



SATHYA SAI Newsletter

FALL 1988
Volume 13, Number 1

SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Quotation	<i>Sri Sathya Sai Baba</i>	1
Life Is the Best Teacher	<i>R. Najemy</i>	2
The Ideal for Women	<i>Phyllis Krystal</i>	6
Sai Service:		
Peace for Palsy Patients	<i>Lee Cable</i>	9
Talking About Socks	<i>Phil Sloan</i>	10
My Sister and I	<i>Sue Wilson</i>	11
Here's to Your Health!	<i>Jay Jarrett</i>	12
The Challenge of Raising Sai's Children in America	<i>Cathy Daub</i>	14
Birthday Greetings	<i>Susan Caffrey</i>	16
Children's Corner: Rosy Smiles	<i>Story Auntie</i>	17
Proceed Beyond Triumph	<i>Sri Sathya Sai Baba</i>	19
Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Foreigners at Prasanthi Nilayam and Brindavan		22
A Birthday Message	<i>Dr. V. K. Gokak</i>	25
Locked In: Guarded and Protected by Baba	<i>Sandra "Dusty" Maurer</i>	26
A Divine Discourse to Foreign Devotees	<i>Sri Sathya Sai Baba</i>	30
Sai Books, Tapes, and Other Items		
Sathya Sai Book Center of America		39
Birth Day Publishing Company		40
New Subscription Information	Inside Back Cover	

Photographs, drawings, and literary contributions are always welcomed by the **Sathya Sai Newsletter**. We reserve the right of discrimination in selecting and editing material for publication. To have a manuscript returned, please enclose a self-addressed envelope. Send contributions to: **Sathya Sai Newsletter**, 1800 East Garvey Avenue, West Covina, California 91791.



We must encourage people to correct themselves by highlighting their good points. . . . Let us lay stress more on positive virtues and positive ideas among devotees in our organization—like love, service, and brotherhood. Let these be the distinctive marks of our organization, making it distinct from the rest. Let us keep away from the undesirable; ignore it, steadily and silently. Discussing the undesirable and publicly condemning it will only soil us. Maintain the atmosphere of purity and divinity; there, evil cannot sprout or thrive.

Sai devotees have to give support to each other and share the labor. They must infuse into their groups love, courage, confidence, and a sense of sacrifice so that the message can transform more and more into seekers, sadhakas of the Truth. The diamond becomes brighter with the cutting of more facets. One's duty is to continue along one's chosen path and fulfill the task with undiminished enthusiasm. Truth cannot fail to be valued and appreciated, one day or other. Be as happy as ever, whatever happens.

—Baba

Excerpted from *My Baba and I*
By Dr. John S. Hislop
Birth Day Publishing Company

LIFE IS THE BEST TEACHER

I remember that the first time I came to Prasanthi Nilayam, in the summer of 1977, I expected to find various classes and seminars on Hatha Yoga, meditation, *Patanjali*, and *Vedanta* philosophy; a separate hall for meditation; and one-man rooms in which one could meditate all day long and have peace and quiet. I expected that Sai Baba would speak to us every day and explain the various spiritual truths and techniques with which we could realize them directly. I expected an atmosphere of silence somewhat like a monastery: reflective and peaceful, with plenty of time for contemplation.

During my first two visits in 1977 and 1979, I was able to create my own little world somewhat in line with my expectations, because I managed to have a room by myself—a luxury no longer possible with the ever-increasing number of devotees who arrive at Prasanthi Nilayam every day.

Then, during my subsequent three visits, I gradually began to understand that a different game was being played there, that a different method of spiritual growth was being applied. I had been asking myself why we were packed three, four, and five in a room; why we were packed into sheds with fifty to one hundred others; why so many dogs were barking day and night and construction sounds were audible all day long and even at night when we were told our lights should be off and we should sleep. Why

was no room provided for meditation and for quietness? Why were there no classes or seminars (although lately some have been started for foreign devotees)? Why did Swami not speak to all of us every day and explain what we should do? So many why's. Finally when my mind stopped asking "Why?" and started listening, some answers became apparent, and they seemed very logical and important. What were they?

The School of Life

It became apparent that at Prasanthi Nilayam (and, for that matter, all over the world), life itself is the teacher. Life is God. God is life. Need there be any other teacher than life itself? This process of learning from life experiences seems, however, to be accelerated at Prasanthi Nilayam. It feels like an electromagnetic field in which lessons come fast and heavy; and one's weaknesses, fears, egoism, and various other obstacles to spiritual growth come up to the surface. One begins to understand that absolutely nothing in life happens by chance or accident, that there is a divine hand guiding our every experience, giving us in every moment exactly the objects, persons, and situations which we need in order to come face-to-face with our ego and to overcome it.

This is not always a pleasant process, and often those experiences which we

need are the last ones we would want. We may be put in the sheds to stay there with hundreds of mosquitoes, babies crying, and people coughing, sneezing, talking, laughing, snoring, opening and closing doors, and walking across the floor with sandals which bang with each step. When there are large groups, one may shout to the other across the hall while you are trying to sleep or meditate. All this occurs not only during the daytime, but occasionally even at night.

It would be silly to think that Swami could not build hundreds of thousands of other rooms, giving one to each pilgrim. His power is unlimited. He, however, has directed this energy toward other projects, i.e., schools, hospitals, housing for the poor, and first-aid and hygiene centers. We can only assume that these conditions exist for a reason.

Purifying the Butter

An image comes to me from childhood which, in some way, helps me to understand the reason these conditions exist. When my mother made Easter sweets with butter, she heated about three kilos of butter in a large vessel. As the butter was heated, it began to send up a foam with various impurities to the top of the vessel. She then scraped this foam off the top and in this way purified the butter.

Prasanthi Nilayam is a large vessel. In it are the sheds; the dogs; the waiting for hours in the heat or rain; colds; coughing, snoring, loud neighbors; and

thousands of people with different ways of acting and living habits all in close proximity, creating much psychic heat and inner turmoil. We, then, are the butter which begins to melt; and our impurities are the foam which flows up to the surface of our beings in the form of negativity, resentment, anger, doubt, and feelings of injustice and indignation that we are being treated in this and that way, that things are not run as "they should be," that no consideration is being given to our "problems," that Baba is not paying any attention to us, that the others are not paying any attention to the rules, that Baba is taking for an interview those who are not following the rules—on and on goes the monkey mind. All of this creates friction with others, with other groups, between groups and individuals, between us and ourselves, between us and how we see Baba. The mind comes into conflict and confusion, and the foam floats up to the surface with all the impurities which have long been stored there, not only since childhood, but for many lifetimes.

Then comes the Cosmic Mother in Her long, flowing, orange gown, waving Her hand in circles, and She scrapes off the foam with a word, a smile, a gesture. Relief comes; the impurity has been removed, at least lessened. The butter is a little lighter, more pure, more wholesome. But the Cosmic Mother sees that the butter still has some impurities and continues to boil it in the cauldron of experiences at Prasanthi Nilayam, which is not to say that this does not happen every moment of our lives wherever we may be. However, the heat is turned

up a little higher at Prasanthi Nilayam because the Mother can be seen with our physical eyes so that we can be relieved of our foam more easily.

Not that the relief comes only through that physical form clothed in orange. Mother Sai is not limited to the form which gives *darshan* twice a day at Prasanthi Nilayam. This, too, is one of Baba's important messages. We are being asked to see Sai in every being that we meet. There is no value in bringing our hands together before Him in *darshan* if we come into conflict with Him in the form of our roommates or ashram personnel later on. The message from life comes on strong that God is everywhere. Sai can speak to us through our roommates, through the dogs, through our diarrhea, through the "Saying of the Day," through the lecture of the day, through our meditation, through a book we are reading, or through any annoyance that any person or situation may stimulate in us.

The Problem And the Gift

Every person, animal, situation, or event which stimulates negative feelings within us is a blessing in disguise. It is a blessed opportunity to discover our weaknesses, attachments, aversions, fears, expectations, insecurities, or selfishness. We never feel angry or upset out of strength or correctness. We feel upset only when deep inside us there is fear, which may be expressed in many emotions such as anger, hurt, bitterness,

jealousy, hate, and insecurity; but all are based on identification with the separate, vulnerable ego-body and the ensuing fear. Every time this fear is aroused in some way by our environment, we come face-to-face with ourselves and others. These beliefs are the result of ignorance and lack of evolution of the soul, which cause it to believe that it is weak and vulnerable and that it needs certain things, persons, attitudes (from others), and situations in order to feel secure, content, and affirmed as a being. As long as we are controlled by such beliefs, we will try to find happiness, security, and affirmation through establishing specific conditions in our environmental reality.

When conditions do not allow us to fulfill those "prerequisites" which we believe we must have in order to feel okay, then we usually feel insecure, hurt, bitter, angry, and, sometimes, even vengeful. On the other hand, if we accept that nothing comes into our life that is not the plan of God—our own plan for our release from the dark prison of body identification—then we will ask, "What is life trying to teach me in this situation?"

Once we ask this question with sincerity and accept that we have exactly the room we should have, the roommates, the heat, the illness, the reactions from Baba, and the behavior from others that we need in order to learn the next lesson on the spiritual path, then we will start having daily lessons from the *Sadguru* Himself, God. Life is the best teacher.

Psychodrama Therapy

Thus, Prasanthi Nilayam as a whole becomes a great classroom, a continual seminar, a technique of life which requires no classroom, teachers, or *gurus*. It becomes a psychodrama in which each one is projecting his own problems and the obstacles within his mind onto the people and environment around him, many times even onto Baba Himself. The pilgrim becomes purified and renewed as his blockages are brought to the surface and are healed by the underlying love which pervades the atmosphere as a result of Swami's example, presence, and teachings.

