



This is particularly beneficial for the youth and children, many of whom grow up feeling confused and disillusioned by having to perform rituals without understanding why. On 11th December 2005, the entire Bhagavad Geeta was chanted in unison for the auspicious occasion of Tapovan Jayanti and Geeta Jayanti, followed by a talk by Sumatiji on "The Vision of the Geeta." Log on to [www.chinmayauk.org](http://www.chinmayauk.org) to learn more about the different festivals which are celebrated at Chinmaya Kirti.

Tapovan and Geeta Jayanti in 2005 also marked the 2nd anniversary of Chinmaya Kirti. With the centre now being in constant use, major refurbishment work began at the end of last



year. A brand new central heating system and new windows have already been fitted, making the centre more comfortable. There is still a lot more work to be done - what has been done so far has only been possible through the generous contributions of those who have felt the benefit of the Mission in their lives. Fundraising has to be one of the biggest challenges, yet one of the most important goals, of the Mission in the coming year. Many opportunities for sponsorships and contributions will be forthcoming, starting with the London Marathon on 23 April. Please get involved in every way you can with this effort.

There is a lot to look forward to this year. Swami Chidatmananda will be here for a week in April when there will be a series of talks at Chinmaya Kirti. In September Swami Swaroopananda will spend a few weeks in London. His visit will include a family camp and youth symposium, not to mention what will be our grandest yagna yet: a 7-day series of lectures by Swamiji on "Life Management

Techniques" at Kensington Town Hall. We are truly blessed to have such learned teachers of Vedanta travel from across the globe to impart the glorious Knowledge of our scriptures to us.

What do our Acharyas want from us in return? What did Pujya Gurudev ever want from His devotees? Surely they ask of us exactly what we should be asking for ourselves - Happiness through Intelligent Living. If I apply myself I can achieve this by constantly questioning and contemplating on the thoughts and ideas that arise when I am listening to a talk, reading a text or attending a study class. By diligently striving to improve myself; challenging and divinising my negative tendencies so that my mind may become tranquil and I will become better prepared to serve in the world.

*"Real service to the Teacher is to try to understand his words, his ideas; to reflect upon them and strive our best to live up to them"*  
- Swami Chinmayananda

When? Now. "Today belongs to us," says Gurudev. We have all the equipment and resources that we need. Today we will be alert and make use of all the opportunities that we have. Today we will approach our Sadhana with utmost sincerity and discipline. Today we will choose to think the best of thoughts and act on the noblest of ideas, because ...

*"Today is the only day to attempt any great and worthy purpose"* - Swami Chinmayananda

- Trishna Gulrajani



## Chinmaya London UK Festivals Calendar 2006

Month	Event	Date
January	Sw. Vivekananda Jayanti	12
	Makara Sankranti	14
	Tapovan Maharaj Aradhana	18
	Indian Republic Day	26
February	Maha Shivratri	26
	Holi	14
March	Sri Ram Navmi	6
	Hanuman Jayanti	13
May	Gurudev Jayanti (Seva Day)	8
	Guruji's Birthday	30
June	Guru Purnima	11
	Gurudev's Mahasamadhi	3
July	Raksha Bandhan	9
	Indian Indep Day	9
	Krishna Janmashtami	16
	Ganesh Chaturthi	27
September	Onam	4
	Navratri Starts	23
October	Navratri Ends	1
	Vijaya Dashami	2
	Gandhi Jayanti	2
	Karva Chauth	10
	Dhan Teras	19
Deepavali	21	
November	Guru Nanak Birthday	15
	Geeta Jayanti	1
December	Tapovan Jayanti	1

We invite you all to join the CMUK family in celebrating these festivals at Chinmaya Kirti. With uplifting explanations from our Acharya, Brni Sumati Chaitanya, of the deeper symbolism behind these festivals, they become not only a time for fun and celebration, but also present opportunities for us to lift our thoughts to greater levels of inspiration and let our hearts soar in a more subtle love and joy. For more details please see our website [www.chinmayauk.org](http://www.chinmayauk.org)



# Words of Mission members

## Self Transformation

I enjoy making new friends every week when I go to BV. I learn new things about life and the values of life but in a fun way. I enjoy the stories that we get told especially the ones about Hanumanji. Out of all the things I have told you, you may have worked out that I LOVE BV!!  
**Kiran Modi, 9 yrs (Bal Vihar)**

