



Integrate in 2008

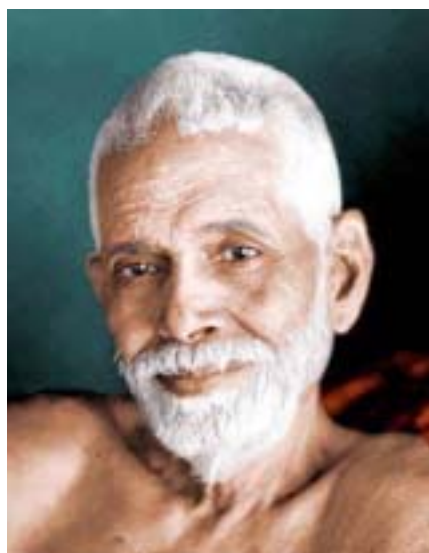
Inquiry and Surrender

From *Be As You Are, The Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi* ; Page 45

“I exist” is the only permanent self-evident experience of everyone. Nothing else is so self-evident as “I am.” What people call self-evident, that is, the experience they get through the senses, is far from self-evident. The Self alone is that. So to do Self-Inquiry and be that “I am” is the only thing to do. “I am” is reality. I am this or that is unreal. “I am” is truth, another name for Self.

Devotion is nothing more than knowing oneself.

On scrutiny, supreme devotion and *jnana* (knowledge of Self) are in nature one and the same. To say that one of these two is a means to the other is due to not knowing the nature of either of them. Know that the path of *jnana* and the path of devotion are interrelated. Follow these inseparable two paths without dividing one from the other.





There's Only One Awareness

The following is from a transcription of an "Interlude with Ramana" on September 10, 2005

Questioner: *When you ask yourself, "Who am I," are you trying to get rid of the "I" to fall into the Pure Awareness?*

Ramana: You are not trying to get rid of anything. You're just having the insight, seeing what is really genuine, what really is true. You are getting hold of the "I," yes, because that's where thinking arises. That's what gives rise to thought. But this "I" is itself a reflection in the consciousness of Pure Awareness that we all are. And this reflection, this "I" rises simultaneously with *each* and every thought that rises. It is not just one perpetual "I," it's millions of "I's." Can you see this little cartoon character that is carrying this big "I" on his shoulder? He stubs his toe and it falls or drops and shatters into a million little "I's." Get it? Every thought has its own "I."

Understand something. There is not now, there has never been, nor will there ever be an individual "I." There's only one Awareness, and that Awareness doesn't even have an "I"-sense to it. "I" is in the mind along with its co-dependent or dualistic counterpart, "other" or "not-I." "I" is in the mind, and is thought; Awareness is the Being and is thoughtless. Move all the way back into Being. Yes, Sri Bhagavan Ramana says you continue to keep in the Inquiry, and when you reach the Heart, he says there is another "I-I." Bhagavan uses these words "I-I," but that's not the same "I," that is the pure Awareness. It is not like the "I"-thought that we ordinarily consider to be an "I."

Take the Inquiry to Completion

So, carry the Inquiry all the way through to completion. Don't get stuck, or stop in just the "I"-thought. You did not take the Inquiry all the way through to completion. When you take the Inquiry all the way through to completion, the "I" that you think you are dissolves; it's no more. And, the Awareness that you are, that has no "I"-sense in it, is realized as the Allness of Being. The wave in the ocean has no "I"-sense in it; it is the ocean. These are words, or metaphors. We have to use metaphors or words, and try to understand with words; yet words cannot do it. Is anybody with me?

Words cannot do it! You can't "get there" with words. You can't "get there" with the mind. The mind will not get you there. You have to let go of the mind. You have to let go of words or use them as pointers, and actually "let go" into the

Being. Sure, I'm using words. But again, I'm saying to you (now listen to what I'm saying), don't believe me! (Laughter) Use my words only as pointers, as indicators, to direct you there. You've got to "go there" for *yourself*, but there's no "going" (Laughter) You are already there.

Right now, this instant, are we not aware? What other awareness are we looking for? (Laughter) This is it, baby!

Listener: *It is a good place to be. One other quickie. You mentioned the big "I" and all these little "I's" floating out of it, and all that stuff....*

Ramana: Now don't "believe" any of that...

Questioner: *Every time one of those little "I's" arises, that would be a good time to Inquire.*



A. Ramana

Ramana: Yes, every time you get the notion that there is an "I," meaning every time you have a thought. How did you have the thought unless the "I" rose up there with that thought? So, every time you have a thought you have the opportunity to trace that thought back to the source of thought itself. The source of thought itself is an "I." Don't stop there! See, that's what happens.

