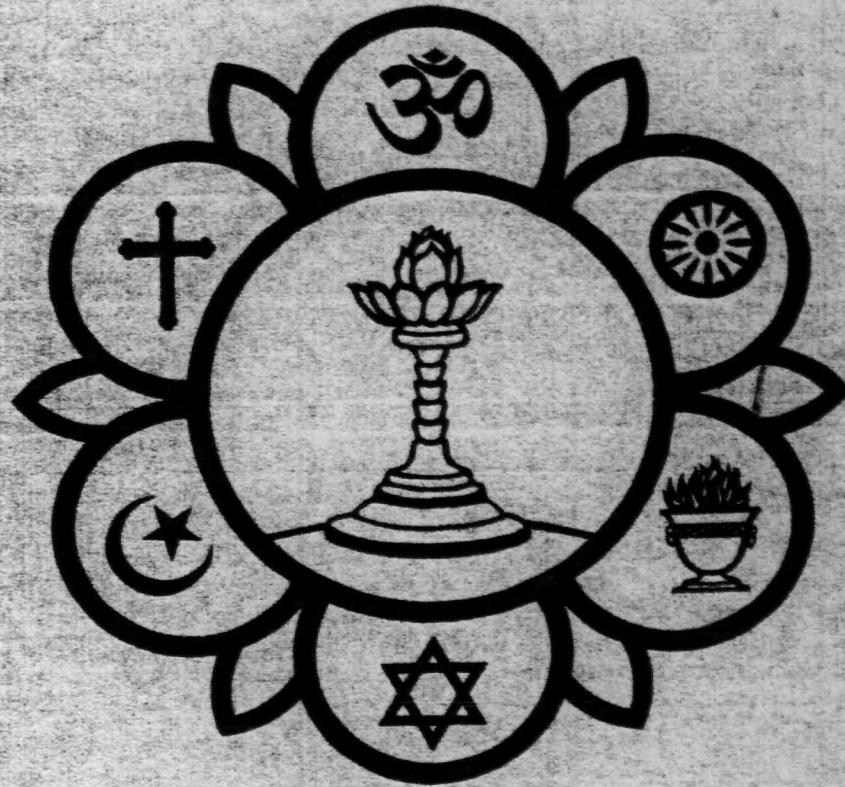


SATHYA SAI



Newsletter

SUMMER 1983

Vol. 7 No. 4

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This publication is dedicated with love and devotion to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.



My Dears! Accept my Love and Blessings

The world today is in the grip of a supreme moral and spiritual crisis. People everywhere are feeling frustrated and helpless, and anxiously wondering what is in store for humanity. The hopes raised by the advances of science and technology have proved dupes. While science has overcome the barriers of time, distance, and nationality, it has done little to promote better understanding between man and man, nation and nation. Never has there been so much distrust, hatred, and violence as is witnessed today in almost every country.

Men have forgotten their essentially divine nature and have even failed to observe those basic human qualities which raise them above the level of animals. In the ceaseless pursuit of material acquisitions and sensuous pleasures, they have forgotten that the real source of happiness and bliss is the discovery of the Atma (divinity) that is in each of them.

There are, however, heartening signs that earnest people in many countries are turning to the way of the Spirit as the answer to the crisis that faces humanity. There is a spiritual hunger that is growing in every country.

Without the conquest of one's passions and desires and without realizing the divinity that is imminent in every living thing, man cannot achieve peace, bliss within, or harmony with the outside world. The message of "Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man" which Jesus Christ proclaimed 2000 years ago should become a living faith for the achievement of real peace and the unity of mankind. The oneness of all creation affirmed by the ancient seers and sages must be expressed in a transcendental love which embraces all people regardless of creed, community, or language.

This is Sai's message to you all. May you all develop this Divine Love and stand out as harbingers of a new age free from selfishness, greed, hatred, and violence. Let each of you be a light unto himself or herself and thereby be a light unto others.

There should be no differences among devotees in the Sai organizations. There should be no scramble for power or position. What matters is the purity, intensity, and sincerity of the devotion and the spirit of selfless sacrifice in which each devotee renders service to the needy and the suffering.

Swami is always with you, in you, and around you. When all differences are eradicated and devotees in Sai organizations conduct themselves with selfless devotion, you will all realize that Swami and you are one.

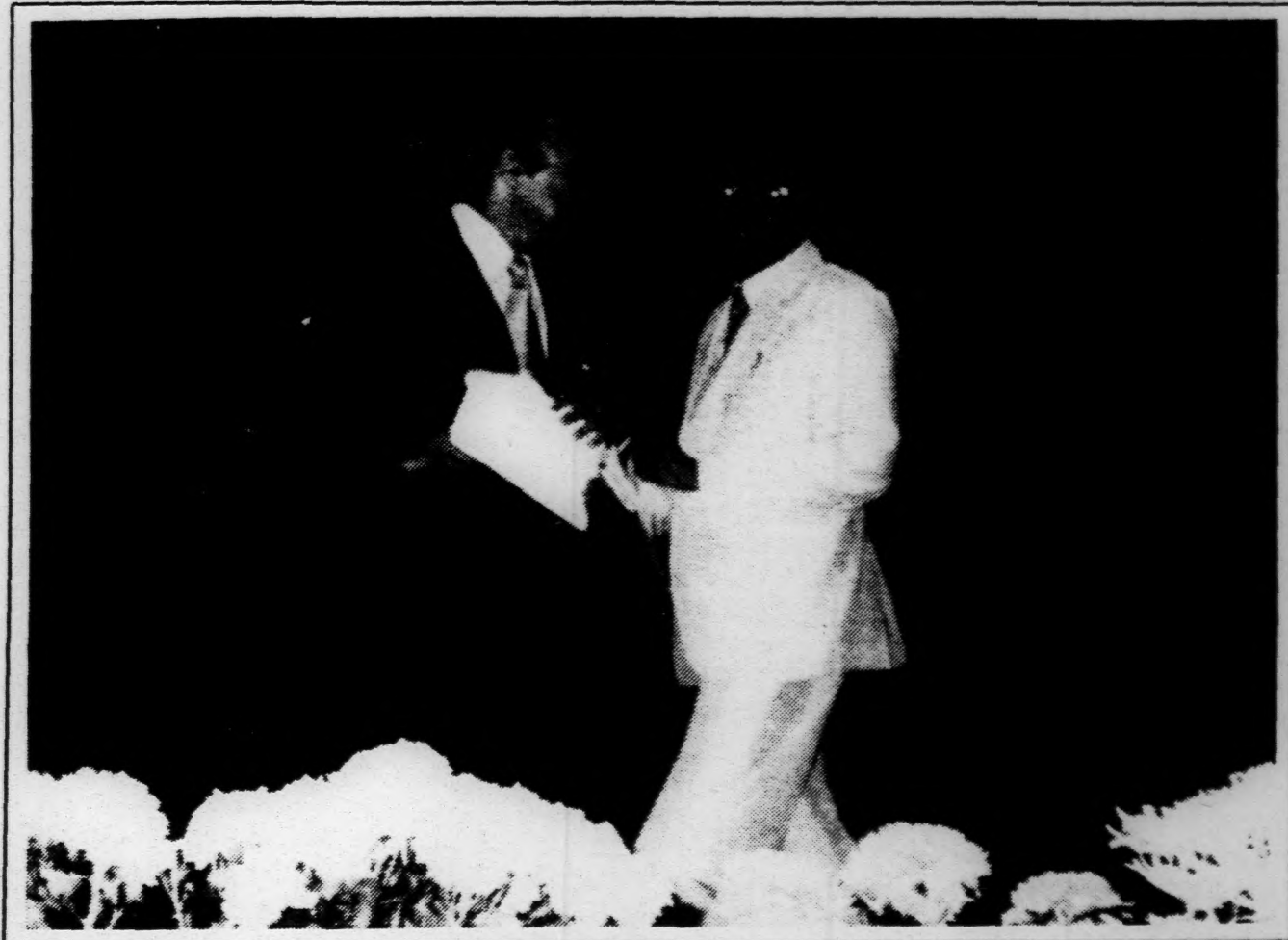
With Love,

Sri Sai Sree

15-6-83

This is a letter written by Sri Baba to devotees and office bearers of the United States Sai centers.

