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Chinmaya

Chinmaya Mission (UK) Newsletter

Issue 12

“ Today belongs to us. Yesterday was. Tomorrow will be. Every day is bursting with opportunities for us to do and to serve, to act and to express, to love and to live. We must make use of these lush chances and diligently make our life rich, fruitful and useful for others at all times. ”





Chinmaya Hari Om!



Hari Om

The last three months have probably been the most eventful, exhilarating and spiritually charged periods in the history of the Chinmaya Mission UK.

It started with Guruji's visit in June which set the tone for the coming months, followed by Swami Chidatmananda's visit in September and culminating with a 'Call for Peace' Concert in celebration and hope. Add to this the festive days of Navratri, Diwali, and the start of the New Year bringing with it renewed energy and determination and taking us forward onto the next stage of realising Gurudev's vision.

On cue, it would seem, we have now achieved one of our most pivotal goals – from which we can continue the ground-root development, the strengthening and expansion of all our activities. This is our own centrally located 'Ashram': *Chinmaya Kirti* – a focal point for Vedanta and spiritual development. We can build on this as we continue to establish our place in the local, national and international arena as an authority for knowledge of Vedanta, Hindu Culture and Value based living.

Our activities range from classes for children and teenagers, camps and seminars, to study groups for the Youth Wing and Adults all of which are growing steadily at satellite 'centres'. We are now increasingly involved in national mainstream projects through our volunteers, publications, materials and guidance. The Peace Concert in association with Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, representation at the Diwali Celebration in Trafalgar Square, the GCSE in Hinduism Course in association with the Vivekananda Centre, representation with the Hindu Youth Organisation, are some of the more recent ones. Outreach projects include exploring aspects of Hinduism in schools, in their assemblies or at classes.

But there is much more to do, to build on and to develop. Starting with the Centre. A fund raising campaign was launched at the Yagna – to build our Centre 'Brick by Brick'. More than half the money needed has already been raised – but we do need to raise the rest as a matter of urgency. Our Bal Vihar children have been so inspired at getting the opportunity to build their own centre that instead of traditional Diwali presents they have bought 'bricks' - you may already have had

the experience of one of them trying to make you buy bricks! The St. Johns Wood Bal Vihar children have contributed £1350 in this way. We have much to learn from their example, for they have learned this simple truth of working and sacrificing for the higher – these children are already living 'Vedanta in action'!

And so I come to you, to help us build the future for our children – all it takes is a few bricks at a time. But we need to start now.

Hari Om
Rupin Vadera
President, Chinmaya Mission UK

*"All spectacular successes were achieved in little courageous steps taken with self confidence and faith in the nobility of the final goal chosen."
Swami Chinmayananda*

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What is it to live in inward inspiration at all times?

It is the sure reward of true living that a devotee should feel more and more a chaste happiness gurgling within, rising from nowhere. Bliss is our true nature. It is the essence from which life is made. But it is the discordant thudding in the misguided heart that spoils the music and makes life a tragic pandemonium of sorrows and sighs. When a true seeker, conscious of her destiny, lives intelligently for some time she comes to drop some of her unnecessary bondages created in her through her own miscalculations and false valuations in life. Necessarily, therefore, it is a clear sign of one's successful religious life that a true devotee discovers in herself a greater joy and a brighter appetite in her own limited life.

What are these unnecessary bondages that limit us from experiencing Bliss as our true nature? They are our desires and negativities. **If desires are not clogging the strings of your heart, and if negativities are not loosening the stretch of your love-chords, why shouldn't it give the song of life?** It is the *vasanas* (tendencies) in us that bind us down in the dark caves of imperfections and sorrows. *Vasanas* are the source of all thought eruptions. The type of thoughts we entertain is determined by the quality of the *vasanas* we have. Unintelligent and therefore unhealthy *vasanas* create such wild thoughts that they produce agitations in the bosom. Man, as he grows more and more sensitive, abhors this inner state of disturbance and chaos. The only remedy is to discipline the thoughts by a readjustment of the type of *vasanas* we have in our mental worlds. Life is a piece of art and it can be beautified and polished, chiselled and shaped by our own careful self effort. Nobody can help us. Each will have to help herself. Study, self-appreciation, continuous *vichar* and constant self-analysis are the means. The courage to criticise yourself and giving adequate self-punishments, from time to time, for the wild mischiefs of the riotous mind, are what determine the ultimate success.

Life is a piece of art and it can be beautified and polished, chiselled and shaped by our own careful self effort.

And as one slips these *vasanas* off and gets relieved from these bondages, one comes to enjoy the greater bliss of perfect existence. Music is in the fiddle ever awaiting the musician's fingers to tickle it out. But if the

wires are loose, the stem broken and the keys rusty, it needs some preparations and repair before it can yield its music to the touch of the player.

Religion is the science which teaches us how to repair the broken hearts and draw out of them their music.

