

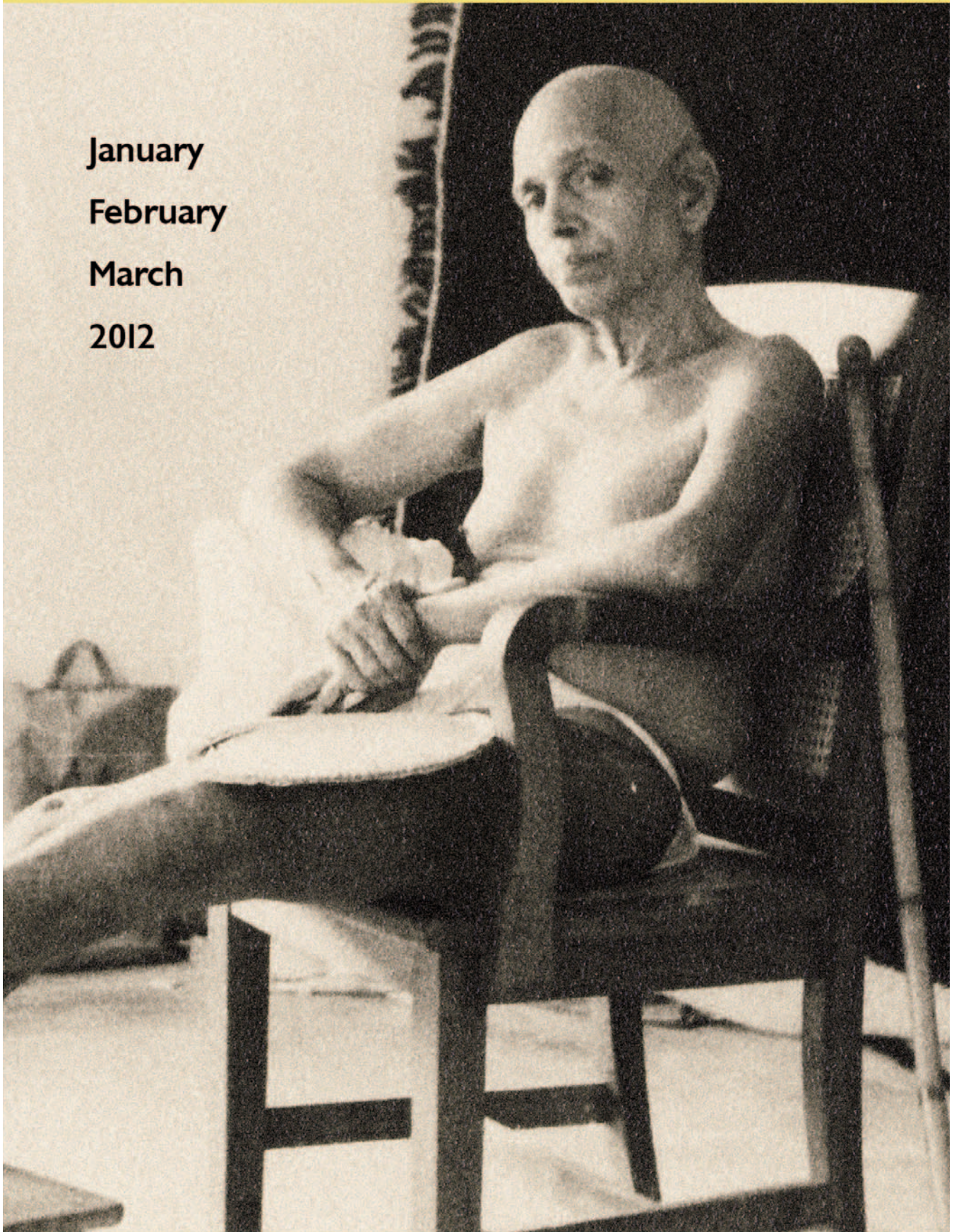
REFLECTIONS

January

February

March

2012



SOCIETY OF ABIDANCE IN TRUTH

Invocation

*I am eternal; I am partless; I am taintless; I am
blemishless,*

And I, indeed, am the complete, perfect fullness.

I am the Truth; I am peaceful; I am the ancient;

I am all. I am the permanent Sambhu.

I am also the pure. I am the mass of Bliss.

I am the free; I am the subtle;

*And I, indeed, am of the nature of the self-
luminous.*

*I am the liberated; I am the Liberation; and I am
the liberator.*

*I am of the nature of the delusionless, superior
Knowledge.*

- Song of Ribhu, 15:32

*... I am unequalled. I am also the unsurpassed
Bliss.*

I am higher than the highest.

I am the Supreme Siva. I am the Supreme Self.

I am of the nature of the Supreme Brahman.

- Song of Ribhu, 15:33

Contents

Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana From <i>Letters from Sri Ramanasramam</i>	1
<i>Immeasurably Vast</i> Satsang, October 23, 2011	5
From <i>The Ramana Way</i>	12
Temple Archives	15
Announcements	37
Upcoming Special Events	38

Reflections, January, February, March 2012
Copyright 2012
Society of Abidance in Truth
1834 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 USA
Ph: 831-425-7287 / e-mail: sat@cruzio.com
web: www.SATRamana.org



The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi

(From *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam*)

June 3, 1946

Japa, Tapa, and the Like

Yesterday, a gentleman came here—a devout brahmin. From his words and from the rosary of rudrakshas around his neck, it was clear that he was practicing mantra japa. He said that he had darshan of Bhagavan once before in Virupaksha cave. Today, going up to Bhagavan, he asked, “Swami, can a continuous japa of Panchakshari or Tarakam absolve one from sin such as drinking alcoholic liquor and the like?” “What exactly is your idea?” asked Bhagavan. The brahmin again asked pointedly, “Even though people commit adultery and theft and take alcoholic drinks and so on, can their sins be wiped out by doing japam with the mantras mentioned above, or will the sins stick to them?”

“If the feeling ‘I am doing japa’ is not there, the sins committed by a man will not stick to him. If the feeling ‘I am doing the japa’ is there, why should not the sin arising from bad habits stick on?” said Bhagavan.

“Will not this punya (result of virtuous acts) extinguish that papam (result of those sinful acts)?” asked the brahmin.

“So long as the feeling ‘I am doing’ is there, one must experience the results of one’s acts, whether they are good or bad. How is it possible to wipe out one act with another? When the feeling that ‘I am doing’ is lost, nothing affects a man. Unless one realizes the Self, the feeling ‘I am doing’ will never vanish. For one who realizes the Self, where is the need for japam?”

Where is the need for tapas? Owing to the force of prarabdha, life goes on, but he does not wish for anything. Prarabdha is of three categories, ichha, anichha, and parechha (personally desired, without desire, and due to others' desire). For him who has realized his Self, there is no ichha prarabdha. The two others, anichha and parechha, remain. Whatever he does is for others only. If there are things to be done by him for others, he does them, but the results do not affect him. Whatever be the actions that such people do, there is no punya and no papa attached to them. But they do only what is proper according to the accepted standard of the world, nothing else," said Bhagavan.

