

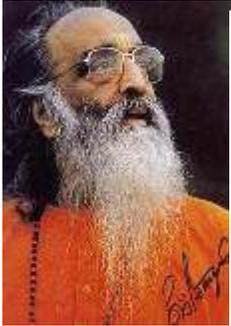


# Chinmaya Pradīpika

CMSD Quarterly Newsletter



Oct. 2012, No. 4



## The Master Speaks:

*Religion must not be considered true because it is necessary, but necessary because it is true.*

**Swami Chinmayananda**

### From the Team of Chinmaya Pradīpikā

Although Bala Vihar was adjourned for the summer, we still have an issue chock full of interesting articles and reports. The annual CMSD youth camp and the Cam- Tra-Con for CHYKS took place in June. Chinmaya Jyoti grading and construction began in earnest over the summer.

One of our high school seniors, *Sarath Pathuri*, attended a two week camp at CORD, Sidhbari, Himachal Pradesh. *Guru Pūrṇimā* and *Gurudev's Mahāsamādhi Ārāadhanā* day were celebrated in July and August.

This issue has also turned out to be a "*Karma Yoga special*", with reports on *Sevak* training in August, the Conscious Parenting Workshop in September, and two other articles on *Karma Yoga*.

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## Start of Bala Vihar – Sep 9, 2012

by *Bhuvana Garcia*

Anticipation, excitement! Summer was great-but now it is time to start a new Bala Vihar year! Year #12! Wow! Everyone is looking forward to seeing familiar faces and meeting new members.

*Swaroopa Kalva*, our artist, has made a beautiful garland for *Pujya Gurudev* with jasmīnes from her garden. The humidity this summer resulted in a beautiful crop of these flowers. The auditorium is filled with their fragrance.



The kids walk in, and many have shot up in the last few months. "What--he's in high school already?" "I can't believe she's in middle school--I remember her in kindergarten!" The passage of time is apparent. Of course the new pre-K and K kids are smaller and cuter every year. I don't remember my kids ever being that small! Most have dressed up for the first day!



The youth camp kids do a presentation on what they learned in camp including the "18-ities" and the pledge in Sanskrit. The summer birthdays are celebrated. Announcements are made!

We are back! Year number 12 has begun!

## Chinmaya Jyoti Site is GREEN

Though the *Chinmaya Jyoti* site looks very brown now because of the site being graded in preparation for the buildings to come up, a lot of work is being done to make it environmentally GREEN. This was the focus of the presentation made by Sukumar Uncle on the first day of Bala Vihar (September 9, 2012). When the site is fully graded and landscaped, no one will be able to see what is underneath. But a tremendous amount of engineering has gone into the design of the site so that the storm water runoff does not pose any environmental issues both in the immediate neighborhood and in the quality of the water that goes into the storm drainage system.

There are three critical factors that the design has considered:

1. Soil erosion control
2. Water filtration to remove pollutants from the parking areas
3. Velocity of water outflow from the site

A complex set of brow ditches and water capture drain systems have been designed to direct the large quantity of water that comes down from the hills to the west of our property. In addition the landscaping with shrubs and trees will prevent soil erosion and muddy runoff into the neighboring streets, which used to be the case in the past years.

There are three major bio-retention areas that have been designed to capture the water flowing out of the parking areas and the non-pervious concrete surrounding the buildings. These have several



layers of materials that will remove all the pollutants before the water is let out into the storm drain system.

The storm water protection system also makes sure that the velocity of the outflow is significantly reduced so that the water flowing out does not cause erosion and possible flooding in nearby properties.

Sukumar Uncle showed pictures of these design structures as they are being built in order to communicate to the members and especially the children that CMSD (Conserve, Manage, Serve, Dedicate) is truly living up to its name. In spite of significant expense for these features, we feel that being GREEN is worth it in the long run, but more importantly, is our bounden duty to Mother Earth.



## CMSD Summer Youth Camp 2012

by *Hema Pandya*

It was a fun learning experience for kids and adults at the youth summer camp. I learned so many teachings that are packed in our **Chinmaya Mission Pledge** which was the theme of this year's camp. Working with the kids of all ages was wonderful and it was a great learning environment for the kids as well. They learned about the pledge in detail, and even the arts and crafts they made were in line with the pledge. Some of the fun things they did included games like 'Om Alone', singing *bhajans* and so on.