Similarly, the human heart contains infinite music; but it needs readjustment before life can tickle out of it this endless bliss. Religion is the science which teaches us how to repair the broken hearts and draw out of them their music. It is necessary for all that have taken up a human form. Whether one lives in the jungle, or in the midst of the market place, one must start practising religion while living in the world and through the usual ordinary tussles of life. And a time shall come when you can no more remain in the midst of bustling life and you start seeking peace and solitude. It is this peace and solitude that we see in our Gurus – in the sparkle of joy in their eyes, the aura of cheer around them, the scent of purity that they spread in their lives. **It is this search for peace and solitude that inspires us to ourselves reach the perfect state of bliss.**

To remain in this inward inspiration in all conditions is an art. It can only be achieved when we try to lift ourselves up to the world of the Lord – to the spiritual heights. We must necessarily gain a spirit of *upeksha* (renunciation) towards all objects of the world. Else nobody can develop equanimity. And our *sadhana* should not be merely left at the body level. Bring more and more of your conscious mind into your *sadhana*. This is raising the sincerity or deepening the *sadhana*. Let it be for a short time to start with. But do it with your entire mind. Be steady with your mental thoughts. For it is the mind that stands between the two natures in life – the lower, made ugly by the clamours of our passions, and the higher, rendered beautiful with the harmony of Peace. The mind can reflect both sides. The more and more the mirror of mind is turned inward it reflects the calm serenity of the Harmony of the Self and we feel joyous.

In time, one comes to identify with Him, to see His play everywhere – in every thing, being and situation. To one thus living fully, nobly and divinely, there is nothing else in life but the rhythmic steps of the Lord dancing on the Jumna banks. In the silence of the night, in the day, in the light of the spring moon and in the darkness of the New Moon night, she sees



the Shyam spreading the silent music of His eternal aura.

In the silence of the night, in the light of the spring moon and in the darkness of the New Moon night, see the Shyam spreading the silent music of His eternal aura.

With this understanding, seek Him in the Smile of your friends, in the glow of the angry eyes, in the throb of love, in the storm of passion. Everywhere it is His glow that is gleaming through different emotions, thoughts and actions. Seek him in the thrill of the dawn, in the sadness of the dusk, in the thrill of the rains, in the hustling storms, in the murmuring breeze, in green pastures, in the blue lotus, in the Sangam of Graceful Ganges and the restless Jumna. He is everywhere – in everything – not with mortal legs and hands, but in His Presence as the Divine Joy Infinite.

One who thus sees everywhere is unbrokenly in Him – in an Ocean of Joy – in calm bliss. Such a one in the world, capable of smiling at the world is Himself. Such a one listens and in the hushed silence of inspired joy, in the roaring laughter of silent meditation, in the motionless dance of ecstasy, in the freezing heat of tapas, hears Him whisper His deafening message: 'I am you – you are Me.'

Swami Chinmayananda



chintan **Seeing the Light**

Art – The Creative Expression of the Soul

“
... Art refers to those pieces of creativity that manifest from one who is in a state of complete unity.”



There are certain objects in this world that glow with a divine resonance. Do you know what I mean? Sometimes we come across items of substance that radiate an inherent sense of perfection, as though their creator was a giant of towering genius, one whose work could not possibly be matched by a mere mortal such as myself.

What is it about these pieces of creativity that give them this quality? What is it about these pieces of writing or music, or dance that distinguishes them, that attracts and enchants us?

I come across these from time to time. Occasionally, I read a piece of writing or listen to a piece of music that has this *quality*, this sense of innate precision and excellence that seems to characterise every word or every note. I have, once or twice, even been able to produce such creativity myself; but only once or twice.

I wonder why.

Why am I only able to read some of the articles I have written, reach the last line and smile? Why is it that only sometimes do I feel that I have created a piece of work that I can truly feel proud of? Why can't I consistently produce perfection?

Well I guess nobody's perfect. Or not.

Because Vedanta teaches us that we are all custodians of this perfection. It is our nature and our birthright and we are merely deluded by our self-propagating ignorance, perpetuated by our refusal to think and act upon those thoughts.

If I place myself firmly in the moment, where the tremors of the past and the fevers of the future are unable to reach me, then I have tricked time.

But I am tired of thinking. If perfection is my true self, then why am I not able to realise it? Why am I ignorant of it and why, sometimes, and for brief moments, am I able to tap into this reservoir of perfection and produce a piece of work that transcends my abilities?

Too many questions...and I am weary. I need a break. A movie would be good.

So I'm going. Goodbye.
The cinema is a warm place. It is a place where I can forget. Where I can leave my life behind and immerse myself in another world. It is a house of

dreams where I can lose my problems and forget my regrets. It is place where my dreams become real, if only for a time. But it is not real, it is only fleeting. For as soon as I have entered and the lights have dimmed, I have to leave. Finished. Popcorn over, cup full of soggy ice.

But for those 2 hours, I was entranced by the play of light on the canvas. The hero, the heroine, the love, the hate, the tears, the dance, the music, the colours, all so real, as if I was there myself, rapt and wrapped at the same time. For 2 hours, it became MY life.

But behind me, the whirr of the projector stops, the curtain falls, and it's over. I hear the faint hiss of the projector powering down and I realise that all I have just seen was unreal: it was just entertainment. Of course I knew this already, but sometimes its nice to pretend. It's more fun that way.

Vedanta teaches us that we are all custodians of this perfection.

I could feel sad, that the movie has ended, and that my heroine has left me, but I don't. I could feel angry that the projector has run its course and ended my dream. But I don't, because the projector is just a machine. It's just fulfilling its function. It is merely taking light, passing it through some cinematic film and casting the resulting image onto a blank canvas. It would not do this unless I had told it to. If I had chosen not to buy my ticket, then the projector would not have been switched on. It would not have taken the light, passed it through the cinematic film and cast the image onto the blank canvas. My dream would not have begun and it would not have ended and I would not have felt sad and unhappy and jubilant and dejected and ecstatic. The movie only occurred because I wanted it to occur. It was made real by me.

