



HEART to HEART

Consciousness speaking to Consciousness

Vol. 30 No. 1

The Association of Happiness for All Mankind

October 2008

Creating Conscious Community





Is "AHAM" an Idea Whose Time has Come for You?

Excerpted from *The Handbook to Perpetual Happiness*, pp. 271-274 by A. Ramana

AHAM (pronounce both "a's" like the sound of "a" in "father") – the Association of Happiness for All Mankind – is an idea whose time has come! It is time that we were all living *consciously from* our own direct Oneness with the Source, the Supreme Being of all beings, the Supreme Self of all selves, and living from this Consciousness *as the present basis of our daily lives!* This means living in Happiness-NOW as the basis of our experience or reality, with no more sense of doubt, fear, bondage, lack, dis-ease or upset as chronic problems we are having to strategically deal with, avoid or eliminate from our life.

Perpetual, or constantly steady, unshakable Happiness-NOW, for all mankind – yes, everyone who is open to allowing and receiving it! – is to me an idea whose time has come! It is now experienced as my natural state. And not only for just myself, but I can also see it as already being the truth, the natural state, of one and all who are willing to turn their full attention around. Or, withdraw their attention from identification with the body-mind, and the world, and into the Self, and simply remain there in their own being, their natural state.

Let me right here state *emphatically* that the power of a context is absolutely real! It is true that it may not seem very real to you if you are stuck in the position or held-belief that you are your body. Or, that the "self" you think you are is this psycho-physical apparatus, or body-mind, with all its conditioning from the past. And with you therefore operating out of a system of reality which says that the body of the person you are seeing is also that person, or is their very being or existence, and that their physical form or appearance is more real or significant than is your consciousness of them – the same consciousness with which you sense your body and perceive and experience all that is "other" in your life. When you are identified with your body-mind as being your "self," then you are out of context with the Truth, and don't feel your own true nature, and the nature of all manifestation as being one and the same – which is only Consciousness, the real existence, and is Existence Itself. The understanding of which is Love and Joy, or always, already Happiness. It is the only Real Happiness.

The context, created now – of Happiness-NOW for everyone – has a greater power than all the outer facts. Why? Because it is already, always the underlying Truth, or the very Nature of the true Self that we all *are*, just awaiting our Awakening or Realization of it. Therefore it has *great power!* If strongly considered and focused on, it has the power to generate a process, to bring forth forces which are aligned with the end result, and which will eventually actually create the circumstances within our own (yours and my)

immediate environment. And also *eventually*, for those who wish it for themselves throughout the world.

If you wish, you too can align yourself now with this context and allow its working principle and power to be your own. And, to contribute to the process whatever reveals itself to you to be done to both

experience it for yourself, and to even live and work as an example or aid for this process to awaken in the lives of others. The experience of responsibility already exists within yourself. All you have to do is to experience yourself – the true Self – as pure Awareness, as the underlying space of your experience, and you will automatically and necessarily experience responsibility for everything and everyone occurring within your space. For it is not different from you – or from your consciousness, which is you. The end of unhappiness and the Association of Happiness for All Mankind "project" is a natural consequence of the experience of individual and personal responsibility. It is from your own experience that doubt, fear, conflict and unhappiness now exist in your life, in your world. As a practical response or expression of that, you may ask, "What can I do about all the pain, poverty, suffering and unhappiness that I perceive in the world?" "What can I do to stop it, or to contribute to ending it?"

I cannot answer that for you. Instead of attempting to do so, AHAM, along with you, creates a context in which you get to answer that question for yourself, so that the answer is *your own answer*, your own "program," or "project," or process – your own Awakened Purpose.

I can say that the first thing for you to do is clear your own consciousness-space of all sense of unhappiness by simply abiding in the Self. Or by falling into the Heart of your own being and just abiding therein, and thus be a living example for others to know that they too can be always naturally happy. ♥



An Appreciation for AHAM Community

By Elizabeth MacDonald, AHAM's Assistant Spiritual Director and Senior Trainer

"You are the Light of the world." – Jesus

"We are the givers of existence to the whole world." – Sri Bhagavan Ramana

(Elizabeth shares this message from her book, "Living From The Heart," making some updates.)

It was in August 1978 that Ramana shared with me the idea of AHAM and I joined him in this mission and project. At the time of our meeting my life was consumed with all the many responsibilities of being a mother of two young girls, while finding a way to survive in the world.

The idea of "happiness for all mankind" appealed to me. I was not only open, but intrigued by the idea of seeing how we could offer a service to the world in which everyone could actually experience Real Happiness as the very basis or Source of life and living.