In the morning when the kids arrived they first wrote their *Japa*. Classes started after that with prayers and chanting of the Chinmaya Mission Pledge in Sanskrit. Kids also learned a prayer to Lord *Śiva* and Mother *Pārvatī*. An important part of the class was also teaching the kids the Chinmaya Mission Pledge line by line. The importance of this lesson was to make sure the kids understood the meaning of the pledge, which they say every Sunday in Bala Vihar. To end the morning class we did *Sūrya Namaskārah* and Chapter 15 *Bhagavad Gītā* chanting.



After lunch the kids worked on Arts and Crafts that were connected to the lines of the Pledge that they learned in the morning.



For example, on Wednesday June 27<sup>th</sup>, the kids learned the pledge line “We live honestly the noble life of sacrifice and service, producing more than what we consume, and giving more than what we take.”

That day, the kids made shopping bags out of old newspapers, which taught recycling or reuse. After Arts & Crafts there was a small break for snacks.

In the evening the kids learned a *bhajan*. They performed that *bhajan* with actions on the final day performance for the parents. The kids had a lot of fun dancing to this *bhajan*. After the *bhajan* was Game Time. They played ‘Knock Out’ and ‘Om Alone’. These were a big hit. The end of the day was marked as *ārati* time. Each day a different group of kids got to lead the *ārati*. Overall this was a great experience for everyone involved. I am looking forward to next year’s camp. Special thanks to Lakshmi and Sukumarji for organizing these camps.



## Chinmaya Dhvani celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary

by Anjali Bapat

CMSD Ninth Annual Bala Vihar Camp concluded with a student presentation on the auspicious day of Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayanandaji’s sixty-second birthday on June 30, 2012. This occasion also marked Chinmaya Dhvani’s 10th anniversary, (Chinmaya Dhvani San Diego was started 10 years back with the blessings of Pujya Guruji). To celebrate the occasion they offered *bhajans* at the program. Chinmaya Dhvani commenced the program with *Gaṇeśa Vandana* " *gāyīye gaṇapati jagabandana*". They also offered Gurudev’s favorite song, “*cilaṅga kaṭṭi oḍi di vāyo*”.



## Cam-Tra-Con

by *Akil Rajaratnam*

Right before Swami Tejomayanandaji came to San Diego in June, I got to spend a week with him, other *ācārya-s*, and a lot of inspired CHYKs in our beautiful ashram *Krishnalaya*, in Piercy, CA. The occasion was the first ever CHYK West Cam-Tra-Con. Short for ‘Camp-Training Conference’, the Cam-Tra-Con was a gathering of the leaders of CHYK across North America (and one from the UK) lead by Swami Mitranandaji, Director of National Projects and All-India CHYK, Swami Sarveshanandaji, National Director of CHYK West, Brahmachari Prabodhji, *ācārya* of CM San Jose, and *ācārya* Vivekji, Deputy Director of CHYK West.

The ‘Camp’ portion of our week was spent with *Pūjya Guruji* Swami Tejomayananda. The theme of the camp was “You, Mission and Gurudev”, which was covered by *Guruji* in morning lectures and evening satsangs. During this time, *Guruji* discussed the CHYK West and elaborated on its place in the Mission going forward.

The ‘Training’ part of Cam-Tra-Con featured all of our other *ācārya-s*, but most prominently Swami Mitrananda, who was visiting the West for the first time. During our trainings sessions, we covered a wide variety of topics, including how to host a study group, marketing, and more.

The ‘Conferences’, overseen by Swami Sarveshananda and *ācārya* Vivek, is where the CHYKs presented how the CHYK program in their area was developing and collectively brainstormed on how to proceed in the future.

Overall, the Cam-Tra-Con was a huge success. With Swami Tejomayanandaji giving his blessings to CHYK West, as well other *ācārya -s* of CHYK West giving us guidance, look for an explosion of popularity for the CHYK movement.

## CMSD On-Going Events

### *Gurudev’s Mahasamadhi Day*

In San Diego, *Pūjya Gurudev’s Mahāsamādhi Pādukā Pūjā* was performed on August 4 due to the national *Mahāsamādhi* camp. About 50 devotees came to Chinmaya Nivas to pay homage to *Pūjya Gurudev* and participate in the *pūjā*. Lakshmiiji recounted several personal stories of her experiences in the presence of *Gurudev*. Heartfelt *bhajan-s* in gratitude of *Gurudev* filled the room as the CMSD family came together and remembered the Master.



