



Chinmayam

January 2000

Issue 1

2000

MILLENNIUM ISSUE

OUR FIRST MAGAZINE

GURUDEV - A BRIEF PROFILE

THE VISION OF THE MISSION



chINMAYAM NAMASTE

Blessings from our Gurus . . .



Swami Tejomayananda
Head of the
Chinmaya Mission

My heartiest congratulations to the Chinmaya Mission members, UK on your inaugural newsletter "Chinmayam". I am confident of your zeal and capacity for spreading Pujya Gurudev's vision through this newsletter.

The action of today becomes the destiny of tomorrow.... By extending yourself with love, attention and time to be part of the Chinmaya family, you have given fulfilment to your Mission for the "Truth". May that destiny be discovered, abided and basked in every moment.

Coinciding with the dawn of the next Millennium, this newsletter should be a vehicle of growth, strength and clarity! Each one of us too will witness this setting and rising of millenniums.

Let us welcome this new era as one of significant spiritual evolution. For only through inner contemplation and reflection can the Truth shine ever forth.

May He bless your efforts with success.

Love, Swami Tejomayananda

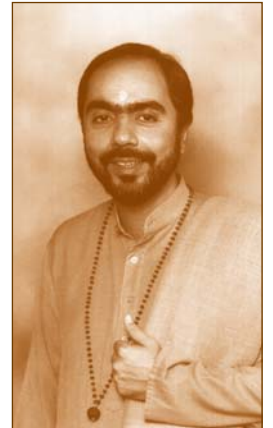
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It has always been a matter of great joy to see Chinmaya Mission UK grow and flourish over the years. The dedicated sevaks and their teamwork have created a special awareness in the community - this is the true *Chinmayam*.

The Newsletter *Chinmayam* that will be launched at the beginning of the new millennium in UK will spread this awareness even further. May the blessings of Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda bless this noble endeavour and the message that *Chinmayam* carries bless and enrich the lives of all its readers.

Love, Swami Swaroopananda



Swami Swaroopananda

Message from our President

Hari Om!

Welcome to *Chinmayam*, Chinmaya Mission (UK)'s first magazine.

We hope that you will find the contents informative, entertaining and inspiring.

The main aim is to stay in touch with all devotees and to keep you informed of the Mission activities. The launch of this magazine could not have come at a more opportune time when the unprecedented success of the recent Yagnas, Youth and Children's camps indicates that the Mission is growing very rapidly. There are three Adult Study Groups, two Youth Study Groups and Two Bal Vihars, being conducted in various parts of London.

We have recently been granted the status of a registered charitable organisation and as such we need to have a cohesive, integrated and focused strategy in place. As part of this overall process, a new Operational Committee has been established, with Swami Swaroopananda as Acharya in charge of the U.K. Mission, Swami Tejomayananda being the Head of the Chinmaya Mission Worldwide.

The Committee will devise a framework for the way forward, in keeping with Gurudev's vision for the Mission. There is much to do and the path ahead lies well signposted with Swami Tejomayananda and Swami Swaroopananda's guidance and inspiration, and Gurudev's resounding voice – a mere echo away -

"We Can..We Must.. We Will.."

Enclosed with this magazine is a reply-paid postcard. I urge you to please complete it and return it to us as soon as possible. It will ensure you receive your next copy of *Chinmayam* and enable us to keep you up to date with the Mission's activities. This is our magazine, the voice of our Mission! Help us, to ensure that it serves its purposes to inform and inspire.

In His Service, Rupin Vadera, President

"The bright beginning made each day can become the early dawn of the day of achievement"

- Swami Chinmayananda



Chinmayam

by Swami Swaroopananda

What is it that makes the world?
What is that which makes me see, feel and think?
What makes every action efficient?
What makes relationships beautiful?
What makes life itself meaningful?

Without Awareness there is no existence of the world.
Without Awareness there is no seeing, feeling or thinking.
Without Awareness no action can be done properly.
Without Awareness relationships do not last.
Without Awareness no experience is fulfilling.

This Awareness or Consciousness is **Chinmayam**.

The Substratum of the Reality of the world is **Chinmayam**.

That which gives life to the inert equipment such as
the Body, Senses, Mind and Intellect
- the Self of all, is **Chinmayam**.

When actions are done with full Awareness, resulting in Efficiency
and the Well-being of all,
such Work is **Chinmayam**.

When we are Aware of the needs of our dear ones,
such Love is **Chinmayam**.

When life is lived with total Awareness,
such a fulfilling Life is **Chinmayam**.

