

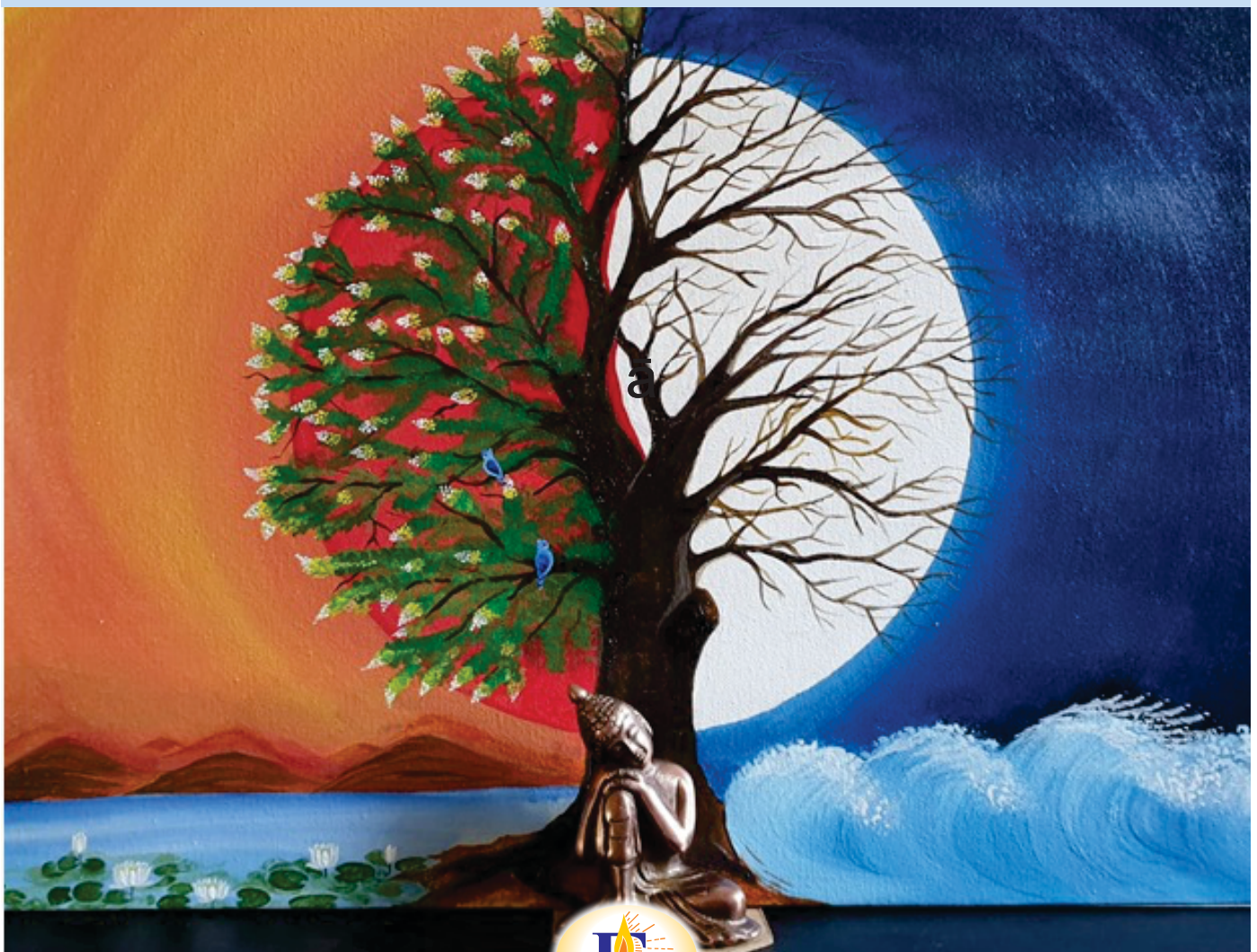
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# Inner Flame

Volume XI

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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Hari Om,

This land is indeed blessed as it has given birth to many 'yogis', who not only showed the zeal to traverse the pathless land but having attained the summit, have also held the torch high from the lofty heights so that it could transmit the beams of transcendental light to benefit the maximum number of people.

We are proud to present the sacred story of Shri Swāmi Satchidānandaji Maharaj who was born in very humble surroundings in a village in the state of Tamil Nadu in South India. You will be inspired by how he attained great heights of spiritual attainment through observance of severe yogic austerities and through his tutelage under several Gurus, Shri Swāmi Sivānanda of Rishikesh being his chief mentor. His life's work of teaching 'Integral Yoga' and promoting interfaith harmony touched millions through the concrete shape of 'Yogaville' – the Yoga community, academy and ashram he founded in USA.

Under 'Stories Teach', Osho brings out how we can develop the right vision independent of our family trappings when we learn to drop our dead past and move on to live in the present moment.

In his article under the series 'Perceiving Phoenix', Swāmi Chidānanda talks about 'the nuts and bolts' of how we need to ensure that our intentions and actions are aligned with our vision.

In his own inimitable style, Swāmi Chidānanda recounts his three meetings with Mātā Amritānandamayee, the modern-day saint, popularly called "Amma – the Mother", making us feel part of the experience.

We are taking you to the Queen of Satpuras – Pachmarhi, that has all the features of a ideal hill station – agreeable weather, lots of greenery and the legacy of the colonial architecture.

Hope you enjoy reading this collection of spiritual wisdom that is our true inheritance and also get inspired enough to do more to disseminate it to the world that so urgently needs it.

**For Swāmi Chidānanda**  
*Cdr HC Guruprasad (IN, Retd)*



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Swāmi Chidānanda

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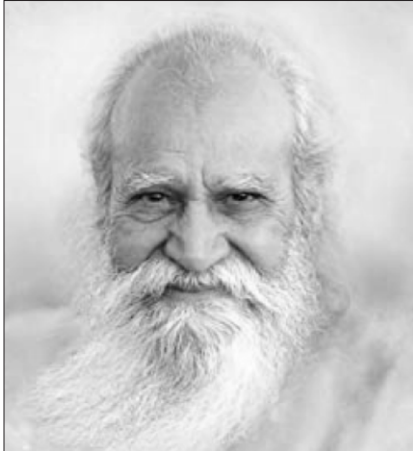
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### ***The Woodstock Guru with the gigantic cottony beard***

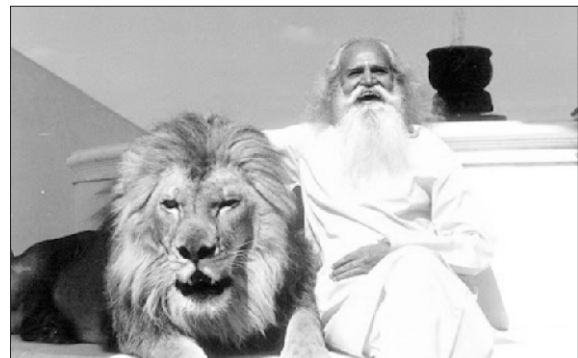
What do an employee at an import business, a motorbike enthusiast, a speaker at the famous Woodstock music festival and Integral Yoga Teacher have in common? They are all facets of the hugely popular 'Guru with the gigantic cottony beard' (New York Times), a Master who went from humble beginnings to being a much-loved and revered Guru to thousands across the globe. "I don't belong to any one country or organization", said Swāmi Satchidānandaji; following in his footsteps, Integral Yoga International has grown, with branches in six of the seven continents.

### ***Childhood***

In 1914, C.K. Ramaswamy (Ramu) was born in Chettipalayam, near Coimbatore, in South India. His father, Sri

Kalyanasundaram, was a landowner, village leader, Tamil scholar, and acclaimed poet. His mother, Srimati Velammai was a devout woman who prayed in order to conceive a child endowed with divine virtues and found her prayers answered. From the time he was a child, he showed great spiritual sensitivity and an inclination towards difficult yogic practices.

