



Ananda Kutir Ashrama

serve . love . give . purify . meditate . realise

It is the objective of this Ashrama to disseminate the Teachings of
H.H. Swami Sivananda Maharaj
according to H.H. Swami Venkatesananda Maharaj

July - October 2023

Update from Swami Vidyananda

Blessed Swamijiis and Friends,
Hari OM. Loving Greetings!



The month of July started off with the auspicious celebration of Sri Guru Purnima. The spiritual seeker learns about yoga

and receives guidance from the Guru (or the Guru's teachings). Without the teachings and guidance the vast majority of seekers would be lost. Even those teachers who claim that a Guru is not needed are teaching. Why would they do so, if their teaching was not required? Hence, we

acknowledge this profound influence in our lives.

Guru Purnima was celebrated on 3rd July with Puja and Kirtans, and Swami Parvathiananda shared some insights of her experiences with Swami Venkatesananda. One that stood out was that the Guru has the capacity to see through the disciple, so that nothing is hidden. This itself is essential for the transformation to take place.

This was followed by the Integral Yoga Retreat at the Fynbos Estate Retreat Centre near Malmesbury, about an hours drive from Cape Town. A small group of keen aspirants spent a week in daily yoga practice consisting of meditation, hatha yoga, lectures, contemplation, nature walks and kirtan singing. The retreat focused

on deepening our practice of yoga and getting a more in-depth understanding of the teachings of Swami Sivananda's Integral Yoga.



Immediately following the retreat, the ashrama commemorated the Maha Samadhi of Sri Swami Sivananda Ji on 11th July, also with puja, kirtans and a discourse.

The discourse focused on some of the mantras that appear in the '108 names of Swami Sivananda'. The 108 names are epithets that describe various aspects of Swami Sivananda. One epithet that was described was that Swami Sivananda was always immersed in the repetition of his mantra. This was one of Swami Sivananda's main spiritual practices that he advocated: to constantly repeat one's mantra. This facilitates the transformation of daily living into yoga, so that one can remain centered in the soul whilst being active in life.

On 21st July the ashrama hosted Sri Kavir Daya, who facilitated a Workshop on the Vedas. Sri Kavir gave a comprehensive oversight into the Vedas, the origins, how they are set up and how the chanting of the Vedas is of tremendous help for one's spiritual growth.

Mother Yogeshwari's Birth Anniversary was celebrated with a special Yoga Camp on 6th August with Hatha Yoga,



Meditation, Kirtans and a talk. One of the topics shared in the talk was Mother Yogeshwari's view on illnesses such as influenza and the cold: She always regarded these as the body's way of detoxing. It is interesting to note that the Latin word 'virus' means 'poison' or 'slimy substance'. And it appears that when the word 'virus' was first used in Western medicine, it was believed that it is something that the body produced. Was Mother Yogeshwari on to something?

The ashrama once again was blessed with the music of the duo Desert Rose, who performed a



Medicine Music Concert with their beautiful soulful and contemplative compositions on 25th August. Yusuf and Lynne had recently attended the inauguration of a church, mosque and synagogue in a single building in Georgia. Now more than ever is the time to focus on Unity.



Swami Sivananda's Birth Anniversary was celebrated on 8th September with the usual Puja, Kirtans and a talk.

Swami
Parvathiananda

shared various anecdotes and teachings of Swami Sivananda. An interesting facet of Swami Sivananda was highlighted: When he was still a doctor in Malaysia, he used to buy expensive jewellery. At one occasion he threw all these into the ocean as a mark of renunciation. When

questioned on why he could not have rather sold them, he replied that this would mean that he still gave them a value. The only stable and true value is Enlightenment.



This year the annual nine-day spiritual festival of Navaratri was celebrated with great enthusiasm from 15-23 October culminating in Vijaya Dasami. Navaratri celebrates the Divine as Mother. Daily the ashrama devotees recited various chants and listened to video discourses by Swami Venkatesananda, who in 1982 gave a brilliant and deeply insightful commentary on a text called Devi Mahatmyam, in which he explains how we can progress from an ego-based and deluded life to an enlightened life. The Vijaya Dasami day focuses on learning, especially spiritual learning, and

acknowledging the true source of knowledge.

The ashrama is still busy with proof reading the new editions of Swami Venkatesananda's Daily Readings Books. These are a great treasure in the spiritual literature and friends participating in this project are deriving much joy.