I feel that Junior Chyk has helped me to understand more about Hinduism, especially now that we are doing Hinduism GCSE. Not only is it a place to learn, but we enjoy ourselves and get to meet others our age that are of the same religion. The teachers are very loving and easy to talk to. The recycling project we did a few months back has made me think more about the environment and how you can help it. I look forward to continuing Junior Chyk, and if I had not started Junior Chyk I would not be the person I am today. **Ekta Nandwani, 14 yrs (Junior Chyk)**

I have been truly blessed to have grown up as a part of Gurudev's family under his love and that of all the Swamis that visit. For me, the Mission has been the fabric of my life and it is difficult to see where it began to make a difference as I have never felt apart from it. However, I can say for a fact that the last few months have been very special because of the love and inspiration that I have received from Sumatiji. The spiritual intensity has been undeniable. I will always remain indebted to her for introducing me to the special world of devotion; to what it means to cry and yearn for Him. Her talks make you want to drive yourself to push that extra bit harder so as to not compromise on the spiritual path. The path no longer seems impossible and it is motivating to see someone who actually does live life with the acceptance that He is its Orchestrator.  
**Roshni Mahesh, 20 yrs (Chyk)**

*I'll never forget my first chyk class. I did not know anyone. I had never heard of Vedanta and knew little about the Chinmaya Mission. All I had was a curiosity to find out why this group of young successful professionals found Hindu philosophy so appealing. As soon as I entered the classroom, there was indescribable vibe in the air. An atmosphere of infinite enthusiasm and energy. I'll never forget how I felt after the class. I experienced a sense of belonging and identification with the group and I was inspired to learn more. Over the years many questions have been unequivocally answered through my Vedantic studies .... What is the purpose of my life?... How can I become the master of my life and not a slave to circumstance?... What spiritual techniques can I deploy to improve the purity and clarity of my mind?... How can I discover my true inherent potential to become a person who commands success rather than suffers failure?*

*Three years later, that same group of people are my best friends, I am a one of the youth co-ordinators of the Mission and I facilitate my own study class. As I look back I can see that my whole personality has transformed and a power of inspiration, motivation and dynamism has been unleashed from within. I have achieved things that never before seemed possible or comprehensible.*

*All of this has occurred because I took one risk and attended a class out of curiosity .... Curiosity will always be a blessing that I will be eternally grateful for.*  
**Anoli Rayvadera, 28 yrs (Chyk)**

**Change we must, but change what?** What change the Mission has brought to me is a change of VISION – a vision of ONENESS – that all the changes that happen in one's life and sphere of experience are on a CHANGELESS substratum that is one's very own nature. This could be straight out of a textbook of Vedanta but I can now claim this to be my very own firm conviction. This clarity has not come about in a day.

Like most, I started out initially to study for a professional qualification, then setting up home, climbing up the social ladder and having a family. With that however came responsibilities, duties and often disappointments from unmet needs and desires. Bringing up children necessarily meant taking a step back with my career and I found myself in no man's land – neither making a good job of bringing up a family and at the same time, being plagued by a sense of inferiority with my professional peers. Moreover, had society invested in my expensive education just for me to then drop it to bring up a family? Did I not owe society back it dues? Ten years later, I returned to pursuing my career but success in that only plagued me with guilt for not being able to fulfil family duties well. There was a void and much searching eventually took me to the portals of Chinmaya Mission and Vedanta.

Here, I learnt what I should have learnt as a youth twenty years ago! I had weaved myself a web of duties based on my own desires and I now HAD to fulfil them. But I learnt the attitude of love and selfless dedicated performance of all my duties. I strived to be a better mother, wife, doctor, citizen and emphatically serve the Mission that had given me so much so that others could also benefit from this knowledge. This meant rigorous self discipline and a daily spiritual routine. My children were also inspired and seeing them and the other youth grow from within filled me with enormous satisfaction. Cooperative activity to foster a vision of ONENESS was the next step. This has not been easy. It has meant developing an acceptance of people, situations and experiences without expectation because these are constantly changing and transient. This has resulted in considerable quietitude of the mind but I still have to purify my mind further of its past baggage to be able to practice meditation. So I have increased my exposure to Vedanta talks. Combined with rigorous daily self introspection and personal churning, this has enabled me to drop previous social values and ways of living. This has not been possible without withstanding criticism. But I have the strength, resilience and the energy to pursue my goal because now I know what it is and there is no time to lose! **Smita Samani, 55 yrs (Adult Study Group)**

