



Master's News

October 2014

On Wednesday, 1st October, Master came out in the wheelchair and met with about 20 new abhyasis who had come for the five-day Chinese Seminar due to start on the 2nd. He had planned to meet all the Chinese on the 4th. On that day about 120 abhyasis from China and around 15 abhyasis from South Africa were eagerly waiting to see him, but unfortunately Master was feeling tired and said that he would try to meet them in the evening.

By 6 p.m. Master was ready and sat for about an hour with the abhyasis assembled at the entrance of the cottage. With the help of a brother who was translating, he was able to interact with them. They offered Master a lovely gift which was a figure of the Buddha made from white porcelain. The coordinators then introduced abhyasis to Master and he listened to them keenly. There was some discussion on the translation of Mission literature to Chinese and Master asked if the Whispers were also being translated. He then said that some selected Whispers messages could be translated into Chinese. An abhyasi played two songs on the flute in the typical Chinese style and Master and everyone around really enjoyed it. He was quite tired after this session and afterwards went straight to bed. Along the way, he greeted abhyasis and wished them well.

Australian Seminar:

On 5th, during the live video conference with the Australian seminar taking place in Brisbane, Brother Kamlesh said that though Master was physically suffering, he was able to do his duties with cheerful acceptance, and in doing so bring a feeling of joy and spiritual uplift to all those around him. In spite of his physical ailments he was always concerned with spiritual service to others, whether close by in the Ashram or far afield. The abhyasis were deeply moved when Brother Kamlesh added that Master was restricting certain types of treatment for his illness as they would have made him very vulnerable to infections and meant that he would not be able to



meet abhyasis. This is the level of sacrifice that Master undergoes.

Around hundred abhyasis and thirty children had gathered at Brisbane for a national gathering on the theme of 'Meditate with Joy' at a beautiful hall in a local Montessori School in a natural setting on the banks for the Brisbane River. Brother Prasanna Krishna, the RIC was also present for this gathering.

At around 11 a.m., Master came out to the front of the cottage and took a group photograph with the Chinese abhyasis.

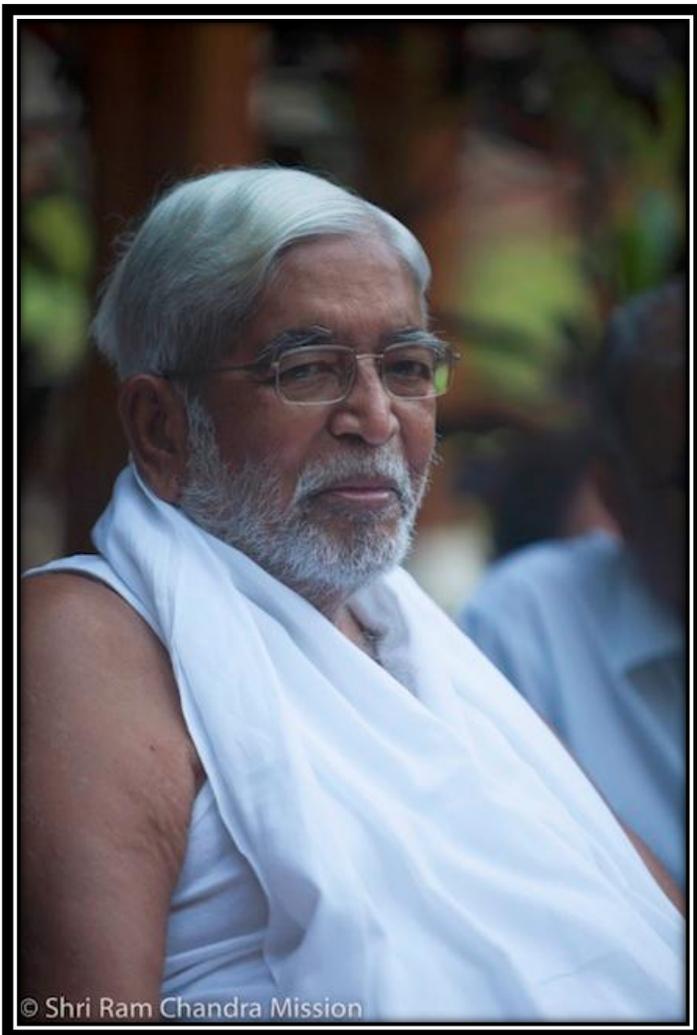
Monday, 6th October, was the last day of the Chinese seminar and Brother Kamlesh conducted the closing group meditation.