And the one who lived and taught us with boundless love
this Truth, Beauty and Perfect living,
such a Guru is **Chinmayam**.



VISION OF THE 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:

- A politician runs to an accident scene to get political mileage out of his action;
- A seva-minded person rushes there to offer relief to the injured.

This knowledge begins to change the focus of our activity and life takes a new meaning and quality. Gradually an inner transformation occurs. Gurudev used to say, "I am not interested in how many institutions you build; I want each one of you to become an Institution. Then you will create an awareness in the world around you. Your inner beauty will be reflected in the smiles of people around you."

Our Mission motto is "to give maximum happiness to the maximum number for the maximum time" and our Mission statement is "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."

Is it possible to achieve all these goals? Let us remember the clarion call given to us by Gurudev:

"We can, We must."

May we all wholeheartedly respond:

"WE WILL ! "



I am
Chinmaya Mission

MIND OVER CHOCOLATE MOUSSE?

Hinduism believes in one God, one consciousness that pervades everyone and everything. What is the relationship between this one God which Hinduism believes in and the thousands of deities whom Hindus actually worship?

The power of the government is one, right? But there are many ministers and officers through whom that one power is expressed. In an ocean there are many waves, but all the waves are just different manifestations of the one ocean water. In the same way, there is one God, one infinite power and all the various deities are simply different manifestations of that one power.

And how does one reconcile the fact that there are so many gurus and swamis often suggesting completely different and seemingly contradictory routes to salvation?

The same disease may be there, but one patient decides to go to an allopathic doctor, another decides to go to an ayurvedic doctor, and a third trusts a homoeopath. For some people allopathy may be beneficial, and for others ayurveda may be more beneficial. So even though there are different kinds of doctors practising different systems of medicines who appear to be prescribing different things, the goal is one and the same that the patient should get cured. In the same way, when you have so many different kinds of people with different natures and aptitudes, you need a variety of different methods and spiritual teachers to cater to them all. But the end goal peace and happiness is the same.

Some sceptics argue that India has seen more religious masters than any country in the world and yet we have so many social, economic, political and communal problems. How do you explain this?

What does one imagine the spiritual head of a big religious organisation like Chinmaya Mission to be like? Serious, grim, with a long, white, flowing beard? Well, there can't be a more inaccurate description for 49-year-old Swami Tejomayananda, who succeeded the illustrious founder of Chinmaya Mission, Swami Chinmayananda, upon the latter's passing away in 1993. Bubbling with seemingly boundless energy and a sense of humour that would make Jay Leno marvel, Swami Tejomayananda has behind this jovial veneer an extraordinarily sharp intellect. This incredible intellect was obvious by the way he answered questions put by JUJHAR SINGH in an exclusive interview aimed at bringing commonly held doubts to the fore.

It is because we have so many problems that we need so many masters! You see those people who have followed the teachings of the scriptures and the masters have attained nobility and peace. It is not the scriptures or the masters that will change the world, but whether people follow them or not. Medical science has become so well developed. Yet why is there so much disease and illness even in the most advanced countries? Those who live clean lives and take their medicines are fine. But those people who don't follow any diet and live totally unnatural lives fall ill. It's not the fault of medical science! It depends on whether people choose to follow medical science or not.

Nowadays many people are just mechanically going to temples, praying, doing a few rituals - but the spirit of religion and the spirit of what religious masters have been saying are not being followed. And that is why problems are there.

How relevant can scriptures written thousands of years ago be in 1999?

The nature and cause of the world and the reality behind it hasn't changed over the years you know! Man is also the same now as he was then in terms of his likes and dislikes, anger, ambitions, frustrations, love, struggle, etc. And scriptures talk about man and his struggle. Therefore they are as relevant today as they were then. In fact more relevant today because man's problems have multiplied and his freedom has decreased.

What is this freedom? In your lectures too you talk about attaining freedom and that that is the goal of life. Freedom from what? Are we not free people?

Ha! You think you are free? Think for yourself! You wake up in the morning and if hot water is not

available for your bath, you become miserable. Then if you don't get the right cereal for breakfast, you are angry. At office, if the cleaner has disturbed the papers on your desk, you feel frustrated. When you get back home if your wife doesn't smile at you, you get depressed. If she smiles too much, you are worried! See how delicately poised our happiness is? Where is the freedom?

The outside world of things and people is perpetually dictating our happiness and sorrows. We are slaves to the outside world and to our mind and senses. When you see some delicious chocolate mousse, are you free !? Don't misunderstand. I'm not saying don't have chocolate mousse. But do you have the mastery over your mind so that whenever you want to employ your mind or senses in a given field, you can do it; and whenever you want to stop and withdraw, you can? The freedom our scriptures talk about is freedom from the slavery to our own mind.

