



SATHYA SAI Newsletter

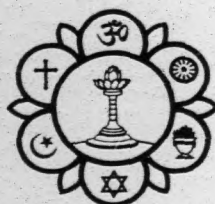
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SATHYA SAI NEWSLETTER

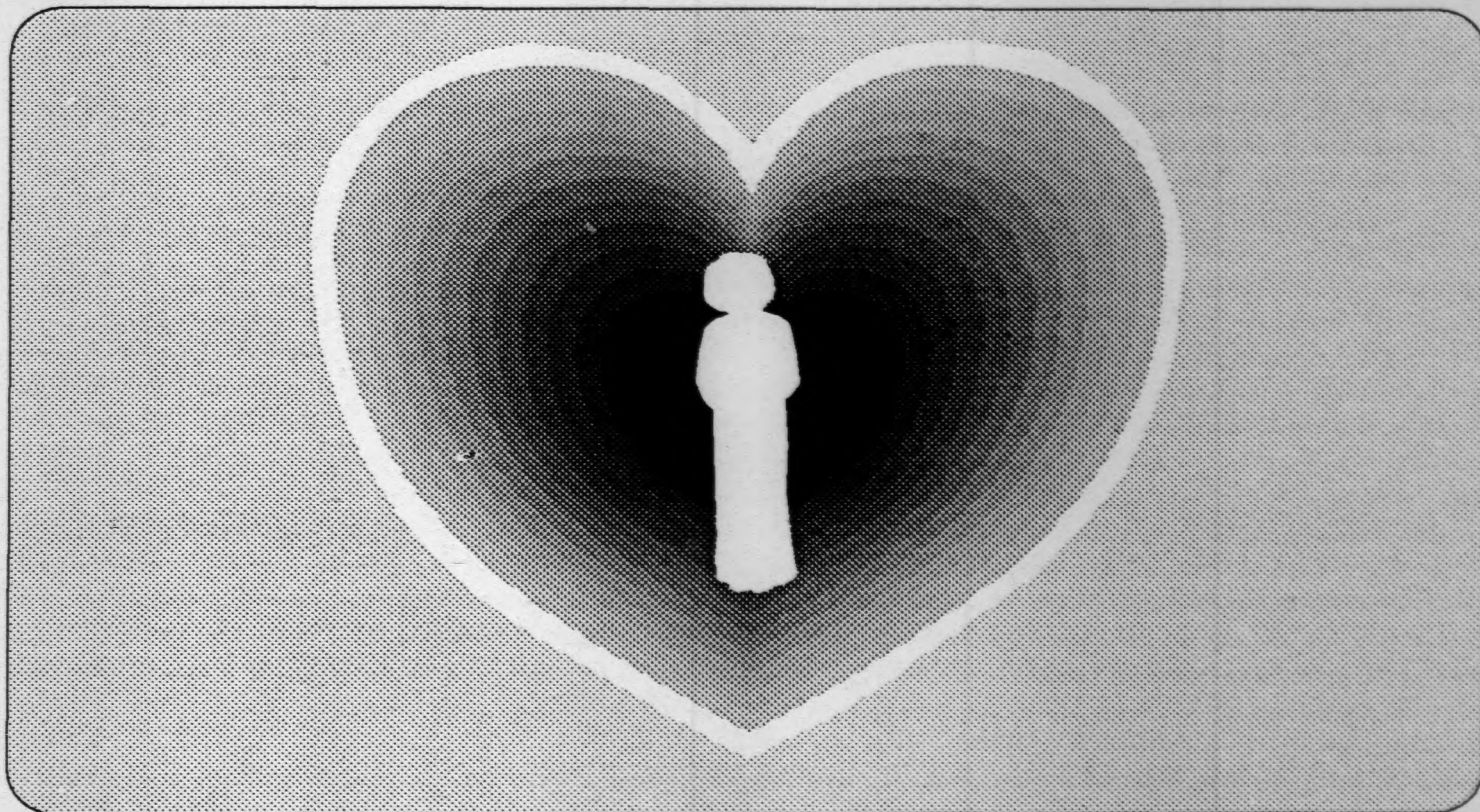
*This publication is dedicated with love and devotion to
Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

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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. Send contributions to: **Sathya Sai Newsletter**, 1800 East Garvey Avenue, West Covina, California 91791.



The sun teaches us that when one is oneself, there will be no exhaustion or elation, no disgust or pride. The task of the sun is not something imposed from outside and taken up under compulsion. That is why it performs [its task] systematically and smoothly. It exhorts mankind to use the allocated time fully and fruitfully, not merely for living comfortably and safely, but for living a moral, elevating life worthy of the destiny that belongs to mankind.

Krishna taught the indestructible Bhagavad Gita (song of God) to Arjuna, representative of man at the crossroads of life. He was chosen because he had excellence. Reflect on that for a moment. If Arjuna was not a vessel endowed with such virtues and splendor, Krishna would not have decided to use him as the recipient of the Gita. The Lord will not give gifts to the undeserving.

--Sathya Sai Baba
Geetha Vahini, pages 60, 61

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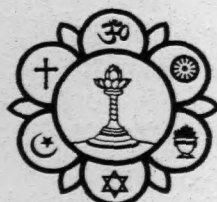
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Geetha Vahini, pages 60, 61

SAI TALKS TO BUSINESS STUDENTS

This Inaugural Address was given by Sathya Sai Baba to the students of the Management Development Program at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthi Nilayam in July 1991.

Learning the means of promoting world peace, eschewing all narrow-mindedness, striving for unity and cooperation for all, cultivating the spirit of equality--these constitute the essence of true education.

Students! Today, in the name of promoting education, all kinds of bizarre developments, devoid of morality, are taking place. There is no trace of humility and discipline which are the hallmarks of true education. Instead, there is the limitless growth of indiscipline and misbehavior. In place of character and good conduct, which should be prevalent among students, we see the spread of materialism, ostentation and arrogance.

With the rapid advance of science and technology, there is a corresponding decline in peace and security. Developing insatiable desires, the modern students are corrupting their minds. They lack the capacity for introspection, but their external vision is turned in all directions.

From The Divine

The primary thing that students should seek to know is: Who is man, and what are the qualities that distinguish him as a good human being? "Man" means an individual with faith. One's faith develops when one lives up to one's lofty beliefs.

The sacredness (*pavithram*) of the human being should be recognized. The term *pavithram* is derived from the Latin word *vir* meaning "man." Hence, man should be regarded as a pure and sacred being. The thoughts emanating from such a pure being should also be pure. Equally, his speech and actions should be pure. Pure thoughts, words and actions are esteemed human qualities. Whatever scholarship a person may acquire, whatever wealth or position he may attain, he should also develop human virtues.

In the Roman Empire during the post-Christian period, the term *persona* came into vogue with reference to human beings. This term means, one who has come down from the Divine. That signifies the recognition of the inherent Divinity in each person. The English term "person" is derived from the Latin term *persona*. The corresponding term in Sanskrit and other Indian languages is *purushathvam*, meaning personality.

What is it that constitutes personality? It is not related to the physical form. Man got the label "person" from the fact that he could manifest the Divinity that is within him. It is when he manifests his Divinity that he becomes a *vyakti* (a divine mani-

festation). If this Divinity is to be manifest, every student should study ethics.

Life is a Sacred Adventure

There is no use in attempting to establish a new system of education or a new social system. By these means current problems cannot be solved. Instead we have to bring up a generation of pure-hearted boys and girls. To rear such a generation, there should be a climate of purity and sincerity. This calls for the development of morality and devotion to truth. Character and truth lead to the emergence of spirituality in the divine human personality. Hence, spirituality is the basic foundation for producing a generation of pure-hearted boys and girls. Only when we have such pure young persons will the nation experience peace and prosperity.

Students, leading a good life is supremely important; to lead such a life you will have to give up selfishness. Unfortunately, the spirit of sacrifice is not to be seen among students today; instead they are swayed by self-interest in everything, from securing high marks in examinations to jumping the queues for seats in a bus. They appear to have no consideration for those who are worse off than themselves. They will shed their selfishness only when the spirit of sharing is developed.

People suffer today from mental weaknesses. One such weakness is the feeling that wealth and position are essential for personal happiness and that they should be sought after. This is wholly wrong. What is the inner significance of the fact that in the past great rulers like Janaka

and Shivaji submitted themselves to sages like Yajnavalkya and saints like Samarth Ramdas? They lacked nothing in terms of wealth and power, but they valued the wealth of spirit as greater than all worldly wealth and power. Men like the Kauravas, who attached greater value to power and position, came to a miserable end.

Students, it is true that you need material wealth for living, but wealth should not become the be-all and end-all of life. Human life has come from the Divine and not from any external source. Therefore, when you dedicate your life to God and adhere to the path of righteousness, you can sanctify your life and achieve peace, happiness and prosperity. Do not pursue your studies for the sake of wealth or a comfortable existence. As your wealth and position improve, they are accompanied like a shadow by worry and fear.

The world is an arena where dualism has free play; pleasure and pain, loss and gain go together. Students must be prepared to face all ordeals and vicissitudes, overcome them and achieve peace. Regard human life as a sacred, ever new, sublime adventure. In every aspect of life: social, economic, political and moral, a spirit of equal-mindedness (*samathvam*) should be manifest.

Self-Managment

The MBA (Master of Business Administration) course teaches different areas of study such as: management, finance, marketing, etc. But, the most important area of study is self-management. How is the individual, who cannot manage himself, going to manage anything else?

The human body may be compared to a factory in which the different organs are like machines. The operation of all machines has to be coordinated; when this is done, a divine feeling emerges. The integrated functioning of these organs results in purity which leads to Divinity.

The first requisite is self-management; in this there is no room for self-interest. No one can be an island unto himself. If a man is asked for whose sake he is living, he may answer that he is living for himself. With further questioning about his job, he will say he is working for the sake of his wife and children. When he is plied with more questions, he will admit his dependence on society for meeting various needs of himself and his family. No individual or family can exist without depending on society.

Social Consciousness

There are lakhs (one lakh is 100,000) of people in authority who are engaged in politics, business and other walks of life. Almost all of them are concerned only with themselves and their families, but few are imbued with social consciousness. What is the cause of all the evils plaguing society? It is the lack of a sense of social responsibility. Every individual has to recognize his duty to society and understand that without society, he cannot lead a family life. The individual has to realize that he is dependent on family and also society.

Therefore, everyone should develop a social consciousness. They should ask themselves how, by their actions, they can promote the welfare of society rather

than focusing on themselves and their families. For the sake of one individual's well-being, numerous people should not be made to suffer. Each one should seek to protect his interest without causing harm to others. Everyone should feel: "I am a part of society. My well-being is bound up with the well-being of others." Students should develop this kind of broad-mindedness; then the problems we face will get solved.

