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Master's Talk

(Excerpted from) Look Into Yourself
 12 October 2012, Chennai, India

The entire talk can be seen in video format on line at:
<http://www.sahajmarg.org/literature/online/speeches/chennai-20121012>

Therefore, trouble comes when each of us looks into the mirror that is the Master and see ourselves; others see themselves. We all see things differently and there is this trouble, the Tower of Babel: “No, no, God is like this, God is like that, God is yellow, God is blue, God has a trunk. *Ganapathi bappa moriya*. [Ganapathi, come again next year.]”

So until we are able to see reality, which is nothing but purity – purity alone can be reality – we cannot say that we saw anything except a reflection of our own qualities, our own attributes and, to some extent, when we look at others we see a projection of our own selves. [If] you have bad motives, you see bad motives in him. Often when you go on the streets, a khaki uniform goes [by] and somebody runs. You know that is authority, and this is somebody that has broken the rules. Why don't other people run when they see a khaki uniform?

We must first of all understand that when we see all those whom we call brothers and sisters, and see in them qualities which we don't like, attributes in them which we don't like, we must understand this is being reflected from us and this is what we see. Therefore, I have often said, especially in the West, if a lady looks into a mirror and does not like what she sees, there is no use breaking the mirror; this [the self] has to change.

Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, whenever you see something that is not palatable or acceptable or enjoyable outside, look into yourselves. Just give a moment of thought to yourself and clean that for seconds or minutes, and you will find this sort of temporary cleaning, wherever you are, is so effective that it accelerates your progress. Of course, it does not mean you stop your evening cleaning. That goes on all the time. This is like washing your hands after going out, [but] the daily bath does not stop. If you are able to do this with your consciousness alert to the fact that you are creating all that is outside and nothing can happen there without it



**Master's Talk** *(continued from page 1)*

happening first in yourself, a lot of wisdom will be generated, a lot of purity will be generated. In no time at all, this world will change.

So don't waste time disputing with others, criticising others, hating others. Every time you have the tendency to hate somebody, just look into yourselves, close your eyes and clean; you will find he has changed. So this is what I recommend to all of you.



Letter from John Barlow
North America Blossoming

As 2012 comes to an end, we have an opportunity to pause and reflect more deeply on the year gone by, and to set intentions for the year ahead. When it comes to our Sahaj Marg practice, a practice that is in essence a catalyst for change, we may ask ourselves: What about my practice is working well for me? What may be strengthened? Am I willing to change those aspects of my character that no longer serve my spiritual journey? The fundamentals of our practice continue unaltered – morning meditation, evening cleaning, night prayer and remembrance. What else is available to nurture and support our process? *Whispers*, messages offering insight and loving vibrations, are unparalleled in their nature. There is also the SPURS Retreat Center, where one can truly retreat and immerse oneself in an atmosphere dedicated to introspection and renewal.

This year, 2012, we have had the great fortune to witness two new ashrams opening in North America. I can only feel that as our hearts open, we will also experience expansion on the physical level – attracting abhyasis who will use these new centers of light.

Save the Dates

North American Seminar
Manapakkam Ashram
August 19 – 23, 2013



This past year, a number of programs were developed, including several on “Grounding in the Practice” and a program on Heartspeak. Many facilitators have been trained to assist in making these programs available across the entire region of North America. All together, there is quite a network of support to help us deepen our understanding of this simple and straightforward practice, so that it can be an integral part of who we are and ultimately who we can become.

This issue of *Echoes* has been prepared with the intention of showcasing the resources available to us all. Our ashrams and retreat center are highlighted, including the new Fremont ashram in Fremont CA, and the Monroe ashram in Plainsboro NJ. We also enjoyed the North American Seminar this past February in India with our Master, and now have the dates of the upcoming North American Seminar in India in 2013, which are August 19 – 23, 2013.

It has truly been a fruitful year, as evident in the blossoming of these new facilities in North America.

