

Vedanta Family Foundation

*In memory of
dear 'RCM'
who battled it out
valiantly
.....but
unfortunately succumbed.*

When the Going Gets Tough, Reinvent Yourself and Get Going!

*Reaching out to all those that face tough situations
in personal life and attempt to seek relief otherwise.*

A Short Story

Sri Mumukshu
sri.mumukshu@gmail.com

April 2006

How many of us pursue our dreams and make it big in the distant land of milk and honey! Well meaning folks! Eminent citizens of the world! And become the proud household talk of those back in India. And many times, rural India to be precise. All nice and full of glory. However, there been situations where these successful, well meaning and highly accomplished professionals have faced an emotional roller coaster in their personal lives and wrecked their future reacting to it. The degeneration of loving relationships that they had invested heavily in, the betrayal of trust, the lack of loyalty and the resulting anger... and the need to get even at all costs ... or the sadness and the helplessness due to the overwhelming circumstances around .. and an emotional implosion that forecloses any sense of further honorable living. Somehow the deep depression that they land into, the damaged emotional relationships, rising inabilities to deliver on the professional front, the damaging fallout on all sides: they succumb to its viciousness seeking relief in death. Relief? What relief? It only leads to many long drawn problems for all the real loved dear ones left behind.

**Relief?
What relief?
It only leads to many
long drawn problems
for all the real loved
dear ones left behind.**

**The bottom line is,
while destiny always
prevails, all efforts
should be made by all
to help out no matter
what - in so many
ways and in so many
dimensions!**

With deep sympathies all the friends and family members gather in, after the untimely death. And muse and wonder what could have been done to avert this sorry state of affairs! Many ideas float back and forth. We think we can do ... but in ALL such situations, it is always a case of not having done enough..... And look at the flip side - where it was done successfully and perhaps made a difference..... either we will not know about it or perhaps it was a bit of an overkill. It never gets explicitly acknowledged. The bottom line is, while destiny always prevails, all efforts should be made by all to help out no matter what - in so many ways and in so many dimensions!

This is a story with many parallels in real life - any similarities are all purely coincidental. Of the many approaches that friends and dear ones might take to help get over this killer depression, here is one of the Vedanta ways of sharing noble elevating thoughts of true devotion, making true efforts to reinvent oneself with a strong spiritual anchor and start leading a more meaningful and energized life that swamps out and makes meaningless the basis of earlier problems even as one disengages oneself from the current state of emotional problems. And the strong succeed!

**Disclaimer
This story and the
characters in it are
fictional.
Any resemblance or
similarity to anyone,
living or dead or to
any events is purely
coincidental.**

1. INTRODUCTION

M stared at the email – the response to the Diwali greetings he had sent out sometime back. Chandu had agreed to be in touch with him when he left India. And was incommunicado for a long time – several months had passed by.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 4/11 **To:** M

Hi M,

Thanks and Wish you and the family a very happy Diwali.
Past couple of months have not been too kind to me. I will call you sometime to talk.

Regards,
C

M wrote:
>Hi Chandu
>
> Greetings and best wishes for a great Diwali! Hope you are able to catch up with the various
> demands and handle it all successfully.
> Anyway... how come no emails/reply to me after you left India?????????????????
>
> Best regards
> M

M saw the plainspeak with which Chandu shared his inner thoughts. He did not want to make much of it. Perhaps work was taking its toll.

Chandu was a high profile technology guru working for a top financial business group of a Multinational. Born and brought up in a pious family that was traditional as well as enterprising in rural India, Chandu worked his way up in life and in his profession – from a village boy to become a top globe trotting technology professional. A journey that made him take several decisions matching his climbing up the economic ladder. Primarily in moving out of his village to go for higher schooling.. and then to go north for getting his engineering degree, to migrate to the Americas for work – Chandu lived in two worlds – the world in which his professional colleagues lived .. and the world in which his parents, siblings and relations lived. True to his instincts in successfully navigating up the professional ladder, Chandu chose to marry his sweetheart that he met at work, much to the chagrin and opposition from his family members. To a degree he alienated them with his choice and that emotional distance perhaps remained until the end, though his family members had reconciled to it long back. Out in the Americas, Chandu was a model immigrant, working hard to achieve wealth and success as well as taking care of his family with two kids. He was very sensitive and quiet person.

Chandu and M had worked together as professionals. And shared some common heritage values of life. Chandu had his circle of friends and given the varied tastes, preferred to interact with them individually. Thus even after migrating to the west, Chandu used to keep in touch with his friends, visiting them during his brief India sojourns. It was one such visit that Chandu promised to work with M and got too busy to be in touch. Until of course, M saw the above email that said something was going wrong for Chandu.

***Vedanta
has helped out
many in their
dire circumstances.
A re-look at how
they lived their lives
and how they can
live it differently
helped!***

2. SHARING

The new year rolled in and M sent out a greetings email to all. And to Chandu it was something special. And he looked deep and hard at the reply that he got.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 3/1 **To:** M

Dear M,

Thank You. Your message is exactly applicable to my personal situation. I am facing the worst challenges of my life. I am down and feel mentally beaten up. I know it is probably too much to ask, but will you help me with some work in B?

Thanks,
Chandu

M wrote:
> Dear Chandu
>
> Greetings and best wishes for the new Year! May the Lord bless you with all the wisdom to deal with all
> the challenges of life as well as the courage to successfully come out of each one of them
>
> Best regards
> M

M could not bear to see his friend write this way. There was something terribly wrong. Something needs to be done. Just that M was half way round the world. And if at all it had to be done by email. M quickly responded with that which sincerely appealed to him most.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 4/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

When you are sincere and you sincerely pray to God, the unseen hand is always helping out... and has been doing so even without your knowledge! Such has been my experience... and all I did was to articulate it. Tell me what I can do for you... and I shall try my best!

Best regards
M

And Chandu replied back sharing his plight indirectly. And asking for help – ways and means of taking care of his parents!

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 4/1 **To:** M

Dear M,

I am sincerely praying and hoping for the help from the Lord. I consider my situation as an indication that the Lord is cleansing my soul.

My current situation also implies financial difficulties if I don't manage the same carefully. So far I have been sending money to my parents from here and it appears that I need to rely on my resources in India to help my parents. I need tactical help and ongoing moral support. When (if) we meet in person, I will explain what exactly happened to me in the recent past. Thank you for the offer to help. Please do not hesitate to let me know if it is inconvenient to you.

Regards,
Chandu

M thought Chandu was going through one of those tough heart wrenching job layoffs – more so in the higher levels where for all the heart and soul slogging that you do, your boss might simply drop you off when the going isn't good for the company. One of many ills of the western society. But what he got in reply was different. Chandu was having marital problems? Or was it his failing health?

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 4/1 **To:** M

M,

Thanks a lot. I will send you the details by mail. I will also try to connect with you. My situation is not related to professional side, but it is the personal life!

Regards,
Chandu

M wrote:
> Hi Chandu
>
> Yes, the situations that we pass thru ... when with blessings we have the wisdom to see thru... is a
> process of cleansing our vasanas out! Yes, we have to consciously choose to live up by that wisdom the
> price of which we have already paid for! Like they say, it is only the fool who pay up for the ticket
> but doesn't enjoy the cinema! Am curious - do I have to wait until we meet? There are so many ways in
> which we can communicate including over skype....Just fix the time. Or, by email itself... I can
> understand your situation.... perhaps if am not wrong ... are you in professional transition?
> More on hearing from you
>
> best regards
> M

There it was. Chandu was going through some personal problems. And is devoutly seeking Divine help. The cleansing of the soul sounded odd. Was it that Chandu had does some moral wrong that he is facing a tough situation? A health problem? M asked Chandu to call him up and share his sorrows. After some days, Chandu sent the bombshell!

