

Reflections*

Walking The Path of Jainism



* Holding this book perpendicularly to a mirror allows the cover image and its reflection to create a WHOLE image. Similarly, reflecting on our inner self is the key to completing our WHOLE self.

Walking the Path of Jainism

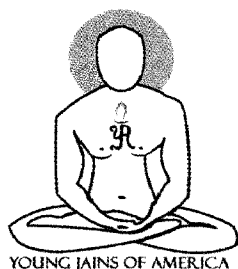
As you attend the 5th Biennial Young Jains of America Convention, you will meet many different personalities and become exposed to diverse schools of thought. The individuals you meet, ideas you share, and friendships you make will change your life in some way, shape, or form. Believe it or not, these next four days will impact you.

Rarely in life do we take time to reflect upon who we are, how we got here, and where we are going. During these next four days, as you attend sessions and participate in activities, take a few moments to introspect and explore your inner self.

Without reflection, it is difficult to decipher destination. *Reflections* is designed to help you find your path. It will serve as a guide during your sessions and as a memoir after the Convention has passed.

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YOUNG JAINS OF AMERICA

Young Jains of America

Federation of Jain Associations in North America
A Non-Profit Tax Exempt Religious Organization. IRS Code Section 501 (c)(3) EI #54-1280028

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Jai Jinendra,

Young Jains of America (YJA) is proud to unveil its 5th biennial convention in Mahwah, New Jersey from July 4th to July 7th. This auspicious event will bring together close to 1000 Jain youth from all across North America and the rest of the world. We realize that today's youth need more than just knowledge, they need application—so YJA presents *Walking the Path of Jainism* as its theme in this year's convention.

We felt that we needed to emphasize Jain concepts and core knowledge so that youth can understand the tenets before they delve deeper into the philosophy and practice of them. With sessions such as 12 Bhavanas, Ratnakar Pachissi, and Jain Rituals and Prayers, youth will be able to learn the fundamentals of Jainism. Speakers like Satish Kumar, Chitrabhanuji, Sadviji Shilapiji, Samani Charitra Prajana and Samani Sharada Pragma, Dr. Ray Greek, and many others add unparalleled knowledge and inspiration to this convention. Hence, we've strived to bring in influential speakers, motivating sessions, and inspirational topics.

While working on the 2002 Convention has been the focus of YJA for the past year, we also tackled several other activities. YJA has teamed up with Habitat for Humanity to build houses all across America in our attempt to help youth put into practice the teachings of Lord Mahavir in the form of 'Ahimsa in Action.'

We've given our website a facelift and added exciting new features with flexible capabilities for our members to use. From our interactive discussion board with various topics, to our events and holiday calendar, to the YJA member spotlight, our website has grown and will continue to grow to better give youth across the nation and world insight into the activities of Jain youth in North America.

This convention and all of our other undertakings could not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our executive board. We also thank the New Jersey Convention Committee for their diligence and indomitable work ethic. We would like to thank each and every donor for their generous contributions and continuing support. Finally, we appreciate the tireless efforts of all the volunteers, both youth and parents, who have spent countless hours putting together this great convention. Together, we've brought you the best convention to date and introduced features that future conventions will assuredly repeat.

Ultimately, you the youth of North America decide the course YJA takes. To learn more about YJA and all our activities, please visit our website at www.yja.org. We urge you to take the initiative and become involved in your community and your region. Become a leader and help spread Jainism today, to the leaders of tomorrow.

Young Jains of America (YJA) is the umbrella youth organization of the **Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA)**. The mission of YJA is to be recognized nationally and internationally as an umbrella youth organization for establishing a network to share



Young Jains of America

Convention 2002, New Jersey

Establishing a network to share Jain heritage and religion through youth



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Federation of Jain Associations in North America
A Non-Profit Tax Exempt Religious Organization. IRS Code Section 501 (c)(3) EI #54-1280028

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Jai Jinendra!

Welcome to the 5th Biennial Young Jains of America Convention. We take great pleasure in seeing so many youth excited and interested in making a difference. This convention is designed to give you a glimpse of what it means to ***Walk the Path of Jainism***. "Walking" signifies travel, or embarking on a journey—a journey towards enlightenment (*Moksha*). All individuals choose their own path in life. Jainism acts as guide to help each person attain the ultimate goal of true happiness. This conference is aimed at helping you incorporate Jainism into your daily lives.

All too often, participants go home from conventions complaining about not being able to apply what was learned at the convention into their daily lives. They appreciate the knowledge they gained but become frustrated because there is no guidance post-convention. Doing and acting are vital elements to our life force and true knowledge cannot be complete without it.

To this end, we have concentrated our efforts to provide you the best convention experience possible. This year, we have taken it upon ourselves to help you practically incorporate everything you are going to learn. Each session you attend, every activity and night event you participate in has an end goal in mind. Your objective this weekend should be to engross yourself in the convention experience.

For the next four days, you will come to know what it means to eat Jain food, use cruelty free soap, and participate in Indian cultural and religious programs. Over 100 youth across the U.S. have helped to make this convention happen. What you take away with you this weekend will be our reward. It is our sincere hope that you will allow yourself to be challenged and inspired by the viewpoints presented here.

Palak Doshi & Nikhil Shah

Co-Chairs

New Jersey Convention Committee 2002

ROBERT G. TORRICELLI
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July 4, 2002

Young Jains Of America
The Sheraton Crossroads Hotel
Mahwah, New Jersey

Dear Young Jains Of America Members:

I am writing to express support of the efforts of the Young Jains of America (YJA), to establish a network to share Jain heritage and religion through youth between the ages of 14 and 29. I am honored your organization has chosen the state of New Jersey to host this year's convention. For many years, the Young Jains of America have worked as an effective advocate for Jain youth by raising awareness about Jain ideals and principles in North America and throughout the world. I am eager to see your vibrant social activism continue.

The YJA has worked diligently to create a forum for sharing Jain religion while instilling a sense of pride among Jain youth about their heritage. You have also developed successful programs to address the problems, difficulties, and concerns facing Jain youth. Your efforts promoting charitable community activities has been substantial and much appreciated.

I hope your convention is a great success and enjoyed by all those in attendance. I applaud your efforts to assist both the Jain community and your fellow man. I wish you continued success and growth in the years ahead.

Sincerely,



ROBERT G. TORRICELLI
United States Senator

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Jai Jinendra!

On behalf of The Jain Center of New Jersey Executive Committee I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for coming to this convention. We not only welcome all of you, but are truly proud to host the 5th Biennial YJA Convention 2002 in New Jersey. Close to two years of hard work is coming together for this four day event in Mahwah, NJ.

Conventions are great fun and everyone can learn by being an active participant. We hope every child will enjoy this convention, meet old friends and make new friends as well. We are sure that every participant will take something from the convention that will stay with him/her for the rest of their life.

We send our best wishes to YJA and the New Jersey Convention Committee for the success of your Convention.

Virendra S. Shah
President
Jain Center of New Jersey

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Editor's Note

This book is designed to accompany the programming and events of the Fifth Biennial Young Jains of America Convention, hosted in New Jersey from July 4 to July 7, 2002. We regret any omissions and errors.

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Gurudev Chitrabhanuji

■ Gurudev Chitrabhanu was the first monk to establish Ahinsa and reverence for life in the western world. Gurudev was born Rup-Rajendra Shah on July 26, 1922 in a village in Rajasthan, India. He attended college at Bangalore and earned a degree in psychology. His spirit of adventure and idealism led him to meet Mahatma Gandhi whose Ahinsa-approach to the British had touched him. Young Rup-Rajendra was once beaten by a British policeman for participating in India's Freedom Movement. Rup found forgiving the officer who had hurt him a very moving experience. Something happened that day.

He began to seek out masters who could enlighten him to receive answers to his perplexity about the mystery of death. Foremost in his mind were the deaths of his mother when he was age four, his sister when he was twelve, and his closest friend whose father, even as a doctor, could not save her. He found the renowned Jain master Acharya Sagarinand Surishvarji at Palitana. Inspired by him, Rup Rajendra took Disksha (initiation) on February 6, 1942 at the age of 20 and became a Jain monk. For the next 29 years he would be known as Muni Chandraprabha Sagarji, the change in name traditionally signifying a change in life. In extraordinary solidarity, his father in Tumkur soon became a monk as well.

For five years he took a vow of silence (mohan), wandering the mountains, forests, and villages. He experienced a silence that stills the logic of the mind and awakens from within the deepest intuition of the spirit. When the years of silence were over, his guru proclaimed him ready to go out into the world and speak. Under his guru's guidance he began to travel, meet people every day, and witness life in its diversity all over the country: its joys, its beauties, and its hardships. He spoke before villagers, boys and girls at schools, and prisoners in jail.

He also began writing. His books and poems stirred people's good feelings. His poem that runs "Maitri Bhavanu Pavitra Jharanu...", which he wrote under the pen name Chitrabhanu, became very popular. His books reached abroad and aroused considerable interest in Ahinsa and Jainism..

From these activities, he heard a different call that invited him to explore other attitudes and altitudes, and to travel other paths. He realized there was much for the world to learn and more to understand from the vast reaches of wisdom and experiences of the Jinas'— ahinsa, anekantavada, and reverence for all life. His footsteps covered vast grounds (now an estimated 30,000 miles or more). It was the joy of wandering, the joy of living. He launched a campaign to close down slaughterhouses, which successfully led to a complete ban on cow slaughter in nine states of India.

Directors of The Temple of Understanding in India invited him to attend The Second Spiritual Summit Conference on April 1970 in Geneva. His inspiring message was received with a standing ovation. He felt it important to involve all other religions and spiritual groups of the world and make them aware of the blessings of Ahinsa. This led to invitations from the Dean of Harvard Divinity School, from institutes in Paris and Munich, and from the Secretary of the Vatican to have an audience with Pope Paul VI in Rome.

He decided he would not remain a traditional sadhu but instead lead the life of a lay sadhaka (aspirant). In the spring of 1970 in a simple ceremony, he married his spiritual companion Pramoda Shah who was a graduate student of psychology and whose spiritual quest had led her to join his mission. He envisioned having to go through all aspects of life to complete his cycle of evolution. He visited Africa and Europe, and at the invitation of Harvard Divinity School and the Temple of Understanding he came to the United States in 1971.

He was the first to celebrate Mahavira Jayanti at the UN Chapel. In 1973 he founded the Jain Meditation International Center in New York City, near the United Nations. In 1975 he also sponsored a dynamic personality from India, Acharya Sushil Kumarji, who would go on to establish the Siddhachalam Jain Tirtha in New Jersey.

He inspired American Jains to create religious centers all throughout America, which would help to guide individuals sow the seeds of non-violence and reverence for all life, and also to help spread the understanding of karma and self-realization.

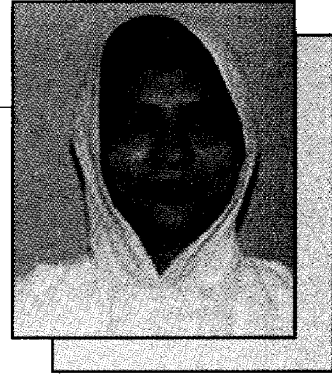


Samani Charitrapragyaji

■ Samani Charitrapragyaji received her initiation (Samani Diksha) in 1990 From Ganadhipati Gurudev Sri Tulsi and Acharya Sri Mahapragyaji. She holds an M. A. degree in Jain and Comparative Philosophy from Jain Vishva Bharti University, India. She has organized a number of Preksha Meditation camps, and delivered numerous lectures on Jain Philosophy and Culture at many colleges and universities in India as well as Europe and the U. S. She has also made presentations at many national and international conferences. Charitrapragyaji is a heavily sought out speaker for all

aspects of Jainism and is a tremendous advocate for amplification of women's rights in Jainism.

Samani Shardapragya



■ Samani Shardapragyaji, is a disciple of H.H.Acharya Mahapragyaji. She took Saman diksha in October, 1994 in New Delhi. She has received her masters degree in Jainology & Comparative Religion and Philosophy from Jain Vishva Bharti Institute University. She has visited India and traveled abroad preaching non-violence, Jainism, preksha-meditation, and more. She visits several countries every year, participates in inter-faith programs, preaches the values of non-violence, peaceful co-existence and environmental protection.



Satish Kumar

■ Born in India, Satish Kumar became a Jain monk at the age of nine, which he later renounced to join the Gandhian movement. He walked 8000 miles for peace from India to Moscow, Paris, London and Washington DC. Currently he is the editor of *Resurgence*, a bi-monthly magazine that provides an international forum for ecological and spiritual thinking, and Programme Director of Schumacher College, an International Centre for Ecological Studies. The magazine, which is now working to widen its tiny North American audience, has been called "the artistic and spiritual flagship of the Green movement" by

the Guardian. Satish also directs a college devoted to holistic principles of learning, an alternative school in his local village, and a publishing house - all of which he founded. He lectures all over the world on assorted topics

When asked what particular experience in his life led to his hard work, he replied, "In 1962 British philosopher Bertrand Russell was jailed because of his civil disobedience against the nuclear bomb. Russell was 95 at that time. Reading the news that a man of that age and that stature could go to jail for his convictions and for peace in the world gave me courage to embark upon a life of service." Satish, who can be counted among our most interesting social thinkers, needs considerable energy to accomplish all the things he wants to do.

Amar Salgia

■ Amar Salgia holds both a bachelor's and master's degree in engineering and was formerly a project authority at Boeing Satellite Systems. His research and writings on Jain philosophy & tradition encompass world history, religion, and modern science. Part of his awareness involves how Jainism and its development have been represented and misrepresented in both Western & Indian writing and teaching media. Amar was one of the founders of the Young Jains of America. His long-term projects include Jain outreach to American society and the building of a new American Jain tradition accessible to all Americans. His recent publication *Pure Freedom: The Jain Way of Self Reliance* is a first exposure to Jain thinking designed for persons of Judeo-Christian and agnostic/atheistic backgrounds.

Ameet Shah

■ Ameet Shah spent most of his life growing up in Lexington, a small southern town nestled in central North Carolina. He will be joining JP Morgan in New York as an analyst in their investment banking division. Ameet has been extensively involved in the Jain community as a former Co-Chair of the YJA executive board and active member of both the Charlotte and Raleigh Jain communities.

Dr. Anne Vallely

■ Dr. Anne Vallely teaches courses in "Environmental Thought" and "Religious Ethics and Environment" at McGill University, and a course in "Jainism" at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. She received her Ph. D. in Anthropology from University of Toronto. The title of her thesis was, "Women and Ascetic Ideal in Jainism." In 1999-2000 she received the Rockefeller Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Humanities. Her book, *Guardians of the Transcendent: An Ethnography of a Jain Ascetic Community*, is being published by the University of Toronto Press in Spring 2002.

Archit Shah

■ Archit Shah is currently a graduate student in computer science at MIT. After graduating with a B.S. from MIT, he spent two years in industry as a software developer and manager at an internet consulting firm. He has been actively involved in presentations at 3 national Jain conferences. As part of the Jain Center of Greater Boston's Pathshala, he participated in the Tattvartha Sutra project which presented the fundamentals of Jainism to almost 1000 people at the Toronto JAINA convention. At the last JAINA convention he gave a talk exploring the relationship between Jainism and science.

Arvind Bhandari

■ Arvind Bhandari has been active in educating the youth in New Jersey for over ten years as a pathshala teacher. He dedicates his time to help the youth understand Jain principles in a dynamic and interactive way. He has written and directed many plays that are preformed by the youth at JAINA conventions as well as local Mahavir Jayanti Cultural programs. Arvind Bhandari is an advocate for the young Jains in New Jersey and continues to be an asset to the Indian community. Mr. Bhandari is married to a supportive wife, Nayna Bhandari, has two sons, and one daughter-in-law.

Ashik Shah

■ Born in Nairobi, Kenya in 1969, Ashik has spent most of his life in the United Kingdom, where he was educated at the Cambridge University in Economics and Politics. He has spent much of his spare time studying various religions of the world, and modes of spirituality, and focused on Jainism in recent years. He has benefited from the guidance of many great teachers, such as Pujya Chitrabhanuji amongst others. He has studied Shrimad Rajchandra's life and teachings for the last five years, taking the guidance of Pujya Nalinbhai Kothari of Sayla, Saurashtra, India.

He has been part of a team translating a book on the life of Shrimad into English from a Gujarati version by Shri Kumarpal Desai, and is currently working on a translation and commentary of Shrimad's Shri Atma Siddhi for the Institute of Jainology, to be published as part of the International Sacred Literature Trust Series, which includes "That Which Is" or the Tattvartha Sutra.

He helped to found YJA, and was on the executive board 1993-1995, and has presented in Chicago in 1994, and in LA in 2000. He was also one of the main speakers at the Young Jains international convention in July 2000 in London.

Dr. Atul Mehta

■ Dr. Atul M. Mehta, President and CEO founded Elite Laboratories in 1990. He is a renowned scientist in the field of oral controlled release dosage form development, and has over 15 years of experience, and is an inventor of 10 US patents. His company is traded on the NYSE under the ticker ELI.

Beeneet Kothari

■ Beeneet Kothari is a junior at the University of Pennsylvania and also a board member of the YJA. He is enrolled in the Management and Technology (M&T) Program, and is majoring in Bioengineering and Economics at Wharton. In 2000, Beeneet was an Intel Science Talent Search Top 40 National Finalist for his research on HIV, T Cells, and anti-HIV drug therapy. Last year, Beeneet was awarded a prestigious full scholarship to conduct Quantum Computing research at Oxford University.

Dr. Bharat Shah

■ Dr. Bharat Shah practices Chest and Internal Medicine in New York City. He is a diplomat of the American Board of Internal Medicine and has worked on artificial lungs for emphysema patients.

He has written and published (Setubandh Publications) several educational books on the Gujarati and English languages, Devanagari script, and an Introduction to Jainism. He has also written many commentaries in *Gurjari*, *India Abroad*, *News India*, and *Kalam* of Gujarati Samaj of New York. Dr. Shah has been on the All India Radio, and has been interviewed on the Bombay TV. He has served as secretary and as president of the Gujarati Literary Academy of North America.

He has written, directed and performed in many Gujarati one-act plays, the most famous being "Ranano Mevad Tyag". His latest play "Kasturi Mrug (A Musk Deer)" is in English, and it involves a dialogue between four sophomore students of various religions that have a chance encounter with Lord Mahavir.

Chandrakant Mehta

■ Chandrakantbhai was born and raised in a religious family in Ahmedabad, India. He came to the United States in 1970 and holds Masters degrees in Physics and Nuclear Engineering. In 1996, he accepted an early retirement from Nuclear Engineering to accept a teaching position in academics and to devote more time for religious activities.

Jain Centers across North America appreciate his selfless service for the past 14 years, especially on his inspirational lectures and Jain discourses. He is a well respected Jain scholar who is instrumental in performing the traditional Swadhyaya and has also been actively involved in giving lectures, Aradhana, Samayik, and Shibirs.

He is fluent in Gujarati, Hindi, and English. His goal is to continue promoting Jainism to adults and youth groups all over the world. Aagam, Prakashan Trust (a non-profit organization) has published an audio series on the spiritual explanation of Uvasagga Heram stotra, Bhaktamar Stotra and Chaitya Paripati. His video on the Science of Samayik is extremely popular.

Chintan Parikh

■ Chintan Parikh was born and brought up in Mumbai. He has lived in New Jersey for 4 years and is a college graduate with a degree in Information Systems. Being a part of this year's convention planning team has been an enriching experience for Chintan and has helped him learn more about Jainism and grow as an individual.

Chirag Shah

■ Chirag Shah has just completed his senior year of high school and is on his way to Truman State University in Missouri to pursue Political Science to prepare him for law school. Born and raised in a suburb of Milwaukee, WI, his parents instilled in him a good foundation of Jain principles. When asked why he decided to present at the convention, he said, "Jain Rituals and Prayers have personally helped me to understand and explain how and why ceremonies are performed the way they are."

Cromwell Crawford

■ Cromwell Crawford's family came to India in the employ of the East India Company in 1761 — the first Crawford was a governor in the Orissa area and his son was in charge of the country's finances in India House, London, along with Secretary James Mill. Cromwell was born in Jhansi, reared in Bombay, and completed his first 7 years of college in Serampore, W. Bengal. Cromwell Crawford is currently a Professor and Department Chair at the Pacific School of Religion. His specialty is in Comparative Ethics, Indian Religions, and Health & Medicine in World Religions. Publications include: *Evolution of Hindu Ethical Ideals*; *Ram Mohan Roy*; *In Search of Hinduism*; *World Religions and Global Ethics*; *Dilemmas of Life and Death: Hindu Ethics in a North American Context*; forthcoming, *Hindu Bioethics for the Twenty-first Century*. He is recipient of the 1999 Indian Council of Philosophic Research and National Lectures Award. His personal web site is: www.geocities.com/judit_tiszai/cc-cv/

Dhrumil Purohit

■ Dhrumil Purohit is a member of the YJA executive board and currently attends the University of Delaware as an Interactive Design major. His interests in Jainism were sparked when he wound up at the Toronto Jain Convention by "accident". On weekends Dru can be found doing everything from break dancing to hanging out with Tibetan monks. Other interests include graphic web design for compassionate organizations and learning about the inner workings of the human body. Dru became a vegan two years ago and has since inspired other Young Jains to also pursue this compassionate way of life. At this year's YJA convention he is presenting on the laws of nature and his experiences as a 100% "Living Foodist", one who only eats uncooked fruits and vegetables.

Gabriel Figueroa

■ Gabriel Figueroa is an assistant editor and staff writer for *American Vegan Magazine* (formerly called *Abimsa*). Though raised in a Catholic family, Gabriel was drawn to learn about Jainism from his very first exposure to it. After studying Jain philosophy for some time, Gabriel realized that Jainism offered something very unique, unlike anything to which he had been previously exposed. He made a conscious decision to follow its principles and teachings – in its true essence, *to become a Jain*, which he has been for over six years. He has studied Philosophy and Asian Studies extensively through the University of Texas at Austin. Most of his education about Jainism, however, has come from his own private studies, practical experience, and interaction with others from the Jain community. Gabriel Figueroa works in the retail marketing of new hardware and software technologies within the Central Texas region. He enjoys meditation, reading all sorts of books, writing, and meeting new friends. He has been a vegetarian since 1989 and a vegan since 1990.

Jain Association of Young Adults (LA)

■ The Los Angeles Youth Group has members who currently are or where a part of Jain Center Youth Council (JCYC) in Southern California. JCYC is also known to be the pathshala class held in Southern California. After being schooled by JCYC, UCSD Freshman Bansari Shah and UCLA Freshman Pinita Shah are ready to share ways they have learned to incorporate Jainism in their daily lives.

Jain Center of Greater Boston

■ The Jain Center of Greater Boston youth group has been together for many years.

Some of our group's major accomplishments include presenting the workshop Tic-Tac-Toe and the Three Jewels session at YJA convention in L.A. in 2000 as well as at JAINA in 2001. Some activities that we have done in the past are performing in cultural programs, participating in the Walk for Hunger, and feeding the homeless. In addition, the youth group has performed in our local Mahavira Jayanti and Diwali functions and played a huge role in our Pratistha this past June.

Our motivation not only comes from our long lasting friendship, but also from our aspiration to learn more about our culture. Teamwork and our own opinions sometimes inspire us to present to large groups of people or to help others. Our motivation for the YJA convention 2002 in New Jersey was a combined effort. We enjoy and love representing Boston when we present as well as gaining from the experience that comes with going to the conventions.

Jain Fellowship of Houston

■ The Jain Fellowship of Houston is the official name of the Jain youth group in Houston, Texas. Several young Jains who felt that there was a need for an official organization founded it. The Jain Fellowship has nearly fifty members. The Jain Fellowship has been in existence for several years, however with each year new changes are made to improve the overall organization.

This past year, we have changed our focus to making improvements and being more involved within our community at the temple. JFH performed the YJA play on 2600th birthday of Mahavir. We have taken an active role in the temple renovation and provide regular cleaning of the deraser. Several new ideas have been brought up for the next year. Some possibilities include organizing a YJA South Regional Convention as well as having a Banquet.

University of Michigan JSG

■ The Jain Student Group at the University of Michigan was founded eight years ago in Ann Arbor, MI on the University of Michigan Campus by some students that were interested in furthering their knowledge on Jainism through their college years. The first major accomplishment of our group was the publication of a thorough book on the basics of Jainism at www.umich.edu/~umjains/. Since then, we have been participating in activities with the local Jain center through Snatra Puja, fundraising events, and a Navakar Jaap. Also on campus, we hold meetings, discussions, and yoga activities in conjunction with other student groups. Our group is motivated by their desire to increase their understanding of our culture and religion. Our aim is also to spread awareness of Jainism amongst our community.

Our group members that will be presenting are: Suchita Shah, a second year Chemical Engineering student, Kavita Bhavsar, a second year Pre-Med student, Rinku Kapadia, a third year Industrial Engineering student, Priti Shah, a third year Industrial Engineering student, Anupa Shah, a third year Mechanical Engineering student, Sneha Shah, a third year Chemical Engineering student, and Krupesh Mehta, a fourth year Business student.

Dr. John Cort

■ Dr. John E. Cort is Associate Professor of Asian Religions at Denison University in Ohio. He is the editor of Kendall W. Folkert's, *Scripture and Community: Collected Essays on the Jains* (1993) and *Open Boundaries: Jain Communities and Cultures in Indian History* (1998). He is the author of *Jains in the World: Religious Values and Ideology in India* (2001) and several dozen articles on various aspects of Jainism and religion and society in South Asia. He has also conducted extensive fieldwork research among the Jains in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Manoj Jain

■ Dr. Manoj Jain is a physician living in Memphis, Tennessee who has been conducting research in spirituality and medicine for over 5 years. He has received a \$300,000 grant to study the "Therapeutic Effect of Prayer" in collaboration with Dr. Herbert Benson of Harvard Medical School. He is also a former president and current member of the Jain Center of Memphis. He teaches at the pathshala students and also leads the meditation exercises.

Dr. Jain was born near Indore, Madhya Pradesh, and immigrated to USA in 1973. He received his undergraduate degree in Bio-medical Engineering, summa cum laude from Boston University and conducted research at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Dr. Jain received his doctorate in medicine from Boston University School of Medicine in 1981. During medical school he received several grants to work on health and soybean nutrition projects in rural Madhya Pradesh. He co-authored two books on vegetarian and soybean nutrition.

Dr. Jain also received a Masters in Public Health from Boston University School of Public Health and did his residency training in internal medicine at Boston City Hospital and fellowship training in infectious diseases at New England Medical Center, Tufts University Medical School. During his fellowship he conducted research on HIV epidemiology in India through grants from Ford Foundation and Rockefeller Foundation at Christian Medical College in Vellore. He also served as a consultant to the World Bank on HIV Epidemiology.

Presently, Dr. Jain is a clinical assistant professor at University of Tennessee, Memphis. He is a consultant in infectious diseases, and Medical Director for Quality Improvement at the Tennessee's Quality Improvement Organization. He lives with his wife, Sunita Jain, a physician in physical medicine and rehabilitation and their 3 children Sapna, Monika and Rishab in Memphis, Tennessee and Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

Nature Love

■ Nature Love was born in Wilmington, Delaware into what he calls, “an infinite realm of life on a beautiful planet.” At the age of 15, he began to have dreams of being vegetarian. Against his doctor’s and family’s will he pursued this sensation and started his spiritual journey in life. Nature’s fascination with health and the body’s limitless capabilities eventually brought him to a Living Foods diet- a diet in which one only eats fresh, organic, uncooked fruits and vegetables. His vast knowledge of the body’s workings has inspired many to regain true health and happiness and live a life they never thought possible. Nature’s interest in Jainism and Ahimsa has led him to the YJA Convention to motivate young adults across the globe to grow far beyond their self-placed restrictions.

Pallavi Gala

■ Pallavi Gala is a Microbiologist and Biophysicist by education and Mother by occupation. Actively involved in Arcadia Schools and Jain Pathshala. She has been teaching in the Pathshala at the Jain Center of Southern California since 1994.

Parin Tolia

■ Parin is a 24 year old graduate of the Stern School of Business with a dual Bachelor’s degree in Finance and Information Systems. He works as an Investment Analyst at Global Asset Management, a subsidiary of UBS Global Asset Management. He enjoys basketball, chess, cooking and socializing in his spare time. he also likes to travel and experience different cultures throughout the world.

Pramodaji Chitrabanu

■ Born and brought up in a traditional Jain family, Pramodaji Chitrabhanu developed an interest in the study of the philosophy of Jainism from early childhood. After acquiring the necessary knowledge of the teachings, she started to practice it from eleven years of age. In this way, the philosophy gave a direction to her life that inspired her to study various subjects, thus enriching her vision, knowledge and practice.

After receiving her Bachelors Degree from Mumbai University, majoring in psychology, she dedicated her life to practicing meditation and studying Jain Dharma in depth. Her interests in learning Sanskrit, Jain mantras, music and vegetarianism added extra dimensions to her knowledge of Jainism.

Pramodaji’s main interest is to help put the Jain teachings into day-to-day life. She focuses on women’s issues and helps females emerge out of their narrow self so they can see their potential. This includes steps a woman can take to develop sufficient self-confidence, to build independence from dependency, and to have self-love and love for family members and other people around her. She says that when one comes from a place of self-love, without ego, then one acts with integrity, compassion, respect, kindness and appreciation toward all living beings, including oneself. She believes that once we understand how important our thoughts really are, we will not take our actions in the world so lightly for what we give out, comes about.

She is presently the President of the Jain International Meditation Center in Mumbai which sponsors projects directed in education and rehabilitating the poor and the underprivileged. She works for the Reverence for Life Society, and for Beauty Without Cruelty, in Mumbai which promotes animal welfare and the vegetarian way of life worldwide.

During her stay in New York City, she gives classed in meditation and Jain philosophy, exposing friends to the high vision, pure ideals and potent vibrations of the Jain teachings. She has written three books: namely, *Foods of Earth, Tastes of Heaven; Jain Symbols, Ceremonies and Practices; and To Light One Candle*, co-authored with Clare Rosenfield.

Pratiksha Parekh

■ I have been apart of the New Jersey Convention Committee for the past year and its been a great and worthwhile experience. It been fun working with such an awesome group of innovative minds. I was born and raised in Central Jersey and am currently attending Rutgers University completing my undergraduate degrees in Biochemical Engineering and Economics. I hope that this convention is the very best yet and and that everyone who attends goes home with a little sense of enlightenment, whether external or internal.

Pravin Shah

■ Pravin Shah is a founding member of the Jain Study Center of North Carolina (Raleigh) in 1979. He is a JAINA director and chairperson of the Jaina Education Committee. He is Vegan and an Electrical Engineer by profession. Mr. Shah is also a member of the Harvard University Pluralism Project Advisory Council as well as an advisor to the YJP and YJA organizations of JAINA. He teaches Jainism extensively and has lectured to audiences of all ages all over the U.S.

He is the author of the books; Essence of World Religions, Jainism a Religion of Ecology and Non-violence, and the Book of Compassion. He established the Jain BBS (Bulletin Board Services) in 1993, later converting it to the website www.jainism.org which provides Jain religious information worldwide electronically. At present more than 10,000 pages of Jain literature information are available on this site.

Prem Jain

■ Mr. Prem Jain holds BE with honors from BITS Pilani, India and a masters degree in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from the University of California, Davis. He is the Senior Vice President and General Manager of the Router Technology Group at Cisco Systems which includes all Cisco routers and access products. Prem joined Cisco in 1993 when Cisco acquired Crescendo Communications.

Prem Jain is committed to promote Jain values in the western world. He was President of Jain Milan, founder president of the Jain Center of Northern California, a VP of JAINA, the convener of the 1991 JAINA convention at Stanford, California and is currently Chairman of the Board of Jain Center of Northern California.

Jain's hobbies include skiing, hiking and playing 'bridge'. He is actively involved in volunteer work for non-profit organizations, fundraising for the homeless, and helping San Francisco Bay Area schools.

Purnima Doshi

■ Purnima Doshi was born and raised in Singapore. After marriage, she has been living in upstate New York. An attorney by profession, she is currently a stay at home mom raising her two daughters. Purnima has been teaching Jain Pathshala for the past five years.

Dr. Ray Greek

■ Dr. Ray Greek is a physician who is board certified in anesthesiology and sub-specialty certified in Pain Management. He was an instructor at two of the United States' most prestigious medical schools and has published in the medical literature. He has performed experiments on animals and research with humans. Along with his wife, who is a veterinarian, he has written 2 books on the scientific fallacy of attempting to extrapolate the results of animal experiments to humans, *Sacred Cows & Golden Geese* (forward by Jane Goodall) and *Specious Science*. He has shown not only that animal experiments are unnecessary, but that they have resulted in both direct and indirect harm to humans. Thus these expensive and risky animal experiments produce nothing that could not be accomplished via other methods. Dr. Greek effectively argues that the money currently going to fund animal experiments should be designated for other historically more productive and scientific means of health research. He is president of Americans For Medical Advancement, a 501c3 dedicated to educating the public about the hazards of extrapolating the results of experiments on animals to humans.

Sadhvi Shri Shilapiji

■ A multi-faceted personality, Sadhvi Shri Shilapiji is a young Jain Sadhvi with outstanding qualities. Her unique approach to understand and present religion has touched many lives. She is multi-lingual and a great inspirer and motivator to young people across the world.

Sadhvi Shri Shilapiji comes from Veerayatan, a Jain socio-religious institution dedicated to helping humanity. In Veerayatan, the concept of service to mankind is not only preached by the nuns but also practiced by them. Love and devotion, which are the foundations of Veerayatan are manifested through various activities which include running a charitable eye-hospital, an orthopedic clinic for polio patients, educational facilities for needy students, direct employment to the unemployed through its various activities and training facilities in vocational courses. The institute has motivated many people to lead a value-oriented life. Veerayatan was one of the first organizations to arrive with helping hands at Kutch after the terrible earthquake.

Shri Shilapiji was truly inspired when she first visited the Veerayatan institution in 1986. Her first meeting with Acharya (head nun) Shri Chandanji was the turning point as she decided to make Veerayatan her new home. The next five years were a remarkable story of service and sacrifice, of devotion and dedication, of master-disciple relationship. She chose to work from within: through the humility of heart, the silence of the soul- actively involving herself in social and medical welfare, rural development projects and the promotion of Jainism not only as a religion but also its place in the promotion of human welfare.

Shri Shilapiji finally decided to take *Diksha* (renunciation) in 1991 at the young age of 26. She was able to undertake an in-depth study of Jain scriptures during two periods of silence, one for six months in 1991, and the other for four months in 1993. Through her innovative ideas, and despite resistance from traditionalists, she made a significant contribution to the concept of 'practical modern Jainism'. She also traveled extensively in India for the promotion of non-violence, peace and harmony.

She joined King's College in London in 1995 where, a year later, she completed a master's degree with distinction in Comparative Indian Religions. She is presently undertaking a Ph.D. in *Compassionate Aspect of Jainism* at King's college in London.

Sadhvi Shri Shilapiji's stay in the United Kingdom has had a tremendous impact on the daily lives of thousands of Jain families residing there. She has given birth to faith in the local Jain community, where after years of spiritual apathy, her presence has inspired an awakening and the beginning of a new era. In a short space of time, she has successfully established an International School of Learning Jainism (Shri Chandana Vidyapeeth), with centers in North and South London and in Nairobi and Thika in Kenya. Recently she started two new centers in Australia, and has had many invitations from different countries to support her work.

San Diego Youth Group

■ The San Diego Youth Group consists of Sumeet Jain, Shreya Doshi, Raj Vora and Palak Kothari who are all active participants in the San Diego pathsala classes.

Sumeet, Raj, and Palak are students at the Rancho Bernardo High School. Sumeet enjoys public speaking & philosophy, Raj is a member of the speech and debate team, and Palak is a member of the speech and debate team. Shreya is a Senior at Poway High School, Vice President of the band, and is actively involved in Peer Counseling.

Sarina Jain

■ Sarina Jain, a bhangra aerobics teacher who gets her motivation from her family and her students, is also part of our very diverse panel. She is a host for several Indian TV shows and is an entertainment reporter for Fitness shows. She is the fitness guru for the BBC Radio Asian Network and writes fitness articles for different publications. She also speak at South Asian Seminars. Born in the United States, Ms. Jain proudly embraces her Indian heritage, and is the first to introduce Indian dance to a mainstream audience by creating a powerful fitness tool, THE MASALA BHANGRA WORKOUT™.

Sarita Vasa

■ Sarita Vasa is the Founder and Executive Director of the Indo-American Cultural Center. Her organization has produced over 100 events, served close to 10,000 people, and has involved over 500 volunteers. Sarita is a graduate of UCLA in International Development, completed the certificate program at the Center for Non-Profit Research, and a member of the Ford Foundation funded program. In addition, Sarita has just completed production of a documentary on South Asian youth.

Satya-J

■ The Jain Youth Group of New Jersey - now more commonly known as Satya~J- originated in 1992. Its founders hoped that it could be something that would unite young Jains from neighboring areas to come together, learn who they are, and what their religion is all about. It's safe to say that they reached their goal. Many Jain youth of the time found comfort in a group that was solely about them and what they represented. The ideals of Jainism were put into play through numerous activities and discussions. The end result was an incredible group whose members were not only partners in teaching the world about their culture and religion, but companions that could not have found each other without the creation of this group. They paved the way for the formation of Satya~J.

Satya~J now strives to combine religion with fun and friends. We have meetings where we learn about the ideals of Jainism through discussions and debates. Our annual gatherings give us the chance to get to know one another and become friends. Together, we form a team who members depend on one another for support and collectively uphold the religions we feel so strongly about. Our reason for this? The responsibility of ensure the passage of Jain ideals to future generations, we realize, will soon be ours.

Shailesh Mehta

■ Shailesh Mehta is president of Granite Hill Capital Ventures LLC, and investment and advisory partnership. Prior to Granite Hill, he was Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Providian Financial Corporation, a company with over \$30 billion in assets and over 18 million customers. Mehta joined the founding team of First Deposit Corporation, the predecessor company to Providian in 1986 and built it from just 80 employees to over 12,000 employees. The Fortune 500 company is traded on the NYSE under the ticker PVN, and is in the S&P 500. Prior to joining Providian, Mehta was Executive Vice President at the Ohio-based Ameritrust Corporation (now Key Corp), where he worked for twelve years.

Mehta is currently director to PayPal Inc.; Trustee, Cal State Universities; West Bridge Capital Partners, LLC; selected high tech companies including SiteLite, Inc. and iPolicy Networks; Trustee, Asian Art Museum Foundation in San Francisco; Advisory Committee for India Studies Chair at U.C. Berkeley; Trustee, American Indian Foundation; Charter Member, TIE. Further, Mehta is known for his philanthropic activities. He has formed the Shailesh J. Mehta and Kalpa S. Mehta Charitable Foundation, which has given millions in grants to various institutions and causes. Mr. Mehta holds masters and PhD degrees in Operation Research and Computer Science from Case Western Reserve University. He Received his Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology in Bombay.

Shayna Parekh

■ Born and raised in Southern California, Shayna Parekh has been an active youth member of the Jain Center of Southern California and is the current Director of Education for Youth Jains of America. In 2001, Shayna was chosen by the American India Foundation, chaired by Bill Clinton, to supervise post-earthquake rehabilitation and redevelopment in Bhuj, Gujarat. She graduated from the University of California, Berkeley in May, 2002 and earned the university's top honor for a graduating senior-the University Medal. Following this year's convention, she will be traveling back to India to work with other the Jain non-profit service organization Veerayatan. She will be directing the organization's Service Corps to help with other educational redevelopment in various parts of Kutch, Gujarat.

Shrenik Shah

■ A member of the Jain Center of Greater Boston, Shrenik Shah, age 22, attended the University of Chicago, graduating with bachelor's degrees in Biology and Environmental Studies in the spring of 2002. He now works at an environmental consulting firm, assisting EPA in determining national drinking water regulations. Interested in Jain philosophy from a young age, Shrenik has given various presentations at past JAINA and YJA conventions. In his free time, Shrenik enjoys composing and playing music, acting, reading, rock climbing, and running.

Sadhvi Shri Shubhamji

■ Sadhvi Shri Shubhamji renounced the worldly life 25 years ago at the young age of 21. A disciple of Acharya Shri Chandanaji, Shubhamji worked enthusiastically to build the strong foundation of Veerayatan. A proficient scholar of Sanskrit and Prakrit language, she has studied ancient scriptures and theories of Jainology. She has been traveling extensively in India and abroad spreading the message of love, compassion and brotherhood. Her ideas and actions bring out the true essence of Jainism. She shares a very unique bond of love with animals. Lives of many birds and animals have been set free due to her efforts.

Our beloved Shubhamji has been blessed with the extraordinary capacity of "AVDHAN". She spontaneously answers hundreds of questions raised by curious students. Her motherly, selfless service to humanity has made lives of hundreds of children brighter and full of hope. Her words and actions have inspired many people across the world.

Sudhir Shah

■ Sudhir M. Shah received his MS and MPPM degrees from Yale University. He has been involved in Jain education for the past six years. Currently, he is serving as Pathshala coordinator. He is the Editor of Anekantvad, a quarterly newsletter which can be accessed at: www.anekant.org. Mr. Shah is also the author of "Think of These Things." He is currently serving on the Board of JAINA, Jain Center of Connecticut, and the South Asian Study Council at Yale.

Dr. Tushar Mehta

■ Dr. Mehta has a liberal arts degree from McMaster University and graduated from medical school at the University of Toronto. He recently joined a family practice in the Toronto area and pursues a part time fellowship in Addiction Medicine. In his spare time he enjoys outdoor activities and helping out with various Jain activities.

Vastupal Parikh

■ Vastupal Parikh is knowledgeable professor of Jainism that has recently come out with a new book entitled *Jainism and the New Spirituality*. Here he explains principles and practices of Jainism in a simple lucid language and links this ancient religion with the modern concepts of spirituality. He proposes that Jainism represents a new spirituality – one that has at its core the human rights, social justice, and environment. The book will be a valuable reading for anyone interested in spiritual values, world religions, multi-faith movement, peace, ecology, and social justice. It is also for students of Jainism, whether they are exploring the depths and riches of Jain philosophy or rediscovering their heritage. We believe that the book will be an excellent aid in your attempt to globalize Jainism.

Vatsal Doshi

■ Vatsal Doshi is a fourth year medical student at Harvard Medical School. After medical school, he is considering entering a residency program in General Surgery, and eventually he hopes to combine a career in surgery along with international health work, particularly in India. When he is not learning medicine, Vatsal is interested in a variety of cultural and athletic activities, though perhaps his most favorite ones include going dancing, especially during Navratri festival, exploring new places, and reading a good book. vatsal_doshi@student.hms.harvard.edu

YJA

■ Young Jains of America's (YJA) mission is to be recognized nationally and internationally as an umbrella Jain youth organization for establishing a network to share Jain heritage and religion through youth. YJA started in 1991 and today has grown into an organization representing over 4000 youth nationwide. Under JAINA's guidance, YJA has dedicated its complete time and resources towards educating the future leaders of tomorrow. YJA's major goals include:

Raising awareness about Jain ideals and principles, addressing the problems, difficulties, and concerns facing Jain youth, and instilling a sense of pride among Jain youth about their heritage. To accomplish these mission goals, YJA undertakes several major projects every year. The 2001-2002 board has focused on:

Helping those less fortunate by teaming up with Habitat for Humanity to build houses all across America (www.yja.org/h4h); **Energizing local youth groups** by creating national projects for them, including a vegan/vegetarian listing of franchise restaurants; and **Spreading education** through a massive campaign which provides significant educational resources via the internet (www.yja.org)

YJP

■ We are a network of Jain professionals whose mission is to increase the awareness and understanding of Jain principles and heritage by promoting networking among our members and taking an active role in our community. Some of our major objectives are: to raise awareness of Jain principles through educational and interactive discussions, promote the application of Jainism in the professional and social aspects of our lives provide mentorship to younger Jains, and collaborate with other Jain organizations, and facilitate peer networking

We are midst of planning our biggest annual YJP convention in October. We have made our membership free to reach out and increase our membership base. Check out our new website www.yjponline.org and join us!!!

Yogendra Jain

■ Yogendra Jain has been active in the Jain Center of Greater Boston since it's inception in 1975. He has been the Director of Pathshala in the past, and currently teaches Level 6. He has headed up several projects which have been presented in JAINA conventions including Tattvarth Sutra - Ancient Scriptures Come Alive, Comparative Religion, and Essence of Jainism. His current project together with his Level 6 team is "Re-branding and Repackaging Jainism." The objective of this project is to share "golden nuggets" in Jainism in simple and easy to understand manner with non-Jains.

As for his professional background, Yogendra is a serial entrepreneur. Recently he founded his second start-up, ThinkEngine Networks, a \$15M venture-funded company in the field of telecommunications. Prior to ThinkEngine Networks, Jain was founder and CEO of his first startup which was later acquired. Previously, Yogendra worked at Texas Instruments and MIT-Lincoln Labs. Yogendra holds a Masters degree from Rice University, B.S. from Boston University, and an MBA from Babson College. Yogendra, together with his brother, Dr. Manoj Jain, is nearing completion of a book on Spirituality called the "Illustrated Guide to the Soul."



Ahimsa Thru the Ages

Dr. John Cort

In this talk, Professor Cort will compare the social and ethical values of ahimsa and nonviolence in India and the United States.

“Ahimsa” is often times translated as “nonviolence,” but this translation hides as many differences as the number of similarities it illuminates. Ahimsa is closely connected with other concepts in Jainism, including dharma, shanti, and moksha. We see that ahimsa is thus primarily concerned with the spiritual well-being of the individual, who strives to avoid harming other living beings in order to minimize the negative karmic effect upon his or her own soul. Classical expression of ahimsa within Indian culture have been the strict Jain interpretation of vegetarianism, the use of cloth masks to protect water and air, and animal shelters.

Nonviolence in recent centuries in Europe and North America has come to be closely associated with the concepts of justice, peace, and liberation. Non-violence is thus primarily concerned with the well-being of other human beings within society, and the goal of nonviolent action is to create what Dr. Martin

Luther King, Jr., called “the beloved community.” Classical expressions of nonviolence within American culture have included Henry David Thoreau going to jail rather than pay war taxes, Martin Luther King, Jr., leading the nonviolent struggle for civil rights, and the movements in opposition to wars in Vietnam, Central America, Iraq, and now Afghanistan.

An analysis of the ways in which ahimsa has been understood and practiced within Jain communities, and the ways in which nonviolence has been understood in the United States, shows that these concepts diverge as

notes:

Amazing Jain Architecture

Pallavi Gala

Historically, Jain patrons have been some of the wealthiest individuals. Kings and rich merchants used their considerable resources to build some of the most breathtaking temples. These temples served two purposes:

1. To aid the spirituality of the king and Community and
2. To create a lasting relic of their reign.

Within Jain architecture I will discuss two kinds of structures: the actual physical building structure and the structure of the Jain sangh itself. The first is an obvious topic in architecture as the temples are a reflection of vision, time, and money that went into their construction. The second looks at the influence of these temples on the actual fabric of society. They were created as centers of religion and culture. Temples are anchors of community. Without them the structure of the Jain community would much weaker. This session will discuss not only the architecture in the literal sense but also how these stone buildings show the amazing architecture of Jain society.

There are many temples that we will be discussing, including those at Mount Abu and Ranakpur, Palitana, and Shravarn Belgoda.

The stories behind some of these temples are just as remarkable as the temples themselves. Other ways of looking at Jain architecture will also be discussed. If you are interested in more information about any of these temples or want to learn about others two great books are:

- Shree 108 Jain Tirth Darshanawali
- The Peaceful Liberators: Jain Art from

India

Of course, the best is to go directly to the source itself. So if you are ever presented with the opportunity to visit these or any other Jain tirths, be sure to take it and enjoy their wondrous beauty and spirituality.■

notes:

Anekantavada

Gabriel Figueroa

This discussion will focus on the principle of Anekantavada and how Jains use this fundamental idea in practical ways in different areas of their lives. We will examine what Anekantavada means precisely by looking at its morphological components and examining them closely to gain a fuller and more accurate definition. We will also examine how Anekantavada is perhaps one of the least understood principles of Jainism by looking at some common misunderstandings of this principle. We will compare and contrast these with our definition derived from the morphemes. By gaining an understanding of what Anekantavada is, we will be able to explore its usefulness.

When one is trying to understand something more fully, it is not necessary to draw a conclusion. In fact, drawing conclusions can prevent us from acquiring a greater depth of understanding. The beauty of Anekantavada is that it allows us to look at things more fully rather than limiting ourselves to a particular conclusion that holds only part of the truth. **Nayavada** allows us to look very specifically at how something can be true when looked at from a particular point of view and how this varies based on perspective. It has many practical applications in conflict resolution and negotiation. Syadvada

helps us to overcome certain barriers of language by looking at the truth-values of different statements and seeing how in some respect different and opposing statements can be made about something.

To examine the usefulness of Anekantavada, we can take something such as Jain studies and see how application of Nayavada and Syadvada can be useful to scholars who are trying to make sense of this vast and complex tradition. Nayavada will illustrate how particular statements made about Jainism are only partially true depending on differing perspectives. Syadvada will allow us to examine different ways in which to evaluate the truth about a specific statement. Both will be discussed and examined.

From this discussion, we will first come to understand what Anekantavada really is. We will see that Anekantavada is not mere relativism but rather is a way of understanding that the truth is not one-ended. It will become evident that this principle empowers Jains to grasp the truth more fully while allowing them to remain compassionate and understanding of differing points of view. We will see that Anekantavada is useful in not only an academic sense but in a practical way that is beneficial to all people from all walks of life.■

notes:

Anger Management: Teach Yourself to Chill

LA Youth Group

As defined by the Webster's unabridged dictionary, Anger is a strong feeling excited by a real or supposed injury, often accompanied by a desire to take vengeance to obtain satisfaction from the avenging party; resentment, and wrath.

Known as **Krodha**, anger in Jainism is defined as the loss of our sense of judgment.

There are 4 classifications of the degree of the four passions (kayshays). The first is extremely severe (**Anantanubadh**) and obstructs right belief and right conduct for a long period of time and operates with the worst karma (**Darshan Mohiya Karma**). The second is severe (**Apratyakhanavarana**) which stops one from taking the vows of a monk (to fully follow true conduct) even in a limited form. The third is moderate (**Pratyakhanavarana**) and here the partial renunciation is possible by worldly beings, but the total renunciation (becoming a monk or nun) is not. The fourth is slight (**Sanjvalana**) and while it is active, initiation into monkhood or nunhood and spiritual progress are possible, but becoming Vitragi (where the soul is fully following the jewel of right conduct) is not possible.

Anger can be shown through three methods:

1. **Physical**- harm done physically not only to others but yourself;

2. **Verbal**- profanity, sarcasm, tone of voice, mean things in general, gossip; and
3. **Mental**- thoughts of physical or verbal anger, guilt, resentment, regret, hatred, jealousy.

Dealing with anger is called **Krodha-pratyakhyana** (giving up anger). There are many ways to deal with anger. Some individuals respond in an assertive – not aggressive – manner. Some suppress anger and redirect it. It is not only a method to reduce anger, but also practice self-control.

The best way to have control over your emotions, especially anger is through **Anekantvad**. By respecting and taking into consideration the ways people may see an issue or problem, you may be able to stop bitter and anger feelings from arising. There are a list 35 householder rules placed by Archaraya Hemchandra to avoid conflicts and live a peaceful life as a layman that may also be helpful.

Anger develops with those who don't think or think only one way. So, with a bit of understanding and control this passion can be reduced. ■

notes:

Animal Experimentation: The Scientific Way

Dr. Ray Greek

As students in veterinary and medical school, my wife and I were struck by how differently we treated the same diseases in animals and humans. Some medications that caused birth defects in humans could be given to animals with impunity and vice-versa. In light of these differences between humans and animals, we began to question how animal experimentation could ever hope to cure human disease.

We became alarmed when we realized that slight differences between animals and humans in anatomy, biochemistry, and physiology make the application of the results of experiments on animal dangerous when extrapolated to humans. The money wasted on animal experimentation disgusted us. Our disgust changed to horror as we learned that wasted money was the smallest transgression; humans were actually being harmed when their physicians tried to apply what they had learned in the lab to their patients.

Smoking was thought safe because it caused no cancers in animals. A high fat, high cholesterol diet was also thought safe based on animal models. The cardiopulmonary bypass machine, the heart-lung machine used to keep patients alive during heart operation, killed human patients when first used even though it tested well on dogs. The animal

experimentation lobby spends millions annually to convince the public that all medical advances are directly due to animal experimentation. In fact, individuals with vested interest in animal experimentation have admitted to the fallacy of animal experimentation, even while making their livelihood from it

The great advances in science that have given us the high standard of medical care we enjoy today have come from clinical observation, in vitro research, epidemiology, autopsies, computer and mathematical modelling, technology, human tissue research, genetics, post-marketing drug surveillance, the specialization of medical care including the specialization of physicians, nurses, and areas of the hospital. It is time the public knew that not only is that an expensive fallacy to believe that the cures for human disease will be found in animals, but it is also a dangerous one.■

For more information see:

Sacred Cows and Golden Geese: The Human Cost of Experiments on Animals Continuum 2000

Specious Science: How Genetics and Evolution Reveal Why Medical Research on Animals Harms Humans Continuum 2002.

The NAVS and AFMA web sites

notes:

Animal Rights Moderator

In everyday life there are many questions one should ask when it comes to living a compassionate life, and many that remain unasked in this fast paced world. Let's examine some of the different issues when it comes to compassion and non violence towards animals.

First, let us examine what in the Jain religion involves compassion for animals. The first anuvrat and mahavrat (limited and extended vows) are about compassion towards all living beings. Jain literature also contains the idea that each living being has a soul and that soul is equal to that of the human being, for in its pure state each can attain moksha (enlightenment). This equality makes the Jain religion look at all life differently than most other world religions. Specifically, Jainism does not allow one to place a human being superior to an animal.

With that in mind, vegetarianism falls under the philosophical aspect of Jainism. Vegetarianism, as defined by Jainism, includes not eating any animal products. Due to the harsh treatment of animals in America and other first world countries, many people often chose veganism.

However, though many Jains practice vegetarianism, we tend to forget compassion in clothing and other material goods. From your leather briefcase to your silk shirt, all are animal products that support the meat and dairy industries.

We do not realize that even parts of our shoes may have leather in it, or that our luxury Mercedes S-class has leather too.

How far should one go in living a compassionate lifestyle? Is it possible to still maintain the trends of today's fashion scene and be cruelty free? Does a soy latte really taste different than your regular non-fat latte?

In order to find these alternatives, you have to look a little harder than your average Joe or Jane when shopping, but its possible to find your Enzos without leather, or go to a coffee shop and look slick with your new Kate Spade. When at a grocery store, just read all the ingredients and when at a restaurant, just ask. Usually waiters are pretty happy to tell you what they have on their menu that's vegetarian. And when shopping, most shoes have labels, that they are all man-made, even Birkenstocks can be bought all man made. You just have to have the will, and you too can find a way. Remember, it is the power of one that can translate into the power of many. ■

notes:

Atma Siddhi: Self-Realization

Ashik Shah

Atma Siddhi is one of the most well known works by Shrimad Rajchandra (1867-1901 A.D.) In just over 140 verses, Shrimadji manages to explain in considerable detail the key aspects of Jain philosophy, as well as the path to Moksha. Composed in a single sitting of ninety minutes, Atma Siddhi remains one of the most influential and inspiring poems in the Jain tradition, having an impact on Mahatma Gandhi, as well as on many religious movements in the modern era.

It is the expression by a Self-Realised Saint of the modern era, of a compassionate desire to see all Souls attain true happiness. We will follow the scheme of Atma Siddhi, but will consider the key issues which it addresses.

- Who are you?
- What is your true nature?
- What is the ultimate cause of pain and suffering?
- What is the ultimate source of happiness?
- How do you practice your religion?
- Do you like the rituals?
- Would you say you were spiritual?
- Which inner qualities are you trying to cultivate?
- How would you recognise a True Guru?

- What do you think are supposed acts of religion which might not lead to Moksha?
- How would you characterise someone who is a True Seeker?
- Do you think you possess any of these qualities?
- What is the benefit of having such qualities?
- What moves you about the following six insights, known as Chha Pad?

- 1) The soul exists
- 2) It is eternal
- 3) It is the creator or doer of deeds or Karma
- 4) It experiences the fruits of these deeds or Karma
- 5) There is freedom (Moksha) from Karma
- 6) There is a path to Moksha

- What are the chief causes of Karma, whose removal will cause Moksha?
- How many type of Karma are there?
- Which is the chief culprit, the ringleader? How does one conquer anger and the other passions?
- Is this path sectarian or dogmatic?
- What characteristics must we possess to move forward spiritually?
- How will a True Guru's guidance impact us? ■

notes:

Breaking the Superficial Barrier

San Diego Youth Group

Walking down the street on a beautiful autumn day in Malibu, you chance upon a rare find. The most gorgeous, DKNY sports coat ever imaginable! You bust out your wallet and prepare to hand the saleswoman your credit card when all of a sudden you blink. And it's gone. The sports coat of your dreams gone forever because some fool was carrying cash in his pocket. So what do you do? Well, a normal person would jump up and down wishing for gravity to collapse at just that time and place so he could end the pain and suffering. But you – you're different.

You're Jain. And being Jain you have learned that *Aparigraha*, or non-attachment, helps us limit our materialistic desires. By first reducing our desires for things, we are able to practice *Samyan*, self-control. We have realized that we don't need the name brand shirt and that a Civic is just as good as the BMW in that it serves the purpose for which we "need" it. And even if everyone else is driving a Beamer, and you feel the pressure to get one, you are now enlightened enough to realize that Jainism focuses on the individual. We control our own path, and what we choose to do is ultimately for the betterment of our own self.

You understand that being materialistic will ultimately cause you to become reclusive. Nobody likes a self-absorbed person, and by putting material possessions higher on your "to-do" list than being a moral and Jain person, you will eventually alienate those around you.

Jainism helps you minimize your materialistic desires in the reduction of what you already have. By donating five of your t-shirts, you are able to benefit others and learn that you can get by on ten shirts alone. The most important aspect of Jainism is that it relates to self-control. But you already know that, right? Or at least you do now.

You were trained and taught by the best. At the 2002 YJA Convention you learned that possession is not as bad as attachment. You conquered tough questions like, "If parents can afford a car but can get by with one, should they buy another one for their teen." You learned about needs and wants and how to tell the difference. You now know that when we give up logic possession becomes a part of us. So what do you do? You tip your hat to the saleswoman and walk away whistling your favorite tune. ■

notes:

Bye Bye BEEF!

Gabriel Figueroa

When people think of Jainism, they invariably think of vegetarianism. The connection is a very real one. Vegetarianism is a fundamental part of being a Jain; however, it is not something that is a mere traditional or cultural practice, as some may believe. It is a practice that is thoroughly rooted in Jain philosophy. Jains are not vegetarian just for the sake of being vegetarian. Jains are vegetarian because of a basic respect for all living beings. This compassion is but a consequence of the Jain way of thinking about the universe.

This session will examine the important role of vegetarianism in Jainism. We will explore why vegetarianism is crucial to Jain living and look at how making simple dietary and lifestyle changes can have a great impact on our lives and the lives of others. This influence will not be limited to our spirituality but will extend to many practical areas of our lives.

To examine vegetarianism, we must first understand it and what it is and is not. There are many misconceptions as to what vegetarians eat and don't eat. We will look at the different types of vegetarianism. We will also explore veganism, which involves certain lifestyle and dietary habits. And we will consider what Jainism teaches us about

vegetarianism to help each individual understand the connection between vegetarianism and Jainism.

Then we will explore the practical aspects of vegetarianism. How do we apply this? How do we deal with situations where being a vegetarian is more challenging? How can we deal with eating with friends or going to restaurants? There will be tips for those who want to be more thorough in being vegetarian or who want to take an additional step in their vegetarianism.

Gabriel Figueroa was not born in a Jain family and he was not raised vegetarian. Yet he made a conscious decision to become both a vegetarian and a Jain. Because of this, he will be able to share his own personal experience in making these changes. He will discuss his shift to a vegetarian diet and eventually to a vegan lifestyle.

This will be an interactive session with questions and answers. Together, we will look at vegetarianism and its place in Jainism. Our goal will be to learn some new things, enjoy the session, and leave with some valuable information that we can put to practical use in our daily lives.

notes:

CEO Forum

Moderators

Admit it. We all feel a touch of awe when someone has it: the CEO title. The power, the salary, and the chance to be The Boss. It's worthy of awe! Sure it's great to be recognized as one, but what exactly does a CEO do anyway? A CEO's responsibilities is, in a nutshell, EVERYTHING, especially in a startup. The CEO is responsible for the success or failure of the company. Operations, marketing, strategy, financing, creation of company culture, human resources, hiring, firing, compliance with safety regulations, sales, PR, etc.-it all falls on the CEO's shoulders..

their efforts to effect changes in their respective industries. They are here to relate to YJA attendees the secrets to their success. Hear them as they share with you the principles and values that have helped catapult them in to positions of greatness. ■

Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) all over the world are known as the movers and shakers that can make things happen. They have the influence, the contacts, and the respect to be able to effect a great deal of change in society and really, the world. Very rarely, however, is a CEO's performance measured by the moral standards he/she upholds when conducting day to day business.

Time for a bit of introspection. You are the CEO of a multi million dollar operation. Your company is progressing and your employees & shareholders are happy. What would you do to help the environment? To decrease animal experimentation? Promote higher values in the people that work for you? And really, change the world for the better?

Three very successful CEO's have been pioneers in

notes:

Cocktails and Dreams

Parin Tolia

As a Jain living in the United States in today's day and age many times we are faced with the daunting task of strictly adhering to the values we have been brought up with. Multiple factors work in a complex way to influence us to behave in certain ways. One such example is with alcohol. Peer pressure, environmental influences, and even the media tempt us to consume alcohol to "fit" in, and many of us give in to the desire often to find ourselves compromising what we initially knew was morally wrong. But do we really lose our values/morals and defy Jainism by consuming alcohol? As human beings, is alcohol harmful or beneficial to us? What are the pros and cons behind the long debated issue of alcohol consumption in religious philosophy?

First and foremost, there will be an explanation in to the biological ramifications involved in drinking, for example, a can of beer where you will learn how the alcohol effects the different parts of the body and what the body needs to do to detoxify this "bodily poison."

Additionally, you will become skilled in understanding why Jainism takes the stance that it does on alcohol. The Jain perspective is a very unique one in that it does not

see alcohol as the root of the issue at all, instead the problem is in an individual's inability to observe *aparigraha*, or non-possessiveness.

Finally, we hope to close this session with a powerful story of one individual's addiction to alcohol and how it affected him in his life and, furthermore, his attempts turn himself around to rid the demons of alcoholism ■

notes:

Comparative World Religions

Cromwell Crawford

Religious diversity exists in the modern world especially here in the United States. Today you come across either classmates or colleagues that generally don't have the same background as you and this also includes one's religious upbringing. Religion plays a major role in shaping one's views and ultimately decisions and actions. Religion becomes part of one's philosophy thus the melting pot we live in combines all philosophies. I use the analogy of the melting pot to also illustrate many different scenarios that we as humans come across. We assume that people we encounter have morals and values that have been rooted from their religion and/or culture. But what happens when your morals and values conflict with that of your neighbor? Can you live in harmony? When does ignorance end and tolerance begin? This session will help you introspect how Jainism plays a role in today's society with inclusion of tolerance and acceptance.

For better or worse, religions represent a potent force on the world stage, whose claims and counter claims must be addressed if we are to have peace in our generation. Jainism has an important role to play in this global crisis. First it illuminates our understanding of the common roots of religion in the human condition, and also sheds light on how these universal roots come to flower and flourish in a garden of distinctive forms, each with its own specific beauty. Thus Jainism recognizes both the universality and

particularity of religions, and provides us with conceptual tools to accept religious diversity without having to forfeit or sacrifice the uniqueness of one's own tradition.

As we have entered the 21st century many conflicts have just arisen in the past two years. Religion has been a central focal point for these conflicts, from civil wars that occur in Ireland between Catholics and Protestants to the most recent turmoil in India due to the Hindu-Muslim conflict. Some points to ponder:

Are these conflicts based on religious text or interpretation of text by people today?

Would outcomes of these conflicts differ if people followed their religion based on tolerant teachings of religious leaders versus extremism that projected today?

As a human when do we take responsibility of negative actions instead of citing religion as the drive?

You will walk away with a better understanding of how religions can resolve intolerance without ignorance.

notes:

Compassion in Action

Sadhviji Shilapiji | Shayna Parekh

One of the vows we adhere to is *dana*, or charity. Many take this to mean monetary charity, but there is also a certain type of “action charity.” Though refined skills, such as those of a doctor’s, a teacher’s or an engineer’s provide immediate, clear evidence of being useful to others, we all, as able-bodied, educated individuals, possess a set of skills that can be put to use *now*.

Tirthankara Mahavira’s life was a pure example of compassion, *ahimsa*, and *dana* in action. Now we too, in this *himsa* and pain-filled millennium, have an urgent responsibility to show our own compassion in action. One manifestation of this is development work (DW).

Direct DW involves working in a developing country. A development worker can use his or her skills to assist a domestic organization working in a certain field, such as that of health, education or disaster relief. In this way, DW involves doing administrative tasks, initiating programs (in literacy, disease eradication, small loan development), and a multitude of other tasks.

If you are truly interested in such work, it is imperative to ask two types of questions:

- 1) Why do I want to do this? What do I expect to get out of it? and
- 2) Am I prepared for a tough environment—perhaps more so mentally than physically?

And if you can confidently answer these questions, then you should move on to choosing your path to development work. Some people choose to work independently or travel to a different country. Most newcomers, however, decide to work with an established program in the United States, which places them with an organization in the developing country.

There are a few questions you should ask before deciding to join an organization. First, what is the purpose of this organization (missionary, humanitarian, disaster relief)? Who heads this organization? Do they have a concrete “blueprint” for development? Are they experienced in this field, or, if not, are they being supported by seasoned development workers? What provisions will the organization make for my shelter and security?

If you are interested in DW in India, the following organizations may be helpful: Veerayatan (www.veerayatan.org), American India Foundation (www.aifoundation.org), and IndiCorps (www.indicorps.org). ■

notes:

Concept of Desiny in Jainism

Boston Youth Group

In this session, you will learn about three concepts: **destiny, fate, and karma**. Each word affects our daily lives and the actions we take. This session is designed to help you learn more about the different types of karmas and what role they play in our life. In our presentation, we will discuss the phrase, "what comes around goes around" and the truth behind it.

1. Introduce Karma Theory and Destiny
 - A. Define karma and destiny
 - B. Explain what we are trying to do
2. Karma Theory
 - A. Name the 8 types of karma
 1. Describe each
 2. Explain their effects on life
3. Destiny
 - A. Explain relationship between fate and outcome
 - B. Discuss if things are destined to happen-Karma Theory
4. Skits
 - A. Examples of different types of karmas
 1. Perform skits based on them
 - B. Audience participation

1. Work with presenters, who already have a skit in mind, and perform it
 2. Other groups voice opinion on what the outcome would be if they were in the situation and then see the outcome that is chosen
5. Conclusion of "what comes around goes around"
 - A. Briefly explain the saying
 - B. Discuss how true the statement is

Concept of Jain Destiny is dedicated towards introducing youth the different Jain terms relating to karma and expanding your knowledge of how destiny, fate, and karma play a role in Jainism. ■

notes:

Dating and Relationships

Dhrumil Purohit | Nirav Sheth

Dating has become a very common practice amongst Indians in America. Young adults are entering bonds with significant others earlier than ever before. This practice often conflicts with traditional cultural values and causes great amounts of tension between parents and their children. Youth who are considering dating in their teens are torn between Eastern and traditional Western thought processes.

This heavy cultural gap leaves many of the questions that youth have unanswered. If one decides to enter in a pre-marital relationship, is one going against Jainism and their parents? What do Jain scriptures say about pre-marital relationships? How about prominent Jain figures, do they have opinions?

Youth who discuss this topic with elders often find that they are receiving insufficient answers. In fact, most discussions only raise more questions, leaving both parties upset. Many parents can't imagine why kids "waste" time and energy into "insignificant" relations and youth can't accept the fact that their parents answer to each question is: "Because that's the way it is, that's how it was when I grew up!"

The "Dating and Relationships" session isn't going to solve all the problems regarding this heated topic. But your hosts, Dhrumil Purohit and Nirav Sheth, will guide you in exploring these issues and reaching some common ground solutions. ■

notes:

A Day in the Life of a Shravak

Sudhir Shah

In this capitalist society encouraging independence and individuality, we have learned to be “in-charge” by striving for more and more materialistic possessions. In this consumer driven society our consumptions knows no bounds. We are constantly bombarded with all kinds of temptations promising “happiness” and yet we feel empty and our dried up soul longs for inner peace. As demonstrated by recent events, it is apparent that violence threatens to destroy the very existence of life on this planet and perhaps the planet itself. Thus it is imperative that we seek non-violent solutions to our problems.

“Day in the life of a Shravak” is just an attempt to explore various tools that can be used effectively by a “Shravak” in the practice of Jain philosophy, that not only leads to greater fulfillment in our lives but also creates greater harmony in our environment. We don’t need to become a monk or move away somewhere to lead a spiritual life. We can remain where we are and lead a life that is filled with peace and contentment, as well as provides a personal success.

In this session we will examine the relevance of ‘Mahavrats and Anuvrats’ as tools to achieving spiritual upliftment. The moral failure to respect life of others is rooted in a mistaken knowledge claims that result in ideologies that fail to recognize other legitimate perspectives. Jain theory

of Anekantvad requires epistemological respect for all points of views. The ability to see others as no longer others, but to see them as an identical to ourselves, underlies the capacity of empathy and sympathy for others and operationalizes Ahimsa. Jain philosophy offers an alternate and inclusive epistemology that can support a dialogue and negotiation among diverse perspectives and claims.

Along with viewing “anuvrats” in modern perspective, we will also examine some other tools as prescribed by many of our great Acharyas. In particular, three tools described by Acharya Haribhadrasuri in Darshanshastra (750 AD) will be discussed in detail.

1. Develop disinterest in satisfying the desires of our five senses (Control over passions)
2. Remove ‘Kashay’ – anger, ego greed and deceit from our day to day lives
3. Fill your basket with good virtues. This is done through developing a vision to look for some good virtue in others

As we interpret many of our old teachings, we must be careful not to become ideologically dogmatic. Understanding that everything can be known in various ways, interpreted in various perspectives, leads naturally to a more balanced view.

notes:

Dual Identity Crisis

Roshni & Panel

Don't let the title scare you! This session will explore the obstacles we encounter on a day to day basis. The session will be straightforward consisting of youth that has faced various issues through different stages of life such as middle school and leading up to college. We will analyze each stage and pick out different issues that maybe directly related to that particular stage versus everyday life. Some issues discussed will include vegetarianism, religion, and social issues. We hope that at the end of the session, you will have a better idea on who you are.

Growing up as the minority in any country can be difficult but not impossible. We can be who we want to be without being criticized by other people and expressing ourselves also. Growing up in a western world can be crazy at times, but hopefully this session will help you deal with any obstacles or hardships you may have encountered or will encounter in the future.

Are you more receptive to advice from peers or parents? This is a conflict, at any age, that influences decisions we make. In this session, hear from peers that will share their stories and experiences with you.

As an audience member you will have the opportunity to swap stories and come to resolutions.

Here are some questions that may be posed to you from the moderator:

What are some experiences you have had that can help us understand what you are going through, and how you dealt with the issue?

What advice can you give to help others deal with similar situations?

Does Jainism play a factor in your decisions, or do you believe some youth have lost faith?

Does academic pressures cause stress in your life?

Knowing that you come from a strong ethnic background, are you proud of who you are or ashamed of you are?

Most of us are the minority, so how do you represent your ethnicity in your community?

Can you associate with one culture or mixed living as an Indian in a western society?

Are you juggling both sides of the coin by fitting in both cultures?

The audience will have an opportunity to be able to explore resolutions to issues that the majority encounters. What ever your identity is, don't loose sight of the reality!■

notes:

Environmentalism: Jain Style

Dr. Anne Vallely

The facts and figures are grim: In the last 500 years, human activity has forced 816 species to extinction; Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon in 1995 reached the highest level ever recorded. Water system regulations and drainage for agriculture and urban development have been the major cause of loss of over 50 percent of the wetlands in countries all over the world. Environmental disasters are in the news daily and we are often reminded to use, reuse and recycle. We have often times extended the concept of ahimsa to environmental protection and conservation, but have you ever asked what Jain scriptures have to say about the environment? Take a journey with us as we attempt to uncover the Jain underpinnings for being nature lovers. In this session, we will reveal fresh, new spins on the issue of Jainism and the environment.

Ecology deals with the relations of organisms to one another and to their physical environment and studies the interaction of people with their environment. According to the Gaia scientist James Lovelock, the planet earth is gravely ill. Pressed for space and resources, human beings are becoming violent, greedy and extremely selfish. Many important species vital for human survival are gradually disappearing posing a serious threat to the very survival of life on this planet. It is this dangerous situation that attracts our attention towards the Jain Principle of Ahimsa which alone can ensure environmental and eco-

logical balance. Life is bound together by mutual support and cooperation. Ahimsa can save life on this planet.

This session will explore the five Jain principles which, to a greater or lesser extent, all Jains - monks and lay people - are required to observe. They are non-violence (*Ahimsa*), truth, non-accumulation of material possessions, right sexual relationship and gender dignity, and non-acquisitiveness. An elaboration and discussion of these principles in the context of ecological sustainability will pursue in the second half of the session. By understanding and practicing these principles in the contemporary context, society can develop a sense of reverence for all life and a sense of the sacred. ■

notes:

Fast Food Recipes To Go

Pratiksha Parekh | Dharti Sheth

Fast food does not just mean soy-burgers on a bun!!! Good, healthy, delicious food can be prepared within minutes, whether you're at home or at the dorm during finals. Although our everyday lives are moving at greater light speeds by the moment, we must try our best, being Jains, to maintain a good nutritious vegetarian diet. This is essential for two reasons: to keep up with our everyday pace, as well as, being compassionate of the lives of others living around us, no matter how big or small. This session was created to help those on the run consider the impact of a healthy vegetarian lifestyle, while also keeping in mind the virtues of Jainism.

Vegetarianism is a way of life for a Jain, taking its origin in the concept of compassion for living beings, Jive Daya. The practice of vegetarianism is seen as an instrument for the practice of nonviolence and peaceful, cooperative coexistence. Jains are strict vegetarians, consuming only one-sensed beings, primarily from the plant kingdom. While the Jain diet does involve harm to plants, it is regarded as a means of survival, which involves the bare minimum amount of violence towards living being. Many forms of plant material, including roots and certain fruits,

are also excluded from the Jain diet due to the greater number of living beings they contain owing to the environment in which they develop.

A nutritious diet is essential in order for a person to remain in his-her top form, and can lead to the prevention of many diseases such as Type II Diabetes. Nutrition & vegetarianism, go hand in hand, and are combined to create the ultimate state of well being. A balanced body can not exist without the proper nutrients, and we discuss what is needed to maintain ideal health. To excite the taste buds, even the most finicky eaters will enjoy our fun and delightful selections.

In this session we hope that attendees walk away with a sense of understanding the relationship between vegetarianism and nutrition, as well as comprehending how pivotal it is to the physical, as well as metaphysical, no matter at what speed your life runs at. ■

notes:

Fasting

Pramodaji Chitrabanu

Think fasting is not for you; guess again come check out this session. Fasting, is to abstain oneself from any form of sustenance which provides us with necessary nutrients to live on. Think you can go without pizza, or Mexican for a day, so why should you fast, what benefit does it provide you, is fasting good for your health? These along with many other questions, that one ask why I or anyone should fast. There are 12 taaps (12 Rays of Sun) that explain why one must fast, how to do the taaps. There are 6 external taaps, and 6 internal taaps:

6 External Taaps:

1. Anasan – complete fasting
2. Unodari – Eating less than what one desires
3. Vritti Sankshep – Reducing desire
4. Raha Tyag – Giving up sumptuous foods field with desire
5. Kaya klesh – Trying to discipline body
6. Samlinata – Sitting in Solitude

6 Internal Taaps:

1. Prayaschit – Atonement
2. Vinay – Reverence
3. Vaiyavachch - Service
4. Swadhyay – Spiritual studies leading to self-realization

5. Dhyam – Meditation

6. Kayotsarg – Renouncing the attachment of body

This session is geared towards college age audience, which wonders, why they should follow the norms of Jain religion, especially during parushaun time. There are many different types of fasting; Upavas (Complete Fasting) and Ekasan (Taking food only once a day at one sitting,) Atthai, and Masakshman are few of the examples. This session will attempt to show the practical aspect of fasting, while in college and still maintain a hectic college schedule. So you still hungry, then learn more about fasting pick up one of the many books available on fasting, and enlighten your mind!■

notes:

Footprints & Echoes: Jain Writing at its Best

Pravin Shah

Lord Mahavir's preaching was orally compiled into many texts (Sutras) by his disciples. Collectively these texts are called Jain canonical or Agam literature. During the course of time many acharyas (elder monks) compiled commentaries on the various subjects of the Agam literature. Traditionally these sutras were orally pass on from teachers (acharyas or gurus) to the disciples for several centuries. These sutras were documented about 1000 years after Lord Mahavir nirvan.

The entire literature of Jains is classified into 4 'Anuyogas':

- ◆ *Prathamanyoga* - deals with historical traditions and religious lore
- ◆ *Charananuyoga* - deals with the rules of conduct of the ascetics and the laity, including ritual and devotional compositions
- ◆ *Karananuvoga* - deals with metaphysics and cosmology
- ◆ *Dravyanuyoga* - deals with pure philosophy and mysticism

The literature they have created is on varied themes (subjects). They have written on matters concerning Spirituality, Yoga, Metaphysics, Philosophy, Logic, Poetry, Drama, History, Purana, Ethics, Economics,

Grammar, Lexicography, Prosody literary criticism, Geography, Astronomy, Mathematics, Astrology, Medicinal Science, Mantra, Tantra, Music, and Diamondology.

Jains have handsomely contributed to the development of almost all the ancient, mediaeval and modern Indian languages literary styles and forms.

Jaina intellectuals have not only shown their keen interest in creating literature but also in its preservation. The institution of manuscript-libraries (Shastra bhandars) has helped the preservation and dissemination of Jain works. Jain literature forms a valuable part of India's literary heritage. In their wonderful collections they have preserved not only the Jaina literature but also that belonging to the vedic and the Buddhist traditions as well. The old collections at Jasalmer, Patana, Khambhata, Limbdi, Jaipur, Bikaner, Ahmedabad, Sravanabelagola, Moodbidri, etc. are worth seeing. Among them are thousands of books on leafy papers (Tada - patras) and thousands of paintings representing the best in Jaina Art.

In the development of Indian literature and culture, Jain ascetics and scholars have made unique contribution in various philosophical, social, and cultural subjects. Their contribution in the areas of painting, art, architectures, and iconography are very significant. ■

notes:

Forgive and Forget: Michhami Dukkadam

Sadhviji Shilapaji

The phrase “*forgive and forget*” is a very significant tenet to *all* religions. One may argue that the prime objective of all religions is to inculcate this feeling of ‘doing good to others’, and in the process, forgiving and forgetting that which has pained one’s own heart. When Tirthankar Mahavir was asked what to give the definition of religion, He said, ‘Your own basic, intrinsic nature is religion, and our essential nature is love, compassion and kindness’.

Thus, all human beings want to act out of goodness, and that any act of hatred and violence is a departure from our basic nature. Since we are not perfect human beings, we may perpetrate many mistakes intentionally or unintentionally, thus straying from and straining our basic nature. *Pratikraman*- a ritual of which teaches us to forgive and forget - helps us to stick or to return to our basic nature and purify our heart and soul.

Traditionally a *Sadhu* and *Sadhvi* would perform *partikraman* immediately after every mistake, since it is believed that the soul should remain clean and pure at every moment. The moment something wrong is being done, it should be rectified immediately through *pratikraman*, in order to retain his or her peace of mind. The exercise of *pratikraman* allows us to think about our own mistakes and gives us a chance to rectify these situations. By doing regular *pratikraman*, we can make

our own lives more focused and balanced. Mere recitation of the verses of *pratikraman* without understanding may not purify our inner being.

Pratikraman is one of the most powerful internal methods of purification. However it must not be performed in isolation. Other means of purification, such as *Prayashchit*, (repentance), *Vinay* (humility), *Vaiyavrtaya* (service to others), *Swadhyaya* (self-study), *Vyutsarg*, (giving up prejudices and hurts), and *Dhyan* (meditation) should be practiced simultaneously. The ritual of *pratikraman* has been practiced in the Jain tradition for thousands of years. However, this ancient practice is not easy. Special efforts are required by all of us in order to understand its logic and meaning.

Micchami Dukkadam is a commonly used word in the entire exercise of *pratikraman*, which simply means that I accept my wrong doings and put my efforts to rectify it. The most difficult part of human behavior, (which also requires much courage and self-analysis), is to accept our own mistakes. Yet overcoming such an obstacle places one on the path of self-development and purification. ■

notes:

Fitting Belief with Practice in Jainism

YJP

Jainism is practiced in different ways and at different levels among youth in North America. This seminar is an interactive panel discussion that explores the relationship between belief in Jain ideas and principles and the practice of those principles as well as the more “traditional” aspects of Jainism such as fasting, Samayik, and Pratikraman. Furthermore, a second aspect of practice deals with conflicts between beliefs and actions that we may undertake in our personal and professional lives. Examples of such conflict include the extent to which we are able to follow dietary restrictions in light of the overall life-style in North America to various ethical dilemmas that we may face as students or professionals. This seminar hopes to explore the various ways in which Jainism is actually practiced by youth in North America, the potential divide between belief and practice of Jainism, and ways in which this divide can be overcome.

This seminar is led by panel members of various professional backgrounds who will share their experiences as well serve as moderators to encourage audience participation. The first part of this discussion will highlight the variety of ways in which religion is practiced by Jain youth and to address how Jainism may be evolving in the North American context.

A second goal of the discussion is to examine the relationship between belief and practice at a broader level in our daily lives. Examining our personal lives, the question to be addressed is whether there are any gaps between what we believe in and what we do. Taking a relatively common example, given that we accept certain beliefs ranging from the value of vegetarianism to the elimination of things such as alcohol, onions, or garlic, what are the obstacles that we face in truly implementing these beliefs, and how do we overcome them. Other interesting examples dealing with our personal lives include our various relationships and our activities.

There may be conflicts between belief and practice in our professional lives as well, and so we can ask about the common dilemmas that we face in our work lives. This issue is certainly relevant to any field, but two good examples come from the corporate and biomedical research fields. In light of recent events in the corporate world, we can ask to what extent Jain professionals in the corporate world have to face issues of truth and integrity and how they address the ethical dilemmas that arise. In the biomedical sector, a common issue that Jain students and scientists have faced is the use of animals in biomedical research. Using such examples, the seminar hopes to uncover real conflicts that participants face in their professional lives and how they can address them. ■

notes:

The Four Passions in Jainism

Samaniji Charitrapragyaji | Samaniji Shardapragyaji

The following topics will be discussed in this session:

- ◆ Why these passions—anger, ego, deceit and greed so important to discuss?
- ◆ Do these passions reside within the soul?
- ◆ Are they more powerful than the energy of soul?
- ◆ Is it possible to get away from our passions?
- ◆ Can passions be used to gauge spiritual progress?
- ◆ What will be the state of consciousness in the absence of passions?

The Physiological Effect of Passions includes the body gets tense and stressed and your breathing rate increases, which results in high blood pressure. The effects can go as far as the blockage of arteries cause heart stroke, heart attack, and/or paralysis or a sudden and premature death. These effects may also be loss of vital energy and strength, imbalance of hormones or just a weakening immune system. It works to break down in eco system of the body.

The Psychological Effect of Passions may activate negative feelings and instigate the determinants of unhappiness which include agitation, anxiety, irritation, and depression. The mental faculties are disordered and the mental peace is lost. This can also cause a plethora of

negative effects ranging from loss of memory power or materialism to family relations being severed.

The Spiritual Effect of Passions where attachment leads to destruction and one accumulates intensive karmas. There is an absence of spiritual practices. The cycle of birth and death continues and then one has to suffer many lives. The inherent qualities of the soul become obscure which hinder the attainment of eternal peace and happiness.

How do we Rid Ourselves of these Passions?

- ◆ Accept the inner weakness
- ◆ Make up your mind to change that
- ◆ Practice meditation with contemplation
- ◆ Chant mantras
- ◆ Understand the consequences of passions
- ◆ Think before you act
- ◆ Change of lifestyle
- ◆ Be happy and optimist
- ◆ Adjust with the circumstances
- ◆ Spend time for self-development ■

notes:

Gurudev Chitrabhanuji

It is important that we as humans realize the tremendous gift we are given, that gift is "Being Human!" A gift, that sometimes comes with both pain and pleasure. Pain because, we tend to hurt our fellow human, animal, and environment among few. Pleasure because, we get to enjoy the greatness that mother earth has to provide. We as humans have greater responsibility towards mother earth, for we are given another great gift, the ability to think independently, reason rationally, and act responsibly. There are 5 ways one can learn to be a better human.

1. *Humanness* - The essence of human.
2. *Realization* - A sense of awareness, of just being a human.

- Living in this fast-paced, technology-filled world, we are so quick to judge the world around us, which leads to us making assumptions about ourselves. This may cause us to overlook the valuable gift of human life that is inside each and every person. Once one has discovered and acknowledged this gift, only then will a human be able to develop themselves to the point of completeness and thorough independent thought. And from there, personal liberation can be attained.

It gives us great pleasure to spend an hour to reflect on the impact our lives has and the gift that has been bestowed upon us. It is our responsibility as human beings to find, utilize, and cherish this gift as it has been given. Let this hour be your first step on winding, miraculous and eye-opening journey. ■

notes:

In Temple, In Style

Chandrakant Mehta

This is a thought-provoking seminar for everyone. The central idea of the discussion is, "What are you supposed to do when you go to the Jain temple?"

Most people know the mechanical process, the rituals, but do not know the spiritual meaning. The rituals are the tools to invoke the right spiritual meaning. Any ritual we perform must touch our heart and impact our mind. In understanding religion, Heart is more important than mind. Faith is more important than logic.

This seminar will discuss the rituals of what one should do in the temple? The answer is not simple because there is no fixed procedure; however, there are general guidelines that one must follow.

When you enter the temple you don't see one ritual. People in the temple do different things. For example, somebody is doing idol puja, somebody is doing chaitya vandan, someone prays quietly, someone does Navakarvali or Stuti and someone recites 'bhakti-geet' or stavan. It is not easy to focus when several things going on at the same time.

Our discussion will cover the following key items.

- ◆ Some do's and don'ts of entering the temple.
- ◆ How to do a prayer? What mantra should one recite?
- ◆ How to do Khamasamano?
- ◆ What is Chaitya Vandan? What is the purpose of 'Aarti' and 'Mangal Divo'?
- ◆ Why and how do we do Swastik? Why rice is used in Swastik?
- ◆ Why do we ring bell? Why do we do tilak on the forehead?

These and many other questions will be discussed. Namokar-mantra and a few common prayers will be recited by all together and the spiritual meaning will be explained. The emphasis will be to put in practice in real life. ■

notes:

Is Jainism Gender Biased?

Sadhviji Shilapaji

"The Jains are distinguished by their treatment of women as equals of men and their lay communities have looked after them with great care and devotion."

-Professor Padmanabh Jaini

In this session, we will examine the Jain perspective of gender bias through a brief lecture by Sadhvi Shilapaji who will clarify points between the differences of religion and culture, different religious practices and Jainism in its essence.

In order to find an answer, we will discuss questions like:

- 1) Why is it that in pathsala classes that being female means you had less good karma than being male?
- 2) Why is it that one can only attain moksha from a male human form?
- 3) Why are there certain slokhas that females are not supposed to say
- 4) Why can't females go to the temple when they have their periods?
- 5) Why if Mallinath was female, that there is only 1 tirthankar that was female out of 24?
- 6) Do you think that Mallinath was not really female, and in order to make the religion more fair, that the fact was changed through time?

7) Do the biological differences have any bearing on religion and the karma theory?

The following is an excerpt posted on the YJA discussion board regarding this subject.

"I wonder why Jainism would consider it a punishment to be born as a woman. Could the reasoning be that our society has been male dominated for the most part, and being a woman can be a huge handicap in this world?"

Lets put things in right perspective here. According to Jainism, being born with any form of body is basically a punishment. So being born a man could also be regarded as a punishment. As long as men and women both are capable of attaining moksha, we can't say that Jainism discriminates against a gender. The ways to attain Karma and also to get rid of them are identical for both genders. Is it not possible that Jainism did not preach or appease gender bias, but simply acknowledged that it exists and is a handicap?"

After discussing the aforementioned issues at length the group will hypothesize using what has been gathered and discussed on whether or not Jainism should be categorized as gender-biased. ■

notes:

Jain Hip-Hop

Ameet Shah

The Jain Hip-Hop session offers participants the opportunity to learn more about the traditional Jain stavans and prayers that have been an important part of Jain reflection for many generations. Along with the rich scriptural resources, followers of the Jain philosophy have used art and music to strengthen their belief and devotion not only to the ideals propagated by the philosophy, but also to the spiritual leaders who Jains try to emulate in their daily lives. Stavans and stutis represent a form of *bhakti*, or devotion, for Tirthankars and other spiritual leaders who have helped promote Jainism throughout society. Stavans are relatively simple songs that appeal to the masses and lend to the spiritual progress of individuals who focus their attention to the spiritual world while leaving the worries of the material world aside. This session aims to look at the history of music and Jainism and help youth learn not only the transliterations of Jain stavans, but also the translations to help youth learn to sing and understand the meaning behind many inspirational stavans sung by devoted Jain followers.

The singing of stavans is a form of ritual practice that helps followers invoke a spiritual state of mind that helps them focus on the teachings and values fostered by the Jain philosophy. Like many other rituals, stavans and prayers

serve as a source of inspiration and strength during both periods of happiness and challenges. A review of the meanings of popular Jain prayers will bring a greater level of understanding and meaning that will hopefully be transformed into regular recitation of these prayers through individual reflection or with a group of peers. This session will combine elements of modern background music to help supplement the singing of these popular stavans. ■

notes:

Pallavi Auntie

Perpetual legends – With every ascending and descending portion of a time cycle comes a new set of legends. Regardless of the cycle, we have stories of the twenty-four Tirthankars, twelve Chakravartis, nine Vasudevs, nine Prativasudevs, and nine Baldevs. The Tirthankars, while all identical in their attributes, each has a prominent quality that legends serve to highlight. They are who we strive to become; they are our role models. As with any role model, his admirers want to hear of his awesome adventures and dutiful deeds. Tirthankars fulfill this role and their stories show us how.

Legendary Laypeople – The legendary laypeople, such as Vastupal and Tejpal, were of considerable wealth and prominence in Jain society. They used their resources for the greater good and as a result, among other things, we have the famous temples at Mount Abu and Ranakpur. The fact that they were willing to donate their time and money to the Jain community has made them legends.

Jain legends serve as role models for us today. They can be idolized as complete individuals, or we can choose the qualities in them that we wish to emulate. Either way, these great people have set the tone for future generations and it is now up to us to follow in their footsteps. ■

notes:

Jain Rituals and Prayers

Chirag Shah

Jain rituals and prayers are a focal point for all worshippers. Primary goal of daily rituals is these are worships with the deep concentration and pure thoughts free of violence and harm disperse the accumulated karmas from the soul.

Some guidelines that Jains follow include:

- ◆ Worship before the Jina murtis
- ◆ Bowing before the murtis
- ◆ Lighting a devo in front of murtis.

Puja is a regular daily ritual done in the derasar. There are three major types of puja:

- ◆ *Snatra Puja*: This ritual includes the bathing of the murti/image is symbolic to the bathing of the newborn tirthanakara by the celestial beings.
- ◆ *Panch Kalyanak Puja*: This puja commemorates the five great events of the Tirthankara's life: conception, birth, renunciation, omniscience and moksa.
- ◆ *Antaraya Karma Puja*: This puja comprises a series of prayers to remove those karmas which obstruct the spiritual uplifting power of the soul.

There are also rituals associated with milestones in a layperson's life.

There are birth rituals that include:

- ◆ *Priyodhbhav Sanskar*: This ritual takes place after birth of a child. Ten days of cleansing or Satak are observed after delivery; in the temple the priest recites mantras and receives offerings on behalf of the newborn.
- ◆ *Namkaran Sanskar*: You will learn where the names of boys and girls are selected from.

The marriage rituals include nine rituals that are preformed on the same day. Jain marriages are simple ceremonies without flaunting of wealth. These rituals range from the confirmation of the date and time of the marriage to setting the engagement to the actual vows taken on the day of the marriage.

Last but not least there are death rituals. However you would assume death to be a time to be sad and somber however Jains believe that the dead soul would be reborn immediately. So then death is a festival or Mahotsav.

This is just a small overview of rituals and prayers associated with Jainism. Let this session be a window to the beginning of how complex yet methodical our religion is. ■

notes:

Manoj Jain | Yogendra Jain

Human knowledge is increasing exponentially. Traditional religious beliefs and practices are being challenged. However, many of the ancient Jain beliefs are being embraced by today's scientists and thinkers; beliefs such as life in plants, drinking filtered water, environmentalism, cleanliness, meditation and yoga, non-violence, to name a few. Many of these beliefs came to be known by the world not through Jainism but by advances in science.

Jainism has many other “golden nuggets.” As Mahavira re-branded and re-packaged Jainism, the time has come for us to do the same and share these “golden nuggets” with the world. And these nuggets have the power to radically re-shape the future human mind and give it hope and happiness. What will the future of Jainism be and can we as Jains re-invent ourselves and our institutions? Can we re-brand and re-package Jainism for the 21st century.

Also explored in this session will be 21st century institutions to build and promote Jain principles and values. We propose that we go back to the drawing board and reevaluate our objectives for a temple.

Instead of continuing to build and expand our traditional temples, perhaps our temples should be not just for Jains, not just a people of Eastern views, not just for Indians, not just for

religious people, not just for spiritualist, but for all. These new breed of temples, let's call them "Spiritual Parks," would be a cross between Epcot Center, Museum, Disney World, Monastery, and a Research Lab. The goal of these parks would be to compress 20 years of spiritual learning into 20 hours and to take the visitors to new levels of self awareness which would take 20 or more years of regular practice and many trials and errors.

Furthermore, with the expansion of spiritual awareness among the visitors, we should see significant reduction in meat diet and animal based products consumption and increase in practice of Non-Violence, Non-Absolutism, and Non-Possession. ■

notes:

Jain Time Cycle of the Universe

Pallavi Gala

What is time? Perhaps every notable culture, religion and group of people on earth has made significant attempts to define and measure the concept of time. To this extent, Jains have made their own contributions to the history of the delineation of time.

Jainism has a specific, elaborate definition of time and its various components. Time, according to Jains, has no beginning and no end. In this sense, it is similar to a circle of a wheel, which has no definitive start and end point. Within this infinite space, smaller time spans are defined, though still difficult to comprehend.

Jains believe that different time cycles govern various portions of the universe. For the purposes of this session, we will focus on the Jain view of time as a sort of circle, divided into two halves: an ascending half and a descending half. Each half is further divided into six portions, or "aros." The descending half begins with the first aro and continues down to the sixth. As we go down the aros (usually thousands of years long), life becomes progressively grimmer and more difficult for human beings. For example, in the first aro, humans are very tall and their needs, small in number, are usually all fulfilled by a "giving tree". As we progress through the aros, humans

become smaller in stature, their needs greater, and subsequently less fulfilled. Environmental and manmade disasters occur more frequently, and in the sixth aro, a sort of "hell on earth" prevails. We are currently, we are in the early stages of the fifth aro on the descending side, which is approximately 21,000 years long.

Following the sixth aro of the descending side, the ascending side begins. Time once again progresses from the sixth aro back up to the first, reviving the good and pleasant aspects of human life. At the "end" of the ascending half, the descending half of the cycle "begins" once more, and continues on infinitely.

The Jain time cycles are shrouded with a myriad of myths and conflicts. These include the different types of people and general condition of things in each aro, and the conflict between science and religion. This session attempts to simply clarify some aspects of the Jain time cycle and elucidate some of the controversy which surrounds it. ■

notes:

Samniji Charitrapragyaji | Samniji Shardapragyaji

1. What is the uniqueness of Jainism?
2. Why do we need to know about three jewels?
3. What is the significance of the three jewels?
4. Was Mahavir a mere philosopher or ethical-cum- spiritual practitioner?
5. Where do we find the concept of three jewels?
6. Is it right that only Jains have the authority found in the three jewels to reach moksha?

Right Faith (**Samyak Gnan**) is the true understanding of Arhat's teachings. One must refrain from delusion, doubt, and indefiniteness. Proper knowledge of nine Tattvas and six Substances is gained and one begins developing the multifaceted view of reality and the clarity between what to do and what not to do. One gains the inner desire of attaining moksha.

The gateway of success and liberation is “the path of the three jewels.” ■

notes:

Vastupal Parikh

Jain Youth and the Arts

Sarita Vasa and Fellows Artists

For the last ten years, there has been an explosion of South Asians in the arts. This can be seen through film, television, music, dance, theatre, literature and visual art. It is no longer shocking for us to see our films in the theatres, our faces on TV, and our names on the cover of novels. South Asians have officially broken into arts and mainstream media.

While we have been able to “make it” in so many ways, this session will address, “Where do our personal and institutional challenges lie?”

Vijai Nathan:

A good Tamil girl, mortified her parents by quitting her job, canceling her edding and becoming a stand-up comedian five years ago. Her latest adventure is her one-woman show, “PUSH”, a funny and poignant exploration of the struggle to discover, create and claim an Indian American identity.

Uday K. Dhar:

Uday Dhar is a painter living in NYC. Over the last ten years, Uday has exhibited in Verlin, London and in NYC. In 2001, Uday was the recipient of the Civil Society Award, a fully funded artist's fellowship at

the Vermont Studio Center beginning May 2002. Currently, Uday is taking part in the Emerging Artists Series curated by Todd Lambrix and hosted by Summer Arts Intl. Newark, NJ, a show of recent work is scheduled for June.

Geeta “Citygirl” Chopra:

Geeta Citygirl (SALAAM! Artistic Director and Co-Founder) is an actor, director, producer, writer and foremost a proud New Yorker who loves her family more than words can express. She is a graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and City College (CUNY). Her acting credits include the lead of Maria in David Willinger's The Wound (LaMaMa), Theater for the New City's The Trail of Tears, Mahesh Dattani's Thirty Days to September and more. In film and television, her credits include Switching Symbols, The Family Name, Law and Order, Avant Garde Fresh Video (Video Jockey for weekly music video hip-hop show).



notes:

Jainism 101: Back to the Basics

Amar Salgia | Dr. Bharat Shah

Jainism is a philosophy – it's also a religious tradition that has developed around that philosophy over many thousands of years. This very old tradition is very much alive today, and is continuing to take shape.

Jainism is based on the spiritual value of every single living being. Its based on the notion that every individual living being is independent & free to create its own destiny.

- ◆ Every living thing – from us humans, to plants, to animals, to bacteria – has an eternal and individual soul.
- ◆ Soul is “life” or *jiva* (the soul is that which is alive – soul is conscious of itself).
- ◆ Souls, as individuals, aren't dependent on anything else for their existence. A soul, such as each of us, doesn't need anything else for its own eternal survival or for its own spiritual liberation – ultimately, the only thing we need is our own pure souls.

Jainism is not a

- ◆ sect or part of another religion
- ◆ offshoot of another religion
- ◆ protest against another religion

“Jain” is also not a caste or a *jaat*.

- ◆ In other words, “Jain “ is not an ethnicity.
- ◆ Jains come from many different walks of life and from all different socio-economic levels. (Not just one caste, not just *banias* or bankers, or merchants, etc.)
- ◆ Jainism is a philosophy – it's also a religious tradition that has developed around that philosophy over many thousands of years. This very old tradition is very much alive today, and is continuing to take shape.

Historically, Jainism goes back to an extremely early period in the development of South Asian (Indian) culture

- ◆ The Indus Civilization (3000 – 1500 BC) – many artifacts (such as statues and seals) strongly indicate the practice of Jainism.
- ◆ Vedas & Puranas (from the Hindu tradition)– these ancient books also discuss many important figures from early Jain history. ■

notes:

Jainism as a Science

Dr. Tushar Mehta

Is Jainism a scientific religion? There is a controversy over the relationship between Jain thought and modern science, and the answers to such questions affect our perception and belief of Jain philosophy. Many people state that Jainism is not only compatible with modern science, but even provable by modern science. This presentation critiques the notion that Jain philosophy is scientific in the modern sense of the word.

People have come to trust that science is objective and true in a fundamental sense. It is seen as a measuring stick for our ideas about the world, or even a greater paradigm within which all other ideas must fit. To believe that one's religious beliefs are scientific is to affirm their verity and quality

A general dictionary definition of science thought that is structured or organized. According to this definition any religion or dogma can be "scientific" if it is meticulous in certain ways. The second definition of science refers to knowledge gained by Scientific Method; the systematic testing of ideas through experimentation. Scientific method strictly involves the following process: 1) the formulation of hypotheses, 2) the testing of those hypotheses by controlled and reproducible empirical experiments 3) results of testing form new hypotheses and scientific theories.

Are Jain ideas, such as the principle of Ahimsa, testable and provable by scientific method? The answer is clearly "no". Therefore, Jainism is not scientific in the modern sense of the word. One may ask: how can we believe in something that is not scientific?

Science itself has particular limitations. It, like any system of belief, has certain primary assumptions that are themselves not empirically provable. For example, it is unable to prove that an external material world actually exists outside of our minds. Therefore science itself is not objectively provable, but relies on certain assumptions. But most of us do believe in the assumptions that science rests on, i.e. we do believe that a material world exists. Again, this belief is not externally provable, but is based on *rational intuition*. Jain philosophy examines the idea of rational intuition.

Hence, it is the concept of rational intuition that is the basis of belief in both modern science and in the principles of Jain Philosophy. As a final thought, I conclude that it is not important for Jain philosophy to be verifiable by the principles of modern science, but perhaps it is important to be compatible with science. ■

notes:

Jainism in the Media

Manoj Jain | Yogendra Jain

The question which must be first answered is WHY? Why even bother to promote Jainism in media? Why undergo the scrutiny and the possibility of misinterpretation by media and public? Why risk being labeled as a “cult” or worse. Instead of promoting Jainism in media, why not use this energy in practicing Jainism and “get rid of karmas” or building bigger temples and institutions.

After September 11, many Jain institutions felt a need to be heard. They felt that Jainism has a message of non-violence, non-absolutism, and non-possession which is not as clearly articulated by any other religion. In fact, when many of the religious leaders gave their opinions on this event, Jain leaders were nowhere to be found.

Today, Jainism in media is non-existent in US and worldwide media. It struggles to be recognized just as an independent religion. In contrast Buddhism has become popular in new age and religious literary circles and practice in the West.

Furthermore Jainism’s strong and unique focus and obsession with the philosophy of non-violence is what the world needs in these testing times. Hence, first we need to clearly define what our goal is in promoting Jainism in media.

Once the goal is defined, then as in any product promotion, some part of our budget and energy must go in public relations, advertisement, and other forms of promotion. And only over time as we develop our own expertise the appropriate promotion “mix” will need to be re-evaluated and refined.

This session will explore the potential impact media can make on a religion and why Jainism and Jain community and Jain organizations have lagged behind and why we must actively promote Jainism. Fundamentals of PR and marketing 101 will be discussed first followed by presentation on access to media and current PR work underway. Specific goals will be outlined as to what constitutes a successful media campaign. Based on this, a strategy will be developed and tools will be introduced to promote Jainism at local, regional, and national level. ■

notes:

Jainism on Technology

Prem Jain

What is the influence of Jainism on Technology, or should we say influence of Technology on Jainism? This session will focus on how Jainism and technology help each other, and how to use technology to be a better Jain, and how to be a better Jain using technology. In this session we will cover how the electronic technologies, particularly digital technologies of the computer can be leveraged in "walking the path of Jainism". Networking and the Internet have become one of the most influential forces of our lives today they continue to change the way we work, live, play and learn. Through this session we will bring together those who are concerned with the significance of how culture and religion plays a part in emerging technology.

It started with the industrial revolution, then technological revolution, followed by the computer revolution, and so many others, and so many more that will follow as technology progresses with time. Technology is changing the face of society. Whether it's GM food, embryonic stem cells, cloning, climate change or the Internet, we're all aware of the challenges which current developments are bringing. However in this session we will study

the impact of e-worship ,e-temple, e-learning ,e-publishing, e-pathsala, digital preservation & e-library can have on our lives. We will also discuss issues such as: How will we do religion in twenty or a hundred years from now? Will there be e-religion that people practice at home, just as they e-shop rather than going to the mall?

Conclusion: Technology can be good and bad. Lately in the news we have been hearing about the negative aspects of technology, especially with cloning technology. But in this session we want to give particular attention to the positive aspect of technology, and how we can use it to be a better Jain! ■

notes:

Jin Puja
Arvind Bhandari

This session will discuss the importance of performing Jin Puja. Jin Puja is a spiritual ritual designed for Shrāvaks (lay persons). The presence of the Tirthankar image provides mental peace and harmony and encourages one to detach himself from the worldly desires. Pujās provide an environment that help people to discipline themselves. It is considered to be a simple and preliminary step towards the attainment of Moksha. Jainism teaches us to pray and worship the Tirthankars. Why? Because it is in this manner that we can show our regard and respect to those individuals that have attained and experienced liberation, explained the path of liberation, and dedicated their lives to a higher purpose than themselves. We honor them so that we may one day get the inspiration to walk their path and attain moksha as they have.

There are two types of *Jinpujā*: *Saguna* & *Nirguna*. The worship of *Jina* in the form or Image is called *Saguna Jinpujā*. The worship of *Jina* as formless (spiritual idea of *Jina*) is called *Nirguna Jinpujā*. The *Saguna* worship of the *Parmātmā* (idol) is of eight-fold (*Ashtaprakāri*). We require the medium of an Idol or image for worship till we reach the 7th *Gunasthān*¹ (Seventh Stage in the spiritual development). *Nirguna* worship consists of devotion and meditation of the Formless one. Once the

aspirant is spiritually advanced to significantly higher spiritual level (the stage of the 8th *Gunasthān* and beyond), where *Saguna* worship is abandoned. A beginner requires the medium of Idol. While carrying on the *Dravyapujā* (*Pujā* that includes physical offerings such as Water, Chandan, Rice etc is known as *Dravyapujā*) we should do the *Bhāvpujā* (mental / emotional act of *Pujā* without any physical offerings).

This session will cover the main points outlined below. Please take notes.

- ◆ How is Jin Puja actually performed on the Idol?
- ◆ What parts of the body do we do *Tilak*?
- ◆ How can you actually become engrossed in the Puja?
- ◆ What rules and regulations exist when performing Jin Puja?
- ◆ What role do the following items like flowers, chandan, fruit, sweets, and rice play in Jin Puja?
- ◆ Practically speaking, what benefit will Jin Puja provide me in my life? ■

notes:

Kalpa and Tattvartha Sutra

Archit Shah | Shrenik Shah

Bhagwan Mahavira, who lived around 500 BC, was the most recent propagator of Jainism. In the Jain religion, it is fully enlightened souls like Mahavira whose sermons are the basis of scriptures. Both the Tattvarthasutra and Kalpasutra are based on the final sermons of Bhagwan Mahavir.

The *Tattvarthasutra* was written by Acharya Umaswati in Sanskrit in the second century BC after the teachings of Mahavirswami had been passed down through oral traditions for hundreds of years. Similarly, Acharya Bhadrabahu began work on the *Kalpasutra* in the fourth century BC. The two scriptures represent two different facets of Jainism: the intellectual and emotional, and they provide great insight into the Jain tradition.

In its most basic form, the *Tattvarthasutra* is a collection of about 300 statements about what the Jain universe is and how it works. These statements concisely expound the Jain philosophy which encompasses the nature of mind, soul, and matter; the history and physical structure of the universe; and the workings of a cycle of metaphysical cause and effect through the interaction of soul and karma.

Despite its deeply intellectual and philosophical nature, the lessons of the *Tattvarthasutra* are simple. The central themes form the core of Jain practice: nonviolence, non-absolutism, and non-possession. By following these principles, each one of us can follow the path to liberation, ultimately escaping the cycle of birth and death to achieve complete purity and bliss, known as nirvana.

notes:

The *Kalpasutra* is a highly revered text, as it plays a central role during the holiest of Jain festivals, Paryushana. Because of its elevated position, copies of the Kalpasutra were beautifully illuminated and illustrated. In particular, the style of manuscripts created between the 13th and 16th centuries in Gujarat and Rajasthan spread throughout India and as far as Burma, influencing artists of many diverse traditions.

The life of Mahavirswami is recounted in great detail in the *Kalpasutra*. It begins with a pregnant Queen Trishala experiencing fourteen auspicious dreams. She takes the dreams to the interpreters who announce that her son will be a Tirthankar. The birth of Mahavirswami is described in great detail as the people and celestial beings celebrate. Finally, after describing his thirty years as a layman in only two sentences, the text describes Mahavirswami's life as a monk and finally as an omniscient being. Rather than a straightforward biography, it is a recounting and celebration of the auspicious events in Bhagwan Mahvir's life.

The *Tattvarthasutra* and *Kalpasutra* together show the broad range of the Jain canon – from the intensely technical to the mythic. One shows a religion for the intellect; it covers the inner workings of the universe in precise details, while the other provides a religion for the heart. It recounts the life of the last tirthankar, the last of 24 great souls who each brought order to the religion. Through the stories of their lives, we celebrate what one man, no different from each of us, can achieve. ■

Karma: What Goes Around Comes Around

Archit Shah | Shrenik Shah

In order to fully adopt the Jain path of life, one must make three fundamental assumptions:

- 1) The goal of human life is liberation.
- 2) Liberation is perfect knowledge, perfect intuition and eternal bliss.
- 3) All knowledge is partial truth except omniscience.

The underlying philosophy that unites these three assumptions is the Jain theory of karma. Karma is often the subject of many a discussion concerning both theology and philosophy. This is because the dynamic between the soul and karma is the underpinning on which all Jain philosophy is based.

At a very rudimentary level, basic karmic philosophy is simply a cause and effect pathway. Through the process of asrava karma flows into the soul, this is followed by bandh by which these particles bind to the soul. The karma stays attached and exerts an influence on the soul according to its type and the intensity with which it is bound. Karma is split into two varieties: pap and punya, with the former being pleasure producing and the latter pain producing.

These aforementioned basic principles may seem quite simple. However, there are several confounding issues that can be raised when these principles are applied to certain tenets of Jainism:

Is a strong desire to attain liberation considered attachment? If so, does the desire to shed karma ultimately cause one to accumulate more karma?

Is there such a thing as a truly selfless deed? If one feels pride due to an act of charity, does one not gain negative karma?

Is the distinction between pap and punya really as clear as we think it is? Because they both contribute to obscuring of perfection, aren't they both in essence negative? Can the terms negative and positive be attached to karma?

It is issues like these and many others that one must considering before the delicate intricacies of karma theory can be fully grasped.

Our journey towards absolute knowledge consists of slowly prying away eons worth of karmic accumulation. Perhaps discussing these issues will help us to understand our world and ourselves while our souls are blessed with this temporary human guise. We can view this discussion as a miniscule step on the stairway to right knowledge, acquired only on the threshold of liberation. ■

notes:

Language: Gujarati 101/102

Chintan Parikh

India has always been an epicenter for world culture, literature and religion. Today there are a number of languages spoke around India, such as Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu and many more. All these languages have their roots in the ancient Devanagari script. In this two-session course I would like to touch upon the basics of Gujarati and make you familiar with Devanagari script.

To learn any Indian language it is first necessary to understand the Devanagari script. All the Indian languages are derived from this script. The origins of Devanagari can be traced back to the 11th century CE. Devanagari originated from the Brahmi script that had its roots in the ancient Aryan cultures dating back to 5th century BC. Even though being a descendant of the Brahmi script, Devanagari has evolved into a highly cursive script. Many languages in India, such as Hindi and Sanskrit, use Devanagari, and many more languages throughout India use local variants of this script. Hindu scriptures are written in Devanagari, a fact illustrated by the etymology of the name. “Devanagari” is a

compound word with two roots: deva means “deity” and nagari means “city”.

The emphasis during both these sessions will be on Devanagari script. Once you understand the basics of this script you will be able to learn and understand any other Indian language with ease. The sessions will be highly interactive using multimedia presentations. Also, class participation and feedback will be critical to the success of the course. It is very important for you to attend both the sessions as the coursework will be evenly distributed in both the sessions and the 2nd session will be a continuation of the 1st session.

I am hoping that attending these two sessions will help increase your awareness and knowledge in Gujarati. It will also help you learn other languages based on the Devanagari script. If you have any questions or suggestions please feel free to contact me at chintan@parchin.com. Your feedback will be very much appreciated. ■

notes:

Life of an Ascetic

Samaniji Charitrapragyaaji | Samaniji Shardapragyaaji

Jainism is a soul-oriented religion having its antiquity and rich heritage of art and culture. The destination of each individual soul is to attain eternal happiness—that is liberation.

- ◆ How that can be achieved?
- ◆ What are the pathways to make our soul closer to it?
- ◆ Does it take long process or we can figure out some right exists to be at our home?
- ◆ What's the aim of our life?
- ◆ Where I want to go?
- ◆ What kind of success do I really desire?
- ◆ Why this human life is considered so important?

These are few queries make us to think over and over and to find out the answers from our inner self - the inner voice which never betrays us but take us to the right track. However in this so-called modern world, it is very significant to talk about such a life giving mental satisfaction and peace.

The points mentioned above will be discussed by recruiting the important aspects, events and ceremonies taking place before becoming an ascetic and after being an ascetic. Samanjis' own experience narrated at the session will make it livelier.

Just as there are rules of religion for the Shravaks, the ascetics live by their own code of conduct – a disciplined lifestyle in which they lead their lives. Participants would get an idea about their food, clothing, shelter and travel issues and how they deal with it.

Answers can also be had for questions like how does one qualify to become an ascetic? What is the hierarchy in the ascetic order? In the 21st century, how do the ascetics spread Jainism for and wide while keeping the spirit of Jainism intact? ■

notes:

Life Sketch of Srimad Rajchandra

Ashik Shah

I would like to share with you the life of someone who has influenced me profoundly. But before we start, I would like you to think of a hero in your life. I would like to present to you a few scenarios. What would you do? What would your hero do?

- 1) As a child, you find that your family is involved in some highly immoral activity, what do you do?
- 2) You have a talent which brings you national recognition. As a result you are offered many opportunities to advance your career and earnings, but might have to compromise some of your values, what would you do?
- 3) You are invited to Bill Gates' home and he shows off all his wonderful gadgets to you. What do you think?
- 4) You have concluded some business negotiations from which you expect to earn a substantial profit. You have signed the contract. A few days later, the counter party approaches you and asks you to reconsider, what do you do?

My hero is Shrimad Rajchandra (1867-1901). However, he was not just my hero. He has influenced the course of 20th Century History through his impact on Gandhiji, who in turn influenced MLK.

ॐ Born 1867, Vavania, Saurashtra ॐ Aged 7, he attained Jati Smaran Gnan, seeing his past lives, and attained

tremendous detachment, resolving not to undergo the tremendous suffering of his past lives, or the worldly cycle ॐ Aged 16, already well known for his intelligence and insight, he publishes Mokshamala, a book of 108 chapters, still read today as a reference on Jain philosophy ॐ Aged 24, he attained Samyag Darshan.

His explanation of Lord Mahavir's message urged us: to maintain spiritual, and not material, motives in our religious activities; to avoid excessive intellectualism, excessive ritualism, dogmatism, prejudice and sectarianism; to realize our own true spiritual nature as Souls, and to take guidance from, and have faith in a Living Self-realized True Guru, and thus conquer our Svachhand, the hubris that we alone know what to do in spiritual matters, which is a major obstacle in our spiritual progress.

His unique literary legacy consists of poems such as Atma Siddhi, prose, and many often intimate letters written to his closest disciples, including the monks. We are truly fortunate to have access to the innermost thoughts of such a self-realized Saint, and the guidance he gave others, provides unique insight into the path to Moksha.■

notes:

Living as a Jain After September 11

Ameet Shah

The moderators of this session will illicit a discussion on recent tragedies and other times. September 11, 2001 is a day that all people around the world will remember. This among many other tragedies around the world has affected all walks of life. As a young Jain, how were you affected by this tragedy? What was your initial reaction? In this session you will be able to voice how you felt about this as well as violence that has since erupted around the world (i.e. war between Israel and Palestine, Muslim and Hindu conflicts, as well as many other terrorist acts around the world) One will learn how to remember the basic tenant of ahimsa and try to make sense of the world events.

This session, although a very touchy subject, was created in order to help the Jains of our society deal with the events of this tragedy. Jains are supposed to react calmly to this event, but as human beings our instincts make us angry and seekers of revenge. Although one of the Jain Virtues we, as Jains, of forgiveness (KSHMA) when a person is overcome with anger, he forgets the difference between the good and the bad and acts blindly without being discreet. However, this session will deal with how

each and every Jain can deal with handling these emotions.

This session will begin with a Navkar, one of the most important things in Jainism, something which will bring peace to all of our listeners. The topic of 9/11 will then be introduced and Ameet Shah, who saw this whole event occur and will speak about his perspective and how this tragedy has affected him. Although most have read about this and/or watched events on television as they unraveled that day, Ameet's accounts of that day will refresh all emotions and memories you have. Combining a power point presentation and first hand account the audience members will then break into smaller and discuss the aftermath as well as how would we change people to take a pacifistic route for resolution. ■

notes:

Logassa Sutra
Pramodaji Chitrabanu

Logassa Sutra is one of the most important, widely chanted sutras of the Jain scriptures. Be it for chaityavandan, samayika, pratikraman or even meditation, knowledge of logassa sutra is a important for the aspirants to gain knowledge of Jain rituals and practices. Pramodaben has the experience of sharing the virtues of Logassa sutra in the most easily comprehensible manner.

Logassa Sutra is about showing reverence to the 24 Tirthankaras who are our role models and inspiration in this world. It is about seeking blessings from these Tirthankaras so that we may practice their teachings in our life sincerely.

These Tirthankaras are worshipped in our meditation with the mind, body and soul so that their divine light can illumine right knowledge, right vision and right conduct in us. In the end a state of completion is requested from the Tirthankaras who are purer than the moon, brighter than the sun and are profound as the ocean.

Logassa meditation is a powerful technique for relaxation and spiritual upliftment. In this, the aspirant first visualizes the light of all the perfect souls descending on him and healing him. He visualizes himself being free from ego

and conceit by offering his reverence and adoration to the virtues of the 24 Tirthankaras. As the gravitational force drops down, the fountain of happiness within springs forth.

With the perfect understanding of the meaning and feeling of each word of the sutra, one naturally glides into the meditation and experiences clarity of the mind, purity of the heart and ecstasy of the soul. ■

notes:

Crowell Crawford

- ◆ Had these two spiritual giants come face to face: what would they have said to one another?

- As Jains we are taught principles of tolerance; however Mahavir brought the issue of tolerance to the forefront of modern Jainism. Buddha enlightened the middle path for people and distinguished the philosophical aspect of religion rather than the ritualistic viewpoint of religion. Both Lord Mahavir and Lord Buddha introduced radical ideals to age old rituals/prayers/basic ways of thought. My intention is to not only educate you on Lord Mahavir and Lord Buddha just as religious pioneers but to explain their impact to each respective religion. Learning about them in this light will give each attendee to walk away with a better sense that although a partition exists between Jainism and Buddhism, these religions actually are more similar than different. Using Lord Mahavir and Lord Buddha as examples to find a way to use both religions as positive forces that affect all people in similar ways. ■

[illegible]

Meditation Techniques

Moderator

Meditation has become a trend recently in the United States. But meditation has been practiced in Jainism for thousands of years. In fact, the essence of meditation is deep contemplation on a spiritual subject and finding ones self, the fundamental nature of Jainism itself.

The purpose of meditation is to free ourselves from all emotions and worldly thought. We cannot afford to waste time in negative thoughts and worry. We are born free and we must not make any cages for ourselves. The conditions which condition us were conditioned by us. We have created our own present and we are, in each moment, creating our own future. This includes not only our future life, but also the next moment of our present life. Unless you change your pattern of thinking, no outer change will help you or make you happy. The only way to change your pattern of thinking is through meditation.

Meditation is an adventure, the greatest adventure the human mind can undertake. Meditation is just being, not doing anything; no actions, no thoughts, and no emotions. You just are and it is a sheer delight. From where does this delight come when you are doing nothing? It comes from nowhere, or it comes from everywhere.

Meditation means awareness. Whatever you do with awareness is meditation. Action is not important, but the awareness that you bring to your action is important. The quality of this observation, the quality of being aware and alert, is the most important component of meditation. As one becomes alert and watchful, then whatever you do will be meditation.

Life has some direction. It is pulsating with something alive; you can call it divinity, eternity, or soul. When you realize this, all emotions, distractions, and materialism disappear.

The vibrations of violence or peace do not come from the outside. They come from inside. In the beginning there will be resistance. But as you relax and become tranquil, you will be able to concentrate and focus your thoughts and energy. Each individual has to take charge of himself, and create harmony in himself. By creating peace inside, we are able to create peace outside. ■

notes:

Namakar Mahamantra

Houston Youth Group

The Namokar Mantra is the most important mantra in Jainism. However many people may not know the true meaning of this prayer. After studying the Namokar Mantra, the Jain Fellowship of Houston is proud to present the Namokar Mahamantra session where we hope to illustrate this mantra's deeper meaning. To start learning about this mantra we must first know its meaning:

Namo Arihantaanam	<i>I bow to the Arihantas.</i>
Namo Siddhaanam	<i>I bow to the Siddhas.</i>
Namo Ayariyaanam	<i>I bow to the Acharyas.</i>
Namo Uvajjaayaanam	<i>I bow to the Upadhyayas.</i>
Namo Loae Savva Saahoonam	<i>I bow to all the Sadhus in this world.</i>
Eso Pancha Namokkaro	<i>Bowing to these five</i>
Savva Paavappanaasano	<i>Is destroyer of all sins,</i>
Mangalaanam Cha Savvesim	<i>And among all the holy things,</i>
Padhaman Havai Mangalam	<i>The first and foremost it is.</i>

By reciting the Namokar Mantra, we are bowing down to the virtues that the Panch Parmesthi have practiced rather than worshipping any individual person.

The Namokar Mantra is a timeless saying which carries the main message of Jainism. Its message states that if we want to be liberated from this world, we have to take the first step of renunciation by becoming a monk or a nun. If one continues on this

path then he or she will proceed onto becoming a Siddha, which is, or should be, every Jain's goal.

People recite the Namokar Mantra at various places and times. Some Jains may recite the mantra everyday while others during tense times. The sounds that are produced by the Namokar Mantra are supposed to create positive vibrations that will keep the negative vibrations away. There have been several instances in real life and in Jain mythology in which the Namokar Mantra has helped people overcome unfavorable circumstances.

The Jain Fellowship of Houston feels that by gaining a deeper understanding of the most important mantra in Jainism, one is making an attempt to progress on the spiritual path to Moksha. ■

notes:

Paryushan and Me

University of Michigan JSG

Set in olden times as a welcoming to the monks, Paryushaun is one of the most important celebrations of the Jain Religion. It is either 8 days (Swetamber) or 10 days (Digamber). Throughout the week, one celebrates the important days of Swapna Darshan and Samvatsari Pratikraman in addition to the daily pujas and bhavanas. In "Paryushan and Me," we will uncover the practices of Paryushan.

- ◆ *Why are these days set this way, and why is the tradition different between Digambers and Swetambers?*

Another aspect that youth find difficult to understand is fasting and the Jain diet that most Jains follow during the Paryushan holidays.

- ◆ *What exactly can we eat with the Jain diet?*
- ◆ *Are there any health risks?*
- ◆ *What are the different types and how do I know what is best for me?*

The most important concept from Paryushaun is forgiveness. The idea that what is done is done and one must move on with their lives and forgive those with whom they are angry.

- ◆ *But should this be only an annual thought? Is saying Michami Dukkdam enough?*
- ◆ *Knowing all this is good, but how does it relate to you?*
- ◆ *How can you practice these ideals in every day life?*
- ◆ *What is the best way to get the most out of this week?*
- ◆ *What are the biggest misconceptions about Paryushaun?*

These questions and more will be answered in "Parushan & Me." It's a practical session aimed at educating youth what they are practicing and helping them understand the importance of this holiday.

Join the University of Michigan's Jain Study Group to discuss all of this and much more. ■

notes:

Pilgrimage to India: Jatra in 60 Minutes

Dr. John Cort

Pilgrimage to sacred sites associated with the lives of the 24 Jinas and other sacred heroes is an important part of the spiritual practices of the image-worshipping Shvetambar and Digambar Jains.

The two most important of these sites in India are Shatrunjay near the town of Palitana in Gujarat, and Shravana Belagola near the city of Mysore in Karnataka. Both of them are striking mountains that rise up from the surrounding plains to greet the pilgrim. Shatrunjay is sacred to the Shvetambars, and Shravana Belagola is sacred to the Digambars.

Shatrunjay is dedicated to the Adinatha, the first Jina of this era, and is understood by Jains to have been a sacred mountain since the time of Adinatha's son Bharata. Historically, Jain patrons have been some of the wealthiest individuals. Kings and rich merchants used their considerable resources to build some of the most breathtaking temples. These temples served two purposes:

1. To aid the spirituality of the king and Community and
2. To create a lasting relic of their reign.

Within Jain architecture I will discuss two kinds of structures: the actual physical building structure and

the structure of the Jain sangh itself. The first is an obvious topic in architecture as the temples are a reflection of vision, time, and money that went into their construction. The second looks at the influence of these temples on the actual fabric of society. They were created as centers of religion and culture. Temples are anchors of community. Without them the structure of the Jain community would much weaker. This session will discuss not only the architecture in the literal sense but also how these stone buildings show the amazing architecture of Jain society.

There are many temples that we will be discussing, including those at Mount Abu and Ranakpur, Palitana, and Shravarn Belgoda.

The stories behind some of these temples are just as remarkable as the temples themselves. Other ways of looking at Jain architecture will also be discussed. If you are interested in more information about any of these temples or want to learn about others two great books are:

- Shree 108 Jain Tirth Darshanawali
- The Peaceful Liberators: Jain Art from India.

This profusely-illustrated talk will use a discussion of pilgrimage to explain the role of worship and devotion in Jainism. ■

notes:

The Point of Rituals and Prayers

Arvind Bhandari

Jain rituals and prayers are a focal point for all worshipers. Primary goal of daily rituals is these are worships with the deep concentration and pure thoughts free of violence and harm disperse the accumulated karmas from the soul.

Some guidelines that Jains follow include:

Worship before the Jina murtis

Bowing before the murtis

Lighting a devo in front of murtis.

Puja is a regular daily ritual done in the derasar. There are three major types of puja:

Snatra Puja: This ritual includes the bathing of the murti/ image is symbolic to the bathing of the newborn tirthanakara by the celestial beings.

Panch Kalyanak Puja: This puja commemorates the five great events of the Tirthankara's life: conception, birth, renunciation, omniscience and moksa.

Antaraya Karma Puja: This puja comprises a series of prayers to remove those karmas, which obstruct the spiritual uplifting power of the soul.

There are also rituals associated with milestones in a layperson's life.

There are birth rituals that include:

Priyodhbhav Sanskar: This ritual takes place after birth of a child. Ten days of cleansing or Satak are observed after delivery; in the temple the priest recites mantras and receives offerings on behalf of the newborn.

Namkaran Sanskar: You will learn where the names of boys and girls are selected from.

The marriage rituals include nine rituals that are preformed on the same day. Jain marriages are simple ceremonies without flaunting of wealth. These rituals range from the confirmation of the date and time of the marriage to setting the engagement to the actual vows taken on the day of the marriage.

Last but not least there are death rituals. However you would assume death to be a time to be sad and somber however Jains believe that the dead should would be reborn immediately. So them death is a festival or Mahotsav.

This is just a small overview of rituals and prayers associated with Jainism. Let this session be a window to the beginning of how complex yet methodical our religion is. ■

notes:

Professional Career Forum

Palak Doshi

Not sure of your major? Unclear of the jobs you're applying for? YJA's Career Information Forum is designed to promote an understanding of the various

industries that exist in today's day in age. Speakers from various firms and backgrounds will give a first hand account of what college professors do not reveal in class. The forum will allow participants to find the answer to the age old question: "What do I want to do with my life?"

With today's suffering economy and immense job cuts, finding employment opportunities and obtaining job security is harder than it's ever been. It is for this reason that YJA has become proactive in assisting individuals by bringing companies to its 5th biennial convention. The Career Information Forum has two objectives in mind:

- 1) Educating attendees on a wide range of employment opportunities that currently exist, assisting them in deciphering what their “dream job” may be, and then finding the appropriate channels of contact to help them on their way.

and

- 2) Providing participants an opportunity to submit their resumes to companies that are hiring now so they can begin their search.

Attendees will benefit by gaining insight into what really makes each occupation tick. Speakers will address frequently asked questions (FAQs) dealing with the requirements needed to qualify for various career paths, demands placed on individuals working in those careers, the time commitment required, income potential of each profession, and the future outlook on any given occupation. ■

notes:

Ratnakar Pachissi

Sadhvi Shri Shubamji

Ratnakar Pachisi is a prayer to God and allows the listener to know oneself and to improve one's moral values and to free oneself from the want of material possessions.

The session is designed to develop awareness amongst the participants of ways of recognizing one's own bad deeds and confessing them in front of God & requesting for wisdom and right vision to be able to attain liberation. Ratnakar Pachchisi is a 25-verse poem which has lot of practical application for young and old alike.

Before you encounter this session here is some background information about this beautiful poem. The enlightened saint that wrote this poem was inspired by self analysis. He examined his actions through life and confessed to "God" through this poem. Although he devoted his life to preaching God's word he still felt unfulfilled. When one listens to the poem you hear a sense of turmoil the writer is going through. The saint is caught in an evil web of passions such as anger, greed, ego, and desire. But isn't he a saint? Yes, however even with *right knowledge, faith and conduct* gained as a saint, he has lost because he was consumed by these emotions.

He has lost the sense of virtues deemed upon all Jains especially that one of his stature. He neglected the

importance of the Navkar Mantra and the power it holds, instead he devoted his time to learning other mantras (by this we mean mantras that was in sync with Jain virtues and beliefs) as well ignoring the supreme Agam scriptures. He also did not observe the vow of celibacy and thus the beginning of destruction of his soul. Doesn't that sound harsh? This poem illustrates introspection as to what one's motives in life are. He continues to confess that he didn't fulfill his role as a saint therefore indulging in passionate actions of acquiring wealth, sex and power. He understands that with all these accumulated sins, he is a failure in his past, present and future lifetimes. Finally, he repents, and urges to God to understand and forgive him.

The session is designed to develop awareness amongst the participants of ways of recognizing one's own bad deeds and confessing them in front of God & requesting for wisdom and right vision to be able to attain liberation.

This poem illustrates to us that even though we have a certain path to fulfill as a Jain that along the way with temptations we encounter that our ultimate goal should not be forgotten. You will have an opportunity to listen to the poem and get an understanding why this is an example of powerful Jain scripture. ■

notes:

Relationships: Keeping Everyone Happy

Dipa Talati

Relationships come in many shapes and sizes. Your relationships can vary from a family relationship to a friend relationship to a dating relationship to the relationships that you have with your boss and co-workers. But each of these relationships does have something in common, they include you. The aim of this session is to try to figure out how to handle all these relationships to keep yourself and the other person happy. Based on the Jain principle of relativity, your outlook or perspective on life can be the factor which ultimately determines if you find a situation to be happy or sad. Although the session will incorporate all of the relationships that a person has, the focus will be on the relationships that you have in the workplace. You know how to handle many of the other relationships besides the workplace because you have experienced them to some extent at this point in your life. But the workplace can be a totally new environment for those who just graduated college and have been working for a short while. There are many different types of relationships that you can have with your co-workers and boss. There are also positives and negatives that arise from each type of relationship. This topic and many others will be discussed throughout the hour. The session will

feature a panel of speakers that will share their experiences with you and answer any questions that you might have. Since this session is based mainly on audience participation and questions, come prepared to express your opinions! ■

notes:

Samayak & Samta

Chandrakant Mehta

Samayik is one of the daily six essentials for everyone. Samayik is a ritual to condition the body and the mind. Entering the Samayik and leaving the Samayik takes a few minutes. The actual Samayik is for 48 minutes. These 48 minutes are a quiet period, to read scriptures, to pray, to chant, and to discuss religious principles, and we will do a samayik in the session.

Samayik teaches you mind control, modesty, and repentance. In the process of Samayik, you apologize for any incidental violence you committed on that day. Basically there are two types of Samayik, one is most people do at home, for 48 minutes. The other type of Samayik is for the monks. Samayik is their way of life.

During the Samayik, you are trying to withdraw your mind from worldly things. Just as you have to be careful about how you drive to avoid an accident, or get a speeding ticket, in the same way you have to be careful that you do not run into any trouble while performing our samayik. If you are not careful then you can violate samayik by your mental, verbal and physical activities. There are **ten mental violations**: 1) to be disrespectful, 2) to be greedy for fame, 3) to be greedy for gains, 4) to be proud, 5) to be in fear, 6) to expect the rewards, 7) to doubt the rewards, 8) to be in anger, 9) to be rude, and 10) to despise. There are **ten verbal violations**: 1) to use an abusive words, 2) to use alarming words, 3) to say non-religious words, 4) to speak inadequate, 5) to use words to incite fight, 6) to gossip, 7)

to make fun, 8) to pronounce improperly, 9) to use irrational words, and 10) to jargon. There are twelve physical violations: 1) to sit at an unsuitable place, 2) not to sit steady, 3) to walk every now and then, 4) doing home work, 5) to stretch the body, 6) to lean against a support, 7) being lazy, 8) cracking knuckles, 9) to clean body dirt, 10) to scratch body, 11) to make vulgar postures, and 12) to sleep. Though it may look difficult, it is not impossible to do samayik the right way.