It is truly a privilege and blessing to be part of these uplifting activities.

May the Divine bless us!

ACT WITHOUT EXPECTATION.

-LAO TZU

Cosmic Links

“Attachment is the source of all suffering.”

Buddha

“Things are as they are, we suffer because we imagined different.”

Anonymous

“Accept what comes and allow it to leave when it’s time.”

Anonymous

“The less attached you are, the more peaceful you are.”

Anonymous

“Attachment to views is the greatest impediment to the spiritual path.”

Thich Nhat Hanh

“According to Buddhist psychology, most of our troubles stem from attachment to things that we mistakenly see as permanent.”

Dalai Lama

“Stand in the reverent attitude to the whole universe, and then will come perfect non-attachment.”

Swami Vivekananda

“How to recognize emotional attachment; if your happiness rests upon what you expect from something or someone.”

Anonymous

“Attachment is the state of ignorance or forgetfulness, and thus clinging to a memory of enjoyment.”

Goswami Kriyananda

“Everything is temporary; emotions, thoughts, people, and scenery. Do not become attached, just flow with it.”

Anonymous

“Nothing ever belonged to you. Even you will be returned. Don’t get attached.”

Anonymous

“Cut the cords of attachment. Expand the circle of love.”

Shri Radhe Maa

Freedom From Attachment

By Sri Swami Sivananda



Attachment produces infatuation and causes entanglement. Fear exists on account of attachment and desire. Infatuation or delusion is a stigma on pure love. Attachment to the objects of the world is due to ignorance of their true nature. Nothing but the atman (self) really exists. Objects are illusion. Attachment is indicative of the feeling that the objective possession brings happiness. This idea has to be removed from the mind.

Happiness is not in the objects but in one's own atman. Attachment is the impure vasana (feeling) of love or hate that is

entertained by the mind for the diverse objects of this world. If you remain unaffected by joy, envy and sorrow, you have relinquished all attachments. If, without rejoicing in joy, or pining under pain, you do not subject yourself to the trammels of desire, then you can be said to have rid yourself of attachment.

If you can be content with whatever you get, then you have cast off attachment. Through attachment, desire for material objects arises. Renunciation of attachment is said to be moksha (release). Through its destruction all rebirth ceases. Destroy the association of the mind with the objects and attain the state of the jivanmukta (liberated soul).

Pleasure does not lie in the objects but in the condition of the mind. The mind goes out in search of pleasure. At the same time there is pain as the mind is straying away from the truth. When the object is attained, the mind ceases to function and rests on the atman, the substratum. Then it unconsciously tastes the bliss of the atman.

Sublimate your inward longings through discrimination, dispassion, enquiry and meditation. You will attain supreme bliss.

News From The Outreach Project

FOOD PACKS

On Monday mornings the ashram is a hive of activity; as well as the Hatha yoga class, the dedicated Outreach volunteers are busy assembling 100 food packs, consisting of rice, split peas/lentils and soya mince. Each pack, with water added and cooked, provides a nutritious meal for four people.

Our grateful thanks go to Ladles of Love who have been collecting and delivering the food packs to the clinics we support: Masincedane in KTC, Mzamomhle in Browns Farm and Crossroads 2 and Phumlani in Crossroads. The clinics receive food packs on a rotational basis every 3 to 4 weeks.

HOME ROSTERS

Juliet Clavaux and her friends who have been long-time supporters of the Outreach project continue to make food packs which they deliver to the ashram.

WINTER DRIVE

Every year, during Cape Town's cold and wet winter we buy blankets for the clinic clients. In July, 100 fleece blankets measuring 2m by 1.5m and costing R100 each were purchased from

HiLite and donated to Masincedane and Phumlani Clinics. The clinic sisters sent us some very happy pictures of the clients receiving their blankets. Colourful hand knitted beanies, gloves and baby's jumpers donated by our supporters have been a welcome addition to the blankets.

OUTREACH FINANCES

Very special thanks go to our donors whom we rely on to keep the Outreach project alive: those regular monthly donors and those who donate during the year when they are able. We have also received donations in memory of loved ones. We keep a 6 month money buffer to protect the project from unforeseen circumstances. Everyone involved does so on a voluntary basis: all money received is used to benefit those clinic clients in our disadvantaged communities.

My thanks go to my fellow co-ordinators Damyanti Gajjar, Elsa Oliver and Jennifer Stephens.