A hundred seminars, a thousand classes and lectures, or a million books could not be as effective in creating such real and permanent changes on the mental, emotional, and physical levels as this psychodrama is. Thus, we are forced to employ the philosophy of love, patience, and unity or else we suffer. In this way, there is the potential of feeling not only the greatest happiness, bliss, and love, but also moments of the greatest separateness, fear, and depression. Some people, especially when they first go to Prasanthi Nilayam, experience an emotional roller coaster in which they rise and fall between these two extremes many times a day.

The veterans begin to see that it is all a game, a purification process, a process

of learning and self-discovery. Although they still go through ups and downs, they try to dis-identify themselves from those movements which are taking place in the body and the mind. They try to identify with the Witness, the pure consciousness in which this illusory drama is projected. They become more identified with the *Atman*, the sea, rather than with the personality, the wave. But the process is endless, and the tendency toward identification with the body is one which we have developed over millions of years of life-cycles on earth. So the *sadhaka* (spiritual seeker) is forced to develop love and patience until he can free his mind from its fluctuations.

Thus, the Cosmic Mother continues to apply heat to the cauldron and to remove the foam. The only thing we can do is to realize that it is happening, accept it, enjoy it, and not resist. We can look for our impurities (rather than blaming our environment and others) and offer them up willingly in the form of purification to the Divine Mother.

When we start to do this, life—the best teacher—will always be with us. Everywhere we go will be Prasanthi Nilayam, and every moment will be an “interview.”

—R. Najemy
Sanathana Sarathi
September 1985

THE IDEAL FOR WOMEN

Some years ago, in a kind of reverie, I had the impression that Baba appeared to my inner view and was beckoning me to follow Him. I gladly complied, and it seemed that I was being led to a higher vantage point from which I had a clear view of the whole world laid out below. I heard His voice in my head saying, "Now I will show you the real heart bypass." I was puzzled by that statement and wondered what it meant. However, it became clear as the narrative unfolded.

In past ages when men would periodically close off their hearts, stifle their compassion, and engage in wars and violence which vented the emotion of hate, the majority of the women continued to act out their role as the nurturing, compassionate, maternal, and loving members of society. A partial balance was thus preserved, even during the darkest periods of history.

However, the women's originally strong and loving *shakti* (divine female energy) role as mothers and nurturing partners with their husbands gradually degenerated into one of abject subservience to men, which further reduced them to becoming only a means of satisfying their husband's physical desires. Their true role became vitiated, lost its positive power in the world, and caused the loss of contact with the heart. This condition also leads to divorce from nature and the replacement of living forces with artificial substitutes. The result is the

sorry plight of this loveless world, which threatens to become even worse unless this trend is soon reversed.

In recent years, women, particularly in the West, have finally rebelled against being used as objects and treated as second-class citizens instead of being equally valued with men. Women are often the first to react to a state of imbalance—both in the world and in their personal lives. So when their natural function of feeling is suppressed or diverted, they are the ones who suffer most.

However, in their struggle for liberation from this worsening dilemma, they have mistakenly chosen to try to become carbon copies of men, proclaiming that they are equals in every way—often going to ludicrous extremes to prove their point. The result of their quest for liberation and equality has caused many women to make a conscious decision to bypass their hearts. In this way, they have cut off, suppressed, and frozen their emotions, fearing that feelings would be a hindrance to them in their competition with men.

Throughout many lifetimes, we have undoubtedly incarnated sometimes as men and other times as women. In this way, we have learned to experience variations of each role.

Carl Jung gave the world the terms "anima" to designate the feminine

aspect in men and "animus" for the masculine qualities in women. Baba states that He is *Siva-Shakti*, both male and female in perfect balance, acting through one body, which is the wholeness and completeness toward which we are all moving.

Baba impressed upon my mind that when the heart is bypassed in the world, multitudes of serious problems arise. Crime and violence increase rapidly; materialism, resulting in greed and selfishness, prevails; sexual deviations become more common and hence accepted; incest and child abuse increase; various addictions, promiscuity, and broken homes become common everyday facts.

Looking back over this list, it is obvious that the missing ingredient is love, which is exactly what Baba stresses as being essential in every part of life. "Start the day with love. Fill the day with love. End the day with love."

I knew with absolute certainty that the grim insight I had been given was all too true, yet I was stunned by such a profoundly disturbing experience. I had often thought about the state of the world, as all concerned people do. But having this experience while in reverie, when I was wide open and therefore completely vulnerable, meant that I had received a different and extended awareness of the situation through intuition. The result was that I was fully cognizant of the world scene in every cell of my body, in addition to my mind and heart, which made the impact much stronger and more distressing.

It also made me acutely aware that one of the chief reasons why many young people resort to drugs is an attempt to dull their insight into the depressing lack of love and seemingly hopeless state of the world, which will directly affect their future. Obviously, the use of drugs or any other means of escape is not the answer. What can be done to alleviate the major problems?

"What can we do?" I cried out to Baba. As if in answer came the memory of His frequent assurances that in past eras, when the world was seriously out of balance and people strayed too far off the path of righteousness as outlined by the ancient sages, an *Avatar* was called forth. At such times, God took human form in order to infuse all who were willing to receive it with divine love, which alone is capable of healing the sickness and starvation not only of the body for food, but the heart for pure love. Baba has repeatedly announced that the chief reason for His advent into the world at this particular time is to re-light the lamp of love which has been doused by people's attachment to the body and its teeming desires.

I still vividly recall a group interview in February 1977 when Baba entered the room full of eagerly waiting devotees with a light tripping step and gaily singing a little refrain, "Who is Sai Baba? He is love, love, love."

"But what do we do?" I persisted. The answer seemed to be that the women of the world need to find a way to reconnect to their own ancient heritage of

keepers and protectors of the gift of love to the human race. They must be willing to be channels through whom the Divine love can again flow from their hearts and out into the world, to balance men's traditionally more mental and physical involvement in worldly affairs. Women need to accept their *shakti* role and complement men instead of aping

or competing with them. Only then can women be of equal value with men, and the members of both sexes can unite and work harmoniously together.

—Phyllis Krystal

*Excerpted from Sai Chandana
Book of Homage for
60th Birthday, November 1985*



Love of God, fear of sin, and expressing morality in society are dependent upon love. When you are filled with love and the entire world is filled with love, only then can there be peace and joy in the world.

—Baba

Divine Discourse
March 18, 1988

SAI SERVICE

Peace for Palsy Patients

When my friend Jim first told me about his monthly service trips to the cerebral palsy hospital in Chatsworth, California, and asked me to join him, I was not interested. But as he spoke about the patients and their response to the non-professional but earnest entertainment his group provided, the trips began to sound interesting, challenging, and even necessary. Eventually I agreed to go along and add my untrained voice to the choir.

Jim did a wonderful job of preparing me for my first visit. He explained how the patients would look and behave, and he admitted that his own first visit caused him to retreat to a corner where he could quietly cry. In a way, I also expected to be horrified by the deformities, or saddened by the loss of muscle control, or even depressed. However, none of those feelings were aroused. Instead, quite the opposite happened.

I entered the room and focused on the group of singers moving in the center of a circle of wheelchairs. Two guitarists provided the accompaniment as the group strolled around the circle. I didn't look at the patients at first, concentrating on the singers. Someone handed me a book full of old songs like "Down by the Old Mill Stream," etc. I moved into the group and followed as best I could. Almost immediately a young ambulatory patient walked over and hugged me. Her face was somewhat distorted, she was terribly

thin and awkward, and she couldn't speak, but her eyes contained a message, "Please love me! I'm glad you're here. I need you." How could anyone ignore such a plea?

After that, I found it easy to look at the other patients. To my surprise, their eyes were lit with excitement and love. Some even kept the beat of the music by swaying in their chairs or clapping their hands. Their reaction fueled others. We sang with our hearts, sometimes well, sometimes not. The enthusiasm was important—not the quality of our performance. Soon a kind of glow seemed to surround us, taking in the singers, the patients, and radiating around the room to include the caretakers as well.

Suddenly I became aware of a young boy who sat in a far corner. He was the only patient who wasn't smiling. A lump came into my throat. He looked so small, so defenseless, so lonely. I walked over to him and noticed another patient—a young girl about his age—tightly holding his hand. I was told their names, so I stood in front of them, stroked their hair, smiled, and spoke their names in what I hoped was an encouraging way. The girl smiled, although she didn't move her head or look at me. The boy's head still drooped and he didn't smile, but he moved his eyes upward to meet mine. The contact was electric! I somehow seemed to have a communication with him that was beyond words, and I felt that I had made a new friend.

By the end of our session, everyone was smiling and uplifted. It was difficult to say goodbye. The patients seemed to beg us with their eyes not to leave. And so, of course, I must go back. To know that one can give so much joy with such little effort and receive joy in return is a true demonstration of God's love and grace.

—*Lee Cable*
Los Angeles, California

Talking About Socks

A nonprofit organization named FAITH (Family Assistance Involving the Homeless) feeds an evening meal to 150 to 200 needy people six days a week in Santa Monica, California. A Sathya Sai Baba Center in the area has elected to be responsible for the feeding each Monday.

One Monday, while helping to unload the food from a car, a homeless man spotted a pair of socks in the back seat, and several people asked for the socks. This was the way Baba told us of their desperate need for stockings to warm and protect their feet. A drive to collect 200 pairs of new socks was launched.

On a subsequent Monday evening, a devotee pulled out of his car trunk two huge, Hefty bags filled with new socks. We began moving down the food line, giving each person a pair, with a choice of color and thickness. Many sat down immediately, giving up their place in line, to put on their new acquisitions.