Though Bhagavan told the questioner that for him who realizes his Self there is no ichha prarabdha but only anichha and parechha prarabdha, his usual views about the prarabdhas may be found in his work, Unnathi Nalupadhi.

"The Jnani does not have present, future, and prarabdha karma; to say that prarabdha remains is only a reply to a question. Just as one of the wives cannot remain unwidowed when the husband dies, so also the three karmas cannot remain when the karta is gone."

(The Forty Verses Supplement, verse 33)

June 9, 1946

What Is Samadhi

Bhagavan spent a lot of time this afternoon freely conversing with devotees about many matters and in between teaching them Advaita. Seeing that the conversation was going on without end, a new arrival got up and asked, "Bhagavan, when do you go into samadhi?" All the devotees burst into laughter. Bhagavan also laughed. After a while, he said, "Oh, is that your doubt? I will clear it, but first tell me what exactly is the meaning of samadhi? Where should we go? To a hill or to a cave? Or to the sky? What should samadhi be like? Tell me," asked Bhagavan.

Poor man, he could not say anything and sat down quietly. After a while, he said, “Unless the movement of the indriyas and limbs stops, there cannot be samadhi, they say. When do you go into that samadhi?”

“I see, that is what you want to know. You think, ‘What is this? This Swami is always speaking. What jnani is he?’ That is your idea? It is not samadhi unless one sits cross-legged in padmasana, with folded hands and stops breathing. There must also be a cave near about. One must go in and out of it. Then people will say, ‘This is a great Swami.’ As for me, they begin doubting and say, ‘What Swami is this, who is always talking to his devotees and has his daily routine?’ What can I do? This happened once or twice even before. People who had originally seen me at Gurumurtham cave and then saw me at Skandasramam, talking to all people and partaking in normal activities said to me with great anxiety, ‘Swami, Swami, please give us darshan in your previous state.’ Their impression was that I was getting spoiled. What can I do? At that time (while in Gurumurtham) I had to live like that. Now, I am obliged to live like this. Things happen the way they have to. But in their view, it is enough if one does not eat or talk. Then, saintliness, swamitvam, comes on automatically. That is the delusion people have,” said Bhagavan.

July 5, 1946

What Is Sarvam (Everything)?

(How To See Everything as One’s Self)

For the last three days, a young man who came recently has been worrying Bhagavan with a number of questions without rhyme or reason. Bhagavan was explaining patiently everything in great detail. This morning, at nine o’clock, he started again. “You say everything is one’s own Self? How is one to get that feeling that everything is one’s own Self?”

With a voice indicating displeasure, Bhagavan said, “What is meant by everything? Who are you? If you tell me who you are, then we can think of everything. You have been asking me many

questions for the last few days, but you have not yet replied to my questions as to who you are. First tell me who you are and then ask me what is everything (sarvam). Then I shall reply. If only you try to find out who you are, these questions will not arise. If you don't try that and go on thinking of what next to ask, this will go on like an endless flow. There is no limit to it. There will be shanti, peace of mind, only if one practices Self-inquiry and finds out the truth. If, instead, one inquires about this and that, what is the use? It is all wasted effort."

The young man said again, "To know one's own Self, should there not be a Guru and sadhana?"

"Why do you want a Guru or sadhana? You say you know everything. Why then a Guru? You don't care to do what you are asked to do. What can a Guru do? A Guru's help will be available only if you go the way he indicates. You talk of sadhana. For what purpose? What type of sadhana? How many questions? One must go by one path. What is the use of running about with limitless doubts? Will your appetite be satisfied by your eating food or by others eating their food? What is the use of wasting your time asking about those people and these people or about that or this? You forget yourself and go around the sky and the earth, searching and inquiring, 'What is happiness?' You must first inquire, 'Who am I that am going around and inquiring?' If one thus inquires about one's own Self, no other question will arise," said Bhagavan.

Meantime, another took up the questioning and asked, "How does the jiva acquire karma?"

Bhagavan said, "First find out who jiva is and then we shall find out how karma came. How did the jiva acquire karma? Is that karma allied with jiva or is it at a distance? These are the thoughts. None of these doubts will occur if the mind that is so active outwardly is made to look within."



Immeasurably Vast

Satsang, October 23, 2011

(Silence)

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Truly, your Self is only Brahman—the immeasurably vast, absolute Being. Such a vastness is it that it is actually utterly transcendent of time and space. It is eternal and truly infinite. This alone is your very Existence, and, apart from that Existence or different from that Existence, there is no other existence for you or for anything else.

It is only misidentification that seems to overlook this nature of the Brahman-Self and, through imagination, superimposes the limitations of what is not the Self—what is not Brahman—upon yourself. This does not change your nature; your real Being is immutable. It is never modified at any time, but, due to such illusion, where there is infinite Being-Consciousness-Bliss, there seems to be an “I,” objects, ignorance, and suffering. For whom is such superimposition? Whose ignorance or misidentification is it?

The idea that there is someone for whom it is, is, itself, the misidentification, for, in reality, the Self does not misidentify. In reality, nothing is superimposed upon Brahman. It remains ever just as it is—infinite and perfectly full. So, Sri Bhagavan says that all other thoughts, that is to say, all concepts of differentiation, start with the notion “I.” That “I” is an incorrect assumption, and whatever is based upon it is similarly not true. Any limitation you can image, any kind of bondage that you can conceive for yourself, is based completely on this notion of “I,” while the “I,” itself, is merely an imagined superimposition upon the vast, absolute Existence of Brahman—the real Self.

Ignorance has no substance and no validity, yet belief in it gives rise to the experience of bondage. It is pseudo-bondage, but, when in it, one does not know that. Absence of such ignorance—that is, true knowledge of one’s Self—is liberation from

all of the imagined bondage. How is liberation brought about? It is brought about by Knowledge and by inquiry. No activity of the body, speech, or mind can accomplish this. Knowledge shows what the Reality is and thereby liberates one from the unreal.

How to attain this Knowledge? This, then, is the question. The Knowledge is actually innate, and it will shine in your own experience fully without the least trace of obscuration as soon as the misidentifications are abandoned. So, you inquire into the nature of your very Existence, your very Consciousness. You discern what limitations are being superimposed upon your nature. You know something is a superimposition if it is not eternal. You know that it is a superimposition if it is changeful. You know that it is a superimposition if it results in a sense of limitation or bondage. You know that it is a superimposition if it is anything but the infinite Brahman—Sat-Chit-Ananda—Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Discern such misidentifications and then inquire, “Who Am I?” and realize what you truly are. The moment you fully discern that ignorance is ignorance, it ceases to exist.

