



February 2018 Newsletter

Sneak peak inside this issue:

This month there has been several trips made to many schools as well as many visitors coming to visit our center.

Saman ji Shrutpragyaji's Gujarati and English blog available, link :

<http://www.pomy.c.org/blog/>

Current Events

Sabarkantha Trip
Date: 26-30 Jan 2018

School Program at Padadhari
Date: 2 Feb 2018

Visitors from Chicago to Abhavalay
Date: 4-6 Feb 2018

Visit of Graham Dwyer (Gangaram)
from UK to Abhavalay
Date: 1 Feb – 15 March 2018



Upcoming Events

Dharmiben Shah from Chicago
Date: Feb 2 – 28 2018
Purpose: as a Singing Trainer

Motivational School Program for Stress
Free Exam Success
Date: Feb 7 – 11 2018

Yoga Shibir for Heart and Cardiovascular
Disease at Abhavalay
Date: Feb 12 – 16 2018, 7-8.30 am

Balashram Orphanage Visit
Date: Feb 17 2018

Bhuj-Kutch Visit
Date: Feb 18 – 20 2018

Palitana Yatra
Date: Feb 21 – 24 2018

Charity Work with Malaysian Jain Family
Date: Feb 25 – 28 2018

Purushartha School Bhanvad Shibir
Date: March 1 – 7 2018

Padyatra with Siddhartha Muni ji
Date: March 8 - 10 2018

Shibir at A. P. Patel Girl's Hostel, Rajkot, 2-4 January 2018

Saman Shrutpragya conducted a three day shibir at A. P. Patel Girl's Hostel in Rajkot in which over 500 school and college girls participated. Each day of the shibir began with yoga asanas and the practice of meditation, and on each of the three days a dedicated lecture was delivered.

The first lecture focused on how to study effectively. Samanji explained that students often become overly stressful at exam time and that this is primarily because of anticipation of exam results. However, it is because students worry too much about the results that they have great difficulty concentrating on the study itself. Exam anxiety, therefore, is always counterproductive. By being in a state of anxiety about the results rather than being correctly absorbed in the learning or revision process, they fail to concentrate in a productive way, Samanji said. Whenever the mind is so distracted, concentration on what matters thus becomes compromised and leads to poor performance in exams.

According to Samanji, stress must be avoided or minimised for effective exam performance. In the second lecture the qualities needed to succeed in terms of study were discussed. The necessary qualities required, Samanji stated, involve cultivating right values, discipline, self-confidence, as well as having right perspective and right attitude. The third lecture focused on the importance of spirituality in student life. Samanji explained that spirituality puts students on the right track, making their minds more peaceful, positive and capable of reaching towards the higher purpose of life. In particular, it keeps students effectively connected with the route of life, which every individual needs to understand and appreciate. Spirituality, therefore, is central to life itself and key throughout the student's whole learning experience.

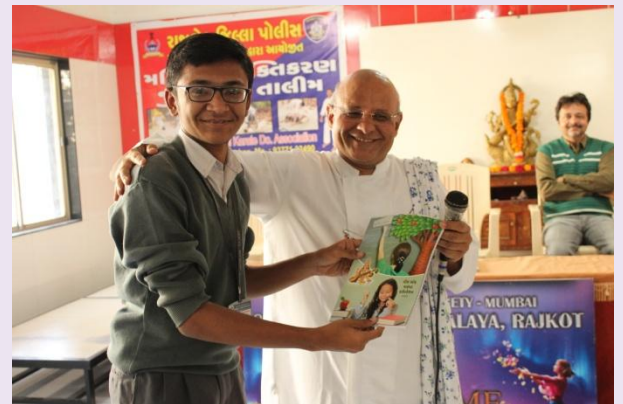
In the three day camp many students asked questions to which Samanji responded helpfully and positively. Jayaben, Shambhubhai and Govindbhai Patel supported the shibir; and there was high demand for Samanji's books.