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 10/1 **To:** M

Dear M,

Thanks a lot. I am still in the disturbed state of mind. I would like to do the best for my children. Right now, I am a victim of circumstances. The thought of ending life is crossing my mind many times. I hope it won't be an useless and abrupt end to life. I will (at some point) talk to you.

Regards,
Chandu

M could not take it. What was it that made Chandu go into such a disturbed state of mind? There were too many things stated in those few lines! Victim of circumstances? What circumstances was there in anyone's life that such thoughts have to cross several times? And yes, there was this implicit anger too – the hope that such ending should not become useless and abrupt! One can only wonder what was that deep sense of betrayal, anger, sadness, helplessness, hopelessness and perhaps therefore the vindictiveness to prove some point. Albeit in an emotionally charged but totally unwise way!

Oh God! M shot off an email immediately!

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 11/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

I want to talk to you ASAP! Can I request you for your number. Ofcourse in FULL confidentiality! Meanwhile, I just wanted to share with you my understanding and efforts in living a meaningful and conscious life in face of the MOST extreme adversities! And ofcourse I find succour in chap 5 of Gita. It will help out in a way! Cheer up - there are some who care for you! Just call me up!

M

3. RESPONDING

The best way to handle these situations is to immediately start a dialogue to release up the pent up emotions; to say that there are some who really deeply care as well as give honest, authentic advice and sympathies. The biggest problem was the distance. The key was to build up on the trust and bonding to ease up the Chandu from the depths of the hopelessness or rather the dark side of the universal affliction called 'borderline depression' – people interacting with the victim may know it and yet may not know it!

M could not keep quiet. He tried calling Chandu directly but had problems getting through. He sent another email – by now things

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 11/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Is your number 999 666 3333? Kindly confirm. I tried calling out but did not succeed!

I have found - like they say in the Upanishad: "the truth like seeing the bright sun" - that the realities of life as well as the meaningfulness that we seek to live -- become apparent during these very challenging moments! Very few are blessed to experience and see thru the contradictions called life! You have been blessed - and you have already paid the price. Now, sit back, relax and build up a new life based on these..... Don't lose the opportunity! That you are not alone ... and there are others who are in much more deeper muck can be seen in www.498a.org as well as www.saveindianfamily.org I dont know how relevant it is -- all it means is that there are others who have faced deeper problems of a different kind.

Also just before seeing your / this email, I visited the Ashrama. There I happen to meet Smt and Sri R. Interesting but brief conversation sounded pretty odd for me... It took me sometime to connect this email with those words: my question: how are you? Their answer: -- "Chandu is fine.. he keeps calling once in a while" .. and a quick hurried exit...

Call up - am expecting your call. I don't know where you are ... but surely you are there!

M

were becoming more clearer though Chandu had not said it explicitly in so many words! Many people down the dark alleys of the waves of depression will not open up immediately. What will help them is an authentic sharing of one's experiences to show that there are ways to get over even the most horrible adversities. Every saint's life stands out as an inspiration. More so given the persecution that they have bravely and detachedly faced. Modern situations pale down to nothingness when compared. The key was to get Chandu to be more conscious in his thoughts, words and deeds – and to get him out of the clutches of his emotions. Chapter 5 of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita

is wonderfully helpful in these matters. To get off the dark emotions and into the world of equanimity. Ofcourse, Lord Krishna's words are as much to us in difficult situations as was to Arjuna!

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 11/1 **To:** M

Dear M,

I will call you. I need every bit of moral support.

Thanks for the caring.
Chandu

That message was reassuring to M. Chandu will talk. And he needed all the moral support. And he was listening. M said yes – after all what are good friends for!

Chandu did call up. M sombrely listened. He was right. Chandu was getting deeply affected by the conflicts in his marriage. Perhaps it was there building on for a long time. Intermittent conflicts triggered by petty differences of opinion. Chandu was very decent. He did not say anything nasty against his significant other. Just about such events that he just could not stomach! And the resultant fallout – to think of its implications made Chandu so 'mentally beaten up'!

Marital conflicts look very unreasonable and yet that is how the emotional seat within the brain of every man and woman works. If this unconscious primitive brain found that in the long term the relationship was not benefiting it (testily checked by the mate for acknowledgment of the 'whims' also called as 'marital compromises'), the (blind?) love within it for the spouse starts slowly evaporating (perhaps turning into contempt and hatred), the warts in the significant other starts becoming more visible and the dislike grows. At some point it crosses such thresholds so much so others find the dislike irrational. Suddenly top quality well-meaning professionals look stupidly immature! It is nature's way of getting the animal brain to start looking to others for security and desire fulfillment.

But that is exactly as humans we seek to regulate – through such institutions like marriage and family traditions. More so our vedic traditions that practising folks embrace lifelong and across many generations. It is not without basis that some of these traditions exist - to counter the dark side of the primitive brain. Yes, let us accept that deviations and ignorance have crept up over the ages in the meaningfulness of these traditions more so when the context itself is not understood properly. Vedanta as a life science helps one cut through the entangling negative emotions and transactions of the primitive brain in us. And helps us understand the efficacy of these traditions better. As well as the confounding contemporary marital problems that we find ourselves in.

There wasn't any more potent antidote than vedanta for what Chandu found himself in! M thought hard and deep and summarized his understanding in terse but down-to-earth helpful way.

All marriages have marital conflicts! How it is handled for an early and amicable resolution is the key!

When emotionally stressed, both the man and the woman will describe the same event in very different ways!

Taken at face value and acted upon, this emotional coloring creates a cascade of problems for everyone!

More so when they spiral out of hand, with 'advisors' and the law agencies getting into the forced pigfight!

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 12/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Calmly read every word below carefully. These words are not a waste of time – Lord Krishna shared tough secrets when Arjuna was in the midst of the deepest challenges of his life! In comparison Am a nobody.....

Karma will soon catch up with all: the good will reap that which they have sown – of forgiveness to get over the bitterness and resentment; of a new found energy and determination to work towards helping out the world at large where such crap inflicts more intense damage; and of a new life of self-realization of what mundane vasanas can do to all! The crooked will reap that which they have sown – by getting into circumstances that will cause further damage than the worst curse that you could think of.... and I have living proofs of it...

The vedantic way of handling these situations is to strongly build up on the following (with NO hatred):

- a) titiksha - forbearance - which you have amply demonstrated – on the rocky seafront, the waves crash into the rocks .. so what? Does it not show the ruggedness of the rock? Be just that!
- b) vairagya - detachment - to get over one's own inner reactions that saps out all energies to get off this quicksand (or swamp) of emotional action-reaction entanglements!
- c) tapas - putting in the needed concentration and focus to get things straightened up - a way of very CONSCIOUS living where emotions are quietened out...
- d) 'thath twam asi' - knowing that 'YOU' are NOT the picture that has been painted up by those around! The 'reputation' picture is in tatters - are YOU that? Never! Neither before nor after the events! This is a very powerful mantra! Your character is the most important strength – not the imagined reputation!
- e) Getting over 'kamini' & 'kanchana' as Sri Ramakrishna puts it - the urges within oneself that traps people into relationships by blinding them up on the personality shortcomings of their 'loved' ones. This is the 'intense' time to burn them up within you...

Now make a spiritual commitment to live by the above!