He was only seven years old when Ramu asked his father if he could accompany him to a spiritual conference at Perur, not only to listen but to give a short talk as well. At these conferences, anyone who applied could give a speech, provided the leaders agreed. His father arranged to place his son's name on the speakers' roster choosing the topic of nonviolence, *ahimsa*. Ramu was scheduled to speak on a day when Subbiah Swāmigal, a particularly well-known Swāmi, was to preside as chairman. Actually, the Swāmi's full name was much longer and quite complicated.



Exhibiting diligence and tenacity in one so young, Ramu practised and practised - not only his talk, but the correct pronunciation of the monk's name as well. The hour arrived. Subbiah Swāmigal smiled at the tiny form of his guest speaker, who, thoughtfully rather than nervously, was mounting the platform with a serious expression. The youngest speaker in the history of the conference began, "First of all, let me offer my humble salutations to the Chairman of this session, Sennai Sri Jagathgurupitham Nayachandra Vedanta Bhashkara Srimath Mahamandaleshwara Veerasubbiah Jnana Desikendra Swāmigal and to you all." The perfect recitation of this complex name drew a prolonged round of applause while the Swāmi, who had never expected such an eloquent speech from a child so young, lifted the boy onto his lap and instructed him to give the talk from that position. As long as Ramu lived in that area, he continued to be a guest speaker at the conference. It turned out that this speech was the foundation of a lifetime of inspiring speeches and talks that resounded and still resound internationally.

### ***Vocational training***

He had a commonplace student life at a school in a neighbouring village, except that he learned independence early: he lived in a youth hostel, going home about once a month. Later he attended upper high school at the government art college in Coimbatore after which, proficient at handling engines and machinery, he joined his uncle's automobile business as

a youthful partner. To develop their business prospects, Ramu decided to travel to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) where his natural talent with machinery and welding was enriched. He also made excursions to various places of religious pilgrimage - the shrines of Kataragama, Munneshwaram and to Adam's Peak. He studied well and returned to South India to serve as the first expert welder in all of Tamil Nadu. Not content in a limited field, Ramu left the automobile business for the field of cinematography as a producer and distributor, travelling to remote villages to promote and project films.

His multifaceted personality was about to take the ultimate turn towards the divine, a brief glimpse of which he got at the temple in Perur. For some time, he served as caretaker of the temple at Perur where he had a deep fondness for the large statue of Nataraja - the dancing Śiva, balancing on one leg, arms gracefully raised to the side. When all the devotees left after the final evening prayers, Ramu would decorate the image of Lord Nataraja with all the ornaments in his charge, light the lamps and spend the night in meditation before the flickering flames. About meditation, he said: "Balancing and controlling the mind utilizing the eight limbs of Yoga delineated in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali... leads to the state of samādhi, or super-consciousness."

### ***Life as a Householder***

By 1937, when he was turning twenty-four and still a bachelor, his mother began to fret, fearing his absorption into a life of

*sannyāsa* “without even tasting life with a wife and children.” But Ramu remained indifferent to her hints and prodding. His workshop, to which he had returned, filled most of his time, and his interest in a spiritual life strengthened. Whenever these discussions were brought up, he thought of the various problems of his married friends - economic crises, family illnesses, obligations, and attachments. Eventually though, after weighing the pros and cons of the *grihasta* (householder or married) life, he decided that the lessons to be learned in a family situation were valid and necessary. He married the beautiful and devout daughter of an ex-trustee of the Perur temple.

The marriage was smooth, contented and loving; they had two sons. But he seemed to have a premonition of things to come: one evening as he drove home on his motorbike through the darkening trees, in his mind he saw his wife lying on the bed at home with the neighbours standing by her body and saying that she was dead. Over time, the vision persisted. Five years into his marriage, Ramu did lose his wife. But it did not happen exactly as in his premonitions. One day, his wife suddenly and inexplicably packed up and left him and their children. Though considered shameful in those days, the tight-knit Gounder community to which Ramu belonged, gathered around Ramu and his family. They decided to consider her dead to their lives and to the community and never spoke of her again. Ramu was surprised by his own sense of calm.

There was nothing he could do and though his attention turned to the welfare of his children, the die had been cast.

### ***Intense austerities***

Ramu moved to an eight-foot square hut in a field on his family’s property where, he devoted himself entirely to religious study and meditation and became more and more introspective. He tended to a small flower garden from which he picked flowers for the morning *pujā*; the rest of the day was spent in meditation and the study of books by Saint Pattinathar - a great renunciate, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Saint Ramalingam, Sri Swāmi Vivekānanda and Sri Swāmi Sivānanda. To keep his body fit, he practised Hatha Yoga *āsanās* and his austere diet was limited to one meal a day at noon. This strict regimen continued for almost a year. Fearless, Ramu shared his small space with a number of snakes and once found a family of scorpions living less than a foot from his bed.

It was in his flower-garden home, during meditation that Ramu’s early spiritual experiences manifested. As he carefully concentrated on his beloved deity, the Goddess Parvati, he felt the small room suddenly glow with light and fill with a supernatural, shining Presence, an experience repeated often in the small hut. But though this was a good situation for introspection and meditation, Ramu began to feel the need to further explore spiritual life outside those particular confines. As he considered this, he naturally thought of the great *upāsaka* (*tāntric yogi*) Sri Sādhu Swāmigal, one of the main holy men who had frequented

the family home during Ramu's boyhood. Ramu went to his *āshrama* at Palani Hill for the next stage of his spiritual journey. The hill temple, dedicated to Lord Muruga with the name Palani Āndavar has, for many centuries, been a place of pilgrimage and meditation for saints and seekers and one where many *siddhas* lived and attained *samādhī*. Often Ramu sat and meditated on the *siddhapurusha* named Bhogar who had established the Palani Temple and effected its construction. One day, repeating his *mantra*, Ramu had a vision. Bhogar appeared clearly before him and began to repeat the mantra also. He placed his right palm over Ramu's head. The devotee lost all awareness of his body and fell into a 'conscious sleep.' Peace and bliss surrounded him. After one half-hour, he slowly returned to normal consciousness. Bhogar's form was no longer before him, but Ramu felt he had received Bhogar's blessing and initiation. Ramu eventually left Palani Hill, to continue his pilgrimage to further study with some of the great South Indian saints and sages.

He said: "By renouncing the world, you don't lose anything. Once you give yourself to others, all others will give themselves to you. In the beginning of this life, people often said to me, 'Why are you renouncing? You have thrown away your house, your wealth, everything. What are you going to gain?' I would tell them, 'It may look like I am giving up something, but I know that I will gain everything'."

His renunciation was hard,

beyond the scope and endurance of ordinary humans. Wandering as a mendicant, Ramaswamy devised a test period. "If there is a God, then God will take care of me." He took two vows: not to keep any money and not to ask anybody for anything, including food. For four months, he wandered wherever his feet took him. During the first three days he had nothing to eat. Eventually he was approached by a man who asked, "Have you eaten? You look hungry." When Ramu replied that he had not eaten in three days the man hurriedly brought him a meal. When Ramu felt tired he would lie down wherever he was and sleep - sometimes by the side of the road, sometimes on a park bench. He never stayed in any area for longer than three days. He visited the temples, where he was allowed to sleep on the big verandas and bathe in the ponds. After the morning worship the temple priests distributed food; but Ramu adhered strictly to his vow, never standing in the queue for food. He would eat only if someone noticed him sitting off to the side and brought him a plate of food. Sometimes walking, sometimes taking advantage of rides that were offered and sometimes travelling by train, Ramu was able to visit Kalahasti, Madras, Calcutta, Benares and Pondicherry where he gratefully received the blessings of the great Master, Shri Aurobindo and his foremost disciple, the Mother. Then he continued his journey through South India as a wandering mendicant.