But throughout the whole process, through all the movement and colour and expression and passion and hate, there was only light. The projector simply took the light, refracted it and gave it seeming characteristics (that were inherent in it in the first place) and produced the performance.

That's all it was. Light.
The same light that was there in the beginning was there through the whole show and was still there at the end. Sure it looked different, from my perspective, the light seemed to take on the image of a beautiful woman or a brave



but slightly dim hero or the perfectly proportioned moustache of the evil, but slightly sympathetic villain.

But at no time was the light not present. At no time did the light itself move. At no time did the light itself change colour or take name or form. It was just there; an underlying constant against the movement of birth, death and the cycle of life. Without it, there would be nothing.

I am back. I feel refreshed. Where was I? Ah yes, perfection...

When I read Gurudev's words, or hear them brought to vocal expression by one of his Swamis, I never stop feeling a sense of wonder at the *quality* that they exhibit. What is it about these men that when they speak or write, that their words resound with an indescribable clarity so powerful, that it can move people to tears of inspiration? What is this *quality*?

Art.

But not the Art that denotes mere items of imagination. This Art refers to those pieces of creativity that manifest from one who is in a state of complete unity. One who has become his work and in doing so, lost any conception of subject and object and broken the bonds of duality. It is in this state, where the shackles of our ignorance cannot reach, where our infinite potential gathers expression. This is where we can realise, if only for a few brief moments, that we are not the movement of colour projected onto the canvas, but we are the all-pervasive light by which all creation can take place. This is where we can know that creative perfection is our very nature.

It can appear anywhere at any time and from anyone, because we all have this ability inherent in us, dwelling in a state of ungraspable dormant dynamism: trapped, enclosed by three layers of adharmic ignorance.

But to transcend this ignorance, if only for a few brief moments, and allow this creative will to take expression, is to create true *Art*. True Art that resonates this *quality* that cannot be defined but only felt by those who know how to feel.

This is the state that our Swamis reside in: this is the state where we hear their souls speak.

It happens to me sometimes.

Sometimes for brief moments I am able to

realise that I am not the character on the screen, but I am the light by which this character is able to take form. I don't know this or understand this or even feel it intuitively. It is not an emotion or a deep understanding, it is more like forgetting to be myself.

What is it about these men that when they speak or write, that their words resound with an indescribable clarity so powerful, that it can move people to tears of inspiration?

It doesn't happen very often and the only times I have felt it is when I am writing: because that is when everything else is blocked out. That is when my personality disintegrates; when my desires and pleasures and appearances no longer exist and I forget my mind. I am not conscious of thoughts, there is only a blur of fingers and the tapping of keys. And in this strange fog of tapping and not-thinking, I attain this sense of unity. The computer (which I have stopped looking at) and the keyboard cease to maintain their independent existence: they become merely an extension of my mind and my thoughts flow seamlessly, as though powered by an unknown and thus far untapped source. I am able to transcend duality. I forget about all other objects, all other relationships...the tree, the clouds, the leaves, the sky, even the bird; everything fades to nothing: all that remains is the eye of the bird.

I have even forgotten about time. One could even say that time doesn't exist for me, because I am truly in the moment. For time is nothing but the space between two events. If I place myself firmly in the moment, where the tremors of the past and the fevers of the future are unable to reach me, then I have tricked time: I am able to transcend it, defeat it and break free from its limitations. In this state I am able to break free from all limitations, from all thoughts, all desires and all of the beliefs that I feel define me as a person. They all disappear. The way I look, dress, act, talk, listen, love, hate, all melt away and all that is left is my fingers, my keyboard and my mind, bonded together to form a fragile yet magical conduit, through which my soul speaks.

This is my moment of inspiration. This is the creative expression of my soul. This is my Art. This is the only time where I am able to forget the person that I have decided to be and transcend the limits I have set myself. These are the brief moments in my life where I am free.

Milan Samani





PLANET IN CRISIS – The Birth of a New World

Problems facing us today

Why is it that we are not able to find a solution to all the problems in the world? What is it we do not have? Technology has brought about global communication. Knowledge and science have developed tremendously. We are not in the caveman's state of utter ignorance and development. We have conquered the world and outer space, yet with all these achievements, people are suffering and unhappy. Never before has the world been in this condition.

Take the map of the world, close your eyes and put your finger anywhere you like. Is not that area disturbed, having mutual killing and famine? Then the armies come. But is the army the answer? Is providing food to the hungry the solution? Think! What is the solution?

For years we have been struggling in international institutions. But what is the sum total of our results? We have tried politics, changed constitutions and changed laws. Is it right to say that we have progressed? Progressed to what? Progress in the arrangement of the outer world? Expecting from this a great individual satisfaction and fulfilment? This is what we have expected. Did we get it?

We have everything. Better housing, better clothing and food. Yet with the luxurious plenty of the outer world, you and I sit on cushions and weep. It does not matter if you are rich or poor, powerful or powerless. No community or race is happy. In fact no part of the world seems to be happy. Why? Why? We never ask this question! All we do is find out what the problem is. Then we find out how to mitigate and cure it for the time being. But we do not enquire into the fundamental source of all these disturbances.

When you start thinking, you must think deeper. What is the source of these eruptions? Think! This is what Vedanta does. It is a subjective science. We do not recommend a solution for problem after problem, individual, communal, national or international. Vedanta goes into the depths and tries to find the source of all these troubles.

THINK!

