



BALABHAVAN NEWSLETTER

VEDIC CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL CENTER OF SAN DIEGO



January 2011

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Festivals of the Month:

Please visit:

www.shiva-vishnu.org for more details

Jan 3 @ 6:30 PM:

[Shri Hanuman Jayanthi](#)

Jan 14: Pongal

What is Karma Yoga ?



Karma yoga can simply be described as 'Selfless Service', when our ego is surrendered before God. It is related to man, animal and plants as well. Karma also means to choose the right path to do right things. Personal religion is followed and the destiny is accepted as everything in life. All the acts which are completed from birth to death in one's life are called Karma. *Karma yogi* does not accept any wealth for rendering service in any household and even name and fame is not sought after.

Two things are indispensably requisite in the practice of Karma Yoga. The Karma Yogi should have non-attachment to the fruits of actions. He will have to dedicate his actions at the altar of God with the feeling of *Ishvararpana*. Non-attachment brings freedom from sorrow and fear. When he dedicates his actions at the Lotus Feet of the Lord, he develops devotion to God and approaches him nearer and nearer. He gradually feels that God works directly through his Indriyas. He feels no strain in discharge of his works now. He is quite at ease. The heavy load which he felt previously on account of false notion has vanished out of sight now. By doing selfless service you purify your heart. Egoism, hatred, jealousy, ideas of superiority and all the kindred negative qualities will vanish. You will develop humility, pure love, sympathy, tolerance and mercy. Eventually you will obtain knowledge of the self. You will realize one in all and All in one.

----- Aruna Sudarshan

BBC Announcements:

Wish you all a very happy new year! We would like to welcome you all to Bala Bhavan 2011.

Please review the syllabus document sent out earlier to access all the necessary information about the curriculum and links for various resources that will be used throughout the upcoming year. This document along with the detailed calendar is available at <http://www.shiva-vishnu.org/bbcalendar.html>

Topics of the year:

Toddler: Various Gods and Jataka tales

Junior: Mahabharata

Senior: Skanda Purana

Super Senior: Vedas and Vedic Culture

BBC TEAM

January Birthdays:

Toddler:

Rohan Sahoo

Juniors:

Pajaka Lakshmin
Anirudh Yadavalli
Pralhad Achar
Aadya Vijkanth

Seniors:

Rachana Madhukara
Sarthak Madan
Kavya Vijaysankar
Anjali Koganti

Super Seniors:

Vikram Thridandam



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Class Schedules

1-1-2011 -----

Toddler Class:

Story: Story of Veda Vyasa and Ganesha

Gayathri Vidyashankar

Sloka: Gajananam, Vakrathunda
Gayathri Vidyashankar

Bhajan: Ganesha Sharanam,
Chandra Shekaraya Nama Ok
Hema Kalyan

Super Senior Class:

Story: Vedas - basis of our philosophy and religion

- *Ram Krishnamurthy*

Sloka: Dashashloki
Lalitha othandapani

Bhajan: Vigna Vinayaka Veda Swarupa, Shankara Saambashiva
- *Latha Sundar*

1-15-2011 -----

Toddler Class:

Story: Story of subramanya marrying valli, Ganesha's help

Ram Krishnamurthy

Sloka: Shubham Karoti, Guru Brahma
-Sushma Natarajan

Bhajan: Shankara Sadadshiva (pg 19); Review Chandra Shekaraya Nama Om (pg 22)
Lata Sundar

Super Senior Class:

Story: Fourteen abodes of knowledge - the basis of our culture

Ashok Malavalli

Sloka: Dashashloki
-Viji Ramanaryanan

Bhajan: Review of Nandeeshwara, Sharanam Siddhi Vinayaka; Shankara Chandrashekara
Bharathy Thridandam

What is Dharma ?

Dharma is one of the most important themes in Hinduism. Hindus consider dharma the very foundation of life. Dharma is the path of righteousness and living one's life according to the codes of conduct as described by the Hindu scriptures.

In ancient India dharmashastras (law books) provided guidance to people in their day to day lives and helped them to adhere to dharma. The best way to know what is dharma and what is adharma, is to follow the religious scriptures such as the Bhagavad gita and the Upanishads or any other scripture that contains the words of God.

Manusmriti written by the ancient sage Manu, prescribes 10 essential rules for the observance of dharma: Patience (*dhriti*), forgiveness (*kshama*), self control (*dama*), honesty (*asteya*), sanctity (*shauch*), control of senses (*indraiya-nigrah*), reason (*dhi*), knowledge or learning (*vidya*), truthfulness (*satya*) and absence of anger (*krodha*).

