



HEART to HEART

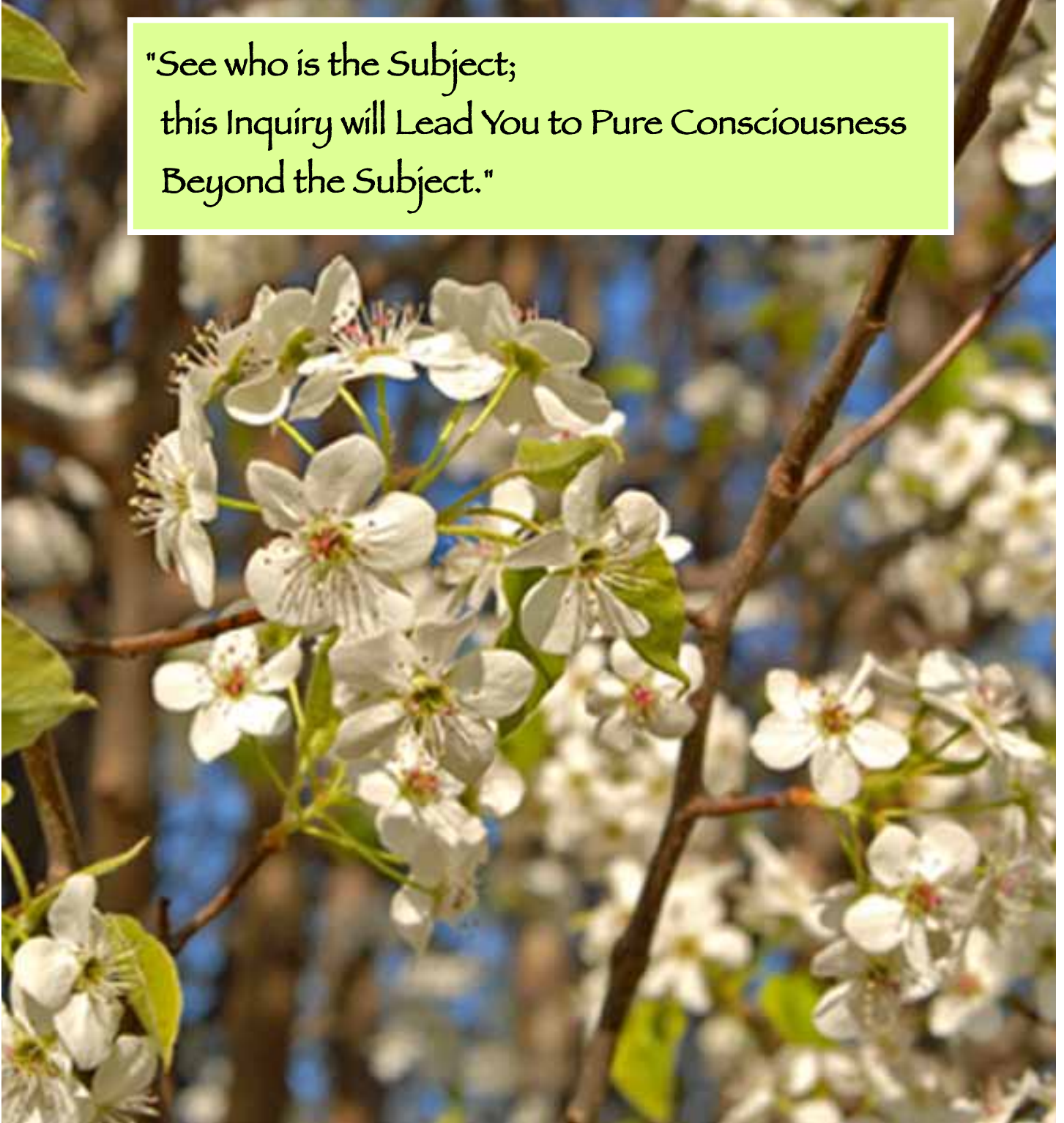
Consciousness speaking to Consciousness

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The Association of Happiness for All Mankind

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"See who is the Subject;
this Inquiry will Lead You to Pure Consciousness
Beyond the Subject."