U. S. DEVOTEES HONORED BY A VISIT FROM INDULAL SHAH



Dr. Michael Goldstein, member of the world council, introducing Sri Indulal Shah, chairman of the Sathya Sai Baba World Council.

On Sunday, July 10th, nearly 900 devotees and their guests thronged to the Wilshire-Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles to attend a public meeting sponsored by the newly-formed Sri Sathya Sai Baba American Service Organization. The keynote speaker was Indulal Shah, Chairman of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba World Council. In his thought-provoking talk, Mr. Shah stressed the purpose and importance of being associated with Baba. The following are some excerpts from his speech:

"...It is easy to pick the goal of life. We have already set it: happiness...Each one of us feels, 'I want happiness. I do not want grief. I must have money; I must have all the comforts in life.' The result of following this objective is obvious.

"At the individual level, we find that, even though we have money and can afford to buy the best nutritious food, we are not keeping good health...in our relationship between parents and children, there is isolation from the family. There are various things that cause us grief. We have no strength to bear this grief....

"At the national level, we live in a scientific age...What we experience is corruption and crisis in character. Materialism has distorted the human psyche and social situation in this amazing modern space age....

"Professor John Galbraith, the former U.S. Ambassador to India, in his book *Affluent Society*, writes, 'Food and drink are plenty in the U.S.A., yet more die by overindulging...than in any other nation of even Asia or Africa, noted for their recurring famines and droughts.'

"Society needs spiritual food. It is in this context that we think of Sri Sathya Sai Baba....

"Baba does not preach any religion. On the contrary, he strengthens our faith in whatever religion we believe in....

"We must set a goal in our lives...to practice spirituality, without which no headway is possible. Bertrand Russell said that man must increase in wisdom as much as he increases in knowledge. Increase of knowledge alone means increase of sorrow.

"In this context, Baba says that we must find out our objective--that is the first wisdom. He has prescribed a formula for this. Set happiness for your goal...but, when you have grief, do not run away from it, as happiness and grief are two sides of the same coin. Happiness should be accompanied by satisfaction...grief should be accompanied by peace. This is the objective for which the seed is spirituality.

"Research shows that there is a moral and spiritual void in the

lives of teenagers, especially children between the ages of nine and 15. To fill this void, Baba has given the nation--perhaps the world--the program of Education in Human Values....

"This program was first introduced in India 15 years ago. Today it has been accepted by the Government of India in all the states....

"Truth, Right Action, Peace, and Love are the four pillars of Education in Human Values. It does not deal with any religion; otherwise, the Government of India would not have accepted it as part of a secular education...Baba is motivating everyone in the educational field to donate their talents and time for the welfare of mankind and the development of society....

"Baba does not prescribe any religion for children in the age group of six to 15 years. He says that the younger generation in this modern world will not believe in God; in fact...they will run away at the very mention of the name. For them, he has defined God as *the sum total of all human values*...If these children imbibe all of these values from the age of six to the age when they will be completing their academic education, by the time they enter society these values will be their God, and will save them as well as all mankind....

"Education in Human Values has been introduced in 45 countries in the world today. Some of the governments are looking at how they, too, can include this course in their elementary school education.

"Baba says that duty starts with 'I' as an individual, like a drop of oil on the surface of water. But, once you take to the service of others, the expansion of the heart will start, and then I and you become we. The we will also grow and become all-expansive, and the I that began will totally disappear...In this manner, when we join God, we plus He becomes He only...The starting point is to tell yourself that you are the messenger of God.

"...As a messenger, you should with love and humility take to the service of mankind. Through love and service to others, you grow closer and closer to God, and ultimately become one with Him."

300 UNITS OF BLOOD DONATED AND MORE FLOWING IN



A turning point, in this country, has been the establishment of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba American Service Organization. There was a most successful national blood drive held last June 25th, under the auspices of that organization. Giving service to fellow human beings has always been stressed in Baba's teachings. For many years, good works have been accomplished by centers as a group, and by devotees individually. The giving of blood to the American Red Cross was unusual on two counts: this was the first service activity coordinated as a national project, and the donors were, for the first time, allowed to use the name of Sathya Sai Baba.

So far, it is reported that 300 units of blood were donated, and more accounts are coming in from Sai centers each day. It is obvious that

not everyone is able to give blood, and some of the Sai family resolved that dilemma in a creative manner. Members from the centers of San Francisco, Walnut Creek, and Nevada City in California who could not donate had, instead, a day of working with the Special Olympics, an activity for the handicapped. This made it possible for all bay area devotees to participate in an alternative form of service.

Some centers in remote areas could not engage in blood donations because of location. Instead they plan to participate throughout the next few months when the mobile units come near their neighborhoods. The Red Cross informs us that any healthy person may donate a pint of blood every three months. Therefore, many people plan to continue giving their gifts, in the name of Sai, as often as possible.



A POEM TO SATHYA SAI

In this Age of Kali*
Discord is everywhere.
Hate dances a happy step
Across this earth.
Hopelessness and confusion
Walk hand in hand
Into a dark tomorrow.
And mankind is on the
Brink of total annihilation.

But God has answered
The prayers of His devotees.
And in the Gem of the East
An Avatar has come
Giving Peace, Love, and Divine Hope.
To reestablish Dharma
To children lost in the fogbound
Dark forest of Maya.

Eternal Glory to Sri Sathya Sai Baba!
Gloria In Excelsis Sai Baba!

Richard Kenney
Lincoln Heights, Ohio

*Age of Kali, or Kali Yuga: a difficult time in which to live.

CEILING ON DESIRES PROGRAM: TIME AND ENERGY

In the spring issue, I discussed some of the ways in which Baba indicated that he wishes us to reduce waste in the two areas of money and food.

I will now explore the second pair, time and energy, which interact with one another in all of our lives.

Baba pointed out something which I had never before considered: that time is the only thing that everyone in the world is given equally. We all have at our disposal just 24 hours each day. If we waste any part of it, it is gone forever and can never be retrieved. It therefore behooves us to use it in productive pursuits according to Baba's teachings.

Baba repeatedly stated that the majority of people, including many of his devotees, are prone to waste time in idle and meaningless activities. That means anything which is a distraction from following the path towards liberation.

Obviously most people need to spend time each day engaged in the work which enables them to support themselves and their dependents. Some time also needs to be spent in caring for the home and family. If we follow Baba's instruction to look upon work as worship, we will discover that less time and energy will be consumed, with the result that we will have more time for leisure. However, it is in their free time that most people tend to be wasteful. At the end of a long working day there is a genuine need to relax. To many people that presents a temptation to indulge in various time-wasting pursuits, in the mistaken belief that these will relax and refresh them.

To illustrate this point, Baba gave as an example a man who arrived home from his job at the end of each day tired and restless. In order to relax after the stress of the day, he had developed the habit of going to his club to meet his friends and drink and play cards in their company. Baba advised that it would be preferable if he would take a short rest or meditate in his room, and then spend the rest of the evening in some relaxing way with his family.

Baba listed a number of pursuits which he labelled unproductive and which should be eliminated. He included going to tawdry movies,

reading trashy novels and magazines, drinking, gambling, smoking, and indulging in gossip and idle chatter. We could add to this list of activities the watching of undesirable television programs. All of these pastimes use up our precious supply of fleeting time but give nothing worthwhile in return. He therefore advised us to replace all unproductive activities with more meaningful ones which will pave the way towards liberation from the thrall of maya (worldly illusion).

We can all very easily make a list of our favorite time-wasters and determine to cut them out of our lives as a fitting gift to Baba. We can also compose a list of alternative ways of using our time, in more useful pursuits. Obviously, everyone will choose quite different ways in which to fill their leisure time, according to their native abilities, financial status, responsibilities, number of family members, and many other factors.