For dealing with all these problems it is essential to promote spirituality. It is the decline of spirituality that has led to all the disorders and maladies in the country. In the world today, starting with the human mind, all things are polluted: the air, water, etc. All the five elements are contaminated. Man's life is based on these five elements. Hence, he has become the embodiment of pollution causing the sacredness of human life to become desecrated. Moral values are going down the slope every day while animal instincts in man are rampant. Only by fostering one's divine nature can this animality be destroyed, and then the human can rise to the level of the Divine. For this to happen, each person must get rid of selfishness.

Work Ethics

Realize that education is not for earning a living but for leading an ideal life. Education is essential as a preparation for serving society. For instance, the MBA students hope that after getting their degree, they will become managers of big companies and lead comfortable lives. Managerial jobs carry high salaries. The reason for high incomes is inflation in prices, caused by the failure in produc-

tion to keep pace with the demand. Higher incomes have been followed by a decline in morality. With a collapse in morality, the nation has fallen prey to violence and disorder.

Those who are receiving large incomes should ask themselves whether the work they do is commensurate with the salaries they get. In many enterprises, the expenses exceed the receipts. The absence of work ethics and the spirit of work is responsible for this situation. Let the students compare the situation in Japan and Bharat (India). The Japanese have the spirit of work, they work hard. Hence, their productivity is high and they are able to keep the prices low. Whether it be a watch, soap or anything else, Japanese goods are available at low prices. The reason is their devotion to work. They do not abstain from work, even during strikes.

In Bharat, there is a clamor for high wages but there is no willingness to work harder. It is because of this attitude that the economy is in a deplorable state. Students are not ready to take up any kind of work. "Work, work, work," that should be their motto. How many among the lakhs (hundreds of thousands) of graduates turned out every year can find jobs in government or the private sector? The Central Government is finding it difficult to pay the salary of its several lakhs of employees. The cost of allowances and prerequisites for government employees is going up. The government has to borrow even to meet the employee's salary payments.

With no prospect of getting jobs, young, educated people are getting frustrated,

mentally upset, becoming Nazarites (abstaining from all things) or turning to a life of crime. But students should not develop such perverted tendencies; they must think of their duties. They should not wait for specific jobs of their choice. They should be willing to take up any job that comes their way. That will give no room for indolence or laziness.

Students, bear in mind that you are in a precious period of your life which is full of potential. When you have all your abilities and energies at their peak, you must be most active.

Selfishness and Greed

On January 28, 1973, a plastics factory was started in a village called Balliapara near Calcutta. A chemical fluid was being discharged from the factory as an effluent. A cooking oil salesman noticed the flow of this oily substance. He collected this effluent material and mixed it with the edible oil he was selling to customers. When an epidemic of paralysis broke out in the village, striking down men, women and children, an official inquiry revealed that the outbreak of paralysis was caused by the consumption of the adulterated oil sold by the merchant.

In their greed, some businessmen are endangering sacred and precious human lives. A great deal of business today is of this nature. We cannot get pure milk, water or air; every commodity is adulterated. Even a new car develops trouble the next day. In this manner, all the necessities of life are contaminated. Selfishness is at the bottom of this evil and is growing because of disregard for moral values.

Morality means good conduct, and good conduct is based on a recognition of right and wrong. The word *neethi*, morality, comes from the word *natha*, which means that which takes one to a higher level.

Moral Values

Students, you should develop a spirit of sacrifice so that you are prepared to dedicate all your energies and talents to the service of others. For this purpose, you must cherish those moral values which will enable you to lead ideal lives. Wherever you may work and whomsoever you may meet, you should earn a good name. Do not behave in a conceited manner because of your high MBA degree, instead, conduct yourselves with humility and reverence.

You must also remember what Prahlada revealed as the essence of all education, "The contemplation of God." Once you have filled your heart with thoughts of the Divine, ideas of fraud and chicanery will not enter your mind. Only then will you be able to make proper use of all the knowledge you have acquired in your management studies. Students, remember to:

Bend the body,
Mend the senses,
End the mind.
That is the way to immortality.

Control of the senses is most essential.
Maintain fraternal relations with your

fellow employees. Keep a watch over every aspect of the operations of the enterprise where you may be working. Continue to learn from everyone you come in contact with in the work place.

Make the best use of the present, which is a result of the past, and the parent of the future. The students of our institute are good. They are pure by nature, but are likely to be affected by the environment outside when they go out into the world. To keep your minds pure in such an environment, fill your hearts with love and keep your daily actions pure and unsullied. Students should also learn to avoid wasting food, time, money and energy. When you become active in the world, your life should be exemplary. Look upon God as your only true friend and follow the dictates of your conscience.

Students, you should become ideal managers. When you bring credit to this institute by your behavior, that will be the best way of showing your gratitude to your alma mater. We seek nothing else from you. Earn for yourself a good name and lead an ideal life. There by you will be pleasing your parents and the institute where you have studied.

Baba concluded with the *bhajan*: *Bhajana binaa sukha shanthi nahi . . .* Without praying to the Lord there is no peace or happiness. . .

--Sathya Sai Baba

Discourse to MBA students, July 1991



Everything given to God by the devotee was first given to the devotee by God.

--Sathya Sai Baba
Exact Source Unknown

LOVE IN THE WORKPLACE

It hadn't been a very good year. A death in the family, and financial losses had been trials endured only through faith and prayer. In order to pay my bills, I took the first job which was available, working in a very large, disorganized, crowded department store. For a quiet, spiritually oriented person such as myself it was a case of "culture shock" to say the least. I was being immersed in an environment that epitomized commercialism, competition, the almighty dollar, everything that ran counter to my highest beliefs. But there I was, like it or not, sink or swim. To make the challenge more complete, health problems kept me wondering if I'd be able to muster the energy to make it through each day.

What to do in a situation like this? We all face difficulties from time-to-time, but they are particularly unnerving when they arrive en masse. Nevertheless, all of our popular philosophies and religious traditions have told us, "Every cloud has a silver lining," and that there is always something to be gained from working out the problems we face. Music wouldn't soar to the heights if it didn't have dissonance to elicit greater harmony.

One thing I didn't do was ask, "Why me?" I figured that the soul has its purposes even in the most mundane lessons in life. One thing I did do was pray. In my daily communion with Sai Baba, I didn't ask Him to help remove these problems from me. I sometimes asked for strength to see me through the day, and for some relief from pain when it became extreme. Every day though I asked for one thing,

"Love, love, love." That I may see my fellow workers and customers as Baba saw them, as brothers and sisters, the beloved children of God. That I may love them as He loves them, with simple, unconditional, all-encompassing love. Most of all, I asked that love may flow through me, that with no thought of myself, I may serve all.

It wasn't always rosy. There were days when I wished I could find another job. Anything would be better. But little-by-little my prayers were answered. I could actually feel the love welling up within, and what was even more wonderful, it must have showed on the outside. Frequently people would ask me, "What are you so happy about?" or "How are you today, Smiley?" My interactions with others became a bright, spontaneous outpouring of love. I would demonstrate in my actions my willingness to help and serve, even in the littlest ways. In return, I was often met with: "God bless you," "Have a great day," or "Thank you so much." What had started out as a nerve shattering exercise in frustration had blossomed into proof that God is truly in all.

Would I have arrived at this beautiful demonstration without the preceding angst? I can't say for sure, but I know that whatever growing pains I may have endured were more than fully compensated by the end result. Wherever we go, whatever we do, whatever we have to experience, God is within the hearts of all and can be brought forth into view by the transforming power of love. The smallest word, the smallest deed can convey this

mighty power, and from its infinite, flowing Source it is always at our command. After all, Sathya Sai Baba has confirmed this by saying, "Meditate and find God

who resides above, below, around and within."

--Gary Bates Fountain
Tallahassee, Florida



Prema (love) must express itself in the business world developing the feeling that all who are engaged in business--managers, workers and others--are members of one family. They must develop fraternal feelings toward all. With mutual love and regard, industrial harmony can be achieved.

--Sathya Sai Baba
From a Divine Discourse on Business Management

PRAYER TALK

Ask yourself a simple question: Are you happy? If the answer is no, then you must find out the reason for your unhappiness. All of us feel low at one time or the other, but how do we get rid of our depression? Maybe we can learn from others.

The lives of great people shine as guiding principles to the rest of humanity. One such person was Peace Pilgrim.* She had no other name but this. Her goal was to establish peace in a world full of nuclear weapons and other powerful means capable of annihilating the whole human race. Peace Pilgrim lived her life in accordance with what she felt was the will of God. She vowed that she would walk across the United States until mankind decided to live together harmoniously. Because Peace Pilgrim's teachings were simple and easy to understand she became quite a celebrity. A reporter once said to her, "You seem to be a most happy person." She replied, "I certainly am a happy person. How could one know God and not be joyous?" That statement should really set all of us thinking. There are those of us who think we know God--yet are we always so cheerful?

We worry needlessly at times,
Just what tomorrow brings,
We dwell on "what-if" happenings
And other needless things.

An unkind act or word was said,
And so, we sit and cry,
We dwell on hurts and sadness
As yesterday went by.

Its NOW that tells the story,
That is what we should pray,
To live our lives moment-by-moment,
Starting from TODAY!

That's exactly what our lives are full of,
worrying about things that seldom happen or grumbling about the problems that we already have.

As Peace Pilgrim rightly says, "The purpose of problems is to push you toward obedience to God's laws which are exact and cannot be changed." We have the free will to obey them or disobey them. Obedience will bring harmony, disobedience will bring you more problems. Which is, of course, much worse!

A life without problems would be a barren existence without an opportunity for spiritual growth. This fact can be illustrated by an experience of Peace Pilgrim's. She was once called to the home of a woman who was a millionaire. The woman was middle-aged but seemed like a child because she was so immature. This was due to the fact that, the woman had been shielded from the problems of life by a group of servants and lawyers.

**Peace Pilgrim*, the book chronicles the true story of a unique, saintly, American lady by the same name. Compiled by "Some Friends of Peace Pilgrim." Published by Ocean Tree Books, P. O. Box 1295, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

It is said that we are never given a burden unless we have the capacity to overcome it. If a problem is set before you this merely indicates that you have the great inner strength to solve the problem. Difficulties are like opportunities. The greater the difficulty, the greater the opportunity for growth. So next time you face a problem, you can feel good about it because you'll know that you have the power to solve it!