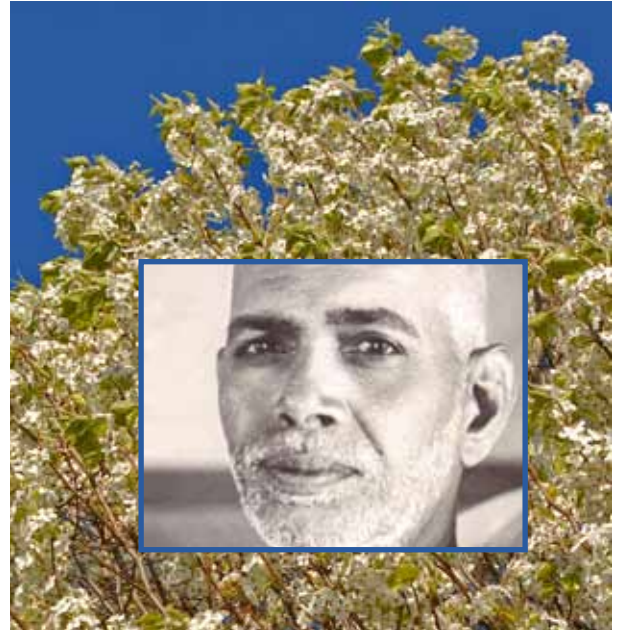
Teachings of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi

Ask yourself the question,
Who am I?

The body and its functions are not 'I.'

Going deeper, the mind and its functions are not 'I'.

The next step takes on to the question. "Wherefrom do these thoughts arise?" The thoughts are spontaneous, superficial or analytical. They operate in intellect. Then, who is aware of them? The existence of thoughts, their clear conceptions and their operations become evident to the individual. The analysis leads to the conclusion that the individuality of the person is operative as the perceiver of the existence of thoughts and of their sequence. This individuality is the ego, or as people say, 'I'.



Inquiring further the questions arise, "Who is this 'I'? Wherefrom does it come?" 'I' was not aware in sleep. Simultaneously with its rise sleep changes to dream or wakefulness. But I am not concerned with dream just now. Who am I now, in the wakeful state? If I originated from sleep, then the 'I' was covered up with ignorance. Such an ignorant 'I' cannot be what the scriptures say or the wise ones affirm. 'I' am beyond even 'Sleep'; 'I' must be now and here and what I was all along in sleep and dreams also, without the qualities of such states. 'I' must therefore be the unqualified substratum underlying these three states. (Talk 25)

Arranging thoughts in the order of value, the 'I' thought is the all-important thought. Personality-idea or thought is also the root or the stem of all other thoughts, since each idea or thought arises only as someone's thought and is not known to exist independently of the ego. The ego therefore exhibits thought-activity. The second and third persons do not appear except to the first person. Therefore they arise only after the first person appears, so all three persons seem to rise and sink together.

The mind is by nature restless. Begin liberating it from its restlessness; give it peace; make it free from distractions; train it to look inward; make this a habit. (Talk 26)

Inquiry (vichara) is the first and foremost step to be taken. When vichara continues automatically, it results in a contempt for wealth, fame, ease, pleasure, etc. The 'I' thought becomes clearer for inspection. The source of 'I' is the Heart – the final goal. ♥

(Talk 27)

Heart of the Matter

The Inquiry must go deeper.

The Inquiry must go into the very Source of Consciousness, *prior* to 'I am' itself.



Arunachala Ramana

The distinction to make is a fine-tuned one, yet very simple as seen from the Heart, the Self. The distinction is between 'I am this' or 'I am that' and simple, pure I-am-ness itself. 'I am this' or 'I am that' is conditioned consciousness, which is limited. I am, as pure I-am-ness, is unconditioned. It is the unlimited Self.

As Bhagavan says, if we abide in the Source, then the sense of 'I' dissolves, but we must abide in the Source *exclusively*.

Now, abiding in the Source exclusively is itself *inclusive of everything else!*

However, this is not usually seen, or readily understood, so fear arises. For, along with the dissolving of this 'I' is the dissolving of everything else.

Now, inasmuch as the 'I' is identified with all this, the notion of dissolving everything, including the 'I' that is aware of everything, does not seem to be a preferable or desirable direction to take, and often here is where great fear and resistance arise. And then all the strategies that go with that also arise, strategies of avoidance and forgetfulness. You see, resistance itself gives rise to both – forgetfulness and avoidance. Forgetfulness to Inquire is itself avoidance, it's the strategy of fear to not allow the Inquiry to happen. This is the resistance we see to 'doing' meditation or Self-Inquiry.