Change

As a result of this, our rishis, saints and sages, from the Vedic period onward, with one voice,

all cried out that *it is time to move on to a new realm and level of consciousness*. I am saying it in one sentence, but will try and explain it.

This is the pain of a new birth. No new birth is possible when the mother is smiling and the child is giggling. No! When both cry it is a new birth. Is not the world in pangs of pain and agony? We refuse to move forward in a new direction. We are not able to recognise what is required because it is easier to follow what has been done in the past. We must learn to adapt. Nature's Laws have no compassion. They will wipe us clean.



Don't you think that we have arrived at a point where the old methods can no longer be a remedy for the sufferings of mankind? Think! Why? Because the source is something different. It is not physical, emotional or intellectual. Why do we have various sorrows of the world, economic upsets, poverty, disease and mutual killing?

THINK!

Mental attitude

When you analyse the cause of things, hunt for the cause of effects, this is called an intellectual method of analysing and understanding the world around us. Causation hunting is the preoccupation of the human intellect. This is how all sciences develop.

What is the spring from which all these problems and sorrows arise? When we analyse it, a wondrous new truth emerges which the ordinary materialist and scientist may not accept

immediately. *The outside world is an echo and a reflection of our minds*. Think!

One Swami is talking. You are all intelligent people listening, Can I say that all of you are understanding in the same way? It cannot be. Each receives the idea and interprets it according to their own mind. So the outside world is ordered by, governed by, controlled by your mental attitude. Haven't you heard some people say that this world is hell? Successful people say that this world is wonderful, unsuccessful people say "I want to die". Why? It is the same world, the same sun, moon and stars. These undisciplined mental disturbances prompt us to live on instincts and impulses of the mind. They are utterly selfish, heartlessly desiring everything in the exterior world, wanting to acquire, possess, embrace, indulge and enjoy. They are like cattle and live only at the mental level at this moment.

Each individual is a unit in this universe. All individuals put together are a community, nation or world. Apart from the individuals there is no world. Without distinction, all your minds put together is the world outside. If the majority of the minds are egocentric, selfish, without character, then that society will be of the same character. **Through individual perfection alone can world perfection be aspired.**

In all world scriptures, this is the conclusion of our great thinkers of the past. I am not only talking about Vedanta. Is not the Kuran saying the same? The Dhammapada of the Buddhists saying the same? Every great Master who has given thought to it has understood that the cause for the sorrows of the world, is the imperfection and disturbances of your own mind.

THINK!

Secret of action

Even today the world is a pure divine thing. When passing it through our mind by "My terms and my experiences", we poison it with our own false thinking, false ideas and false values. There is not a single moment when you are not responding and reacting to the world. This is called life. These responses and reactions at the body level in the world are called "work or action".

We are all active dynamic people because we are alive. But your actions are totally different from someone else's even when the conditions are the same. Why? Responses to the world are ordered by, determined by, guided by my thoughts. It is subjective.



All actions are expressions of our minds. If you smile, that is your thought. If you growl, it is your thought. When you do something bad and the police are after you, at that time you say “the Lord gave me this idea and now I am being punished”. Absurd! This is escapism. When you scientifically analyse it, the quality and quantity of thoughts that you entertain in your mind determine the very contours of your expression in the world, your behaviour and responses to the world.

Sometimes you may think, why am I so lustful, greedy, passionate, jealous and why do I have all these negative thoughts? Other people are loving, tender, compassionate, ready to make sacrifices for others. Why these differences? The Subjective Masters analysed this serious question and came to the conclusion that “*The quality and types of thoughts that arise in you are ordered by your own intellectual convictions.*”

If I am convinced from childhood that money is all I want, when I am introduced to a Swami and shake his hand, the thoughts in my mind are “Can I get something from him, does he want money from me? How much does he have, is there any way of getting that money?” Suppose you are constantly dreaming about women. No matter how strong in character and behaviour you are, the moment you shake hands with a woman you start thinking, “Not bad!” I am not joking! The quality of thoughts are determined by each individual’s intellectual convictions that “this is my goal”.

THINK!

Values

Each one of us is convinced of a goal in life and every thought in us is ordered by and coloured by that intellectual decision and conviction. All these thoughts are being expressed through you and me. These are called values of life.

A thing by itself has no value. Think of it, a piece of iron rusting away on the road side has no value. But let a man heat up the iron and beat it to make a knife, then it has value. *The object plus your effort in it gives it value.* You cannot get values by merely listening or reading. After reading and listening, you have to start thinking, then you have to work on yourself to create the right values.

THINK!

Mental renaissance

Children understand not by words, but demonstration. If parents have values and are educated, their behaviour must be a declaration of these higher values. Not only parents, teachers and the school atmosphere, but the whole system has to be changed. We have neglected it for thousands of years.

Change! “But Swamiji, changing is difficult”. Plants that have refused to change and animals that cannot adapt to the environment become extinct. Whether it is Lebanon, Iraq or Iran, when there is a change of values through which quality of thoughts are purified, the actions become so beautiful and the community is healthy. I am not talking in terms of economic development. It is a superficial observation to say that poverty is the cause for sorrows. ***Sorrows are not caused by wealth or by poverty. It is your own clinging attachment that causes sorrow.*** Have higher values in life, where the minimum is sufficient. Jesus never had a pope’s palace; he lived under a bridge. Was he not happy? What sheer beauty of thought he had! Think!