Attached please find a few URLs that might be of some use to you... perhaps. I did some research for several hours and here is some output whose readings might help you handle issues perhaps better...

More when we talk again.

Best wishes

M

RESEARCH – How should decent menfolk defend and get over the excesses of DV laws.

1: http://tafkac.org/misc/spousal_abuse_of_men.html - on the falsehoods that sympathy seekers use...

2: <http://standyourground.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=3482>

-- the experiences of a guy who has been thru it... this is very useful.

2a: <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1563841908/qid=1088910238/102-4936199-2968946?n=283155> The reviews of this book will help out in deciding further readings needed.

2b: <http://www.abuse-excuse.com/> or better: http://www.abuse-excuse.com/ae_home.html

3: <http://www.ifeminists.net/introduction/editorials/2005/0316blumhorst.html>

An interesting editorial on VAWA misuse! (VAWA – Voilence Against Women Act, USA)

4: http://www.mediadarar.org/alert_ai1.php

A good letter on why the lopsided laws have to be changed...

5: <http://www.geocities.com/dscott8186/organizations.htm>

On what can be useful to you in your future legal interactions - a list of organisations.

6: <http://www.gate.net/~liz/fathers/fathers.htm>

NEVER Make a mistake of getting labeled like in this link - it is terrible how the misuse is done!

7: http://www.ancpr.org/domestic_violations_false_allega.htm

Custody battles and how the judges are twisted into issuing false judgements...

8: <http://www.fathersforlife.org/Sodhi/debunkingDV.htm>

Falsehood statistics and how to get them out!

9: <http://www.lectlaw.com/files/fam27.htm>

Interesting case studies of how things spiral / escalate out of hand..

10: <http://www.trueequality.com/booklet/>

Defending the need to handle gentlemen (and menfolk) better...

11: <http://www.ejfi.org/>

A foundation interested in seeking true gender equality - a good resource center...

Gender games played by a deeply disturbed partner can cause havoc for the family!

More so when such a partner's 'supportive' circle share the blindspot to be manipulative!

When law enforcement get involved, it is HELL for All!

Vedanta helps one to remain sane and to untangle oneself from the mess!

Vedanta asks you to consciously refuse playing the game!

**Don't react!
Instead respond – doing what is really needed.**

The ways of the world are such that though they are not, most men are shown as brutal because of their instinctive reactions and a worldly life philosophy. It is because of this that even the good folks get painted black and suffer the misuse of a supposedly progressive law to aid the victims of domestic violence. The shrewdness, crookedness and cunning that goes into mis-using these laws are a terrible bolt on the society. Even as every woman affected has a father, brothers and sons to care for her (and therefore all men cannot be rubbished as being brutal), so also does every man have a mother, sisters and daughters that love him. A decent man suddenly does not become a brute that he be condemned outright. And his reputation be shattered, he be denied access to his children and property as well as be burdened for life without any say. And most importantly make his elderly folks suffer for no fault of theirs.

The worst part is that once a woman in a fit of rage reports her man to the law enforcement, it becomes a case between the state and the man. Even if she were to sincerely regret it later, the events cannot be rolled back. The momentum of destruction in the family life increases and fallout is tremendous! How many times have women folk regretted their rash act in getting the state involved. There is absolutely no healing touch in this way for the women folk involved! It is tragic! More so given the statistics of how the families and the menfolk have got ravaged beyond repair in the name of justice!

Chandu perhaps did look deep and hard into the long email given his busy schedule. And acknowledged with a terse one-liner. He was wanting to talk more. M felt that was good!

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 12/1 **To:** M

Thanks M, I will talk to you again in a couple of days.
Regards,
Chandu

M could see what was troubling Chandu most – the effects of all this on his children! He thought deep and wrote to Chandu.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 13/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,
Before you sleep, offer A&B to His Care and pray that you benefit the most from all the tough challenging times yet to come! The ways of the Lord are inscrutable... just that in retrospect... I find His hand helping me (& you) all through these days & months. When you wish do talk. I shall await your call. I stand by you!
Best regards
M

Chandu did not acknowledge soon. But M had to keep the dialogue on. Keep writing so Chandu will call sometime.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 15/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,
Hope and pray that you and children are keeping normal health. When you get time, do call.
M

4. COUNSELLING

Given the fact that all marital problems are stressful and the fact that many times all reactive decisions are made in the heat of a tiff, it was most advisable to practise such spiritual exercises like pranayama so that one may keep the cool in the most adverse situations. M wrote to Chandu accordingly.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 16/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Here are some of the thoughts I had about Pranayama:

In breathing for health, the chest should be forward during inhalation. We feel a joy when we take a long breath with the chest expanded to the full. Deep intakes of fresh air daily are essential for the maintenance of sound health. An open air life for not less than two hours a day should be compulsory. Pranayama is a method not only of harmonizing the breath but also the senses and the mind. Be seated in a well-ventilated room and take in a deep breath. Then, exhale slowly. This practice should continue for sometime, say, a month. Afterwards, the regular Pranayama with proportion in respiration may be commenced. The technical kind of breathing which, in Yoga, generally goes by the name of Pranayama is done in two stages:

Exhale with a slow and deep breath. Close the right nostril with the right thumb. Inhale slowly through the left nostril. Close the left nostril with the right ring finger and removing the right thumb from the right nostril, exhale very slowly through the right nostril. Then, reverse the process commencing with inhalation through the right nostril. This is the intermediary stage of Pranayama without retention of breath and with only alternate inhalation and exhalation. This practice may be continued for another one month. In the third month, the perfected Pranayama may be started: Inhale, as before, through the left nostril; retain the breath until you repeat your Ishta Mantra once; and then exhale slowly. The proportion of inhalation, retention and exhalation is supposed to be 1:4:2. If you take one second to inhale, you take 4 seconds to retain, and two seconds to exhale. Generally, the counting of this proportion is done by what is called a Matra, which is, roughly, about 3 seconds, or the time taken to chant OM thrice, neither very quickly nor very slowly. You inhale for one Matra, retain for four Matras, and exhale for two Matras. There should be no haste in increasing the time of retention. Whether you are comfortable during retention or not is the test for the duration of retention. There should be no feeling of suffocation in retention. The rule applicable to Asana is valid to Pranayama, also. Sthira and Sukha, easy and comfortable, without strain or pain of any kind, are both Asana and Pranayama to be in a practice which is a slow and gradual progression of the process.

These are from: http://www.swami-krishnananda.org/yoga/yoga_08.html

Kindly practise it - more so when Sri Sri Ravi Shankar or Swami Ramdev have been teaching variations of this to so many people! For them to get over successfully their challenges! May I suggest that it is in these times that you can be truly your own ALONE self... kaivalya bhava. Kindly read the Bhagavad Gita or the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna even as you think through the most meaningful and value oriented responses to the various challenging situations you are in from moment to moment. Strategize based on values. No reactions but only proactive responses! The Atman shines from within - being merely a witness - therefore rise forth in all your energies to bring out the best of the values in you! Remember every such man has a Mother, some sisters and perhaps daughters. Never should you get trapped into the makings of your own emotions! Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih!

With the very best

M

Chandu was a hard working perfectionist to the core. And did what he thought was always right. And he would unforgivingly push his wards to do things right. Suppose one had a spouse who was a bit laid-back and easy going. There is thus all the more possibility of friction in the marital relationship due to differences of opinion on the activities of everyday survival.

When in calm times, Chandu could see the value of Pranayama to ease out his stress.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 16/1 **To:** M

Dear M,

Thank you very much and I sincerely appreciate your time. I will practice Pranayama.