For a short time I imagined myself to be like Sathya Sai Baba, giving out *vibhuti* (holy ash) packets. I was filled with love, hope, and compassion as I looked into the eyes of those homeless people. In some I could see a flicker of gratitude that was perhaps real enough to rekindle hope in their lives. The stockings were an unexpected gift for many of them, an answered prayer for others. We were the simple instruments of Sai Baba, the necessary middlemen, distributing His grace. For those whose anger was silently raging like a fire, I think the socks were like a splash of refreshing water.

One becomes familiar with the faces of those who regularly pass through the food line. You can't help but see the effects of street life wearing these people down. A small sore on the hands or knuckles begins to spread, and the sad part is they don't heal as they once did. For most of us, the life force of healing is taken for granted. But these people aim all their anger and confusion at themselves, and I think the healing energy isn't allowed to flow.

Without our ego in play, Baba's love can be accepted by those who have become too wiley to trust their fellow human beings. Recognizing that all is His, our act is but a petal at His feet. Multiplied by thousands of petals, it adds up to a pleasant fragrance. And when talking about socks, isn't that saying something?

—*Phil Sloan*
Los Angeles, California

MY SISTER AND I

My sister was recently hospitalized with mumps encephalitis. We are both in the medical profession; and when she asked me if she was going to die because of "anoxic encephalopathy," I was startled, but humored her and said, "Of course not." These conditions are totally unrelated. I did not understand why she would associate the two.

The next day I brought her my favorite picture of Sathya Sai Baba and told her that He would watch over her. She had never really heard much about Him before, but she saw the picture and said, "Oh, I dreamed about Him all last night. One of my patients has His picture over his bed." I was glad she said that, because it saved me from trying to explain why I felt a compulsion for her to accept the picture.

The following day as I was driving to work, a thought came to me: "Check on your sister. You have plenty of time before going to work." When I got to her room, she could not talk. She could hardly move her extremities, and, worst of all, her breathing was irregular.

The next few hours were a nightmare. They did an emergency cat scan, an ICU admission, etc. A neurologist was called in, and it was discovered that the cause was a severe drug reaction. He gave her an intravenous antihistamine. After that,

she was able to move again, and she began to make sounds. It was amazing!

For the most part, I had been estranged from my family; but when I accompanied my sister on her journey that night, I realized how much I loved her. Since I was dressed for work, no one questioned my presence.

I called my workplace to report that I had an emergency. By some unusual coincidence, another nurse had gone in and had taken my place for the entire shift. In my opinion, that was a one-in-a-million occurrence.

After it was over, the words "anoxic encephalopathy" drifted back to me. I realized that Sai was indicating to my sister and me that, within the limits of *karma*, He was acting in her life. Later, my sister wrote me a letter saying that she felt she would have died had I not been there. I think she would have stopped breathing and suffered anoxic encephalopathy had Sri Sathya Sai Baba not been there.

What is more amazing is the continuing presence and the blossoming spirit in all I see around me and in my sister's life, too.

—Sue Wilson
Aquasco, Maryland

HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH!

Baba's writings are the usual inspiration for my sporadic musings, but inspiration is where you find it. The urge to communicate this time was not from so lofty a source, but from an article in the June *Reader's Digest* entitled "The Healing Power of Doing Good." I'm calling it to your attention because it adds a new dimension to *seva* (selfless service), a constant theme of Baba's discourses.

We all know (or should) that giving compassionate service to those in need is held in high regard by Baba. Also, many of us have experienced an expanded sense of well-being and fulfillment when we turn our efforts to the needs of the many unfortunates in our communities. We need only recall Sai Baba's ringing announcement many years ago that He did not incarnate in order to surround Himself with devotees or to create a new religion, but to call us all to love and to serve.

A condensation of an article in *American Health* magazine states that an "explosion of new research is pointing to the benefits of altruism." It reports the results of a University of Michigan study of 2,700 people over a period of fourteen years which indicates that people, especially men, with no close social or community relationships have a death rate 2½ times that of people who are actively involved with other people. A University of California study of 7,000 people over a period of nine years "found that those who were single, had few friends or

relatives, and shunned community organizations had more than twice the mortality rate of others—regardless of race, income, physical activity, or other lifestyle factors."

Researchers are starting to look for the reason behind these figures. Hans Selye, a pioneer in modern stress research, was of the opinion that by helping people you inspire their gratitude and affection, which somehow helps protect you from stress. The warm feeling which results from such activities is thought to come from endorphins, the brain's natural tranquilizers. Through the neural link between the mind and our immune system, such altruism may result in an increase of the cells, produced in bone marrow and the spleen, which are needed to fight infection.

A Harvard psychologist discovered that showing his students a film of Mother Teresa working among Calcutta's sick and poor resulted in an increase of immunoglobulin A, an antibody that combats respiratory infections. In one of many studies of the "Type A and Type B" personalities, a University of Florida psychologist found that many characteristics of the Type A profile were harmless. "Only a few of those characteristics—anger, irritability, and aggressive competitiveness—seem to put people at a higher risk for heart attack." Hostile types are more prone to heart disease. A Duke University study found that the more hostile the person, the more blocked

his coronary arteries were. (Hmmm... does that mean that the folks with quadruple bypass surgery are more hostile than triple bypass folks?)

Such research findings certainly tie in well with Baba's teachings on service. True, Baba doesn't—to my knowledge—promise us radiant health through service. He does promise bliss, and I am tempted to suggest that improved personal health is certainly a step along the way. Baba has stated that you cannot make spiritual progress with an ailing body. If, to secure good health, we are given the choice between gulping wonder drugs (with all their side effects, including the economic one) and helping in some small way to make the world a better place, how could anyone choose the former? Yet, we may very well be making just that choice right now.

In one of His many discourses on *shanti*, or unchanging peace, Baba says, quite logically, that we cannot find unchanging peace in an everchanging world. He admonishes us to "arise and work [for] work is the mission of man." The key, He says, is to establish a worthwhile goal and the proper environment for achieving it. "Until you fix upon a certain direction for all your thoughts and activities, you will only be building shadowy castles in the air and roaming about in them."

I wonder if Baba had anything like my workshop and toy-making in mind when He spoke those words, but they seem to apply. The toys are all donated to local children's shelters, day-care centers, homes for abused children, etc. One of the most pleasant aspects of the project

is the cooperation I've received from local merchants. When they learn that what I make is donated thus, they supply me with all the materials, power tool repair and replacement parts, sawblades, drill and router bits, and such, all free or at considerably reduced prices.

When I have attempted to thank them by giving them a completed toy for one of their children or grandchildren, they insist on thanking me for the toy by donating more materials or equipment! And so it goes. It is, as Baba says: The more you give, the more you have to give; you never run out.

For several months my health was going downhill in a hurry. I centered my thoughts, plans, and activities on the toys. I established the goal of making 250 this year and set about remodeling the shop and improving its efficiency (the proper environment).

Since then my health has improved dramatically. Recently, a friend took me to my first major league baseball game in twenty years. I sat through the long, well-played game for the better part of three hours and walked in and walked out—a distance of a couple of city blocks—without incident. The Braves lost the game (they usually do), but I won a little confidence in my future.

I don't know what, if any, connection exists between the improvement in my condition and the topic of the *Reader's Digest* story, but I pass it along for consideration.

—Jay Jarrett

*Excerpted from Prema House Call
Stone Mountain, Georgia*

THE CHALLENGE OF RAISING SAI'S CHILDREN IN AMERICA

It comes as no surprise that children are easily influenced in their early years. Sai Baba says, "The hearts and minds of children are very tender, and what is taught to them early in life will get imprinted on their hearts and form the foundation for the rest of their lives. Children have certain capacities which are not possessed by grown-ups. In their tender hearts and minds, there is potential by which we can help them go close to God with the kind of devotion and attachment that one will not find paralleled in grown-ups."

Of paramount importance is the example that parents set. As parents, we are also teachers. Sai Baba says, "Teachers have to be lifelong students engaged not in mere study, but immersed in practice, too. Only a lamp that burns can light other lamps." If we preach one thing and practice another, we are teaching our children to do the same. If we are teaching the children the importance of telling the truth and behaving appropriately, then we should refrain from all unworthy acts, no matter how insignificant. Sai Baba says, "You must not waver, but be steadfast while imparting knowledge to children."

As adult Sai devotees, we are not moving in the mainstream of society. Our acceptance of the challenges which this entails will help our children feel the same

way. In fact, we can feel an inner peace about the entire matter. If the words we speak and the actions we do are in harmony, then there will be mutual respect between us and our children and there will be harmony in the household. Sai Baba says, "The ability to synchronize your thoughts, words, and deeds should be developed—then with your mind you are thinking good thoughts, with your mouth you are speaking good words, and with your body you are doing good work."

Sai Baba has entrusted us with His children. If we can give them a strong foundation in values and faith in the Divinity of all, and if we practice this ourselves, then our children will develop self-confidence and self-worth. They will believe in themselves and the God within who is guiding and protecting them through life. This foundation will serve as strength to carry them through any of life's challenges. Slowly and gently the loving Lord is molding the character of His children just as a sculptor creates an image from stone. Sai Baba says, "A sculptor takes up a block of stone. He mentally visualizes the beauty within the stone. By carefully chiseling, he uncovers a beautiful, charming image. Teachers and parents have to plant seeds of higher values in the child's heart; then they must foster, nurture, and help these values grow. They have to root out the weeds—

the unhealthy habits or surroundings—that are crowding around these good saplings in order to facilitate the unhampered growth of higher values in the child's heart."

