



SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

ECHOES

NORTH AMERICA

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Master's News

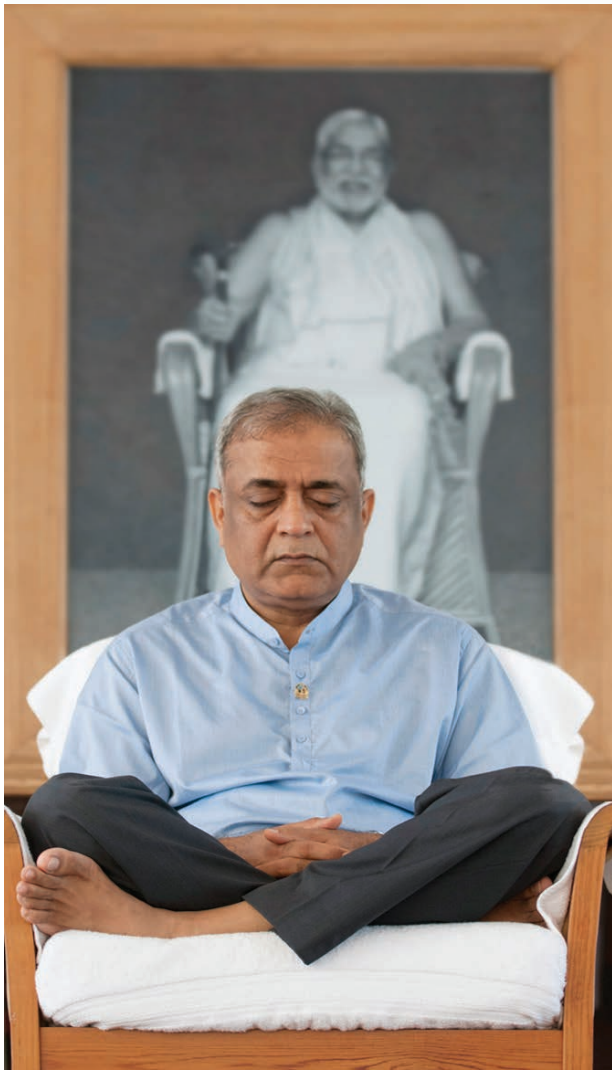
How Basant Was Celebrated in North America Reported in Sahaj Sandesh, January 28, 2015

The abhyasis of North America were overjoyed and deeply grateful for the opportunity to spend three days between the 23rd and 25th of January with respected Kamlesh bhai, in his new role as spiritual Master and president of Shri Ram Chandra Mission. It was an impromptu bhandara on the occasion of Basant Panchami, in New Jersey.

On the afternoon of January 18th, after two weeks of personal work, Kamlesh bhai reached out to local abhyasis with three possible meetings times. Cognizant of the distance and the cost of cross-country travel in the US, he initially thought of only meeting the abhyasis from the three states around the Monroe Ashram. But the eagerness of abhyasis was so palpable that in no time it turned into a North American gathering that stretched over three days and was attended by over 1100 abhyasis from across the continent. A core group of fifty volunteers connected to work together, and before we knew it the arrangements were in place.

The gathering took place in a hotel, which became an ashram for three days. Its large ballroom became a spacious and very aesthetic meditation hall, with a Basant banner, pictures of the Masters, flowers and a simple stage. Almost all outstation abhyasis stayed there, as did Kamlesh bhai.

On Friday evening, the gathering opened with a 5 p.m. satsang, followed by a heartfelt talk by Kamlesh bhai on the call by his Master, Chariji, for the urgency of sincere practice. He mentioned that Chariji was very candid in his diaries and exhorted abhyasis to be absolutely honest, especially with themselves. At the close of the talk he invited all abhyasis to reassemble in the hall for the Friday night sitting at 9 p.m.





On Saturday morning, on the occasion of Basant Panchami, Kamlesh bhai inaugurated the Toronto Ashram at 7:15 a.m., via Skype, addressing a gathering in Toronto of one hundred ninety abhyasis from across Canada and the US, followed by a wonderful sitting.