## **Guru Purnima**

by *Rajasekar Vaidyanathan*

On *Guru Pūrṇimā* day, Hindus remember with gratitude the *Guru* and *Guru-śiṣya paramparā* for the blessings and knowledge that grace our lives. It is an important observance for Chinmaya Mission members worldwide. This year, *Guru Pūrṇimā* fell on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, and many CMSD members and their families gathered in the evening at Chinmaya Nivas to attend the *Guru Pādukā Pūjā*, which was followed by *ārati* and *prasāda*. A special treat followed the celebration – members listened to *Shekhar Sen*'s moving audio biography of *Swami Vivekananda*, whose *mahāsamādhi* day was July 4<sup>th</sup>. The special relationship between Swami Vivekananda and his *Guru* Ramakrishna Paramahansa, came alive through the lilting music, warm dialogues and eloquent speeches in this wonderful mono-act play.

## **Sevaks focus on re-vision and re-dedication**

by *Venu Babla and Anu Rajasekaran*

On August 25, and again on September 8<sup>th</sup>, before the start of the new CMSD year, *sevak-s* and *sevikā-s* attended the CMSD *sevak* training at Chinmaya Nivas conducted by *Smt. Lakshmi Sukumar*. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the meaning of *sevā*. The teachers' training conducted on August 19<sup>th</sup> also addressed this very important topic.

### **What is *Sevā*? Why *Sevā*? Who is a *sevak*?**

“Love in Action” is a beautiful and apt definition of *seva*. A *sevak* may be satisfied in his life as a whole, but an attitude of gratitude is the right propellant for service. *Seva* is selfless work done for the greater good, and without expectations. Selfless work is done out of love, and is a means for one's own growth and happiness. It is the highest form of selfish work sanctioned by our scriptures. Therefore, a *sevak* must be first a *sādhaka* (one who is sincerely on the path to Self Unfoldment).

*Seva* is not doing a specific action, but an attitude that pervades the action. The *seva bhava* is one that considers work as worship; that feels it is a privilege to serve the Lord and His manifest world, and that dedicates all service to the Lord.

### **How to do *Sevā*?**

A *sevikā* is clear in her purpose for doing *Sevā*. She is committed to the cause for which she is working in the areas of her expertise. She is sensitive to the needs of those she is serving, and does her work with cheer and enthusiasm. She feels privileged to serve and does not take this responsibility lightly. Serving with utmost attention, and the understanding that she is only an instrument, brings her mental peace and fulfillment in her work. Her calm and peaceful mind is thus prepared for spiritual Unfoldment.

*Gandhiji* said, “There is not a single moment in a person's life where one cannot serve.” At CMSD, there are opportunities abound for all those who are available and want to serve with *sevā bhāva*. Serve... We can, We must.

## **Sundarakāṇḍa Pārāyaṇa**

The **Sundarakāṇḍa Pārāyaṇa** for **Chinmaya Jyoti** was started in April 2008 on *Srirāmanavami* at Chinmaya Nivas (the Sukumar family residence) and is continued every month at the home of our member families.

Host families in the past months were:

July 2012 – *Meera and Vilas Shukla*

August 2012- *Kalpna and Arvind  
Gidwani*

September 2012- *Mudita and Nishith  
Chaubey*



Chaubey family performing the *Hanumān Pūjā* before the *Sundarakāṇḍa Pārāyaṇa*

## **CMSD in the Community**

### **Karma yoga and parenting: Conscious Parenting workshop**

With contributions from *Venu Babla* and *Sumathi Iyengar*

The workshop on conscious parenting entitled “**Guidance from the Gita—Karma Yoga in Parenting**” drew over 30 participants at the JCC on Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>.

The workshop began with a presentation by Smt. Lakshmi Sukumar on the principles of *karma yoga* and how they apply specifically to parenting. After a short refreshment break, the participants divided into groups for discussion of parenting challenges and applying the principles of *karma yoga*. This was followed by an in-depth Q & A by Lakshmi.

The main questions for one on the path of *karma yoga* are:

- What *karma* should one do?
- With what attitude should it be done?

The Gita says that first one has to do her ordained duties, with equanimity of mind. She should do the work enthusiastically, do it well, and do it without attachment to the result. ‘Without attachment to the result’ means one



should not let happiness be contingent on a specific result, since many factors other than ‘me’ affect the outcome. In due course, one sees herself as an instrument and offers all her actions as worship of the Lord. The ultimate gain is a peaceful mind, ripe and ready for self-knowledge.