Baba also mentioned that many devotees make countless excuses for not being able to find enough time for regular meditation and service, complaining that they are too busy and too tired. He observed that if they would carefully examine their daily activities they would undoubtedly discover, to their surprise, that by eliminating the daily waste they would have plenty of time to devote to worship, meditation, and helping those less fortunate than themselves.

Baba advised that devotees should also regulate the amount of time spent in sleep. Too much or too little should be avoided. Each person's needs are different. Some escape into sleep to avoid doing something they dislike, while others waste time on useless activities which leave too little time for restful and refreshing sleep. Time, like money, should be budgeted, which would automatically also save energy.

In contrast to their equal amounts of time, everyone has varying amounts of energy at their disposal, Baba announced. Whatever the amount, he cautioned that it should be used in productive pursuits. I was reminded of the biblical parable of the talents, which teaches that, no matter how few talents we are given, they should be put to use and not wasted by being buried.

Baba further explained that idle talk uses up a great deal of energy. He compared it to water being poured through a sieve, which disperses it in all directions instead of its being channelled to-

wards a specific use. He advised that cutting down on idle chatter, particularly such negative habits as gossip, backbiting, and criticism of others, would conserve energy for more useful activities.

Lastly, he warned that anger, greed, fear, pride, hate, envy, jealousy, and other negative emotions consume far too much mental energy, which should be made available for beneficial and positive emotions such as love, compassion, helpfulness, etc. For example, according to Baba, when a person is angry, he expends more energy than would be supplied by food consumed over a period of three months.

If we are to do as Baba has requested and curtail waste in all four areas of our lives, i.e. money, food, time, and energy, we need to take stock of ourselves in relation to our whole life situation with as much honesty and self-scrutiny as possible. As we turn the searchlight onto ourselves, the most glaring areas of waste will be the first to become visible. However, we are all, to a great extent, unconscious of our own weaknesses, and tend to project them onto others who have similar ones. We are then frequently critical of the very faults we have suppressed or overlooked in ourselves. It is so much easier to criticize others than to uncover our own weaknesses, admit to them, and determine to eliminate them.

You might like to play a little game which will not only curtail criticism of others but will also help you to concentrate on eradicating your own faults, exactly as Baba so often urges us to do. It involves using other people as a mirror in which to catch a glimpse of your own faults. Whenever you are tempted to criticize someone for a failing, such as being wasteful in some area, stop at once, and turn your gaze inward to see if you too may be guilty of that same fault. In this way, observation of other people can help you to begin to let go of many unwelcome habits and attitudes, instead of wasting time and energy in criticizing others for problems which they alone can solve for themselves.

Baba often tells us that we are not one person but three: the one we think we are, the one others think we are, and the one we really are. He encourages us to bring all three into one person. We can accomplish that feat by self-observation.

All of the above probably sounds like an impossible task. It is, if we try to accomplish it solely with our own ego-strength. How-

ever, we can all ask Baba to bring to our attention the areas in our lives where we are guilty of waste. As soon as we see them clearly, we can ask him to help us to eliminate the desire which caused the waste. In this way we will find the task to be infinitely easier, as well as deeply fulfilling. Baba assures us that he will always respond to our earnest request for help. However, we must do our part by being alert to watch and listen for his answers, which sometimes come indirectly by way of other people, books, or dreams, and in many other unexpected ways.

May Baba help all of us to persevere with the program he has offered us as a gift to him and a blessing to us.

It would be most useful if devotees would write brief accounts of any methods which they have found to be helpful in putting this program into action in daily life. Your suggestions might help other devotees to reduce waste. In this way we can all help one another in a concerted effort to give Baba the gift he has himself requested: to put a ceiling on our desires.

Phyllis Krystal
Pacific Palisades, California

People suffer because they have all kinds of unreasonable desires and they yearn to fulfill them, but fail. It is only when attachment increases that you suffer pain and guilt. If you look upon nature and all created objects with the insight derived from inner vision, then attachments will slide away. Attachments to nature have limits, but the attachments to the Lord that you develop when the inner eye opens, has no limits. Enjoy that reality, not this false picture.

Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Man can be happy with much less equipment than you seem to think essential. When some article is with you for some little time, you feel it is indispensable and you do not know how to live without it. Like the silk worm, you weave a cocoon for yourself, out of your fancy. Do not allow costly habits to grow, costly from the monetary as well as the spiritual point of view. Watch your likes and dislikes with a vigilant eye and discard anything that threatens to encumber your path.

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume IV



CHILDREN'S CORNER

VYASA LEARNS A LESSON IN HUMILITY

In the Indian month of Ashadh, people all over India celebrate Guru Poornima, which falls on the full moon day in July. It is said that the Lord Himself came down as the great sage Vyasa to teach mankind the path towards God. That is why it is also called Vyasa Poornima. Even though Vyasa has been worshipped as a very wise guru, he also had to learn his lesson in humility.

It happened during the battle of Kurukshetra, which was fought several thousand years ago between two sets of cousins -- the Pandavas and Kauravas. The battle lasted 18 days, and caused enormous destruction, as all battles do. Vyasa was sad and very much hurt to see so many men and animals killed or badly wounded, even though it was a fight for the sake of truth and justice. He could not help feeling guilty and dismayed because people on both sides in the battle were his own kith and kin.

One day, as the armies were marching in to resume the fight, Vyasa was so filled with sorrow that he did not want to be anywhere near the scene of destruction. As he was hurrying away from the battlefield, he saw a spider scurrying along on the ground. The little fellow appeared to be in as great a hurry as the sage!

"Why so fast?" asked Vyasa. The spider quickly ran off the road and climbed to the top of an anthill. Feeling safe in this place, it then replied, "Don't you know that the war chariot of Arjuna is about to pass this way? If I am caught under its wheels I am done".

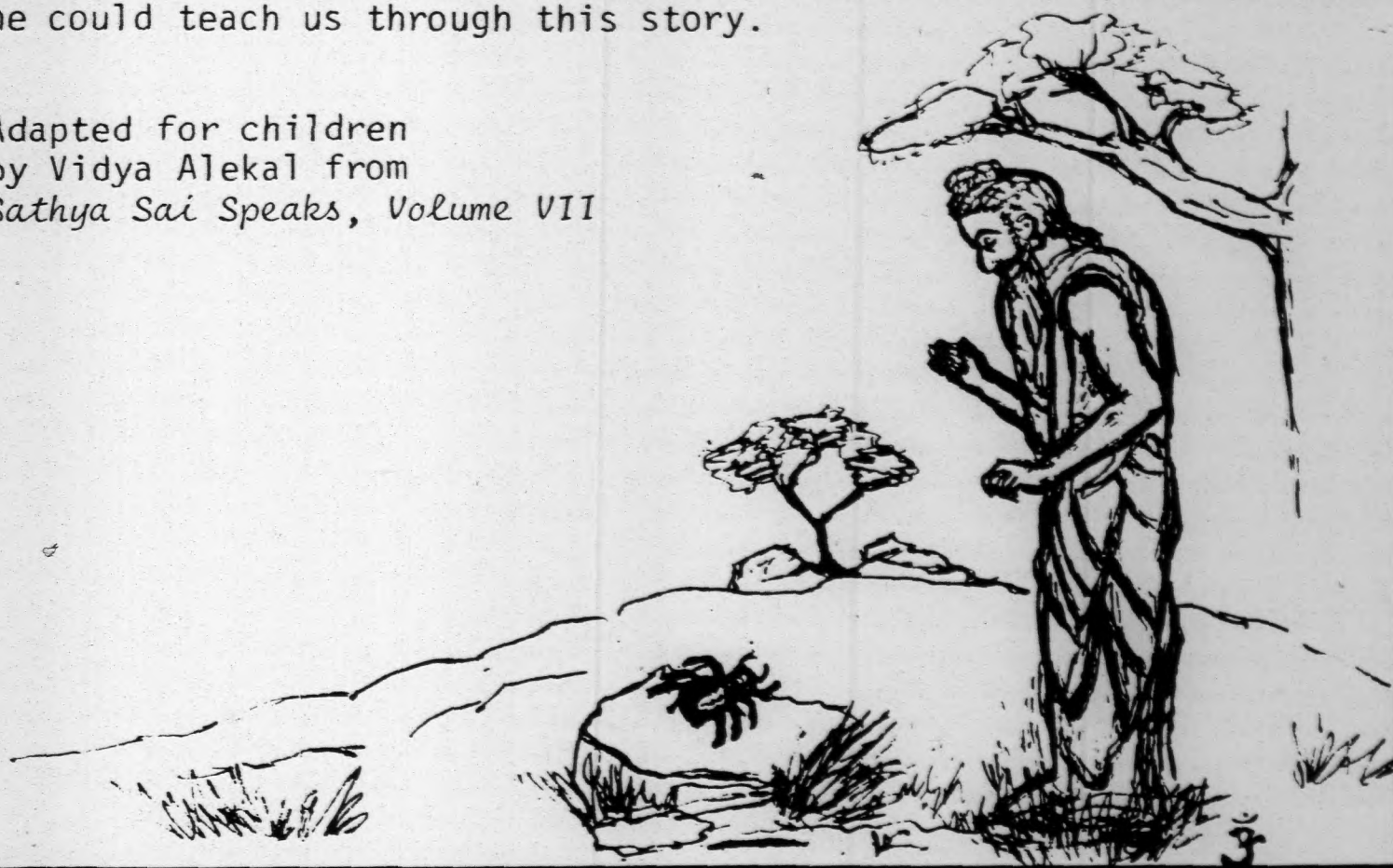
Vyasa laughed at this reply. He said, "The world suffers no loss if you are killed. No one is going to miss you when you disappear!" The spider was very much hurt by these harsh words. It began shaking with anger, and furiously asked the holy man, "How is that? You are such a vain sage! You feel that if you die it will be a great loss, whereas I will not be missed at all. I too have a wife and children whom I love, as much as you men do. I also have a home and a store of food. I like to live as much as you folks do. I get hungry and thirsty as much as any of you. I enjoy being with my

