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Muruganar In His Own Words – A Journey of Devotion, Surrender and Realisation – II by Hari Moorthy

Sri Muruganar, due to his absolute surrender to his guru Sri Ramana Maharshi, was able to understand with utmost clarity Sri Bhagavan's teachings and to experience and be absorbed in the Reality of the undying, all-pervading Self. By Sri Bhagavan's grace, Muruganar recorded the nectarine words that flowed from the lips of his Master in pristine Tamil poems, which bequeaths to all seekers an infallible guide to self-surrender and Self realization. Sri Hari Moorthy's work, Muruganar In His Own Words, recently published by Sri Ramanasramam, contains many of these gems of wisdom. We present here an excerpt from the section titled Muruganar's Practical Guidance.

Through his poetry, Muruganar imparts practical advice to sincere seekers, offering valuable guidance on their spiritual journey. His verses serve as a boundless source of spiritual wealth, allowing any seeker to mine unlimited treasures for their path. Covering the importance of Self-enquiry, as well as the nuances of surrender and devotion, Muruganar's insights and the clarity of his expression create a rich reservoir of teachings that accompany the journey toward realization, making it less solitary.

His poetry acts as the best motivation for the weary, a wonderful medicine for the emotionally distressed, a devotional antidote to pessimistic moments, a clairvoyant for closed minds, a caring love for the angered, and compassion for the sinners. Muruganar's verses are multifaceted tools, addressing various facets of the human experience on the spiritual path, providing solace, inspiration, and spiritual insights.

In contemplating Muruganar's verses, one can discern a comprehensive manual for seekers, covering diverse topics such as the nature of the Self, the significance of inner silence, and the importance of devotion. Each poem is like a seed with the potential to blossom even the most closed heart,

illuminating the darkest corners of the inner recesses. Indeed, the abundance of spiritual guidance embedded in Muruganar's poetry suggests the potential for a dedicated book that systematically explores and expounds upon his teachings. Such a book could serve as a valuable companion for seekers, offering insights, practical advice, and timeless wisdom distilled from the poetic expressions of Muruganar's devotion to Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. Readers may consider this section merely a glimpse into the immense treasures that reside within his verses as it contains only a few verses selected from the vast ocean of Muruganar's poetic wealth.

In emphasizing the significance of Self-enquiry, Muruganar asserts that it is the sole path to pursue for attaining perfect happiness and bliss.¹

உய்யவே வேண்டுவோர் ஊக்கமா உள்ளத்திற்
செய்யவே தக்க சிவயோக சாதனையைத்
தொய்ய விடாதுதினந் தோறும் மகிழ்ச்சிபொங்க
ஐய னருளைமுன்னிட் டாற்றக் கடவரே.

Meaning: Devotees who seek to live eternally should enthusiastically engage in the most important

sadhana: the pursuit of the Self within one's heart through the practice of Self-enquiry, Siva Yoga. They should do so without interruption, pursuing it daily with overflowing happiness, guided by the blessings and Grace of our Lord Bhagavan.

What is the most practical way to attain wisdom? According to Muruganar, it is to lead a dispassionate life without interfering with the unfolding activities of the world.²

நடக்குமா றெல்லா நடக்கவே நோக்கி
நடக்குமம் மோனமே ஞானம் – நடுக்கட்
குறுக்குச்சா லோட்டுங் குறும்புமனச் சேட்டை
யறக்கடிந்து வாழ்த லறிவு.

Meaning: Wisdom lies in maintaining silence while patiently observing the unfolding of events in the world. Interfering with worldly activities stems from the restlessness of the mind. True wisdom is found in living with tranquility.

Furthermore, he elaborates on how to lead a life without experiencing pain from anything in another verse.³

ஒன்றிலுந் துன்பம் உழவாமைக் கேதுவா
என்றென்றும் நல்லோர்க் கியல்பா விருக்குநலன்
அன்றென் றெதையுந்தா மன்றா தெவற்றையுமே
நன்றுநன் றென்று நடக்குமனப் பான்மையே.

Meaning: Great individuals harbor no hatred towards anything. Even amid circumstances that may seemingly pose challenges, they accept and maintain a mindset that perceives inherent goodness. Such individuals do not experience pain; rather, they embrace happiness.