### Parent-child relationship

Lakshmi explained that before birth each *jīva* chooses its parents to exhaust its *vāsanā-s*. It is important to understand that the parent must fulfill his/her purpose just as the child has to fulfill his/her purpose. The role of the parent is analogous to that of a gardener, where the parent’s duty is to provide the right environment that is conducive for the seed to grow.

Khalil Gibran’s poem beautifully explains that “Your children are not your children...

They come through you but not from you..

During the workshop it became evident that child upbringing is more than passing on the key aspects of Indian culture to our children. They need to be equipped with values that will enable them to succeed as good citizens *globally*.



Lakshmi nailed down this point at the workshop, and pointed out the only effective way that it could be achieved – by being good role models to our children.

Lakshmi brought to our attention that what we do for our children – be it tying their shoe laces, preparing their lunches, or spending hours at their soccer practice or even giving them a patient listening ear when they come home tired from school - we must do it with the same attitude as serving the Lord. In the same way, we must also dare to say NO to them. Saying ‘no’ is in fact often more important, as it chisels their behavior and choices for their future. Often parents and teachers are afraid to

say no to the whims and fancies of the child. This should not be the case. We must say NO with conviction when the child is insisting for something we know is incorrect. This is serving the Lord in the child, not the child in itself. However in order to be a good judge of what is right and what is wrong as parents, we must improve our understanding and knowledge of the scriptures.

Simple, yet profound guidelines, structured in the spelling of PARENTING, were provided.

Being a parent is the most challenging, yet the most important role that we play--the principles of *karma yoga* give us the clear vision of the role and how to play it well.



Participants provided feedback after the workshop on their take-home message, and these are excerpted below:

“Teach this to ourselves and the kids: Have faith at all times. Lord will come to your rescue, he’s right there.”

“Intelligent involvement and never give up!”

“Be clear about our values as parents and have conviction and humor to put these values forward”

“Parenting is a responsibility. Be “conscious”.”

“Applying *vedanta* to parenting, particularly how to practice *prasada buddhi* in child upbringing.”

“A must go...eye opener!”

“Parents achieve spiritual growth by raising children”

“Leading by example is the best way to teach a kid”

“How to listen to what kids are saying and what they are not saying”

“Keep guiding without expectation with open mind and tailored to the child”

“Standing up for the right thing can make you unpopular in the short term, but kids will listen and learn from it in their own time.”

“Do not measure their success as a means to measure your parenting skills. They are God’s kids, not our kids.”

“Your own spiritual growth is important for your child’s upbringing”

## A Visit to CORD Sidhabari

by *Sarath Pathuri*, Grade 12

Words such as ‘beautiful’ and ‘magnificent’ fail to describe the grandeur and majesty of Sidhbari, a small village in the state of Himachal Pradesh in North India. It is an area bathed in lush, terraced rice fields, which not only create a stunning topographical mosaic, but are also surprising in their irrigation efficiency. The Dhauladhar mountain range of the Himalayas form the northern boundary of Sidhbari and stand tall and magnificent with their peaks forever bathed in snow. During my two week stay in the Sidhbari Ashram of Chinmaya mission, my roommates and I would wake up to this breathtaking view of fields and mountains and be caught in awe every morning.



**CORD volunteers on the last day of their stay with Kshama Didi**

Sidhbari with all its beauty and elegance has many human problems. Some of the problems are: discrimination or abuse of physically and mentally disabled children and adults, female abuse, alcoholism, legal disputes between parents and wives, and lack of sanitation which causes illness. The Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development (CORD), is a non-profit organization that addresses such problems in Sidhbari, and all across India. This summer, I along with 24 other high school children from various Chinmaya centers from the U.S got to experience the reality of these problems with the help of the CORD workers.

