



LIGHTHOUSE

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Dear Readers,
Jaigurudev,

Wishing you all "Thamizh Puthandu Vazhukal", (Happy Tamil New Year's Day), "Vishu Asamsakal" (Happy Vishu). Happy Bihu and a Happy Baisakhi. Let us make life a celebration.

Recently during satsang at Ashram, a lady stood up to share her experience, as she was fiddling with the mike trying to turn it on, Guruji remarked that he had already turned it on before passing it on to her and she immediately responded saying "**Guruji, you have turned my life on!! So very apt! Those seven words are applicable to millions of us who have been fortunate to be a part of the Art of Living family!**" (Courtesy <http://niranjani.wordpress.com/>)

In line with the above, we have a special page called "**From the Heart**". Devotees who wish to share their experience of divine grace and transformation in life can send us their write-up. Some of our readers have given us valuable feedback and it has been useful for us to make necessary amendments to our Newsletter and also the website. We want this good interaction to continue. With kind regards.

For Coimbatore Web seva Team.
Mani Gopalakrishnan, Durga Prasad Dash, Thilagarajan
and Suryanarayanan.K.

Spiritual blossoming' simply means blossoming in life in all dimensions---being happy, at ease with yourself and with everybody around you. – Poojya Gurudev.

FROM THE HEART

“Ignite your mind not the cigarette” the experience of an ex-smoker.

Jaigurudev

We are all aware that millions of people all over the World suffer from smoking related diseases. Cigarettes are the worst possible enemies of mankind because they are addictive, socially unacceptable, expensive and fatal. The large number of toxic chemicals that come along with tobacco can ruin the body and cause heart disease, cancer of the lungs and throat. It is a pity that smokers knowingly or unknowingly pollute their surroundings making it easy for non-smokers also to get affected.

Why do people get addicted to smoking?

Every inhaled puff of a cigarette brings in a drug called Nicotine into the body .Nicotine is a substance responsible for duping the brain into releasing a "pleasure" chemical called Dopamine. Once nicotine enters the brain, it starts to replicate the brain's most powerful chemical messengers. The result is a temporary improvement in brain chemistry that is experienced by the smoker, as improved joy, decreased anxiety, and a state of alert relaxation. The Nicotine receptors on the nerve endings receive the Dopamine and produce a feeling of happiness in the nerve cells and this false sense of well-being provokes longing for more and more Dopamine on a regular basis. This activates addiction. It forces the smokers to go after the habit more than a dozen times per day and that is why the smoking habit holds its victims in such a firm grip. Some of them turn compulsive to the extent that when they run out of cigarettes or are unable to smoke, they become fully engrossed by the feelings of having a cigarette. At those times the Tobacco addict depicts a pathetic sight.

Why is it difficult to quit smoking?

Nicotine is the only known psychoactive ingredient in tobacco smoke, hence addicted smokers, smoke to get their habitual dosage of nicotine fearing repulsive symptoms such as irritability, anger, hostility, insomnia and nauseating sensation. Fearing these withdrawal symptoms to quit smoking becomes very difficult. Usually people try two or three attempts and each time they learn about what helps quitting and what hurts while they quit. Although there are various ways to quit smoking like the use of Nicotine patches/inhalers/chewing gums and the “Cold Turkey” method by which a smoker fixes a date to quit and from then on never looks back. Some long-term ex-smokers had used this technique to quit smoking successfully.

Now, why should I put this topic in our newsletter?

Two sincere reasons.

- 1) To make smokers be aware and know that it is possible to get rid of the habit. All they need to do is attend the Art of Living Part I Course, be with the knowledge and practice the breathing exercises regularly
- 2) To share with you my own personal experience as a smoker and how I overcame the incorrigible habit by Gurudev's Grace.

Contd....3

Coming to my story, when I first started smoking at the age of 15, it seemed like a cool, smart, stylish way of expressing my personality. All the big people in society smoked and that was one reason to get trapped with the infatuation. After 30 years I found it was no more cool to smoke, as the misery related to the habit were not one but many. There was a feeling of guilt about the habit, as I was very sensitive about non-smokers and that made me refrain myself from smoking in public. With nearly 15-20 cigarettes a day, my life was becoming overpowered by this addiction and no way, I could overcome it. Matters did not end there as slowly I started coughing up brown phlegm which is a common symptom of too much smoking. Added to this I became vulnerable to all ailments including throat infections. Consequently the antibiotic medicines and treatment took a heavy toll. Literally I became more or less a couch potato sitting either in my Office or at home without much physical exercise. I wanted to break the habit but every time I tried to quit something happened and I ended up smoking again without really knowing how to quit. I had the inclination, but lacked the commitment due to fear of withdrawal symptoms.