Friends, this mental renaissance must come. A greater awareness must come. We are being pushed towards the search for a higher state of consciousness. Just as when the foetus in the mother’s womb is fully developed, does not every muscle in that loving mother push the child out? The child also wants to come out. *In the same way, does not Nature from all sides squeeze the rich and the poor, the powerful and the powerless, whether you are a developed nation or an developing nation. is not everyone in the whole world being squeezed?*

THINK!

Reawakening the human spirit

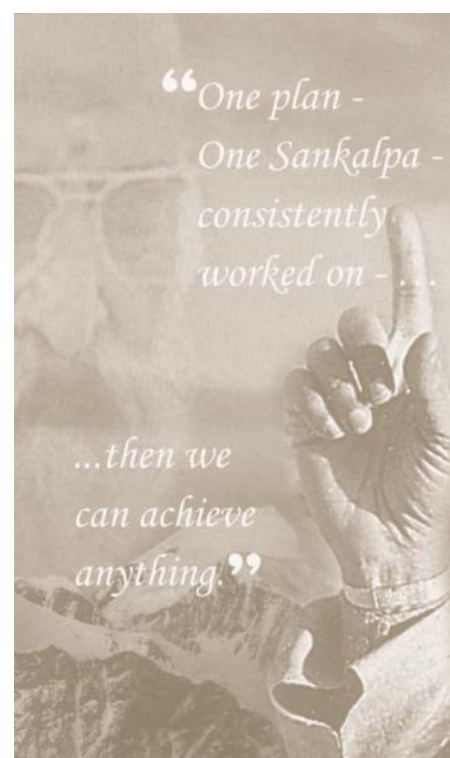
We have to move from materialistic prosperity into a better and larger awareness: a greater state of consciousness. A broader shoulder to take the responsibility of the sorrows of the world upon your own shoulders. I am the cause for the sorrows of the world. *You change and the world will change.* What we want is for the world to change so that I may be happy. We have been struggling to beautify the world, not to beautify ourselves. There is nothing wrong with the world. The sun, moon, stars, plants, animals and birds have no problem with the world. The problem arises only with the intelligently stupid man. Man is not able to live up to the Laws of Nature. It is here where troubles come from.

So then how can we bring about change? By changing the atmosphere in which we live. Think! There must be an atmosphere of serenity and beauty. Teach the children how to enjoy beauty, show them the beauty of the sunrise and the sunset, the beauty of love. It is not true to say that the modern youngster is a lost soul. He is lost because of your confusion, your inability to guide him. Vedanta gives you the necessary knowledge. Study your scriptures. Any scripture can take you to the highest, but you have to work on yourself. It is a subjective science. Slowly feed your children with the logic behind this great Truth and you will see them dynamically marching towards spiritual unfoldment.

THINK!

The whole world is sorrowful. Joy and happiness is not in more money or in one more wife. No, it is in understanding the mind. An awakening in yourself, an unfoldment, a growth in ourselves to the higher. Then you leave these petty, paltry temptations of the toys of life and start living for a higher purpose. Only then can man reach a higher realm of consciousness and the world soar to greater heights of happiness and fulfilment. ***This is the birth of a new world.***

Compiled from Swami Chinmayananda’s talk at the United Nations.





Chinmaya Vedanta in Action

“...to give maximum happiness to maximum number for the maximum time...”

The motto of the Chinmaya Mission. These simple words are often quoted and usually given no more than a passing thought. Yet it is these words that are the goal of the Mission; that are supposed to convey the ethos of the Mission. Every activity of the Mission has to be considered in the context of fulfilling this goal.

Compared to the life style we all seem to live, moments of happiness from breaks in our hectic schedule is the maximum we can hope for. Fifty years on, if moments of passing joy are all that we can expect, then surely either the Mission has failed, or this motto is too utopian, maybe even naive. Maybe Gurudev's vision was a mere idealistic notion. After all many great Teachers have come through the ages, and travelled the world, preaching their gospel of love and peace. Yet the world seems no different in spite of their influences. We still have suffering, war and tragedies on national and personal levels. So much for religion!

“Science applied becomes technology. Pure philosophy applied to social conditions becomes religion.”

What then is our goal, our Mission? On Swami Swaroopananda's visit to London last September he shared many thoughts and ideas with a group of mission members. At one such occasion he was asked about the possibility of undertaking a seva project to distribute food to the needy.

His response was quick and to the point: *“any seva is a good idea but we in the Chinmaya Mission should never lose sight of our main activity which is Gnana Daan - the distribution of Higher Knowledge to all. The strength of Chinmaya Mission is Vedantic Knowledge. Chinmaya itself means Pure Knowledge and our main objective is to gain this knowledge ourselves and to spread it to as many people as possible. Besides having a vision for the Mission as a whole*

it is very important to examine our own individual vision and to understand our purpose for joining the Chinmaya Mission.

First and foremost we are here for our own spiritual growth; to gain spiritual knowledge and to put this into practice in one's daily life and to become aware of one's own spiritual unfoldment. All our actions, reactions and responses should also begin to arise from a spiritual vision and not from a materialistic one.”

External challenges are indeed unavoidable. To overcome them one may seek the support of the society of men and materials. While Gurudev was one among those who fought for freedom in an inspired patriotic spirit, he was not satisfied merely in the freedom of speech and duty. His concept of freedom was much deeper. He found that even after the freedom of the nation, men failed to recognize their moral obligations towards society due to wrong priorities of life. Wrong ethical values were the causes for the disharmony in an apparently free society. 'How to bring back the beauty of morality among the educated?' was the noble question that rose in his mind.