Shibir at G.T. Sheth School, Rajkot, 4-6 January 2018

A total of 250 10th and 11th Standard students participated in Samanji's shibir at G.T. Sheth School. Samanji here talked on various topics. The lecture programme he gave began with how to set goals and achieve them. Every person is unique, and everyone has a special talent as well as interest, Samanji emphasised. It is a fundamental principle, and all students need to realise it to lead a happy and fulfilled life. Education should enable students fully to grasp the principle too, and, critically, to act upon it. How to improve memory was the focus of Samanji's second talk at the school. He made it clear that students generally do not actually have a problem of memory as such; rather the problem is in the cultivation of interest in study. Where there is interest there will also be concentration; and by the same token, where there is concentration automatically there will be enhanced memory power. Finding ways uniquely to be engaged in learning is thus essential, Samanji said, and he encouraged students to discover their own special talents.

In addition to this, Samanji pointed out that much learning takes place outside the classroom. Whatever one learns in school offers only some 10% of use value in one's life as a whole. This is because class learning is limited, as it relies essentially on books within the classroom setting, whereas learning outside the classroom is based on human experience. In a sense books offer essentially dead knowledge, but experience, on the other hand, is fully alive. Understanding this, Samanji taught, is important to grasp, and school education should also play a role in promoting it. For this reason, Samanji said that students should not ignore the learning of life skills; and, indeed, because one can learn from all circumstances of life, this needs to be embraced. Bhavesh Dave School Principal welcomed Samanji and introduced him to the students. On each day of the shibir, Bhavesh Dave helpfully summarised Samanji's lecture, using a meditational approach to reinforce the points made in the lectures.



60+ Group, Rishabhvatika, Rajkot, 7 January 2017

How to Live After 60 was the subject of Saman Shrutpragya's talk to the 60+ Group in Rajkot. Dalsukhbhai Sheth, Head of the Group, both invited Samanji and introduced him to the audience. Some 100 members of the group were present at the talk. Samanji taught that human life is like the movement of the sun. Life begins like the rising of the sun, it reaches its zenith on its journey and thereafter inevitably descends and disappears over the horizon. Similarly, in human experience there is birth and childhood followed by adulthood and old age until, eventually, death itself comes. Everyone has to accept this reality, Samanji said, but stressed that it should not be viewed negatively. The sunset is not bad or a reason to be sad. On the contrary, it is a cause for great celebration and joy, just as the fading light of the sun has its own special colour and beauty. It is the same in old age. As one enters old age, it brings its own glorious treasures. At this stage of life, arduous duty or responsibility shrinks away, leaving the individual increasingly free. And in the latter years of life, one also has the benefit of life's multifaceted experience, along with wisdom and the choice to share that experience and wisdom with others for their benefit and help.

In old age, Samanji taught, a person has to be aware of two important considerations: one relating to personal life and the other involving family. Samanji said that the first of these requires one to ensure one's personal care is maintained in order to be healthy and peaceful. In terms of the family, he added that one should play an active role to ensure that it is harmonious, with good relations being promoted. If someone achieves this, he or she then lives elderly life like a king or a queen.

Samanji then went on to mention the observation that every person close to the time of death tends to have five regrets: (1) having never lived life as he or she wanted but only according to the wishes of others; (2) realising he or she did not need to have done as much work in life; (3) having never fully expressed his or her true feelings due to fear of what others might have said; (4) spending insufficient time with friends; (5) giving too little time or attention to the cultivation of inner peace. Samanji concluded by saying that if one wants to avoid these regrets, one has to develop four qualities in one's old age: (1) the ability to forgive and forget one's own and others' mistakes; (2) the development of unconditional love through self-sacrifice and removal of any personal demands; (3) the performance of seva bhav, with a genuine feeling of wanting to help others through acts of kindness; 4) and training oneself to engage more in self-introspection, trying also to eliminate all forms of inner weaknesses, whatever they are and however they arise.

