

January 14
Makar Sankranti

GURUVANI

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Sri Krodhi Nama year Pushyam – Maghamu



Pravachan

The Significance of the Makara
Sankranti Festival

Sri Vidya Sadhana

Meditation, A Powerful Tool
in Spiritual Practice

Authored by: Dr. Gautam Raju

Special Srividya Sadhana

The Importance of Mental
Health in Spiritual Practice

Authored by:

Smt. Indrani Yashoda Kompella

Sri Vidya Temples

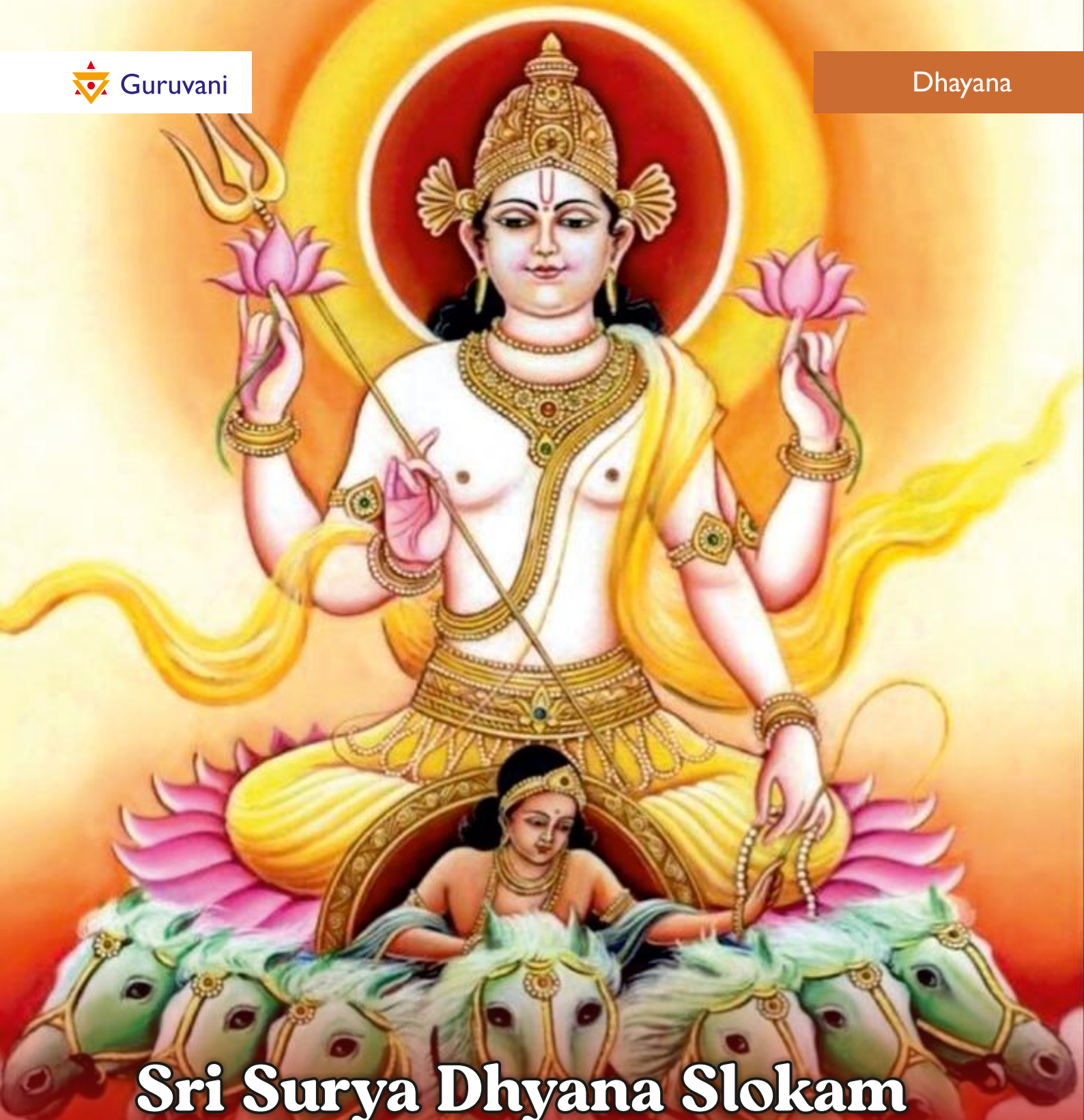
Govindavadi Sri Dakshinamurthy
Temple, Kanchipuram

Questions and Answers

Which Naivedyam (offering)
is appropriate for each deities?

Experiences of Sadhakas

My Service Experience at
Srividya Jnana Peetam,
Venkata Raghava Sharma



Sri Surya Dhyana Slokam

**Namassavitre Jagadeka Chakshushe Jagatprasooti Sthiti Naasa Hethave |
Trayeemayaaya Trigunathma Dhaarine Virinchi Narayana Sankaratmane ||
Japaakusuma Sankasam Kasyapeyam Mahadyutim |
Tamorim Sarva Papapaghnam Pranatosmi Divaakaram ||**

Salutations to Savitri, the sole eye of the universe, The cause of the creation, Sustainance, and destruction of the world, The embodiment of the Vedas, the bearer of the three qualities (Sattva, Rajas, Thamas), Who manifests as Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva.

I bow down to the Sun, Who is red like a hibiscus flower, the descendant of Kasayapa, of immense radiance, The dispeller of darkness, and the destroyer of all sins.



Shri Gurubyo Namah | Shri Matre Namah ||



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Significance of Makara Sankranti

In the month of January, Bhogi and then Makara Sankranti are celebrated. On this occasion, I would like to discuss a few aspects with you.

Typically, Bhogi and its traditional celebrations are not seen as prominently today, either in rural areas or urban settings.

Every year, the day before Makara Sankranti, we celebrate Bhogi. On this day, people light a Bhogi fire by burning items that are no longer useful, such as old wood and other unwanted household items. People tie together cowdung cakes into a garland, throw it into the fire, dance around it, beat drums, and sing joyfully, believing that “with this fire, all miseries are burned away.”

As part of this tradition, on Bhogi morning, people wake up early, even before sunrise, and have elders apply sesame oil to their heads and body, followed by a ritualistic bath. This practice is believed to cleanse us of the troubles and miseries of the past year.

The Spiritual Significance of Bhogi in Śrī Vidyā Upāsana

From a Śrī Vidyā perspective, Bhogi is seen as an opportunity for inner purification. The fire symbolizes burning away the impurities within us, such as fear and doubt rooted in the Mūlādhāra (root chakra), and desires, anger, greed, and envy located in the Svādhiṣṭhāna (sacral chakra).

- These impurities are visualized, given a form, and symbolically burned in the Maṇipūra (navel chakra) through meditation.

- Only when these impurities are burned can the new sun and new light enter within us.

When the impurities within Maṇipūra are fully incinerated, the true radiance of the Bhogi fire reflects in the Anāhata chakra (heart chakra), where the sun with its twelve rays illuminates the twelve petals.

Significance of Makara Sankranti Morning

•On the morning of Sankranti, it is essential to wake up early, complete your bath and Sandhya rituals, and stand outside before sunrise—barefoot and without glasses.