For Gurudev knew that it was an illusion to believe that more comfort meant more happiness. The impact of all the great Teachers and Masters was lost on those who continued on the hectic path of continuous material consumption and attempts at fulfilling their desires. Instead, that 'rare' commodity that we all crave for had to depend on the very composition of our minds. Change that mind set and we would change the way we felt. Happiness therefore depended on freedom from the desires that continuously drove us. Freedom from being slaves to our wishes and wants. Freedom meant complete mastery over the mind. Complete mastery over the mind meant **Maximum Happiness.**

“Mind can make a hell of heaven or a heaven of hell.”

were after all tools used for realising the Truth of this Knowledge. His yagnas were not ritualistic ceremonies, but talks based on the Geeta and the Upanishads, where ignorance was burnt in the sacrificial fire, whose light would illumine greater understanding.

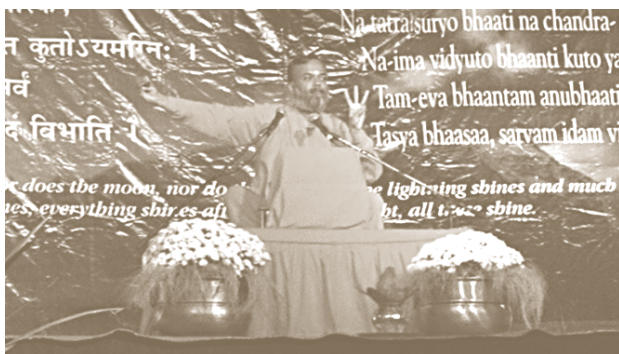
Thus, a Mission came to be born, with a vision to spread the knowledge of Vedanta, the underlying philosophy of all religions, the ultimate Truth. The Advaita philosophy saw no boundaries or division. It was not a philosophy for a specific community or indeed a specific religion. People from all religions were drawn by the powerful message of Vedanta that the whole world and all the individuals in it are a mere manifestation of that One Consciousness. Realising the Oneness, for Gurudev there could have only been one goal, to reach out to everyone, irrespective of their individual 'religion'. **Maximum number** could be the only goal. The Mission's statement therefore became:

“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 contributors to society.”

Starting from the grass roots, through yagnas and study classes, books and publications, this Knowledge would be expounded. Each individual would in turn spread this influence and contribute to the upliftment of their community.

As study classes and activities began springing up in India, centres around the world were established, with the aim of reaching more people and giving identity to the local mission. Though these physical structures ensured that the mission continued to spread the message of Vedanta, it was the establishment of the Sandeepanias where the training of Brahmacharis began, who would dedicate their lives to spreading this great knowledge. From here came the true disciples of Gurudev. They not only gained an intensive knowledge of Vedantic philosophy, but also would carry on the task of reaching further afield teaching the principles of this Knowledge.

Their unique message, 'That Thou Art', is being expounded to us today in a modern context, in light of the issues we face in the present day. For Vedanta is not only the perfect and ultimate Truth, but it is also a practical philosophy. This wasn't a philosophy for the escapist. Today's world is a fast moving, aggressive and competitive place. Preaching of detachment and sacrifice of worldly ambitions was going to fall on



The task Gurudev set himself was then to spread this philosophy to the masses. Rituals had divided communities, had been used as a tool by an elite group to rule over the masses. The mission was to dispel these misconceptions and bring about a revival of true understanding of this great Knowledge. Rituals



deaf ears. This was a practical and dynamic philosophy, true today as it was thousands of years ago. The principles had to be explained, to be understood and so lived. These principles encourage achievement in all fields, but on a basis of understanding the human mind and spirit. As this understanding grew through the lectures at yagnas, study classes and seva activities in the Mission, the process of sublimation gave greater control over the wayward and demanding mind. This would lead to happiness for **Maximum time**.

“The spirit of Advaita is not to keep away from anything, but to keep in tune with everything.”

Our activities in the UK have been in keeping with the Mission's motto. We have been blessed with a number of Swami's visiting London. In June, the Head of the Mission Worldwide, Pujya Swami Tejomayananda, held a weekend of talks for sevaks. Talking on the vision and activities of the Mission around the world, Guruji inspired us in the UK to plan ahead with greater conviction and dedication.

August and September saw Swami Chidatmananda visit for what was an inspiring and memorable 3 weeks for all. The CHYK camp, 'Born to Succeed' so inspired the youth that it has whipped them into dynamic seva and sincere self-

study. The Family Camp, 'Bring Out the Best', brought together the youth, the bal vihar children and parents for an enjoyable and rewarding camp where Swamiji reached out to every age group with the universal wisdom of Vedanta.

Swamiji's week long yagna on Chapter III of the Geeta, Karma Yoga, or 'Efficiency in Action' was an unqualified success. He delivered his roaring discourses to a packed hall night after night, all eager to receive his thought-provoking words. There was hardly a dry eye in the audience when he spoke of Gurudev's relentless work in the early days; the struggle which eventually led to the birth of the Mission. Even those who have never met Pujya Gurudev could feel his presence during Swamiji's uplifting talks. His morning talks helped guide seekers through the hard-hitting logic and deep philosophy behind Swami Tejomayananda's Jnana-Sara. Swamiji's visit concluded with the successful Raas Leela programme: a fun-filled learning experience for all ages where his elegant explanation of the symbolism of this age-old popular dance provided understanding, meaning and significance to the evening.

