

This is a quarterly newsletter that provides updates on SMSF activities. In the words of our Revered Master, "This publication will essentially focus on the spiritual needs of human beings, how they are being or trying to be fulfilled by the Sahaj Marg philosophy and practice ..."

For archives of newsletters, visit <http://www.sahajmarg.org/newsletter/smsf-newsletters>.

Featured in this issue

CREST: We feature activities at CREST Bangalore, CREST Berlin and CREST Kharagpur.

Retreat Centre: We include reports on activities at the Retreat Centre, Pune and SPURS Retreat ranch, USA.

Health: We cover medical center activities at Chennai and Satkhol.



(above) Master on the occasion of Lalaji Maharaj's Birth Anniversary at Manappakam on 2nd February 2014

Programs at CREST, Bangalore

During this quarter, nine programmes were conducted at CREST, Bangalore.

Sahaj Marg Insights – A deeper study

Two programmes of Sahaj Marg Insights in English and three in vernacular languages were conducted. The first one in November was attended by thirty-two participants and the second in December was attended by twenty-nine participants. Both these programmes had the following five topics:

- Work as if you are playing and play as if you are working
- Acceptance of changes in life
- How to sublimate the ego
- How to develop sensitivity
- Joy is a powerful energy; it is to be cultivated

Dr. Mohandas Y. Hegde has been appointed as Director for CREST, Bangalore in place of Sis. Seetha Kunchithapadam. He has started working in this post since 15th January 2014.

The programme in Tamil was attended by fifty-seven participants, Kannada by thirty-three participants and Hindi by twenty-eight participants. The following topics were dealt with:

- The ever-receding goal – how to achieve it?
- Responsibilities of an abhyasi towards self, family, society and Mission
- Faith, love and surrender

Deepening Prefects' Experience

This is a training programme for prefects from various zones of South India. Two batches of this program were conducted. The first one was in November with fifty-four participants and coordinated by Br N.S. Nagaraja. The second batch was conducted in December with forty participants and was coordinated by Sis. Lalita Sreenivasan. Videos of Master's talks to prefects were shown during these programmes. These talks were eye-openers for the prefects and helped them to make a *sankalpa* to involve themselves better in their work.

Library Immersion Period

The CREST library is a treasure of literature on spirituality, religions, cultures and philosophies of the world and on various related subjects. Two batches of this program were conducted during the quarter. In this program, abhyasis spend two days reading a book of their choice from the CREST library and write

or talk about the book on the third day. The participants were minimal in number but their enthusiasm was contagious. They selected books of their choice from the CREST library. On the third day, they gave small write-ups on the books read, and also spoke about the books with gusto.

Source: Sis. Seetha Kunchithapadam



(left) Participants of the program on Deepening Prefect Experiences held in December 2013



(above) Participants of the program on Sahaj Marg Insights (English) held in December 2013



(above) Participants of Library Immersion Period held in December 2013

Change in schedule of programs at CREST, Bangalore and CREST, Kharagpur

Revered Master has instructed the CREST team to carefully review all the existing programmes at both CREST locations (Bangalore and Kharagpur) and has provided inspirational guidance for what these institutions and their programmes should offer to seekers and abhyasis, going forward. In order to revise these programmes so that His vision for CREST may be effectively fulfilled, all existing programmes scheduled at CREST Bangalore and Kharagpur for 2014 will be on hold until further notice. A revised calendar for both CRESTs is expected to be announced by the end of March 2014. During this period, abhyasis may continue to use the CREST libraries as per the existing guidelines, and may contact the respective CREST Directors for further information.

Programs at CREST, Kharagpur

During the quarter ending 31st December 2013, two seminars on 'Ten Maxims of Sahaj Marg as Tools of Character Formation', one seminar for Youth and one programme on 'Fundamentals of Character Formation' were organised in CREST, Kharagpur.

Ten Maxims of Sahaj Marg as Tools of Character Formation

(Telugu), 1st – 6th October 2013

Seventy-one abhyasis participated in this seminar. Following topics were discussed.

Maxim 3 (The Goal): Br K.S. Saptanukhulu elaborated on a few key words of this Maxim and urged the participants to fix up their goal which should be the highest, thus laying the foundation for noble character.

Maxim 2 (How to approach the Goal): Br Appa Rao shared his understanding and experience regarding the practice of this Maxim. He said that a heart full of love and devotion, prayer, spiritual elevation and right attitude are essential for one to be transformed into a man of character.

Maxim 1 (How and what to do to reach the Goal): Br N.L.V. Prasad said that sincerely following the first Maxim makes it easy to follow the other Maxims. This maxim helps one in developing habits of punctuality, rising early, and commitment.

Maxim 10 (How to end the day): Br Mohanty Ramu said that one who seeks forgiveness for his wrongs and resolves not to repeat them will evolve spiritually.

Maxim 4 (Simplicity and being in tune with nature): Br Dasaratha Naidu said that one who lives

his life in a simple and yet balanced way as is the Nature's understanding will be loved by all.

Maxim 6 (Attitude to be adopted towards our Brethren): In his presentation on Maxim 6, Br K. Lakshmana Rao said that each one of us is the result of the stir (*Kshobh*) that occurred at the same source and each one has the same essence. If we consciously practice shedding prejudice and hatred, a state conducive to reach higher states of spirituality is established.

Maxim 5 (Being truthful and how to handle miseries): Sis Sarada explained what exactly being truthful is and when we are truthful, handling of miseries becomes simple. She spoke on Master's precept, "Expect not, for thou shall not be disappointed." By adopting this precept, one can get His help in refining one's character.

Maxim 7 (Being not revengeful for wrongs done by others): Br Nagaraj Reddy related a few personal experiences where he was able to tolerate adverse situations by remaining conscious of the seventh Maxim. The desired change is bound to follow if we exercise patience and do not react.

Maxim 8 (Contentment, taking food in Divine thought and importance of honest and pious earnings): Br Mohammed Shareef shared his experience on this Maxim. With stories of Sudama and Krishna, a Zen Buddhist and a story narrated by Master, he explained how food taken without the divine thought affects one's character.

Maxim 9 (Moulding one's life to be pious arousing love in others): Br M.V.M. Prasad



(left) Participants of the seminar on Ten Maxims as Tools for Character Formation held during 1st–6th October in Telugu



(left) Participants of the seminar on Fundamentals of Character Formation held during 12th - 17th November in English

emphasized that this Maxim is the natural and automatic consequence of practicing all other Maxims intensely.

Fundamentals of Character Formation (English), 12th – 17th November 2013

Fifty-eight abhyasis participated in this seminar. Following topics were discussed.

Power of Attitude: Br Narendra Umasankar said that one's external behavior should be as if Master is sitting next to him or her. Everything should be accepted as though it is coming from Master.

Brotherhood: Br Gyanendra Mohan Bhatnagar explained how brotherhood has evolved with the development of civilisation. Our Mission is playing an important role in upholding universal brotherhood. He discussed the qualities for development of brotherhood and the Universal prayer.

Faith and Fearlessness: Br Lalith Mohan Kaistha explained the meaning of faith and said that faith can be developed through Sadhana, obedience and sincerely following the Ten Maxims. He said that fear is the production of lower mind whereas love is the production of higher mind. Fear can be removed by cleaning.

Love is the essence of Spirituality: Sis. Anasuya Ramachandran showed a clip from 'He, Hookah and I' that says that secret of quick progress in spirituality lies in creating love in your heart. She explained about various aspects of love in spiritual life and shared a few practical methods necessary for cultivating love inside oneself in day to day life.

Youth Programme (English), 25th November – 1st December 2013

Ninety-four participants including faculty and coordinators attended the programme. Following topics were discussed.

Life is a choice experience: Sis. Suseela asked the participants to share their life's defining moment and the choices they exercised. She said that choices make our destiny and we should not put limitations on the infinite possibilities. She also mentioned that it is the ingredients within us that help us make choices and that we must pay attention to the inner self.

Man is Nature's instrument: Br Misal Mehta talked about the necessary characteristics for Man to be an instrument of Nature namely such as cooperation, adaptability, preparation, surrender and faith.

Time and Life Management: This activity was conducted by Br Sanjay Panigrahi with the objective that participants take back an experience that helps them in the real world. Referring to Master's talk, he said that we tend to focus on 'not important but urgent' work. Focusing on 'not urgent but important' work improves quality of our life.

Life spaces: This activity, conducted by Br Sumit Arora helped in showing the attitude and state of mind with which we operate and work in different areas of life.

Adapting Invertendo principles: Br Tushar Pradhan explained invertendo as seen in Sahaj Marg and gave examples of invertendo in real life such as rich people not helping beggars, but beggars helping beggars.



(left) Participants of the Youth seminar on Character Formation held during 25th November – 1st December in English

Role of the Master in an Abhyasi's Life: Br Somakumar emphasised that The Role of the Master is an all-encompassing role. He is present at every moment in our life. But he needs our co-operation in the sacrifice he is making. He said that the Master we see in physical self is not the real Master and we have to develop inner closeness with him.

Ten Maxims: Br Rishi explained the importance of each Maxim with practical scenarios. He explained how to apply the Maxims to reverse the tendency towards grossness and to connect with divinity.

Purity Weaves Destiny: Sis. Suman Mishra said that fate is what we are born with, and destiny is what we create. Fate is inevitable and destiny can be influenced by our thoughts and actions. The soul chooses the circumstances in which it is born which will influence the course of its evolution. What we do in the process is too get caught in the web of our own creation and get entangled in it. So, we have to free our mind and become pure at all levels- physical, mental and spiritual.

Relationships: Sis. Snehal discussed about various relationships, their impact on life and its events. She mentioned that genesis of relationship is from conception and the end of relationship is with the eternal one which we have with our Master.

What is Sahaj Marg way of communication: Br Harish Mehta talked about various forms of communication. He said that transmission is the major means of communications in Sahaj Marg where one heart transmits to the other. He also narrated his experiences in life where Master actually responded to his heart to heart communication.

Courage to know and Dare to think: Br Ajay Bhat

said "Will I reach my destination?" is what matters. Half the work is done when we start to think. He said that must have the courage to find answers to questions such as why are we here, what is our goal, are we practicing mechanically, are we sensitive and where are we heading.

Ten Maxims of Sahaj Marg as Tools of Character Formation (Tamil), 24th – 29th December 2013

This seminar was attended by sixty-six participants including eight faculty members.

Maxim 3: With Master's quotes, Br Dhanumoorthy explained the need to fix the goal. The goal should be the highest and should be oneness with God.

Maxim 2: Br Raghupathy shared his understanding and experience regarding the practice of the second maxim. The importance of right attitude and a heart full of love and devotion were explained.

Maxim 1: Br R. Pavunraj spoke on the need to practice the first Maxim sincerely with emphasis on rising early to complete the *puja* before sunrise, the need to have fixed separate space as well as seat for worship and purity of mind and body.

Maxim 10: Br K. Kalyanaramana highlighted the importance of being simple to lead a balanced life.

Maxim 6: Br V. Sudharsan underlined the need for realizing that everyone has the same essence. He said that if we consciously practice shedding prejudice and hatred, a state conducive to reach higher states of spirituality is established.

Maxim 5: Br M. Murugarasan explained to the participants the inherent meaning of what Pujya

Babuji intended to convey through Maxim 5.

Maxim 7: Br V. Sudharsan explained that there may be temporary pain in following the seventh maxim which can be handled through Constant Remembrance. He emphasized that cleaning can overcome pain inflicted by acts of others and also remove tendencies to cause harm to others.

Maxim 9: Sis. M. Ezhilarasi dealt with various aspects of this maxim and emphasized that this is the natural and

automatic consequence of practicing all other maxims intently.

Maxim 8: Br K. Natarajan shared his experience and views about the process of having food. He stressed on the need to adopt honest and pious means to earn one's livelihood as well as the need to eat in constant divine thought.

Source: Br. U. P. Dhawan



(left) Participants of the seminar on Ten Maxims as Tools for Character Formation held during 24th – 29th December in Tamil

A report on CREST Seminar on Ten Maxims as Tools for Character Formation (24th - 29th December 2013)

Master has said, "In Nature, there is no creation – Nothing is created. That which is lying dormant is made active."

The whole programme was very natural, like a river starting from the hill, flowing down with all its turbulences, running calmly in the plains and finally reaching the ocean where it loses its identity.

The entire programme was dynamic; change was felt within and without by every abhyasi. It was also visible in everyone. Every session superseded the previous session in all aspects such as delivery of speech and receptiveness of the participants. As a result we all got tuned to the atmosphere and were resonating with each other's heart and ultimately with Master. When each maxim was presented, we felt as if its essence was directly flowing into our heart. During the talk on brotherhood, there was a strong feeling of connectedness with all our brothers and sisters. We felt Master activating the dormant feelings, lying in our heart.

Each speaker handled the subject in a unique way, in-depth and mixed with stories and humour.

- The whole programme was in line with Master's saying – "Beginning is mine and ending is His."
- It started with external and internal noises but ended with pin drop silence within and without.
- It started with lots of questions and ended with no questions.
- It started with minor frictions but ended with complete harmony.
- Started with individuals, ended as family.

We all basked in His care, forgetting all our worries. Even though it was only five days, we feel as if we stayed for a long time and learned so much, which is a very clear indication that Master has taken us all, beyond time and space and put His teachings in our heart. We feel like our education in the institution is completed and we have to get into the field to spread his message not through speech but through our way of life as the ninth Maxim goes "Mould your living so as to rouse a feeling of love and piety in others."

By Br. Raghupathy R, Coordinator for Tamil Seminar

Seminar at CREST, Berlin



Upcoming Seminar at CREST, Berlin

CREST, Berlin will host the next seminar from 20th to 26th March 2014. The topic for this seminar is "Does Generosity depend on Faith?" For further information, the interested may contact CREST registration at: de.secretary@srcm.org

(left) Participants of the seminar held during 7th – 13th November 2013

During the last quarter CREST, Berlin hosted a seminar on the topic 'From Ignorance to Knowing to Unknowing' from 7th to 13th November. Following sub-topics were included:

- Ignorance, innocence
- Identities, Personalities, Our own constructions, Illusions
- Cloud of Unknowing / Acceptance, Cleaning and Humility
- Dare to Think

Below is a report by Sis. Shruti, a participant.

It was nature at work that we (Ineke and I) decided to attend this CREST session. On reaching Berlin we were happily surprised to see the ashram was so spacious and nice to look at! The first evening started with satsangh – could feel that my heart was being prepared to receive and accept.

It was lovely to meet brothers and sisters from various countries, cultures, age groups and professions. Many were practicing Sahaj Marg for a long time, while a few were quite new!

Each day there were two talks for 3 hours each, with a short break for 15 minutes after 90 minutes. The speakers had worked very hard, researching, trying to feel and understand the topic and presenting it in a simple, natural and interactive manner. There were short activities and experiments that made us 'dare to think' and it was a beautiful expression of heart through the mind. There was a blend of science, psychology, philosophy, history, mathematics, media and personal experiences related to spirituality.

The sessions were quite intense and thought-provoking. The talks that were really touching were

the ones in which the speaker spoke with conviction from the heart.

The beauty of the sessions was that as soon as the speaker would finish the talk, we could feel strong transmission, so much so that it felt like being in satsangh. Many would go deep into meditation soon after the talks.

There were some short simple physical activities in the evening and this helped us to relax.

There was much interaction between all participants. One would meet the right person at the right time in order to share the right experience that benefitted both. There were some emotions felt and reactions coming up but all got settled down after sometime. To my mind it was like Master was boiling all the potatoes together to make a dish! It was a beautiful learning curve for everybody resulting in the binding of hearts.

Transcending the exterior, one could feel within a strong transformation taking place within. This was especially evident during the satsanghs. It was like the true understanding of the topics was the revelation that came from inside during the satsangh. In a way the link between the external and internal knowledge that had been missing so far was re-established.

I feel CREST is doing a fine job of linking the external with the internal - knowledge of the heart with knowledge of the mind. This seminar really helped me realize certain truths from within, and helped to understand our system better by giving expression to internal knowledge.

Source: Br. Christian Macketanz, Sis Shruti.

Activities at SPURS

SPURS hosted twenty-seven abhyasis for the quarter ending December 2013. The focus of the quarter was on nature. Rain has filled up the two ponds and the stream is now flowing. Six crape myrtle saplings were planted along a new path to the pond. These trees bloom with flowers for around six months in the year and will provide shade and natural beauty for the next generation of retreating abhyasis. A hugelkultur garden was constructed to feed abhyasis healthy organically grown produce eventually. Below are comments made by abhyasis on their experience at SPURS:

- *I'm just waiting with excitement to go home and do my practice like I was able to do here. I also really understand what is meant by 'sense of urgency.'*
- *Sitting in the rocking chair felt like rocking in Master's arms. Then it expanded to the room and property.*
- *I felt like this is my own house and I don't want to leave. Master has put an umbrella over here and I can take it with me - hooked to me.*
- *My heart is so filled with His presence. The feeling is just overwhelming.*
- *I was able to experience the state of lack of desire here.*



You may yourself wish to spend a few days in this very special place. Should you have questions about coming to SPURS, please do not hesitate to call at +1-512-301-2104. Information on SPURS is available on web at: <http://www.sahajmarg.org/smww/spurs-texas-usa>.

Abhyasis may submit the participation requests online. Once requests are processed, abhyasis will receive a confirmation and a welcome package containing detailed information on the program and the facility. Please e-mail austin@sahajmarg.org

Source: *Sis. Suzanne Garner, SPURS Ranch Retreat Center Resident Prefect*

(left) The pond at the SPURS Retreat Centre

Activities at Pune Retreat Centre



During the quarter of October to December 2013, one hundred and forty-two abhyasis availed the facility of retreat at the Pune retreat center.

Interested abhyasis are requested to book a place here well in advance especially during vacation period. Senior citizens are required to bring a fitness certificate from a doctor when they arrive at the Retreat Centres in India. Abhyasis are advised to prepare themselves by reading prescribed material, taking individual sittings and getting into the retreat mood a week before the retreat starts. We look forward to more and more abhyasis coming for retreat to utilize this divine facility made available by our Master.

Source: *Br Prem Apte*

(left) A picture of the Pune Retreat Centre

Applying for Retreats

Abhyasis who wish to apply for retreats either at the **Malampuzha** or **Pune** centres may find more information about these facilities and the retreat program at: <http://www.sahajmarg.org/smww/retreat-center-overview>. Abhyasis who wish to enroll for retreat programs may now apply online at the address given above.

Medical Centre News

Free Medical Centres (FMC) at Manapakkam and Satkhol have been undertaking many activities towards imparting medical services to the needy. Medical Camps are regularly held in many other centres. Physicians, medical students, residents, nurses and others in the medical community have formed Sahaj Marg Physicians Group (SMPG) to offer medical services to the needy in the FMCs. This group may be contacted at rgokula@hotmail.com or smg@sahajmarg.info

Services of Free Medical Centre at Manapakkam during the period from October 2013 to December 2013

The FMC served 22,410 patients during this quarter. Details of the activities in this period are given below.