While encouraging his devotees to engage in sadhana, Muruganar provides substantial assurance regarding what happens in case they encounter limitations in their practice in the following verse.⁴

தம்மால் இயன்றவரை சாதனைதாஞ் செய்தாரேல்
தம்மால் இயலா ததைத்தம்மான் சாதிப்பான்
தம்மால் இயன்றதுமே தாஞ்செய்யத் தப்பினரேல்
தம்மான் அருளுக்கோர் சற்றுந் தவறின்றே.

Meaning: When devotees engage in sadhana to the best of their abilities, our Lord will accomplish for them what they cannot achieve on their own.

Even if devotees cannot complete what is within their reach, there is no shortage of His grace, and He will not regard their inability to finish as a mistake. The second sentence is a very important assurance. He doesn't penalize anyone for not completing what is possible in one's sadhana. His grace will continue to be available! However, Muruganar cautions us against becoming attached to pride and fame.⁵

வீண்பெருமை கொண்டு விசைந்தெழுந்து வீழாதீர்
காண்பறியா மேலோர் கதைநீர் அறிவீரே
மாண்பதவாழ் வான மகத்துவஞ்சேர் தன்னியலைக்
காண்பவரார் கர்த்த நருட்கண்காட் டாவிடிலே.

Meaning: Do not stumble by attaching yourself to useless pride and fame. Do you not know the story of Brahma and Vishnu, who couldn't perceive the entirety of the column of light that radiated as Arunachala? Who can behold the glorious Self, which bestows all wealth, without the gracious eyes of the ordainer revealing the truth? To counter the distracting thoughts of pride and fame, Muruganar advises continuous meditation, as expressed in the following verse⁶ presented in the enchanting form of Kural Venba. Additionally, this meditation involves steadfastly holding the holy feet of the Lord in one's heart.

அண்ண லருட்சே வடியை மகிழ்கூர
வெண்ணுவார்க் கில்லை யிடர்.

Meaning: Those who joyfully contemplate the rubicund feet of the Lord experience no distress. This succinct verse encapsulates all the guidance that a sincere spiritual seeker would ever need in any situation. Worries and distress only arise for a mind that is already agitated. The agitation of the mind manifests as worries, distracting one from their natural state of happiness. The surest way to find solace at the level of the mind is to unburden any worries at the feet of the Lord. Contemplating the feet of the Lord keeps the mind calm, preventing agitation and dispelling worries. Muruganar emphasizes this trust in the feet of the Lord in another verse.⁷

கழற்கே யடிமைசெய்யக் கற்றலே கல்விப்
பழக்கமா நாளும் பயில்க – ஒழுக்கம்
பலவற் றுளஞ்சிறந்த பத்தியாற் பாச

மலமற் றொழியும் மனத்து.

Meaning: To learn to be subservient to the golden feet of the Lord is the true education. This education should be learned and practiced always through devotion, which is the most virtuous quality one can possess. Devotion has the power to purify the mind from impurities that bind it to material things.

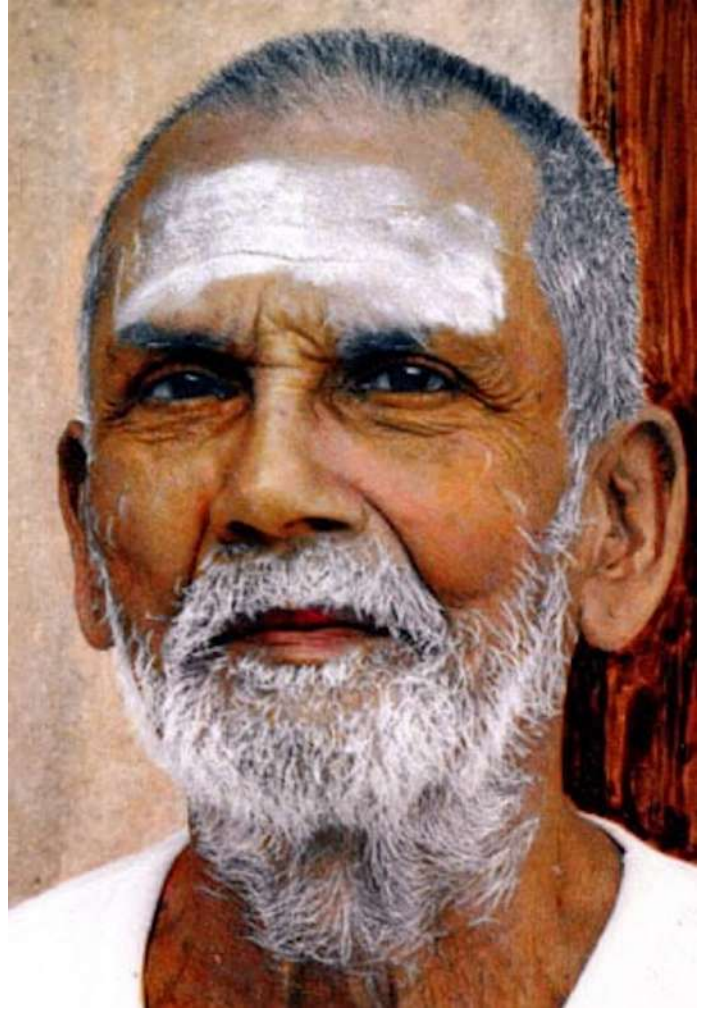
Muruganar offers another practical method, association with the wise, to nurture devotion in one's heart and consistently focus one's thoughts on the feet of the Lord.⁸