Finally most people are fearful of death. How can one learn to face death more confidently?

Fear arises only where there is attachment. Death in itself is actually not so frightening for us. It is death as a cause of separation from our near and dear things and beings that is frightening. If death was to say that you can take with you your wife and kids, house and servants, cars and money I don't think people would then be so afraid of death! The more we are attached to the outside world of things and beings, the more fear there will be of death. But if we are devoted to the Eternal Truth, then there is no question of any fear.

(Jujhar Singh is a television producer and writer.)
Times Of India, November 9, 1999,
<http://www.chinmaya.org/html/interview.htm>



The Chinmaya Movement could be said to have sprung out of conversations that took place in the drawing room of the late Mr. Shantilal Karia, in 1984.

In **1982** there had been a death in the family; having heard extracts from the Geeta, some of the younger members expressed their desire to know more about the 'meaning of life'. Particularly keen was Tushar Karia, who was then persuaded by Shantilal to attend a few sessions on the philosophy of the Geeta, conducted by the followers of Pandurang Shastri in Gujarati. Tushar rapidly lost interest. Shantilal tried to revive his enthusiasm by introducing him to various different texts, but to little avail. The trail of knowledge could well have stopped here.

In **1984** Shantilal returned from a trip to India with a suitcase full of books and a heart full of enthusiasm. He had been enchanted by a 'thin, dark Swami', who was explaining Vedanta in fluent English using a 'chart and a pointer'; Tushar sitting with his uncle looking at all the books picked up "Self Unfoldment" and started reading it from the back!

All his unanswered questions were addressed here: Where does the word "Hindu" come from?, What is Vedanta?, What is God? Not only were these questions answered, they were rationally and scientifically dissected and supported with irrefutable logic. There was also a section on how a Study Group should be conducted, the texts to be read and discussed and the order in which this should be undertaken. **The first study group was formed and the Chinmaya Movement was born.**

In August **1986**, Swami Chinmayananda arrived in this country formally. A spiritual residential camp was organised at Crystal

Palace by Kavita and Laju Chanrai. Delegates were mainly from Europe and America. The texts were 'Narada Bhakti Sutra' and "Kenopanishad". In **1988** the members of the first study group invited Gurudev for a Yagna and from then onwards there have been Yagnas every year and in some years there have even been two. The numbers attending the Yagnas have been growing steadily year on year. Gurudev's final Yagna was conducted in **1993** - Geeta Ch 9. He took Mahasamadhi that year. The Mission, in the UK, was still in its infancy - and the loss of Gurudev at this stage of its development was quite a setback.

The next milestone in the history of the Mission, was the start of the Youth wing: The Chinmaya Yuva Kendra, known as 'CHYKS'. This was initiated in **1994**, following a rapturously received series of seminars conducted by Swami Swaroopananda. These were followed by immensely successful Youth Camps held annually.

In **1997**, the first Bal Vihar was established at St Johns Wood, followed by one in Northwood in **1998**. The very first Bal Vihar Camp took place in August **1999** and was a runaway success.

The Mission is now well established, and growing. There is an urgent need to establish a Mission Centre to cater to all the diverse needs of our sevaks and devotee community: Bal Vihars, Study Groups, Youth Forums, Satsangs, Bookshops etc...

We have just been granted charitable status, and with the support of a newly established committee, a strategy is now in place to take Chinmaya Mission (UK) into the Millennium!

Rupin Vadera

H.H. Swami Sacchidananda in London - June-September 1999

He came from Hong Kong, silently one sunny Saturday morning, an upright figure with a firm stride and a good humoured face. He asked for nothing and gave PLENTY in the three short months he stayed, and left as silently as he had come, begging no acknowledgement nor recognition for his wealth of contribution in spiritually enriching the lives of many.

Within two days of his arrival Swami Sacchidananda commenced Vedic chanting classes every morning from his residence, "The Ashram". Soon to follow were the popular meditation classes at weekends, "Ghar ghar men Geeta" discourses in Northwood and St. John's Wood. Study groups celebrated Gurupurnima day; Swamiji also conducted the soulful chanting of Vishnusahasranaam on Gurudev's Mahasamadhi day and celebration of Janmashtami that included 'matka' breaking by children, chanting, a Krishna quiz, finally guided

meditation and Mahaprasaad. Swamiji also presented three, short four - day Gnana Yagnas on Bhagwad Geeta in St. John's Wood, the Sindhi Mandir and at the Hindu Temple in Slough. His contribution at the CHYK camp with Swami Swaroopananda was also "fantastic" - to use his favourite adjective.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes to our dear Swamiji, who touched our hearts with his purity and selfless imparting of the True Knowledge, who sparked many of us on to a high trajectory of spiritual evolution and who himself remained ever silent, undemanding and unassuming - an example to us all!