Rosemary Frith

Attachment

By Swami Venkatesananda



Question: Attachment is a very complex problem. Are there any techniques one can use to deal with it?

Swamiji: The technique which is usually suggested is what one might call transference rather than sublimation. This is referred to in the *Bhagavatam*. Attachment is bondage if it is directed towards your husband or children and so on; but the same attachment, when it is directed towards holy men, is conducive to liberation.

Though you may be

attached to the holy man, the holy man is not so attached. So, in that relationship the feedback that you get is one of non-attachment and hopefully (that's what they hope), one of these days you'll discover, "My God, this man is very affectionate, he is not indifferent, he doesn't hate me, but he's not attached to me. What is this magic?" They hope that when you question thus you will find your way out of this silly thing called attachment. *But*, that may not happen. All these tricks and techniques that are given are ultimately useless because you are merely transferring your attachment.

I see that this attachment is non-existent and therefore there is no need to struggle against it at all. I am alone, I was born alone, I will die alone and nothing, nothing, nothing in the world will do anything! Even so, everybody is born alone and will die alone and will pursue their own course. I cannot cling to them and there is no sense in my allowing myself to be clung to.

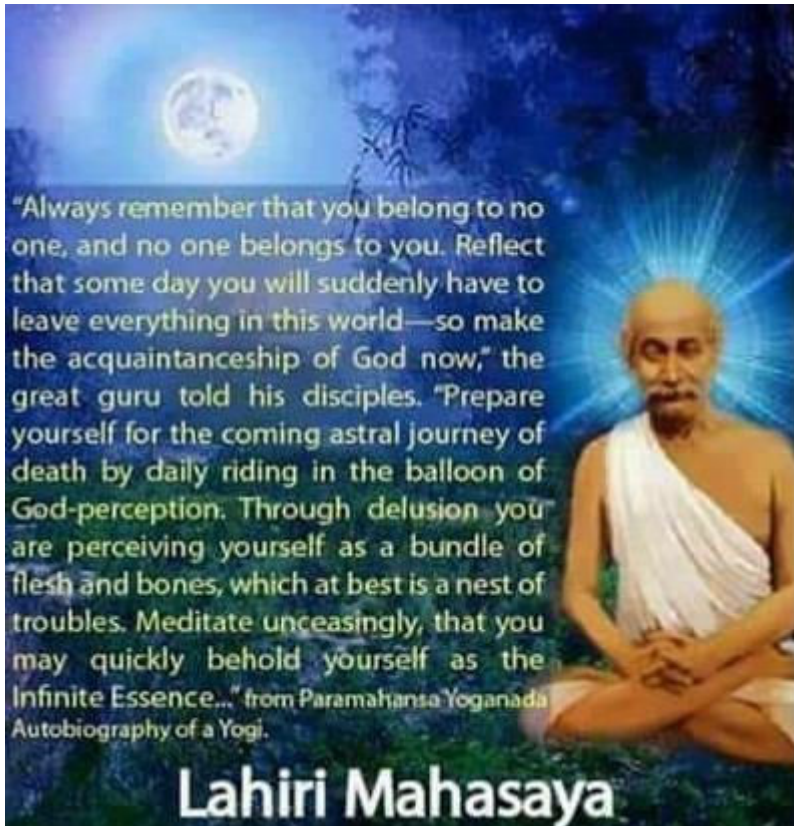
In the meantime, you and I are together - we can make our lives as pleasant and comfortable as possible. As a matter of fact, if there is no attachment there is a greater joy in relationship. There is

no jealousy, no sense of possession, no clinging, nothing. Whether you are my father or mother, my wife or husband, my son or daughter - it's beautiful. As long as we are together - which means as long as you want to stay with me and I want to stay with you - we can love each other.

But even then I realise that one day you will die, one day I

will die. When that is seen clearly, then there is no attachment. The intelligence recognises that there is no attachment. It is not a question of 'I should not be attached'. 'I should not be attached' is already an assumption that it is there and I have to get rid of it.

The direct perception or recognition that attachment is *not* there, is the only solution.



News from Children Of Light Educare

MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL MALA (MAITRI) MAKAN

Loving greetings, dearest friends of COLT.



