



# Newsletter ~ Vallabh Vidya Mandir ~



Publisher – VVM

Volume Number 4

Issue Number 1

Date: Jan 2008

## An Expression...

In this modern era, we are hard-pressed for time. We find ourselves overwhelmed and caught up in raising family, managing job responsibilities and staying connected with family and friends. In the daily grind it is very difficult to find calmness, spirituality and harmony.

All of us need a certain amount of down time, to sit on the porch or on the hillside, stare out of the window and even watch the grass grow. ....If we don't pursue this, there is a deeper intelligence that won't come forth. Mine is a racehorse rhythm, and once I get started in the morning it's difficult for me to stop. I have learned that even a small pause is extremely useful. My daily morning walk and a short evening walk with my dog is my pause! My walk with my dog is a common scene – an ordinary event in most neighborhoods. One can almost set the clock by my reliable rhythm – winter, summer, spring, or fall, rain snow, clouds or shining stars. On these walks I settle the affairs of the day and think of my up coming day or

wrapping up the day. I calm down from the busy-ness of my life, notice the weather, the seasons, the trees, and the sunrise/sunset...and think about all the big and little stuff.....To me walking the dog is in truth a ritual of renewal and revival on an intimate scale – a small rebirth and well being on a daily basis.

Household chores and daily duties with the family require our attention and presence. Daily chores give us practice in the disciplines of love and devotion. St. Therese of Lisieux, a 19<sup>th</sup> – century Carmelite Catholic nun, is convinced that God can best be served through little things or trifles. *“To ecstasy, I prefer the monotony of daily toil”*. She writes. Hobbies on the other hand, offer us opportunities to express ourselves and to nurture our growth through silence, attention, imagination, and wonder. They awaken within us deep reserves of devotion, commitment, and fascination.

The simplest, most direct method of creating sacredness into everyday surroundings is cleaning. I know this activity is usually relegated to the realm of drudgery,

but it can become a practical means of infusing consciousness into our surroundings. Sacredness is experienced in the qualities of purity, orderliness, balance, and renewal.

In the book “Happiness through Integration” Swami Gnaneswarananda shares his thoughts – “Life has been considered by many thoughtful people as a vast field of action. In fact, if anything distinguishes the living from the dead, it is activity. No living organism can remain without action even for a single moment. God himself is working constantly. If He should stop, even for an instant, His whole creation would disintegrate and enter into a state of chaos.

## ...Get Smart

### Chess Club

Classes will be held on  
January 6<sup>th</sup> and January 20<sup>th</sup>

Contact Neelay at 713-723-5892

Bring your own Chess Board  
Free for VVM Students  
(Ages 8 & Up)



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As long as life lasts, nothing can be inactive. Then how can we human beings expect to live without working? We cannot. There is something in our nature, which is always striving to express itself, always urging us to expand, to attain the state of absolute perfection. It is this force that drives us forward even in spite of our resistance.”

The question is how to convert our activity into productivity, how to attain material and spiritual success in our everyday work. According to Hindu philosophy, Karma, or work, has two aspects – subjective and objective. On the subjective side, man must strive to develop and evolve within himself his spiritual consciousness while on the objective side, he must work in such a way that his inner perfection manifests. No matter what your occupation may be, whether you are a housewife, a street cleaner, a butcher, a banker, or a shoemaker, you can make your work the noblest and best of its kind. You can raise it to the loftiest heights of excellence, beauty, and utility.

At the onset this new year, I wish all of us could find time for simple joys. Joy of flying a kite, reading a book, going for a walk, tending the garden, playing with the children, listening to music....whatever is your relaxing method – think of your next day off as a spiritual retreat offering refreshment for body, mind and spirit.

*Phalguni Kikani*

## ..VVM Classes

Classes WILL be HELD on

*Jan 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008*

## The March is On..

Since September 2005, Phalguniben and I have written our respective columns in VVM Newsletter. Many a time we, especially I, wonder whether these columns are read, and if read whether the views and sentiments expressed make sense to the readers. It is very difficult to know your reaction with one way

communication. When we enter a new calendar year, I am making a simple request to all the readers of this newsletter to give us some feedback. Our purpose in publishing this newsletter is not to propagate certain views but to contribute whatever we can to improve our organization. So please write to us or e-mail us with your reactions, comments and suggestions relating to Vallabh Vidya Mandir and this newsletter. Do not be bashful. Or, if you really want to remain anonymous you can write your comments and drop them in the Suggestion Box mounted on the Ladies' Shoe Room wall. VVM is trying to do its best for all students. Your comments and suggestions will be welcome and will be appreciated.

*Sureshbhai Patel*

## Seniors Tea Party

*Seniors (Age 62+) meet  
Youth(Age 14+)*

**February 2<sup>nd</sup> 3-5pm**  
(Mark your calendars. More details forthcoming)



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## Teachers Corner..

(Pooja Sridhar – Religion Teacher)

Little children are like 'liquid wax', whatever form we give them shapes them up. I was always a teacher at heart; it's my greatest passion, to impart the knowledge I have! It was like God's call when I heard about an opportunity at VVM.

I am truly proud of presenting VVM's goals to the young minds who will be the leaders of tomorrow; giving them the platform they will stand on- our culture and rich heritage!

With organizations like VVM, who says we live overseas? In-fact we have our India under this very roof! I thank Mr. Rasesh Dalal for directing my family and me towards this wonderful window of opportunity; and I also thank Ms. Phalguni Kikani to trust me with the great responsibility that this is!!  
Jai Shri Krishna

*Pooja Sridhar*

## Free Seminar...

*Women's Health*

By

*Dr. Kokila Parikh &  
Dr. Dipika Ambani*

*January 20<sup>th</sup> 10 am  
Vallabh Hall*

## Students Corner..

Time..... Is so strange

We think about this world, and all

We can do is stare

Dream Love

And think

This is the way we are created

We might like it or not

Sometimes we hate ourselves

We ask, why? Why have I been

Born in this world?

I have no right to be here?

I am lonely, upset, no one cares

For me, so why am I here?

Why? Why?

Well, there is no answer to this question

Except that we all are here

For a purpose, and it takes time and years

To find why was 'I' born, and for what purpose

It is not necessary for you to find it right away

But if you look deep within yourself you will find

A reason and your love, someone you can

Take care of, express your

Feelings to them

Everything takes time

But, remember

You Can't stop time

But, it can stop you

So whatever you want to find or do,

Do it fast 'cause you don't have enough time

It might seem that you have a long way to go

But this is just the beginning of your journey

So remember, your time will find you

Sooner than you can imagine.

*Nikita Shah*

*Students are encouraged to  
submit articles, poems,  
reflections and experiences for  
VVM Newsletter.  
Send to kikanis@earthlink.net*