•Witness the Bālā Arka (rising red sun) while reciting the following mantra three times as you offer water (arghyam) to the sun:

“HRaām hReem hRoom Saḥ Mārtāṇḍa Bhairavāya Prakāśa Śakti Sahitāya Svāhā.”

Another significant practice is chanting the Chakshushmathee Mantra twelve times while gazing at the rising sun. The mantra is:

“Om Sūryākṣi Tejase Namaḥ, Khecarāya Namaḥ,
Asato Mā Sadgamaya, Tamaso Mā Jyotirgamaya, Mṛtyor Mā Amṛtaṁ Gamaya,
Uṣṇo Bhagavān Śucirūpaḥ, Haṁso Bhagavān Śucir Pratrūpaḥ,
Viśvarūpaṁ Ghr̥ṇinaṁ Jātavedasaṁ, Hiraṇmayam Jyotirekaṁ Tapantaṁ,
Sahasra Raśmiḥ, Śatadhā Vartamānaḥ, Prāṇaḥ, Prajānām Udayatyēṣa Sūryaḥ,
Om Namō Bhagavate Sūryāya Aho Vāhini Vāhinyaho Vāhini Vāhini Svāhā.

Benefits of this Practice

Those who practice this ritual are believed to be protected from external ailments like eye and skin diseases. However, the greater significance lies in overcoming the inner disease of dissatisfaction or the belief that “my life is worthless.”

On this auspicious day, we make resolutions:

- “I will never abandon the values of my life.”
- “I will strive to bring honor to myself, my family, and my community.”
- “I will not hurt others and will never abandon my devotion to the Divine.”
- “I will share unconditional love with all beings.”

With the grace of the Divine Mother, if we remain disciplined in our efforts, we will eventually fulfill these resolutions.

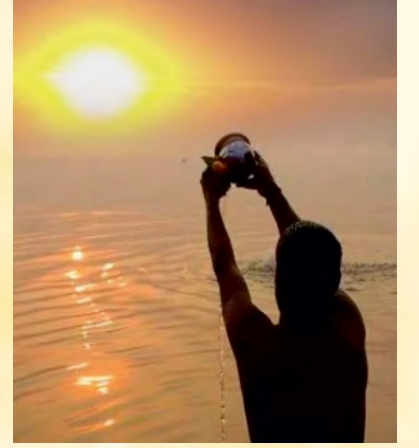
Surrender and the Importance of Bhogi Fire

On Bhogi, it is not just physical objects but also the attachments and fears we hoard within ourselves that we need to burn. In Śrī Vidyā, surrendering to the Divine Mother’s will and letting go of our egotistical decisions brings us true peace. When we approach life with the thought:

- “Mother, your decision is my final decision,”
- “Guide my actions, I will listen to you. Whatever happens, let it be your doing,”

we overcome fears associated with planetary influences or astrological predictions.

On Bhogi day, clear your home, let go of items unused for six months or more, and donate them to those in need. This practice not only purifies your surroundings but also reflects the spirit of



detachment and selflessness.

Conclusion

Bhogi and Sankranti are not just festivals but opportunities to reset our lives spiritually and materially. By burning the impurities within, we make space for new experiences, joys, and spiritual growth.

May this Bhogi and Sankranti bring new beginnings, fresh insights, and Divine Mother's grace to everyone!



GURUVANI

Sri Devi Khadgamala

Part 18



Sri Devi Khadgamala

Part 18

1. Mitra-Esha-Mayee

The term Mitra-Esha-Mayee signifies the one who governs, with Mitra meaning friend and Esha denoting a ruler or controller. Sarvesha refers to the one who rules over all. This is the essence of the cosmic ruler, the universal sovereign, governing oneself, one's nation, and the entire cosmos. Before aspiring to govern the external world, one must first govern oneself. In the context of Mitra-Esha-Mayee, Mitra symbolizes friendship—specifically, the need to cultivate a friendship with oneself.

To achieve this, one must first accept oneself, then love oneself. Only through self-love can one genuinely extend love to others. Hatred towards oneself inevitably reflects as disharmony in the external world. Like raw material awaiting refinement, we must learn to love ourselves as we are.

We must not assume ourselves to be inherently sinful. Perhaps we lack devotion, fail to chant, or neglect reciting hymns and prayers—but does that render us sinners? In the divine creation, how can anyone be deemed a sinner? Such thoughts are but states of consciousness we ourselves have created, and we must embrace them as part of our growth. Joy comes not from perfection but from aligning with our true nature and striving towards divine completeness.

Divine perfection represents the state of Paramashiva, yet the desire to strive for greater completeness reflects the union of Paramashiva and Parameshwari.

When we lose ourselves in perfection, it signifies harmony with life. This harmony extends to our family, for a true friend remains unconditionally by one's side.

The Sun, the ultimate friend, embodies this principle. The Sun, addressed by various names in the scriptures (Mitraaya Namah, Khagaya Namah, Pushne Namah), exemplifies constancy and benevolence. A prayer offered during the Sandhyavandana elucidates the Sun's significance as a protector of the world.

As described in the Lalita Sahasranama (Unmesha-Nimishotpanna Vipanna Bhuvanavali), the Sun's momentary closure of eyes would plunge the world into darkness, halting all growth and vitality. The Sun tirelessly rises to nourish and sustain life, a true friend without parallel.

Through the Sun, crops grow, trees flourish, and all living beings thrive. Those who revere the Sun are blessed with health, longevity, and moral fortitude. The Sun is also a teacher, embodying wisdom and proximity to the divine mother, as adorned by her radiance. Offering salutations to this selfless friend who awakens us each day reflects our gratitude for his presence.

The philosophy of Mitra—friendship—encompasses every aspect of existence. We must foster harmonious relationships with plants, animals, and nature itself. Cutting flowers or digging earth mercilessly alienates us from the environment, evident in phenomena like global warming. The entire cosmos is imbued with the essence of Mitra-Esha-Mayee. Contemplating this name

grants us wisdom, for it is the Mother who governs the qualities of friendship and harmony in creation.

Sitting amidst creation, we realize, “This entire movable and immovable world is my own manifestation.” Every form, stable or dynamic, is her expression. With such a perspective, we perceive the world as her nurturing embrace and cultivate universal friendship. By practicing mindfulness, such as turning off unused lights or conserving water, we align ourselves with the essence of Mitra-Esha-Mayee, embodying spirituality through harmonious living rather than endless rituals.

2. Shashti-Esha-Mayee

When one internalizes the principles of Mitra-Esha-Mayee, the Mother manifests as Shashti-Esha-Mayee. Shashti denotes six, and Esha-Mayee implies the one who governs. Thus, the Mother governs the six impurities within us: kama (desire), krodha (anger), lobha (greed), moha (delusion), mada (arrogance), and matsarya (envy). She is also the creator of six tastes (shad-ruchi) and the six seasons.

By neglecting environmental laws and dishonoring nature, we have disrupted these natural cycles. The Mother created the seasons for our benefit, designing our bodies and minds to synchronize with nature’s rhythms. Her governance ensures the appropriate season manifests at the right time, maintaining harmony in creation. Honoring her involves living in alignment with these natural laws.