மனத்திற் கலக்கமற மாற்றும் பெரியோ
ரினத்திற் பயில்வதே யின்பம் – முனைத்துக்
கலங்குமகங் காரக் கருத்தற் றொழிய
நலங்கிளர்மெய்ஞ் ஞானந் தரும்.

Meaning: Being in the company of the wise, the mind becomes clear as it unburdens itself of confusions. This, indeed, is true happiness. Engaging in the daily struggles of life, facing all its tribulations, the ego's form gets crushed through this association, ultimately bestowing the greatest boon – wisdom.

Muruganar's poetry is akin to an endless ocean of honey. Just as a single dip and sip from even a small portion of his verses can be likened to extracting an ounce of honey from this vast ocean, it has the transformative power to widen the aperture of a narrow mind. The sweetness of his verses serves as an elixir that not only quenches the thirst for spiritual wisdom but also opens the gates of understanding of the Self, allowing the teachings of Bhagavan Ramana to flow in and illuminate the seeker's consciousness. Muruganar's poetic expressions waft through the consciousness like a gentle southern breeze, tenderly caressing and dispelling any stress or burden one might carry.

On various occasions, Muruganar offered detailed explanations for some of the poems composed by Bhagavan. Muruganar's unique qualifications for writing these expositions stem not only from his Tamil scholarship but also from being one of the foremost devotees of Bhagavan who embraced the path of Self-enquiry and Self-surrender. His explanations emanate from a place of devotion, surrender, and realization.



Sri Muruganar

1. Verse number 141 in *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, Volume 8.
2. Verse number 879 in *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, Volume 8.
3. Verse number 165 in *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, Volume 8.
4. Verse number 192 in *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, Volume 8.
5. Verse number 644 in *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, Volume 8.
6. Verse number 284 in *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, Volume 8.
7. Verse number 180 in *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, Volume 7.
8. Verse number 338 in *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham*, Volume 7.

Advent of Sri Ramana Maharshi at Arunachala

by Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata

Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata, the founder of Arunachala Ashrama, was entirely absorbed during his every waking hour in the thought of his guru Sri Ramana Maharshi. He stated often that he saw Sri Bhagavan as clearly as one sees the sun, and it is evident from his prolific devotional writings that this was indeed true. As we approach the 128th anniversary of Sri Bhagavan's arrival at Arunachala on Sept. 1, 1896, we would like to share this prayer manuscript that was written on Aug. 30, 1974, at Arunachala Ashrama in Nova Scotia Canada, which reflects the heartfelt longing of this great devotee and the grace granted to him by Sri Bhagavan. This excerpt is from the book titled In Search of Self, published by Arunachala Ashrama.

From the moment Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi came into my Heart, identified as the Silent Sage of the Holy Hill of the Beacon Light, I have not been the same. My life underwent such a volcanic change on the day I found myself face to face with my Master and Lord, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, that I wished to fly to His Lotus Feet on the southern slopes of the Beacon Light without the least delay. The mountains of doubt, desire, and delusion were pulverized at the mere sight of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, who has always been holding me by the hand, guiding my life, lighting my path, and leading me to His Supreme Abode in the innermost recesses of my Heart, whence none ever returns to the cycle of births and deaths. At the very first sight I knew that He had claimed me as His own and the long march to the Self had ended at His Lotus Feet. All the puzzles, problems and riddles of human life found their answer in the Silent Sage of the Holy Arunachala Mountain.