Meditation, which is to simply *be that* which reveals us to ourselves, is all that must happen. If we abide as that which reveals us to ourselves, then there is really no resistance in that. There may be for a moment or two but it usually soon melts away. For we're already only abiding in that by means of which we know that we are. And, that's *not* unpleasant – to simply be that by means of which we know that we are.

All there is, is Consciousness. And in this environment, with this focus, you cannot help but abide as That. The Peace and the Stillness that naturally shine and radiate in this quality are also this Consciousness, and are that for which the eternal quest has been going on, and is now going on in one and all.

The quest is over when or as long as there is only abidance in this quality, this Pure Consciousness. You can even feel the mind come to a stop. You can even feel the sense of effort cease, and the contraction, discomfort and dis-ease of the former 'I-am-the-body' notion no longer applies. So, in this quality, with eyes open, simply be, and allow whatever is occurring to occur without any interference by thought or thinking. Do you see how simple that is? ♥

Making a Connection...see details on AHAM's Website



Sunday Evening "Wake-Up" Call
MEDITATION ON THE TELEPHONE



AWAKEN TO AWARENESS WEEKEND RETREAT
Enjoy 3 days in Training and Quiet Retreat – upcoming

May 6-8
&
June 3-5



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,
please phone, mail, or e-mail your prayer request to the AHAM Center



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 through Friday,
simply e-mail your request to the AHAM Center



Graduates Speak



“I got an awareness of my true nature and a real practice that will dissolve all difficulties from the Intensive Self-Inquiry Training and Retreat.

I also received support and love, lots of hope, and a huge shift in consciousness.”

Susan Owen Roanoke, VA



Tammy Sanders, Stan Davis (Trainer and AHAM's Spiritual Director), Susan Owen

“I got more than I expected from the training. There is a knowing that I need to let everything be there just as it is. Total acceptance. The Self-Inquiry process is compatible with everything.”

Tammy Sanders Salem, VA



Lina's Love Note

India is a total sensory experience, and an absolute paradox. Tiruvannamalai, with its ancient temples and proximity to the sacred mountain, Arunachala, doesn't fit the Western sensibility of sacred silence. At any time, day or night, there are horns honking, dogs barking, temple bells ringing, or fireworks exploding.



Lina Landess, recent resident of AHAM Center

And then there are the sights and smells; the holy hill like a still, silent beacon, beautiful, dark-skinned children, brilliant coral bougainvillea, the scent of dosas bubbling on a hot griddle, incense burning on altars, and the ever-present beggars near Ramanasram.

Although I returned from AHAM's 2011 India pilgrimage in mid-February, I am instantly transported to Tiruvannamalai, South India, just as Jan, the Manager of AHAM Ashram, predicted.

What brings about that sense of 'being there' again is not simply the memory of the experience, but tuning into the feeling of the experience. The feeling I return to again and again is the stillness and silence that is ever-present, behind all the activity. Although it is ever available, as our very nature, there are places on this planet where it feels almost tangible.

Those places in India were spaces where I couldn't take pictures or be a casual observer. They required me to surrender, to simply be open and receptive to the all-pervasive, palpable stillness and silence they held.

One of those places was the Old Hall at Ramanasram, where Bhagavan spent much of his time meditating and meeting devotees. I was drawn to the Old Hall, basking in Bhagavan's still presence, immersed in a silence that overrode the chanting and the ringing of temple bells next door in the Shrine Hall.

Love Note *continued...*

The most truly silent place I experienced was Virupaksa Cave, a large, dark cave where Bhagavan lived for 16 years. The cave is named for Virupaksa Deva, a 13th Century saint who self-combusted there. A large, cone-shaped pile of ashes said to be his, sit under an orange cloth on the altar. The caves' low entrance and location on the mountain blocks much of the noise from downtown Tiruvannamalai.

I was also attracted to Bhagavan's mother's shrine at Skanda Ashram. I often meditated there by myself since most people were next door, where Bhagavan meditated and lived for six years. I experienced a peaceful, nurturing quality in the Mother's Shrine and an aloneness that is rare in India.

We traveled the eight-mile loop around the mountain (Pradakshina) three times, once on the Outer Path, and twice on the Inner Path. While the distinction between the Inner and Outer Path may be based on topography, it is also a perfect metaphor for the different quality of the experience. On the Inner Path we walked on the mountain, in nature, with few distractions, whereas the Outer Path drew us into the sensory smorgasbord that is downtown Tiruvannamalai.