In the second week of October, Master's routine changed a little. He would get up very late, after 9.30 or even 10 a.m. on some days, have breakfast and spend some time with the news. On a couple of days, he came out and sat in the sun. He would then go for

his rest, get up at around 3 p.m. and have his lunch. In the afternoon he would watch some TV or listen to a book being read and later in the evening come outside. Most of the time, Master has been silent – even while meeting abhyasis he would simply bless them. There has been a general sense of silence and calm felt in the cottage.

On Tuesday, 7th October, when Master came outside, the girl from Omega school who had played the piano earlier, came and played the piano once again. It was very nice to hear this in the background as Master sat listening in perfect silence.

On Wednesday, 8th October, there was a dance programme by a Mexican abhyasi in the courtyard of the cottage. Master's health did not permit him to attend, so Brother Kamlesh attended instead.



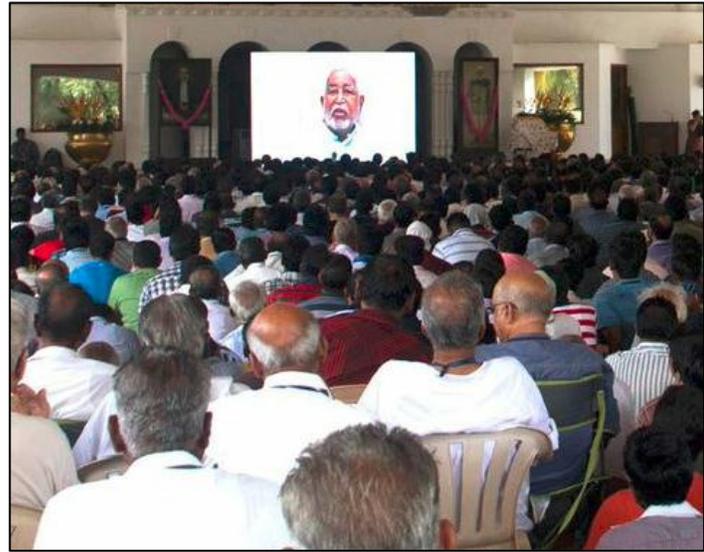
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Video Conference with US Seminar: On 11th October, Master was awake by 5 a.m. Later, he and Brother Kamlesh sat with their eyes closed for about 30 minutes while a book was being read and then they started talking. Brother Kamlesh casually informed Master about the plan to have a video conference to address abhyasis participating in the US seminar. Master was keen to know more and Brother Kamlesh asked him if he would be interested in addressing the abhyasis. Master said, "Why not?" Brother Kamlesh told everyone to keep this a secret as it would then be a surprise for all. The conference call was planned for the night-time in India so as to accommodate all centres in the USA. Master finished his dinner by around 8.30 p.m. and he was informed that the link was ready. There were many centres connected online when Master addressed them. He was able to see the abhyasis from large centres like Molena, Monroe, San Jose, Texas, etc. on his screen. Master gave a short talk which lasted about 20–30 minutes. He seemed very happy to address this large number of abhyasis distributed across the USA.

US National Seminar:

Across the United States over the weekend of 10–12 October, abhyasis gathered in six locations for a national seminar on the theme, 'Designing a Loving Heart'. The highlight of the gathering was a much-anticipated live video link Saturday morning with Brother Kamlesh in India. When the moment came for the connection, all got a wonderful surprise when beloved Master appeared on the screen instead! The moment everyone saw him, the atmosphere suddenly changed. Abhyasis said that it was so magical that it could not be expressed in words, "Seeing the Master there, his message touched all our hearts, and it felt like we were with him. At the end of his message, we truly felt his blessing."