How could I ever describe the indescribable peace and happiness that flooded the lotus of my Heart and made me one with the Supreme Self? Darjeeling, the queen of the hill stations in the Himalayas, occupies the most honored and privileged place in my life where all my aspirations, longings, yearnings and

dreams were fulfilled, and the long march for the realization of the Self coalesced in Bhagavan Sri Ramana Arunachala Dakshinamurty Sachchidananda Parabrahman. This village boy came home to the Silent Sage of the Holy Hill of the Beacon Light and had no doubt that the purpose of his being born in this phenomenal existence was to do nothing but carry out all the commands, commissions, and mandates of his Master and Lord, Sri Arunachaleshwara Shiva Bhagavan Sri Ramana Guru. The unceasing abidance in the Self in the Heart was the mission cut out for him for the remaining days of his earthly existence.

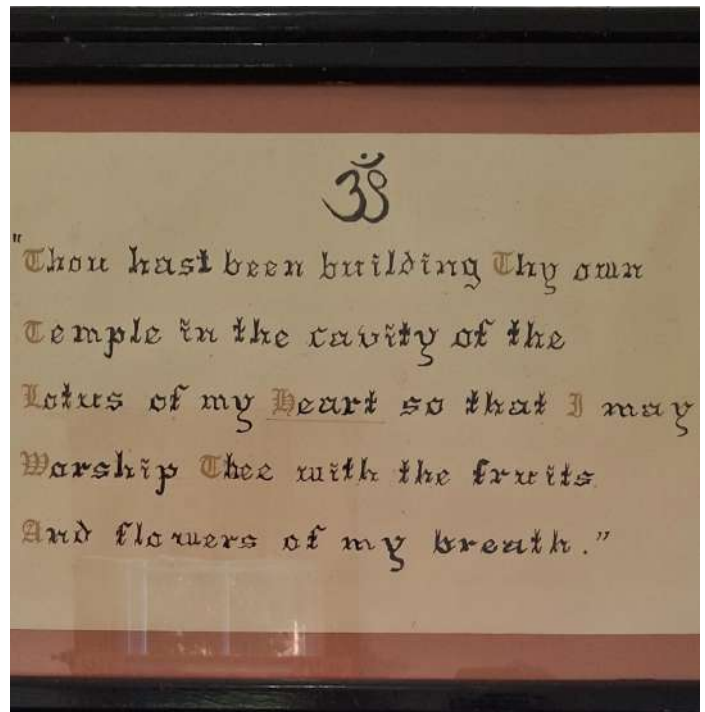
Since the earliest years of my childhood, I have been seized with the love and affection for the complete and total abidance in the Self in the cavity of my Heart. Day and night I aspired for the day when I shall be plunged into the ocean of peace and happiness. So, the moment I caught sight of Sri Ramana Arunachala Bhagavan's name and form, I knew it for certain that He was there for the realization of my dream and no time should be wasted in chasing the shadows of desire, delusion, ego and ignorance in the midst of sense objects. The age-old relationship of Father and Son was revived and I found my destiny linked with Him once and for all. The smoldering fire of dispassion, discrimination, devotion, dedication, renunciation, love and affection began to blaze brighter and brighter within the innermost recesses of my Heart and I didn't want a moment's rest without sitting at His Lotus Feet on the southern slopes of the Holy Hill of the Beacon Light where Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi abided in the body for the benefit of mankind. But, He didn't want me to get stuck with body identification. That is why I was sent out into the wide world to work out my latencies before returning to Him forever. The Silent Sage of the Holy Hill of the Beacon Light is ever standing before me, showering His infinite grace and mercy upon me, and I trudge along, trudge along, towards the goal of the unceasing japa of OM NAMO BHAGAVATE SRI RAMANA within the cave of my Heart. My Heart is ever throbbing and pulsating with the unceasing remembrance of His name and there is nothing for me to do but to cling to His Lotus Feet,

abide in Him, and let His will be done.