Samanji ended his talk by giving a blessing to all present, wishing them well in their pursuit of self-knowledge, as well as continued happiness and joy. He said that one has always to keep oneself busy, spending one's time in good company and in loving relationships. After responding to questions from the audience, one male participant requested Samanji to be his guru. Samanji responded by saying that he would be happy to be that person's friend and supporter (as indeed with everyone) but added that every individual should look for and find the guru within him or herself. This, he emphasised, is not an excuse to avoid taking on the guru role but a message to all that they should be a light unto themselves.



Program at Vivekananda Vidhya Pratishthan Sankul Dhasa, District Batod, Gujarat, 8 January 2018

This one day program was for arranged for 500 8th to 12th Standard school children. Ashokbhai, the school Principal, invited and welcomed Samanji, and V.D. Vagaghasia arranged and accompanied Samanji from Rajkot to Dhasa. Babubhai Ranpara also joined the company. Samanji talked in the morning about value in education. Following that in the afternoon there was a meeting for the mothers of the school children. At this meeting Samanji talked on the subject of good parenting. He said that there are very many distractions for children in the modern world and that a mother plays the role of more than 1000 teachers. But to do this optimally requires some training. If the mother is not trained herself, he said, it can lead to a tragic outcome for children. Every parent should thus know about the importance of the child's interests, talents and abilities in order to encourage and nurture them appropriately. Samanji then went on to give some 15 key tips. There was also a question answer-session where Samanji gave additional advice. Samanji's books were in big demand after the event, which was enjoyed enormously by parents and by staff at the school.



International Yoga Competition Winners from Purusharth School, Bhanvad, 1 February 2018

International Yoga Competition Winners Dhaval Darshan and Wandana Jaishree along with two other competitors from Bhanvad visited Abhavala following their success in Malaysia. Bhimsibhai Kharmool, owner of Purusharth School, accompanied the students. Samanji gave gifts to the children and to Bhimsibhai in celebration of their achievement. At the Peace of Mind Foundation Samanji warmly received and congratulated them all, as well as giving them his blessing.



Visit to Kodiavala, Sabarkantha, Gujarat, 26-30 January 2018

Samanji spent four days in Kodiavala, where he held satsangs at the home of Trushaben Patel and also at the home of Jayentibhai Patel in the nearby town of Vijaynagar. He additionally gave a talk at the local primary school in Kodiawala. During the visit Samanji delivered a special lecture at Ambima Temple in Dadhavav on the anniversary of the founding of the mandir, a lecture attended by over 600 people. He was invited to speak at this important event by Lalji Maharaji, Acharya of Sanatana Dharma, in Shamlaji. In the presence of this Hindi sannyasi and highly respected guru, Samanji narrated the famous story of Mansukh whose conversion from atheism to spirituality offers many profound lessons. Mansukh, who had originally been opposed to all forms of religion, an angry man of jealous disposition, was radically transformed into an empowered spiritual hero. According to the story, which was skilfully delivered by Samanji, Mansukh accidentally met a group of monks, who had been invited to his home by his wife. The hero of the story was at first extremely angry when he saw the monks, as he had not expected to encounter them at his home, which he guarded jealously.

However, the head monk lovingly reached for the hand of Mansukh when the latter raised it in an attempt to beat the holy men. The loving touch of the head monk completely neutralised the negative emotions and violent behaviour of Mansukh who was henceforth altered completely by this action.

After rehearsing the narrative, Samanji offered a number of key points about it. He said that it makes clear that the sign of a true monk or religious leader is that he always effects positive change in the lives of others, just as Mansukh had been transformed by the spiritual vibrations of the head monk's hand. Samanji further stated that the story illustrates how genuine spiritual experience invariably results in the removal of negativity, such as anger and jealousy. Yet another lesson from the story, Samanji emphasised, is that it shows how forgiveness is central in the lives of all spiritual people; for when Mansukh changed, he forgave all the people who had previously performed hurtful things towards him. Samanji gave thanks after the lecture to all the organisers and dignitaries present, especially to Lalji Maharaji and Ratanbhai Patel and Maniben Patel who took care of Samanji during the event, as well offering sincere thanks to Trushaben Patel for her hard work and support throughout the entire visit to Kodiawala. Finally, it should be noted that Lalji Maharaji was extremely impressed by Samanji's lecture, adding that every single word spoken was full of potency, just as sacred words of scripture are powerful. It was the first time that Lalji Maharaji had come into close personal contact with a practicing Jain monk, he said, and stated that he was very impressed by Samanji's spiritual approach to life.