In his address, Master urged everyone to understand that we are now mature enough to use our hearts. "How to use it? The only way is to love." He said that we cannot go wrong when we use the heart. We shouldn't be afraid to use it; it is not risky. Without the heart there is no spiritual life at all. There are no foes if our hearts are open. We will never be able to know what the heart can do for us unless we have the courage to open it, trust the Master, do the practice.



October 22-23:

The Diwali Festival is celebrated in South India on the 22nd and in North India on the 23rd. On the 22nd, Master was intending to conduct group meditation in the meditation hall. However, after breakfast, when he was attempting to get into the wheelchair, he felt that it would not be possible for him to go, so Brother Kamlesh conducted the group meditation. Master came out later in the morning, but he was quite unhappy that he had not been able to go to the meditation hall. In the afternoon, he met with some abhyasis who had been waiting since the morning to get a glimpse of him.

In the evening, Master went around the ashram in the golf cart. The crowd of abhyasis was enormous and as everyone was pushing to see him, it was very difficult for the security to manage the situation. Master still managed to meet a lot of abhyasis and then came back inside. He was telling everyone that he wanted to go out again as there were many who had come just to see him. On Thursday also, there was a large number of abhyasis who had come. Even though he could not go out that day, Master made himself available to

meet them in the cottage. Overall, there was a festive feeling, with lamps lit inside the cottage as well as in the hearts of everyone.

Friday, 24 October:

In the morning, after his physiotherapy, Master came outside – it was a pleasant surprise for all. He asked for the newspaper to be read and then went back inside for breakfast.

In the evening, there was a garbha dance in the meditation hall by sisters from Gujarat; Master watched this via CCTV in his room. After the session, the sisters and children who had performed came to the cottage to meet Master. It was very nice to see him in good health, talking with everyone and with abhyasis sitting around him. Master gave a gift to everyone who participated in the dance and casually said, “This gift is precious, don’t give it away.” Abhyasis responded saying, “Master you are precious to us and everything you give us is also very precious.” They took a group photo with Master before he went back inside his room.

Sunday, 26 October:

Master Addresses Abhyasis:

The original trigger for this event was the talk that Master gave to the US abhyasis about two weeks earlier. He had felt good that he was able to address so many people and also that he could see them and they could see him. Master said, "It will be nice to do more of this." The very next day, Brother Kamlesh arranged everything and announced that Master would address all abhyasis in a live telecast broadcast throughout the world via the internet.

Master was ready quite early in the morning, but before breakfast, he was saying, "I am supposed to address all the abhyasis, but I do not know what I am going to say. Anyway, something will come", pointing above. Master spoke for about 50 minutes to an audience of abhyasis from countries worldwide who had gathered at ashrams and centres, or connected from home to listen to him. After the talk was over, one could see a sense of satisfaction on Master's face, which was glowing; it had been several months since he addressed a large assembly. After the talk was over, Master sat outside the cottage for an hour. While outside, much to the delight of all around him, he said, "I will have a hot chocolate drink" and the kitchen team quickly got this ready for him. Soon after this event, Master received many emails about how abhyasis felt, what impact the talk had, etc. and he was very happy to hear this.

Monday, 27 October:

Master's trip out:

All of a sudden Master decided to go to an abhyasi's new house, which was waiting to be inaugurated. He went in his golf cart entering the house on a ramp made specially. Master offered prasad which was distributed to everyone present. He went around the

house, came into the kitchen and lit the stove where milk was boiled. Master then sat in the hall while some sisters were busy making snacks for all who had come. Some children sang a couple of traditional Carnatic songs, much to the delight of Master and everyone there. It was a very homely feeling. Master was mostly silent and then he came back to cottage. The whole trip lasted about an hour.

Wednesday, 29 October:

Marriage in the Cottage: Master conducted a short group meditation and then performed the wedding. It was a very pleasant sight to see a wedding happening in the cottage after such a long time. Group photographs were taken and a very festive atmosphere prevailed.

Friday, 31 October: Master's health took a little downturn towards the middle of the day and towards the end of the day, he was quite down. Some tests were done and brother Krishna came in the night to be with him.