After the 9 a.m. satsang and another short talk, Kamlesh bhai sat at the registration desk for several hours taking pre-registration orders for a new book on Lalaji's life, to be released later this year, and interacting with abhyasis with touching warmth, directness and humor. He later met with around 150 prefects from North America, where he mentioned some of the new changes the Hierarchy of Masters have permitted in the Mission, as have also been indicated in recent messages from the brighter world.

He also mentioned that in keeping with the changing times there is a need to reach out to seekers in simple ways, and encourage them to meditate and experience the changes for themselves. He gave a sitting to all the prefects present. This was followed by his meeting with new abhyasis at 8 p.m. The day ended with satsang at 9 p.m.

The true culmination of the three-day gathering was the question and answer session that Kamlesh bhai held with the entire gathering of abhyasis after the morning satsang on Sunday. The call for listening to the simplicity and purity of the message of the heart spilled over into this session. It was momentous not only for the detail and substantive richness of the answers, but also for the heart to heart bonding between the new master and his abhyasis. There was love, there was humor, there was patience, there was joy, there was commitment to a deeper practice and interiorization and to a constant connection with the Master through thought. Constant thinking develops into feeling for the Master. This eventually leads to *being* and then *becoming*. The final stage is *unbecoming*. As the session progressed, many abhyasis saw in Kamlesh bhai a true reflection of Chariji, and many were so deep-

ly touched and so moved that they were in tears as the session ended. As one abhyasi said, "I feel it in my heart. They are truly one."

After leaving the venue, Kamlesh bhai visited the nearby Monroe Ashram with the local volunteers. He gave them a sitting there and had lunch with them before leaving for his home.

We feel blessed and deeply grateful for the opportunity to spend three wonderful days in the company of Kamlesh bhai, our new Master and the successor of our beloved Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari, as he begins his journey of taking the Mission and the work of the Masters forward.





North American Gathering (cont.) Celebrating Basant Panchami with Master





North American Gathering (cont.) Celebrating Basant Panchami with Master

A Gentle and Sure Transition

Leslie Blair, Vermont,

Every Sahaj Marg gathering has an atmosphere of reunion. There is always joy in reconnecting with brothers and sisters, and of course the anticipation of being in the blessed company of the Master, the heart of our spiritual family. In the case of the gathering in Iselin, New Jersey, there was an additional element of expectancy: our brother, respected Kamlesh D. Patel, would be overseeing a North American gathering for the first time as our new spiritual guide and Master.

There was also a delightful element of surprise. One week earlier, most of us had no idea that we would be together for such an event. It felt like a gift that had dropped out of the sky. One sentiment seemed to be at the heart of every conversation: “Isn’t this amazing?”

And it was. How had our brother and sister volunteers arranged for 1100 of us to congregate at such short notice and in such a way that all our needs were taken care of? As waves of abhyasis arrived at the hotel (our venue for the weekend), the rooms and halls began to take on the atmosphere of an ashram.

The program unfolded seamlessly, and we found that Kamlesh bhai’s manner of being with us was quite natural and brotherly, with a lightness that was both uplifting and comforting in the aftermath of our dear Master Chariji’s departure. It felt like a gentle transition, but one that left no doubt as to the continuity and surety of the Mission’s leadership. We could all rest easy, and marvel at the loving preparation that made this possible.

There were changes introduced that seemed to prepare for rapid growth in the Mission and a speeding up of our individual spiritual progress – changes, for example,

that will allow prefects to do more work in less time. It was clear that our guide was giving each of us a job to do and the means to do it – something our Master Chariji had always guaranteed us.

Kamlesh bhai infused us with a quiet confidence and optimism, and his sense of humor was like a balm. After the final morning satsang, he took questions. Here are some of his replies, as noted in my diary:

When the heart is really saying something, we won’t need to doubt it.

We don’t sleep enough and we don’t sleep in time. To appreciate the system I must feel it with my total sense involvement – too much or too little sleep spoils it.