I had awakened to the "spark" of the idea of AHAM. There was no road map for moving along with it, to say how this was going to be done. From this "not-knowing," knowing just seemed to occur naturally. Needless to say, this aspect of AHAM's development has been the most important element for me in awakening.

As we together set about "doing" what needed to be done, it was incredible to watch as we followed the course of development, as it was all revealed from the Heart.

As I worked side by side with Ramana in the office, in the programs, and in his home, he was a stickler for details. Before I met him, I had "bought into" the limitation of the ego-mind and was operating from this basis. If I did not give my best to a project Ramana would hand it back to me again and again until it was perfect. Ramana saw only the best in me – the Perfection. The quality time I spent with him began to chip away at the strategies of the ego-mind, revealing more and more the Splendor of the Self.

The "ins and outs" and "ups and downs" of the process of AHAM was certainly a wild "roller coaster ride." The people who have stayed with this incredible ride over its long rough period have all benefited tremendously. AHAM is not just someone's "pipe dream," fantasy, or irrelevant idea.

One meaning of the Sanskrit word "aham" is "existence", comprising All. What is happening now, in AHAM's thirtieth year, is the conscious awakening of "aham" or "existence" itself in the Hearts or Consciousness of those aligned with AHAM's Teaching. Our Conscious Community is growing. We are all coming "Home to the Heart." The present is fresh. Moment-to-moment, "what is," is *beautiful!*

We are reaching out into the world community and sharing an awakening into the "I AM," in our introductory experiences of the Heart. We are ready and eager to serve this purpose – *Happiness for All Mankind ...*

The Light of Truth is glowing in everyone's face and is twinkling in everyone's eyes. The warmth of real and true Love is being felt in our "Heart to Heart" communion with each other around the world. We are seeing there is only One Heart, One Love, One Truth, and only One AHAM ... We celebrate and give thanks for this opportunity to be Real, to be true to the Self, to easily Live from the Heart. ♥

♥Celebrating 30 Years of Awakening♥

Heart-felt gratitude to all who contributed their time, money, talents and presence in making this celebration a success.

Festival of the Heart - Daytime Celebration



Linda mowing lawn to make way for the tent



Donna putting up the butterfly decoration symbolizing transformation



l-r: Stu, Hannah and Candace Creating a watermelon basket



l-r: Jane, Jenny and Cindy frying spring rolls



Doug making sure we have enough veggie dogs and burgers



No having to be called twice to come and eat



Having a good time with "The Goodtimers," with Richard on left joining in and AHAM graduate Jenny playing guitar (on the right) of trio



Sing-a-long with Elizabeth



The "Heart Spa" - the place to be for a little pampering of the body with massage, pedicure, energy work and more...

♥ Celebrating 30 Years of Awakening ♥

All Weekend

Before



Some of the many hands involved in painting – truly a community effort



Esther

After



Our Annex gets a makeover too, thanks to Esther who was inspired to create a paint by number project to transform the annex

Evening Celebration – Sharing and Gifts



Beverly presenting Welcome & Introduction speech



Adjoa reading a tribute to AHAM Staff



Usha telling the story of Arunachala Siva



Bill & Steven recording the festivities



"Maggie" the Magnolia tree presented to Ramana



Elizabeth accepting gift

Sunday – the celebration continues



Interlude with Ramana Sunday morning



Richard H. (middle) – recipient of Bhagavan photo at end of silent auction



Words of Wisdom



*This that we are is a mystery.
Everything is both an invitation to and an expression of
that mystery.
There's nothing that isn't That
It's all That. This is That.*

What we would call the awakening experience is just the beginning of learning to live from the felt sense of understanding more consciously, the beginning of what we might call the embodiment process. Usually, for most people, awakening is waking up out of the relative, out of the personal, into the Absolute. The sense is I am not my body, not my mind. I am That which is really an eternal mystery that cannot be defined.

The embodiment process is being able to come back into the relative world and to see the whole of existence, including the very movement of one's body and mind, is really the same essence.

Liberation is not liberation *from* life. It's a liberation to live more fully.

When we really want the truth of our experience more than we want life to look a certain way, then the truth begins to reveal itself and to liberate more and more of itself within us. The mind that wants life to look a certain way is always resisting something.

Most people are looking for something to gain. The so-called ego, which doesn't really exist but we use it as a term of speech, is always looking for something for itself. "I want more peace. I want more happiness." It wants to gain something, and the process of awakening to our true nature and embodying that is the process of losing. It's the process of losing all the concepts we have, period, about what's truth. Not a single concept, not a single thought is ultimately true.