A typical day at CORD consisted of getting up early in the morning, attending *aarathi*, spending time in self-study and then having breakfast. After that we would take off into the field with our CORD guide into either CBR

(Community Based Rehabilitation) or CBL (Community Based Livelihood) projects. A day of CBR would consist of our group traveling to the homes of the disabled local people. We would talk to the parents or relatives of the disabled child or adult by asking questions on how they were impacted socially, financially and mentally. For example, we went to the house of a mentally retarded child whose name was Rajat and there we asked his family about how they coped with Rajat's disability and what they saw in the future for Rajat. The mother with tears in her eyes told us that she loves her son the way he is and holds no regrets since god had given him to her and so she considered it a blessing. My words are incomparable to the way she spoke as she spilled out her hearts' love for her son in a few sentences of Hindi. Moving as that was, Rajat's accomplishments were also equal in scale. Rajat was a champion in the Special Olympics for the disabled children and has traveled to different states to participate in competitions always managing to place in the top three. Rajat's successful social integration and accomplishment can be traced back to 2 sources. They are CORD and his mother. CORD has given Rajat the rehabilitation he needed. And his mother's love created a strong pillar of support for Rajat, saving him from a life of abuse and despair. Such interviews were very saddening but inspirational and always left me awestruck of how much potential every person has within his or herself.

Apart from CBR days were CBL days. On a typical CBL day we would travel to successful farms, silk worm factories and dairy plants. One of my most memorable CBL experiences was rice planting. We would plant rice for a whole day while standing in knee high pools of water mixed with cow manure and mud. I was utterly scared as there were many water snakes (harmless), jumping spiders and many other critters. Letting go of those fears took great strength but a day of farming was even more scary. The muddy water was almost like quicksand as we would always get stuck, fall into the mud and have someone help us out of the mud. The actual act of planting rice for a mere 3-4 hours was painful work as our backs ached at the end of the day. Looking back on it I am glad I went through that painful but unique experience.



**Volunteers with young girls in Yuvathi Samudh demonstrating sanitation practices**

Some of the most self-transformative experiences at Sidhbari for me personally were my interactions with the CORD workers trained by Kshama Didi. Kshama Didi, also known as Dr. Didi, is a world-renowned humanitarian who is in charge of CORD. She has turned CORD into a unique organization that addresses Sidhbari's problems in unique ways. Some of her methods are: empowering without sliding into self-esteem-draining welfare, focusing on the ability within the disability, socializing not institutionalizing the disabled, self-sufficiency through entrepreneurship, and pragmatic goal setting. Many of the CORD workers are experts in solving problems with these methods thus making CORD very successful. Many of the workers are people of the local community themselves who have faced the same adverse problems and circumstances. They have started to work for CORD out of a genuine desire to help other and give back to their community. The fact that some of the female workers at CORD were victims of alcoholic abuse, social torment and other such problems, and are yet able to give back to those who need their help is truly inspiring. The workers are some of the happiest people I have ever seen. They know that they are doing *Swami Chinmayananda's*

work and no other work can be more meaningful than theirs. I was truly humbled and inspired by the workers of CORD as they exemplify the ultimate Dharma which is to give back to society however much you can.

Another inspirational experience that the other high school students and I had was through *Kshama Didi* herself. Didi told us a story about one of her first accomplishments at CORD. During her first days in Sidhbari, Didi visited a family where the young adult had a disability which paralyzed his lower body. Embarrassed of this disability and looked at as a social stigma by his family he was hidden for 15 years in a dark room where all he saw was the ceiling. The young man had never seen the surroundings of his house nor the sun and was seriously frail. Discovering this horrific situation Didi became enraged and decided to take matters into her own hands. She brought the man out of the house and helped him sit up. She then worked for the next two years improving the man's mental and physical conditions with so much effort that now the same man is married with two children and even has a government clerical job. Such achievements by Didi really showed me what one's higher calling can accomplish and how others can be benefitted by a little help.

The CORD trip I had gone on this summer will probably be one of the most valuable experiences ever. I thank my parents for providing me this wonderful and transformative opportunity which I could not have guessed ever existed. Those of you who are planning to visit Sidhbari should expect to have one of the most valuable times of your life and prepare to be blown away by the accomplishments of Didi, the workers and CORD.



**CBR worker Madhu helps Palak with her daily exercises to strengthen her muscles so that she can walk properly**

## Our New members Speak

CMSD 2012-13 session has started with 42 new families and 56 new children this year for a total of 188 member families and 274 children in the Bala Vihar and Yuva Kendra classes. Seven CHYK members assist in the Bala Vihar classes and also mentor our high school students.

This is what some of our new members say about their experience...

"I feel that the CMSD organization was the missing piece of the puzzle to our family in order to instill hindu values, indian culture, and spirituality in our daughter and also us - the parents!"