Children need to know that we are all fortunate to be born at this time when an *Avatar* is living on earth in human form. When our daughter was three, Sai Baba made her candy during *darshan*. She had prayed for Him to give her a present, and her prayers were answered. To this day she believes that Baba listens to, and answers, her prayers. We also need to let our children know that they have a purpose in life. Sai Baba says, "Faith is the very breath we live by. Every being is the effect of some cause and has been created for some purpose. Man has been made for some cause he has to serve. Young persons must believe firmly in this cause-and-effect principle." Being born in the time of Sathya Sai Baba is of great significance.

So when our children feel uncomfortable with the roles they have to play, we need to remember Baba's words, "Do not seek to find differences between one person and another. Seek, rather, ways and means to strengthen the bonds of kinship through love. You have to sow love and grow love and destroy the weeds of fear and hatred that have spread over

the world. Make the world the happy home of love." Truly, Sai's mission in the world begins with parents in the home:

"If there is righteousness in the heart,
there will be beauty in the character.
If there is beauty in the character,
there will be harmony in the home.
If there is harmony in the home,
there will be order in the nation.
When there is order in the nation,
there will be peace in the world."

—Cathy Daub
Medford, New Jersey

Please send us your experiences of the challenges of teaching or raising Sai's children in America. Mail them to the **Sathya Sai Newsletter**, c/o Cathy Daub, 1800 East Garvey Avenue, West Covina, California 91791.

Foster a loving attitude. Nothing is more sacred than love. *Sathya* (truth), *dharma* (righteousness), *shanti* (peace), and *ahimsa* (nonviolence) are dependent upon *prema* (love).

—Baba
Divine Discourse
March 18, 1988

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

This is the earth's day to sing,
for it's the birthday of our King—
Of our beloved Sathya Sai,
who rules the earth and rules the sky,
The mountains, seas, the cosmos, too,
and He rules the hearts in me and you.
With love Sai rules, and purity,
with compassion for humanity.

Our King, Sai Baba is His name,
teaches us to do the same—
To rule our feelings deep inside
where "inner foes" still reside;
And watch them as they meekly go,
protected not by our ego.
For ego no longer rules the day,
when we celebrate Sai's birthday.

Now that King Sai rules inside,
and by His rule we now abide—
Pride, hate—they'll have to step aside
to make room for our beloved Sai.
Every inch of dear Mother Earth
glorifies His day, His birth.
Every moment of Father Time
will always hold this day sublime.

All our days, we'll glorify
our beloved King, Lord Sai.
So strike up the band, let angels sing!
It's the birthday of Sai, the King.
Happy birthday, dearest King!
This birthday message to you, I bring.

—**Susan Caffrey**
Prasanthi Nilayam, India

Children's Corner

ROSY SMILES

There once was an old lady named Bertha Gouch who lived in a small town. The children didn't like her very much, so they nicknamed her "Grouchy Gouch." Bertha didn't like the children very much, either. She'd never had any of her own, so they irritated her just by being children. Her house stayed neat and tidy because no one ever messed things up. She knew very well that children did things like that because her brother used to bring his wife and children to visit. Now they were grown up, "Thank heavens." She discouraged visits from grandnieces and nephews by being polite, but firm.

And, then, there were the roses. Many years ago, her father had planted a rose-bush at the front gate. She never would have planted it there herself, preferring a corner by the cellar door, around back. But it had been his wish to plant it in front. The bush had never bloomed a great deal, but usually there was at least one pink blossom. She could see it from her breakfast table. It was a nice way to begin her day.

The trouble was, the school children would always pester her about the roses. "Humph," she would say to herself, "with all the flowers along the street, why do they want my roses?" Bertha felt she had to stand guard each morning and afternoon when the children passed

her house. That's when she got called "Grouchy," not loudly, of course, but she could hear the whispers.

One afternoon, it happened that her cat, a little stray she had adopted, was sick. He was usually a well-behaved little cat, and Bertha loved him. He had wiggled his way into her cold heart. Bertha really had a lot of love, but she guarded it like her roses. Well, by the time she had taken care of the cat and taken her position at the front window, the children had gone and so had the pink rose. "Good heavens!" she muttered and rushed out to the gate. She found the small culprit still hovering there, clutching the rose.

"You have stolen my property," Bertha began. "You have no right to take something that isn't yours." The small face of a thin girl looked up at her, wide-eyed and terrified. "Oh, oh, I'm sorry, Ma'am. I only wanted it for my mother." "I don't care why you wanted it. That's not my problem," Bertha said coldly. "I know, but it's my mother's birthday, Ma'am, and I just couldn't save a penny from my lunch money to buy her anything. Here, please take it back. I'm very sorry." Bertha recognized the child as Mrs. Parks' daughter. Mrs. Parks worked as a maid. The small girl held up the rose and tried to smile. "I'm sorry," she said.

Suddenly, it seemed to Bertha that the child's face was much like the rose. Both were pink and soft and so fragile. "Take it!" she said gruffly. "But don't ever, ever, ever do it again." "Oh, no, no, I promise, Ma'am. I'll never take nothing again that don't belong to me—never, ever." "You'll never take *anything* that *doesn't* belong to you," Bertha corrected her. "Yes, Ma'am," the girl said as she meekly scampered off. "I hope she learned her lesson," muttered Bertha to herself.

The next morning as she gazed out her window, there was no rose to brighten her day. But, strangely enough, she could almost see the face of that small girl amidst the rose leaves. That sweet

face seemed prettier than any of the roses that had grown there before.

In the remaining years of her life, Bertha Gouch began picking the roses and giving them away to children and to her family and neighbors. On Mother's Day, the bush seemed to bloom just so the children could bring roses home to their mothers. Of course, the more she picked them, the more they grew. Sometimes she had more pink roses than she knew what to do with. Those small, pink blossoms, as well as her warm heart, sometimes overflowed with love and goodwill.

—*Story Auntie*
Prasanthi Nilayam, India



PROCEED BEYOND TRIUMPH DIVINE DISCOURSE

You have the chance to see, experience, and be sanctified by the incarnation of the Lord. This chance is a result of the accumulation of merit in many previous births. That merit has brought you here at this time when I have come down. For this chance, *rishis* (sages) and *devas* (celestial beings) have prayed for a long time. Having won this chance, strive to taste the sweetness and achieve the bliss of merging without wasting even a single moment. The rays that emanate from me are three grades: first, filling this Prasanthi Nilayam; second, pervading the earth; and third, covering the entire universe. The people who have the privilege of staying in this Nilayam are indeed lucky.... Do not, therefore, waste your days entertaining worldly desires and ambitions and planning to achieve them. Success or failure should not elate or depress you. When a banquet is in store for you, why run after the droppings from others' tables.... Keep before you the main goal; do not deviate from it whatever the attraction that tempts you to stray. Command the mind and regulate your conduct so the goal is won. Let not the care of the body, the fostering of the family, or the demands of pride and pomp overwhelm the call of the spirit....

Winning the grace of the Lord is as easy as melting butter; that is why the heart of the Lord is compared to butter.

A little warmth is enough to melt it; a little warm affection shown to a suffering companion, or a little warmth while pronouncing His Name. That is the *chaitanya* (consciousness), the life-giving nectar that you get by *namasmarana* (repeating the Lord's name); it is the fountain of primal energy. Recite the Name and the Named will be before you; picture the Named and the Name will leap to your lips. They are the reverse and the obverse of the same coin—the Name and the Form. There are some who vow to write the Name of Rama or some other Name a million times, but very often it is just a matter of the finger and the pen. The mind of the writer is the spoon which does not taste the honey which it doles out. The mind should not wander from the Name; it should dwell on the wonder which the Name connotes; it should ruminate on the beauty of the Form which it recalls, the perfume which it spreads. The conduct and behavior of the writer should be such as befits a servant of God. Others should be inspired and have their faith renewed by the writer's experience.

To earn the goodwill of the master, there is one recipe: Obey His orders without a murmur. I am telling you My truth, not in self-praise, but so that you can understand Me. If I do not tell you about Myself, who can? Grace is showered on all who obey instructions and follow

orders. But the number of such is very small, even though the instructions are easy. . . . You should be steady, fixed in your resolve and in your conduct. That is why outside Prasanthi Nilayam I serve in my discourses what you call *vindu* (a feast), but here at Prasanthi Nilayam, I always administer medicines to you. This is the center, the headquarters of the army which is to establish welfare for the entire world. Of course, I insist everywhere on piety and a high moral life, but I lay down stricter and more rigorous rules here.

The rules I have prescribed for those who come to the Nilayam may appear strict and even severe, but they are all for your good. Inner purity first and outer purity later—that is the natural order. You feel satisfaction when you take a bath first and then put on clean clothes. I have to be strict, because if I excuse one error, the tendency is to commit another. A plant will grow well only when the ground all around it is raked and exposed to the sun and rain. I want you to drop old, deep-rooted habits of purposeless talk, vanity, envy, and scandal-mongering. You are not to live like earnest *sadhakas* (spiritual aspirants) just to please Me; it is a duty you owe to yourselves. So you must adhere to these rules wherever you are, not merely within the confines of the Nilayam. You will notice that Prasanthi Nilayam is not limited by any boundaries. It spreads and spreads until it envelops the universe.

Generally, I speak sweetly; but on this matter of discipline, I will not grant any concessions. I do not care whether you

come or, having come, go. I insist on strict obedience. I shall not reduce the rigor to suit your level, for that will only ruin you. I pay attention to your ultimate good. Live peacefully, happily, contentedly, taking each day as a gift from the Lord. Do not rush and scramble, fret and fume. Be vigilant and do not allow greed or anger to creep in.

