



# Newsletter ~ Vallabh Vidya Mandir ~



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## An Expression...

The Shadow, according to American poet Robert Bly, is “*the long bag that we drag behind us*” containing all the dark parts of ourselves that we would like to keep secret. The shadow may include our anger, selfishness, jealousy, pride, insecurity, wildness, or destructiveness.

Although these qualities are an integral part of us, we want to hide them or deny them. Eventually, they get out of the bag when we project them onto others around us, such as – husband, wife, child, friend, neighbor, coworker or another, race, culture or religion.

The spiritual practice of shadow involves being able to recognize these elements and deal with them, when they make an appearance in our lives. According to Jungian analyst Robert A. Johnson, “to honor and accept one’s own shadow is a profound spiritual discipline.”

But it is much easier to demonize enemies and blame things on something outside ourselves. Nations do this as well as

individuals – “*If only it were all so simple. If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them,*”. The line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. Now is the time to accept the evil that lives in us. “*The only devils in the world - said Indian spiritual leader Mahatma Gandhi, are those running around in our hearts.*” There is a vicious thug, a serial killer, a terrorist inside all of us. To deny this truth is to live in an air-conditioned fantasy world.

Evil is unspectacular and always human. We human inflict pain on others in small daily doses – little acts of selfishness, indifference, and neglect. The shadow lives in our snubs, grudges, criticisms, and self-pity. Trying to deny our evil or to escape from our imperfections and limitations will not do us any good. We must listen to our demons and after accepting the worst in our self – we can try to transform our self!!

Richard Rohr, a Catholic priest says, “*god calls us to take path of*

*the inner truth – and that means taking responsibility for “EVERYTHING “ that is in you: for what pleases you and for what you are ashamed of...In the spiritual life, nothing goes away. There is no heavenly garbage dump. Everything belongs.”*

We must remember that the Eternal Light is often discovered during a dark night of the soul. We must accept and own our own shadow, name our demons and learn from them. As Swami Vivekananda said “*Know that the various passions and feelings, and emotions in the human heart are not wrong in themselves; only they have to be carefully controlled and given a higher direction, until they attain the very highest condition of excellence. The highest direction is that which takes us to God.*”

*Phalguni Kikani*

**Free Yoga Seminar..**

**November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

**11 AM - 11:50 AM**

**Open to Public**

*The doors will close at 11 AM*



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## The March is On..

**I hope you all had wonderful Diwali holidays. I wish all the members of VVM family a very happy, peaceful, prosperous and healthy new year!**

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*The nest of young eagles hung on every word as the Master Eagle described his exploits. This was an important day for the eaglets. They were preparing for their first solo flight from the nest. It was the confidence builder many of them needed to fulfill their destiny.*

*"How far can I travel?" asked one of the eaglets.*

*"How far can you see?" responded the Master Eagle.*

*"How high can I fly?" quizzed the young eaglet.*

*"How far can you stretch your wings?" asked the old eagle.*

*"How long can I fly?" the eaglet persisted.*

*"How far is the horizon?" the mentor rebounded.*

*"How much should I dream?" asked the eaglet.*

*"How much can you dream?" smiled the older, wiser eagle.*

*"How much can I achieve?" the young eagle continued.*

*"How much can you believe?" the old eagle challenged.*

*Frustrated by the banter, the young eagle demanded, "Why don't you answer my questions?"*

*"I did."*

*"Yes. But you answered them with questions."*

*"I answered them the best I could."*

*"But you're the Master Eagle. You're supposed to know everything. If you can't answer these questions, who can?"*

*"You" The old wise eagle reassured.*

*"Me? How?" the young eagle was confused.*

*"No one can tell you how high to fly or how much to dream. It's different for each eagle. Only God and you know how far you'll go. No one on this earth knows your potential or what's in your heart. You alone will answer that. The only thing that limits you is the edge of your imagination."*

*The young eagle puzzled by this asked, "What should I do?"*

*"Look to the horizon, spread your wings, and fly."*

*Tom Reilly wrote this beautiful short story that I share. I thought that it was an unforgettable way to communicate that our potential in life is only limited by our heart and our dreams.*

*Sureshbhai Patel*

**...No Classes**

**November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

**Thanksgiving Holiday**