- Shila Shah

"The focus on study and discipline at CMSD has helped strengthen my convictions and is giving me renewed enthusiasm and confidence to achieve the goals I set for myself. Thank You CMSD!"

- Meera Mulchandani

"The teachings of the mission are logically irrefutable that they have made me think and question everything that I do."

- Siddharth Mulchandani

"CMSD provides a very organized and disciplined approach to guide our children in following the path of dharma. It is our responsibility as parents to teach and encourage them to always do the right thing. CMSD is a means to help facilitate this path."

- Babita Sethi

The assembly, recital of shlokas and mantras and stories are all presented very well and make it a very fulfilling experience.

We are happy to be a part of the family and hope to make this our new way of life and extend it beyond Sunday mornings. - Akhila Mangesh

Gurudev came to our house in the form of Vivekachudamani DVD. We watched the DVD, ever since we looked for the mission in San Diego and have been now involved in the mission, study groups. I was a avid Monday night football watcher, now I spend my time with Monday night Study Group, and very happy about it"

- Javanti Bhai Patel

Ever since we have started coming to Balavihar, we now have a very peaceful and organized Sundays. My husband and kid get ready promptly for the Balavihar on Sunday mornings. Our son is now very much interested in Hinduism, he is researching more on the topics discussed in the class. He downloaded the Slokas and listens to them." -Hema Subburaman



## **Bhagavad Gītā Chapter 3 - Karma Yoga**

by *Faith Prasad*- August 2012

This is the first time I have thoroughly gone through any chapter in *Gita* and I am glad that I have gone through chapter 3 because it is very important to have this knowledge as a Bala Vihar *Sevika*. Important because it reminds me that while ‘the doing’ must be done, it is the attitude with which I do my *seva* that is important. What I appreciate about *Gita* is that *Arjuna* asks questions that we all have and Lord *Kṛṣṇa* gives the answer.

This chapter is very nicely organized and very complete in its explanation. First, having being born, we must act, so *karma* is unavoidable. Then which *karma-s* should be done are covered – which is the obligatory duties in our life, not just anything we like to do. The attitude should be one of *yajña* spirit. *Yajña* spirit means one acts with a higher ideal in mind, for benefit of the greater community. Now, this is the basic understanding of *karma yoga*, but the chapter doesn’t end here. The Lord explains that those who understand this teaching and follow it will of course benefit; but those who follow faithfully without a full understanding will also benefit. However, those who choose to not follow and find fault in spiritual knowledge will destroy themselves. Here, I, like probably most other spiritual seekers, feel relieved that though it will take time for this knowledge to completely pervade me, yet, with faith and continued effort I will reach the final goal.

Next *Arjuna* asks, why is there a gulf between what we know and what we do? Lord explains that man’s behavior is not always in line with his knowledge because of his inner tendencies (*vāsanā-s*) and that self-effort is needed to remove the gap. So here we must first be aware of our tendencies, then not get carried away by them and slowly will we learn to be master over ourselves and not our senses over us. “So while you are working on overcoming these likes and dislikes remain steadfast in YOUR duties and YOUR duties alone. If you keep focused on what you have to do then you will also benefit.” My understanding here is that even though I have not fully realized what *vāsanā-s* I have, I am grateful that some of these *vāsanā-s* have brought me to this path, while others still give me problems. I must continue to do MY duty in the prescribed way and rise beyond the negative *vāsanā-s*.

Lastly *Arjuna* asks, why does man compromise and not lead an ideal life? The Lord tells that desires are the root of our troubles and that we must tackle this enemy on all levels from the sense level to the mind level. Desire clouds our right knowledge and we must control ourselves by ourselves to overcome desire and fully surrender ourselves to only that which is higher than intellect—to the Lord. Here I am reminded about our discussion during *Devi* group that the regular re-alignment provided through *satsaṅga* is what will help us.

“Do everything you do with the attitude of gratitude and with your mind fully engaged and surrender yourself to the Lord.”

## **Karma Yoga - Based on Bhagavad Gitā – Chapter 2**

by *Lakshmi Sukumar*, July 2000

Every embodied soul, willingly or unwillingly, is ever engaged in action. Animals and other beings act prompted by their instincts which are governed by nature. Hence their actions do not lead them to bondage. Human beings, on the other hand, perform actions prompted by their desires based on their likes and dislikes. Their motivation to act lies in the understanding that the worldly things and beings can provide them with happiness. This in turn leads to bondage. An action performed with a sense of doer-ship is called *karma*.