And there in the midst of the marketplace with all its potential distractions, we could look up and see the holy hill; a still, silent reminder that no matter where we are, no matter what we're experiencing, the silence and stillness that is the truth of our Being is always ever present.



Lina meditating on the AHAM Ashram's roof-top

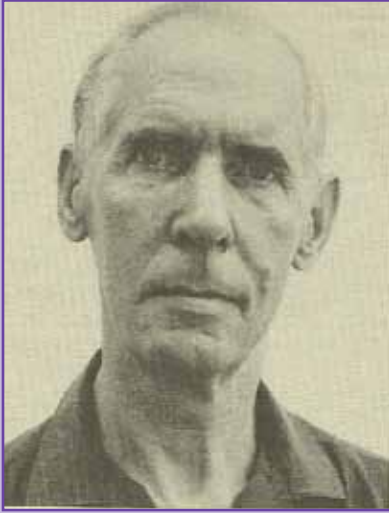
In those sacred places where Bhagavan lived and sat, I recognized more deeply the importance of who and what he really was and how profound a gift his awakening was and is for the world.

I know, too, now that I'm 'home,' that all I need do to experience that again is to turn my attention inward, keep my attention Here, and revel in the deep contentment and gratitude that comes from simply being I AM.

Writings of Arthur Osborne

For Those With Little Dust

Selected writings of Arthur Osborne 1st edition, 1990, Ramana Publications



Arthur Osborne

OTHERS

What will they think of this?
What will they say to that?
So others arise.
When there are others there's I.
In truth there just IS.
Isness alone is;
No others, no I, only a dance, a rhythm,
Only a being.

Of course, one has to play the game of "I and others," to act as though they existed. It is as if (as can sometimes happen) one had a dream and took part in its events while at the same time being awake enough to know that it was a dream.

What, then, is this vow to help others before seeking one's own Realization? Nothing but a resolve to remain in a state of ignorance (avidya). And how will that help others? It means clinging to the ego one has sworn to dissolve, regarding it as supremely wise and beneficent! In the language of theism it is revealed as overwhelming arrogance, the decision to show God how to run His world or to run it for Him.
(Where Charity Begins p. 46)

What is required is willingness to open one's heart to the truth, to surrender oneself, give up one's ego, conceive of the possibility of its non-existence, give up one's life for Christ's sake. That is why the Qur'an speaks of unbelievers rather as perverse than ignorant, saying that even if an angel from heaven came down to explain to them they would not listen.

Theoretical understanding is not enough. Neither is belief in the sense of a conviction that this or that will happen after death. What is needed is to set one's hand to the plough, as Christ put it, to undertake the true alchemy, transmuting the dross in one's nature to gold. This is the quest of the Sangrail (Holy Grail), the search for the elixir of life, the eternal youth of the Spirit. It is the pathway of heroes, the way from trivialities to grandeur. Its consummation is like waking up from a dream into the ever-existent Reality.
(To Those With Little Dust p. 41)

Join us in May for continued sharing

Simply Divine

Penne Pasta with White Bean and Sun-Dried Tomato

Vivian says, "Heartland makes gluten-free penne which works very well. Their pasta is actually made with corn and rice so it holds its shape, unlike rice pasta which many times gets mushy.

If you can't find penne, use another short, stubby pasta such as rigatoni, fusilli (spirals), or large elbow macaroni.

This hearty sauce, thinned with vegetable broth, would also make an excellent bean soup."



From "Everyday Cooking with Dr. Dean Ornish" pp. 246-247
Serves 3-4

- 1 cup sliced onions
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 1 cup vegetable broth, or more if needed
- 2 (15-ounce) cans white cannellini beans, or
- 3 cups home-cooked cannellini beans with 1 1/2 cups liquid
(1 cup dried beans makes about 3 cups cooked)
- 1 cup sun-dried tomatoes (not oil-packed), quartered or in slivers
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 pound whole wheat or Heartland penne pasta

Combine onions, garlic, and 1/4 cup broth in a large pot. Simmer over moderately high heat until onions are soft, about 5 minutes. Stir in beans with their liquid, sun-dried tomatoes, thyme, basil, and remaining 3/4 cup broth. Bring to a simmer and cook, uncovered, over moderate heat, stirring often, until flavors are well blended (15-20 minutes.) Thin, if desired, with additional vegetable broth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Keep warm.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add pasta and boil until al dente (about 12 minutes.) Drain and transfer to a warm bowl. Add sauce and toss to coat. Serve on warm plates, topping each portion with 1/2 tsp chopped parsley.

