



SEPTEMBER 2024



BHAKTI SAURABH & GOPAL FOUNDATION

# NEWSLETTER

## The Mind

In the September edition of the Bhakti Saurabh newsletter, with Shri Guru and Hari's blessings, we provide spiritual insights on the mind (मन).

The mind wields great power, driving an individual's actions and feelings. For instance, even when savoring delicious food, a person preoccupied with other issues may taste nothing but anxiety. One's mental state has a stronger influence on happiness than physical conditions, guiding individuals toward joy or sorrow.

It naturally follows, then, that a well-disciplined mind has the power to offer lasting and profound happiness (परम सुख) to an individual.

In Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Bhagwan Shri Krishna says:

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्वेनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमं ।  
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥

*Lord Shri Krishna declares that those who achieve supreme bliss are those whose minds are entirely serene, whose desires have been calmed, who are free from impurities, and who have become one with the universe. (Bhagavad Gita 6.27).*

However, the average human mind is frequently restless and troubled by numerous issues such as anger, cravings, greed, desire, infatuation, jealousy, and more. Regrettably, most are too focused on their physical health to acknowledge these mental afflictions.

In the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita:

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथी बलवद्दृढम् ।  
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥

*Shri Arjun Maharaj says to Lord Krishna, "O Krishna, the mind is exceedingly restless, turbulent, powerful, and stubborn. To me, it seems more challenging to control than the wind." (Bhagavad Gita 6.34).*

*Flip the page to continue reading!*

Monthly Spotlight Monthly Spotlight

In the following verse, The Lord advised on the control of the mind:  
*O mighty Arjuna, there is no doubt that the mind is restless and difficult to control. However, O son of Kunti, through practice and detachment, it can be disciplined." (Bhagavad Gita 6.35)*

Through consistent practice and detachment, the mind can achieve purification and control, ultimately guiding us towards eternal and supreme bliss. The question naturally arises, then, as to how an individual can effectively rid themselves of these mental afflictions.

The Shri Ramcharitmanas succinctly describes this:

राम कृपा नासहिं सब रोगा । जौ एहि भाँति बनै संयोगा ॥  
सदगुरु बैद बचन विश्वासा । संजम यह न बिषय कै आसा ॥

*All these afflictions can be eliminated if, by Lord Rama's grace, the following elements come together: there must be faith in the words of the healer, who appears in the form of a true guru, and the prescribed discipline is detachment from sensory pleasures. (Ramcharitmanas, 7.122.5-6)*

The solution to overcoming these ailments lies in embracing spirituality:

- Seek guidance from a spiritual master and follow their teachings.
- Participate in spiritual gatherings and chant the Lord's name
- Give up sensory pleasures and pursue profound happiness from pure wisdom and a heart devoted to the Divine.

The entirety of the mind can be described as Antahkaraṇa (अन्तःकरण). Antahkaran encompasses four functions of the mind: the lower mind (मानस), the intellect or higher mind (बुद्धि), consciousness (चित्त), and ego (अहंकार). In the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, purified Antahkaran (सत्व संशुद्धि) is mentioned as a divine quality. Antahkaran can exhibit three types of faults (दोष) – impurity (मल), distractions (विक्षेप), and covering (आवरण). To achieve a purified Antahkaran (सत्व संशुद्धि), it is necessary to eliminate these.

As per the scriptures, to eliminate the impurity (मल) fault, it is essential to carry out all your responsibilities selflessly (निष्काम कर्म), as service, without a desire for personal gain. Distractions (विक्षेप) can be eliminated through worship (उपासना) under the Navadha Devotion (नवधा भक्ति):

*Flip the page to continue reading!*

श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम् ।  
अर्चनं वंदनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम् ॥

*The nine forms of pure devotional service are:*

- *Hearing, chanting, and remembering the sacred name, form, qualities, paraphernalia, and pastimes of Lord Vishnu*
- *Serving His lotus feet*
- *Offering respectful worship to the Lord*
- *Praying to Him*
- *Becoming His servant*
- *Considering Him as one's dearest friend*
- *And surrendering everything to Him. (Bhagavatpuran, 7.5.23)*

The flaw of covering (आवरण) can be resolved through the acquisition of spiritual knowledge (तत्त्व ज्ञान) gained by attending discourses with a spiritual master (सत्संग) and engaging in the study of scriptures (स्वाध्याय).

Lastly, how do we evaluate our progress to determine if our mind is becoming purified?

The Shri Ramcharitmanas says  
जानिय तब मन बिरुज गोसाँई । जब उर बल बिराग अधिकाई ॥  
सुमति छुधा बाढ़इ नित नई । बिषय आस दुर्बलता गई ॥

*The mind can be considered healed, my lord, only when the heart gains strength through detachment, the appetite for virtuous resolutions grows daily, and the weakness in the form of sensual cravings fades away. (Ramcharitmanas 7.121.9-10)*

A purified and devotional mind, achieved through the association of spiritual devotees, or satsang, shows divine traits such as fearlessness, simplicity in thought and speech, peace, absence of anger, and stability, leading to surrender to the Lord's lotus feet, devotion, and ultimately, supreme bliss.

*Flip the page to read about  
our accomplishments this  
month!*



## A Quick Recap

- **August 3, 2024**

On August 3, Maharaj Ji continued teaching us through the Shrimad Bhagvat Katha. On Day 5 of this series, we learned about the Dashama Skandha, the heart of the Bhagvata Puran, overfilled with Shri Krishna's lively childhood stories. Maharaj Ji enlightened us on the Maakhan Chor Leela, the Daamodar Leela, Shakatasur Vadh Leela, and much more. We concluded our day with an aarti and lovingly served prasadam to everyone.