#### ***Meeting with the masters***

Now it was time for Ramu to plunge even

deeper into his spiritual commitment. He had the great good fortune to enter the Ramakrishna Mission at Thirupparaiturai, which was headed by Sri Swāmi Chidbhavānanda who was himself a disciple of Sri Swāmi Sivānanda, one of the twelve apostles of the famous sage Ramakrishna Paramahansa. At this *āshrama*, he decided to ask for *brahmacharya dikshā* (initiation). With the Gayatri Mantra he was presented with the sacred thread. From that day until his *sannyāsa* initiation, he was known as Sāmbaśiva Chaitanya, his new name representing the true harmonizing of the individual soul with the Divine. Sāmbaśivam's hair and beard had grown since his days at Chettipalayam but as soon as he shaved, a sudden change struck his system. The hair had served as a shield to neutralize the dense heat of the area. When it was removed, Sāmbaśivam was stricken with a severe fever that lasted for a number of days. Sri Swāmi Chidbhavānanda realized the problem and told the *brahmachāri* to grow his hair once again, even though it was not the usual custom.

On *Mantra* repetition, he told his listeners in the US: "A short prayer, repeated daily is a *mantra*. Prayers have beautiful vibrations.... Build that sound repetition into your system...the more you repeat the *mantra* the more you produce that vibration in you. That very same sound vibration is enough to heal you, destroy any unwanted things, toxins, in your body and mind." [Source: YouTube]

In 1949, though inexplicably

drawn towards Rishikesh to have *darshana* of Swāmi Sivānanda, he was inspired to spend some time at Ramanāshramam, the abode of the great sage Ramana Maharishi. In answer to Sāmbaśivam's inquiry, the great Sage, in his inimitable manner said.

*"Who is having the doubt?"*

*"Sir, I am having the doubt," the young brahmachāri answered.*

*"Who are you?" Sri Ramana persisted. "Find out the answer and come to me then."*

Suddenly Sāmbaśivam felt the impact of his meaning and vowed that he would find the answer to that question. Watching Sri Ramana suffering from cancer was painful for Sāmbaśivam; he finally approached the Sage. "Please, I beg you, Sir, to give me leave to travel on." "Why? Are you still attached to the body?" "No. I'm not attached to my body, but maybe I'm attached to your body. I find it hard to face this situation. I don't really feel comfortable in staying and watching the whole thing." Sri Ramana understood. He raised his hand in blessing. Sāmbaśivam now was ready to continue his journey and headed toward Rishikesh, in the Himalayas. Fourteen days later, on the day he reached Rishikesh, Sāmbaśivam heard that Bhagavān Ramana Maharshi had left his body. On that day he had seen a beautiful bright star flash across the sky.

On meeting his Guru Swāmi Sivānanda at Rishikesh in the spring of 1949, Sāmbaśivam knew that he had reached his final destination. He served



in the *āshrama* conducting Hatha Yoga classes, giving lectures and answering correspondence in the Tamil language. July 10, 1949, the day of Sāmbaśivam's *sannyāsa* initiation was clear and warm. The Ganges sparkled with reflections. With his freshly shaven face and head, Sāmbaśivam presented himself to his Guru. The Master looked at him silently. Sāmbaśivam sat before the orange flames of the sacrificial fire into which the initiate symbolically offered the body, mind, and intellect - in fact, all that could be called his own. The *sannyāsi* burnt all worldly attachment and from that day forward, he walked forth as a shell, used only as an instrument of the Divine. The one who had been called Sāmbaśivam became Swāmi Satchidānanda (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute). The following morning it was business as usual. The new Swāmi Satchidānanda waited in his Guru's office to receive the daily load of correspondence. Swāmi Sivānanda entered and studied his new Swāmi curiously. "Satchidānandaji," he said thoughtfully, "I'm giving you special permission to grow your hair again. You looked so beautiful that way. I want you to look like that again." He never cut his hair again.

### ***The globetrotting Guru***

In 1951, Sri Swāmi Sivānanda decided to send Swāmi Satchidānanda to care for a devotee facing a medical crisis. He also said, "I want you to take this opportunity to visit some of the places that have been asking for you, some of the other Divine Life centres and other spots where there

are devotees. Come back in a leisurely fashion." The devotee prostrated, holding onto his Guru's feet, and then left to catch his train..New Delhi . . . Madras . . . Bangalore . . . down to Coimbatore; he lectured at colleges, universities and homes of devotees. He gave private and public instruction in *āsanas* and *prānāyāma*. New branches of the Divine Life Society were opened among which a beautiful one was opened in Coimbatore and afforded Satchidānanda's earthly family their first opportunity to see him since he had received *sannyāsa* initiation. After eight months when he returned for a brief visit to see Swāmi Sivānanda before continuing on the tour, his Guru said: "Satchidānandaji, you have worked wonders. You have thrilled one and all. I have received letters and reports of admiration from various people. You have created a mighty spiritual stir in the country. You have, by God's grace, rendered an inestimable divine service to the Lord's children."

### ***At Sri Lanka***

Satchidānanda was a little reluctant to go to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) to serve at the Divine Life Society there; feeling unfit for the work, he wanted to continue his seclusion and meditation. Swāmi Sivānanda had other plans. "Go ahead. I will work through you. Don't worry." As elsewhere, Satchidānanda Maharaj was a huge success in Ceylon, necessitating the opening of Centres in Colombo, Jaffna and then the more centrally located Kandy. His main theme during talks with the labour at the tea plantations was an attempt to get them to educate

their children and turn them away from chronic drinking of alcohol, squandering their limited funds. During his 13 years in Ceylon, he travelled throughout the island, giving talks, writing regular columns in newspapers to share Yoga teachings and spiritual inspiration and broadcasting ongoing radio discourses. The Thapovanam *Āshrama* which he set up by the river for planning discussions, classes and Yoga treatments for various physical illnesses became a meeting place for government officials. People from many different political parties held offices as trustees in the *āshrama*. At one meeting, five different party leaders, Tamils as well as Singhalese, sat down together to discuss the welfare of the centre. It was here that his interfaith vision of religion began to grow and take concrete shape. Various clergy members came to the *āshrama*; they organized an All-Religions Group that met once a month, sometimes at the *āshrama*, sometimes at a seminary, sometimes at the home of a Buddhist or at an Islamic mosque. Swāmiji then declared that Guru Purnimā (an annual holy day devoted to paying tribute to one's personal Guru) should serve as "All Prophets' Day," teaching that "Truth is one, paths are many," and that all the world's major religions are equally a valid means to the understanding of the highest spiritual Truth.

### ***Wandering in the Himalayas***

In 1958, Satchitānanda made a two-month pilgrimage to the holy Mount Kailash with a group of Swāmīs. They climbed on foot through 800 miles of

rocky ups and downs, to a height of 19,000 feet. The group took no oxygen masks, nor particularly heavy clothing. Even here, Swāmi Satchidānanda lectured and visited villages, schools and monasteries along the way. Twice during the pilgrimage, Swāmiji faced death.

After he returned, Swāmiji was asked, "What did you gain by that pilgrimage?" He answered: "A great lesson. The lesson is that by such a pilgrimage you realize that nothing you have owned, nothing you call yours will help you to experience God within and without. There are many situations where we depend on money or position or bodily strength. But on the pilgrimage, nothing is going to help you. You might have a strong body; but when there is no oxygen, what are you going to do? You may have millions of dollars, but there is nothing to buy. You may have an important position; you may be a powerful person. But on the pilgrimage, you are more or less a slave to your own mule drivers because they are the people who give you directions. So everything becomes nothing. In a way you are made to learn the worthlessness of everything that you have depended upon. It is at that point you say, 'It's only God's grace that helps me.'"