For more India news, please see the latest [India Echoes](#)

Announcement

For Abhyasis in the Oceania Region

We invite you to be a part of the Echoes Newsletter team. If you would like to be part of the core team to collect, refine and put together the issue or contribute articles and photographs from your centre, please contact us at echoes.oceania@srcm.org

We would also like to have your feedback and suggestions on the Echoes Oceania Newsletter.



Australia News

Western Australia

RIC Visit

Br Prasanna Krishna visited Perth centre for a couple of days. The programme for visit was as follows:

Friday 26th September – Group meditation was held at 6:30 p.m. followed by dinner at Bull Creek Primary School Hall. 33 abhyasis attended the evening meditation.

Saturday 27th September – Half-day programme was held at sister Lulu and brother Ram's place. The first group meditation was held at 7:00 a.m. followed by breakfast. Second group meditation was held at 10:30 a.m. which was followed by a short presentation by kids regarding Value Based Spiritual education and then we had a shared lunch.

It was lovely that brothers and sisters from the Donnybrook and Busselton centres joined for the afternoon session. About 34 abhyasis attended the half day programme.



RIC Visit to Perth

UN Day

The United Nations International Children's Day 2014 was observed in Perth Centre on Sunday, 23rd November after the group meditation.

After the morning group meditation we had a shared breakfast with delicious snacks prepared by abhyasis. Then the Value Based Spiritual Education children read out a presentation on the United Nations day of children, which ended with a short prayer for peace.

The highlights were the heartfelt songs 'Author of Beauty' and 'It's a Small World', sung beautifully by the children.

Total attendance was 34 abhyasis and 10 children.

Victoria

Over the last few months many non-Indian abhyasis have started the practice in Melbourne. We felt it was a challenge to integrate them within the core group of our centre. In the last month a dynamic group of abhyasis have taken on the initiative to meet these new abhyasis and welcome them to the core group. The main thing that was identified was that new abhyasis will attend group meditation once they have become comfortable with at least a few members of the core group.

Last Wednesday after group meditation in the city, a few of the core abhyasis and the new abhyasis went for a dinner. After group meditation, everyone present was introduced to the group. Almost instantly bonds were formed. This happened due to the open and very friendly nature of everyone present. The dinner event was fruitful as the bonds got stronger. It was evident that our spiritual family had suddenly grown as we welcomed the new abhyasis. It was a refreshing feeling, Master being the one binding loving hearts.

This has resulted in the core and dynamic group of abhyasis endeavouring to spend more time with the new abhyasis and involve them in more activities. Change, when it comes, can be quite an experience but the more open and accepting the abhyasi is, it will only make it easier. It is not easy to shift known ways of thinking to something so refreshing but it must be said that the abhyasis in this centre put aside

old ways, however challenging and have adopted this wonderful change initiated by Master.

There is recognition that Master works through each abhyasi and this is recognised even more amongst abhyasis. A new era has commenced in the Melbourne centre where many abhyasis have put their hand up to work with one another, for the centre and this dynamism is now on clear display. It assists the prefects and administrators because it allows them to focus on their activities while giving our team the space to do their programs.

The energy, excitement and involvement this has generated amongst abhyasis is amazing and something which Master would be very happy to see. We are one - all sisters and brothers and HE is amongst us.



Above: UN International Children's Day - Perth

Left: City Meet and Greet - Melbourne

Our First Visit to BMA, Manapakkam, Chennai

2 to 9 November 2014

I joined Sahaj Marg when I was quite young but never had the privilege to visit Manapakkam ashram. My husband Dikesh Gandhi joined the Mission early this year. This October, a brother from our centre came back after visiting the ashram and asked us what we were waiting for? That was the catalyst and we booked our tickets straightaway. Little did we know that this trip was not only going to be an eye opener for us in many ways but also change our way of thinking about many things.

We both went with no expectations in our heart, only the longing to be there, which we have been feeling for a while. We reached Chennai International Airport and the person at the prepaid taxi counter asked us if we wanted to go to Babuji Memorial Ashram. This was only the start to our magical week.

We reached on Sunday morning and entered the gates trying to match the ashram with all the stories we had heard from my mother. The meditation hall, the café, the trees with the magical heart shaped leaves and Master's cottage. It was hard to believe that we were actually there and that Master was there inside the cottage.