I've been involved in Sri Bhagavan Ramana's teaching for many years, over 30, and in all due respect (I don't say this in judgment or criticism), but so many people who have been involved in this teaching still don't know what he is really talking about. They haven't taken Inquiry all the way to completion. You must go to completion. You can't just go back into the "I" and say, "Oh, I got it. I am the Self." Well, who got it? Well, "I" got it. Oh, you did? What did you get? Now you're back in your mind telling your story. Back into the story again. You see, it all happens when *you* no longer ARE.

The Self you really are we all ARE, all of us, and there's no "other." If there's no "other," guess what? What's the other side of it?

Questioner: *There's no "I."*

Ramana: If there's no "other," there's no "I." Well, who's talking about "other?"

Questioner: *I am. (Laughter) ♥*

That Which is Real

Excerpt from *Living From the Heart* pp. 37-39, by Elizabeth MacDonald



Following a guided meditation on a Heart-Line call by Elizabeth, AHAM's Assistant Spiritual Director and Senior Trainer.

Participant: I just want to share two things that happened for me tonight. One is when you mentioned not "being the doer," I could just feel myself drop into the Heart, and a huge *load* came off of me. What actually is "the doer?"

Elizabeth: The doer is when you have left the Heart and returned to identifying with the

body-mind as being the Self, as being who you think you are, which is not the Truth. Bhagavan Ramana says it this way: "Why leave the cool of the shade to go out into the sun to your own discomfort?"

Participant: I think I've actually been "the doer" since then. "I've lost some of the lightness that I felt.

Elizabeth: So, from where is this doer arising? Just watch it. Look and see. What's really happening here? Face it, or look directly at it. *Really be aware of it!*

Anytime the "I" rises as the "doer," look it straight in the eye; not from the corner of your eye. Don't allow it to sneak in. Because we *know* it, we can *feel* it. It's like having an absolutely placid pool of water, such as here at the Center on our Reflection Lake on a calm day. You can be sitting there watching it being absolutely still; and then a fish will come up or the wind rises and causes this little ripple.

Feeling the rising of the "I" can also be compared to a spider feeling movement on its web. A spider can tell when anything is on its web; it's immediately aware of it. It knows exactly where it is, and can go suddenly to it. We must *be* like that spider on the web, noticing immediately whatever is on the "web" of our consciousness, and immediately draw awareness to it. Not that we have to go there and get caught up in it, but to just be *aware*. This Awareness that is aware of "I," is "prior to" this "I," is *That Which Sees* it. From this perspective we are already free.

By giving our full attention to it, from the pure light of Awareness, it is exposed like photographic film exposed to light. It's *gone*.

That's our practice: no longer being at the effect of those things that come up in our lives ... but, rather, being Here, present, conscious, and alert to it. It *can't survive* in this Light! What we're actually doing here is exposing it and its illusory quality, revealing that it's not real, and the *Real* wins out every time.

Participant: I now see that during your meditation, I was drawn into the Heart and felt a load released. And then, just as you said, I was unaware of it creeping back in until, all of a sudden, I realized that the heavy feeling had returned.

Elizabeth: Yes. This "load" gets removed by investigation, first by telling the truth about what we are experiencing right now. As soon as we notice that there's something here that's distracting us from the Heart, we ask "Who is it?" "Who's having this experience?" The answer can only be "I am."

This is the method for bringing it into our Awareness, into our attention, and taking full responsibility for it. *I'm* holding on to this distraction from the Heart. *I'm* doing it *to me*. In the first part of the Inquiry we ask, "Where is it being felt in the body? ... What are the emotions? Who's having this experience?"

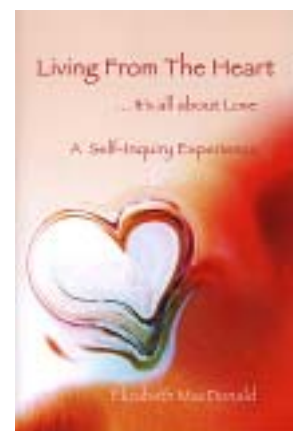
And we answer, "I AM."

Now we've got it in our Awareness. It's like grabbing hold of a "slippery eel" with "sandpaper gloves." It's in our clutches now, in our Awareness. And then with the "Who am I?" it dissolves. It fully brings it all into the Heart, and it's gone. It exposes it fully.

Our investigating into it is what will expose it fully and we'll be finished with it. This is the practice. This is *all* it is. Anything else is just a distraction from doing the practice in its simplicity.

Be *here* in the Heart now ... ♥

If you would like to order a copy of *Living From the Heart* with CD, email: ahampublications@aham.com Cost is \$19.95 US + shipping and handling.