*Yoga* (from *yuj-* to unite) means union. Here it represents the union of the individual self (*jīvātma*) with the eternal (*paramātma*). Thus *karma yoga* is that action which when performed with an attitude of worship frees the doer from bondage and unites with the supreme goal.

In the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gitā*, *Karma yoga* is also referred to as *Buddhi yoga* because the action arises from the intellectual conviction that he/she is a servant of the Lord. The emphasis lies on the understanding and attitude towards the action than the action itself. It is the motive behind an action that determines whether an action is meritorious (*puṇya*) or not.

***Karma Yoga purifies the mind and prepares the seeker for Self-Knowledge/Self-Realization. Karma Yoga is the bridge between Ignorance and Self-Knowledge.***

### **The evolution of Karma to Karma Yoga**

The evolution of *Karma* to *Karma Yoga* constitutes the development of the various aspects of the intellect namely *kartavya*, *samatva*, *asangatva*, *samarpaṇa* and *prasāda*.

### **Action with an attitude of worship - kartavya buddhi**

Work is done in the present moment whereas results come in the future. An ignorant man performs actions prompted by his selfish desires (*rājasic* and *tamasic*), motivated by an expected result, upon which his happiness depends. He is unable to focus on the present moment due to worries of the past and anxieties of the future. His actions suffer due to the absence of his total presence. There is wastage of efforts, and incorrect actions lead to *pratyavāya doṣa*.

**“Disappointment comes to those who make appointment with the future.” – Swami Chinmayananda**

A karma yogi performs actions as enjoined on him, with an attitude of service/worship of the Lord, just as a mother would serve her family without any expectations. This leads to purification of the mind - *cittaśuddhi*. The *karma yogi* rises above his likes/dislikes-*rāgadveṣa*, and remains in the present moment. While an ignorant man postpones his happiness (as it is based on the results), the wise man enjoys the immediate sense of fulfillment and contentment regardless of the consequences of his actions. This is inspired living.

**“An ignorant man works for joy; a wise man works out of joy.” – Swami Chinmayananda**

### **Equanimity of Mind - samatva buddhi**

An ignorant man is happy as long as the results of his actions meet his expectations. But, that happiness is short-lived because he becomes greedy. On the other hand, if the expected results are not gained, he is overcome with anger and delusion leading to sorrow. He is ever riding on a roller coaster of joys and sorrows, which appear very real to him. The mind, ever in a state of flux, knows not peace.

The karma yogi, with a vision of equality (*samadr̥ṣṭi*) sees all beings as expression of the one Lord. His understanding, power of discrimination and emotions do not waver in happy and sad, favorable and unfavorable situations. He

recognizes the joys and sorrows of the world as fleeting pleasures, and does not identify with them. With his intellect established in the Supreme Truth, he does not allow himself to be overpowered by his emotions. He knows that **“Continuous change alone is the changeless law”**. He rises above situations –*dvandvātīta*.

**“Don’t put the key to your happiness in someone else’s pocket.” - Swami Chinmayananda**

**Detachment**- *asaṅgatva buddhi*

An ignorant man suffers from the sense of ownership of his work, people, power and possessions. He is unable to let go of these things because he believes that his happiness and security depend upon them. The need for these objects of happiness arises from his identification with body, mind and intellect. He is ever engaged in acquiring these objects of happiness and safeguarding them (*yoga* and *kṣema*).

The *karma yogi*, as a servant of the Lord, has no sense of ownership of his work and also the results.

He is the instrument in the hands of the Lord. He develops a total sense of detachment and rises above *rāga* and *dveṣa* because they do not pertain to him. When such a person acts in the world, without any agitation of the past and the future, the quality of his work in the present is maximized due to non-dissipation of energy, resulting in the most efficient action.

**Surrender** - *samarpaṇa buddhi*

The *karma yogi* dedicates his work to the higher altar of worship and thus surrenders his sense of doership. The ego “I”-*aham bhāva*- is substantially weakened. The *Karma Yogi* evolves into a *Bhakti Yogi*. He surrenders to the will of the Lord.