Her bija mantra, Soum, encapsulates her essence. Chanting the mantra of Subrahmanya Swami (Om Shreem Hreem Kleem Aim Soum Saravana Bhavaya Namah), we revere him not just as the divine child of Shiva and Parvati or the rider of the peacock but as the cosmic force regulating tastes, seasons, and harmony within us.

3. Uddisha-Mayee

The Mother next manifests as Uddisha-Mayee. The term connects to the Sun (tapana) and the Moon (udupa), symbolizing light and tranquility. Uddisha-Mayee represents the state of awakening, contrasting the delusion of being awake while spiritually asleep.

In this state of ignorance, we perceive with eyes that do not see, hear with ears that do not listen, and live unaware of our true purpose. The Guru awakens us, revealing that we have squandered our lives in trivial pursuits. After death, Yama, the god of justice, questions us: “Did you fulfill the purpose for which you were sent to Earth?” This moment exposes the slumber we were trapped in.

Awareness, jagrata, is essential. It arises from the realization of mortality, symbolized by the sword of death hanging over us, urging us to act without procrastination. Uddisha is this constant reminder, inspiring righteous action and guiding us towards spiritual progress.

The Moon, symbolic of the mind, governs our thoughts, while the Mother, through Uddisha-Mayee, silences the mind’s turbulence and awakens us to higher consciousness. When we perceive no distinction between ourselves and the divine, our actions align with the virtues extolled in the hymns and stotras.

The deeper meaning of Uddisha-Mayee lies in her power to elevate us from the mire of worldly existence. She is the force that liberates the soul trapped in mundane life, like a frog confined to a well or a pig wallowing in mud. Through her, we transcend ignorance and rise to divine awareness.

The Mother, through avatars, scriptures, and teachings, continuously rescues and enlightens us. By delving into the deeper meanings of prayers like the Lalita Sahasranama, we grasp her role as the liberator who extricates us from the mire of samsara. She is Uddisha-Mayee, the one who awakens, elevates, and transforms us.





Kancheepuram Jnana Peetam Updates

In the month of January, the structural designs for the primary buildings are being finalized. Subsequently, as per the predetermined plan, the contractor will be selected, and following the auspicious time set by the astrologers, the groundbreaking ceremony will be swiftly conducted, marking the commencement of the construction of the compound wall this month.

In the first phase, the construction will include Mother's Peetham, Yajnashala, two cottages, 75 apartments, water tanks, transformer rooms, roads, drainage works, kitchen, dining halls, residential quarters for staff, and storage facilities.

In the second phase, there will be a Goshala, a Pushkarini, additional cottages, another set of 75 apartments and Oushadhi vanam.

The third phase will see the completion of the remaining tasks, covering all other necessary constructions.

Important milestones

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reports: Comprehensive project reports have been prepared for the corporate donors, detailing how our projects align with corporate social responsibilities. As part of this process, we have identified a couple of donors (companies) willing to contribute. Efforts are underway to reach out to these companies and engage with their key stakeholders.

We are reaching out to individuals who are interested to assist us in obtaining CSR funds.



Support the development of Kancheepuram Jnana Peetham

SreeMatre Namaha :

SriVidya is considered to be the highest of all the Paths, as the chances to reach the materialistic and spiritual goals are very high. Nowadays, there are not many Masters who lead disciples in such a Path, and there are not many places that provide right environment to carry on the Upasana taught by such Masters. According to Sastras, Upasana when carried on in a kshetram yields better results.

To make up for this, eminent **SriVidya Upasaka Sri Guru Karunamaya**, is developing a **SriVidya Jnana Peetham** in 9 acres of area, in Kancheepuram, one of the famous Shakti Peethas.

In this Peetham, **RajaRajeswari**, the main diety of SriVidya, will be seen as a 9 feet idol, seated on Sadasiva. She will be flanked by the 5 feet idols of **RajaSyamala** and **Varahi**, who enhance the attractive power of the devotees and protect them from negative energies.

Not just that, spacious Yajnasala will be constructed in a traditional way with a variety of homa kundas. Along with this, a large GoSala, and two pushakarinis will be developed so that disciples can have conducive facilities for meditating as visualized in the pictures.

Besides Nakshatra Vanam, Oushadha Vanam, a garden will be developed in 3 acres of land with all the flowers, fruits and plants mentioned for SriVidya Sadhana in the Sastras. Walking in this garden will solve not only the health issues, but any issues arising from adverse planetary positions.

Along with all these, cottages will be constructed so that interested disciples can permanently stay here for their upasana or come occasionally and spend some time.

We humbly request people to come forward and support this divine cause by donating generously as such a Peetham, will help the upasakas and common people in their spiritual progress.



Donors can contribute by scanning the QR code provided below and depositing into the Axis Bank account of Sri Vidya Learning Center.

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“Meditation is a natural process of letting go of focused effort, expanding into boundless awareness, and connecting with the self.”

Meditation: A Powerful Tool in Spiritual Practice

Part 1

In this era of fast paced living and thinking while one hand results in progress and advancement in the materialistic world; on the other hand, has taken a toll on the spiritual identity and the inner world of individuals and societies. With the advent of the digital technology, last few decades have seen a rise in the number of people losing out on health on every level. It is medically also evident that most of the ailments come from bad habits of engagement of one's mental and physical faculties.

Our Ancient sages of Sanathana Dharma, as if having a premonition of such states of spiritual strife far into the future of their physical presence, had developed art and science of spiritual strength and advancement; both on the internal and external aspects of human beings.

Meditation is one the greatest tools they chose to give us all for self-preservation and rejuvenation of the mind, body and the spirit.

What is Meditation?

In the last century, Meditation has been increasingly studied, practiced and the techniques refined by both Spiritual Giants as well as other experts with a kindred vision and good will towards fellow human beings. So, it has been given many names and definitions. We shall go by the one which one of Bharat's spiritual



Written by:
Dr. King Gautama

genius and saint i.e., Swami Vivekananda had to say which is as follows.

“Meditation is a state when the “mind” has been “trained” to remain fixed on a certain internal or external point such that it gets the power to flow to the point in an unbroken current.” - (“Raja Yoga by Swami Vivekananda - World Yoga Forum”)

He probably implies that “Meditation Happens” in the ideal circumstances than something that can be “done consciously.”

“Mind” is a stream of thoughts, emotions, perceptions which continuously flows into a human being. While “consciousness” is something that can observe such a mind, even understand, aptly modify and correct and elevate it and in turn impact its owner in a positive or negative manner depending on the nature of training. Though modern science is still yet to concretely understand it, Mind and consciousness and their various states have been extensively studied, appraised, analyzed and tools for their application have been given in Upanishadic scriptures and thus forms a subject of study on their own. We can stick with Meditation as a tool to understand, study and apply.

Meditation and concentration:

Many times, mediation is confused for Concentration, which is only partially true. Concentration is ‘focused attention’ on a particular object/activity which demands effort, time, energy and a defined goal. It is a key to success in most of the materialistic world.

On the other hand, Meditation is ‘focused Awareness’. It is prolonged flow of such awareness on a subject: internal or external or even pure silence (Nishabda Dhyanam) and culminates in leading the practioner to deeply be one with himself/herself and helps to be aligned with nature and higher reality and dimension, while treading through life and responsibility. It disengages one from forceful energy inefficient efforts and necessitates movement forward with flow with ease consciously and results in deep restfulness. It can lead to success in materialistic world as well spiritual world with a deep sense of fulfillment, as a result of balance and harmony that ensues in a diligent practioner both inside and outside oneself.