Regards,
Chandu

Chandu called up M. And spoke of his woes. At times he was almost crying. M could feel Chandu's intense daily prayers to Lord Balaji, and his desire to climb up the Thirumala hills with his friend Y, to have His darshan on his next visit. And how, he got Lord Balaji's prasad from an office colleague – who incidentally walked up the hills to have darshan. M too had his similar share too tell Chandu. M desired to join Chandu when he visited Thirumala and expressed so. Chandu shared told M about his friend Y and Y's efforts in helping him on so many occasions. M was glad that Y was fully aware of Chandu's problems and more was doing the needful beyond the call of friendship – almost like doing for a brother! Anything! However the important issues got left out. M shot off an email

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 19/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Yes, in retrospect, I too had the opportunity of having the Lord's Laddu on Fri / Sat having been given the by the Swamiji at the Ashrama here!

Yes, there are a number of things that I wish to share my thoughts with you on – some of them include:

- a) the orthogonal path of vedanta that cuts through the ensnaring transactions of actions and reactions and re-reactions that would seem endless ... in our contemporary living
 - b) 'stockholm syndrome' (i.e., falling in love with the tormentors!)
 - c) What is mapped out for one in your situation over the coming months, years, etc
 - d) The tapas of the climbing visit to the Lords' abode
 - e) coherence, consistency, values and communication even as one battles out the vasanas within so as to get over the hangovers of the past....
- in the true style of annamaya and others...

so,

when you get time, reflect on the above and then do call.

warmest regards

M

PS: Saturday is Swami Vivekananda's birthday.... some of his exhortations might be inspiring to you!

reminding Chandu about it and other matters.

There was no response from Chandu. Perhaps busy. M wrote again.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 21/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

How are you? How are things? Today is Swami vivekananda's birthday.... my prayers to him for your wellbeing and support!

cheers

M

PS: Will this help? <http://www.coeffic.demon.co.uk/index.htm> especially the sections on PAS!

Parental Alienation Syndrome or PAS is an insidious effect in many marital conflicts that affect the children most – their loss is huge and tremendous. PAS is *“the systematic denigration by one parent of the other with the intent of alienating the child against the other parent. The purpose of the alienation is usually to gain or retain custody without the involvement of the father. The alienation usually extends to the father's family and friends as well.”*

PAS damages the child's unprejudiced decision making ability for life! This negative conditioning leads to gender hatred – man hating the male gender as well!

How many of us are really aware of such things?

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 25/1 **To:** Chandu
Dear Chandu,
How are you? How come no response....? More on hearing from you
best regards
M

M became restive - no news again from Chandu. He sent an email. Chandu was busy as usual – inspite of his problems. There was

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 25/1 **To:** M
Dear M,
I am in Boston during this week. I will call you during the weekend. I got an e-mail from S. He got the cs. and I told him to handover the same to you. Please do the needful as per details that I sent you.
Thanks & Regards,
Chandu

nothing outside of him that indicated the storms raging inside him. Chandu wanted M to do some work for him – for his parents. Chandu's respect, love and concern for his parents were tremendous.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 27/1 **To:** Chandu
Dear Chandu,
S delivered the cs, I shall do the needful. Meanwhile, how are things? Here am attending a week long 2.5hr session on Sudarshan Kriya (AOL). Very interesting. Perhaps I shall describe it later. Read the web for the feb 16 /17/18 AOL event in bangalore. (<http://www.artoflivingsilverjubilee.org/>). If you dont get thru with my number, try again. Perhaps on sat night / Sun night or Mon Morning India Time.
Best regards
M
PS: how is work?

M did the needful for Chandu's parents after getting the inputs from S – a friend of Chandu. To get Chandu interested more into stress busting pranayama, M shared with him his active life participating in various spiritual programmes including those from 'Art of Living'. All these programmes focus on the psycho-somatic disorders that many

in our society suffer from. And going through the simple and yet systematic rigours of the exercises gets one off the debilitating problems. If only Chandu can be impressed to get started on one of

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 28/1 **To:** M

Dear M,

Thanks M. I will call you tomorrow (Sunday morning your time).

Thanks & Regards,
Chandu

these, it would be great. Chandu promised to call up.

Most of Chandu's emails were a simple one-liner that did not reflect any deep and continuous emotional suffering in Chandu. Yes, when Chandu was working – he was totally lost in it. And when he returned

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 28/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

After the AOL course (which got over today), a crowd of 15,000 people will be taken to the AOL ashram on kanakapura road tomorrow (sunday). Starting at 9am and until 7pm. Am planning to go along with family. Can I suggest that you call up sunday morning your time (which is sunday night my time) if it is okay with you. Else call me at 7am (sunday) my time.

Best regards
M

'home' all the dark emotional thoughts came back in full force at him. M wrote back. Keeping the up the conversation going. Chandu was prompt! Yes, he was flexible and willing to talk at M's

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 29/1 **To:** M

Dear M,

No problem. I will call you Sunday morning my time.

Thanks & Regards,
Chandu

convenience. That itself was a sign of Chandu's openness to keep talking. And sharing his emotional turmoils.

Emotional repression leads to several problems including depression!

More so when you have to stay put in a 'normal' way even as you are boiling emotionally inside!

M unfortunately had some problems when visiting the Art of Living Ashrama. He had a funky accident and a fracture. That not did deter M from asking key questions on Chandu's daily living. What was he doing for his food? Interesting – he was staying at home! What if he moved out? Will that lessen problems for him? More so given that he now had to interact with the legal folks on his marital conflict. How was that helping him out spend quality time with his kids? How are they taking it? Most importantly, M was sharing thoughts – spiritual thoughts – that came to his mind. Was it being useful? Was he feeling he was getting benefited? Or was he too lost out and uncontrolled in his emotional turmoil. All these were important in understanding how Chandu was faring. For sure, Chandu was repressing his emotions

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 30/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Guess you must be busy.. or perhaps you would have tried.... Anyway... we can always talk later. Just curious: a) where do you eat everyday? Do you cook your food? b) How are things? c) did you reflect hard and deep... if so what wisdom have you gathered? d) how are you spending the 'quality' time with your children....

yesterday, I had been to Sri Sri Ravishankar's big ashram at Kanakapura road... nearly 20,000 people had gathered here for yesterday's satsangha..... It was nice.. except that my son who generally can't stand seeing me saying hello to others pulled me... and I almost lost balance and fell..... resulting in a bone fracture of my little left toe. So am in a cast for the next one month..... Guess more time for me to focus on important readings etc.

Best regards
M

while at work – it looked like everything was going fine there – looked like! And all the emotional repressions hit back when he returned 'home' – home of uncertainty, emptiness and 'hopelessly unjust' in his

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 30/1 **To:** M

Dear M,

Sorry to hear about the small accident. Hope you are feeling better and wish you a speedy recovery. I am fluctuating between the depressing thoughts and philosophical perspective. I am in a depressed mode during the past couple of days and could not call you. I will call you to talk about the questions from your e-mail.

Thanks & Regards,
Chandu

words! The key question was – Chandu – did you reflect hard and deep. The problem was that many in such situations fall into a deeper reverie – of having the negative thoughts repeating again and again rather than doing the needful for cool and calm thinking. Chandu kept up his promise. When he was down, he did not call.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 31/1 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Yes the situation will take you through a feelings roller-coaster of being a victim of maya as well as seeing thru the energy of the atman that gives you the self confidence to face up the reality... (well there is NO other option is it not?) Sure.... thats also a fantastic opportune time to take off on the spiritual mould.... (and taking off on spiritual mould does not mean you will go about your activities ANY LESSER... just that you will do it with a different perspective!).