Swamiji's visit came to an end after 3 weeks, but his words continue to inspire our burgeoning study and bal vihar classes, whose growth is matched only by the expanding number of sevaks.



The recent Concert for Peace and Inter-faith Harmony, organised with the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan UK, on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti was enjoyed by all, not only for the music, but also for the human values celebrated by the event. Last year was an exciting and fulfilling year. With the formal announcement of the acquisition of our very own Centre, the future promises to be even more so. For the present, there is still much to be done, for which we will need all the support possible to help fulfil the noble dream of a great Master **“to give maximum happiness to maximum number for the maximum time.”**

Hari Om, Rupin Vadera

“Religion must not be considered true because it is necessary, but necessary because it is true.”
Swami Chinmayananda

CHINMAYA KIRTI

Brick by Brick

Transforming Lives...Brick by Brick

“We stand as one family...”

The first line of the Mission pledge, and words that will hold meaning for anyone who regularly participates in any of the Chinmaya Mission's many activities. We do consider ourselves a family and that family now has the possibility of having a home, Chinmaya Kirti.

On Ganesh Chaturthi this year, we were happy to announce that we will finally have a Centre in London. Its focus will be to provide *“Gnana Daan – the distribution of higher knowledge to all”* for inner awareness is a central theme in all of Gurudev's teachings. With a library, bookshop, classrooms and a lecture hall, it will be a centre for people to attend cultural programmes and festival celebrations, to house our vast publications and books, and cater for the ever-increasing activities organized for all age groups: truly a home for the community.

Building a community centre needs the support of the entire community. During the recent yagna we launched a 'Brick by Brick' sponsorship scheme, so that each person could contribute to the development of our very own Chinmaya Kirti. It was met

by a heartening response, but there is still a long way to go.

These contributions are not merely donations. They are an investment towards the future of our children. Our children deserve a secure place where they can further their spiritual education, practice good values and develop their inner personalities. In today's age when youngsters are so easily conditioned by the media, peers and other influences, we owe it to them to provide a sound, healthy environment. Indeed, we owe it to ourselves.

So we ask you to come forward to contribute towards building your own Centre: every brick is important in holding up a structure. Only with the support of every individual in the community can this Ashram be built. Let's do it for our families; let's do it for our Chinmaya Mission Family. It will certainly add new meaning to the age-old adage, “Charity begins at home.”

We can do it together, “Brick by Brick”.
We hope that we will see you there.

Hari Om, Rupin Vadera



Chinmaya Chyk it out!

Born To Succeed - CHYK Camp 2003

“Meet life as it reaches you. With or without the things our minds demand, life can be a brilliant success. But, for this, we must discover something else to depend upon. Seek that something in yourself, not outside...”

Swami Chinmayananda

The August 2003 Bank Holiday weekend is one which no UK Chyk will easily forget. For how many long weekend breaks involve a fun-packed journey to a beautiful retreat, with quality time to be spent in the company of a wise and wonderful master, and classes based on excerpts of the holy *Upanishads*. Not to mention creating new friendships and participating in a variety of enjoyable activities. It may sound like a great deal, but we managed to achieve all this and much more in the short time that we spent at Dunfield House in Hereford with Swami Chidatmananda.

Being a day longer than past CHYK camps meant that this year’s camp took on a slightly different format and included many never-before-seen-at-camp activities. These included a picnic lunch, a *bhajan* and chanting session, a quiz, a group Ganesh *puja*, and Swamiji’s two educational outdoor games (a personal favourite!). We also had more lectures and discussions, an extra night around the camp fire, and spare time set aside to rest and contemplate or simply unwind with friends. Whew!

But that’s not all. This year, for the first time, a group of *sevaks* performed a play at camp. Not of the amateur standard of our annual role-plays, but of a more polished, professional standard. It was called ‘Journey of a Master’, a biographical tribute to our Gurudev, Pujya Swami Chinmayananda. The spellbound audience watched some touching moments from Gurudev’s life unfold on stage, and the response was truly heartwarming. As one Chyk said, “...I felt that from that point on, there was a certain unique beauty to this year’s camp.” Another said, “I think that night marked a new dimension to everything; new understanding, new expectations of camps, new togetherness, and so much more...”

There certainly was something new and unique to this year’s camp. A warm and positive vibe could be felt by all. All were inspired to give their 100%. CHYK camps have always attracted talented and skilled individuals, but this year’s efforts seemed to be dedicated to the highest of ideals. It was as though Swamiji’s discourses on Inner Awareness penetrated the hearts of all, and the results brought tears to many eyes. Be it music, dance, the artistic set-up, singing, photography, acting – everything bore the mark of divinity, for it was all performed as service to the Chinmaya Mission, and not for the sake of applause or accolades. Put beautifully by a Chyk, **“Where there is duty, there is no need for praise...To do seva is but thanks in itself.”**



The spiritually charged atmosphere at camp was largely due to the thoughts awakened in us by Swamiji during his incredible lectures. Some motivating quotes from his talks: “True living is connected to awareness and the result is joy, peace, divinity.” “Misery calls our attention to what needs to be changed.”

“We are the authors of our own falls. Accept this, only then can you try to come out of it.” And then there was that one particular class on the Sunday evening titled ‘Inner Nature’, after which we were told to go outdoors and reflect upon what we had just been told. It is difficult to describe the amazing effects of that talk or the gratitude we felt towards Swamiji for leading us into feeling such immense inner strength and calmness. “I didn’t want the experience to end,” said someone. Another person said it was “exhilarating and continues to be inspiring.” It was definitely a highlight of the weekend.