Such is the nature of maya or illusion; it has only a seeming existence. The ignorant one, himself, does not actually exist. The ignorant one and his ignorance are both imagined, a product of misidentification or superimposition of what is unreal upon the real. So, they seem as if actual but are not so. The only Reality that actually exists is the Brahman-Self. Inquire in the deepest recesses of your own nature as to what you truly are. Discerning and casting aside each misidentification, you will in turn find the one who misidentifies also to be of the same nature. What exists is one Self—Brahman—and that eternally is just as it is. In this there is the Bliss of immaculate perfection—the immortality of eternal Being. It is the Knowledge of the self-luminous Consciousness. For That, there is no other, no alternative. If you think otherwise, even by a trace, inquire to know the nature of the thinker. Continue to inquire until you know with certainty, beyond any possibility of doubt, that the immeasurably vast Brahman is the only Reality, and that the only Self.

Q.: Thank you, Master. I am curious about something at a lower level that you did not address in your discourse. There is

a spiritual urge that is very beneficial at a stage that I might call “the urge to repair.” It would be something that would be transcended and part of the disidentification, but does it just consume itself if purely followed or is it really actually something to disidentify from? It implies that there is something to repair.

N.: Why do you have that assumption?

Q.: With gross misidentifications, I could consider successfully releasing them as a kind of repair.

N.: So, if there is any sign of imperfection, there is a natural yearning to find perfection or to return to it. It is an intuition of your actual nature, isn't it?

Q.: So, would it consume itself or would it actually have to be let go of consciously?

N.: Trace the feeling to its nature, and then neither side which you have proposed is applicable. If it is an intuition of the innate perfection or the perfect fullness of the Self and that that, indeed, is your natural state, which is why you wish to find it or return to it, or wake up to it, would there be any need to get rid of that? Could it really be said to extinguish itself? Not truly. Yet, it is possible to realize the Truth in which no imperfection needs any repair for it does not exist. If you are limited, you must pull off those limitations, but are you truly limited to begin with? Such an inquiry completely removes the false limitations and furthermore shows that they never actually came to be. So, then, does such desire to be free of limitation—desire for Liberation—get thrown aside?

Q.: Fulfilled would be a better term.

Another Q.: You said that ignorance has no validity. So, I thought, “O.k, let's test that in my experience.” Can I validate ignorance and think that it really exists. So, the place I looked at was the sense of individuality as ignorance. There is nothing that validates that it is actually there. If there is the assumption that it is there, I can attach it to a body or a mind, but that does not validate it. If I look at what is actually there, I find that it just does not have a root, while my Existence has a root. That experience continually validates itself, but there is no reason to vali-

date it as if it were proving something. So, that phrase, “Ignorance has no validity,” like so many things that you say during a satsang, is an entry point to Reality

N.: The “entry” is always a matter of setting aside, or the destruction of, some ignorance. Then, you find that you already are within—where you want to be. Indeed, you are the place itself.

Ignorance has no validity. There is not a drop of truth in any kind of limitation. The seeming solidity of ignorance is entirely borrowed from one’s own Reality. When something imaginary is superimposed upon a substrate, the substrate is the only solid thing there. Any apparent solidity, vividness, or substantiality found in that which is superimposed actually belongs entirely to the substrate, and such does not actually leave the substrate and go into the imagined part. It is just like that with the Self, which is true and ever solid, and ignorance, which is never valid. We should perceive the falseness of ignorance from top to bottom: the falseness and its details, the various names and forms that it appears as, and the falseness of its basis, which is the one who can be ignorant.

Q.: That prompts the question, “Can I be ignorant?”

N.: You can not be ignorant and be Brahman at the same time.

Q.: Because if I look at the “I,” the one that would say that it is ignorant is not another “I.” So, if it is not another “I,” there is just not a second, which is the invalid assumption of individuality.

N.: It seems to assume itself, but that is not possible. The ego or “I” is not truly the knower, which is pure Consciousness. Since it is not the knower, it can neither know other things nor can it know itself. If the ego is the root of ignorance and it cannot know itself and it cannot know anything else—further ignorance—what does that say about the entirety of ignorance?

Q.: The experience says that it is not there. The experience behind it is that “I” is not an experience like an individual “I” is experienced. That is actually experienced like an object. But the experience that knows that there is no ignorance is not an expe-

rience experiencing itself as an object. There is no objectivity in that, so, I think that is why those words I just uttered were said that way. There is something that comes before experience.

N.: The Self is a matter of direct or immediate experience, which is nonobjective. In this, experience and Knowledge are the same thing, and that experiential Knowledge is identical with one's Being. The certainty of it is without comparison. The more deeply you inquire into the one who is ignorant, who is the basis of ignorance, who is the one who appears in the various guises of the names and forms of ignorance, the more you discover that he is absent. There is one Knower, which is of the nature of pure Consciousness. There is one Self. There is not an ignorant self and a true Self. There is no second knowing entity. Consciousness is the only knower. For that One, there is never any ignorance. Another one does not actually exist.

Another Q.: Being and Knowledge are clear. The process of questioning, "Who Am I?" or saying "Not this," is clear. What is not clear is, as we go from that knowledge of the process to the state where we want to be, is that just by practice or is that Grace, or is it a combination?

N.: Yes, all of them. Practice is necessary, but it is by Grace that one practices. The Grace that is needed is already there. It is not to be created anew, but it is ever-existent. If you understand the practice to be one of Self-inquiry, which is making one's vision entirely nonobjective, you understand what needs to be understood. If you pursue such inquiry, all illusions will be burnt up. What now appears as a process is actually the end itself shining in your present state. The end appears as the means. The Knowledge appears as the inquiry. Be sure that, inquiring, you make your vision entirely nonobjective--"Who Am I?"--and stay firmly with that. If you start to think of something else or conceive of the inquiry as a mental process—to quiet thoughts or something similar—you should immediately inquire, "For whom is this view?" "For whom is this idea?" and thereby dive deep to abide as to what the Maharshi refers to as "the Heart," which is the self-existent, quintessential Being.

Another Q.: On Friday night, I was tired. It could be related to some sickness. It is interesting to try to inquire when the men-

tal faculty is not sharp. I'm not sure if it actually makes a difference. In a certain sense, to understand and to retain concepts is harder, but inquiry isn't that. Because I believe, or give credence to the idea of, myself as being thought, I know there are some limitations there.

N.: Do you rely on thought to know that you exist?

Q.: No. I just know.

N.: That interior knowledge of existence is the actual place of inquiry. Physical tiredness, illness, and mental fatigue are inconsequential to the actual inquiry. Be certain that your inquiry is entirely nonobjective and that it does not become any kind of mental practice. It is not a repositioning of one's thoughts, but it is ceasing to misidentify with any thought.

Q.: Yes, the meditation during Friday night was on the simple passage from the Maharshi that the dead are doing fine (laughter) and it's the living [that grieve], so one must destroy the ego, and any outgrowths of the ego as well. I notice the outgrowths and try to take things more inwardly. You mentioned in your discourse to inquire into the Sat-Chit-Ananda and remove the objectivity and misidentifications. It wouldn't matter in what order one does that. Noticing the misidentifications seems to partake of the inquiry already, so, it is all the same thing. You were describing something that happens simultaneously.

N.: The desire to be free, the power that discerns where there is delusion, the light by which one eliminates the delusion and sees his way clear, and the absolute Being that thus remains are all one and the same. Yes, one must kill the ego, but the best way to kill it is to seek it. Finding it to be unreal is complete death. Nothing is as dead as something that never actually came to be. (laughter)

Q.: It's all inverted. What we believe in as life must be questioned. It's just merging, somehow, this reality with the body.