*Mission members, wherever they are, in whatever condition, their life's work is to discuss and impart the secret essence of Vedanta. Be yourself a "Sandeepany" – one who lights the "Lamp of Truth" in the hearts of all.*





## Chyk Classes and Activities

*"The purpose of Chinmaya Yuva Kendra is to give 'root and wings' to the youth - roots of their culture and wings to soar high in the vast expanse of beauty, joy and service. It is with this vision that Pujya Gurudev had started the Chinmaya Yuva Kendra - the youth wing of the mission. The steady growth of this group has proved the relevance, need and utility of this youth movement" - Swami Tejomayananda*

**Is religion relevant to young people? Does spirituality hold any answers for problems in the modern age?** Swami Chinmayananda's answer was a resounding yes! He said that it is far more relevant for us to understand the goal of life and how to live it when we are young rather than when life has largely passed us by. Vedanta is a science. It is subject to hypotheses (eg. on the goal of life), experiments (the best way of reaching this) and testing (enquiry and debate): the same logical way in which the sciences of the

outer world stand ground. Vedanta is the science of the internal world. It gives us the tools to live life with equipoise, intelligence and confidence.

**CHYK Activities** - As CHYKs, this is our goal. The main way we achieve it is through study classes, which help us to develop clarity of vision and create an atmosphere that allows us to grow as friends, yet equally and more profoundly as individuals. As one CHYK describes it: "CHYK class is mentally stimulating – one comes out feeling awake: as if another sense has been opened". By far the most indescribable, friendship-forming experiences are our annual CHYK camps conducted by our Mission Swamis. Fusing ancient mystical truths with our fast-paced lifestyles, we learn the practical tools by which we can bring greater efficiency and success into our lives. With the knowledge and inspiration we thus gain, CHYKs also undertake various forms of

seva: teaching in our Bal Vihar centres, organising events, fundraising and helping with numerous Mission projects.

**The spirit of CHYK!** - Through countless talks at universities across the country, burgeoning study classes, ever more young people ready to offer their talents and energy to serving the world around them, CHYK UK is growing exponentially, giving expression to the clear need and relevance of this movement to the youth in the modern world. Whatever we do, we seek to bring out the best in one another and in ourselves - to live life to the full in its truest sense. It is this spirit that defines CHYK, that helps us create the greatest of friendships and cultivate every quality necessary to win the game of life!

*We hope to see you at our regular activities!  
Please contact Milan Samani on 07957 568 879.*

## The Sadhana Journal

*"Sincere sadhana life changes ourselves to be a polished flood of tranquil perfection"*

How can we implement change in our lives? The Sadhana Journal is a practical tool that one of our CHYK study classes has undertaken over the last six months. It has been a process of study, reflection and bringing about new ways of thinking and acting – a continuous internal audit. This is a personal reflection from a member of the study class on what the Sadhana Journal exercise has unearthed:

Reading a book such as "We Must" by Swami Chinmayananda in study class, could not be fully appreciated simply through reading and discussion. Activity must be performed to cultivate and enrich this spiritual teaching in our lives. This, in my opinion, is how the Sadhana Journal started.

The Sadhana Journal is a diarised account of reflections made by each individual in our study class around a specific sadhana, for example: "Go beyond your comfort zones – take a risk, do something that you have wanted to do but haven't until now, it must however be for the betterment of others". Recording our spiritual endeavours, based upon the study class topics each week, as

well as sharing these experiences with the group, has encouraged openness and inspired others to take part. These weekly recordings have been reviewed in each class. It is similar to an appraisal system where weekly progress is monitored. In this case we are measuring and quantifying our motivation, stamina and resolve to stay on the spiritual path.