Smita Samani





RECENT EVENTS

The year 1999 was a doubly blessed year for The UK Chinmaya family, first with Swami Tejomayananda's week long yagna in June, followed by Swami Swaroopananda's September visit.

The September Yagna was indeed an extra special event. It was our most extensive yagna to date, and offered treats for all ages which included youth camps for the CHYKS, a Bal Vihar camp and a first ever one day workshop for teenagers, which proved to be a resounding success. All in all, a joyous three week period of spiritual rejuvenation.

The evening sessions were particularly innovative, Bankimiji and his talented group of musicians sung the well-loved verses of "Ramcharitmanas-Baalkand". Swami Swaroopananda's discourses on the beautiful scriptures of the Ramayana were lovingly enriched with stage depictions by our

devoted children and youth. Ram-Janam and Shiva-Parvati Vivah were two of the principal events celebrated with great enthusiasm in the course of Swamiji's evening lectures. The finale depicted the marriage of Shri Ram and Sita and was performed by Bal Vihar children which truly won all hearts.

The morning sessions covered the profound and thought provoking instruction from the Kathopanishad.



KRISHNA - MY FRIEND - BAL VIHAR CAMP



The very first residential children's camp, entitled 'Krishna, My Friend' took place on the weekend of 17th September 1999. The camp was open to all children aged 5 - 12 years.

During the two day camp at The Saint Albans Pastoral Centre in Shenley, 48 children had meditation sessions, sang bhajans, listened with rapt concentration to the Krishna stories as narrated by Swami Swaroopananda.

New friendships were forged; old ones strengthened, a feeling of being part of the same family became evident. As to the future - we hope to have another Bal Vihar Camp next year: bigger and better!

Madhavi Vadera

THE CHYK YOUTH RETREAT - A VIEW TO PERFECTION

During the camp, we were taught to hold up a mirror and examine our paths in life. Each day led us to new insights of how to attain our goals, eradicate our desires and move closer to the spiritual path.

Every step of a new day brought us to a vibrant morning with meditation at 6.00am proceeding onwards to thought provoking lectures and discussion groups. We were slowly releasing our doubts and confronting our incomplete saga of searching for the truth.

Together we discovered the new world outside our illusion as we tackled questions such as, 'what is our purpose', 'where are we heading towards' and 'what is our ultimate goal in life?'

Buckinghamshire was not only beautiful and serene but also inspirational as a venue for the camp. It not only offered us some peace and quiet but also helped us collect our thoughts and let our minds focus on what life has to offer us as we tread along our spiritual journey.

Resham Bhojwani



TEENAGERS WORKSHOP

Peer pressure, careers and relationships were just some of the relevant issues raised and discussed on the day.

Swamiji addressed these issues taking on a very modern approach, incorporating drama, fun and games to create an ideal ambience in which we all felt able to learn and enjoy simultaneously. There is a tendency amongst teenagers to reject one's culture and teachings, but the reaction of the youth from the retreat strongly proved otherwise. There was certainly diversity added to the day, from lectures with Swamiji and discussion groups, to an interactive

question and answer session and mini performances in groups which involved much teamwork and co-operation.

Swamiji showed a great understanding of teenagers and their limited knowledge of religion, but managed to combine this excellently with present day issues to create more awareness of our culture and tradition. Our heartfelt thanks to all those who contributed to making the day a great success, and look forward to many more such camps in the future.

Vishva Samani.

GURUDEV - A BRIEF PROFILE



Swami Chinmayananda was born as Balakrishna Menon in Ernakulam in Kerala, South India, in May 1916. He was the eldest son of a prominent judge, Kutten Menon, and nephew of the then ruling Maharaja of Cochin.

When young Balakrishna was five years old, his mother, Manku Ammo, died, leaving him and his two younger sisters to the care of his father and his mother's eldest sister, Kochunarayoni Ammo.

Balakrishna's education began at Ernakulam. After finishing his intermediate course in science at Maharaja College, he went to Trichur to study arts at St Thomas College. Thereafter, he attended Madras University and graduated in 1939 with degrees in science and political science. He then went to Lucknow in North India to take postgraduate degrees in literature and law.