N.: How do such merge? How can we combine the real and the unreal? Such is the so-called combination of the Self and what is not the Self.

Q.: When you first asked that question, I thought maybe there is not a combination, and it's just believed to be a combination, but, is there really a combination? In other words, is there unreality there?

N.: Can you combine the unreal and the real? Is there a real unreal to combine with it? If you keep going in this direction, you ask if the idea of a combination is real or unreal?

Q.: I was thinking that if I were making a recipe and took nonexistent ingredients and threw them into a bowl and mixed them up...

N.: No one is going to be fed that way. (laughter)

Q.: Maybe, if there is something in the bowl already and I mix them up, did I create anything new or different? Essentially, that is what you are saying?

N.: Yes, you've got the recipe. (laughter)

Q.: Yes. That is important to understand. I keep forgetting that though. You keep pointing to that one who forgets, and that one has to be inquired into.

N.: If one forgets his real nature, he has to remember, but how else to remember That except by abiding as That? This being so, there is no actual forgetfulness or remembrance. There are not two. The idea that the Self is remembered or forgotten by another self should be questioned. Earlier, it was mentioned that there are not two knowers. So, an individual can neither remember nor forget. You are not the ego or individual and most certainly not a mind or a body. This Knowledge gets rid of the entire recipe. With this Knowledge, there is not even a bowl in which to put the recipe ingredients. (laughter)

Q.: The cook gets laid off permanently. (laughter)

N.: The cook becomes cooked. (laughter)

Q.: It seems you have merged everything into that recipe. There would not be anything separate in the end.

N.: Your real Self does not mix with anything and a second self has not come to be. Deep inquiry reveals this. Where there

is no second self or ego notion, there is, similarly, no world-
notion, no one bound, and nothing to constitute the bondage.

[Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English of verses
from Brhadaranyaka Upanishad]

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

[Then followed a Tamil recitation from Song of Ribhu, chap-
ter 13]



From The Ramana Way

***The following article appears in the January 2002 issue of
“The Ramana Way,” a monthly publication produced by
the Ramana Maharshi Center for Learning in Bangalore,
India. They have been producing monthly publications
entirely devoted to Sri Ramana and His teaching since the
early 1980’s. Sri A.R. Natarajan dedicated his life and his
family’s life to the cause of Bhagavan Ramana. Sri A.R.
Natarajan was absorbed in the lotus feet of His Master in
2007. His daughter, Dr. Sarada Natarajan continues in his
legacy, keeping the Ramana Maharshi Centre for
Learning and “The Ramana Way” alive for all Ramana
devotees. May the devotion and wisdom from which this
article is written “jump” off the pages and into your heart.
Please visit them at: www.ramanacentre.com***

Spring Time, All the Time

by A.R. Natarajan

According to Ramana, the true nature of the mind is silence.
In the natural state, the mind is unifocussed, totally attentive and
at its full potential. This is because the mind is only an aspect
of the Self in action, the dynamic side of it, consciousness is
characteristic of it. A conversation which a devotee had with
Ramana reads:

D: In the book “Who Am I?” you have said that the heart is the seat of the mind. Is it so?

R: The mind is the Atman.

D: Is it Atman itself or its projection?

R: The same.

One could also refer to Ramana’s instructions to Gambhiram Seshier, at the beginning of the twentieth century. He told him “Mind is in reality only consciousness, because it is pure and transparent by nature. It is spacious, unitary.”

The mind with which we are now functioning is constantly pestered with wanted and unwanted thoughts. Memories of the past sensate experiences sow tendencies which give directional pulls. Sometimes that which one calls “my mind” is very much out of one’s control in the sense that one is unable to ward off unwanted thoughts or one is caught up with obsessive thoughts. Therefore, methods are sought for bringing the mind under control, to hold it in check.

Does it mean that each individual has two minds? One the limited, distracted one and the other integral, unitary and totally attentive? The answer is clearly “No.” The mind is always pure like ether. Just as the atmospheric pollutions do not effect the ether which remains unpolluted, so, too, the pollution of the mind due to its distractions and experience of the past will not change the essential characteristic of the mind which is always pure. Once the habitual outwardness of the mind is tackled appropriately, then the present desire and fear complex of the mind will drop automatically.

In order to go to the root of the matter, one has to remove certain false or incorrect notions. When troubled by too many thoughts, one may think that the goal to be achieved is a thought-free state. On the one hand, people desire it, and, on the other, they fear it because they think that they do not have an experience of our natural state and are consequently afraid of it. We find this kind of doubt and fear in some of the questions which were put to Ramana.

D: Can we think without the mind?

R: Thoughts may be like any other activities, not disturbing the consciousness.

D: I know that one can think remaining forgetful of the physical body. Is it possible to gain that consciousness which is beyond thoughts?

R: Yes, there is one consciousness. It subsists in the waking, sleep and dream states. If it is known, you will be aware of that which is beyond thoughts. The same nagging doubt is seen in questions like, “Does a Jnani have thoughts?”

Here, one would notice that the worry is about thoughts and not about the power to have them, which is really the crux, for there is a mix up between a thought void and a thought-free mind, which is the opposite of the uncontrolled mind. The essential question about the nature of the mind is not even posed.

Ramana points out that each day in deep sleep we do not have thoughts. Why should we, therefore, fear a state that is free of thoughts? Secondly, he emphasizes that if one looks at thoughts and seeks to control them, erroneously thinking that it would lead to the control of the mind, then he would have missed the wood for the trees. Because all thoughts are for the thinker, the centre of every thought is the thinker. The movement of thought itself is caused by shifting the thinker’s attention to some other thought, from one thought to another. Thoughts have no independent status, and they will move away from the mental horizon the moment the thinker changes his attention to some other thought. Ramana once clarified, “Arranging thoughts in the order of value, the ‘I’ thought is the all important thought. Personality-idea or thought is also at the root of or the stem of all other thoughts, since each idea or thought arises as somebody’s thought.”

Any method which tries to minimize thoughts or hold them controlled for sometime would be without a proper foundation. Forceful limitation of thought for particular periods through different modes of spiritual practice would at best be palliatives. They are based on concentration and not on attention. When concentration weakens, the forcefully controlled mind would become uncontrolled again, and the old thoughts would return with reinforced vigour. There can be no lasting benefit.

It is in this context that one must understand Ramana's teachings that the peace of mind which we all seek can be found only through understanding the mind and not by controlling it. If one understands the mind right, it would be seen that the mind is centered now on the individual 'I' thought. It would also be seen that in deep sleep this 'I' thought is nascent. Understanding the nature of the 'I' thought by questioning its source, its centre, alone can lead to the result sought because one would be rightly directed. This enquiry into the source of the mind is called self-enquiry, or enquiring into the nature of the individual to whom all thoughts relate. According to Ramana this is the only infallible means for being restored to the natural state of the silent mind.