However we got to know that Master was not well. Everyday we would go early in the morning to enquire about his health before heading for meditation. After meditation, we would come and sit outside the cottage gate with no intention of trying to see him.

Unexpectedly, we got permission from brother Kamlesh to be a part of the South Asian Seminar which was going on. Getting the opportunity to learn and be a part of the activities, was a privilege.

Tuesday early morning, we saw an ambulance take Master to the hospital for what we were told was his routine check-up. We sat at the cottage gate the whole day until Master came back, to ensure that he was alright. However the next morning it was a shock to receive the Sahaj Sandesh telling us that he had had a mild stroke.



We both got busy with the seminar and the amazing workshops. The seminar participants were predominantly Vietnamese with a few from Indonesia and Philippines. There were also a few observers and facilitators from Denmark. One brother from Denmark shared this amazing 'candle in a glass bowl' concept. He said that each and every human being has a light in their heart. Some have too much of the dark residue around the glass and some less. We should try to clean this dark residue so that the light becomes

clearer for Master to see and make us progress quicker.

That afternoon brother Kamlesh came for a question and answer session. He gave the group a sitting and then opened the floor for questions. One of the sisters asked about the 7.30 a.m. Sunday time as a lot of people cannot make it at their centre. To our surprise he said very easily, "Then change the time. Make it a time when a majority of the abhyasis can make it. There are no rules around it, if you want to do something, follow your heart." Another important message conveyed by him was of a fulltime and part time employee where the full time employee gets full benefits of the organisation where he works whereas the part time employee doesn't. Similarly if abhyasis are following the practice completely, then the benefits are endless. This was the first time I met brother Kamlesh and I noticed the ease with which he speaks; crystal clear and so easy to understand.

We met amazing brothers and sisters from Spain, Denmark, France and Norway. A sister from Denmark would just walk with us wherever we were going and sit with us and share such beautiful experiences which she has had through the years.

The following day, early morning, all seminar participants were suddenly called to Master's cottage. We all ran to the cottage and settled ourselves in the hall. I could tell that my dream was about to get fulfilled, to see my Master again after more than ten years. Someone who has been guiding

me all these years, literally held me through ups and downs and been there unconditionally. He came out in a wheelchair, looking weak but his eyes were the brightest. Tears of joy rolled down my eyes and it was difficult to stop. Only the heart feels what it is to be in the presence of divinity. Just two days after having a mild stroke, he came to see everyone, smiling and to our surprise, gave us a sitting. After the sitting, he said, "Sahaj Marg is not a guru based system, it is an abhyasi based system where you have to do everything. The guru is there to help." Here was our Master who hasn't been well, saying, "I am sorry I haven't been able to spend more time with you all. Hope you all have had a pleasant stay."

I've always known the importance of my Master in my life but this trip has opened my eyes to the magnitude of how much Master actually takes on.

On Friday, most of the seminar participants were to leave. So we decided to cook dinner and invite brother Kamlesh. We were working together in the canteen kitchen preparing dinner, five of us were Vietnamese who didn't know much English and I didn't know Vietnamese. There was so much harmony and love that the work happened naturally and language was least important.

In the evening, we set the dinner on the rooftop above the auditorium. Brother Kamlesh said, "You all have cooked, I will serve." He told us to have more informal get togethers for our Melbourne centre so we can create a bond and have the feeling of brotherhood, harmony and family amongst us.

The next morning, we got some prasad packed for our Melbourne centre and gave it at the gate to get it blessed by Master. In the evening when we went to take the prasad, a brother came running from inside

asking the abhyasis from Melbourne to come in. We ran in and were taken straight to Master's bedroom. Here he was this larger than life figure with the brightest eyes, smiling at us and I couldn't think of anything to say. I somehow gathered myself to say 'Melbourne centre' and we both thanked him for everything. He nodded smiling and raised his hand in blessing. The experience that I had was something that I get a glimpse of every single day since then, when I close my eyes. Later, someone asked us if we had told him our names and I thought it is actually not important to do so because he can see deep inside, our hearts, our souls.