There was once a lady who lived constantly with back pain. She was always arranging pillows in different positions so she could feel more comfortable and be relieved, at least for a little while, from the pain. All in all, she was very bitter about her affliction. A friend tried to inspire her with thoughts of God instead of pain. Her friend must have been successful, because one night she thought, "God regards me, this little grain of dust, as being so important that He sends me just the right problem for my growth." In her prayers she said, "Oh dear God, thank you for the pain through which I may grow closer to Thee." After that her pain was gone! (Maybe all of us should pray the prayer of thankfulness for our problems more often.)

Most of the time, people feel frustrated or think themselves incompetent, thus creating more problems for themselves. No person is unimportant or useless. Remember, you may not be elected to Con-

gress or sit at a banquet table presiding with wit, but do not give up or sadly deplore the things you can't do. God made you for a special assignment that you, only you, of all other people on earth can do. Actually, if we don't have problems, we wouldn't value our joys or even life in general.

If all the world were broad and flat,
How dull the scene would be!
We'd wish for hills and vales
With changing views to see.

If all of life were free from care,
Devoid of tears and pain,
There'd be no failure or success,
No summits to attain.

But life is filled with ups and downs
With happiness and woe.
Our joys are like mountaintops,
Our sorrows lie below.

The Lord who made the lofty peaks,
Designed the valleys too.
And He is there at every turn
To guide our passage through.

Yes, God is always with us to lend a helping hand. We needn't feel that we have to deal with our problems all alone.

--Mala Srinivas, Graduate
Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning
Anantapur Campus



Have faith in His grace and lead a virtuous life, a life devoted to serving the weak, a life spent in thoughts about the might and glory of God. Pray that you may carry out your duties well. Then God will certainly answer your prayer.

--Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. IX, Chapter X

MY LESSONS IN FINANCE

FROM SATHYA SAI BABA

I had read in Phyllis Krystal's *Ceiling On Desires* booklet, the idea of buying an item for the poor each time you go to the grocery store. Since my church is a member of the North Dallas Shared Ministries, which collects food and financial donations for the poor and homeless from each of its member churches every several months, I thought that NDSM would be the ideal recipient for the food items I was collecting.

However, my own finances had been extremely tight for several years. Every time I managed to get a few cans of food together for them, I would suddenly have such a severe money crunch that I would wind up having to use the food myself. After this happened several times, I finally figured out that Baba was trying to tell me that as long as I WAS ONE OF THE POOR, I need not worry about trying to help others right now.

I had been receiving hints for some time that poverty was somehow connected with low self-esteem. I recently received further guidance indicating, that it was all right to buy myself a little treat when I felt the need, as long as I was also willing to get rid of any material possession that I was no longer attached to. I have not yet had time to make an extensive search of the premises, but I am being guided to identify such articles in the course of my daily routine. I may walk into my garage or open a closet door, and my gaze will fall upon something that I haven't even thought

about, let alone used, for five or ten years. Then, I think, "Well, I certainly don't need that any more," and cart it off to Goodwill Industries, the Salvation Army or perhaps give it to a needy friend. Sometimes I even find something I can sell.

It was a little strange at first; I felt as if pieces of myself were being scattered all over town. Then I realized, the things I had given away were still attached to me! (You think your "stuff" doesn't love you? Read the chapter, "The Weeping Saris" in Dr. Hislop's book, *My Baba And I*.)

So now, before I give something away, I actually give it a hug and release it by explaining to the item that I'm not rejecting it, but just trying to see that it will have a more useful life than sitting in a dark corner of my closet.

Living a balanced life includes receiving as well as giving, but some people seem to feel that they have to be constantly bleeding themselves dry in the service of others in order to justify their existence--as if that would earn Baba's love. Baba specifically says, "Self first; help next" (*Sathya Sai Speaks*, Volume II, page 185, Second Edition 1970). I've come to the conclusion that, it is only by means of the experience we gain in coming to know ourselves and, thus, bringing our lives into balance, that we are able to be of help to others.

--Linda Darnall
Dallas, Texas

LOVE MY UNCERTAINTY

The existence of man has become overly dependent on technology. Man is driven into the fast lane by the necessities and expectations of modern life, which cause a tremendous amount of turmoil in his inner world, as well as the external world. The inner turmoil caused by the various tensions often becomes unbearable.

While reflecting on the forces which drive my thoughts, words and actions, I became concerned about my capacity to tackle the demands placed on me by circumstances. Then, in a moment of deliberate silence, I remembered the words of Sai Baba, "Love my uncertainty." The mind paused to ponder, forgetting for a few merciful moments its chaotic nature. As I reflected on this divine prescription for a happy life, I found that it could indeed be a panacea for our afflictions. At the same time, I realized that in order to understand the curative power of these words of Baba, I had to reach a certain level of acceptance of the divine power that guides our whole universe.

There is an incessant struggle that goes on in life: the struggle between right and wrong, faith and doubt, equanimity and excitability, fulfillment and disappointment, and so on, and so on and on. These struggles cause pain, suffering and unhappiness.

When I think about it, I realize that suffering results when hardships come my way unexpectedly. Serendipity is the word for such surprises. Sometime ago, I heard a sermon by Dr. Robert Schuller of

the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California, in which he talked about serendipity. He narrated a story about a Vietnam War veteran who lost an arm and a leg in the war. This courageous man celebrates the anniversary of the day he lost his limbs, to rejoice in the gift of life God gave him on that fateful day in Vietnam. He turned a most traumatic situation into a celebration of life.

When I thought about this story and pondered the meaning of Baba's words, I began to understand what He was saying. Sathya Sai Baba wants us to enjoy every moment--no matter whether it brings sorrow or joy, pain or pleasure, disappointment or fulfillment--as His gift to us. If we do that, we cannot be caught by surprises.

Being able to realize every moment as a gift of God is akin to being Aware. When I reflect on this, it becomes clear that before I can reach that state of Awareness, I have to reach the state of Being, so that I can ultimately reach the state of Bliss--the states are *Sat-Chit-Ananda*.

The state of Being, or Is, suggests that one has accepted God. For a moment, this statement may pose a dilemma: the chicken-and-egg conundrum. Does acceptance of God come before or after the awareness of God?

I pondered this question for a long time, and came to the conclusion that acceptance came first. I likened the three states--Being, Awareness and Bliss--to

three stages in the development of spirituality--faith, surrender and realization.

The development of faith is the first step. When faith develops, we say we believe in God. We accept the abstract idea of God. Developing faith in God is easy, because our limited human intelligence cannot comprehend the full majesty of God's universe and its laws, so that we wearily accept the idea of a superhuman power. This is the state of *Is*, *Being*, or *Sat*--so far so good.

Now, we often find ourselves asking God, "Why me? What have I done to deserve this punishment?" Although we have accepted that God is the supreme power guiding our lives, we still find it necessary to question His will. Therefore, until we reach the next step, surrender, we cannot benefit from our faith in God.

As we progress from the first to the second step, from faith to surrender, we realize that this journey is quite treacherous. I find myself attempting to climb up a big wheel which is rapidly rotating toward me. I manage to climb a little, but I slip back. I want to reach the top of the wheel where I can balance myself more easily, but the surface of the wheel is slippery.

The reason that this step is the most difficult is that now I have to surrender. Surrender what? Surrender my whole being? Oh, no! I find the idea of surrendering everything to some incomprehensible entity quite frightful. I feel totally vulnerable. This is because the idea of God's presence has not yet permeated through my outer shells of consciousness and touched my inner core. The *maya* (illusion) of this world, the ego, and the

strong resistance of the mind hinder my attempt to take the next step firmly. This is where Baba in His compassion tells me to, "Love His uncertainty!" "Strengthen your faith," He says, "and accept the reality that you are Divine."

When faith becomes strong, surrender becomes easy. We are able to accept our lot with greater equanimity. At the crest of this progress, we accept everything as His gift. We accept because we become aware that He is allowing us this experience as a token of His love and grace. This stage is reached when we totally surrender our ego to God.

Thus, we see that faith gives us the experience of *Sat* (Being), and surrender gives the experience of *Chit* (Awareness). When we are firmly established in these two states, we begin to realize God. We begin to enjoy the experience bestowed upon us because we realize that God has chosen us to have this experience. When we reach the top of the wheel, we experience a state of serene contentment, or Bliss. In this state we lose all distinction between pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, elation and disappointment and so on. This is so, because these emotions are in the realm of body-mind consciousness while the state of Bliss is beyond the body and the mind. Therefore, when we reach the third step, realization, we experience the state of Bliss, or *Ananda*. The journey is thus complete. Faith is surrender to and realization of--Being, Awareness and Bliss--*Sat-Chit-Ananda*.

And it all begins when we absorb Sathya Sai Baba's words, "Love My Uncertainty!"

--Deepak Bhat
Troy, Michigan

CHILDREN'S CORNER

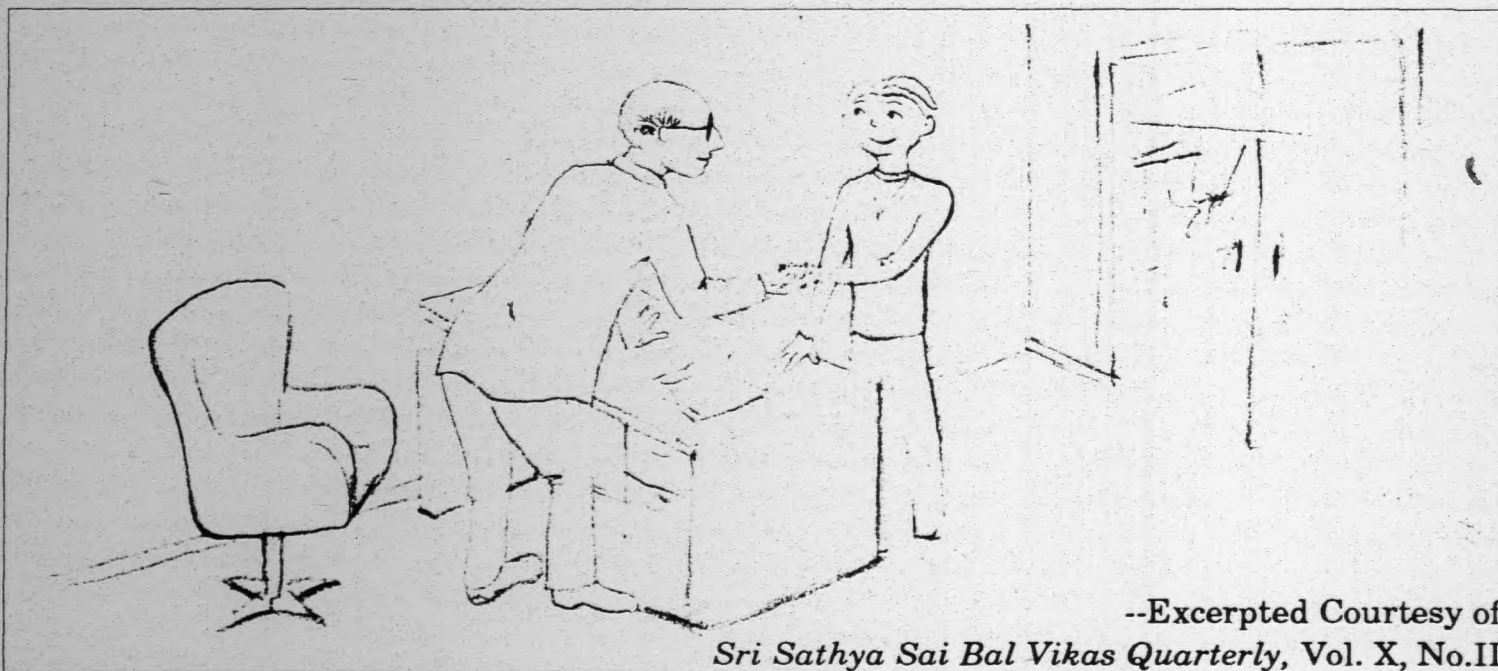
SMALL ACTS COUNT

A merchant wanted to hire a clerk. He put an advertisement in the newspaper and many applications were received. Twelve of the applicants were called for interviews. The merchant called them into his office one-by-one, and he finally selected one of the applicants for the position.