Based on his experience, Ramana indicates the source to be the spiritual heart from which the notion of 'I' rises on waking and into which it subsides in sleep. This source is the fullness of consciousness. Thereafter, thoughts will arise depending upon the need. They will cease when their purpose is over. There will not be any carry forward of thought for there is no need to find pleasure outside when one is immersed in joy. The mind's natural silence is undisturbed by the pulls and counter pulls of the mind with its endless seeking. Happiness in its fullness would have been discovered. Each moment would be fresh and invigorating. For then one has crossed the time barrier. A life lived in the present blooms. It is spring time all the time.



From the Temple Archives

[This is a message from a SAT member who resides at a distance from the SAT Temple addressed to Sasvati and Nome. It has been edited to delete medical details. Nome's response follows.]

September 5, 2011

Dear Beloved Ones,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Rānānaya

Namaste. It was a wonderful thing to be there for so many beautiful events. Thank you both for your kindness, your instruction and your help at all levels. I feel the deep impact of the retreat. It's a blessing to be in the Presence of the wise. I really know that. Again, thank you.

[Name omitted] has been sick since I returned...

The teaching is precious, you both are precious, and I am forever grateful that you are with me. Your care and love are deeply felt and appreciated. The atmosphere at the temple is truly amazing, the devotees are like family. It is most helpful to have a spiritual environment so supportive of practice.

All my love to you both.

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Rāmanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. The experience of being in holy company at the temple and imbibing spiritual instruction is sure to continue shining within you, especially if you continue to practice deeply.

Please convey our best wishes to [name omitted] for his speedy recovery. The body is transient and subject to ills, but the Self is eternal and is transcendent of all. One who knows this remains at peace, undisturbed by what may befall the body. The perfect fullness of the Self ever exists. This perfect fullness is also known as Grace.

May you, by the power of deep devotion and the revelation of knowledge, ever abide as the Self, of the nature of immortal Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This message came from seeker who has never been to SAT. Nome's response follows.]

September 4, 2011

Dear SAT (or Nome),

I am having a little trouble trying to cut off the enjoyment during eating. I want to remove all external enjoyment, as I find that this enables me to experience the inner clarity of self-consciousness with greater ease. Enjoyment during eating seems to be a problem for me. For regular foods, I try to eat them cold, or mix them with bitter ingredients to kill the taste, but when it comes to fruits, I cannot really "kill the taste" of fruits. Also, I find that fruits greatly increase sattva-guna, so they are helpful to eat. But, how to remove all sensual enjoyment while still satisfying the body's requirements? Should I try to read a book of Bhagavan's teachings while eating? Or, is it better to practice self-attention as intensely as possible while eating, so that I am not conscious of eating, and the mind cannot go out through the taste-sense?

I appreciate your help. This is a little strange, but I am well aware that if the tongue is conquered, the body-identification is much easier to shed.

Sincerely,

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

As Sri Bhagavan and Adi Sanakaracarya have made completely clear in their spiritual instruction, Liberation is of the nature of Self-Knowledge and not a product of action. Therefore, transcendence comes with detachment and not by a rearrangement of sensations or the objects of the senses. Rather than contend with the tastes of various foods, it would be far wiser to inwardly determine the real source of happiness. Such discernment regarding the real nature of happiness is the true root of detachment. A simple lack of culinary skill is not to be equated with wisdom and does not automatically grant peace.

You may also find it to be beneficial to reflect deeply upon the actual spiritual instruction bestowed by the Maharshi, for you may find that it is much more joyfully freeing than interpretations based on misidentification with the body and the senses. Attempts to “kill the taste of food” cannot possibly yield blissful immortality, but Self-Realization does. The nature of that Realization is Self-Knowledge, which is found by Self-inquiry.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This is a response to a seeker who attended satsangs and wrote a message about his experiences of “ajna cakra (third eye)” during meditation.]

September 6, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Such experience as you have described regarding this cakra is not uncommon. It may be associated with previous practices or may occur spontaneously. Whether it occurs or not, inquire to know yourself, for subtle experiences are not the finality, but Self-Knowledge is.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This message is in the form of a written prayer, bearing the title “Love” in the subject line, and is followed by Nome’s response.]

September 6, 2011

Subject: Love

Namaste Master Nome,

I just want to love you, my lord. This is all I ask for now, just let me love you. Silence my mind, take me away, and let me love you. All else is but too much anxiety.

No more worries, no more doubts, no more fear, no more life or death, no more selfishness, no more pride, not else, just this sweet love alone. Let me die here. Let me live here. Let me dance here eternally.

I've missed the point for so long. I've walked in anxiety for ages. Now, I seek repose and rest in your love. Pray, here my cry, and let me love you with a pure heart.

No room for me, no room for them, no room for this, just love. Just you. What can be sweeter than this?

A cold heart is too much of a burden. Thinking about anything else is too much of a struggle. Wanting anything else is full of too much misery. Doing anything else is full of too much anxiety. Simple and sweet is your love, simple and sweet is your grace, simple and sweet are you. Please, my lord, take up residence in my heart and mind.

This world is full of misery, sadness, struggle, fear, anger, desire, all of which darken the eyes and cover the heart. This is death. Let me no longer live in this, but live in you. This is true life.

Forgetting the past, forgetting the future, forgetting myself, let this love sweep all away. Let this Love dance in itself, by itself, for itself, eternally.

Tired am I, lord, beat down am I, aching all over from the anxiety of myself. This burden is too much. There must be another way. An effortless way. A way full of love and peace. A way full of you and you alone. For the struggle of myself, is but the struggle of misery. Can you alight the way in my heart, I pray, can you?

I look to the past and feel only pain, I look to the present and see only struggle, I look to the future and see only hopes in vain full of impermanent results. Where is shanti? Where is the long-desired love?

All that I seek, all that I desire must reside in you, and must flower in my heart. Can this really be done? Can I, one who has been wrapped up in himself for ages, thinking he has a way in

this dance of you, thinking there is space for him in all that is you, thinking there is a purpose for him in this game that is yours, can I?

Please, on my knees I beg, I cry, I surrender, free me of my ways and let me just live in love. In you.

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Just as effort in meditation is never in vain, sincere prayers for increased devotion never go unanswered. That for which you strive, upon which you meditate, to which you devote yourself, in which you truly abide, and which you truly are is the ever-existent Self, the sole-existent Reality. Practicing, inquiring, in light of this, you will realize freedom and unceasing bliss.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This is a response to a message from a SAT member who had written about surrender and some problems between her neighbor's dog, or at least the dog owner, and her own.]

September 6, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for both of your messages.

Yes, surrender yields peace. Be sure that the surrender is the dissolution of the false ego-notion in devotion to that which is the Absolute. This brings deep discrimination between the real and the unreal and detachment toward the illusion. Mere resignation to transient circumstances is temporary, lacks depth, and is no substitute for actual Self-inquiry or devotion.

Such devotion does not preclude taking action to better a situation, but it does yield freedom from the misidentification as a performer of action and nonattachment to the results of action.