At the Educare, we are aware that our children are not involved in or exposed to any form of spiritual or religious practice in their homes. We feel it is important to bring these teachings in at the Educare. Simple practices, like praying before we partake of our meals, are encouraged over the long term through daily repetition and song. It is heartwarming to see our little people adopt these routines over time and learn to express their gratitude with earnestness and joy.

This year, we will also be presenting a play at our Children's Christmas Party. The play is a simple one about the birth of Lord Jesus. The script has been edited, characters selected and practice is well underway. We look forward to your support to making this a festive and joyful event for all.

As we all start the wind down to the end of the year, may you and your loved ones remain safe, healthy and blessed. Thank you for your support. God bless.

COLT IS 6 YEARS OLD!

The Children of Light Educare turned 6 years old this October. We celebrated together with the children, staff, volunteers and friends of COLT on the 23rd of October at the Educare. Swami Vidyanandaji conducted a yajna (fire ceremony) - a purification ceremony which consists of making offerings into the sacred fire while chanting vedic mantras. Afterwards, everyone enjoyed birthday cake and special treats.



It was wonderful to have Ward Councillor, Mark Kleinsmidt, and representatives from the LKRS ECD forum (of which COLT is a member) join for the celebrations. We are grateful for their continued support which has helped COLT grow into an established Educare.

Birthdays are a great time to reflect on the years gone by and the journey so far. It is humbling to consider how far we have come at COLT. The Educare started as an idea to teach yoga to children from



informal settlements and has grown in leaps and bounds in the short space of six years. May God continue to bless COLT.

FUNDRAISING BRUNCH

We hosted a fundraising brunch in August to raise funds for the operational costs of running the Educare. The event was a resounding success with 200 friends attending at the Venue on Par.



MC, Prim Reddy, did a fantastic job of coordinating the occasion and keeping guests entertained. Guests were treated to a delicious ensemble of flavours from Kapoochka and got to learn a bit more about the various activities and opportunities for seva at the Educare.

SOCIAL SERVICE

We held a number of social service interventions this last term and are proud of the work Teacher Nushfeekah, our Social Auxiliary worker is doing within the community. Parent education and support is an integral part of our service at COLT and ensures a holistic offering to the child.



A parent meeting was held at the Educare to share important information with our parents around the school term, their responsibilities and how to better equip their child for their education path.

In September, Principal Mala and Teacher Nushfeekah accompanied some of our parents to Home Affairs to apply for their IDs and birth certificates for the



children. They joined the queues at 5am in the morning to guarantee a spot and service.

Once these important documents are collected, parents will also be able to apply for social grants and our children will be able to apply for a place at a primary school on graduation.

AFTERCARE UPDATE



Our aftercare programme, which was launched in January this year, takes place once a week on a Wednesday afternoon. We have four past children attending regularly and they receive assistance with primary school class work and homework. The programme is run by volunteers and two occupational therapy students.

This is one of the ways COLT continues to support children once they have graduated from the Educare.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS

We are grateful to have two Occupational Therapy students from

the University of Western Cape join us at the Educare for seven weeks. As part of their internship, they are working closely with our children to assess their development progress and determine if any early interventions are needed.



They work with four children individually on a daily basis and also assist with clean up, prep and do gross motor development with them daily.

NURSES ON SITE

As part of our social and health services offering to COLT children, we partner with the City of Cape Town health department to provide basic clinical services to the children. Two nurses from the City were onsite at the Educare in August to do checkups and administer Vitamin A drops and de-worming tablets to our children.



They also checked and updated their clinic cards. This is an important requirement for enrolling our children into primary schools later.

TERM OUTINGS

One of the highlights in our academic year is the term outings. We aim to have two outings per term. These excursions allow our children to experience adventures and visit places they would not be able to otherwise. It is also a time for them to experience nature, interact with animals, climb trees and have time for free, unrestricted play.



This term, we visited the Cape Town Gardens and The Playshed, an indoor play area. We are grateful to the Playshed for sponsoring this outing and for providing lunch and snacks for our children.

GARDENING WITH TEACHER DEVI

Once a week, Teacher Devi spends a morning at the Educare teaching our little people some gardening skills. They are all developing green fingers and love being out in the garden to weed, plant and water their vegetables. When the crops are ready to be harvested, these vegetables are incorporated into the lunch meal for everyone to enjoy!



Teacher Devi has also established a healthy worm farm which is now producing fertiliser regularly. Our children have learnt to turn all their food waste into compost for their worms to enjoy.