A co-worker, who was in the office, was surprised to see that the boy who was selected had not gone as far in school as some of the others who had been sent away. "Why did you select that one?" he asked the merchant. "He has not had as much education, and he has no other skills for the job."

"You are correct when you say that the boy does not have as much education, that is because his family is too poor to send him for further schooling," answered the merchant. "But," he added, "you are wrong when you say that he has no other skills for the job. In fact, he has many!"

"First, when he came into the office," continued the merchant, "he closed the door gently behind him. This shows that he is careful and considerate of the feelings of others. Second, he picked up a book which was on the floor and placed it on the desk. Third, his hair was well-groomed and his clothing, though old, was neat and tidy. What better claims than these can a person have for a job?"



--Excerpted Courtesy of

Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas Quarterly, Vol. X, No.II

BAL VIKAS

EDUCATION IN ATLANTA

The *dharma* (righteousness) of a teacher is the service rendered to God for all His children. This has become firmly rooted in my heart, and I am grateful to serve as a *Bal Vikas** teacher for our Sathya Sai Baba Center in Atlanta, Georgia.

The curriculum in our classes is a banquet of love set before us: through unity of religious devotion and the study of the various ways people offer glory to God, through observance and practice of human values and virtues, through development of self-esteem, skills, service and kindness to others, through the importance of prayer, the feeling of unity with all creation, and the constant remembrance of God. In our class we sing, study, wonder, discuss and share. Together we create a climate of trust, understanding and growth for the human spirit.

It is a joy to watch the students grow in service, self-understanding and faith. I find that I am constantly learning from the children. Every week they contribute to a renewal of my own faith and dedication through an overwhelming joy at their accomplishments.

It is interesting to see what happens in our classes. Though I often plan the lessons, sometimes Baba seems to take over the class, and when that happens, everything seems to flow and synthesize. On these occasions, the children often tell me that our lesson was about what they have been experiencing during the previous

week. Sometimes I realize that the *Bal Vikas* discussion is revolving around the same points covered in the adult study circle that very morning! At such times, my faith is strengthened and my joy is great, knowing that Baba is the only true Director of Curriculum and is always giving us the exact information we need at the time we need it.

Our class has grown in recent weeks from the two children we started with, to enough children to warrant consideration of expansion to provide more classes. Also, several center members have assisted through the years as fellow facilitators.

We are especially grateful for our teaching and lending library of religious objects, books, activities, tapes and related materials necessary for our studies of various cultures and religions. The library was established for the children through donations from center members. This level of support by the center is surely Baba's loving generosity in action.

It has been important to our children to be included in many of the center's *seva* (service) projects. They have helped with walk-a-thon booths, community food bank packing and sandwich preparation for feeding the homeless and hungry. The children have certainly helped to brighten the faces of the elderly in the senior citizen's home where our group visits. I have witnessed the children demonstrating Baba's instruction to "Love all, serve all"

in their steady development of purity, patience and loving service.

Baba has touched everyone of us through His *Bal Vikas* program. As one of the students says in her own words, "I have learned a lot from Baba. I used to be a little girl who was all a mess, but *Bal Vikas* has put me together. I enjoy *Bal Vikas* and singing *bhajans*. Learning about religions and loving people has really made me happy."

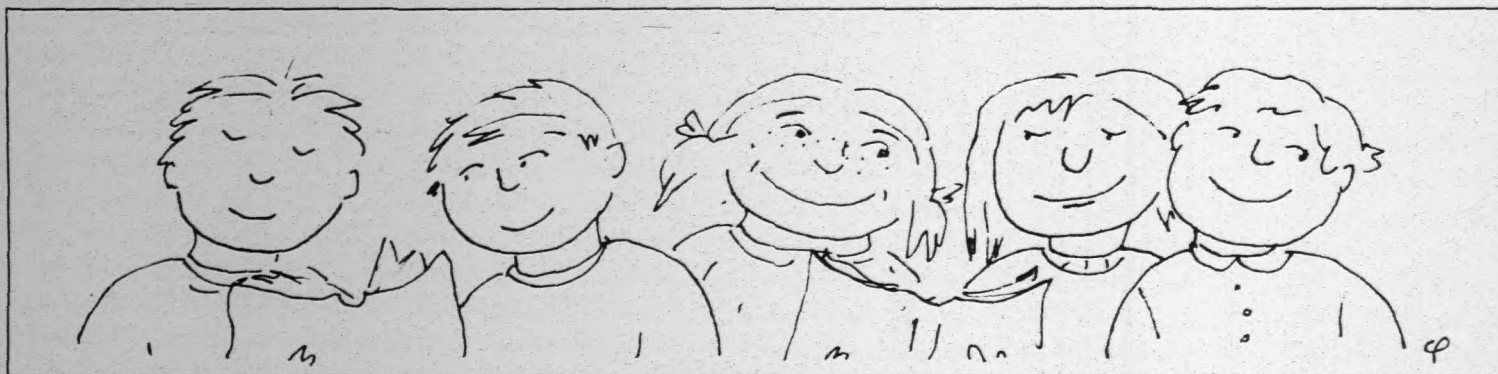
Baba has allowed my contact through *Bal Vikas* to lead to a renewal of my career as a public school teacher, but *Bal Vikas* classes are a home base for me as an

educator. I try to help each of the children to develop a trusting and personal relationship with Swami, the only tool needed for a sincere journey with God.

Two students expressed this reality in simple and thrilling words that speak to the heart, "I feel very close to Baba. I know Baba helps me a lot. He is with me all the time. Even if nothing special comes up, He's just there for me." The other student said, "Sai Baba is inside your heart and your mind. It gives me a feeling of a 'Never say die' attitude toward life."

--Rev. Judith Steinman-McKnight
Coordinator of Education, Atlanta Center

**Bal Vikas* is the system of education taught to children in Sathya Sai Baba Centers throughout the world. It emphasizes the teaching of Human Values, Respect for all Religions, Unity in Diversity, Ceiling on Desires and much more.



Education must instill the fundamental human values; it must broaden the vision to include the entire world and all mankind. When earning money is the goal, the system fosters falsehood and injustice, it restricts the vision of the family and community, and brings anxiety, sorrow and hatred. Education must equip mankind to live happily without making others unhappy, to evaluate pleasures and possessions correctly, and, without prejudice, to fix one's attention on the highest and most precious achievement of all, the Atmic victory (knowledge of the Indwelling Divine).

--Sathya Sai Baba
Sanathana Sarathi, March 1981, pp 59-60

HOMELESS PEOPLE

We think that this young man has compassion and insight that a world filled with avarice and greed should take pause to contemplate. His plan may be an oversimplification of a complex problem, but his heart is certainly in the right place.

--Editor

There is an injustice in the world and it is called "Homeless People." I am going to talk about how it is such a bad problem and how it affects other people. I chose this topic because I hate to see people suffer.

Some are homeless because they don't have an education or a job to get money. Some are homeless because they are alcoholics and are left on the street. They get sick because they don't have good food or shelter. Some even die! I am going to change all of that, and tell you how to solve the problem.

If the President hired me to take care of all the homeless people, I would raise a fund for them. If I didn't get enough money, I would ask the President to raise taxes. If he did, the people of America

would be angry but I would tell them why taxes were being raised on a TV special, then they would understand.

When I got the money from the government, I would hire men to build a building in each town that needs one for the homeless people. When the building was done, I would add maids, doctors and teachers to take care of them. The teachers will give them an education so the homeless can get jobs when they decide to leave. Every month I would sprinkle magical *vibhuti* (holy ash) over the buildings to give them love. Now that that problem is solved, I am ready to go and solve other problems.

--Sasank Aleti, Age 9
at the time this was written
Cherry Hill, New Jersey



There is no use in attempting to establish a new system of education or a new social system. By these means the problems cannot be solved. Instead we have to bring up a generation of pure-hearted boys and girls. To rear such a generation, there should be a climate of purity and sincerity. This calls for the development of morality and devotion to truth. Character and truth lead to the emergence of spirituality in the divine human personality. Hence, spirituality is the basic foundation for producing a generation of pure-hearted boys and girls. Only when we have such pure, young persons will the nation experience peace and prosperity.

--Sathya Sai Baba
page 3 of this issue

WHAT IS FREEDOM?

How glittering and quivering is the water
drop on the lotus leaf !

So is mans' life in this transient world;
life is filled with strife, disease and
delusion.

Sorrow and suffering reign supreme
in this sordid world.

Therefore, oh foolish mind! Take refuge
in the name of the Lord.