I hope that all comes out right for all of the dogs, and their handlers, involved.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A Ramana devotee in India wrote about her father's illness, which she described as not serious but causing fear and asked how to overcome the fear. This is Nome's reply.]

September 15, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

As long as there is misidentification of the Self with the body, there is likely to be fear associated with its decay, becoming infirm, growing old, and eventual death. Sri Bhagavan has clearly revealed that the Self is not a body. Realizing that this is so by deep Self-inquiry, one destroys the imagination, or ignorance, that is the very basis of the fear.

Even if the symptoms are such as to naturally make the mind more attentive to them or given to more consideration as to how to heal the illness, one can still remain without fear or other suffering by absorption in this Knowledge of the bodiless nature of the Self.

Thus, if one is transcendent of the body so as to be able to meet serious illness or even death with peace, less serious sickness will certainly present no problem.

Please convey my best wishes to your father. May you ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self, of the nature of eternal Being-Consciousness-Bliss, and thus dwell in happiness and peace all ways.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A seeker wrote a message in which he described his practice of Self-inquiry and that he is a college student, expressing

his concerns over his parents' response to his reduction of activity and attending only the minimum classes and attempting to maintain solitude in his apartment. This is Nome's response.]

September 18, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

It is good that you have taken an interest in Self-inquiry, for it is in Self-Knowledge that lasting peace and happiness are found. Knowledge is not to be equated with a particular action, inclusive of the action of inactivity. Action of any kind, whether considered moving nor unmoving, is only of the body. Freedom from the misidentification with the body, which includes freedom from the idea of being the performer of action, is essential for Self-Knowledge. The Self is the same whether the body is inactive or active and does not depend on any action or inactivity in order to be itself. One who knows this remains identified with the Self and no longer imagines that he is bound by activity even though his body may be engaged in action. You may find it helpful to reflect upon this.

What others may opine regarding your spirituality is not particularly significant, just as your opinions about the spirituality of others would not be of any significance. What is important is that you find the interior wisdom that yields freedom from imagined limitation and the revelation of the Self, which is Brahman, within.

Your determination to remain completely honest and to intensely pursue Self-Realization by profound inner inquiry will certainly bear fruit.

May you, deeply inquiring to know that which you truly are, which is of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self and, thereby, dwell in happiness and peace always.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A SAT member again wrote on September 19, 2011 regarding her experience of her husband's ill-health and impending surgery. In the message, she wrote:

Dear Beloved Ones,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your concern and kindness. [name omitted] surgery will be delayed until October 26...

I see that the serious nature of this surgery is bringing up issues, fears etc. I am trying to use this as an opportunity to deepen my meditation on the Real, and attempt to stay more focused on the Eternal. Thank you for your strong Presence in this life. That Presence is healing the fears and it is most precious in my heart.

I know [name omitted] was looking forward to attending Satsang. I also know association with the Wise is a blessing for the entire family.

All my love to you both,

[This is Nome's response.]

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Yes, fears, etc. arise for the spiritual aspirant for the purpose of her finding the deep resolution for such. The Self that you truly are is the Self of all. It is never separated from itself. Unborn, it is imperishable. This eternal Self transcends the limited body and its conditions. By Grace and by dissolution of the false ego with its idea of being body-bound, know this Self to be your only self, and, with joy, see the disappearance of the fear as your experience becomes absorption in peace.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A seeker wrote a lengthy message with several questions that can be inferred from the answers contained in Nome's reply presented here.]

September 25, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. As I currently do not use Skype or Facebook, probably email is the most suitable means of communication. If you ever visit California, you will be very welcome at the SAT Temple.

In as much as your subtle experiences may have prompted you to recognize that the Self is not the body, they may be regarded as having been helpful. With or without such experiences, the innately bodiless Self exists. It would be wise to inquire deeply as to the nature of the one who knows the appearance and disappearance of such experiences and thus realize this Self.

Samsara should be renounced, but what is the samsara? It is only the delusion in one's own mind, and Liberation from that ignorance is found only in the inner Knowledge of the Self and not by outer actions.

One's pursuit of spiritual Truth is beneficial for all.

Steadiness and strength of practice arise within those who earnestly strive with perseverance and who ascertain the actual source of happiness. Continuity of Knowledge shines for those who inquire in a thought-transcendent manner.

What could be more direct than the nonobjective inquiry, "Who am I?" for Self-Realization? In whatever manner you may meditate and search, in the end, you must come to this.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[In a previous reply to the same seeker, Nome wrote:]

If meditation be upon the nature of the meditator, that is, Self-inquiry, abidance in Self-Knowledge is certain, which is immortal bliss.

May your meditations be deep so that you abide as the self-luminous Being-Consciousness-Bliss that you really are.

Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker wrote on September 27, 2011:]

I'm stuck. The answer to "Who am I" seems to be "the brain," since it is pretty much the only non-replaceable organ. You can have a heart transplant and live, etc. But if someone has Alzheimer's, if they have a serious stroke, they disintegrate and die because their brain has been damaged.

Please help me; I want to get past being stuck here. Thank you.

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Though you may regard the brain tissue to be irreplaceable for the body in order that the body may continue to live, there is no need to misidentify with the body or that organ. Real Being is unborn and eternal. It does not begin when the body is born, and it does not end when the body is destroyed. It is bodiless and does not change when the neurons, etc. decay.

If you commence a deep inquiry to truly know the Self, that which is expressed above will become comprehensible for you.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[In reply to a message from a seeker who was attending satsangs, Nome wrote:]

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Yes, if you can discern the source and nature of happiness, with this conviction, you will be able to free yourself

of any binding attachment to anything of the world, and you will, indeed, find yourself endowed with a joyful, intense desire for Self-realization and a heart full of devotion.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A seeker wrote concerning his attempts to practice Self-inquiry and about problems with his marriage. This is Nome's response.]

October 18, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

That you are attempting to practice inquiry is splendid. The inquiry should not be reserved to a particular time, for the Self is ever-existent, and, therefore, Knowledge of the Self ought to be continuous. So, inquiry should become continuous.

When both members of a couple, as one, keep their vision upon the Reality of the Self, maintain their aspiration to the Realization of the Self, hold the Realization of that Truth as supremely dear, draw their love from the depths of the Self and, indeed, love this true Self, dissolve their minds and personal attributes in the course of the inner quest to know the Self, and, in Truth, abide as One as the One Self, the illusory troubles of which you speak do not arise and those that arose previously are gone, never to reappear.

You stated that you are doing all the household work. It seems that she is doing the work that is a livelihood to financially support the family. Whatever be the activity, it can be accomplished while one remains free of the notion that he or she is a performer of action.

May you ever abide in the Knowledge of the egoless Self, as this Self, the very source of love and of the nature of unlimited Bliss, so that you are always at peace.

Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A SAT member had to leave a holy event early due to a burglar alarm at his home. The next day, this message was sent to him.]

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. We were sorry to see you leave early last evening. Hopefully, it was just a false alarm at your house and not a burglar.