There's nothing we meet up against in our lifetime, no experience, no moment, no person, that isn't a portal to the truth of our nature, the mystery we can't really speak about. Everything is both an invitation to and an expression of that mystery. There's nothing that isn't That. It's all That. It's all an expression of That. ♥

– Dorothy Hunt

Excerpted from *Ordinary Women Extraordinary Wisdom; The Feminine Face of Awakening*
By Rita Marie Robinson, pp. 75-86



Dorothy is the founder of the San Francisco Center for Meditation and Psychotherapy. She is a teacher in the spiritual lineage of Adyashanti and serves as a spiritual Director of Moon Mountain Sangha, Inc.



Heart Note



Heart Note is our newest addition to the HEART to HEART. It is a page devoted to life stories of AHAM graduates who have been using the Teaching in their everyday lives. If you have a story to tell about how the living of the Teaching has worked in your life, please send it in to <aahampublications@aham.com> Subject: Heart Note.

When asked to share about experiences that have occurred since being in AHAM, my mind raced with all of the experiences that have unfolded before me. From witnessing my brother's transformation as well as my husband's within the year, miracle above all miracles were opening up. As significant as having found AHAM for myself it has been even more significant being the witness to two individuals who seemed to be unlikely prospects for such a spiritual integration into their lives.

However, life does go on and with the peace of having immediate family join the AHAM family, I was still receiving plenty of "gifts" in all forms. One "gift" that occurred was bleeding into the neighborhood in which I live. The mountain on which Steve and I live has been a quiet, seemingly safe haven for the last several years. I have spent numerous hours walking my dogs and riding my horses around the countryside in which we live and have never felt threatened. This all changed very rapidly when three homes across the street from us were burglarized. Came to find out this was happening in other places on our street as well. Two of the properties burglarized were renters of ours. They had just moved into the neighborhood very recently. Even though they were very kind, I could not help but think (there I go a thinkin' again) they would try to get out of their lease agreement immediately. Then there was the thought of just putting everything on the market and getting out of here myself. My mind was really starting to go out THERE but because of AHAM I was able to become quite silent. It was during one of my morning meditations that a quiet voice came to me; It said, "start a Neighborhood Watch Program." It was all quite simple, with a couple of calls and a meeting with an officer who is in crime prevention, the WATCH was launched. With the help of others, brochures were hand delivered to each home in our area making them aware of how we were being encroached upon by burglars. However, the morning of the first meeting I was experiencing a sense of dread (gee, I wonder if that was the ego). I was having some residual doubt about staying in this neighborhood. I certainly was not feeling like a candidate for heading up a meeting that evening. Something directed me in a different direction that morning as I headed up the road on my run. On my way I was feeling an immediate sense of peace and as I made my turn back to the house, I saw two young girls headed towards me. One girl had a saddle on her hip and the other was carrying a horse bridle. As I got closer, I recognized them as the girls that keep their horse in the field across the street from my home. As I joined up with them we walked in silence all the way to our destination. The realization came to me that these young, fresh eyes were not afraid and were enjoying the moment and this beautiful piece of land with all of its offerings. The forest that was being cluttered by the trees in my mind became cleared through these eyes of innocence. That night the meeting was very well received.

What I was becoming increasingly aware of was one of the roads that I am on all the time with my animals is a drug alley. On one of my morning jogs, I handed out the second Neighborhood Watch Meeting brochure to one of the main drug dealers (unbeknownst to me). Maxwell Smart move over. As I was learning more about this street and more and more connections were being made with cars coming in and out of houses on a regular basis for only a few minutes, I was witnessing the power of sharing coming through from our community. To make a long story short, there has been much gratitude from many concerned neighbors, police officers and the narcotic vice squad as the neighborhood has noticeably quieted down. My renters are still here and feeling safe and so are Steve and I.

It has also been a time for me to pay attention to whether or not I was reactionary throughout any of this event. During my time with neighbors, I heard many remarks about so and so and so and so. I would come home and get silent as to not carry that into my thoughts and make it into another vicious cycle. This has been a great opportunity for me to use the Inquiry as a tool that has already directed me to the Self but further keep me HERE through keeping the mind silent. Coming from this place of silence, I am witnessing that the friction spoken of by Robert Adams is what makes this world survive. The friction that arose in the neighborhood at first brought about resistance in me but thankfully because of Self-Inquiry the resistance did not persist. Instead this body/mind was an instrument. It is in my time of daily silence that I have asked to be an instrument of God's peace. That is all I was in this situation. I did not create the peace, it was already here. And collectively, when witnessing AHAM and the involvement of each and every individual in the entire AHAM family, I see such a powerful orchestra of Beings who are also these instruments of God's peace. I am so eternally and infinitely grateful for being a part of ALL of THAT. ♥