Samta – equanimity of mind is an important principle of Jainism. Samayik helps achieve that. Its a way of Jain meditation. During the 48-minute period the meaning of Samta will be discussed. We will also discuss how Samayik and Samta are related to each other. Muh-patti, an important accessory of Jain rituals is used in Samayik. The significance of Muh-patti, the actual and the spiritual meaning of the use of Muh-patti will be explained.

This way samayik helps us in preventing the accumulation of new karmas and the penance we

notes:

Soul in Motion

Pravin Shah

Everything in the universe is either living or non living(jiva or ajiva). Every single living being is an individual eternal soul. However it continuously changes its material body as it passes from one life to another. Metaphysically speaking, all souls, according to their stage of spiritual evolution or progress have a legitimate place on the path of religion. Everyone's position is determined by its Karmic limitations, and its progress depends on its efforts and potentialities. The doctrine of Karma tells us that we are the architects of our own fortune. It is for us to look into ourselves, analyze our motives, estimate our objectives, without slavishly prostrating ourselves before any power for fear or favor.

Jain scholars have divided all souls into four major categories of life, in any of which an individual soul may be reincarnated; (1) animals and plants, (2) gods or heavenly beings, (3) hell creatures, and (4) humans. These four states are often symbolically represented by the four arms of a swastika.

At the lowest extreme there are the tiny nigoda souls, infinitesimally small and short lived, but existing in all parts of the universe. Also Earth, air, fire, water, and plant are populated by tiny soul hardly greater than the nigoda soul. These souls have only one sense, the sense of touch.

The living beings above these have taken material life in all the various forms of insects, fish, birds, animals, humans and so on. These souls have two, three, four or, in the case of human and the higher forms of animal life, five of the senses, to include taste, smell, sight and hearing. Human beings come in a rather special category for they have abilities to liberate from karma.

In many Jain books diagrams of the universe will be found. They show the occupied universe (Lokakas) depicted as having a roughly human form, wider at the bottom where the legs are spread, narrowing to the waist, widening out again and then narrowing at the top to the head. At the very top is the resting place of the liberated souls known as Moksha.

Below the Moksha are the upper worlds or heavens in which heavenly beings (gods) reside. The world in which we live is located in the middle (waist) is occupied by humans, animals and plants. Below this are the underworlds or hells. Outside the Lokakas there is nothing but boundless empty space (Alokakas) where there is no life or matter or movement.

The presentation will summarize the soul's journey which starts from a tiny nigod state to its final destination which is Moksha or liberation. During its journey it occupies various forms of life such as plants, animals, humans, and beings of hell and heavens. These various forms of life reside at various places of the occupied universe. ■

notes:

Stress Management: The Jain Way

Gurudev Chitrananuji

Stress is the inevitable result of the 21st century. And to avoid it, what better way than to practice the timeless teachings of the Jinas! The session is aimed to throw light on - easy to learn and simple to practice - mind, body and soul relaxation techniques viz. kayotsarg, pranayam, prekshadhyan, vipassana to name a few. Chitrananuji and Pramodaben have been well versed with these techniques and are happy to share the same with the youth.

Adults and young all have often experienced stress. Stress is like a two sided coin. It has the positive and the negative side to it which affects one's life on physical, psychological and emotional front. It becomes very important for the today's youth to be able to manage it right from the early stage, so that one can win over it and lead a desirable happy, successful life.

Effective stress management techniques outlined as under can be practiced in routine life to handle stress.

- **Kayotsarg** is a technique of meditating on the self, in silence, with concentration and with peace of mind to make the body relaxed and composed.
- **Pranayam** is extension, expansion and control of energy – breath. By controlling the breath, one can indirectly influence the mind, improve

will power and control the autonomic nervous system.

- **Prekshadhyan** is a process of awakening one's own reasoning mind (*viveka*) and thereby control one's passions and emotions. It consists of : Regulation and harmonizing (a) respiratory and other physiological functions, (b) nervous system, (c) endocrine (ductless glands) system and (d) subtle inherent vibrations which produce passions
- **Vipassana** means to see things as they really are. Through direct experience, the nature of how one grows or regresses, how one produces suffering because of unmanaged passions or frees oneself by letting go (the process of *puttgala*. *Put* – To fill and *Gala* – to melt) from suffering is understood. Life becomes characterized by increased awareness, non-delusion, self-control and peace.

Other practical techniques shared during the session would enable the participants to grasp them, practice them and be stress free in times to come. ■

notes:

Twelve Bhavans

Purnima Doshi

As you're reading this, take a moment to reflect on the thoughts and ideas that have been running through your head all day. You probably won't be able to recall most of them, but of the ones that you do remember, how many of your thoughts are going to uplift your soul?

Humans think so much and most of that thinking causes happiness, sorrow, anger, greed, jealousy, and egoism, etc. And, depending upon how we react, we attract various types of karmas to our souls. To minimize the bondage of karmas, the Jinas have taught us to observe twelve bhavanas. Bhavana means the contemplation, through which you motivate your soul to carry out lofty reflections.

The twelve Bhavanas described here are the subject matters of one's meditation and how to occupy one's mind with useful, religious, beneficial, peaceful, harmless, spiritually advancing, Karma preventing thoughts. They cover a wide field of teachings of Jainism. They are designed to serve as aids to spiritual progress, produce detachment, and lead the aspirants from the realm of desire to the path of renunciation. They are reflections upon the fundamental facts of life, intended to develop purity of thought and sincerity in the practice of religion.

The reflections are also called Anuprekshas, longings, thoughts, aspirations, or Bhavanas:

1. **Anitya Bhavana** – Impermanence of the world
2. **Asarana Bhavana** – No protection
3. **Samsara Bhavana** – No permanent relationships in the universe
4. **Ekatva Bhavana** – Solitude of the soul
5. **Anyatva Bhavna** – Separateness
6. **Asuci Bhavana** – Impurity of the body
7. **Asrava Bhavana** – Influx of karma
8. **Samvara Bhavana** – Stoppage of influx of karma
9. **Nirjara Bhavana** – Shedding of Karma
10. **Loka Bhavana** – Transitory universe
11. **Durlabha Bhavana** – Right Faith, Right Knowledge, Right Conduct
12. **Dharma Bhavana** – True preceptor, Scriptures, Religion

Conclusion: A constant reminder of these twelve Bhavanas mitigates our pangs of pains and expands our understanding of the life's problems, and even in uncomfortable situations of life does not appear burdensome. ■

notes:

Valuing Jainism - Call Options

Beenet Kothari

Business and Jainism? Many could never imagine a connection between the two, but this presentation builds the bridge that will allow us realize the true meaning and importance of practicing Jainism. Methods of financing for business fall under essentially two methods, equity and debt. Recently, a new class of financial instrument has started to be used called derivatives, which derive their value from something else – options are such an example. An option is an instrument that gives its holder the right, but not the obligation, to buy or sell something at a fixed price in the future. Two types of options exist: put and call options, allowing the buyer to wager whether the price of a certain instrument will go up or down in the future. The key to options is calculating the price one should pay for a certain option. This price, essentially, allows the seller to determine how much the option is worth. The price of this option depends on five factors: price of the underlying instrument, the expected future price, duration time, interest rate and volatility.

What if Jainism were the underlying instrument? How would the options model help us understand the value of practicing of Jainism? The underlying instrument is assumed to be Jainism – our *sanskar*, which includes our culture, religion, family values, humanitarian deeds and spiritual reading. We aim to reach a certain goal in Jainism – this *strike price* is whatever we decide for it to be, and thus by keeping it attainable, we increase the value of our

option. Our target goal in Jainism is often dependent on our age and personal circumstances. By keeping in mind that the greater the time to maturity, the greater the value of an option. Thus, though many say that religion is to be practiced in retirement age, religion exerts a greater influence and affect when practiced as early as possible. The time value of Jainism is greater in youth compared to senile state, because at a younger age, the time and health permits for true devotion. The interest rate and volatility factors can be summarized by illustrating that the Western world has fast-paced life where time is a premium and has greater volatility in its media and societal factors, thus making the necessity of following and practicing Jainism even greater in the Western culture.

This presentation will show us that the time value of religion is immense when we were are younger; that the option value is higher in our Western environment; that practicing Jainism in our volatile environment brings the option an even higher value and that we need to set achievable goal targets for ourselves. Using the financial options model, we begin to appreciate that the underlying philosophy, principle and religion is invaluable. ■

notes:

Vardha...Who?

New Jersey Youth Group - Satya-J

Who's the man? VARDHAMAN of course. You see, before Mahavir Swami attained nirvana, he was something close to your average boy growing up around the corner in a palace with everything he could ever wish for at his reach. So what makes him "The Man"? Well, imagine having a life like his, where everything is possible and there's not one thing you cannot have. Then imagine making the ultimate sacrifice, giving up such a comfortable life to set out on an unmarked trail lined with hardships unimaginable to you and me. Join us as we journey to his world and trace the everlasting effects of his teachings and principals through time in a quest to bring them to life in today's world.

Prince Vardhaman, even as a child, displayed extraordinary qualities that set him apart from everyone else. Curious of his apparent strength, many gods decided to put his courage and power to the test. They carefully plotted unusual obstacles in Vardhaman's life to see if he could overcome them. Ultimately, Vardhaman unknowingly proved himself by fearlessly getting rid of a snake and defeating a giant with ease. The next test came in school. Accused of not paying proper attention in class, Vardhaman was being reprimanded for his apparent lack of respect just as a Brahman came to

the classroom and presented the teacher with a difficult question. Realizing that the teacher was unaware of the answer, the Brahman suggested asking prince Vardhaman. The prince replied to the question correctly without any hesitation. As the teacher tried to fathom the young boy's ability, the Brahman explained, "Acharya! Please don't feel insulted. You are not aware that the sun of knowledge of this era is present before you as prince Vardhaman. He is the future Bhagavan Mahavir." With this began the path to prince Vardhaman's enlightenment.

Mahavir's religious venture consisted of 12 years of spiritual practice. He declared, "I take the vow of practicing equanimity all through my life and abandon all intentional sinful activities...I will tolerate every affliction of predicament caused by man, god, demon or animal equally, no matter how fearsome it is. As long as I do not attain omniscience, I will continue to tread the fire paved path of purity with unflinching and firm steps." Upon taking this oath, Vardhaman began his arduous journey to enlightenment.

With the simple use of our creative outlets we have put together a program of a different nature. Through our presentation we hope to allow the audience to not only learn more about prince Vardhaman's life, but also see how his values and principles can relate to today's world. ■

notes:

A Women's Role in the 21st Century

Sadhvi Shilapiji | Sarina Jain | Chhaya Kapadia | Shayna Parekh

As we progress into the 21st century, women are becoming more recognized in social and professional settings, thus, enhancing the portrayal of women altogether. This session will be lead by 4 prominent women leaders in today's society. It will also reflect Jainism's view on the role of women. We decided to choose this topic because to most people the role of women in Jainism is either undefined or not even discussed. Also, most people do not even know the exact role of women in Jainism, or if they even have a specific role. This session is meant to answer any of the questions a person might have on the role of women in Jainism.

Our panelists include Sadhvi Shilapiji, Sarina Jain, Chhaya Kapadia and Shayna Parekh. In this session, you will have an opportunity to ask any of these 5 women about their goals or achievements. You will also learn about the lives of these 5 individuals and how being a woman has helped or hurt them in any way. You will also be able to discuss any difficulties or challenges they might have had because they are women.

Some questions posed to the panel can include:
What obstacles have you faced in any project you are involved in?
With all that is said about a woman's role in Jainism do you agree or disagree with the inequality that can exist?

Mahavir has preached equality for all, do all Jains follow this teaching and when have you encountered either equality or inequality?

What is the status of women in Indian society? Does that differ from status of women in Western society, if so, how?

Did Jainism play a role in decisions you make today, if so how?

Ideally men and women should be equal but even for a liberal country as the United States it isn't, how can we change that?

As our religion and ethnicity separates us from the majority what obstacles have you encountered because of your ethnicity? Does that reflect on both men and women?

Some background information on these women is included in this book. The purpose to get women from all walks of life is to get an overview on how each woman tackled life. Although the session has moderators that will ask preselected questions, the audience will have an opportunity to ask the panel questions. ■

notes:

Who Am I?

Mukesh Hamukwala

Who am I, as a human, who am I, who are you? Understanding yourself is the first step to walking the path of Jainism, or just being a good human. This session seeks to help individuals understand themselves better. Here, we will discuss your personality type, ideal learning environment, natural tendencies, and all aspects of identity that concern one as an individual or a group.

I follow Jainism but do I follow by choice? I could follow Hinduism and/or Christianity? But religion is just one aspect that is part of your identity? What are others?

Are you a follower or a leader?
Are you an extrovert or an introvert?
Are you materialistic or simplistic?

These are questions one doesn't think about, this session will expect you to introspect these questions? Can you fit in one label or do you belong in the gray area (somewhere in between)? What shapes your personality? Where do these tendencies come from? Was this a part of your parents up bringing? Or do friends shape help shape who you are? How does one figure who he or she is? Its important in life to figure out who one

is, the self identity, the exploration of self, the journey in to self!

There is hidden pressure placed on us by society, by friends, including ourselves, to figure out who we are, for some, for others they don't care, and choose to develop their own identity. It is this exploration that we seek to explain, how to achieve your goal, with maximum results.

There is a force that makes us want to identify ourselves, we strive to be known, as someone, or somebody. This force leads us to what we become in life, this is how people identify us. The irony to this dilemma is if I don't walk this path, the world looks down on you. This is where Jainism teaches us, that one can and should be what they want, and can be. Don't attempt to falsify or imitate what you can't be. This often leads to a human who is corrupt from within, and immoral.

So what should you expect from this session when you walk out that door, if anything, walk away with one thing that will make you ask your self, when you look in to that mirror next, who am I? ■

notes:

Ya Baby I Like It Raw!

Dhrumil Purohit | Nature Love

Since many people have not heard of Raw Foods before, let me provide a brief introduction. A Raw Foodist, one who follows the living foods lifestyle, is one who eats a diet of un-cooked fruits, vegetables, seeds, nuts, and sprouts. Most Raw Foodists are also vegans, meaning they don't eat any animal products (milk, meat, fish, eggs). So now you know. But why would anyone want to put themselves through this? Okay, get ready for this; it's going to be hard to digest, yet delightfully fulfilling!

When food is cooked at 118 degrees F for three minutes or longer, its protein becomes coagulated, its sugar become caramelized, its natural fibers brake down, which means it will take longer to move through the intestinal tract, 30% to 50% of its vitamins and minerals are destroyed and 100% of its enzymes have been destroyed.

This destroyed food can fuel our bodies for some time but the toxicity of it builds up and the theory is that it eventually leads to colds, flu, cancer, tumors, arthritis, and more.

Excuse me? The concept behind Raw Foods is that food that isn't cooked, (fresh vegetables and fruits) is all that we are supposed to eat. When you eat a Raw diet, or Natural diet, you avoid most forms of sickness and disease that many people in this world face. Sounds like fantasy!

It isn't! Yogis in India have known for thousands of years that the body is an incredible unit that has the ability to heal itself when it has proper fuel.

Humanity has forgotten where it has come from. The average doctor in his medical school study gets an average of 2.5 hours worth of nutritional education. Everyone is looking for a quick fix through pills and magic potions. Plus there is money in pills, and diet plans, and "Jenny Craig". There is no money in fresh produce. If you can go to the super market and pick up fresh produce, you have the ability to take a gigantic step towards living an amazing life!

Think of this. Every animal out there eats 100% raw in its natural environment. Except for humans and their house pets! And look at humans and house pets (dogs & cats). They get the same diseases: obesity, heart disease, depression and more.

"Yeah Baby, I like it Raw" is a session hosted by Nature Love and Dhrumil Purohit. In this session they will be presenting their experiences with the laws of Nature. They do not claim to be medical doctors. What they do is research, write, and share their findings and opinions on the value and healing power of a Raw Food diet. They hope that you will not accept anything they say before you verify it yourself. "The important thing is not to stop questioning."

-Albert Einstein

notes:

Young Jain Leaders: Be the Change

Young Jains of America

As a Jain youth, you can make a positive difference, but how you may ask? This session will equip you with the resources needed to become an active member or leader in the Jain movement. Current and former YJA board members will relay their leadership experience in YJA and where it has taken them.

This session is for motivated Jain youth, who wish to start or continue with Jain activities in their community. Come join us, as we help guide you toward solutions to problems and give you the foundations to begin local and regional events.

The main focus of **Young Jain Leaders** consists of a region by region break out session with other Jain Youth Leaders from across the nation. This session is designed to help old local representatives and bring in new, interested people to help YJA.

This Session tackles the following issues:

- ◆ Problems with starting youth groups
- ◆ Ways to motivate youth
- ◆ Kinds of activities to do and how to organize them
- ◆ Solutions to existing problems
- ◆ The need for strong representation through YJA

For a national organization like YJA to function, people from every corner of the country must step up and assume responsibility as a leader. That's why this diversely attended session serves an integral role in shaping YJA's future.

Anyone can be a member, but it's the leaders who drive the organization. So be there and we will show you how "Walking the Path of Jainism" will make you a strong leader in your community.

notes:

Young Jain Professionals

YJP

Jain youth conventions provide a forum for young Jains to gather in order to learn, exchange information, and share experiences. The importance of allowing such interaction to take place through these events and outside them has been recognized through the development of youth organizations such as Young Jains of America (YJA) and Young Jain Professionals (YJP). This session will provide an overview of YJP, including its mission, current activities and future directions. As participants in the YJA convention continue to progress along their career paths, the aim of this session is to allow members and non-members to learn more about the current activities of YJP and to provide input as to how the organization can continue to serve the needs of Jain students and professionals in North America.

Background information on YJP

YJP is a network of Jain professionals whose mission is to increase the awareness and understanding of Jain principles and heritage by promoting networking among our members and taking an active role in our community.

Our objectives are:

- ◆ To raise awareness of Jain principles through educational and interactive discussions
- ◆ To promote the application of Jainism in the professional and social aspects of our lives

- ◆ To engage in community service at our events and promote personal involvement in community service
- ◆ To provide mentorship to younger Jains, and collaborate with other Jain organizations
- ◆ To provide opportunities for leadership development
- ◆ To facilitate peer networking

We have hosted many successful events. With that in mind, this year we are embarking on a renewed mission to increase the awareness and presence of our organization so that a much larger audience can take part in our activities and initiatives. We want to elevate YJP to a vocal and active organization that will have local/national presence and will interact closely with similar international organizations. We are rolling out our Local Leader Program that will have a local leader who will coordinate and manage our initiatives at the local

We are planning our biggest annual YJP convention in October. We have made our membership free to reach out and increase our membership base. Check out our new website www.yjponline.org and join us!!! ■

notes:

YOUNG JAINS OF AMERICA

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The New Jersey Convention Committee sincerely appreciates all the support from individuals, families, corporations, and other organizations. Without your kind donation, this convention would not have been possible. We regret any unintentional omissions and errors.

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