On his visit to Lord Amarnāth at an elevation of 14,000 feet in Kashmir, he said: "With an offering of flowers in my hands and an offering of love in my heart, I entered the cave. My entire body tingled with the thrill. My heart was exuberant with joy. Here I beheld the holy person of the Lord of Amarnāth. I clasped my hands and prayed. I fell at His feet in worship. I

arose and stood reverently in His presence, wondering at the grace He bestows on His devotees by appearing before them as the *lingam*. It is His gift of grace to allow them this experience of seeing His holy person. The form soon melts away, but the realization of His presence remains with the devotee for all time." He mentally offered all of the benefits of that journey at the feet of Sri Swāmi Sivānanda.

### ***In the Far East***

The next 2 years, from 1959 to 1961, while demonstrating and teaching *āsana*, *prānāyāma* and meditation mainly to business communities in Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia and Philippines, he lectured them on the spiritual principles of business. "How often do we see people who worship the threshold of their business place?" Swāmiji asked a group of devotees. "The Harilelas [a highly successful business family in Hong Kong] do that because they know it is not *their* business; it is God's business. They sincerely feel that they are only caretakers. From the home to the office - everywhere - you see this devotion in their hearts. I think that is the secret of their success in life - total trust in God. They are the living proof that if you have absolute devotion to God, you won't have to worry about anything." And now, a new phase of Swāmi Satchidānanda's life had begun. He was being called upon to serve the world...

### ***An Invitation to the West***

It was in 1965 in Ceylon, that the seeds of the final and definitive lap of Satchidānanda's ministry began to

fructify. A young film maker and yoga enthusiast, who also happened to be the heir to a vast cosmetic empire, met, invited and made all arrangements for the Yoga Master to go to Paris where he, Conrad Rooks, a spiritual seeker of sorts, was making a film. Leaving the *āshrama* at Kandy in capable hands, he left for Paris on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1966, promising to return in a month's time. He returned to Ceylon but only very briefly...such is the work of destiny.

On the way to Paris, Satchidānanda stopped in Cairo, Jerusalem, and Rome where he was introduced to Pope Paul VI. After a brief conversation, Swāmi Satchidānanda boldly said to the Pope: "Now, why don't you come forward to bring the entire world together - all people, regardless of religious or racial differences? It is not only the Christians who should come together. All people should unite in the name of religious harmony. Your word could carry a great deal of weight in helping people realize the oneness of the spirit." Pope Paul VI nodded in agreement. "Certainly, that is a noble idea, Swāmiji. But for the time being I think I should concentrate on putting my own house in order before going out to help the whole world."

Persuaded by Rooks to stay in Paris for the well-being of those whom he could see were benefitting from his teachings, the plan to return to Ceylon was set aside when pop artist Peter Max entered the scene. Peter said, "I was amazed that there was a real human being like this... and I knew that America

really needed him.” The Master was on his way to America.

He held his first meditation session in New York, after a two-hour talk at a private residence. After the session, the participants knew what they had to do: they chipped in small bills, totalling US\$100: the Integral Yoga Institute was formed; it grew through word of mouth. Eventually, some of these Hatha Yoga and meditation students became interested in an even deeper connection with their Guru. To them who sincerely wanted this connection, Swāmiji gave mantra initiation. After a quick return to Ceylon via Hawaii, Japan, Hong Kong, and Malaysia, he could no longer resist the call from the newly awakened spiritual seekers in the US because, according to one adherent: “There has been a mass spiritual awakening” where, in Central Park, people came together for chanting, meditation, dancing, kite flying! All that was missing was “our Swāmiji”.

### ***His Interfaith Vision***

During the late 1960s, Swāmi Satchidānanda continued to foster the growth of the Integral Yoga Institute in



New York and rendered pioneering service in bringing various clergy and spiritual leaders together to promote a vision of world peace through greater interreligious dialogue and understanding. In 1967, Swāmiji first met with H. H. the Dalai Lama: it would blossom into a long-lasting collaboration along with outstanding leaders of the Jewish community in promoting interfaith education and understanding. Recognition of his work came in the form of the granting of an American resident’s visa as a ‘Minister of Divine Words.’ This was the first time such a visa with this designation had been granted. While he conquered the hearts and minds of a packed audience at the Carnegie Hall in New York in 1969, it was the musical gathering at Woodstock that created a sensation even as it converted thousands of American youth into spiritual seekers.

It is well worth quoting and reading Peter Max’s recollection: “They didn’t know they were creating history as they gathered in Max Yasgur’s cow pasture for the Woodstock Festival - Aquarian Exposition - three days of free music, free food, and free entertainment. Almost all of the most famous contemporary musicians had volunteered to perform at the Festival - for free. The promoters had expected a few thousand people, and as they watched many more than that pouring into the farm for the festivities, they became concerned.

Delivering the official opening remark at the music festival, the ‘Woodstock Guru’ as Satchidānanda

came to be known, led half a million American youth in chanting “OM”.

“Sound energy, sound power, is much, much greater than any other power in this world”, his voice boomed across the vast field. In a later interview, Max noted, “I truly believe that the Swāmi’s words set the tone for that generational event when he said, ‘through the music, we can work wonders...The entire world is going to watch this. The entire world is going to know what the American youth can do for humanity.’”

### ***The Legacy***

With the huge success at Woodstock, Swāmi Satchidānanda’s ministry in New York gathered speed and soon in December 1969, he founded Integral Yoga Magazine, the first magazine in the United States dedicated to Yoga. (This magazine celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2019 and today publishes weekly as an e-magazine.)

By 1970, Swāmi Satchidānanda’s popularity was growing by leaps and bounds as interest in Yoga exploded. He was invited to give talks at numerous universities, drug rehabilitation centres, prisons, and peace festivals all over the world. At the time of his passing in 2002, Swāmi Satchidānanda had made eight world tours and logged nearly two million miles. Everywhere he went, he met with the highest officials; so also at the UN. Talks on Hatha Yoga, meditation, Karma Yoga service projects, chanting, vegetarian food, and evening talks enabled retreatants to go within, to

observe and control the mind and to find inner peace and happiness. The New York Integral Yoga Institute became a beacon for spiritual seekers from all over New York City and is the place where thousands of people experienced Yoga for the first time. Since 1972 to the present, when Satchidānanda’s vast vision and dream of establishing a true Yoga village that could be a model ‘heaven on earth’ fructified, it has been a place where yogis from every walk of life live together in the spirit of Yoga, of peace, harmony and cooperation. Called Yogaville, it grew in space and strength over the years in different places. In the centre of the town is a shrine with 10 altars for different religions -- Hindu, Shinto, Tao, Buddhist, Islam, Sikh, Native American and African, plus two for other unnamed religions. Tubes of neon light rise from each altar; a larger central altar has its own, larger tube of light. The shrine highlights a belief the Swāmi shares with modern Hinduism that all religions ultimately lead to God. At the dedication ceremony in 1986, there were two Bengal tigers, a juggler and a baby elephant named Bubbles. Swāmi Satchidānanda led the audience in chanting ‘Om-shanti,’ or ‘peace’.

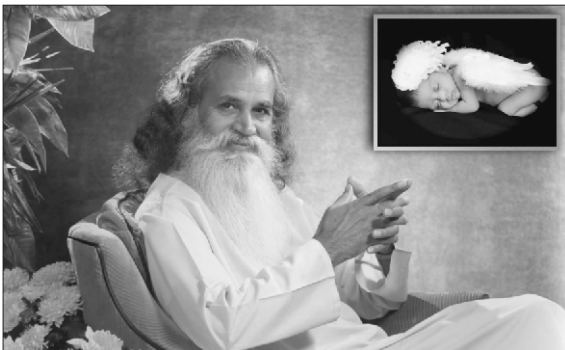
He died at the age of 87 on 19th August 2002. He died as he lived...attending a peace conference in Chennai.