Affectionately and with best wishes for the New Year,
John



Heartspeak Update

Janmarie Connor, Indianapolis, IN

Like from one seed comes a tree, from one tree comes a million seeds, so this must grow. Every seed you plant must bear a hundred such seeds and each of those a hundred, and so on, it must multiply, you know. And this is the purpose of Sahaj Marg – not only for your own individual growth and satisfaction, and elevation and liberation and things like that, but to become like Him, so that someone else can become like Him too through you, and so it goes on. Like one candle can light a million candles. So please, I request all of you to understand the seriousness of the spiritual pursuit, of its global significance for humanity.

(Master's Message to Abhyasis of North America, March 18, 2011)

Master's words offer a resonance that only our hearts can perceive. We are happy to announce the addition of Heartspeak on our [sahajmarg.org](http://www.sahajmarg.org) website, which might enhance our capacity for listening and responding with our hearts. Many of you have requested copies of the *Introduction to Heartspeak* materials for North America that were provided in September.

These documents are now available online at <http://www.sahajmarg.org/resources/programs/heartspeak>

Please take some time to explore this link. Your heart will thank you.

National Gathering, October 5 — 7, 2012

National Gathering West, Fremont Ashram Opening October 5-7, 2012, *Girish Dixit, San Jose, CA*

The 400 abhyasis who came from across North America to celebrate the opening of our new ashram in Fremont, California, began arriving midweek before the gathering was to begin on Friday. Preparations had been ongoing for weeks and culminated in the opening satsangh on the evening of October 5th. The effect of the deep and utter internal silence experienced in the sitting left everyone speechless, immersed in the unifying presence of beloved Master.

Saturday, October 6, 2012 was full of grace with three sittings and really speaking the harmony of the congregation made the whole day into one continuous satsangh. Although the facility appeared brand new, the atmosphere at the ashram was charged as if it had been in service for a very long time. The day's program progressed smoothly and all the anxiety that the organizers had felt prior to the gathering seemed to have been completely misplaced.

The group meditation on Sunday, October 7, 2012 commenced earlier than usual at 7 a.m., to accommodate the schedule of return travel of some of the abhyasis, but the remainder of the morning passed by so quickly that midday satsangh seemed to be immediately following the morning sitting. As it is with most Mission gatherings, the One World, One Humanity event at the Fremont Ashram also ended too quickly and left us all feeling that there should soon be another such gathering.



National Gathering *(continued from page 3)*

Children's Program at Fremont Ashram

October 5-7, 2012

Bagya Sodem

Nearly 70 children from various centers and regions attended the National Gathering West opening at Fremont Ashram. They participated in several activities and games during the three days. Activities for older kids, ages 7 to 14 years, included sessions on self-management and self-awareness, mock elections, nature photography and fun exercises; for younger children, ages 3 to 6 years, arts and crafts activities, board games and several active games, were conducted. Children also volunteered in the ashram, by holding signs reminding abhyasis to turn off their cell phones and by selling snacks in the canteen. The gathering included fine entertainment by children from the Fremont and Sacramento centers who performed a beautiful folk dance that brought the love of gopikas for Lord Krishna alive on stage. They also enacted a moving skit conveying the love and essence of Saint Kabir's life and teachings. The children from Sacramento performed a skit depicting our Masters' messages of unity and the gathering's theme, One World, One Humanity. Toddlers sang a joyful song about their shining hearts while brother Roberto



from Los Angeles brought us a heart-felt Spanish song and sister Lavanya from the Bay Area children's center performed a soulful bhajan. Altogether the children had a wonderful time being together in the divine grace of our Master.



National Gathering East, Molena Ashram, October 5 — 7, 2012





Monroe Ashram

Monroe Ashram Updates: October

Ragini Jagdish, New Jersey

By the grace of our beloved Master, the Monroe ashram received its occupancy certificate August 16, 2012. Since then, there has been a steady stream of abhyasis visiting the ashram.