Cheers for there is a big life ahead!
M

Why? M wondered – is it because M was trying to engage Chandu into a rational dialogue – which demanded that Chandu be calm emotionally for sometime? That is something M needed to think about. Engage Chandu in something that will be interesting and deep! Chandu's 'feelings roller-coaster' was causing deep concern for M. More so when there is this feeling of being a victim – this

5. PRAYING

hopelessness saps away whatever mental or emotional energy one has. But that was also a truly spiritual opportunity to transform oneself. Aadhyatmika Sadhana leverages adverse situations one is in,

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 31/1 **To:** M
Dear M,
Thanks. Hope you are feeling better. I will call you within the next couple of days.
Thanks & Regards,
Chandu

to one's own advantage to progress spiritually! That is something M was pushing Chandu to do. And that gives a great boost in one's confidence. And the subsequent ability to be in control of one's bad situations. Any adversity can be faced as long as one knows one is in control of oneself in how one responds to it rather than how one reacts to it.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 3/2 **To:** Chandu
Dear Chandu,
Am awaiting your call!
M

Chandu responded with his enquiries for M's health. And the promise to call. That was good! Days passed by. M impatiently sent a reminder to Chandu! Simple and direct!
Chandu did call. He recalled out how these testing times were becoming more of a cleansing time – how he was giving up on all

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 5/2 **To:** Chandu
Dear Chandu,
Titiksha or forbearance is the key! And with prayers you will get back to the original path of solid tapas --- after years of having wandered off it!
cheers
M

those bad habits he had picked up during his professional work. It was mild compared to what other consultants indulged in. M was not bothered about it. And how it was difficult putting up with all the contradictions – more so being at the receiving end. He also spoke of

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 13/2 **To:** Chandu
Dear Chandu,
Hope you had a peaceful and sombre weekend..... Yes, the world around you is there and is not there for you! Heart of heart remember that there is only Lord Venkateshwara for you .. and none else!
Best regards
M

his prayers and devotion to Lord Balaji. The conversation was reinvigorating for both M and Chandu. 'Putting up with the shit' was

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 17/2 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

How are you? How are things? Why no communication at all? Why no reply to my email? Do call....

Best regards

M

the key to a less stressful daily life – grow the thick skin in all your marital conflicting situations and have the forbearance. That is what M advised and that is exactly what Chandu did.

M was aware that on weekends Chandu has started to go to the Shiva-Vishnu temple some distance away from the city where he

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 17/2 **To:** M

Dear M,

I was in NY last week & have week long meetings this week. I will call you either today or tomorrow night. The past two weeks have been very depressing, I am at a low point right now. Do I recover? I don't know.

Thanks & Regards,
Chandu

lived. Chandu replied to M's impatient email – asking why there was no communication for some time – more than 10 days. Chandu replied – too busy lost in work and travelling.

Returning to a disrupted or divisive emotional nest after a long hiatus has its impact – the emptiness starts staring at you. It eats away into your professional performance. The brooding on the implications of the various aspects of the future situations adds to the already depressing state of affairs. That is when even the most independent professional has to reach out to his / her circle of close friends, share

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 18/2 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Don't worry - you will recover into a different human being...Do call

Best regards

M

the heart load of problems and how each can be mitigated. If this is not done, the dark cancerous tentacles of depression start eating out into one. This was hitting Chandu in waves. Could he recover from

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 21/2 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Look forward to your call - yes, the impact on your performance is at a deeper level..... which is why you need to loosen up a bit ... and increase tolerance on the performance count due to the rough weather.... But don't worry - if you can ANCHOR your self to SRI BALAJI more firmly.. these storms can be calmly faced without much problems! BTW, my dad did the needful for you yesterday.

cheers
M

the low point? Definitely he could! M sent out an reassuring email. Everytime one goes into the dark low of depressing thoughts, friends

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 21/2 **To:** M

Dear M,

Thanks for doing the needful. I am sorry that your dad had to take the trouble. I was not able to call you during the weekend. I am not able to talk freely from home. The only option is early morning your time (5 PM PST and 6:30 AM). I am very depressed. All the feelings that I suppressed after the irreversible damage caused to myself, are surfacing back and staring right at my face. I do not see much of a point in continuing this way. I am looking forward to the Lord Balaji to free me from the misery, and I have a feeling that I am getting closer to be free.

Thanks again for all your help.
Chandu

should reach out and talk to unload the burden created by these thoughts. M did not get a quick response. Again he reached out. Chandu quickly responded this time. His deep emotional turmoil came to the fore again. M got the key to Chandu's emotional

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 22/2 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Today, my doctor permitted me to remove the cast.

Sure, you will not feel at home - at home anymore! thats okay! Do call me early in the morning too... Lets fix the date! I shall be ready to take your call. Sure, again, the feelings of being cheated and deprived will come to haunt back again and again. For this there is a very fundamental therapy! A spiritual therapy that has helped me regain my new ANCHOR point - and a new worldview that helps me get the earlier situations and experiences in the RIGHT perspective! I wish to share that with you! And sincerely pray to SRI BALAJI that you too should get to ANCHOR your life to a new way of thinking and living! When that happens these bad dreams will disappear and the NEW purpose of life will MAKE YOU NOT DO ANYTHING OTHERWISE! You would rather be very committed to make the best of the new life as YOU ARE NOW HAVING THE LEVERAGE on the emotions which others fully LACK!

Best wishes
M

reasoning. His faith in Lord Balaji was strong. M was very glad about

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 22/2 **To:** M

Dear M,

Thanks for the kind message. I will call you either today (thursday AM your time) or on Friday (Saturday AM your time). My prayers have changed, I stopped asking HIM to help me, I am asking HIM to tell what is next for me. I am emotinally drained.

Chandu

it. This is the key. ANCHOR Chandu around his devotion and that way help him get out of his miseries. M wrote back the next day. M wanted Chandu to always call up – atleast once a week until he got over his problems. Chandu responded still dejected.

Chandu's resigned state of mind was showing – or was it? Atleast sometimes. He was, in his own words, an 'emotionally beaten' man!

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 23/2 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Yes, in our relationship with our INNER most one, we take up various modes of bhakti. And the LORD never tires to tire us out -- repeat -- NEVER TIRES TO TIRE US OUT of our own karma and vasanas! Is that NOT REALLY A BLESSING? Understand it correctly! Yes, your transition from asking Him to help you to have an upper hand in the stupid 'game' imposed on you to a 'resigned' state of 'whats in it for me next?' speaks volumes about the progress you have made! Am sure you have heard of 'sampoorna saranagati' - not everyone has the opportunity of emotionally being very sincere in this 'sampoorna saranagati' - well, just see yourself as SO LUCKY to have an opportunity of TRULY being so! And then the results will unfold of itself - results NOT what you seek... .. but WHAT THE LORD seeks! And if you are true to Him, you will accept it! And REMEMBER THERE IS NO DEFEAT HERE! (The other side - remember - is a far more blind in their robotic behaviour!) Infact, if you could be calm and take off a few moments - you will REALIZE the significance of the situations around you ... and how you can BEST BENEFIT from it! Yes, do it - and IT WILL RE-INVIGORATE you! YES, there is a beautiful saying in the Upanishad: *na karmana, na prajaya, na dhanena (thyagenaika) amrithatva manusha!* - neither by work nor by progeny nor by wealth (but by renunciation alone) is that Supreme *Amrithatva* obtained! You are on the path to it.... and if you need to affectionately distance yourself from your own kids for their own good... well, do so, for destiny is already taking care of them - YOU HAVE so many other kids EAGERLY waiting for you to call them with love! I hope am making sense to you!