### ***Enduring message***

“Everyone is searching for inner peace and joy. Some people want to be happy quickly so they take shortcuts and get temporary happiness. But borrowed joy

comes and goes. The happiness that we seem to be getting by our daily efforts is fleeting and mixed with a lot of troubles, worries and unhappiness. We keep trying to find that happiness and we keep missing it. When we finally tire of searching for happiness outside, we sit quietly and wonder: What is this? Why am I unhappy? Why do I lose the happiness I have? If we are sincere and analyse well, we find, ultimately that happiness never comes from outside. Happiness simply is. Our true nature is peace and joy - if only we don't disturb it."

"Peace and joy is our goal. Whatever we do, we are doing it for that. Not everyone believes in God; but the real God, the absolute God, the cosmic



God who is being searched for by one and all, is that peace and joy. Everyone wants that." "If anybody asks me, "What is your philosophy or God?" I say, "Peace is my God." If they ask, "Where is He?" I reply, "He is in me and He is everywhere. He is all-peaceful; He is all serenity. He is to be felt and experienced within oneself." People often ask me, "What religion are you? You talk about the Bible, Koran, and Torah. Are you a Hindu?" I say, I am not a

Catholic, a Buddhist, or a Hindu, but an Undo. My religion is Undoism. We have done enough damage (with religious dogma). We have to stop doing any more and simply undo the damage we have already done."

"Whenever you feel in a peaceful state of mind, meditate. Just close your eyes and relax, even if it's only for a minute. If you wish to deepen your meditation, then schedule some time for this practice daily. Meditation needs the cooperation of both the body and the mind. Prepare the body with the *āsanas*, Yoga postures, and *prānāyāma*, the breathing exercises. Learn to keep the mind fully occupied on one thing, but don't let that thing or concept bind you.... Stick to one object of concentration, don't change continually."

About Integral Yoga he said: "The goal of Integral Yoga, and the birthright of every individual, is to realize the spiritual unity behind all the diversities in the entire creation and to live harmoniously as members of one universal family. This goal is achieved by maintaining our natural condition of a body of optimum health and strength; senses under total control; a mind well-disciplined, clear and calm.; an intellect as sharp as a razor; a will as strong and pliable as steel; a heart full of unconditional love and supreme peace and joy."

<https://swamisatchidānanda.org/life/global-service/>

<https://swamisatchidānanda.org/life/woodstock-guru/>

<https://jivamuktivyoga.com/fotm/teachings-swami-satchidānanda/>

- Swāmi Chidānanda



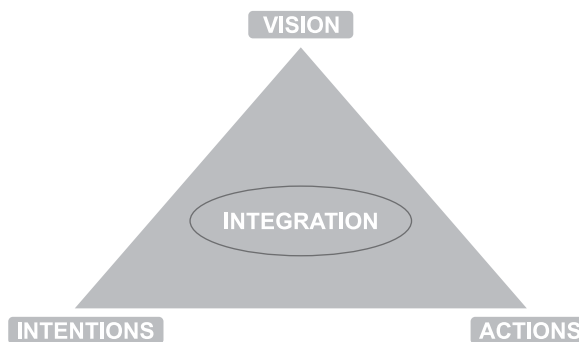
Vision, intention and action make a circle. Think of them as three dots. If our daily life is such that these three dots are connected, there is integration. Otherwise, our life is disintegrated.

#### **A problem with most people**

Most people, including many who are highly qualified, have a 'disconnect' in their daily life. At the bottom of their hearts, they want something in life. They have certain intentions as they begin their day; and, you may not believe it, they do actions which are not at all in line with either the intentions or the vision. For example, a Vedānta student, who has been studying the Upanishads for many years, is convinced in his heart of hearts that there is nothing as valuable as Self-knowledge (*ātma-jñāna*). If you give him a few minutes of quiet time- let us say in a

'spiritual workshop'- to work on the question, "What do I want finally in life?" and then ask him to write it down, he will say, "I want the purest of Upanishadic wisdom." He is sincere there. He is not saying that to impress you. When you check with him how he spends his life generally, however, you will discover that there is *many a slip between the cup and the lip!*

Thanks to all his study and the *aha* moments he has had during many *satsangs*, when he had some powerful insights, he indeed has a deep desire to delve into the teachings of the *rishis*, as contained in the Upanishads. His conscious mind, however, is generally perturbed or distracted by a variety of life's situations. A financial problem, a nasty comment by people who matter, a fancy for a new item of furniture or dress or a strong desire to settle score with somebody who hurt him recently, can cause an intention, totally different from



his vision, to rise in him every morning. Many short term goals can hijack his one long term goal. Days pass, and then weeks, months and years do!

As though that is not enough, his day's actions are again at variance with his 'early morning intentions'! He intends, for example, in the early hours of the day, to spend some time that day to examine all his investments, make some new plans and act on them. What hijacks him far away from these intentions, which are well aligned with certain short term goals, could be as simple and silly as his attachment to newspapers, magazines and, these days, *Whatsapp* messages! Reading all sorts of things in the media, getting agitated over some news, drinking many cups of tea and coffee in between all these activities that are a sheer waste of time, his whole day may pass without doing justice either to his vision or to his intentions.

### ***Lack of integrity***

A life of no integration is accompanied by lack of integrity. An old Sanskrit verse<sup>1</sup> puts it this way: *The dishonest people think something, say something else and do something totally different. Men of eminence think of, say and do one and only one thing.* If we are not even aware of this chasm between thought and word, or between word and deed, that is terrible. There is some bliss in this ignorance though, which will not last long! When we become painfully aware of the contradictions in our way of living, there is hope. It is, however, a long journey before we bridge these gaps and achieve true integration of life.

*Sustained effort culminates in effortless being, says<sup>2</sup> Ānandamayee Mā (1896 – 1982).* These words of the born-saint of Bengal are great assurance to all of us, who are striving on the path to self-perfection. The first thing we discover, when we realize that we need to change, is the presence of many bad habits on the planes of thought, word and deed. We generally achieve many things despite our undesirable habits and arrive at a level of social respectability. Some complacency generally takes over. Then we get a few wake-up calls when things go wrong. Our success in the past does not help us anymore. We find we are unable to go further or to some higher standard of life.

'What got you here won't get you there!' was the title of the bestseller by Marshall Goldsmith (first published in 2007), which is self-explanatory. It is easy for most of us to be a *big fish in a small pond* but, when it comes to the harder challenges of life, we discover we are *little fish in a big pond!* The laws apply in somewhat similar ways whether the context is the corporate world or the spiritual domain. The wise advise us to *start small and grow big.* Management gurus and leadership experts like Stephen Covey (1932 – 2012) and Robin Sharma (1964 - ) ask us to install healthy habits, which can help us realize our hidden potential not only to be effective in our work but also to shine as wonderful human beings.

### ***Making the dots connect***

The three dots of the 'Integration Triangle'



must connect. We must check, and double-check, what is going wrong with the way we live. Total awareness, of course, is the panacea for all the evils of life. Those of us, who cannot figure out this art of awareness, opt for well-defined exercises to change our self-management. Better time-management, more effective communication, greater empathy in listening, being regular in physical exercise, working towards enhanced EQ and a host of other self-improvement ideas are examples of these exercises. Typically, everybody begins with concrete measures. As our understanding deepens and certain intelligence that perceives the interconnectedness of different facets of life rises in us, we begin to experience the fragrance of harmony in life. The differences between our deep aspiration, intentions of the morning and actions through the hours of the day begin to spontaneously evaporate. The burden of ambition, likes and dislikes or various fancies vanishes in mature understanding of life.