After graduation, young Menon chose journalism rather than law as his career. He joined the renowned newspaper, the National Herald becoming a regular feature writer. While working at the National Herald, Menon actively joined India's independence movement and was imprisoned. In prison, he became seriously ill and was thrown out on the streets to die. He was providentially saved by a kind lady.

During convalescence, he chanced upon spiritual articles which aroused interest and scepticism. Menon went to the Himalayas to seek out Swami Sivananda, though he later said, "I went not to gain knowledge but to find out how the swamis were keeping up the bluff among the masses." In the Himalayas, the young sceptic turned enthusiast and finally renunciate.

On February 25, 1943, Menon took sanyasa from Swami Sivananda and was given the name Swami Chinmayananda. Soon thereafter, with Swami Sivananda's blessing, he sought out one of the greatest Vedantic masters of his time, Swami Tapovanam of Uttarkashi, and devoted several years of his life to an intensive study of the scriptures under the realised master's tutelage.

In 1951, in the face of the opposition of the orthodox, Swami Chinmayananda made the

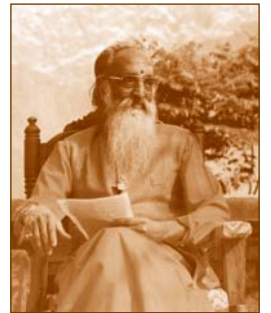
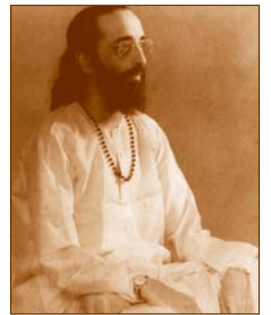
bold decision to bring to the masses the teaching of Vedanta, traditionally reserved only for the priestly class. In May 1951, he left the Himalayas with a plan to set out on an all India tour, lecturing from place to place visiting places of worship to see how the Hindu religious heritage was being passed on. He says of that time: "In October I returned to Uttarkashi, having visited almost all the main cities in India in one sweep...I was miserably disillusioned and disappointed about the working plans of maths, ashrams and temples, and about the stuff doled out as the best in Hinduism...My experiences during those five months of roaming only strengthened my conviction that I must execute...Upanishad gnana yajna sessions all

"I went not to gain knowledge but to find out how the swamis were keeping up the bluff among the masses."

over India, in all big cities." That conviction was first executed in the city of Poona in December in 1951, when Swami Chinmayananda held his first lecture series. Since then, he has continued a nearly nonstop program of Vedantic discourses the world over. In addition he wrote many books on Vedanta, founded Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, an academy of Vedantic learning in Mumbai.

He established a worldwide network of Chinmaya Mission centres and charitable institutions such as hospitals, clinics, schools and temples. Out of love and reverence for him who held out the gift of a greater life, men and women in many cities in various corners of the globe have banded themselves into Chinmaya Mission, seeking spiritual growth in study, and satsang or in service to humanity through work in hospitals, schools or places of worship.

Courtesy: Tapovan Prasad



*... the one who lived and taught us with boundless love this Truth, Beauty and Perfect living, such a Guru is **Chinmayam** ...*



chintamani **AUSPICIOUS BEGINNINGS**

Ganesha or Ganapati, the son of Lord Shiva and Parvati, is the Lord of and the Destroyer of obstacles. Before any new activity is undertaken, he is worshiped and his blessings are invoked for siddhi—success in the new venture. Hence, we begin our series on the symbolism of Hindu gods and goddesses with Lord Ganesha. May he bless our new magazine, and oversee its success.

TRUNK

Represents discrimination.
The elephant's trunk is a remarkable instrument. It is a tool which can uproot a tree or pick a straw from a haystack. It has the strength to pull heavy loads as well as the sensitivity to pick out the smallest of objects. In the same way, an evolved intellect can use its discrimination fully to solve the gross problems of the outer world as well as effectively employ its discrimination in the subtle realms on the inner personality layers.

TWO TUSKS

Discriminative powers only function when there are two factors to discriminate between: these two factors are represented by Ganesha's tusks. The trunk growing down between them represents the discriminative power. We discriminate between good and evil and between all other dualities and come to our own judgements and conclusions in life.

ONE BROKEN TUSK

The broken tusk indicates that a real Vedantic student of subjective experience is one who has gone beyond the pairs of opposites, or dualities and knows what is right and just does exactly that.

POT BELLY & LARGE MOUTH

These symbolise the ability to digest all the knowledge that has been gained. We may gather various kinds of knowledge and know certain things very well—what we should and should not do, but if that knowledge is NOT digested well, our actions do not match our knowledge.