Attend all of the sessions in the Hall: the *pranavajapa* (chanting of Om), the *bhajans* (singing of devotional songs), and the discourses. Do not take shelter behind excuses. If you are ill, *bhajans* will help to cure you. Let me tell you, it is far better to die during *bhajans* with the Lord's name on the lips. *Sadhakas* (spiritual aspirants) are led along wrong paths, and the respect that is due to them as pious people is dwindling because they do not rigorously stay on the hard path. Concessions have spoiled them. Hereafter, I will not excuse the slightest deviation. . . . It is on account of the *prema* (love) that I have toward you that I rebuke you when you take a false step. . . .

In a hospital, the doctors care for the disease. Disease is the important thing. So, too, in the case of the suffering of birth and death, of the dual buffets of good and bad, each has a right to the care and consideration of the doctor. The doctor prescribes the drug and the regimen; both are supplementary. When you get a relapse of doubt and distress, take the drug a greater number of times and in larger doses. Join *satsang*, the company of the godly; just as tame elephants surround the wild tusker, taming him, the spiritually minded will reassure the doubter.

The current always flows along the wire. You only have to make a connection and turn on the switch. If the connection is loose, then the flow of grace will be disturbed and might even stop. You are the one who connects and disconnects. You switch on and off, and you get light or dark. Study the *Gita*; you know “*gita*” means “a line” in Telegu. The *Gita* draws a line which you should not cross. I do not ask for your vows. Why should I force you to make them and cause you to break them? If you do

so, your life becomes a torn cloth, loosely stitched. It may tear again at the slightest pull.

In conclusion, let Me tell you one more thing. However you are, you are Mine. I will not give you up. Wherever you are, you are near Me. You cannot go beyond My reach.

—*Baba*

*Excerpted from Sathya Sai Speaks
Volume II, page 182*



GUIDELINES AND CODE OF CONDUCT For Foreigners at Prasanthi Nilayam And Brindavan

Prasanthi Nilayam and Brindavan are spiritual communities. Because of the large number of people who go for Sri Sathya Sai Baba's guidance and *darshan* (to see a great spiritual being), it is essential that visitors understand and respect the routines and prescribed behavior there. This is especially important for foreigners, who may not be familiar with the customs and norms of Indian society. Visitors are, therefore, urged to pay careful attention to the following advice and conduct:

1. There is room in Prasanthi Nilayam and Brindavan only for those who accept the discipline and code of conduct.
2. Humility, thoughtfulness, and respect for elders should determine every aspect of your behavior. Only in this way will we gain respect for ourselves.
3. All conversation and moving about in the *ashram* (spiritual community) should be limited to the essentials of politeness and communication. Running about, unnecessary laughing, outer displays of devotion, giving spiritual information, and speaking in a loud voice are not acceptable.
4. Do your own *sadhana* (spiritual practices). Develop your own spirituality; do not seek it from others or speak of their achievements and power.
5. You are expected to present a clean, modest, conservative appearance at all times. Saris for ladies and neat, pressed, Indian or Western clothes for gents are in order. Both inner and outer cleanliness are part of the spiritual path.
6. Persons wishing to stay for any extended periods must have Swami's specific permission to do so. All must observe proper passport, visa, and registration requirements, which are the individual's responsibility.
7. All visitors must bring enough money to adequately take care of their needs while in India. Those who live off money collected from other persons will not be allowed in Prasanthi Nilayam! All are warned against those who solicit money from visitors and claim to have Baba's blessing to do so.
8. Because of the serious weakening of the individual's physical, mental, and

spiritual capabilities, Swami definitely does not approve of drug-taking of any kind, including marijuana, ganja, alcohol, hallucinogens, etc. Offenders will be excluded from the *ashram* and all its activities.

9. It is Swami's explicit wish that single ladies and gentlemen do not mix socially at Prasanthi Nilayam and Brindavan. Social mixing is completely contrary to the spiritual path as it is understood in India. Remember that you are here for spiritual reasons only and spend your time accordingly.
10. Whatever Baba wishes to say to you, He will say directly. Do not pay attention to those who claim to have "inner" messages, advice, special contact, or favors from Him, especially when they conflict with Baba's teachings or code of conduct. This also applies to anyone who claims to have been given Swami's powers. Baba's powers are such that they are not given to anyone or taken by anyone.
11. Only those who are personally invited by Sathya Sai Baba may follow His car when He is traveling or on tour.
12. Help those in need as best you can, but do not promote attachment with those in the *ashram* or those outside in the village.
13. Have no connection of any kind with people outside the *ashram*. Devote your time to *ashram* activities and your own *sadhana* (spiritual discipline).
14. Accept and follow one path, one teacher, and one teaching, and pursue it with steadiness and concentration; otherwise, confusion and distraction may hinder your spiritual progress.
15. If you want good and quick results in your spiritual quest, you must correct your faults and improve your behavior.
16. Fully respect and be aware of the limits of proper behavior in the environment in which you live. If your behavior, however innocently, causes bad thoughts in another, it is your responsibility.
17. For reliable information about Sai Baba and His teachings while you are in India, read the books available at the *ashram*. Do not rely on rumors, stories, and personal impressions of other individuals. Experience for yourself.
18. Any attempt to touch Baba's person is strictly prohibited. Exercise discrimination and self-control in Swami's presence and be an example to those around you. Do not walk or rush after Baba when He moves about the *ashram*.
19. Whether you are staying inside or outside the *ashram*, all *ashram* rules and regulations should be observed and respected.

20. It is Swami's wish that these guidelines be published and distributed to all foreigners who go there so that there will be no question about what is expected of them. If you are in doubt about Baba's views on these or any other related issues, please ask a member of the *ashram* committee (or the volunteer responsible for foreigners) for further information.

“You have come from long distances; you have given up several comforts; you are putting up with various difficulties; you have come with great hopes and ambitions. If you realize that, and if you understand the code of conduct prescribed for Prasanthi Nilayam [or Brindavan] and submit yourself to it, all opportunities for your spiritual practice will be enhanced. Having given up contact with your kith and kin at home, why develop new contacts with strangers in India?”

*From Swami's talk to foreigners
March 28, 1975*

I harp, day after day, on the need to practice steady faith and discipline. This may be irksome for some of you. Sometimes I feel I have spoken enough and that it is time I give you some rest. But, soon, that resolution is overcome by compassion, and I am addressing you again. My belief is that, as the music master says, “You master the melody by constant effort to reproduce it—not otherwise.” In the corner of a few hearts, at least, one portion of what I advise may get stuck and, from thence, it is bound to transform the daily lives, attitudes, and emotions of the persons so affected.

—Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks
Volume VII

A BIRTHDAY MESSAGE



Baba does not appreciate the celebration of what is called His birthday. He is anxious that we should celebrate, rather, the day He is born in each of us, or, to put it more clearly, the day when we recognize that He is the inner core of

each of us. So the birthday celebrations are used by Him only to reveal the unknowable depth of His mystery.

—*Dr. V. K. Gokak*
Excerpted from Sai Avatar

LOCKED IN: GUARDED AND PROTECTED BY BABA

My first journey to India, from which I have just returned, began long before the securing of the ticket. I started saying that I wanted to go to India about ten years ago. About five years before that, I began reading, exploring, and absorbing the teachings of various leaders in metaphysics, but I never became attached to any one group. Finally, my search carried me beyond the intellect to the heart, and I realized that God resides there within each of us.

My path covered many rough roads, detours, bumps, and even setbacks. It seemed that I only learned the hard way. If I surrendered one list of grievances, I soon added new ones. But I never gave up on myself, and God didn't give up on me either. I am grateful for the struggles and the pain for, somehow through them, I seem to have earned the right to be in the presence of the *Avatar*, the incarnation of the Divine in this age, Sathya Sai Baba. To spend a little time in His Abode of Peace, *Prasanthi Nilayam*, to be able to look upon God in concrete form, is the ultimate experience of not one, but many, many lifetimes.

People ask why I chose India for my vacation, and I must admit that it was no vacation. It was a *pilgrimage*. There were many physical hardships, but I willingly went through them just as I would have done two thousand years ago if it

had been in my power to sit at the feet of Jesus, the Christ. Baba has said that only India has the tradition, the culture, and the spiritual climate to allow the Divine to manifest there and that He has come to heal the unholiness of these present times.

Because His every word shines with Truth and sincerity, and because He has shown me His omniscience in special ways from the time of my first communication with Him, I believed in Him before I made this trip, and I'm sure that it was His will that allowed me to go.

After Tokyo, Singapore, Bombay, and Bangalore, I was filled with anticipation, but I was also physically exhausted. I had to get on and off the last plane in a wheelchair. Then the three-and-a-half-hour taxi ride to Puttaparthi was the wildest I've ever had. The scenery was exotic, bizarre, and the colors extraordinary. I knew I was in another land as we made our way through the countryside—villages with bullocks, monkeys, donkeys, horses, and pigs in the streets; bright-saried, dark-skinned women with large baskets, pots, or bundles of clothing on their heads; bright red trucks filled with rocks and Indian men; villages with bus stops and little two-table cafes for refreshment; little wooden open-air stores, like playhouses; fruit and vegetables; teeming life; beautiful sky, fields,

and hills; and even large boulders just like here at Joshua Tree in my own desert.

Finally arriving at the gate of the *ashram*, I was blessed with a wonderful, welcoming surprise. There was Sai Gita, Baba's pet elephant. She seemed just to be waiting there, and I stopped and talked to her. The taxi driver said that this was very auspicious—even uncommon. Since I had chosen a picture of Baba with Gita to be the one on my desk, thus seeing them both many times every day, I did feel myself to be quite honored and especially welcomed.

That blessed feeling was quickly lost, however, when I learned that, as tired as I was, I would have to go to someplace called "the sheds." At first, I could hardly believe the sight of row upon row of cots or mats—some with mosquito netting—clothing hanging willy nilly everywhere, and bathrooms half a city block away.

After I chose a small parcel of floor in the now half-dark, the front door creaked. I knew that it was my friend Doris who had left the States nine days before I had. We met in the middle of the dark room, and she was as happy to see me as I was to see her. She helped me get settled.

Sleeping was never easy with so many women. They were from many different countries and had many different habits. The first night I jumped up at 3:30 a.m., thinking that it was time to get up. I heard crows cawing in a way I'll never

forget. Then I heard men singing to wake up the Lord. I felt a tremendous surge of energy, and I thought: "I really am in heaven!" It was rather like having your battery given a jump-start.

That morning at my first *darshan*, I was lucky (or graced) enough to get the second row. Baba walked out in His orange garment, at once so tiny and yet so large. He walked along the edge of the women's section, taking letters. As He moved toward and past me, I felt His power radiating through my entire being. It's difficult to describe, but I knew at once that this was no ordinary human.

The next morning I managed to do *Omkar* inside the temple. It was incredibly powerful to chant *Om* twenty-one times, to experience the lighting of the camphor, to hear the sound of the bells which goes right through you, and to see the birds flying inside the *mandir* (temple).

Even though I was determined to have that experience again, I didn't make it until the morning of my last day. I was just too tired. I had to really hustle to make it to 6:00 a.m. *darshan*, where I often wound up in the eighth, twelfth, or even twentieth row. The heat drained my energy; it was difficult to sleep in the sheds in the daytime with pilgrims arriving and leaving at all hours; and the amount of walking required was quite debilitating. Near the end of my stay, I resorted to riding in a bicycle rickshaw.

So many things happened in such a short span of time. I had unusual visions

for three or four nights. I seemed to see luminous Indian symbols, a blue lotus, and other beautiful sights. I simply enjoyed the show without feeling any compulsion to try to understand it.

About the fifth day of my stay, I wrote a letter to Baba, and as I did I felt a powerful sensation within me. He never took the letter from my hand, but it was definitely acknowledged. These things are still beyond my understanding. Once, when I was sitting just outside the temple near a window, He turned in His chair, and I believe that He was looking right at me. However, feeling not quite worthy, I soon looked down.

When I found the famous meditation tree, I asked that He acknowledge me so that I would know that He had heard my prayers. Since there were thousands of people at the *ashram* at that time, it really meant something just to get a look from Him. That same day, I walked toward the *mandir* and was totally surprised to see Him right in front of me. Only the low wall around the *darshan* area separated us. He was ministering to someone, and He looked up at me with what seemed to be a surprised and rather stern expression. He went back to what He was doing. Then we both moved a few feet, and He looked up at me again with the same expression. But then He turned a little to one side, and His face broke into a wide grin that turned into a kind of chuckle. I was delighted to have generated some amusement. It seemed quite appropriate for me since, though I'm quite serious, I often play the classic comedic role of the fool, having

been born on April Fool's Day. He was apparently in on one of my jokes.

Looking back now, I know that I wasted some of my precious time there feeling concerned about my queasy stomach, talking, and complaining about the long lines and other conditions. I would prefer to have done better; but in His kindness, He saw that I got all I needed anyway.

Four days before the end of my visit, I was given a room which I shared with some Australian ladies. I still longed for an interview. On the day before my departure, I had the great blessing of being locked in the temple with Baba, two translators, eighty Italians, and other Westerners for a very special discourse. And I was right up front! I never took my eyes off Baba or allowed my mind to stray. This was a rare occasion, and I was determined not to waste a minute of it. When He came into the room, He seemed to look at me, and my eyes were riveted to His. He gave me a beautiful smile of love, peace, and understanding. I felt that His look said: "This is for you. I know everything, and I know you are leaving."

During the talk, not only His words, but His manner of speaking touched my heart. At some point, He held His hand aloft, and between His thumb and forefinger there appeared a magnificent diamond ring of about five carats, set in gold. Even in the back of the room, everyone oohed and aahed. As He dissolved the rare gem with one puff of His breath, He went on to say that the ability

to create such objects was the least important of the abilities He possessed. He said that He could turn earth into sky and sky into earth, but what He came to do was to change the hearts of people.

When the talk was finished, He walked along the aisles and whispered, "Very happy! Swami is very happy!" How sweetly He said that. And what a delight it was to hear Him say it. I had seen Him manifesting sacred ash, *vibhuti*, from His hand, and it was also quite a thrill to see the manifestation of the diamond. As He has said so often, He does these things to give us happiness, and they certainly do.

These words barely skim the surface of the experience I've had. After arriving home safely and sleeping a couple of

days, things here appeared quite different. My small apartment seemed palatial at first. It has shrunk a bit since. For about a week, I noticed a profound difference in my physical being. It was as if there was some extra space inside my head. I felt a little sad at first when that feeling diminished. Now I'm back to normal, yet changed, and very grateful for the changes. All the way home, I felt guarded and protected. As I rode away from the *ashram* in the taxi, my very soul yearned to stay. Again, I felt that powerful influx of energy. The feeling has not left me, but it has now been transmuted into a kind of strength with which to face the world.

—Sandra "Dusty" Maurer
Palm Desert, California

Contentment is the best tonic. Why inflict on yourself the disease of greed and consume tonics to get strength? Use the body as a boat to cross the ocean of life, using devotion and detachment as the two oars.

—Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks
Volume VII

A DIVINE DISCOURSE TO FOREIGN DEVOTEES

Given August 5, 1988

Embodiments of Divine Love:

Transformation of man is the basis for transformation of the world. When man becomes good, the world becomes good. When man's behavior becomes exemplary, the society becomes perfect. Therefore, if you want the world to be peaceful and prosperous, there must first be a change in the individual. What is the reason for all the disturbance and misery in the world today? It is that man's conduct is not ideal; he is not living a proper life.

God Dwells Within

What is a true man? It has been said that the proper study of mankind is man. This means that there must be unity in thought, word, and action. To achieve this unity, you must earn the grace of Divinity, which is dwelling within you. Divinity is a powerful force present in all beings and in everything, everywhere. On hearing this, you may think: "If Divinity is omnipresent and found in all beings, how is it that I am not able to see it?"

To help clarify that doubt, consider a small example: You may be using a tape recorder to tape Swami's voice. When



you look at the tape, you cannot find the words. Even if you cut the tape into many pieces, you still won't find the words. But once you connect the electric current to the tape recorder and play the tape, you are able to hear Swami's words. Likewise, God dwells in your body. But if you physically probe inside this body, and even if you were to cut it into pieces, you wouldn't be able to find God. It is only when you turn your mind toward God and connect it to the divine current that you will be able to

experience God. For this reason, *Vedanta* has declared that the mind is the key to man's bondage and liberation.

Peace

Suppose we see a door, and in that door is a lock. If you put the proper key into that lock and turn it to the right, the lock will open. If you turn the key to the left, the lock will close. It is the same lock and the same key; but to open or close it, the direction in which you turn the key is different. Your spiritual heart is the lock, and your mind is the appropriate key. If you turn the mind toward God, you get detachment, and the door of your heart opens; when you turn the mind toward the world, you get bogged down in attachment, and the door of your heart closes. When your mind is continuously absorbed in worldly matters, the lock of your spiritual heart stays closed. As a result, you remain in bondage and lose your peace.

You come here from all over the world and say to Swami, "I want peace!" But peace does not exist in worldly things. Peace can only be found inside, within you. "I want peace" consists of three words. "I" is the ego, and "want" is desire. If you remove these two, then you have peace. You have been covering up your peace with your ego and your desires.

First, you must get rid of the ego. What is the reason for this ego? Truly, there is no reason. It arises only from ignorance.

Body, Universe, Desires

From the standpoint of your body, when compared with the size of this vast universe, you are just a very small person. How could you possibly feel big in such a huge universe? Even countries like Italy, Australia, and America are significantly small on a map of the universe. When the earth is seen from outer space, Australia looks like a mere speck. In this Australia, how small is your native town? And, in that town, how very small are you? Is it not egoistic pride for such a small person to feel arrogant in this vast universe? Therefore, where is there any room for ego?

Are you feeling proud of your body? The body is not permanent; it is just a water bubble. Life may leave this body at any moment. Is there any reason for you to feel proud of your wealth, which is also impermanent? Like passing clouds, wealth comes and goes. Do you feel proud of your mind? The mind is just a mad monkey; you have no control over it at all. When all this is so, then on what basis can you feel egoistic? There is no basis. Therefore, first of all, destroy this ego.

Next, consider your desires. Say that you are hungry and want food, so you take some food which satisfies you for two hours. But again your hunger starts. In that way, you continuously cycle through satisfaction and dissatisfaction, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and there is no permanent peace. As long as you go on multiplying your desires, you will have no peace. You come here and

say, "I want a husband," "I want a wife." Even animals feel these kinds of desires. As a human being, how are you any better than the donkey or the monkey? All these desires lead only to temporary gratification.

Human life is extremely precious. If you want to achieve the objective for which you have taken human birth, you must be prepared to sacrifice even this life, if necessary, to achieve this objective.

Change from Within

Transformation of humanity cannot take place merely by changing the external environment in which you live. Human life will not be transformed merely because there are some political changes, or because there are some economic, scientific, and technological changes, or because there are some social changes. Only when there are deep-seated mental and spiritual changes in each individual, in addition to these other changes, will a basic transformation in humanity take place. Without transformation of the mind, you cannot achieve peace.

Wealth cannot give you peace. All your kith and kin and friends cannot give you peace. Material objects cannot give you peace. Any number of comfortable pillows and sofas and air conditioners cannot give you peace of mind. You can get it only by thinking about and contemplating God. You must seek the means for putting into practice this constant contemplation of God.