family and friends and feel the pain of being away from them. The world is as much for me as it is for human beings and other creatures."

Vyasa was shaken by the powerful and truthful words of the spider. He hung his head in shame and quietly moved on. He realized that, in his sorrow at seeing so many of his kith and kin dying in this war, he had forgotten that there is life in everything in this world; that there is nothing but God in this entire creation. As he walked along, he said to himself that the things the spider had said to him were true, and common to all: men, animals, and even insects. However, he remembered that the great desire for Truth, Beauty, Goodness, and the Wisdom of knowing that behind all the different beings in this universe, there is a Unity--one God--these are special treasures shared by mankind alone.

Hence even the great, wise Vyasa, who is revered by all for giving the wisdom of the Vedas to mankind, forgot divinity for a moment and had to learn a lesson in humility from a little spider so that he could teach us through this story.

Adapted for children
by Vidya Alekal from
Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VII



Illustrations by John Svensson and Diane Wells

THE AMERICAN NON-PROFIT FOUNDATIONS

Devotees frequently write to ask about the non-profit Sai foundations in America, and want to know, "Which one does what?" There are three foundations in America that Baba has approved of and I will try to explain a little about each one.

The Sathya Sai Baba Society's primary activity is the publishing of Sai books and the distribution of books and other materials through the Sri Sathya Sai Baba Book Center of America, P.O. Box 278, Tustin, CA 92681. The Society also holds public meetings monthly and publishes its own newsletter, and is currently constructing a national headquarters building in Tustin that will house the Book Center. Mrs. Elsie Cowan is chairwoman of the Society.

The SAI Foundation is directed by Richard and Janet Bock and has produced dozens of high-quality cassettes, films, videotapes, and photographs of Sathya Sai Baba. The SAI Foundation has its offices at the Sathya Sai Baba Center of Los Angeles, 7911 Willoughby Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90046. Sai materials produced by the Foundation are available at the Los Angeles center and by mail order. Richard and Janet Bock both take active roles in the Sathya Sai Baba Council of America and at the Los Angeles center.

The third foundation is the Sathya Sai Society of America. It was authorized by Bhagavan at the time of the formation of the American Council, to accept voluntary contributions towards various aspects of his work and message. Individuals may make tax-exempt donations to the Society and request that the funds be used for a particular aspect of Swami's work. Such requests, at the discretion of the trustees of the Society, are honored to the extent they are not inconsistent with the purposes of the Society. Trustees of the Society are all members of the Sathya Sai Baba Council of America. Because appeals for donations are *never* made by the Society, you hear very little about it. Its President is Robert Bozzani and its Secretary-Treasurer is Sidney D. Krystal, 246 Monte Grigio Drive, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272.

For more information on these foundations, please write directly to them at the addresses listed above.

Richard Bayer, Vice President
Sathya Sai Baba Council of America
Santa Cruz, California

NEW CASSETTE TAPES AND BOOKS AVAILABLE

SAI Foundation
7911 Willoughby Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90046
(213) 656-9373

- C-048 A new 60-minute Sai cassette tape. Side I: Sri Sathya Sai Baba speaks on the significance of the Gayatri Mantra, and the Upanayanam Thread Ceremony. Sri Baba repeats the Gayatri for those who wish to learn it. Side II: Contains excerpts from Sathya Sai Baba's 1979 discourse on meditation. Price: \$4.00
- A written transcript of Dr. Jack Hislop's talk delivered during the Camp Colby Retreat in May, 1983. He discusses various aspects of Sathya Sai's teachings, and reads from dialogues he has had with Baba. Dr. Hislop also answers questions from those who attended the retreat. Price: \$1.50
- Sai Baba, The Embodiment of Love* by Peggy Mason and Ron Laing. Published by Sawbridge Enterprises, Ltd., London, England. This book brings a breath of fresh air into the gloomy regions of Eastern philosophy and Western organized religion. Price: \$7.25
- Living Divinity* by Shakuntala Balu. Published by Sawbridge Enterprises Ltd., London, England. Mrs. Balu's beautifully written book displays glimpses of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's glory and is interspersed with heartwarming anecdotes. Price: \$8.25
- Sai Baba, God Incarnate* by Victor Kanu. Published by Sawbridge Enterprises Ltd., London, England. A book of enlightening experiences, teachings, miracles, and a discussion on Jesus Christ for the spiritual seeker. Price: \$4.25
- Sai Baba, Invitation to Glory* by Howard Murphet. Published by S.G. Wasani for Macmillan, India, Ltd., New Delhi. This is the third volume that Mr. Murphet has written about the extraordinary Sri Sathya Sai Baba. His journalistic ability and knowledge of his subject makes this book fascinating reading. Price: \$2.75
- Cutting the Ties That Bind* by Phyllis Krystal. Published by Turnstone Press Ltd., Wellingsborough, England, and Aura Books, a division of Aura Enterprises, Los Angeles, California. Mrs. Krystal, a long time devotee, outlines a method by which individuals can detach themselves from outer security symbols, and instead connect

with the Higher Self. This is in keeping with Baba's program of putting a ceiling on our desires. Royalties from the sale of this book go to the Sathya Sai Society of America, a tax-exempt foundation. Price: \$6.95

NEW BOOKS AVAILABLE

Sri Sathya Sai Baba Book Center of America
P.O. Box 278
Tustin, California 92780
(714) 669-0522

Âtmâbodha (Knowledge of the Soul) of Âdi Sankarâchârya, translated by Camille Svensson, with comments taken from the writings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Price: \$1.00

A Review of Education in Human Values Projects in India (limited number of copies available), sponsored by the Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas Education Trust. A teacher's training program embodying re-orientation in primary education curriculum. Price: \$.95

Smruti, compiled by the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Brindavan Campus. "That which is remembered is Smruti, and Smruti guides men to acquire expansive hearts, detached attitudes, contented minds, and loving personalities." The book contains 33 articles, "to remember what we have experienced, to recapitulate what the Lord has been teaching..." Price: \$3.65

Ceiling on Desires for Spiritual Renaissance, a booklet for adults to be used in conjunction with the "Ceiling on Desires" program, which was approved by Sri Sathya Sai Baba as part of the 60th Birthday Celebration of Bhagavan Baba. Price: \$.60

Towards a Brighter Future, a booklet for children to be used in conjunction with the 60th Birthday Celebration of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Price: \$.60

At this critical juncture in the history of the world, when the demonic forces of fear, anxiety, tension, injustice, and inequity are raging like wildfire, it is necessary for every human being to be equipped with spiritual strength so that he may not be overwhelmed by the storm. This is an urgent and pressing task. For this you must enshrine God into your hearts, for faith in God is the tonic which man needs to restore mental health and happiness.