UPCOMING EVENTS - THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

As the year winds down to a close this final term, there are many exciting celebratory events to look forward to. Please contact us if you would like to get involved as a sponsor or a volunteer.



Our Graduation and Advent play will be held on the 24th of November. This is a bittersweet occasion for those of us at COLT. On the one hand, we mark a significant milestone in the personal and academic life of our children who graduate from one grade to the next. On the other hand, we also bid farewell to those children who are moving onto Grade 1 at a neighbouring primary school and therefore, leaving COLT.

Even though they may no longer be physically at COLT, we continue to maintain close contact with our graduating children, their families and new teachers. We may even meet some of them through our Aftercare Programme.



Our annual Children's Christmas Party takes place on the 6th of December this year. It is always an event filled with so much joy, wonder and excitement as the children are treated to special treats and presents from friends of COLT. Please see below for the special appeal for Santa Shoe Boxes and Candy Jars.

CHILDREN OF LIGHT EDUCARE

Santa Shoe Boxes

Candy Jars



Please support our drive to create a Christmas spirit for our children.

Santa Shoe Boxes



You create your own box with the following items

- toothpaste and toothbrush
- soap and facecloth
- item of clothing
- toy
- stationery

Decorate Box with child's full name printed on top of box. Add your personal touch to the decor.

OR

Candy Jars



To fill these jars, we require any of the following items.

NB: we already have jars

- nikkaks/small pkts crisps
- sweets
- smarties
- lollypops
- marshmallows
- fizzers
- chocolates
- mini biscuits
- jellytots

To be delivered
latest by 28th
November
Tuesdays btw
9am -11am @
Educare

Contact Maya Kooverjee 083 799 4043 for further information and child's name allocation.

www.colt.org.za

From Falsehood To Truth

By Swami Venkatesananda

When the problem is clear, the solution is simple. The manifold is an appearance of the One: the diversity is in truth One experienced as many. Oneness frees us from fear, grief, sin and suffering. The perception of diversity generates fear of another, love of one and hatred of the other, sin that is the fruit of ignorance, and suffering which is the fruit of sin.

The word “sugar” does not sweeten our mouth: nor can the word or even the idea of “Oneness” tantamount to a realisation of the Truth which alone can liberate us. Hence, the Bhagavad Gita gives us detailed and clear instructions on the method to be adopted to intensify knowledge into realisation. Here, again, one cannot fail to notice Lord Krishna’s love of synthesis in the Gita. Not only does He correct the false notion that one method is superior to another; but He points out unmistakably how one method is another! Diversity is the creation of the mind in its attempt to grasp the Infinite with its finite hands. Diversity even in the concept of God and in the method of reaching Him—though inevitable to begin with—ought to be overcome.

As you approach a big railroad junction, you find the single

railway track branching off into a yardful of crisscross of railway lines. As you leave the station, you see this process is reversed: all these lines merge into one another and once again you have one. It is an arduous, long and exciting journey back to the Source. It involves many integrations, to be delicately worked out. Hence, the Lord gives us many opportunities to effect this perfection and many instruments and vehicles with which to pursue our path.

The path is called YOGA. Krishna gives it a distinctive name—Buddhi Yoga—not to distinguish it from others (and hence quarrel even in His Name), but to reveal its chief characteristic, viz., it is not a blind system of physical practice, nor of rituals and ceremonies but it is full wisdom and it is a rational approach to the Reality.

YOGA is integration. It does not attempt to do anything new. It does not bring together incompatibles. It reintegrates (i) the threefold nature of the Inner Man, viz., head, heart and hand, and his three-fold self-expression, viz., thought, word and deed: (ii) man and society; (iii) man and God; (which three imply) (iv) matter and Spirit; and (v) service and salvation. My Master summed

up Yoga in four simple words; “Be good; do good”; (i) achieves subjective goodness (Be good); (ii) ensures good actions (Do good). They, together, lead to God.

The various aspects of Yoga, the different phases of the one process, the facets of the single gem, have been given different names. Krishna deals with them separately; and then points out that one includes the others.

By an initial determined turning (not running) away from “the world” as an alluring anti-God influence, the spiritual aspirant paves the way to a reintegration of his own personality. The heart which is free from selfish desire allows the wisdom of the ‘head’ to express without distortion through the ‘hand’. When life’s goal becomes One—the seeking of the One—the conflict between thought, word and deed is reconciled. To ensure that there is no self-deception in regard to this all-important preliminary, Krishna gives us again and again long lists of noble qualities which we should possess and develop.

