



Volume 6 - Edition 3

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Outreach



Chant Your Problems Away!

When was the last time you had a headache or a fever? Last month? Last week? Do you remember the first thing you did? You probably took a nap, called out sick from work, or simply rested. If that did not help, you might have reached into your medicine cabinet for an Advil or Tylenol. And if you were still sick, then it was time to visit your family doctor.

But to your surprise, the doctor said he can solve all your health problems without taking a single pill or any medication. Would you trust him? Well, advancing research in science and medicine says you should!

New healthcare institutes are being established with the focus on using the power of the mind and meditation to fight our illnesses. For instance, the Mind-Body Medical Institute at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, founded by Dr. Herbert Benson, is dedicated to teaching patients on how to reduce their stress and improve their medical condition using 'relaxation response' approaches.

One such approach taught at this institute involves chanting a mantra. A 'mantra' is a word or phrase repeated over and over again during meditation. It has two parts: "man,"

which in Sanskrit means "mind," and "tra," which means "instrument."

A mantra is therefore an instrument of the mind, a powerful sound or vibration that can be used to enter a deep state of meditation. As a result, the chemical balance in your body changes to promote physical healing. Benson and his colleagues also found that meditating with a mantra helped to reduce the chaotic thoughts that would otherwise keep us tense throughout the day.

Clinics around the world have observed similar outcomes. Apart from benefits in improving health, *mantra-jaap* (chanting of mantra) has shown various emotional benefits such as building stress management skills, increasing self-awareness and reducing negative emotions.

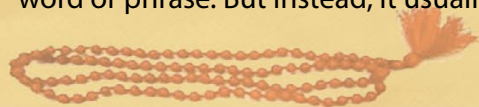
Advances in science are now providing extraordinary proof for the benefits of *mantra-jaap*. However, mantra chanting is not a recent discovery. In fact, the power of mantra has its origins in Hinduism and dates back thousands of years.

A mantra is typically not an ordinary word or phrase. But instead, it usually

refers to the name of a holy God. This type of mantra has a special significance and unique powers. Chanting a mantra of God's holy name carries with it His blessings, His wisdom, and His strength.

The rich Hindu heritage is filled with many unique and powerful mantras. For example, the traditional *Om* mantra is the essence of creation. The *Ram* mantra helped form a bridge of floating rocks between India and Sri Lanka. The *Swaminarayan* mantra has helped people overcome stressful situations, remove disturbing thoughts, bring internal peace, and even reach the highest spiritual state-of-mind.

In addition to simply chanting the holy mantra, it's equally important to keep full faith. Recite a mantra with all your heart and keep complete trust in its divine powers. And to really experience its full benefits, chant *Swaminarayan* while thinking of the *pragat sant* who is currently on this Earth. In this way, any worries or depressing thoughts will be replaced with joy and confidence. Such is the phenomenal power of a holy mantra.



What do you think about most? There is a good chance that it may be about something other than what you are doing physically. A recent study by Daniel Gilbert from Harvard University showed that people spend a staggering 47% of their waking hours letting their mind aimlessly wander, and this typically made them unhappy.

They would contemplate on events that happened in the past, might happen in the future, or may never happen at all. It appears that letting the mind wander may be the human brain's default mode of operation.



LAUGH OUT LOUD

Two men are walking through a forest. Suddenly, they see a bear running towards them. They turn and start running away. But then one of them stops, reaches into his bag for running shoes, and puts them on.

"What are you doing?" says the other man. "Even with those shoes you won't be able to run faster than the bear."

The man replies, "I don't have to run faster than the bear. I just have to run faster than you."

COOL FACT

ATMIYA YUVA MAHOTSAV

DEC 30,31 2014



JAN 1,2,3 2015

Only 10 months remain until the grand celebration of **Atmiya Yuva Mahotsav 2015**. For this once-in-a-lifetime event, countless youths have decided that they will not only attend, but make a sincere effort to contribute something. For example, over 700 youngsters from Mumbai, India have decided to forgo buying any new clothes, and instead, donate that money towards AYM 2015. What amazing dedication and enthusiasm to really be a part of AYM 2015!

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Four Benefits of Allocating Time ONLY for Yourself

Dedicating time from your busy day for introspection and meditation is a preventive medicine to combat and even prevent mental burnout. Spending just a few minutes each day in thoughtful solitude can help you:

* improve concentration, focus and creativity

* re-strategize the next few hours to be more productive

* recognize if your actions are taking you towards your goal

* identify personal shortcomings

Chanting *Swaminarayan* and asking for God's strength during your time of solitude will significantly enhance these benefits.