Best regards
M

When emotional uncertainties eats away into our being, we become more vulnerable to sickness and depression sets in.

Hurts get exaggerated and the reactions to it vitiates healing!

**Man or Woman, Vedanta seeks to quieten down the emotional brain with orthogonally conscious actions that might make one look like a loser!
Example - forgiving to get over resentment and being detached to emotional provocations!**

There was hope as always. The prayers said it all. The acceptance of the reality. Yes, 'I might have lost this battle, but the war is still on!' attitude. More so for inner transformation! M had to build on this in an appropriately spiritual way. And there were plenty of examples in out our *puranas* and *itihisas*. It was important to convey that there is no notion of defeat here! And when we understand the reality correctly, we can see through the game without getting affected by our negative emotions if any. Having seen and accepted the reality, it is now respond appropriately based on a more broader and deeper philosophy of life. And work on our negative emotions!

Chandu called up. He spoke of his getting bugged by the uncertain and negative possibilities of how the future would unravel, for him, for his kids and for all. M could see the lack of clear thinking there. As well as the fact that the legal drag was overwhelming Chandu. He was most hurt at the shattered state of his reputation as a human being. And the absolutely unjust way in which his home interactions were proceeding forth - 'forbearance' was not easy! More so for an emotionally sensitive person. M had to reach out in a way by which Chandu's current legal compliance requirements became meaningless and yet had to be done fully and precisely - detached clinical precision in going about the demands of one's past karma - no love nor hatred nor disdain for it. Just do it! Because it had to be done! Learning the wisdom along the way.

M also thought of a simple and quick plan for Chandu. To help make the deep life changing transitions! The focus of execution had to be the emotions and how they are handled - not the monies or the possessions - others were anyway helping out with that. But none with Chandu's way of decision making or the basis of his decision making. Was M making an impact? There was not much feedback.

Subject: Re: Greetings

From: M

Date: 25/2

To: Chandu

Dear Chandu,

yes, it was very nice talking to you! I wish I was in the bayer area to help out in which ever way possible! Including perhaps in going along with you to the Shiva-Vishnu temple every saturday and sunday! I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING YOU EVERY WEEKEND! Yes, Chandu, I might be overflowing with my jnana stuff but I strongly think that you have a very positive MISSION cut out for you! Yes, it is so strong and so very impactful in the society at large - that, after many years, people will remember you positively for what you have done to all! And in the long run, what better legacy to leave for ones own children! Something that they should be hearing from the rest of the folks in the world than what they might have been doctored to believe in! And even more wonderful when so many of the beneficiaries claim to be your own children and are proud of it! THINK! Am not talking some nonsense... For the past several years I have been coming across various gentlemen absolutely spiritual and enlightened in their own ways... They lead such wonderful and gentle lives -- after having gone through heart-wrenching transitions in their life! We are NOT alone in these kinds of matters! Infact, these stupidities keep happening all around us every now and then. Just that we have not chosen to open our ears to listen properly!

I was praying to Lord Balaji some hours back and suddenly I remembered something very interesting about HIM. Remember when both of us visited Thirumala last time, I had an unbounded opportunity of being and seeing HIS presence for more than 30 minutes near the sanctum while you went and reported me to the 'lost persons' counter? His Darshan was very symbolic of a very strong message that He has been silently conveying to us ... very patiently and for LONG! Yes, first is His right palm that points to the Holy feet - pointer to 'sampoorna saranagati' as THE way - like how Annamaya sings - and with His left palm, He conveys what my mother used to tell me, that He shall absolutely protect such devotees (that is why the palm is bent in a protectionary mudra). And with the right upper arm He has his divine chakra as a weapon against INJUSTICE while the left upper arm carries a conch - to spread the message that He is THERE - for all at all times! How wonderful was this - how very symbolic! Just that we NEED to have the most sincere and AUTHENTIC bhakti. After having fully surrendered, with NO HATRED in the heart for ANYONE, we shall do that which is needed with clinical precision! HE SHALL TAKE CARE OF THE REST!

For every one in such tight situations, here are some suggestions that will help get one off the maze:

- A) First make a detached assessment of the situation. This leads one to understand one's blindspots as well as the others bullying tactics better. This also leads one to make the right decisions in responding!
-- Never REACT more so never react emotionally! Always RESPOND! And respond calmly!
- B) Given the no-way-out-maze that one might find one self in, re-invent oneself! A new mission of life, a new charter, a new plan of action WHERE all the existing dependencies are meaningless - ORTHOGNOL strategy is the perfect phrase. The "problem is there or is NOT there - it does not matter..." kind of action plan. "Athmano Mokshaartham, jagat hitaya Cha!" For the inner transformation of oneself and the good of the world! {{ This re-invention will mean that you will have to spend a quiet six months away - perhaps you can do it with me here! Set up a protocol by which you will interact with the folks that will be the guardians to your kids! (They will visit you! And not otherwise! Your glory will pull them to you!) }}
- C) MAKE THE TRANSITIONS!
 - c1) One may move out of the current job to another that might not demand travel, will give more free time, allow the development of a committed network of folks, gives more time to do the inner transformation etc. Have this perhaps for some months before one moves to be near one's own people - do the country transition too!
 - c2) Take up a charity mission too - something that you can contribute! Something that where your impact will be great and yet the twisted history is of no consequence!
 - c3) Make the big transitions - bring out the best of your professional training and management skills to the mission at hand! Let the SILENT work do the talking! The impact will do the needful.
- D) Stabilize - yourself, your family relations (& elders), new protocols with ex folks and all!

So many have gone through this rigmarole. Even in the US. On the celebrity front, look at what Jack Welch did when he was discovered with his new love! He talks about 'change before you have to!'. Is that not something that is important here as well?

Also look at what Dr.Larry Brilliant did before being picked up by google recently!
(See <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2006/02/24/MNGKLHE6QJ1.DTL>)
And his guru? See: (www.neemkarolibaba.com)

Look where this little 'I' is pushing you into! Look forward to hearing from you!
best regards and prayers

M

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 26/2 **To:** M

Dear M,

Thanks you for the inspiring message, and the description of LORD Balaji. Yesterday I went to Shiva-Vishnu temple and sat there during the whole day watching Shiva abhishekam for the Maha Sivaratri. I sat through the Rudram, chanted Om Nava Shivaya as many times as I could, participated in the Jyotirlinga Archana, in between participated in Balaji Poolangi seva, returned home tired and peaceful.

During my past 9 years of stay here, this is the first time I spent an entire day in the Shiva-Vishnu temple. Something had to happen to me to be able to do so, and what I am doing now to get closer to the LORD is positive. I am not still 100% detached, I am still bothered by the uncertainty of the future, carrying a lot of mixed feelings and emotions ! Let's see how it goes.

Thanks again and I will talk to you soon.
Chandu

Chandu replied back – in a way that soothing to his emotions and made him feel good about – his visit to the Shiva Vishnu Temple! Good that he was spending time making his emotional anchoring deep. M wrote back asking of a certain coincidence and seeking Chandu's response to it. And telling Chandu, my success is in helping you out! Otherwise I have failed!