“A man of integration finds lasting peace,” says<sup>3</sup> Lord Krishna. In the language of Geetā, *yoga* is integration and the adjective here is *yukta*, integrated. When the delusion of name and fame, or of pleasure and power, ceases, we let go of hankering after ‘fruits of action’. We then live in the present, in the awareness of facts, not driven by fancies. Disintegration then has no room in our life.

**Notes:**

1. *manasi ekam, vachasi ekam, karmani ekam, mahātmanāmī manasi anyam, vachasi anyam, karmani anyam, durātmanām ॥*
2. She also said, “Relentless perseverance brings about the change in perspective, which will establish you in peace.”
3. *yuktah.. shāntim-āpnoti naisthikeem*  
– Geetā 5.12



It's always too early to quit.  
-Norman Vincent Peale



- Osho



By the side of my house there was a temple, and between the temple and my house there was some land which technically my father could win a case in the court and take. But actually, the land belonged to the temple. It was a legal and technical matter.

I told my father, “If you go against the temple – I have nothing to do with the temple, but if you go against the temple then I am going to be a witness against you, because you are taking advantage of a technical mistake. The land does not belong to you and you know it. And not only am I going to be against you, I have convinced your father, my grandfather”.

He is going with me because they may not take any note of me. I am so small – I must have been ten years old – “they may not take any note of me, so I have convinced my grandfather. He is going with me. So, two generations on each side against you. You have to decide.” He said, “You have talked with my father?”

I said, “Certainly. Because it is a simple matter. The land does not belong to us. Just in the papers of the temple, technically it is not written that it belongs to them. But don’t take advantage of a technical mistake.”

He said, “But I have never heard of anybody’s son being a witness against his own father.” I said, “My loyalty is not to the family. My loyalty is towards truth. If you are on the side of truth, I will be with you, but in this case, I cannot be with you.”

Children living in a family are bound to become loyal to the family. Then they don’t care whether they are fair, just, or not, they just fight. People go on fighting for generations.

One of the families in front of my house was the enemy of my family for generations. I was the first to enter into their house....

The man was shocked. He said, “Where are you going?” I said, “I am coming to your family with a message of friendship”. I don’t know who the people were who fought. I don’t know even the names of the people who fought. I know my grandfather and I know my grandfather’s name, his father’s name. Beyond that I have no knowledge. And this has been going on for ten generations. How many generations do you remember? Can you tell me all the names? Can you tell me who began all

this nonsense? And we have not been on talking terms.

I have come with friendship. I am inviting myself for dinner today in your house. He said, "This is strange, but perhaps you are right. You are welcome, but have you asked your father?" I said, "I don't need to. Whatever I want to do, I do it and then I inform him. Then he can express his opinion. It does not make any difference; I have done what I wanted to do. I know he will ask, 'Why did you not ask me?' But that is my problem, you don't be worried."

And they were very happy. The children were very happy, because it was such a strange thing. They were just living in front, and we saw each other, but we could not talk to their children; they couldn't talk to us. We were going to the same school, but we were not talking to each other, we were enemies. And you don't have any idea why. The children were happy; it was a celebration.

My father came home and he was informed that I had gone inside that house and I had not come out for almost two hours. He said, "This is unbelievable. For ten generations we have not talked to each other. Now he has gone beyond the boundaries, let him come."

When I came back home he was really angry and he said, "Why did you not ask me?"

I said, "It is simple, because I wanted to do it. And now you are free to express your opinion. I knew that you would say no, so what is the point of asking? And I have not done anything wrong. I have made a beautiful friendship; I have opened the door for you too. I have invited the man and his children for dinner tomorrow in this house". He said, "What?"

I said, "Yes. I have eaten there – I invited myself into their house. Now, in return what do you want? I should at least be this much courteous." He said, "My God, then I have to go out of this house tomorrow." I said, "You have not to go anywhere. You have to be here and you have to receive them, because this is foolish – ten generations ago, and who knows who was right and who was wrong? Those idiots are dead. Why should we go on clinging to the dead, just because we belong to their family?"

The family creates a very small commitment to a very small number of people. A commune frees you from commitment.

And psychologists say that if children can be freed from the family then ninety percent of mental diseases will be simply finished.

From the book "THE SWORD AND THE LOTUS"



- Compiled by Ratna Viswanath

### ***The Place of Five Caves***

Pachmarhi is a hill station - in Hoshangabad district in the state of Madhya Pradesh (MP) in India. It is situated in the Satpura ranges at 1100 m above sea-level and is popularly known as 'Satpura ki Rāni' (the Queen of Satpura).

Legend says that the five Pandava brothers had visited Pachmarhi during their exile. While passing through Pachmarhi, they excavated five caves in the sandstone hills for their shelter. 'Pach' refers to '5'; 'marhi' means 'caves'. These caves are still in existence and have gained popularity as a major tourist spot. But most geologists say that these caves must have been in existence even before the Mahabharata era.

The Pachmarhi region was part of the kingdom of the Gond king Bhawut Singh, although it was not a populated village or town at that time. Pachmarhi was discovered in 1857 by Captain James Forsyth of the British armed forces. On his way to Jhansi, he spotted this beautiful region replete with natural beauty. The British soon developed it as a resort for their forces. Forsyth further added to the popularity of Pachmarhi by praising its beauty in his famous book 'The Highlands of Central India'.

Pachmarhi has been a cantonment since the times of the British Raj. It also served as the summer capital for the Central Provinces. The grandeur of

British architecture still lingers over the cantonment in the form of cottages and bungalows.

Pachmarhi town is not very large and most of its area is under the administration of the Pachmarhi Cantonment Board. It is the centre of the Army's Education Core (AEC).

Pachmarhi and its surrounding forests are designated as a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO.

### ***A Major Tourist Attraction***

Pachmarhi attracts tourists throughout the year. The climate is mild, and generally warm and temperate.

Pachmarhi has numerous nature-spots and offers attractions such as boating at the lake, paragliding, greenery, scenic locations, waterfalls, mountain streams and rare wildlife. The National Adventure Institute is also situated in Pachmarhi; various adventure training camps are organized here. There are also many cave paintings in the forests, some of which have been estimated to be as much as 10,000 years old.

### ***Some of the places of tourist interest here are:***

***Rajat Prapāt (also called 'Big Fall')*** – It falls from a height of 2800+ feet, roaring down the gorge and creating a silver streak that gives it its name. It is a soaring single-drop fall. The view of dense, serene, virgin forest and the stream is mesmerizing.

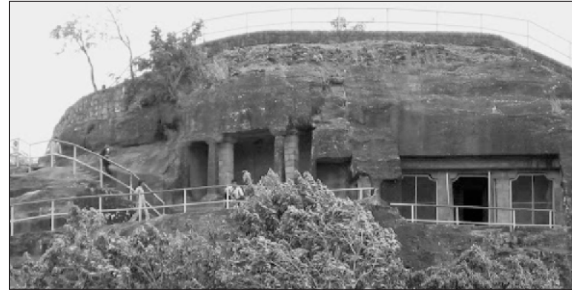
**Bee Fall** - From a distance, the sound of this waterfall is like that of a bee. The Bee Fall tumbles over a jagged rock face to the northwest.

**Chaurāgarh** - This is the third highest peak in this region. It is a pilgrimage site with Lord Śiva's temple at the top. The Chaurāgarh fort here was built by the king Sangrām Shāh of Gond dynasty. One gets a breathtaking view of the sunrise from here and it is well worth the 1365 steps that one has to climb. During the festivals of Nāgapanchami and Mahāshivarātri, devotees flock to Chaurāgarh temple in large numbers, heaving up massive trishuls (tridents) as offerings. Nearly two lakh trishuls are kept in front of the temple and also on the way to the temple.