The Most Powerful Word in the Universe

Mankind has been blessed with a very special gift.



We have access to such a powerful gift, that it is actually unbelievable. This gift acts as a force field to constantly protect us. It is also an endless fountain of energy. The strength of this gift is such that the smile on our face will never diminish, regardless of the circumstance. This magnificent gift is the *Swaminarayan* mahamantra (supreme mantra) and was bestowed unto mankind about 213 years ago by *Bhagwan Swaminarayan*.



Being from a family who regularly practiced *satsang*, the youth came in contact with a few saints. These saints provided motivational words and took him to Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji for blessings. The glory of Swamiji is such that God truly listens to and fulfills His prayers.

Swamiji told the youth, "You should undergo both medical and spiritual treatment. Consult my fellow ayurvedic doctor in Mumbai and start his treatment. Also, chant *Swaminarayan* for 30 minutes every day. I will also pray that *Bhagwan Swaminarayan* protects you in all ways."

In explaining the glory of the *Swaminarayan* mahamantra, Gunatitanand Swami said, "All malicious desires, bad habits, and addictions will be eradicated. Any sins or mistakes that have been committed, knowingly or unknowingly, will be washed away. Even if someone is bitten by a venomous snake, the poison is incapable of causing any harm. Such is the strength of the supreme *Swaminarayan* mahamantra." (Swami Ni Vaato - P.1, V.153)

Swamiji paused for a few moments and then said, "You and your family should continue to regularly chant the *Swaminarayan* mahamantra even after you are cured from HIV."

Just as a mother instinctively comforts her crying child, God is always present for those who wholeheartedly chant His holy name. Thousands of people stand testament to the remarkable and divine power that resides within the *Swaminarayan* mahamantra. One such example is of a devotee who fell victim to an ailment for which modern science has no solution.



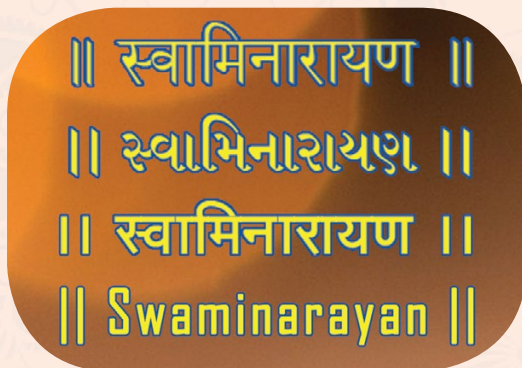
Putting full faith in Swamiji's divine words, the youth started to sincerely follow His request to chant *Swaminarayan* every day. Remarkably, after just 10 days, the youth's health began to improve, and eventually, no trace of HIV remained within his blood!

Having been cured from HIV, the youth was willing to donate any amount of money to the temple. He offered a blank check to Swamiji. But to his surprise, Swamiji just looked at him with a loving smile and did not accept the blank check.

In the late 1990's, a youth underwent a blood transfusion to treat an existing medical condition. Soon after, he developed severe symptoms. He visited the emergency room and the results of the blood test were shocking. He had HIV. Due to the doctor's negligence during the blood transfusion, the youth was infected with HIV.

Then Swamiji humbly said, "We are simply the messengers of *Bhagwan Swaminarayan*. Chanting *Swaminarayan* with utmost faith can cure the diseases of our physical body. Moreover, it can cure diseases afflicting our soul (e.g. ego, jealousy, anger, lust). You and your family members will experience eternal happiness if you regularly chant *Swaminarayan*, and to me, that is worth much more than donating 10,000,000 rupees!"

The news of this traumatic incident completely demoralized the youth. He visited several hospitals, disease specialists, ayurvedic doctors, and spent hundreds of thousands of rupees for numerous treatments and medication. Yet, there was no relief from the HIV symptoms. He accepted the fact that he would have to suffer for the rest of his life, because there is no cure for HIV.



Swamiji's humility, compassionate personality, selfless attitude, and majestic divinity cannot be expressed in words! Fortunately, Swamiji's blessings and spiritual advice is not only for this one youth, but is relevant for each one of us. The *Swaminarayan* mahamantra holds immense strength and divine powers, but it is up to us to decide *when* and *how often* we utilize this all powerful gift.

Lasting Thought "All malicious desires and disturbing thoughts can be eradicated by merely thinking of and chanting the name of a *Gunatit Sant* [a saint who is one with God] for just one minute!"

- Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji