



Editorial

Smrithi is a newsletter published by the Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center, a non-profit, religious organization registered in Maryland. The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of Chinmaya Mission or Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center.

Editorial Board:

Raju Chidambaram (Editor), Sethuraman Balan, Vilasini Balakrishnan, and Swami Dheerananda (Resident Acharya). Web Site Technical Coordination: Anil Kishore, Suresh Balakrishnan, Audio Visual Effects, Jay Sriram and Narayan Inamdar.

Articles appearing in Smrithi may be reproduced with permission from the Editorial Board by sending a request to Raju Chidambaram at aiyers@comcast.net. (April 2004)

Happiness Vs Bliss

Vandana Bapna
(Arts Coordinator, Chinmayam Bala Vihar)

In the *Bhagavad Geeta* discourses for adults, Swami Dheerananda mentioned as to how our instruments of body, mind and intellect are governed by our *vasanas* (the past tendencies of likes and dislikes) and how we are placed in an appropriate field in the outer world to exhaust these *vasanas*. At every experience, besides exhausting our *vasanas*, we are gifted with ample opportunities to peek, seek and unfold our true nature, that which lies beyond what can be perceived through our senses, feelings and thoughts...only if we are able to maintain a quiet, alert and watchful *sakshibhava* through the roller coaster of dualities.



One of the most precious blessings we receive in order to exhaust the existing *vasanas* is through the unconditional love for our children. It is just impossible to understand or explain the intense love that a parent feels for this hitherto completely unknown soul. From the moment of giving birth, the parents' hearts ache with love to ensure that the child grows up to be happy and a positive contributor to the society.

On tucking the children in bed at night, I silently prayed to the Almighty to keep them happy, healthy and safe; to enable them to become responsible, respectful and truthful; to grant them with courage,

wisdom, *viveka* and gratitude...and a special prayer based on that day's experience.

On one such night, I questioned to myself the prayer for their happiness? Is happiness real? Why do we run away from sorrow and seek happiness? It is a rule of life that moments of happiness are fleeting and always coexist with moments of sorrow. And, after all what is sorrow, but for our dislikes? So, in asking for their happiness (*raga*), was I also peacefully accepting their sorrow (*dvesha*)? NO! So, what should I pray for from now on? The question haunted...

I found the answer in "Bliss", a state of serenity that is beyond the two-sided BMI perceptions. Bliss is the source of peace, wisdom, courage and faith in spite of the ever-changing experiences of joy/sorrow, pain/pleasure and profit/loss. So, Almighty, please grant them, us, and All with "Bliss" to sail through the boat of this life!