Having reflected upon my entries made since October 2005, patterns begin to emerge. You can trace the lows and the highs. It also forms a stark picture of how hard we must try, and how complacent we can be. Reflection can be peaceful but also quite restless at times. Having physically written down the weekly reflections it appears that we have imbibed a noble honesty, akin to looking in the mirror at your self with a penetrating stare - going deeper and deeper to understand why you do the things that you do; and why you hold on to certain likes and dislikes.

The Journal shows how much control (or lack of it) we really have, and how much we can be swayed. But most importantly, it shows that when we need convincing that this path is correct, the journal entries remind us of the greatness behind everything. In almost all entries there is a mixture of both good and bad points. Memory of the good things has the effect of lifting you past negativities that can build up. It is a source of

inspiration proving that regular Sadhana is imperative, and when you are down you are reminded that there is more to life, and things can and will change in the direction you wish them to.

It serves as a motivation tool to help us put into practice the spiritual knowledge gathered through study class through our daily thoughts and actions. Many of us often ask ourselves if we are doing the right thing. This Journal has helped to identify and reinforce that we are.

– Nishal Hurry

*You Chyks are now our only hope.  
When the younger generation  
comes to feel inspired  
by a programme of revival,  
it gathers momentum  
and  
floods the hearts of  
that generation  
with a new  
spirit of  
courage and goodwill.*

*Om*  
Chinmaya



# Junior Chyk: Daring to be different

## Junior Chyk News, Classes and Activities

*"When we try to analyse how to remould and recast our future, we see that it is certainly through the children of today, who will be the leaders of tomorrow. Only when a plant is young and we are sincerely watching it, we can train the plant to grow straight. Therefore, we must teach the children not only to have the right values but also the heroism to live up to them. If that kind of training we can impart to them – even to one child – we have proved that today's children are our future" - Swami Chinmayananda*

When Junior Chyks, the teenage group of Chinmaya Mission, get together every weekend for their study class, they come together to learn about Vedanta and its relevance to the youth of

today, to understand the cultural significance of our festivals and Gods, and most of all, to seize that knowledge and put it into action!

Learning about the importance of seva, or selfless service, in the classroom, the Junior Chyks bravely took on a seva project last term, to raise environmental awareness. A challenging project, the Junior Chyks took it on with enthusiasm and determination. And it was fun! The project was so successful that they were congratulated for their efforts by Councillor Matthew Offord, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, who said "I am confident that your young people have made a valuable contribution to the community". Now, at our Ashram, Chinmaya Kirti, we recycle heavily thanks to their work. They've

shown us that change begins at home! Aside from seva, for the last few years, Chinmaya Mission UK has been teaching GCSE Hinduism, with the students achieving all-round excellent grades. The value of the GCSE classes has been for the students to concretise their understanding of Hindu concepts and thus form the building blocks for continued self-improvement. Through their learning and seva, these young members of our society are able not only to develop into personalities of integrity and knowledge, but also use their dynamism for the good of those around them!

**To join our Junior Chyk classes and for information on Hinduism GCSE, please contact Madhavi Vadera on 07980 597 810.**

### ***"We can... We must... We will!"***

Report on Junior Chyk Seva Project 2005: Environment Day

The Junior Chyk group is the teenage/youth group of the Chinmaya Mission. The Chinmaya Mission provides individuals, from any background, the wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to become positive contributors to society. To put our philosophy into action and as a service to the community, we decided to take on a project to generate awareness of plastic recycling and collect recyclable plastic from homes in the Hendon area, near the Chinmaya Mission UK centre.

In order to collect the plastic we did a number of tasks to prepare beforehand. We designed flyers outlining our undertaking, explaining what kinds of plastics the residents should collect and providing easily digestible facts about environmental concerns and the importance of plastic recycling. The first round of our mission began on 5th November. In small groups, we went to houses on pre-selected streets, distributing flyers door to door and explaining our mission. On 13th November, wearing our name labels which bore our mission statement, "We, can, we must, we will!", (to keep us motivated!), around 30 of us between the ages of 11 and 16 joined forces in order to take on this mission of collecting as much plastic as possible. Before setting out for the collection, our resident Acharya, Brahmacharini

Sumati Chaitanya, gave us an inspiring talk about the importance of selfless service and protecting the world we live in. We then went out to homes in the local area, collecting plastic and raising awareness in order to keep the spirit of environmental concern alive in the area.