Namaste.
Cindy Pasternak
Roanoke, VA



♥ Self-Inquiry Instruction at AHAM ♥

August 2008 Intensive Self-Inquiry Training Graduates



"The 'conscious company' was amazing and much needed."
– Benjamin Peters
Lexington, KY



"The Self-Inquiry replaces everything else for going deep within, to the I Am."
– Millie Bastien
Quebec, Canada



"I am experiencing a sense of the insignificance of my mind-body (ego). I have the tool to diminish the causes of unhappiness."
– Virginia Froehle
Cincinnati, OH



"Self-Inquiry is absolutely compatible in giving me a wonderfully effective tool to disempower my ego and reveal who I really am."
– Annette Davidson
Gainesville, FL



"Wow! What a wonderful staff-trainers and volunteers. I feel calm and peaceful."
– Rich Schons
St. Cloud, MN

Upcoming Intensive Self-Inquiry Retreat/Training: November 8-16, 2008. Registration cut-off is 30 days prior to program. Call the AHAM Center at 336-381-3988 or email <ahamcntr@asheboro.com> to register or for more information.



Roasted Mustard Potatoes

From *A Simple Celebration* by Ginna Bell Bragg and David Simon, p.125

Ingredients:

1 Pound Yukon Gold potatoes diced
1 Tbsp olive oil
1 Tbsp dried onion flakes
Pinch of salt
1 Tbsp Bragg's Liquid Aminos
1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
1 Tbsp honey (optional)

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees
2. Toss the potatoes in the oil, onion flakes, salt, and Bragg's Aminos. Place in an oiled or sprayed baking dish. Cover with foil and roast for 30 to 40 minutes.
3. Remove the foil, toss and continue for an additional 15 minutes, until the potatoes are browned. Toss with the Dijon mustard.

Honey may be added, if desired.

Serves 2-3 people ♥

Heart Watch

Every four hours, during our Heart Times, one of our staff or volunteers 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

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

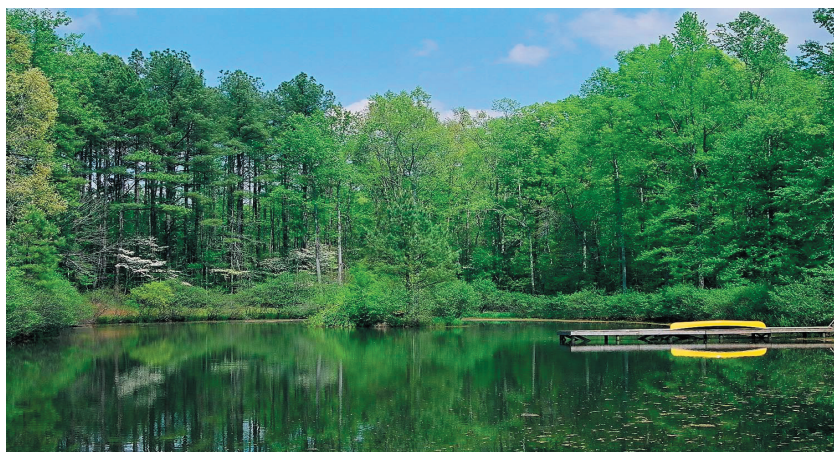
Here's an example:

Question: What method should I use to make my mind steady and firm?

Bhagavan: It is sufficient to think always of one thing. If the mind does not obey, again start thinking of only one thing. In course of time, the mind will obey your orders.



♥ Awaken to Awareness Retreats ♥



Reflection Lake

Why not "give yourself" a 2 - 5 day retreat time of abiding in Pure Awareness? This is simple, effortless "being meditation" at AHAM's tranquil, 37-acre meditation Retreat Center. The "Awaken to Awareness Retreat" is perfect for those wanting to "get away from it all" and to experience 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 that can be used by anyone, anytime, and anyplace. Experience this, and much more of AHAM's transformational teaching... all in a very "laid back" and relaxed format.

Contact the Center soon.

**Enjoy any season
of the year**



Meditation Path

"I realize that I have direct access to mental and spiritual renewal through the I AM meditation."

*– Kathryn Arnold
Morehead City, NC*



Front Yard

Upcoming Awaken to Awareness Retreats: October 10-12 and November 21-23, 2008. Registration required at least one week prior to program. Call the AHAM Center at 336-381-3988 or email <ahamcntr@asheboro.com> to register or for more information.