**Dhupgarh** - At 1352 m, Dhupgarh is the highest peak of the Satpuras and in Madhya Pradesh. It is known for the sunrise and sunset view. At night, one can see the lights of the neighbouring towns such as Itarsi. In the daytime, the lush green valley offers a captivating view. One can reach the top either by road or by trekking.

**Apsarā Falls (Fairy pool)** - This is a mountain stream that creates in its course a beautiful natural pool, cascades and a waterfall.

**Jatāshankar and Mahādev caves** - These are mountain caves with fresh water dripping from them. Jatāshankar is a stalagmite-filled cave in a deep ravine. One can witness the ecosystem at work here with the mountains feeding the streams with fresh water that they have soaked in during the rains. As the name suggests, these caves and many others like these are the abode of Lord Śiva.



**Duchess Fall** - This waterfall is the most remote and considered the most beautiful waterfall in Pachmarhi. There are Doctor Fish in the pool made by the waterfall. The road to this waterfall has a very steep incline. There is an almost vertical downward trek of 1km.

**Panarpani** - This spot has a natural freshwater lake surrounded by forests.



**Sangam** - This is a conflux of mountain streams behind Dhupgarh. The water in these streams is crystal clear in all seasons except during autumn.

**Other waterfalls** - Pachmarhi's ecosystem includes other waterfalls such as the Little Fall.

Other tourist attractions are Pachmarhi Hill (affords a view of the entire town of Pachmarhi), Pansy Pool, Waters Meet, Piccadilly Circus, Patharchatta, Crumps Crag, Lady Robertson's View, Colletin Crag, Mount Rosa, HandiKhoh, Reechgarh, RajendraGiri (beautiful

gardens with natural scenery), BansriVihar, Nāgdwāri, Draupadi Kund, Twynham Pool, Chhota Mahādev, etc.

In the last week of December every year, Pachmarhi *Utsav* is organized by the government of MP. Celebrities perform stage shows during the *Utsav*. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of December, an event is organized by the Pachmarhi *Paryatan Mitra*, the local association.

Pachmarhi is well-connected from major towns in MP by road and rail.

### **The Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve**

The Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve (PBR) is a non-use conservation area initially designated in 1999 by the Indian government. UNESCO designated it a biosphere reserve in 2009.

The total area of the biosphere reserve is 4,926.28 km<sup>2</sup> (some sources mention 4981.72 km<sup>2</sup>). It includes three wildlife conservation units:

- Bori Sanctuary (518.00 km<sup>2</sup>)
- Pachmarhi Sanctuary (461.37 km<sup>2</sup>).
- Satpura National Park (524.37 km<sup>2</sup>)

Satpura National Park is designated as the core zone and the remaining area of 4401.91 km<sup>2</sup>, including the Bori and Pachmarhi sanctuaries, serves as the buffer zone.

It covers parts of three civil districts, viz., Hoshangabad (59.55%), Chhindwara (29.19%) and Betul (11.26%).

The reserve primarily consists of forest habitats, and is an important transition zone between the forest species of western and eastern India.

The forests are dominated by Teak (*Tectona grandis*). They include the westernmost groves of sal (*Shorea robusta*), which is the dominant tree of eastern India's forests. Other endemic vegetation includes wild mango, silver fern, jamun and *arjun*.<sup>[4]</sup>

Fourteen ethno-botanical plant species occurring in PBR have been studied. These are traded from the selected villages of the buffer zone area of PBR. Different plant parts of these important species are collected by the local people for their own consumption and trade.

The forest around Pachmarhi town is home to many rare varieties of plants. It is full of fruit trees such as mango, jamun, custard fruit and lesser-known but very delicious local fruits such as khatua, tendu, chunna, khinni and char. The forest is also known for its richness in medicinal plants and herbs. There are also thick forest areas of oak and blue pine.

The endemic fauna includes chinkara, nilgai, wild dogs, the Indian wolf, bison, Indian giant squirrels and flying squirrels.

Large mammal species include tigers, leopard, wild bear, gaur (*Bosgaurus*), chital deer (*Axis axis*), muntjac deer, sambar deer (*Cervus unicolor*), and rhesus macaque. Animal-species belonging to the Himalayan peaks and to the lower Western ghats also abound in the forest.

#### **Sources:**

[www.mptourism.com](http://www.mptourism.com)  
[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)



- Swāmi Chidānanda

Between 1994 and 1995, I had three occasions to meet Mātā Amritānandamayee, in USA. It was, of course, a privilege and the three *darshans* are now memories that I treasure.

I lived in San Jose, California, between November 1993 and August 1998. When I learnt that Amma's US headquarters was an hour's drive from my residence, in the city of San Ramon, I expressed the desire to go and see her. Smt. Umā Jeyarāsasingam, the then Secretary of Chinmaya Mission San Jose (CMSJ), gladly offered to take me to Amma's āshram.

It was on a bright day, if I remember right, in the summer of 1994, that the two of us reached the spacious āshram in Northern California. We were fortunate to find moderate crowds that forenoon and a disciple led us to the residence of Amma. As we both entered the room, we saw Amma standing at a backdoor, leading to a balcony, with her right hand held up, touching the upper part of the frame of the door. She was looking out at the hills, I suppose. The disciple, bowing down with reverence, informed the 'hugging mother' that two people had come from the Chinmaya Mission to see her. She had been, I am sure, told earlier and this was set up with her permission. She turned around and motioned to us to sit down. There was no



furniture in that room and she came towards us, and, like a sister in a simple Indian home, sat on the floor, facing us. We too prostrated before her and readily took our seats on the floor. [I was astonished at her simplicity. She was already a celebrity in the spiritual world. Her glory and fame rose a thousand times in the years to come.]

We perhaps spent about 20 minutes with this very remarkable saint that day. Except for an interpreter – between Malayālam and English – there were no others in the room than the three of us! This was in sharp contrast with the two meetings I had later in the next year, where huge crowds were around and I went in line (queue) to receive her

blessings.

After Umā and I said a few words of our deep respect for her and mentioned our work following the guidance of Pujya Gurudev Swāmi Chinmayānandaji, she too expressed her love and regard for our master. She asked me if I had any questions. Since she spoke in Malayālam, which the disciple (interpreter) of course translated into English, I began speaking in some broken Tamil! The disciple promptly requested me to speak in English, which I did without delay. Thus, with the help of the interpreter, we had a wonderful conversation.

My questions were on *sādhana*, spiritual practices. Her answers were simple and clear, blending *bhakti* (devotion) and *jnāna* (knowledge). All I can remember now is my deep appreciation of how her replies to my doubts were perfectly in line with the great Vedānta works like the Upanishads, Viveka - Choodāmani, etc. that I had studied. I was indeed amazed at the sense of originality that emanated from her, given her humble background of growing up in a village in Kerala. A second thing I remember is how she embarrassed me by telling the interpreter at the end, pointing to me, "You see, he knows all this!" Yes, I knew much of the verbal answers that revered Amma gave me that day but my knowledge was from the books; hers was from her own living wisdom.

Time flew and when we bowed down once more before taking leave of

her, she told the interpreter-disciple, "Please give him a set of our books." As the two of us came out, we met a few of the devotees and disciples. Umā knew some of the devotees there. I knew none, as I was pretty much new to the area. I received a set of more than a dozen books about and by Amma, before we got into Umā's car and sped towards San Jose.

### ***The second and third darshans***

The following year, I was at Los Angeles, conducting classes at the residence of Shobha and Ashok Nainpally, in the city of Cerritos. I used to spend six weeks at a stretch those days in LA before returning to San Jose. This was perhaps the summer of 1995. One evening, after the class, some of my students said they would not be able to come to my class the next week as they would go to see Amma. The spontaneous response from me was, "Let us all go together. Having Amma's *darshan* is a great and better substitute for this class!"