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 27/2 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Very happy to see this email from you! Did you visit Shiva-Vishnu temple on Saturday? Really nice to hear that you spent the ENTIRE DAY THERE - IN TOTAL ANONYMITY AND IN TOTAL ABSORBTION! How did you spend your SHIVARATRI DAY? Did you again visit Shiva-Vishnu temple and partook of the activities there? Here I was in the Ashrama - student's hostel for the Shivaratri. About 330 am (early monday hours) I remembered and prayed for you! I thought perhaps at that time you might have been in the temple (at 2pm sunday your time) perhaps... eating prasadam alone in the back side of the temple! Do confirm what where you doing at 2pm sunday your time!

Yes, I can perhaps write inspiring -- but I know I am failing.....if I have not helped you get over to a more detached state of MIND!

Best regards
M

Chandu responded back with precision! Pointing out the 24 hour gap between what M did at 330am versus Chandu's 2pm standing in the prasadam queue. But the unconscious emotional grind within was telling on Chandu. The tiredness, the drift, the evening prayer said it all. It was reassuring to read Chandu offering to talk soon.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 27/2 **To:** M

Dear M,

I was in Shiva-Vishnu temple on Saturday PST, which is Sunday your time. At 2:00 PM Saturday, that is 3:30 AM Sunday, I was actually in a line to get prasadam (lemon rice and curd rice), and got back in to the temple for the 3:30 PM abhishekam. Yesterday (Sunday PST), I was very tired and continuously slept with breaks in between. Finally got up and prayed in the evening at around 4 PM.

I will talk to you soon.
Thanks and regards
Chandu

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 6/3 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

The weekend has gone by.... how are you and how was your visit to the Shiva-Vishnu temple....
I did not get to hear from you

Best regards
M

The week went by without any news from Chandu! M wrote off an one-liner reminding Chandu of his promise to call!

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 6/3 **To:** M

Dear M,

I visited Shiva-Vishnu temple yesterday (Sunday) and focused on Balaji's left palm pointing to HIS feet. I am still in a depressed state. The only time I could have called you is very early morning your time, and I did not want to disturb. I will try during this week.

Thanks & regards
Chandu

Chandu replied back. In brief his depressing emotions were still active. And he continued to derive solace visiting the temple! Good. And then there was his thoughts on devotion to the Lord! Specifically the concept of 'Saranaagati', the devotees cry to the Lord to help out! Wonderful. The negative emotions raging within Chandu worried M.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 7/3 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Very good! It is very nice to read that you focussed on the (diamond studded) left palm pointing to His feet. Most if not all are so immersed in this Mahamaya that we forget the palm (and its significance) and instead focus on the diamond studded glove so to speak! So I had asked my mom as to why all this glitz and glamour for the Lord, if at the end of the day, Mahamaya makes it meaningless; as 'precious' diamonds are nothing but some odd form of carbon which I can get immediately by just burning a matchstick and seeing the charred wooden butt or our bandams become so treacherous that we cannot even think of living -- for all the trust that we have been nurturing in them... or for that matter .. etc etc.

My mom shared with me this secret: Humans are so immersed in the play of mahamaya that even if the Lord were to come and stand by your side, you would still be conceited to handle Him rough and tough for all the sober qualities that He might have (look at how we pityingly handle a brahmana when it comes to his sophistication and worldly decision making). So the big question that some saints thought through was - how to convey to the common human that the Lord can help out in times of troubles :: He was idolized in that posture of indicating the TIMELESS message of 'saranaagati'. But the human mind filled with so much folly would not care to know this message ... it has happened repeatedly and has been lost! Hence the sugar coating - for the worldly lot, the palm (and other aspects of the dressing finery) was covered by that which the humans COVET very much! So much so that they may unconsciously imbibe that though there is something odd, they can still be at home!

And then when the trouble strikes - either karma catches up or karma tests us, it is so much more to be at home for one's ego with the 'saranaagati' message! No doubt the maha mantra then is 'Ventakaramana Sankataharana!' Am sure your mom would have shared this with you too - atleast some variant of it.

Before you go to Shiva-Vishnu this weekend, kindly read up this email message so that you can RELISH His darshan even more! Do call - it does not matter how early it is for me. Even 445am is fine by me!

Best wishes
M

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 7/3 **To:** M

Dear M,

Thanks once again for the wonderful message, and Thank you for directing me to the reassuring left palm of the LORD. I am on my way to NY for a meeting and I will be back tomorrow midnight local time. I will try and call you on Thursday evening PST and Friday morning IST.

Thanks & regards
Chandu

Chandu replied back promptly – happy to hear more about what he was doing in the Temple! So, Chandu will call!

Intuition.
The reading of the emotional connectedness that makes one take appropriate responses!
Or
atleast regret for not having done the needful!

M did not hear for a few days. Not knowing what is happening with Chandu, before sleeping on late Friday night, M sent out an SMS message composed intuitively with whatever came off his mind – M imagined Chandu driving somewhere – perhaps tense! M hoped this will soothen Chandu's mind. It was in a way a random act!

When M was in the ashrama next day morning, Chandu called up. He thanked M for the SMS and said how it brought him back home! Yes, Chandu was deeply disturbed and was driving to the Big Bridge! To jump off it? Oh my God! M counseled Chandu with strong anecdotes from the lives of great saints on how they handled tough situations. Chandu gave reassuring responses! More so on how he intended to handle the immediate future! More so the upcoming legal hearings on Monday. Good! Chandu's intense prayer to God was helping him!

6. TRANSITION

M had written an article on Vedanta education. He passed it on to Chandu. And kept the email conversation going...

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 11/3 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

I know you are very busy. And I know that you will really not have the time. But here is the article....
I look forward to your feedback and inputs.

Best regards
M

Promptly the next day, M got a nice message! Chandu valued M's friendship and his reaching out! Good! M felt reassured. Chandu was not saying anything otherwise.

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** Chandu **Date:** 12/3 **To:** M

Dear M,

Thanks for the article. I just browsed through, and will read it in detail.

(proud to be your friend).
Thanks & regards
Chandu

Still M kept sending SMSs now. Whenever he had something intuitive come up in his mind, though terse, he send it. And then sent a follow up email explaining the brief SMSs. The context was important too.

Subject: Re: Greetings

From: M

Date: 14/3

To: Chandu

Dear Chandu,

I am very thankful to Lord Balaji for hearing from you two days back. Yes, my SMS "Drive carefully. Pray very deeply. Balaji protects true Sharanaagatins. Yes, do so, be in peace and relax!" was sent after due prayers before I went to bed at 1230am. And like I said, we never know how we are just instruments in the hands of the Lord! How did I know that you were driving to the Bridge? Yes, these are the toughest moments in life... and it is then that the toughest philosophy gets spoken deeply into our minds and brains! Just like in Bhagavad Gita! I don't think the message of Gita would have got into Arjuna's head (for all his greatness) but for the crises situations in the midst of the Mahabharata war. And each one of us have it in us as well! And look at the coincidence - when you called up - I was in the Ashrama doing japa/dhyana!

And so was my next SMS on Monday morning your time. I was sitting in prayers in my home (930pm). Something in me wrote up: "Be a saakshi in this unjust leela of Mahamaya! It is happening so that you can get fully fired up. So you can open up your (inner) Shiva's 3rd eye and dedicate your life to wiping this adharma around you! Your sacrifices today is an arpanam to Lord Balaji. He is taking care of you. Prayers and Best wishes!" Am sure you were calmly looking at whatever the proceedings were and taken up the challenges that destiny has imposed on you with a calmness and inner strength obtained from your prayers to Lord Balaji.