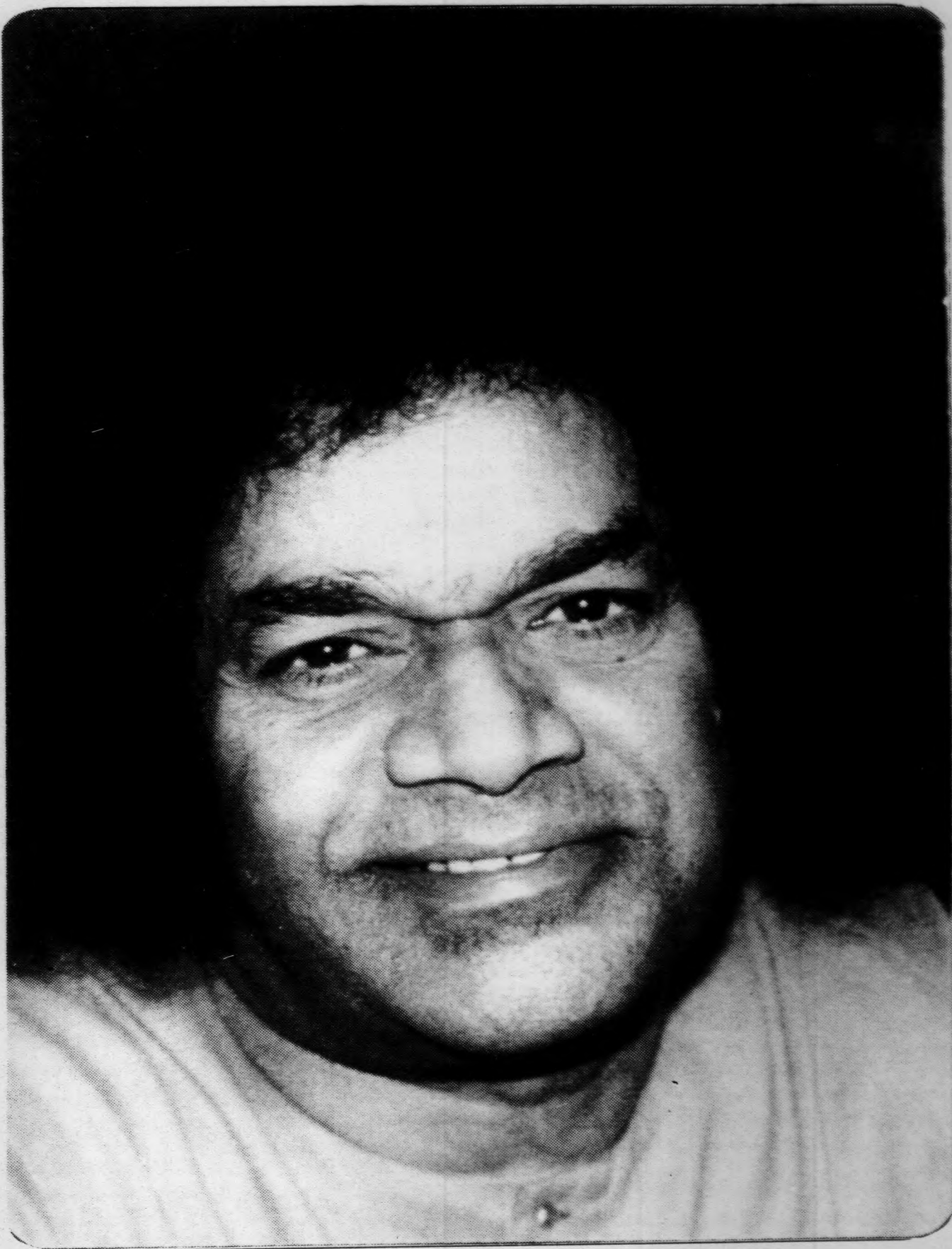
Dear Students, people in general cannot understand what spirituality and individual freedom are. Spirituality does not mean living in solitude, far away from society. True spirituality consists of sowing the seeds of love in the hearts of all people and facilitating the blossoming of peace and divine love among all mankind. If you inquire deeply into the nature of the Divine Principle, there are not two things like spirituality and individual freedom.

If one is allowed to express one's feelings and thoughts from a public platform without any hindrance, it is said to be individual freedom. But the truth is that no one has absolute freedom in this universe. The word "freedom" has been used frequently in the political field. What is freedom? To get rid of foreign rule and to establish the rule of the natives of the nation was considered to be freedom before India got her political independence. But that was neither individual freedom nor fundamental freedom. It was only a replacement of foreign rule by indigenous rule, with little or no change in the aspect of freedom as such. After the departure of the foreigners, we thought that the natives acquired freedom. But in what as-

pect did we get freedom? What is the use of simply repeating, "freedom, freedom." It is only when we have achieved unity that we can claim to have attained freedom. Without achieving unity, if we talk of freedom, it is merely the freedom of words but not of individuals. True freedom springs forth from the level of the Heart.

What is meant by the "Heart?" Not the physical heart full of flesh and blood. The real Heart is that which has no connection with any particular place, time, individual or country. It is the Divine Principle which is equally present in all persons at all times, in all places and in all countries. This Heart has no form. What we consider as the heart inside the human body comes in the middle and goes in the middle. But what we call "Heart" in the spiritual parlance knows no coming or going; it is eternal and changeless. Therefore, true freedom consists in recognizing and realizing this Heart or Divine Principle--knowing which one is the Knower of everything.

As in the microcosm, so in the macrocosm. Microcosm refers to the individual and macrocosm to the aggregate or sum total. One who knows the Self knows all. Today people try to know everything about the world; they feel proud that they know everything. But they forget that they do not know themselves. Mention is made in one of the *Upanishads* of a great sage by name Uddalaka who sent his son Svetaketu to a guru to be educated. Svetaketu took twelve years to acquire proficiency



Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

FLAMES of FIRE

I was freezing cold, the bones seemed to be rattling,
the teeth were shaking and I was numb.
You gave me a blanket for warmth,
You touched me.

I was poor and lonely and had fallen on hard times.
Even without a home and no money,
You stopped to see how I was.
You gave me shelter.
You tried to help.

I was arrogant with the filth of modern education.
Your love pierced through the walls of
intellectual fancy.
You brought home the message of goodness and truth
You educated me,
and I am starting to change.

I was stuck inside the senses' rage for pleasure.
The world had me in a whirlwind.
The light of truth was gone,
and then compassion came
When I saw the error of my ways.
You saved me and to You, I owe my all.

May we touch another to relieve the cold winds of winter.
Give to the poor and needy, who once was us, in a
different dress.
Bring forth Sai's message of love, deepen insight to
humble the proud and teach them who forgot.
Bring about a change when pleasures have taken hold and
peace has fled.
Learn from experience and carry the torch ahead.

--Michael J. Hollander
Fort Lee, New Jersey



YOU ARE SAI

A TIME TO RE-TREAT

The third annual San Diego area Conference/Retreat took place the last three days of September at a Christian Camp in the beautiful rural mountains east of Ocean-side California. One hundred forty *sevaks* (spiritual seekers) gathered to celebrate Mother Sai during Yom Kippur (the great Jewish day of Atonement, or At-One-Ment) on September 28, and the close of *Dasara* (the Hindu celebration of victory over darkness) on September 29.

These conferences and retreats serve as refreshing spiritual respites and an opportunity to increase our devotion, understanding and zest in our mission. This manifests as loving cooperation and service among devotees, newcomers and camp staff. Several workshops on how to better integrate the teachings into our daily lives were held, followed by a period of conscious *seva* (selfless service).

While several *seva* programs were offered, by far the most popular in attendance was the "Quilt Project." Quilting is a revered American folk tradition and some such quilts retail in Europe for sev-

eral hundred dollars each. These Sai quilts however, are not for sale. The men and women devotees, using remnants of cloth, sew patches together into exquisite designs. The finished bed coverlets are then given to old folks in convalescent homes and to the police, who in turn gift them to needy children encountered in family quarrels or road accidents. These quilts offer more than warmth and security, they offer a physical reminder that we are each loved, remembered and cared for by countless unseen friends. The *sevak* in charge of the project revealed that somehow the remnant bag never empties! There is always more cloth for more quilts, just as there is always more love to give, the more we show our love.

Sunday the 30th was devoted to sharing Sai experiences and singing *bhajans*. While each devotee had unique experiences, all expressed the same divine love and compassion of our Lord. As one newcomer put it, "For me, you are Swami. When I love you as I love Him, I am a devotee."

--Bon Giovanni

Sathya Sai Baba Center of Los Angeles



Forget all else and stick to the orders that I give you; I want only to initiate you into the spiritual path of love and service. Do not be ashamed that you have been asked to watch a heap of sandals, or carry water to the thirsty or stand at the gate. The privilege and pleasure consists of the way in which you use your skill and time for helping others. So, you long to serve me; let me tell you this, serving those who serve me gives me as much satisfaction as if you were serving me. Serving anyone is serving me, for I am in all.

--Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol VIII, Chapter I



SAI CONFERENCES,

<i>Date and Region</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Theme</i>
May 22-25 Memorial Day weekend North & South Central Regions	Adults \$68.00 Children 5-18 \$55.00 Children under 5 free	"Follow the Master"
May 22-25 Memorial Day weekend Pacific Region South	Adults \$78.00 Children \$55.00 Children under 5 free Visitors \$30.00 per day Max. price per family \$251.00	"Be Happy"
May 22-25 Memorial Day weekend Mid-Atlantic & Northeast Regions	Adults \$75.00 Young Adults 12-21 \$50.00 Children 5-11 \$37.50 Children under 5 free	"Ceiling on Desires"
May 22-24 (not Monday) Memorial Day weekend Southwestern Region	Adults \$45.00 (first adult) Spouse reduced rates Children reduced rates	"Expansion is Life"
July 3-5 Pacific Region South	Adults \$70.00 to \$120.00 (depending on accommodations) Children reduced rates	"Love in My Heart"
September 4-7 Labor Day weekend Southeast Region	\$55.00 to \$100.00 per person (depending on accommodations)	not established

RETREATS FOR 1992



<i>Location</i>	<i>Information and Reservations</i>
Camp Wyman Eureka, Missouri near St. Louis	Dinesh Mehta 107 East Wesley Drive O'Fallon, IL 62269 (618) 632-7908 home (618) 482-6369 office
Cottontail Ranch, Malibu Canyon near Los Angeles, California north of Malibu	Nosh & Rose Vadoli 22537 Uhea Road Woodland Hills, CA 91364 (818) 591-7242
Camp Colang Lord's Valley Lackawaxen, Pennsylvania	Rajen Ghayal 5 Foxcroft Drive Marlboro, NJ 07746 (908) 536-5775
Sky Y Camp Prescott, Arizona	Mary Christina Falvey 717 West Virginia Phoenix, AZ 85007 (602) 258-3876
Casa de Maria Montecito, California near Santa Barbara	Susie Salguero 812 North Montgomery Street Ojai, CA 93023 (805) 646-4932
Simpsonwood Conference & Retreat Center North Atlanta, Georgia	Diane Justice P. O. Box 52404 Atlanta, GA 30355-0404 (404) 261-2197

<i>Date and Region</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Theme</i>
September 4-7 Labor Day weekend North Central Region	Cost not established	not established
September 4-7 Labor Day weekend Southwestern Region	Adults \$65.00 (sorry, no facilities for children)	"Spiritual Renewal of One's Solemn Vow to Sai"
September 11-13 Pacific Northwest Region	Adults starting at \$98.50 Children starting at \$93.50 (less expensive prices available)	"Surrender to Love"
September 18-20 Northern California and Nevada Region	Cost not established	not established
September 25-27 Pacific Region South	Adults \$65.00 Young Adults 10-17 \$30.00 Children under 10 \$15.00 Max. price per family \$150.00	"Keeping Sai in Our Daily Lives"



Have good companions--that will help your spiritual discipline. The proper atmosphere is essential. . . . Be careful that the {spiritual} success you have won does not get frittered away by trite company.

--Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. I, Chapter XV

<i>Location</i>	<i>Information and Reservations</i>
Camp Ohiyesa Holly, Michigan	D. K. Majumdar 511 North Grant Street Westmont, IL 60559 (708) 968-0889
Bodhi Mandala, Jemez Springs New Mexico near Albuquerque	Michael Chavez 1524 Central S. E. Albuquerque, NM 87106 (505) 247-4379 (day) (505) 265-0930 (after 5:00 PM)
Crystal Mountain Resort Mount Rainier, Washington	Jackie Plastino 20524 81st S. W. Vashon, WA 98070 (206) 463-5389
Camp La Honda, YMCA in the Santa Cruz Mountains between San Francisco & Santa Cruz, California	Kathy & Charlie Townsend 38667 Dow Court Fremont, CA 94536 (510) 793-2458 (after 6:00 PM)
Cedar Glen, near Julian in San Diego County California	Jane Darin 11303 Trailside Way San Diego, CA 92127 (619) 451-3420



In the past, aspirants used to dwell in the ashrams maintained by sages. While there, they had the unique chance of being immersed in good thoughts, good activities and good company.

--Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. I, Chapter XV

TO ALL DEVOTEES

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Sai Ram! All Central Coordinators have received instructions to remind Sai devotees of two important policies of the International Sri Sathya Sai Organizations:

I. If you are approached by anyone, claiming to be a Sai devotee, for financial contributions or loans for any alleged Sai project, regardless whether he or she is an American or from another country, you should decline to participate and inform your Regional President. All financial activities of this kind should be discouraged.

II. There have been a number of occasions in which members and/or office bearers from one country address meetings of Sai devotees in another country without the knowledge and approval of the Central Coordinators of the two countries. This is not appropriate.

These instructions have been issued because problems in these two areas have been brought to the attention of the Central Office of Sri Sathya Sai Organizations, Prasanthi Nilayam.



In the service of Sai
--Michael Goldstein, M. D.

TO NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

Dear Subscribers! There seems to be some confusion about the *Sathya Sai Service Opportunities* publication. Please be assured, if you are a subscriber to this quarterly *Sathya Sai Newsletter*, you will automatically receive the *Service Opportunities*, edited by Judith Wechsler. It is included with the *Newsletter*--twice a year--at no extra cost.

The Editor and Staff of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter* wish to take this opportunity to thank the subscribers for their patience and understanding; we know that the Winter 1992 edition of the *Newsletter* was a month late! We apologize for a series of delays that were really beyond our control, and hope that you were not inconvenienced.

In addition, the *Newsletter* is sent Bulk Rate, Third Class Mail; they are all posted at exactly the same time. But what happens to them after they leave our local Post Office remains a mystery, perhaps never to be solved! We are as bewildered as some of the subscribers as to why someone in a neighboring state or town receives their issue days or even weeks before (or after) another subscriber!? This is an ongoing situation that defies logic. We appreciate your patience and forbearance.

Thank you for your loving support, *Sai Ram*
--Barbara Bozzani, Editor *Sathya Sai Newsletter*

in all the branches of learning. Puffed up with pride, he returned to his father and told him about his profound scholarship. Then the father questioned him, "Oh my son, do you know that by knowing *That*, you would know everything?" The son was baffled by this question which gave a shattering blow to his pride of learning. Of all the kinds of pride, the pride of learning is the worst. By putting that question to his son, it made sage Uddalaka recognize the superiority of Self-knowledge, or *Atma Jnanam*, as compared to *L o k a Jnanam*, or secular knowledge.

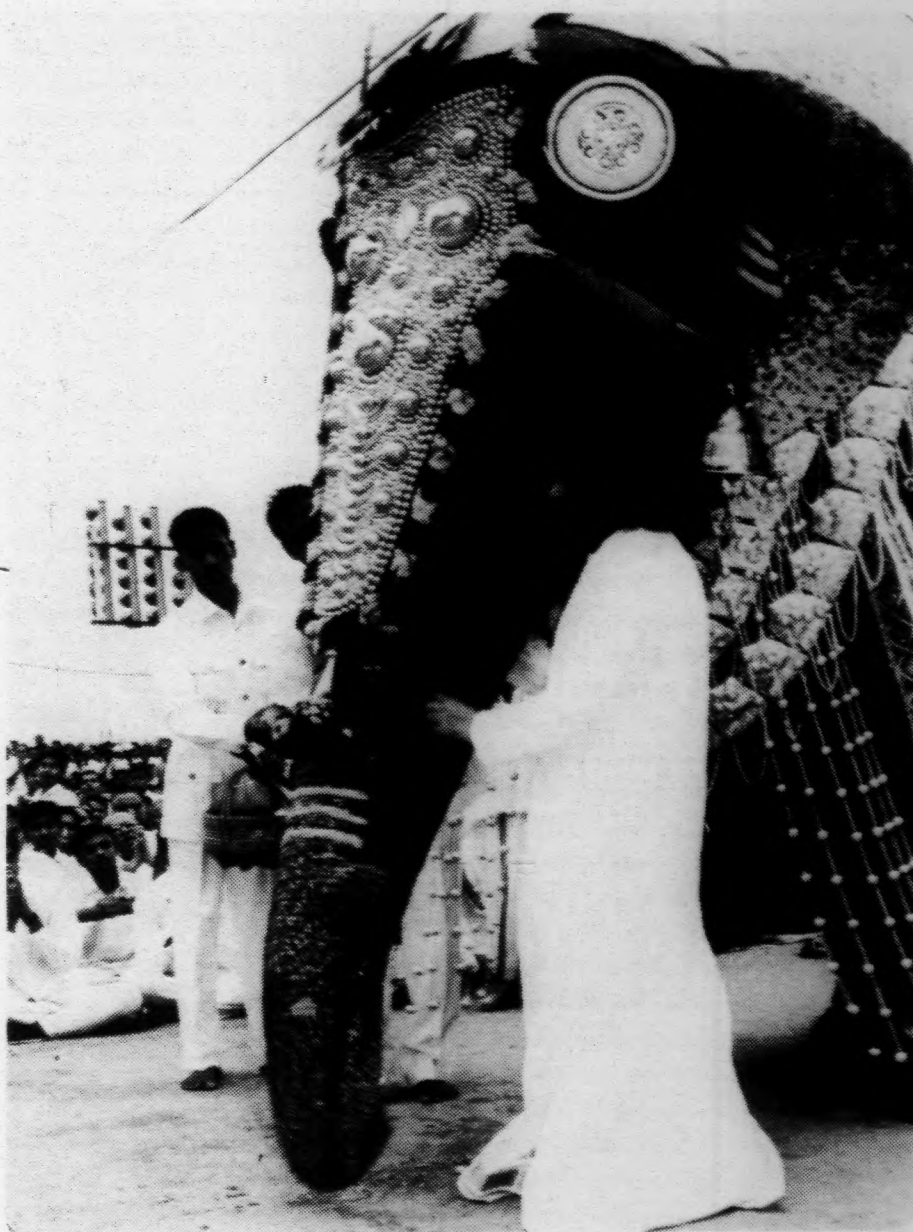
When you ask someone, "Who are you?" and if they reply, "I don't know who I am," what do you think of them? You consider them to be mad. Similarly, if you try to

know about everything else without knowing who you are, are you any better than that mad person? Therefore, you should try to know who you are. You may say, "I

am called Ramaiah." But Ramaiah is the name given to your body. What is that "I" in your reply who is separate from Ramaiah? You should understand the nature of "I." That "I" is nothing other than the Heart. That "I" is the *Atma* or Self. That "I" is *Brahman* or the Supreme Reality. This Heart is all-pervasive, omnipresent.

Consider this illustration: A painter has painted a beautiful pic-

ture of a dancing girl on a sheet of paper. The picture shows her body and limbs with several bends and curves, ups and downs in the process of dancing. In another painting, there are high mountains



"The real 'Heart' has no connection with any place, time, individual or country."

and low valleys. But if you feel the paper by touching it, you will not find any ups and downs or elevations and depressions in either painting. So also, in the phenomenal world, you find many differences like ups and downs, good and bad, sins and virtues, truth and untruth, pain and pleasure, etc. But at the level of the Heart, you will not find these dualities or pairs of opposites.

Let us consider another example. There is a silver tumbler. It has a name and a form. If you remove or ignore the name and form, what remains? Only silver; it was silver before becoming a tumbler. When it has the form of a tumbler, it remains silver. If the tumbler is destroyed and made into a round mass, it will continue to be silver. So it is nothing but silver in the beginning, the middle and the end. The name and form of the tumbler was there only in the middle, but not in the beginning or at the end. That which does not exist in the beginning and the end, but exists only in the middle is considered to be nonexistent, even in the middle. Its apparent existence in the middle is only a myth or illusion. That is why the phenomenal world is called *mithyajagath*, the illusory universe.

Existence is one. When there is no second, how can the question of freedom or bondage arise? So these concepts of freedom and bondage are the concoctions of your own mind. For example, we give attention and value to the moon only when there is no sun. Why do we give value to the moon when there is no sun? The moon has no effulgence of its own. It shines because of the reflection of the sun's rays. Similarly, when we do not see the sun of

Self; we give value to the moon of the mind. The *Vedas* have revealed that the mind is a reflection of the moon. Therefore, we cherish the mind and nourish it by devoting more time and attention to it, but we neglect *Atma vichara* or Self-inquiry. It is only when you have the mind, that you see all differences as spiritual or secular, sacred or mundane, freedom or bondage, man or woman, *prakriti* or *Paratattvam* (nature or Absolute Reality). All dualities are certainly creations of the mind.