The next day it was time for us to leave after Sunday group meditation. To our surprise we had a group at the canteen, bidding us farewell. Here were people who were strangers about a week ago but the bonds we had formed with each of them within a short time was incredible. We all had tears in our eyes and hoping for the next time we would meet again.

All these years, whenever I spoke about Master or watched his video, my husband would see my attachment towards him. This trip has inculcated the same feelings in him. I am grateful to Master for this feeling of love in us.

Since returning from Chennai I have spent much time reflecting on this amazing journey and I think that my trip was for many purposes. Master had a bigger plan for me, to gather messages from Chennai and to convey them to my family here; my brothers and sisters as well as a life changing experience for my own character transformation and spiritual growth. We can only encourage all abhyasis to go and experience it themselves.

— Pushpita Ghosh



New South Wales

The main focus for September was on the National Seminar which was held in Brisbane. The theme of the seminar was 'Meditate with Joy' – the introspection to create the inner state. The centre had weekly sessions conducted by brother David Todd, after Sunday meditation.

About 35 abhyasis and 15 children from Sydney region attended the National Seminar from 3rd to 6th October 2014 at the Nganbiira Hall, Brisbane Montessori School, Brisbane. Brother Prasanna addressed the abhyasis and conducted group meditation. There was lot to take home from this seminar.

The centre observed United Nations International Day of Peace on 21st September 2014. After the morning group meditation, brother David Todd spoke on the importance of peace in today's world.

Children also observed the Peace day. Twelve children and five adults went on a reflective walk. Every child was given lap sheets which had pictures of great peacemakers around the world.

Master addressed all abhyasis around the world on 26th October. The centre had a whole day event on this day with two group meditation sessions at the usual Sunday group meditation venue. All abhyasis listened to Master's broadcast together.



UN Peace Day - Sydney

Queensland

The Australian National Gathering with the theme of '**Meditate with Joy**' was held over the weekend from 3rd to 6th October 2014. It started with a Prefect Training on Friday which was attended and overseen by brother Prasanna Krishna (RIC) from Bangalore. Centres across Australia explored the theme to prepare for the seminar through meditation and group sittings. The topic arose from a Whispers message mentioning the need to 'Meditate with Joy'. Approaching the seminar, several more Whispers were received with this message.

Thursday, 2nd November 2000, 10.00 a.m.

"Let your heart remain joyful; it will become an incomparable strength. Maintain it and cherish it constantly, like an offering made to Divinity."

It has been ten years since holding a National Gathering in Brisbane and for many volunteers, it was their first time to be involved. It was marvelous to see their commitment through hosting abhyasis, arranging transport and making food preparations. Towards the final day it seemed that we could host all participants without the need to hire any outside venue. Master's hand seemed to be at play as everything fell into place at the last minute.

The prefects' day was attended by 21 prefects. A video of a talk given by Master in Chennai in January 2014 to the Oceania prefects prior to the prefect workshop as part of the Oceania Seminar, was played. It was a delight to transport ourselves to that moment in time with Him where he praised us for achieving a state of submission in a group of prefects which he had never come across before. Our focus was on how we could continue to achieve this state



National Seminar - Brisbane



of submission to the will of the Master. Our Zones-in-Charge then shared their experiences in their work for spiritual development and some positive discussions evolved. The second session was on research findings, with several prefects sharing the work done so far with a resolve that further research and study was needed. All prefects then selected their topics for presentations to be done at the 2015 Oceania Seminar.

Friday evening was the beginning of the National Seminar and the spirit and enthusiasm was already apparent in the hearts of all with many interstate and local abhyasis attending. The venue was a local Montessori School on 10 acres with the Brisbane River to the west and an Equestrian centre to the South. There was plenty of room for the young ones to enjoy the natural settings and parkland and a large central hall which was used for satsangs and presentations. The programme started with group meditation at 6.00 p.m. followed by a Whisper on the theme and the welcome announcements.

Having all abhyasis from interstate staying with the local abhyasis assisted in strengthening the atmosphere and made us as one big family. Breakfast was served at the venue and the Saturday programme started at 9.00 a.m. with group meditation. Brother Prasanna gave his opening

address urging us all to participate in our daily practice with the right spirit and earnestness that it requires. The first session workshop was on the theme prepared by sister Libby Crichton from Sydney centre.