When it comes to the question of “Training the mind “into the above-mentioned flow state, it would depend on

1. Subject of Meditation (E.g., Deity/thought/icon/image)
2. Centre of the consciousness (Eg: Heart centre)
3. Method to achieve concentration (Eg: Japa yoga (mantra japa, Shat chakra Japa), Jnana Yoga (firm discrimination), vairagya, ritual practices etc).

Basically, the preparatory aspects of achieving the meditative states are extremely crucial in the resulting success of what Meditation truly is and has to offer to the spiritual elevation of the Sadhaka. And these preparatory aspects have been authoritatively delved and described in Sage Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras and dealt with in extensive detail by Lord Sri Krishna in Srimad

Bhagavad Gita (chapter 6).

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras in brief describes what is known as Ashtanga Yoga

Contrary to popular understanding of Yoga = Physical poses, Ashtanga Yoga is more to do with mind and inner self.

Components of Ashtanga yoga are Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi.

1. Yama:

- ☒ Satyam(truthfulness)
- ☒ Ahimsa (Non-Injury)
- ☒ Astheya(non-covetousness)
- ☒ Aparigraha(non-receiving)
- ☒ Brahmacharya (Chastity)

All the above in Thought, Word and Deed is Yama. These Purify the Mind or Chitta.

2. Niyama (Regular habits)

- ☒ Tapas (austerity)
- ☒ Svadhyaya (self-study)
- ☒ Santhosha (contentment)
- ☒ Shaucha(purity)
- ☒ Ishvara-pranidhana (worshipping God).

All the above help in success in Yoga

(Yoga-word derived from root word Yuj or to unite. *Unite with highest reality/ God).

3. Asana (posture):

While literal meaning is to have a steady posture.

It also implies efforts towards it in form of Hatha Yoga or physical conditioning of any form to achieve a comfortable posture, stamina and werewithwal to endure and succeed in one's efforts to progress in any spiritual path. It also goes without saying that states of disease or ill-health (Ex acute or chronic illnesses like diabetes/asthma/mental illness/hormone imbalance) needs to be promptly addressed with appropriate medical or non-medical therapy before one can smoothly practice spiritual disciplines (recommended by none other than Lord Sri Krishna himself)

4. Pranayama:

The science and Art of movement of Prana (Pooraka{inhalation}, Kumbhaka{retention}, Rechaka{exhalation}) (in simple words breath but more accurately corresponds to "Life Force" or the Chaitanya in a living being). It's a separate subject by itself where its movements along with functions of its individual components (Pancha Vayus: Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana, Samana) control subtle aspects of every organ and its function. While Yama, niyama and

asana are easy to understand and are self-explanatory, Pranayama on its own is a vast subject with many types, has various schools of prescription, method and practice.

5. Pratyahara:

Once Asana and Pranayama has been optimized, bringing organs/ indriya's under control/inward is called as Pratyahara.

6. Dharana:

Fixing of mind on Lotus center of Heart (anahata Chakra)/ center of eyebrows (Ajna chakra)/crown of head(sahasrara) is called Dharana. Many great spiritual masters like Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Ramana Maharshi, our Parama Guru (Sri Amrithanandanatha Saraswathi) have deeply recommended focusing on heart centre for most benefit and progress and depth of connection with the deity or object of meditation. One can even practice Trataka: i.e., staring keenly at an object (commonly flame on a lamp/candle) with unbroken attention

7. Dhyana:

As mentioned earlier, state where all thought waves ceasing to form only one single wave which flows inward or outward seamlessly without any gap in between. Absolute stillness or one pointedness in thought. "This is the state of Meditation"

8. Samadhi:

State where sadhaka experiences deep oneness with object of meditation of nature around him/her. Also known as trance state. Various states Ex: Savikalpa Samadhi, Nirvikalpa Samadhi, Sahaja Samadhi

*Nirvikalpa Samadhi: State of enlightenment where the Will of the Sadhaka and God become one and in this state all siddhis and knowledge and control of higher realms are fully accessible for the spiritual seeker

When we say Meditation, ideally it means the latter three components i.e., Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi. Just before start of Meditation, certain basic exercises can help warm up the mind.



In Srividya Upasana, spiritual progress
is achievable only through
a calm and focused mind.



The Importance of Mental Health in Spiritual Practice

Jai Guru Dev Datta

The Silent Architect of Success: **Mental Health as the Key to Achieving Excellence**

What do a spiritual master, an Olympic athlete, a successful corporate leader, and an exceptional student have in common? Have you ever wondered what drives success and which inner qualities are essential for achieving excellence, regardless of the field of endeavor? Whether the goal is spiritual enlightenment, professional accomplishment, or personal growth, the foundational principles of success remain remarkably consistent. Across spiritual texts, biographies of high achievers, and diverse disciplines, certain qualities are universally emphasized—resilience, emotional balance, clarity, and focus. These attributes are crucial



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for navigating challenges and reaching one's highest potential.

At the core of these principles lies an often implicit yet essential factor: mental health. Mental health serves as the silent architect of success, providing the clarity

needed to make wise decisions and the balance to remain grounded amidst life's uncertainties. For centuries, spiritual traditions have underscored the essential unity of mind, body, and spirit. Specifically in practices like Srividya Upasana, the alignment of inner energies and the regulation of emotions are seen as vital for spiritual growth and enlightenment. The mind, regarded as the sacred abode of the Divine Mother in Srividya, must be purified and stabilized for spiritual energy to flow without obstruction.

In **Srividya Upasana**, a calm and focused mind is not just beneficial—it is indispensable. Consider the example of a seeker who struggles with inner turmoil. Despite their devotion, unresolved anxiety clouds their connection with the Divine, preventing them from accessing deeper spiritual experiences. Or think of a seeker who can maintain composure during rituals but allows anger or frustration to disrupt their relationships, ultimately hindering their spiritual and personal growth. Similarly, a professional might excel in their work environment but find themselves overwhelmed by stress at home, losing emotional control with loved ones. An athlete may have the discipline to train rigorously but finds it difficult to manage performance anxiety before competition, affecting their results.

These examples illustrate how mental health plays a crucial role in every aspect of life—spiritual, personal, and professional.

Without emotional balance and mental clarity, even the most dedicated efforts can falter, and true success remains out of reach.

While the importance of mental health in achieving success is clear, it's essential to explore how we can cultivate these crucial qualities of clarity, emotional regulation, and resilience. One of the

most powerful tools in achieving this is meditation. Across spiritual traditions, including Srividya

Upasana and among high achievers, meditation has long been heralded as a transformative practice for cultivating a healthy mind. From ancient texts to modern-day success stories, it is evident that meditation provides the mental space necessary for self-reflection, emotional balance, and focused intention.

Meditation also brings about **Trikarana Shuddhi**, or the purification of thought (manas), word (vak), and action (kriya). This alignment ensures that the mind, speech, and actions are in harmony, creating a powerful foundation for personal and spiritual growth. By calming the mind through meditation, one cultivates pure thoughts, which naturally reflect in truthful speech and ethical actions. This triadic purification helps individuals stay aligned with their highest goals and fosters a life of authenticity and integrity. Over time, meditation not only stabilizes the mind but also refines speech and actions, making them channels for positivity and growth. In

StrividyaUpasana, this purification is seen as essential for accessing deeper states of spiritual awareness and connecting with the Divine.

