



## EDITORIAL - *Take a Break*

On one hot summer day, two wise men named Tom and Jerry were hard at work clearing the forest grounds, cutting down the trees for new development. Tom worked non-stop all day, without taking a single break. There were times when he felt tired and exhausted, but he just kept chopping one tree after another. On the other hand, Jerry stopped for fifteen minutes every hour.

At the end of the day, Tom was extremely tired and weak. In utter surprise, he could not believe his eyes when he saw how much Jerry had accomplished. This made Tom very upset and he asked Jerry, "You took a fifteen minute break every hour and still accomplished more than me! How is this possible?"

With great pride and delight, Jerry replied, "Every time I took a break, I actually stopped to sharpen my axe. It is a waste of time, effort and energy to keep working without re-sharpening the blade."

At times, we are so absorbed in our routine life, whether it is studying or working, that we tend to wear down both physically and mentally, making ourselves less productive and easily frustrated. What is the best remedy to overcome these negative outcomes? Take a break! By taking a break, we can freshen up, feel better and rejuvenate our excitement and concentration.

As we approach the end of the year, taking a break becomes much more essential. This is the time to re-evaluate our successes and failures, learn from it and to plan for an improved strategy going forward. While it is the time to make our New Year Resolutions, it is an equally important time to reflect on our past year. *This edition of Outreach is focused on **How to Welcome the New Year.***

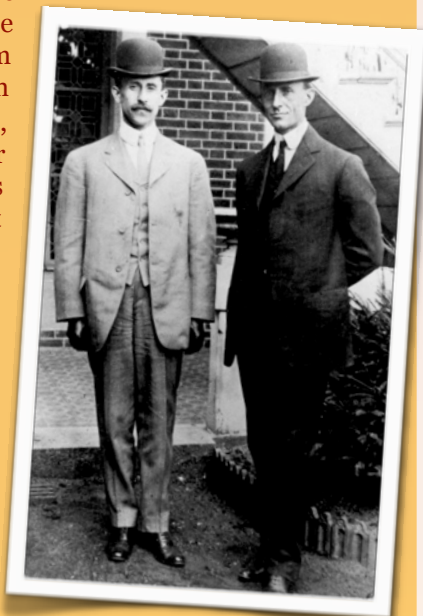
## Inspiration from History - *I Believe We Can Fly*

If you are faced with a difficult problem or situation, who would you rely on to find a solution? Would it be someone who has the resources, experience and wealth? Or someone who lacks the former but has the drive and dedication to solve the problem at all costs? In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, one such dilemma was the pursuit for man-powered flight.

While hundreds of dedicated individuals and groups around the globe strived to solve the "flying problem", the majority of the public had their eyes on one man in particular to crack the case: Samuel Pierpont Langley. Langley was held in high esteem and with great expectations because he had everything we generally consider to be necessary for success including: a strong college education in astronomy and physics, a substantial amount of federal funding, and an extensive collaboration with the greatest minds of the time. The New York Times even followed him around everywhere, capturing every moment of his pioneering work.

**So this begs a critical question: *How come so few of us have heard of Samuel Pierpont Langley?***

Hundreds of miles away in Dayton, Ohio, two young brothers named Orville and Wilbur Wright were also pursuing a similar endeavor. However, they had **none** of the things that were considered to be the recipe for success. Neither Orville and Wilbur nor their team had a college education. In addition, money was scarce, as they were paying for their dream with the proceeds from their bicycle shop. But what they did have was a cause, a purpose and a belief. They were driven by the thought that if they figured out this flying problem, they can give something to this world and change the course of history. On the other hand, Samuel Pierpont Langley had a different motive: he was in pursuit of the riches and fame. *(continued on page 2)*



## So what happened?

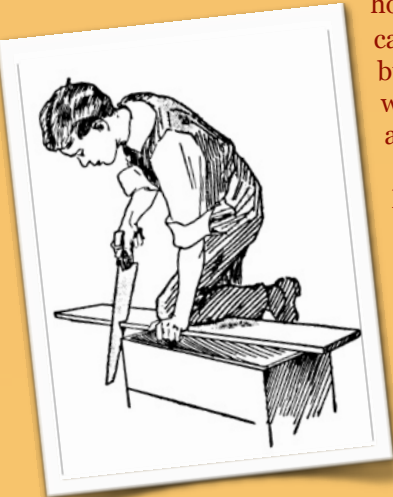
On December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1903, the Wright brothers took their first flight and became a global sensation. But what did Langley do when he heard of their great feat? Was he overcome with joy that a solution was found to the flying problem? Did he try to reach out to the Wright brothers to improve his own flying machine? History goes to show that when the Wright brothers took flight, Langley gave up his aviation endeavors and quit. For Langley, he was not first, he did not get rich, and he did not get the fame, so what was the point?

This historical anecdote serves to remind us of our own motives and aspirations. It reveals that a foundation built on a genuine purpose, a genuine belief and a genuine drive will help guide our endeavors even in the bleakest of moments. To look beyond the simple materialistic rewards in order to find a noble driving force in our lives is one thing we can all try to do in the upcoming year. As the year comes to an end, we have an opportunity to reflect on our ambitions in achieving our goals. And with that, we can all take a fresh start in the coming year.



## A Moment of Self Reflection - Building Our Home

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his contractor of his plans to leave the house building business to live a more leisure-filled life with his wife and family. He would surely miss getting his weekly paycheck, but he was certain that he wanted to retire. The contractor was sorry to see his good worker leave and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. The carpenter was hesitant at first, but due to his close relationship with the contractor, he accepted this final project.



But, as time went on, it was easy to see that the carpenter's heart was not in his work. He resorted to careless workmanship and used poor quality materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career. When the carpenter finished his final construction, his employer

came to inspect the house. Then he handed the door keys to the carpenter and said, "My

friend, this is your house, consider it my gift to you!" The carpenter was shocked! If only he had known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so different!

Similarly, every opportunity given to us should be treated as though it is our last opportunity and we should strive to excel at it. Every opportunity gives us a unique chance to learn and grow. We build our lives one day at a time, often putting less than our best into the building. Then with a shock, we realize we have to live in the house we have built. If we could do it over, we would make it much better. But, we cannot go back. Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji has always emphasized on achieving the best in anything we do. He says that if you want to be a doctor, you should strive to become the best doctor; if you want to be an engineer, you should strive to become the best engineer; if you want to be a businessman, you should strive to become the best businessman.

In one way or another, we are all like carpenters; we work hard everyday to build our future. The New Year is a time to reaffirm our goals, our attitude and our determination. After all, the choices we make today will help build the "house" we live in tomorrow.

## Laugh Out Loud!

Dear Lord,

*This is the first day of the New Year, and so far, I've done well. I haven't gossiped, I haven't lost my temper, I haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or overindulgent. I'm very thankful for that. But in a few minutes, Lord, I'm going to get out of bed, and from then on, I'm going to need a lot more help!*

Thanks in advance!



## Cool Fact

Throughout the year, visitors come to Times Square in New York City and write their New Year's wishes on pieces of official Times Square New Year's Eve confetti. At the end of each year, the wishes are collected and added to one ton of confetti that showers the crowd gathered in Times Square in celebration of the New Year.



## Lasting Thoughts

"Do not wait until the conditions are perfect to begin. Beginning makes the conditions perfect." – Alan Cohen

"You cannot change the cards you are dealt, just how you play the hand" – Randy Pausch