Samanji and Gangaram visited Muni Shubh Karanji, as well as Shrimad Rajchandra Ashram in Idar, and also travelled to the Government Adivasi Primary School near Kodiawala where they gave sweets to a delighted assembled group of children and staff.



Visiting Guests to Abhavalay, December 2017

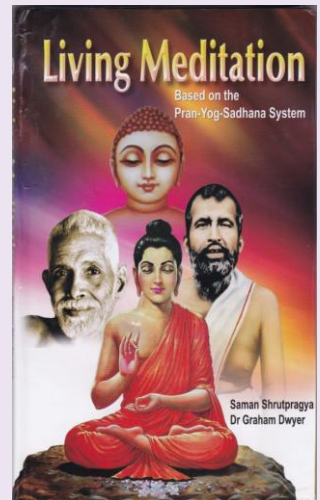
Samanji has been travelling to and serving his devotees abroad for over 25 years. He has naturally established very warm and friendly relations with these devotees. Samanji was pleased to welcome a great number of his well wishers to Abhavalay in December; and he was grateful to them both for visiting his centre in Rajkot and for their continued support. Those who visited Abhavalay in the month December include the following:

Mita Sheth from Kuala Lumpa, Malaysia
Avni Mukesh Shah and Sefali Babul Sheth Freemont, CA
Meera Shah from St. Louis, USA
Niru Shah from Ahmedabad
Jagruti Shah from Kolkata
Chandraben and Saileshbhai Shah from Chicago, IL, USA
Harshadbhai Sanghvi from Connecticut, USA
Javaharbhai and Kalapanaben Doshi from London, UK
Amiben Doshi from Chicago, IL, USA
Ratibhai Patel and his family members from California, USA
Ramanbhai and his Family from Dallas, TX and Tulsa, OK, USA
Dr Graham Dwyer from London, UK



Samanji on Amazon India (www.amazon.in)

It is with great pleasure for the Peace of Mind Foundation to announce that many of its key publications are now available from Amazon India. These include: *Living Meditation*; *Ghar Ej Swarg*; *Jivan Jivavani Kala*; *Shrutvani*; *Body Language*; *Smaran Shakti Vikash*, and *Parivartan*.



Motivational Programme at Dr Shubash Ahir Kanya Vidhyala, Rajkot, 2 February 2018

Saman Shrutpragya, together with Bala Saheb from Rajkot, Dharmiben Shah from Chicago and Dr Graham Dwyer from London, delivered a motivational programme at Dr Shubash Ahir Kanya Vidhyala. Following a brief introduction from Bala Saheb, Dharmiben sang a devotional Saraswati Prayer after which she talked about her own personal life journey. Coming from a small Gujarati village and training in a school where many classes were conducted under a tree rather than in a dedicated building, she said that any student can realise her dream and enjoy success. With determination to succeed, she commented that she was able to set goals for herself and then with hard work and the development of self-confidence as well as firm commitment to study, finally she achieved her goal. Her contribution during the programme greatly inspired the students, which Samanji applauded. He then went on to reinforce the message of her personal story with a targeted lecture.

Samanji explained in his lecture that four key steps are required for success. These steps, he said, include goal setting, hard work, self-confidence and sincere commitment to current study. The students appreciated Samanji's tips for study and for a stress free approach to examinations, as did the school Principal Taruben Dave, the Chief Trustee, and Trustee Dhaniben. Following Samanji's lively talk, he and all other participants at the programme were served a delicious dinner.