When selfish desires are curbed, His own Will manifests in us as the desire to do good. Goodwill is truly God’s Will. The man of goodwill serves society, without attachment and personal desire. That is possible only if he is able to see that behind the society and within his own personality there is a Reality which is responsible for

all this apparent ceaseless activity. It is God. Karma Yoga is based on and is one with Bhakti or devotion.

This Bhakti again is not showmanship nor emotionalism. It is enlightened with Self-knowledge and expressed as the adoration of Omnipresent God. Yet, one who has not experienced the love of one cannot love all! In the secret cave of his own heart, therefore, the aspirant is asked to commune with God in his own way. A direct experience of His presence provides him with the touchstone to evaluate the validity of his experience of God-in-all. Meditation is part of Raja Yoga. Bhakti and Raja Yoga are integral parts of this inner adventure.

When, through Karma Yoga and the deliberate turning away from worldly pleasures, the heart has been purified, and when the mind has been steadied by the love of God in which all other worldly loves find their fulfilment and culmination, the Soul and the World merge into the Cosmic Being, that they always were. Ignorance is removed as smoothly and quickly as darkness is removed when light is brought in. Man becomes sage.

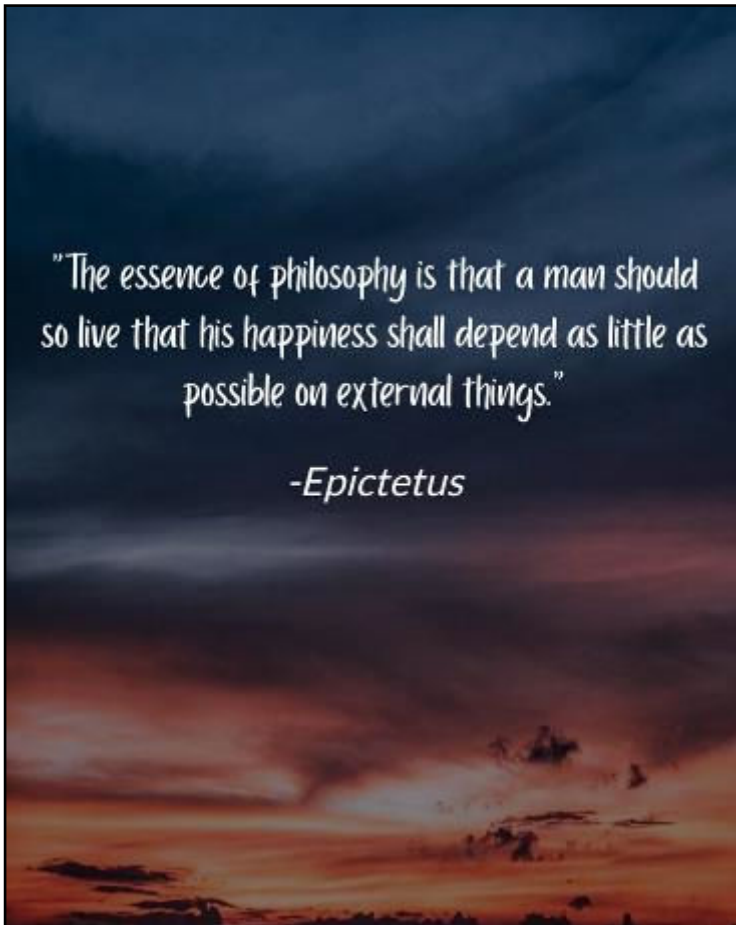
The sage does not withdraw himself from the world. He lives, knowing that His Will lives in him. He works knowing that God works through him. No self, no world, no dualities, no distinctions, no barriers of caste, creed,

religion, race, or nationality can hold him now. He is one with all. He realises that the Self is the All. When he sheds the body, he actually becomes the All-in-all. Thus the goal has been reached.

The questions do not arise in him: what is the world, who created this and why, what is sin and what is

suffering and why do they exist. He has not found answers to these questions: the questions themselves vanish. He has not solved any problems: all problems are dissolved in Self-realisation.