The project was a great success. We collected over thirty bin bags overflowing with reusable plastic. We got so many good responses from the community - many saying, "You kids are doing a wonderful job, I'm proud of you! Keep it up!". Contrary to some of our pre-collection anticipations, many people do actually want to help the community. If it wasn't for the sincerity of the community we wouldn't have been so successful, so we would like to thank them greatly. We also could not have done the project without the strong spirit of teamwork between the Junior Chyks! Everyone worked well together focussing on our goal: to help raise environmental awareness ... and also to enjoy ourselves in the process!

*Written by St. John's Wood Junior Chyks, 13-14 years*



***Watch this space for news on the Junior Chyks' next seva project to spend time with elders in an old age home!***



## Bal Vihar Classes and Activities

*"Love is to the human heart  
what sunshine is to flowers"*

Being the visionary that he was, Swami Chinmayananda saw that in the hi-tech urban civilization both sunshine and love would be hard to come by. Anticipating this need, he started the Bal Vihars. Groups of 10 to 25 children meet at a certain place on a weekly basis and the children and the sevaks/sevikas learn the art of living in love, the Hindu way. The idea is to provide an environment where the personality of the child blossoms in a spontaneous way. Good conduct, emotional refinement, intellectual finesse and spiritual awareness are developed by mature sevaks

through fun and play, and through stories and bhajans. Sometimes it is through tears, but more often through smiles; sometimes through strictness, but mostly by persuasion. The children are encouraged to be responsible, alert and sensitive members of society. Swamiji believed that just as the strength of a wall depended on the quality of each brick, so too, the health of a society depended on the individuals. If the individuals are healthy, the society is healthy. His strategy for building a new society was to: *"Catch 'em young."*

Chinmaya Mission UK has several thriving and rapidly growing Bal Vihar centres. Classes are taken by trained sevaks/sevikas at many

locations around London, including Hendon, St John's Wood, Northwood/Ruislip and Harrow. Bhajans, stotrams, a knowledge and reverence for our scriptures and basic values such as honesty, diligence, responsibility and integrity are inculcated in the children.

To enrol your child today, please contact  
Madhavi Vadera 07980 597 810

*"The seeds of spiritual values should be sown in young hearts. Cared for with warmth of love and affection, such a tree shall blossom forth flowers of Brotherhood, Universal Love, Peace, Bliss, Beauty and Perfection." – Swami Chinmayananda*

## Voice of the soul

I am the soul  
You don't know me but I know you  
I am you  
I'll never leave you  
I'll stay with you till you die  
I'll be with you every day of  
your life  
Wherever you are I'll be there

I make you unique, special  
I make you who you are  
I make you stand out  
I make you, you

I am the voice of god inside you  
I tell you what's right and wrong  
... But you don't always listen

Without me you have no meaning  
Without me you have no feelings  
Without me you cannot live

Everyone has a different soul  
So everyone has a different  
personality

But if you really understood us  
You would know

That we are only sparks of god.

Shree Vadera, 8 years  
Winner of the National Poetry Competition

Chinmaya

Check out our Bal Vihar website [www.chinmayakids.org](http://www.chinmayakids.org) for games, activities and stories.



# What's Happening?

## Chinmaya Mission UK Study Classes and Activities

### ADULT STUDY GROUPS (AGE 30 +)

Adult study classes are held on every day of the week by our resident Acharya, Brni Sumatiji, and by experienced sevaks.

The classes are held in various locations in London including Hendon, Harrow, Northwood, St. Johns Wood and South Croydon and for all levels of advancement. Study of a wide range of texts and subjects is undertaken, including:

- Self Unfoldment
- Kindle Life
- Art of Manmaking
- Bhagavad Geeta
- Manah Shodhanam
- Atma Bodha
- Vakya Vritti
- Bhaja Govindham
- Vivekachudamani
- Chinmaya Mission and Basics of Vedanta
- Sanskrit

These classes are free and all are welcome to attend.