Experience Meditation on the Telephone

Learn to bring stillness & peace into your life

Every Sunday

Call (712) 338-8000 + code 2398#

A FREE one-hour phone call
with guided meditation,
sharing, fellowship, and
answers to your questions.

Call begins at 7:30 pm EST
(Call in 5-minutes early)

Try it This Sunday



Presented by:
AHAM Meditation Retreat Center
Asheboro, NC

Phone: (336) 381-3988
Email: ahamcntr@asheboro.com



On Society

From *Ramana Gita* pp. 116-119

VERSE 1

This chapter records the conversation between Yoganatha and Maharshi Ramana for conferring joy to society.

VERSE 2

Great Sage, what is the relationship between the individual and society? Please explain for the welfare of society.

COMMENTARY

The Maharshi had transcended the rules and obligations of society and was therefore in a position to advise objectively and courageously. Yoganatha is therefore keen that society should benefit from the advice of the Maharshi.

VERSE 3

In a society comprising of followers of different ways of life, society is like the body and individuals are like its limbs.

COMMENTARY

Society is comprised of various streams differing on the basis of location, background and other factors. Even so, they are only parts of the whole of the society. Their cohesive functioning is essential first, as the proper functioning of each limb is necessary for the human body as a whole.

VERSE 4

An individual prospers by working for the good of the society like a limb being useful for the body.

VERSE 5

One should serve the interests of society through body, speech and mind and enthuse his circle to do likewise.

COMMENTARY

It may be noted that what is emphasized is actual conduct, practice, and not mere preaching.

VERSE 6

One should build up one's own inner circle and make it prosper so that it may serve the interests of society and make it also prosper.

COMMENTARY

Working for one's own group's welfare is not for selfish ends but for prosperity of the entire society which is seen to be integral.

VERSE 7

Yoganatha asked, "Some praise peace, some others extol power, which is needed for the welfare of the society?"

VERSE 8

Bhagavan replied: For purifying one's own mind, peace is required, power for society's progress. Society should be raised through power and then peace should be established.

COMMENTARY

For purification of the individual, quietness of mind is a precondition. The spiritual practices necessary for mind's purification are not possible if the mind is disturbed and wandering. Hence peace is a must for the individual.

Society cannot function unless law and order prevails. Power is necessary to sustain order. Maharshi however, makes it clear that power, though absolutely essential, is not sufficient. Once order is established through power, it is only the peace of the individuals who constitute the society which matters.

VERSE 9

Yoganatha asked, "Great sage, what is the supreme goal to be attained by entire human society?"

VERSE 10

Bhagavan replied, "Brotherhood based on equality is the supreme goal of human society."

VERSE 11

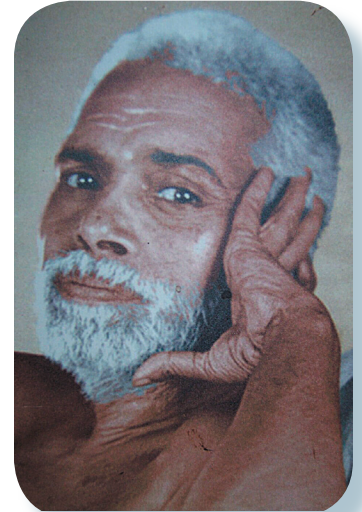
Through brotherhood peace and amity will prevail among mankind and the world will flourish like a single household.

COMMENTARY

The Maharshi has placed before humanity a lofty ideal. The inter-relationship is to be on a feeling of oneness, of equality. This is the most important verse of this chapter and it visualizes the position as to how the world would be if all are wise. Ramana has referred earlier to "equality" as the hall-mark of the wise. It has been explained there that equality does not mean the absence of difference, but awareness of the essential unity. Brotherhood would mean the presence of a feeling of oneness.

VERSE 12

This conversation between the ascetic Yoganatha and the compassionate Ramana took place on the 15th of August, 1917.♥





Fair Use Notice

In legal terms: This newsletter may contain copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. The material in this publication is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information. We believe this constitutes a 'fair use' of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107.



Note: It has often been difficult to contact the artists or copyright owners of the art, recipes, or photos in the newsletters. Please consider it a compliment that your work has been selected.

Please contact <ahampublications@aham.com> for your suggestions or comments. Feel free to share this publication with your friends and family. Past issues starting with January, 2008 can be found on our website: <http://www.aham.com/inspiration/index.html>

In loving service,

AHAM Publications