<https://tinyurl.com/SBKDay5>

- **August 10, 2024**

On August 10, numerous Vaishnavas again came together for the sixth day of our Shrimad Bhagvat Katha series by Maharaj Ji. We continued learning about the Dashama Skandha and the vibrant childhood stories of Shri Krishna. A few of the most popular and loved ones covered were the Yamala-Arjuna Uddhar Leela, the Fruit Seller Leela, and the Bala Leela, along with many others. We ended by distributing our delicious prasadam to all.

<https://tinyurl.com/SBKDay6>

- **August 17, 2024**

On August 17, we all gathered to hear the last day of preaching from Maharaj Ji in the Shrimad Bhagvat series. We learned about how even the great Brahma Dev fell to the influence and illusion of Shri Krishna and learned an important lesson. Maharaj Ji also illustrated the many stories of Shri Krishna like the Dhenukasur Vadh, Pralambasur Vadh, the Veenu Geetam (emphasizing the inspiring devotion of the Gopis), and much more!

<https://tinyurl.com/SBKDay7>



**Shrimad Bhagvat Katha**



**Shrimad Bhagvat Katha**



**Shrimad Bhagvat Katha**



## A Quick Recap



**Shrimad Bhagvat Katha**

- **August 24, 2024**

On August 24, devotees gathered to hear Maharaj Ji's profound teachings merged with uplifting kirtan and bhajan. Maharaj Ji taught us the path to moksha (liberation) in the corrupted Kali Yuga, explaining that gyaan (knowledge), vairagya (detachment), and bhakti (devotion) have diminished and that only the Shrimad Bhagavatam can restore them. We concluded with an aarti and served homemade prasadam to all who attended.

<https://tinyurl.com/SBKDay1>



**Janmashtmi Celebration**

- **August 25, 2024**

On August 25th, GOPAL Foundation celebrated Shri Krishna Janamasthmi with great enthusiasm at Raghav Kunj. The program commenced with Abhishekam, followed by children and adults singing and dancing to many beautiful songs about Lord Krishna. Bhajans like "श्याम! मने चाकर राखो जी..." and "द्वारिका नो नाथ मारो राजा रणछोड़ छे ..." filled the air with a sense of joy and devotion. This auspicious occasion, Shri Guruji encouraged us to dedicate ourselves and our children to service for the better of our world.



**Shrimad Bhagvat Katha**

- **August 31, 2024**

On August 31, we continued our education on the Shrimad Bhagvatam. Maharaj Ji enlightened us on the Bhisma Pitamah Stuti, the situation of Dharma in the Kali Yuga, and the inspiring devotion and prayer of Mother Kunti to Shri Krishna. We also learned the famous story of the son of the Pandavas and Ashwathama. Along with crucial and valuable lessons, we enjoyed lively Sankirtan, ultimately ending with an aarti and prasadam.

<https://tinyurl.com/SBKDay2>

## Programs & Services



### Vedic Yogshala

We teach the art of meditation, breathwork, and yoga to adults along with spiritual advice on how to improve their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. This month we educated and helped many individuals through yoga. Make sure to join our September - October batch!

### Shastra Daan & Ghar-Ghar Ram

For a better tomorrow, this initiative has conducted 8 home programs this month, with the goal of bringing the beloved Shree Ram Lalla to every household worldwide, fostering peace, reinforcing vital life values, and changing lives.



### Raghav Pathshala

We educate young children on our culture, integrating Vedic principles and values into our language classes. Recently, we launched 8 new Hindi and 2 Gujarati skill-based batches. Our impressive annual function showcased our students' various skills and talents learned in this program.

### Raghav Baal Sanskar

We guide children to live a Sanatan life by teaching them how to read and understand our sacred scriptures, apply them to their daily lives, and connect the lessons to today, forming a deep connection with their roots and culture.



### Vedic Garbh Sanskar

For expecting mothers, we conduct weekly sessions focused on spiritual, mental, and physical health to benefit both the mother and child. Last month, we studied and explored the Bhagavad Gita and Ramcharitmanas, discussing the integration of the scriptures' wisdom into our daily lives.

### Summer Camp

In the summer, we spent 2 weekends with our students, reciting and learning Ramcharitmanas Chopais and Bhagavad Gita Shloks, teaching yoga, and the best daily routines to improve their overall lives, educating many young children.



### Bhagavad Gita Goshti

We have initiated a program to create an open, interactive platform where like-minded spiritual seekers can come together every Saturday morning to find the answers to their questions about everyday life with the guidance of the Bhagavad Gita.

*Learn more on our website!*



## Upcoming Events

- **September 14-15, 2024**

From September 14 to 15, we will be hosting an Akhand Ramayan Paath where we will be reciting and completing the entire Ramcharitmanas in 24 continuous hours. Join us at any time for an amazing experience, overflowing with positive energy, and a unique opportunity to deepen your spiritual and cultural connections. You will leave with an unforgettable feeling of fulfillment, peace, and positivity.

*Hosted in Kirkland*



**Akhand Ramayan Paath**

- **September 8, 2024**

Join us on September 8 for a workshop dedicated to helping expecting mothers improve their spiritual, mental, and physical health to create a great life and also benefit your newborn! We will be exploring many important topics and our sacred scriptures! You don't want to miss this! Join us to help us help you and your precious new arrival!

*Online Event - Look out for the Zoom Link!*



**Garbh Sanskar Workshop**

***Don't forget to join our weekly Kathas every Saturday!***

*Look out for more information in our Whatsapp group*



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