We should not worry too much about samskaras. Live a carefree life like a child in the hands of the mother. It is Master’s job to take care of it.

Unable to sleep? Get absorbed in meditation as you’re lying there. You’ll get what you need. In the night-time, you’re the king. Put it in cruise control, absorbed in the divinity. It becomes a spiritual rejuvenation as well.

Enjoy food, otherwise it won’t digest. When you enjoy things, they are no longer a burden.

Sensitivity and level of tolerance go together. If you are given one, you are given the other.

Create depth in ourselves. Acceptance is higher than tolerance. Become like a deep lake. The falling leaves don’t make much ripple.

It’s best not to try too many things. Dig in the ground in one place and you will find water.

Don’t be discouraged if your spouse is not in the system. Just be more loving.

We don’t need to display anything. The more we display,



the more we come down.

*We maintain connection with the Master by thought.
Then we feel the presence inside.*

[Kamlesh bhai left us all with many suggestions to internalize and adopt. The following are a few taken to heart by some abhyasis.]

We should be honest with ourselves and have the courage to follow our hearts.

Sahaj Marg is about internalizing the Master's presence. We can stay connected with him by thoughts. Master carries the abhyasi in his mental womb for seven months before delivering him or her to the Brighter World. Only the abhyasi can abort this process.

At bedtime, say the prayer with a heart full of surrender and love. This will help us use sleep for its spiritual purpose. If we go to bed with frustration, we will wake up with frustration, and won't appreciate what happens during morning meditation. Instead, if we go to bed with love and surrender in our hearts, we will wake up with love and can appreciate our meditation.

After morning meditation, make a sankalpa: "I will stay connected throughout the day."

How can we retain our condition? Master gave an example. Just like a bucket with holes cannot retain water, a heart with holes cannot retain grace. What are these holes? Desires. Instead of having multiple material desires, we should make the goal (of human life) to be our only desire. We can digest what we are given by enjoying our condition.

We are busy trying to solve too many different problems. It's like digging two feet here, five feet there, eight feet elsewhere, to get water. Instead, if we consistently dig in one place, we will eventually get water. Similarly, we should solve that one problem of life which, when solved, fixes everything else in our life. What is that one problem of life? Our spiritual goal of oneness with the Master.

On His Way to the US, He Stopped at Montpellier

His visit to Montpellier, France, January 4, 2015

Reprinted from Echoes of Europe, January issue

We have been favored with the immense gift of welcoming Kamlesh D. Patel, Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari's successor as the Master and President of the SRCM Mission, on the occasion of his first journey outside India.

The quite unexpected news, received on January 1st, had local abhyasis mobilize to welcome him and as many brothers and sisters as they could. Twenty-four hours later, a venue had been found for the 800 abhyasis who came with their families, most from all parts of France.

At 7.30 a.m. revered Kamlesh bhai conducted the first of three satsangs, in a very prayerful atmosphere propitious to the union of hearts. Then he traced the road for us when he said:

"...So please, don't restrain your feeling. If you feel happy at one moment thinking of Master, feel happy, if you feel sad about his absence, it is OK to shed two tears. With desolate heart, with thankful heart, with smiling heart, we can always remember Him. Now he is more accessible and he is dissolved in us. Now our exercise is how to dissolve ourselves in Him. It's up to all of us and I pray that we achieve that state of dissolution, the sooner the better. That's what Babuji Maharaj wants, that's what Master wants, that's what the Hierarchy wants, that total absorption in His universal presence, and this is what we call this absolute merger in the ultimate. With prayers, thank you all."

He also said how deeply moved he was at seeing that so many abhyasis managed to come on such short notice. Though we all left full of joy and gratitude for the fantastic day he offered us, he thanked *us* for having come in large numbers to share the day!