Baba

WELCOME TO NEW SATHYA SAI BABA STUDY GROUPS

GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

Mr. B. Michael Glancey
3925 N.W. 37th Place
Gainesville, FL 32606
(904) 373-6972

LAKELAND, FLORIDA

Dr. C.H. Gundavda
2014 Charnes Drive
Lakeland, FL 33803
(813) 644-0202

REVISED GUIDELINES AVAILABLE

In May, the revised *Guidelines* for American Sathya Sai Baba centers were published. The revised *Guidelines* contain essentially the same rules, but in an entirely different format that is shorter and simpler than the last edition. The information on study groups is now included, but details on center operation have been left for the "Center Manual", which is now being prepared.

It is hoped that prospective members of centers and study groups will find the revision easier to work with and that the more direct approach will simplify center matters.

Copies of the *Guidelines* are available from all centers, study groups, directors, and regional seva committee members, or by writing to Mr. Richard Bayer, 4727 Bonny Doon Road, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

When asked why there is so much misery in the world, Baba said: *Desire or thrishna* (thirst for things) is the prime cause for misery, and if a person examines his desires he can easily find that he can live much more comfortably with much less, as his house is filled with unused or unusable lumber. Look at things with less attachment. Try to live simple lives. Derive joy from the spring of joy inside you, not the objects around you.* If you extend your love to all, no one will hate you or envy you, and so you can have the peace you crave. Teach the mind as you do the body. Have a regular breakfast of *dhyana* (meditation), a lunch of *bhajans* (holy songs), a tea of scriptural reading, and a dinner of *nagar sankirtan* (singing holy songs while walking in a procession) and *namasmarana* (repeating and remembering the name of the Lord), and you will be happy.

THE GUNAS AND KNOWING THE MASTER



When you find that others are suffering or in pain you should feel that pain and the suffering as your own and you should remove it by serving them. Cultivate that sympathy that is the highest sadhana. The Vedas declare, "Immortality can be won and experienced neither through the performance of rites, nor through progeny, nor by the accumulation of wealth. It can be won only by renunciation." Give up. Give up your comforts, your time, and your skill in order to help others. That is the way to immortality.

Man is bound by one of three ropes or gunas: the thamasic chains of dull, deleterious desires which lead him to sloth, sensualism, and sin. (this can be called the iron chain); the rajasic chain of ambition and acquisitiveness, of competition and pride (this can be called the copper chain); and the satwic chain of humility and simplicity which make him good and virtuous is also a chain, albeit a golden chain. All three bind man. Man has to become pure with no charac-

teristic in his makeup. The word guna means a rope and a rope does bind. This is its justification. You cannot complain against it for that. To escape from these chains that bind him, man has to adopt one of two stratagems. First, he can immerse himself in the feeling 'dasoham,' 'I am the servant', and reduce his size steadily until the chain falls off and he escapes. This is the path of the bhakta, the 'dasa,' the servant, of laying the 'I' at the feet of the Almighty, of unreserved surrender, of Prahlada who had no will or thought of his own. Or, secondly, he can expand himself with the feeling 'sivoham,' I am Shiva, I am divine, I am the eternal, the absolute. He becomes so vast, so pervasive, so grand that no chain can contain him and it snaps and he is free.

Imagine God as resident in the top floor of a high mansion. The stairs by which alone you can reach Him are guarded by a fierce dog, 'maya.' Maya is the monster of ignorance which deludes you into the belief that the transitory is eternal and the eternal is nonexistent. The dog will not harm you if the Master comes down in response to your prayers and takes you up along with Him. This is what the bhakta does. He pleads, he prays, he yearns and God comes down for his sake and showers grace upon him. The bhakta is like the kitten which mews piteously sitting in one place. The cat hurries towards it and lifts it gently with its teeth and removes it to a place of safety. This is the reason why bhakti is often referred to as the kitten's way to God. Another way of reaching the Master in the mansion is to become an exact prototype of the Master so that the dog believes you to be the Master Himself. Know the Master, you become the Master. 'Brahma vid brahmaiva bhavati'--'He who knows Brahma becomes Brahman.' The 'jnani' who knows that he is the eternal Absolute becomes the Absolute. Maya dares not delude him anymore. This is a hard path which the pilgrim has to trudge alone. He is like the young monkey which holds fast to the mother while she leaps from branch to branch. This is therefore referred to as the baby monkey way.

Detachment is the very first step, whether it is bhakti or jnana. Man saves himself by his own resolute efforts. Others can only point the way. Your only friend is yourself. All others have some motive in befriending you. A person loves another for his own sake. No person loves another more than he loves his own self. Develop the feeling of non-attachment. Be attached to the work but not to the fruit. Leave it to the grace of God. He prompted the work. He made it possible. Let Him accept the fruit thereof.

Baba

INDULAL SHAH PUTS ADDED EMPHASIS ON SAI'S TEACHINGS

On his recent trip to the United States, Indulal Shah, Chairman of the Sri Sathya Sai Baba World Council, addressed the members of the Council of America. He stressed the importance of putting Baba's teachings into daily use. He posed the question, "What good is it to read Sai literature every day and not put it into practice?" Mr. Shah emphasized his talk by saying it is even "dangerous" to be with Baba and not actively engage in following his instructions. There is no longer time to waste. Baba cannot give us his precious moments if we do not live by his code of conduct. He stated that it is better to be first a devotee of the teachings of Baba, and then a devotee of Baba himself.

At this time, all those who call themselves devotees should be actively participating in the nine-point code of conduct as outlined in the Charter of Sri Sathya Sai World Organization. These nine points appeared in the *Newsletter* last winter (Volume 7, Number 2, Page 5), but bear repeating because of the special significance given by Indulal Shah. They are as follows:

1. Each day practice meditation and japa (repetition of the name of the Lord done with devotion).
2. Sing bhajans (holy songs) with members of the family once a week.
3. Encourage participation in the Education in Human Values program by the children of the family.
4. Participate in community work and other programs of the Sai organization.
5. Attend at least once a month a bhajan session sponsored by the Sai organization.
6. Regularly study Sai literature.
7. Speak softly to everyone.
8. Do not indulge in talking ill of others, particularly in their absence.
9. Set aside some non-perishable food each day and donate it to the needy. Form the habit of not wasting food.

The Sai devotees in India have long since integrated these nine standards into their daily lives, and have now taken on a gigantic service activity. The project consists of 'adopting' 6,000 villages in remote areas of the country, and providing for the basic needs of the villagers in regards to their welfare, health, and education.

THE WELFARE WORK OF SATHYA SAI BABA

I have written of the vast scale of materialization and healing miracles of Sathya Sai Baba. Much less is known of his educational and welfare work, which he regards as far more important than the miracles. I am writing of these aspects of his mission, partly because they should be known, and partly to disarm those critics who question why he does not materialize food rather than vibhuti in a world where there is so much hunger, and why, if he is an avatar, does he allow earthquakes, famine, and epidemics to occur.

The answer is that he does, on occasion, materialize food for the hungry, and there have been times when by the direct use of his sankalpa (will) he has transcended man's negative karma and alleviated the consequences of seemingly natural catastrophes which have in fact been caused by man's selfishness and greed.

But to do so generally would be to break the sacred Law of Karma on which the whole of creation is based. Baba's task is to spiritually transform mankind so that these calamities do not occur; were he to create a kind of artificial Garden of Eden before we are ready to sustain it, we should revert within a century to the sort of conditions that are prevalent in the world today.