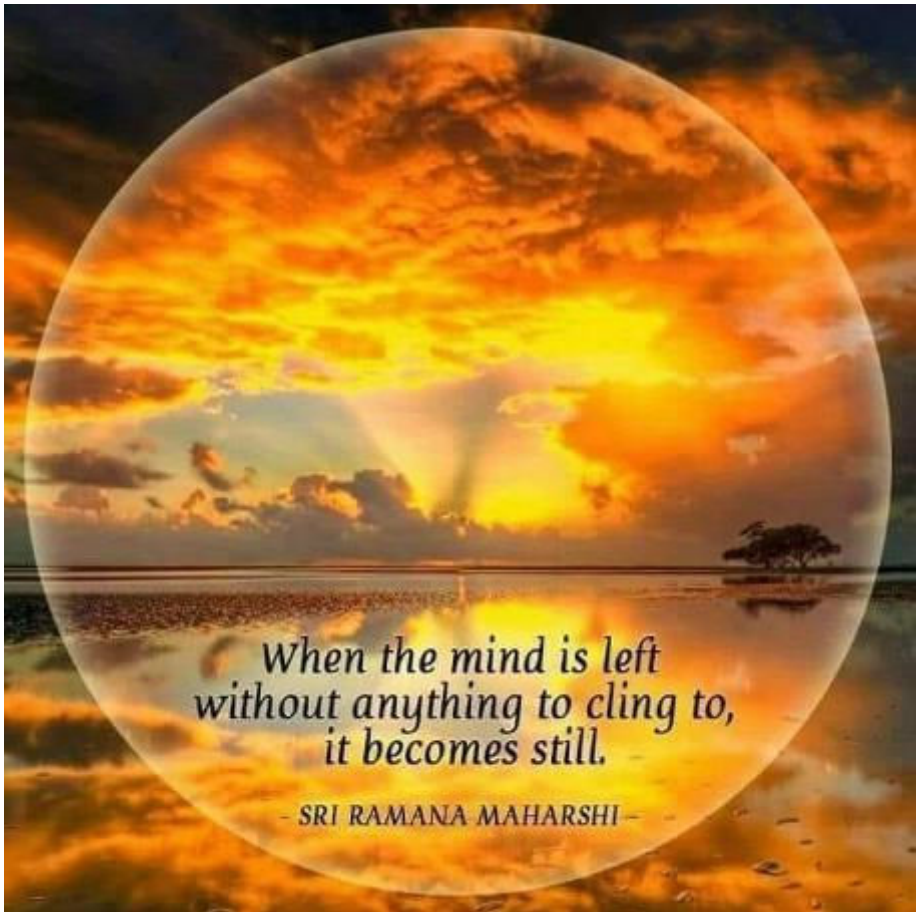
May you all reach that Goal in this very life.



Wisdom from Mother Yogeshwari

NON-ATTACHMENT

We have to learn to say goodbye
Without a tear-drop in the eye.
We have to learn to mend our ways
And give without receiving praise.
We have to learn to stand alone
Before we call the world our own.



*When the mind is left
without anything to cling to,
it becomes still.*

— SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI —

Ananda Kutir Ashrama Membership Application Form

Seekers who are keenly involved in the Ashrama and who are actively supportive of its objectives can become members. A member receives a copy of Swami Sivananda's 20 Spiritual Instructions and Swami Venkatesananda's Prayer. A member can vote at the AGM and can serve on the management committee.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

R200 valid for the financial year March-February. R300 for married couples.

Name _____

Postal Address _____

Phone _____

Cellphone _____

E-mail _____

Signature _____

Date _____

**For more information please contact:
Ananda Kutir Ashrama
031-418 NPO**

Tel: +27 21 696 1821

Email: info@anandakutir.org.za

www.anandakutir.org.za

Residential and Postal Address:

24 Sprigg Rd,
Rondebosch East, 7780
Cape Town, South Africa

Banking Details

Donations to the Ashrama

Bank: Standard Bank
Branch code: 051001 (Rondebosch Branch)
Account name: Ananda Kutir Ashrama
Account No: 10158117954
Reference: Your name & purpose of payment

Donations to the Outreach Project

Bank: Standard Bank
Branch code: 051001 (Rondebosch Branch)
Account name: Ananda Kutir Outreach Project
Account No: 10158113770
Reference: Your name & purpose of payment

Donations to the Children of Light Educare

Bank: Absa
Branch code: 632005 (Claremont)
Account name: Children of Light Educare Trust
Account No: 9322073615
Reference: Your name & purpose of payment