Mental health, much like physical fitness, cannot be developed overnight. Just as you wouldn't walk into a gym, exercise for five minutes, and expect to see defined abs, cultivating mental well-being requires consistent effort and dedication over time. Many people feel discouraged after just one meditation session, thinking that nothing has changed. However, meditation is a practice that demands repeated effort and patience. The stability of the mind and the regulation of emotions are not innate qualities; they are skills that must be nurtured and refined through continuous practice.

Just as a fitness regimen involves progressive training to build strength and endurance, mental well-being demands a disciplined approach and daily practice. Meditation, mindfulness, cognitive restructuring, self-behavior modification strategies, and emotional awareness are tools that, when applied regularly, gradually fortify the mind. Having an expert to guide you in learning these techniques can make a significant difference, as they provide tailored insights, strategies, and encouragement to help you navigate this transformative journey effectively. With time, the mind becomes more stable, and emotional reactions become more measured and balanced.

The process of developing mental health is akin to training for a marathon

rather than sprinting toward an immediate result. It is through sustained practice and repetition that mental clarity and emotional equilibrium are achieved, ultimately leading to greater self-awareness, resilience, and the capacity to navigate life's uncertainties with composure and wisdom.

While the fields of a spiritual master, an Olympic athlete, a successful corporate leader, or an exceptional student may differ, the one common thread that ties them together is the mental clarity, emotional resilience, and focus they possess. These qualities are not only cultivated by physical training or intellectual pursuits—they are deeply influenced by the state of their mental health. It is time to recognize the importance of mental health, prioritize its cultivation, and apply its strategies to elevate every aspect of our lives, no matter the journey we undertake.



Govindavadi Sri Dakshinamurthy Temple, Kancheepuram



The Sri Dakshinamurthy Temple in Govindavadi, near Kanchipuram, holds several mystical and lesser-known details that enhance its spiritual significance. This temple's significance is as a Guru Sthalam, where devotees seek remedies for planetary afflictions, especially those related to Jupiter.

Temple Architecture and Deities:

- **Main Deity:** Lord Dakshinamurthy is depicted in a seated posture on a pedestal supported by a tortoise (Koorma). The pedestal features intricate carvings of eight elephants, eight lions, eight Ashta Dikpalakas (guardians of the directions), and five serpents. Unlike traditional depictions with a banyan tree backdrop, here a mandapam representing Mount Kailash is shown behind the deity. ☐
- **Other Shrines:** The temple complex includes shrines for Lord Kailasanathar (a form of Shiva), Goddess Akilandeswari (Parvati), Varasiddhi Vinayagar (Ganesha), Balamurugan (bala subrahmanya), Valli Devasena Subramaniam, Rahu, Ketu, Nagadevathas (serpent deities), Chandikeswarar, Kala Bhairava, Navagrahas (nine planetary deities), and Sridevi Bhudevi Samedha Govinda Raja Perumal (Vishnu).

1. Unique Placement of Dakshinamurthy:

- Unlike most temples where Dakshinamurthy faces south under a banyan tree, here he is the main deity seated majestically, symbolizing his supreme role as the guru of the universe.
- His representation includes esoteric elements like:
- Koorma pedestal: Signifying stability and the support of the universe.
- Serpents and lions: Representing wisdom (serpents) and courage (lions).



- Ashta Dikpalakas (Guardians of Directions): A rare feature, denoting Dakshinamurthy's control over cosmic directions.

2. Astronomical and Astrological Connections:

- Planetary Worship (Navagraha Remedies): Govindavadi is a Guru Sthalam (center for Jupiter worship). It's believed that praying here remedies:

- Guru Dosha (afflictions of Jupiter).
- Weak Jupiter placements in one's horoscope.
- The temple is aligned with cosmic principles of Sthapatya Veda, enhancing its ability to channel spiritual vibrations.

3. Connection to Siddhas and Yogis:

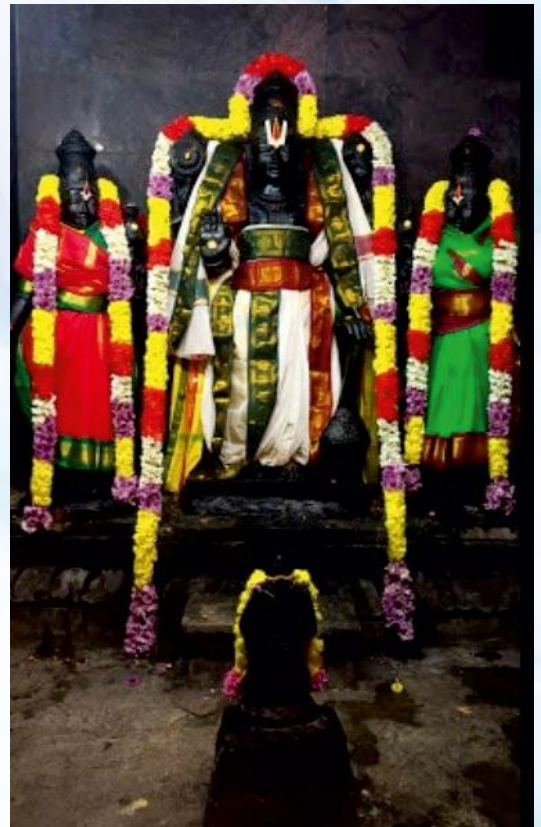
- It is said that many Siddhas (mystics) and Rishis have meditated at this temple.
- Some believe the temple houses hidden yantras (mystical diagrams) buried under the sanctum, installed by these sages to amplify spiritual energies.

4. Sacred Banyan Tree:

- A sacred banyan tree in the temple premises is revered for its spiritual potency. Devotees meditate under it, as it's said to aid in achieving clarity and inner peace.
- The banyan tree is associated with Dakshinamurthy's teachings—especially in guiding one toward self-realization.

5. Mandala Pooja Rituals:

- Special Mandala Poojas (rituals performed for 48 days) are organized for achieving knowledge, spiritual growth, and planetary alignment.
- Thursdays are considered highly auspicious for such practices.



6. Hidden Temple Connection:

- The Govindavadi Dakshinamurthy Temple is believed to be spiritually linked to Tiruvottriyur (Chennai) and Tiruvannamalai. Meditating on Dakshinamurthy here is said to channel blessings from these cosmic centers.

7. Moolavar's (Main Deity's) Energy:

- The deity's drishti (gaze) is said to directly influence devotees' intellect and decision-making, helping overcome ignorance (avidya) and align them to dharma.
- Specific beejaksharas (seed sounds) associated with Dakshinamurthy's mantra are considered more potent when chanted in this temple.



8. Unusual Offerings and Rituals:

- Offerings like milk, honey, and curd are poured on the deity during abhishekam, symbolizing enlightenment and self-purification.
- Yellow flowers, bananas, and ghee lamps are preferred offerings to please Lord Guru (Dakshinamurthy).