September First, Tuesday morning of 1896, is the gleaming, glowing, shining and dazzling day for me when the world was blessed and graced with the advent of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. Out of all the important and memorable days in the life of the Silent Sage Ramana, First September is the dazzling sun which reminds me that I must abide in Him without the least reservation and let His will be done. How I like to pour out my Heart in words and sentences so that I could express the innermost thoughts of my central being. The very scene of His advent at Arunachala melts me into the ocean of peace and happiness.

The surging Ganga of Bhagavan Sri Arunachaleshwara Shiva Sri Ramana Sadguru is flowing unceasingly within the cavity of the lotus of my Heart. The creation of movements and manifestations has become merged in Him, once and for all. The life-long dream of taking up the staff of kindness and compassion has been fully realized and there is now nothing else for me to do but to march along towards the shining peaks of the Holy Hill of the Beacon Light and cross the sea of transmigration with His name on the tip of my tongue. All paths to realization of the Self have become merged in His direct path of Self-Enquiry of "Who Am I?" With every breath, I call on Him in the cave of my Heart.

Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi incarnated in the world for the sake of simplifying the path of complete and total inherence in the innermost recesses of the Heart without entanglement in the myriad teachings and techniques. He advises us to return to the Source in the cavity of the Lotus of the Heart with the help of Self-Enquiry of "Who Am I?" or the quest for the Self in the Heart with the help of each and every exhalation and inhalation of the breath, or the search for the Source of the sound in order to abide therein. Anyone, anywhere, can take up the path of Self-Enquiry of "Who Am I?" and abide in the Self of peace and happiness. It is for the realization of the Self that Sri Bhagavan enjoins each and every aspirant to dive deeper into the cavity of the Heart while muttering the mantra with each and every out-flow and in-flow of the breath. There has never been any doubt in my mind that with the one-pointed attention to the Source of either the sound or



"Thou hast been building Thy own temple in the cavity of the Lotus of my Heart so that I may Worship Thee with the fruits and flowers of my breath." – Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata

breath, one can easily return to the Self gleaming and glowing unceasingly with the Heart.

From the early morning of September First, 1896, till 8:47 p.m. on Friday evening, April Fourteenth, 1950, Bhagavan Sri Ramana tenanted the body of the Holy Hill of the Beacon Light and never for a second did He stir out of the confines of the Holy Arunachala Mountain. He taught mostly by silence like the primeval teacher Lord Dakshinamurty Sadashiva and the doubts and delusions of all aspirants, searchers, seekers, devotees, and disciples were removed. Although Sri Bhagavan taught with words too, His most potent teaching has always been by silence and he incarnated to simplify the path of practice for aspirants the world over for all time. He is the Self, the Supreme Self, shining gleaming, and glowing as "I-I" in the cave of the Heart. Anyone, anytime and anywhere who will turn to Him with firm faith and open Heart will find to his or her surprise that Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi solves all the problems and drives away the darkness of ego and ignorance from the Heart.

All those who are thirsting for the eternal water of peace, bliss and happiness will have to leave behind

the creation of names and forms and turn within to the widest expanse of their innermost being and become liberated from the ever-rotating cycle of births and deaths. Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi says that the true and real happiness is within the Heart and everyone will have to rise above the limitations of the movement and manifestation and merge himself into the widest expanse of the Self. So long as the mind is wandering in the phenomenal existence for peace and happiness, it is chasing shadows. It is certain that they will never be captured. Hence, the person shall have to turn his back on the forces of ego and ignorance and merge himself in the Self, nothing but the Self, and drink deeper and deeper in the nectar of being, consciousness and bliss of the Supreme Self.

My Heart is throbbing and pulsating at the mere remembrance of the effulgent radiant, resplendent and shining Self, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Guru. How I

would like to flood the ten corners of the globe with the chanting and recitation of Arunachala Shiva, Arunachala Shiva! Bhagavan is the indweller of my Heart and nothing is hidden from Him. He knows full well that His loving son and humble servitor Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata has all along been striving strenuously to unfurl His banner in the cavity of the lotus of his Heart and without His infinite grace and mercy, this mission will never be completed. Hence, there is no other option for me but to do my best to abide in the Self, nothing but the Self, in the cave of the lotus of my Heart, and cross the sea of transmigration. Sri Bhagavan is the substratum behind all movements and manifestations in this world. Day and night I am repeating His name with each and every exhalation and inhalation of my breath, and I become merged in the Holy Arunachala Hill.