I wish to clarify some points relating to the debate that took place here on the subject of "Freedom and Bondage." Suppose there is a man suffering from dire poverty; he is very hungry. Even in spite of begging, no one gives him food. Then he feels that he has the freedom to resort to stealing in order to appease his hunger. Although he may rationalize thus, because of his selfishness, his conscience does not approve of his stealing. So how can it be called freedom when his conscience disapproves? It may, at best, be called freedom with bondage. When does one have real freedom? Only when the mind is destroyed. When you use the words *swabhava* and *swechcha*, you have to understand their true meaning. *Swa* means Self or *Atma*. Hence, *swabhava* means the nature of *Atma*. Likewise, *swa+ichcha* equals *swechcha* which means the volition or power of the *Atma*. Strictly speaking, it should be understood as volition which is in line with the *Atma*, since *Atma*, per se, has no volition. In the light of these meanings, it is incorrect to use the terms *swabhava* and *swechcha* in connection with matters relating to the activities of the body, senses, mind and intellect.

It should be recognized that man's life is regulated by the laws of nature on the one hand, and by the man-made regulations on the other. Such being the case, there is no validity in thinking that one has freedom to act as they like. It is only God who may be said to have freedom. Even this is a relative truth, because in absolute terms, existence is only one; hence, the word "freedom" is out of place in this context.

People talk glibly about surrender. Some persons complain, "I have completely surrendered myself to Swami, but there is no end to my problems, hardships, suffering and sorrow." In my view, this is not surrender at all. True surrender never cognizes the presence or absence of sorrow, suffering, misery and the like. There are some others who say, "When I sit in meditation, I sometimes go into *samadhi*." But what is *samadhi*? In books written by worldly people with mundane views, one may find various descriptions of *samadhi*. While in meditation, a person may lose body-consciousness. But this cannot correctly be called *samadhi*. It may be a symptom of weakness, fits, hysteria or emotion, but never a sign of *samadhi*. Merging the mind in the *Atma* is true *samadhi*. In that state, one does not see or experience duality. *Samadhi* equals *sama* plus *dhi*, which essentially means equal-mindedness. In that condition, there will be no trace of such differences like pleasure and pain, gain and loss, virtue and sin or *prakriti* and *Paramatma*--nature and God. This alone is the evidence of equal-mindedness. This truly is *swabhava*, nature of the Self. In contrast, if a person aspires for something and pursues various paths to achieve it, you may take it as an indication of their mental aberrations.

As long as the mind is there, no one can claim to be enjoying freedom. In the worldly parlance, one may say, "I have money. I am giving it to someone. This is my free will, etc." But truly speaking, this is neither freedom nor free will. The mind is a mixture of three qualities or *gunas*: *sathwic* (pure, calm, unruffled), *rajasic* (overly active, craving adventure) and *tamasic* (dull, ignorant, lazy). One or more of these three may become dominant at a given time in any person. In the present instance, the mind of the man who is giving some money to another person is motivated by the *sathwic guna*, to give something in charity to a needy person. Hence, when a man acts under the influence of the *gunas*, how can he claim to have freedom of will? It is therefore impossible for anybody, who is part of creation, to have freedom.

Justice Khastagir said that a person has freedom to conduct physical exercise by waving a stick in the compound of his home. But he has no freedom to do so in a public place, because it is against governmental regulations, and he is liable to be arrested by the police. Strictly speaking, when a man does exercises by waving a stick on the premises of his residence, that which is involved is not freedom but only the fulfillment of his desire. Whenever a man does something for the sake of his personal benefit, it signifies his desire for that thing. True freedom emanates only from the Heart irrespective of the place, time, person or thing.

Highly talented people in different walks of life, have not acquired their skills from somewhere outside. All skills are manifestations of their own innate potentiali-

ties. It is sheer ignorance to think that any person can be developed by some other person. Everything is in you already. All that you do by way of your effort is to manifest or give an outer expression to what is already inherent within you. So even in the spiritual field, all the *sadhana* (spiritual activity) that you need to do is to remove the obstruction, namely, the ignorance that is preventing the manifestation of the Divinity already present in you. Krishna too taught this truth to Arjuna as follows:

"Arjuna, you did not know the art and science of archery when you were born. You are under the impression that Drona instructed you, and therefore, you acquired the skills of warfare from somewhere outside. It is not correct to think that Drona taught you and that you learned these skills afresh. All that Drona did was to facilitate the manifestation of what was already in you." Remember that any teacher or great person endowed with extraordinary powers cannot bring out what is not already inside you. Good luck or bad luck, bliss or misery--all these are in you.

Suppose you are digging a well. On reaching the depth of, say, 100 feet, you strike a good spring with a copious supply of water. Now, have you created the water or brought it from somewhere? No, the water was there all the while; it came to view because the earth that was covering it was removed. So too, there is Divinity ever present in you, but you have forgotten it. Why did you forget? Because of your wrong identification with the body.

As long as there is mind, man cannot escape from various kinds of thoughts.

These indicate the freedom of the mind, but not freedom of the person. Sampath [Vice Chancellor of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning] has told you that a student has the freedom to question the teacher and obtain answers. But this does not come under freedom; it comes under duty. The duty of a student is to abide by the regulations of the educational system which provides for asking questions and obtaining answers. You should understand the difference between freedom and duty. Duty may be considered under three categories: *sambandham* meaning relationship, *nirbandham* meaning compulsion and *kartavyam* meaning obligation. Here are examples of the differences between these three:

You want to give a tea party for your friends on a Sunday evening. You invite your friends in advance. But at 4:00 PM on Sunday you develop a high temperature. So you inform all the invitees that the tea party is postponed. In this situation, you may or may not have the tea party, as you wish. But this is not freedom; it is *sambandham*, relationship--something voluntary and optional.

About *nirbandham*, you are in the office, suddenly you are attacked by a high fever. On that very day, your boss is coming to inspect your office. So you cannot go on leave of absence. Therefore, you run to the doctor--take an injection and some tablets for your illness--and remain in your office compulsorily, in spite of your suffering from the fever. This is a case of *nirbandham* or compulsion.

Third is *kartavyam*. Due to some reasons there arises a quarrel between you

and your wife. . . . She goes away into the bedroom and lies down, weeping. She does not attend to the cooking. You are sitting in the drawing room; you are extremely angry on two accounts: First, for the reason which led to your quarrel and second, because your wife has not cooked food and you are very hungry. So due to the combination of both anger and hunger, you are very restless. Just then, a good friend comes to visit. You greet him with a smile, saying, "Hello, hello" and after offering him a seat, you go inside and tell your wife in a hushed voice but with an angry tone, "Our friend has come; prepare coffee." You show an angry face to your wife but a happy countenance to your friend. You don't want your friend to know that you are angry with your wife, nor do you want your wife to know that you are jolly with your friend. You are thus obliged to adjust your behavior to suit different persons and situations in conformity with the social norms and etiquette. This is called *kartavyam* or obligation.

Nowadays, people in general have given the go-by to all three--*sambandham*, *nirbandham* and *kartavyam*--relationship, compulsion and obligation. Hence there is *dharmaglani*--an all-around decline of righteousness in modern society. It should be noted that there is no freedom for man in acting according to relationship, compulsion and obligation as illustrated above. There is freedom only at the level of the *Atma* or Self.

Engage yourself in any activity, but always keep in view your true nature as the Self or *Atma*. If you do so, you will surely enjoy real freedom. There are not two kinds of freedom, individual and spiri-

tual. Spirituality alone is freedom. Freedom alone is spirituality. It is not possible for these two to exist separately. There is only one entity which has assumed different names and forms. Just as the same milk assumes the different names and forms like: curd, yogurt, buttermilk, cream, butter and more. Similarly, *saalokyam*, *saameepyam*, *saaroopyam* and *saayujyam* are different names for the same spiritual experience. These four, however, are progressive steps in the process of God-realization. *Saalokyam* means always thinking of God and living in the spiritual world or God's world, so to say, instead of the material world. *Saameepyam* indicates moving closer to Swami or God. *Saaroopyam* means becoming one with Swami. *Saayujyam* is the final stage of becoming Swami Himself, therefore, complete merger without any trace of duality.

If anyone in this phenomenal world says he has freedom, we can call it only "crazy freedom." It may also be called freedom of the ego, and freedom of infatuation or attachment. It is foolish on your part to think you have the freedom to scold or strike your wife or children. If you want to enhance your freedom by suppressing the freedom of others, it is only utter selfishness. True freedom lies in not interfering with the freedom of others. You do not find such freedom in this world. What you find in this world is a hierarchy of controls, the one at a higher level controlling the one at a lower level. This results in a lack of freedom for all except perhaps for the one person at the top of the hierarchy. But strictly speaking, even that one person occupying the top most rung of the hierarchical ladder cannot be said to have

freedom, because the question of freedom does not arise when there is only one without a second. What we call individual freedom and fundamental rights may serve the purpose of enabling us to carry on our mundane affairs. But in the absolute sense, there is no true freedom involved in these matters.

From the above discussion, we arrive at the conclusion that--from whatever angle we may consider the matter--there is no freedom for mankind, and that there can be no freedom for mankind. In fact, man does not know what true freedom means. One who has freedom does not take birth in this world. One who enters the world with a body cannot have freedom. Take the example of an animal tied to a peg with a ten foot length of rope to illustrate that the animal has a limited freedom within a radius of ten feet. But how can you speak of its freedom when the animal is tied and it cannot go beyond ten feet? Anything that is bound by any limitation whatsoever, cannot and should not be said to have freedom. This only shows that we are in the habit of using words without knowing their correct meaning.

If you understand the true meaning of Heart, you will recognize that it is beyond all limitations. The same Heart that is within you is also within all others including those who are hated by you or who hate you. You may wonder--if all have the same Heart--why should their thoughts, attitudes and actions be different? Students, remember that all these differences are created by the mind and they have nothing to do with the Heart. This is not the physical heart but the spiritual Heart which is omnipresent. It has no

form, but it is the substratum for all forms. It can be compared to sugar which is the common basis for all kinds of sweets enjoyed by different people.

All the differences you find in the world are only reflections of your mind. Whether you love or hate someone, ridicule or praise them, it is only your reflection. If you give up these reactions and reflections--which appear in the phenomenal world and get hold of the Heart, which is Reality--then all these differences in thoughts, feelings and actions will disappear. God does not have thoughts and feelings of any kind. But He appears to respond suitably according to the thoughts, feelings, attitudes and actions of the devotees. God has no likes or dislikes; nor is He angry with some and pleased with others. He does not have moods that change from time-to-time in respect to the same person or different people, as many of you imagine. Of course, as a result of putting on a body, the *Avatars* appear to have such reactions and reflections, but it is only to set an example for others and to help them reform themselves, so they may make the needed progress in their spiritual journey. God does not differentiate or discriminate between high caste or low caste, between the young or the old, between men or women, between people of one country or another, etc., etc. These are all mundane differences pertaining to the world, but they have nothing to do with Divinity.