GANESHA'S MOUSE

At the side of Ganesha there is a mouse sitting in the midst of beautiful fragrant, ready-made food, but we find that the devout mouse is sitting looking up at the Lord, shivering with anticipation, but NOT daring to touch anything without His command. Now and then the Lord allows the mouse to eat. This mouse is our desiring mind. A mouse is a small animal with tiny teeth, and yet can bring disaster in a barn full of grains, as it can continuously nibble at the grain. Similarly, there is a 'mouse' in all of us - "our desires". They can eat away even a mountain of goodness within in us.

BIG EARS

For listening. We spend a lot of time, talking but not listening. Large ears are for listening and gathering knowledge, with which we can then discriminate. Listening is an art! When we listen well, we learn well. If we learn well, we think well. If we think well, we act well. If we act well, we live well.

BIG HEAD

A big head represents our ability to think and to analyse. It is important to gather in all the information and then to think about what we have attained - contemplate, and analyse it through.

FOUR HANDS

Ganesha has four hands. The first is holding an axe with this Ganesha cuts off all our attachments. The second, holding a rope ties all these attachments together preventing them from running free. In his third hand he holds a sweet - a pure reward for renouncing these attachments. With his fourth hand Ganesha gives us diksha-blesses us, and protects us from all obstacles.

GANESHA TEACHES US

Listen to the things around you well, keep your ears open and gather all the information. Feed this into your mind analyse and discriminate between the right and the wrong. Digest what is good and make it part of you, discard what is not. Success is yours if you keep working at it. Jai Ganapatibaba!!



Mission Logo

This is our logo - the logo of Chinmaya Mission

A Shining Brass Lamp

All 5 wicks alight and glowing forth. Atop - a graceful swan, silent, poised, aware. Encircling all - a globe.

The 5 Wicks are the 5 Senses of Perception - Sound, Touch, Sight, Taste and Smell, all finely tuned to transmit to the Experiencer, without distortion, the way things really are.



The 5 Wicks also represent the 5 Organs of Action - Hands, Feet, Tongue and Organs of Procreation and Excretion, so mastered, they function as they ought - fulfilling duty, truthfully, lovingly, righteously; with Satyam, Priyam, Dharmayam.

The Graceful Swan, a mythical bird, able to suck out pure milk alone from a mixture of milk and water. So should a man strive to cultivate his Power of discrimination, sifting out the TRUTH from all Experiences brought to him through his senses, discarding all the rest.

The Globe

Then, luminous with the TRUTH, he goes forth to the four corners of the globe, spreading the Light of Knowledge, dispelling darkness and ignorance wherever he is present.

A Christmas Blessing from Brni. Sadhana

Silent night, Holy night

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

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

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

The divine baby is born surrendered by love and caring, around Him special aura of love and beauty. When lower desires and tendencies in us

are replaced by the noble, we celebrate the Eve of Christmas. When darkness of ignorance is dispelled by the light of consciousness, in the pure heart (white snow), the Lord is born. He brings with Him joy, love and sharing to the world. The lights are sparkling, bells are ringing, hearts are singing.

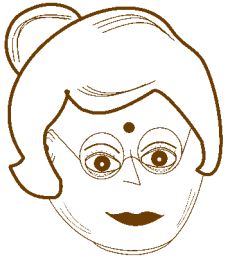
May Christmas be in our lives every day, every moment. Let's clean up our minds from jealousy, anger, dejection, fear... Let's turn the poor looking manger of our heart into a magnificent rich mansion of high values supported by the divine principles of purity, compassion, mutual love and respect. Let's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

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

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas!

Brni. Sadhana





Home Remedies for Seasonal Colds & Coughs



The slightest sign of a sneeze or snuffle sends Dadima off to her secret store-cupboard; within minutes she is brewing up some ginger tea and other not-so wonderful decoctions; some for garglings and inhalations, others to be swallowed under her penetrating gaze.

Dadima insists that during her childhood no one ever took medications for colds. Her ancient wisdom, passed down through the generations dictates that COLD requires WARMTH and HOTNESS to balance the disturbed system.

Re-establish BALANCE and let Nature get on with it's job. In Ayurveda it is said that the role of the physician is to distract the patient and allow Nature to do the healing. The same sentiment was expressed by Hippocrates, "Nature cures, not the physician". He also went on to advocate that – Food shall be your Medicine.

But the food we generally consume today could hardly have been what he had in mind! Unseasonal, over-chemically fertilised, artificially preserved, genetically and otherwise modified, industrially prepared, food arrives thus in our homes, and whatever life-force still remains is either frozen dead in a deep freezer or zapped out by micro-waves!