Toronto Ashram Inauguration January 24–15, 2015

Toronto Ashram Inauguration

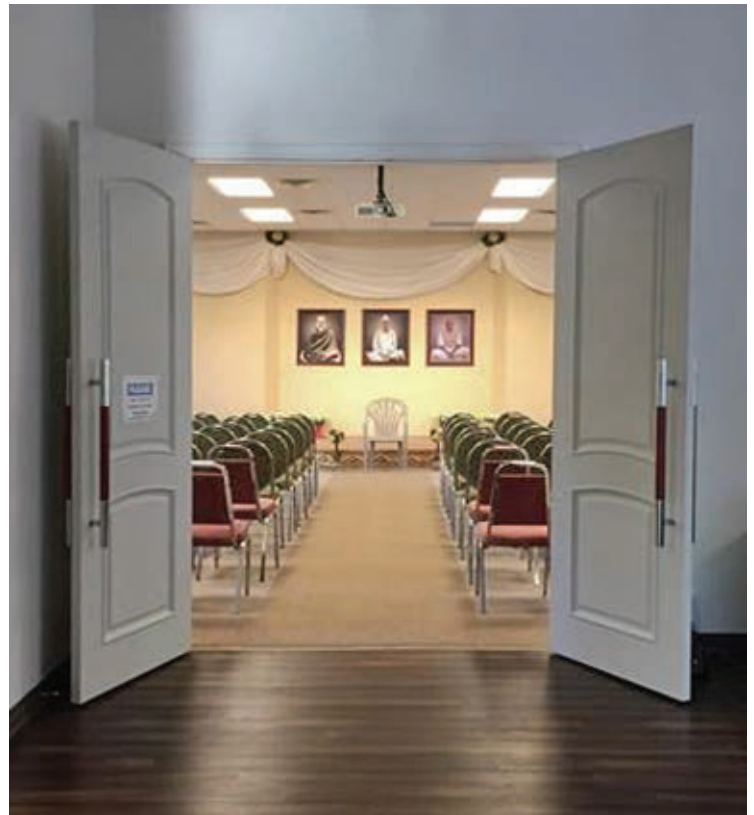
Lakshmi Aravind, Vancouver Centre*

We are very humbled and delighted to inform all that our respected Master, Kamlesh bhai, inaugurated the Toronto Ashram on January 24th, Basant Panchami day, via Skype. It was truly a blessed, memorable occasion.

For more than two years, with the love and guidance of Master Chariji, current Master, Kamlesh bhai and the Great Masters, the abhyasis of Canada and the rest of the world worked together to build the first Canadian ashram. The journey to realizing our dream has been one of doing joyously, doing with heart and finding brotherhood in the process.

There were many changes and preparations prior to the inauguration, but when the long-awaited weekend arrived everything seemed to have a wonderful flow of its own. One hundred ninety abhyasis and children from Canada and the US came together in Toronto to celebrate, to cherish and to be part of this journey that started long ago; and which had accelerated after Kamleshji's talk, "Canada is coming UP!" given during the 2012 North American gathering in Chennai.

The weekend started off on Friday with a 7:00 p.m. satsang at the North York Civic Centre. On the 24th, the auspicious morning of Basant Panchami, volunteer teams at the Toronto Ashram took their places at 5:30 to help abhyasis find parking, and to welcome all to our new home. All abhyasis were serenely seated in the meditation hall early, ready to be with our Master over Skype. At 7:15 a.m. Master received a virtual tour of the ashram, during which all the children greeted him happily from the children's room, and the abhyasis welcomed him warmly in the meditation hall.



Kamleshji then congratulated us, reminded us that this is not the end of the journey, but the beginning, and started the satsang. It was a wonderful sitting and a heart-warming experience to have him inaugurate our Toronto Ashram. An overwhelming feeling of love, joy and gratitude prevailed throughout the day. We are very grateful to our Master for this and to the great Masters for their blessings on this day.

That morning sister Christine Prisland, the first abhyasi in Canada, related the amazing story of the beginning of Sahaj Marg there when she met Babuji during his North American visit in 1972. She told the story in the most humble way; however, the magnificence of the Great Master's work on the growth of Sahaj Marg family in Canada is obvious.