Live As Being-Awareness

Verses taken from pp. 80 - 81 of *The Garland of Guru's Sayings*, by Sri Muruganar

*The one true light there is is pure
Awareness. Other kinds of knowledge
Clinging to it and claiming to be
Real are ego-born conceptual
Clouds. To trust them is sheer folly.*

*All other kinds of knowledge are
Base, trivial. The only true and
Perfect knowledge is the stillness
Of pure Awareness. The many
Differences perceived in the Self
Whose nature is awareness are Wrong
attributions and not real at all.*

*What if one knows the subtle
Secret of manifold inscrutable
Mysteries? Until one knows the
Awareness which reveals all
Other knowledge, does one know
The Truth?*

*Not like other things unreal,
But always by its Being real,
The Self as permanent Awareness
Has no other dwelling Place than
Its own radiant Awareness.*

*Those who have not searched and
Found the truth of their own natural
Being will perish by alien forms
Deluded. Live as one sole Being-
Awareness. All save this is false
Appearance, the realm of maya.*

*Not like other things unreal,
But always by its Being real,
The Self as permanent Awareness
Has no other dwelling place
Than its own radiant Awareness.*

*What is lifeless and unreal this
Alone needs for support pure Being-
Awareness. The mind deluded and
Impure forgets its oneness with the
Self, with Being-Awareness and
Then looks for some other object of
Awareness.*

*O mind excited as if mad, what is
The source of all existing things,
Both moving and unmoving,
Except Awareness which itself
Owes its birth to nothing else?*

*Is it not because you are yourself
Awareness that you now perceive
This universe? If you observe
Awareness steadily, this Awareness
Itself as Guru will reveal the Truth.*

*How can any treatise thrust some
Wisdom into that human-seeming
Heap of clay which keenly watches
Things perceived and not at all the
Self, Awareness? ♥*

[The delusion consists in thinking that one is the body alone, not the whole world.]



Can You Really Manage Stress?

By Doug High

What do people complain most about at work? Is it their coworkers, their bosses, not enough money, lack of appreciation, lack of fulfillment, the physical environment, or pressure? Or is it all of the above?

And what do they do? Do they complain, take it home, take it out on others, or just and bear it? Is this what H. David Thoreau meant when he said, "most people lead lives in quiet desperation?"

OK, maybe that's true, but what else can you do? Are you one of those who has changed jobs so many times your family thinks you're in the Federal Witness Protection Program? Yet the situation is basically the same, no matter where you work.

Fortunately, there is relief. Misery and suffering really are optional; they are not necessary. Pressures and stress on the job aren't likely to go away any time soon, but what can be changed is how stress and pressure are allowed to affect you. We are not talk about stress management. Let's get real; there really is no such thing as "stress management." That would suggest that we, as individuals, have control over all that seems to cause stress in our lives, such as all the events in life. We don't.

What you do have control of is whether stress and pressure are allowed to just be, whether they are allowed to take you over, to suck the joy right out of you. This isn't about stress management; it's about being stress-free!

Stress-free? Really?

Yes, stress-free! Really! Although there's no magic pill to make stress go away, the proven, simple practice that empowers you with the ability to remain peaceful and calm regardless of what's going around you. The practice is meditation. We're not talking about practices or techniques that require special rituals, positions, postures, clothing, or sound effects. We're talking about simple, easy and effective techniques that can be taught and applied in the workplace. Use them at work, at home, driving, or riding – anywhere.

Teaching these techniques or methods of meditation is what AHAM, the Association of Happiness for All Mankind, does. AHAM is a non-profit organization based in Asheboro, North Carolina. It has two retreat and training centers providing workshops, retreats, telephone seminars, and support programs throughout the US, Canada, India and worldwide. AHAM makes housecalls.

What is meditation?

What do these meditation programs look like? What can one expect to experience by participating in them? What benefits are there for my organization?

Meditation has been described as the art of being present, not living in the past, not in the future, but living in the here and now. Why is that important? What does that have to do with stress? As Eckhart Tolle states in his book, *The Power of Now*, "Unease, anxiety, tension, stress, worry – all forms of fear – are caused by too much future, and not enough presence. Guilt, regret, resentment, grievances, sadness, bitterness, and all forms of non-forgiveness are caused by too much past, and not enough presence."

What happens in these meditation programs and what can one expect to experience?