In the meantime he has embarked on a program of education and welfare the like of which, for sheer scope and imagination, has never before been attempted by any avatar. Its scale is truly gigantic. "My life is my message," he says. Let no man think that when Baba claims to be the Embodiment of Love, with love as his instrument, he does not practice what he preaches. He is no cloistered holy man or ashram guardian.

It is in the field of welfare that the mind almost boggles when one grasps what Sai Baba is doing all over India. Most of this work is done by the Seva Dal organization which Swami has set up, of which there are now 20,000 trained members. Training is given to the volunteers in the organization of field hospitals, blood donor camps, dental camps, opthalmic camps, etc. On the vocational side, a wide variety of skills are taught. Apart from the elementary crafts of plumbing, carpentry, and bricklaying, such diverse skills as motor rewinding, scooter and automobile servicing, projector operation, refrigerator servicing, and agro-industrial equipment servicing (that is, farm machinery for the land, and bulldozers, cranes, and the

like at dam and road construction sites).

The women are taught knitting, soap powder making, tailoring and embroidery, cooking and jam making, interior decoration, and similar home crafts.

In fact, these volunteers can turn their hand to almost anything. They are full of initiative and ingenuity. Wherever there is a need they think up a scheme, however homespun. And in a country like India, with its vast population, its backwardness by Western standards, and its absence of a national health service, the needs must sometimes seem like a bottomless well. The Seva Dal volunteers may be seen doing almost anything, from removing large boulders for making a bullock cart track from a remote village to its primitive crematorium in order to give the deceased some semblance of dignity on their last journey, to organizing a field hospital where up to a hundred doctors may be in attendance.

They collect secondhand text books for children whose parents cannot afford them, and rebind them. They teach blind pupils Braille, and they act as 'scribes' for them during examinations. They make crutches for the crippled which are called 'Sai supports.' They offer their services as blood donors to the hospitals and donate their eyes in their wills. One opthalmic hospital in Madras has received 400 eyes from Seva Dal volunteers.

They run, and exclusively staff, an old folks home in Monegar Choultry.

There is a 'Medical Service Day' each year in December, when gifts such as oxygen cylinders, wheelchairs, Braille books, and other equipment are donated to the less-well-equipped institutions.

Let us take one state, that of Tamil Nadu, in which the city of Madras lies. In Madras alone, 50,000 patients a year benefit from the First Aid Centers which have been set up. Free medical checkups and X-ray screenings are done, and there are free dispensaries for drugs. The drugs are collected from the well-to-do residents of the city who have supplies surplus to their needs (and over-prescription is common to all countries), or from pharmaceutical firms whose top executives are Sai devotees and who donate free supplies, as well as from doctors who donate their free samples. At the dispensaries in Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Coimbatore, and Kallamadi there is an average

of 100 patients a day at each center.

Of course cooperation is sought and willingly given to the existing services. For example, befriending of elderly and lonely patients who have no relatives is undertaken in hospitals. It is called 'adopting.' Film shows of Sai Baba are given in the wards and cassettes of bhajan singing are loaned. Blood supplies from the donor camps are sent to hospitals, and sometimes much-needed supplies of rare blood groups are obtained. Foster parents are found who are willing to take children who are orphaned or mentally retarded from the existing institutions. Sai Baba adopted hundreds of children orphaned in a disaster.



Sai volunteers feeding the poor

But the bulk of Sai Baba's work is undertaken in a spirit of private enterprise. It has the grateful and enthusiastic support of the Indian government. In areas where there are large groups of Seva Dal volunteers, whole villages are 'adopted' and the most pressing social

needs attended to. Recently villagers were astounded to see educated girls from one of Sai Baba's universities for women digging a long drainage canal, working in the hot sun with spade and pick-axe, and gladly joined in the task. Another voluntary service is removing silt from dried-up wells and deepening them until they yield water again.

There is a voluntary scheme for a medical checkup in all the schools and orphanages in the state. About 50,000 children have been screened in this way, with a follow-up service administering drugs, tonics, and vitamins, as well as eyeglasses and hearing aids.

The field hospitals are usually set up in remote areas of the countryside where doctors and hospitals are not readily available. In 1979, over 30,000 patients, mostly villagers, were treated in eleven such camps in isolated parts of the state. They were staffed by an average of 50 to 80 doctors and 200 paramedical helpers who gave their services free, and were equipped to deal with tuberculosis, eye surgery, gynecology, and other specific conditions. Severely sick patients were transported to Madras for specialist hospital care, and in due course taken home again to outlying districts in the state.

One doctor worthy of mention, the eye surgeon, Dr. Modi, has given his services free to Swami for the past 25 years. He travels to field hospitals all over India, and is estimated to have performed 100,000 cataract operations, with a success rate of over 90%.

Great efforts are made to feed the hungry. (Every volunteer in Sai seva is asked to put aside a handful of rice daily which is then collected monthly.) In the remote areas, a register is compiled of the old and destitute, who are fed daily. Eighty such centers exist in the State of Tamil Nadu alone. Food packets are also provided for the poorer children in Madras who cannot afford a midday meal at school.

In 1976 there was a severe drought in the Coimbatore District. A thousand peasants in the villages were provided with daily food and drinking water for six weeks, until government relief arrived.

And in the following year a truly gigantic rescue operation was mounted by the Seva Dal. A terrible cyclone hit the coast of Andhra Pradesh. A 20-foot tidal wave swept inland for up to 40 miles, causing enormous devastation. Thousands died, whole villages were literally

washed away, and hundreds of cattle and stock were drowned. Disease quickly spread.

It so happened that it was at the time of Swami's birthday celebrations when an All India Conference of the Seva Dal and 3,400 Sai Centers was also taking place. Swami cancelled everything and sent the Seva Dal into action.

The first job was to wade through slush and mire, through fumes and stench, to collect the rotting corpses which lay in huddled heaps and carry them to a place of cremation or burial. Some were found entwined in the branches of fallen trees they had climbed in a vain attempt to escape the rising waters. Corpses of cattle also had to be dealt with.

Nearly a million relief rupees flowed in from Sai devotees within a matter of days. Four relief camps were set up with a full complement of doctors and Seva Dal volunteers. Truckloads of food, clothing, blankets, tents, and medical supplies were rushed in as near to the camps as possible in the sodden ground, and then carried as headloads by the devotees.

Thus 5,000 forlorn men and women rendered destitute, who had somehow managed to escape, were cared for and saved. Other small groups who had found refuge elsewhere were reached by wading through mud and water and provided with food. But for the presence, courage, and resourcefulness of the Seva Dal, it is doubtful if government relief, when it did come, would have arrived in time.

They worked literally day and night in the most appalling conditions for four weeks, and when the floods had subsided they erected primitive huts which they equipped as best they could with cooking utensils, reed mats, and rugs. Singing bhajans to lighten the gloom, they managed to persuade the stunned and grieving remnants of the populace to take up their lives again as fishermen and farmers.

It was truly an heroic operation which tested the Seva Dal to the limit and brought out the best in them. Many fainted temporarily from the nauseating stench, and were near collapse at the end of the four weeks from lack of sleep and food. I do not think it could have taken place except for the inspiration of Sai Baba.

In more normal times, at the ashrams at Puttaparthi and Brindavan,



where beggars tend to congregate, Swami sees they are all adequately fed. At the recent World Conference in November 1980, he urged every devotee family to set themselves the target of saving enough food to feed one beggar every day of the year.

When funds are available, Swami builds whole rows of cottages in a particularly poverty-stricken area. He especially favors the Harijans (God's people), the so called 'untouchables,' in order to play his part in ridding the country of caste prejudice.

One can say that almost every conceivable need is provided for, albeit on a still-limited scale in a country which is so overpopulated and so poor. Even group weddings are arranged for those too poor to afford one, with special food and clothing provided free for the bridal couple and up to 20 friends and relatives of each.