And ofcourse you came back tired and alone, dazed and emotionally drained at the days proceedings and crashed into the bed. Early in the morning I fingered out another sms again another spontaneous thought about: " Lord Balaji helped you pursue your dreams and turn them into realities (from a village to global hopping as a CTO). He then made these dreams crumble, blessing you to be a saakshi of the true realities. And He will make you a blessed instrument in wiping out adharma around you. Let us truly wakeup to this reality. Uthishtatha Jaagratha! Do call!". What you have been through and more importantly having the divine counsel along to face these realities is what Vedanta calls true blessings (Not all, in similar circumstances are blessed to have the divine counsel... most succumb to the emotional trauma!). The sages of vedanta called out to all - *Uthishtatha jaagratah! Praapya varaanibodhatha!* Getup! Wakeup! Avail of the wisdom.... or like Swami Vivekananda puts it: "Awake! Arise! Stop not till the goal is reached!".

Dear Chandu, reading and re-reading this up.... frankly I am myself getting inspired to put into more practice what comes off my mind this way! I hope and pray you will have the new punarjanma to see life in all its gory realities, accept it the vedantic way, pray to Lord Balaji for all the strength like what Annamaya did, and proceed forth...

Do call - I wish to talk to you!

Once again prayers and best wishes

M

There was no response from Chandu! M was interested in knowing how Chandu handled it all. Some days went by... Again M wrote another email. Hoping that Chandu was peaceful within now...

Subject: Re: Greetings

From: M

Date: 16/3

To: Chandu

Dear Chandu,

Hope and pray that all is calm on all your battle fronts... I thought you would call..... anyhow, with Lord Balaji's grace I hope to hear you sometime in the near future!

warm and best wishes

M

M did not get to hear. Had anything otherwise happened? God knows why, but M did casually browse the internet edition of the local newspaper published in the region where Chandu lived. There

was nothing there! Good, thought M. It was stupid of him to have done that. Or was it? Meanwhile M got a bountiful Thirumala Laddu prasad from a friend who had visited Thirumala a few days earlier! As though it was meaningful, M was happy about it!

A few more days later, M was visiting his doctor for a minor health problem. And heard from the grapevine something vague that Chandu was no more! That was shocking! Immediately M came back home, fired up another email hoping against hope...

Subject: Re: Greetings **From:** M **Date:** 22/3 **To:** Chandu

Dear Chandu,

I was praying for you! Hope & pray everything is fine. Can you give me a call ASAP? I wish to talk to you.

Warmest regards
M

He got in touch with some of Chandu's friends. They had not heard any such thing – it was shocking to them as well. And they promised to call up friends in the US and confirm the situation.

Later they called back to tell M that indeed Chandu was no more!

7. POST-MORTEM

Chandu was found unnaturally dead at his home on Monday the 13th.

Does following the precepts of Vedanta or using these ideas to counsel the emotionally hit succeed?

This story ends in a tragedy! Does that mean the M's efforts in reaching out to Chandu failed?

More so given all the 'high-flying concepts' that mere mortals are not used to?

Vedanta posits that Destiny and Karma will unravel in their own ways! While that is true, the corollary is also true – the individual shall fully strive wholeheartedly. And, with full faith in the inscrutable ways of the Lord, accept the results whatever it be!

M stared woefully at the email that he sent on the 14th India time! Chandu would have seen the 2nd SMS. The last SMS sent was futile – too late! If Chandu had indeed been blessed with the Divine Counsel, he wouldn't have succumbed to the emotional trauma he underwent. The Lord's ways are inscrutable! M could only pray for Chandu and the family members he left behind – more so for the deepest emotional healing that they needed most!

Blaming anyone for anything does not get one anywhere! Forgiveness of the past transgressions to get emotional relief from the resentments; accepting the reality of how negative emotions play havoc and sincere prayers to God to get over them is the only way!

What triggered Chandu to do this rash act? More so, after he had spoken re-assuringly to M. And sent a nice reply to M for the Vedanta article that M had authored? More so when he was peacefully living together with his family, patiently putting up with all the problems? Cooking everyday for his kids (and wife). Attending to his children's needs. etc. He had even shared with M the positive conversations he had had with his wife, of his Shiva Vishnu temple visits, how he happened to get Lord Balaji's prasad at his office one day,... and how his wife shared with him that her friends too greatly recommended to her that praying to Lord Balaji might lessen her woes and that she too got the Thirumala prasad that day!

The answer to this question will remain an eternal mystery!

Vedanta Family Foundation is a non-profit based in Bangalore India, dedicated to sharing the best of the wisdom of Vedanta with interested families around the world to help solve their immediate and down-to-earth problems.

Vedanta Family Foundation strongly recommends that all medical situations be handled by qualified professionals. And their medical advice shall override any views shared herewith.

Vedanta Family Foundation truly works on the basis of the gender neutral nature of Vedantic Wisdom. As much as gentle Menfolk, adorable women get to suffer silently as well. Their plight is not that apparent given the societal biases stereotyping women which the manipulative exploit

Given that all human beings have the primitive brain – the seat of emotions, there shall be episodic joy and happiness as well as suffering and misery. Vedanta Family Foundation seeks to reach out to them and help them out of their entanglements.

Vedanta Family Foundation will appreciate your feedback and inputs. And your help in carrying these messages to whoever can be helped.

www.Vedanta-Family.org

© 2006
Vedanta Family Foundation
Bangalore, India
All Rights Reserved

M organized a condolence meeting – a few good close friends of Chandu came by. Everyone spoke of their treasured moments of friendship with Chandu. There was a lot of regret at the sad turn of events. Those that could really help Chandu were far away - in India! All signed the condolence message for the bereaved families. Later, in silence, everyone went their way! With more wisdom to reach out and help all such friends in need... friends like Chandu!

Condolence Message

We, the undersigned, express our deepest condolences on the untimely and sudden demise of Sri Chandu, of the USA, on 13 March. We share the deep sense of sorrow with Master A, Master B and Mrs C along with his Parents, brother and sisters.

Sri Chandu was a top professional with a deep sense of commitment and work ethic that have deeply impressed each one of his colleagues and friends. In so many ways, we recall our conversations, meetings and projects (professional and personal) done with him over the years – each speak of one of the finest of the humans we have interacted with. A soft and firm speaker, he was a great conversationalist with some of us even as he shared his insights and suggestions on the professional front. From M'pur, a small village in southern India, to being part of the top technological elite in the US and globe trotting as a divisional technology guru of a MNC, Chandu made great strides in life. He kept in touch with all his friends that he made along the way. And in many ways, our friendship with Chandu has enriched our lives – significantly.

We convey our deepest feelings of care and hope for Master A, Master B and Mrs. C. The children will miss him tremendously and for them, for life none shall be able to stand tall as their father – he loved them to the core. We hope and pray for the emotional and spiritual healing in the family. We hope and pray for that blessing that will keep the positive values and larger memorable legacy of Chandu as an integral part of the children's lives.

We convey our deepest feelings of sympathy to the elderly Parents, brothers and the sisters of Chandu. We sincerely appreciate his deep sense of respect, care for and commitment to his parents over the years. We hope and pray for their continued good health and well being.

We sincerely hope to reach out to those, amongst our friends and in the communities that we live in, who in the best of their professional and personal lives, suddenly face difficult life situations and ill-health. We hope to truly convey that there are folks to share with and care for as well as to go through that difficult yet spiritually strengthening process of healing so that life may be richly lived to the full – for oneself and for our dear ones. And in true spirit of what Chandu battled out in the last weeks and days of his life.

We are proud to have been his friends and to have worked as professionals alongside with him.