9. Time and Space Vortex Beliefs:

- The sanctum is considered a spiritual vortex where time slows, enabling deep meditation and spiritual insights.
- Many devotees report experiencing heightened states of consciousness during poojas or personal prayers in the inner sanctum.

10. Chola-Era Mysticism:

- Inscriptions and carvings suggest that the temple was designed under the guidance of Chola mystics and architects, embedding mystical geometry into its construction.
- Some speculate that secret underground passages (now closed) connect this temple to nearby Shiva temples, symbolizing the interconnectedness of Guru and Shiva worship.

11. Mantra Initiation at the Temple:

- The temple is a favored spot for Guru mantra diksha (initiation), as it's believed that Dakshinamurthy blesses seekers with clarity, wisdom, and the removal of karmic blocks.
- Chanting the Dakshinamurthy Gayatri mantra here is said to yield instant blessings.

If you're planning to visit, spending time meditating in the sanctum or under the sacred banyan tree might reveal personal insights or intuitive clarity.

The Sri Dakshinamurthy Temple in Govindavadi conducts a variety of special poojas and rituals, each uniquely aligned with the worship of Lord Dakshinamurthy and the planetary influence of Jupiter. Below are detailed insights into the types of poojas and their



significance:**Daily Poojas:**

- Ushakalam Pooja (Early Morning):
- Performed at sunrise, this pooja invokes blessings for a new beginning, with emphasis on knowledge and wisdom.
- Offerings include fresh flowers, fruits, and incense.
- Kaala Sandhi Pooja (Morning Pooja):
- Conducted around 8 AM to ensure stability and spiritual progress for devotees.
- Sayaraksha Pooja (Evening Pooja):
- A meditative offering at dusk to seek guidance in daily challenges.
- Lamps are lit, symbolizing the dispelling of ignorance.

Special Weekly Poojas:

- Guru Pooja on Thursdays:
- Thursdays are highly auspicious for Lord Dakshinamurthy, as he is associated with the planet Jupiter (Guru).
- Devotees perform abhishekam with:
- Milk: For purity and spiritual growth.
- Honey: To sweeten speech and improve communication.
- Sandalwood Paste: For calmness and focus.
- Curd: To cool the mind.
- Chanting the Guru Gayatri Mantra or Dakshinamurthy Stotram enhances the ritual's benefits.
- Lighting Lamps with Ghee:
- Lighting yellow ghee lamps on Thursdays is believed to bring blessings in education, career, and spiritual pursuits.

Special Monthly Poojas:

- Pournami (Full Moon) Pooja:
- The temple organizes special poojas on full moon nights, focusing on spiritual enlightenment and clarity.
- The energy on full moon days is believed to amplify the vibrations of Dakshinamurthy's blessings.
- Pradosham Pooja (Twice a Month):
- Conducted during the 13th day of each lunar fortnight (Trayodashi), this pooja is dedicated to removing karmic obstacles.
- Dakshinamurthy is worshiped alongside Lord Shiva to cleanse past mistakes.

Annual and Festival Poojas:

- Guru Peyarchi Festival:
- Celebrated during Jupiter's transition (Guru Peyarchi), this grand event attracts thousands of devotees.

- Rituals include:
- Special homams (fire rituals).
- Navagraha Shanti for Jupiter-related doshas.
- Offering yellow vastras (clothes) and sweets to Lord Dakshinamurthy.
- Maha Shivaratri:
- Devotees stay overnight at the temple, performing abhishekam to Dakshinamurthy and seeking his blessings as the Guru of all Shiva's devotees.
- Dakshinamurthy Jayanthi:
- Celebrates the birth of Lord Dakshinamurthy as the cosmic teacher.
- Elaborate rituals are conducted, focusing on jnana homam (fire offering for wisdom).

Specific Remedies and Rituals:

- Guru Dosha Nivarana Pooja:
- For those suffering from weak Jupiter placements in their horoscope or delayed progress in education, career, or marriage.
- Includes chanting Guru Beejaksharas and offering yellow items like turmeric, bananas, and sandalwood.
- Vidya Prapti Pooja (For Education and Knowledge):
- Students and professionals perform this pooja to seek blessings for memory power, intelligence, and academic success.
- Offerings include books, pens, and notebooks placed at the deity's feet.
- Marriage and Family Blessings:
- Couples facing delays in marriage or seeking harmony in relationships often perform kalyana archana and light ghee lamps.

Unique Rituals:

- Guru Homam:
- A powerful fire ritual invoking Jupiter's energy.
- Conducted to remove planetary doshas and invite wealth, prosperity, and spiritual wisdom.
- Yantra Pooja:
- Performed for devotees seeking success in meditation or spiritual pursuits.
- The yantra associated with Lord Dakshinamurthy is energized and worshipped during this pooja.

Abhishekam Rituals:

- Common ingredients used during abhishekam include:
- Milk: Purity and nourishment.
- Curd: Peace of mind.
- Honey: Sweetness and happiness.
- Sandalwood: Relaxation and inner calm.
- Tender Coconut Water: Healing energies.

- Vibhuti (Sacred Ash): Spiritual protection.

Devotees are encouraged to chant the Dakshinamurthy Ashtakam during or after abhishekam for heightened spiritual results.

Astrological Rituals:

- Navagraha Worship:
- Dedicated rituals for balancing Jupiter and other planetary energies.
- Includes offering yellow flowers, turmeric, and bananas.

The temple's poojas are renowned for their ability to bestow wisdom, clarity, and spiritual growth, making it a powerful center for those seeking Dakshinamurthy's blessings.

Temple Timings:

- Regular Days: Open from 7:00 AM to 12:00 PM and 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM.
- Thursdays: Open from 4:00 AM to 9:00 PM without a break, as Thursdays are considered auspicious for Lord Dakshinamurthy.

Contact Information: (+91)-9092109498

How to Reach:

- By Road: Govindavadi is approximately 18 km from Kanchipuram. Buses from Chennai to Kanchipuram via Arakkonam pass through the Govindavadi railway gate. From there, the temple is accessible by auto-rickshaw.
- By Rail: The nearest railway station is Tirumalpur, accessible by electric trains from Chennai Beach station.



What Offering Should Be Made to Deities ?



Once, when the parents of Adi Shankaracharya were away, the young Shankara was tasked with offering food to the deity. Observing his elders, he noticed that they would place a glass of milk before the deity, close the door, and later declare, "This is the prasada," believing the deity had consumed it. Satisfied by this faith, they would partake of the remaining milk.

However, young Shankara, with the innocence of a child, truly believed that the Goddess drank the milk. When he performed the ritual himself, he sat there waiting, trusting that the Goddess would drink the offering. When she didn't, his faith led him to weep and even strike his head on the floor, pleading, "Will you not drink? I am offering it with such sincerity!" His determination was so pure that the Goddess

herself appeared and drank all the milk. This left Shankara lamenting again, "Why didn't you leave any for me? You leave milk for my parents, but not for me?" Moved by his devotion, the Goddess blessed him with the nectar of divine knowledge. It is said that this experience inspired Shankaracharya to compose the Soundarya Lahari.

The Essence of Offerings

The divine has no preferences or dislikes regarding the offerings made. As the ever-satisfied and self-sufficient Supreme Being, God is beyond the need for human offerings. This is beautifully illustrated in the Krishna Tulabharam, where Rukmini's single tulasi leaf outweighed all other material offerings due to her pure devotion.