I can honestly say that I have not covered more than half the scope of the welfare and humanitarian work which is being undertaken in this one state of Tamil Nadu - and repeated elsewhere, for I do not think it is an exception. As far as I am aware the same thing is taking place in every other state of India. In total, it makes a truly prodigious effort.

No doubt the needs of one state vary from those of another. In the two states in which the ashrams are sited, for example, there are courses for villagers in modern dairy farming at the ashram model farms. In Bombay, where there is considerable unemployment, I inspected a well-equipped workshop at Swami's Dharmakshetra to teach unemployed youngsters various trades. No doubt this is emulated at the main Sai Centers in all the big cities. Dharmakshetra also has a large lending library and a classroom for coaching the backward. Swami also has an Agricultural Polytechnic in Bombay, and Schools of Technology in Puttaparthi, Bombay, Calcutta, and other areas.

It is safe to say that the two priorities of hunger and sickness are attended to all over India by the Seva Dal volunteers. Swami, too, does his personal share, apart from inspiring and setting in motion the whole organization. He loves to feed the needy. He was doing it at the age of three! At the Dasara Festival, on the day given over to feeding of the poor, he insists on personally doling out food to as many as 15,000 people, with the help of the volunteers, and every year a sari is given to each woman and a dhoti to each man.

He frequently visits prisons and detention homes. His presence and his stirring words have a miraculous effect. Many a prison cell has become a shrine room, and many a delinquent a devotee. Friend of ambassadors, cabinet ministers, scientists, and philosophers, he is even more a friend to the wrongdoer, the lame and the blind, the crippled and the sick. As he himself says, "I am happiest when I am with those who are most in need." Sai Baba gives comfort, hope, and spiritual uplift wherever he goes, but he does not forget our physical needs. As the wise man from the East said, "Even God hesitates to offer the starving anything but bread."

By Ron Laing

Sathya Sai Baba: The Embodiment of Love

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Service in all its forms is primarily a spiritual discipline, and mental cleansing. Without the inspiration and proper attitude, the urge is bound to end and dry up, or it may change into pride and pomp. Remember it is God in you Who serves. He allows you to claim that you have served. Fill every moment with gratitude to the Supreme Giver.

Baba

INTERNATIONAL SAI NEWS

TEACHERS' CONFERENCE IN INDIA, August 13-18, 1983. The Overseas Bal Vikas Teachers' Conference will be held at Prasanthi Nilayam. This Bal Vikas (Education in Human Values) conference is a training camp for teachers, and individuals interested in becoming teachers. For more information, contact Mr. Michael Dave, 6255 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 1214, Hollywood, California 90028.

FOURTH CANADIAN COURSE ON HUMAN VALUES, August 21-27, 1983. This course will begin Sunday afternoon and conclude the following Saturday afternoon at Wesceanaskin Camp, Ontario, a two hour drive from Toronto. The fee for U.S. citizens is \$60.00 per person, and includes lodging and food for the full week. The program includes essential unity of religions, spirituality of the American Indians, and value-oriented daily life. For more information, contact Mr. George Kibedi, Chairman, Sathya Sai Baba Centre of North York, Ontario, at 22 Hillcrest Avenue, Willowdale, Ontario, Canada M2N 3N5. Phone contact may be made at (416) 225-3257 or (416) 225-0841.

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM IN ROME, ITALY, October 30 and 31, 1983. The topic of this symposium will be "Unity is Divinity." Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has blessed this auspicious occasion. The aim of this congress is to reaffirm the fact that peace and prosperity in the world cannot be ensured except through a realization of the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God.

WORLD BAL VIKAS RALLY, INDIA, December 28-30, 1983. The World Bal Vikas Rally for children ages 9 through 12 will be held at Prasanthi Nilayam. The children's rally is in conjunction with an International Bal Vikas Teachers' Conference. Interested individuals should contact Mr. Michael Dave, 6255 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 1214, Hollywood, California 90028.

Love of God results in concentration flowing exclusively to God. One need not leave home to cultivate this love. Burn out the instincts and cravings that enslave you and this will bring you nearer to God wherever you may be.

Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba

ACTIVITIES OF SAI CENTERS ACROSS THE NATION

CONNECTICUT - The second annual Janmashtami (Krishna's birthday) celebration will be hosted by the Sathya Sai Baba Center of Shelton, on August 27th. The center is big enough to accommodate more than 100 people, so all are invited to bring family and friends.

Devotees in Connecticut have been successful in obtaining free cable television time to show films of Baba on two stations, Valley Cable Vision and Fairfield Cable Vision. Anyone who is interested in investigating the possibility of showing Baba's movies on a local public access channel may contact the Sai center in either Norwalk or Shelton.

WISCONSIN - The Milwaukee center received a certificate of appreciation for its contribution to the local food bank program. The center has been cited for its consistent sharing with those who are in need. The food bank states that it feeds over 200 people a month. The center is sending the citation to Swami.

ARIZONA - In the Phoenix center, the Education in Human Values program for children has expanded. It now includes a class for Group III, which is comprised of teenagers aged 13 to 16.

In response to Baba's suggestion regarding service projects in America, the center has made plans to work with the local Y.W.C.A. on the aid-to-the-aged program called "Reassurance," designed to assist over 100 lonely elderly people who have requested help.

CALIFORNIA - The Lompoc, Ojai, Santa Barbara, and Ventura centers organized a retreat during the weekend of May 13-15 at Camp Colby, located in the mountains above Los Angeles. Over 200 devotees and guests from western states enjoyed the spiritual feast. "My Life is My Message" was the theme of the retreat.

The Siskiyou County center in Mt. Shasta has decided on a project to distribute food among needy people in that area. Also, some of the members have arranged to help supply used clothing that has been washed and mended.

The newly-formed Sri Sathya Sai Baba American Service Organization sponsored a public meeting in Los Angeles on July 10th, at the Wilshire-Ebell Theatre. Posters were hung and invitations distributed, resulting in a gathering of some 900 devotees and guests.

Dr. Michael Goldstein, Chairman of the American service organization, welcomed everyone. Mrs. Elsie Cowan spoke briefly on our good fortune to be here at this time when we have Sri Sathya Sai Baba amidst us. Dr. Jack Hislop gave an interesting talk about his experiences with Baba, and Richard and Janet Bock introduced one of their films about Sathya Sai. The highlight of the meeting was a talk by Indulal Shah, Chairman of the Sathya Sai Baba World Council, who had been especially invited to address the gathering. Excerpts from his talk are given on Page 3.

Another large-scale public meeting is being planned by the Sathya Sai Baba Centers of Lompoc, Ojai, Santa Barbara, and Ventura, along with the Atascadero study group, to be held at the Victoria Street Theater, 34 Victoria Street, Santa Barbara, California, on Saturday, August 20, 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

A SAI IDEA IN BUSINESS

I have been asking in prayers how best to introduce the idea of God at my office, and I received a very clear reply shortly after my return from India. I am the president of a manufacturing firm that designs and produces dresses primarily for little girls. The design and sales office is in New York, and factories are in Pennsylvania. The answer was to follow the example that can be seen at the ashram of Sri Baba in India, and that is putting up a large blackboard with thoughts written on it. So, I have just put up the blackboard with the title "Food for Thought," and will change the passage each week. I am also thinking of using the same passage at our factories in Pennsylvania. My reason for mentioning this is that perhaps there are others who either own or manage businesses and might be in a position to follow this example.