**“Do your best, leave the rest.” – Swami Chinmayananda**

**Peace of mind** - *prasāda buddhi*

The *karma yogi* has no insistence on results. He knows that the result of any action depends upon a number of factors that are beyond his control. The only factor that is under the jurisdiction of the worker is his own attitude and quality of work. Having done his best, he accepts the results with reverence seeking no modification of it. The ego “Mine” –*mama bhāva*- is surrendered.

The *karma yogi* develops total dispassion-*vairāgya*, and fearlessness. He is now a fit student of Self-Knowledge and ultimately merges in the Self.

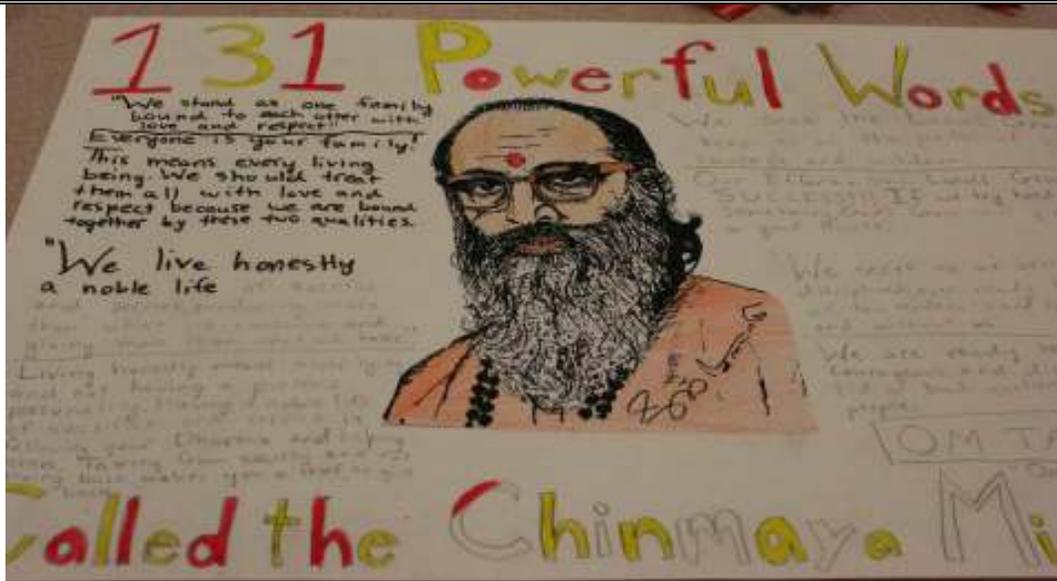
**The evolution of the karma yogi may be described using the following metaphor:**

The rocket (*jīva*) which is space-bound (intellectual conviction of the supreme goal) lifts off from the earth’s gravity (the force of our *vāsana-s* and our desires) accompanied by severe heat and roar (deliberate self-effort required to overcome the force of *rajas* and *tamas*), maintains its momentum, (*nityasattvastha*), in the direction of the outer space (conviction of the supreme goal) and finally transcends the earth’s gravitational field (total dispassion, *vairāgya*). Once in outer space, there is no more any momentum (the *karma yogi* goes beyond *karma*) and remains in the quietude, *śānti* and *ānanda* of the outer space (Self-realization).

**“Through Deliberation attain Liberation”,** said *Buddha*.

*Karma Yoga* is the conscious effort towards Consciousness.





Yashna Rajaratnam-Grade 6

## Chinmaya Mission Pledge –rhymes

by *Lakshmi Sukumar*

### **We stand as One Family**

One World; One Family  
Two words tied closely  
The bond of love and respect holy!

### **We serve as an Army**

As an army we serve,  
Disciplined is our nerve,  
Desires and anger have no place  
When inside we look for solace.  
Fit we are to deliver peace  
With our mind all at ease.

### **We live a Noble Life**

Nobility is the jewel  
We wear upon ourselves  
Sacrificing the lower  
Service becomes higher  
Grateful and content we live to give.  
Live simply we must that others may simply live.

### **We seek the Lord's Grace**

On the path we are to the Truth beyond  
Without His Grace we know we just cannot.

### **We become His Instrument**

Fit we shall become for His Divine work  
Empty we shall be of any selfish quirk.

### **Service of Humanity**

What is serving God, but in the beings around  
For He alone is in one and all.

### **We know our Responsibilities**

Now that we know our purpose,  
Seek from Thee courage and strength.  
For we are available,  
Please make us able.

*An unexamined life is not worth living.*

*- Swami Tejomayananda*