- ♥ How to get quiet no matter what
- ♥ How to remain peaceful regardless of what's going on around you
- ♥ How to release stress in the moment it occurs, not futilely trying to manage it
- ♥ How to be "quiet on the inside"
- ♥ How your peace and calm empowers others you come in contact with, especially children

The benefits of meditation on the spot have been proven myriad times. For example, shortly after Hurricane Katrina leveled New Orleans, AHAM was there providing meditation sessions and teaching meditation techniques right at "ground zero." AHAM's trainers were not directly providing victim relief, although that did occur. The first-responders and other health professionals were the primary providers of victim or disaster relief in New Orleans. AHAM was there working with those very, same health care professionals. AHAM provided relief to the caregivers who had given until there was no more to give, to the first-responders and grief/loss counselors who themselves had become overwhelmed with the tragedy, and to the support staffs whose sleepless and over-worked bodies were ready to drop. Talk about stress and pressure!

But did meditation work in such a catastrophic, high-pressure, high-stress disaster situation? Indeed it did. The feedback from those first-responders, health care professionals, and other service providers was re-

soundingly positive. The stress and pressure-producing events didn't suddenly disappear, but the service providers and responders were able to function more effectively because they themselves were better able to be stress-free and remain calm and centered. So, if it worked after hurricane Katrina, why not give meditation a shot where you work, the place you spend most of your day? Why?



- ♥ Less sick time and absenteeism
- ♥ Better teamwork
- ♥ Higher productivity
- ♥ An environment of mutual respect
- ♥ A kinder workplace environment
- ♥ Vastly improved customer relations

AHAM can also bring these same stress-prevention and stress-release skills to any workplace, medical or non-medical, wherever there is stress, pressure, conflict, or upset. AHAM stands ready to be a resource for calming conflict, for increasing mutual respect and acceptance in the workplace, and for creating a cooperative and nurturing work environment. AHAM will go anywhere to deliver this calm and peace: to the workplace, meeting facility, or wherever it's needed. Remember, AHAM makes house calls. In short, AHAM may just be the light at the end of your personal tunnel. AHAM stands ready to serve you. Simply e-mail Stan Davis, stan09@aham.com, or call (336) 381-3988 for more information or to book a highly beneficial session for your workplace, for your employees and for your co-workers. ♥

Doug High is a Human Resource Development instructor at Randolph Community College in Asheboro, NC. He and his wife, Carol, have participated in several of AHAM's personal and professional enhancement programs. Doug and Carol reside in Asheboro. If you'd like to contact Doug, you may email him at highdoug@aol.com.

This is an article that appeared in the Art of Wellbeing Fall 2007 Edition.



Graduates Share



"The Self-Inquiry Process has been a very profound process for me. Before coming to the retreat I was not aware that I would be able to go within with 'I' to the center of my Heart Beingness. I am very thankful for this program."

– Ted.S.
Kailua, HI

"I am experiencing total acceptance of myself. It has become very clear to me of how I am responsible for 'everything' in my life. I have a feeling of calmness and clarity that I have been longing for most of my life."

– Angela K.
Cumberland, BC, Canada

Intensive Self-Inquiry Training held on Vancouver Island, BC, Canada

November 11-17, 2007



"I am experiencing the delight of knowing that I am not alone and that I share the same Self with all. I am experiencing a sense of 'Coming Home.'"

– Rachel C.
Courtenay, BC, Canada

"I am experiencing peace about who I am and what I have carried with me. By having identified and qualified my pain/fear, it is now 'just a part of me,' no longer a burden."

– Tricia St.P
Comox, BC, Canada

Upcoming Intensive Self-Inquiry Programs: January 19-27 and April 19-27, 2008 in USA; February 11-24 at our India ashram. There is a 30-day registration cut-off date. Call or email the Center for information. Ph: (336) 381-3988 or email: ahamcntr@asheboro.com



Mushroom Barley Soup

From AHAM's *Simply Divine Vegetarian Cuisine Cookbook* Page 71

1/2 cup raw pearled barley
 6-1/2 cups stock or water
 1/2 tsp salt
 3-4 tbs tamari
 3-4 tbs dry sherry
 3 tbs butter
 2 garlic cloves, minced
 1 heaping cup onions, chopped
 1 lb fresh mushrooms, sliced
 freshly ground black pepper to taste

In a soup kettle, cook the barley in 1-1/2 cups of the stock or water until tender. Add the remaining stock or water, tamari and sherry.

Saute the onions and garlic in butter. When they soften, add mushrooms and 1/2 tsp salt. When all is tender, add to the barley, making sure to include the liquid from the onions, garlic and mushrooms.

Give it a generous grinding of black pepper and simmer 20 minutes, covered, over the lowest possible heat. Taste to adjust seasoning. Add additional salt if desired.