A New York Devotee

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE SAI RETREATS

<u>DATE & COSTS</u>	<u>KIND OF RETREAT: TITLE OR THEME, SPONSOR(S)</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>INFORMATION & RESERVATIONS</u>
September 9-11 Adults-\$45.00 Children- special rate Children under 6- free	Annual Northern California Re- treat hosted by the Sai center of San Francisco	YMCA Camp La Honda in the Santa Cruz Mountains of Northern California	Mr. Tim Conway 380 Ivy Street San Francisco, CA 94102 (415) 626-8921
September 9-11 Whole Weekend- \$30.00 Sat. & Sun.- \$22.50 Sat. only-\$10.00 Sun. only-\$ 7.00	8th Annual North- east Sathya Sai Retreat hosted by the Sai cen- ters of Shelton, Connecticut, and Poughkeepsie, New York	Lake Surprise Camp, Cold Spring, New York	Dr. Ramesh Wadhvani (203) 929-9659 Dr. A.V.S. Sathya 38 Tor Road Wappingers Falls, NY 12590 (914) 297-7615
September 23-25 Each person- \$30.00 Spouse-\$15.00	5th Annual Sun- belt Retreat hosted by the Sai centers of Mesa, Phoenix, and Tucson	Sky-Y Camp in the moun- tains near Prescott, Arizona	Mr. Jon Roof 4960 Ave. del Cazador Tucson, AZ 85718 (602) 299-2054
September 23-25 Whole weekend- \$51.00	Northwest Ore- gon Retreat hosted by the Sai center of Eagle Point	Breitenbush, in the moun- tain area of Detroit, Ore- gon	Ms. Patty Osterhus 1381 Ohio Ashland, OR 97520 (503) 488-0540

It is reported that the Sai retreats in various parts of the country have been enthusiastically received and well attended. Those who have participated find this a time to leave the busy world behind and focus on a deeper level of consciousness. One need not be a Sai devotee to attend, as all are welcome. No attempt is made (or ever will be made) to alter the philosophical persuasion of any individual.



HOSPITALS AND HEALTH

At the dedication of the Sri Sathya Sai Hospital
for Women and Children, Whitefield, August 28, 1976

Health is an essential requisite of man. The man afflicted with poor health is powerless to execute even the least burdensome assignment. The scriptures proclaim that health is the very root of all endeavor in the four fields of human achievement -- dharma (righteousness), artha (prosperity), kama (desire), and moksha (liberation). Without health, man cannot brave temptations, earn a decent living, fulfill his basic needs, and succeed in sadhana (spiritual disciplines). Man can engage himself in obligatory and optional functions only if he has health.

Food habits and recreational habits are the two main causes for poor health. Great care has to be bestowed to ensure that injurious tendencies do not affect these two. At present, though drugs have multiplied and hospitals have been established in every nook and corner, poor health is also widespread. This situation is attributable to the spread of deleterious food habits and pastimes.

It is also necessary to keep the environment of the places where one works and lives unpolluted by smoke, dust, or dirt. The clothes that one wears, as well as the body that one is encased in, have both to be washed clean and kept clean. Health endows a person with joy and brightness. The fruits of the tree of human life are sweet, but they are encased in the bitter skin of egoism and ignorance, and have hard inedible seeds of desire, anger, pride, etc. One has to exercise one's intelligence to peel off the outer skin of ignorance, throw off the seeds of vice and wickedness, and partake of the sweet kernel of life.

To remove the evil of egoism, service is the most efficient instrument. Service will also impress on the person doing service the unity of all mankind. One who leads can never know the joy of one who serves. He who dedicates his time, skill, and strength to service can never meet defeat, distress, or disappointment. For service is its own reward. His word will be ever sweet and soft, his gestures will be ever reverent and humble. He will have no foe, no fatigue, no fear.

The units of the Sathya Sai Seva Organization are engaged in enthusiastic service in the two areas of health and education. To improve and maintain the health of the people, continuous education on the principles and practice of hygiene and environmental cleanliness is essential. Education is the most effective safeguard against physical and mental poor health. So these two activities are closely interrelated. The body is a temporary habitation; it is subject to all kinds of disease and injury. Yet the body is the boat on which alone we can cross the ocean of samsara (flow of time) or flux. The boat has to be kept trim and serviceable. It should not distract our attention more than the minimum necessary for its upkeep. It has to be used for reducing the burden of others, and should not itself become a burden on us. It should serve others, not demand service from them. That is the reason why this hospital is being established here to remedy disease and help people to keep their bodies in good condition.

People of this village, and villages that are in the surrounding area, will resort to this hospital for medical relief and advice. Unfortunately, hospitals that treat patients with love and care, with dedication and devotion, are very rare. There are hospitals with costly equipment and expert doctors, huge buildings and spick-and-span interiors, but they indulge more in profiteering than affording relief. Their services are for those who can pay large sums of money. Villagers are not welcome there, and in turn do not feel at ease to approach them. Therefore, this hospital is being started amidst the villages, so that expert advice and treatment can be rendered to them in a loving atmosphere of reverence and devotion. No charge will be levied here for any service. The villagers and others can come here, regain their health, and return hale and hearty in order to carry out their tasks and fulfill their responsibilities.

The doctors and volunteers who help in this hospital must feel it a part of their duty to advise the villagers about environmental hygiene and prophylaxis measures. The members of the Sathya Sai Seva Dal have a special duty for this type of service. They have to visit the villages and, after winning the confidence and love of the people, advise them on good food habits and other means of maintaining health. They must also exhort them to resort to this hospital as soon as the first symptoms of poor health are evident. Early treatment will save the villagers from spending many days in bed, away from the fields.

The villager now lives on food that is deficient in vitamins and proteins, though he is growing vegetables and food that provide these ingredients in plenty, and selling them to city-dwellers. He has to be told of the value of fruits and vegetables as a source of nutrients that will promote and preserve his health; for healthy parents mean healthy children, and sick parents pass on their poor health to the coming generations. Members of the units of the Sathya Sai Seva Organization can also join the Seva Dal in this campaign of educating the villagers. This activity is as meritorious as worship itself.

Today is Vighneswara Festival, the day on which the entire country is worshipping the elephant-headed god who helps man overcome all obstacles. Worshipping Vinayaka or Vighneswara or Ganapathi, as he is also called, endows man with the courage and confidence needed to enter upon and carry through any undertaking in the world. The elephant is the biggest animal of the forest. It is very intelligent, and has a powerful memory. Its footprint can erase the footprints of all other fauna. When it marches through the thick jungle, it clears a pathway for all other animals to pass through. The elephant-headed god confers intelligence and memory, and the power to subdue evil and vice. Thus he is also a path-maker. So it is only appropriate that every rite, ceremony, or project should be started with the worship of this god.

I must also point out to the doctors serving here that, perhaps even more than the drugs they prescribe, the sweet, soft words they speak and the love and sympathy they evince can cure better and quicker the illnesses of their patients. Look upon them as your own kith and kin, as your special guests and as your closest friends, and attend to them lovingly and with unflinching care. I call upon you to maintain this attitude in every situation. Remember that the patient has to cooperate with you in order that you may effect the cure, and, when cured, the patient confers on you satisfaction, joy, and a sense of elation. Be grateful to the patient for all of this.

We have in this hospital as a doctor, a lady devotee who is highly qualified, and who has done service for the backward regions in Nigeria and Ethiopia, in Africa. We have also others, equally able and enthusiastic. Experts in special branches of medicine and surgery will also be visiting this hospital off and on, and diagnosing,

advising, and helping patients who need their attention. It is for you now to make the best use of these facilities, offered free and with fullness of heart.

I am glad that the members of the panchayath (village council) of this place as well as of nearby villages are here today, and have been with us ever since this project was begun. If only they help the patients from the villages to be happy and healthy, they will have no more need to beg for votes from door to door when the elections come around. The voters will themselves come in large numbers to get them elected, in order to avail themselves of their services in greater measure. India was long famous for the sense of compassion that animated her peoples. She is now dishonored by some as a 'poor' country. No! She was for centuries the preceptor of the world, and she is assuming that status again today. India is the land where the ideals of service, renunciation, and spiritual endeavor were born and flourished. It is only recently, since India fell under the impact of alien cultures which highlighted material comfort, physical luxury, sensual liberty, and exterior display, that Indians have trodden the wrong path of exploitation and violence, idleness and pompousness. With the spread of alien cultures and alien ways of thought and life, diseases too have multiplied and mental imbalances have increased. But when simplicity, humility, and the ideal of social service (as the worship of God in man) are restored, the nation will again be happy, healthy, and full of peace, prosperity, and joy.

Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X

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