Knowledge

There are different grades of knowledge. First, there is book knowledge. You should read diligently and understand what is contained in books. You can gain a great deal of knowledge from books, but this is only superficial knowledge based on words. To that superficial knowledge, you need to add the power of discrimination and, thereby, gain discriminatory knowledge. In every situation you encounter, before you take action, you must ask the questions: "Is it good or is it bad? Is it right or is it wrong?" Then decide. Do not just follow the whims of your mind. The mind is a mad monkey; it must not be allowed to do as it pleases. Before undertaking any action, use your intellect to examine if the action is right or wrong, whether it is proper or not. When you have examined it with your discrimination, then your conscience must approve it. Once the conscience gives the go-ahead, then you can do it. But do not undertake any action without first using your discrimination and getting the guiding directions from your conscience.

In addition to book knowledge and discriminatory knowledge, you also need worldly knowledge or general knowledge. There are many highly educated people who are very well-read. They have the superficial knowledge of books and may even have the power of discrimination, but they don't have any general knowledge; they have little common sense. So general knowledge is very important. But above all these different types of knowledge, there is knowledge

gained from direct experience. This practical knowledge has been defined in *Vedanta* in terms of three steps: *jñatum*, to know; *drashtum*, to see; and *praveshtum*, to enter into and merge with.

Here is an example to illustrate these three. Let us say that you are fond of apples. You have been going to the bazaar for some time looking for apples, but you have not found any there. One day a friend comes and tells you that a shipment of apples has arrived. The moment you hear that, you feel a certain joy; but your desire for apples is not satisfied merely by hearing that the apples are in the bazaar. Getting the news about the arrival of the apples is *jñatum*. Immediately you go to the bazaar and buy some apples. As soon as you have bought the apples and have them in your hands, you feel a greater happiness. The very sight of the apples and the knowledge that you have them gives you a certain pleasure. That pleasure is *drashtum*, the direct vision of what you love. But even that does not complete your happiness. Only when you take the apples home and eat them do you feel the complete fulfillment of happiness. That happiness is *praveshtum*. So when you hear about that which you have been longing for, that is *jñatum*. When you see it and experience it indirectly, that is *drashtum*. But, finally, when you consume it and experience it directly and become one with it, that is *praveshtum*.

All of you have heard of Sai Baba from books and friends and devotees. That is *jñatum*. From the moment you

hear of Baba, you develop the yearning, "I want to go to India; I want to see Baba and speak to Him." So you come to Puttaparthi and have the *darshan* of Baba. You see Him and He sees you. That is *drashtum*; it is the happiness that you derive from seeing. But this is not complete happiness. It is only after Swami calls you in for an interview, speaks to you, answers your doubts, and helps you with your problems that you have *praveshtum* and are really happy. Then your happiness is complete. So the stages are hearing and knowing about Swami, coming and seeing Swami, and then experiencing the loving connection with Swami. This is the secret of the *Vedanta*.

Why Go To India?

When you ask yourself the question, "Why have I come to India?" the answer will be, "I have come to achieve spiritual progress." But then you must ask yourself another question: "Having come for spiritual progress, am I pursuing my spiritual goals here or am I getting sidetracked by involving myself in numerous worldly things?" In the spiritual pursuit for which you have come here, there should only be one line and one direction—straight between Sai Baba and you, heart-to-heart and love-to-love. Concentrate completely on developing that one relationship. Since you have come for a spiritual purpose, do not get lost in all kinds of distractions and unnecessary activities.

Now you are cultivating connections with all kinds of people. But this will

only hinder your progress on the spiritual path. The first thing you must do is to avoid all excessive talk. Too much talk is not good. When you meet someone you know, it is enough to exchange with them, "Hello." "Hello." "How are you?" "How are you?" "Goodbye." "Goodbye." Or just greet each other with "Sai Ram" and go on your way. That is enough. But this is not what you are doing today. You are developing connections with all kinds of people. Some of you come alone and then develop attachments and relationships. First there is friendship, then there is a relationship, and then it is husband and wife. This is not good. You have come to see Swami. Do not get distracted from that. Everything you do here should be devoted only to deepening your connection with Swami.

Swami often repeats the advice given in the railroad carriages: "Less luggage gives more comfort and makes travel a pleasure." Reduce your desires, and this journey to Sai can become a real pleasure for you. It may not be easy for you to understand Sai. Since Sai talks like an ordinary person and moves freely among you, you may be deluded into thinking that He's like any other human being. But this is not so. The entire universe is in Sai's hands. Sai can transform the whole world in one instant. Gold, diamonds, everything is in Sai's hands. You are misunderstanding this Sai phenomenon. By one movement of Swami's hand, instantly there appears a big diamond. [Swami waved His hand and a huge, beautiful diamond ring appeared—and in one puff of Swami's breath it

disappeared again when He blew on it. There was a great exclamation of wonder and delight from the devotees seated in the hall.] Anything that Swami wills must happen. The real nature of Divinity cannot be understood by everyone. For this there must be faith.

Sacrifice

The first step in developing faith is self-confidence. When you have self-confidence, you will gain self-satisfaction. Self-confidence is the foundation on which the mansion of self-realization is built. The walls are self-satisfaction. The roof is self-sacrifice. Only when you are prepared to fully sacrifice yourself will you be able to enter into the mansion of self-realization. Therefore, it is of primary importance that you must be ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of God.

Wasting Time

Do not waste a single moment of your time. Should you meet together as a group, discuss only good things. Keep your mind on God and speak only about Him. Don't discuss any personal matters or talk about this person or that. Never, never speak ill of anybody. The divine exists in everyone. Whenever you speak ill of anybody, you are speaking ill of God Himself. The best thing is to avoid talking to anyone altogether, remaining silent and immersed within yourself as much as possible. Many of you have come from thousands of miles away. Instead of staying within the precincts of

Prasanthi Nilayam, you go wandering about outside.

Outside, the vibrations are all worldly ones; there you can easily get into bad company and become involved in contacts which will be harmful to you spiritually. Make the best use of the spiritual atmosphere, the supreme peace, and the divine vibrations that are concentrated here at Prasanthi Nilayam. Please avoid any connections with anyone, particularly strangers. Let the only connection be the loving connection between Baba and you. This is the direct connection; Baba has no ambassadors. Yearning for that direct heart-to-heart connection is true devotion.

Occasionally some bad thoughts may come to you. Pay no heed to such thoughts occurring in your mind. It is only when you follow your bad thoughts with actions that all kinds of difficulties may follow. Even if bad thoughts come to you, as long as you maintain control over your body, then no regretful actions will result. When the negative and positive get linked together, a current will start to flow. Mind is the negative pole; body is the positive pole. When these two are combined, actions will result. Therefore, while you are here, keep your body within the confines of Prasanthi Nilayam and fix your mind steadily on God. Then only divine thoughts and actions will arise.

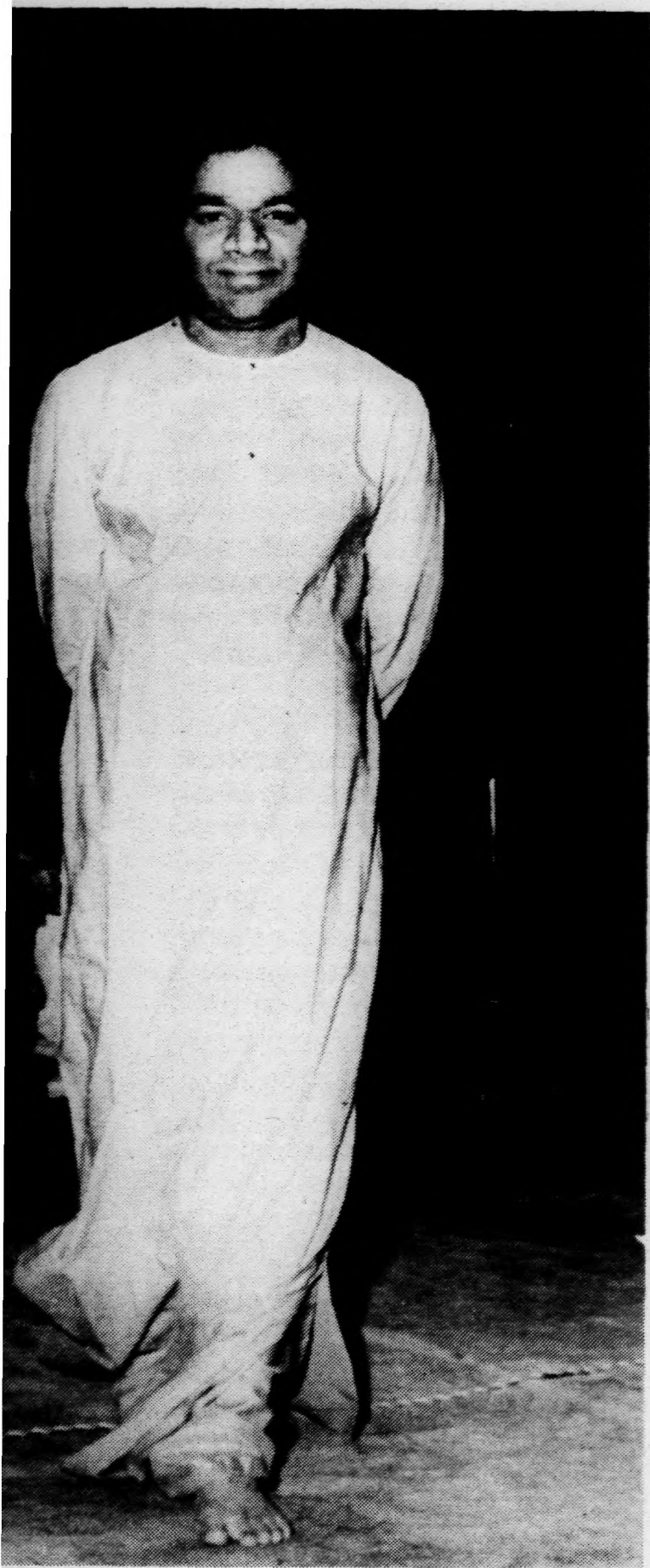
You have not come here to waste your time. You have come to lead a pure, sacred life. You must secure such a sacred life, a happy life, a healthful life,

and a peaceful life. Concentrate on God and all your desires will be fulfilled. Make your prayer the ancient *Vedic* prayer that all the worlds be happy. Let everyone in every part of the world be happy—not just people of your own country, but let everyone everywhere in the whole world be happy.

An Attitude of Unity

The world is like a grand mansion with many rooms. The rooms may be different, but the house is one. Likewise, the many countries will be different, but the world is one. In this beautiful mansion of the world, with its many diverse and colorful rooms, let all people behave like brothers and sisters. That is what was meant by the voice from above which said to Jesus on the cross, "All are one, my dear son; be alike to everyone." There are many differences of place, of caste, of color, of language, and of culture; but God is always One. You must cultivate this attitude of unity.

There are many different varieties of sweets. They have different shapes and different names, but the sugar contained in them is one. Without the sugar, they cannot exist. Stars are many, but the sky is one. Jewels are many, but gold is one. Beings are many, but life-breath is one. Nations are many, but the earth is one. Therefore, all are children of God. Don't develop narrow minds and go on quarreling with one another. Live in harmony in the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. This is the spiritual path that you have to pursue.



Love. Love. Love. Love is God. Live in love. Without love, your life is meaningless; truly, without love you could not even exist.

God Is Always There

When there is moonlight, you don't need a torch or some other light to see the moon. You see the moon by means of the moonlight itself. God is the very embodiment of love. You can see the embodiment of love only through love. No other type of spiritual discipline or *sadhana* is necessary. Only love, love, love... *amore, amore, amore*. Therefore, develop this spirit of love. God does not exist separately for Americans or Italians or Indians. He exists for all. He harbors no differences. All people are His. I belong to you and you belong to Me. You are all Mine. This is the love relationship with God that you must feel all the time. If you have that love, then you don't need any other practices, such as rituals or worship, repeating the name, or meditation, although they will help in purifying your mind.

Consider a small wood fire, such as might be used for cooking. When you leave the fire to itself, it eventually becomes covered with ash and gets smothered. Where did the ash come from? It came from the fire itself. The ash which came from the fire covers that very fire and banks it. The moment you blow on the ash, the ash flies off and the fire burns brightly again. There is a fire of wisdom within you. Because you have ignored this fire, the fire of wisdom has

gotten covered up with the ash of *maya*. When you utter the name of the Lord, it is like a powerful puff of wind blowing on the fire; soon the *maya* is blown away and disappears, and the fire of wisdom reappears.

Worry and Divine Love Are Incompatible

Now you are still very much immersed in worldly matters. But all these worldly things are just passing clouds; they come and go and come and go. Nothing in this world is permanent—all are only passing clouds, not permanent clouds. Sometimes you may experience sorrow or grief, but this also soon passes away. Sorrow is not permanent. Don't worry about sorrow or grief. Don't worry about anything. Worry is just a mentally created thing. Keep worry away from you and experience lasting joy by thinking all the time about God. A single, fervent intense prayer will disperse all your troubles. Reduce all your talk, actions and concerns, and concentrate your mind on thinking about God; then you will remain happy.

The biggest miracle is Sai's love. It is not gold; it is not diamonds; it is not rubies—it is love, love, love. Love is Swami's ultimate miracle. With love, Sai can do anything. Don't be carried away by what Swami does, but concentrate only on Swami's love. The moment you have secured Swami's love, you can achieve anything and get anything—health, wealth, everything. Therefore,

cultivate love, the most important treasure you can acquire. For this, you do not need to go all over the world and spend a lot of money. Wherever you are, you can develop this selfless, divine love. That is the best penance and the highest worship you can engage in.

Do Not Waste

Constantly strive to purify your thoughts and your feelings. Some of you are wasting money. By giving money to beggars, you are encouraging begging. This is really a misuse of money. Misuse of money is evil. If a beggar is hungry, you can give him food; but by giving him money, he is likely to end up using it for drink.

At all times in your daily life, check to see if you are misusing food and money. There are four important principles that you should keep in mind and practice in your daily life. Don't waste money. Money is a gift from God. Don't waste food. Food is a gift from God. Don't waste time. The time given to you is a gift from God. Don't waste energy. The energy available to you is also given by God. Too much talk, too much listening to others, and engaging in wasteful activities all squander away your God-given energy.

Adieu To Bad Company

If anybody tells you something that is morally wrong and opposed to your own thoughts, give up his company and bid him *adieu*. Whenever you hear something negative that is against your principles, then just leave that place. By staying and listening to anyone's bad talk, your mind gets spoiled. Don't listen to anything that is bad. Eschew all harmful contacts. Run away from evil company. If you consistently keep yourself free from all impure associations, you will develop a pure mind and a pure heart. But if you go on seeing bad things, talking about bad things, hearing about bad things, and doing bad things, then how can you avoid becoming bad? All these bad things will get into you and pollute your whole being. Therefore, as far as possible, avoid all contacts with evil, including evil talk, evil sight, evil thoughts, and evil company.

Am I giving you too much trouble? [In answer, there was a loud chorus of "No!" from the devotees assembled in the hall.] Very, very happy. I wish all of you a happy life, a long life, and a healthy life. I bless you all.

—*Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

*A discourse given in the
Mandir at Prasanthi Nilayam
to foreign devotees, August 5, 1988*

SAI BOOKS, TAPES, AND OTHER ITEMS

SATHYA SAI BOOK CENTER OF AMERICA

305 West 1st Street, Tustin, California 92680, (714) 669-0522

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 278, Tustin, California 92681-0278

New Books

The First Pilgrimage to Sathya Sai Baba, by Dara Irani. This is the new, revised edition. The author presents information, advice, suggestions, and warnings of various aspects of your first Indian adventure. It details what to do before leaving the United States and offers suggestions on how to approach Sathya Sai Baba. Many have found it to be an invaluable guide. 76 pages. \$2.50

Saiclopaedia, published by Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust. The foreword states: "Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba says, 'This world is the best school, and nature is the best teacher.' Here is an attempt to bring together Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's similes and parables drawn from nature. In each one is enshrined a value-lesson." Children will enjoy the colorful pictures illustrating the stories and sayings which are printed in English, Hindi, and Telegu. The cover and pages are plastic-coated. 37 pages, 8½ x 11½". \$3.95

The Essence of Truth, edited and translated by Hardy Fechner, is extracted from discourses by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, based on the *Sutra Vahini*, Sai Baba's teachings on Truth. 44 pages. \$1.85

Japamala or Rosary Beads

Japamala or Rosary Beads are made from sandalwood, a rare fragrant wood. The *japamalas* are nicely made in India. The 108 beads are ⅙ of an inch in diameter and are joined with copper wire links. \$6.25

BIRTH DAY PUBLISHING COMPANY
P.O. Box 7722, San Diego, California 92107
(619) 296-3194

Cassette Tapes

Volume I, *God Is All*, and Volume II, *Take One Step Toward Me*. These two English devotional song tapes have been produced under the auspices of the Publications Committee of the Sathya Sai Baba Council of America. \$2.50 each

Periodical

Sathya Sai Baba Children's Newsletter, for children of all ages. This publication focuses on teaching values in a way that will stimulate the child's interest and capture his or her imagination. There are stories, games, cartoons, poems, and more. Published four times a year. One-year subscription. \$5.00

Complimentary Publication

Fact Sheet on the Sathya Sai Baba Organization, explains how the Sai Organization functions and includes a brief statement about the Sathya Sai Baba Centers. Free upon request

You can observe Me and my activities; note how I adhere to righteousness, moral order, truth, and universal compassion. That is what I would like you to learn from Me. Many of you plead for a "message" from Me to take to the Center of which you are a member. Well, *My life is My message*. You will be adhering to My message if you live so that your lives are evidence of dispassionate quiet courage, confidence, and eagerness to serve those who are in distress.

—Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks
Volume VII

SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER

1800 East Garvey Avenue
West Covina, California 91791
USA

Editor: **Barbara Bozzani**

Printed under the auspices of the Sathya Sai Baba Council of America

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Published quarterly, with annual rates of:	Two Years	One Year
United States	\$10.00	\$ 5.00
Canada, Mexico, and Puerto Rico	16.00	8.00
All other foreign countries	24.00	12.00

For foreign mailing, the subscription cost is computed for airmail. Foreign subscribers, please send international money order or bank draft in U.S. currency. Other subscribers, send check or money order. No cash, please.

All new subscriptions will begin with the *next* regular issue.

Please send _____ subscription(s) for _____ year(s). I have enclosed a check or money order in the amount of \$_____, payable to the **Sathya Sai Newsletter**, 1800 East Garvey Avenue, West Covina, California 91791, USA. (No cash, please.)

_____ I have moved and my new address is listed below. Please let us know as far in advance as possible of any address change so that your service will not be interrupted.

Name _____

Street _____ Apt. No. _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Fall 1988

SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER

1800 East Garvey Avenue
West Covina, California 91791

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage

PAID

West Covina,
California 91791
Permit No. 1060

☐

An X in the box indicates that, according to our records, your subscription expires with this issue.

F/88

SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER, Fall 1988, Volume 13, Number 1. All rights reserved.

©Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE SATHYA SAI BABA COUNCIL OF AMERICA