Participation generated warmth as all contributed whether through musical performances, coordinating food service, registration, cleanup, readings and videos, parking, book sales or simply being there. Hidden talents among us were revealed, to the delight of all. There were also performances by guests as well as Toronto abhyasis on the guitar, the sitar, and the tabla. As poems and songs were read and sung, the inspiration for all performances could be felt easily. It would not have been the same without each abhyasi who was there, and we were so happy to welcome all to our new home.

We remembered our dear Master Chariji fondly throughout the day, as we watched videos of his wonderful talks. Although Kamlesh bhai was in New Jersey at the time with a larger assembly of abhyasis, we in Toronto felt very connected to him in our hearts.

We also listened to the recent speech of Kamlesh bhai urging all abhyasis to make a commitment to grow together in this mission of radical change of one's self.

We as abhyasis, we as bhaktas, we as lovers, we as disciples, as functionaries and volunteers, we as conduits of love and grace, we as dreamers of seeing a better world, we as privileged beneficiaries of His love and care, we have a commitment to make. It was his dream to see us all united, and growing together, with the life's mission of changing oneself radically, and in the process help the Hierarchy change the course of our future together...

Kamlesh D. Patel

That day and the following one were filled with the joy of being together at our own ashram, our own space to be together in brotherhood, our own place to care for, our own place in which to meditate, to grow spiritually in the atmosphere of love flowing from the heart of our Master and our space from which to expand that love, allowing it to flow from us to all humanity.

It was an experience beyond words, where space and time seemed to have disappeared. Such was his love. May we use our new ashram more and more to internalize our journey.

**With contributions from: Maire Estar, Canada Kalia, Tina Mehta, Joey Rzemieniak, Ryan Sequeira, Marsha Thompson*





Toronto Ashram
Inauguration





Lalaji Birth Celebrations

Sunderland Ashram

Elizabeth Limkemann, Mystic, CT

A group of about fifty abhyasis assembled at the Sunderland meditation center on Sunday, February 1st, to celebrate Lalaji's birth. The atmosphere was light and festive, with high spiritual energy during the whole gathering. We were privileged to see videos of recent talks given by Kamlesh bhai in New Jersey, in which he emphasized that it is up to each one of us to do our work. He also gave us useful phrases to use whenever we choose: "Think that all sisters and brothers are developing correct thinking, right understanding and honest approach to life;" and "Think (imagine) that everything surrounding us is absorbed in godly remembrance."

Satsang times were adjusted in consideration of the weather, as snow began to fall on Sunday night and continued throughout the next day. By Monday the group had dwindled to around fifteen, and much of our time outside of satsangs was spent shoveling snow, joyfully moving great piles of snow and welcoming the driver of the snowplow.

We tuned in to the USA General meeting and watched a preview of the forthcoming publication, *The Story of Divine Revolution*. We were inspired to think of Sahaj Marg as an abhyasi-centered practice – we each need to do our practice to the best of our ability, and to improve the atmosphere by our thoughts.



Vancouver Centre

Lou-Anne Bryant, Vancouver, BC

About twenty-five abhyasis attended Lalaji's birth celebration this year at the Vancouver Centre. We followed morning satsang with Kamlesh bhai's most recent talks, sparking some informal discussions and a deep appreciation for the work he is doing. We ended our day with some beautiful quotations from Lalaji Maharaj, collected by Leslie Romano. This one stayed with me:

"Love is truly the supreme form of the purest human feelings. Love and pain are born together. Unless there is pain, one cannot know the existence of love. Love is born in a human being in an unknown, unclear way, and pain lifts it up and gives life to it."

Complete Works of Ram Chandra (Lalaji Maharaj), Vol. 2, First Ed. p.205 (2013 Reprint, p. 286).





Gatherings

A Blessed Treat, 2014

Rose Madigan-Strong, Keuka, NY

In November, 2014, my husband, Skip, and I hosted a weekend gathering at our family lake home on Lake Keuka in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York. We have no center close by and usually travel 4 hours to either Montville or Toronto to be with our Sahaj Marg family, so this was a blessed treat, having 16 brothers and sisters, including children, come from New Jersey, New York and Canada.