We have had various group meetings, gatherings and workshops taking place in the ashram. There is a regular calendar of training sessions conducted in the ashram on Saturdays. Below is a brief calendar of events:

Calendar of Events

Saturday, October 20, 2012:

Grounding in the Practice: Meditation

Saturday, November 3, 2012:

Grounding In the Practice: Diary Writing

November 17–18, 2012:

Regional Gathering

Saturday, December 1, 2012:

Grounding in the Practice: Prayer

Saturday, December 15, 2012:

Grounding in the Practice: Cleaning

December 31, 2012 – Jan 1, 2013:

New Year's Gathering

Apart from these programs, on the first Sunday of the month there is a full day program, providing the opportunity to view DVDs of Master's talks and to have some quiet time in the ashram for contemplation and introspection.

Satsangh Times

Daily satsanghs Monday – Saturday at 6:30 a.m.

Wednesday satsangh at 8:00 p.m.

Sunday satsanghs at 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The morning satsangh is a boon for those living close to the ashram.

The ashram has a bookstore that is rapidly increasing in collection and participation. We have received various books and DVDs from the Molena bookstore and abhyasis can now purchase Mission literature and new releases at the ashram itself. We are also setting up an ashram library that will feature both Mission and non-Mission books with a strong focus on books for 3–12 year old children. The library will also carry subscriptions to spiritual magazines.

We are grateful to Master for giving us this center of light that unites all abhyasis and helps us grow harmoniously.

Monroe Ashram, November, 2012

Satysree.Buddharaju, South Brunswick, NJ

It has been wonderful to experience Master's work in the creation of this Center of Light. The ashram was beautifully decorated to welcome the hundred fifty abhyasis who came to the first regional gathering to share feelings of joy and gratitude in Master's presence through the theme, Purity That Weaves the Destiny. As the theme took hold of my thinking, I felt that gatherings are like a treasure hunt where Master gives us clues with the theme and sittings and the gathering environment reveals these conditions within us.

Thanks to modern technology, brother Kamlesh spoke with us, filling our hearts with a warm and loving message. He also read a conversation between Babuji and his [Kamlesh's] preceptor on practice, our spiritual journey and shared tips on effective practice approaches. He emphasized the importance of fixing the time for daily meditation – a suggestion I will immediately apply to my practice.

The gathering was also enriched with heartfelt talks, readings from literature and beautifully selected audio and video messages. As I left, my heart took away the message that purity in everything is essential and can be developed with dedicated practice and devotion.



Monroe Ashram Regional Gathering, November 2012

Sunderland

Sunderland Ashram Update

Barbara Lockhart, Greenfield, MA

From September to December there have been three special events at the ashram: two for training and one regional gathering. On September 29th 20 abhyasis met for the training workshop, Grounding in the Practice – Meditation. In small groups and pairs, with the gentle guidance of our facilitator, we read, discussed and reflected on why we meditate. With the help of Master's video and written guidance we introspected to understand how meditation helps us in our lives, helping us to have more focus on our spiritual practices.

The theme of our November regional gathering used the Introduction to HeartSpeak material to offer An Invitation for Conscious Practice. We acquainted ourselves with the meaning of and importance of HeartSpeak, expanding our understanding of the many ways we can share the divine love that we receive from our Master.

On December 1st, we are invited to participate in a regional book group to focus on Babuji's work, *Reality at Dawn*. Together we will read and reflect on how Babuji's words can guide us through our daily lives. Topics for reflection will include: spiritual training, faith and constant remembrance.





The Global Youth Network

The primary goal of this initiative is to create a worldwide connection and community for the youth of Sahaj Marg. The Internet became the natural starting point, due to its increasing pervasiveness, especially among young people. It allows us to travel across the world without leaving our homes! This idea was accepted quickly and spread through almost all continents. Due to overwhelming participation, webinars were introduced as a tool where abhyasis could connect and participate in a cyber gathering.

The agendas are aimed at creating fun, instructive content and a means to promote the connection with the Inner Master. The talks given by both young and guest speakers struck at the heart of all participants. The network that is being created allows for promotion of international Sahaj Marg initiatives and a means to quickly mobilize large numbers of volunteers for projects.

Criteria

The young abhyasi is typically either single or recently married. Many are studying or starting their careers. Life is very dynamic and busy, surrounded by a world of sensations, temptations and ambition; a period when the practice is perhaps most crucial, yet ironically is sometimes the most neglected.