Final Talks

By A. Ramana

Final Talks given in India in 2009-2010

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January 5 - *The Show Must Go On*

Self-Inquiry, awareness, time & space, karma, love

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From A. Ramana's Archive



Samadhi of Arunachala Ramana at AHAM's India Ashram – One Year Anniversary of his Passing

Insight into Sin

by A. Ramana 3/31/83

Sin is the sense of “wrongness.” Jesus said I come (the I AM is taken as the basis of being) to overcome sin. Love, which is compassionate acceptance of what is, or forgiveness, is the quality in consciousness that allows a person to fall free from the contraction of separateness, or sin, releasing the contraction of “I” as a separate self.

The sense of “wrongness” when identified with as “I am wrong,” and felt as “I am not good,” “I am bad,” “I am guilty,” etc., is a contraction felt in the body as a chronic pinch, a discomfort, or dis-ease, usually in or on the spine, or solar plexus. It is the feeling of this pinch of dis-ease that is unhappiness. This unhappiness is the cause of dislike toward some outer form of being the scapegoat to lay blame on as the cause of the suffering felt from this contraction.

Who could believe that this felt discomfort could be “self” caused. That would require one to take personal responsibility for it and the resulting pain of it.

AHAM'S 2011 PROGRAMS

May

- 6-8 Awaken to Awareness Retreat
- 20-22 Sat Sanga Weekend

June

- 3-5 Awaken to Awareness Retreat
- 11-19 Intensive Self-Inquiry
Training/Retreat

July

- 1-3 Awaken to Awareness Retreat

August

- 5-7 Awaken to Awareness Retreat
- 20-28 Intensive Self-Inquiry Training/Retreat

September

- 2-4 Awaken to Awareness Retreat
- 7-11 Neutralizing Your Negative Past
- 30-Oct.1 Awaken to Awareness Retreat

October

- 22-30 Intensive Self-Inquiry Training/Retreat

November

- 4-6 Awaken to Awareness Retreat

December

- 2-4 Awaken to Awareness Retreat
- 14-18 Neutralizing Your Negative Past

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Contact AHAM (336)-381-3988

***Its main purpose is to spread the teaching of AHAM, which is primarily Self-Inquiry and the Pure Teaching of Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi.
Self-Inquiry is the core and central theme of AHAM's own pure teaching.***

HEART to HEART is a wonderful way for readers to be connected with AHAM and its pure teaching, especially if you cannot come often to the AHAM Center in the USA, or to our ashram in India.

It is AHAM's ongoing spiritual mission to assist one and all in transcending and ultimately eliminating all emotional pain, suffering, conflict, contradictions, and confusion seen and felt in their lives and in the world, which is caused by identifying with the body-mind and one's ego appearing in the world of time and space. It is to bring about real and lasting peace, freedom, and happiness for all who are ready and willing to receive it.

AHAM is here to share the Highest Truth – that there is not now, never has been, nor will there ever be a single, separate, individual being. There is always only this One Self, or One Reality, appearing as all the apparent "others" and revealing this One Self to Itself.

This is a free publication. However, your donations, gifts, or contributions to its continuation are very welcome and assist us in the operation of our two centers. Please feel free to pass this publication on to friends, and send us any questions you may have regarding either AHAM or your spiritual practice (*sadhana*). Please give us permission to print both your question and our answer in the HEART to HEART. All comments and suggestions are always welcome.

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www.dillingerphoto@gmail.com and www.ronwhitaker.ca**

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.

Past issues can be found on our website: www.aham.com/

In loving service,
AHAM Publications

THE ASSOCIATION OF HAPPINESS FOR ALL

MANKIND (AHAM) is a non-profit organization, incorporated in the state of North Carolina. AHAM has been serving the worldwide spiritual community with its curriculum of conscious-transforming programs since August 1978.

All is constantly being blessed by A. Ramana, AHAM's Founding Spiritual Director, who died in February 2010 and Elizabeth MacDonald, AHAM's Co-Founder, who is now retired and traveling abroad in our global spiritual community.

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