We started Sunday morning with satsang promptly at 7:20 a.m. To me it felt like Master had placed a blanket of love over me the entire weekend. Individual sittings and satsangs were all very settled and deep.

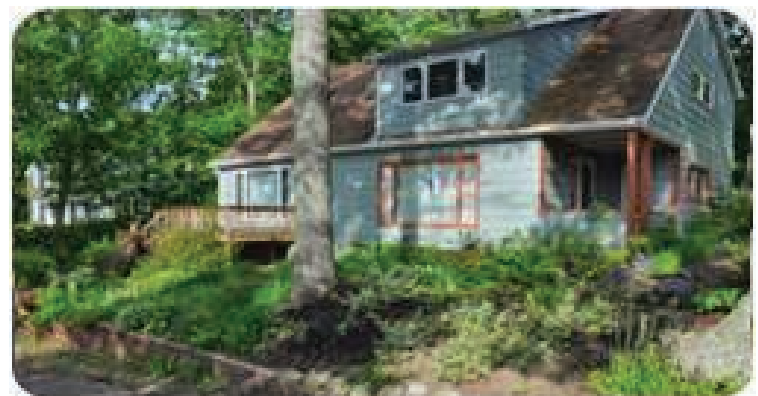
We were grateful to our two prefects, Chris Curran from Montville, New Jersey and Bhavani Shankar from Toronto, Canada for attending. It was enjoyable for me to spend this time with my brothers and sisters dining, watching Master's DVDs, having group discussions on the new morning and evening practice techniques, and then walking together in nature near the lake. Below others shared that they felt the same.

"Having the gracious invitation to join our other 'orphan' (also without preceptor) brothers and sisters who live in outlying places in NY State, at a lovely beach house about two hours away, was a special experience. Even the planning brought us closer together. Rosemary's place was a perfect place to get together. It was like being in an ashram – the warm welcome from our hosts, the blessing of having two prefects join us for individual sittings, the meeting of new abhyasis who live too far to join us for our weekly satsang, and the atmosphere present in this lovely home was magic." *Kate*

".... I was able to feel the presence of our beloved Master in the house. Before going to Hammondsport, I was feeling that my soul was very hungry for divine food (transmission). All the activities, meditation and my individual sitting during our gathering filled me up with spirituality. I came back home with inner happiness and spiritual assets." *Arun*

"I felt that Master took me to that spiritual atmosphere. There was only love in all brothers and sisters (even though I had met them for the first time). It felt like a turning point in my spiritual journey." *Viji*

"I felt like I was on a vacation with my family where I got introduced to some new members also. The entire house, members, climate, location, and the purpose of our gathering made me feel very good. Meditations and satsangs made every corner of house and atmosphere charged." *Swati*





Honoring Chariji, New Year's Day

Ragini Miryala, Houston, TX

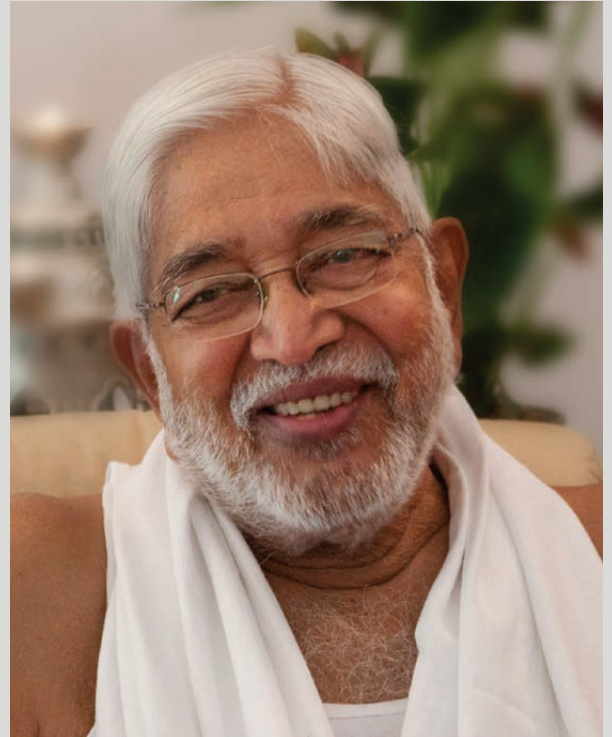
Houston abhyasis gathered at our home in Seabrook, TX. Hosting gatherings makes me nervous because as an Indian hostess, I need to make sure everyone is fed properly but I don't know how to cook well. I'm more comfortable ordering pizza, sandwiches, or Chinese food.