Prostrations to the One who steals the ego, who wears no disguise, and who establishes Himself in our true home and does not leave. Seeing Him, we do not raise an alarm, but welcome Him in with open arms and folded hands.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A message from the same SAT member whose husband was ill to Sasvati. The details about some DVDs that would not play corrected have been deleted. Sasvati's response follows.]

October 23, 2011

Dear Sasvati,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for DVDs I received this past week. I have to say this "Talks" was the most profound for me, and the Satsang from Sept. 25th really spoke to me in a very deep way. These were extremely powerful for me. Thank you!

I am grateful that the Dipavali holy event takes place so soon after [name omitted] surgery. He and I would do well to

have our egos disposed of! Any suggestion of how I can participate from the hospital?

In our current state of stress, and living with these unknowns of serious surgery, I see our egos popping up more than ever. I think it's progress to at least see it for what it is and not take it as seriously. Maybe that is progress.

I feel blessed by the Grace and love that I experience. Thank you and Nome for your kindness and care. I will be in touch after the surgery.

All my love to you and Nome,

Thank you so very much for loving kindness and support. I will keep you and Nome posted on [name omitted]'s condition. I appreciate you holding him in your heart.

Oct 24, 2011

Namo Ramana

Dear ,

Namaste!

It is puzzling about the DVDs. Please tell me exactly which ones we should resend.

Sri Ramana says, "If a man considers he is born he cannot avoid the fear of death. Let him find out if he has been born or if the Self has any birth. He will discover that the Self always exists, that the body which is born resolves itself into thought and that the emergence of thought is the root of all mischief. Find wherefrom thoughts emerge. Then you will abide in the ever-present inmost Self and be free from the idea of birth or the fear of death."

Sri Ramana tells us that thought is the root of all mischief. We think we will die and are fearful, when in fact, it is only the body that dies. We think we will go out of existence and are fearful, when in fact, we are the Existence. We cling to thoughts, in the form of memories, hoping they will give us happiness, when in fact, our nature is happiness. We have thoughts that make us feel lonely or fear loneliness, when in fact, the whole universe is contained within us.

Ramana says, "...Why fear death? Death cannot mean non-being. Why do you love sleep, but not death? Do you not think now? Are you not existing now? Did you not exist in your sleep?"

Sri Ramana tell us that Existence, our true nature, never dies.

He says, "...The ego in each one must die. Let him reflect on it. Is there this ego or is there not?" By repeated reflection one becomes more and more fit."

The so-called ego exists only due to non-investigation into the non-reality of thoughts.

Be kind and loving with one another. Grace and love are ever-existent and ever-present. Take Ramana books with you to the hospital. Read them yourself and read them to [name omitted]. Meditate on the non-reality of thoughts.

Our love and prayers are with you both.

With love,

in Sri Ramana,

Sasvati

[Another message from the same SAT member.]

October 27, 2011

Dear Beloved Ones,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your sage advice. [name omitted] read your email too. I think during the past 2 days, I can't say that I have been purposely and thoughtfully focused on the Teaching. However, it is the depth of the Knowledge of the teaching that has kept me calm and peaceful.

{Name omitted} is doing well. I believe the emotional roller coaster he has experienced, as well as the outpouring of love he has received, may bring new levels of openness to his heart.

I can't imagine life without spiritual knowledge, experience

and support. Thank you for giving this life your love, guidance and Grace.

All my love to you both,

[Excerpts from Nome's response to her:]

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. We are very glad to know that [name omitted] is doing well. We hope that his recovery is swift and not too uncomfortable.

Peace is present in faith and reaches its perfect fullness in the deep Knowledge of the Self.

As Sri Bhagavan is ever-existent, so is His Grace. Thus supported by the indestructible, inquire deeply to realize the Truth He reveals so that your happiness and profound peace are full and never-ending. In this Truth, love shines as the indivisibility of Being, and separation is seen as impossible.

Please convey our love to [name omitted].

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[From a SAT member who is frequently at the temple, followed by Nome's response.]

November 2, 2011

Namaste Nome, Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

This body must attend a hospital inservice for our new Electronic Medical Record System this evening so I am unable to be at the SAT Temple. I will meditate as Consciousness, the Screen upon which the universe is projected! Also, [name omitted] is kindly warming [name omitted]'s Prasadam I brought over.

Ever Yours in Truth,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya,

Namaste. Thank you for your message. Yes, you are the unmoving screen of Consciousness that is ever changeless, unaffected by any projected image, neither being born when an image appears nor ceasing when an image disappears. In this Knowledge, remain blissful and at peace.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[Another message from the same SAT member, followed by Nome's reply.]

November 7, 2011

Gratitude and Meditations

Namaste Nome,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

This Heart is spilling over in Love and Gratitude for the Holy Being which The Maharshi/Nome graciously reveals so lovingly and freely. Revealing Existence to Existence is Truth and Bliss. This one continues to read/reflect/meditate/take refuge in Shankaracharya's Vivekachudamani. It being so very potent and pithy, I move slowly then at times quickly, enlivened by the freedom from conceptual thinking, which is Bliss. I encountered an area that requires deeper and more profound meditation in order to liberate myself from bondage. There was worrisome thought concerning the approach of 2 and 3 hour lectures on nursing theory materials, about preparing for it, how it in the past was demanding, etc. The misidentification with the anxious mind then swung into the depressive state which I am much too familiar with and consequently remained disidentified for a longer time than customary! The Maharshis' Grace lifts the veil of illusion to reveal Reality as Existence Consciousness which is my own innate happiness. OM. Love and Gratitude surges.

Ever Yours in Truth,

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Realizing that you are not the performer of action, inclusive of being a speaker, your mind will be free of worry regarding the lectures and such. Grace is always present, and it carries all. Where your love and gratitude surge, there is the knowledge of the Reality as Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. That which the Maharshi reveals, which is that which Sankaracharya reveals, which is that which ever so many sages reveal, is within you. May your meditations be profound so that your very sense of identity remains absorbed in the Self.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This is a response to a SAT member who resides at a distance and who wrote expressing how much she had benefited by her recent stay at the temple and raising some questions about how to retain the experience she loves, thinking and not thinking, and how to deal with “issues.”]

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. As there is such beneficial effect for you in attending satsangs at the Temple, perhaps you could consider if it is possible for you to visit more often. Nevertheless, as your own experience reveals, the Consciousness, which is the Self, is ever existent everywhere and always perfectly full.

The spiritual instruction is not that “one should not try to hang onto an experience,” for the desire to do so actually stems from the deep source of happiness within you. It is far wiser, then, to discern how that which is the essence of higher spiritual experience is actually not an objective experience but is your

own true nature. It is only recurring misidentification that makes it appear as if that ends. The Self is beginningless and endless, is nonobjective, and is peace itself. The very nature of the Self is freedom, and the bondage is merely imagined due to misidentification.

Abidance as the Self is true. Thinking of yourself as otherwise is not true. That which is true is the best. Rather than concern yourself with whether or not there is thought, minimal thought, or no thought, it is wisest to abide in the Knowledge of the Self. For that, the appearance of thought or of no thought is inconsequential. In truth, thought itself is not existent. To have a little or a lot or none of what does not exist amounts to the same thing. Abide in the Knowledge of the Self, which transcends thought and thinker.