Hinduism accepts the concept of reincarnation, and what determines the state of an individual in the next existence is karma which refers to the actions undertaken by the body and the mind. In order to achieve good karma it is important to live life according to dharma, what is right. This involves doing what is right for the individual, the family, the community and also for the universe itself.

The practice of dharma gives an experience of peace, joy, strength and tranquility within one's self and makes life disciplined.

---- *Anugraha Panneerselvam*

Class Schedules

1-8-2011 -----

Junior Class:

Story: Story of Veda Vyasa and Ganesha

-Seetha Janakiraman

Sloka: Ganesha Pancharatnam 1-2, Shiva Sadakshara
-Anandhi Krishnamoorthy

Bhajan: Sharanam Siddhi Vinayaka, Jaya Jaya Shankara
-Lalitha Krishnamoorthy

Senior Class:

Story: Introduction to 18 puranas. Muruga before his birth and how he came to be born to Shiva

-Ram Krishnamurthy

Sloka: Shiva Panchakshara Stotram
- Anandhi Krishnamoorthy

Bhajan: Ekathandam, Nandeeshwara Hey- *Lalitha Krishnamoorthy*

1-22-2011 -----

Junior Class:

Story: Story of Devavrata/Bhisma

-Rama Srinivas

Sloka: Ganesha Pancharatnam 3 - 4, w:Shiva Sadakshara 4 - 6
-Vandana Santhanam

Bhajan: Review Jaya Jaya Shankara; Shambho Shankara
-Radhika Chari

Senior Class:

Story: Daksha's yagna, Churning of ocean and emergence of Amrita; Devas approach Shiva.

Seetha Janakiraman

Sloka: Shivamanasapuja
- Lakshmi Srinivasan



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Special Thanks

We thank all the volunteers who make this program such a success. Our special thanks go out to our previous Bala Bhavan Coordinators, Bharathy Thridandam, Sriram Srinivasan and Nithya Sudhakar.

Attendance Requirements:

Any child missing three consecutive classes will be removed from Bala Bhavan and that place will be given to the next child in the waiting list. This rule will be strictly enforced. Please go through the Guidelines section of Bala Bhavan website to note the exceptions and to understand how to notify an absence.

Glimpse of Bala Bhavan children in 2010:



Topics of the Month

Anugraha Panneerselvam
Aruna Sudarshan
Shrea Chari

What is Dhyana Yoga?

Dhyana Yoga is simply the yoga of meditation. It is seventh of the eight limbs of yoga. It is derived from the Sanskrit root "dhyai" which means "to think of". One of its popular forms is the Kundalini Yoga.

How do you practice Dhyana Yoga?

Dhyana Yoga is practiced by meditating on a single (flow) idea without getting distracted. This helps us clear the mind and be one with God and reach a heightened level of awareness. It does not have to be done sitting still or with closed eyes. Dhyana yoga can be an active meditation used in physical activity as well. In addition to its use as a religious meditative practice, dhyana yoga is also thought to calm the mind and emotions.

This meditative yoga is claimed to help with digestion and blood circulation and also for relieving stress and enhancing feelings of well-being. The practice of Dhyana yoga is traditionally thought to strengthen the mind by raising positive energy, known in Sanskrit as *kundalini*, up through the spine.

Significance of Dhyana Yoga: Sri Krishna in Chapter 6 of the Bhagavad Gita, explains DhyanaYoga to his friend and disciple, Arjuna.

Shiva also is said to have described 108 different ways to do Dhyana of Mata Parvati.

In Dhyana Yoga, it is important to remember three things:

- Pointed mind - controlling its thoughts;
- Setting bounds to one's life to help achieve this - doing actions after weighing and measuring them; and
- State of level-headedness or evenness of vision - having the nobility to think in terms of the whole world.

-----Shrea Chari

Class Presentations

Junior Class:

1-8-2011:

Why do we light a lamp?

--Reetesh S

Why do we do a Namaste?

--Sumana S

1-22-2011:

What is the significance of OM?

-- Akshaya V

Why do we have so many gods?

-- Priyanka S

Senior Class:

1-8-2011

Slavana: How characters you have learnt in the past used this kind of Bhakti?

- Susmeetha S & Anugraha P

1-22-2011

Slavana - How characters you have learnt in the past used this form of Bhakti?

---Rengashree M & Shreya S

Super Senior Class:

1-1-2011

Mahabharatha or Ramayana - Which is the Ithihasa you think is better in conveying the morals/conduct/dharma for this Kali Yuga?-

- Akhilesh V & Padmashree M

1-1-2011

Vaamana or Parasuraama (both of them were Brahmins who appeared with the intent of vanquishing evil Kshatriyas - but handled the process very differently)?

- Satish C & Utkrish R

Newsletter Editors

Kamakshi Ramanarayanan
Keerti Tadimeti