Makes 6-8 servings. ♥



Flower garden at AHAM Ashram, South India

Daily Messages

AHAM sends out Daily Messages for transforming the mind and realizing the true nature of the Self, or real God, based on the Teaching of Sri Ramana Maharshi. If you wish to receive these FREE daily messages, Monday to Friday, simply e-mail your request to the AHAM Center at: ahamcntr@asheboro.com
 Subject: Daily Messages



Heart Watch

Every four hours, during our Heart Times, one of our staff sits in silent meditation in our sanctuary and consciously envisions a successful conclusion of the particular need of each person for whom a request has been made. If you would like to have a request placed in our Heart Watch book, then phone, mail, or e-mail your prayer request to the AHAM Center. ahamcntr@asheboro.com;
 Subject: Heart Watch Request



Upcoming Events



January:

- 11 - 13 Awareness Retreat Experience (ARE)
- 19 - 27 Intensive Self-Inquiry Training/Retreat (ISIT)

February:

- 1 -3 Awareness Retreat Experience (ARE)
- 7 - 10 Conscious & Clear Living **Refresher Program**
- 11 - 24 Intensive Self-Inquiry Training/Retreat (ISIT) **India**
- 29 - Mar 2 Awareness Retreat Experience (ARE)

Sharings From Graduates

"There is an inner stillness with me at all times. All answers are here as I am ready and open to receive."

– T.B. , Fletcher, OH, **ISIT Participant**



Awareness Retreat Experience/ ISIT

"On completing the Awareness Retreat Experience at AHAM I am feeling calm and grounded." I received an understanding of the Self-Inquiry approach that AHAM offers. I look forward to taking the September ISIT Program."

"I was hoping to get a method to go 'toward' liberation. What I got was 'I already am there and here is the way to realize it.' No more excuses!"

– K.O., Springfield, OH

Awareness Retreat Experience (ARE)

Why not "give yourself" 2 to 5 days retreat time of abiding in Pure Awareness? This is simple, effortless "being meditation," at AHAM's tranquil, 37-acre meditation Retreat Center. The "Awareness Retreat Experience" is perfect for those wanting a time to "get away from it all" into deep peace, solitude, and relaxation. Enjoy our quiet meditation trails and beautiful Reflection Lake. There is personal guidance into the experience of Self-Inquiry – "the eyes open" meditation for anyone, anytime, and anyplace. Experience this, and much more of AHAM's transformational teaching... all in a very "laid back" and relaxed format.

A retreat experience can be scheduled to fit your schedule. It is also already offered on selected, specific weekends.



AHAM's Reflection Lake

For information on any of our programs, contact the AHAM Center at: <ahamcntr@asheboro.com>
Subject: Program Information



AHAM Meditation Retreat Center - USA
and
Arunachala Ramana AHAM Ashram - India
2008- 2009 Program Calendar

**January**

11-13 Awareness Retreat Experience
19-27 Intensive Self-Inquiry Retreat/Training

February

1-3 Awareness Retreat Experience
7-10 Conscious & Clear Living
11-24 Self-Inquiry Retreat/Training **India**
29-Mar 2 Awareness Retreat Experience

March

6-9 Conscious & Clear Living
14-16 Sat Sanga
19-23 Neutralizing Your Negative Past

April

4-6 Awareness Retreat Experience
19-27 Intensive Self-Inquiry Retreat/Training

May

2-4 Spring Fling
9-11 Awareness Retreat Experience
14-18 Neutralizing Your Negative Past

June

7-15 Living Meditation Training
20-22 Awareness Retreat Experience
23-29 Sat Sanga Week
27-29 Sat Sanga

July

4-6 Awareness Retreat Experience
23-27 Neutralizing Your Negative Past

August

2-10 Intensive Self-Inquiry Retreat/Training
15-17 Awareness Retreat Experience
22-24 Association in Consciousness Retreat
22-24 AHAM 30th Birthday Celebration

September

4-7 Conscious & Clear Living (1st)
12-14 Awareness Retreat Experience
17-21 Conscious Communication & Relationship

October

3-5 Conscious & Clear Living (2nd)
11-19 Living Meditation Training
22-26 Neutralizing Your Negative Past
31-Nov. 2 Sat Sanga / Awareness Retreat Experience

November

8-16 Intensive Self-Inquiry Retreat/Training
21-23 Awareness Retreat Experience

December

12-14 Awareness Retreat Experience
21 Community Christmas Celebration
31 New Year's Eve Celebration

February 2009

9-23 Self-Inquiry Retreat/Training **India**
18-22 Neutralizing Your Negative Past

March 2009

21-29 Intensive Self-Inquiry Retreat/Training