If there is an “issue,” as mentioned by you, there is no need to concern oneself with measurements as to how many thoughts about it one is thinking. It is far better to free oneself from the misidentification and attachment that make an “issue” to begin with. Practice discrimination in this way, and you will remain free, and your bliss will remain full.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A message from a seeker, with Nome's response.]

November 6, 2011

Hi,

I am sending this email after having been guided in my meditation to get in touch with Nome. I have been following the Vedantic philosophy and feel greatly guided by Bhagavan in my meditations. I am currently looking for different employment opportunities and one of the astrologers who did a reading for me said that they see me moving to California. Seeing Nome's videos put my mind so much at ease. I was wondering if there is any guidance that you can give me in this challenging time of looking for employment and trusting that a higher power is leading and guiding it.

Looking forward to your reply.

In sincere gratitude,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. Thank you for your message.

It is with joy that we come to know that you are following the Vedanta and are being guided by Sri Bhagavan in your meditations. Certainly, if you visit or move to California, you will be very welcome at SAT Temple.

Always, all are fully within the higher power of the Supreme Lord, who is, in Truth, the Self. In the light of this, remaining free from misidentification of being a performer of action is quite natural.

Knowledge that the source of happiness is within yields complete detachment from all things, activities, and events in the world.

In the Knowledge that one is not the body, the very ideas of being an actor or being in the world cease, leaving one's peace and happiness always undisturbed. This is true even while the body is in the midst of its activities.

May you ever abide in the Knowledge Self, which is of the nature of immovable Being-Consciousness-Bliss, and thus always dwell in peace and happiness.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[From the SAT member whose husband was ill, followed by Nome's reply.]

Monday, November 14, 2011

Dear Beloved Master,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. I missed not attending the retreat. I intended to have a little retreat here, but really most days only managed to

read your most recent SAT post, (over and over again) and found that a precious meditation. It is full of profound teaching!

The mention of cutting the 'knots of the heart', made me think that those knots are the pain held by ego (is that right? There is some relief of that in this life . . . not all done, but at least better now.

The 'Light that sees my mind,' I think that means the formless being. The story that Ramana speaks of in his death experience has always helped me so much with the formless. I see that as his gift of Grace.

Master Nome, I missed not having the opportunity to be with you during this special time. I write to you about these meditations because I feel the deep connection when I reach out to you. You are my very own heart and I love you always.

[name omitted] is still very weak, dizzy and having shortness of breath. I think he is within the normal range of recovery, but I am glad he sees his cardiologist this week.

I hope that you and Sasvati are well.

All my love to you both,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

The "knot of the heart" refers to the ego notion, and the plural form of "knots" signifies the various misidentifications based upon that ego assumption. Indeed, all suffering is due to such. With Self-Knowledge, the ego and these misidentifications are destroyed, for they are found to be unreal, and so the knots are said to be cut. The innate Bliss thus shines without obstruction or veil.

Yes, the Light that is ever shining, which is only One and which knows the mind, is Consciousness, your very Being.

Sri Bhagavan's Realization is limitless Grace for all.

In love, as in Truth, there is no distance.

We hope that [name omitted] recovery continues and that those symptoms subside. Most importantly, we hope that he is full of inner peace.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A seeker wrote with several questions, mainly spiritual in character, that can be inferred from Nome's answers.]

November 20, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. Thank you for your message.

We are glad to know that you have taken a deep interest in the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi. If pursued in earnest, the practice of Self-inquiry surely yields the Knowledge of the Self, which is perfect happiness and peace.

If you cease to misidentify with the body and, therefore, abandon the tendency to conceive of yourself as a performer of action, you will find that your concerns about working and such dissolve.

The differentiation of the universe, the individual, and the Supreme (jagat-jiva-para) delusively appears only so long as the ego notion is assumed. If that notion vanishes, differences, being unreal, also vanish. The ever-existent Reality of the Self alone remains.

Though we are not in a position to provide food and lodging for you, if you nonetheless desire to visit the SAT Temple, you will be warmly welcome. You may also find what is available at the SAT website (www.SATRamana.org) and in the SAT publications to be of spiritual benefit for you.

The bodiless, location-less, world-transcendent Self, of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, is your true abode.

May you ever abide in the Self, as the Self, and thus be ever happy and at peace.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[In response to a message from a SAT member that raised questions about suffering.]

November 20, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Happiness is one's very nature. Suffering is due to being ignorant of it. Though pains and the mortality of the body are unavoidable, suffering on account of such experiences is not necessary.

If there is suffering, it, like everything else, is for the ultimate purpose of the Realization of the Self. However, in the Self, there is neither suffering nor its cause, but only the vast, infinite expanse of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, which is the eternal Reality.

One who sees that the Self has neither birth nor death sees truly. This yields peace that is transcendent of all. Abide as That.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome



Announcements

Thank You...

The selfless service we do here to help maintain the temple is prompted by the love we have in our hearts for this teaching. We do not desire acknowledgement for such. We would, though, like to thank all of the folks who perform service at our temple...

Bob Haber: keeping the bathrooms clean, watering plants, sweeping the walkways & parking lot, cleanup after events, cleaning the temple, set-up for events, general helping out wherever needed; Ryan Shaw: maintaining the temple grounds gardens; Tim Frank: vacuuming & cleaning the temple, cleanup after pujas and retreats, providing meals at retreats; Myra Taylor:

vacuuming & cleaning the temple, providing prasad after satsang & atmotsava, cleanup after pujas and retreats, providing meals at retreats; Raman Muthukrishnan: running the bookstore including mail order service, maintaining the SAT website, providing prasad after satsang, editing and mastering recordings of Friday night events and special events; Sangeeta Muthukrishnan: helping with the bookstore mail order, organizing things around the temple, providing meals at retreats, providing prasad after satsang & atmotsava, teaching songs during atmotsava; Wimala Brown: providing meals at retreats and prasad after satsang & atmotsava; Dhanya Nambirajan: singing during special events, providing meals at retreats, providing prasad after satsang, cleanup after pujas; Ganesh Sadasivan: organizing special events including singing, recitation, and chanting; Eric Ruetz: editing and mastering recordings of satsangs and special events, providing meals at retreats; Jim Clark: lighting candles at events, flowering murtis, providing meals at retreats; Richard Clarke: providing incense for the temple and helping with book orders from India; Nome: temple grounds maintenance, writing books, administrative stuff, general help wherever needed including spiritual guidance; Sasvati: preparing books & *Reflections* for publishing, maintaining residential rentals, overseeing property repairs, flower arrangements, maintaining temple gardens; Advait Sadasivan: providing play time at any time for anyone who wishes to play. Jaden Silva: transcription, mastering recordings of satsangs, assisting with flowering the murtis and lighting candles, general helping wherever needed.

Upcoming Special Events

Arudra Darshanam: January 8, 2012.

Mahasivaratri: February 20-21, 2012.

The Nondual Self-inquiry Retreat: March 16-18, 2012.