For more information please contact Rameshbhai Pattni on 07765 837 134

### CHYK (YOUTH) STUDY CLASSES (17-30 yrs)

CHYK classes for the youth are conducted in Baker Street and Hendon for all levels on the following texts:

- Self Unfoldment • Vision of Life
- We Must

Numerous talks by our Acharya, Brni Sumatiji, and our experienced young speakers are held at universities around the country. These classes and talks are open to all and all youth are strongly encouraged to attend. For more information please contact Milan Samani on 07957 568 879 or on chyk@chinmayauk.org

### BALVIHAR CLASSES (4-12 yrs)

Swami Chinmayananda has said "Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit". At our Balvihar centres in Hendon, Northwood, St. John's Wood, Harrow and Edgware, children are given value-based education. Classes are held for:

- 4-7 years • 8-11 years

For more information please contact Madhavi Vadera on 07980 597 810.

### JUNIOR CHYK CLASSES (12-17 yrs)

Junior Chyk classes provide teenagers with an introduction to Vedanta. Classes take place in Hendon, Northwood, St. Johns Wood, Harrow and Edgware for the following age groups:

- 12-14 years • 15-17 years

In addition, Junior Chyks are offered the chance to sit for **GCSE Hinduism**, taught by our trained sevaks. For more information please contact Madhavi Vadera on 07980 597 810.

### DISCOURSES

Weekly discourses are given by our resident Acharya, Brni Sumatiji, at Chinmaya Kirti in Hendon on the following texts:

- Upanishads
- Geeta
- Tulsi Ramayana
- Vedanta

With impeccable logic and precision, Sumatiji skilfully and beautifully brings out the essence of these important scriptural texts. For more information please contact Brni Sumati Chaitanya on 020 8203 6288.

### CHANTING AND PUJA, MUSIC AND BHAJANS

The following Pujas, chanting and bhajan sessions take place at Chinmaya Kirti and are conducted by Brni. Sumatiji:

- Guru Paduka Puja - devotion and prayers at the feet of the Guru.
- Sponsored Hanuman Puja and Hanuman Chalisa.
- Vocal classes conducted by qualified musicians (£9 per class).
- BalVihar Soul (BalVihar music group).
- CHYK Soul (Youth music group).
- Swaranjali (Bhajan session, first Sunday of every month).
- Vedic Chanting from Book of Hymns and Bhagavad Geeta.

All major festivals are also celebrated with explanations from Brni Sumati Chaitanya. For more information, contact Brni Sumatiji on 020 8203 6288.

### MEDITATION

Brni Sumati Chaitanya holds weekly Meditation and Gayatri Mantra sessions. For more information please contact Brni Sumati Chaitanya 020 8203 6288.

For all information on study classes please e-mail: [info@chinmayauk.org](mailto:info@chinmayauk.org) or call 020 8203 6288  
Please visit our e-bookshop on [www.chinmayauk.org/ebookshop](http://www.chinmayauk.org/ebookshop)

## UPCOMING YAGNAS AND CAMPS

### Pujya Swami Chidatmananda at Chinmaya Kirti

Head of Chinmaya Mission Hyderabad and Regional Coordinator of Andhra Pradesh

7-13 April - 7.30pm – 9pm

daily at Chinmaya Kirti

Talks on 'Learning through Relationships'

What happens in a relationship?

How do relationships test our progress

and help us evolve? Pujya Swamiji will explain these issues by delving deep into the wisdom embedded in the Upanishads.

14-17 April – Arise, Awake!

Special 4-day Easter weekend CHYK Camp in Paris (17-30 yrs)

With Pujya Swamiji, Brni Bhaktiji and Brni Sumatiji (places limited)



### Pujya Swami Swaroopanandaji at Kensington Town Hall

Director, CIRS & Regional Head  
Chinmaya Mission Australia, UK & Far East

3-11 September

Talks on Life Management Techniques

Covering topics such as coping with stress, cultivating relationships and managing the mind, Swami

Swaroopananda will explain to us the simple yet transformational techniques for creating a life of contentment, integrity and spiritual value, enabling us to become positive contributors to society, producing more than what we consume and giving more than what we take.

Further details on both events will be updated on our website [www.chinmayauk.org](http://www.chinmayauk.org).

Visit our website [www.chinmayauk.org](http://www.chinmayauk.org)

"Symmetrical growth is essential for the human personality"