This year ordering take-out did not feel right. This gathering was not a celebration; it was a wake for our beloved Chariji. This year I had to make the food myself. I had never taken a gift to Master because of my proverbial worry, what do I get a guy who has everything? Preparing a meal for his flock would be my gift. I would face my insecurities to honor Him.

I started a week in advance planning each dish, visualizing how I would make it before I started. While stirring the food I would cry at times, reflecting on the life of a man who had worked so hard for us.

On the morning of the gathering many participated in the final touches of the meal. Some sisters were washing dishes, some brothers were heating chapattis or taking out trash. Instead of being loud and boisterous we were quiet and somber.

Without my little group of fervent spiritual seekers in Houston this journey would be too hard. As for the meal, well it was amazing, of course, and a good parting gift.



New Book Releases

	Sale Price
BOOK	
Eng- <i>Gift of Love</i> (PSM 16) (soft bound)	\$8.00
BOOK	
Eng- <i>HeartSpeak 2001</i> (soft bound)	\$8.00
MP3/DVD	
Spanish-MP3 audio-book <i>Whispers</i>	\$12.00
DVD/NTSE	
Eng-DVD set <i>HeartSpeak 2012</i> (set of 4)	40.00
DVD/NTSE	
Eng-DVD set <i>Heart is Divine</i> (single DVD)	\$10.00



Books About Spirituality to Share A Synopsis and Review



In *The Journey Within: Extraordinary conversations with uncommon people*, you will hear from 16 practitioners of Sahaj Marg (The Natural Path) meditation as they reflect upon their meditation practice, the changes that have taken place, and their personal 'journey within'. 'hree to four people are interviewed for each section of the book: Getting Started, Lifestyle Changes, Master and the Spiritual World, Living in the Heart, and Hope for the Future. Chariji Maharaj gave permission for this project in December of 2012 and it was published in December of 2014.

The target audience for *The Journey Within* is anyone questioning today's focus on materialism and those seeking a balance between mind, body and spirit. In this book, you will hear answers to a number of questions a newcomer would have about meditation and spirituality. Basic principles such as when and how to meditate are covered as well as esoteric concepts such as the difference between religion and spirituality. In these extraordinary conversations, you will hear the interviewees' hopes and dreams for a brighter future for humankind, one based on tolerance and love.

Kim Hughes started this project as someone new to meditation that wanted to learn more and to share what

she had learned. At that time, there was little information available for people before actually starting the practice. She thought that the insights shared here (and in the second book of the series, *Journeys Beyond*, anticipated publication in March of 2015) would help both newcomers and those more experienced. In this book, there is something for everyone. Please consider reading it and, even more importantly, share it with others as a means to help them begin their inner journey of meditation on the heart.

Inside This Book ...

- Hear stories about starting and continuing a meditation practice
- Explore 'pathways' to self-fulfillment through meditation and an enhanced focus on spirituality
- Learn about 'natural' lifestyle changes resulting from meditation
- Learn about the role of a spiritual teacher (guru, master)
- Explore hope for the future (of humans and our planet) as we learn to evolve within.

To change the world, change yourself.

Live by the Heart – A Review

Dr. Elizabeth J. Denley, Sydney, Australia

December 24, 2014, Amazon, U.S.A.