Hence, it is less about what we offer and more about whether we offer at all, and the spirit in which we do so. Historically, extensive offerings like the "22 varieties" or "12 delicacies" mentioned in scriptures were a part of societal norms. Priests and communities involved in worship depended on these offerings for their sustenance. The food prepared for the deity was distributed among devotees, fostering charity and generosity. Over time, this practice of sharing diminished, leaving excess offerings to go to waste.

True understanding of naivedya (offering) lies in its intention. Offer with the thought of sharing. When you place an offering before the deity, think of it as, "I am satisfied; now let me

share this with you.”

A Deeper Perspective

Even the simplest of acts, like preparing food at home, can be an offering. If you make a dosa, why not think, “Shouldn’t I first offer it to the Goddess?” If you are eating at home, a restaurant, or on a plane, recite Brahmaṛpanam or Krishnaṛpanam. Wherever you eat, if you think of it as an offering, it becomes sacred.

The principle of naivedya is this: “The Goddess resides there, and I am here. She is alive, and I must feed her.” This mindset transforms the act of offering into a heartfelt gesture. Whether it is wiping the deity’s mouth with a saree edge or ensuring the plate is clean, such devotion makes the offering genuine. This is why the Parashara Kalpa Sutra states, Shiva-Shakti Samarasya iti Naivedyam Kalpayami Namah—the unity of Shiva and Shakti represents the essence of offering. This teaching is central to Sri Vidya.

The Supreme Offering

Ultimately, the greatest naivedya is harmony and togetherness. When husband and wife live in concord, the Goddess declares, “This is the highest offering to me.” Sharing what you have with others is also considered a supreme offering. Hence, the nature of dharma evolves with time and circumstances. The definition of naivedya has shifted: in ancient times, it was elaborate rituals; today, it is unity, harmony, and sharing.

The essence remains unchanged: devotion, love, and selflessness are the true offerings to the divine.



My Volunteer Experience in the Sri Vidya Jnana Peetam

Shri Ganeshaya Namaha
Shri Saraswatyai Namaha
Shri Gurubyo Namaha

My name is Venkata Raghava Sarma, I have been initiated into Shri Vidya in the month of June and I have had the privilege to volunteer/ seva in the Shri Vidya Peetham.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Shri Arunamba Sahitha Shri Guru Karunamaya for giving me the opportunity to volunteer at the Peetam.

I have volunteered there for a month and it felt like a week. The day starts in the Peetam by 6 A.M.

I have had the privilege of cooking for the Kamakshi Ambal (Prasadam) and also to Guruji and all other volunteers. When Guruji blessed me as Annadhata Sukhibhava, I had tears.

I had the privilege to do Sandhyavandanam with Guruji. The importance of Gayathri and Sandhyavandanam explained by Guruji and how everyone irrespective of Caste should do Gayathri is wonderful.

The Guru Mandala Puja done by Guruji is an Amrutha Bhandagaram to the eyes. Everyone should experience the Guru Mandala Puja. I had the chance to dance for the Shri Rama Keertans during the Guru Mandala Puja. When Guruji explained why it's important to dance for Bhajans in order to activate the Chakras, I was mesmerized.

The Rhythmic way of Reciting Lalitha sahasranamam, Khadgamala Stotras is a feast to the ears. The Vibrations that we experience during the Guru Mandala Puja is nothing short of divine experience.

I was in Peetham during the Gita Jayanti and Guruji explained about Bhagavad Gita and how it's useful to today's date. Ever since, I'm Reciting a Chapter per day.

We are really entitled to be in the presence of Guruji, experience the wisdom which only Peetham volunteers can experience.

Even though, Guru Ma's name is Arunamba , she is the real Karunamba. The way she inquires whether everyone has eaten or not, tells us that everybody should eat heartfully. She is Annapurna amma. I am grateful I had the Guru Mantra Deeksha by Guruji in Kamakshi temple.

Visalamma is an inspiration to everyone who wants to get initiated into Shri Vidya and a perfect example of Guru Shishya Sampradaya. The way she first feeds Maa Annapurna before eating is a perfect example of how a devotee should be and isn't it what guruji says so !!

The fellow volunteers are really helpful in helping during the preparation of Guru Mandala Puja or attending the calls or preparation of Prasadam.

There's no difference between the Kamakshi Temple and the Shri Vidya Gyana Peetam except we can see Kamakshi Amman in the Peetam as long as we want. Maa Kamakshi walks in the Peetam. The divine fragrance of the Kumkum that sometimes I experience when we pass through Ambal shakes your spine to the core. Believe it or not, Maa Kamakshi listens in the Peetam.

I urge everyone to experience this wonderful opportunity provided by Guruji to volunteer in the Peetam. Everyday, we receive calls begging people to meet Guruji asking for help and how Guruji takes time to reply to each and every message and trying to make lives better and how we are directly in contact with Guruji is phenomenal.

After coming out of the Peetham, I can sense the difference in my lifestyle. I am talking less and soft. I'm being Punctual, the discipline is better. To be honest, what I have gained through this volunteering is much more than what I have offered. In fact , I did nothing, it's all Kamakshi Ambal that made me do it.

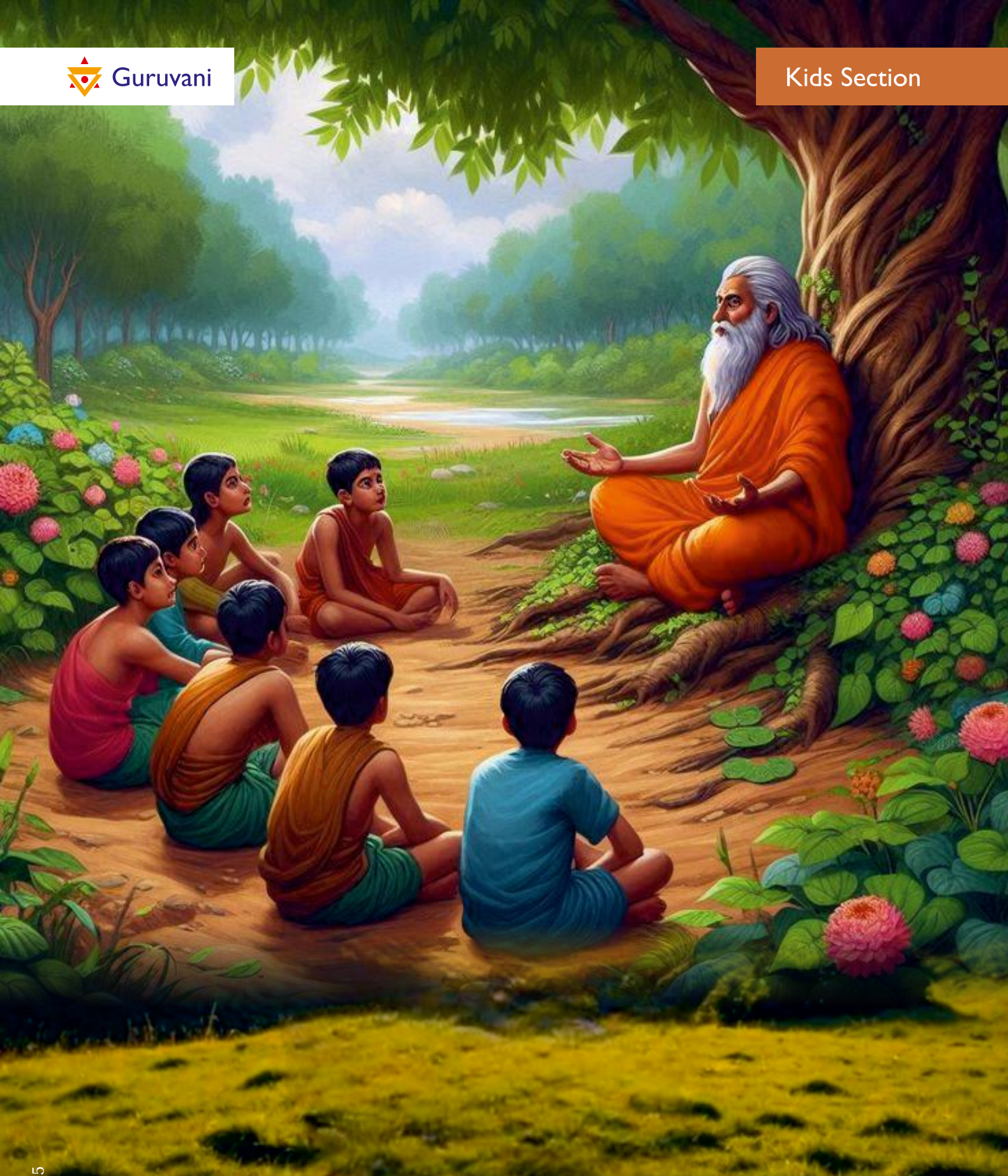
I am looking forward to volunteering in the Peetham again soon so that I could experience the drops of devotion and be in the Presence of Guruji.