With this background, I joined the Art of Living Part I course. I never expected that this course will have such a deep impact in my life. Within a couple of weeks after doing the course my craving for Tobacco ceased to exist. One fine morning I stopped smoking and today nearly Five and half years had gone by without a puff of Tobacco. I can not comprehend this astounding transformation in my life and can attribute it only to Gurudev's Divine Grace. Ever since I took the course, I was regular in my practice at home and I attended follow-up "Sudarshan Kriya" sessions each and every week. Within a few months I became more energetic and confidence increased. Satsangs and seva programs gave a positive direction to my life. Without any of the withdrawal symptoms I was able to quit smoking. More than everything I could feel a lot of remarkable changes happening in my life.

When positive things happen there is a natural tendency to probe deep into it. I was not an exception to this. I read a lot about Tobacco cessation and was convinced that "Pranayama" and "Sudarshan Kriya" in particular had been the reason for me to break the habit. I learnt that the Art of Living Part I course not only helps reduce stress and tension but also reduces cravings. There is scientific data to support its use. It has the effect of reducing the stress response system. In addition, it increases the activity of the parasympathetic nervous system (A part of nervous system that serves to slow the heart rate, increase the intestinal and gland activity, and relax the sphincter muscles. allows us to deal with stressful situations.) The preliminary evidence suggests that it stimulates dopamine reward systems in the forebrain but in a healthier way than chemical substances. It is good to practice deep breathing exercises when you have a craving. I also came to know thousands of ex-smokers have quit the habit after doing the course and I was not the lone case. True to Gurudev's words "Faith is the beginning and confidence is the result."

By the way before I conclude I wish to share this question and the fitting answer given by Gurudev.

Question: "How do we get rid of the habits faster?"

Gurudev : "When you are pained by the habits, so deeply, don't justify your habits. Usually, what we do is justify our habits. Without justifying, if you really feel the pinch of the habit, "oh this habit of mine is eating me up! I am really fed up with it!" when you come to that point, that pain of that habit becomes prayer to you that moment, habit drops. For you don't go to that extent of intensity of feeling the pain drop. The habit goes away after more meditation, more satsang, more Kriya. Proper company, restrictions in your attitudes are way towards it, or keeping yourself busy in some creative work will also change the habits.

You know the chain-smokers, they smoke less when they have a lot to do. But when they have nothing to do, they go one by one, one after another, they go on smoking. Keep totally busy then also the habit will go away or be pained by your habit. Really feel the pinch of it. This habit I should get over it! I want to get over it! And then surrender, prayer wells up and when prayer comes up, it changes your chemistry.”

Today, I live a happy and inspired life by the blessings of Poojya Gurudev. As I type these words tears of gratitude rolls down from my eyes. I have been bestowed with best of everything in life, so much of happiness, adequate competence to handle difficult situations in life and what more could I ask for. One thing I still cannot figure out is how such a positive transition took place in my life. I am still wondering!!!.

Jaigurudev

M.Gopalakrishnan

Let us join hands to curb Tobacco Smoking in Public places and help people who want to quit smoking. Our VVM RESEARCH CENTRE FOR ALCOHOL & DRUG DE-ADDICTION is doing good work in West Bengal not only for tobacco addicts but also for alcoholics and drug addicts. For details visit the following site.

<http://www.vvmrc.com/050920/frames/jq46vh27rg.htm>

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Congratulations to Sri.P.Mohan who has been blessed by Gurudev to conduct Healing. People with terminal illness, depression and suffering due to psychological fear may contact him for counseling and get relief from pain and fear. You can contact him at the following address.

Sri. P.Mohan, Phone Nos: 92444-18012 & 5521374.