A second group meditation at 12.00 p.m. was followed by a scrumptious meal prepared onsite by our local chefs and volunteers. A balance of Eastern and Western palates went down well with all.

The afternoon was set aside for a question-answer session on the lawns with brother Prasanna and gave an opportunity for the youth to engage and gain some clarity on the salient features of the Sahaj Marg practice. Meditation at 6.00 p.m. was followed by dinner and a presentation by the youth on Whispers, giving a beautiful anecdote and some fun.

Sunday started at 9.00 a.m. with group meditation and the Annual General Meeting at 10.30 a.m. with an Ashram update and discussion. At 1.30 p.m. a live video call with brother Kamlesh was projected for all to see and was the highlight of the meet. Though the reception was a little poor the main point stressed by brother Kamlesh was; *"That though Master was physically suffering, he was able to do his duties with cheerful acceptance, and in doing so bring a feeling of joy and upliftment to all those around him."*





In spite of his physical ailments he was always concerned with spiritual service to others, whether those close by in the Ashram or those far a field."

The message given in such a heartfelt way, was extremely touching. The afternoon session on the theme 'Meditate with Joy', was carried out with discussions in small groups. Evening group meditation was at 4.30 p.m. as some abhyasis were leaving. A late supper completed the day.

On Monday morning a group meditation at 7.30 a.m. was followed by breakfast and a second group sitting at 9.00 a.m. Brother Prasanna then gave his closing address followed by a thanks for his visit and to the volunteers who had done a fantastic job. It was a most joyous occasion and a great weekend held in Brisbane.

Photos courtesy of Brother Meng are available [here](#).

John Smith, Brisbane

New Zealand

Despite different experiences, reasons for meditating, social and cultural backgrounds, it was heart-warming to experience harmony in our answers to four simple questions about Sahaj Marg.

During our New Zealand National Seminar, we shared ideas around four simple questions in groups. We discovered a striking similarity in our responses. My group was initially a young one, later joined by two prefects. We all thought we'd really gone 'deep' to discover and open our hearts to some special thoughts. When we heard the answers from other groups we were humbled to discover that a group full of brothers, or just sisters and even the 'mature' group said the same things as though we had been sharing as one big group all along.

Looking back, our connections are deeper and subtler than most of us give credit for, thanks to our Master's love and work. Notwithstanding this, external bonds were strengthened and the feeling of family was enhanced by this activity. So what were the four questions?

1. What does meditation mean to you?
2. What is your support system in Sahaj Marg?
3. How have you changed since you started meditation?
4. What does having an ashram in NZ mean to you?



The following is what was discussed:

1. A breath, a pause, a break in the constant stream of our material lives, a chance to reconnect, check-in with our Divine Self.

Groups shared that meditation was also about connecting with our brothers and sisters, developing tolerance, respect and love for Master, for each other and learning to turn that energy towards all.

2. Immediate family or friends who also practice, brothers and sisters in our local centres, brothers and sisters around New Zealand.

All groups also expanded to say that in our daily lives many of us are not surrounded by brothers or sisters who meditate or understand the need for a Master or a spiritual aspect to life. Because of this we find our greatest support in sharing and connecting with our Sahaj Marg brothers and sisters, where we can have those conversations that matter, talk of difficulties and rejuvenate ourselves with energy and love.

3. Awareness and softness.

Both long practicing prefects and new abhyasis spoke of an increasing awareness of self and our grosser traits which was followed by a softening of them. A reduction in anger, an increased tolerance towards others or mending of strained relationships.

As a sister beautifully put it, "I don't feel I've changed, everybody else has just got friendlier." On top of this was the notion of effortless in these changes, the grossness melting away as the effort and willingness to meditate and surrender rose.

4. Reconnection and recharging, a place to remind ourselves of the important goal in life.

Following from question two, an ashram provided a place to surround oneself with support, a place to duck below the material world, re-immense in the practice and Master's love so as to recharge the spiritual batteries and deepen the practice.

Andrew Maps Curtis