Specialty wise	Patients	Panel of Doctors	
Allopathy	19,863	Dr U. Ravindran, Dr Anamay. K. Bidwai, Dr S. Kishore, Dr R. Sulochana, Dr V. Vidyavathi, Dr Komal Gupta, Dr Jaya Prasanthi	
Cardiology	86	Dr V. Vanaja	
Dentistry	800	Dr Jagadish Kumar, Dr Komal Gupta	
Dermatology	757	Dr M. Jayaraman	
Endocrinology	48	Dr M. Ravi Kiran	
Gastro-enterology	77	Dr M. Manimaran	
General Surgery	71	Dr Anamay K. Bidwai	
Physiotherapy	554	Sis. P. Kiranmayee	
Homeopathy	1,222	Dr RamSubramaniam Dr Vidhi N. Shah	
Nutrition	39	Sis. G. Srilatha	
Ophthalmology	229	Dr Harshitha Bakshi	
Orthopedics	52	Dr D. Narendra	
Paediatrics	3,384	Dr Natwar Sharma Dr S. Kishore	
Psychiatry	23	Dr A.P. Mythili	
Pulmonology	2	Dr G. Raja Amarnath	
Urology	13	Dr Sanjay Sharma	
Gynecology	49	Dr Jayanthi Mohan	
Neurology	23	Dr R. Padmini	
Spirometry	11	Courtesy Lupin Laboratories	
Ayurveda	107	Dr. C. Jayasree	
Categories	Patients	Categories	Patients
Male	8,460	Abhyasis	6,537
Female	10,566	Others	15,873
Children	3,384	Total	22,410
Other details	Patients		
Services outside regular hours	161		
In patients	198		
Clinical Laboratory investigations	1,627		
Staff	Staff	Volunteers	
Dr S. Kishore (Doctor) Dr Anamay K. Bidwai (Doctor) Dr Vidhi N. Shah (Doctor) Dr Komal Gupta (Doctor) Dr P. Dinesh (Doctor) Dr. Jaya Prasanthi A. KrishnaKumar (Pharmacist) K. Jaya (House-keeping) Sis. P. Kiranmayee (Physiotherapist)	A. Radhamani (Nurse) S. Hemavathy (Nurse) D. Eswaramma (Nurse) S. Jayasudha (Nurse) M. Suba (Nurse) S. Selvavani (Nurse) V. Samanthi S. Srinivasalu (Lab Technician) K. Kavitha (Lab Technician)	Dr U. Ravindran Dr V. Vidyavathi Dr R. Sulochana Sis. Janaki Sudha	

Source: Br. Dr Ravindran Ulaganathan



(above) Pictures from Free Medical Camps at Thiruvallur

(below) Statistics of patients treated at the Thiruvallur camps

Free Medical Camp at Thiruvallur

SMSF has recently purchased land near Thiruvallur about forty kilometres from Chennai. Master had announced that a Free Medical Centre would come up there. As a beginning in that direction, he has instructed that Free Medical Camps should be conducted there on the last Sunday of every month.

On 29th December 2013, the first camp was conducted. It was inaugurated by District Collector, Br Veera Raghavan. On that day, 539 patients from about seven villages in and around the land were treated. Thirteen consultants from Chennai participated in the first camp. Lab investigations such as blood sugar and haemoglobin were conducted for sixty-eight patients. ECG was taken for twenty-four patients.

The second camp was conducted on 26th January 2013. About 482 patients from twenty-one villages were treated. Sixteen consultants from Chennai participated in the second camp. Lab investigations such as blood sugar and haemoglobin were conducted for sixty patients. ECG was taken for seven patients.

Source: Br. Dr Ravindran Ulaganathan

Activities at Satkhol Medical and Dental Centre

A specialist camp was held at Satkhol from 4th to 6th October 2013. The camp included a school health program in which 413 students from four schools and one intermediate college were covered. Two photographs from the camp are shown in the left sidebar.

Category	29-Dec	26-Jan
Male	186	154
Female	273	249
Children	80	79
Total	539	482
Abhyasis	17	34
Others	522	448

(below) Pictures from the medical camp at Satkhol



Specialty wise		Specialty wise	
Medicine	156	OBG	175
Surgery	63	Dermatology	138
E.N.T	71	Orthopedic	126
Cardiology	95	Physiotherapy	30
Dentistry	204	Paediatrics	95
Dermatology	138	Homeopathy	53
Ophthalmology	219	Ayurvedic	97
Total cases treated	2184		
School health program	413		
Total	2597		

Source: Br. Dr. K. D. Dubey

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