Notes from the North Mountain

For devotees of Sri Ramana Maharshi, a visit to the Holy Hill of Arunachala and Sri Ramanasramam is a divine, inspiring experience. How can it be otherwise? When one steps into that sacred environment, Sri Bhagavan's presence is so palpable that one is certain that his continuing guidance is always there.

And thankfully, the same is true for devotees who cannot themselves, for various reasons, undertake the journey to Arunachala. For example, when a devotee asked Sri Bhagavan if he ever intended to go to America, he replied, "America is just where India is (*i.e.* in the plane of thought)."

It is no wonder then that Sri Bhagavan's devotees, wherever they may be, feel that by his grace, the constraints of time and space can be transcended and that the ever-shining wisdom, kindness and supreme love that manifested as the *jnana-guru* at Arunachala can even now, in the midst of every day life, be experienced and lived as the eternal radiance shining as 'I am I' in the heart.

As Sri Bhagavan kindly reminds us, "Mental contact is the best." This encouragement given to us by the Sage of Arunachala allows devotees who are geographically distant from his shrine to be assured



The North Mountain behind the Nova Scotia Ashrama, with its wreath of vibhuti (sacred ash).

that his grace is always present, merely by thinking of him. Indeed, as he has sung when describing the glory of Arunachala, Self-realization is possible for those who not only behold the Holy Hill, but also for those who contemplate it from afar. (*Arunachala Mahatmyam*, v. 5)

When asked by one devotee if proximity to the guru was necessary, Sri Bhagavan replied: “Do you mean physical proximity? What is the good of it? The mind alone matters. The mind must be contacted. Satsang will make the mind sink into the Heart. Such association is both mental and physical. The extremely visible being of the guru pushes the mind inward. He is also in the Heart of the seeker and so draws the latter’s inward-bent mind into the Heart.” In this manner, Sri Bhagavan assures us that wherever

and whenever we think of him, his grace is available to the sincere seeker. He leads us on to the resting place of all, the heart. He reminds us that when we are absorbed into the Self, the limitations of the individual personality are dropped by the wayside, and Sri Arunachala Shiva then blazes forth, swallowing up everything. “Dazzling Sun that swallowest up all the universe in Thy rays, open the lotus of my heart, I pray, O Arunachala!” (*Arunachala Akshara Mana Malai* v. 27). Such is the greatness of the guru's grace.

Advent At Arunachala Celebrations Nova Scotia, Canada

You, your family and your friends are cordially invited to join us in celebrating the 128th anniversary of Sri Ramana Maharshi’s Advent at Arunachala. The program will include recitations, bhajans and talks, followed by prasad (lunch).

Sunday, September 1st, 2024 – 11:00 am AST
Arunachala Ashrama
1436 Clarence Road
Bridgetown, Nova Scotia B0S 1C0
Tel: (902) 665 2090
email: NovaScotia@ashrama.org

Advent At Arunachala, New York

You are cordially invited with family and friends for the Sri Ramana Maharshi's 128th Advent To Arunachala Celebrations. The Advent Celebrations will be in person only. The program will include recitations, bhajans, reading and aarathi.

Sunday, September 8, 2024 – 11:00 am EST
Arunachala Ashrama
8606 Edgerton Boulevard
Jamaica, NY 11432-2937
Tel: (718) 560 3196
email: ashrama@arunachala.org

Updates

For the latest information regarding Arunachala Ashrama, New York, please visit [our home page](#) . The Ashrama has been having regular satsangs online which can be found on our [events page](#).

The [Nova Scotia Arunachala Ashrama](#) is welcoming overnight guests. Guests are required to make arrangements ahead of time by contacting nova-scotia@ashrama.org. Guests will be responsible for cooking vegetarian food during their stay and ensuring that their rooms have been cleaned and their linens and towels are laundered and replaced before they leave. Wearing a mask while inside the temple is optional. Visitors are advised to have health insurance. As usual, the Mandiram is open to daytime visitors for prayers and meditation. Tel: 902 824-2297

Please see our [online satsangs](#) page for a listing of other centers that are offering satsangs.

THE MAHARSHI is a free bimonthly newsletter published by Arunachala Ashrama, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi Center, New York. To subscribe online or access all back issues, please visit “www.arunachala.org/newsletters/”. Books, DVDs and audio CDs on Sri Ramana Maharshi are also available in our [on-line bookstore](#) .

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