Participation

The first youth webinar took place on June 29th. Brother Bill Waycott encouraged the youth to get involved in the Mission; brother Santosh Khanjee emphasized the importance of discipline in the practice. It was a maiden voyage for the webinar platform, with the organization team learning many ways to improve, to ensure a great experience for participants. Beloved Master's presence could be felt in the hearts of all participants.

On August 25th a group from dozens of countries gathered again online. Participation had increased. There were registrations from California to Australia, including Latin America, Europe, the Middle East and India. The webinar began with a brief introduction to the youth network, conducted by brother Andre Barreto (Brazil). Next, sister Simone Skovsang (Denmark) talked about a youth seminar that took place in Vrads Sande ashram last January. That gathering was an opportunity for about 15 young abhyasis from Denmark to get to know each other and plan for activities and projects. Inspiring and beautiful presentations created an atmosphere of love, transcending borders of space and time.

To register for news and invitations for this initiative, please sign up at: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dE8wRmdCR2txVknlcXAtTmNCX2d3UHc6MA#gid=0>

Workshops

Cleaning Workshop in Orlando, FL

Meenakshi Singla, Orlando, FL

On Sunday, September 16, 2012 we held a full day training program, Grounding in the Practice – Cleaning, at the Orlando Center. After starting with a few minutes of adjustment, we proceeded with preparatory enquiry, interactive group activities, self-reflection and presentations. It was eye opening to compare our current way of cleaning with the method prescribed by our Master. The techniques shared by Kamleshbhai in his video were very helpful.

The evening session began with Master's video on constant remembrance, in which he explained how we can cooperate and avoid making impressions. This workshop helped us understand the need for daily cleaning to make our practice more effective. All of us learned the prescribed method of cleaning, and how it differs from meditation. Later we shared our answers to a questionnaire with all the participants in plenum. After a week we regrouped, to share how this workshop had benefited us.

Workshops, (continued from page 7)



Cleaning workshop in Orlando, FL.



Grounding in the Practice, Diary Writing

Amrutha, Dallas, TX and Bhairvi Shah, Dallas, TX and Sonia Ahuja

Brother Rob Klinger conducted a Diary Writing workshop in Austin, on November 10, 2012, and in Dallas on November 11th. Throughout the workshop, he gave us the clear understanding that with the help of our Master, we have the ability to make a difference in our lives, and in turn, the lives of others. The diary-writing process can help us gauge our progress over a period of time and give us the motivation to stay on track. The much-awaited full-day program began with a satsangh, followed by Master speaking on diary writing. Brother Rob shared a small 'gratitude' stone with each abhyasi and invited all to have a look at the forty-three diaries he has maintained over the years. He shared a booklet, a compilation of thoughts about diary writing with clarifications, extracts of messages and guidance given by Lalaji, Babuji and Chariji. Brother Rob shared many stories from his own personal life, explaining the effectiveness of diary writing. The content of the program was apt, crisp and drove the message home. Abhyasis could feel Master's presence, and the environment during the session was vibrating with Divine love. Impromptu question and answer sessions lead to sharing many clarifications, lessons learned and jokes cracked, during this wonderful time. An example of the significant effect of the workshop is revealed in this participant's comment:

I was very regular in diary writing when I started Sahaj Marg, but as years passed, I only wrote during important

events or gatherings, or during a visit with Master. But now I understand diary writing is a must – an essential daily regime. Diary writing should be done after meditation, but can be done for our daily events at any moment. It is self-reflection and helps us to understand our own self – the good and the bad sides. It helps in character formation. One shouldn't hide from himself in the diary.

Before concluding, a few extracts from the book, *The Dash Making A Difference With Your Life* [by Linda Ellis and Mac Anderson] were read. Short videos from the documentaries, *The Dhamma Brothers* and *The Butterfly Effect* were played to impress upon the group how far one can take their spiritual lesson and that spirituality is open to everyone in this world.