For common ailments like cold or flu which are viral in nature, there are really no effective cures even in modern medicine with it's wide range of antibiotics and anti-histamines. It is unfortunate that there is a tendency to use the strongest medications at the slightest sign of cough and cold making useful allopathic drugs inefficient when a real need arises.

Often prevention is simpler than cure

Most home remedies aim at bringing out the secretions in the respiratory passages. They do not suppress a cold but help it by making the discharge flow out more easily. Drying up the secretions could have undesirable side-effects and do not help the patient to build up his own resistance to future attacks.

A few simple measures taken at an early stage can greatly reduce the severity and duration of an attack. Just gargling with warm salt water and taking a mixture of 1/2 teaspoon of tumeric, honey and fresh lime juice in warm water 3-4 times a day may be sufficient. **TUMERIC is Nature's wide spectrum antibiotic and antiviral!** And the vitamin C in lime juice increases resistance and reduces toxins.

Often prevention is simpler than cure. One measure to stop attacks of cold is to drink water which has been kept in a copper container overnight. This is supposed to change one's constitutional tendency to get respiratory problems.

Dadima says she never suffers from cold as she takes white radish juice with a teaspoonful of honey very regularly.

Onion and garlic are both so good for a cold that if you eat plenty of both all winter you will probably never get one.

Chilled drinks and mucous-producing food like yoghurt, cheese and dairy products should be seriously reduced in winter; and kapha fruits like bananas and melons are taboo. Night meals should be light insists Dadima, as digestive capacity is low at that time.

Ginger tea, Garlic soup, Tamarind-Pepper rasam are all age old recipes to decrease the severity of colds. Besides its other properties garlic is also antiseptic and anti-spasmodic, and it's volatile oils help to open up the respiratory passages. A cup several times a day relieves body-ache and fever and heavy headedness and helps to liquefy congestion which passes out with frequent urination.

Ginger tea: Add a few pieces of crushed ginger or one teaspoon of dry ginger (sunthi) to two pints of water along with a pinch of chilli powder, cardomom and salt. Boil for 5-10 minutes. Remove and add lemon juice and honey to taste.

Tamarind-pepper rasam: Add 1/2 tsp. of ground black pepper to 1 tsp. of hot ghee. Then add dilute tamarind water and few leaves of karipatta and boil for a few minutes. Drinking the hot rasam causes nose and eyes to water. Nasal blockage is relieved and one feels instantly better. Instead of the drowsiness of an antihistamine, this rasam has an exhilarating effect.

Ajwain (thymol), its vapour rich in essential oils, has a remarkable power to open up clogged respiratory passages. One tablespoon crushed and filled in a cloth bag could be used for inhaling or placed by the pillow. Or 1 tsp. in boiling water can be used as an inhalation.

Dry coughs and irritant conditions of the throat are a common occurrence and can be soothed with a soup made with lady's fingers or bhindi. This vegetable, rich in mucilage acts as an emollient and demulcent. Suck rock candy - constant wetting of throat with sugar-rich saliva soothes irritation very effectively.

So next time you feel a cold coming on resist the temptation to stretch for an aspirin or an antihistamine. Instead treat yourself to some warm ginger tea and a soothing inhalation; then soak in a nice hot bath with a fistful of ajwain seeds thrown in followed by a fragrant back rub of warm mustard oil and camphor. Keep warm and snuggle into a comfortable armchair and let nature cast it's magic spell. More likely than not you will drop off into a deep, relaxed sleep, perhaps the best healer of them all.

Do spend this little time on your health - AND YOU KNOW YOU ARE WORTH IT!!



Krishna! Krishna!

Colour me in!



LOOKING FOR GOD

God who is everywhere,
Yet nowhere.

God who is inside each one of us,
Yet cannot ever be found.

God who can be felt but,
Never be seen or heard.

God who has no figure,
Yet still is able to live in the soul of each human.

God who lives in a world with no time,
Yet still remains eternal.

God who can help you,
Yet he has never been helped.

God who is there for each of us humans,
Yet cannot be seen by one of us.

God who is an eternal spiritual being,
Let him guide us to his seeings.

And if you try and search for him,
Look inwardly not externally and
you may see him.

By Krishna Majeethia(13)

Children, this is our very own page in the magazine...if you would like to see your poems, stories and games on this page, send it to email@nimesh.co.uk or post it to the senders address at the front.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE CAMP?

Well I remember one thing very clearly...the girls were scared of ghosts and spiders at night, but the boys were really good and went to sleep early and woke up fresh for meditation!

But do you remember the bunny rabbits we saw?

And how many wickets did Krishna knock out in the camp?

