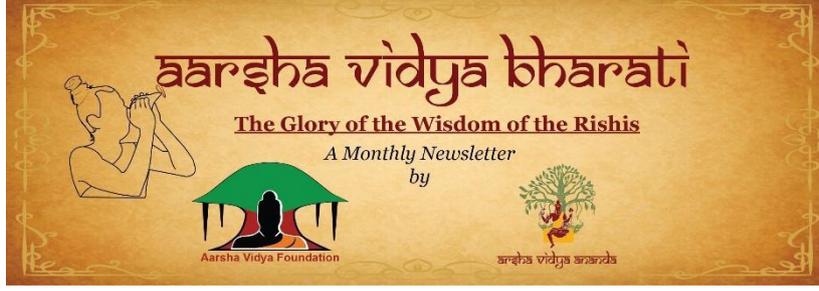


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# Aarsha Vidya Bharati – Dec 2023

## Agrahayana - Pausa 2080

A monthly newsletter that will bring you more happiness, more wisdom and more freedom



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This is one of many articles from our monthly newsletter. Access the [dec 2023 issue](#) and read any of [the articles](#).

## Looking back on 2023



A lion takes a few steps and stops to look back and glance every now and then. A wise person too always looks back at the past in order to celebrate it and shape a better present leading to the future.

In this very spirit of *Simhāvalokana Nyāya*, maxim of the lion's glance, we can be happy and grateful at the year of 2023 that will soon be complete. It is that time of the year when lists are generated - Best books of the year, best movies of the year, most significant events of the year and so on. It is also that time of the year when we are prompted to review the year that has gone by.

For most of us, a review or evaluation reminds us of the report card at school, the performance appraisal at work. There may well be an unpleasant lingering taste from the hangover of past reviews. However, an annual life review is different. It is an opportunity to be grateful for this blessing called life which we take for granted, how we have lived this year and plan for the next.

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Given how short and unpredictable life is, we want to make the most of the time that we have on this earth. Here is a simple framework of guiding questions to reflect for some of life dimensions which are not water-tight compartments. It will take only a couple of hours or less.

Physical well-being – How was my health? Any illness/accident requiring attention, How was my exercise routine, my sleep routine, my eating habits, my rest and relaxation? What worked well and what will I take into the new year?

Emotional well-being – In the context of my different roles as a son, daughter, parent, professional, friend, I ask – How am I contributing in all these roles? How am I applying *kausalam* (*dharma* based competent *karma*) and gracious acceptance in these roles?

Professional well-being – What did I gain (knowledge, perspectives and experience) and what did I contribute in my professional role? How am I applying *karma yoga* in my role?

Financial well-being – What is my current financial position in terms of assets and liabilities? How am I applying *karma yoga* in my strategy of growing and managing the money I have - Investments, savings and expenses. What is my relationship with money like? Is it a source of security or it is neither a source of security or insecurity but a means to acquire things to live comfortably?

Intellectual well-being – Whichever domain is of interest to me, how has my skill or knowledge in that domain expanded? Was I able to give that domain the interest and time that it required?

Social well-being – Besides family (including extended family) how are my friendships? How might I be contributing to my neighbourhood, community and the less fortunate?

Spiritual well-being – As a Vedanta student, walking on the pathless path, how consistent is my *Śravaṇam*, which is the main *sādhana*? Listening to podcasts or discourses, attending regular Vedanta classes and camps. In terms of allied *sādhana*s, am I doing *japa* of the *mantra* I received? How am I bringing in the various values and attitudes as mentioned in the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter into everyday life? Is the vision becoming more clear to me?

Overall, through this annual review, we learn about how happy we have been and how we have contributed to the happiness of others. We appreciate how well we have done with *Īśvara's* grace and seek his grace in our journey of self-mastery and self discovery.

*Ātmā*, the limitless being that is you, does not need a review. There are no key performance areas for the *Ātmā* and hence no key performance indicators 😊 The *jīva* who is the *kartā* and *bhoktā*, the doer and the experiencer can certainly do with an annual review.

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You as the *Ātmā* illumine all the areas of your life and other forms.  
Keep Shining!

With love and prayers,

Brahmavidananda  
Brahmaprajnananda