It is only narrow-mindedness to think that Rama was born into a *Kshatriya* family, Krishna into the *Yadava* or cowherd family, or Sai Baba into *Raju-Kshatriya* family and so on. God will never have such

differences. If one correctly understands the nature of the Divine Principle of the *Atma*, there will be no cause for such petty, narrow-minded differences and discriminations.

Living in this vast universe, you must develop broad thoughts and feelings to understand the nature of the infinite *Atma*. Spirituality should not be approached from a narrow standpoint. Doing worship, devotional singing, meditation and the like are considered by many as signs of spirituality. But all these are mental aberrations that serve to give only mental satisfaction to the practitioners. You praise God, saying, "Lord, you are my mother, my father, my friend" and so on. But why all this mumbo-jumbo and gibberish? Why not simply say, "You are I. I am You" and be done with it? In this connection, it is not correct to say, "You and I are one" because you and I are we, but never one. It is better to say, "We and we are one," because I am in you and you are in me. Therefore, when we come together, we become one. However in the statement, "We and we are one" there is duality because the "we" consists of the physical body and the Divine Principle of the *Atma*. If you understand the nature of these two aspects of your personality, you will never think of the relationship between yourself and God like mother, father, friend etc. You are both one, although you may appear as two. Here is a concrete illustration for this. The mike in front of me appears as two, but functions as one in the process of amplifying my voice to make it audible. Similarly, you should visualize and realize the unity of the body and the *Atma*. This is the one *sadhana* (spiritual discipline) you should practice.

Students, spirituality means merger with God. You are not different from God. You are God; God is you. If you are firmly established in this faith, you need not undertake any other *sadhana* or spiritual practice. Of course, some people repeat parrot-like, "I and You are one," but they do not live up to it. Here is a small story to illustrate this: A guru gave the mantra *Sivo-ham* to one of his disciples and told him that the mantra means, "I am Siva." As the disciple was uttering, "*Sivo-ham, Sivo-ham*," a friend of his came and asked him about the meaning of the mantra. On being told the meaning, the friend questioned him, "If you are Siva, how is Parvati related to you?" The immediate response of the disciple was, "May God forgive my offence! Goddess Parvati is far superior to me and deserves my adoration and worship." The point to be noted here is that if the disciple had real faith and conviction in the mantra, *Sivo-ham* which implies that there is only one God--who appears to have assumed all the names and forms of all gods and goddesses, as well as all beings in the universe--then the correct answer to his friend's question would have been, "I am Parvati too."

Instead, this wrong reply was due to his belief in the traditional husband-wife relationship that Parvati was Siva's consort. Therefore, these kinds of complications will arise if you think of God in terms of such worldly, physical relationships like mother, father, etc. Instead of that you should have unshakable faith in the unity of Godhead and assert, "I am You, You are I--we are not two, but one." This is the true freedom inherent in you. In this context, you should understand the correct meaning of the terms *swadharma*

and *paradharma* used in the *Gita*. The meaning of *Swadharma* is *Atma-dharma*, and not the *dharma* or duties enjoined on the different castes like *Brahmana-dharma*, *Kshatriya-dharma* and so on.

Likewise,

p a r a -
d h a r m a

means *deha-*
dharma or

dharma per-
taining to the

body. It is in
this sense

that you
should un-

derstand the
declaration

in the *Gita*,
" *p a r -*

a d h a r m o
bhayavahah,"

which in ef-
fect, means

that if you
follow the

d e h a -
dharma or

the *dharma*
of the physi-

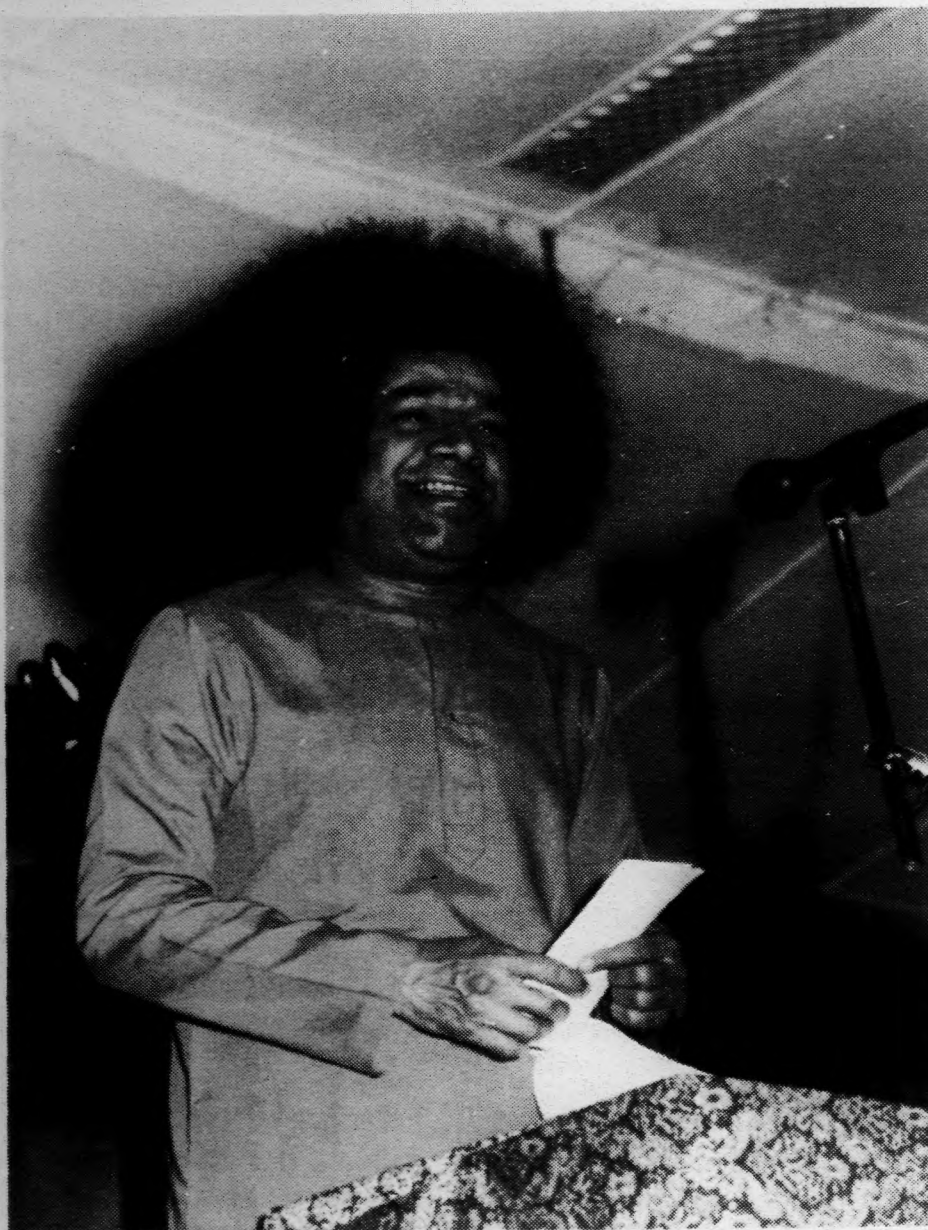
cal body, fear
will be your

lot in life. On
the other

hand, if you
follow the

A t m a -
dharma, you

will have no fear. If you understand the real meaning of the verses and words in the *Gita* and if you mold your lives accordingly, you will have no fear of slander, ridicule, sorrow or suffering.



**"If you understand the true meaning of 'Heart,'
you will know that it is beyond all limitations."**

Students, you may or may not believe me when I say, 'I do not know what sorrow is, what worry is, or what hardship means.' Some may praise and worship me. Others may criticize and vilify me. It is their will

and pleasure
in either case.

I am not at
all bothered.

My attitude
toward oth-

ers abusing
me is, if they

abuse or scold
me aloud, I

say, 'Gone
with the

wind.' If they
abuse me si-

lently within
themselves, I

say, 'It hurts
only them, for

it does not
reach me.' In

either case,
why should I

be worried at
all? There-

fore, if you are
established in

truth, you
will never be

affected by
praise or

blame, by joy
or sorrow.

People come

to me and complain about the bereavements in their family or some suffering and pain etc. I respond to them by saying '*Chaala santosham*,' which means, "Very happy." You should note that this kind of

happiness remains the same under all circumstances, because it is based on the *Atmatatwa* which means, "Everything is *Atma*." However, sometimes I pretend to be angry with the students, because of their wrong behavior. But it is only outward anger; it does not come from inside. I may not speak to some persons for months. That is the medicine to cure them of their disease of misbehavior and to correct them. What right has anybody to ask why Swami is not talking to them?

A small example of this: Four patients go to a doctor. They have all come with the same complaint of stomach ache. The doctor examines them one after the other. He gives one of them the advice to have hot water fomentation. For the second patient, he gives a mixture of mag sulph and soda bicarb and tells him that he will be relieved of his stomach ache which is due to gas trouble. For the third person, he gives some tablets. But he wants the fourth person to undergo an operation immediately because his stomach pain is due to appendicitis. Similarly, I give different treatments to different people based on their needs and for their own good. I don't even look at some people. I don't speak to some. I avoid or pass by others, although they try to attract my attention. These are all my prescriptions for their respective diseases. Why do I administer such medicines or treatments? I have principles; my words are very precious. Even if you don't give value to my words; I

attach great importance and value to them. If somebody does not heed my words, I don't like to waste them by speaking to him. Hence in order to save the value of my words, I stop talking to such persons. Instead of complaining that Swami does not talk to you, why don't you blame yourself for not acting according to Swami's instructions? This is not one-way traffic; it is a matter of give and take. If Swami's orders are implicitly obeyed by you, His grace is showered on you automatically. You need not specially pray for His grace. First of all, attach value to your own words. Remember the wise saying, "Truth is the life of a word; a battalion of brave soldiers is the life of a fort; modesty is the life of a woman; and signature is the life of a promissory note."

All cannot understand the nature of Divinity. God is never elated or depressed. Even if the whole world blames and reviles me, I will not be depressed. Even if the entire world extols me, I will not be elated. This is because I am established in Truth. There will be no room for any worry or anxiety if you are firmly established in Heart, *Atma* or Truth--all of which mean the same. Try to understand the Divinity of Swami who is the changeless support of all that changes. Thus sanctify and justify your stay here.

--Sathya Sai Baba

Excerpted, *Indian Culture and Spirituality*
chapter 13, Summer Course 1990

Keep all your work as sacred and devote it to God. Do this each day without fail. . . . Even if you do good, if there is arrogance and ostentatiousness, everything will fall out through these two holes.

--Sathya Sai Baba
Kodaikanal, April 1988

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