...do you remember all of Krishna's names?

Try to fill in the gaps below:

D _ _ _ _ _ a
the son of Devaki

G _ _ _ _ a
protector of cows

G _ _ _ _ _ a
beloved to the Gopis

Y _ _ _ _ _ a
the son of Yashoda

N _ _ _ _ _ a
the son of Nanda

V _ _ _ _ _ a
the son of Vasudev

Puzzles

1. What occurs once in every minute, twice in every moment, yet never in a thousand years?
2. Which is correct to say: The yolk of the egg are white or, The yolk of the egg is white?
3. What five-letter word becomes shorter when you add to letters to it?
4. Jack Axe charges £5.00 to cut a wooden leg into two pieces. How much will Jack charge to cut a log into four pieces?

Answers: 1. The letter M. 2. Neither. 3. The yolk of the egg is yellow. 4. Jack will charge £15.00 since it requires three cuts to make four pieces.



chinyauk **CURRENT CLASSES**

BAL VIHAR

For children aged 5 to 12 years old

Bal Vihar literally translated means:
Bal- child, Vihar - a place of enjoyment or play

Children are exposed in a fun and friendly environment to the value system of our Sanatana Dharma (Way of Life). As Swami Chinmayananda said 'Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit'

At the Bal Vihars this is what we aim to do. To ignite the desire for knowledge and self improvement and to inspire our children to aspire to a better way of life. Interwoven into this varied curriculum is exposure to Hindu culture, glimpses of India's rich heritage, and the resonance of our religious songs.

A typical Bal Vihar session would consist of Prayers, Bhajans, Topic of the day, and ending with closing prayers.

Current Classes

Northwood Bal Vihar,
Sunday 10.30-12am,

Contact: Madhavi Vadera
020-8861 2625

Nimesh Sachdev
020-8446 5478
email@nimesh.co.uk

St Johns Wood Bal Vihar,
Saturdays 12-1:15pm,
Contact: Anita Jethwani
020-7724 1986
ANITAJET@aol.com

Chitra Vasandani
020-7586 0483

CHYK

Chinmaya Yuva Kendra
"Combining Youth, Spirituality & Dynamism for 18 to 30 year olds"

The Chinmaya Yuva Kendra is the youth wing of the Chinmaya Mission. It is a melting pot of young minds enquiring into the Hindu philosophies and seeking answers to life's obstacles.

We are currently studying 'Self Unfoldment' by H.H Swami Chinmayananda. A great starter book for the uninitiated, it is clear and gradually lifts the reader through a modern, contemporary and scientific logic to the heights of Spiritual Unfoldment by a thoroughly practical approach applicable in one's daily life. Every chapter ends with a series of questions and thoughts for reflection, which makes it an ideal text for a Study Class.

Current Classes

St Johns Wood Chyk Study Class,
Sunday 6.30-8pm,
Contact: Satesh Melwani
0771-424 1998
SateshMel@aol.com

12-14 year olds Study Class from Edgware/Elstree,
Sunday 10.30-12am,
Contact: Nina Majeethia
020-8953 1312

ADULTS

Northwood study group is currently studying the book 'Kindle Life'. This study group has now been running for nearly two months and has a regular attendance of 8 - 10 people.

All students read one to two chapters before they come to study group. They then discuss, and analyse aspects of the chapter(s), until all questions are answered. It then moves on to the next chapter.

The Ladies class in central London has been meeting for the last three years. These sessions are informative, thought inspiring and sometimes inspirational.

Current Classes

Northwood Adult Study Class,
Monday 9-10.30pm,
Contact: Rupin Vadera
020-8861 2625,
firstint@aol.com

St. Johns Wood Adult Study Class
Friday 8.30pm - 10pm
Contact: Suresh Wadhvani
020-7722 5869
sureshwad@msn.com

Harrow Adult Study Class,
Thursday 8-9.30pm
Contact: Smita Samani
0961 177106
smitasamani@aol.com

Central London Ladies Class,
Friday 11-12.30pm
Contact: Rajni Mahtani
020-8905 5463

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- 4th March 2000 - Mahashivratri
- 19th March 2000 - Holi
- 19th / 20th March 2000 - Chinmaya Mission Family Get-together
- 28th March - 11th April 2000 - Swamini Vimalananda visits the UK
- 24th - 30th April 2000 - Chinmaya Mission International Camp (Nepal)

For further information contact Rupin Vadera
Tel: 020-8861 2625, e-mail: chinmayauk@aol.com

APPEAL

Please ensure you return the freepost card **PROMPTLY**, so we can update our records accordingly.