Sarvam Shri Kaanchi Kamakoti Peeteshwari, Shri Kamakshi Paradevatha
Charanaravindha Arpanamasthu

Swasthi.

Venkata Raghava Sharma,
Vizag





Kids Section



Krishna Lesson of Humility



Compiled by:

Smt.. Indrani Yashoda Kompella

When Krishna was around 13 years old, His fame as a protector and leader had spread far and wide. One day, a young boy named Srutadeva, who was proud of his intelligence and knowledge, arrived in Vrindavan. Srutadeva had heard stories about Krishna but thought, “Why does everyone worship Krishna? Isn’t He just a cowherd? Surely, someone like me, who is learned in scriptures, deserves more recognition.”

Krishna, who knows the thoughts of everyone, smiled. He decided to teach Srutadeva an unforgettable lesson.

One afternoon, Krishna invited Srutadeva to the forest with His friends. As they sat under the shade of a large banyan tree, Krishna said, “Srutadeva, you are so learned! Can you tell us the meaning of true wisdom?”

Excited to show off his knowledge, Srutadeva began reciting verses from the scriptures. He spoke of devotion, humility, and the importance of recognizing divinity in all beings. Krishna listened patiently, and when Srutadeva finished, He said, “Your words are wonderful. But have you

truly understood their meaning?"

Before Srutadeva could answer, Krishna pointed to an anthill nearby. "Do you see this anthill? It holds more wisdom than even the greatest scholars."

Confused, Srutadeva replied, "An anthill? How can that be? It's just a pile of dirt and ants."

Krishna smiled and gently touched the anthill with His flute. To everyone's amazement, the anthill disappeared, revealing a radiant sage sitting in meditation. The sage opened his eyes, and Krishna bowed before him, addressing him as Sage Muchukunda.

Muchukunda, who had been cursed to live as an ant for his arrogance many lifetimes ago, spoke humbly: "O Krishna, you are the Supreme Lord who frees even the most ignorant from their pride. I had forgotten my true purpose, but your grace has brought me back to the path of devotion."

Turning to Srutadeva, Krishna said, "True wisdom is not about knowing scriptures or being recognized by others. It's about living the values of humility, love, and service to all beings. The greatest scholar is one who sees divinity even in an anthill."

Srutadeva fell at Krishna's feet, his pride completely dissolved. He realized that Krishna wasn't just a cowherd boy but the Supreme Teacher, who imparts lessons in the most unexpected ways.

This story reminds us that true greatness lies in humility and that even the simplest things in life can hold profound wisdom. It also shows Krishna's loving way of correcting and guiding people, making Him an eternal source of inspiration for young and old alike.





Morning Puja

1. Sandhyavandanam
2. Shri Vidya Mantra Japa
3. Rudrabhishekam
4. Sahasralinga Archana
5. Shri Chakra Archana
6. Guru Mandala Puja
(Including Hanuman and Subramanya Puja)
7. Shri Rudra Homa
8. Lalita Sahasranama Parayana
9. Ganapati, Shyama, and Varahi Yantra Pujas



Evening Puja

1. Rudrabhishekam
2. Lalita Sahasranama Parayana
3. Varahi Homa
4. Rajashyamala Homa
5. Ekantha Seva



Important Note:

Donors/devotees participating in the pujas and services conducted in the shrine can contact this phone number: 8608747873.

Srividya Sadhana Classes in January Module Details

January 10th, 11th (in Telugu)

Advanced Srividya Classes (Module 3 & 4),
from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM IST in English (Online and Offline)

January 11th, 12th (in English)

Advanced Srividya Classes (Module 3 & 4),
from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM IST (Online and Offline)

Note: All Srividya classes will be conducted both online and offline.
Those who wish to attend the offline classes must come to the Kanchi Peetham.
For more details, please contact 80882 56632.

To register for the Basic Srividya Classes, use the following link

<https://srimeru.org/cloud/workshopregistration>



01
JAN
2025**Festivals
of the Month****Auspicious days in**

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 05 Sun | - Skanda Shashti |
| 07 Tue | - Durgashtami Vratam |
| 10 Fri | - Pushya Putrada Ekadashi,
Uttarashada Karte,
Mukkoti Ekadashi |
| 11 Sat | - Sani Trayodashi,
Pradosha Vratam |
| 13 Mon | - Sri Satyanarayana Puja,
Pournami Vratam,
Pournami, Bhogi |
| 14 Tue | - Uttarayana Punyakalam
begins, Makara Sankranti,
Pongal |
| 15 Wed | - Kanuma |
| 16 Thu | - Mukkkanuma,
Bommalanomu |
| 17 Fri | - Sankatahara Chaturthi |



Guruvani and Amma distributing Sriyantra's after prana pratishtha



Guruji had the darsan of **Sri Vijayendra Saraswathi Garu** of Kancheepuram peetham in Tirupathy and got His Holiness blessings for the early construction of our peetham without any hindrances



Nithya Pooja, Japam and Homam in the Peetham



Dhanur masa celebrations (gobbillu) in Peetham daily





Guruvani gave a pravachan on the **"The essential thathva of Srividya"** in Sri Vasavi Kanyaka Parameswari temple in Bangalore on 24th Dec

Guruvani and Amma were felicitated by the Vasavi trust on this occasion

The pravachan was live on youtube in our channel



Words of Treasure

**Detachment in the Beginning &
Attachment in the End, That is Lalitha.**

- Guru Karunamaya



GURUVANI

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