Accordingly, some eight of us went to a certain college campus in/ near downtown Los Angeles. To our pleasant surprise, some Chinmaya devotees from San Diego and LA were already there, greeting us with "Harib Om!" [Among them was Venkat Rangan, who had come from San Diego with his wife Nandini, and with his parents from Mysuru. Venkat is today the Vice Chancellor of Amma's University, having his office in their Coimbatore (Ettimadai) campus.] This time, it was *bhajan* time! All of us, thanks to my status of being a Swāmiji from



Chinmaya Mission, were led to the carpet right in front of the stage where, in a short while, Amma came and sat. Amma was surrounded by ten to twelve devotees and one or two Swāmi disciples. All of them sang devotional songs, led by Amma. Most unexpectedly, in between this session, I suddenly became very emotional and sobbed for a little while. People near me perhaps noticed; it does not matter. At the end, Amma spoke for a few minutes, and the senior *sannyāsi* - disciple accompanying her translated her words into English, which all of us could understand.

Within a month of this, I was in Chicago for Vedānta lectures and our students like Sudhā Gouthama told me that Amma was in town. One morning all of us went to have *darshan* of Amma. There was no need to cancel any class this time as my lectures were in the evening at Badri, the Chinmaya Mission Centre. It was once more a huge gathering, and as in LA, the audience was a mixture of people of Indian origin and others. Non-Indians were in larger number. Amma was again on the stage and *bhajans* were going on. After an hour

or more, several hundreds of us went in line to receive her divine hug and blessings. As is well-known, she hugs everybody, addressing them, “O my son, O my daughter” in Malayālam. For me, obviously, it was the third time that I received her motherly embrace. As soon as I went near her, she asked a disciple nearby, “Is this not the Swāmi who came to our Satsang in Los Angeles also last month?” The disciple and I both said in one voice, “Yes”!

I stop here my narration of my spiritual hat-trick, where I received Amma’s blessings three times in a short period of time. I have never met her again – face-to-face – afterwards but she continues to occupy a special place in my heart, and that will be so all my life.



**Note:** Everybody knows about Amma, therefore I have not written anything about who she is. Utter novices may please see the website [amma.org](http://amma.org).



*To be yourself in the world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.*

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**



- Kuei-shan (771-854)



On a long journey, it is essential to go with good companions; purify your eyes and ears again and again. When you stay somewhere, choose your company; listen to what you have not heard time and again. This is the basis of the saying, “It was my parents who bore me; it was my companions who raised me.”

Companionship with the good is like walking through dew and mist; although they do not drench your clothing, in time it becomes imbued with moisture. If you cleanse the mind and cultivate virtue, conceal your tracks and hide your name, preserve the fundamental and purify the spirit, then the clamor will cease.

If you want to study the Way by intensive meditation and make a sudden leap beyond expedient teachings, let your mind merge with the hidden harbor; investigate its subtleties, determine its most profound depths, and realize its true source.

When you suddenly awaken to the true basis, this is the stairway leading out

of materialism. This shatters the twenty-five domains of being in the three realms of existence. Know that everything, inside and outside, is all unreal.

Arising from transformations of mind, all things are merely provisional names; don't set your mind on them. As long as feelings do not stick to things, how can they hinder people? Leaving them to the all-pervasive flow of reality, do not cut them off, yet do not continue them either. When you hear sound and see form, all is normal, whether in the relative world or in the transcendental absolute, appropriate function is not lacking.

If there are people of middling ability who are as yet unable to transcend all at once, let them concentrate upon the teaching, closely investigating the scriptures and scrupulously looking into the inner meaning.

Have you not heard it said, “The vine that clings to the pine climbs to the heights; only based on the most excellent foundation may there be widespread weal?” Carefully cultivate frugality and self-control. Do not vainly be remiss, and do not go too far. Then in all worlds and every life there will be sublime cause and effect.

**Source:**

Five Houses of Zen

By: Thomas Cleary 1997

What do we learn from  
the Upanishads?

The Way To Calm Your Mind  
Merge The Gross In The Subtle

- Swāmi Chidānanda



Kathopanishad supplies to us an extraordinary technique to go from  
'a storm' to 'a calm'.

In a single mantra, the sacred text opens our eyes to five layers of our existence.  
Organs of perception and action constitute the first layer. Second comes the mind.  
Third is the intellect. Total intellect of all humanity is the fourth.

The Pure Self (*ātmā*) is the last, the best.

Leave aside the deeper three. If we just learn to shift our attention from the organs  
(*indriyas*) to healthy emotions on the mental plane, we will find a great calm  
entering our hearts, making storms subside.

*yacched vāng-manasi prājnah* Katha Upanishad, 1.3.13

[The wise man dissolves his speech in his mind.]

A simple interpretation of the above is to bring noble emotions and good thoughts in  
our within; reflecting on them, we may allow our agitations on the bodily plane to  
subside.



- By Anthony de Mello S.J.



The Master kept scrapping a brick against the floor of the room where his disciple sat in meditation.

At first the disciple was content, taking this to be a test of his powers of concentration. But when the sound became unbearable, he burst out, "What on earth are you doing? Can't you see I am in meditation?"

"I'm polishing this brick to make a mirror out of it," said the Master.

"You're crazy! How can you make a mirror out of a brick?"

"No crazier than you! How can you make a meditator out of the self?"



अनारम्भो मनुष्याणां प्रथमं बुद्धिलक्षणम् ।  
आरब्धस्यान्तगमनं द्वितीयं बुद्धिलक्षणम् ॥

*The first sign of intelligence in men is not to start work  
(that leads to unnecessary trouble).  
The second sign of intelligence in men is not to stop work  
(i.e. carry till its end, any work that is begun)!*



- Rose Milligan

Dust if you must, wouldn't it be better  
To paint a picture or write a letter,  
Bake a cake, or plant a seed,  
Ponder the difference between want and need?

Dust if you must, but there's not much time,  
With rivers to swim and mountains to climb,  
Music to hear and books to read,  
Friends to cherish and life to lead.

Dust if you must, but the world's out there,  
With the sun in your eyes, the wind in your hair,  
A flutter of snow, a shower of rain,  
This day will not come round again.

Dust if you must, but bear in mind  
Old age will come and it's not kind,  
And when you go - and go you must,  
You, yourself will make more dust.



*The Self, your true nature, is ever free.  
March forth towards that freedom on this March fourth!*  
**Swāmi Chidānanda**



## ETERNAL VIBRATIONS

### ENRICH YOUR LIFE WITH RIGHT ACTION

*Meritorious deeds are the most precious wealth*



यथा वृक्षस्य सुपुष्पितस्य    yathā vrikshasya supushpitasya  
दूराद् गन्धो वाति ।    doorād gandho vāti ।  
एवं पुण्यस्य कर्मणो    evam punyasya karmano  
दूराद् गन्धो वाति ॥    doorād gandho vāti ॥

(Liberal translation)

Just as, from a tree in full blossom, the fragrance (of its flowers) goes far and wide, wafted by winds, so too does the fragrance of meritorious deeds (and the good name that accrues from them) spreads to a great distance (as far as heaven)!

[Mahā-Nārāyanopaniṣhad 11.1 (anuvāka 11, mantra 1)]

Comments: The fragrance of the flowers goes in the direction of the winds. Commentators on the mantra above say the fragrance of virtuous acts goes in all directions, including in that against the winds! – Editors.



## **FOWAI FORUM**

### **Wisdom for Right Action**

Dissemination of spiritual and secular wisdom is the main objective of the Fowai Forum. Educational activities, human welfare and services to all life are its concerns. Insights and observations especially based on Indian culture and heritage will find expression in its activities.

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