After such a wonderful and enlightening program one could feel the heart swell with love and gratitude towards Master, for such a simple and effective path, and for giving us such great brothers and sisters to inspire us to be even more dedicated to our spiritual path.



Gatherings

Early Autumn Camp Weekend in Texas

Leslie Childs, Dallas, TX

In mid September, many in the Texas Region gathered at the Greene Family Camp, a retreat and conference center situated on a slight rise of the land at the edge of the Texas Hill Country, where it opens to the west with a panoramic view. Amongst its offerings are kayaking, a gymnasium, a game room, trails, campfire, cabins and a large cafeteria from which a dedicated and caring kitchen staff prepared great meals.

Our first morning, we broke the ice with a myriad of games that had us laughing and feeling as one in our hearts. We played table tennis, or took to the trails with new friends and old. While soaking up the sun we kayaked to the far edges and coves of the lake, where children paddled, discovering wildlife amongst the reeds and log piles. Nighttime brought nature close, with fox and deer and the call of owls. Mothers, with their children in bed, took late strolls, visiting arm in arm. At a campfire on our last night, everyone enjoyed the children entertaining us with games and song.

Throughout the weekend, we kept our satsangh schedule and prayers, adding to the renewal that a camp is meant to give, and reminding us that simplicity is the worthy goal, and that to experience life with the heart of a child is the ultimate gift.



Portland Regional Gathering

November 9 – 11, Camp Adams, Molalla, OR

Krissy Brunner, Portland, OR

As has become traditional, Portland Center hosted abhyasis from various centers around the US, Canada and India at the beautiful Camp Adams retreat center near Portland, Oregon. During this chilly fall weekend 51 warm hearts, endless hot chocolate and chai kept everyone cozy.

The theme, Cleaning the Path for Love, was developed from abhyasis' input during our informal discussions at weekly satsanghs. The members had agreed that for one to develop love in the heart, it is imperative to further develop the cleaning practice. Hence, our focus was primarily on helping abhyasis better understand the process and importance of cleaning. We conducted a small session clarifying the terminology and techniques of cleaning. Other activities throughout the weekend included 5 satsanghs, insightful readings and a wonderful fireside discussion on the practice. In addition, the group took the popular meditation walk through nature, interspersed with pauses along the way to listen to and ponder messages read aloud from *Whispers from the Brighter World*. Being in the stillness and beauty of the forest while listening to words of the great masters was inspiring.

At the end of the gathering all the abhyasis were full of Master's energy and very happy to feel closer to one another. In addition, each family was given a special calendar on the 10 maxims that the Portland center made especially for the attendees. The hard work and love that went into preparing this gathering permeated our hearts throughout the weekend.



United Nations Day of Peace

Judith Polston, B.C., Canada

A group of fifteen abhyasis from as far away as India and including Vancouver and the Fraser Valley B.C., gathered together in Ft. Langley B.C. to commemorate the U.N. Day of Peace.

In a loving and sharing atmosphere of a brother and sister's home we enjoyed watching the second *Meanderings DVD* of Master being interviewed in Rudrapur, India. *The Roots of Sahaj Marg DVD* brought us to a state of remembrance and harmony that only Master can transmit through his words and voice in a DVD.

At 9 p.m. we observed the Universal Prayer, followed by Master's Friday 9.15 sitting. This allowed us to sink deeper into the feeling of brother/sisterhood and connection to all souls in the world. A condition of peace and harmony with all humanity was present. We can be grateful for these special tools given to us by our Master,

to assist our spiritual growth, not only for ourselves but for all creatures everywhere.

The evening ended with sharing food and laughter and an exchange of thoughts and understandings of Sahaj Marg and topics that Master spoke of in the video. We had a feast not only for the body but also for the soul.





New and Relocated Prefects

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New Publications

SRCM Molena Bookstore

<https://http://www.sahajmarg.org/publications/bookstore/online-bookstores>

Change at SPURS

Sister Suzanne Garner is the new caretaker at SPURS Retreat Ranch in Austin, Texas. We wish to express our gratitude to sister Mary Lou Stoner for her years of heartfelt care given to all who have retreated there.

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