**No: 4, Anna Nagar West, Peelamedu,
Coimbatore : 641 004.**

Here is Gurudev's schedule for April & May,courtesy of Samir Golhar:

April 15 Singapore
April 16 - 19 Indonesia
April 20 - 21 Hong Kong
April 22 - 23 Taiwan
April 25 - 27 Hawaii
April 28 - May 1 LA (West Coast, US)
May 2 - 4 Washington DC
May 5 - 7 San Antonio (Texas Ashram)
May 9 - 10 Belgium
May 11 - 12 UK (London)
May 13 - 14 Germany
May 16 - 17 The Netherlands
May 18 19 Germany
May 21 - 24 South Africa
May 26 - 27 Mauritius

All of us are eagerly awaiting Poojya Gurudev's 50th Birthday on 13th May, 2006. A lot of seva activities and celebrations are planned. A live video conferencing program has been planned on Gurudev's Birthday and we are pleased to convey that it should be possible to wish Poojya Gurudev on his 50th Birthday from each and every part of the World. The details of the programme will be available at our website www.aolcbe.org



TENKASI RESIDENTS SOAKED IN BLISS.

After the enthralling Satsang at the abode of Karamadai Aranganathar at Coimbatore, Sri. Arunji kept spellbound a large crowd at the Tenkasi Kasi Vishwanathar Temple on Saturday 17th March, 2006. It was the MAHA KUMBABISHEKAM. of the temple and thousands of fortunate devotees who came to the Temple enjoyed a blissful Satsang. In between the melodious bhajans Sri. Arunji gave the audience some useful insight into the importance of temple rituals and celebrations. The Tenkasi residents were highly inspired by the Satsang that the entire month of May 2006, 3 Part I Courses, 1 Art Excel, 1 YLTP Course and 1 Part II Course are scheduled to happen here.

Report from Ms. Sujatha Sriharan, Tenkasi.

AOL Part II Course (Advanced Meditation Course) – Erode.

Venue : Maharaja Kalyanamandapam, Chennimalai Road, Erode.

Date : Thursday 11th to Sunday 14th May 2006.

Course Starts at 9.00 A.M. on 11th May, 2006. The Course is Residential.

Contact .

Sri. Raja D Palnikumar 98435 23439 Sri. SCS Ramasamy 98427 51212

Miss Vedhanayaki Balasubramanian 94436 22701 Mrs Vijayalakshmi 94438 40828

More details please visit Coimbatore Website www.aolcbe.org

COIMBATORE COURSE (PART-1) SCHEDULE: APRIL 2006

17.04.2006 TO 23.04.2006

S.No	VENUE	ADDRESS	CONTACT	TIME
1	VIDHYANIKETAN SCHOOL. PULIYAKULAM	PULIYAKULAM ROAD, OPPOSITE TO KIDNEY CENTRE, PULIYAKULAM.	98432-57396 2223637 2223258	6.00 P.M TO 8.30 P.M
2	SAIBABA COLONY	COIMBATORE CULTURAL ACADEMY, BHARATHI PARK 2 ND CROSS, SAIBABA COLONY COIMBATORE : 641 043	2447907 94438-96941	6.00 to 8.30 (Morning)
3	NORTH COIMBATORE	SREE GUJARATHI SAMAJ METTUPALAYAM ROAD, NEAR CHINTHAMANI SUPER MARKET. COIMBATORE	2447907 94438-96941	6.00 P.M. TO 9.00.P.M.

24.04.2006 TO 30.04.2006

1	PEELAMEDU	N.G.R. HIGH SCHOOL, OPP TELEPHONE EXCHANGE PEELAEDEU, COIMBATORE .	94433-56249 94433-49259	6.00 TO 8.30 P.M
2	EACHANARI	KULLAYA CHETTIAR KALYANA MANDAPAM, EACHANARI, COIMBATORE.	93603 42377 94438 18158	6.00 TO 8.30 P.M

ART EXCEL COURSES

Dates : 23/4/06 to 26/04/06
 Venue : N.G.R. High School Coimbatore.
 Contact Phone Nos: 2452770, 5549249 , 94433-49259, 94433-56249

Dates : 27/04/06 to 30/04/06
 Venue : Kullaya Chettiar Kalyana Mandapam., Eachanari, Pollachi Road, Coimbatore.
 Contact Phone Nos: 2452770, 93603 42377