Another highlight for many was the Convocation ceremony, when Swamiji whispered an individual blessing to each one of us while handing us the *Prasad*. It was a kind, loving gesture and the perfect conclusion to a perfect weekend. One deeply-moved Chyk said, “Swamiji was, well, just awesome! I don’t think I’ve ever met anyone like him before.” Swami Chidatmananda is a truly remarkable man, so simple, so approachable – and what is most touching – so dedicated to fulfilling his Guru’s dream and delivering his promise.

Gurudev’s presence could be felt throughout the camp. His energy was behind Swamiji’s roaring discourses on stage. We felt His blessings upon us in the peaceful surroundings during walking meditation. We sensed His pride when the manager of Dunfield House was moved to tears by our conduct. He took the form of inspiration during our performances. It is indeed the most special thing to be said about Camp 2003. He was there with us.

Gurudev is **always** with us. CHYK UK doesn’t only exist in August and September each year. All year round, there are opportunities to learn together, enjoy ourselves and serve society through the Mission. It is easier to walk the path to Self-Realisation and Inner Awareness knowing that others are walking by our side. Striving together to one day be the **authors of our success stories**, for as Swamiji says, **“We all have an inherent ability to generate the energy necessary to meet all obstacles and situations.” We were Born To Succeed!**

Hari Om, Trishna Gulrajani



The Glory of God

He is the Supreme God
Who created the world;
He shines as bright as the sun
He is in everyone,
He is God.



He created us with His glory,
He is ancient and everlasting God,
Which everyone knows,
And everyone loves,



He is nature's beauty,
He is in the plants,
Grass and herbs and trees,
The biggest and smallest of animals,
He is everyone,
The foolish cannot see Him,
But the wise can.



The fact that you can breathe,
hear, smell, touch, taste
Is the glory of God.
The glory of man is realising
That He is a soul in a body
And not a body in a soul.



Mohit Wadhvani, 11 years



To enter a poem competition, contact info@chinmayuk.org or call Kanchan on 07870 590 879.
The winner will have their poem published on this page.



chīnmayauk Newness of New Year

“To the common folk 364 such days and nights bring according to their calendar, a New Year, but in fact, to a large majority, there is no newness about it. Every year is a dragging continuity of the previous year. Every month is a shameless prototype of the sorrows and imperfections of the previous month. Every today is the echo of the yesterday that has passed. To the unintelligent thoughtless persons there is very little of any newness and their days, months, years roll by. On the high road of life they constantly miss their buses. The field of time can be cultivated and brought to bear fruit and profit if we sincerely farm our own life. The seeds in the barn can not produce at the end of a year a rich harvest unless we plough the land, sow the seed, weed out, water the growth, protect it from danger and wait for the ripening. So too, the field of the time, cannot smile forth to provide us with our joys in life unless we cultivate it properly.”

Swami Chinmayananda



Study Classes

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

ADULT STUDY CLASS

Northwood

Mondays 9.00pm – 10.30pm

Sundays 11.00am – 12.30pm

Level: Beginners

Contact: rupin@hanuman.be,

07785 921 000

St Johns Wood

Tuesdays 7.30pm – 9.00pm

Level: Beginners

Contact: Nimisha 07774 796 090

Cris 07771 546 407

Saturdays 11.00pm – 12.30pm

Level: Beginners

Contact:

rameshpattni@hotmail.com,

07765 837 134

Harrow

Mondays 8.30pm – 10.00pm

Level: Beginners

Contact:

rameshpattni@hotmail.com,

07765 837 134

Thursdays Chanting Class

7.00pm – 7.30pm

Thursdays Study Class

7.30pm – 9.00pm

Level: Intermediate

Contact:

smitasamani@hotmail.com,

07961 177 106 (after 6pm)

South Croydon

Thursday 7.30pm – 9.00pm

Level: Beginners

Contact: gparmar@tjg.co.uk,

Gita on 07960 525 728

SANSKRIT CLASS:

ADULTS/YOUTH

Wembley Park

Saturdays 10.30am – 12.30pm

Levels: Classes: Beginners and

Intermediate

Contact: ballu_ji@yahoo.co.uk,

BalKrishna on 07973 472 042

BALVIHAR (5-12 yrs) AND

JUNIOR CHYK (12-17 yrs)

CLASSES 4 classes for age groups

4-7yrs, 8-11yrs, 11-13yrs and 14-16yrs

Northwood and Ruislip

Sundays 11.00am to 12.30pm

Additional classes in Hinduism,

leading to a GCSE 'O' Level;

Gujarati and Folk Dance

Contact: info@chinmayauk.org,

Madhavi on 07980 597 810

St Johns Wood

Saturdays 11.00 am – 12.30pm

Additional Hindi classes

Contact: info@chinmayauk.org,

Kanchan on 07870 590 879

Harrow and Edgware

Sundays 11:30pm – 1.00pm

Contact: info@chinmayauk.org,

Madhavi on 07980 597 810

CHYK STUDY CLASS

(Youth 18-35)

Baker Street

Wednesdays 7.30pm – 9.00pm

Level: Beginners and

Intermediate classes.

Contact:

chyk@chinmayauk.org,

Milan on 07957 568 879

Visit our website www.chinmayauk.org