The Journey Within is a series of interviews with people who have chosen an evolutionary path through the spiritual practice of meditation. They are ordinary people from all backgrounds and walks of life, who are part of something extraordinary. They share a common willingness to meditate, pray and purify their hearts every day, as a normal part of their daily routine, along with family life and work. They try to live simply by the heart, in tune with Nature. In all this they are aided by transmission or pranahuti.

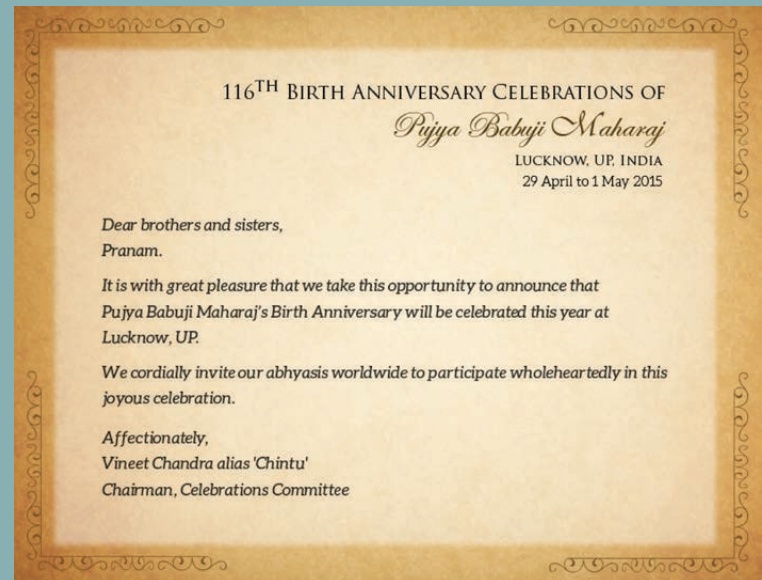
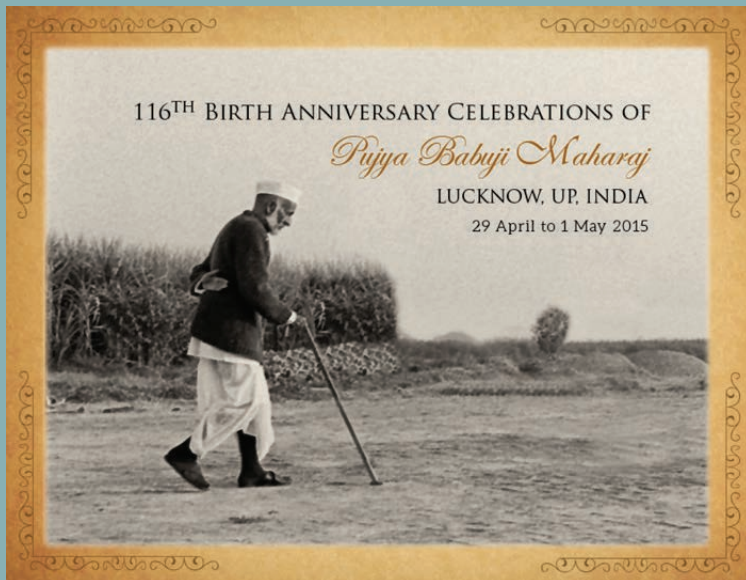
Kim Hughes' inspiring book has come at a time when



humanity is at a turning point in its history. The turmoil is evident by watching any news channel anywhere in the world. Yet out of the mud, the lotus flower is emerging — there is an ever-growing consciousness among people all over the planet to become something better. 'The Journey Within' provides many insights into what each of us can do to bring about our own personal change, as well as the much-needed change for humanity that will steer us towards a bright future.



We are all invited to the 116th Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Babuji Maharaj
at Lucknow, UP, India, April 29–May 1, 2015



Registration

Registration is open and all abhyasis who plan to attend the celebrations are requested to register for the same in their respective centres as soon as possible. Early registration will be helpful in planning the infrastructure for the celebrations at the venue.

All abhyasis who plan to attend the celebrations are requested to register by following the process mentioned in this link which will guide them to register:

<http://www.sahajmarg.org/April-30-celebrations/2015/registration>